

HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE

St. Francis College has a proud heritage of preparing students to take their places as leaders in their fields and to become contributing members of society. With a mission founded on the ideals and teachings of St. Francis of Assisi, the College plays a vital role in the community and in the lives of its students and alumni.

A group of Franciscan Brothers first came to Brooklyn in 1858, opening St. Francis Academy several months later in 1859. It was the first private school in the diocese of Brooklyn. The school, which was opened to educate the boys of the diocese, started in a building on Baltic Street and grew quickly. In 1884, just 25 years later, the trustees of St. Francis received permission from the state legislature to "establish a Literary College" under its current name and giving it the power to confer diplomas, honors, and degrees. In June 1885, St. Francis College conferred its first Bachelor of Arts degree, and seven years later the first Bachelor of Science degree was granted.

The College continued its meteoric growth and built a new facility on Butler Street in 1926. In 1957, the Regents of the University of the State of New York granted an absolute Charter to the Trustees of the College. In 1960, St. Francis embarked on an expansion program. It moved to Remsen Street, where it had purchased two office buildings from Brooklyn Union Gas Company, allowing it to double its enrollment. Shortly thereafter, it became a co-educational institution and additional property was purchased on both Remsen and Joralemon Streets. The College expanded its facilities with the construction of a science building, athletics complex and housing to accommodate the Franciscan Brothers and provide more space for faculty.

The addition of the Anthony J. Genovesi Center in 2003 offers students additional opportunities to participate and watch athletic events while the \$40 million Frank and Mary Macchiarola Academic Center which opened in 2006, houses a library, numerous smart classrooms, HDTV studio, and black box theater.

Today the School has more than 2,600 students and 20,000 alumni. They come primarily from Brooklyn and the other boroughs of New York City, although their diverse backgrounds represent some 80 countries. A record 450 undergraduate and graduate degrees were conferred in the liberal arts and sciences in May of 2012. Many distinguished public servants, scientists, lawyers, business professionals, and teachers call St. Francis College alma mater, as do many of the priests and nuns within the Dioceses of Brooklyn-Queens and Rockville Centre.