

Subiaco Academy Lives its Mission

by Brian Fisher, AdmissionsQuest, Inc.

Rarely does one find a school as devoted and dedicated to its mission as Subiaco Academy. The school recently celebrated its 121st graduation and, today, the school does exactly what its founders laid out 121 years ago- serve- with a focus on providing strong educational opportunities to the people of the surrounding community.

Respected nationally and internationally as a boarding school, the Academy's success grows out of Subiaco's focused efforts and good works. Also, at the most fundamental level, Subiaco Academy responds to the lives of local families.

Through a combination of mission and physical location Subiaco has earned the position as one of the most affordable boarding schools in America while producing graduates that have a 100% acceptance rate into post secondary education- including America's finest universities. Service- to students and the people of the region- drives Subiaco.

Subiaco's physical location contributes to its unique position. In central Arkansas, Subiaco enjoys a degree of freedom that comes from a rural setting away from large, industrial cities and urban life.

Subiaco is not the proverbial school on a hill. It can't be; nor, does it want to be. The school integrates itself into local social and economic fabrics. The school prides itself on participating as a community member.

As an apostolate of the Abbey, this local integration grows organically. From inception, the academy was run- administratively and academically- by monks living their vows in the Subiaco Abbey and teaching in the school. The Abbey contributes both monetarily and through teaching to the Academy. The Abbey is able to reduce the pressure on the Academy to produce revenue with a portion of the faculty and administration living the vows of commitment and service.

The support and commitment of the church and the monks provide the school with the ability to put a college prep boarding school experience within the reach of any capable young man that wants it.

The contributions of the Abbey and the services of the monks help insure that the school's bottom line supports rather than determines or guides.

The school and community enjoy a strong, dedicated relationship. The Parents' Association includes local families and the local community knows, supports, and looks out for Subiaco students in both the larger and personal senses. Although day students comprise only about 15% of the student body, their families are extremely active and carry the brunt of the load of a very supportive Parents Association that sponsors many student social events such as dances and proms. The Parents' Association also conducts various fund raising events.

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Subiaco's mission and commitment to service translate into a very different view of admission. Subiaco considers students who desire and work hard for opportunities. As Scott Breed, Subiaco Academy's Director of Admission, relayed in a story, he was once told, "If you have a good kid who wants to be here. We want that kid."

Today, Subiaco draws students from all over America and all over the world. Currently,

40% of students come from Arkansas

40% of students come from the other 49 states

20% of student are international

Even with its broadening reach and ever growing web of alumni, families, and students, Subiaco constantly lives its mission- dedication to service and opportunity, full participation in local fabrics, and a school big enough to provide opportunity but small enough to require everyone's participation. From these local roots and foundations, Subiaco continues to make a difference in Arkansas, in its students' lives, and send its alumni into the world with knowledge and an understanding of service and contribution.

As Scott Breed told me, "some schools have more, but this place is special."