

Volume 30, Number 1

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[www.champion.org](http://www.champion.org)  
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# Center Advocate

An irregular publication of the Indian Creek Valley

Christian Family & Children's Center

2166 Indian Head Road Champion, PA 15622

724-455-2122 South Campus

724-593-9200 North Campus

Mark Your Calendars!!!



[www.champion.org/development/fundraisers](http://www.champion.org/development/fundraisers)

## **Benefit Auction**

Friday, April 12, 2013

[Accepting donations of items valued at \$50 or more]

## **Alloutpraise!**

Friday, July 19 and  
Saturday, July 20, 2013

[www.alloutpraise.com](http://www.alloutpraise.com)

## **Golf Benefit**

Donegal Highlands  
Golf Course

Saturday, October 5, 2013

Center calendar online at  
[www.champion.org/calendar](http://www.champion.org/calendar)

*Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me...the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth."  
-John 14:6 and 18:37*



## From the Executive Director

by D. Merle Skinner

Regardless of how you feel about the results of the election, the changes in the economy, as well as the world in general, it is not hard to see that our cultural value systems are degenerating. It is a very difficult time for parents to raise children and for families to thrive in our country. It is an even more difficult time for parents who want to raise their children within the context of a Christian worldview. From the Christian community, there are two legitimate calls to action. We are hearing from leaders that it is time to learn how to live as exiles in the land, planting and growing, regardless of the culture that surrounds us. From other corners, we are hearing that it is the time to stand up, work harder, and make sure we fight the good fight so that we are the salt and light in society, regardless of the outcomes. Both of these perspectives have Biblical and practical validity for existing in a culture that has eroding values. We want to see the Christian community engage our culture in a new and relevant way.

...continued on next page

## **We need your email addresses!**

We are only sending out hard copy mailings once or twice a year, so if you have an email, and you have not been receiving emails from us, can you let us know? Keeping in touch by email is much easier and more cost effective. Don't miss out! Just email [info@champion.org](mailto:info@champion.org) and we will make sure you are on the mailing list.

## **Champion Christian School Enrolling for the 2013-2014 school year!**

North Campus in Donegal  
Preschool / 5th - 12th Grades

South Campus in Indian Head  
Preschool / K - 4th Grades

**Free Bussing from Connellsville, Mt. Pleasant, Somerset, Rockwood, Ligonier, and Uniontown School Districts**

Check out the CCS webpage to learn more about why Christian education might be the right choice for you!

Call Now for Your  
FREE DVD & Tour

Financial Aid Available!

[www.champion.org/ccs](http://www.champion.org/ccs)

## From the Director...continued from previous page

At the Center we deal with these issues in perhaps a magnified way because of our direct involvement in the lives of children and families. Many in the Christian community have embraced secularism, leaving God and Biblical truth out of education, science, the arts and human services. It simply isn't working, and while we claim we can do this and not lose our faith, the Christian community in America remains in significant decline. We see a growing antagonism and hostility in academia and other areas toward Christianity and yet are seeing an openness to spirituality in general. The culture continues to slide down a 'slippery slope' that we have openly identified since the seventies as a distinct reality and now is documented truth.

What an opportunity for us to shine! Holding on to the idea that we don't have to sell out in raising our kids, choosing our vocations, and raising our families to experience God more fully in our lives. We have a growing and maturing field of research and practical examples of how education, science, history, and every area of knowledge is directly related to a Biblical perspective on life, and many more Christians are learning to step out and walk in those ways to raise their families. The Christian community has more information now than ever before on how to raise successful Christian children, help families live healthy and Godly lives, and provide an educated and healthy Christian influence in our world.

At the Center, we are excited to see what happens when people are willing to allow God to open up their perspective to new and vibrant ideas about Christian education, counseling, as well as Christian life and service. Although we often utilize the example that building the Center is like *mining*. It is a difficult and tedious process. However, the 'ore' that the mine is producing is a valuable commodity in the society around us. We are thankful of what God is doing here as we partner with hard-working families to live strong and vibrant lives in these difficult and yet opportunistic times. It is a sincere privilege to partner with you in ways to deliver these services in our communities.

Last year was a year of blessing at the Center. You, our supporters, helped us:

1. move from a cash deficit to a balanced budget and stronger financial position.
2. restore salaries that had been cut back in previous years.
3. accomplish a great deal of our "curb appeal" projects (see next page in the newsletter).

## **Will you give to the work of the Center this year?**

If you gave to the annual fund last year, THANK YOU!! Will you consider matching or increasing your gift this year? If you didn't give, would you consider investing in not only the current culture, but Eternity, with your finances? Your annual fund giving is critical to the success of being able to move forward, not only just the Center, but a Christian world view in terms of the culture that we influence and serve. We need to raise over \$140,000 this year in our annual fund to balance our budget. To date, we have raised \$35,000. We rely on this end-of-year giving to advance effectively in the course that God has laid for us. Will you partner with us? We need your help. We commit to you to leverage every dollar you give to its fullest potential to provide Christian programs to the family. For those of you who were unable to attend our annual banquet early in November, go to our website at [www.champion.org/ccs/video](http://www.champion.org/ccs/video) to view some encouraging testimony from that night. We'd love to have you attend next year's banquet at North Campus on Saturday, November 9th, 2013. May God Bless You!

In His service,



## 'Curb Appeal' Projects

Thanks to a mission team from the First Free Evangelical Church in McKeesport, PA and many Center volunteers, we were able to complete a lot of projects this summer. At the North Campus, concrete was poured for sidewalks in the front and back of the building and large swingsets were built for the playground. There were also many landscape projects that were completed, the front entrance was prepared for our new sign, and classrooms were painted. At our South Campus, workers helped to repaint the playground equipment. The kitchen was also re-done with tiles for the floor and walls and a new coat of paint. Mission week was so successful that we accomplished the equivalent of over 275 man days of work in one week! Thanks to everyone who donated equipment, materials, supplies, and their time.

If your church youth, men's group, Sunday Schools, etc. are looking for a way to make a difference, contact us! We hope to host a work team this coming summer. Contact Merle if you are interested.

### **Needs List:**

- backhoe
- utility tractor
- tandem or triaxle dump truck
- small equipment trailer
- new chain link fencing
  
- Microsoft Windows 7 & Office licenses
- Dual Core Processor & above computers
- Smartboards, flat screen monitors, projectors
- Musical instruments: trap set, woodwinds, brass, etc.



Pictured is the front sidewalk being poured at North Campus

## **Christian Community Coach Bus Trips**

### **March For Life**

Ride with us to the March for Life on Friday, January 25th in Washington, D.C. Please reserve your spot early. Students younger than 7th grade must have a parent or responsible adult along. Transportation per person is \$25 and \$50 per family.

### **Other trips:**

- \* Chris Tomlin & Kari Jobe: February 23  
@ Consol Energy Center
- \* Third Day, Colton Dixon & Josh Wilson: March 23  
@ Johnstown War Memorial
- \* Sight and Sound Theatre: Lancaster

*For more information on any of these trips or to purchase tickets call Jill at 724-455-2122 ext. 100*

[www.champion.org/events](http://www.champion.org/events)

## **Church Bible school planners... Summer Lunch Program**

As you plan your summer activities, please keep in mind that Champion Christian School provides FREE lunch, dinner and/or snacks for area churches for Bible Schools, clubs or other gatherings. These nutritious meals are provided through the Federal Summer Food Service program to children ages 18 and under of any school district or any income level. This year our summer lunch program served over 4,000 meals and took meals to 21 sites such as the Carnegie Library in Connellsville and church Bible schools. If you are interested in more information about this program or would like to register a site please call our Food Service Director, Jill Sharlock, at 724-455-2122 ext. 100.

## Champion Christian School Highlights!

Current research shows that graduates of Christian schools are more likely to retain and live out their faith, give more financially to missions, have a higher rate of going on a mission trip, and commit financially and personally to their local churches and communities (see Cardus study referenced later in this newsletter). As you read the following news, keep in mind that these fun activities are just a part of the work of the local Christian community of parents, fellow believers, churches and professional educators to shape the future of our world!

### *Early education departments...*

Preschool participated in walks in our local area, made nature wreaths, ate yummy fall goodies, grilled pizza, and enjoyed the beautiful fall weather and each other's company learning about how God made seasons. They had a visit to a local farm where they explored farm life, learned about pigs, sheep, cows, horses and had a chance to be cowboys and cowgirls trying to use a lasso to catch a toy calf. Preschool welcomed grandparents into their classroom to enjoy an afternoon learning about what they do each day. For a fire safety unit, the students got to see a real fire truck. They work very hard every session learning how to work with others their own age, develop early reading and math skills, sing songs, learn about sharing, and how God has made us all to be a part of community.

### *In developing a Christian service perspective...*

In the Elementary program, the students learned about giving to others and be involved with missions by collecting coins. The classes then voted to use the money to buy shoes for children to attend school in Ethiopia, buy a bunny and a pig to be given to families in Third World countries, sponsor the shipping cost for Operation Christmas Child boxes, and help drill a well for children to have healthy water for a lifetime. They also collected items to help those who were affected by Hurricane Sandy.

Our high schoolers are learning about the needs of other students and people in the Dominican Republic (D.R.) as they prepare to travel there on their annual mission trip in the spring. The D.R. may be a Third World country, but it is a country that is experiencing spiritual revival. They will work with students who will become national leaders and serve their country in the future. The team has been having regular video conferences with the missionaries in Santiago and starting their preparations. Other students at CCS will join them in praying and practicing their skits and lessons for the trip. While the team is away, those students will be traveling to area ministries who are serving the Lord locally. Each year our students are required to give back to their communities by performing hours of service.



Our students often get to hear missionaries from a variety of places around the world share how God has moved and used them to reach different cultures. Several of our own CCS alumni, who are full time missionaries, have come to speak to our student body about the work they are doing.

We continue to host and develop deep friendships and relationships with students from other parts of the world such as Korea, China, Russia, and Taiwan. Students recently took a trip to see a performance of traditional Chinese dances.

### ***Being committed to academic excellence...***

Champion Christian School is dually accredited with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and with Middle States Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools. A team from ACSI will be visiting in April to renew our accreditation. The new protocol is a self improvement plan that builds upon extensive standards.

### ***Developing literary skills...***

CCS students participate in several reading incentive programs. Elementary students who reach monthly reading goals receive a free personal pizza from Pizza Hut as part of the 'Book-It Program'. Grades K through 6 students who read 6 hours will earn a free ticket to Six Flags as part of the 'Read to Succeed' program. We also utilize the Accelerated Reading Program and an online reading quiz program called 'Book Adventure' which offers prizes to students who earn points as they read and successfully show their comprehension of books which have been read. Research is clear that students who are great readers tend to succeed in school and in life. The incentives encourage them to read, so they improve their skills, become more confident in reading and hopefully develop a love for reading as a lifetime skill.

The Center's 23,000+ library is open to the community and is filled with rich resources that include everything from recreational reading to strong biblical discipleship tools. Check out and search our resources online at [www.champion.org/library](http://www.champion.org/library).

### ***Offering creative educational opportunities...***

Our greenhouse and environmental science area has a new storage shed for the poinsettias to sell in December and the geraniums for sale in the spring. Our diverse Directed Study Programs offer our high school students hands-on opportunities to learn skills in teaching as well as in technology in a highly networked setting. In fact, we were awarded the Internet All Star Award for the significant ways we are utilizing broadband technology in a rural community.



Each of our academic programs offer active learning through Social Studies, Science, and Bible Fairs, where students present a wide variety of topics of their own choice such as the history of sign language and the characteristics of spider webs. Trips to places like the Flight 93 Memorial provide not only academic, but emotionally moving educational experiences for students. Science integrated with a Biblical world view (as with all subjects) create Christians prepared to handle a complex and new world.

### ***Using digital educational tools...***

We have been enhancing digital learning in new and creative ways including a new point to point video distribution system. This allows us to communicate between campuses and with those around the world. Digital lessons with streaming videos over the internet and using classroom projectors, iPads, Kindles, and video have made

21st century learning techniques, as well as student-centered learning, the focus of our growth in terms of educational methodology.

### ***Committed to good health...***

CCS has developed a relationship with the Ligonier YMCA to have access to a swimming pool, weight equipment, and structured physical fitness activities. This year our Middle and High School Summer Readers program students went rafting and biking at Ohiopyle, PA. As a part of developing healthy habits in the lives of our students, our Elementary students walk or run three to five laps around the playground daily. So far, in the 'Healthy Heart Program' our students have gone a distance of over 250 miles!

## CCS Community Visit Days

Thursday, December 13  
Tuesday, January 15  
Tuesday, February 5  
4-7 P.M.

both North Campus in Donegal and  
South Campus in Indian Head

It's FREE!!!

## Kindergarten Readiness Seminar\*

Thursday, December 13 - 6:30 pm @ South  
Tuesday, January 13 - 6:30 pm @ South  
Tuesday, February 5 - 6:30 pm @ North

**To Register for any  
of these events call  
724-455-2122**

## Kindergarten Visit Day\*

Thursday, February 7, 2013  
&  
Friday, February 8, 2013

from 9:30 to 11:30 A.M.  
South Campus in Indian Head

RSVP by calling 724-455-2122

\* For any child who will  
turn 5 before 12/31/2013

\*No matter where you are  
planning to send your child

\*Discuss milestones & ways  
to help prepare your child

Our students continue to actively participate in our two primary competitive sports, soccer and basketball, which have programs for both girls and boys beginning in 3rd grade and running through the Varsity League level. Our involvement in the Southwestern Christian Athletic Conference (varsity soccer and basketball), Southwest Christian league, and the National Christian School Athletic Association helps focus our sports on glorifying God, working with each other, and learning how to compete in a healthy way which encourages relationships, teamwork, and godly character.

### ***Committed to spiritual growth...***

CCS has regular integrative activities in each academic area, but also provides special chapels that concentrate on spiritual growth and Biblical training for the students. Elementary's theme in the Bible Festival this year was called 'The Jesus Expedition'. The children spent time in a different classroom each day, trekking through the Egyptian Desert, climbing Mount Everest, swimming with the fish in the Pacific Ocean, exploring Antarctica, and hiking through Brazil. All while studying the miracles of Jesus! Champion Christian High School students attended the ACSI World Concerns Conference in Washington, D.C. They, and seven hundred other Christian school student leaders, heard from ministries around the United States about the spiritual implications of dealing with some of the biggest problems facing America today.

### ***Committed to the arts...***

CCS hosted a Christmas Music Program at the Ligonier Town Hall in which all our students and choirs celebrated Jesus' birthday! Last spring, CCS performed 'Rescue in the Night', a musical about the Bible story of Daniel and the lions' den. Held at the Geyer Theater in Scottdale, it was a great experience for our students to develop our drama, acting, and theatrical experiences. The ACSI Choral Festival is coming up in March, where we will be hosting other ACSI schools at the Town Hall in Ligonier.



Our instrumental program continues to grow as nearly 60 of our students are taking instrumental lessons each week. The high school students went this fall to the Jennerstown Playhouse to see 'The 39 Steps', a play based on a movie by Alfred Hitchcock.



*Pictured above is the new two-sided sign and block work at the North Campus entrance in Donegal. Landscaping to come!*

## **Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic**

A mission team from Champion Christian School will be traveling to Santiago, a city in the Dominican Republic (DR) to work with missions there. The team will be staying in a hotel near the mission. They will be working with a small Christian school, and interacting with a Haitian church that meets in the school. The missionaries that they are working with have been in the country for over 30 years and in Santiago for 18 years. As you can imagine, this is a big step in faith for our students and adults. Please keep them in prayer and consider donating to cover their expenses.

## **CARDUS Study**

The Cardus Education Survey is the first major academic study of the outcomes of Christian education. In partnership with the University of Notre Dame, researchers gathered data from the largest-ever sample of Christian school graduates on the topics of spiritual formation, cultural engagement, and academic development. The results of the study have shown that Christian school graduates, as maturing adults, are significantly outperforming their secularly educated peers in terms of academic achievement, were more likely to be accepted to the college of their choice, are more invested in their communities, give of themselves to their churches and their culture, and have hope and vision for the future. You can find more about this and other research on our website at: [www.champion.org/ccs/parent/resources](http://www.champion.org/ccs/parent/resources).

## **New OSTC Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit**

There are still funds available for students from the lowest 15% of failing schools (see [www.champion.org/ccs/failingschools.pdf](http://www.champion.org/ccs/failingschools.pdf)). If your business was closed out of funds for the EITC, let us help you apply for these funds to help students get a Christian education and make a big difference with your tax dollars!

## **A BIG THANK YOU to our EITC sponsors!! ( Educational Improvement Tax Credit )**

[www.champion.org/development/eitc](http://www.champion.org/development/eitc)

Armstrong Cement & Supply Corporation

Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company

Bridge Foundation

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Synergy Group, Inc.

Somerset Trust Company

Verizon Pennsylvania

Wheeler Brothers, Inc.

White Oak Veterinary

XTO Corporation

Businesses: If you are not a sole proprietorship and want to redirect your PA corporate tax dollars to help local families - check this out!  
[www.champion.org/development/eitc](http://www.champion.org/development/eitc) or call Barb at 724-455-2122 ext. 104

... Annual Fund and Banquet Update...



www.champion.org

Champion, PA 15622  
2166 Indian Head Rd.

Christian Family & Children's Center

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# Alloutpraise!

Friday evening July 19  
All day Saturday, July 20, 2013

Advanced sale tickets only \$15 for groups of 10 or more!  
Special activities & reduced prices for children!

**Nickers 'N Neighs Pony rides, greet and get your picture taken with mascots like the Chick-Fil-A cow from Greengate Centre, climbing wall from Shekinah Ranch**

Sponsors: Save-a-Lot

*"Like" Alloutpraise on Facebook*

[www.alloutpraise.com](http://www.alloutpraise.com)



This could be YOU!!

**National Headliner TBA**  
Bands all day including: Zach Ellsworth, Sanctified, One Destination, Calvary Cross and other area Christian artists