



# Required Reading

Newsletter of the Children's Scholarship Fund

Volume IV, Issue 1

giving  
parents  
a **choice**  
giving  
children  
a **chance**

## Winter 2007

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## CSF 2006-07 By The Numbers

Number of children using CSF scholarships	25,000
Average CSF scholarship	\$1,330
Average Family Contribution	\$1,493
Average Family Income	\$27,278

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## CSF Awards Empower Parents

Nine years after CSF was founded, it is encouraging to see that our mission of maximizing educational opportunity by empowering parents to choose the best school for their child is being recognized and reinforced by political leaders on both sides of the aisle.

A few weeks ago, newly elected New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer, a Democrat, proposed a \$1,000 tax credit for parents paying private school tuition. Spitzer, who attended a private school and sends his own children to one as well, acknowledged that private schools provide a service that must be recognized and supported, along with public schools.

And President Bush has again called for publicly-funded vouchers for children in poorly-performing public schools as part of the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act.

To quote a January 31st, 2007 *Wall Street Journal* editorial, "[T]he most effective way to hold public schools accountable is by arming parents with more education choices."

CSF scholarships, in addition to providing the opportunity for a quality education to low-income families, also help to strengthen the independent and parochial private schools that serve many of the school districts and neighborhoods with the worst-performing public schools. As private and parochial school tuitions increase even slightly, families who are barely making ends meet find these tuitions just out of their reach and more seats go empty in these schools. But with just an average scholarship of \$1,330, thousands of families can afford to make this choice, helping their child and, in the process, the viability of their chosen school. The story in this newsletter about

Christ the King School in the Bronx is a living testament to that truth.

Indeed private schools do provide a service. In 2003, 72% of private school parents reported they were "very satisfied" with their child's school compared with only 54% of public school parents. Private school parents are also more involved in their children's schools and as a result their children do better academically.\*

The schools attended by CSF students provide their unique service very efficiently as well. The average Catholic elementary school tuition is just \$2,607, yet the national average spent on public school students is \$8,019, and significantly higher in some cities. In New York City, for example, the amount spent per student in Catholic school is about one third of the amount spent per public school child. ●

\* From *Trends in the Use of School Choice: 1993 to 2003*, National Center for Education Statistics



All 141 CSF recipients at Christ the King School in the Bronx gather in the gym. Turn to page 3 for more on Christ the King.

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# CSF Hosts Compton Luncheon

CSF recently hosted a luncheon celebrating scholarship recipients and their families at St. Albert the Great Elementary School in the Los Angeles suburb of Compton. Despite Compton's reputation as a violent, gang-ridden neighborhood, St. Albert's provides hope and stability to all its students.

Parents and grandparents were treated to a student performance of an original short play telling the story of a single mother applying for a scholarship for her son. Gloria Jackson, a great-granddaughter of Booker T. Washington, inspired the students with the story of Washington's rise from a childhood of slavery to founding the Tuskegee Institute and becoming one of the nation's most celebrated African-Americans.

Stacey Squires, a single mother who is studying for a Ph.D. at UC-Irvine, said that without CSF, she would not have been able to send her son, Kyle, to St. Albert the Great.

"Since he's been here, he's grown tremendously because of the teachers and administrators who care about his education," she said. "For that I'm very grateful."

Ms. Squires also told the group about her work as a substitute teacher in the LA public schools, noting that what she saw there made her



Students at St. Albert the Great Catholic School in Compton pose with (back row l-r) CSF President Darla Romfo; Principal Deborah Parham; Council Member Barbara Calhoun; Pastor Richard Hoynes, and Gloria Jackson.



Stacey Squires spoke at the luncheon about her son, Kyle, an 8th grader at St. Albert the Great Catholic School.

appreciate the individual attention and care Kyle receives at St. Albert's even more.

St. Albert the Great is one of 237 Los Angeles schools educating almost 1,300 CSF recipients. ●

**THE CHILDREN'S  
SCHOLARSHIP FUND AIMS TO  
MAXIMIZE EDUCATIONAL  
OPPORTUNITY AT ALL INCOME  
LEVELS BY OFFERING  
TUITION ASSISTANCE IN GRADES  
K-8 FOR NEEDY FAMILIES.**

## Teenagers Donate 50,000 Pennies for Scholarships

Students at the Professional Performing Arts School (PPAS), a public high school in New York for teenagers pursuing careers in the arts, recently made a donation of \$500 to CSF by collecting pennies!

The students were participating in Penny Harvest, a project where schoolchildren act as philanthropists, first raising money and then making grant-making decisions.

After listening to a presentation on CSF, students asked thoughtful questions about how scholarships are awarded, where recipients go after 8th grade, and how CSF measures success. One student recalled how her mother scrimped and saved for tuition for herself and her younger sister to attend private school, and noted that without her private school elementary school foundation, she may not have been accepted to PPAS. ●





# Straight from the Schoolyard:

## Christ the King Reigns in the Bronx

Christ the King School, just off the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, is one of the largest Catholic elementary schools in New York City with 573 students enrolled this year. Almost a quarter of the student body – 141 children – is attending with scholarships from CSF.

In fact, enrollment at Christ the King increased by about thirty students for 2006-07 alone thanks to the Cardinal's Scholarship Program, a joint effort with our partners at the Endowment for Inner-City Education, the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, the Archdiocese of New York and the Patrons Program.

Principal Lenora Yzaguirre has seen waves of immigrants move in and out of the neighborhood, but the demand for a high-quality school has not changed. Almost the entire student body qualifies for the free and reduced school lunch program, but parents think the school, which boasts a large computer lab and a library with more than 5,000 books, is worth the sacrifices they must make to pay tuition. And scholarship dollars make up the critical difference for many of the families. Although local crime rates have gone up in the past few years, Christ the King School is considered a "safe haven" in the area.

Ms. Yzaguirre greets students at the door each morning so she can keep up-to-date with their parents. When students first apply to



*Christ the King School is just off the Grand Concourse in the Bronx.*

the school, she looks seriously at their conduct record. "They don't have to study hard to get a good behavior grade," she says. As she walks through hallways filled with student artwork, Ms. Yzaguirre calls out to passing students that their sleeves need to be rolled down and buttoned or that their shoelaces need to be tied.

Her leadership and constant attention to detail is part of what makes Christ the King such a success. The children know she is aware of them every day, noticing everything from their latest math test score to whether their shirt needs to be tucked in. We are so pleased to be part of making this school a choice for so many families. ●



*Fourth-graders at Christ the King pose in the hallway next to their school projects.*

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***“Enrollment at Christ the King increased by about thirty students for 2006-07 alone thanks to the Cardinal's Scholarship Program.”***

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# The Last Word:

“My great-grandfather said, ‘Success is better measured by the obstacles you overcome as you look forward to success.’ I would encourage you that by applying your best, you will become extraordinary.”

**- Gloria Jackson**

*Great-granddaughter of African-American hero Booker T. Washington, speaking at a CSF luncheon at St. Albert The Great School in Compton.*



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