

..... Open to Growth .....



As Chicago Jesuit Academy enters our fifteenth year, we continue to branch out in new directions



# When CJA opened our doors in 2005,

our model was simple: an all-boys, full-scholarship middle school with talented teachers, small class sizes, a longer school day and a longer school year. The roots of this model remain in place today.

However, over the past fourteen years, we have learned more about the structural inequities facing our students and alumni. For too long, access to basic health care, fair housing, safe public spaces and high-quality educational resources have been denied to our young men, their families and communities like ours.

We have chosen to respond to the inequities through the *magis* — the Jesuit term for the qualitative more. We meet our students and alumni where they are and ensure they get the resources they deserve inside and outside of the classroom. The story of CJA is the story of great young men taking advantage of the opportunities that all students deserve, but too few are given a chance to access.

## Social Work Team

Though a part-time social worker served on CJA's staff in our earliest years, in the 2019-20 school year we now have five full-time social workers and two social work interns serving our students and alumni in addition to outside counseling support services.

*To read Ms. Lee's story, please see Page 11*

## Learning Resource Center

In August of 2018, we opened the Learning Resource Center to support our students with diverse learning needs and help our faculty better recognize the unique talents and needs of each student.

*To read Ms. Odom's story, please see Page 13*

## Health & Wellness

In 2007, Nurse Gilmour began volunteering at CJA part-time. In 2010, she became a full-time employee, and has served as one of the lead medical resources for our students, alumni and families.

*To read Nurse Gilmour's story, please see Page 9*



# Volunteers at CJA

From the first days of CJA, volunteers have played a critical role in the growth of the school. Today, over 50 volunteers work with our students and alumni as tutors and coaches while also supporting important back-office and finance functions.

To read Mr. Hartney's story, please see Page 19

# Campus Safety

In May of 2016, CJA began partnering with the Cook County Sheriff's Police in response to a spike in gun violence in our neighborhood. This partnership is crucial to keeping the blocks around our campus safe for our parents, neighbors, students, alumni, faculty and staff.

To read Ms. Jenkins' (mother of Detongress '20) story, please see Page 17

# College Persistence

In the early years of CJA, we supported our alumni with limited programming. In recognition that more resources were needed as we grew, we formed the College-Persistence Team, which supports our students with their transition to high school and our alumni through their high schools, post-secondary paths and the start of their careers.

To read Mr. Castleberry's ('09) story, please see Page 15

# The Class of 2019

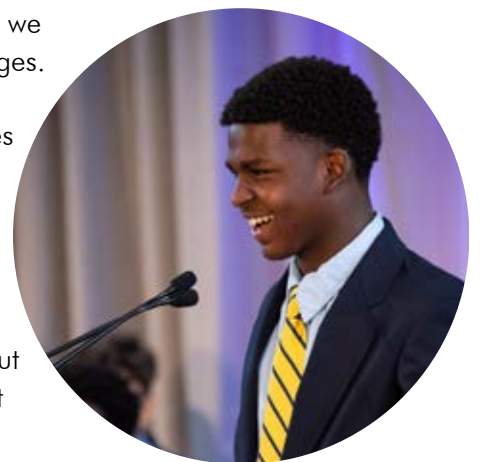


## In Gratitude...

## For our Faculty & Staff

“Over the past four years we have had lots of challenges. Those challenges have ranged from family issues to problems with other students. If anything goes wrong, the students of the Class of 2019 can always talk to the faculty and staff about it, because we know that they have our backs.”

— Lamont





“Be thankful for your strengths, for the talents that God has bestowed upon you. Be thankful for your weaknesses, because without these you’d never find your strengths.”

Mr. Brian Greviskes  
Director of Automation  
Development Engineering, Tesla

## For our Benefactors

“God has gifted us with these wonderful people, our benefactors, and saying thank you is the least that my classmates and I can do to express our gratitude. God bless CJA, and God bless you all.”

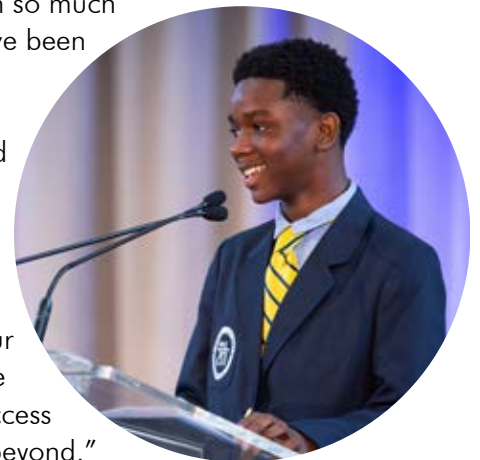
— Michael



## For our Families

“This class has grown so much during the time I have been here, and I believe that it’s because our families have worked their tails off to keep their children on the right track to be successful individuals. With your help we will continue to grow and find success in high school and beyond.”

— Jerry



# The Class of 2019



## Next Steps

Next year, the Class of 2019 will attend the following high schools:

## Noble Network of Charter Schools

Chicago Bulls College Prep  
Muchin College Prep  
Rauner College Prep  
Rowe-Clark Math & Science Academy

## Private Catholic

Christ the King Jesuit College Prep  
Fenwick High School  
Guerin College Preparatory High School  
Holy Trinity High School  
Loyola Academy  
Saint Ignatius College Prep

## Boarding

Church Farm School (PA)  
Thacher School (CA)

## Other Public

Copper Canyon High School (AZ)  
Lakeview High School  
North Grand High School  
North Lawndale College Prep  
Richard T. Crane Medical Prep High School  
Steinmetz College Prep

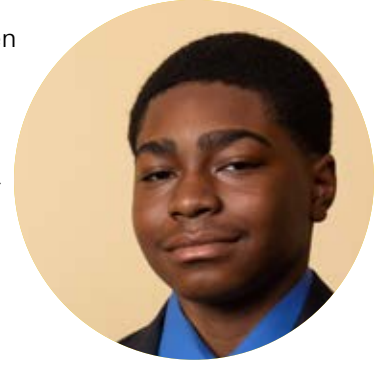
# Grad-at-Grad Award Winners

## Intellectually Competent *awarded to Winston and Israel*



"The gentlemen who have earned this award - yes, plural gentlemen - have found a way to protect something sacred. They allow themselves to be interested. They dig into the work, the questions that lead to more questions. They do their own thinking, and they're interesting. They make every classroom they're in a better place for other students, a safer place for questions, a more fascinating ecosystem of thought."

— Ms. Boyle



## Committed to Doing Justice *awarded to Armario*



"His arm around a shoulder, a big vibrant smile, a pep talk for someone who is struggling. These are actions of love, but they are also expressions of his notion of justice: his belief that because you are a person, you deserve to be included in the community, welcomed no matter what, and treated with love and compassion."

— Mr. Crean and Ms. Hagerty

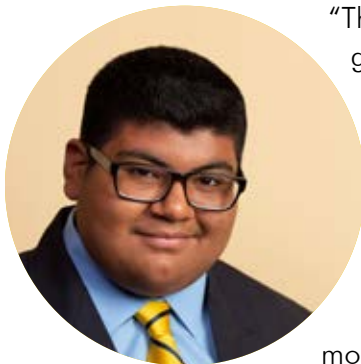
## Religious *awarded to Luis*



"His devotion to a rule of life, directed by his faith in God, undergirds and gives life to all of his actions and choices, both big and small. His intentional choice to live by these principles, through which all other Grad-at-Grad values are born, is an exemplar of what the 'Religious' Grad-at-Grad value looks like in everyday life."

— Mr. Swanson

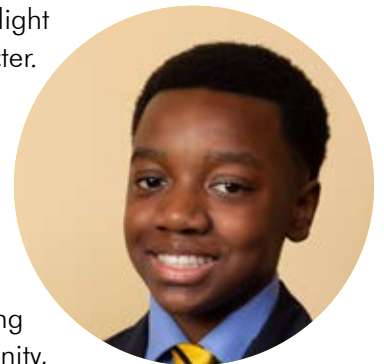
## Loving *awarded to Fidencio*



"The love he shows is a calm. It's grounded in simplistic presence of self. It's a safety both students and adults trust. He's the ultimate 'I could just use being around that guy' kind of guy; a 'thank goodness he's around' guy; an 'I've had a super rough morning, can I sit next to him' guy. Every day, he quietly shows love and care to us all."

— Mr. Rathke

## Open to Growth *awarded to Kaden*



"Today, I am so proud to highlight a person of incredible character. One who, every single day, shows me how strong and how driven he is. One who is receptive to advice and willing to try again and again, despite how he may be feeling or what else is going on around him in the community, classroom or world."

— Mr. Houlihan



## CJA Scholarships

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 also 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 Ms. Maria Lefkow Sorensen, Vice President of Development, at (773) 696-4907 or [sorensen@cjademy.org](mailto:sorensen@cjademy.org).**

“Your gift is not just money. It shows that you have made a choice to care about us. Your support of others’ education leads to a great future. It changes the world and others’ lives.”

Miko,  
Class of 2021

### Magis

**\$5,000 per year  
for four years**

A Magis Scholarship helps provide a CJA student with access to social workers, a school nurse, a learning and reading specialist and other supports to help overcome trauma, chronic struggles and other special needs.

### Core

**\$12,500 per year  
for four years**

A Core Scholarship gives a student an excellent college prep education for 9.5 hours per day and 11 months per year in small class sizes with high-quality teachers.

### Comprehensive

**\$17,500 per year  
for four years**

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

### Full Cost

**\$28,600 per year  
for four years**

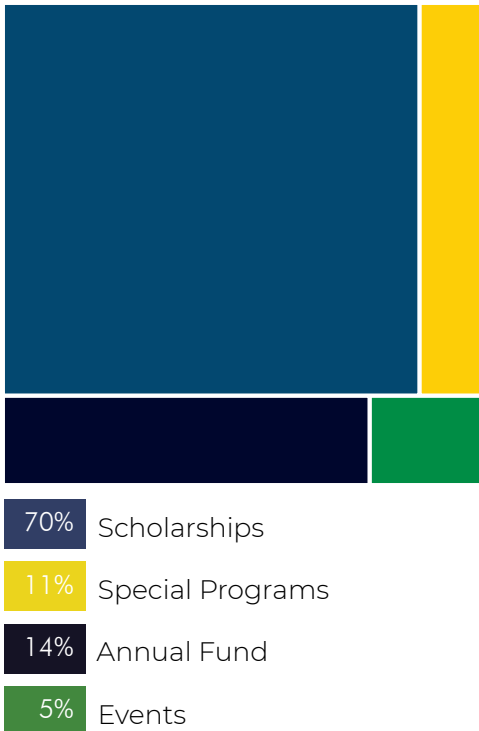
A full-cost scholarship takes into account the approximate true cost per student per year at CJA. This cost is in line with the amount spent by many suburban public school districts whose average school day is three hours shorter and whose school year is two months shorter than CJA's.



# Our Financials

For a copy of CJA's audited financials, please contact Ms. Maria Lefkow Sorensen.

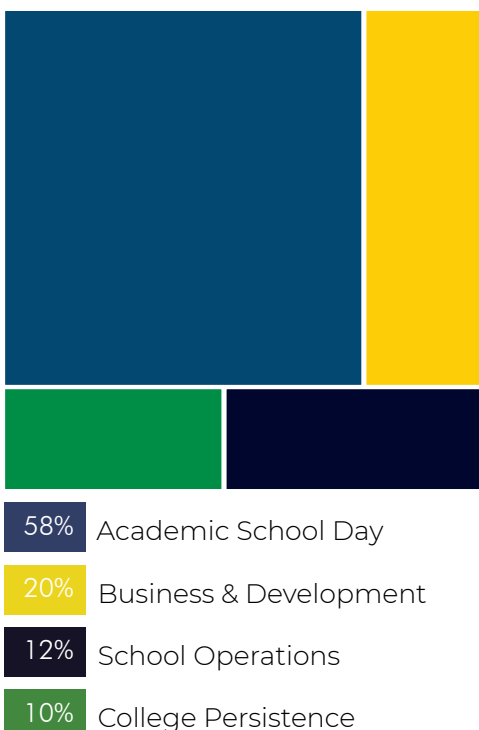
## Charitable Funding by Program



The majority of CJA's annual fundraising helps contribute to student scholarships each year. Some benefactors choose to support specific programs such as our Healthy Students Program, our College-Persistence Program or our Arts & Music program. Others give to our Annual Fund, which directs contributions to areas of the school that need it most.

Scholarship fundraising is critical to help CJA continue to grow. After supporting a student for four years through his eighth-grade graduation, scholarship benefactors choose to renew their scholarship with a new fifth grader over 80% of the time.

## Spending by Department



The majority of spending at CJA during the 2018-19 school year directly supported the Academic School Day, ensuring an 8:1 student-to-teacher ratio and funding for four social workers, two social work interns, a reading specialist and a school nurse. This comprehensive support helps our young men grow both academically and in their social-emotional skills.

The Business and Development Team raised 96% of CJA's revenue and ensured the financial health of the school remained strong.

School Operations managed all of the technology, campus safety, buildings and grounds for our students and alumni.

The College-Persistence Team worked with our students and their families starting in sixth grade to help prepare them for the transition to high school and continued this work with our alumni in high school, college and the start of their careers.



## Access to Resources

For the past twelve years, Ms. Gilmour has served our community with great love and commitment as our inaugural school nurse. This summer, she and her husband relocated to their home state of Michigan, where they will provide rural camping and outdoor experiences for children living in urban settings.

While we will miss Ms. Gilmour greatly, we know that this is not a goodbye, and we expect to have CJA students participate in the camping and outdoor experiences that she plans to offer.

We are also excited to welcome Ms. Kiefer to CJA as our new nurse. She comes to CJA with extensive clinical and school nursing experience, and we look forward to having her serve our students, alumni and families.

As a stranger to our school, you might learn the most about our community by spending some time in the school nurse's clinic. You would learn about acute medical issues, hear young voices describing the pressure of modern life and the favorite risk-taking behaviors of tweens and teens as well as student responses to current stresses. The nurse's clinic would be a great place to learn about community resources for families, the newest management strategies for chronic diseases and the health ramifications of heavy backpacks and too much screen time. You would witness first aid for injuries, learn hints to survive puberty, overhear words of counseling, compassion and the joy of success among our youth, all in one day! The CJA nurse's clinic is a microcosm of society.

Schools need nurses because we are often the first to detect symptoms of health problems in children and the first to detect public health trends when problems arise repeatedly in a student population. Working with our families at CJA allows me to identify unmet health needs of our students. A nurse's presence can help foster academic achievement, improved attendance and positive health outcomes. I have seen these effects every day at CJA.

As in many schools across Chicago, in the early years of



CJA, our students did not have access to a school nurse. Today, they benefit from my daily support, but also from the resources that many of our partner organizations can help provide.

All of our students have access to an annual in-school dental clinic providing exams, cleanings, sealants and fluoride treatments. Our rising 6th graders have the opportunity to receive a physical exam and immunizations from the Loyola University Mobile Medical Van. The Sight for Students program allows me to provide comprehensive eye exams and glasses for those who fail their vision screenings. Every day, our students are served fresh meals cooked from scratch and learn about nutrition, food choices and the connection between healthy eating and healthy minds.

Every child deserves a school nurse to support student learning and act as an advocate and liaison among home, school and the healthcare community. It is the goal of the CJA nurse's clinic to advance the well-being, life-long achievement and health of our students, and I'm proud of what we have built for our school community.

*Pam Gilmour*  
CJA School Nurse



# Our Benefactors

## Founders Circle

*These donors have generously contributed over \$400,000 in support of our students over the life of the school.*

Anonymous (3)	Bill McIntosh
Matthew J. and Christine C. Botica	The Howard and Kennon McKee Charitable Fund
Helen Brach Foundation	Midwest Province of the Society of Jesus
CA Student Living	Office of Justice Programs
Chicago Blackhawks Foundation	Perkins Malo Hunter Foundation Fund
Conway Family Foundation	Maralyn and Michael Reilly
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John J. and Virginia B. Gearen Family	Susan and Steve Wolfe
The Gies Foundation	
Joel and Stacy Hock	
Michael and Lindy Keiser	
Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Virginia and Joseph Mallof Family Fund	

## Scholarship Circle

*These donors are generously sponsoring students through gifts received outside the 2018-2019 fiscal year.*

Anthony L. and Jean C. Barbato	The Howard and Kennon McKee Charitable Fund
David C. and Jill Christian	O'Gorman Family Charitable Fund
Ann & Tim Finnegan	Romano Family
Foglia Family Foundation	Mark Rowley
Gallagher Family Foundation	Dan and Patty Walsh
James P. Gearen	David and Peggy Wilson
Joel and Stacy Hock	
Justin and Hilarie Huscher	

## Invest In Kids Act Benefactors

*These donors have generously supported CJA through a gift to a qualified scholarship granting organization. Proceeds will be distributed to CJA during the 2019-2020 school year.*

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Thomas and Tracy Brooker	Jim & Sara Lynch
Stephen C. and Patricia B. Carlson	Rick and Christina Malnati
Mary and George Fitzpatrick	Bill McIntosh
Gary and Karen Gardner	Martin and Lauren Modahl
The Gies Foundation	Noel G. and Michele V. Moore
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Patrick and Katy Kennedy	Thomas J. and Sarah Teeling
Thomas and Margaret Kittle-Kamp	Richard and Ann Waris
	Susan and Steve Wolfe

# Our Benefactors

**Bolded names** indicate scholarship benefactors.

The donor roll acknowledges gifts made to Chicago Jesuit Academy between June 1, 2018 and May 31, 2019.

## **Ignatius Circle** \$100,000 and Up

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**CA Student Living**  
**James and Catherine Denny Foundation**  
**Foglia Family Foundation**  
**The Gies Foundation**  
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**Wintrust Financial Corporation**

## **Xavier Circle** \$10,000 to \$24,999

Advocate Bethany Community Health Fund  
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**Aileen S. Andrew Foundation**  
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## **Bellarmino Circle** \$25,000 to \$49,999

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**The Timothy B. Johnson Gift Fund**  
**Kemper Educational & Charitable Fund**  
**Jim and Sue King**  
**Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Virginia and Joseph Mallof Family Fund**  
**Polk Brothers Foundation**

**T**rauma restricts empathy. That's something I've found consistently, in both my professional and personal experiences. To demonstrate empathy we need to care for people and experiences beyond our own. But when we're hurting, when we're dealing with the aftermath of traumatic experiences, it can be incredibly difficult to move beyond our personal bubble. As a third-year Social Work Intern from Loyola University's JVC Magis Program, I have frequently seen this challenge with students in our Lower School. Circumstances that are beyond our students' control regularly impact them, and they carry that throughout their day.

That's where our Social Work Team comes in. Chicago Jesuit Academy is extraordinary in the number of resources devoted to the social and emotional care of our students. CJA's holistic approach to their care and development is crucial to their success. Addressing their social and emotional needs allows them to be present for learning and engaged in the wider CJA community. We strive to graduate empathetic, well-rounded students. Sometimes the need is more foundational as we work towards this goal and seek to support our students' success in and beyond CJA.

For example, last year, two fourth graders had developed a pattern of conflicts. They tried to one-up each other in class and sometimes used unkind words and pointed looks. Through a mediation led by Ms. Fleming, our



Director of Social Work Services, they were able to move past the behavior to the root cause. For those two young men, the root cause of trauma and its impacts were very similar. Following their mediation, I began meeting with the students for lunch each week. They would check-in with each other, commiserate, offer advice and ultimately demonstrate empathy. By having real conversations about what was bothering them, these two students were able to completely change their relationship from antagonistic to supportive. That shift certainly affected them, but it also had positive repercussions for their whole class.

Their story isn't unique. I've found that when students are able to address their experiences and have those experiences validated, connections and empathy naturally follow. While it is never easy and rarely quick, it is always worthwhile. Building empathy and community is an act of healing and resilience. Helping our students address their traumas and challenges sets them up for healthier relationships, better academic outcomes and greater resiliency throughout their lives.

As social workers, we're given the opportunity to support students and to teach and reinforce skills to transition from pain to empathy. As I continue my time at CJA, I hope to support students as they continue to build a more generous and empathetic community. I've seen it happen, and I know that with the right resources and opportunities, our students and community will continue to flourish.

*Jessica Lee*

*JVC Magis Social Work Intern*



## Healing and Growing

Far too many of our students have faced trauma in their lives. CJA's five social workers and two social work interns often serve as the lead mental health care resources for our young men. In all, 85% of CJA students receive one-on-one or small group counseling and therapeutic support from the Social Work Team on a weekly basis. This support is critical in ensuring that our young men have the skills they need to achieve not only as students, but also as leaders in our community.



After three years as a Language Arts & Reading teacher at Chicago Jesuit Academy, I continue to be proud of the way that we serve the whole student academically and emotionally. The addition of our Learning Resource Center (LRC) is an incredible example of how CJA strives to fulfill its mission to educate the whole person and create access to a well-resourced and equitable education for all of our students.

As an academically non-selective school, CJA must meet the academic needs of a wide range of learners. The founding of the LRC has shown our continued commitment to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment, where students will thrive and meet our highest expectations regardless of their skill levels, test scores and previous opportunity gaps.

One of the most difficult and sacred parts of our work and service as educators at CJA is finding ways to differentiate and give each individual student exactly what they need to enter high school fully prepared.

Through various individual and small-group academic interventions, organizational support and other progress monitoring and assessment collection, the LRC has been instrumental in helping students to be empowered in their own learning and understand how they are most successful in school.

In addition to helping students, as a teacher I have received an incredible amount of instructional support, professional development and data that has allowed me

## Diversity of Learners

Our students are strong, talented young men with a wide variety of skills and needs. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) creates an opportunity to build on these skills, address these needs and help all students at CJA grow and develop. Staffed by our Director of Learning Support, a Math Specialist and a Learning Specialist, the LRC — in conjunction with our faculty — strives to meet each of our students where they are through enrichment and intervention.



to adapt to the unique needs of my students in my own classroom. The LRC has also served as a pillar of support in our school community by working in partnership with parents and families as they navigate their students' learning differences and learning evaluation processes.

As a student with a learning disability who utilized interventions and accommodations in my own schooling, I know personally how transformative these supports can be and the confidence and life-long love of learning they are able to instill in a diversity of learners.

I know how absolutely necessary advocates like our Learning Specialist, Mr. Mireles, our Math Specialist, Ms. Buethe, and our Director of Learning Support, Ms. Hauser, are. They are unwavering champions on behalf of our students and families. They help them to understand and navigate the supports and rights they are not only deserving of, but are entitled to.

I am proud to be a part of a school that has worked so hard to fulfill our mission to provide students the support and advocacy they deserve.

I am hopeful and optimistic that the LRC will continue to help teachers and students at CJA to find creative ways to reinforce the learning taking place in our classrooms for all learners. I am excited to continue to see the tremendous growth of all of our students, and I'm looking forward to a future at CJA where all students will have had access to this resource from the beginning of their time with us.

*Sonia Odom*  
Language Arts & Reading Teacher



# Our Benefactors

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- John M. Yeager

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- Michael and Kate Cooney
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- Stephen and Denise Andrews
- Anonymous (4)

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One thing I can vividly remember being told by multiple CJA faculty and staff members during my time as a student there is that the relationship with CJA would continue to exist upon graduation in 2009. The College-Persistence (CP) Team is evidence that this is true. The team serves the growing number of alumni throughout the various stages in our lives.

The CP Office does everything from offering ACT classes, organizing seminars on college applications, sending care packages to often-hungry college students during finals and helping alumni find summer internships. After graduating from CJA, I attended Walter Payton College Prep. The CP team assisted me with college applications during my senior year and helped me figure out what school would be best for me. I ultimately made a decision to attend Denison University where I received an excellent education. With the assistance of CJA, I was able to secure an internship at Wintrust Bank after finishing college. I worked hard and earned a permanent position with the bank within four months. I am currently in a credit analyst training program at Wintrust, which I began this past January.





I am very grateful for the help I've gotten from CJA. The CP Team has offered themselves as a resource willing to adjust to the variety of situations that CJA alumni deal with and aid how they can. Their work is important because for many alumni the CP Team offers a set of resources many of us may not have access to. The team has worked with many alumni, including myself, in successfully dealing with the adversities and challenges that have arisen post CJA. They've offered premium dress clothes to alumni for work and assisted alumni in covering tuition for school when they could not afford the cost.

While a junior in high school, I applied for and successfully earned the chance to visit Costa Rica for ten days. A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me, I was ecstatic to leave the country for the first time. However, the trip cost \$1,600, an amount I could not afford to fully pay. Thankfully, CJA helped me cover the cost, and I was able to attend the trip, which was a life-changing experience.

One person on the CP Team that I have come to have a great relationship with is Jessie Walsh. She has helped me a lot throughout my academic career following CJA. She has aided me in college applications and even personally drove me to Ohio when I moved into my dorm my freshman year of college. Throughout college, she was a consistent and reliable contact and resource when needed. Whether it was buying books for class or transportation home, I could always depend on her to make sure I was ready to have a great semester. This has continued after my college career, as she connected me with my most recent mentor (who happens to be her mother) who has been a big part of my successful start to my career in finance. Another CP Team member, Katie DiPiero, has also assisted me by connecting me with a test instructor offering free GMAT training for a test I will ultimately take to further advance my career. These have been valuable relationships I've formed that have had a great impact on the success I have been able to achieve.

CJA has always presented itself as a lifelong community that will always be accessible and put forth its best efforts to help their students both current and former. I can personally attest to this. As an alumna from the first graduating class of CJA, I will always be grateful for the role CJA has played in my development and their passion and commitment to helping young men find solutions to the problems they face after graduating from CJA. I look forward to witnessing how CJA's growing CP Team will impact the next generation of students and alumni.

*Jerrod Castleberry, CJA '09,  
Walter Payton College Prep '13,  
Denison University '18*



## Continuity of Care

CJA's College-Persistence Team supports our students and alumni with three critical transitions in their lives: from elementary to high school, from high school to post-secondary education and from post-secondary education to a career. Through regular visits with our alumni at their subsequent schools, summer jobs, academic programming and trauma-informed counseling, the team serves as an additional advocate in the lives of our young men. In all, over 96% of our alumni have graduated from high school and 84% are persisting in post-secondary education, working full-time or serving in the military.



Chicago Jesuit Academy is the best challenge for my 7th-grade son, Detongress. This is his second year as a student at CJA. When he and I came to tour the school, I was truly impressed with the security the school has. CJA is a “Diamond in the Rough” in so many ways, and Principal Beckley and the embracing staff are truly prepared to protect our families entering and leaving school daily.

I have so much respect for the school! Seeing Officer Joe or a teacher welcoming us parents upon arrival each morning is a comfort. When I picked my son up from school on his first day, another great surprise was that there was a Cook County Sheriff’s Officer posted at the corner daily in case there are any events that are happening in the surrounding areas and the staff was in tow ready to help too! They are making sure our sons are safe and encouraging them for what the world has to offer them...an exciting opportunity for SUCCESS.

Sincerely, #PROUDMOM

*Ms. Jenkins, parent of Detongress '20*



## Safety and Community

CJA partners with parents, families, neighbors, community organizations and law enforcement to ensure that the blocks around our campus are safe for our students and alumni. As part of this work, CJA contracts with the Cook County Sheriff’s Office. For the last eight hours of every school day, a uniformed officer patrols the blocks around CJA, works with our neighbors and responds to any violent activity in the area.

During the 2018-19 school year, a group of parents and staff started the Parent Safety Committee to help CJA strengthen its safety practices and continue working collaboratively with the community.





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Chicago Jesuit Academy is a remarkable place! Navigating the first few weeks as a volunteer I thought would be daunting, not knowing what to expect, or how my being here would be received. The several young men initially assigned to me, and the ones I seemed to acquire, relieved those fears. Being gentlemen in the CJA tradition, they had the willingness to work, to complete their assignments, to listen to others, and to be models for younger students, and they gave me something I hoped for: a "piece of gold." How lucky could I be?

Some days at CJA, one finds a lot of gold: nuggets everywhere. Other days, only gold dust, but always a bit of gold to be panned, creviced, polished, made malleable. GIR or Guided Independent Reading was in a bit of flux during my first few weeks, as I worked with several different students. One day, the sixth grader assigned to me announced, "I do not like to read books." I asked what he did like to read, and he replied, "Poetry." "Well," I said, "So do I!" He then read his selections of Shel Silverstein. From that point, we read selections from Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, Robert Frost, and excerpts from the Spoon River Anthology. Some of these selections he read dramatically in front of his classmates. Panning for gold!

Crevicing is the process of digging out the gold from the bedrock into which it has settled. The theme for this year's African-American Heritage Celebration for the seventh grade was the Great Migration. I had the opportunity to work with several young men to develop their themes about the main characters in The Warmth of Other Suns. We learned the reasons these real people left their homes, about the music they brought with them, and the trials they faced coming North. In collaborating with the students, I learned so very much, and hopefully, they did also.

Gold is a precious metal and is also malleable. One student and I have shared time in GIR for both sixth and seventh grade. We embarked upon a program under the guidance of Dr. Elsener, the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, reading some classical works of literature. After reading certain passages, we incorporated movie trailers to visually capture the story. Over the last four months, we have read from authors including Charles Dickens, Ernest Hemingway, Shirley Jackson, John Steinbeck, and George Orwell. In between



my selections, the student has presented his selections. He came up with a terrific trilogy for young adults under the general title of Shakespeare Stealer. We not only read the different books, but we also discussed the style and syntax of the writing, the history behind the story, vocabulary, and the authors. The time spent with this student is one of my favorite parts of my day because of his willingness to learn and be open to growth – one of CJA's five Grad-at-Grad values.

An aside to why I regard CJA as a very special place occurred at a local 7/11, where I get my morning coffee. A youngster was there with his grandfather. He told his grandfather, "I know that man," pointing at me. He repeated this several times to his grandfather who did not know me, but remarked back to his grandson, several times, "No, you don't!" At the cash register I looked down at him and said, "You go to CJA, right?" He looked up at me with a beaming smile, and with great pride said, "Yes I do. I am in the Fourth Grade!" Another nugget of gold.

CJA is an oasis of dedicated faculty and staff, students, alumni, and volunteers serving a community that does not always receive good press. I have seen firsthand the gold that doesn't shine through on the nightly news. Indeed, CJA is a most remarkable place!

*Bruce Hartney, Volunteer*



## Network of Support

CJA students and alumni have a far-reaching network of support, including their families, teachers, benefactors and volunteers. During the 2018-19 school year, CJA had over 50 regular volunteers. Many of these volunteers worked closely with our students in classes, the library and co-curricular programs or supported the finance and back-office functions of the school. If you are interested in volunteering in support of our students during the 2019-20 school year, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Ravae Duhaney, at [duhaney@cjademy.org](mailto:duhaney@cjademy.org).



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