Winter 2020, Volume 31, Issue 1

The Crusader Chronicle

WCMS 2019-2020

COL. 3:17

embrace the challenge

WHITINSVILLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

"All In"

ust two words and five letters packed with meaning, wide in scope and deep in significance. It is the school's theme for the year and the focus of this *Crusader Chronicle*. The theme comes out of Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." The time of my tenure at Whitinsville Christian School is ticking down this year, month by month, but it is truly a year of being all in.

The **"all"** reminds me of cross country team competition. Five competitors contribute to the overall score of the team. They need to be "all in" to get a final score that is competitive. Individual participation and placement are important, but the overall score of five runners is what really counts. If you are the fifth runner, your score counts as much as the first runner, and it is the team score that offers the competitive edge. Whitinsville Christian School is really a team of individuals all focused on the same mission. It requires that every component of what makes up WCS is "all in" to operate with prime effectiveness. The complexity of an organization like WCS requires attention to being all in, all the time, all focused on the mission of WCS. In this issue of the *Crusader Chronicle*, you will see examples of what it means to be "All In." The **"in"** is yet another significant, albeit small word. In Colossians 3:17b it says, "do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus…" Our relationships, our curriculum, our athletics, our capital campaigns, our decisions, our programs, our dialogue, our fundraising, our hiring, our attitudes, and our vision for the future are all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Romans 12:1-2 from The Message offers some poignant words regarding this issue. "So here's what I want you to do: Take your everyday, ordinary life — your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life — and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the

"The complexity of an organization like WCS requires attention to being all in, all the time, all focused on the mission of WCS." best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops wellformed maturity in you."

Radical, life-changing words and transformative behavior flow out of two small words – "All In." It is my hope and prayer that not only through this issue of the *Crusader Chronicle*, but far into the future, "All In" will resound with deliberate clarity and deep significance. Our mission demands it; our uniqueness as an outstanding Christian education in the heart of New England requires our ultimate allegiance to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. I'm fired up about this and should I offer much more here this page will ignite! Move on with humility and wisdom, my friends.

Lance B. Engbers Head of School

In November, the Girls Cross Country team won their first-ever district championship for WCS!

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HITINSVILLE

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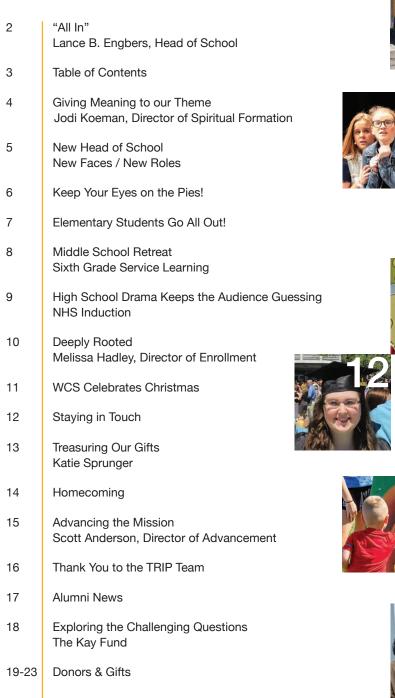
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ON THE COVER C.J. and his fellow middle school students assemble boxes for the Dutch Apple Pie Sale

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Giving Meaning to our Theme

By Jodi Koeman, Director of Spiritual Formation

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

- Colossians 3:17

F or the last three years, WCS students have chosen the spiritual theme for the school year. This year's theme, *All In*, was created with input from all students, but particularly the class of 2020. The idea of *All In* comes from the students' desire to give of themselves, to give 100% in what they do, the desire to not be half-hearted, but to live wholeheartedly. More importantly, *All In* is a call to do all we do and all we say for God's glory, not so we are recognized, not so this school is praised, not so other students or parents or staff like us, and not so we get what we want in life. We do what we do so that God receives the glory. Whatever we do – we do it through Christ and for Christ.

Colossians 3:17 is an excellent way to examine our lives. Broken down it simply says:

- In everything all we do, or make, or create, in what we say and think and how we act,
- We do it, because of and for God we do every bit of it with the authority and for the cause of our master, Lord, Jesus,
- With thankfulness because God is our Father, our caregiver.



All In helps us to live more fully for Christ. It is a beautiful theme to wrap around our year; however, we must be careful how we use this theme. We should not use it to say that we ought to be giving more – doing more. It might make some feel that they're not doing enough, not being enough – not enough. Although sometimes

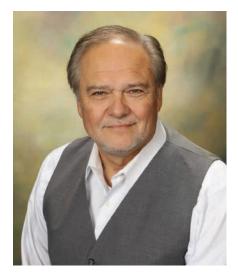
Whatever we do – we do it through Christ and for Christ. we aren't giving 100% when we should, the meaning of this theme and verse is NOT about guilting us into doing more. God says and knows you are enough. He wants to shine through you. This verse is a reminder to put our focus and attention on submitting to God, not ourselves.

It is a challenge to be all in together. We need people around us challenging us to do our all, not for ourselves or for our glory, but for God's. We have a tremendous responsibility to teach each other how to do this well.



Jodi joined WCS as the Director of Spiritual Formation in the fall of 2017. As of February 2020, she has accepted a new, full-time position with World Renew as a Church with Community Coordinator. She is excited about this position since it combines her deepest passions and skills; community development, church engagement, strategic planning, and team building. We are deeply grateful for the energy, enthusiasm, optimism, and joy Jodi has brought to the position of Director of Spiritual Formation. We will miss her leadership and joyful presence but also wish for her God's blessings as she embarks on this new journey.

Seniors escort the kindergarteners into convocation



BOARD OF TRUSTEES NAMES Rick Lukianuk, J.D., Next Head of School

After eight months of prayer, visits, and analysis, the WCS Board of Trustees announced in December that Rick Lukianuk will become the next Head of School at WCS. Rick, who

will be leaving his current position as Head of School at Heritage Christian Academy in Olathe and Overland Park, Kansas, for WCS in June, began his career in international law. "We were looking for a leader who could keep us moving forward," said John Casey, President of the Board of Trustees, "as well as one who will help us stay true to our mission, which is to help all of our students grow into thoughtful, compassionate world-changers."

Rick has served as Head of School at Heritage Christian Academy since 2011. He also served as Head of School at Christian Heritage Academy in Northfield, IL, and as High School Principal at Portsmouth Christian Academy in Dover, NH. Prior to pursuing a career in education, Rick was Vice President and General Counsel at Fisher Scientific Worldwide, Inc. in Hampton, NH. "He has a deep passion for Christian education," said John. "Rick was impressed with the staff, facilities, and programs at WCS, along with our commitment to keep Christ at the center of everything we do – a testament to the faithful service and leadership of Lance as Head of School. Rick is very excited to join WCS and to help it continue on its path to become all God would have it be."

"It is with great excitement and anticipation that I look forward to becoming part of the WCS family this coming June," said Rick. "My wife, Lee Ann, and I felt so warmly welcomed during our trip this past December. After learning about the history, the community, and the outstanding staff and leadership, we both agreed we felt God calling us to serve at WCS. We are so pleased that the Board also felt God calling us to this wonderful school and loving community. Coming home to New England is a wonderful and exciting full circle for us. I believe that WCS is poised to become even more prominent, more influential, and more effective in passing God's wisdom down to the next generation. I believe that you, the WCS community, are prepared to be an integral part of what God has in store for this wonderful school. I can't wait to get started."

New Faces



Tamara Boras Kindergarten Aide



Lillian Christy HS Faculty



Melissa Hadley Director of Enrollment



Gina Kreidler Kindergarten Aide



Nancy Monts Kindergarten Aide



Alex Rivera Student Academic Services, Elementary



Jessica Ryan Kindergarten Aide



Kurt Savage High School Faculty & Assistant Athletic Director



Andrew Weiseth HS Paraprofessional

New Roles

Several faculty and staff members have new roles as of the 2019-2020 school year.

Heather Engle is now a 2nd grade teacher. **Kelly Foppema** moved from Student Academic Services to the elementary school as a 3rd grade teacher and recess monitor. **Erinn Klatt** teaches 3rd and 4th grade and elementary PE. **Karen Wasielewski** moved from 2nd grade to being a 4th grade teacher. **Tammi Gorman** has taken on the new role of Academic Dean.

Keep Your Eyes on the Pies!

Nothing embodies our theme of "All In" quite like the WCS Dutch Apple Pie fundraiser! This is most evident on the day of pie making, even though teams of people put in hours of work before the first pie is boxed.

In the weeks and months leading up to the sales kick-off, the Apple Pie Committee procures materials and ingredients, connects with sponsors, develops a sales and marketing strategy, and identifies recipients of the donated Pay It Forward pies. As the day approaches, a setup crew transforms the Krull Memorial Auditorium into a pie factory and middle school students participate in a team activity assembling the boxes. Next comes the big day, when hundreds of volunteers work in shifts to make these famous pies.

This year, over 7,100 pies were sold and more than 1,400 of those pies were donated to area food banks, shelters, veterans, and first responders. Teams of volunteers delivered these pies to their grateful recipients. "During our first year, we donated 850 pies," said Erika Johnson, Apple Pie Committee Member. "It was our hope that this aspect of the apple pie sale would continue to grow, and we're excited that it has done just that. There is so much need, and people are so appreciative when receiving the pies."

Thank you to everyone who ordered, donated, assembled, and delivered WCS Dutch Apple Pies this year!



7,100 PIES SOLD





1,400 OF THOSE DONATED



Elementary Students Go All Out!

WCS third graders are following a new path to learning, and that path leads outside! Outdoor Ed is a pilot program launched at the beginning of the school year and students are thriving as they explore God's world.

During the fall of 2018, **Sarah (Plumb) Bowler ('95**), Elementary Principal, visited Holland Christian Schools in Michigan to learn

"Play-based learning is not content-based, but process-based. It is not what you know but the process by which you find the answers. It teaches the HOW, not the WHAT." more about a program known as Forest Kindergarten. Upon returning, she prepared a proposal for a new elementary curriculum. Third graders now head outside three times per week for a time of student-directed exploration. Karyn Pagkanlungan and Erinn Klatt are the Outdoor Ed teachers.

"We go outside no matter what the weather brings and students ex-

plore the woods, build bridges and huts out of branches, find small creatures, and create their own outdoor learning experiences," said Karyn. "While the outdoor time might seem unconventional, there is serious learning happening by students engaging in physical activities, rather than listening to a classroom lecture or following pre-scripted lesson plans," said Erinn.



Outdoor Ed has been a big hit with the third graders. Sophia Jamros was surprised to learn that Outdoor Ed was new this year. Her favorite aspect has been working with her classmates to accomplish a goal. "You have to make sure everyone knows the plan and knows what to do," said Sophia. "We find items to build and decorate our forts. We've even found bags



Dawson tests a bridge

to carry our pine cones. Pine cones are money in Outdoor Ed." The science lessons are plentiful. "We've learned about different kinds of trees. We've learned which kinds of footprints belong to which animals. And deer poop is weird (insert giggles here). It looks like jellybeans." Students also learn about God's creation. "It's really fun what you can hear and see in God's creation."

"Outdoor Ed fits perfectly with our mission 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," said Sarah. "The students in a nature-based classroom are surrounded by evidence of God. God is not just a subject we study each day, or hear about from our teachers. He is an active, living presence in our lives, wherever we are. Students observe and explore God's creation, and do this with wonder and discovery."





Sophie, Elise, and Sophia work as a team Photo to left: Graedan doesn't mind the snow



Middle School Retreat

The annual middle school retreat has been a shining example of ALL IN long before those words became WCS's spiritual theme for the school year. Since 2013, students, faculty, and several chaperones have ventured to Camp Sentinel in Tuftonboro, New Hampshire, for an overnight retreat at the beginning of the school year.

Terry Ebbeling, English Language Arts teacher, has attended every retreat. "This event sets the tone for the whole year. It helps the students realize that we teachers are 'all in' for them and that we are all, students and teachers, ready for a year ahead where we will work together to God's glory. It's fun to spend time with the kids playing, worshiping, and sleeping outside of the classroom in a place that shouts God's majesty."

Jake Fogg, sixth grader, participated in his first retreat this year. "I had fun hiking and enjoyed the outdoor space to run around with my friends. I also liked the team activities and cabin time where we talked about what we learned during chapel."

Kaylin Fogg, eighth grader, reflected on her third and final retreat. "Over the past three years, the middle school retreat has been a fun way to become closer with my classmates, God, and even the teachers. I loved having the freedom to explore God's creation with my friends and try new things. One of my favorite parts was when a group of us got up early to watch the sunrise together."

Parents have participated as worship leaders and chaperones. Ian Fogg ('95) has served in both of these roles for several retreats.



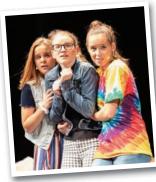
"As a parent, it has been a tremendous blessing to be a part of this important transition time for the kids. I love the way that the eighth graders are encouraged to take ownership of the tone that will be set in the middle school for the year. There is a genuine sense of welcoming for the incoming sixth graders, and they get a chance to see what independence can look like as they leave the safe structure of elementary school. Understanding that they have a role within a community, the potential impact of their words, actions, and how they live out their faith - it can be a lot to sort through all at once. This retreat offers opportunities to build courage in the older students to stand up and say 'Follow me as I follow Christ', even within the imperfect sphere of middle school."



Sixth Grade Service Learning

In October, the sixth grade class completed a service learning project with the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Students visited the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center in Worcester and participated in a cleanup along the Blackstone River Bikeway. Their project represented a \$2,352.27 in-kind contribution and Bonnie Combs, Marketing Director for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, presented the class with a check representing that contribution. "It was such a great pleasure to work with the students at Whitinsville Christian School and to share that the birth of the American Industrial Revolution happened where they live and go to school. In addition to telling that story, we are also committed to protecting the important natural resources here and the students made an impact with their cleanup along the Blackstone River and the bikeway. We are grateful for community service projects like these."

High School Drama Keeps the Audience Guessing



For their fall production, the Whitinsville Christian High School Drama Club presented *Ax of Murder*, an audience interactive murder mystery by Pat Cook. *Ax of Murder* featured a cast of 21 talented high school students, amazing special effects, and plenty of fun for the entire family.

"In looking for a play this year, our drama club wanted to try a murder mystery. This classic genre is fun and entertaining and always keeps audiences thinking. *Ax of Murder* is full of twists and surprises, and the answer is only found on the last page!" said Mary Dykstra, HS Drama Club Director. "Our cast and crew put so much work into this show. Timing is

everything with a show like this."

SInduction

"The tech crew and the cast all have to work as one to make the special effects impactful. We chose this show after reading through many other murder mysteries because of the variety of characters, minimalist set, and intrigue; and when the students love a show this much, audiences will be thoroughly entertained."







Pictured left to right: Alyssa Worley, Katie Weedon, Fiona Shaw, Bella Ibrahim, Ally Fogg, Ella VanTol, Lucy Bowler, Maggie Rejmer, Mikaela Rose, Olivia Fleming, Ben Cannistraci, Micah Hart, and Anthony Gilbert

Deeply Rooted

Melissa Hadley, Director of Enrollment

have been ALL IN since I was five years old. When I started at WCS in kindergarten in 1986, it was because my parents valued a Christian education, as did my grandparents,

Lois and Sydney LaFleur. I graduated in 1999, and in those years of elementary, middle, and high school, life happened. In 1989, my parents parted ways and I was one of the first "broken" families in my class, in a Christian school.

Those times were difficult for all involved, especially for my brother and me. The sense of community and support that we had at WCS was second to none. We went through some very difficult times as kids, but truly those times, even at a young age, made me appreciate this small school community even more. I felt the value of a Christian environment long before I understood the meaning of the word value.



1st grade at WCS



Student

Alumna

Parent

Trustee

Employee

The roles I've held

at Whitinsville

Christian School.

When I was in junior high, I remember my mom telling me that I was going to have to go to a local public school. Fear took over, but God stepped in and I was able to stay at WCS. When I turned sixteen and started my first job at a supermarket, I would take my check to the business office so that I could help pay my way, as much as a sixteenyear-old could. I knew the value that I was getting at WCS and I did not want to let that go. The roots were established.

My husband, Matt, and I moved closer to the area so that our first son could begin kindergarten at WCS. Soon after that, I knew that it would be an honor to sit as a Trustee. I learned a lot during my time on the Board. I learned that all decisions made for this school are made with God first. I also learned that I wanted to help in more ways to continue to build upon the foundation of WCS.

Now, as the Director of Enrollment, I am able to show new families all that WCS has to offer and see them become excited to become part of this community. I am also able to strengthen existing ties. This school is something truly special, not just in the Blackstone Valley, and not just in Central Massachusetts, but in our state as a whole. We have something incredible within these walls and down these halls.

I hope you see it; I pray you see it. I pray for each family every night that a big-picture, positive impact is made not only in the lives of your children, but in your lives by being part of the WCS community. I pray that when families are part of the WCS community, their roots will be strong and they may find comfort in the shade of the trees around them. I pray that in the comfort of His hand on your lives, you too will become deeply rooted, not just in this community, but in His love for you.

The Hadley Family: Matt, Melissa, Jackson, Nicholas, and Madeline

wcs Celebrates Christmas

Christmas is of course a favorite time of year at WCS and we are blessed to celebrate in many ways.

Stepping Stone Preschool students presented their musical nativity scene and enjoyed delicious snacks with their families.





The elementary musical, *Jingle Bell Beach*, taught us that Christmas isn't about snowmen, hot chocolate, and fancy decorations. It's about celebrating the birth of Jesus, God's gift to us, with the people we love.







And at what has become the biggest performance of WCS musical gifts, *Celebrate Christmas with WCS* was hosted by Valley Chapel of Uxbridge and showcased the talents of students of all ages.









Staying in Touch A Conversation with Lavne

Whitinsville Christian School's mission speaks to our goal that after students leave WCS, they continue to live a life of Christ-like service in God's World. We are always blessed to hear the ways our alumni are living out this mission. We recently caught up with **Layne (Harden) Patch** from the class of 2010 and we are thankful to her for sharing her story.

Where did your path take you after WCS?

After graduating from WCS, I attended Messiah College for two years. In May 2014, I graduated from Worcester State University with a degree in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting.

After graduating from college, did you begin searching for a job in accounting?

I preferred to find a job related to accounting, but was open to whatever God had planned for me. I accepted a position within the fundraising department at Ascentria Care Alliance, a local human service nonprofit organization, and worked there for four years. From the second I stepped foot in the office at Ascentria, I felt such a warm welcome and everyone was so friendly and kind. There is something about the people who work in the sector. Everyone has the same heart for helping people, and it's really good to be surrounded by that every day.

What made you decide to continue your education?

I wanted to go back to school for my master's because I knew I wanted to work in the nonprofit sector for the remainder of my career, and having the education to back my professional goals was important. In 2017, I received my Master of Science degree in Nonprofit Management and Philanthropy with a graduate certificate in Strategic Fundraising from Bay Path University.

What kind of work are you doing now?

I am now working at UMass Medical School as a Prospect Research Analyst. I have two branches of my role: prospect research and prospect management. The prospect research side involves finding new potential prospects who could become major donors to the institution. The prospect management side includes working with the major gift officers and managing their prospect portfolios and proposals.

What is the best part of working in your field?

It's inspiring to see the generosity of others. In today's world, sometimes you need to hear or see how people are doing good things because we are bombarded with so many tragedies every single day. It's also amazing to get to see how donations, big or small, can really help people. I've seen how a hand-knit blanket can bring so much joy to a person during the winter, to how a \$1,000,000 donation can fund new cancer research to save lives.



Layne at her graduation from Worcester State with brothers, Garrett Harden ('08) and Tyler Harden ('02)

Is there a specific experience that made a lasting impression?

One part of my job at Ascentria that I really enjoyed was interviewing clients for fundraising appeal letters and newsletter features. One client who touched my heart was a man named Tony who was paralyzed from the neck down after a logging incident when he was in his early 20's. Meeting him when I myself was in my early 20's was a surreal experience and put my own life into perspective. He needed 24/7 assistance, and yet he was the happiest and most optimistic person I had ever met. It made me cry on my way home, thinking how my problems seemed so small compared to his. It was a very humbling experience that has stuck with me.

Are there memories of your time at WCS that you'd like to share?

Mr. Herrmann's accounting classes were what made me love accounting and inspired me to pursue my career. He explained the subject so well and helped me actually understand and apply what I was learning. I was also on the volleyball team from 7th grade through senior year. I transferred to WCS in 7th grade and my mom encouraged me to join a team so I could make friends and feel included. Mrs. VandenAkker as a coach was WONDER-FUL, and she believed in me and supported me on a personal level as well as on the court. Being on that team gave me so many lasting memories and friendships.

How did your time at WCS prepare you for the work you're doing and the life you're living now?

I tell people all the time that my high school prepared me for my college years more than I could ever explain. The level of education I received at WCS is something I will always be grateful for and I hope to some day send my kids there. From learning how to write college-level papers, to the teachers who truly cared about the success of their students, to the community I found playing on the volleyball team, to the Christian values that I was exposed to every day and shared with my classmates and teachers....I will be forever grateful. Attending a Christian school helped me grow up with certain values and influences that have rolled into my adult life.



Treasuring Our Gifts

By Katie Sprunger, Class of 2020

In order to keep Christian education affordable for local families, Treasures Upscale Thrift Store operates to raise money for Whitinsville Christian School. The thrift store sells high quality, donated items and is operated primarily by volunteers from the school's community. Treasures sells housewares, clothing, toys, glassware, small appliances, books, holiday specials, and a wide variety of other items. Since opening in 2008, Treasures has contributed over \$1 million to WCS.

Thrifting poses a substantial positive impact for the planet by reducing the amount of items contributing to landfills. Anyone can create efficient environmental change by partnering with stores such as Treasures to donate unwanted items and to shop for previously owned items. All items put on the shelf to be sold are in good condition and the majority of items are found to be good as new!

Treasures would not be possible without its generous volunteers! Every individual that contributes time to making Treasures successful uses their unique, God-given talents to serve. Treasures gives students opportunities to serve in a business setting if they are interested in retail or pursuing a career in business once graduating from WCS. Over the years, a strong community at Treasures has led to fruitful friendships between volunteers. However, the need for volunteers is greater than ever. We encourage anyone who is interested to reach out and get connected. For more information about volunteering, please contact Kitty Manyak at schedule@valleytreasures.org or call 774-293-1564. The team is looking forward to growing and welcoming other volunteers.

Treasures encourages people to connect with them on social media to keep up with the latest sales, news, store hours, specialties, giveaways, and items being sold! Follow Treasures on Instagram @treasuresupscalethriftshop and Facebook at facebook.com/valley-treasures/. Share any of your favorite items on your own Instagram account by tagging them on posts or stories and putting Treasures Upscale Thrift Store as the location.

Together, the Whitinsville Christian School community can make an impact on WCS families financially and environmentally by donating their items to Treasures, volunteering with Treasures, and shopping with Treasures!



Treasures is typically open Mondays through Saturdays from 10am to 5pm.

Katie Sprunger is raising awareness of reducing and reusing waste as her Senior Capstone Project. Among other activities, she has teamed with Treasures to promote the idea of donating to and shopping with thrift stores in order to keep unwanted items out of our landfills.

HOMECOMING 9









Our second annual Giving Day was successful in raising almost \$77,000 for the WCS Fund, our annual fund that supports tuition assistance, student expression, academic excellence, and spiritual formation. CS Homecoming is always a great time to celebrate with current families and students, as well as a time to welcome back our alumni!

This year's events kicked off with an all-school pep rally on Friday to get our fans ready for the athletic events on Friday and Saturday. The annual 5K was run on Saturday morning, then families gathered for carnival games, lunch from Chick-Fil-A, treats from Sweet Wise Ice Cream, a vendor fair, oliebollen, a concert, and a special reception for the Willow Street alumni. Thank you to all who joined us and to all of the volunteers who made the day so much fun!



Advancing the Mission

Scott Anderson, Director of Advancement

s we begin a new year, I have had an opportunity to look back on the many ways that the concept of "All In" has manifested itself throughout our Advancement Team. I am blessed to be able to work with such an outstanding group of people, people who are dedicated to the mission of WCS, and provide a highly professional approach to their work. Though the year passed quickly, much was accomplished and we look forward to taking on the challenges of the year ahead.

DEVELOPMENT – The WCS community has once again demonstrated they are "All In" when it comes to the financial support of the school. The WCS Fund Annual Drive raised 41% more than last year and more importantly, the number of donors increased by 20%. The generosity of our donors has provided an increase of 19% in available tuition assistance while the amount of individual awards increased by 27%. In addition, contributions to the Endowment more than doubled from the previous year and we have increased our pledges for both the WCS Fund and Endowment for years to come. The success of these efforts go directly toward our primary objective of *Inspiring Minds and Igniting Hearts*, and while numbers are important, the impact on our students and families is what really matters.

The generous support of our donors plays out in many ways including more families being able to afford tuition, a significant growth in the robotics team, five students qualifying for the Central District Concert Festival, the purchase of musical instruments, students at all grade levels having access to STEM-related programs, and 14 athletic teams qualifying for playoff action. In short, we are able to build on the outstanding academic and Christian experience that WCS is uniquely able to offer.

ENROLLMENT – In September, we were blessed with the hiring of Melissa Hadley as the Director of Enrollment. Working alongside Dawn Lefrancois and Pam Bajema, there has been an immediate impact on the admissions process through successful open houses, increased community activity, impactful shadow days and tours, and effective relationship development. The results of their efforts have provided a dramatic increase in inquiries and applications started to date over last year, as well as a waiting list for kindergarten in the upcoming school year.

MARKETING – Through the efforts of Laural Plourde, Marketing and Communications Manager, we have established our brand essence of Inspiring Minds and Igniting Hearts. As a community, the staff, faculty, and administration are *all in* when it comes to living the brand. In addition, Laural has developed and implemented an effective strategic marketing plan that has included the rework of our website, a comprehensive social media plan, a new admissions brochure, and the WCS Strategic Plan brochure, as well as many other ongoing marketing projects that have helped to bolster both the admissions and the advancement efforts.

I am confident that this team will successfully guide our marketing and recruiting messaging and efforts in the year ahead. In addition, we are blessed with a faculty and staff that is all in, living the brand of *Inspiring Minds and Igniting Hearts* each and every day!

INSPIRING MINDS | IGNITING HEARTS



E very other week, the TRIP team gathers on Tuesdays and Fridays to give WCS families some credit. Tuition credit that is. **TRIP stands for Tuition Reduction Incentive Program** and a team of volunteers has been working for more than 20 years (since May of 1999) to bring this program to our families. As with many of our volunteer groups, the TRIP team has consisted of alumni and parents of alumni, as well as grandparents and great-grandparents of students and alumni.

Tuition credits are posted to accounts in May and December each year. From the period of mid-May through December 11, 2019, families earned more than \$45,000 in tuition savings. The total tuition savings in 2019 was more than \$70,000! TRIP credits are earned by purchasing gift cards and through credits from many local businesses.

Thank You to the TRIP Team!

Alison Bell, mother of one graduate and two current students, is a huge fan. "Why do I use TRIP? Because it is an easy and effective way to save on tuition! Our family started participating in the TRIP program before my children were students at WCS. We moved here when our oldest son was going into second grade so we started ordering TRIP while we were still living in New Jersey. We would put our order in the mail and Dawn Lefrancois would send us our TRIP cards when they were ready. The first time our TRIP rebate appeared on our tuition statement, we had saved almost half of that month's tuition!"

So thank you to the TRIP team! Because of your work over the last 20+ years, WCS families have earned more than \$1.3 million in tuition credits! This program allows us to reach many more families who value the WCS mission.

WCS Families Earned Over



Lois Guis ('48), Harold ('53) and Barbara Plantinga, Gladys ('49) and Henry Ebbeling ('43)



Front L to R: Helen Banning ('48) and Eleanor Baker ('48) Back L to R: Willard Banning ('47) and Harold Plantinga ('53)

ALUMNI NEWS

BABIES



Hilary (Banning) Cooper ('10) and her husband, Drew, welcomed William Andrew in September.



Bonnie (Cooper) Shearer ('05) and her husband, David, welcomed daughter number three, Judith Grace, in December.



Leah Masselink Kyanya ('98) and her husband, Eppy, welcomed their second son, Josiah Etienne, in August.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Owen Cooper ('08) and his wife, Toni, celebrated the arrival of Eliza Jane in September.



WEDDING

David Jellesma ('03) and Samara Yohai were married in Mexico on November 2. They are currently are living in Watertown, MA.

CONDOLENCES

Harry Wiersma

('41) passed away in November at St. Camillus Health Center in Whitinsville. He had most recently been living in Naples, Fl.

Jean (Feddema) Nydam

('42) passed away in September. Jean has left behind an incredible legacy of faithfulness, kindness, and a love for Whitinsville Christian School.

f CONNECT

Stay connected with us on Facebook. Search: Whitinsville Christian School Alumni Network



Kathryn Haddad ('06) was a special guest at the WCS fall concert.



Jamison Koeman ('15) won the Detroit half marathon on October 20, with a time of 1:11.51.

AMN D. Sam Barker Isaiah 6:8 Send mel BMT is DONE! Congratulations to Sam

Congratulations to **Sam Barker ('19)** who graduated from Air Force basic training in October.



Jake Van Dyke ('15) spoke with WCS students about Army ROTC. He is a graduate of Virginia Military Institute and was recently deployed to Korea.

Class of 2009 Reunion

"The class of 2009 met up at a local brewery in Worcester over the 2019 holiday season. We shared some great memories, caught up on lost time, and reminisced about our high school years. The night was full of hugs and laughter. We are so grateful for those who were able to make it out! We were so busy having a great time, we forgot to snag a picture!" -Katherine Anderson, reunion organizer



Left to right: Rob Gould, Steve Macindoe, Brian Graves, Erin Meagher, Emily Masnoon, Betsy (Vis) Hughes, Marc Pitts, Gennie (Wick) Baldwin, Jessie Henderson

Members of the class of 1999 met at UxLocale, a local restaurant, over homecoming weekend for their 20-year class reunion. They highly recommend bringing a yearbook for some reminiscing and laughs and they enjoyed reading their 10-year predictions.

Exploring the Challenging Questions – A Faculty Book Study

t the beginning of each school year, all WCS faculty and staff members gather for two days of orientation. Mike Sullivan, guest speaker, referred to the book, *Confronting Christianity*—12 Hard Questions for the World's Largest Religion by Rebecca McLaughlin. After a few faculty members read the book, they invited others to join a book study, recognizing that too often in today's culture, we avoid talking about hard issues because the conversation quickly becomes polarized. Our faculty is practicing civil conversation and listening to understand diverse points of view.



Sheryl Casey, Emily Paharik, AnnaMarie March, Kerrie Harper, Sue Cooper, Karen Exoo, and Lance Engbers



John Vriesema, Tammi Gorman, Jodi Koeman, and Steve Fortna

Two sessions have formed and meet every other Tuesday and Wednesday after school. The groups consist of teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators discussing some tough questions posed by the book such as: Hasn't science disproved Christianity? Isn't Christianity homophobic? How could a loving God send people to hell? The discussions have been lively with Sue Cooper moderating on Tuesdays, and Jodi Koeman moderating on Wednesdays. The study will continue through the year as we cover all twelve of the questions. The faculty highly recommends the book, *Confronting Christianity*.

The Kay Fund

hile the overall admissions numbers for Whitinsville Christian are trending up this year, we have been particularly blessed with an exceptional level of interest in our kindergarten program. This certainly bodes well for the future of our school. Many of these prospective families are not new to WCS. They are our Stepping Stone Preschool families who have seen the impact of the WCS experience, and want to continue that for their child. Laurie Baker is someone who can speak first-hand of some of the challenges these families face.

As a preschool teacher, Laurie has personally seen the heartbreak of parents who wish to have their children continue beyond preschool to the elementary school, but cannot due to finances. These are families who are committed to a Christ-centered education, are prepared to sacrifice for it, and still can't make it work. This is where the Kay Fund plays such a critical role. The Kay Fund is named for Laurie's paternal grandmother, Kay Veenstra. Kay was a life-long supporter of Christian education in New Jersey, and inspired Laurie and her hus-



band, Darrell. The Kay Fund was established to assist preschool parents with making the transition to WCS kindergarten and first grade. As a parent goes from paying for preschool, as they would with any preschool, to deciding to pay for kindergarten, a very tough decision has to be made.

Your generosity can help unlock the door of opportunity for these young, Christian families. Please note the giving option for the Kay Fund on this year's donor envelope, and thank you for your consideration.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Aladdin Jr. presented by MS Drama Club March 6 and 7 – Nehemiah Center for Arts and Worship

> Spring Auction April 3 – Pleasant Valley Country Club

Beauty and the Beast presented by WCS Drama Club April 30, May 1, and May 2 – Nehemiah Center for Arts and Worship

> Blackstone Valley STEM Expo May 16 – 10:00 am to 2:00 pm – Nehemiah Center

Open House and Time of Tribute – Celebrating Lance Engbers May 26 – 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Nehemiah Center for Arts and Worship

> Golf Outing June 15 – Blackstone National Golf Course

Please visit whitinsvillechristian.org for more information and for our full schedule of events.