



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL

An independent elementary school in North Central Philadelphia

SPRING 2011

VOLUME 5. ISSUE 2.

HATS OFF! CPS CELEBRATES SUCCESS OF FIRST GRADUATING CLASS

In 2003, a group of Germantown Academy (GA) trustees, parents and educators began meeting to discuss a revolutionary idea. Community Partnership School (CPS) Board Chair Lynn Gadsden explains, "our idea was to bring a GA-caliber elementary education to an urban neighborhood where it was most needed, so that when children graduated at the end of fifth grade, they would be prepared to attend the area's best middle schools."

United in their vision for educational equity, the group joined forces with Sister Mary Scullion, who offered the opportunity to rent facilities at Project H.O.M.E.'s Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs in North Central Philadelphia.

In 2006, the dream became a reality when CPS opened its doors on Judson Street, serving 36 students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade. Located in one of the city's most under-served neighborhoods, CPS offered children with limited resources and opportunity to meet their unlimited potential.

Now, five years later - with the help of many partners and supporters who represent the best of what "community" and "partnership" are all about - our first graduating class will continue their educational journeys at middle schools around the city.

"Reaching the stage in our evolution where we're sending our first cohort of students forth is a real point of pride for our school," Head of School Eric Jones reflects. "There are so many trailblazers who invested their time and resources to ensure a successful operation. Our first commencement

ceremony is a salute to our collective efforts."

Director of Enrollment Linn Vaughters has been preparing for graduation since joining CPS in 2009. Ms. Vaughters provides a smooth transition to middle school by counseling each student about the challenges and opportunities ahead, hosting monthly information sessions with families to educate them about their

middle school options, and guiding them through what can be tedious and overwhelming financial aid and admissions processes.

"Because of their socio-economic status, CPS students are not the traditional independent school demographic," Ms. Vaughters says. "Despite this, our students have impressed middle schools with their capabilities, including sharp intellects, creativity, critical thinking

and analytical skills. Our students are prepared to succeed. The caliber of schools they have been accepted to show that CPS has accomplished what we set out to do—broadened our students' options."

CPS graduates are decidedly mature when reflecting upon how their elementary education has changed them. According to Nasir, who will be attending William Penn Charter School in the fall, "If I hadn't gone to CPS, I wouldn't be the person I am today. I have learned from my mistakes, and a lot about the world. Here I can really learn."

We look forward to the regular return to CPS of Nasir and his fellow graduates, so that they can continue the tradition of learning and share their wisdom with the younger students that will follow in their footsteps.



The fifth grade class.



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CPSPHILLY.org

The members of the first graduating fifth-grade class of Community Partnership School have gained admission to a variety of high-quality independent, charter, and parochial schools, including:

Greene Street Friends School, Hope Partnership for Education, Independence Charter School, KIPP, Norwood-Fontbonne Academy, Project LEARN School, Springside School, William Penn Charter School, & Young Scholars Charter School.

Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of our fifth year of operation at Community Partnership School, we pause to recognize the significant contributions of a variety of constituents who have created and sustained our school:

- To our founders, Project H.O.M.E. and Germantown Academy, particularly those individuals who committed their resources – and in some cases their reputations – to making the CPS idea a reality.
- To our founding families – those parents and guardians who were so fed up with the dearth of quality neighborhood school options that they took a chance on a fledgling school with only space and an idea to sell, entrusting their most precious gifts, their children, to our care.

- To the members of our founding staff, those idealistic men and women who bought into the initial vision and, for relatively meager remuneration, signed on to fashion the CPS that so many of us know and care deeply about today.

It's these individuals, along with the host of benefactors investing their time, talent, and treasure on our behalf, who have facilitated Community Partnership School's growth. Without them, our school would not exist.

As this newsletter highlights, it's been a year of milestones at CPS and we look to our future thankful for our accomplishments so far, grounded in our mission today, and excited about our possibilities moving forward.



Sincerely,
Eric C. Jones, Head of School

Behind the Scenes

“COMEDY FOR A CAUSE”

On May 5, 2011 over 450 guests gathered at Temple University's Performing Arts Center for *Comedy for a Cause* featuring Bill Cosby – an event to benefit the promising students of Community Partnership School. Presented by Philadelphia Financial and co-chaired by Kelly Korman and Karen Regan, this joyous event raised \$200,000 in scholarship funds for the school.

Among the evening's many highlights was a stunning pre-show cocktail reception where premium ticket holders and special guests were treated to live music, cocktails and tasty treats, such as Cosby-inspired Jello pudding desserts.

Dr. Cosby opened the program with an impassioned plea to invest in quality education for all children. The renowned entertainer and education advocate received a standing ovation from the audience and a special tribute by CPS students. This impressive student performance was directed by faculty of the Broadway Dreams Foundation, including Broadway performer Paul Caanan and the organization's founder, Annette Tanner. Broadway Dreams generously donated their time and offered two scholarships for CPS students to participate in their Summer Institute!



Above: Dr. Cosby and fourth grader Zahir have a heart-to-heart.
Below: CPS students pay tribute to Dr. Cosby's long career.

After the performance, Dr. Cosby presented Community Partnership School's first *Excellence in Education Award* to Charles L. Blockson, a noted scholar and author who has devoted his life to the preservation and teaching of Black History. Among Mr. Blockson's many accomplishments is the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection at Temple University, a world-famous research center containing more than 300,000 books and artifacts.

Our students had the opportunity to learn from this preeminent scholar of the Underground Railroad when he visited the school earlier this spring.

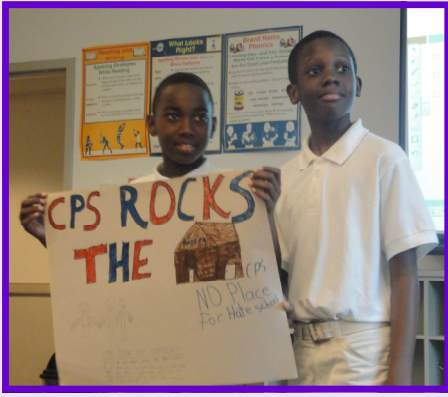
While accepting his award, Mr. Blockson shared a childhood experience which led to his passion for documenting black history. His teacher told him, "Negros have no history. They were born to serve white people." Mr. Blockson certainly proved that statement wrong, and the teacher called to apologize almost fifty years later.

The audience was then introduced to some young history makers, as Dr. Cosby invited several CPS students on-stage for some one-one-one interviews, reminiscent of "Kids Say the Darndest Things." After asking them about their favorite subject in school or to imitate their teacher, Dr. Cosby tried to stump students with some crazy "math" questions.

The laughs continued as our featured comedians took the stage: Ralph Harris, back by popular demand after performing at a CPS fundraiser in 2009, and Gary Gulman, a teacher turned comedian who was a finalist twice on NBC's "Last Comic Standing." Both comics had the audience roaring with laughter.

One of the most memorable moments of the evening took place when CPS Board members Jeff Benjamin and Mark Korman challenged the audience to raise a scholarship on the spot. In just a few moments, over \$20,000 was pledged, reminding everyone what *Comedy for a Cause* is all about: caregivers, educators and benefactors, all drawn together around the singular idea that every child deserves access to a high-quality education in a safe and nurturing environment.

Expanding Horizons MASTERING CHESS, ADVERTISING & MORE



A fourth and fifth grader present the CPS slogan and logo they developed with the help of volunteers from Tierney Communications.

They may only be in elementary school, but Community Partnership School students think seriously about their future careers— as doctors, architects, teachers, business owners and lawyers, to name just a few of their ideas! Students have the opportunity to explore a range of career fields through the school’s relationships with area corporations.

This school year, students traveled to **SEI Investments** and met employees working in finance, marketing, interior design, and other roles. Students also toured the West Collection, a modern art gallery housed at SEI filled with unique pieces of art, including giant rubber sharks and shoes made out of licorice.

A visit from **Tierney Communications** inspired many students to consider advertising and public relations careers. After an overview of branding, Tierney worked with students to create CPS advertisements. Students enjoyed creating slogans for the school, such as “Where Learning Shows its True Colors” and “Where Personality Meets Smart.”

Before the end of the year, fifth graders will also have the chance to try their hand at law when they play the part of jurors at a mock trial facilitated by lawyers from **Saul Ewing and Ross Feller Casey**.

Students have also benefitted from collaborations with local non-profit organizations. Thanks to **Big Brothers Big Sisters**, over 25 Temple University “Bigs” mentor their CPS “Littles” weekly. Meanwhile, **After School Activities Partnerships** has provided chess boards and training to our Chess Club, as well as the opportunity to compete in local tournaments. This spring, students attended their first chess tournament at the African American History Museum, where they competed with children from all over the city.

Chew on This! CPS LAUNCHES NEW NUTRITION INITIATIVE

Community Partnership School is excited to introduce the Health and Nutrition Initiative – a collaborative effort between CPS and private, public and non-profit partners to close the wellness gap in our communities, starting with our children. This innovative suite of programming will offer healthier food alternatives to our students, their families and neighbors; enhance classroom nutrition education; and expand learning opportunities beyond the schoolyard.



Chef Jeff Michaud demonstrates how to cook a healthy chicken dish at CPS Family Night.

This spring we piloted two programs, including *Food for Thought*, featuring healthy cooking by Chef Jeff Michaud, James Beard Award-winning executive chef and co-owner of Osteria and Amis. On March 17th, 100 CPS parents and guardians were treated to a demonstration and tasting of a fresh and seasonal dish that can be prepared at home. We also launched an urban garden project with Project H.O.M.E. and The Urban Tree Connection that offers many health benefits and connects students with their food source. Both the urban garden and *Food for Thought* series will continue next school year.

In the coming months, CPS will start “Farm to Families,” which brings farm-fresh products to the tables of CPS families and neighbors. Members of the cooperative will be able to purchase an affordable bounty of local fruits, vegetables, dairy, and poultry. CPS was selected by St. Christopher’s Foundation for Children to be a host site for this groundbreaking program, which will take place every other week at the Honickman Learning Center and feature cooking demonstrations and recipes by Philadelphia’s Health Promotion Council (HPC).

CPS is also proud to have been selected by HPC to participate in the “Nutrition For Life” health education program. This program will supplement existing curriculum with healthy food tastings and fun, interactive lessons taught by specially-trained HPC educators. The HPC educators will also provide classroom teachers with various activities that they can integrate into everyday math and reading lessons. “Our goal is to get kids excited about healthy eating,” says Christina Miller of the HPC. “We want to build their knowledge and awareness about good nutrition so that they can make informed decisions about what they eat today, tomorrow and years from now.”

Lastly, CPS has been awarded funds from The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables for snacks. Funds from The Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program provide CPS with a tenfold increase to our snacks budget. Moreover, this award will enable us to significantly increase our children’s daily servings of fruits and vegetables, which provide vital nutrients to a population at high risk for Type 2 diabetes, obesity and asthma.

CPS is thrilled to work together with our partners to close the wellness gap, nourish our children and provide opportunities to be happy, healthy and whole members of the community.

END OF YEAR GIVING CHALLENGE

Donate to CPS by June 30th, and your gift will be 100% matched!



Because of the generosity of supporters like you, Community Partnership School has raised almost **\$1.4 million** this year! These gifts help provide scholarships for children with limited resources and unlimited potential, allowing them to attend a high-quality independent school. **Thank you!**

At time of print, we have reached 90% of our goal for the fiscal year, and **we need your help to get to 100%**! The fiscal year ends on June 30th; please help us continue to meet talent with opportunity by making a donation using the enclosed envelope.

The CPS Board of Trustees has generously agreed to match all gifts made before June 30th, up to \$50,000.

Double the impact of your gift by making a donation today!



Almost there— help us reach our goal!

How Can My Gift Make a Difference at CPS?

<u>Your Gift</u>	<u>With Match</u>	<u>What can it do?</u>
\$25	\$50	Provides science experiment materials.
\$120	\$240	Covers two classes' admission to the Academy of Natural Sciences.
\$250	\$500	Provides a professional development workshop for the faculty.
\$450	\$900	Provides the incoming pre-kindergarten class with new uniforms.
\$1,200	\$2,400	Covers the After School Program expenses for two students for the year.
\$5,000	\$10,000	Provides Family Education Programming for the year.

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