



GESU SCHOOL

Educational Excellence in North Philadelphia in the Jesuit and IHM Traditions

Education for the 21st Century

PHILLY

BY LAUREN, 6TH GRADE

The city of Brotherly Love
 No praise comes down from above
 Some act like crooks
 Some don't want to look
 Most streets are not safe
 Some people just want to hate
 Some people are safe and happy
 With their mama and pappy
 But in Gesu School
 Kids feel cool
 To let their guard down
 And know they won't get a pound
 Down into the ground
 Some people have to pack
 When they track
 They think no one has their back
 I try to make a change—ashamed
 But no one listens to kids so I'm a
 Boom Boom get down on the floor
 I hear that sound once more
 Two bullets to the leg
 It was a girl we call Peg
 If this is the city of Brotherly Love
 I'd hate to see the city of Brotherly Hate.



Computer teacher Sallie Michalsky guides 7th graders Asya, Kenijah, and Lopaka through an exercise in one of the school's two computer labs. Thanks to generous donors, Gesu students have access to technology they might not have elsewhere. Equally importantly, they learn meaningful uses for technology as life-long learners in the 21st century.

Gesu students learn to use technology—and use technology to learn—with a wealth of resources at their fingertips.

Sallie Michalsky, Gesu's computer teacher, gets to know every student in the school, from pre-K on up, during their weekly computer class. While students may get lots of experience with things like video games outside of school, Mrs. Michalsky makes sure they learn the computer skills they'll need for high school, college, and the professional world.

Each grade focuses on age-appropriate technology topics and skills, from developing the motor skills to use a mouse to perfecting their knowledge of Microsoft Word. Typing (and not the kind you do with your thumbs) has been the focus for the 1st through 3rd graders recently as students completed weekly lessons and practice using an online program called Dance Mat Typing. Meanwhile, the 7th and 8th graders learn how to engage in meaningful online dialogue through weekly blogging, as they respond to writing prompts such as, "What is the world's biggest problem and how would you fix it?" Mrs. Michalsky has even created a web site with resources for each grade.

Stay tuned for the unveiling of the end product of the spring trimester's work—the 7th and 8th graders will design and publish their own web sites. Other technology initiatives in the works include establishing Skype connections with classrooms around the world so that the students can video chat live with classes in other countries.

Computer class isn't the only place technology and learning go together at Gesu. Every classroom is equipped with a SmartBoard, enabling teachers to incorporate online resources into their lessons. Initiatives such as Math First use online learning and practice to refine skills and motivate students through competition.

Recently, the school acquired 30 new laptops for the lower grades through Title I. The laptops have become a regular feature of "Center Time" in Kindergarten. Teacher Kathy Asta notes that the computers in the classroom promote "enthusiasm" and "allow for differentiated learning" when students are at different ability levels.

In more ways than one, technology at Gesu is preparing life-long learners for the the 21st century.

We the People Gesu's 2011 Celebration

Join us for an evening of cocktails, dinner, dessert, and inspiring entertainment in support of our children!

Thursday, May 5, 2011
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

National Constitution Center

Rev. George W. Bur, S.J. and Christine S. Beck
Recipients of the 2011 Gesu Spirit Medals

Opportunities to become a Sponsor or Patron for the Celebration are now available at www.gesuschool.org/wethepeople.html.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

During the recent Martin Luther King Day, the chance to listen again to his "I Have a Dream" speech provided powerful thoughts and questions.

"We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of Now. . . Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children."

I urge you to remember that NOW is the time.

Study after study shows that we, in our schools, in our cities, in our nation, are failing to help many children, but especially African American males. We are failing to motivate them to stay in school and reach their potential. As the UNCF motto expresses, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." But so it happens to many of our youth.

Today six 5th grade boys came to my office for pizza lunch. They are bright, eager and motivated, and all of them participate in Saint Joseph Prep's Magis program for talented young boys in North Philadelphia. Lively conversation on many topics included bullying, their desire for adults to listen to them, Congresswoman Giffords, and what they love about Gesu. These fifth graders asked many questions and expressed many opinions. They want to become heart surgeons, pediatricians, astronauts and accountants. Our 45 minute allotted lunch quickly became a one hour lunch because of their wide interests and curiosity.



When they left to return to class, my first thought was "What gifted treasures!" Then my thoughts quickly turned to these questions: How can we help these young boys keep their dreams alive? How can we help them achieve their dreams and reach their fullest potential? How can we keep them from succumbing to the lure of the streets?

Now is the time to challenge them. Now is the time to provide every resource we can muster to help them believe in themselves and gain the needed tools to reach their goals. If we don't do this now, we may lose them in three years, in five years. And if that happens, what a waste of such gifted young people!

All of us at Gesu are extraordinarily grateful for your support and for your investment in our children. However, we also ask that you continue your generosity – with a sense of urgency. As Martin Luther King said, "Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children."

With thanks and blessings,

Christine S. Beck
President and CEO

“ One of the reasons my parents support Gesu School is because they like the fact that the school caters to the neighborhood children providing them educational opportunities they might not otherwise have... They were both previous educators and they believe strongly that the children thrive in the environment of Gesu. ”

–Susan Kim, daughter of James and Agnes Kim, as quoted by the *Main Line Times*, December 14, 2010, in an article highlighting The James and Agnes Kim Foundation's \$1 million grant to Gesu's new scholarship campaign, *Gesu Isn't Gesu Without You*.

TRUSTEE NOTES

We welcome **Terence Connors**, Partner at KPMG LLP, and **John J. Curry**, Principal Harvest Equities, Inc. to our Board of Trustees.

THREE CHEERS!

Fourth grader **Ishea**, 4th grader **Nadia**, and 7th grader **Devone** took 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places respectively in the Catholic Peace Fellowship Martin Luther King Jr. Day Art Competition. At the St. Joseph's Prep Forensics Competition, 7th grader **Kimberly** won 3rd place in Prose and 7th grader **Lauren** won 5th place in Poetry. Alumni **Leya Egea-Hinton '02**, **Desmond Shannon '02**, and **Shakeeta Parker '02** are participating in the first cohort of Alliance for Catholic Education volunteers teaching in inner-city Catholic Schools in Philadelphia and earning their M.Ed.'s at Saint Joseph's University. Alumna **Catera Rivers '02** is teaching at Mastery Charter School through the highly competitive Teach for America program. Trustee and alumnus **Daryl Shore '94** is now Assistant Vice President in JP Morgan Chase's Community Development Real Estate Program, financing and developing affordable housing and revitalization of low-and moderate-income communities nationwide, and was recently featured in a publication by his high school, Westtown School. (Read the article at www.gesuschool.org/shore.html.) Our **eighth graders** are beginning to receive their high school acceptances. Congratulations to **Kamero**, **Juwan** and **Semaj**, who have been accepted to Saint Joseph's Prep!



Fourth grader Ishea's "My Mural of Peace" won 1st place in the Catholic Peace Fellowship Martin Luther King Jr. Day Art Competition.



Peter Crimmins from WHYY interviews 4th graders Andrew, Christian, and Abrimn about Philadelphia Orchestra Concert Master and Violinist David Kim's visit to Gesu School. The students enjoyed the opportunity to give their opinions.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL NEWS MEDIA COVER MULTIPLE STORIES ABOUT GESU. You're the reason behind Gesu's newsworthy success.

TV and radio coverage of our innovative outreach partnerships with The Philadelphia Orchestra and The Rock School for Dance Education... Features and op-eds in national publications, like *Momentum* and *Educational Leadership*, about our Youngest Scholars Program, our symposium on closing the college gap, and our ability to keep violence at bay...

Why are the national and local news media so eager to cover stories about Gesu School? Because they know we're making a huge difference in society by educating "the whole child" —the civic-minded, aspirational, creative, moral child, the one who represents the fate of our future and breaking the cycle of poverty and violence that too often destroys their potential and their dreams.

YOUR support ensures that all children are prepared to pursue those dreams and play a role in that future. A critical mass of journalists, business professionals, philanthropists and community leaders are giving so much attention to Gesu because YOU help us secure the kind of high-quality education every child deserves. Thank you!



Gesu's Founding Board Chairman Win Churchill, Gesu's Founding President Rev. George W. Bur, SJ, 7th grader Teyonna, 6th grader Denzell, and President Christine S. Beck pause for a photo as Win is presented with the Gesu Founder's Award for his 20 years of service to the school at a dinner in his honor. The photo as Win is presented with a gift and a book of letters from students also presented Win with a gift and a book of letters from the faculty, staff and students. Over the years, Win has brought countless friends to Gesu to save and sustain the school for the children in the neighborhood. He now serves Gesu as Board Co-Vice Chairman and Chairman Emeritus.

ON A COLD NIGHT IN DECEMBER, WARM THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS FILLED THE SCHOOL. Friends, faculty, students and staff celebrated the contributions of Gesu's Founding Board Chairman, Win Churchill.

Win Churchill's change of role from Board Chairman to Co-Vice Chairman and Chairman Emeritus marked an occasion to celebrate Win's enormous contribution to saving and sustaining Gesu School over the last twenty years.

Over 125 people were in attendance for the celebration, which included performances by Gesu's Choir, the 3rd grade ballet dancers under the instruction of The Rock School for Dance Education, and one of Gesu's award-winning orators, as well as accolades from Mayor Nutter, Board Chairman Gordon Cooney, Trustee Ralph Saul, President and CEO Christine S. Beck, and Founding President Rev. George W. Bur, S.J.

Friends and family gave generously to Gesu's campaign for scholarships in Win's name, including over \$140,000 to endow the Winston J. Churchill Endowed Scholarship.

YOUNG FRIENDS SHOW BIG HEARTS.

Two of their recent events garnered enough support to sponsor two children.

In the fall, the Young Friends hosted a "Dareoke" night using a cutting edge website mydunktank.com, which helps individuals raise money for their favorite charities. Through the site, donors can make a \$10 donation in exchange for a chance to vote for the dare they want the organizer to complete.

Twelve daring Young Friends, coordinated by Steve Shea and Mike Wham, allowed their friends and family to vote for which Kareoke songs they should sing at the Young Friends' last happy hour. You can find a link to the Dareoke web page and the YouTube "evidence" of the completed dares at www.gesuschool.org/young_friends.htm.

In January, a committee of enthusiastic volunteers organized by Julia Rafferty hosted the 2nd Annual Night Out With Friends at the Paddock in Wayne. Over 150 people attended or made donations for the event. Special thanks to Iris Creative Group for donating the invitation design!

Together, the two events raised \$12,000, enough to cover the cost of educating two children at Gesu School for a year. **For more information about upcoming Young Friends events, or to join the Young Friends email list, visit www.gesuschool.org/young_friends.htm.**

HOT TOPICS SCRUTINIZED AT SYMPOSIUM. Leaders in the field considered low college-completion rates and separate but unequal higher education.

Headlines scream about the widening income gap between rich and poor – but the hot topic as more students are heading to college than ever before is the alarming higher education opportunity gap between socioeconomically disadvantaged and advantaged students. As "white flight" from less selective institutions creates stratification on campus and disadvantaged students face overwhelming obstacles to being college ready, policy analysts like Richard Kahlenberg warn that "American higher education is in danger of quickly becoming both separate and unequal."

Closing the College Completion Gap, A Guidebook for the Faith Community, a report released by Civic Enterprises in tandem with Gesu's 13th Annual Symposium on Inner-City Education, revealed other sad findings: "Every year, more than 90 percent of low-income teenagers say they plan to attend college, but only half of these students will actually enroll in college. Only slightly more than half who enroll will finish..."

But there ARE ways to bridge the socioeconomic divide, which the symposium panel, including Kahlenberg and CEO of Civic Enterprises John Bridgeland, tackled under the direction of symposium moderator Dr. John DiIulio. The panel, which also included experts Wanda Bigham, George Bur, Eric Furda, and Christine Beck, offered invaluable perspectives from the trenches, examined the latest research, discussed some innovative solutions, and explored how to make college work for more low-income students.. Read or listen to the the full transcript at www.gesuschool.org/2010symposiumrecap.htm.



ATHLETIC CORNER

Soccer: This fall, Gesu School and St. Malachy's established a new soccer team under Coach Vince Riley. The first season was a great learning experience for the players, who held their own despite their newness to the sport.

Basketball: Boy's Varsity showed an upswing to their season, winning their last three straight games. The Boy's JV team enjoyed an explosive start to the CYO Region 8 season with a 7-0 run and remains undefeated. Girls Varsity has also made a strong early showing, going 5-3 to rank 3rd in the league as of the middle of January. A link to all basketball schedules and standings can be found on our website under upcoming events at www.gesuschool.org/announcements.htm.

GESU ISN'T GESU WITHOUT YOU CAMPAIGN FOR SCHOLARSHIPS BUILDS MOMENTUM.

The campaign aims to create a sustainable business model as the school ministers to children and families in financial need.

Gesu never turns a child away because a family cannot afford tuition—the fact is, however, very few families can pay the modest cost. Therefore, Gesu must raise almost its entire operating budget every year. Thankfully, generous individuals provide annual scholarships for many students.

In the spring of 2010, to create a new business model for sustainability, Gesu's Trustees and President Chris Beck undertook a three-year Scholarship Campaign to provide for the majority of Gesu's 450 students by the school's 20th Anniversary in 2013.

Chaired by Trustees Bob McAlaine and Julia Rafferty, the campaign is raising named endowed scholarships (\$125,000) as well as new and multi-year student sponsorship pledges at \$6,000 a year.

The Campaign for Scholarships, *Gesu Isn't Gesu without You*, will enter its public phase later in the year. Please contact Seán Lavelle (215) 763-3660 or sean.lavelle@gesuschool.org for more information.

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GESU AMONG 5% OF
CHARITIES EARNING CHARITY
NAVIGATORS'S HIGHEST RATING
FOR 5TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR.



"We are proud to announce Gesu School has earned our fifth consecutive 4-star rating [Charity Navigator's highest rating] for its ability to efficiently manage and grow its finances. Only 5% of the charities we rate have received at least 5 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Gesu School consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America. This 'exceptional' designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Gesu School from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust," writes Ken Berger, CEO of Charity Navigator, a nonprofit evaluator that has been profiled in *Forbes*, *Business Week*, and *Kiplinger's Financial Magazine*.



Volunteer Cheryl Marks reads to students in the YET after school program. The program helps students who are below grade level in reading with extra individual attention. While many of Gesu's students start school with a lot of catching up to do, Gesu offers a variety of programs to get them on track, thanks to the help of volunteers and donors like you!



Dr. Erwin (center), Gesu's advanced writing teacher, meets with Aliyah and Semaj, two of Gesu's peer mediators. The Peer Mediator Program is one of the many ways Gesu is helping students grow into healthy adults of strong character.

GESU'S 3RD ANNUAL WRITING CONTEST BEGINS MARCH 7TH.

The contest, again endorsed by the Mayor, is open to all middle school students at 30 schools in North Philadelphia. This year's theme is, "Why study?" Cash prizes are awarded. Contact Germaine Hendon at germaine.hendon@gesuschool.org for more information.

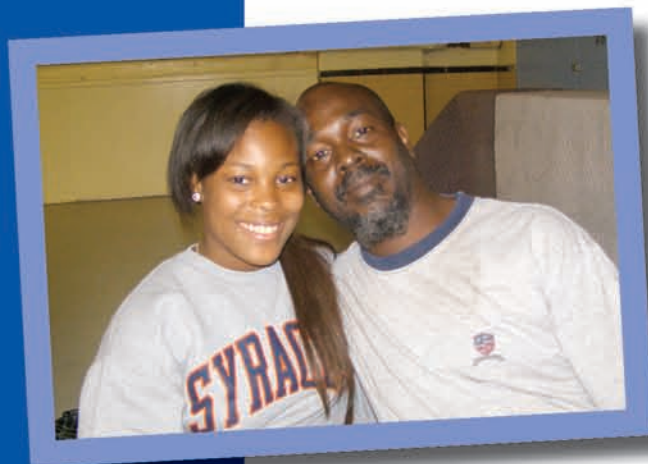
Gesu's United Way Donor Choice Number is 7408 (Gesu Community Service Project).



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Address correction requested



Alumna Ashlei Tinsley '06 sports a sweatshirt from Syracuse University, where she majors in veterinary science and maintains a 3.7 GPA. She is pictured here with her proud father, Terrence Tinsley, who keeps Gesu's building in good order as Director of Maintenance.

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