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Big NEWS

A COMMUNITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL PUBLICATION

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Community Prep and Amos House partner to launch Southside Elementary Charter School

A new charter school in Providence's south side will open in September 2014. Sponsored by Amos House and housed at Community Prep, Southside Elementary Charter School will ultimately serve 140 Providence students in grades K – 5. Its board of trustees will be composed of community leaders and representatives of local non-profits. The school will open with one kindergarten class in September and grow by 24 students each year for six years. As it starts to enroll third graders, Community Prep will stop enrolling third graders and eventually become a grade 6 – 8 middle school. Admission to Southside Elementary will be by lottery, and Community Prep will continue to admit highly motivated students with the goal of preparing them for college-prep high school programs.

It has long been a goal of Community Prep founder Dan Corley to increase the school's reach, both to younger grades and into the public education discussion. "Some of Southside Elementary's teaching methods will be modeled on Community Prep's," explains Dan. "And, it will be able to positively impact far more students from the neighborhood than Community Prep alone could."

Community Prep is thrilled to help "give birth" to a new school that will have much in common with CP, but will remain completely distinct. "Community Prep has always differed from charter schools," says Dan. "We create a deliberately diverse community through our admissions process. Our high academic standards and racial/socio-economic mix offer something truly unique in Rhode Island. Having these two schools in the same building will help each become a better school.

Coach Cooley Inspires!

Shares his story of overcoming the odds

It is really something special when someone who grew up in Community Prep's neighborhood comes by to show students that a disadvantaged start needn't stop them from achieving their dreams.

Ed Cooley, Head Coach of the Providence College Friars NCAA Division I Men's Basketball team, recently visited the school and talked with the students about his difficult youth growing up in Providence's south side. The neighborhood around Community Prep is one of the poorest in the city. Cooley shared that he was one of nine children from a family that struggled to the point he sometimes didn't know where he'd get his next meal. Despite these challenges, he was twice RI Player of the Year in high school, graduated from Stonehill College, and worked at a number of universities, including Boston College and Fairfield University, before ending up back in his hometown at Providence College.

"There's greatness that's going to come out of this room. There are future CEO's that are going to come out of this room."

He was very impressed with his visit. "To walk into Calculator Club…that made an incredible impression on me. I'm thinking, how can I talk to our Mayor, how can I talk to our Governor to support what this place has done for so many young men and women. There's greatness that's going to come out of this room. There are future CEO's that are going to come out of this room... Whenever you feel down, take a peak back over your shoulder; you'll be amazed at what you've accomplished. But don't be content at all. Keep striving for excellence. Keep striving for greatness."

College Information Panel helps alumni prepare for college applications

Applying to college is overwhelming under the best of circumstances, but many CP graduates, whose parents did not go to college, have no idea where to begin. Monica Rodriguez '99, Community Prep's Alumni Coordinator, recently organized the school's second College Information Panel. Speakers included CP alums from Brown, Duke, MIT and Morehouse. Solanchi Fernandez from the College Planning Center of Rhode Island pre-registered students for an upcoming conference sponsored by the Latino College Access Coalition and provided invaluable information about financial aid and the application process.

Community Prep believes that its graduates have the potential to reach the high goals they set for themselves and works to keep alumni connected after graduation. Those at Classical High School can feel lost at such a large school after Community Prep's tight-knit community. Those at elite independent schools often need support in learning to adjust to school settings that are much less diverse than what they enjoyed at CP.

The Alumni Relations program supports graduates through all phases of their school and professional careers. High school-age alums are among the first hired for jobs with CP's summer programs, and the school is delighted to have two alumni on staff and three serving on the Board of Trustees. The school has helped college-age students secure internships and has set up mentoring relationships for young professional alums. "As a graduate myself, I understand the challenges CP graduates face going out into the world," explains Monica. "It is very gratifying when they come back and tell us about their successes. What they tell us is that Community Prep got them started."

United Way

If you have a balance in your United Way Philanthropy Fund, please consider donating it as an end-of-year gift to Community Prep.

Remember to designate Community Prep on your United Way 2014 Campaign Form!

Honoree Janine Lee

Janine Lee has taught visual and performing arts to every student who has attended Community Prep over the last 27 years. This past spring, Janine's achievements were recognized at the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. Cluster V Salute to Excellence Luncheon. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA) is an international service organization founded at Howard University in Washington, D.C. in 1908. It is the oldest Greek-lettered organization established by African-American college-educated women. The Salute to Excellence Community Education Award recognizes those in the community who have made a difference in non-traditional educational subjects, creating an environment where youth can thrive.

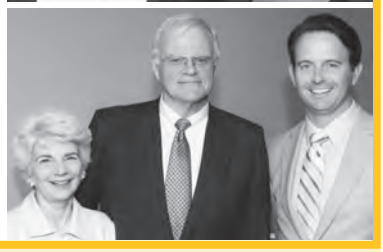
Janine was nominated for this award by former Community Prep colleague Candace Harper. "My 3rd – 8th grade students are challenged to reach very high expectations through innovative creating and learning in the arts. They are willing to take the risks that are inherent in doing something new and something old in a new way. My administrators and colleagues give me autonomy and work collaboratively. We have an integrated arts curriculum. They all give much time and effort in support of the arts."

Many CP graduates have gone on to pursue careers in the arts, and they credit Janine with opening their eyes to their own creativity and potential, along with a life-long love of the arts. Congratulations, Janine!

Candace Harper (l) and Janine Lee

"Monocular Man" raises $25,000 towards scholarships

Community Prep Trustee R. Jim Stahl is a former classroom magazine editor, book publisher, and English teacher. On September 22, he performed his one-man play, "Monocular Man: Story of a One-Eyed Son" at Trinity Rep as a fundraiser for the school. It was a wonderful evening. Many thanks to Jim, Director Kate Lohman, all of the generous sponsors, the staff at Trinity Rep, and Russell Morin Fine Catering.



Top right: Jim Stahl, Pam Delaney
Bottom right: Sponsors Sondra and Tom Pitts and Guillaume De Ramel

Students share their "dream" at R.I. Peace Month Concert

September was Rhode Island's official Month of Peace, designated by Governor Chafee and Mayor Taveras. Month of Peace organizer Ginny Fox, Executive Director of the Peace Flag Project and a long-time Community Prep supporter, has worked with CP students making peace flags--some of which have made it as far as the Mt. Everest Base Camp.

The finale for the Month of Peace was a concert with legendary folk singer Holly Near. Ginny remembered the annual performance of Martin Luther King Jr's "I Have a Dream" speech at the school's Beloved Community Night and invited our 7th graders to recite it as Holly Near's opening act. Begining with the voices of just two students--"I have a dream"--the speech crescendos --"free at last!"--as a resounding chorus of all the young voices. "I loved the way everyone responded to the kids," says Ginny. "It was a great way to get the concert going, and Holly loved it."

Community Fall Prep Golf Classic

Another beautiful day and another great tournament at the Misquamicut Club. This fall's golf tournaments raised $40,000 for scholarships. Thanks to all the wonderful sponsors who made this event possible.

Mark Your Calendars!

The Spring Golf Classic is June 12, 2014 at the Misquamicut Club!

ALUMNI UPDATES

VALDAIR LOPES '08's recent initiatives, via a student group at Occidental College called Oxypreneurship, landed him a student coordinator position at this year's Global Startup Youth Summit at the 2013 Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Malaysia.

In 2009, President Obama announced the start of the GES to foster innovative business ventures. The youth component was established to "harnesses the power of youth . . . [and] their expertise" to brainstorm solutions for today's world problems. Valdair was one of 500 young entrepreneurs selected from all over the world and was charged with overseeing logistics of the youth programs. After meeting with some of today's most distinguished young innovators and entrepreneurs, he returned to school ready to inspire. Oxypreneurship is on the verge of having entrepreneurship declared an official minor at Occidental and is responsible for bringing next year's TED Talks to campus.

Aside from co-chairing several student groups, Valdair continues to be a star on the soccer field. He made All-ISL First Team and was The Providence Journal's All-State Fall Independent Star in 2011. Valdair says some of his most memorable moments as an athlete happened at Community Prep, where he learned the value of teamwork, camaraderie, and the importance of representing oneself as professional and respectable. He attributes much of his subsequent success at St. George's School to the particular interest Mr. Husband took in him and the example he set as a young black professional.

Valdair is leaning toward a major in economics. "Whatever I end up doing," he says, "I want it to be aligned with my values and ambitions. I want to be part of something that makes a positive impact, whatever that may be."

Hispanic Heritage Celebration at Community Prep

More than a third of Community Prep's students are of Latino heritage, so it is not surprising that the school's community room was chock full of students and parents at October's Hispanic Heritage Month assembly.

"Yo soy Colombia," "Yo soy Guatemala," "Yo soy Argentina..." Students from all nationalities held up flags respresenting the world's Hispanic countries. Community Prep is home to students from the countries above as well as the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico.

Organized by Spanish teacher Rina Consuegra, the celebration included students performing folk songs and dances, and dressing up as role models, including the first Latino astronaut, a Nobel prize winner, surgeon general, Academy Award winner, among others. Parents provided delicious traditional Latino finger foods. State Senator Juan Pichardo, parent of a CP graduate and a current student, and the first Latino elected to the Rhode Island Senate, shared with students his own story and named other distinguished Latino leaders in the state.

"Community Prep's diversity is one of its greatest strengths," explains Rina. "We want every student to be proud of his or her heritage."

Community Preparatory School
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