



Spruce Hill
Christian
School

City
Center
Academy



The Lantern

a newsletter

for the City Center Academy

+

Spruce Hill Christian School community

New Merit Scholarships Promote Excellence at City Center Academy

Merit scholarships and annual awards are made available at City Center Academy (CCA) to encourage both academic rigor and character development in our high school students. We recognize and reward their efforts and accomplishments in order to promote diligence and growth in all areas of life.

These scholarships and awards are named for those with a history of generosity and service to the CCA community. We are pleased to recognize their contributions to the school and are grateful for their legacy of modeling humility, diligence, leadership, and faith—the kind of character traits we desire for every CCA student.

The academic program at CCA is designed to provide rigorous and challenging college-preparatory instruction. CCA students have a history of successful college admittance because they are prepared well through an academic program strong in fundamental core curriculum. These awards and scholarships provide earned distinction for those students seeking competitive college placement.



Sarah Riggs, 2008 CCA Valedictorian, received the Renae S. MacFadyen Memorial Scholarship Award from Dr. Jean MacFadyen. Sarah is now attending the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, studying pharmacy sciences.

We are particularly pleased to announce the establishment of two new endowed scholarship funds: The Boice Scholarship and the VanDijk Memorial Scholarship. These scholarships were created to attract and retain highly qualified high school students at City Center Academy. Both scholarships have been funded by the gifts of generous donors who seek to honor those for whom the scholarships are named and to help provide expanded educational opportunities for urban students. Students will be considered for these competitive, merit-based scholarships based on academic talent and perseverance, leadership abilities and exemplary character. *(cont. on next page)*

4th Graders Log On at the Wharton School of Business

In November, the Spruce Hill fourth grade class was invited to the renowned Wharton School of Business to participate in an online math challenge. Wharton student Grant S. Mellon, Jr., reported that, “Of the schools that participated in the challenge, SHCS students performed the highest.” Sponsored by Kraft Foods and the Common Knowledge Scholarship Foundation, the challenge was designed to inspire students and introduce them to the opportunities, benefits, and rewards of education and its real-life applications through math.



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New Merit Scholarships

(cont. from page.1) Through these merit-based scholarships, the strong academic program at City Center Academy will continue to be enriched by commending the efforts of motivated and talented students. ■■

Through these merit-based scholarships, the strong academic program at City Center Academy will continue to be enriched by commending the efforts of motivated and talented students.

The Boice Scholarship

The Boice Scholarship was created to honor the vision, work, and legacy of Dr. James and Mrs. Linda Boice, who founded City Center Academy in 1983. The Boices lived out their Christian commitment and demonstrated their love for their city, urban teens, and scholastic excellence when they established this college-preparatory high school with the goal to teach teens to “think and act biblically and excel academically”.

This scholarship, the school’s most prestigious award, is intended to encourage highly-qualified students to excel in their high school education at City Center Academy. This merit-based scholarship is awarded to academically talented students who display Christian character and leadership ability. Donations checks for the Boice Scholarship Fund may be made out to “CCA/SHCS” with “BSF” written in the memo line.

The VanDijk Memorial Scholarship

Mrs. Gysbertha VanDijk (pronounced “van dike”), a former teacher from California, became acquainted with the work of CCA and grew to love it. In addition to providing financial support, she enjoyed getting to know and encouraging the school faculty. In 2007, Mrs. VanDijk chose to remember the school through an estate gift of an endowed scholarship fund in her name.

This merit-based scholarship is for academically talented students who qualify for financial aid. Awards will go to motivated learners who value their education and make positive contributions to the school community.

The SHCS Honors Scholarship

We are pleased to announce that Spruce Hill Christian School 8th grade students who choose to continue their education at City Center Academy have increasing opportunities to earn scholarships towards tuition costs. These scholarships are intended to:

- Encourage academic perseverance during the middle school years,
- Offer motivated students the opportunity to attend a rigorous college-preparatory high school, and
- Provide distinction for those students seeking competitive college placement.

The Spruce Hill Christian School Honors Scholarships will be awarded for the first time to two students in the SHCS graduating class of 2009.



CCA Students Naomi Henry and Portia Emory are the 2008-2009 Boice Scholarship Recipients.

For more information about the scholarships available at CCA/SHCS, please contact the Admissions Office at Spruce Hill, 215-382-7839, or City Center Academy, 215-731-1930.

News Flash

CCA senior, **Taylor Hawes**, has been selected as a semifinalist for the prestigious National Achievement Scholarship. Since 1964, this National Merit Scholarship program has recognized the nation's most academically promising black students.

Yekwon Sunwoo, first place winner of the renowned Grand Bohemian Orlando International Piano Competition, attends CCA part-time in the school's program for students who also attend the Curtis Institute of Music. Competition prizes for Yekwon include a CD recording with Classical Records, numerous recitals across the U.S. and in Russia, and concerts with the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra and the St. Petersburg Symphony in Russia.

After interning this summer in Councilman Rizzo's and Judge Djerassi's offices, **Iskar Smith** is organizing a mock trial team at CCA to compete in the citywide competition this winter. They are looking for an attorney or law student who would be willing to volunteer a few hours to coach the team. Please call CCA at 215-731-1930 if you are interested.



SHCS students show off their knowledge and costumes during the 5th Grade Social Studies State Project.



Training the Brain

Our mission is to pursue academic excellence with creativity and integrity for each child. We have effective programs and curricula in place as the foundation of our academic program. However, we know that all students have some learning weaknesses that affect their academic progress. We are constantly looking for strategic and creative ways to provide the necessary help and instruction our students need to overcome any academic challenges they face.

CCA/SHCS has now connected with LearningRx, an organization that offers a computer-based program called BrainSkills. This program addresses the educational needs of all learners, but especially those that may be struggling. Instead of simply managing the learning symptoms, BrainSkills seeks to eliminate learning problems at the core, cognitive level. Research has found that learning is difficult, if not impossible, if a student does not have the proper cognitive skills to hear, read, think, prioritize, plan, remember, and problem solve. The good news, though, is that cognitive skills can be developed through specific training activities. BrainSkills is designed to do exactly that, diagnosing and addressing every learner's individual needs.

Due to a generous foundation grant, both CCA/SHCS campuses have acquired the technology needed to implement the BrainSkills program. Our students are now able to maximize their academic potential through improving their cognitive abilities. We thank God for this blessing as we pursue excellence for each and every one of our students. ■■



Members of the CCA Class of 2009 receive their Philotimos Honor Society induction pins.

You can now make
donations online! Visit
www.citycenteracademy.org
or www.sprucehill.org
and donate today!

08 Spruce Hill Christian School and City Center Academy 09 Annual Fund

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he
became poor, so that you through his poverty
might become rich. –2 Corinthians 8:9*

God's economy is very different than a Wall Street or Main Street economy. According to 2 Corinthians 8:9, we become spiritually rich through the "poverty" of Christ. At Spruce Hill Christian School & City Center Academy, we seek to reflect this richness in all we do: excellent academic programs, top-notch faculty and staff, a dedicated Board of Directors, and a vibrant student culture. This kind of richness is *intangible*, yet prevalent throughout our entire school community.

Likewise, a more *tangible* form of "richness" is necessary for our school to maintain this level of excellence, and that is through financial resources. Tuition alone does not cover the costs of running our school, nor do we want it to. We strive for excellence, not elitism. Embedded in our mission is a commitment to make our school available to anyone, even if they cannot pay full tuition, as is the case for 60% of our students. This is accomplished through our Annual Fund, a vehicle for turning the individual generosity of donors into an eternal investment.

BOLDLY, WE HAVE SET OUR 2008-09 ANNUAL FUND GOAL AT \$700,000.

Some would dissuade us because of the challenging economic times in which we live. However, we are not naïve about this and we remain careful stewards of our resources. As you evaluate your riches – both tangible and intangible – would you consider making a financial contribution to our Annual Fund? More than ever this will require looking beyond our current economy and trusting in a biblical economy that promises eternal returns not measured in dollars and cents.

A gift envelope is enclosed for your convenience. You can also make donations online through our websites: www.citycenteracademy.org or www.sprucehill.org. We are thankful for your continued prayers and support.

City Center Academy & Spruce Hill Christian School

Benefit Dinner

Friday, May 8th • The Union League of Philadelphia

For more information call the Development Office at 215-382-7839 or e-mail smcdowell@sprucehill.org

Expressions of Thanks

"City Center Academy is one big family of people trying to learn. I love how the teachers don't just care about our education but also about what goes on in our everyday lives."
Portia, CCA Sophomore

"In the middle school the teachers trust us a lot. They build a community for us and help us fix our problems. We're encouraged to have deep conversations about what we think and feel and we're getting very prepared for the challenges of high school."
Sarah, SHCS 7th Grader



"I'm thankful for Spruce Hill because it's a place where you can learn more about God and being a Christian. If you don't understand something, the teachers will always help you. And it's a school where you don't have to worry about bad things happening."
Ashley, SHCS 5th grader

"[CCA] has nourished me more in one year than all previous educational environments have nourished me combined. I am certain that when I graduate this coming spring, I will be fully conscious of how prepared I have become because of this school."
Emily, CCA Senior



"My teachers comes up with really fun activities to help us learn, and she is always respectful to us. I also really like art because we have to be dedicated and work at things bit by bit."
Nathan, SHCS 3rd grader

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.” —2 Timothy 4:7

What Does Excellence Look Like?

by Dr. Seth R. Cohen, Headmaster

A number of years ago, the director for a national association of Christian schools came to visit our school and lead professional development workshops for our staff. When the day had ended and we were saying goodbye, the director told me that he had been surprised by the standard of excellence in our academic program and the professionalism of our faculty. He finished by confessing to me that in his heart, he had expected less from our school, simply because we were one of the few member schools doing business in the inner city. This man, who had visited more than a thousand schools in his career, had not expected to encounter excellence in the city.

So what does excellence in the city look like? It looks exactly the way excellence looks anyplace else. At our college preparatory school, we’re striving for excellence in all things, but especially in academic rigor, professionalism, scholastic enrichment and behavior standards.

We are first and foremost a school. As such, we are committed to excellence in the form of academic rigor. As a K-12 school, we start day one of kindergarten with a view towards college success. All along the way, we employ the best practices and finest curricula. By the time our students reach their junior and senior year, they are able to receive dual high school and college credit by taking courses at nearby Philadelphia Community College.

Second, our teaching staff engages in their job with professional excellence. Our teachers are experienced in the field of education, and most have or are working

towards their advanced degrees. These men and women are dedicated, not just to our students as learners, but also to our students as people. They mentor, tutor, encourage, discipline, inspire, enjoy, pray for and point their students to Jesus. While many heads of school struggle with teachers who insist on leaving the building by 3:00 pm every day, I struggle with teachers who come too early and leave too late – sometimes I have to send these dedicated professionals home! Our teachers see this excellence as part of their service before God and as an act of worship.

Third, we believe an excellent education is one that opens up the world to its students. Our curriculum is bursting with visual arts, music, soccer, choir, acting, basketball, ice skating, praise dancing, ballroom dancing, chess, track and more. Even better, we view the city as an oversized extension of our classrooms. This isn’t where we happen or have to be, but where God has graciously placed us.

Finally, we insist on the highest standards for Christian behavior. We refuse to give in to the culture of rudeness, but intentionally nurture a community of caring in which individuals are valued and taught to respect one another. This is done by employing social and emotional curricula which build up the learning community and strengthen self-control. We are not content with a mere system of behavior management and constraint, but we aim to reach the hearts of our children.

Excellence in Christian college preparatory education is our mandate. We are privileged to employ this in Philadelphia. While we celebrate our urban location, we all understand that the city can be a harsh place, too. Children are so vulnerable here, making our work even more important. Your support is making it possible for us to thrive. You are partners in this work, and we pray blessings on you for it. ■



Dr. Seth Cohen with the grade level winners of Spruce Hill's 2008 Headmaster's Reading Challenge.



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You can now make
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Winter 2008

*A newsletter for the
City Center Academy and
Spruce Hill Christian School
community*

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“A light
to the
city”



College Preparatory
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Dedicated &
Accomplished Faculty



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