



REQUIRED READING

Spring Semester 2024 Newsletter



Sandra Swirski Joins CSF Board of Directors

CSF is proud to announce Sandra Swirski has joined its Board of Directors.

Ms. Swirski is the founder of Integer, LLC, a full-service advocacy firm in Washington, DC, specializing in economic and nonprofit policy. Previously, she co-founded Urban Swirski & Associates, a women-owned government relations firm and has worked on Capitol Hill for seasoned Members of Congress and led government relations teams for companies and clients in the private sector.

Sandra serves as a Member of the Philanthropy Editorial Board of Trusts and Estates as well as an Advisory Council Member of Engage, a bipartisan women's organization that promotes economic security for all American women. She is also a frequent speaker and author, providing insightful analysis of breaking financial issues and policy trends to watch for in Washington.

A long-time CSF supporter and a member of CSF's Founders' Legacy Society, Sandra has addressed CSF partner gatherings on education tax credit proposals and philanthropy.

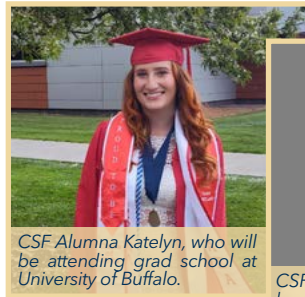
"I am beyond honored to have been elected to the Board of Directors of the Children's Scholarship Fund," Sandra shared. "Having championed federal legislation in DC to broaden children's access to private scholarships nationwide, I'm eager to work closely with Darla Romfo and the Board to contribute my expertise and network to this remarkable organization."



Congratulations, CSF Grads!

Congratulations to more than 2,900 CSF Scholars nationwide (including more than 500 students in New York City) who graduated eighth grade this spring! Thousands more CSF alumni also celebrated high school and college graduations this season.

Data from CSF's internal surveys and independent research show that CSF alumni are highly likely to graduate from high school on time. For example, last year's CSF New York alumni survey found that 96.2 percent of the CSF cohort graduated on time, compared with 83.7 percent of the city's public school students. Since we know high school graduation is associated with desirable outcomes such as higher lifetime earnings, better health, and a longer life, our hats are off to the Class of 2024!



CSF Alumna Katelyn, who will be attending grad school at University of Buffalo.



CSF Alumnus Alejandro, who will be entering the United States Naval Academy.



CSF Alumna Samantha, who will be attending Maria Regina High School.

CSF Hosts Largest-Ever Partner Summit

This March, CSF hosted our annual Partner Summit in New York City, bringing together representatives from CSF's partner programs nationwide as well as other scholarship-granting and education reform organizations, leading to our largest-ever summit with 95 attendees. The summit theme was "Celebrating Choice and Strategies for Expanding the Education Freedom Movement," and many attendees noted that the summit provided them with invaluable networking opportunities and triggered useful ideas for their organizations.



The 2024 CSF Partner Summit included a panel discussion on the role of scholarship granting organizations in expanding education freedom. Panelists included (l-r): Kate Baker Demers, CSF New Hampshire, Julie Scott Soffner, Today and Tomorrow Educational Foundation; Keisha Jordan, CSF Philadelphia; Ann Riddle, School Choice Ohio, and Kathryn Hickok, CSF-Oregon.

THE CHILDREN'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND empowers families by providing children in need with scholarships, and by supporting expanded educational opportunities for all children. During the 2023-24 school year, CSF and its partner programs in 19 states provided scholarships for 33,945 children.

Board of Directors

CO-CHAIRS

MATTHEW W. BONANNO
General Atlantic

MARGOT MCGINNESS

JEFFREY S. CHANG
Guardian Life Insurance Company of America

STEPHEN FRAIDIN
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP

CHRISTOPHER P. HALPIN
IAC

XAVIER D. JAMES, SR.
The Major League Baseball Players Association

DAVID E. JOHNSON
Caligan Partners

MIKE MCCURRY
Wesley Theological Seminary

DARLA M. ROMFO
Children's Scholarship Fund

KEVIN M. SHORT
Clayton Capital Partners

SANDRA SWIRSKI
Founder, Integer, LLC

REMY W. TRAFELET
Trafelet & Company, LLC.

JUAN WILLIAMS
Fox News

CHRISTY WALTON
Board Member Emeritus

THEODORE J. FORSTMANN
CSF Co-Founder
In Memoriam
1940-2011


JOHN T. WALTON
CSF Co-Founder
In Memoriam
1946-2005


CSF in the News

The Washington Times "What if you could give a gift that would literally keep on giving and continue to influence the lives of others for generations to come? ... Such an opportunity exists through the Children's Scholarship Fund." - Cal Thomas, "Children's Scholarship Fund: A gift that will keep on giving," *Washington Times*, 12/18/23, <https://bit.ly/CThomasDec23>

NEW HAMPSHIRE UNION LEADER "My family is a perfect example of how school choice, or education freedom, works. My four children have experienced both public schools and homeschooling, and my husband and I are constantly reminded that one size does not fit all." - CSF New Hampshire Mom Vilenky Rios, "More kids can benefit from education freedom like mine have," *New Hampshire Union Leader*, 1/22/24, <https://bit.ly/VilenkyJan24>

REAL CLEAR EDUCATION "We were honored to be selected by the State of Utah to administer its new ESA program, which will provide more than \$42.5 million annually to some 5,000 children. ... This is a watershed moment in history; now is not the time to let up. As we continue to press forward, let us take pride in our role as catalysts of hope for future generations." - ACE Scholarships Executive Director Norton Rainey, "Children Stuck in Failing Schools Deserve School Choice to Reach the American Dream," *RealClear Education*, 1/25/24, <https://bit.ly/RaineyACE24>

 "The Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia offers hope and opportunity to students destined to attend failing district schools. Not only does the needs-based scholarship program provide financial and other supportive services for families, but data from a new independent report shows that recipients are outperforming their public school peers." - Beth Ann Rosica, "School choice yields high returns for vulnerable students," *Broad + Liberty*, 6/5/24, <https://bit.ly/CSFP0624>

 "I always remember something Teddy Forstmann would say, that if you change a life, you change the world. I never want to discount that we've helped over 200,000 kids. I haven't met 200,000 kids, but I've met a lot of people, and I know how this has changed their lives." - CSF President Darla Romfo on DonorTrust's *Giving Ventures* podcast, 4/2/24, <https://bit.ly/DTpod040224>

Join CSF at SPNAM in Phoenix!

Heading to Phoenix this August for the State Policy Network Annual Meeting? Make plans to join CSF and other like-minded groups for a series of events aimed at sharing learnings and practical tools for overcoming barriers to education freedom in states most resistant to change. CSF is partnering with American Federation for Children, California Policy Center, EdChoice, Excellent Education for Everyone, and Kids' Scholarship Fund for this project. Visit bit.ly/SPN24BlueState to learn more.



CSF Partner Programs Around the Nation



BAY AREA

The BASIC Fund, CSF's Bay Area partner, held its first Chairman's Dinner this May. Pictured (l-r): Chief Advancement Officer, Laura Gonzalez Reed; President Brian Griggs; Bethany Gella of San Francisco City Impact; Orly Friedman of Red Bridge Education; CEO Rachel ElginSmith, and Chairman Jim Herbert.



LONG ISLAND

On a rainy Saturday morning in March, Tomorrow's Hope Foundation, CSF's Long Island partner, held its 9th Annual Run for Tomorrow's Hope, raising more than \$38,000. Many of the 430 runners were students.



OMAHA

Children's Scholarship Fund of Omaha celebrated its 25th anniversary at its annual CHANCE Luncheon this May, which featured several student award winners. Pictured (l-r): Executive Director Joel Long; Sydney Rahmig; Mariela Lopez Lopez; Jang Boup; Hay Hser; Sam Brito, and Board President Shaun McGaughey.



ST. LOUIS

CSF's St. Louis partner, The Today and Tomorrow Educational Foundation (TTEF), recently hosted its annual Archbishop's Gala. Pictured (l-r): TTEF Executive Director Julie Scott Sofner, in conversation with parent Lamar Rose, Haley Dunavant, a high school senior, and Principal Caroline Koetting of St. Frances Cabrini Academy.



NEW YORK

In January, CSF hosted a networking event for CSF alumni and our Young Leaders Board and President's Council donor groups in New York City. Pictured (l-r): President & CEO Darla Romfo; CSF Alumna Isabella Marte, Director of Scholarship Operations Marie M. Bathelmy; author and communications expert Chris Ullman, who shared career and life advice from his new book, Four Billionaires and a Parking Attendant; VP of Strategic Planning and Development Michele Mitola, and Alydia Ullman.



MEMPHIS

Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust (MOST) recently celebrated its alumni who are graduating high school this year. Executive Director Abbey Cowens (far right) posed with four MOST alumni who were the inaugural recipients of MOST's McDonnell Scholarship program, providing a select number of merit-based high school awards. The students wore sweatshirts with logos of the colleges they will attend this fall.

Donor Spotlight: Jackie and Stephanie Palma

Sisters Jackie and Stephanie Palma grew up on Long Island with parents who instilled in them the importance of education and giving back. After attending Catholic and public schools, both sisters graduated from Vassar College. Jackie moved to New York after college and joined CSF's Young Leaders Board, serving as its co-chair for many years. Now, she and her fiancé, Elliot Tisdale, are part of CSF's President's Council. Following in Jackie's footsteps, Stephanie is now a Young Leaders Board member. Together, the sisters have run eight half-marathons for CSF, giving and raising an impressive \$20,000. Recently, they shared why CSF's mission inspires them.

Jackie: Both Steph and I, from high school on, did a good amount of community-based volunteer work. It was just something we enjoyed doing. It was part of our values. After Vassar, I was trying to figure out how I could keep that aspect of my life active. [A friend] mentioned CSF and it sounded very similar to what I was looking to do post-college, so that was a natural segue into my involvement.

Stephanie: Giving back has certainly been part of our education from elementary school through college. The ethos at Vassar was a lot about doing what you can to make the education of those around you even better, whether that was the people sitting next to you in class, or tutoring in the local Poughkeepsie schools. So hearing about CSF through Jackie definitely made me want to become a part of it.

Jackie: We both went to the Catholic school in our town. Making sure that those values were being instilled from an early age was important to our parents.

Stephanie: It's worth adding that our parents are both first-generation college students. It's just kind of bred into Jackie and me that it's a gift to be educated, so we've always taken it really seriously. Jackie's toyed with the idea of going to grad school, and I'm going to be pursuing a graduate degree, so it feels like our family is crawling up our country's education ladder.

Jackie: Making the decision about what the right academic environment is for their child and who's teaching them is something that every parent should have the right to do.

Stephanie: I think it goes without saying that parents have the best interests of their children in mind.



Jackie and Stephanie Palma have run a combined eight half-marathons for CSF. The 2022 NYC Half (above) was the only one they ran together.

CSF Young Leaders and President's Council Pay It Forward

Thank you to CSF's Young Leaders Board and President's Council for their work in fundraising for scholarships while also raising awareness and giving back to CSF Scholars and alumni.

- ▶ We're very grateful to Stephanie Palma (see above), Eileen Pinto, Paige Smith, Laura Wang, and William Harrison for raising more than \$9,000 for scholarships by running this year's United Airlines NYC Half Marathon.
- ▶ In May, the Young Leaders Board hosted its annual Party for a Purpose, raising approximately \$6,000 for scholarships while introducing friends to the cause.
- ▶ In June, Young Leaders Board members volunteered at St. Jean Baptiste High School, helping high school juniors with their college application essays.

To learn more about the President's Council or Young Leaders Board, please contact Kurt Faulhammer at 212-515-7106.



Olivia Sobczyk (l) was one of the CSF Young Leaders Board members who volunteered at St. Jean Baptiste High School recently, helping high school juniors to get started on their college application essays.

CSF Alumni Travel to Norway for Oslo Freedom Forum

Two CSF alumni, Isabella Marte and Aziz Oguntade, recently traveled to Oslo, Norway to attend the Oslo Freedom Forum (OFF) as the winners of a CSF alumni essay contest generously sponsored by the Human Rights Foundation (HRF), which hosts the OFF.

For three days, the alumni attended the OFF, which brings together human rights activists and supporters from all over the globe. This year's speakers included the first female Olympic athlete from Afghanistan, Twitter founder Jack Dorsey, and activists fighting authoritarian regimes in Uganda, Russia, China, and many other countries.

Isabella summed up her experience saying, "The Oslo Freedom Forum was very inspiring for a young college student like me. It exposed me to many human rights issues that I would have not been aware of otherwise. My biggest takeaway from the Oslo Freedom Forum is that 'no one is free until everyone is free' and we must continue the pursuit of freedom and justice for all people."



CSF alumni Aziz Oguntade and Isabella Marte traveled to Norway to attend the Oslo Freedom Forum as winners of an essay contest sponsored by the Human Rights Foundation.

Special thanks to Alex Gladstein, Elle Ota, and Thor Halvorsen at the Human Rights Foundation for sponsoring the essay contest and working with CSF alumni to provide them with such an amazing opportunity.

CSF Celebrates National School Choice Week

This year's National School Choice Week was a whirlwind of activity, with Children's Scholarship Fund (CSF) and its partner programs across the country celebrating education freedom in many ways!



In New York, CSF families joined parents of children in private, charter, public, and home schools across the city and state on a road trip to the State Capitol in Albany, where they met with representatives, and shared how important it is for them and other families statewide to have the freedom to make that choice.



In New Hampshire, CSF celebrated with a School Fair, showcasing the Granite State's diverse education landscape. More than 40 education providers and schools, including Bishop Brady High School (above), shared information with families, and the children in attendance enjoyed games, face-painting, raffles, and more!



Children's Scholarship Fund

8 West 38th Street, Suite 804
New York, NY 10018

The Last Word

"My parents came to America because it held the promise of a better future for their children. They didn't want me or my siblings to drop out of school like they had to. Our Lady Queen of Angels School has helped me and [my brother] Emmanuel reach our full potential. ...I noticed my grades picked up quickly, leading me to my high school, Cristo Rey New York. The same happened there, where I would push myself and achieve new goals. I did my best work throughout the years, which led me to Fordham University, where I am pursuing a computer science major in software engineering."

- CSF Alumnus Antoine Peralta Castro, who was recently named a Future Leaders Fellow by the American Federation for Children



Children's Scholarship Fund
8 West 38th Street, Suite 804
New York, NY 10018
(212) 515-7100
www.scholarshipfund.org

 /ScholarshipFund

 @CSFNational

 @CSFNewYork