



CORNERSTONE
Schools of Washington, D.C.

Hope and Academic Excellence
in the Nation's Capital

THE CORNERSTONE Connection

MARCH/APRIL 2022 ISSUE

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CORNERSTONE
LIONS

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Note from the Executive Director

Hello friends of Cornerstone,

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world. — HARRIET TUBMAN

One of our callings at Cornerstone is to cultivate dreamers — students who can see beyond the limits of the present to their innate, God-given potential and a world of hope and opportunity available to each of them.

We develop this future vision through engagement with passionate people and hopeful stories that inform and inspire a pursuit of something bigger than ourselves.



In this newsletter, you will encounter a few ways we have expanded students' perspectives in the past few months. As an extension of our high school students' weekly life prep class, **we held our first ever College and Career Month.**

On campus, our high school students personally engaged with a wide range of college graduates with diverse majors to begin envisioning their future. Our juniors

traveled to a college fair to widen their horizons on their options after high school.

Our career panel brought four exceptional leaders to share their beginnings with our students and how they got to where they are today, two of whom broke barriers as the first Black individual in their field of study or vocation. One junior student has already forged a mentoring connection with a panelist.

You will see our younger students develop the skills and vision for a future as scientists, writers, athletes, and leaders.

We met Chris Gardner whose story is the movie *Pursuit of Happyness* and shared his new book, *Permission to Dream*. He will be speaking with our older students in May.

In all that we do here at Cornerstone, students are encouraged to "seek first the Kingdom of God and all other things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33) Our lower school students put this into practice as they take ownership of leading weekly Chapels for their peers.

Cornerstone is committed to providing a Christian community of support, prayer, and encouragement to establish and fulfill our students' dreams. **Thank you for being part of these dreams!**

With gratitude,

*Don't build your
dreams on the
opinions of men
but on the
promises of God.*

Bernard Kelvin Clive

College and Career Month

April is **College and Career Month at Cornerstone**, and we have hosted a variety of special events for our high school students to engage in. Our first event was a College Mixer, where students had the opportunity to meet with alumni representing over 10 colleges and universities and ask questions about their experiences. The schools represented include UVA, Duke, UMD, Howard, Wheaton, Bowie State, Towson, and many others. **This event gave students exposure to many reputable colleges and universities across the country as well as the space to engage with adults who could help students explore their own interests.**

Our most recent event during College Month was a Career Panel composed of four community leaders and professionals: Mr. Chris Seo, Dr. Judy Walton, Mr. Jerry Cuffee, and Dr. Courtney Grimes. With experience across various industries including marketing, education, technology, intelligence and defense, chemistry, and health care, these leaders shared with students their journeys of personal, professional, and spiritual growth. **Students were encouraged to dream big, have confidence in who God has created them to be, and to remember that their identity is found in Christ.** We are grateful for the many volunteers and community leaders who shared their time with our students and are positively influencing future generations!



SMITHSONIAN AIR & SPACE MUSEUM VISIT



Each year in 5th grade science, students eagerly anticipate the final curriculum unit of the year — outer space! In order to help students contextualize what they learn, the unit study concluded in a visit to the **Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum**. Students shared that their favorite parts of the field trip were the scavenger hunt and the different exhibits, specifically “Women in Aviation” and “Rockets and Missiles”.

A highlight for this year’s museum visit was that the current 6th grade students were able to attend as well, as they were unable to visit last year due to pandemic museum closures. One sixth grade student spent the majority of the field trip flying a controller plane, seeing the laws of gravity and physics at work. Having the 6th graders as a part of this year’s visit was a long-awaited culmination of their study from last year and it was special to see them enjoy it alongside their peers!





EXPANDING ATHLETICS

Cornerstone's spring sports are in full swing! This year we have introduced two new sports to our Cornerstone Lions student athletes: soccer and tennis. It has been exciting to see students eager to participate and learn new skills.

The Lions soccer program has 28 students between 3rd-7th grades participating in our weekly workouts. The goal for this spring's soccer program is to **help our students learn fundamental skills as we build momentum for launching Cornerstone's first ever elementary soccer team next fall.** Thank you to two of our wonderful partner organizations, **Washington Spirit** and **Leveling the Playing Field**, for the excellent coaching of our young athletes and for surprising our athletes with new cleats!

The introduction of tennis for our students has brought a lot of excitement. Twice a week, our high school students load into the school vans for their tennis elective at the **Washington Tennis and Education Foundation (WTEF)** located less than a mile from Cornerstone. We also have a number of our elementary students enrolled in WTEF's daily after school program. Tennis has gained a lot of momentum with our athletes, and **we look forward to offering competitive high school tennis teams**

next spring! Our partnership with WTEF has been a tremendous blessing in giving our students exposure and opportunity to engage in a new sport.



Growing Christian Leaders

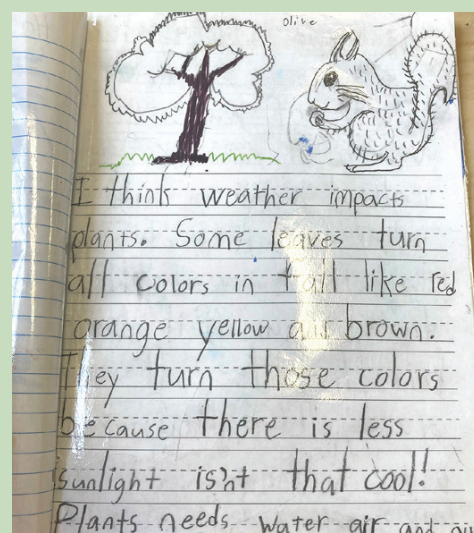
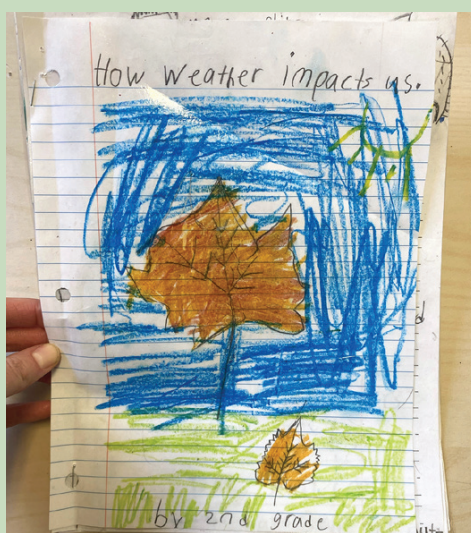
Our K-4th grade students have begun taking turns leading weekly lower school Chapel, which will continue until the end of the school year. By giving each class the opportunity to lead a Chapel for their fellow students—through performing skits, reading scripture, leading prayer, and presenting songs—**students learn to engage deeper within the lessons that Jesus wants to teach us through his Word.** Through preparing for these Chapel services, students increase their understanding by learning how to share and “teach” their peers.

Leading up to Easter, our K-6th grade classes collaborated on decorating the school hallways to create a resurrection walk. Students creatively depicted the events that took place during Holy Week, from the passover feast to the empty tomb, and each class had the opportunity to walk through the experience together. **It is beautiful to see the ways that our lower school students are growing as spiritual leaders in our school!**



BUDDING AUTHORS

This spring, our **second grade scholars** have been learning about how weather impacts plants, animals, and humans. In conjunction with this unit, they have also been studying the writing process and have practiced writing informative paragraphs focusing on a topic statement, supporting details, and a conclusion. Second grade teacher, Ms. Twaddell, told students that if they put in their very best effort the class would get to turn their writings into real, printed books. So, after two weeks of hard work, Ms. Twaddell printed and bound copies of each student's book for them to take home and share with their families as well as to add to their classroom's very own library. **This project gave our second grade students the "writing bug", so now they are all writing their own narrative fiction books!**



DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Throughout March and April, we held a series of wonderful dinner events inviting both new and old friends to spend "An Evening with Cornerstone." **Each event was hosted by supporters who have a passion for our mission and a desire to see the Cornerstone family grow.** At one of the events, special guest Chris Gardner attended to learn more about our school and share his personal story of redemption and resilience. Gardner is an entrepreneur, speaker, and author of *The Pursuit of Happyness*, which inspired the critically acclaimed film about his life. His mission is to equip the next generation with the confidence and tools necessary to achieve even their biggest dreams. He will be visiting Cornerstone to speak to our students in May.

We continue to be amazed at our community of supporters who have contributed to our Next Level campaign this year! We have about \$185,000 left to raise. **We invite you to join the Cornerstone family and help us reach our goal of \$1.25 million!** Every gift counts, and we are grateful for the generosity of so many who make our mission possible.



To make a donation to Cornerstone, visit:
www.cornerstone-schools.org/give-now
Thank you for supporting the students of Cornerstone!