

John J. DiIulio Jr., Ph.D.

2010 Gesu Spirit Medal Honoree



A Gesu student presents John DiIulio with student artwork after the 12th Annual Symposium on Transforming Inner-city Education.

The Gesu Spirit Medal

The Gesu Spirit Medal honors individuals who have shown, through their loyal advocacy and actions, extraordinary commitment to Gesu School, and who have made a significant contribution to Gesu School's success as a model inner-city elementary school.

John J. DiIulio, Jr. is the Frederic Fox Leadership Professor at the University of Pennsylvania where he heads the Fox Leadership Program. Before joining Penn, he was a professor and research center director at Princeton University. He holds a doctorate in Political Science from Harvard University and majored in Economics at Penn. He has written over a dozen books including *Godly Republic: A Centrist Blueprint for America's Faith-Based Future* (University of California Press, 2007) and (with James Q. Wilson) *American Government: Institutions and Policies*, 11th edition (Cengage, 2009).

Gesu Trustee Ralph Saul, who also served as a Trustee of the Brookings Institution and knew John as a scholar there, introduced him to Gesu School, which John has since described as a model school and a "model for all sacred places that fill civic purposes." John joined Gesu's Board of Trustees in 1997 and has served the school in that capacity until becoming an Advisory Trustee in 2009. The fulcrum of Gesu's twelve annual Symposia on Inner-City Education, John brought many distinguished individuals to participate including Tim Russert, Paul Begala, Joe Klein, and Juan Williams to name only a few.

In the spring of 1998, John taught American Government to Gesu 8th graders, using a textbook he had co-authored. Shortly afterwards, he told an interviewer: "I used the same textbook I had used at Princeton and Harvard with my Gesu kids. Not everybody got it at the same level, but every kid could read that textbook. That told me something about their literacy, about the strength of the reading program."

One of John's Gesu students, Andrea Carter, now teaches at Gesu. John's integrity ("He came and taught us every week, just as he said he would.") and incredible enthusiasm ("His eyes were always alive.") have informed her life and her teaching style. When Andrea's mother struggled to pay her high school tuition at Hallahan, John and his wife Rosalee stepped forward with an annual grant. "My mother never forgot this generosity," says Andrea, who subsequently graduated from Chestnut Hill College, having received a variety of academic and athletic scholarships and grants.

The first Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, John has founded nationally-recognized programs to reduce youth violence, promote literacy, and mentor the children of prisoners. He has been deeply involved in post-Katrina recovery efforts in New Orleans, and in numerous efforts to save, support, and strengthen Catholic schools that serve low-income children and families.

John and Rosalee DiIulio have also spearheaded the Youngest Scholars Program at Gesu. Based on John's own research and that of his colleagues, Youngest Scholars strives to ensure that highly intelligent, inner-city children will reach their full potentials.

Gesu is honored to bestow the Gesu Spirit Medal on Dr. John DiIulio at its 2010 Gala, *Believe!*