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For Immediate Release

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DONORS MEET STUDENTS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II CATHOLIC ACADEMY AT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION BUS TOUR

DORCHESTER— On Wednesday, May 21, 2009, Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy's Columbia Campus hosted visitors and donors on a bus tour sponsored by the Catholic Schools Foundation. Over sixty-five donors came by bus to the Academy, where they were given the opportunity to meet and talk with students, faculty, and administrators and see first hand the way their contributions are being used in the lives of inner-city students. Rev. Jack Ahern, new pastor of Blessed Mother Teresa Parish, was on hand as well as many community members and parishioners.

Members of the Grade 8 class gave the visitors tours of the newly-renovated building. The tours not only provided a look at the new gymnasium, computer labs, science lab, and cafeteria, but also at the daily lives of Academy students.

The students were excited to meet the donors. Christopher Nguyen, a K2 student, offered each visitor a jelly bean he brought from home as a gift of welcome. "A great energy filled the entire building," said Claire Barton Sheridan, principal of the Columbia Campus. "The students were genuinely thrilled to meet our guests, and the donors certainly felt the same about meeting the students!"

Troy Brown, former New England Patriots star, was also in attendance at the event. He spoke to the students about how a small scholarship to play football changed his life. He urged students to pursue their dreams and encouraged the donors to continue giving since even a small gift can make a significant difference in the lives of young people.

After the individual tours, guests were brought to the school cafeteria for lunch, a blessing by Rev. Ahern, and another opportunity to meet students, staff, and other donors. Musical entertainment was provided by the students in K1, Grade 1, and Grade 5. The donors were treated to vocal, bell, and violin performances.



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The donors were addressed by Boston City Counselor Maureen Feeney, Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy Regional Director Mary Russo, and Mike Reardon and Peter Lynch of the Catholic Schools Foundation. Each speaker thanked the donors for their past help and emphasized the importance of the continued effort to support the education of inner-city youth.

Russo added, "Visits like the Catholic Schools Foundation Bus Tour are important to all of us at the Academy because they give us a chance to say 'thank you' in a personal way to the people who are making it possible for the wonderful gift of Catholic education to continue in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston."

To learn more about this event or the Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy, please contact Nat Connors at 617-265-0019 x 7006 or at nat.connors@popejp2catholicacademy.org.

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