Dear Thayer Society Donors,

Thank you for continuing to demonstrate your commitment to St. Mark’s students and faculty. Last year, Thayer Society gifts of $10,000 or more contributed $1,748,052 to the Annual Fund, which represents nearly two-thirds of our total Annual Fund revenue.

The flexibility of your unrestricted gifts helped our School pursue innovative opportunities in academics, faculty development, arts, athletics, student programs, and more. During the past year, your support was even more critical, providing the necessary resources not only to transition to remote learning but also to keep our faculty, staff, and students healthy and safe at the onset of this global pandemic. I am deeply grateful for your commitment to our School, and for your belief in the value and importance of a St. Mark’s education.

Your leadership as a donor is vital during this pivotal time for our School and sets a powerful example of philanthropy for others. I very much appreciate your support and partnership in ensuring that St. Mark’s students, our greatest priority, continue to thrive.

With sincere gratitude,

John C. Warren ’74, Ed.D.
Head of School

THE THAYER SOCIETY FUNDS FOR EXCELLENCE

represent targeted areas of the St. Mark’s educational program that profoundly influence our daily work of preparing students to lead lives of consequence. Gifts from Thayer Society donors have made an important impact on each of the vital areas highlighted in this report.

98 THAYER SOCIETY DONORS CONTRIBUTED $1,748,052 TO THE 2019–2020 ANNUAL FUND

STUDENT OPPORTUNITY AND ENRICHMENT FUND

44 STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS SATURDAY CLASSES

Saturday classes give students meaningful opportunities to engage in community service, and this year their work with Special Olympics earned St. Mark’s National Banner recognition for meeting standards of excellence in the areas of inclusion, advocacy, and respect. Thanks to generous support from Thayer Society members, faculty and students engaged with kids with and without disabilities in a variety of activities, including developmental sports groups for ages 2 to 10 during the fall and winter SM Saturday terms.

Special Olympics shared, “The students, coaches, volunteers, teachers, staff, and administration at St. Mark’s have all played key roles in creating a social climate where everyone feels included and respected for who they are. We are honored to have such a strong and fully inclusive school be recognized for the hard work and determination you have demonstrated to grow your program to the outstanding one it is today.” St. Marks was one of only 15 schools in Massachusetts and 155 nationally to receive this distinctive honor.
Unrestricted contributions to the Head’s Discretionary Fund from Thayer Society members helped a Thieriot Common Room upgrade, an effort spearheaded by faculty residents, the Dean of Students Office, and the business and facilities teams. Final plans included fresh paint, new custom, wood built-in cabinets for an entertainment center, and new sofas and cafe-style seating. A new counter extends along the entire wall facing the parking lot, with outlets below, for plugging in laptops, phones, and other devices, and LED lights above, which not only conserve energy, but also dramatically improve overall aesthetics.

Students regularly use this common room, but it’s also shown to prospective families during admission tours. In addition, the smaller common areas of the north and south floors received custom, wood built-ins. For a finishing touch, wires were hung on the walls to showcase student artwork provided with the help of art teachers Barb Putnam and Aggie Belt.

Resources from Thayer Society donors allowed St. Mark’s faculty to deeply engage in professional training that prepared them to present curriculum either fully remotely or in a hybrid model for 2020–2021. Dr. Colleen Worrell, director of The Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, created and led colleagues through her culturally informed course, “Designing & Building for Student-Centered Hybrid Learning at St. Mark’s,” which takes into account equity and learner variability. Its interactive and social design will cultivate and sustain a vibrant learning community. Dr. Worrell also created a free version of the course, which is available to other educators and institutions, and already has more than 150 educators from 62 different schools/districts enrolled.

Providing more families the opportunity to watch live athletic contests, regardless of where they live, has become a reality thanks to Thayer Society members. The Athletics Department installed a high-tech video camera in the Michel Faculty Athletic Center that not only livestreams games, but also records practices so coaches and athletes can review individual and team performance. The camera was placed above the basketball court and livestreamed 18 boys and girls basketball games last year. “This camera has been an amazing tool for both the student athletes at St Mark’s and the coaching staffs. Everything recorded goes straight to the accounts of each team, so student athletes and coaches can watch and learn from either games or practice,” Stefan Giegucz, St. Mark’s Equipment Manager. In addition, student athletes were able to create their own season highlights to help promote themselves during the college recruitment process. Other technology used last year includes drones that livestreamed the School’s cross-country championships, and livestreaming girls’ and boys’ hockey games with professional play-by-play.