



**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **THE FRIENDS OF FATHER JUDGE HIGH SCHOOL, INC. AWARDED \$1 MILLION GRANT FROM THE CONNELLY FOUNDATION**

*\$1,000,000 grant will establish the Connelly Welding Lab in Father Judge High School's new Career Pathways Academy building.*

[The Friends of Father Judge High School, Inc.](#) is pleased to announce it is the recipient of a \$1,000,000 grant from the [Connelly Foundation](#) for the 2023-2024 academic/fiscal year. The funding will establish the Connelly Welding Lab in [Father Judge High School's](#) Career Pathways Academy (CPA) building.

The CPA building has a total project cost of \$11.5 million and will feature a 20,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility unique to the region. It will be dedicated to delivering Career & Technical Education (CTE) curriculum in high priority occupations. The Connelly Welding Lab joins the Faulkner Automotive Institute as flagship programs offered in the CPA. This is the second substantial grant the Connelly Foundation has made to Father Judge after a \$200,000 grant in 2019 to support the addition of Career & Technical Education to the school's curriculum.

The Connelly Foundation of West Conshohocken is inspired by its Catholic heritage to improve the quality of life for people in the Philadelphia region by supporting charitable organizations in the areas of education, human services, and culture and civics that strengthen resilience and help people to flourish.

When asked about the Connelly Foundation's continued investment in Father Judge and its CTE initiatives, Mr. Tom Riley, President of the Connelly Foundation stated, "Father Judge is hitting on all cylinders. The Connelly Foundation is proud to support smart, practical innovations in Catholic education that lead to real-world successes."

The school's Welding Program was established in the 2019-2020 academic year and is the first-of-its kind CTE program in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Over a three-year period, from a student's sophomore to senior year, they complete 1080 hours of hands-on training, co-ops, and internships in conjunction with completing all diocesan curriculum requirements. The program is led by Mr. Joseph Williams and graduated its second cohort of welders on Wednesday, June 7, all of whom are fully certified with 100% job placement. This group follows last year's inaugural class that finished with similar results. Over the last 2 years, students have graduated with salary offers ranging from \$43,000 to \$70,000 and jobs with such firms as SEA BOX, SEPTA, DC

Fabricators Inc., the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Holtec International, PTR Baler, L3 Harris, Boilermakers, and DeVal.

Upon hearing about the Connelly Foundation grant, Brian Patrick King '97, President of Father Judge High School, said, "I am honored that the Connelly Foundation, a decades-long supporter of Catholic education in the Philadelphia region has selected to continue to invest in our strategic initiatives and students. The Connelly Foundation has a history of supporting creative, new ideas and programs that have bolstered and complemented the quality Catholic education offered at Father Judge High School and across the Archdiocese." King continued, "I'm excited for the students, who will ultimately benefit from this and I look forward to seeing them learn the skill of welding in the soon to be state-of-the-art Connelly Welding Lab."

Furthering King's comments, The Friends of Father Judge High School, Inc., Board Chair, Mr. Bill St. Clair, IV remarked, "We deeply appreciate the Connelly Foundation for this grant. Our Board believes a true education should be for all students to excel in their God given talents. Therefore, we are building our Career Pathways Academy to enrich those students that seek careers in various trades, with hands on experience during high school, and job opportunities thereafter; along with our already well established college preparatory tradition. We will teach to all students who are willing to learn for successful careers."

Established in May 2002, The Friends of Father Judge High School, Inc. is a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation with Officers and Directors who fundraise on behalf of Father Judge High School. All funds raised by this organization are managed and securely designated for use at the school. Since its formation, The Friends have raised and invested over \$17 million to make improvements to the school campus, provide financial aid, and fund academic programs that complement the traditional curriculum.

Father Judge High School was founded in 1954. The all-boys school is dedicated to educating its students' minds and souls in the spirit of Saint Francis de Sales. For additional information about Father Judge High School, please visit [fatherjudge.com/](http://fatherjudge.com/).

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**Editor's Note:** For more information about schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, please visit [aop Catholicschools.org/](http://aop Catholicschools.org/).