

Caritas Society

St. John's College, Annapolis

Caring for Students
and Community

Caritas Society of St. John's College, Inc.

What Caritas Does

Caritas Society of St. John's College, Inc. is a Maryland nonprofit corporation. Caritas was founded in 1969 and operated as an unincorporated nonprofit organization until March 2015, when it was incorporated. Today about two hundred people from St. John's College and the larger Annapolis community belong to the Society. Members enjoy many opportunities to share varied interests, and they network with a wide variety of friends who support St. John's and its unique liberal arts program.

Caritas has two interrelated missions: 1. Through fundraising events and solicitations to provide financial aid to undergraduate students who cannot meet college expenses; 2. Through the camaraderie of membership to develop and encourage lasting relationships benefitting both St. John's College and the community. Under the first mission Caritas awards financial aid grants to students who have exhausted other financial aid possibilities and must have additional support to remain in college. Today Caritas can usually help 10 to 12 students a year.

Caritas's second mission is to foster enduring relationships between St. John's and the Annapolis community. Caritas reaches out and introduces people to St. John's by offering social gatherings, instructive and entertaining programs, and special events. Members encourage people to take advantage of the educational and cultural opportunities available to them at the College through its community programs. The College organizes the programs, because of its commitment to lifelong learning as the inevitable outcome of the kind of education offered to St. John's students. People at all stages of life are invited to learn about St. John's and to take advantage of the many activities available to them. Caritas also brings people to the campus by hosting public events such as book and author programs featuring nationally and internationally known writers, and The Capitol Steps Comedy Troupe, which often brings its widely acclaimed political satire review to the St. John's campus.

Over the years, when feasible, the Caritas Society has supported students at St. John's through donations to various initiatives that help students financially in several ways besides providing grants, including:

- Five book awards each academic year to cover the costs of Program books;
- Several donations to the Greenfield Library each year in memory of deceased members or honoring members for service to Caritas or the community
- A prize at graduation awarded to a graduating senior for outstanding service to the greater Annapolis community
- Two prizes at graduation from the Belknap Fund awarded to students for accomplishments in the field of music: 1) the best musical composition by a graduating senior; 2) the best paper on a musical work by a graduating senior
- A significant contribution to the "Friends Scholarship Fund for Maryland Students in Memory of Jeff Bishop" created in 2007
- An annual scholarship to a deserving student through the St. John's College Endowment Fund
- A contribution to the Christopher Nelson Endowment for Student Scholarships in honor of his 20 years as President of St. John's College in Annapolis (2011) and a second contribution honoring him at the time of his retirement (2017).