



Required Reading

Newsletter of the Children's Scholarship Fund

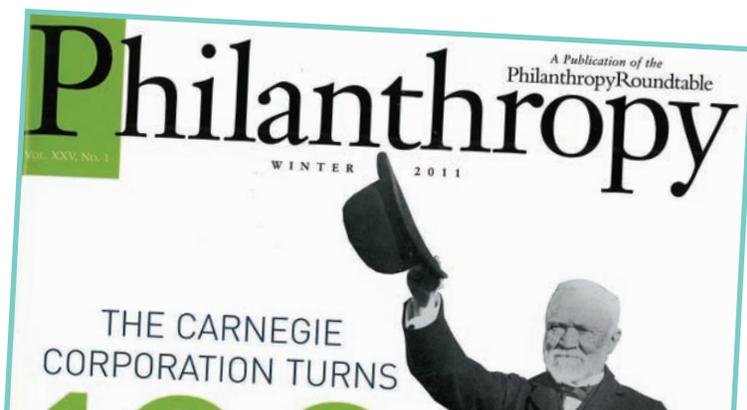
Volume VIII, Issue I

giving
parents
a choice
giving
children
a chance

CSF Named One of the Best Charities of the Century

Philanthropy magazine recently asked several experts, donors, and academics what current philanthropic investments people would still be talking about a century from now.

And the answer is:



“KIPP, the Children’s Scholarship Fund, and ‘Common Core’ Standards”

Don Fisher’s investment in KIPP; John Walton and Ted Forstmann’s generous seeding of the Children’s Scholarship Fund; and the Gates Foundation’s support for development of “common core” academic standards for American schools. The first proved both that schools can succeed dramatically with disadvantaged students—and that such schools can be replicated. The second showed the appetite for, and success of, vouchers in meeting the educational needs of low-income youngsters. And the third is gradually moving the U.S. into the 21st century by establishing shared—and ambitious—academic expectations for schools across the land.

By Chester E. Finn Jr.
President and CEO, Thomas B. Fordham Foundation

CSF Partners Gather in New York City

On February 7th and 8th, Children’s Scholarship Fund joined with the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, and gathered 22 representatives from 14 CSF partner programs and several other scholarship organizations around the country in New York to share best practices and learn from experts about social media, branding and marketing, stewardship, and impacting public policy.

Our special thanks go to Inner-City Scholarship Fund for partnering with us, John M. Callagy, Esq., who donated conference space at Kelley Drye & Warren LLP, and Changing Our World, which sponsored the conference dinner.

Turn to page 4 to see photos of the conference! ●

Spring 2011
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In Memoriam
1946-2005

Parental Choice Programs Gaining Ground

A new period of growth is underway for publicly-funded school voucher and tuition tax credit programs that will empower more parents across the country to move their children into high-quality private schools of their choice. Here are some highlights.

Recent Successes:

- **Supreme Court Decision:** On April 4th, the Supreme Court upheld Arizona's tax credit program, which allows individuals to receive tax credits for donations they make towards scholarships for low-income families to attend private schools. The ruling set an important precedent in rejecting the claim that tax credits for donations used for scholarships at private religious schools were unconstitutional.
- **DC Opportunity Scholarships:** As part of the budget deal agreed upon by Congress and President Obama in April, the Washington, D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program was reauthorized for five years. Now more than 1,000 children using vouchers can remain in their private schools and new applications will be accepted for the 2011-12 school year.
- **Colorado:** This March, school board members in Douglas County, Colorado voted to launch a pilot voucher program that will allow up to 500 students to receive \$4,575 each to attend a private school in the 2011-12 school year.
- **Arizona:** A new program establishes education savings accounts for an estimated 17,000 Arizona children with special needs. These children will receive funds of up to 90% of what the state pays for public

education to use for private school tuition, tutoring, or other educational services. Any unused funding could be saved for college expenses.

- **Indiana:** By the time you read this newsletter, a significant new voucher program may be finalized in Indiana. The bill, which cleared the Indiana House and Senate, calls for a voucher program serving up to 15,000 students by its second year. Families earning up to \$60,000 annually would be eligible.

Potential New Programs:

- **New Jersey:** The New Jersey Opportunity Scholarship Act (OSA) has passed several committees and is awaiting a full House vote. The bill would allow thousands of low-income students in failing school districts to use corporate tax credit scholarships to attend private schools.
- **Ohio:** Governor John Kasich is working to expand the existing EdChoice public voucher program. The number of children served would increase from the current 14,000 students to 60,000 children within two years.
- **Pennsylvania:** A new voucher bill would allow low-income children statewide to use vouchers to enroll in private school. The bill would also expand the existing corporate tax credit program.
- **Other states:** New and expanded voucher and tax credit programs are also under debate in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Wisconsin, among others. ●

**THE CHILDREN'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND
AIMS TO MAXIMIZE EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CHILDREN:
FOR THOSE IN NEED BY OFFERING TUITION
ASSISTANCE IN GRADES K-8 FOR
ALTERNATIVES TO FALTERING CONVENTIONAL
SCHOOLS, AND FOR ALL CHILDREN BY
SUPPORTING AND CULTIVATING EDUCATION
REFORM AND SCHOOL CHOICE EFFORTS.**

Members Project Update

After twelve weeks of voting, the results of the Members Project contest were announced in March. Children's Scholarship Fund came in second out of ten behind A Better Chance, which took the prize in the Education category. Unfortunately, there's no prize for second place!

CSF is extremely grateful to all of our supporters who voted loyally every week and spread the word to friends and family. Each week we sent out more than 1,700 emails asking for votes.

Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness in voting and showing support for our CSF Scholars. Every one of the almost 26,500 students using a CSF scholarship this year is on the path to a better future because of the education they are getting today. This could not happen without our loyal supporters! ●

CSF Around the Nation

Bay Area



At a recent parental choice conference at UC-Berkeley, Kathryn Ascencio spoke about the value and importance of private education for her family. All four of her children have used or are using scholarships from CSF's Bay Area partner, the BASIC Fund. CSF President Darla Romfo also addressed the Berkeley conference and discussed CSF's direct experience expanding access to private schools for thousands of low-income families.

New York



CSF President Darla Romfo (far right) was a panelist at a Young Presidents Organization education reform event this March. The panel featured: (l-r) Whitney Tilson, Dave Levin of KIPP Charter Schools, and Evan Rudall of Uncommon Schools.

Omaha



At a recent CSF of Omaha awards luncheon, board chairman Kurth Brashear (l) is pictured with Jovann Harrington, a CSF of Omaha student who was honored with a Challenger Award, and Coach Greg McDermott, Creighton University's men's basketball coach. McDermott was the keynote speaker at the event.

Philadelphia



Recently, more than 65 CSF Philadelphia board members and supporters gathered for the group's first Lottery Day Celebration. CSFP supporters phoned families to inform them they had won a scholarship for the upcoming school year. Everyone participating was moved by the joy and appreciation of the new scholarship winners.

CSF Alumni Tracking Project

We know that students who graduate from high school are much more likely to lead healthy and successful lives than those who drop out of high school. For example, high school graduates are more likely to find employment, earn higher incomes, and even live longer and suffer fewer illnesses than high school dropouts.

Given the significant quality of life indicators associated with high school graduation, CSF has begun to track our New York CSF Scholars as they graduate from 8th grade and progress through high school, college, and beyond.

The response to our first survey has been very positive. Parents of more than half of the CSF alumni we contacted (current 9th, 10th, and 11th graders) completed the initial survey. Among the findings:

- **High School:** 84% of the alumni responding are now in private high schools, and 90% of those attending private high schools are receiving some form of financial aid.
- **Post-High School Plans:** 90% of the CSF Alumni surveyed plan to attend a 4-year college, and another 2% say they want to attend a 2-year college.
- **CSF Experience:** 95% of the families said their experience in private elementary school with CSF scholarships better-prepared the students for high school.

Every year, we will survey our alumni families to find out about their experiences in high school and beyond. In the coming years, we will be able to compare high school graduation rates, college entrance rates and college graduation rates of CSF recipients with city, state, and national averages. ●



CSF Alum Hansel López speaking at a recent event (see page 5 for more details). Hansel, like many of our CSF alumni, went on to earn a scholarship to private high school. He graduated from Cornell University last fall.

CSF Partners Conference

continued from page 1



Jonathan Tee of ACE Scholarships (Denver) and Rachel Elginsmith of the BASIC Fund (Bay Area) share ideas at the CSF partners conference.

Norton Rainey of ACE Scholarships (Denver) with Cindy McDonald and Kathleen Christy of the BISON Scholarship Fund (Buffalo).



Ginger Spickler of MOST (Memphis) with Mindy Colbert of Educational CHOICE Charitable Trust (Indianapolis).

Reception Celebrates CSF in NYC

On April 5th, CSF gathered supporters and friends for a reception in New York.

Former CSF Scholar Hansel López gave a rousing testimonial about the “ripple effect” CSF has had in his life. His CSF award led to a scholarship to private high school, a college prep mentoring program, and finally his graduation from Cornell University in 2010.

Adam Brenner, our gracious host for the evening, also spoke about how CSF’s work has been an inspiration to him since his days as a CSF volunteer after college. Thank you to Adam, Hansel, and everyone who made the evening so enjoyable. ●



CSF President Darla Romfo with Adam Brenner and Arielle Anhalt.



Josh Goldberg, Andrew Rechtschaffen, Greg Brenner, and Elissa Brenner.



Shirley Jenks, Colin Moran, and Patricia Ann Farrell.



Roopakshi Mathur, Arielle Anhalt, and Lindsay Schulte.



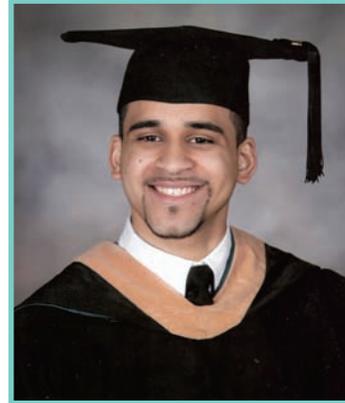
Sara Fay, Bill Jenks, and Jonathan Streep.

The Last Word:



“The most important reason to support CSF is that it simply helps kids and invariably alters their lives. At its essence, CSF provides equal opportunity and access to those that often need it most, under-privileged children.”

- Adam Brenner, CSF Supporter



“I plan to support CSF in the future because of the way it’s changed my life. I just wish I could change someone’s life the way it changed mine.”

- Hansel López, former CSF Scholar and Cornell University graduate.

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