

# THE CATHOLIC VOICE

speaking for the vulnerable in Maryland's public square

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Annapolis, MD

## BOOST Scholarship Program Accepting Applications for 2017-18 School Year



**MARYLAND**  
**BOOST**  
Broadening Options & Opportunities  
for Students Today

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is now accepting applications for the Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST), a scholarship program designed to help income eligible students attend nonpublic schools.

The state's \$43.5 billion budget for the next fiscal year includes \$5.5 million for BOOST, \$500,000 more than the 2016-17 school year. The increase to the budget, together with the remaining funds from the current program, will provide nearly \$6 million in scholarships for the 2017-18 school year.

"The Conference was grateful to both the legislature and Governor Hogan for their work in continuing and expanding the opportunities that this program is providing to thousands of families. As it turns out, we're not alone in that. The demand for information about the program has been high since the legislative session began and we expect many more parents to apply this year," said Maryland Catholic Conference Associate Director for Education Garrett O'Day. "There are so many parents who want educational options for their children, especially in the lower-income areas of the state. This program is delivering and more and more parents are counting on it."

The BOOST scholarship was established in March 2016 by the Maryland General Assembly, and is administered by the MSDE and seven-member BOOST Advisory Board appointed by the state legislature. The program is available for students either already attending or hoping to attend a nonpublic school. Students must be enrolled in – or have applied to – a participating school before completing the application. Priority will be given to students coming from public schools.

Nearly 2,500 students, from 20 of the 24 counties in the state (including Baltimore City), received scholarships in the inaugural year. Public school students received 46 percent of the total scholarship assistance in 2016-17 and received higher scholarship amounts than their counterparts who already attended a nonpublic school. Students coming from public school were offered scholarships totaling \$2.25 million of the \$4.85 million awarded.

Scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$4,400 each, with the highest amount going to students who qualify for the federal governments free or reduced-price meals program and attended a public school the previous year.

Students who received a BOOST scholarship in 2016-2017, and who still meet the eligibility criteria, are eligible to renew their scholarships, but must complete an application to receive an award in 2017-2018. The application deadline is June 15.

## Human Trafficking Information Sessions Underway



Last month, the Catholic bishops in Maryland issued a joint statement on human trafficking. Human trafficking is often referred to as modern day slavery. Every year, thousands of men, women, and children fall into the hands of traffickers.

Since the announcement, the Catholic Church in Maryland has been sponsoring a series of information sessions throughout the state to address the issue. There are six sessions scheduled this month, three in English and three in Spanish at parishes located in Harford, Anne Arundel and Montgomery counties: [www.mdcathcon.org/humantrafficking/infosessions](http://www.mdcathcon.org/humantrafficking/infosessions)

## Archbishop Lori Celebrates 5th Anniversary

In March 2012, Pope Benedict XVI appointed Bishop William E. Lori of the Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut, the 16th Archbishop of Baltimore. He was installed as Archbishop of Baltimore May 16, 2012 at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen. The Catholic Review looks back at Archbishop Lori's five years at the helm of America's oldest diocese: [www.catholicreview.org/article/commentary/amen/amen-in-baltimore-five-quick-years-for-archbishop-lori](http://www.catholicreview.org/article/commentary/amen/amen-in-baltimore-five-quick-years-for-archbishop-lori)



(Photo credit: Catholic Review)

## Maryland Welcomes Six New Priests

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day, a national holiday in the United States to honor mothers. The holiday is now celebrated in nearly 50 countries. In the Roman Catholic Church, Mother's Day is strongly associated with the Virgin Mary. The Catholic Standard has more on what the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is doing this Mother's Day: [www.cathstan.org/Content/News/News/Article/Mother-s-Day-collection-to-support-completion-of-Trinity-Dome-at-Basilica-of-the-National-Shrine/2/2/7814](http://www.cathstan.org/Content/News/News/Article/Mother-s-Day-collection-to-support-completion-of-Trinity-Dome-at-Basilica-of-the-National-Shrine/2/2/7814)