



Required Reading

Newsletter of the Children's Scholarship Fund

Volume IV, Issue 2

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

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Recent Studies Point to Successful Outcomes for CSF

Children's Scholarship Fund is always looking for ways to measure the success of our scholarships. We are happy to report the following results from CSF partner programs and some of the schools our scholarship recipients are attending.

- CSF Baltimore recently announced the results of a new evaluation of 171 scholarship recipients in grades 3-8. The study, undertaken by Practical Research, an independent Baltimore evaluation company, showed that 92% of the students are reading at or above grade level, and 91% are at or above grade level in math. The study collected the children's grades in language arts, math, science and social studies during the 2005-06 school year. CSF Baltimore plans to continue collecting student grades using the procedures established during this evaluation to track the achievement and success rates of scholarship recipients.

The CSF Baltimore study did not measure public schoolchildren, but state test scores show that only 65% of Baltimore 3rd graders and 39% of Baltimore 8th graders are performing at or above grade level in reading and 60% of city 3rd graders and 22% of 8th graders have average or above scores in math.

- A recent study of children attending the Catholic schools of Brooklyn and Queens in New York found that students graduating 8th grade this year are scoring higher in reading, language and mathematics than students attending public school.

The students are also showing significant improvement the longer they have been in private school. For example, above average 8th graders are reading at a level better than 82% of 8th graders nationwide – six percentile points higher than the same children's reading level when they were in 4th grade.

More than 1,000 CSF recipients are attending 105 Catholic schools in Brooklyn and Queens this year.

- An extended day program at St. Ann's School in East Harlem has been so successful that the program has expanded to more than twelve

schools in New York City. St. Ann's, where 27 children are using CSF scholarships, added an hour and a half to their day in 1998. Now the school day ends at 4pm instead of 2:30pm, giving the children an additional one and a half hours each day of reading and math instruction. The extra classroom time has led to improved grades and standardized test scores for the children. According to Principal Sr. Josephine Cioffi, 90-100% of the 4th and 5th grade classes score at or above grade level on state exams, compared with only half of the class before the extended day program began. More than 700 CSF scholarship recipients attend schools that have adopted the extended day program, and several more schools will begin the program next year. ●



Pictured at a recent luncheon in Anaheim are: Scholarship recipient Lizbeth Lopez; SCCSF Director of Fund Development Erica Reiter; Anaheim Mayor Curt Pringle; Alicia Lopez, and ACE alumnus Jair Lopez. Read more on p. 2 and see more photos from recent Southern California events at www.scholarshipfund.org.

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In Memoriam
1946-2005

Mayor of Anaheim Hosts ACE Lunch

The historic Anaheim White House restaurant was abuzz one recent Friday in May. Anaheim's mayor, the Honorable Curt Pringle, joined his wife Alexis in hosting a luncheon there for the Anaheim Challenge in Education's (ACE) donors and families.

Mayor Pringle applauded the ACE program for helping families to provide the best education possible for their children. Also present at the luncheon were donors David and Diane Steffy, whose challenge grant to match local gifts dollar for dollar, along with the Mayor's early support, made the program possible. The generosity of the Steffys, Mayor Pringle, and other donors in Anaheim and Orange County such as Mr. Howard Ahmanson, who also attended the lunch, allows more than 200 children to attend more than forty local private schools of their families' choice.

Lizbeth Lopez, a 7th grader at St. Anthony Claret School in Anaheim, along with her mother, Alicia, and brother, Jair, shared her gratitude for her ACE scholarship. Jair, now in high school, also received a scholarship for part of his grade school years. He spoke movingly of his education, his college plans and his dreams for the future. He asked the audience what a strong bridge, a good road and a building all have in common. His answer was a good foundation – like the one he received with his ACE scholarship. Watching and listening to Jair, one can't help but know he has a very bright future. His mom, Alicia, told us before the luncheon and then again in her remarks how important it is for parents to contribute to their children's tuition. "When you get something for nothing, you don't think it is as important," she said.



David Steffy (center) with Alexis Pringle and Mayor Curt Pringle at the recent Anaheim luncheon.

Veronica Trillo, the mother of three current ACE recipients, attended the luncheon with her son, Samuel, a 5th grader at Prince of Peace Lutheran School. Samuel's brother and sister are students at Prince of Peace as well. Ms. Trillo painted a very vivid picture of what the scholarships have meant to her family.

A special mention goes to Anaheim White House owner Mr. Bruno Serato and his wonderful staff who helped to make it a truly memorable day. ●



Children's Scholarship Fund was also honored with an event at St. Patrick's School in North Hollywood this May: (l-r) CSF President Darla Romfo; St. Patrick's Pastor Gregory King; SCCSF Director of Fund Development Erica Reiter, and Lacey Williams.

**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 Programs Growing in 2007-08

More than 25,000 children nationwide currently attend private schools with assistance from Children's Scholarship Fund and its partner programs. Starting this fall, even more low-income families will be given the opportunity to choose a private school for their children.

CSF programs in Charlotte, Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Memphis, New York City, Omaha, Philadelphia, and San Francisco will be offering new scholarships for the 2007-08 school year. In New York, the number of awards is expected to grow by at least 4,000 scholarships. The San Francisco program will be giving scholarships to 1,500 new children.

As always, families already using CSF scholarships must requalify over the summer. Scholarship amounts are calculated based on the family's annual income and housesize, and by their school's tuition. Every family pays at least \$500 towards tuition – and most families pay more than \$1,400 themselves, underscoring their stake in their children's education.

Since CSF awarded its initial scholarships in 1999, more than 86,000 low-income children across the country have used CSF scholarships to get a quality education in private and parochial schools. ●



PRESS RELEASE - \$22.5 MILLION GIFT LEADS TO 3,000 NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

CSF Offering New Scholarships for Low-Income Families in New York City for 2007-08 School Year

New York City, May 23, 2007 – A generous gift of \$22.5 million made by financier Robert Wilson will provide 3,000 scholarships for low-income families to enroll at inner-city Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York this fall. Mr. Wilson's gift was acknowledged by His Eminence, Edward Cardinal Egan at a press conference at Immaculate Conception School today. An additional gift of \$4.5 million by an anonymous donor was announced at the conference also.

"I am so pleased that the program John Walton, Ted Forstmann and the rest of our board first approved and were part of founding in 2005 is expanding in such a dramatic way thanks to Mr. Wilson's initiative," said Darla Romfo, President of the Children's Scholarship Fund.

The new scholarships are awarded through the Cardinal's Scholarship Program, a unique partnership among the Children's Scholarship Fund, the Endowment for Inner-City Education, the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, the Patrons Program, and the Archdiocese of New York. The Cardinal's Scholarship Program was formed in 2005 and currently funds 3,700 children attending inner-city Catholic schools in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island. Children's Scholarship Fund administers the program.

New Scholarships in Manhattan, Bronx, and Staten Island

Mr. Wilson's gift, combined with funds from Children's Scholarship Fund, the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, the Endowment for Inner-City Education, the Patrons Program, and the Archdiocese of New York, will allow 3,000 low-income children to enter Catholic schools next September. Wilson hopes that his gift will lead other donors to contribute so that all 8,000 empty seats in the school system can be filled. "We'll save the hearts and souls of 8,000 kids and also strengthen the Catholic school system in New York City," he said.

Scholarships Available in Brooklyn and Queens Also

Children's Scholarship Fund is also a proud partner in the Bishop's Scholarship Program, which funds scholarships in the Catholic schools of Brooklyn and Queens with Futures in Education and the Diocese of Brooklyn. Currently, we are accepting applications for up to 1,200 new scholarships available for low-income families wishing to send their children to Catholic schools in Brooklyn and Queens.

Children's Scholarship Fund

Founded in 1998 by Ted Forstmann and the late John Walton, the Children's Scholarship

Fund is a national organization that provides partial tuition assistance for low-income families to send their children to private schools. Almost 86,000 children have benefited from more than \$243 million in scholarships across the United States as part of our mission to open the doors of educational opportunity. Currently, more than 25,000 children are using CSF scholarships nationwide and almost 5,500 here in New York City.



His Eminence, Edward Cardinal Egan, Robert Wilson, and CSF President Darla Romfo after the announcement of Mr. Wilson's \$22.5 million gift for the Cardinal's Scholarship Program in New York.



Kindergartner Miracle Sanchez and 1st grader Kaelyn Vidal at the press conference. Miracle and Kaelyn attend Immaculate Conception School with Cardinal's Scholarship Program awards.

Straight from the Schoolyard:

Ascension School Reaches New Heights

The three hundred students attending Ascension School in Minneapolis do not come from privileged backgrounds. Most of them live nearby in the high-crime inner-city Northside neighborhood. Many ethnicities are represented at Ascension; more than 94% of the student body are minorities. However, these students are outperforming not only the local public schools, but they are beating all but one of the 36 school districts in the Twin Cities and surrounding suburbs.

Several innovations are responsible for Ascension's success. In 2000, the school introduced Saxon math curriculum and E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge curriculum. The Saxon curriculum stresses the acquisition of basic math skills and building on those skills through repetition. The Core Knowledge program emphasizes facts and shared knowledge of science, history, geography, and literature. In 1999, only 21% of Ascension 8th graders were passing the Minnesota Basic Skills test in math and 76% were passing in reading. Scores improved immediately after the new curricula were introduced, and in 2005 91% of Ascension's 8th graders passed in math and 95% passed in reading.

These scores put Ascension students 43 percentage points above the Minneapolis public schools in math and 31% higher in reading. But they are even more impressive when you consider that only 28% of African American 8th graders and 41% of Latinos in Minneapolis are passing. Ascension School is not only raising test scores, the school is also bridging the achievement gap between races.

The school also has a partnership with the MacPhail Center for Music that provides music lessons for every student at the school. Starting in 3rd grade, every child takes violin lessons, and in 4th grade they can choose to continue with violin or play the cello or viola.

Nine children are lucky enough to attend Ascension School with scholarships from KidsFirst, CSF's partner program in Minneapolis-St. Paul. ●



Eight of the nine KidsFirst scholarship recipients who attend Ascension School in Minneapolis. Back row (l-r) Ronald Willis, Jamon Ware, Kimberly Towers, and Kevin Towers. Front row (l-r) Jada Ware, Elisha Phillip, Majeste Phillip, and Kenney Gatlin. Not pictured: Jordan Mason.

"One of the great assets in the United States is the Catholic schools, which oftentimes educate the so-called hard to educate -- and they do so in such a spectacular way."

– President George W. Bush, speaking with Catholic school leaders at the White House on April 13, 2007.

The Last Word:

"[CSF] is much more than an investment in money. It is an investment in the future of individual children, giving them the opportunity to have the education of their choice, and it is an investment in taking a risk and a chance on competition in education."

The Honorable Rudy Giuliani
Former Mayor of New York City



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