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/wethethepeople.html.

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 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.
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 quicksand 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 9th 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 desires for adults to listen to them, Congresswoman Giffords, and what they love about Gesu. Three of them shared many questions and expressed many opinions. They want to become heart surgeons, pediatricians, astronauts and accountants. Our 45 minute allotted lunch quickly became an hour long 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 OTHER WISE HAVE... THEY WERE BOTH PREVIOUS EDDUCATORS 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 Terrence Connors, Partner at KPMG LLP and John J. Crowley, Principal, Harvest Equities, Inc. to our Board of Trustees.

THREE CHEERS!

Fourth grader Ishaa, 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 1st place in Prose and 7th grader Lauren won 2nd place in Poetry. Alumni Leya Egera-Hinton ’02, Desmond Shannon ’02, and Shaekeem 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 Caterra Rivers ’02 is teaching at Mastery Charter School through the highly competitive Teach for America program. Trustee and alumna Daryl Sharp ’84 is now Assistant Vice President in J.P. 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/ahore.html.) Our eighth graders are beginning to receive their high school acceptance letters. Congratulations to Kamero, Jawan and Semaj, who have been accepted to Saint Joseph’s Prep!

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 Montessori 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, S.J, 7th grade Tyseonna, 6th grade Denniel, and President Christina S. beck pause for a photo at Win’s retirement dinner. The key 26 years of service to the school at a dinner in his honor. The legendary co-founder Win presented a photo of the stories of the faculty, staff and students. Over the years, Win has brought the community together. He was served Gesu as Board Co-Vice Chairmen 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.

Gesu’s 450 students by the school’s 20 years of service to the school at a dinner in his honor. The legendary co-founder Win presented a photo of the stories of the faculty, staff and students. Over the years, Win has brought the community together. He was served Gesu as Board Co-Vice Chairmen and Chairman Emeritus.

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.

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 McAulane 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 Sean Lavelle (215) 763-3660 or sean.lavelle@gesuschool.org for more information.

Young Friends Show Big Hearts. Two of their recent events garnered enough support to sponsor two children.

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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 Karaoke 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.

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 upsweep 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 5-1 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 AMONG 5% OF CHARITIES EARNING CHARITY NAVIGATOR'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.

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).