



Required Reading



giving
parents
a choice

giving
children
a chance

Newsletter of the Children's Scholarship Fund

Obama: A New Role Model for CSF Children

Volume V, Issue III

One of the most exciting outcomes of the Obama presidency for us at CSF is his unique position as a role model for so many children helped by our scholarships (and many more like them across the nation).

Now we have an African American man in the highest seat in the land – a man who came from humble beginnings and had a lot of potential excuses if he failed to succeed. Instead he went on to graduate from college and an Ivy League law school, and first and foremost values his role as husband and father. Our families can now point to him as an example of the opportunities that hard work and no excuses present to everyone.

Our parents can tell their children that, like them, President-elect Obama had caring adults in his life who saw to it that he went to good schools – and the hard work and sacrifice paid off. Like CSF recipients, President-elect Obama used a scholarship to attend private school – in his case Punahou School, the private school in Hawaii where he studied from 5th grade through high school.

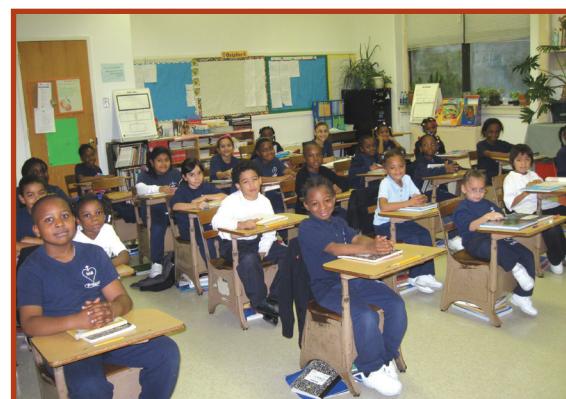
Schoolchildren from Punahou to Our Lady of



Second-grader Khalid Chapman at Sacred Heart School tells us he wants to be a basketball player when he grows up. He also loves reading, spelling, and "taking tests."

Refuge School in the Bronx have followed this election enthusiastically, many even staging mock elections (complete with secret ballots) to experience choosing their leader first-hand. Some students, like 6th grader Guillen Ceralde at Our Lady of Refuge, are already considering a career in politics.

Thank you, our readers, donors, and supporters of every kind for being a vital part of giving these wonderful children the chance to dream and really believe that they can be anything they want to be. And now with the help of President-elect Obama, that dream includes President of the United States of America. ●



The second grade class at St. Augustine School in the Bronx is ready to learn!

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In Memoriam

1946-2005

Cal Thomas Spotlights CSF

A recent column by leading syndicated columnist Cal Thomas called for donations to Children's Scholarship Fund, citing the 96,000 low-income children whose lives have been changed for the better over the past 10 years with CSF scholarships.

The column, which ran in many newspapers including *The Washington Times*, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, *The Tampa Tribune*, and online at Townhall.com and CalThomas.com, underscored the fact that President-elect Obama and his wife are able to choose from

public, private, or charter schools when they move their children to Washington, DC in January. Thomas argued that low-income families who can't afford the choice of private school on their own should not be forced to send their children to schools they consider inferior or unsafe.

As Thomas said, supporting CSF "will offer children trapped in bad schools the brighter future they deserve and the country will get the better educated citizenry it desperately needs." Thank you, Mr. Thomas! ●

Facts & Findings

- Following last April's White House Summit on Inner-City Children and Faith-Based Schools, a new report providing transcripts from the summit and a wealth of data on private schools has been released. At the summit, President Bush called for renewed efforts to stem faith-based school closings in urban areas, saying, "It's in the country's interest to get beyond the debate of public/private, to recognize this is a critical national asset."

"Preserving a Critical National Asset: America's Disadvantaged Students and the Crisis in Faith-Based Urban Schools" can be downloaded free online at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/pdf/preserving_a_critical_national_asset.pdf

- A recent study showed that private school 8th graders were scoring higher on tests and also spending more time on homework and extracurricular activities. The National Center for Education Statistics report followed Kindergarten students in both public and private schools in 1998-99. By 2007, when the students were in 8th



CSF 2nd grader Brianna Rivera checks how her bean plant is growing as she learns about plant biology.

grade, students in religious and independent schools scored 13 points higher than public school students in reading, 6 points higher in math, and 5 points higher in science. ●

**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.



CSF Awarded Four Stars

For the second year in a row, CSF has been awarded four stars by the leading charity evaluator, Charity Navigator. Only 25% of the non-profits surveyed are awarded four-star status, and only 30% of those are awarded this honor for two years running. Charity Navigator bases its ratings on financial efficiency and responsibility. Go to www.charitynavigator.org and log on to view their complete report on CSF!



Once again, CSF has also received Independent Charities of America's (ICA) Seal of Excellence. The seal is awarded to charities participating in the Combined Federal Campaign that "meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and cost effectiveness." Less than 2,000 out of more than a million U.S. charities have been awarded the ICA seal. ●

East Harlem Students Sing With O.A.R.

Imagine you are twelve years old again and some famous musicians visit your school one day and sing a Beatles' song with you. That's what happened to Sydney Dorner a few weeks ago when Marc Roberge and Benj Gershman of the popular band O.A.R. visited her school, Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary, in East Harlem.

Sydney, a CSF recipient since 4th grade, takes full advantage of all the activities her school offers. She's in the honors violin program, even going to after school and Saturday classes at Juilliard, and she's been the winner of the school's speech competition for several years. Sydney's also in



*Sydney Dorner,
CSF 8th grader.*



*Marc Roberge, lead singer of O.A.R.,
wows the students as they all sing along
to "Let It Be."*



the school's gospel choir, which was the centerpiece of the band's visit.

After a quick tour of the school, the musicians went straight to the Texas Dance Studio (named by the Dallas-based donor who paid for the studio), where Sydney and the rest of the gospel choir treated the visitors to several spirited songs. Then Marc and Benj took the stage and answered lots of questions about what it is like to be a "real" musician.

But the best was still to come! When Marc picked up his guitar and sang the opening lines to the Beatles' "Let It Be," Sydney and everyone else in the room was awestruck and silent. "Wow, he's good," was the murmur that trickled through the rapt audience. Then the students joined in, and soon they were standing and singing the whole song along with Marc.

After the singing, Marc and Benj asked a few children to come up and open some presents. Quickly, they ripped off the brown paper wrapping, revealing a brand new set of bongo drums for the school. As soon as the paper was off the drums, they were immediately put to use!



These students won't forget strumming Marc's guitar!



Marc and Benj reveal the big surprise...



...drums!

The morning ended with a lively performance by the school's ballroom dancing group, and then the band said goodbye. But for Sydney and her classmates, the memory of singing "Let It Be" and showing off their talents to a real rock band will last a long time! •

The Last Word:

"[A]ct compassionately toward the less fortunate by contributing to the Children's Scholarship Fund. This will offer children trapped in bad schools the brighter future they deserve and the country will get the better educated citizenry it desperately needs."

- **Cal Thomas**
Syndicated Columnist
(see more on page 2)



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4



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