

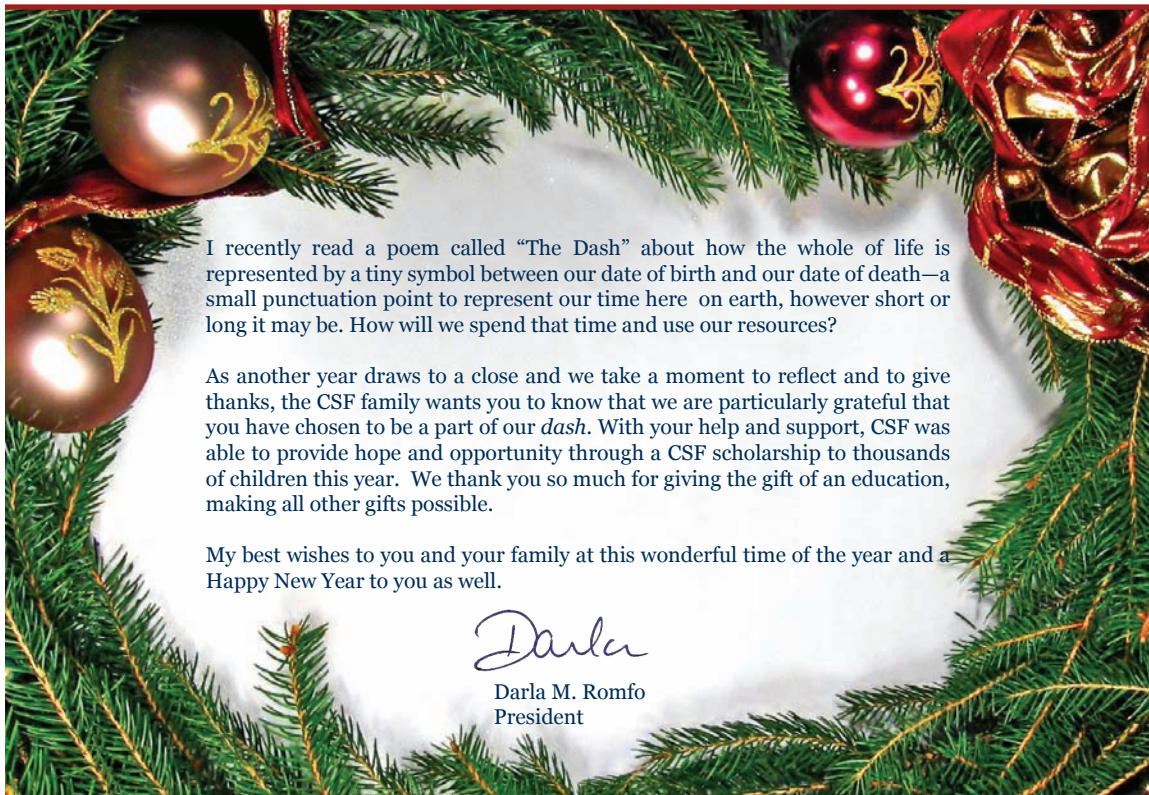
Required Reading

Season's Greetings from all of us at CSF, and a heartfelt thank you!

Newsletter of the Children's Scholarship Fund

Volume VII, Issue III

giving
parents
a choice
giving
children
a chance



I recently read a poem called "The Dash" about how the whole of life is represented by a tiny symbol between our date of birth and our date of death—a small punctuation point to represent our time here on earth, however short or long it may be. How will we spend that time and use our resources?

As another year draws to a close and we take a moment to reflect and to give thanks, the CSF family wants you to know that we are particularly grateful that you have chosen to be a part of our *dash*. With your help and support, CSF was able to provide hope and opportunity through a CSF scholarship to thousands of children this year. We thank you so much for giving the gift of an education, making all other gifts possible.

My best wishes to you and your family at this wonderful time of the year and a Happy New Year to you as well.

Darla

Darla M. Romfo
President

AmEx Members Project Chooses CSF for Chance to Win \$200,000

Children's Scholarship Fund has been selected to participate in Members Project®, a partnership between American Express and TakePart, a social network to help people everywhere support charitable organizations.

to more deserving families, and it takes just a mouse-click each week to help us win this vital support. Every vote makes a difference. It takes just a small step to begin.

We need your votes! Help make CSF one of five charities that will share a total of \$1,000,000 in funding in the current round of voting. You do not have to be an American Express cardholder.

All you have to do is join Members Project, and cast a vote for CSF each week starting Monday, November 29th through Sunday, February 20th. After the three-month voting period is complete, Members Project will tally the votes and announce the winners. We want CSF to be a part of that list!

Sign up to vote and help CSF win \$200,000 by going to:

www.takepart.com/membersproject

Members Project encourages everyone, including non-American Express® Cardmembers, to take his or her step and help support worthy causes and charitable organizations.

To join Members Project and start casting your votes for Children's Scholarship Fund, go to: www.takepart.com/membersproject now! ●

The funding will help CSF offer more scholarships

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CSF By the Numbers

Another school year, another 26,384 CSF Scholars!

We're already a couple of months into the 2010-11 school year, and 26,384 low-income children in 33 program areas nationwide are using CSF scholarships to attend the private or parochial school of their family's choice.

Despite the poor economy hitting low-income families hard, CSF parents are still willing to pay a portion of their own tuition – on average \$1,565 – towards their child's education. As always, CSF families were awarded scholarships based on their household size, family income, and the tuition at their chosen school. Each scholarship covers 25%, 50% or 75% of the tuition.

This year, a total of 5,200 children are using brand new CSF scholarships, entering private school for the first time. Although we had many more interested families than scholarships, we were able to clear 275 children from our waiting list this October, thanks to our generous donors.

The high numbers of applicants for scholarships tell us that despite recent efforts at public education reform and new charter schools entering the marketplace, private schools are still often the only good local education option for children in urban areas.

All told, since CSF's inception, we have awarded \$443 million in scholarships to 116,000 children. Thank you to all of you who have made it possible! ●

At St. Anselm School in the Bronx, 130 CSF Scholars are studying for a bright future!

Number of children using CSF scholarships:

26,384

Brand new awards this year:

5,200

Average CSF scholarship:

\$1,565

Average Tuition:

\$3,956

Average Family Income:

\$29,331

***THE CHILDREN'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND
AIMS TO MAXIMIZE EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CHILDREN:
FOR THOSE IN NEED BY OFFERING TUITION
ASSISTANCE IN GRADES K-8 FOR
ALTERNATIVES TO FALTERING CONVENTIONAL
SCHOOLS, AND FOR ALL CHILDREN BY
SUPPORTING AND CULTIVATING EDUCATION
REFORM AND SCHOOL CHOICE EFFORTS.***



CSF Around the Nation

Denver



Former Massachusetts Governor and presidential candidate Mitt Romney addressed a crowd of more than a thousand people at a recent ACE Scholarships luncheon in Denver. This school year our CSF partner ACE Scholarships is funding scholarships for more than 600 Denver children.

Philadelphia



One of the 670 families who celebrated their new scholarships from CSF Philadelphia at an event this June. CSF Philadelphia honored Vicki Phillips of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the ACE Group, and several CSF Philadelphia Scholars at the event.

Toledo



Enjoying a recent Northwest Ohio Scholarship Fund (NWOSF) event: Robin LaValley; NWOSF Chairman Richard LaValley, Jr.; Mary Ann LaValley, and CSF President Darla Romfo. CSF partner NWOSF is serving almost 700 students in the Toledo area this year.



The December 2010 issue of Newsmax magazine features CSF President Darla Romfo as one of its 2010 Heroes on their "Heroes and Villains" list.

Charity Navigator Awards Four Stars to CSF

For the fourth consecutive year, CSF has been awarded four stars (the highest possible rating) by the leading charity evaluator, Charity Navigator. Only 9% of the 5,500 non-profits surveyed are awarded this honor four years in a row. You can view Charity Navigator's complete report on CSF by going to www.charitynavigator.org.

In addition, GuideStar, another charity website, has once again awarded CSF with the GuideStar Exchange Seal for transparency. CSF is one of the most popular education charities among visitors to GuideStar's website.

CSF has also received Independent Charities of America's (ICA) Seal of Excellence. The ICA Seal of Excellence is awarded to charities participating in the Combined Federal Campaign that "meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and cost effectiveness." Less than 2,000 out of more than a million U.S. charities have been awarded the ICA seal. ●



Lending Superman A Hand

CSF recommends the new education documentary, *Waiting for 'Superman'*. To read CSF President Darla Romfo's commentary on the movie, please visit our blog, <http://csfblog.wordpress.com/2010/10/22/letter-from-csf-president-lending-superman-a-hand/>.

Here's an excerpt:

"The director Davis Guggenheim and several of the experts he interviews argue that charter schools have finally figured out how to educate poor inner-city kids who have scored below their more affluent peers for years. But actually there were schools doing a great job long before charters came along. Some are low-cost parochial and faith-based schools and others are just independent private schools operating in the inner-city. They get very little attention but they are doing a good job of educating some of our most at-risk kids.

These schools do not require a lottery

to choose their students. For low-income families, the only impediment



CSF Scholars at Guardian Angel School in Manhattan showing their best Superman take-off. ●

to attending them is financial. CSF's average scholarship in New York is \$1,857, and that is enough for our parents to make the decision and the sacrifice required of them to send their child to private school. There are thousands of empty seats in these schools in New York alone, and the child doesn't have to depend on the luck of the draw to attend. They just need a little financial assistance.

High-performing charter schools like the ones profiled in "Waiting for 'Superman'" are unquestionably wonderful schools producing excellent results for those children lucky enough to enroll in them. And very importantly, they have provided some level of competition for the public schools in their areas. However, they are not the only solution to our nation's education problems, and it would be dangerous to invest only in them at the expense of private schools and other avenues of parental choice." ●

Jessie Zhan: From Chinatown to China – and Back!



CSF Scholar Jessie Zhan, an 8th grader, was honored along with eleven other students this summer at the Trey Whitfield Foundation Annual Awards Banquet. Jessie has been a CSF Scholar attending Transfiguration School in Chinatown since 2006.

Jessie was born in New York City, but soon after was taken to China to live with her grandparents. She returned to the U.S. at age five to begin public school. She was always a good student, but her mother, Yu Ying, felt she would do better in a private school. Jessie's grades, since attending Transfiguration are even better, and she is deeply motivated to do well, knowing that she has a scholarship to attend her school.

At five years old, with the help of her grandpa, she won first place in her Chinese school's character recitation contest. She also recently won first place in an essay contest where she wrote about the environment and how we can make it better.

Jessie hopes to be admitted to Stuyvesant High School or another prestigious specialized NYC high school. Looking ahead, she is already considering a career in teaching. With Jessie's determination and goal-setting, we have no doubt that she will accomplish great things.

Congratulations to Jessie on all her success! ●

CSF Scholar Jessie Zhan was honored at the Trey Whitfield Foundation Annual Awards Banquet this summer.

CSF Partners With National School Choice Week

CSF is proud to be a national partner of the first ever National School Choice Week. From January 23rd to January 29th, 2011, education reformers everywhere will celebrate and spotlight programs and policies that allow parents to choose the best school for their own children.

Who's involved so far? Eva Moskowitz, CEO of the Success Charter Network; former Florida Governor Jeb Bush; Senator John McCain; Democratic strategist Joe Trippi, and musician Jon Secada, just to name a few!

Watch our blog and website for updates. And read more about it at www.schoolchoiceweek.com. ●



New CSF Annual Report Released

CSF's latest Annual Report is off the presses. The 2009-10 school year report, "Going Places," highlights CSF activities over the past year. It also provides financial information for Fiscal Year 2009 and gratefully acknowledges our generous supporters. Please email azamudio@scholarshipfund.org if you would like us to mail you a report. You can also download one from our website, www.scholarshipfund.org. ●



The Last Word:

“CSF is the single most significant force for giving low-income parents a choice and a chance when it comes to deciding where best to educate their children. ‘Transformational’ is an overused term, but CSF has been transformational in tens of thousands of young lives. CSF gives us reason for objective hope when it comes to improving the educational and life prospects of needy children, youth and families. It richly deserves greater support and ought to be expanded everywhere.”

- **John DiIulio, Ph.D., Frederic Fox Leadership Professor of Politics, Religion, and Civil Society, University of Pennsylvania, and CSF Philadelphia board member.**



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