

REQUIRED READING

Children's Scholarship Fund Newsletter



Fall 2017

2017-18 CSF by the Numbers

25,704
CSF Scholars

166,000
CSF Scholars since
1998

\$741 million
in CSF scholarships
since 1998

Almost 8,000
new scholarships
nationwide this year

Nearly 2,000
new scholarships in
NYC this year

CSF Marks 20 Years of Educational Opportunity with Thousands of New Scholarships



CSF Scholars at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Harlem are enthusiastic and grateful for the education they are receiving!

This school year, more than 25,700 low-income children are using scholarships from CSF and our 26 CSF partner programs nationwide. In New York City alone, there are more than 2,000 new CSF Scholars, thanks to a recent challenge grant which matches new donations dollar-for-dollar.

These students join a rich legacy of educational opportunity that began in 1998 when John Walton and Ted Forstmann first launched CSF. Over the past two decades, more than 166,000 children across the country have benefited from a solid educational foundation using CSF scholarships.

CSF families are empowered to choose schools they believe will best meet their children's needs and allow them to fulfill their individual potential. For example, new CSF Scholar Khloe had a tough time at school last year when bullies distracted her from learning. But her mom, Natasha, is optimistic and excited about Khloe's prospects as a third-grader at Brooklyn's New Grace Education Center.

"I'm hoping that at least at the end of third grade, she'll be way ahead of where she is now and achieve more academically," Natasha told us. "That's what all parents want, which is why they try to make that sacrifice to send them to a good school."

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 parental choice efforts.

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Message from the President: Tending to Our Cabbage Patch

Some of the many happy memories I have of growing up on our family farm revolve around our very large and productive vegetable garden. This was a garden that produced food we ate all summer and, through the process of canning and freezing, during the winter months, as well. While as a kid I naturally complained a bit about the work involved, I secretly was very drawn into the whole experience of digging in the rich black soil, planting the seeds, watching for the plants to pop through and grow, keeping the rows clean of weeds, and finally enjoying all the wonderful food that resulted from the mixture of human effort and the mysteries of nature doing its part.

In recent years I've made a point of going back to North Dakota each spring to help plant our garden. There is an even deeper meaning for me now, as I have greater appreciation for how directly gardening and farming open the door for human beings to begin to understand that much of life is about cooperating in something we can't fully comprehend and distinguishing between those things we can control and those we can't. I marvel at how tiny seeds, when left in the dirt, by some combination of the nutrients in the soil, the sunshine, the rain, and a little human nudging, grow into all the different kinds of food that provide exactly the right nutrients the human body needs to flourish. Depending on the combination of these elements in a given year, different parts of the garden will do much better than others and even my Mom, who is well beyond an amateur gardener, does not always know why.

Not long ago I ran into a beautiful nun who I hadn't seen in several years. In the process of catching up, she asked about my work and upon learning that I was still at the Children's Scholarship Fund, she said with a smile that it seems "you have found your cabbage patch." When I looked at her a little quizzically, she explained how each of us is given something to attend to in this life—our cabbage patch—and if we faithfully do our part, there will be fruit (or vegetables!) and a beautiful mosaic will take shape. We may not be able to see the full picture now, but we can trust it is taking form. Her analogy drew me right back to my garden in North Dakota and helped me see our work at CSF in a slightly different light.

Twenty years ago, CSF started as a four-year project to help 40,000 kids while testing the waters to see what kind of demand existed for educational options among low-income parents. Through a combination of factors, many not in our control, CSF has been a vehicle that empowered some 166,000 children (and counting!) – surpassing the original goal many times over, and proving families really do want to be in charge of their children's education. And in the process, our "cabbage patch" has also helped create the conditions so parents can foster their own children's educational growth.

At this time of year, when we take a moment to reflect and give thanks, I am deeply grateful for the privilege of being part of those tending to CSF and being a way for our generous donors to help families give their children the chance to flourish. I know all of us – including the principals, teachers, and families of our Scholars – are part of something bigger than what we can see or fully know the results of. And I do know we are doing something very beautiful together. Thank you.

With all best wishes,



Darla M. Romfo
President

CSF Partner Programs Around the Nation



NEW JERSEY

At its November awards dinner, Tri-County Scholarship Fund honored Paul Krump, President of North America Commercial and Personal Insurance for Chubb, Dr. Bonita Stanton, founding dean of Seton Hall University's medical school, and Justin Marcucci, Chief Digital Officer of Endava. Above, Mr. Krump met with Janiela Campusano, a former Tri-County scholarship recipient and current Chubb employee, and her sister Janiele Campusano, a current scholar.



PHILADELPHIA

Celebrating 15 years of scholarships at CSF Philadelphia (CSFP)'s Crystal Ball this October were (l-r): radio host Michael Smerconish, Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney, CSFP Executive Director Ina Lipman, CSFP Board Chair Patrick Burke, and Eva Moskowitz, founder and CEO of Success Academy Charter Schools. Photo credit: AMP Studios



OMAHA

Children's Scholarship Fund of Omaha welcomed its latest scholarship recipients at their New Families Reception this fall. New Scholars and their families enjoyed meeting each other, learning more about the scholarship program, and finding out about other available resources from the many community groups represented at the event.



BUFFALO

This October, Cecile Gihozo, an eighth-grader at Buffalo's Our Lady of Black Rock School spoke to nearly 1,000 guests at the BISON Children's Scholarship Fund's Annual Celebration Luncheon.



DENVER

Earlier this fall, ACE Scholarships hosted Dr. Steve Perry, education advocate, author, and founder of a highly successful network of charter schools in Connecticut and New York. Dr. Perry spoke to ACE supporters about the importance of parental choice and the role of American citizens in working towards educational equity.



NEW YORK

This November, CSF joined forces with Morgan Stanley and LitWorld to host a LitFest for students at Guardian Angel School in Manhattan. Special thanks to Young Leaders Board member Priscilla Habeeb Sankar, who organized a team of Morgan Stanley employees to volunteer, reading to the students and working with them on literacy-boosting activities.

New CSF Scholars and Schools in NYC

Close to 2,000 New York City children headed to school this fall with brand new CSF scholarships. These new awards bring the total number of CSF New York recipients to more than 8,000 children at 276 private schools – including 42 schools participating with CSF for the first time. These schools are oases of learning that enrich the city, providing children with a quality education for a fraction of what public and charter schools spend per student. Here are some photos from recent CSF school visits:



Lois Gregory, Founder and Principal of The Learning Tree Preparatory School in the Bronx, poses with eighth-grade CSF Scholars Neveah Delk, Heaven Delk, and Leyoura Williams. Through its Global Exposure Program, Learning Tree's eighth-graders travel overseas each year. This year's class will travel to South Africa.



Meet CSF Scholars Eljin, Elijah, Taylor, Nia, and Leah, all Kindergartners this year at Trey Whitfield School in the East New York section of Brooklyn. Photo credit: Jenna Bascom



New CSF Scholars at Educational Institute Oholei Torah in Brooklyn are enjoying the school year so far.



CSF President Darla Romfo met new CSF Scholars at Al-Ishan Academy in South Ozone Park, Queens.



CSF is a Top-Rated Charity - Again!

CSF recently earned a spot on GreatNonprofits' 2017 Top-Rated Nonprofit List, thanks to excellent online reviews from scholarship families, donors, volunteers, and others, such as this one from CSF Dad Nestor M.:

"Because of you, we can provide a quality education for our three children that supports and reinforces our beliefs and values. We know that our children are in a safe and academically excellent environment. Thank you again!"

You can browse CSF's reviews, and add your own, on the GreatNonprofits website: <http://bit.ly/CSFgreatnonprofits>. Thank you so much to everyone who took the time to share feedback.

Strong Outcomes for CSF Alumni

Because high school graduation is linked to future employment, lifetime earnings, and other quality of life indicators, this summer CSF surveyed New York alumni on track to graduate to determine their status and learn about their future plans.

With a strong response rate of 81.2 percent, we found 95.5 percent of CSF alumni graduated on-time, compared to the most recent New York City public school graduation rate of 72.6 percent.

Of those who graduated, 84.4 percent indicated they planned to enroll in college. Others reported joining the military (1.7 percent), entering the workforce (3.9 percent), or enrolling in a vocational school (0.2 percent). These New York survey results are consistent with graduation rates of alumni from CSF partners. In addition, a recent study found CSF alumni enroll in college and earn degrees at much higher rates than low-income students nationally.

Young Leaders Board Panel Shares College, Career Advice with CSF Alumni

As part of CSF's efforts to continue to engage alumni and encourage their future success, CSF Young Leaders Board members recently hosted a college and career panel for CSF alumni at St. Jean Baptiste High School in Manhattan. As the event kicked off, the Young Leader panelists introduced themselves to the students with some background on their colleges and their current roles.

The St. Jean's students had plenty to ask the Young Leaders regarding their workplaces and daily schedules, and some of the teens really drilled down in their questioning! For example, one marketing professional who mentioned Coca-Cola was one of his firm's clients was asked, "So, what really is the difference between Coke and Pepsi?"

After the introductions, students broke up into small groups and met with pairs of Young Leaders for more in-depth discussions where they were free to bring up questions and concerns about the college application process, college life, and moving into the job market. The students were still happily chatting away at the end of the evening, and many made plans to contact their new advisers by email for follow-up questions.

We are very grateful to all the members of CSF's Young Leaders Board who volunteered their time at the event. Thank you also to Recruitment/Admissions Director Flora Lugo and all at St. Jean Baptiste High School who made the evening possible. We look forward to offering many more networking opportunities for our alumni.



CSF Young Leaders Board members met with CSF alumni at St. Jean Baptiste High School and shared details about their college and career backgrounds.



Hansel Lopez, a Young Leaders Board member who's also a CSF alum, chatted with CSF alumni at St. Jean Baptiste High School, answering questions about college and the work world.



Children's Scholarship Fund

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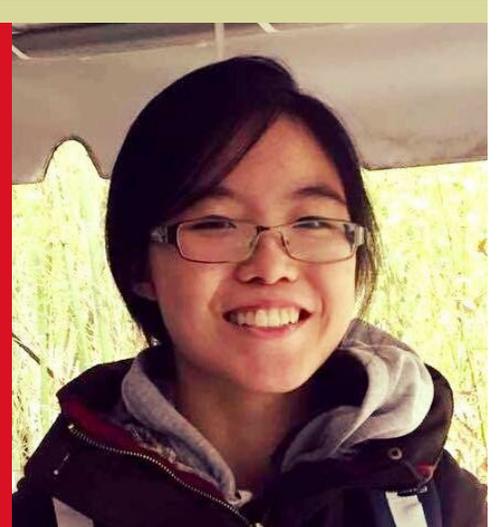
For more information or to purchase tables, please contact Michele Mitola at mmitola@scholarshipfund.org or (212) 515-7108.

Last Word

“ I am thankful to CSF for believing in my potential to do more than I could imagine, and because it gave me the opportunity to realize what I wanted to give back to the world. ”

– **CSF Alumna Mary Zhuo Ke,**

*bioengineering/sustainability management major,
University of Pennsylvania '19*



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