CSF Celebrates 20 Years and Honors 2018 Champions for Children

In May, Children’s Scholarship Fund (CSF) marked its 20th anniversary with its first-ever gala, paying tribute to co-founders Ted Forstmann and John Walton and the 166,000 children who have benefitted from CSF scholarships, as well as honoring prominent philanthropists and business leaders Eli Broad and Julian Robertson as this year’s Champions for Children.

Talented student and alumni artists set a celebratory tone, with the choir of Sacred Heart School singing “We Shall Overcome” and “Amazing Grace,” while students from The Learning Tree Cultural Preparatory School shook things up with African drumming and dancing, and CSF Los Angeles Alumna Nicole Serrato performed an original poem. As CSF President Darla Romfo noted, “Each of these children is a testament to the work of our founders and honorees.”

Guests heard from CSF Chair Mike McCurry and board member Remy Trafellet, and Ted Forstmann’s son, Siya Madikane, and Darla Romfo introduced video tributes to CSF’s co-founders.

Nicole Serrato and CSF Advisory Board member Stedman Graham presented Eli Broad with his award, noting Mr. Broad and his wife, Edythe, have donated more than $4 billion to education, sciences, and the arts, and were major supporters of CSF scholarships in Los Angeles.

Honoree Julian Robertson was introduced by CSF-Charlotte alumnus and New York City Ballet corps member Silas Farley with his parents, Mark and Falinda Farley. Silas noted Mr. Robertson’s leadership of CSF-Charlotte and his foundation’s generous support of education, the environment, and medical research.

CSF’s partner programs from around the country and New York City were well represented, as were CSF supporters, scholarship families and alumni, school administrators, and allies from like-minded education organizations.

The evening ended with a toast led by CSF alumni and a final song, sending everyone home on a high note. One guest pronounced the gala “magical,” with many praising everything from the delicious food and tasteful décor to the touching tributes and heartwarming success stories of CSF Scholars and alumni. We think Ted and John would have been very pleased and are grateful we had the opportunity to pay them a fitting tribute.

CSF’s 20th Anniversary Gala

DINNER CHAIR SPONSORS
Mellody Hobson & George Lucas
The BASIC Fund

HOST COMMITTEE SPONSORS
Matthew & Emily Bonanno
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Special Thanks to All Our Gala Sponsors

2018 Champion for Children Eli Broad and his wife, Edythe, at CSF’s 20th Anniversary Gala.

CSF-Charlotte Alumnus Silas Farley, and Falinda Farley presented Julian Robertson with his 2018 Champion for Children award.

PHOTOS BY: JENNA BASCOM
SEE MORE GALA PHOTOS ON PAGES 4 AND 5.
Meet CSF Alumnus Daniel Baker

CSF Alumnus Daniel Baker recently graduated as salutatorian of La Salle Academy, and plans to enter Colgate University this fall in major in economics.

Future goals: My hope for the future is that I achieve every goal I set for myself and more. One of my possible future careers is becoming a lawyer. My interest in law was strengthened after my internship at Leahey and Johnson Law Firm.

What Daniel’s CSF scholarship has meant: The support from CSF has led to many great things happening for me such as acceptances to colleges, becoming salutatorian of La Salle’s graduating class of 2018, and more. My family and I are very grateful.

CSF alumni perspective: My experience with CSF as an alum has been beyond exceptional. I loved meeting the Young Leaders and building relationships with them. As a student entering college, it was great to get advice from them. CSF reassured me that help is always there when you need it.

His inspiration: My mother motivates me. Growing up, I have experienced struggles and hurdles that I have overcome with her help. I work harder for her.

Advice to younger students: Never settle for less than you think you deserve. Personally, I have seen people who have settled in life and I believe it is the worst thing you can do. Try your best in school and never give up on your goals no matter how impossible they seem.
CSF Partner Programs Around the Nation

SAN FRANCISCO/BAY AREA
The BASIC Fund, CSF’s Bay Area partner, celebrated its 20th anniversary with a luncheon honoring founders Jim and June McCarthy, along with Arthur Rock and the late John Walton, who helped launch the organization in 1998. BASIC Fund Alumna and Yale University student Lorena Ortega-Guerrero (above) was a featured speaker.

OMAHA
At Children’s Scholarship Fund of Omaha’s annual CHANCE Luncheon this June, TD Ameritrade founder Joe Ricketts served as the keynote speaker and Jacob Idra won the Inspiring Alumni Award. Jacob is heading to Creighton University this fall on a full scholarship.

NEWARK
Polly and Terry O'Toole (left) were honored at the Scholarship Fund for Inner-City Children's recent gala. Here they are pictured with Jose Garcia and his family. Jose, a student at Newark’s St. Benedict’s Prep School, will be studying at Villanova University with a scholarship funded by the O'Toole family.

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Governor Chris Sununu presented CSF New Hampshire Executive Director Kate Baker with a proclamation marking National School Choice Week at a celebration in Manchester this winter.

MEMPHIS
Graduating high school seniors who are recipients of scholarships from Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust (MOST), CSF’s Memphis partner, recently celebrated at the MOST Senior Reception.

LONG ISLAND
Tomorrow’s Hope Foundation, CSF’s Long Island partner, recently hosted its annual Stars for Students Gala. Pictured at the gala (l-r) were: honoree Michael D. Sparacone, Tomorrow’s Hope Chairman and former CSF Champion for Children Lewis Ranieri, Senator Alfonse M. D’Amato, and Steven Napolitano.
Choir members from Sacred Heart School performed, setting a celebratory tone.

Students from The Learning Tree Cultural Preparatory School wowed guests with their African dancing and drumming.

Eli Broad receives his Champion for Children award from CSF Los Angeles Alumna Nicole Serrato and CSF Advisory Board member Stedman Graham.

CSF Champion for Children Julian Robertson (center) celebrated with (l-r): Charlie Anderson, Nancy Brinker, Dee Schwab, and Alex Robertson.

Siya Madikane introduced a video tribute to his father, CSF Co-Founder Ted Forstmann.

Today and Tomorrow Educational Foundation (St. Louis) Chair and CSF board member Kevin M. Short, his wife Patti, and former CSF Philadelphia Chair Evie McNiff enjoyed the gala.

Give the Gift of Education!

Celebrate CSP’s 20th Anniversary and the legacy of our founders, Ted Forstmann and John Walton, by investing in CSF scholarships today.

Every dollar raised will go directly to fund a CSF scholarship, opening the door to a brighter future for a child in need.
Representing CSF’s Bay Area partner program, The BASIC Fund, at the gala were Executive Director Rachel Elginsmith and co-founder Jim McCarthy.

Jim Walton and CSF Board Chair Mike McCurry chatted at the 20th Anniversary Gala.

At the 20th Anniversary Gala were (l-r): 2017 Champion for Children Rick Hough, CSF President Darla Romfo, Ed Kirby, Marc Sternberg, and Derrell Bradford.

Representing CSF partner program Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust (MOST) at the gala were (l-r): Scott Hennessy, Carol Hennessy, Jackie Solmson, MOST Chair Robert Solmson, Salle Norton, Mandy Rough, and Courtney Shove.

Enjoying the 20th Anniversary Gala were (l-r): Professor Paul Peterson, Zack Dawes, and John Petry.

The evening ended with a champagne toast led by CSF alumni and special guest, third-grader Gabriel Laratte (drinking milk!), followed by a final song from the Sacred Heart choir.

CSF is a 501(c) (3) organization, and your tax-deductible gift can be made by:

- Mailing a check made payable to the Children’s Scholarship Fund, using the envelope enclosed.
- Making a secure online donation at bit.ly/supportcsf.

To learn more, contact Michele Mitola at mmitola@scholarshipfund.org or 212-515-7108. Thank you for making a difference!
CSF Young Leaders Board Raises Scholarship Dollars

CSF’s Young Leaders Board is having a busy year, volunteering to assist CSF Scholars and alumni in a variety of ways, fundraising for new scholarships, and having fun along the way! We are extremely grateful to the Young Leaders Board and all its members for their passion for education and their enthusiastic support of CSF Scholars. If you are interested in finding out more about the Young Leaders Board or undertaking a fundraising challenge or volunteer activity on behalf of CSF, please contact Jane Lee at jlee@scholarshipfund.org.

Morgan Stanley Volunteers Host LitFest for CSF Scholars

A group of Morgan Stanley volunteers led by CSF Young Leaders Board Co-Chair Priscilla Habeeb Sankar recently hosted a LitFest for CSF Scholars at Our Lady Queen of Angels School in East Harlem.
CSF Celebrates Graduation Season

More than 2,100 CSF Scholars nationwide (including more than 700 in New York City) graduated from eighth grade this June and will begin high school this fall.

Based on past surveys and studies, we can predict the foundation these students received in elementary school gives them an excellent chance of graduating from high school. For example, last year we found that 95.5 percent of CSF alumni in New York graduated high school on time, compared to the average New York City public school graduation rate of 74.3 percent. Congratulations to all the graduates!

Number of CSF Scholars in 2017-18:

- 25,754 CSF Scholars nationwide
- 8,056 CSF Scholars in NYC

Number of CSF Scholars graduating from 8th grade in 2018:

- 2,100 graduates nationwide
- 700 graduates in NYC

Learn more about how CSF scholarships work by watching CSF’s new video at: bit.ly/CSFanim2018.

CSF in the News

“The reasons parents seek a private school education for their children are varied—safety, academics, school culture, faith, values—to name a few. Ted and John both believed strongly it should be the parents, regardless of their reasons, who make that crucial decision for their child, and CSF has stayed true to that conviction.”


“All students deserve equal opportunity to choose the best educational path that suits their needs, just like I was able to do.”

– Diana De La Rosa, who received a scholarship from CSF partner program, ACE Scholarships, in the Greeley Tribune (CO), 1/24/18: bit.ly/ACE012418

“What’s best for one child won’t necessarily work for another child, so it is crucial that families have many types of schools from which to choose, including public, charter, magnet, private, and even home schools.”

– CSF New Hampshire Executive Director Kate Baker, New Hampshire Union Leader, 1/21/18: bit.ly/NHULKB18

“Our focus needs to change from our school systems to our students themselves; what works for our children is in the best interest of everyone, and nobody is in a better position to make decisions for children than their parents.”

"The CSF is currently celebrating its 20th anniversary, and it is indeed an occasion for celebration. The Fund has raised $741 million and provided scholarships to 166,000 students."


"When I look back, I realize the Children's Scholarship Fund opened the door to many opportunities for me, especially helping with finances and lifting a burden off my family's shoulders. I really don't know where I would be today without my CSF scholarship."

CSF Alumna Rose Huitzil, College of Mount Saint Vincent, '18