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Housing Matters

# Boylan art show shares message, service of Habitat for Humanity

From Nov. 1 to Nov. 9, a student art exhibition at Boylan Central Catholic High School in Rockford invited viewers to imagine a future of housing for all.

The “Housing Matters” exhibition, supported by a grant from Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity, centered around positive messaging regarding affordable housing. Students in Boylan’s Art 3, Honors Art 4, and AP Drawing classes contributed work to the show.

The artists were given the freedom to use any media to depict any aspect of affordable housing, including its personal, family, cultural, and socioeconomic benefits. That artistic freedom made for a variety of styles and messages — some straightforward and clear, others more subtle.

Holly Ports contributed a house floor plan, while Madison Buelow created a detail-packed, ghostly white scratchboard house. Some students opted to add written messages, like Katrina Douglas’ lino print “Building community together board by board” or Helena Solana’s illustration “Housing gives us roots and wings,” drawn on a banner between two mourning doves.

Written message or not, each piece featured the artist’s message, thanks to a new augmented reality (AR) aspect made possible by Trekk Design. Before the show, each artist had filmed a video in front of a green screen explaining their piece. Viewers could then scan QR codes on the labels and see the student appear and present in front of the piece.

The collaboration, a new opportunity for the school, also gave students a new way to share their research on the impact that affordable housing can have on the greater community and all the people who live in it.

—Information from Anabel Nosek, Boylan Central Catholic High School Marketing Coordinator.



(Photo/Anabel Nosek)  
Two Boylan students use the “Housing Matters” show’s augmented reality feature to watch an artist’s talk.

## Elgin Students Stand Up for Scholarships

SPRINGFIELD—On Oct. 25, supporters of the Invest in Kids Act from Elgin schools — St. Mary School, St. Edward Preparatory Academy and St. Edward Central Catholic High School — traveled to Springfield to make their voices heard. Illinois lawmakers were seeking to sunset the program, which has granted nearly 40,000 scholarships across the state since 2017. Students, school staff and families met with legislators, lobbyists and other supporters throughout the day, including State Senator Donald DeWitte. The senator gave a tour of the Senate floor and explained why he supports the Invest in Kids Act. Here, a group of St. Mary students poses with Brian Iggins, Empower Illinois Regional Representative.



(Photo provided/Carol Norman)



(Photos provided/Jan Olson)  
Religious sisters of the Franciscans of the Eucharist of Chicago, including Rockford native and marathon runner Sister Stephanie Baliga, FSE (far right), led the confirmation retreat.

## Confirmation Retreat Welcomes 200+ Teens, Features Guests from Chicago

ELGIN—Over 200 students from four area parishes gathered Oct. 28 for a confirmation retreat at St. Thomas More Parish, Elgin.

The retreat also welcomed special guests and retreat leaders of the Franciscans of the Eucharist of Chicago, best known for their Mission of Our Lady of the Angels, which supports 3,000 of Chicago’s poorest families per month through afterschool programs, senior programs, community meals and more.

Leaders from the Rockford Diocese also pitched in: Monica Mackie provided the day’s praise and worship music, seminarian Bailey Peterson served as emcee, and Father Robert Blood gave a vocations talk.

All were able to encounter the Lord in Mass, adoration and confession.



Father Robert Blood



Seminarian Bailey Peterson

## Sauk Valley Saint Qualifies for State



(Photo provided/Robbin Clifton)

STERLING—Trevor Simpson, an eighth-grade student at St. Mary School in Sterling and a member of the Sauk Valley Saints co-op cross-country team, qualified for participation in the state cross-country track meet. He is pictured with his coaches, Tara Prophet and Dr. Ed Welty.