St. Francis Catholic High School Earns Dual AP Computer Science Diversity Award

SACRAMENTO, Calif., - (January 22, 2024) - St. Francis Catholic High School has earned the College Board AP® Computer Science Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science A (CSA) and AP Computer Science Principles (CSP). Schools honored with the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award have expanded girls' access to AP computer science courses.

More than 1,100 institutions achieved 50% or higher female representation in AP computer science courses or a percentage of the female computer science exam takers met or exceeded that of the school's female population during the 2022-23 school year. St. Francis was one of just 68 schools recognized for improving gender representation in *both* AP computer science courses.

"As an all-girls school, St. Francis is uniquely positioned to provide young women full access to computer science courses and other STEM opportunities such as AP Chemistry or our world-championship robotics program," said St. Francis president and CEO Fadia Desmond, Ph.D. "We're so proud to help increase women's representation in the fields of computing, construction, and other underrepresented industries."

Providing female students with access to computer science courses is necessary to ensure gender parity in the industry's high-paying jobs and to drive innovation, creativity, and representation. The median annual wage for computer and information technology occupations was $100,530 in May 2022. However, women represent just 24% of the five million people in computing occupations.

"Computer science is the source code of our economy and much of the career landscape," said Trevor Packer, Head of the AP Program. "In the six years since we began the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award, it's been heartening to see schools like St. Francis welcome so many more young women into this vital field."

According to a Google study, 54% of female computer science majors took AP CSA in high school. College Board research about AP CSP also finds AP CSP students are nearly twice as likely to enroll in AP CSA, and that for most students, AP CSP serves as a stepping stone to other advanced AP STEM coursework.

These findings highlight the importance of schools nationwide achieving gender parity in AP computer science classrooms. Overall, female students remain underrepresented in our high school computer science classes, accounting for just 34% of AP Computer Science Principles

participants and 26% of AP Computer Science A participants. Currently, 57.5% of high schools teach foundational computer science. The 1,127 recipient schools of this year's AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award serve as inspirations and models for all U.S. high schools.

About: St. Francis Catholic High School in East Sacramento has been educating young women since its founding in 1940. Academically rigorous, with full accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and a member of the International Coalition of Girls' Schools, St. Francis draws students from more than 100 area schools across five primary counties in the greater Sacramento region. Visit: www.stfrancishs.org for more information. Click HERE to donate to Thankful Thursday.