



BISHOP O'CONNELL HIGH SCHOOL

6600 Little Falls Road
Arlington, Virginia 22213

bishopoconnell.org

Visit Us

Weekly Tours

Tours are led by a Student Ambassador during the school day and provide insight from the student perspective. Once the tour has concluded, families will have the opportunity to sit down with a member of our Enrollment Management Team to answer any questions.

Knights for a Day

Spend the day on campus with a current Bishop O'Connell student, attend classes, have lunch (our treat!) in the cafeteria, and see firsthand why **it's always a great day to be a Knight!** Knight for a Day shadow visits can be scheduled in the admissions portal once an application has been submitted.

Follow Us

@OCONNELLHS



For more information,
contact our Admissions team.

703-237-1420

bishopoconnell.org/admissions





**Our Mission is to
provide students an
education rooted in
the life of Christ and
to foster the pursuit
of excellence in the
whole person.**

Every O'Connell Knight begins adding to our rich tradition the moment he or she enters our community. Our faculty and staff are committed to helping students recognize their potential and encouraging their efforts to see and fulfill God's plan for them.

DR. JOSEPH VORBACH,

Superintendent of Schools, Diocese of
Arlington, and member of the Class of 1983

Bishop O'Connell High School Mission Statement

AN EDUCATION ROOTED IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Bishop Denis J. O'Connell High School is a faith-filled community of learning, rooted in a tradition of service and excellence. We are committed to providing a rigorous, relevant, and student-centered curriculum with intentional focus on how our students experience the Catholic mission of the school in every classroom.

70

Alumni in Priesthood
and Religious Life

77%

Catholic Student Body



Across the Curriculum

Guiding principles for each grade build on each other and prepare our students for life beyond O'Connell.

9th Grade
Dignity of the
Human Person

11th Grade
Using Your Faith
as a Guide

10th Grade
The Grace of a
Catholic Community

12th Grade
Living Your Faith in
the Broader World



Opportunities for Worship

I.H.M Chapel Open for Prayer

Daily Mass

Regular Confession and
Adoration Opportunities

All-school Masses Every Month

Stations of the Cross

Living Rosary

Join us in Café Vaticano

A casual lounge staffed by Campus Ministry faculty, where students can enjoy snacks and fellowship.



bishopoconnell.org/ministry

SMALL CLASSES, BIG IMPACT



I'm so grateful for the teachers that believed in me. At O'Connell, students are encouraged to reach for every opportunity and that helped me gain the confidence to pursue a career in STEM coming out of high school.

MAKEDA '26
Barnard College of Columbia University

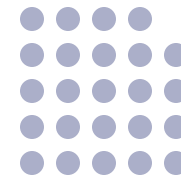
Our community exceeds 1,200 diverse students, yet our small classes guarantee individual academic support for everyone.

Small where it really matters



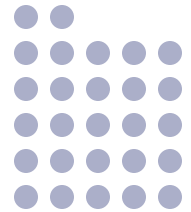
18

Average Class
Size of Bishop
O'Connell



24

Average Class
Size of Other
Private Schools



27

Average Class
Size of Public
Schools

Big where it really pays off

51

Honors Courses

30+

AP Courses
*(the most offerings of
schools in our area)*

55

Athletic
Sports Teams

80+

Clubs and Activities

BROADENING HORIZONS AND CULTIVATING COLLABORATION

Our students learn to think deeply and inquisitively, exploring complex ideas with rigor and creativity.

COLLEGE PREPARATORY COURSES

O’Connell provides a demanding, structured college preparatory curriculum designed to ready students for admission and success at the university level. Classes are focused on student engagement, rigorous content, research writing, and presentation skills. Through these classes, students develop a strong academic work ethic.

HONORS LEVEL COURSES

Students who wish to pursue high interest topics and activities are encouraged to enroll in Honors level courses. Designed to maintain rigorous lessons while allowing teachers freedom and flexibility of content and pacing, these classes focus on student initiative, creativity and collaborative engagement. Students must meet specific prerequisites to be eligible for Honors courses.

73%
Teachers Have
Advanced Degrees

11:1
Student-Faculty
Ratio

The opportunities at O’Connell have helped me develop skills and passions I will carry through college. The community inspires each other to do extraordinary things, with encouragement from peers, friends, and teachers supporting you in every corner.

VIRGINIA ’26
University of Missouri

566
Students
from the Class of
2026, Class of 2027,
and Class of 2028 took

OVER
1,600
AP exams.
Of those students,
398
(84%)
scored a 4 or 5 on one
or more AP exam(s).

Offering Advanced Placement (AP) courses, covering 32 subjects:

2D Art & Design	Human Geography
Art History	Latin
Biology	Macroeconomics
Calculus AB	Microeconomics
Calculus BC	Music Theory
Chemistry	Networking
Comparative Government & Politics	Physics 1
Computer Science A	Physics C (E&M)
Computer Science Principles	Physics C (Mechanics)
Cybersecurity	Pre-Calculus
Drawing	Psychology
English Language & Composition	Spanish Language & Culture
Environmental Science	Spanish Literature & Culture
European History	Statistics
French Language & Culture	U.S. Government & Politics
	U.S. History

ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Advanced Placement (AP) courses follow curriculum topics and pacing aligned with College Board specifications. Open to motivated sophomores, juniors, and seniors, these classes create a learning experience typical of college level courses. Students must be committed to developing independent study habits and strong time-management skills. At the end of the school year, the AP exam is required and qualifying scores may earn college credit.

Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment

Earn college credit while attending O’Connell with courses through Catholic University & Marymount University.

DUAL CREDIT

These universities offer college credit for several classes at Bishop O’Connell. These courses are taught by O’Connell faculty who have obtained adjunct professor status at the University.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Students whose academic profiles meet Marymount University criteria may register to enroll in classes offered at Marymount. Students must consult with and receive approval from both the Counseling department and the Studies Office.

bishopoconnell.org/dual

INSPIRING CREATIVITY, PROBLEM SOLVING AND INNOVATION

The Bishop O'Connell curriculum features an extensive selection of courses within the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Students are empowered to shape their own academic journey based on their specific fields of interest.

PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

Project Lead the Way (PLTW), the nation's leading provider of STEM education programs, is founded on fundamental problem solving and critical-thinking skills development. This network includes university, corporate, foundation and association partners. Students experience hands-on lessons, using real-world problems, supported by a state-of-the-art CAD system installed on classroom laptop computers.



Andres Permuy, a third-year mechanical engineering student at the Columbia University Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), speaks to students about automation that can be utilized in the space industry for extraterrestrial exploration and orbital debris mitigation.



STEM Courses

SCIENCE

- Biology
- Biology Honors
- AP Biology
- Chemistry
- Chemistry Honors
- Organic Chemistry Honors
- AP Chemistry
- Faith and Science Honors
- Genetics Honors
- Physics
- Physics Honors
- AP Physics 1
- AP Physics 2
- AP Physics C
- Ecology
- AP Environmental Science
- Anatomy and Physiology Honors
- Independent Research
- Biotech-Microbiology Honors

TECHNOLOGY

- AP Music Theory
- AP Networking
- AP Cybersecurity
- Journalism and Newspaper Production

- Yearbook Production
- AP Computer Science
- AP Computer Science Principles
- Economics and Financial Management
- International Business
- Personal Finance Management
- Personal Money Management and Your Future
- Digital Technology: Gateway to Tomorrow
- Personal Branding and Digital Communication
- Music and Computer Technology
- Theater Technology
- Audio and Video Production 1
- Data Science

ENGINEERING

- Introduction to Engineering Design
- Principles of Engineering
- Civil Engineering & Architecture

MATH

- Algebra
- Algebra 1

- Algebra 2
- Algebra 2-Trig.
- Algebra 2-Trig. Honors
- Geometry
- Geometry/A
- Geometry Honors
- College Math Topics
- Pre-Calculus
- Pre-Calculus Honors
- AP Pre-Calculus
- Calculus Honors
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- Multivariable Calculus to Multivariable Calculus/Differential Equations
- Statistics Honors
- Statistics and Applied Math
- AP Statistics
- Multivariate Calculus
- Linear Algebra

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES

O'Connell provides students with the tools to thrive in a college-preparatory high school.

The **Muller Academic Services** is a dynamic resource for both students and their parents. The Muller Center supports students with documented accommodation plans to ensure they reach their academic potential. Through this support, students are empowered to explore and refine their unique learning styles and become effective self-advocates.

Upon review of your student's application, the Muller Center may recommend that your student participate in a study skills class or continue with accommodations on a monitored basis. Students in the study skills class work in small groups with a dedicated resource teacher. This class plays a pivotal role in their transition to the high school level curriculum.

Benefits of the Muller Academic Services include:



Academic Support



Small Group Setting



An environment that allows students to explore and refine their unique learning styles



Fostering students' self-advocacy skills

bishopoconnell.org/muller



EXPANDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE HIGH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Bishop O'Connell is proud to offer Expanded Services to students with intellectual and cognitive disabilities, creating the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and spiritually alongside their peers.

Students receiving Expanded Services benefit from small group classes with special education teachers as well as a wide range of grade level general education classes. They receive modified and individualized instruction and are encouraged to partake in the full Bishop O'Connell High School experience.

Peer Mentors play a crucial role in creating an inclusive environment for students receiving Expanded Services. Our mentors ensure the Bishop O'Connell community is filled with friendship and belonging.

bishopoconnell.org/inclusion

SHEPHERDING EACH STUDENT ALONG HIS OR HER JOURNEY OF GROWTH

Each O'Connell student receives the individual attention of a counselor to provide social, emotional, spiritual, and academic support. Students are assigned a counselor for 9th and 10th grade, and receive a new counselor for 11th and 12th grade with an emphasis on college readiness.



9TH GRADE
Laying
Foundations



10TH GRADE
Cultivating
Academic Focus



11TH GRADE
Targeting
Readiness



12TH GRADE
Preparing for
the Future

1:155

Average counselor to
student ratio

Individual counselor
caseload at Bishop
O'Connell is 150-180
students.



Students enjoy Counseling department sponsored events aimed at reducing stress during busy times of the school year.



EASING FRESHMAN JITTERS

Students begin their freshman year with two orientation days specifically tailored for them. During this time, they become familiar with the school building, the location of their classes and locker, receive guidance on course selection and study skills, and bond with their peers. Parents are also invited to join virtual orientation sessions in the months leading up to the first day of school where they will learn about student life, campus ministry, school traditions, academics, counseling, and more.

LINK MENTORS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

Transfer students are paired with a student mentor based on similar interests through our Leaders in Networking Knights (LINK) program.

ACHIEVING COLLEGE GOALS

Students participate in grade-level appropriate college and career counseling throughout their four years at O'Connell and learn the necessary skills to successfully matriculate to a four-year college.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS

College Admissions

NCAA Sports Eligibility

Military Academies and ROTC

College Financial Aid

GRADE-SPECIFIC IN-SCHOOL SEMINARS

Study Skills Workshops

Career-Focused Guest-Speakers

On-Site Visits by College Representatives

Senior Seminars on Preparing for College

LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

O'Connell students have many opportunities to study abroad, experience a new culture, and serve outside of the classroom.

The Global Studies Certificate Program prepares students to be well-informed, self-motivated adults with the skills, confidence and moral perspective required to succeed as leaders in the 21st century. It is open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

With after-school seminars, guest speakers, field trips and student-planned activities, this unique program is centered on beyond-the-classroom learning that focuses on global issues and themes of world importance. Students select a specific concentration that interests them most.

Students who participate in the Global Studies program complete the equivalent of a ninth semester of academic work. They also receive a certificate upon graduation which indicates the completion of a set of non-GPA credit units in Global Studies.

Our Concentrations:

Faith and Humanitarian Issues
Global Business and Finance
Language and Culture
Arts and Humanities
Global Politics
Global Health and Environmental Issues
Space Exploration, Engineering and International Cooperation

bishopoconnell.org/global



Guest speaker, Allison Cronin, Senior Manager of Brand Engagement Strategy for Walmart eCommerce Corporate Compliance, San Francisco Headquarters, reminds students that careers don't always follow a straight line - every experience builds toward something unexpected and meaningful.

Based in Aachen, Germany, students enjoyed day trips to Brussels, Maastricht and Bonn.



This two-week summer program is open to juniors and seniors who wish to study Spanish at the prestigious University of Salamanca. Students can earn college credit while attending classes, participating in cultural activities, and traveling to Segovia and Madrid.

OUR STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

International travel broadens students' horizons and sharpens their language skills. Students participating in the week-long French and German exchange program attend classes in a new country, engage in local history tours, and build relationships with their foreign counterparts at our Catholic sister schools abroad.

GROWING IN FAITH

Our Campus Ministry programs encourage students to grow in faith and service to others, developing this habit in high school so that it will stay with them through college and adulthood.

STEPPING AWAY FROM ROUTINE

Our full-day retreats, days of service, multi-day and overnight retreats, help students encounter Christ deeply in their own lives and assist them in building life-long friendships in the process.

O'Connell is more than a school, it's a family. It allowed me to grow academically, spiritually, athletically, and socially, while also giving me the most supportive community I could've ever asked for.

CAITLIN '26
Princeton University



Freshman Retreats

The first retreat experiences for O'Connell students are filled with team building, reflection, Mass and prayer.

Sophomore Retreats

Sophomore days of services take small groups to sites in Northern Virginia to put their faith into action.



Upperclassman Retreats

During the DeSales Service Works weekend, juniors and seniors provide face-to-face service for an underserved community in Camden, N.J.

Upperclassman Retreats

Juniors and seniors deepen their personal relationship with Christ at the popular Kairos retreats.



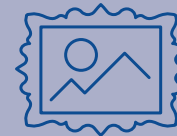
THE ARTS



Everyone is welcome to join our theatre productions as cast or crew. Students can refine their acting skills on stage or explore the technical aspects of stagecraft.



Our students have competed at music festivals in Boston, Montreal, New York City, Orlando, Philadelphia, and New Orleans.



Visual Arts classes are taught in a dedicated art space equipped with a darkroom and a comprehensive selection of equipment and supplies.



Students are encouraged to deepen their knowledge of music with courses such as Survey of World and American Music, and AP Music Theory.



The annual Festival of the Arts showcases the work of our talented students. It includes live music and dance performances as well as student art galleries throughout the school.

SUPPORTING CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORTS

O'Connell builds teams into faith-filled communities that encourage spiritual growth, intrinsic motivation and responsible decision-making.



Teams

Baseball JV, V
Boys Basketball F, JV, V
Girls Basketball F, JV, V
Special Olympics Basketball
Cheerleading JV, V
Boys Crew N, V
Girls Crew N, V
Cross Country CE, JV, V
Royalette Dance Team
Diving CE
Field Hockey JV, V
Football JV, V
Boys Golf JV, V
Girls Golf JV, V
Boys Ice Hockey JV, V
Girls Ice Hockey V

Boys Lacrosse JV, V
Girls Lacrosse JV, V
Sailing CE
Boys Soccer JV, V
Girls Soccer JV, V
Special Olympics Soccer
Softball JV, V
Boys Swim
Girls Swim
Track CE, JV, V
Indoor Track CE, JV, V
Special Olympics Track
Boys Tennis
Girls Tennis
Volleyball F, JV, V
Wrestling

JV | Junior Varsity V | Varsity F | Freshman CE | Coed N | Novice

70%

Student Body Sports
Participation

166

Conference
Championships

195

State
Championships

Bishop O'Connell High School has partnered with the nationally-recognized *Play Like a Champion Today* program to promote athletics as a ministry within the school community.



THE O'CONNELL FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE

The regular school day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 2:55 p.m.

O'Connell students have a unique hybrid class schedule each week which includes Anchor Days and Block days. On Anchor days, students attend all seven classes. On Block days, students attend only three or four classes. Class periods are shorter on Anchor days and longer on Block days.

Anchor days feature Knight Time, which is a flexible instructional period built into the school day. Knight Time is an opportunity for students to meet with teachers, access student support services, attend Mass, collaborate with peers, attend club meetings, and complete homework.

Example Freshman Schedule

MONDAY ANCHOR SCHEDULE	TUESDAY ANCHOR SCHEDULE	WEDNESDAY B1 SCHEDULE	THURSDAY B2 SCHEDULE	FRIDAY ANCHOR SCHEDULE
Morning Bell Advisory	Morning Bell Advisory	Morning Bell Advisory	Morning Bell Advisory	Morning Bell Advisory
First Bell Period 1 - Algebra 1	First Bell Period 1 - Algebra 1	First Bell Period 1 - Algebra 1	First Bell Period 2 - World History	First Bell Period 1 - Algebra 1
Second Bell Period 2 - World History	Second Bell Period 2 - World History			Second Bell Period 2 - World History
Knight Time Bell Knight Time	Knight Time Bell Knight Time			Knight Time Bell Knight Time
Third Bell Period 3 - Biology	Third Bell Period 3 - Biology	Second Bell Period 3 - Biology	Second Bell School Assembly	Third Bell Period 3 - Biology
Lunch Bell Lunch	Lunch Bell Lunch	Lunch Bell Lunch	Lunch Bell Lunch	Lunch Bell Lunch
Fourth Bell Period 4 - English Honors	Fourth Bell Period 4 - English Honors			Fourth Bell Period 4 - English Honors
Fifth Bell Period 5 - Religion	Fifth Bell Period 5 - Religion	Third Bell Period 5 - Religion	Third Bell Period 4 - English Honors	Fifth Bell Period 5 - Religion
Sixth Bell Period 6 - Spanish	Sixth Bell Period 6 - Spanish			Sixth Bell Period 6 - Spanish
Seventh Bell Period 7 - P.E. & Health	Seventh Bell Period 7 - P.E. & Health	Fourth Bell Period 7 - P.E. & Health	Fourth Bell Period 6 - Spanish	Seventh Bell Period 7 - P.E. & Health



The first two days of orientation are for freshmen only. They learn about daily routines, school traditions, and celebrate their first Mass as a class.



New families are invited to kick off the school year with an informal celebration featuring food and games.

Our orientation pep rally brings Seniors and Freshmen together to celebrate school spirit and build unity.



During orientation freshmen engage in problem-solving and team building activities to prepare for the upcoming school year.

CLASS MATRICULATION

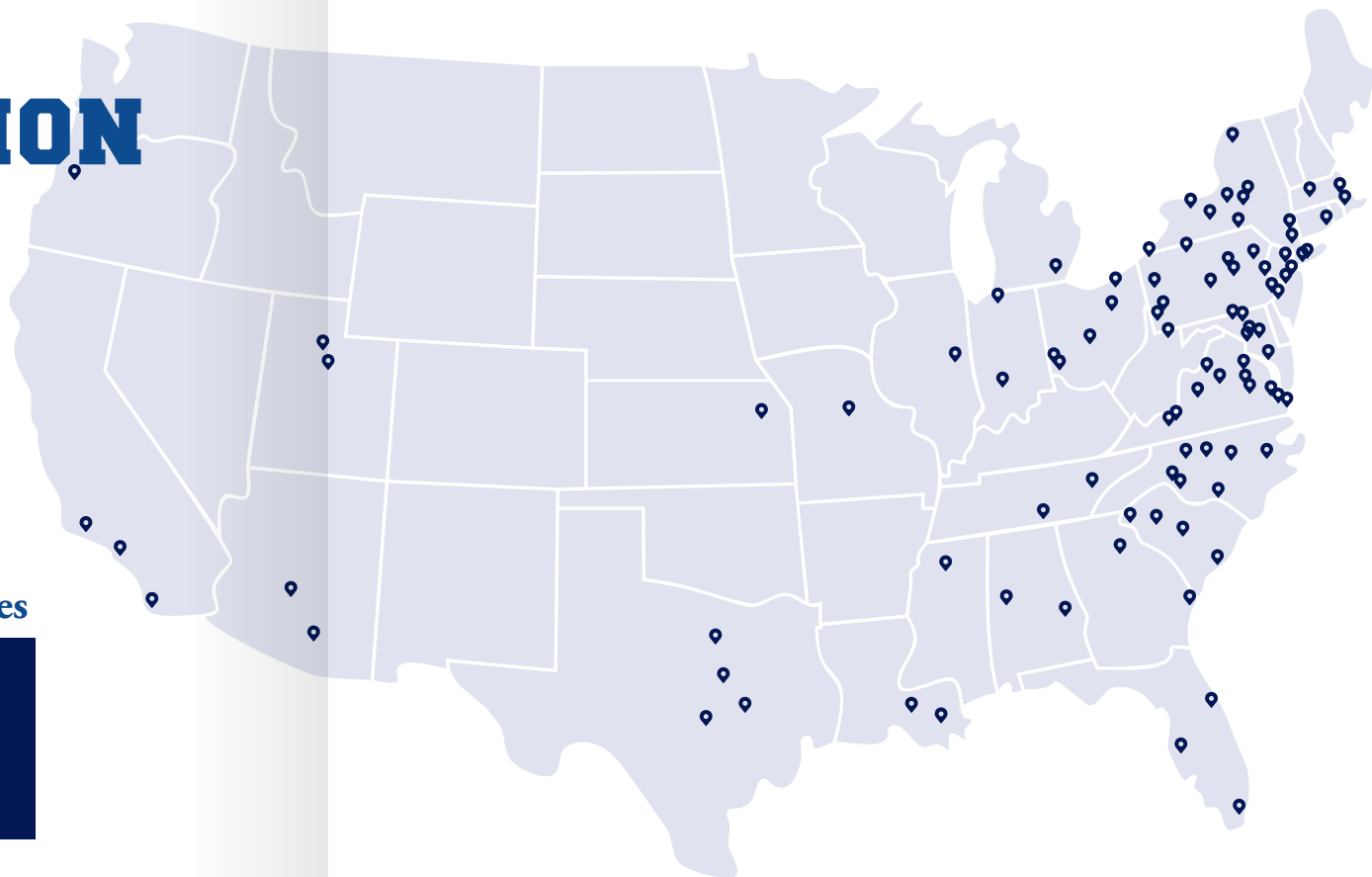
Bishop O'Connell graduates are currently enrolled at the following colleges and universities:

Nationally Ranked Top 20 Schools

Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Duke University
Johns Hopkins University
Northwestern University
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
Princeton University
Vanderbilt University

United States Service Academies

United States Coast Guard Academy
United States Naval Academy
United States Military Academy at West Point



American University
Arizona State University
Auburn University
Barnard College of
Columbia University
Baylor University
Boston College*
Boston University*
California Polytechnic State
University, San Luis Obispo
Carnegie Mellon University*
Case Western Reserve University
Catholic University of America
Christendom College
Christopher Newport University
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
Colgate University
College of Charleston
College of the Holy Cross

Colorado State University
Creighton University
Denison University
Drew University
Duquesne University
East Carolina University
Elon University
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical
University-Daytona Beach
Emory University*
Fairfield University
Fashion Institute of Technology
Florida State University
Fordham University
Gannon University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Georgetown University*
Georgia Institute of Technology*
Gettysburg College

Grand Canyon University
Hamilton College
Hampton University
High Point University
Howard University
IE University (Spain)
Indiana University
Institut Catholique de Vendée (France)
James Madison University
John Carroll University
Le Moyne College
Lehigh University*
Longwood University
Louisiana State University
Marymount University
McGill University
Miami University (Ohio)
Misericordia University
New York University*
North Carolina State University

Northern Virginia Community College
Ohio State University*
Old Dominion University
Purdue University*
Radford University
Randolph-Macon College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rutgers University*
Sacred Heart University
Saint Joseph's University
Salisbury University
Savannah College of Art and Design
Seton Hill University
Shenandoah University
St. John's College
Syracuse University
Temple University
Texas Christian University
Tufts University*

University of Alabama
University of Arizona
University of California-Davis*
University of California, San Diego*
University of California, Santa Barbara*
University of Chicago*
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Florida*
University of Georgia
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign*
University of Kentucky
University of Mary Washington
University of Maryland*
University of Miami
University of Michigan*
University of Minnesota
University of Mississippi
University of Mississippi (Ole Miss)

University of Oklahoma
University of Richmond
University of South Carolina*
University of St. Andrews (Scotland)
University of Tampa
University of Tennessee
University of Utah
University of Virginia*
University of Washington*
University of Wisconsin*
Villanova University
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Military Institute
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University
Wake Forest University
Washington University in St. Louis*
West Virginia University
William and Mary

KNIGHTS BY THE NUMBERS

Our Students embody excellence in the classroom and beyond. Here's a look at the greatest achievements from the Class of 2026.



CLASS OF 2026



149
AP scholars

37 SIGNED
COLLEGE ATHLETES

3
ATTENDING
MILITARY
ACADEMIES

89
earned college
credit from
Marymount
or Catholic
University

\$28M+
in college scholarships

24,000
CHRISTIAN HOURS OF SERVICE

34
received
Global
Studies
Certificates

WHERE TRADITION TRANSFORMS



Bishop O'Connell was the first diocesan high school in Northern Virginia, dedicated by The Most Reverend John Russell, Bishop of Richmond, when it was first opened in 1957. Today it is one of the largest high school in the Diocese of Arlington, and its most recent improvements have been celebrated and blessed by The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington.

Bishop O'Connell
was Opened in

1957

bishopoconnell.org/traditions



Since the school's opening, Bishop O'Connell has been blessed with the guidance and presence of a community of Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (I.H.M.), who serve in the classroom, as well as in administrative roles.



Something that began in 1975 as a way to honor an O'Connell family who lost several children to cystic fibrosis has turned into a uniting force and much-loved tradition at the school. This annual student-organized 12-hour dance marathon, known as Superdance, has raised more than \$4.5 million to help fund research to find a cure for this devastating disease.



Since 1975, the annual soup drive has been a healthy competition between homeroom classes, which benefits local Catholic Charities' food pantries. At the conclusion of the drive each year, the school community gathers for a Living Rosary to pray for those who will ultimately benefit from these efforts.



The celebratory culmination of a Bishop O'Connell education is a memorable graduation ceremony at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

