

Fraternally Yours®

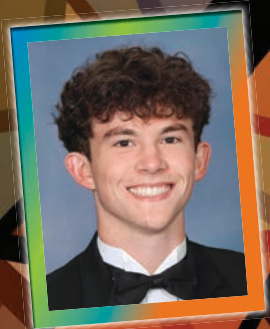


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FIRST CATHOLIC SLOVAK LADIES ASSOCIATION

AUGUST 2026



Congratulations
FCSLA 2026
Scholarship Recipients!

ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA

OFFICE HOURS — HOME OFFICE

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FCSLA LIFE

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Susan G. Moynihan • Cleveland, OH
Cynthia M. Oresik • Schererville, IN
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PLANTING SEEDS FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

There is an old saying that a society grows great when people plant trees whose shade they know they may never sit under. Few things embody that spirit more beautifully than investing in the education of young people. Each year, our scholarship program reminds us that the future is not something we simply inherit. It is something we help create.

Every scholarship we award is more than financial assistance. It is a vote of confidence. It says to a young person, *We see your potential. We believe in your dreams. We are willing to stand beside you as you take your next step.* What an extraordinary gift that is.

Education changes lives. It equips minds, strengthens character, and opens doors that once seemed beyond reach. But its impact doesn't end with the student who receives the award. It ripples outward into families, workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities. The student we help today may become the teacher who inspires a child, the nurse who comforts a patient, the engineer who solves tomorrow's challenges, the entrepreneur who creates jobs, or the volunteer who quietly changes lives through acts of service.

That is how a better world is built—not all at once, but one life at a time.

As a fraternal organization, we have always believed that our greatest purpose is found in helping others. Our scholarship program is a living expression of that belief. It reflects our faith in the promise of the next generation and our conviction that kindness, generosity, and opportunity can change the course of a life.

To this year's scholarship recipients, know that this award represents more than recognition for your hard work. It represents the hopes of thousands of members who believe your talents can make a positive difference in the world. We celebrate your accomplishments, but even more, we look forward to what you will become.

The future will always present new challenges. It will also offer new opportunities for compassion, innovation, and leadership. By investing in young people today, we are helping ensure that tomorrow is shaped by capable hands, generous hearts, and minds eager to serve.

In the end, perhaps that is the greatest legacy any of us can leave—not simply what we accomplished ourselves, but the lives we encouraged, the dreams we helped take flight, and the better world we made possible because we chose to believe in those who will follow us.

Dear friends,

As you go through this month, take a moment to consider whose life you are helping shape. The greatest legacies are often found not in what we achieve for ourselves, but in the hope, encouragement, and opportunities we create for others. Perhaps the question worth pondering is not, "What will I leave behind?" but, "Whose future will be brighter because I was here?"

Wishing you a month filled with purpose, kindness, and hope....

Warmly, *Carolyn*

SAVORING SUMMER'S FINAL STRETCH

Faith, Family, and the Feast of the Assumption

Reverend Monsignor Peter M. Polando, D. Min., J.C.L., National Chaplain

My dear Sisters and Brothers,

Happy midst of summer, 2026! Many of us have a liking to one of the four seasons during the calendar year. Mine is now, going slowly downhill! However, I am very blest because of living in this part of the country where I experience all of the four seasons, usually in their time lines. I relish the remaining days of this season with pleasure, relaxation, and spiritual energy. Just this very morning, I took a ride throughout Mill Creek Park, here in Youngstown, Ohio, which is one of the bigger urban parks in the United States. I had the roof and door windows opened; the speed limit was not more than twenty-five miles per hour; and, I drove around the three large lakes, two of which I used to skate upon in the winter (it took at least ten to twelve days with a temperature below ten degrees to make the lakes safe)! When I was at that age, I was in the Boy Scouts and we used to hike in the park since there were miles upon miles of paths around the each of the lakes – Newport, Cohasset, and Glacier. There is a par three golf course along with a playground and a hill for good sled riding on the Glacier side and an eighteen holes golf course on the Newport side. The residents of the area and I are truly blessed for this natural site!



In the middle of the month we celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a holy day of obligation. However, the Solemnity falls on a Saturday and may not be a day of obligation as set by your bishop/conference of your local bishops. In *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 966, we read: “Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians: In giving birth you kept your virginity; in your Dormition (*falling asleep*) you did leave the world, O Mother of God, but were joined to the source of Life. You conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death.”

I remember as a child, high schooler, and collegian, the last week in August was very special with my Dad, Mom, brother, and me. It was *v-a-c-a-t-i-o-n* time, Tuesday through Labor Day! We packed a picnic lunch and drove to Niagara Falls, Ontario, where my maternal Baba’s youngest sister and her husband lived. They were in their early seventies. Both of them had immigrated from what is now the Republic of Slovakia (eastern, north of Kosice). Actually, all four of my grandparents were from that neck of the woods! My *stetka* (aunt) and *svako* (uncle) were very “Slovak”! They got up every morning to participate in Mass at 7:30 AM; came home for breakfast – fresh bread from the nearby bakery with *stetka*’s homemade jams, Eight O’Clock Coffee, and a shot of brandy. Then it was time to work in the garden, work on the car, do things that they were unable to do; have lunch; Dad, Mom, and my brother would go to some place that we had not been to in the Niagara area; come home and have homemade dinner; I would walk to the Falls every day after breakfast or before supper. Then on Sunday, we would drive to the Slovak Jesuit House in Galt, Ontario for the *odpust* (day of retreat). Ninety-percent plus spoke in Slovak but I still loved the day for prayer, Mass, devotions, Slovak food, and *slivovice*!

August is one of my favorite months – past and present!

Message from our Chief Executive Officer **MICHAEL J. AGAN**



Special Convention 2026: Building a Stronger Board and a Stronger FCSLA



Later this year, FCSLA will conduct a Special Convention by mail to consider two important proposals that will help strengthen our organization and position us for continued success in the years ahead.

As a member-owned fraternal benefit society, FCSLA is governed by bylaws and a board elected by our membership (delegates). Major changes affecting the organization require the approval of our delegates. This special convention provides an opportunity to make two important improvements designed to enhance leadership continuity and strengthen financial oversight.

Proposal 1: Staggered Terms for Board Members

The first proposal would establish staggered Board terms beginning with elections held at the 2027 Quadrennial Convention. After a transitional phase in the 2027 Convention, we would move to board elections every two years. These would occur at the Quadrennial Convention and a Special Convention by mail in between quadrennial conventions. Five board

members would be elected to serve a four-year term at each convention.

This approach offers several advantages:

- Reflects a good governance practice widely used by successful organizations.
- Preserves institutional knowledge and experience on the Board.
- Provides greater continuity in governance and long-term strategic planning.
- Reduces the risk of significant leadership turnover occurring at one time.

Staggered terms help ensure that experienced directors remain available to mentor newly elected Board members and maintain focus on long-term objectives while still preserving the democratic process through regular elections.

Proposal 2: Updated Qualifications for the National Treasurer (Chief Financial Officer)

The second proposal would update the qualifications required for the position of National Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

The current qualifications are too narrow and limiting. There are CFOs for major life insurance companies that we could not hire based on our narrow qualifications. The financial and regulatory environment facing insurance companies and fraternal benefit societies has become increasingly complex and today's CFOs often have more diverse financial backgrounds.

The proposed qualification changes are intended to:

- Expand the pool of potential candidates.
- Allow for more flexibility to hire highly qualified candidates with more diverse backgrounds.



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- Ensure future CFOs possess the education, experience, and professional expertise necessary for the role.
- Align FCSLA with modern insurance industry expectations and best practices.

These enhancements are designed to ensure that we can hire the best talent and cultural fit available.

Both proposals are focused on one goal: strengthening the future of FCSLA. Together, these changes will help FCSLA continue fulfilling its mission. We encourage you to review the convention materials when distributed and support these important initiatives.

Thank you for your continued commitment to FCSLA and to the fraternal values that have guided our Association for generations.

Michael J. Agan

Michael J. Agan
CEO



2026 Debutante Ball

Attention all FCSLA members, former Polish Union and former Polish Women's Alliance members, the 2026 Debutante Ball date is set! Please join us on Saturday, November 7th, 5:30pm at the Best Western Genetti Hotel in Wilkes Barre, PA. The night promises to be a wonderful affair celebrating our youth, highlighting our 2026 Marion Vrabel Scholarship winner, dining and dancing the night away. We would love to see you there! All are welcome!!

The 2026 Debutante Ball Applications are out and available! All girls 15-19 years old are welcome to be a part of this once in a lifetime opportunity. Please reach out to this year's chair, Emily Stefanac, for any questions or further information at eastefanac@gmail.com or 570-466-7789.



W137 Annual Family Bike Ride

On Saturday, June 20th, FCSLA Life W137 held its annual family bike ride. Everyone met at Hoover Park, Cedar Rapids and rode the bike trail to Ely and back. Afterward, all enjoyed hotdogs, brats, chips, cookies and drinks. Next event: Sunday, 9/13 - Adult beer tasting at Clock House Brewery, 2 - 4pm.



Group photo of W137 riders and non-riders.



Sue McCarthy and Kennedy P enjoy the hotdogs.

AUGUST
is
Founder's Month



Anna Hurban

In Honor of the nine courageous and progressive Slovak immigrant women who founded First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association in 1892, any FCSLA Life agent or recommender* who sells at least three (3) of our whole life insurance products during the month of August will receive \$100 and special Founder's Month recognition, presented by CEO Michael Agan. The application needs to be dated during the month of August 2026 and cannot be a replacement.



*Recommenders, including limited license recommenders, must abide by state licensure laws including limits on total sales.

78th Annual Czech Days

This year marked the 78th Annual Czech Days in Tabor, SD and 155 years of Tabor, SD - 1872 to 2027. Tabor is also home to FCSLA Life Branch W093 and National Auditor Dennis Povondra and his family. The branch float pictured below was awarded first place in the Adult Organization Division. The two words Czech Days are synonymous with fun, music entertainment, dancing, and traditional Czech foods. The celebration has kept alive the heritage of the early founders of the little South Dakota community who came to Tabor from Czechoslovakia as early as 1869. What started out to be a small community celebration has grown into an attraction that draws literally thousands of people each year. The little town of 400 people and the surrounding rural community has attracted as many as 10,000 people to Czech Days, its ethnic celebration. This year, Mike Agan, CEO; Kim Graham, COO and Katherine Bowes, Director of Fraternal, Marketing and Communications attended the event.



PLEASE NOTE

FCSLA Life is a trade name and service mark of First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association of the United States of America. Our association has not changed its legal name which remains First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association of the United States of America.

We have adopted and may use FCSLA Life as a trade name for our organization and as a mark for services that we render.

FCSLA ANNOUNCES 2026 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Congratulations to the recipients of our 2026 scholarship awards! It is always a privilege to announce these honors, and this year is no exception. FCSLA's commitment to financially supporting our young members in their academic pursuits truly exemplifies the spirit of fraternalism—we come together as a community to lift each other up and invest in our future leaders.

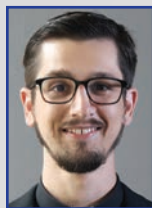
This year's recipients were carefully selected based on their academic standing, dedication to church and community service, involvement in school activities, and the thoughtfulness of their essays. We are proud of each recipient's achievements, and grateful to every applicant for their hard work and dedication.

Wishing our award winners and all those who participated in the program a successful and fulfilling future.

– Paula Dalpiaz, Insurance Manager

SEMINARIAN - DIACONATE - RELIGIOUS AWARD

\$1,750 Each



Evan M. Sekerak
Branch S141
Bowling Green, OH
Mount St. Mary's
Seminary & School
of Theology



Ryan D. Lammers
Branch W093
Hartington, NE
Northeast Community
College



Isabel A. Cava
Branch S225
Fort Wayne, IN
Kansas City University



Coy J. Melchior
Branch W121
Dickinson, ND
Bismarck State College



Lauren E. Deprofio
Branch S030
Mineral Ridge, OH
Northeast Ohio
Medical University

Jonathan R. Pytlik
Branch W016
Brainard, NE
Central Community College



Bianca L. Dubovec
Branch S524
Liberty Township, OH
Xavier University

VOCATIONAL - TECHNICAL TRADE AWARDS

\$1,250 Each



Ryder R. Brabec
Branch W013
Malmo, NE
Northeast Nebraska
Comm College



Ayden Marcus Wilson
Branch U392
Little Meadows, PA
Pennsylvania College
of Technology



Nicholas B. Gaydos
Branch S044
Irwin, PA
Lake Erie College of
Osteopathic Medicine



Joshua D. Hejlik
Branch W051
Britt, IA
Des Moines Area
Community College



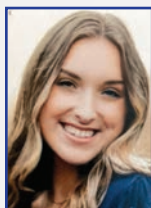
Geraldine E. Berkemeier
Branch S456
Jackson, MI
University of Michigan
School of Dentistry



Morgan A. Gjerde-Bogle
Branch W051
Fort Leonard Wood, MO
Des Moines University



Regina M. Jordan
Branch W191
Lincoln, NE
Southeast Community
College



Ava Marie Butcher
Branch U320
Pittston, PA
King's College

Alexandra A. Glova
Branch S522
Broadview Heights, OH
University of Pittsburgh

COLLEGE GRADUATE AWARDS

\$1,750 Each

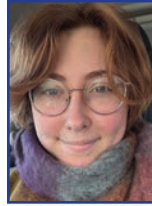


Dominic B. Gearhart
Branch S182
Carlisle, PA
Penn State University-
Dickinson Law

FCSLA ANNOUNCES 2026 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



Peyton M. Hart
Branch S376
Pewaukee, WI
University of
Wisconsin-Madison



Lindsey M. Prochaska
Branch W013
Linwood, NE
Kansas State University



Lauren Elizabeth Dilollo
Branch S615
Easton, PA
Catholic University
of America



Makayla P. Henry
Branch S287
New Lenox, IL
Lewis University



Jorden G. Rieke
Branch S519
North Olmsted, OH
Case Western Reserve
University

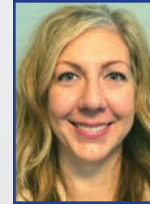


Sophia J. Dvorak
Branch W008
Dodge, NE
University of Nebraska-
Kearney



Marissa E. Jason
Branch S172
Wilkes Barre, PA
Penn State University-
Dickinson Law

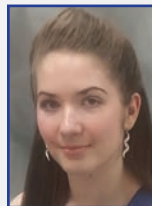
COLLEGE SENIOR AWARDS \$1,250 Each



Samantha C. Hayek
Branch S001
Eastlake, OH
Ursuline College



Evan J. Jurcenko
Branch S046
Chicago, IL
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign



Tamara Patricia Bajek
Branch S287
Naperville, IL
Illinois State University



Christopher W.
Maciejczyk
Branch Z326
Wilkes Barre, PA
King's College



Madeleine Kemmick
Branch S319
Mount Joy, PA
Slippery Rock University

Jacob Behrend
Branch Z087
Columbus, OH
Ohio State University



Matthew J. Maciejczyk
Branch Z326
Wilkes Barre, PA
King's College



Francis L. Locascio
Branch S485
Chicago, IL
University of Illinois
Chicago



Elizabeth P. Blastick
Branch S081
San Angelo, TX
University of North Texas

COLLEGE JUNIOR AWARDS \$1,250 Each



Madison Rose Notarianni
Branch U400
Vienna, VA
Sidney Kimmel Medical
College



Chloe Boyd
Branch Z451
Austin, TX
Texas State University

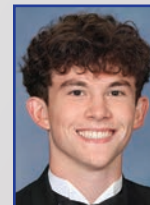
Emily H. Burke
Branch S081
Porter, IN
Purdue University Northwest



Julia M. Podgorni
Branch S421
Chicago, IL
University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign



Grace Marie Coleman
Branch S081
Virginia Beach, VA
Auburn University



Koby Stephen Cerra
Branch U400
Jacksonville, FL
Florida State University

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Emma Dale
Branch SZJH
Hudsonville, MI
Aquinas College



Cassandra Ann Demichael
Branch S141
Seville, OH
Ohio State University



Jillian A. Fedor
Branch S525
Aurora, OH
Kent State University

Addison Marie Gillen
Branch S287
Oak Lawn, IL
Moraine Valley Community College

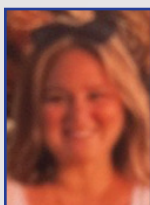


Anne K. McBroom
Branch W001
New Prague, MN
University of South Dakota

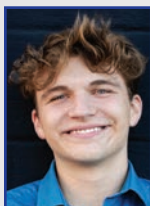


Cassandra R. Muffler
Branch S023
Oconomowoc, WI
Waukesha County Technical College

Kaden M. Pinnt
Branch W080
Norfolk, NE
Wayne State College



Kaiya M. Reisinger
Branch S072
Kingston, PA
Susquehanna University



Davis Allen Robe
Branch W137
Cedar Rapids, IA
Drake University

COLLEGE SOPHOMORE AWARDS

\$1,250 Each



Ali Mae Butcher
Branch U320
Pittston, PA
King's College



James Thomas Fornadel
Branch S010
Solon, OH
Ohio State University

Luke Houchins
Branch Z469
Goochland, VA
Roanoke College

Hailey Catherine Kutcka
Branch S452
Highland, IN
Indiana University-Bloomington



Gwen Noel Labert
Branch S055
Broadlands, VA
West Virginia University

Matthew B. Pulinski
Branch S638
Blasdell, NY
University of Mississippi

Bethany A. Rupprecht
Branch W080
Clarkson, NE
Northeast Community College



Stanley Michael Sims
Branch S172
Luzerne, PA
Lackawanna College



Devon M. Stamback
Branch S635
Augusta, KS
Cornell University

Josephine M. Tworek
Branch W018
Papillion, NE
University of Kansas



Sydney G. Vlock
Branch Z409
Omaha, NE
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

COLLEGE FRESHMAN AWARDS

\$1,250 Each



Austin A. Abbate
Branch S334
Saline, MI
University of Michigan School of Kinesiology



Calvin E. Aukamp
Branch S053
Middletown, IL
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



Maria R. Bak
Branch S114
Amherst, OH
Franciscan University



Lincoln Samuel Boldizar
Branch S001
Loveland, OH
Siena University

FCSLA ANNOUNCES 2026 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



Cooper J. Bowen
Branch S221
Louisville, KY
Spalding University



Riley W. Colvin
Branch W130
Tiffin, IA
University of Wisconsin-
Platteville



William D. Howk
Branch S410
Reading, PA
Kutztown University



Kassie L. Brabec
Branch W013
Fremont, NE
Midland University



Corinne J. Crosland
Branch W187
Bennington, NE
University of Nebraska-
Lincoln



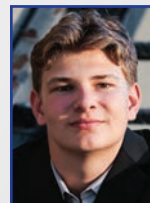
Marjorie A. Hricovec
Branch S524
Avon, OH
Bowling Green State
University



Mackenzie G. Bucl
Branch W018
McKinney, TX
Wichita State University



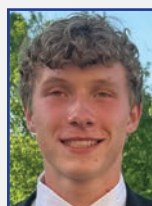
Addison A. Daiute
Branch S108
Olyphant, PA
Pennsylvania State
University



Luke I. Jannusch
Branch W051
Hudson, WI
University of Wisconsin-
Madison



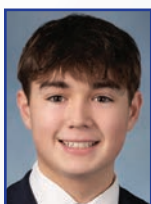
Abigail J. Buksa
Branch S620
Munster, IN
Franciscan University



Joshua C. Dozier
Branch S322
Doylestown, PA
Dickinson College



Ian Jones
Branch S149
Ottawa Hill, OH
University of Cincinnati



Kevin M. Bulic
Branch S481
Rocky River, OH
The Ohio State University



Ethan J. Goldsworthy
Branch S013
Harrison City, PA
University of Pittsburgh

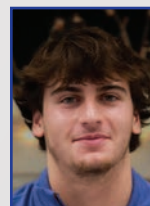
Bethany Therese Jost
Branch S066
Wheaton, IL
Thomas Aquinas College



Colton N. Campbell
Branch W055
Omaha, NE
University of Nebraska-
Omaha



Robert G. Gregor
Branch S172
Dallas, PA
Hamilton College



Peter John Jurcenko
Branch S287
Orland Park, IL
Case Western Reserve
University



Aidan Joseph Carone
Branch S172
Norfolk, MA
University of
Massachusetts-Amherst



Elise C. Heinle
Branch S010
Troy, IL
University of Missouri



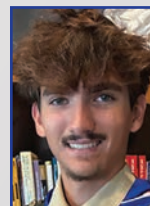
Joshua D. Kacenjar
Branch S114
Avon Lake, OH
University of Akron



Jake Joseph Ceklosky
Branch S172
Canonsburg, PA
Pennsylvania State
University



Elizabeth V. Hornicak
Branch S053
Naperville, IL
Sam Houston State
University



Henry F. Karduck
Branch Z480
Champaign, IL
St. Mary's University of
Minnesota

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FCSLA ANNOUNCES 2026 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



Wilhelm O. Karduck
Branch Z480
Champaign, IL
University of Saint Francis



Jennifer Elizabeth Pelic
Branch S161
Mount Pleasant, SC
University of Notre Dame



Anne J. Sejba
Branch S475
Fairlawn, OH
University of Dayton



Elliot C. Karr
Branch Z277
Grosse Pointe Park, MI
Swarthmore College



Jessica E. Phelps
Branch S334
Saline, MI
Oakland University



Andrew M. Shebak
Branch S423
North Ridgeville, OH
John Carroll University



Marissa Eileen Lilly
Branch S140
Lehigh, PA
Thomas Jefferson
University



Mary Catherine Pierce
Branch S615
Easton, PA
Penn State University
Park



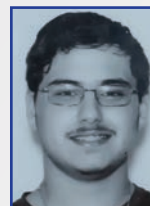
Leah M. Shutic
Branch S114
Painesville, OH
Embry-Riddle
Aeronautical University



Andrew Mancini
Branch S435
Endicott, NY
University at Buffalo



Nicholas E. Pisula
Branch S044
Stahlstown, PA
Seton Hill University



Elijah Aidan Smith
Branch S156
Eastlake, OH
Lakeland Community
College



Tara T. Marchand
Branch W051
Britt, IA
Iowa State University

Cameron I. Pittner
Branch S475
Cedar Point, NC
Virginia Tech



Anthony V. Startare Jr.
Branch S088
Brownsville, PA
Washington & Jefferson
College

Martin A. McBroom
Branch W001
New Prague, MN
University of South Dakota



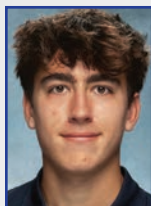
Emersyn L. Prososki
Branch S623
Osceola, NE
Southeast Community
College



Nicholas J. Swiecicki
Branch S627
Bellevue, NE
University of Nebraska-
Lincoln



Christian S. McNeill
Branch S230
McLean, VA
Virginia Tech



Rocco P. Quilici
Branch Z677
Verona, NJ
University of Oklahoma



Matthew R. Thulin
Branch W013
Weston, NE
Northwest Missouri State
University



Mary Giovanna Melone
Branch S156
Youngstown, OH
Youngstown State
University



Natalie S. Sawicki
Branch S030
Youngstown, OH
Ohio State University



Jack S. Vanslyke
Branch W013
Wahoo, NE
University of Nebraska-
Lincoln



Samuel O. Miklovic
Branch S101
Saint Louis, MO
St. Louis University



Kaitlyn Schneider
Branch S621
David City, NE
University of Nebraska-
Lincoln



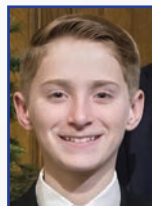
Colin P. Waninger
Branch Z434
Quakertown, PA
University of Connecticut

FLORENCE HOVANEC MEMORIAL AWARDS

\$1,250 Each



Kaitlyn F. Wesely
Branch W032
Lincoln, NE
University of Nebraska-
Omaha



Ciaran C. Fitzpatrick
Branch W055
Lincoln, NE
Pius X High School

HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR AWARDS

\$1,000 Each



Amelia R. Degler
Branch J318
Coaldale, PA
Marian Catholic
High School

Cassandra R. Wiece
Branch S176
Sagamore Hills, OH
University of Cincinnati



Noah Schneider
Branch J540
David City, NE
Aquinas Catholic School



Robert J. Hladik III
Branch W018
Sedalia, MO
Sacred Heart School



Brayden R. Willard
Branch S484
Coplay, PA
West Chester University

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR AWARDS

\$1,000 Each

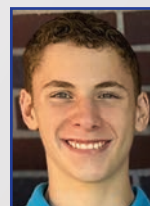
Dylan Houchins
Branch Z469
Goochland, VA
St. Christopher School



Grace Olivia Zolna
Branch S421
Oak Lawn, IL
Marquette University



David R. Norton
Branch S553
Parma, OH
Padua Franciscan High
School



Joshua J. Jordan
Branch W191
Lincoln, NE
Pius X High School

JOHN & GERALDINE GAYDOS AWARDS

\$1,250 Each



Alaina C. Jost
Branch S066
Wheaton, IL
St. Francis High School

Braden M. Quinlan
Branch S070
Broadlands, VA
Kolbe Academy



Klara Humenikova
Branch S081
Whiting, IN
Bishop Noll Institute



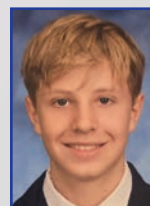
Sawyer S. M. Vlock
Branch Z409
Omaha, NE
Skutt Catholic High
School

HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE AWARDS

\$1,000 Each



Gabriella M. Pavek
Branch W056
Lonsdale, MN
Bethlehem Academy



Justin Michael English
Branch U240
Wyoming, PA
Holy Redeemer High
School

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Cooper T. Hladik
Branch W018
Sedalia, MO
Sacred Heart School

Evangeline G. Scott
Branch J184
Westfield, IN
St. Theodore Guerin Catholic High School

HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN AWARDS

\$1,000 Each



Annaleigh E. Coyle
Branch J013
Scranton, PA
Holy Cross High School



Louise M. Galati
Branch Z078
Oconomowoc, WI
Catholic Memorial High School



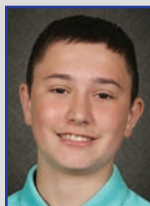
Noah J. Henderson
Branch J380
Twinsburg, OH
Walsh Jesuit High School



Caitlin G. Kaiser
Branch J322
Westmont, IL
Nazareth Academy



Emma J. Kavan
Branch W013
Wahoo, NE
Bishop Neumann High School



Nolan C. Kocol
Branch Z409
La Vista, NE
Gross Catholic High School



Morgan J. Kolano
Branch Z221
Gibsonia, PA
Central Catholic High School



Kenzie T. Korchnak
Branch J364
West Lafayette, IN
Lafayette Central Catholic Jr./Sr. High School



Cason P. Pelan
Branch J532
Columbus, NE
Scotus Central High School



Emma M. Pierce
Branch J526
Easton, PA
Notre Dame High School

Danika M. Robe
Branch W137
Cedar Rapids, IA
Xavier High School



Paul J. Senglaub
Branch J334
Slinger, WI
Chesterton Academy



Ryan R. Stava
Branch W013
Wahoo, NE
Bishop Neumann Catholic Jr. Sr. High School



George H. Weber Jr.
Branch J184
Crown Point, IN
Andean High School

8TH GRADE AWARDS

\$750 Each



Gabriel M. Degler
Branch J318
Coaldale, PA
St. Jerome Regional School



Paxton P. Feilmeier
Branch W014
Norfolk, NE
Norfolk Catholic School



Adam J. Jonczak
Branch J138
Sarver, PA
Mother of Divine Grace School

7TH GRADE AWARDS

\$750 Each



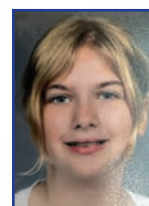
Cambree Andrew
Branch Z356
Nebraska City, NE
Lourdes Central Catholic School



Patrick Beckman
Branch J174
Niles, IL
Northridge Preparatory School



Florence A. Galati
Branch Z126
Oconomowoc, WI
St. Charles School



Danica M. Pecha
Branch W018
Omaha, NE
Christ the King School

6TH GRADE AWARDS

\$750 Each

Elena R. Bishop
Branch J339
Tinley Park, IL
St. Mary's School



Elliot D. Kolano
Branch J003
Gibsonia, PA
St. Kilian Catholic School



Maggie A. Miriovsky
Branch W001
Buffalo, MN
St. Francis Xavier
Catholic School

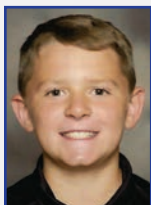
Stella A. Morano
Branch J196
Cedar Grove, WI
Divine Savior Catholic School



Preston R. Paseka
Branch W013
Linwood, NE
Aquinas Catholic
Elementary

5TH GRADE AWARDS

\$750 Each



Wade Andrew
Branch Z356
Nebraska City, NE
Lourdes Central
Catholic School



Andrew J. Esterle
Branch J130
Muskego, WI
Holy Apostles School



Lane C. Jonczak
Branch J138
Sarver, PA
Mother of Divine
Grace School



Caleb J. Juhre
Branch J196
Fredonia, WI
Divine Savior
Catholic School



Eli J. Kavan
Branch W013
Wahoo, NE
St. Wenceslaus School



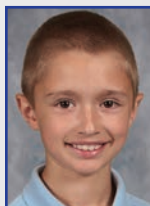
Eloise E. Kavan
Branch W013
York, NE
St. Joseph
Catholic School



Lynkin C. Mastny
Branch W006
Clarkson, NE
Howells Community
Catholic School



Dean C. McCluskey
Branch J192
Silver Lake, OH
Holy Family School



Owen J. Miley
Branch J057
Concord Township, OH
St. Mary School-Chardon



Hunter A. Papousek
Branch W080
Norfolk, NE
Norfolk Catholic
Elementary



Brennen G. Sousek
Branch W013
Prague, NE
St. Wenceslaus School



Jacob C. Stava
Branch W013
Wahoo, NE
St. Wenceslaus School



Jack F. Wetzel
Branch J219
Chalfont, PA
St. Jude School

4TH GRADE AWARDS

\$750 Each

Evelyn J. Henrickson
Branch W018
Omaha, NE
St. Robert Bellarmine School



Liam S. Jansa
Branch W187
Wahoo, NE
St. Wenceslaus School

Eleanor M. Kreuser
Branch W056
Jordan, MN
St. John the Baptist Catholic School



Ashtyn R. Paseka
Branch W013
Linwood, NE
Aquinas Catholic
Elementary

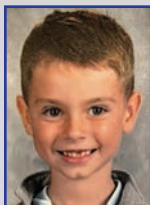


Ezra M. Pecha
Branch W018
Omaha, NE
Christ the King School

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3RD GRADE AWARDS

\$750 Each



Lucas W. Dainton
Branch J184
Lowell, IN
St. Mary Catholic
Community School



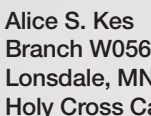
Ava N. Henderson
Branch J146
Twinsburg, OH
St. Barnabas Catholic
School



Luke B. Justak
Branch J058
Valparaiso, IN
St. Paul Catholic School



Andrew J. Kaiser
Branch J322
Westmont, IL
Holy Trinity
Catholic School



Alice S. Kes
Branch W056
Lonsdale, MN
Holy Cross Catholic School



Parker R. Marra
Branch J011
Saint Louis, MO
St. Gabriel the
Archangel School



Sienna A. Romano
Branch J512
Pittsburgh, PA
Christ Divine Teacher
Catholic Academy



Giuliana L. Sammartino
Branch J066
Poland, OH
Holy Family School



Caleesi K. Thompson
Branch J157
Monessen, PA
St. Sebastian Regional
Catholic School



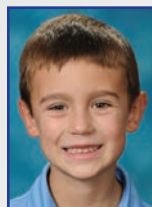
Brecken T. Jansa
Branch W187
Wahoo, NE
St. Wenceslaus School

1ST GRADE AWARDS

\$750 Each



Lydia Beeck
Branch W014
Sioux Falls, SD
St. Michael's School



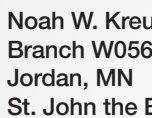
Cainan J. Brichacek
Branch J540
Schuyler, NE
Aquinas Catholic
Elementary



Elizabeth V. Esterle
Branch J130
Muskego, WI
Holy Apostles School



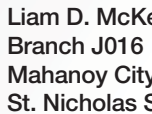
Edward M. Klatka
Branch J016
Strongsville, OH
Sts Joseph & John
Elementary School



Noah W. Kreuser
Branch W056
Jordan, MN
St. John the Baptist Catholic School



Rori L. Maruska
Branch W001
New Prague, MN
St. Wenceslaus
Catholic School



Liam D. McKerns
Branch J016
Mahanoy City, PA
St. Nicholas School



Lawson T. Papousek
Branch W080
Norfolk, NE
Norfolk Catholic
Elementary

FCSLA ANNOUNCES 2026 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS



Miles G. Sabata
Branch W040
David City, NE
Aquinas Catholic
Elementary School



Janet R. Schultes
Branch W187
Valparaiso, NE
St. John Nepomucene
School

Elizabeth A. Vo
Branch W191
Lincoln, NE
St. Patrick Catholic School



Zachary R. Wenzel Dietz
Branch J334
Menomonee Falls, WI
St. Mary's Parish School



Adalynn T. Yanicko
Branch J512
Cheswick, PA
Holy Sepulcher Catholic
School

GRANT LARRONDE AWARD

\$1,500 Each



Koby Stephen Cerra
Branch U400
Jacksonville, FL
Florida State University

First Communion

Annabelle Maddock, Junior Branch 029, of Westerville OH received her First Communion at St. Paul the Apostle Church where she is a student in the parish school. Celebrating with Annabelle at Mass on May 9 were her Great Uncle, Monsignor Kenneth E. Miller Diocese of Youngstown, Annabelle's sister Rosalyn (front left), and her cousins Luke Miller (front 2nd from left), and Ivy Miller (back row), all members of Junior Branch 029. Annabelle is a daughter of Paul and Stephanie Miller Maddock and granddaughter of Dr. Linda Lucarell Miller, Branch 30 Youngstown.



98th Birthday

Eleanor (Madansky) Volpone was born April 29, 1928, in Pierpont, Ohio. She moved to Geneva, Ohio, where she met and married her husband, Tom Volpone. They were married 63 years before his passing in 2022. She is the mother of 2 sons and 2 daughters; 5 grandchildren and one great-grandson. She currently lives in Bethel Park, PA, with her daughter and son-in-law. She enjoys playing Scrabble and Yahtzee and birdwatching and is a loyal Cleveland Guardians fan. She attributes her long life to watching what she eats and exercising and praying. Eleanor is a member of FCSLA Life Branch S10. Her daughter-in-law, Diana, and grandson, Samuel, are also members of Branch S10. A family birthday party was held in Bethel Park. We wish her continued blessings!





Anna Hurban Chicago District Celebrates Scholars at Annual Luncheon



Continuing a proud and long-standing fraternal tradition, the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association (FCSLA) Anna Hurban Chicago District gathered on Saturday, June 20, to honor its local scholarship recipients and celebrate their academic achievements.

The annual Scholarship Awards Luncheon brought together student winners, their families, and district branch officers for an afternoon of recognition, Slavic heritage, and community fellowship.

The luncheon serves as the district's premier event to recognize the hard work and scholastic excellence of its young members. Thanks to the national scholarship

program, generous awards are made annually to eligible members ranging from elementary and high school students to those pursuing college and graduate degrees.

The Chicago District pride was on full display as the class of scholars was called to the podium. Each attending student was presented with an official certificate, a traditional rose, and an FCSLA keepsake notebook to commemorate their achievement. In keeping with district custom, the scholars were also invited to sign the **FCSLA Chicago District Scholarship Book**, adding their names to a legacy of academic excellence.

Beyond the formal award presentations, the event highlighted the strong community bonds in the Chicago District. Attendees enjoyed a warm, family-style lunch featuring traditional Slavic dishes and spent time catching up across generations of fraternal families.

Following the presentation of the awards, National Sales Manager, Paul Smithers, addressed the group and focused on financial literacy and youth engagement. The district transitioned into its regular business meeting following lunch to chart out future community events, charitable initiatives, and branch gatherings for the coming year.

"The Chicago District is incredibly proud of all our scholarship winners," noted district leadership during the closing remarks. "We wish them continued success in their studies and look forward to seeing them lead our fraternal family into the future."



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www.fcsla.com



Eric Macek, S319 The American, The Voice contestant who grew up speaking Slovak at home

The Slovak language was part of everyday life in Erick Macek's (S319, Allentown, PA) childhood, even though he grew up thousands of kilometers from the country. It was spoken around the family table in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where his parents settled after leaving the village of Zbyňov near Žilina in 1971. They had emigrated from communist Czechoslovakia in search of new opportunities, first arriving in New York before building a new life in Pennsylvania. Their son would eventually become a musician, songwriter and creative director, appearing on NBC's The Voice, but the family never let go of the traditions they brought with them. He speaks Slovak fluently and his family jokes that he sounds like someone from a Slovak village in the 1960s. The language survived because it was used every day. The family attended a Slovak church, took part in community events and remained involved with the Tatra Slovak Folk Group, where music and folklore helped preserve a connection to the old country.

Slovakia was also a real place rather than an inherited memory. Macek visited several times while growing up and still has relatives in Zbyňov and around Žilina. His father now lives in the city. His connection with Slovakia



Zbyňov, Slovakia – The village near Žilina where both of Eric's parents were born and where generations of the Macek family have lived.



Three Generations in Zbyňov – His grandparents, Anna and Ondrej Macek, in Zbyňov, Slovakia.



His grandmother, Jozefa Maceková – Preparing traditional homemade cheese ("hruška"), one of the many Slovak traditions that has been passed down through our family.



His Parents – Shortly after beginning their new life in America following their emigration from communist Czechoslovakia in 1971.

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S484 Scholarship Winner

FCSLA Life Sr Branch 484 (Egypt, PA) President, Anne Marie Bachman and Recording Secretary, Delores Krempasky, Congratulate their College Freshman Scholarship winner, Brayden Willard, with a branch gift. Brayden will attend West Chester University in the fall to study Biology. Best wishes Brayden for all your future endeavors.



has never disappeared. Much of that connection came from stories his parents passed down. They spoke about faith, work, family life, and neighbors who looked after one another.

“My parents were always proud of where they came from,” Macek said. “They taught me hard work, humility, gratitude and helping other people.” They also shared the less romantic side of village life. “They would laugh that everyone knows everyone and that the whole village can know your business before you do.”

Music entered his life almost as early as language. He started playing the accordion at three, later picked up the guitar, and began writing his own songs. What began at home eventually became a career in Los Angeles, where he collaborated with other artists and had his music featured in American television projects. His work has also brought him back to Slovakia. In 2009 and 2010, he performed in Jaslovské Bohunice alongside musicians including František Nedvěd and Peter Lipa.

His latest song, *I'm Here*, was written while supporting people close to him who were dealing with mental health challenges. “Its message is simple,” Macek said. “To be there for people when they need you most.”

Today, alongside his music career, Macek is raising twins of his own. He says he wants them to grow up knowing the stories and traditions that have connected his family to a small village near Žilina for generations.



The Macek Family Today – Eric, with his wife Laura and their twins Jakob and Teresa, continuing to celebrate and pass on their Slovak heritage.



The Next Generation – Jakob and Teresa wearing traditional Slovak kroje as their parents begin introducing them to the language, culture, music, and traditions of their Slovak roots.



Tatra Slovak Folk Group, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania – A gathering of the Tatra Slovak Folk Group, where many members of our extended family helped preserve and celebrate Slovak music, dance, and traditions for future generations.

Thank You for Supporting Our Wounded Warrior Project Fundraiser

Senior Branch 11 sincerely thanks everyone who contributed to our “From Independence to Today – We Stand with Our Veterans” fundraising drive benefiting the Wounded Warrior Project.

Your generosity and support will help provide important programs and services to wounded veterans and their families. Every donation made a difference and demonstrated our shared commitment to honoring those who have sacrificed for our nation.

As we celebrate America’s 250th anniversary, we are grateful to everyone who helped make this fundraiser a success. Together, we have shown our appreciation for our veterans and supported a worthy cause.

Thank you for helping Senior Branch 11 make a positive impact in the lives of our wounded warriors.

Kindly, The Officers of Senior Branch 11



FCSLA Celebrates Independence Day and America's 250th Anniversary

On July 2nd, 2026, the FCSLA Life family gathered for an afternoon of community as they celebrated Independence Day and honored America's 250th anniversary. Although the summer heat was in full force, it didn't stop members, leaders, and friends from coming together to mark this historic milestone with festive food, ice cream, music, and fellowship.

The celebration provided a wonderful opportunity to reconnect, enjoy each other's company, and reflect on the values of freedom, unity, and service that have shaped our nation for the past 250 years. The event also gave members the opportunity to spend time with FCSLA Life CEO Mike Agan, who visited with attendees throughout the event. One photo captures Mike with the Beachwood Mayor, Justin Berns, highlighting the strong community partnerships that support FCSLA's mission; another special photo features Mike alongside past FCSLA Presidents Mary Ann Johaneck and Cynthia Maleski, and past National Secretary Irene Drotleff, recognizing the association's dedicated leadership.

The celebration served as a reminder of the enduring values of patriotism, fellowship, and service that unite both our nation and the FCSLA family. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make this special celebration a success.





Grandma's Recipe Collection

MABEL'S BARS

1 cup butter, softened, divided
5 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1/4 cup white sugar
1 large egg, beaten
1-3/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
1 cup flaked coconut
1/2 cup finely chopped almonds (optional)
3 tablespoons heavy cream
2 tablespoons custard powder
2 cups confectioners' sugar
4 (1 ounce) squares semisweet baking chocolate
2 teaspoons butter

In the top of a double boiler, combine 1/2 cup softened butter, cocoa powder, and sugar. Stir occasionally until melted and smooth. Beat in egg and stir until thick, 2 to 3 minutes.

Remove from the heat and mix in graham cracker crumbs, coconut, and almonds. Press into the bottom of an ungreased 8x8-inch pan.

For the middle layer, beat remaining 1/2 cup softened butter, heavy cream, and custard powder until light and fluffy. Mix in confectioners' sugar until smooth. Spread over the bottom layer in the pan. Chill to set.

While the second layer is chilling, melt semisweet chocolate and 2 teaspoons butter together in the microwave or over low heat.

Spread melted chocolate mixture over chilled bars. Let the chocolate set before cutting into squares.

Cutting Tip: To prevent the top chocolate layer from cracking when you slice them, let the bars sit at room temperature for about 10–15 minutes before cutting, or use a knife dipped in hot water.

Note: You can use instant vanilla pudding powder instead of custard powder.

BUCKEYE GRAHAM CRACKERS

12 graham crackers broken in half
3/4 cups creamy peanut butter like Skippy
4 tablespoons unsalted butter softened
1-1/4 cups powdered sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-3/4 cups chocolate chips semi-sweet,

milk, or dark (*The better the quality of the chocolate chips, the better this treat will taste.*)

2 tablespoons coconut oil divided
1 cup peanut butter chips optional

Carefully break each graham cracker sheet in half so you have squares. Place them on a lined baking sheet and set aside.

In a large bowl, using electric hand mixers, mix peanut butter, softened butter, powdered sugar, salt, and vanilla until smooth.

Roll the mixture into 12 equal sized balls. Place one ball on each graham cracker square, then top with another cracker. Gently press to flatten the filling edge to edge. Smooth the sides with your finger so nothing spills out.

In a microwave safe bowl, add the chocolate chips and 1-1/2 tablespoons coconut oil. Microwave in 30 second bursts, stirring between each, until melted and smooth.

Dip each graham cracker sandwich into the melted chocolate. Use a fork to lift it out and let the extra chocolate drip off, tapping the edge of the bowl to help. Slide the sandwich off the fork with a butter knife and place it back on the lined sheet pan.

In another microwave safe bowl, combine the peanut butter chips and the remaining 1/2 tablespoon coconut oil. Microwave in 30 second bursts, stirring between each, until smooth. Transfer to a piping bottle or a zip top bag with the corner snipped.

Drizzle the melted peanut butter mixture over the chocolate coated crackers. Place the tray in the fridge until the chocolate is fully set.

Storage: Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 3 to 4 days. Keep them chilled so the chocolate stays firm. Best enjoyed the same day since the graham crackers continue to soften.

SALTED NUT ROLL BARS

2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
2 cups butterscotch chips
2 1/2 cups creamy peanut butter
3/4 cup milk

1 cup butter
1 (3.5 ounce) package instant vanilla pudding mix
2 pounds confectioners' sugar
3 cups salted peanuts

Melt butterscotch and chocolate chips and peanut butter until smooth on low to medium heat. Spread half of mixture into the bottom of 9 x 13 inch pan. Chill until hard in freezer.

Melt butter, add instant pudding and milk, boil one minute. Add confectioners' sugar and mix well. It will look funny, but it will mix together.

Put on top of chocolate layer. Chill in the freezer until hard.

Add peanuts to rest of chocolate mixture and spread on top of vanilla layer. Chill in freezer 1 hour until set. Keep in refrigerator until served.

LEMON CREAM CHEESE BARS

2 (8 ounce) packages refrigerated crescent roll dough, divided
2 lemons, zested and juiced, divided
2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup white sugar
2 tablespoons butter, melted
3 tablespoons white sugar

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9x13-inch baking dish with aluminum foil, leaving an overhang; coat with cooking spray.

Unroll 1 crescent roll dough; press into bottom of the prepared baking dish, stretching to edges.

Combine lemon juice and 3/4 lemon zest in a bowl. Beat cream cheese and 1/2 cup sugar into juice-zest mixture with an electric mixer until smooth and creamy; spread over crescent roll dough in the baking dish.

Unroll remaining 1 crescent roll dough; place over cream cheese mixture, stretching to edges. Brush dough with melted butter. Combine 3 tablespoons sugar and remaining 1/4 lemon zest in a small bowl; sprinkle over top.

Bake in the preheated oven until top is golden brown, about 30 minutes. Cool for about 20 minutes.

Lift dessert from baking dish using foil overhang; transfer to a cutting board. Cut into squares, leaving foil in place. Return bars to the baking dish; refrigerate until chilled, at least 1 hour.

Note: You can make this recipe with Splenda and low-fat cream cheese.

The FCSLA Life Mission Statement

We provide financial security to our members while embracing our Catholic values and Slavic traditions.

The FCSLA Life Vision is to:

Be a Premier Fraternal Benefit Society that offers quality financial products and benefits.