



The KNIGHTLY NEWS

Columbia Christian School • PreK-12th Grade

May & June 2020

Congrats Class of 2020!

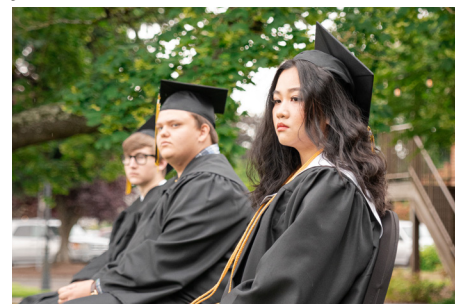


Every graduating class at Columbia is special, but the students in the class of 2020 had a one-of-a-kind experience. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the governor-mandated closure of all K-12 campuses in the state of Oregon, these seniors finished the last three months of their classes through distance learning. Displaying impressive resiliency, they embraced the less-than-ideal situation and completed their high school career from home – utilizing iPads, Zoom sessions, and Google Classroom.

Jiang. Principal Joel Davis presented certificates to standout students in the class including: Spiritual Leadership Award (Cameron Stark), Timothy Award (Dylan Lawrence), Mr. CCHS (Mike Jiang), and Miss CCHS (Evelyn Barrett).



Beloved social studies teacher Jake Kopra was invited by the class to be the guest speaker – his message punctuated by his infamous “dad jokes”.



Diplomas were conferred by President Ami Vensel and Board Chairman David Tucker. Among the class of 2020 graduates were 9 Distinguished Scholar Diploma recipients, 12 National Honor Society Members, 5 Scholar Athletes, and 26 young men and women ready to be sent out into the world to do great things for God’s Kingdom. Congratulations class of 2020!

I want my child to be equipped with skills and character for a successful life, educated in a safe environment where they can thrive.

Let me tell you about
Columbia Christian...

As Columbia Christian celebrates all of their students moving upward and onward, the school's mission remains: to teach Christian character, cultivate Christian faith, and continue an excellent academic program with caring faculty.

Your referrals are the best way for Columbia to continue growing and impacting the lives of students.

Tell your friends to schedule an Educational Success Consultation with Mrs. Vensel to have all their questions answered.



For safety reasons, and in line with county health guidelines, the commencement ceremony on June 12 was moved outdoors. Immediate family was invited to participate by setting up their chairs in a painted circle on the soccer field – designated by a sign including their graduate’s name and photo. Other relatives, friends, and supporters connected to the event remotely via Facebook Live. With the Womack Fountain bubbling in the background, and a light sprinkling of rain overhead, the students of honor were recognized for their success. Salutatorian Parker Reed offered a brief welcome, followed by a few wise words from Valedictorian Mike

Hindsight is 2020

Ask any of the Columbia Christian administrators, faculty, students, and families about the end of the 2019-2020 school year, and they will tell you that it was completely unexpected. No one could have predicted the global health crisis, the national quarantines, and the decision by Oregon governor Kate Brown in mid-March to close campuses of all K-12 schools in the state. Despite the unprecedented challenges faced by the Columbia community, everyone rallied together to end the year strong.

Distance learning became the new norm and Columbia teachers wasted no time in implementing education methods away from the classroom. From Google Classroom collaborating and Zoom Sessions, to printed take-home packets and lots of personal home deliveries from teachers, Columbia faculty made the very best of the situation. In contrast with many local public schools, Columbia students were held accountable for “attendance”, required to continue participating and progressing in their classes, and challenged to demonstrate proficiency with their skills.

Since they were home with their children during this time, many parents had to step up and become a more integral part of the education process during this season. Their gratitude toward the work of the teachers was clearly expressed in their phone calls, emails, and letters to the school – especially after President Ami Vensel hosted personal “Town Hall Meetings” online for families in every grade level.



Parent feedback:

"I wanted to say how much we appreciate all you and the teachers do to make sure the kids keep learning and stay in touch with their teachers and classmates! You all are amazing!"

"We watched the news last night and saw you and the school. It is wonderful what you are doing to help everyone during this difficult time."

"I wanted to send a personal thanks to all staff and faculty at CCS during this crisis. When the schools originally were closed, there was never a doubt in my mind that our children would still be so fortunate to learn, as CCS was ahead of the game when they started teaching via digital learning a couple years back which really prepared the school to be ready, and we were."

"Everyone at Columbia is amazing, and all are missed tremendously. We are glad to trek through this journey with you all. We could not have picked a better partner."

"Thank you so much for that Town Hall meeting. We so much appreciate your communication and care for us as a whole family and it has always been one of the best parts of being a CCS family- really feeling like we are part of a big school family. CCS is truly an extension of the church and we feel that in every interaction with other students, teachers and administration."

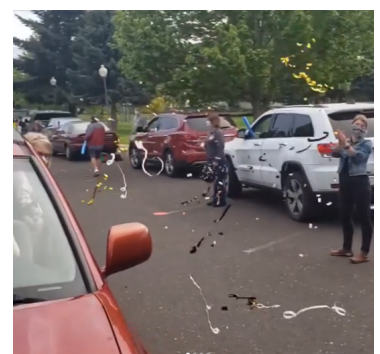


Hindsight is 2020 (continued...)



The 3-month campus closure brought many new experiences to Columbia:

- Over 650 hours of zoom class sessions from PreK through 12th grade
- Weekly virtual chapel sessions with Mr. Rude
- Individual exercise challenges with PE Instructor Coach Yaws
- Online reading time with librarian Mrs. Siler for elementary classes
- First-ever "Columbia Has Talent" virtual competition for all grades
- Pandemic Art Show – online gallery of original student pieces
- Several "drive-thru" events:
 - Teacher Reverse-Parade
 - Elementary Banner Parade
 - Middle School Drive-Thru & 8th Grade Promotion Parade
 - High School Graduation Drive Thru



Gym Floor Replacement!

Built in 1964, the Columbia Christian School gymnasium has been the site for many athletic competitions, PE classes, assemblies, ceremonies, and other events over the decades. Unfortunately, after more than 50 years of continual use, the gym is deteriorating. School administrators, supporters, and friends have formed a gymnasium upgrade committee led by Dave and Sid Astin, to support several much-needed improvements in the building.

The first project on the list was replacement of the playing surface and underlayment. Demolition of the old floor began in June 2020 and some issues were discovered. The original installment was not done properly which lead to many of the problems with the floor separating from the sub-flooring support, buckling, and bubbling. It was also revealed that the concrete pad was not level in many areas and that the volleyball system was installed improperly. Those are areas that are being now being addressed with the remodel.

With the replacement costs being originally quoted at \$105,000, and donor gifts in place for only a portion of those expenses, support is still needed. Please continue to pray for this project and share the news with other family and friends. Contact Dave Astin, Committee Chair, at 503-349-9783 or clubcobbler@aol.com to get involved.



Vensel's Voice



President Ami Vensel

Do you happen to be a fan of *Lord of the Rings*? Both the books and the movies have been among the favorites in the Vensel household over the years and have inspired many family dinner conversations.

Picture the scene: Gandalf and Frodo are making their way through the dark Mines of Moria; Gandalf takes a moment to sit and rest while engaging Frodo in quiet conversation. Poor Frodo is distraught and overwhelmed with the burden of carrying the ring.

Frodo: "I wish the Ring had never come to me. I wish none of this had happened."

Gandalf: "So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us" (J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*).

On March 13th the threat of COVID19 was thrust upon us; its impact rippled countless consequences and (normal) life as we knew it came to a sudden halt. On May 25th the tragic death of George Floyd erupted a profound response within our nation to treasure the value of all human life. Like Frodo, we wish "none of this had happened."

Might we consider the gentle offer of courage and hope of Gandalf? In the midst of despair - there is hope. There is hope! We have hope in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). We have hope knowing that "love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:7). We have hope in the struggle. We have hope through adversity.

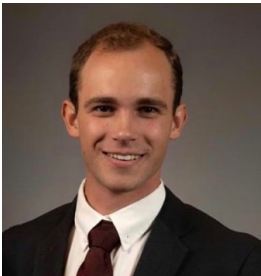
Might we consider the gentle offer of courage and hope from the prophet Habakkuk?

"Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights" (Habakkuk 3:17-19).

Let us hope!

Alumni Spotlight


Management Student Award



Riley Davis
Class of 2017

Riley Davis, Columbia Christian School graduate of 2017, was recently recognized by Harding University with a special student award. Riley is recipient of the 2020 College of Business Administration (COBA) Management Student Award. Congratulations to Riley for this honor!

Do you want to be on the next Alumni Spotlight?

The "Alumni Spotlight" is a regular feature in the Knightly News. Contact Jason Housley in the Development Office if you are interested in being included.

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