



CROSSROAD

ORTHODOX YOUTH TAKING THE CHALLENGE

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Dear Friends of CrossRoad,

As we prepare for our 10th summer of CrossRoad, I write to share with you a development in the life of the program. This year, for the first time, we will implement a tuition charge for the ten-day summer institute. The 2013 tuition charge to participants will be \$500 for the ten-day session; this represents less than 25% of the \$2300 that it actually costs us to support each participant. This amount is in line with many of our Orthodox camping programs, and is well below other academic and leadership development programs hosted on college campuses.

Our entire team has struggled with this decision. There have been so many benefits to providing full scholarships for all students. We have felt that it was a great testimony of our Church to be able to say: we care enough about the faith and leadership development of our youth that we want to invest in them with this exceptional program. It also has allowed students to apply who may not otherwise have been able to come or who may not have had the family support to attend. And it has allowed the program to grow in popularity at a truly surprising rate; as we were crafting the program almost a decade ago, we thought one session would be sufficient to accommodate the number of high school youth interested in such a program—what sixteen year old today wants to study theology for ten days? Now, we've doubled to two sessions, and this past summer, we had almost twice as many applicants as we could accept. It's both energizing and humbling.

Today, the reality is that we have finally “graduated” from Lilly Endowment seed funding that supported the full tuition for CrossRoad, and this program must be sustained entirely by our Hellenic College Holy Cross and Orthodox Christian community. We are committed—indeed, excited!—to fundraise so that CrossRoad may continue to inspire our youth for decades to come.

As we make this decision, we remain open to the possibility of returning to a tuition-free program. But charging for tuition is not solely a financial decision. As we think deeply about the future of our Church, we see a direct connection between vibrant, healthy ministries and our ability—as individuals and as a Church—to give of our financial resources to make these ministries happen.

CrossRoad earned its reputation because of the staff and faculty who spend hours training and preparing to teach and mentor the participants. CrossRoad staff, as you know, are all graduate students at Holy Cross School of Theology. Most of them work two or three jobs to support themselves during school. Our being able to pay CrossRoad staff modest stipends for their training and program time allows us to choose from among the best of the graduate students, and for them to be able to dedicate their time to staff training and the program instead of to another job.

This tuition charge, as mentioned above, only covers a fraction of the true cost. We still need to raise \$1700 per participant, plus funding to cover full tuition scholarships for students with financial need. **Please note that it is our policy that *no* accepted participant requesting tuition assistance will be turned away. Students will be able to apply for financial aid after they have been accepted to the program.** We are energized to raise this funding, and ask for your prayers and support as we do so. Please continue to encourage students to apply! And do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns around funding—or with ideas and inspiration about the process. And please contact me, of course, if you're willing and able to help.

Our guiding principle has not changed: we care enough about the faith and leadership development of our youth that we want to invest in them with this exceptional program. Only now, we are asking our youth and their families to invest with us. And we think, in the long run, this will pave an even brighter future.

With love in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann Mitsakos Bezzerides". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Ann Mitsakos Bezzerides, PhD
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