Closing the Opportunity Gap

Christopher House’s two-generation approach is closing the opportunity gap through a continuum of personalized education with immersive family support starting at birth.
A Letter from Our CEO

More than a century ago, Christopher House was inspired by a simple, yet important insight: all children deserve the opportunity for success. It is this powerful concept that has driven our continual evolution to meet the needs of our community—from supporting immigrants transitioning to life in America at the turn of the 20th century, to being one of the first Head Start providers in the 1960s, to offering innovative teen parent programs in the 1980s. Today, we remain committed to our original vision, and continue to support thousands of low-income children and their families in our continuum of education.

In this newsletter, you will see the incredible results of our data-driven model and inspiring stories of support and success. These gains make me so hopeful for our city and country’s future, and so proud to share something even more exciting: we’re growing.

By 2020, through the completion of the JoAnne L. Cicchelli Middle School, Christopher House will welcome more than 200 new scholars to our continuum of education. These children will prosper from our unique approach—focusing on a high-quality personalized curriculum and whole child development starting at birth. And, their parents will be able to be the best they can be—with our immersive family support, including counseling, workshops on financial and family planning, access to our food pantries, emergency assistance funds, and support groups.

With your support, Christopher House’s two-generation approach is effectively and directly changing the trajectory for children born into poverty. I sincerely thank you for believing in our scholars and their families’ ability to thrive.

Please join me in continuing to invest in our growth and the potential of these incredible children and families. Together we can build a vibrant, thriving Chicago.

Sincerely,

Lori Baas
Chief Executive Officer

November 2018

“You can’t teach a child without family. This is what makes the difference, when you’re able to partner with the family.”

-Karen Ross-Williams,
Director of Early Childhood Education and Youth Development

OUR VALUES
• Commitment to Excellence
• Achievement and Perseverance
• Respect and Compassion
• Equality of Opportunity

OUR BELIEFS
Children and families thrive where:
• They have access to a high-quality education
• Education begins at birth, with parents as the first teacher, and continues through life
• Parents have high standards and set high expectations for their children and themselves
• Professionally trained teachers use strength-based instruction and know their students as individuals
• Parents support their children financially and emotionally
• Evaluations and program adjustments are data driven
• Education includes developing perseverance and social intelligence
• Parents and teachers work together to continuously improve programs

Real Results

#1
CHES ranked top Charter Elementary School by Chicago Magazine

Top Quartile
5th grade math and reading national growth percentile*

70%
6th grade math national growth percentile*

83%
After School students improved their GPA or maintained a B average

76%
Early childhood students prepared for kindergarten***

94%
Early Childhood students prepared in Math for kindergarten**

88%
Early childhood students prepared in literacy for kindergarten**

96%
Early childhood students prepared in social emotional for kindergarten**

RECENT WINS

Karen Ross-Williams, Director of Early Childhood Education and Youth Development, named Barbara Bowman Fellow at Erikson Institute.

Christopher House Elementary School Principal Krissy Novy named a Chicago Public Schools “Game Changer.”

NWEA Assessment Spring 2018
Kindergarten Readiness Matrix® 2018 - All Students
Kindergarten Readiness Matrix® 2018 - Students without IEPs
JoAnne L. Cicchelli has been a member of the Christopher House Board of Directors since 1995. As a board member, she has been instrumental in developing Christopher House into the top-rated family of schools it is today.

Ms. Cicchelli is a fervent advocate for education and children in need. “JoAnne believes passionately in both the mission of Christopher House and the success it has had in achieving that mission.” said JoAnne’s husband, Bill Singer. “JoAnne is as passionate about this next phase of Christopher House’s work, as she has been over the last 20 years of its efforts.”

The next phase of Christopher House’s work began on October 24, 2018, at the Groundbreaking Ceremony of the JoAnne L. Cicchelli Middle School. Joined by Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, her husband, and many supporters of the Campaign for Thriving Families, JoAnne broke ground on construction of her namesake middle school.

The school, which will be completed in time to welcome the first ever class of seventh graders in the fall of 2019, will feature a college counseling office, a rooftop garden, STEAM and language arts labs, and a performing arts studio.

As Ms. Cicchelli said at the groundbreaking, “Everyone in this room understands and appreciates the value of education, and the great problems we have as a city, a nation, and a world when good education is not provided. Education is a lifelong experience. It is best right from the start. (Irving Harris.) That is what Christopher House is about, and now we go further—through the 8th grade.”

We didn’t just break ground on a construction site—we broke ground on a brighter future for our scholars and their families, and the 200 new students we’ll be able to serve and welcome into the Christopher House family.

JoAnne L. Cicchelli Middle School

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In recent years, the research on the importance of early childhood has been clear: early education matters.

New numbers released by the Illinois State Board of Education suggest that only 24% of kindergartners in Illinois are actually ready for school. The data also shows that a well-documented achievement gap between rich and poor kids exists before kindergarten. On average, only 16% of kids who qualify for free or reduced lunches were ready for kindergarten. 76% of Christopher House students* are kindergarten ready — 87% when excluding students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs). It should be noted that 100% of our students receive free or reduced lunch. The missing piece? The bridge to elementary.

At Christopher House, Principal Krissy Novy and Director of Early Childhood and Youth Development Karen Ross-Williams, have done a great deal of intentional work building that bridge. Karen Ross-Williams summed it up nicely stating, “we understand that the intensity of collaboration will lead to higher classroom quality and have a positive effect on student outcomes (school readiness). The collaboration between the preschool and elementary school is defining emergent learning from birth to 8th grade and closing the opportunity gap for at risk children.”

With an early childhood program that starts at birth, we offer emergent learning from birth to 8th grade and closing the opportunity gap for at risk children. 76% of Christopher House students* are kindergarten ready — 87% when excluding students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs). It should be noted that 100% of our students receive free or reduced lunch. The missing piece? The bridge to elementary.

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Thank You to Our Donors
July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018 Annual Fund

Classroom Circle
$50,000 – 100,000+
CME Group Foundation
Paul M. Angell Family Foundation
Anonymous
The Crown Family
Exelon Corporation
Ellis Goodman Family Foundation
IMC Chicago Charitable Foundation
Pollack Bros. Foundation
Teen REACH

Holland & Knight
Leo S. Guthman Fund
Goldman, Sachs & Co.
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Meredith and Brock Flagstad Education Corporation of
Patrick and Anna M. Cudahy

Robert Buono and Elizabeth Perry and Julie Bump

$10,000 – 24,999
Teacher Circle
Mary M. Hasten Foundation
Rick and Dee Dee Chesley
Chicago Department of Family Services
Family Circle
Teen REACH
Polk Bros. Foundation
IMC Chicago Charitable Foundation
Exelon Corporation
The Crown Family
Anonymous
Paul M. Angell Family Foundation
CME Group Foundation
Classroom Circle

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“Schools are a key part of developing values like teamwork, respect, and hard work. Values that will help Christopher House students excel in school, in work, and in life.”
- Camilla Ruelas, Class of 2021

Ingenuity
Jenner & Block
Kenilworth Union Church
Thomas S. Elizabeth S. Maentz
North Shore Exchange
Paul Hastings LLP
Presbyterian of Chicago
James and Patricia Raquet
Stu and Tatum Reed
David W. Rodin
Rooney Rippie & Ratnaswamy LLP
Starcom Worldwide
Barbara Stewart and Peter Bower
The Strobel Family Charitable Fund
Topey Family Foundation
United Airlines
United Scrap Metal, Inc.
Andrew and Betsy Weil
Wintrust Community Banks
XL Catlin

Teacher Circle
$10,000 – 24,999
Anonymous (x2)
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Bank of America - Illinois Foundation
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Perry and Julie Bump
Roib Buono and Elizabeth Cicchelli
CIGNA
Patrick and Anna M. Cudahy Fund
Education Corporation of America
First Midwest Bank
Meredith and Brock Flagstad
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Goldman, Sachs & Co.
Leo S. Guthman Fund
Theresa and David Haines
Holland & Knight
House of Vans

$5,000 - 9,999
Mentor Circle
Accident Fund
All Chicago
Anonymous (x3)
Bank of America Merrill Lynch
Paul and Linda Bartman
Greg and Carol Batton
Bill Carr
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Emery Stahl LLP
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Mark and Lisa Fishman Family
Matt Gibson
Matthew Gray and The Avrum Gray Family Fund
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John Harney, and family
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Jeff and Rhea Kemerley
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Mentor Circle
$5,000 - 9,999

Southminster Presbyterian Church
Robyn Stearns and Leonard Gail
Tangent Technologies
Kimberly White

Advocate Circle
$2,500 – 4,999
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Erikson Institute
First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights
Anthony and Jennifer Foat Mia and Mark Furlong
The Horton Group, Inc.
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Thomas O’Neill and Ann David
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Faye Paul and Mr. Arthur Lipovetsky
Presbyterian Church of Barrington
Lisa Sauer
David Schroeder

Southminster Presbyterian Church
Robyn Stearns and Leonard Gail
Tangent Technologies
Kimberly White

Student Circle
$1,000 – 2,499
Aetna, Inc.
After School Matters
Anonymous
Arkes Family Foundation
Michael and Helen Arkes
Paul Martin and Michelle Arnold
Atomic Mechanical Services, INC.
Avignon Young
Forrest Bailey
Barack Ferrazzano
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Steven and Karen Berkowitz
Dan Binerger
Jeffrey Blackburn
Stacey Joe Blasko
Jeff Bentenger and Wendy Berg
Jim and Mimi Brautl
Seth and Julia Briggs
Michael and Deborah Buck
CNA
Dermod Properties Foundation
Chris and Karen Dickerson

Become an Investor in Success Today
Each gift has the opportunity to create a profound impact on the thousands of children and their families that Christopher House partners with annually. Here are some of the ways you can give:

DONATE ONLINE • DONATE BY MAIL • BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR
DONATE DIAPERS • INCLUDE CHRISTOPHER HOUSE IN YOUR WILL
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DONATE DIAPERS • INCLUDE CHRISTOPHER HOUSE IN YOUR WILL

For more information, please contact our Associate Director of Development Megan Jennings at mjennings@christopherhouse.org or at 773-922-7584.

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Robert and Lynn Marocchio
Christine Marzullo
Mr. Roger and Mrs. Anina McCarron
MG&B Designers
Michael and Lori Mulhern
Suzanne Myers
Doug Nelson
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Open Kitchens
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Charles H. Kurtz
Steve and Dorothy Larrick
Lifetouch National’ School Studios
Angela Lockhart
Yvonne Lozano
Lynn and Mike Lullo
Sam and Terry Maack
Gene and Barbara Mackeivich
The Mail House
John and Patti Mannebach

We’ve got spirit! Yes we do!

We kicked off our first-ever sports program this fall with a pep rally! Together with VIPs retired Bears defensive end Israel Idonije and school mascot Ollie the Owl.

Christopher House students now have the opportunity to participate in volleyball, soccer, cheerleading, and flag football.

Sports are a part of developing values like teamwork, respect, and hard work. Values that will help Christopher House students excel in school, in work, and in life.

We’ve got spirit! How about you?

You can support Christopher House athletes by donating today!

$10: one mouthguard
$20: equipment for the year
$50: team uniform
$150: 1 year sponsorship
$200: bus ride to away game

Camilla Ruelas with her parents and Mayor Rahm Emanuel after she delivered her speech at the groundbreaking ceremony. Camilla is in 6th grade and is a member of our first graduating class.
Christopher House closes the opportunity gap through a continuum of personalized education with immersive family support starting at birth.

Join us for one of our events throughout the year! There are many ways to be a part of our work and directly impact children and families in need. Here are just a few upcoming opportunities!

**Holiday Food Drive & Family to Family**
Holidays are a time of family, food, and generosity. Help our families enjoy a special day of hope. Collect food for special Thanksgiving meals or be paired with a family - or multiple families - to help give families in need a joyful holiday season.

**Read-a-Thon 2019**
Join us to celebrate the love of reading with our scholars! The Read-A-Thon, opens their imagination, sparks creativity, and builds vocabulary and literacy skills. Volunteer to share your favorite childhood book, and collect donations to help create more robust classroom and home libraries.

**29th Annual Benefit**
Save the date to join us for our largest fundraiser of the year! This year our benefit will be held on May 9, 2019 at the Four Seasons Chicago.

Visit ChristopherHouse.org for more information on how to get involved, buy tickets, or donate!
You can help a family reach their full potential.

Visit christopherhouse.org

When her mom passed, I was so lost – what am I supposed to do? I'm a single dad, I work, I take care of my parents – it's kind of hard. Christopher House basically guided me through it to where I am.

Mariano Agosto, Parent of Melanie, Early Childhood and now Second Grade

5235 W. Belden Ave.
Chicago, IL 60639

Christopher House