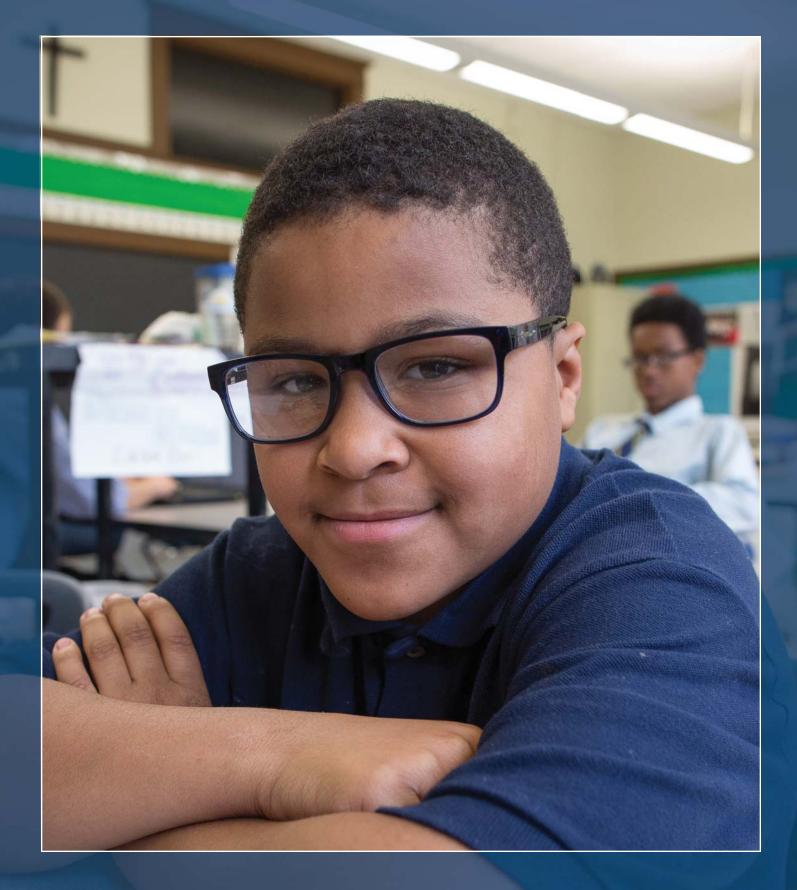
Growing Up While We Grow Down

From third grade to starting a career, we walk with our students and alumni every step of the way



Chicago Jesuit Academy Annual Report 2016

Jerrod '09 Infiniti '10 Kameron '21



"We try to make this school as great as it can be. With people like you, it gets better all the time. We appreciate that you have enough heart to love our school – our CJA community – our home."

Walter, Class of 2017



A.M.D.G. September 2016

Dear Friends,

On a beautiful Saturday morning this past July, our gym came alive as our students and alumni warmed up for our annual three-on-three basketball tournament. As I made my way through the gym, I was greeted with hugs and handshakes from our oldest alumni.

Lorenzo – a towering young man at 6'5" – updated me on his summer internship at Walsh Construction and his plans for sophomore year at Centre College in Kentucky. Timone told me about his graduation from St. Ignatius College Prep. Jermell and Mateo – two recent Loyola Academy grads – spoke about their move to Milwaukee to begin their first year at Marquette. Markel sought me out with a newfound earnestness and talked about his upcoming freshman year at Loyola University Chicago's Arrupe College.

Minutes later, I had to slip out the door to attend a wake for an amazing woman: Ms. Ersilee Wesley. I met Ms. Ersilee in June 2005 when CJA first opened our doors at Marillac House. Long before we had proved our worth or done anything to earn Ms. Ersilee's trust, she welcomed us with open arms. She never tired of telling families, "Your son should go to Jesuit." She introduced us to many of the children who would become our first students.

Twelve years later, these children are now grown men. I saw several of them and their families at the services for Ms. Ersilee. There was Johnnie, who now works for the Chicago Park District and is completing an Associate Degree at the City Colleges. He attended the services with his mom, dad and grandmother. They were joined by DaMarcus and his mom. DaMarcus will complete his Economics degree at Knox College next spring, and he already has a job offer from a major Chicago bank. Our College-Persistence Team has had the privilege of walking with Johnnie and DaMarcus – and all of our other alumni – as they've charted their unique paths from CJA through high school and now college.

This is the West Side of Chicago that I know – a place filled with loving people who work hard each day to care for their families, their friends and their communities. Theirs are not the stories we hear on the evening news. The lives of Ms. Ersilee, Johnnie, DaMarcus, Markel, Jermell, Mateo and Timone are too often made invisible by the terrible violence that plagues our city.

. . .

On that same July weekend, gunmen shot nine people within blocks of our campus between 3:00 PM on Friday and 11:50 PM on Sunday. Of the nine victims who were shot, two were killed: a 19-year-old young man and an 18-year-old young man.

Nine human beings shot. Two dead. Seven seriously injured. All within five blocks of CJA.

This violence is painfully real, but we ought never be deceived into believing it is the summary statement for our students, our alumni or our neighbors on the West Side of Chicago.

...

When I returned to the CJA gym after the wake, I got to watch one of the final games of the tournament. It pitted a team led by Timone against one led by Julian – an alum who is a year older than Timone. Julian worked at CJA this summer as a classroom aide, and he hopes to become a teacher when he finishes his degree at Knox three years from now.

Timone's and Julian's teams were well matched. They played each other evenly through two overtimes. As the third overtime came down to a final shot, I looked down the sideline and had to smile. While Timone's and Julian's teams battled, Mateo, Jermell, Lorenzo and Markel were on their feet cheering wildly – just four college guys having a great Saturday together.

This is the normal we know is possible.

This is what we fight so hard for. These are the invisible stories of quiet courage that define our students and alumni. It's why we believe so deeply in their great God-given promise.

Thank you once again for believing in them.

atthen Japach

In gratitude,

Matthew Lynch President

Chicago Jesuit Academy Class of 2016



In Gratitude



For Our Faculty

Keshaun

"I'm going to take the education my teachers have given me and make at least one change in society. I want to motivate people in my neighborhood to go to college because there are not a lot of people motivating black kids to go to college."



For Our Parents & Families

Justin

"It is so important to have your family on your side. And not just my own family, but all the families at our school. That's what we have at CJA. Our families give us the support we need when things don't work out. There is always someone to lean your head on."

For Our Benefactors

Alexander

"The fact that I could even begin to do this work is because someone offered their time, their money and their faith to make CJA possible. In the same way that I had much to overcome, the benefactors also had a challenge to overcome. They had to trust that I would do good things with the school that they helped build."



Grad-At-Grad Award Winners



Open to Growth

Awarded to Javonte

"I am excited to see what his future will bring, because I know that he is not afraid to open himself to the experiences he will have. And I am thankful for the legacy that he is leaving at CJA."

- Ms. Kennedy



— Mr. Kane

Awarded to Malachi

"Everywhere he went, he attentively listened to the wisdom of all of the adults in his life and he consistently treated them with the utmost respect. In the classroom he strove for excellence and never failed to put forth his best effort."

— Mr. Durkin





Loving

Awarded to Justin

"He has decided it's better to walk his own path, guided by his own sense of how people should be treated, rather than to join a path crowded by the fearful. He hears Jesus' calls for us to love one another. He recognizes that there is much to fear about being loving. And then he loves anyhow."

- Mrs. Boyle

Intellectually Competent

Awarded to Malachi and Tovaris

"These two built a space where it was safe to risk being yourself. They proved you didn't have to love basketball, hate school and only talk about video games to fit in. They built their own space, a fortress where it's safe to love learning and be a kid."





Committed to Doing Justice

Awarded to Robert

"In nearly all he does, he represents his family, his school and himself to the best of his ability. He is never looking for someone to give him an award or recognition for this behavior."

— Mr. Young

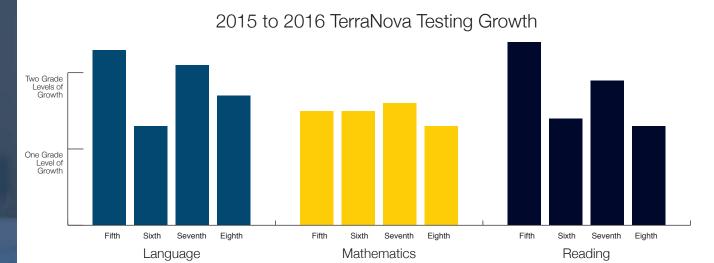
"We need you. We need you to make the world a better place. We need you to be the leaders that create a more just world."

Dr. Norman Francis 2016 Commencement Speaker Former President of Xavier University of Louisiana Recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom



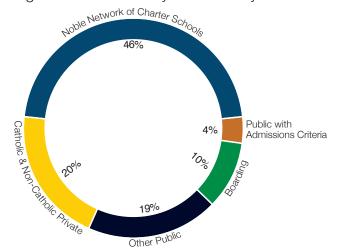
Our Growth

The gentlemen of Chicago Jesuit Academy made impressive gains on the TerraNova test between the spring of 2015 and the spring of 2016. Each grade grew by at least one grade-level in each subject, closing the gap with — and in some cases surpassing — their peers nation-wide. On average, students entered CJA in fifth grade testing at the mid-third-grade level in Reading, Language and Mathematics.



Our Next Steps

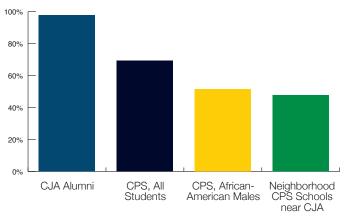
High Schools Currently Attended by CJA Alumni



Of CJA's oldest alumni, 97% have graduated from high school in five years, compared to 69% for all students in Chicago Public Schools, roughly 50% for African-American males city-wide and less than 50% for students attending neighborhood high schools in CJA's service area.

Approximately half of CJA alumni currently in high school are enrolled in The Noble Network of Charter Schools. Roughly a third of CJA alumni in high school attend private schools like Loyola Academy or boarding schools like La Lumiere. Nearly a quarter of our students attend public schools outside of the Noble Network, some of which are selective enrollment schools or schools that have specific admissions criteria.





CPS data from cps.edu/SchoolData





Chicago Jesuit Academy Scholarships

Chicago Jesuit Academy relies entirely on the generosity of others to offer a full-scholarship, college prep education to young men who otherwise would not be able to afford it. That generosity ensures that our students will receive an excellent middle school education, as well as the advocacy and support they will need throughout high school and college via CJA's College-Persistence Programs.

Benefactors who choose to support CJA are investing in the long-term future of our young men. That investment signals a belief in their promise – not only as students, but as gentlemen who are committed to doing justice in the service of others.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a scholarship benefactor, please contact Mrs. Maria Lefkow Sorensen, Director of Development, at (773) 696-4907 or by email at sorensen@cjacademy.org.

Magis Scholarship

\$5,000 per year for four years

provides a CJA student with critical resources including access to social workers, a school nurse, a reading specialist, remedial tutoring and group counseling to help overcome one-time traumas, chronic struggles and other special needs.

Core Scholarship

\$12,500 per year for four years

funds an excellent college prep education for 9.5 hours per day and 11 months per year to prepare students for the rigors of college prep high schools.

Comprehensive Scholarship

\$17,500 per year for four years

provides all of the resources of both the Magis and Core Scholarships for a CJA student.

Creating a Legacy at CJA

CJA relies on both your current and future support to ensure the long-term success of our students. As we continue the process of growing our enrollment to 228 by the 2020-21 school year, annual gifts and scholarship commitments allow us to enroll more young men each year. A powerful way to support CJA in the long-term is to include a provision for our students in your estate plan. Your future gift, no matter the size, helps ensure that we will be able to serve not only our current students and alumni, but also the young men who will follow in their footsteps in the decades to come.

If you decide to include CJA in your estate plan, we recommend that you seek the help of an estate planning attorney or tax professional. More information on planned giving is available on our website at www.chicagojesuitacademy.org/plannedgiving.

If you are interested in learning more about making a planned gift to Chicago Jesuit Academy, **please contact Mrs. Maria Lefkow Sorensen**, Director of Development, at (773) 696-4907 or via email at sorensen@cjacademy.org.

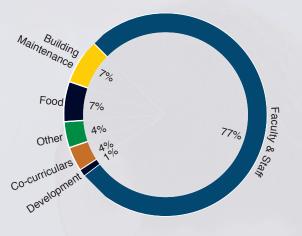
Legacy Circle

Legacy Circle benefactors have committed to support Chicago Jesuit Academy through their wills or other planned gifts.

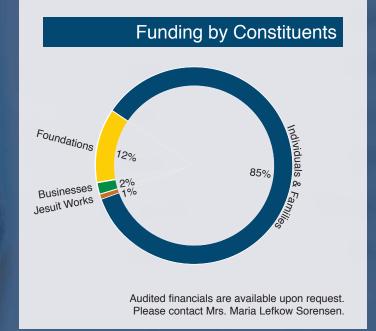
Anonymous (3)
John D. and Rita Crawford
Millie Slane

A Glance at our Financials

Expenses by Category

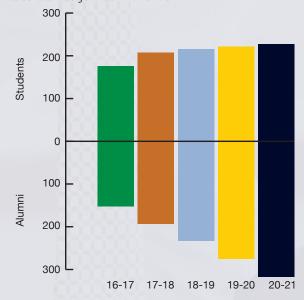


Total FY15-16 Expenses: \$3,307,093



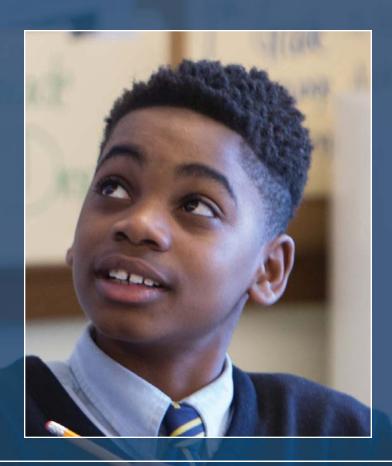
Our Growth and Our Financials

As CJA grows from serving 161 students and 151 alumni in the 2016-17 school year to serving 228 students and 315 alumni by the 2020-21 school year, the projected expenses of the school will grow to \$4,763,000. While we originally imagined CJA to be a school for 96 students, we have been able to grow in this way because the vast majority of our benefactors continue their support of our students and alumni year after year and share our story with friends who might also want to join us in this work.



"Thank you again for your awesome support for this school. My education wouldn't be possible without you."

Jonathan, Class of 2018





The 2016-17 school year will mark the largest enrollment in Chicago Jesuit Academy's history. It is also the first time that CJA alumni will span from freshmen in high school to seniors in college. No matter their age, our young men face countless challenges, and the odds against them are staggering.

Research from the University of Chicago indicates that fewer than 6% of African American young men in Chicago will earn a bachelor's degree by the age of 25.

The University of Illinois at Chicago found that, in 2014, 47% of 20- to 24-year old African-American men in Chicago were unemployed and not in school.

We know full well that these statistics are not reflections of the strength, talent or character of students in our communities. Instead, the statistics highlight a dearth of resources and opportunities. Our goal at CJA is to ensure that the statistics do not become the reality for our young men.

When we graduated our first students from CJA in 2009 – the same young men who are now entering their senior year of college – we learned that their paths were not going to be linear. Like many of their more well-resourced peers, some found the transition to high school challenging academically or socially. Many found great success academically, but the

complicated nature of poverty made this success precarious.

The challenges our alumni faced in high school revealed the need for CJA to become **more than just a middle school**. Today, we have become just that.

• • •

For the past 11 years, each summer our newest 5th-grade students have joined us at CJA for our five-week Higher Achievement Program (HAP). HAP is an opportunity for our faculty and staff to get to know each student and family and for the student and his family to get to know CJA. It's also the first time our teachers learn about each young man's unique talents and gifts.

It is during HAP that we first learn that Joseph likes to play the guitar, that Issiah loves to ride his bike or that Elijah has always wanted to learn more about photography.

It is also during HAP that we begin to learn about the tremendous challenges our newest students face. Each year, approximately 20-25% of our incoming students are just beginning to learn how to read. Others have never been introduced to fractions. Still others have never had the opportunity to see a school nurse or sit down with a social worker to talk.



As a non-academically selective Jesuit school, we are called to cultivate each young man's talents and respond to each young man's challenges.

Over the life of the school, our incoming 5th-grade students have enrolled, on average, reading and doing mathematics at a 3rd-grade level. For too many of our students, violence in their neighborhood is a daily occurrence and some have witnessed traumatic events that have left deep and enduring scars.

In response to the tremendous challenges our students and alumni face, this fall we are growing down to enroll our inaugural classes of 3rd and 4th graders.

By the 2020-21 school year, we will be serving 228 students in the 3rd through 8th grades. This growth will make it possible for us to graduate 48 young men each year to college prep high schools, which is twice as many as have graduated historically. One quarter – or roughly 12 students – will enroll in 3rd grade, one quarter will enroll in 4th grade and the balance will begin in 5th grade.

By enrolling students in 3rd and 4th grade, we will give our teachers, social workers, nurse and learning specialists additional time to respond to the needs of our students and families. This gradual on-ramp means that each year, more young men will be surrounded by classmates who can already model the expectations and rigor of CJA. It will also allow our students who require the most resources to get the care and love they need for as much as two extra years at CJA.

...

As we grow down to serve 3rd- and 4th-grade students for the first time, our College-Persistence (CP) Team continues to serve our alumni as they grow into young adults and plan for what is next in their lives.

Even the most well-resourced families find navigating the college admissions process and paying for college to be an incredible challenge. For our alumni, almost all of whom will be among the first in their family to attend college – the road is even more difficult. Whether our alumnus attends a rigorous college prep high school in the Noble Network of Charter Schools, a selective private high school like Loyola Academy or a boarding school such as La Lumiere, the CP Team visits each alumnus every year and ensures he is supported throughout his high school career. Similarly, whether a young man attends Williams College on a full scholarship, enrolls at Loyola University Chicago's Arrupe College, elects to work full-time or enlists in military service, we continue to serve as a trusted advocate for that alumnus and his family.

As our oldest alumni begin to complete their post-secondary education and enter the professional world, the CP Team has actively worked with them to construct resumes, facilitate internships, guide job placement and build networks within professional fields they are most interested in pursuing.

We take great hope from the success of our oldest alumni. In our first four classes, 97% of our alumni have graduated from high school. Among these college-aged alumni, over 70% are persisting in two-year or four-year colleges or universities and an additional 15% are working full time or enlisted in military service. By any objective measure, our alumni are finding great success.

Most importantly, the CP Team stays in contact with and cares for our alumni who are not in college or working. Sometimes this includes facilitating a school transfer, finding stable housing, coordinating mental health care or intervening in moments of crisis. Too often, our young men are treated as if they are disposable, yet we believe that we are called to offer care and love to our students and alumni because they deserve nothing less.

Whether a student is 8 years old and joining us in 3rd grade, 19 and trying to re-enroll in post-secondary education or 22 and entering the professional world with a four-year degree, we see it as our responsibility to offer him and his family the support they need to find success.

This responsibility stems from our belief that each of our students and alumni are made in the image and likeness of God. Their future success as students, friends, colleagues, sons, brothers, husbands, fathers and gentlemen truly matters.

This is why we have chosen to grow down as our students and alumni continue to grow up.

A Glimpse at CJA

Chicago Children's Choir

For the first time, the Chicago Children's Choir will be working with our youngest students during the 2016-17 school year. Twice per week, a choir director will come to CJA to teach our students the basics of pitch and rhythm as well as an ear for music. Our young men will practice traditional and popular songs.

Through the Choir, our students will have the opportunity to perform in city-wide events at two of the most well-known venues in Chicago: Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park and Navy Pier. In addition, they will perform during school events such as our African-American Heritage Celebration.



Lower School

Middle School



Technology and Mathematics

Since CJA is not an academically selective school, our students have a wide ranging of learning needs. Particularly in math classes, technology plays a key role in helping our teachers differentiate their instruction for each student.

Our math teachers supplement their instruction with a computer program called ST Math. The program helps our students increase their math comprehension and proficiency through spatial and temporal learning. Most importantly, ST Math's visual instruction means that students whose language skills are still growing can more easily grasp math concepts that they might have struggled with through traditional instruction.

ACT Prep

One of the biggest obstacles that our alumni face during the transition from high school to college is the affordability of post-secondary education. In addition to their high school grades, our alumni must earn competitive scores on standardized tests in order for college to be affordable for them.

Each summer, our College-Persistence Team facilitates individual ACT prep for a subset of our alumni. Following these courses, our alumni's composite scores have risen between one and seven points. On average, they have risen two points. This growth can be the difference between attending a rigorous four-year college and not having affordable access to those opportunities as they graduate from high school.



High School

College & Beyond...



Internship Program

Through the advocacy of our Board of Directors and other friends of the school, our College-Persistence Team has built the Alumni Summer Internship Program at CJA. This program pairs our talented alumni with partner companies to help our alumni gain experience and build professional networks.

During the summer of 2016, our college-aged alumni served as interns at Wintrust Financial Corporation, The Heico Companies, Navman Wireless, Cooney & Conway and Walsh Construction. If your company would like to hire an intern for the summer of 2017, please contact our Director of College Persistence, Mr. Jay Kemper, at kemper@cjacademy.org.

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The donor roll acknowledges gifts made between June 1, 2015 and May 31, 2016.

Bolded names are scholarship benefactors. † indicates the benefactor is deceased.

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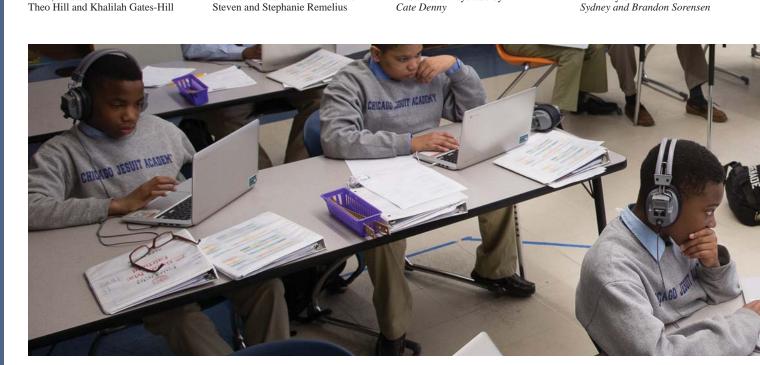
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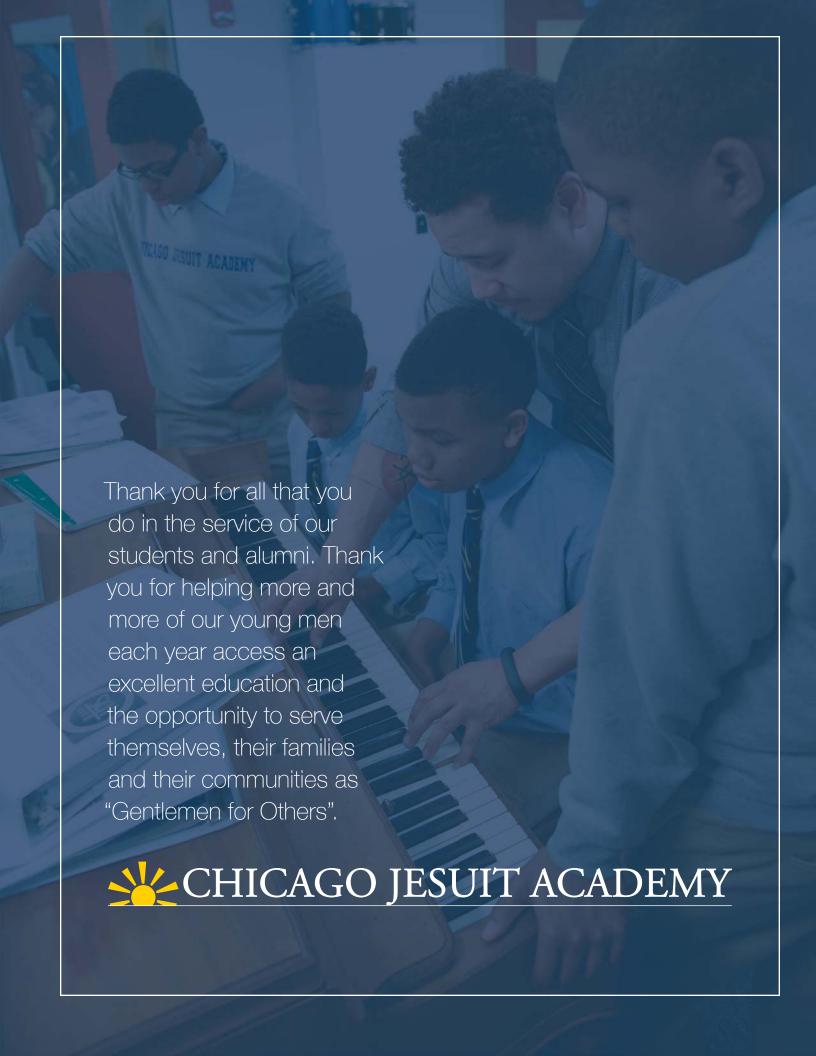
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Mr. Dave Wilson

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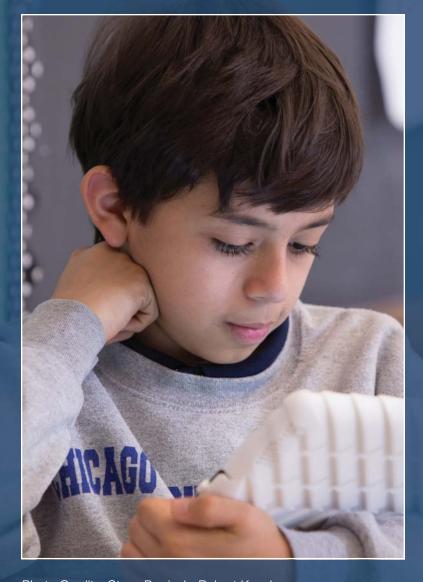


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"Thank you very much for the opportunity to learn at CJA and find my strengths and weaknesses. Because of this, I have learned how to be a better student and how to immensely improve my grades. I have sincere gratitude for all of the things that you do for the students of CJA."

Jahquez, Class of 2017

Pictured on Front Cover

Jerrod is a member of CJA's founding Class of 2009. He attended Walter Payton College Prep and will graduate from Denison University this May with a major in Mathematics. Infiniti is a member of CJA's Class of 2010. He graduated from Loyola Academy in 2014, is currently employed and working with our College-Persistence Team to re-enroll in college. Kameron is a member of CJA's inaugural 4th-grade class. His older brother, Michael, is a rising 6th grader at CJA.