

bile apps available for Windows 10 tablets, iPhone, iPad and Android devices. There is no cost for up to five downloads each on personal computers (Windows or Mac), tablets, and phones. *Go to siparent.com to find out how you can download yours.*

"This initiative is about providing students with the tools they need to succeed," said New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito. "Technology like Microsoft software enhances the educational experience and infuses learning with crucial hands-on computer skills – skills that will be an asset as students prepare for college and the workforce. Learning doesn't stop at the end of the school day – we want to ensure that children and their parents have the resources at home to get curious, organized, and ready to learn together."

CATHOLIC SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Families applying to Catholic elementary schools will find the process a little easier this year thanks to a new online application and increased financial assistance. Last year over 8,100 scholarship/tuition assistance awards were distributed averaging over \$2,100 each, and the Archdiocese hopes to increase the awards given to 10,000 recipients this year. Parents applying should do so as early as possible, as scholarships and financial assistance for the 2016-2017 school year will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. New students entering kindergarten through 8th grade need to complete both the admissions application and the financial assistance/scholarship application by March 9 in order to receive a decision by April 22. *Go to siparent.com to find out where you can download a free online application.*

"Choosing the right school is one of the most important decisions a parent can make for their children's future, and this new streamlined application and additional tuition assistance and scholarships will offer more children a high-quality, life-changing Catholic education," said Dr. Timothy J. McNiff, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New York. "Children of all faiths are welcome in our schools. Academic success starts in our early childhood programs and continues throughout the elementary and high school grades. We are proud that more than 98% of our high school seniors graduate and 99% of those graduates go on to college or post-secondary education."

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS COMES TO STATEN ISLAND

The youth mentoring organization Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC recently celebrated the opening of its first Staten Island office. Although the organization has been working with kids on the Island for years, the new Bay Street location will help to expand the mentoring program in the borough. The ribbon-cutting ceremony in January also honored the 2015 'Staten Island Big of the Year,' Amanda Tavarez, for her extraordinary commitment to her "Little." Both residents of Staten Island, Amanda and Samantha have established a very strong bond since they were matched in 2012. By providing support, structure and guidance, Amanda has been able to help Samantha overcome challenges as she enters her teenage years.



"Amanda is the embodiment of the values that Staten Islanders exemplify, and her relationship with her Little Sister is truly inspiring," said Hector Batista, chief executive officer of BBBS of NYC. "With the incredible support of the Staten Island community, the opening of our new office space will allow our organization to more effectively recruit caring adult mentors just like Amanda for hundreds of young people across Staten Island." *Go to siparent.com to learn more about the Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC and find out how you can offer support or apply to be a mentor.*

MUSEUM DAY LIVE!

Do you like museums? How about FREE museum days? Museum Day Live! is a day annually hosted by Smithsonian Magazine when over 1500 museums nationwide open their doors to the public for free, usually occurring sometime in September. This year a special edition of Museum Day Live will also be held on March 12 in honor of Women's History Month. Here in Staten Island, you can get your Museum Day Live ticket to The Alice Austen House and Historic Richmond Town. There are several participating locations in nearby Manhattan as well, including the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, The New York City Fire Museum, and the Museum of Chinese in America. Your Museum Day Live ticket is valid for up to two people per household. *Visit siparent.com to find out how to get yours. Robert Pizzo.*