



THE BRIEFING

For the first few minutes or so it looked very much like the very first Creation: utter chaos. And then, within a half-hour, the creative

imitators of God's creative work took hold and formed and shaped something to which all could say "It was good."

That creative process was on full display at "Create!", our attempt this year at a community-building, art-creating version of our annual "One Bright Night" event. By all accounts it was a success. The pictures included in this newsletter give you a glimpse at what the night was like.

The six teams representing six schools from a diverse cross-section of Chicagoland were asked to create on site something that represented the idea of community. Perhaps within their school. Maybe it had to do with the neighborhood in which the school is placed. And with a flurry of creative activity each team's vision was distinctive and engaging.

Many in attendance commented about the delightful nature of this student-focused event. Seeing students excited about their school and the creative process, watching them interact with students from very different schools at some distance from their own captured a bit of the beauty of the Bright Promise Fund network which God has brought about these last seven years.

And that serves to remind all of us that God never really stops creating, even though he rested for a bit. Signs of his new creation are all around us. In the students we serve. In the new lives in Christ that are forming. In the growth in our network, now up to fifteen schools in and around Chicagoland.

We thank you for partnering with us in this good, creative work of God's Spirit, now hovering over Chicagoland.

Dave Larsen

Director



URBAN EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

CREATE! Our Annual Celebration of Schools



Friday, October 27, 2017, Bright Promise Fund hosted its annual celebration of Bright Promise Fund

network schools. This bright night differed in many ways from our previous celebrations in that kids were the main event! This year, Bright Promise Fund invited teams of students from its network schools to create art live at the event at our CREATE! event. Six schools sent teams and spent the evening laughing, learning about each other and creating a piece of art based on community. Students painted, created sculpture, engaged the audience and even decorated each other while guests mingled, enjoyed seasonal treats and browsed an exhibit of professional art. The final art was fantastic and the fellowship fun.

Create! was intended to be a friend-raiser and community builder, and by those measures it was a great success. Parents, students, teachers, administrators and donors each commented on the unique, kid-focused nature of the event, which they found refreshing and encouraging. The venue was perfect, and the artistic students were amazing as they put their creativity on display.



CREATE! continued on the following page

Newsletter editor: Kristin Zandstra,
Administrative Assistant



We are grateful to all who made the evening a success, and to God for our faithful school administrators, supporters, friends and sponsors of CREATE!

Can we ask you to partner with us? Learn more about getting involved, view photos of the evening's highlights by Karen Reppman or donate online at www.brightpromisefund.org.

We are grateful for the generosity of our CREATE! event Sponsors:



Thought ... Provoking

"The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor. That sums up the progress of an artful leader." – Max De Pree

SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT: CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL'S CAPTAINS PROGRAM



A small but dedicated group of Reformed Christians founded Calvin Christian School in South Holland, IL in 1912.

Today, over 100

years later, Calvin still offers a competitive and progressive Christ-honoring education to children of believers. Their mission is to graduate students who will be prepared to excel wherever God calls them, rooted in the lordship of Christ and knowledge of His world.

In response to their mission, Calvin Christian School was looking at how they could encourage their male students to greater levels of personal responsibility and leadership. One of their chapel speakers, Jason Perry, Director of Oak Tree Leadership, shared that his research showed that schools that integrate male empowerment sessions into their weekly

schedule had experienced significant success in raising male achievement. This was the start of the CAPTAINS Leadership Program at Calvin, based on the idea that if you want to change the direction of a ship, you identify the captains instead of relying on the sailors. You identify those who have the capacity to chart a new course and to encourage, empower and equip others to follow that course. In the same way, in order to chart a new course for each generation, we must identify the captains of that generation. We need to help them to know that they possess the ability to lead, inspire them to have the desire to lead and give them opportunities to display those leadership abilities in positive and practical ways. C.A.P.T.A.I.N.S. teaches eight things that transformational leaders understand:

Community. Accountability. Purpose. Teamwork. Academic success. Integrity. Next Generation. Service.

Mr. Perry conducted the program for 10 weeks for 25 7th and 8th grade male students. During that time he also brought in other male speakers to increase their exposure to models of success outside fields of sports and entertainment. *(continued)*

HOW ARE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS DISTINCTIVE?



The Center for Christian Urban Educators Hosts Networking Conference



On Monday, October 9, Bright Promise Fund and the Center for Christian Urban Educators (C-CUE) hosted its fourth annual networking conference for the teachers and administrators of Bright Promise Fund network

schools. Attendees learned from keynote speakers Scottie May, retired Professor of Christian Formation and Ministry Emerita at Wheaton College, and Darryl DeBoer, K-12 Director of Learning for Surrey Christian School and Teaching for Transformation school designer with the Prairie Center for Christian Education and the Center for the Advancement of Christian Education.

Harriet Potoka, CCUE Director, opened the conference with the question, “How are Christian schools distinctive?”, the question forming the theme of the day. Harriet suggested that our schools should be different in EVERY way from a traditional school – in relationships, curriculum, finance, discipline and parenting. Our schools should be communities of grace, lead in faith formation and excel in biblical integration.

Scottie May opened her segment of the conference by reflecting on her Christian upbringing and on its cognitive focus and lack of “encounters with God.” Many years of reflection and

study has led her to a focus on true faith formation in children and she shared those practices with conference attendees. She emphasized the need for teachers to “form their students in Christ” (Galatians 4:19) and allow in them spaces for God to work that are intentional, communal, and relational. “Anything taught in a classroom can be an encounter with God if it is facilitated by the Holy Spirit.”



Darryl DeBoer started by leading conference attendees in an activity to get them thinking about God’s story and our role in it. He explained the principles behind Teaching for Transformation and the emphasis on finding delight in our role within God’s story. Darryl gave several concrete examples of teachers and activities that gave students the opportunity to notice, wonder, and then identify real need for real people and real work and the results of this process. Conference attendees were inspired and enlightened by these personal stories of students delighting and even forming their own work in the classroom.

Roundtable discussions were held during lunch where teachers and administrators could ask questions, discuss best practices and share stories with peers. This conference, once again, proved to all who attended to be a valuable resource and great opportunity to connect with peers. For more information about the Center for Christian Urban Educators, visit their website at www.ccuechicago.org.

Mr. John Fountain, an award-winning columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times and professor of Journalism at Roosevelt University was a participant. He addressed the topic of academic success by telling his own story of growing up on the West Side of Chicago with dreams of becoming a professional basketball player. A teacher changed his life by suggesting that his ticket out of poverty was not his brawn, but his brains.

Mr. Andre Hughes is a retired Global Managing Partner at Accenture and the founder of Powered by Action, a not for profit that provides innovation for non-profits that fuels greater social impact. Mr. Hughes spoke on the importance of being a person of integrity. He challenged the young men to start with a sound base of beliefs and ethics and commit themselves to live by them on a daily basis.

As a part of the program, students were also responsible for investing time serving the younger students in the school. In an effort to solidify the lessons taught, Mr. Perry plans to continue a monthly meeting with participants after the course ends. For more information about Calvin Christian School, visit their website at calvinschool.org.



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DID YOU KNOW?

100% of your gifting goes directly to scholarships for students, making Christian education affordable. Our operating costs are met through an endowment, gifts from our Board and foundation support.

Please consider a gift of promise to our schools TODAY!

SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT: BPF WELCOMES EIGHT NEW SCHOOLS!

This October, the Bright Promise Fund Board of Directors welcomed eight new schools into the Bright Promise Fund network of schools.

These are all schools of character and conviction that are committed to Christian education and who meet the character

standards required by Bright Promise Fund to join the network. By joining, these schools will be invited to participate in the Center for Christian Urban Educators which provides conferences and symposia as well as monthly meetings for administrators to network and share best practices. We would like to introduce you to our newest members and invite you to learn more about them at our website:



CALVARY ACADEMY

South Holland
Serving Grades K – 8
Enrollment: 330
Founded: 1970
calvary-academy.com



DEER CREEK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Chicago Heights
Serving Grades Pre-K – 8
Enrollment: 140
Founded: 1995
deercreek.org



NEW LIFE CELEBRATION CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Dolton
Serving Grades K – 8
Enrollment: 39
Founded: 2006
newlifecelcbrationcog.org



SOUTHWEST CHICAGO CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, OAK LAWN

Oak Lawn
Serving Grades PreK – 8
Enrollment: 240
Founded: 1899
swchristian.org



CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

South Holland
Serving Grades Pre-K – 8
Enrollment: 250
Founded: 1912
calvinschool.org



LANSING CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Lansing
Serving Grades Pre-K – 8
Enrollment: 275
Founded: 1907
lansingchristian.org



UNITY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

South Holland
Serving Grades 9 – 12
Opens Fall 2018



WALTHER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Melrose Park
Serving Grades: 6 – 12
Enrollment: 315
Founded: 1955
walther.com