



Required Reading

Newsletter of the Children's Scholarship Fund

Volume V, Issue 1

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

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2008 Marks CSF's 10th Anniversary

It was ten years ago that Ted Forstmann and the late John Walton announced the founding of the Children's Scholarship Fund. Standing together at the New York Public Library on June 9th, 1998, Walton and Forstmann pledged to donate \$100 million to allow poor families to choose private schools for their children.

Little did they know that ten years later, with partner programs and generous donors all over the country, Children's Scholarship Fund would have provided scholarships worth more than \$315 million, changing the lives of 96,000 low-income children.

Although studies have measured the positive effects scholarships have had on test scores and grades, they don't fully capture the value of a

scholarship to every individual child who receives one. And the truth is that CSF awards touch more than just the children. They empower parents and grandparents to choose a private or parochial school, providing them with a larger stake in the child's education, and strengthening the family in the process. The scholarships also stabilize enrollments at private schools that provide a safe and academically sound environment in tough inner-city neighborhoods.

Children's Scholarship Fund currently serves almost 29,000 children attending private and parochial elementary schools in 39 program areas across the country. The total value of the scholarships for the 2007-08 school year is more than \$40 million. This school year, more than

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Newport Beach Reception Kicks Off OC Founders Circle

Southern Californians were introduced to Children's Scholarship Fund recently at the Pacific Club in Newport Beach, where Anaheim Mayor Curt Pringle and David and Diane Steffy launched the OC Founders Circle to raise additional funds for the 185 children using CSF scholarships in Orange County.

Mr. and Mrs. Steffy, who made a generous 4-year challenge grant for Orange County scholarships in 2004, hosted the event featuring speeches from Mayor Pringle, Wendy Adams, and John Thomas. An appearance by grandmother Stella Bribiesca was a highlight of the event.

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CSF families at the Pacific Club event. Back row (l-r) Steve Riesen, Stella Bribiesca and Angela Bribiesca-Mory. Front row: Shayla Riesen and Aubrey Mory.

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John T. Walton
CSF Co-Founder
In Memoriam
1946-2005

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Ms. Bribiesca talked about what the scholarship has meant for her granddaughter, Aubrey, who is a 4th grader at St. Anthony Claret School in Anaheim.

"I want to say thank you for all your help," Ms. Bribiesca said. "I am a cancer survivor and last year, I know if it weren't for your help she wouldn't have been able to continue at St. Anthony's."

To Stella, it's worth the extra effort to keep Aubrey in private school so she can one day reach her goal of becoming an FBI agent. As a cadet at the Anaheim Police Athletic League and a karate student, she is already on her way!

Steve Riesen and his daughter, Shayla, a 5th grader at Aubrey's school, were also in attendance. Shayla, a spelling pro, was one of the first CSF recipients in Anaheim in 2004. Her father is very grateful that she is able to attend St. Anthony's.

Over the past four years, in addition to the challenge grant from David and Diane Steffy, CSF's supporters in Orange County have included the Tiger Woods Foundation, the Orange County Community Foundation, and many other generous individuals and companies. Now, as the program moves into its fifth year, the OC Founders Circle will provide funding to extend scholarships to needy Orange County families in the years ahead. ●



Darla Romfo with David and Diane Steffy.



CSF President Darla Romfo (center) with Wendy Adams and John Thomas.

**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.**

"2008 Marks" continued from page 1

10,000 children were awarded brand new CSF scholarships.

As we celebrate ten years of giving parents a choice and giving children a chance, CSF's mission of offering more families an opportunity to choose a quality education for their children continues to be fulfilled. What started out as an experiment has become a

proven success, thanks to the hard work and support of so many of our partners and contributors!

As the year unfolds, we look forward to sharing memories and highlighting some of the success stories of the thousands of children and families empowered by the scholarships. ●

Christy Walton Speaks at CSF of Omaha Luncheon

After an inspiring morning spent visiting Blessed Sacrament school and meeting its dedicated staff, Christy Walton, the wife of CSF co-founder John Walton, further inspired the audience when she spoke about her late husband's and her own beliefs about education reform at CSF of Omaha's annual luncheon.

"It is so obvious by what we see here today and the numbers of people here, you are what you set out to become: mission-oriented; vibrant; broad-based in your support, and a high-profile cornerstone in education reform in this city," Mrs. Walton said. "But CSF Omaha also demonstrates the principles that John fought for every day in the parental choice movement – that parents have the right to be in command of their children's education, and that we as a nation have a collective responsibility to provide all parents with the financial power to choose where their children attend school."

The lunch also honored six very special CSF scholarship recipients for making a difference, overcoming adversity, and for demonstrating kindness, generosity, and leadership qualities.

Currently, the CSF of Omaha program helps more than 2,100 low-income children to attend the private school of their family's choice. Over the past nine years, the fund has awarded almost \$12 million in K-8 scholarships for needy families in the Omaha area. ●



The honorees at CSF of Omaha's luncheon pose with Christy Walton. Back row (l-r): Tianna Bankhead, 8th grade, Christy Walton, Taylor Dugger, 8th grade. Front row (l-r): Alex Kerwin, 6th grade; Gracie McDonnell, 3rd grade; Naweg Geek, 2nd grade, and Lucas Seger, 7th grade.



At the CSF of Omaha luncheon (l-r): Darla Romfo, CSF President; Tal Anderson, CSF board member; Ed Kirby, Walton Family Foundation; Jeff Schmid, CSF of Omaha Chairman; Christy Walton, and Judy Tamisiea, CSF of Omaha Treasurer & Development Director.

"... we as a nation have a collective responsibility to provide all parents with the financial power to choose where their children attend school."

Thank You Poem

Lord,
What is money?
Paper.
Metal.
But no,
It's more.
For a few,
It's a push
Into more.
Into...what?
A future?
Hope?
An education?
Yes!
But wait!
What of the people
That gave the money.
The paper.
The metal.
The push.
What
do they receive
for their gift?
Happiness?
Yes.
A gold star in heaven?
Of course.
Lord,
Give them
their gold stars
for they have given
something so simple,
Paper,
Metal,
That means so much.

By Ella Hart,
a 7th grader at
St. Joan of Arc School
in Omaha, NE

New High School Scholarships for Graduating 8th Graders

“I remember my first day of school at Incarnation I was able to tell the difference from the education that I was receiving before in a public school. I felt that I was learning,” writes Angel Duran, an 8th grader from the Bronx.

Angel’s mother, Barbara, first applied for a CSF scholarship when Angel was entering first grade, because she was unhappy and frustrated with the way he was struggling in public school. She was also concerned about fights between students at the school.

This year, Angel will graduate from Incarnation, and thanks to CSF’s partners at The Endowment for Inner-City Education, his scholarship will follow him to Mount Saint Michael High School. Barbara and her husband, who live on a very

limited income, had been worried about how they were going to afford a high school tuition. “I knew that without a scholarship my dream of attending Mount Saint Michael was not going to be possible,” says Angel.

Fortunately for Angel, The Endowment for Inner-City Education is funding high school scholarships for CSF and CSP 8th grade recipients who are graduating from Manhattan, Bronx and Staten Island Catholic schools this spring and entering inner-city Catholic high schools within the Archdiocese of New York.

“The average tuition cost of an inner-city Catholic high school education is nearing \$6,000, making it very challenging for low-income families

to send their children to these schools. Yet we know that if we can keep these children in the Catholic school system, they will graduate from high school, go on to college, and achieve great things,” said Caren Howley, the Endowment’s Executive Director.

“We have to step up and ensure children



Angel Duran, 8th grader at Incarnation School in the Bronx, will use a scholarship next year to attend Mount Saint Michael High School.

like Angel have a chance at a better future, and I’m so proud that the Endowment is working with CSF and taking the lead in providing the funding for high school scholarships to make that future possible for these children,” she added.

The high school scholarships will be worth up to \$4,000 and follow the same eligibility guidelines as our K-8 scholarships.

“I will continue to work hard each day and will continue to make Children’s Scholarship Fund proud,” Angel writes. He’s working towards a career in aviation, and with his attitude, we know the sky’s the limit! ●

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Straight from the Schoolyard:

Transfiguration School in Chinatown

A high bar has been set for children who attend Transfiguration School in Manhattan's Chinatown. Parents rank academic excellence as the top reason for choosing the school for their children. Many of the school's families – 95% of whom are Chinese-American - live in Brooklyn or Queens, but travel to Chinatown for work. About 80% of the children qualify for the federal free or reduced school lunch program. Traditionally, more than half of the school's graduates have been accepted to selective high schools.

This year is no different. Collectively, Transfiguration 8th graders have already been awarded \$112,000 in scholarship money to attend private high schools next year. And out of a graduating class of thirty-one, nineteen children have been accepted to Stuyvesant High School, Bronx Science, and Brooklyn Tech, all public high schools with very competitive admission policies. Three of the school's CSF scholarship recipients – Jesse Chen, Anthony Deng, and Shao Long Tan – each earned scholarships to La Salle Academy, a selective all-Catholic high school in the East Village.

A total of thirty-one children are using Children's Scholarship Fund awards this year to attend Transfiguration. The school's principal, Dr. Patrick Taharally, says that without the support from Children's Scholarship Fund, these children could not attend Transfiguration. We will keep you posted on further success stories from Transfiguration! ●



Thirty-one children attend Transfiguration School in Manhattan's Chinatown using Children's Scholarship Fund awards.



Founded in 1832, Transfiguration School was a neighborhood anchor even before the area became known as Chinatown.

The Last Word:

“John always believed that the customer should be able to choose, that parents and students know what their needs and their aspirations are far better than anyone else does, and certainly better than any bureaucrat does. He believed that parents should choose the structure and type of education they thought best for their kids. That we should worry about whether a child gets an education, not where they get an education, and why not?”

– **Christy Walton**

speaking at CSF of Omaha luncheon, March 27th, 2008.



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