



**CORNERSTONE**  
Schools of Washington, D.C.

Hope and Academic Excellence  
in the Nation's Capital

# THE CORNERSTONE Connection

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022 ISSUE

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**CORNERSTONE**  
**LIONS**

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Dean Luckenbaugh, Executive Director



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## Note from the Executive Director

### *Hello friends of Cornerstone,*

In a classical Christian education, unlike most education models, **two of the distinctive habits of learning are connection and integration**, which ultimately lead to creative action.

Students develop the ability to connect the past and the present and see its impact on the future. Students can also take seemingly unrelated texts or topics and identify core principles and ideas that are in alignment or in contradiction. **These high-level capacities provide students with the ability to see things from different vantage points that others cannot and to become outside-the-box thinkers and leaders.**

Our normal plan coming into 2022 was upset by Omicron, causing us to make major pivots and adjustments in our schedule and learning rhythms. Yet, amidst that chaos, our staff and students pressed forward in making sense of our world.

In this newsletter, you will learn of seniors who have grown in their ability to draw connections between ancient texts to Christian texts to life in southeast DC. You will learn of our art teacher, who challenged students to connect a book by a Flemish author with thinking creatively about their unique neighborhoods, and integrated all of that into his own art exhibit. You will learn of students engaging with historic and current Black leaders and stories and applying those to their lives.

You will also meet our first new 2022-23 staff hire, Christopher Lindsay, who brings eight years of experience teaching and leading middle school students to Cornerstone as our Middle School Director and ELA teacher.

You can also rejoice with us in our college acceptances and in the expansion of our unique college scholarship program that rewards our top Cornerstone students—growing from a one-year, \$10,000 scholarship to a four-year, \$22,000 scholarship!

**Thank you for deeply investing in our students and our city through your prayers and support of Cornerstone!**

With gratitude,



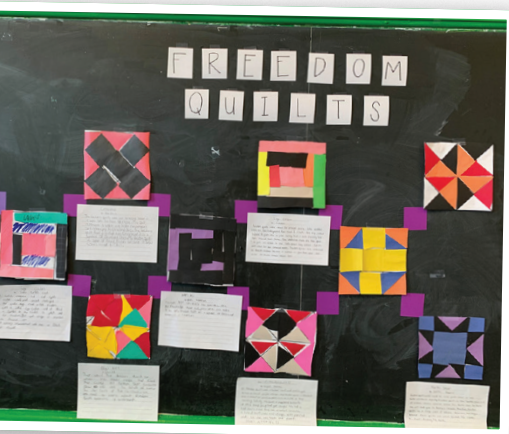
# Celebrating Black History Month



From our elementary students all the way up to our high schoolers, we have been celebrating **Black History Month** at Cornerstone in a multitude of ways. **Students have participated in classroom discussions, scavenger hunts, field trips, and art projects that have given them a deeper understanding of leaders and events that have shaped African American history.**

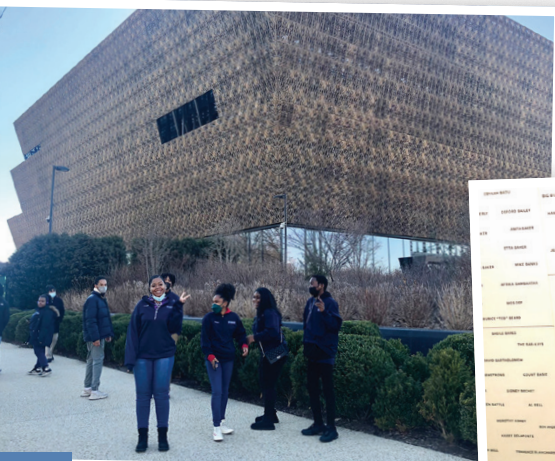
In elementary school, teachers have engaged our youngest learners in various projects to better understand historic Black leaders and events. In 4th grade, Mrs. Matherne's class is focusing on how Black history has influenced different areas of life, studying a new topic each week: Black history in Cornerstone, in our community,

and in the church. Students have heard from two leaders in our school, Mr. Powell and Mr. Newsome, about their experience as Black men and how it has shaped their faith, relationships, and leadership at Cornerstone.



In their study of the **Underground Railroad**, our 5th graders learned about Freedom Quilts and how these quilts were used as helpful codes for people who were enslaved as they navigated their way to freedom. The class engaged in a project where they studied the origin of freedom quilts and researched what each unique pattern meant to those seeking freedom from slavery. Students then chose a specific quilt pattern to recreate and wrote a paragraph on the meaning of their selected pattern and why Freedom Quilts are an important part of African American heritage.

In 7th and 8th grades, students have participated in special literature lessons twice a week focused on African American heroes including Charles Drew, Katherine Johnson, Sojourner Truth, John Lewis, and Anna Julia Cooper. These middle schoolers also engaged in a digital scavenger hunt of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, searching for and learning about items related to music, history, and more!



Our high schoolers have had the opportunity to view documentaries such as *Selma* and *Amend: The Fight for America*, and are engaging in reflection and discussion around these important topics. In early February, the seniors visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture. **It is beautiful to see the ways that Cornerstone leaders and teachers have engaged our students in the study and celebration of Black history as well as in thoughtful discussion on how the past shapes the present and the future.**





## BUDDING ARTISTS

Over the last two months, our 8th grade students and Cornerstone teacher and local artist, Lionel Frazier White III, collaborated on a unique art project in response to the book *My Street* by Flemish author Anne De Bode.

**Mr. White led students to creatively depict their neighborhoods through their own eyes in a way that captured the heart of each of these locations.** This project closely tied in with the students' study of African-American artist, Romare Bearden, and it was exhibited at the Plain Sight DC gallery during the month of January. We are grateful for the depth of experience and the community influence that Mr. White brings to Cornerstone's art program. We are excited to see the ways that our students will continue to learn how to reflect, imagine, and create through art!



## Beyond the Academics: Winter Sports & Clubs

### *Ice Skating Program*

It has been an exciting month for the Cornerstone Lions! Every Tuesday afternoon, students line up and walk over to the Fort Dupont Ice Skating Arena to enjoy lessons with a skating coach. **This program has given our students the opportunity to show perseverance and grace as they have tried something new and honed their skills!** These Lions have made a great impression on each coach who has worked with them, with one coach in particular sharing that she was *"so impressed with the kindness and patience students showed one another."* Despite the range of ages and skating experience, each week our students can be seen encouraging one another, playing games, and falling together on the ice. It's been a fun month!



### *Basketball*

This year our Lions basketball teams have had challenging yet rewarding seasons. More than half of our athletes, both girls and boys, have excelled in the classroom as well making the honor roll. The majority of our young athletes had never played organized basketball before.

Our girls team, consisting of 6th and 7th grade students, grew tremendously since the first day of tryouts. **From day one, the coaches not only focused on teaching the fundamentals of basketball, but also intentionally created a safe environment where**

**the athletes would feel seen, heard, and loved by their peers, coaches and most importantly God.**

The bond that the older players have formed over the years as classmates contributed to a strong foundation that provided the younger teammates with insight into what it means to work hard together as a part of something greater than themselves.

*(Continued on page 4)*

**SENIOR YEAR**

## Connections and Colleges

Our senior students have now entered their final semester of high school, which brings fun and exciting celebrations as well as continued hard work as they culminate their time at Cornerstone. The seniors have been busy over the last several weeks with oral mid-term exams and their senior thesis projects. The oral exams gave students an opportunity to reflect on the texts they read in the fall — *Life Together*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Jesus and the Disinherited* — and not only articulate the plots but also conduct a high-level analysis of each text in ways that show real tenacity and humility. Academic Dean, Elizabeth Sallie, shared that “it was amazing to see the kids draw connections between these texts, especially between *Life Together* and *Crime and Punishment*, and how they applied those to their own lives.”

Seniors have also been developing their senior thesis projects over the last few months. They have formulated compelling arguments, heavily researched their topic, and have started to prepare for their presentations in May. Some of the

thesis project topics include: The Psychological Impact of Colorism, Mental Health of African-American Men, and The Importance of Trade Education at an Early Age. **Throughout this process, each senior has shown deep curiosity and care for the world around them.** It is inspiring to see such remarkable growth from our seniors as they begin to transition from leaders on our campus to leaders in their future communities.

We are also excited to share that our seniors have had acceptances from the following colleges and universities: *Cairn University, Central Michigan University, Clemson University, George Mason University, Hood College, Loyola University Maryland, Mary Baldwin University, Marymount*

*University, Morgan State University, North Carolina A&T State University, Penn State University, Radford University, St. John's University, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Salisbury University, Stevenson University, Temple University, and Towson University.* We're very proud of these senior students and look forward to all that God has in store for them!



### WINTER SPORTS (Continued from page 3)

Our boys team, consisting of 6th-8th graders, started off the season with two losses. After being defeated by a team nearly twice our size, coaches reminded the team of David's victory over the giant Goliath. **Playing with confidence versus fear is essential to both young and seasoned athletes' continued development.** Our boys accepted the challenge and responded with a convincing win in the following game. Jonathan Powell, our athletic director, shared that

some of his favorite things about coaching are “deepening relationships with students outside the classroom, earning the privilege to speak into students' lives and watching students affirm and encourage each other through failure and success.”

Whether on or off the court, the coaches incorporated our LIONS values (**love, integrity, opportunity, nobility, strength**) into every aspect of this basketball season to continue shaping these student athletes as leaders in our school community.





## WELCOME TO THE CORNERSTONE FAMILY

### *Christopher Lindsay, new Middle School Director*

It is our joy to welcome **Mr. Christopher Lindsay** as our new Middle School Director and ELA/History teacher starting this August for the 2022-23 school year. Chris has a B.S. in Information Sciences from Carnegie Mellon and a Masters of Arts in Secondary Education/ELA from Wilmington University, and has taken theology courses at Westminster Seminary. He is in his eighth year of teaching 7th and 8th grade ELA/History in public schools in Delaware and Washington D.C.. He was nominated as teacher of the year for 3 of those years. He is a motivated, enthusiastic teacher with a strong pedagogical approach built on authentic relationships, high expectations, and real world application. From his resume: *"You cannot teach a child you do not love, you cannot love a child you do not understand."*

Chris and his wife, Brianna, have 3 children ages 5, 2, and a 5-week old newborn! His eldest child will attend Cornerstone in 1st grade next fall. They attend Mercy of Christ Fellowship Church in southeast DC where he serves as a worship leader. He plays drums professionally and has led various activities and clubs, including a Christian club at his public school, debate, and an entrepreneurship club.

On coming to Cornerstone, Chris shared, **"I'm incredibly excited for this new challenge stepping into the Middle School Director position at Cornerstone. I have many fond memories of this community, both my parents grew up attending First Rock, and my grandparents used to live on Chaplin St. I consider it an honor to be able to serve the very community that fostered me in my youth. Providing the families of Southeast DC with strong academics and the Gospel of Jesus Christ is truly a dream come true for me!"**



## DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

## 2021-22 Next Level Campaign

**We** are praising God for his provision over our Next Level Campaign efforts! **We are overwhelmed by the generosity and excitement that our community has shown, with nearly 190 supporters contributing toward our goal of \$1.25 million.** We have just \$300,000 to go, which equates to sponsoring tuition for 42 students at \$7,200 per student (our average tuition cost per student).

### *K-to-Life: Expanded College Scholarship Program*

Cornerstone is committed to supporting students beyond graduation. Since 2019, Cornerstone has offered a \$10,000 college scholarship to students who graduate high school with a 3.5 GPA or above. We have six past recipients and expect three from the class of 2022. **We are excited to announce that we have expanded our College Scholarship Program to a four-year program with a maximum scholarship of \$22,000 per recipient!** Please contact Dean Luckenbaugh

([dluckenbaugh@cornerstone-schools.org](mailto:dluckenbaugh@cornerstone-schools.org)) if you would like to sponsor a college scholarship.

**To make a donation to Cornerstone, you can visit our website at [www.cornerstone-schools.org/give-now](http://www.cornerstone-schools.org/give-now) Thank you for supporting the students of Cornerstone!**

