

The Crusader Chronicle



Building a Legacy
God-Centered. Student Focused.

**SPECIAL
EDITION**

The Three Chairs of a Legacy

The legacy of Christian Education continues to unfold at Whitinsville Christian School. I am excited about this issue of the Crusader Chronicle because it offers occupancy of chairs of the past, present, and future. Each needs a voice and proper place at the table of legacy building.

For 20 years I occupied an office near the entry to the building, and it served me and my responsibilities well. I enjoyed being at the hub of activity for young students at WCS. When we hired a full-time elementary school principal this year, that all changed. I moved upstairs to a very different office, in a different environment with a marvelous view. Serving my multi-dimensional functions, my new location offers easy access to the conference room, close proximity to the business office, the admissions office, the advancement office and the international student coordinator's office. The handicap is separation from my two wonderfully supportive administrative assistants whose efficiency, effectiveness, good humor, and integrity continue long distance. However, for the present it is an almost ideal location. The view from my 2nd floor window allows a peek into the developing future of WCS.



Land clearing and land filling with thousands (yes thousands) of cubic yards of clean, sand-like fill have been transported to create a new parking lot to accommodate the expanded facilities at WCS. An outrageously successful, beyond imagination Rise Up and Build Campaign is propelling WCS into the future. This special edition of the Chronicle offers details on the

present campaign and the future building. Fond memories are traced back to the plethora of volunteers who so generously gave of their time throughout the past 88 years to build the current building, harvesting tree by tree, placing brick by brick, positioning bleacher by bleacher and moving beam by beam. Resoundingly colorful stories of the infamous Peter T. Koopman ebulliently and confidently volunteering to help build a legacy of support for Christian education echo throughout our history. He is one of many whose legacy positioned us for where we are today.

Recently several staff and trustees spent time strategically planning for a future beyond the performing arts center and the new gymnasium. Visions included increased access to a transformative education, increased educational opportunities preparing students to soar into the mid-21st Century, and a more diverse student body of joy-filled learners being challenged in a sustainable and attractive Christian educational environment. Our faculty will challenge the muddled thinking and behavior swirling around us and offer our students the richness of wholesome, ethical lives of well-being and Christ-like service. Our identity, the world we are preparing our students for 15 years from now, and our values as an enduring and vital Christian educational institution are all focused around being God centered and student focused.

As you enjoy this issue, I trust those three empty chairs will be occupied with the ways that we are rooted in Christ, engaged in fulfilling our current mission, and focused on meeting the needs of the future at WCS. It is truly building a thriving legacy of Christian education in the heart of New England that honors the Lord of the Universe.

Lance B. Engbers
Headmaster



IN THIS ISSUE:

Read how **Alice Jellesma Hoekstra ('48)** credits a community which values the individual as her inspiration to become a strong and humble servant of God despite health challenges.

See how regardless of his stature and success on the basketball court, **Alex Vander Baan ('05)** holds his WCS friendships as his greatest achievements and best memories.

Get a glimpse of how trust placed in a new-to-WCS 9th grader led **Marisa McIlrath Jones ('97)** to pursue a career in arts education, serving inner-city schools through Boston's Huntington Theatre.

Cheer along as we celebrate the finally-realized dreams and high expectations of **Sarah MacKay Robinson ('01)** as this gifted runner battled through an injury-riddled career to qualify for the 2016 Olympic Marathon Trials!

Last, but not least, rejoice with us for the courage, faith and character of **Daniel Blais ('14)**, who has entered discipleship training in the Middle East.



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The *Crusader Chronicle* is published twice a year for families, alumni, and friends of the school. For a change of address, to add someone to the mailing list, or to let us know of updates, please email advancement@whitinsvillechristian.org.

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Rise Up & Build

Together We Can!

Just as we joined together as a community to build a new Library Media Center, which opened in late 2013, now we unite to construct a new fieldhouse and fine arts center. It all springs from a long-range plan developed to address space and utilization challenges that came to the forefront during our most recent accreditation review. This plan, approved by the Board of Trustees in 2012, set the wheels in motion to complete the new facilities by 2017.

This past summer, as a search was under way for a new advancement director to lead the capital campaign, three committed WCS parents took leadership in launching the effort and introducing it to the WCS community. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to John Esler, Tony Brookhouse and Tom Swaim for leading the way.

The \$17.9 million campaign, named *Rise Up & Build*, was inspired by the Bible story of the prophet Nehemiah, who challenged the people of Jerusalem to rebuild the city walls destroyed by the Babylonians. The seemingly impossible project took an astounding 52 days, with each individual and each family pitching in what they could. Likewise, the WCS community is being encouraged to work together with each person playing a part, accomplishing what on the surface appears to be a difficult challenge for a small community.

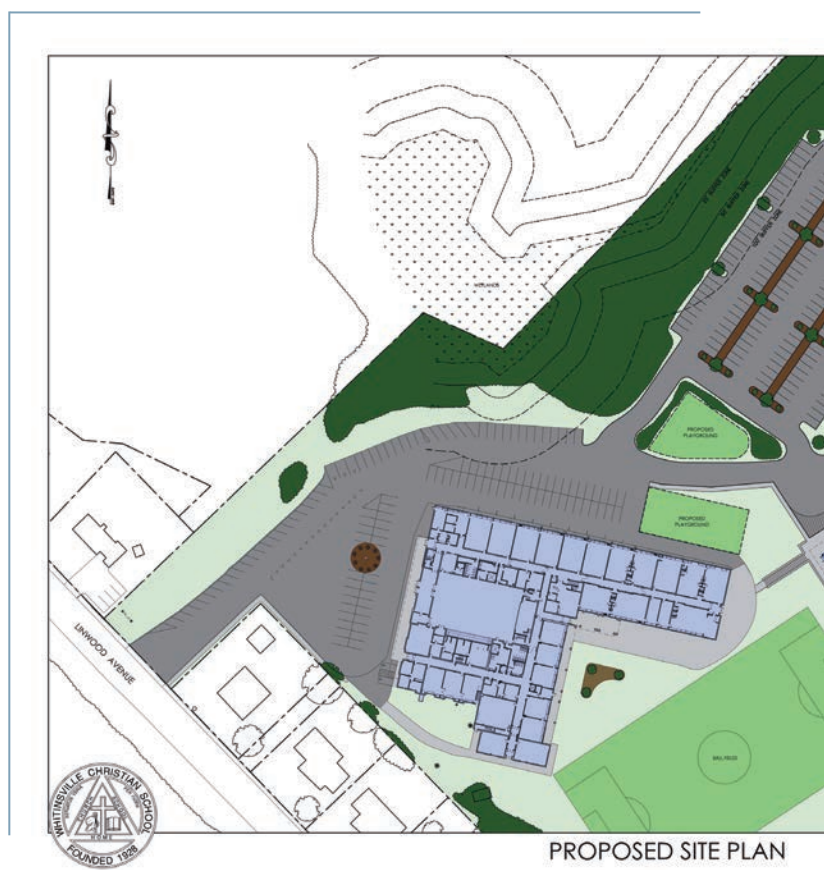
Currently, over \$15.475 million has been raised of the \$17.9 million needed for the campaign. Raising this amount in just eight months has allowed WCS to save over \$1.65 million through a design-build contract. An additional \$4.5 million in savings is being realized through the shared construction cost of building both facilities at the same time.

Starting in December, a 3:1 matching campaign gift opportunity from a group of anonymous WCS donors of up to \$2 million was introduced and remains in effect.

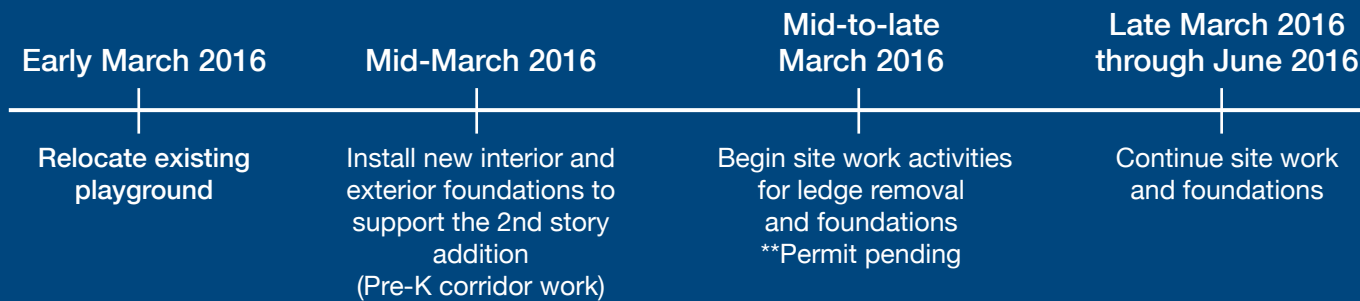
As of our publication date, site work is nearly complete on a new parking lot to accommodate the needs of the new structure and to relocate the playground, which occupies the future footprint of the new facility. Other preliminary steps to the spring groundbreaking are also taking place.

In the next pages, we are excited to share the plans and our progress!

The initial design work was performed by Dixon-Salo Architects Incorporated. The construction firm of JM Coull Inc. has been selected to complete the project.



CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE



Changing the Landscape for a New Generation of Students

With the completion of the first phase of a capital campaign to construct a new athletic fieldhouse and performing arts center, work has begun on the \$17.9 million expansion project. The first steps have been to clear the way for a new parking lot as well as to prepare land for relocating the school playground which now sits in the footprint of the new facilities.

Since mid-November there has been a steady rumble and clamor of trucks and equipment rolling across the acreage of Whitinsville Christian School. From the harvesting and removal of trees and the blasting of rock, to the dumping of fill and the smoothing of ground, we are witnessing day by day the changing landscape of WCS.



We're excited to have alumni **Patrick Salmon ('11)**, above left, and **Joshua Bloem ('14)** working on the Rise Up & Build project. Patrick earned a two-year degree at Garrett College in Maryland before returning to Whitinsville. He is employed by WW Contracting Corp. of Upton. A resident of Uxbridge, Josh earned his Commercial Driver's License and is a driver for Koopman Lumber.

Room for Play

by Sarah Bowler, Elementary Principal

Since the new athletic and arts facility will be located on the site of the current playground, plans are being implemented to relocate the playground and enhance the recess experience for students. The playground committee has been busy meeting weekly since September. The current plan is to move the playground to the far side of the soccer field (and the clearing of trees and moving of earth has already begun). There will also be a smaller area closer to the school building near the Janet Colby garden. A playground designer has been retained to incorporate creative/imaginative play areas and include activities to utilize gross motor skills, all within a natural environment using natural materials. The ADA accessible playground will also have a multi-function stage area to enhance opportunities for imaginative play.

The existing playground equipment was moved in several stages during the first week of March so that progress can continue on the new building while ensuring students have a place to play. Most of the new equipment will be added during the summer.

June through end of
August 2016

Complete steel and weather
tight second story building
addition

September through
July 2017

Construction and substantial
completion of Performing Arts/
Fieldhouse, with new bridge
and 2nd story addition

August 2017

Final closeout and occupancy
of Performing Arts/Fieldhouse,
with new bridge and second
story addition



“The new fine arts building is going to change the game for drama at WCS.”

– Marisa McIlrath Jones, WCS alumna

WCS Fine Arts Enters a New Stage

WCS Fine Arts has faced numerous challenges since its early days. As the school has grown, so have the demands on the Krull Auditorium. Dividing time among the athletic programs, drama productions, musical performances, and gym classes has made it difficult to prepare sets, find storage for props and costumes, and hold regular rehearsals. The WCS Strings, Choir, Band, and the vocal ensembles have found it necessary to rent facilities off-site for scheduling reasons and for appropriate acoustics.

In the new arts facility, dedicated space will be available for storage, rehearsals and performances, and timing the use of the stage will be less complex. Professional quality acoustics and lighting will be built into the design. Gallery space will also be available for displaying student art.



High School All-State Musicians

Congratulations to (above, left to right) Andrew Baker (chorus), Hannah Mercer (chorus), and Michael Dunlap (orchestra). These talented students were selected to the Massachusetts All-State Festival and Concert. They performed at Boston’s Symphony Hall in March.



Many incredible performers have nurtured their talents through the WCS arts programs. Meet just a few of the many gifted individuals who have considered WCS home.

WCS Cellist Plays with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra Billy von Hein, WCS senior, performs throughout the year with this highly-selective repertory orchestra.

“Billy’s commitment to music and service is exemplary,” said Tammy Kaye, WCS Strings Director. “He uses his gift in a beautiful way and is a wonderful role model.”

Marisa McIlrath Jones ('97)

Marisa McIlrath came to WCS as a freshman in 1993. She auditioned for *Little Women* and to her surprise was selected for the lead role as Jo March. That was her first introduction to the school and to the drama program. Marisa explained that drama became a strong foundation for her high school experience, where she developed her very best friends—who remain so to this day—and for her future aspirations in theater.

After participating in every WCS production from that point until graduation, Marisa went on to attend Emerson College and earned a Bachelor's in Fine Arts, then on to Harvard for a



Master's of Arts in Education. Soon after, in 2002, she joined the Huntington Theatre Company in Boston where she today is an education associate and drama instructor. In addition to producing a full schedule of professional plays featuring renowned actors/actresses, Huntington has one of the largest educational

departments of any regional theater company. It sponsors performance competitions, provides artists in residence for the Boston Public Schools, holds afterschool programs and summer theater institutes, and creates and collaborates with schools in student productions. The Huntington Theatre Company has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the President's Council on the Arts and Humanities, Massachusetts House of Representatives and Senate, and City of Boston's City Council.

"I've spent a significant amount of time in my professional life making the case for arts in education and, specifically, advocating for theatre experiences for students at the secondary level," Marisa said. "I feel great pride in knowing that my once small school is growing and has taken significant steps to provide enrichment opportunities for students outside the core curriculum. Through this building project a commitment to the arts is secured. I look forward to seeing what the future generations of students will accomplish as a result of this investment."

"I was just so lucky to have attended WCS where even a freshman can be selected for a lead role. That would not have happened in another school! The WCS drama program built a strong foundation forever for my future."

Marisa and her husband, Kevin, a WCS alumnus, have three children and live in Hopkinton.

Heather Hannon Rufo WCS Drama Coach, 2004-2005

Heather was asked to lead drama at WCS in 2004 during a major transition period for the program. During her time with WCS Drama, she directed *Cinderella: The Musical* and *Titanic*. Her training and experience in vocal performance and dramatic production made her an excellent choice. Heather attended Samford University in Birmingham, AL, a Christian college with a renowned vocal performance department. She later graduated from Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, MA and completed her minor in vocal performance through the New England Conservatory.



During and after college Heather performed professionally in productions at the Speakeasy Stage, Fiddlehead Theater, Turtlelane Theater, Overture Productions, Cape Repertory, and the Foothills Theatre. From 2005-2007, she lived in New York City, where she performed in a musical workshop and a recording of *Poe - The Musical*, which played at the off-Broadway Metropolitan Playhouse. She also was a featured extra in the movie *Fever Pitch* and the HBO series *The Sopranos*.

Heather and her husband, Bill, live in Southboro, MA, where they are raising three young daughters. Currently on professional hiatus, Heather looks forward to returning to the stage sometime in the near future. "I am so happy to hear that WCS is building an arts building," Heather said. "There is so much talent in the WCS community, and it is amazing to see so much support for the arts!"



Jessie Henderson ('99) This WCS alumna and drama student is now a Hollywood producer. Some of her recent work includes:
Ghostbusters (2016) – Executive Producer

Spy (2015) – Producer

The Heat (2013) – Co-Producer

Revolutionary Road (2008) – Assistant

"While in high school, Jessie was a good friend, a gifted actor and accepted lead roles as well as supporting roles with grace. Jessie lived every production and her infectious smile lit up every place she entered."

– Mary Dykstra, HS Drama Director

Building a Fieldhouse of Dreams



ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM VIEW



(above) A light-filled, contemporary lobby with trophy cases and space for art displays will be a central gathering point joining the fieldhouse and fine arts center.

(left) The fieldhouse design also incorporates a new training room and multipurpose space.

(below) The gymnasium will feature multiple basketball courts, expanded seating and spacious locker rooms.



Powering Through CHALLENGES

Sarah MacKay Robinson ('01)

Sarah MacKay Robinson qualified for the U.S. Olympic Marathon trials by running a 2:42:36 at the California International Marathon in Sacramento on Dec. 6. Sarah lives in Seattle and runs for Oiselle, a running and athletic apparel company, where she is the Creative Director. The Olympic Marathon Trials were held Feb. 13 in Los Angeles. Sarah achieved this just 15 months after she and her husband welcomed their first child.

An accomplished runner at WCS and in Central Massachusetts, Sarah made varsity cross country in 7th grade. But her love of running started even earlier. “My first 5k race was the WCS fun run in 6th grade, Sarah said. “I remember feeling so effortless running. At first I was embarrassed to leave my girlfriends who were run-walking, but the feel of running was too good to care. I felt free and happy. I didn’t know how to describe it then, but it empowered me and gave me confidence. When I was running I had a singular focus, I didn’t think about looking cool (I didn’t) or what anyone thought or anything else. I just ran.”

Early in her WCS running career, she was fast and fearless in her competitions, breaking records and prompting college recruiters to fill her mailbox with inquiries. Sarah had a tough road ahead of her, however, enduring multiple knee surgeries in high school. Somehow she always powered through. She was cross country league champion and runner of the year in 10th grade. She had the 2 mile record (11:10.6) and ran in the Foot Locker national cross country championship race at North Carolina State University. In 11th grade meniscus problems prevented her from running in districts or states but she nevertheless was conference champion. In track that same year she broke the mile record (5:19.3) in a dual meet at Northbridge. In her senior year she faced yet another knee surgery and couldn’t run until the last three meets of the cross country season, but placed third in the district meet and led her team to second place, qualifying for states. That cross country season, her last, was really special as her sister Rebekah ('07) was a contributing teammate as a 6th grader. Her brother Daniel ('04) also was



Hard work and persistence finally paid off for Sarah in her December race in Sacramento.

on a state qualifying team as a freshman that year.

Sarah attended Colorado State University on a partial athletic scholarship and continued training and rehabbing. One fateful afternoon, she and a few friends were in a car accident and Sarah ended up with three broken vertebrae. In typical fashion, she never gave up; she just kept working and, late in her collegiate career, had some success including a team trip to nationals.



Sarah began running cross country in middle school.

After college, Sarah moved to Seattle and quietly ran competitively, in fits and starts, while beginning her career at Oiselle. She met and married her husband, Owen, and in 2014 gave birth to Penelope, or “PJ,” as Sarah calls her. After taking a break for a couple of years and finding a good life/training balance, everything came together at last.

“I actually did one of my first workouts just after PJ on the new WCS track,” Sarah recalls. “Mrs. VandenAkker was there with a class playing tennis. We chatted a bit and the flood of memories hit me. She was always excited by my races and encouraging. Mr. Chenet was my first coach. Running the pancake run on a late summer morning was one of my favorites. My mother [Anne Mackay] stepped in as coach and she was great. We had puddle runs and spaghetti dinners. Mr. Vander Baan was coaching the guys and there was always good banter there.”

“Running was a really special place for me, a little family of misfits. And certainly my fondest memories of high school. I’d trade my prom dress for my spikes any day. My best memories were running.”

Today in her early 30’s, Sarah finds herself in the best condition of her life and, with the support of her friends, colleagues and family, she looks forward to a great race in Los Angeles. Congratulations and Godspeed, Sarah!

“This is bigger than money or cash prizes...I’ve thought about quitting so many times, and then I remember this race, and now I’m finally here. This is my Olympics.”

—Sarah Mackay Robinson ('01) in the New York Times, Feb. 12, 2016

Friendships Score Biggest

Alex Vander Baan ('05)

WCS students, parents and alumni will most likely remember Alex Vander Baan as the big, 6' 9" power forward who led the 2005 varsity basketball team to the school's first state title. His strength and agility on the court made him a force to be reckoned with in the league and across the state. His numbers and his leadership together made him an attractive Division 1 Collegiate prospect, and Holy Cross College signed him to a four-year basketball scholarship.

His high school achievements were impressive: A three-time Dual Valley Conference All-Star meet ... Named to All-Central Massachusetts and to the Metro West Super Team in 2004 and 2005 ... Totaled 1,299 points and 1,100 rebounds during his high school career. Yet, basketball wasn't Alex's only sport. He was an accomplished cross country runner, a two-time All-State meet. The boys' cross country team had a 61-meet winning streak during his career, winning four Dual Valley Conference titles. From all accounts, it seems as if those things would dominate his memories of high school.

But that's not the way Alex recalls his time at WCS, or at Holy Cross. "Winning the races or the state championship, or on the court in college, that's not where I have my best memories," Alex said. "The team accomplishments were great, but I really enjoyed the long runs and early morning basketball workouts.



To this day, my closest friends are the people I invested time with outside of practice."

"There are a lot of teachable moments in competition, but it's all the hours outside the season when you're working together, that's when you learn the most," he explained. "You learn a lot from your friends and your friendships."

When discussing the new fieldhouse being built at WCS, Alex said he was happy that it was finally coming to fruition. "In my opinion, WCS has always provided one of most well-rounded educational experiences in New England. It's very rare to attend a school where one can play multiple sports, while participating in orchestra and robotics. This is a special quality of WCS. Students have the opportunity to try many different activities, which allows them to discover what they are truly passionate about. This facility will only enhance that experience."

Alex graduated with an economics major from Holy Cross in 2009. Right out of college he worked for an equity trading company in Connecticut, then at Morgan Stanley on the trading desk in New York City. Today, Alex works for Wellington Management and lives in Boston with his wife, Ali.

Finishing Strong

Thomas Rodger ('12)

Some individuals have untapped talents that, once discovered and developed, propel them to great accomplishments. Such is the case with Thomas Rodger, who did not begin competitive running until his junior year at WCS, coming over as a convert from soccer. WCS cross country coach Chris Vander Baan said Thomas was a coach's dream. "His drive to achieve what was expected of him made coaching him easy. He always beat every guy he was supposed to beat. He was selfless and led by his actions in practice and in races. In cross country talk, he was a 'gamer.' Thomas did exactly what I asked of him. He waited in the DVC league meet to cross the exact line in the dirt I had established with him before the meet, then took off and beat the rest of the field to become league champion. Thomas was unique as an athlete as he was able to flick the switch and give one hundred percent."

His junior year of high school, Thomas was team MVP, Dual Valley Conference Co-Runner of the Year and the Central



Massachusetts Division 2 meet champion. He was named to the Telegram & Gazette All-Star Team for fall sports. In track and field that same year, he qualified for the All-State Meet in both the 800m and 1600m races, with the 1600m relay team placing first at the Central Mass. state meet and finishing 6th at the All-State meet, setting a new school record.

During the 2012 indoor season, Thomas won the 1000m at the Dual Valley Conference championship meet and at the Division 4 state meet, setting a new school record. He was also a member of the 1600m relay team, winning the state meet and competing at the New Balance Indoor Nationals. That year, WCS won its first-ever Indoor District team title. Thomas, captain of both the indoor and outdoor teams, was named a Worcester Telegram & Gazette All-Star for winter sports.

Continued on next page

An Unexpected Bonus!

New Classrooms and a Connecting Bridge



Artist's rendering showing the connecting bridge at night.

Continued from page 10

Now a senior Marketing major at Roberts Wesleyan College in Rochester, NY, Thomas led his cross country team and the entire field at the East Coast Conference Championships in 2015, clocking a blazing 25:03 in the 8K, and was named 2015 Men's Runner of the Year. He was also named to the All-Conference First Team for the third year in a row, and finished 10th in the NCAA East Regionals with a 10K time of 31:58, the second fastest time in team history. In track and field, Thomas earned National Christian College Athletic Association All-American honors in the 1500m and in the 4x800 relay in 2015. At an early 2016 indoor Highlander Invitational, he took first place in the 600m.

"Thomas is one of the top three collegiate runners to come out of WCS," Coach Vander Baan concluded.



Generous giving allowed us to reach the design/build discount level. Those savings, combined with costs lower than originally expected, allows us to add 10,000 additional feet of classroom space above the preschool/elementary wing. A connecting bridge to the new fieldhouse and fine arts center is one more exciting bonus!

WE'RE ALMOST THERE

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Total campaign goal | \$17,900,000 |
| Funds raised to date | \$15,470,000 |
| Maximum 3:1 matching gift | \$2,000,000 |
| Funds needed to receive full matching gift | \$667,000 |

JOIN US!

See inside back cover for donation form



RISE UP & BUILD
NEHEMIAH 2:18

Students Rise Up & Give!

Student Council Develops Plan of Action

Over the summer, high school Student Council Executive Committee members grabbed the early reins of student-led fundraising for Rise Up & Build. They planned and organized Penny Wars for the entire school and laid the groundwork for a community-wide pasta dinner. Still to come in the spring is a Walk/Run to benefit the campaign. Emily Vandenberg, Student Council faculty advisor said, "We have a really great student council. They are true servant-leaders. They've been meeting three-to-four times a week all year to get things done."

"Thank you to all those who have made it possible for us to build this new campus. It will enhance our school so much!"

—Abby, high school student

Pasta-rific! Dinner Raises \$3,300

Over 230 loyal supporters dined on a delicious pasta dinner with all profits going to the building campaign. Students designed the table settings, hung lights, and organized a successful art auction. Parents also played a key role in preparing the food so that students could spend their time serving guests and making everyone feel welcome. It was a community effort from the students, faculty and parents!



School-Wide Penny War Raises \$11,000



"If one little boy can give his all, then we can all give something!"

– Sarah Bowler

Elementary Leads the Charge

Thousands of pennies and coins! They came in plastic bags, paper rolls, piggy banks, and plastic cups. They came in backpacks and lunchboxes and in small hands curled protectively into fists. They were given eagerly, joyfully, and with great sacrifice for some. For two weeks, children couldn't wait to deposit their pennies into a large water jug inside the front door. They filled it quickly the first time, then a second, and a third. Each time goals were set and then met, the students were rewarded for their generosity with specials events: a hall-way dance party; a "drop everything and read" session; 15-minutes of extra recess; and, in a big, celebratory finale, a school-wide session of "Capture the Flag."



Sarah Bowler, Elementary Principal, spoke of how children gave with such joy. She told of one young boy who gave every cent he had saved for years, much to his mother's amazement. These pennies of hope and faith, given by pre-K and high school students alike, added together to make a significant statement...an example to us all! A little goes a long way.

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. ..." Luke 6:38

Faculty and Staff Fully Invested

Over 95% have contributed to the campaign, demonstrating a deep commitment to the present and future of the school.

"How could I not give? This is the stuff

of faith that, with God, dreams do come true! Now, generations of athletes, vocalists, strings players, and young actors will get the opportunity to perform in facilities designed just for them!"

–Staff member



Students reaping the benefits of the success in the penny drive. Photos from left to right: extra reading time, dance party in the hall, and extra recess.

"I'm excited for our school's future in the performing arts center...We'll actually have a place to rehearse and perform our band concerts and choir concerts!"

– Joseph, middle school student

"I love to be in plays and I love singing, so I am excited about having a new performing arts center."

– Cece, middle school student

"The reason I'm excited about Rise Up & Build is I'll be able to play in the gym by the time it's done."

– Zachary, elementary school student

Alice Jellesma Hoekstra ('48)

Her Legacy Lives On

Recently Headmaster Lance Engbers had the pleasant opportunity for a long conversation which reaffirmed his belief that Whitinsville Christian School continues to be a God-centered, student focused institution of learning . . . as it has been for past 87 years. His conversation with Mr. Louis Hoekstra, the husband of Alice Jellesma Hoekstra, centered on the successful foundation that WCS provided Alice from her start as a second grader to her graduation as an eighth grader in the class of 1948.

Born in Tampa, Florida, on May 22, 1933, Alice moved to Whitinsville with her family when she was seven years old. Since she suffered from the effects of rheumatic fever, the move was made in the hope that her serious health problems might be alleviated farther north. Whether the climate or the experimental drug, Penicillin, or both provided some measure of health, Alice was ready to begin her schooling at WCS on Willow Street as a second grader. She demonstrated a quick mind, a caring spirit, and quiet humility among her peers, who formed a very successful class of 24 students by the time they were eighth graders. Alice's love of learning served her well for she graduated from WCS as the valedictorian of the Class of 1948.

Following her graduation Alice continued her high school education at Northbridge High School, located a short block away from the Willow Street School. In many of her classes, she and her classmates were seated alphabetically. Since "H" for Hoekstra preceded "J" for Jellesma, Alice soon became acquainted with Lou Hoekstra. Lou remembers that Alice's bright mind and quiet, gentle spirit inspired others and attracted him to her. By the time they graduated in 1952, Alice and Lou were dating and talking about marriage. In August of 1953, Alice became Mrs. Lou Hoekstra, sharing a marriage with him that included eleven moves, some of which were overseas, while Lou served in the military for more than 20 years.

Though residual effects of her childhood health problems plagued Alice for her whole life, Lou remembers that she was a very caring mother to their six children, a highly successful leader in military chapel ministries, and later an extremely competent career counselor. Alice often attributed her successes in life to her education at WCS, where she was taught to love learning, to develop strong values, and to demonstrate empathy. By the time that Lou retired from military service, he and Alice settled in Florida, where he became a public school teacher and a part-time administrator until his retirement in 1997.



In their retirement years Alice and Lou took frequent trips in their motor home, traveling throughout the continental 48 states and 12 Canadian provinces. Alice practiced her love of photography on these trips, creating wonderful scrapbooks when they returned home. Alice also used her time to sew, to read, and to continue serving as a positive influence on everyone she met. She never complained about the health challenges that ultimately led to her passing. Her heart and lung problems though led to Alice's passing on September 8, 2011, in Monteverde, FL. After her death, Lou recounted this favorite Scripture passage of Alice's, his wife of 58 years: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

Whitinsville Christian School is thankful that its influence on Alice Jellesma Hoekstra lives on as people remember her scholarship, her leadership, her values, and her empathy. May her legacy live on in the lives that WCS touches today . . . and for time to come!



Welcome New Staff

Ben Gibbons Joins WCS as Director of Admissions



This summer, WCS was pleased to welcome Ben Gibbons as Director of Admissions, a newly created full-time position to support the changing needs of the school as we enter a new phase in its history. The current Rise Up & Build Campaign contains within it support for a bold new direction and significant increase in enrollment over the next few years, of which this new position is a key component.

Ben joins us from Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, where he served as Senior Admissions Counselor. At Geneva, Ben oversaw the recruitment of prospective students from his geographical territory and collaborated in planning and implementing on- and off-campus recruitment events. He also managed student counselors and ambassadors through a professional development program.

Ben brings with him a strong understanding of the role Christian education plays in conjunction with the church and family in developing children for service in God's world.

With that, he is committed to helping point students in the direction God has for them. "My role as an enrollment professional need not be separated from that of a teacher or administrator," Ben said. "We are all educators, whether as teachers in the classroom or engaged members of our communities, and our actions pay witness to the truth we claim in our lives."

A 2011 graduate of Geneva College, Ben earned a BA in Christian Ministries (Pre-Seminary) and is currently completing his MBA from the same institution. Ben and his wife, Kylie, reside in Whitinsville. Welcome to the WCS community!

Adam Meyer, New Director of Advancement

Whitinsville Christian School is pleased to welcome Adam Meyer as Director of Advancement. Adam will be responsible for advancement and alumni relations, and will provide additional leadership to the Rise Up & Build Capital Campaign. "My prayer for advancement at WCS is for alumni, parents and donors to feel inspired, connected, and able to make a meaningful difference for Whitinsville Christian School. Our goal is for WCS to have the resources it needs to powerfully provide a God-centered, student focused education."

Adam has over 12 years of development management experience in multiple nonprofit sectors. He has implemented strategic campaign planning for, and execution of, multimillion dollar capital, operational, and endowment goals, and is experienced at establishing and managing successful major gift programs. Adam also has an impressive academic background, having taught at the collegiate level for several years before entering the development field. Adam and his wife, Kim, who is also employed in the development field at WGBH Boston, reside in Upton, MA.



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Daniel Blais ('14) left on Jan.14 for a five-month discipleship training school to the Middle East with a group from Youth with a Mission (YWAM). He will begin with a three-month "lecture" phase, living with a family in

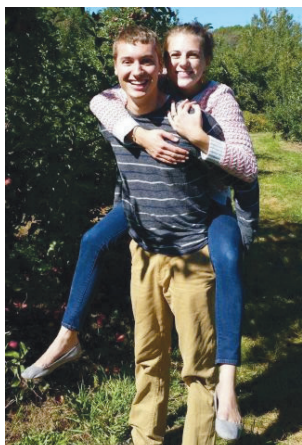
Turkey and attending class, doing chores, receiving discipleship, and engaging in local ministry through interaction with the Muslim community. Following the lecture phase, Daniel begins a two-month "outreach" phase in a confidential location, for reasons of safety. He will stretch what he learns in the lecture phase "through an intense, cross-cultural experience." A debrief will follow to help the group process what God has done through them. Daniel has requested support in prayer, and, if you would like to partner with him financially, please visit his page on the YouCaring.com website.

Abby Epplett ('14), a sophomore at Wheaton College (MA), was recently named to the NEWMAC Academic All-Conference Cross Country team. According to the Wheaton website, honorees must have earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5/4.0 scale after the 2015 spring semester, achieved second year academic status at her institution and been a member of the varsity team for the entire season. The NEWMAC consists of 11 highly selective institutions committed to academic excellence: Babson College, Clark University, U.S.



Coast Guard Academy, Emerson College, MIT, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, Springfield College, Wellesley College, Wheaton College (MA) and WPI.

Connor Dolan ('12) and **Alison Sohigian ('12)** (photo at left) were recently engaged and are planning a June 2016 wedding. Both will be graduating in May - Connor with a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Virginia Tech and Alison with a degree in Art Studio with a concentration in Graphic Design from Framingham State.



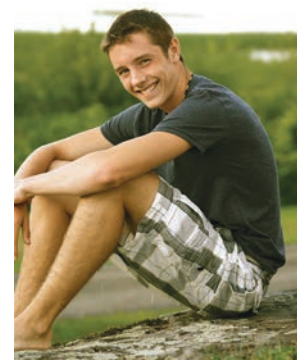
Connor has accepted a position in Cambridge, MA and the couple plans to live in the Metro-west area.

Micaila Olson ('12) graduated Magna Cum Laude from Franklin Pierce University in Rindge, N.H. with a B.S. in the Health Sciences and a double minor in Chemistry and Mathematics.



Eric Monroe ('12) and **Jessa Mitchell ('12)** (photo above) were recently engaged and are planning a June 4, 2016 wedding to be held in Mapleville, RI. Both graduate from Clemson University on May 7, Eric with a BS in BioSystems Engineering and Jessa with a BS in Marketing and a BA in Communication Studies.

Roberts Wesleyan University senior **Thomas Rodger ('12)** recently led his NCAA Division II Redhawks cross country team to victory in the East Coast Conference (ECC) championships, winning the 8k race in a time of 25:03. A Business Administration major, this was Thomas's first collegiate cross country victory, and he was named ECC Runner of the Year.



Matt Vriesema ('12) and **Anna Hardiman ('12)** were recently engaged and are planning an October 22, 2016 wedding. Matt graduated in December from Calvin College and will be working at Hanover Insurance in Worcester, while Anna will graduate in the spring from Rhode Island College with a degree in Nursing.

Michelle (Lindsey) Turner ('10) was married to Nick Turner in August 2014 and lives in Providence. She works at Butler Hospital in Providence as a Research Assistant, where her research team is currently running a clinical trial on the effect of exercise in assisting subjects with smoking cessation.

Jonathan Vriesema ('10) is in his first year of teaching K-5 PE at Duval Charter School in Jacksonville, FL.



Mikaela Vander Baan ('09) graduated with a bachelor of science degree from Calvin College in 2013. Mikaela writes, "My career as a nurse has been short, but nonetheless exciting. I lived in Austin, TX, for a year and worked right out of school on a medical-surgical telemetry unit at St.

David's Hospital. I have since then moved to Phoenix, AZ and I am working at a Level 1 Trauma Center on a trauma/orthopedic unit at Honor Health John C. Lincoln Hospital full time as well as working part time in the operating room as a nurse in an outpatient plastic surgeon's office in Scottsdale."

Ryan Mascilak ('08) graduated from Berklee College of Music in 2012 and currently lives in Los Angeles, working as an Archival Librarian for the Walt Disney Company, as well as at St. Finbar Catholic Church as a Music Minister.

Peter Osswald ('08) was recently hired by Waters Corp. of Milford, while **Kristen Vrieseema ('08)** Osswald completed her studies in Certified Managerial Accounting through Texas A&M. The Osswalds will be moving to Whitinsville this month.



Caleb Bryce ('07) was recently recognized in Point Loma Nazarene University's magazine for his doctoral work in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at

the University of California, Santa Cruz. Caleb is a PhD candidate working with canids in large carnivore physiology and behavior research. A video of one of Caleb's Malamute trials may be found on YouTube.

Katie Lindsey ('07) worked in Rochester, NY for two years with adolescents who had eating disorders, and then for a year in Harleystown, PA, before moving back to the Whitinsville area. She currently works at Bay State Mental Health in Worcester, and has recently started an online Master's program in Mental Health Counseling through Grace College and Seminary.

Matthew Haddad ('06) and **Kathryn Skudera ('06)** were recently engaged and are planning a September 2016 wedding. Matt and Kathryn became friends in 3rd grade at WCS. Matt is working in computer science and Kathryn teaches violin.



Mitch Bajema ('05) and **Samantha Homer ('05)** were recently engaged and are planning their wedding date. Mitch is employed at Hampton Creek, a San Francisco-based food technology company, and Sam is working as an occupational therapist in San Francisco.

Congratulations to **Leonard P. Krygsman IV ('03)** and **Kellie Thiesing ('07)**, who were married on October 12, 2015.

Nathan Kuder ('96) and his wife, Tahnee, welcomed their second child, Teagan Kay Kuder, on Nov. 9, 2015. The Kuder family live in Whitinsville, and Tahnee teaches high school art at WCS.

In July, **Rev. Josh Johnson ('94)** gave the pre-race invocation for the 5-Hour Energy 301 NASCAR Sprint Cup race at the New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon, NH.

Kevin Eckstrom ('93) was named Chief Communications Officer for Washington National Cathedral in June 2015.

Congratulations to **Cindy Plantinga Hart ('89)**, who was recently inducted into the Becker College Athletics Hall of Fame. Cindy was the first female WCS basketball player to score 1,000 career points and went on to a stellar two year career at what was at the time Becker Junior College. During her freshman year, she led the team in scoring and rebounding, becoming the first freshman to score at least 400 points in a season. As a sophomore, she averaged 18 points and 8.4 rebounds per game. In tournament play, Cindy averaged 22 points per game and, according to the Hall of Fame program, "played a key role in 37 victories during her two seasons at Becker Junior College."

Ronald Swart ('59) of Holland, MI passed away on January 15, 2016. Ron received degrees from Calvin College and the University of Michigan. He taught Latin and English and was a librarian at Zeeland (MI) Public High School for 36 years. Ron was a member of Providence Christian Reformed Church, where he served as an elder and Sunday school teacher. He also volunteered at Providence Church as a librarian and at Ditto Upscale Resale Store benefitting Holland Christian Schools. In his personal time, he enjoyed golfing, woodworking, and traveling.

Please send alumni updates to advancement@whitinsvillechristian.org.



REFER A FRIEND & EARN \$1,000*

You're already telling your friends about Whitinsville Christian,
why not receive tuition credit for it too?

The mission of Whitinsville Christian School is to nurture
the academic, spiritual, personal, social, creative and physical development of students,
in cooperation with their parents, for Christ-like service in God's world.

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CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

WWW.WHITINSVILLECHRISTIAN.ORG

The goal of this campaign is to not only provide state-of-the-art athletic and fine arts facilities, but also to increase the size of the student body to 700 students by 2020. Help us accomplish this goal by filling out this card, providing your friends and family with more information.

Please let this family know about Whitinsville Christian School!

Student Name(s) _____

Age/Grade _____

Interests _____

Parents' Names _____

Phone _____

Address _____

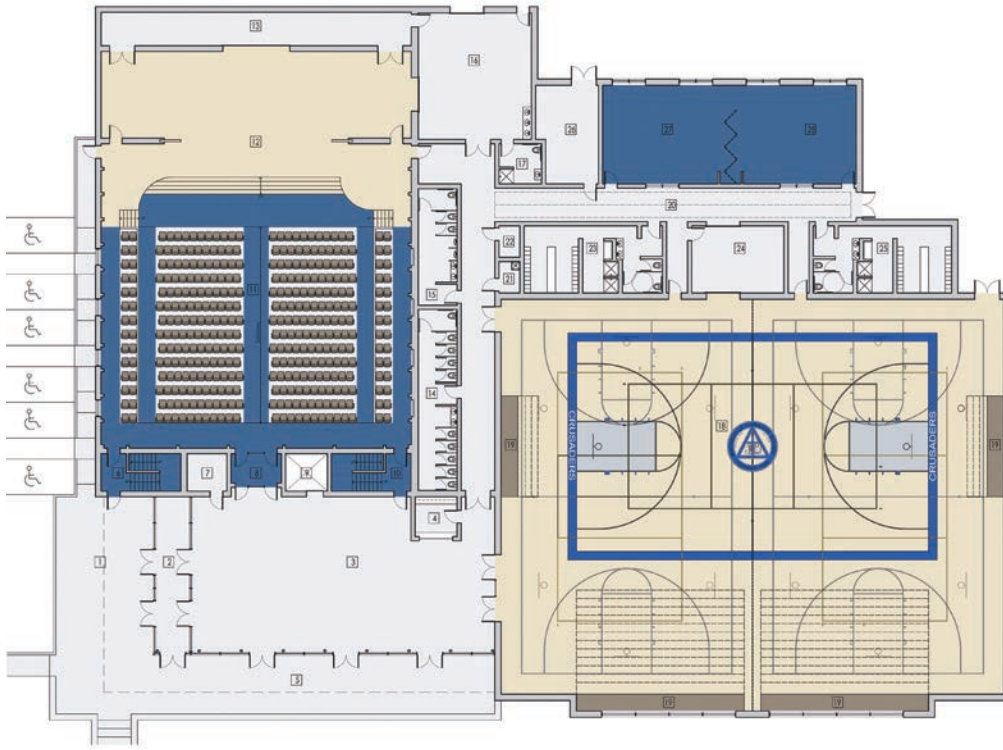
Email _____

Submitted by _____

Yes, you may use my name when you contact this family.

*For questions, comments, or to submit a referral, please contact Ben Gibbons, Director of Admissions at bgibbons@whitinsvillechristian.org or mail to Whitinsville Christian, 279 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588.

cut here and mail to WCS



| Room Legend | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Entry Patio | 15 Men's Toilet |
| 2 Entry Vestibule | 16 Scene Shop |
| 3 Lobby | 17 Make-Up Room |
| 4 Concessions | 18 Gymnasium (700 seats) |
| 5 Viewing Patio | 19 Expandable Bleachers |
| 6 Stairs (Balcony to Exterior) | 20 Indoor Running Track (85 feet) |
| 7 Elevator Machine Room | 21 Janitor |
| 8 Sound Lock | 22 IT Room |
| 9 Elevator | 23 Girls' Locker Room |
| 10 Stairs (Balcony to Lobby) | 24 Storage |
| 11 Fine Arts Seating (365 Seats) | 25 Boys' Locker Room |
| 12 Stage | 26 Mechanical Room |
| 13 Cross-Over | 27 Classroom |
| 14 Women's Toilet | 28 Weight Room |

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Pledge Commitment



Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Tel. _____

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Total Campaign |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|----------------|
| Rise Up & Build Campaign | | | | | |
| Annual Loyalty Fund | | | | | |
| Totals | | | | | |

Gifts of any size are important. Pledge commitment can be paid in full or in annual installments up to 4 years. All gifts to the Rise Up & Build Campaign are tax-deductible. We kindly ask that you make your pledge by December 31, 2016.

Payable as follows: December 31, 2016 **or** _____/_____/_____
 December 31, 2017 **or** _____/_____/_____
 December 31, 2018 **or** _____/_____/_____
 December 31, 2019 **or** _____/_____/_____

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Please make checks payable to *Whitinsville Christian School*.
 Mail to: Dawn Lefrancois, Whitinsville Christian School
 279 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588

To make a gift online, please visit
riseup.whitinsvillechristian.org



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RISE UP & BUILD

NEHEMIAH 2:18

