



The KNIGHTLY NEWS

Columbia Christian School • PreK-12th Grade

March & April 2022

Career Day: Exploring Professions



Important Dates:

May 13-15

Matilda the Musical

May 16

High School Art Show Begins

May 17

Middle & HS Music Program

May 19

Elementary Music Program

May 20-22

Matilda the Musical

May 21

Auction Fundraiser

June 6

Elementary Banner Night

June 7

8th Grade Graduation

June 10

High School Graduation

It's not every day that a helicopter lands on the soccer field at Columbia Christian School, but it did make for an exciting part of Career Day 2022. The copter was from Hillsboro Heli Academy and was co-piloted by Columbia senior Connor Dukes. Excitement was in the air as students from elementary through high school lined the fence around the field to watch the descent and touchdown. A couple representatives from Hillsboro Heli Academy stayed on campus through the afternoon – giving presentations and allowing children to have a seat in the cockpit.

This April, Columbia Christian 8th-12th graders participated in a Career Day aimed at preparing students to enter the workforce. The purpose was to help them broaden their understanding of professions they could join and what steps it takes to pursue them. Students were encouraged to invite friends from the community, and nine non-Columbia guests joined the event.

In the morning, high schoolers completed interactive modules on resumes and cover letters, work-place dress code, interview basics, and a career-interest profiler. Eighth graders joined high school in the afternoon to listen to and ask questions of a variety of professionals. From plumbing to banking, military to IT, and helicopter pilot to pro-athlete, our students explored it all!

A big thanks goes to all the volunteer presenters who took time out of their schedules to be part of the experience, including: Charlene Cox (nursing), Joe Bishop (forestry/IT), Craig Collins, (mortuary/entrepreneur), Dan Vensel (plumbing/trades), Daniel Vensel (banking), Kent Robins (logistics/management), Sam Yaws (airplane maintenance), Erik Walthinsen (cyber security), Joseph Johnson (police detective), and Austin Rehkow (professional athlete).

Of the program, high school STEM teacher Clara Brandt shared, "Career Day provided a fantastic array of professions for students to learn about and ask real people in those fields questions about their day-to-day. I'm very grateful that we had presenters from many different fields, but especially having both trades and corporate jobs represented."

Continued on page 2...

Career Day: Exploring Professions (Continued...)



"I enjoyed the Vensel duo presentation – Mr. Vensel and Daniel Vensel." Aida Valentine, Class of 2023



"The cyber security presentation was my favorite." Seth Alvarado, Class of 2024



"The helicopter landing on the field was pretty cool." Heleana Hetrick, Class of 2023



"Mrs. Brandt's brother [Kent Robins] was the most entertaining presenter. He was really funny." Bergen Behny, Class of 2022

Mark Your Calendar
for an afternoon of honoring Joel Davis for his
34 years of service at Columbia Christian

SATURDAY, JUNE 18TH
1:00PM-4:00PM
JOHNSON CENTER
Columbia Christian School

Honoring **JOEL DAVIS**
34 Years

Watch for additional information in May.

COLUMBIA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL'S

drama department

PROUDLY PRESENTS

ROALD DAHL'S
Matilda
THE MUSICAL

Friday 5/13 7:00PM	Friday 5/20 7:00PM
Saturday 5/14 7:00 PM	Saturday 5/21 2:00PM
Sunday 5/15 2:00 PM	Sunday 5/22 2:00PM

TICKETS: \$12 ADULTS
\$10 CHILDREN (18&UNDER)

SEATING IS LIMITED

ON CAMPUS - stop by the high school office to pay by cash/check
ONLINE - visit www.columbiachristian.com under "Latest News"

Performances at the Vera Johnson Rehearsal Hall
9101 E Burnside Street Portland, OR 97216



Read-A-Thon

Congratulations Columbia Christian elementary students! Librarian Angie Siler and the rest of the school family commend you for a fantastic Read-A-Thon 2022.

Here are the results:

- 5th grade was the top class for minutes with 12,541 minutes
- 4th grade was the top class for donations with \$3,119.70
- Mei T. was the top individual reader for minutes, with 1,537 minutes
- Ben S. was the top individual reader for donations with \$1,010
- The elementary as a whole read a whopping 49,451 minutes total
- Total earned for the school library was \$9,685.05

One of the special rewards this year was the "Popcorn Drop" which involved dumping 40 bags of popcorn on Mrs. Siler!



Spring Highlights



High school students enjoyed a Business & Engineering module at the Hacienda Learning Center in April. Facilitated by OSU Business Professor Stephen Hodges, the group practiced redesigning a space for a new target demographic and purpose.

The carwash and BBQ FUNdraiser in March profited over \$2,750 for the 8th-12th grade Spring Knight Fest retreat. Thanks to everyone who was part of the activities - from scrubbing vehicles to flipping burgers, and from supervising games to painting faces.

Snow Days are not uncommon in Portland, Oregon, but they don't usually happen this late in spring! Several local schools took a day off for inclement weather on April 12.

April Honor Chapel focused on sacrifice. Several elementary students were selected by their teachers for practicing this discipline, and they got to be the leaders that morning - saying a prayer, reading scriptures, leading worship songs, and sharing their thoughts on sacrifice.



In the News



In March, Columbia Christian was in the news again – this time regarding increased enrollment at private schools in the area. Portland Public Schools officials have said they anticipate being down more than 3,400 students next school year. That’s a decline of about 8%. Conversely, Columbia saw growth of 15% this school year compared to last spring.

Christine Pitawanich from KGW8 interviewed President Ami Vensel and parent Jana Apple on the topic. The following excerpts are taken from that news story:



Jana Apple:

Apple said the situation in public schools is tough and she wishes there were more easily accessible mental health supports for families. “That coupled with extremely stressed out teachers who are asked to be social workers. They’re not trained to be social workers and so they’re experiencing trauma of their own, you know,” Apple said. “I feel like [my children] were indirectly getting traumatized by the trauma.”

“It came to a point where it’s like, something has to give. And I love my school and I love my community. But it’s just really broken, the school system is really broken,” Apple said. She said she had noticed a lack

of motivation and a general change in how her kids were acting. She said she transferred all three from the Reynolds School District to Columbia Christian. “I need to know that my child is going to be known enough that somebody is going to pick up on signs when they’re not okay,” said Apple.

Apple said her kids are also doing well in private school. “Academically they are really doing well too and thriving with expectations and accountability, something that was severely missing. They are proud of themselves and that’s really refreshing.”

Ami Vensel:

Ami Vensel, president of Columbia Christian School, said private schools in general are seeing a lot of interest. “Enrollment really has taken a boom increase if I’m being honest,” said Vensel. “In the last year, [I’ve had] hundreds of conversations with families. And that [...] that’s realistic.” Vensel said in addition to prioritizing academics, Columbia Christian has also prioritized teaching children skills that benefit their emotional, spiritual and social state.

“[We are] creating time and space to talk about our feelings. You have to create time and space for them to learn that,” she said about kids in younger grade levels. Vensel said students in older grade levels have honest conversations with adults about anxiety and suicide. “That’s not going to scare us, right? We’re not going to go away. We’re right here. You have to name it. So kids know that we know and not talk around it but name it and then just provide a safe setting to have those conversations,” said Vensel.

In response to the ongoing student population increase, Columbia’s administration and Board continue to plan strategically. Six classes were already full this year, and additional sections were opened in a couple of grades to accommodate significant waiting lists. Looking ahead to Fall 2022, there will be a careful balance of setting class capacities along with staffing and budget needs.



Alumni Spotlight



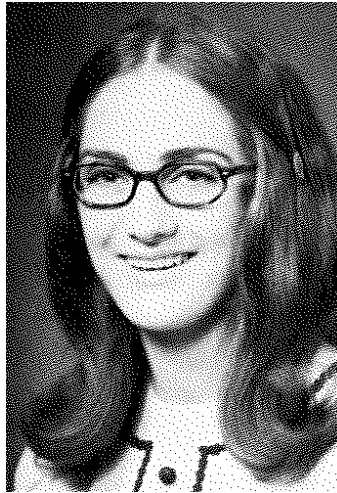
Brenda Smith
Class of 1973

Brenda Smith attended Columbia Christian School starting in 1968 in 8th grade. She recently retired from the Portland Children's Museum and has come back to Columbia as a valued volunteer. Brenda was happy to share about her Columbia experience.

I look back on my high school days with fond memories. I was part of the small vocal ensemble Gospel Messengers. To my knowledge we were the first traveling group from CCS. In the summer we would travel to churches in Mt. Lake Terrace, WA, Salmon Arm, BC and Sandy OR to facilitate week-long Vacation Bible Schools for them. We would stay in families' homes, giving us the opportunity to create extended families. During the school year we would travel to congregations and perform mostly on Sunday night.

Best memory? Hmm...that in eighth grade at recess when we divided up into teams for softball, I would be the first girl picked because I was not afraid to catch a flyball. Or sitting in a restaurant in Boardman, OR with Gospel Messengers waiting for time to go to Sunday morning services in Hermiston and laughing until we were all in tears. Or senior night after graduation, going in the back of pickup trucks to the drive-in to watch a Clint Eastwood marathon, followed by hiking Multnomah Falls to watch the sun come up, and then breakfast at one our family's home (I think it was Don and Una Himes).

I was a math geek. After graduation I went on to Columbia Christian College and finished two years. Life was happening and I didn't know what I wanted to do, so I dropped out of school and got a job. Two years later I went to work for CCC and eventually finished my degree and then went on to do an MBA at University of Portland. I worked in various roles at



CCC and Cascade – all in the field of accounting, and I stayed in accounting until I retired.

To me Christian education is important because it provides you with a foundation for decision-making and relational experiences. While I do not believe it is a one-size-fits-all foundation, it allows students to develop an ethical standard in keeping with Biblical principles.

My advice to students is to enjoy this time in your life. There is plenty of time for other things after you leave high school. Develop lifelong relationships with fellow students, faculty and staff. Explore different activities i.e. play a sport or participate in a play even if you are not "good" at it. If you decide to go to college, do not feel inferior because you attended a small Christian school. You will be surprised at how much you do know. If you decide not to go to college, find something you enjoy doing. Realize that what you enjoy today will probably change and change is okay and can be good.

Washington D.C. Trip 2022



Although COVID significantly pushed back the date of their trip, Columbia high school students enjoyed their week-long East Coast exploration in March 2022. Some highlights of the trip included visiting sites in Washington DC like the White House, Capital, Mt Vernon, and Smithsonian. In New York City they went to Central Park, Times Square, Wall Street, Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and saw Aladdin on Broadway.

History Teacher Natalie Bishop shared, "It is a super trip. Many of the places we go to we study in 8th grade American History. It is a great opportunity for these kids to experience a little independence before high school."

Vensel's Voice



President Ami Vensel

Our high school Career Day event was the perfect opportunity for me to challenge students to connect God's story of creation to work; I encouraged students to consider their future work (career) with purpose, enthusiasm, and joy.

In his book *Garden City*, John Mark Comer invites the reader on a journey to connect spiritual life with life, to ponder the big questions - Why do we exist? What are we here for? What's our meaning and purpose? Corner weaves the first chapter of Genesis throughout his book as he explores what it means for us (humans) to consider the contribution we make to God's story - Creation.

"In the beginning God created the

heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). In the beginning, God created. God is hard at work for six days, creating, forming and filling the earth with life. And when God was finished creating, we read, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). Can you imagine God sitting back and looking at all he had made and feeling great joy and satisfaction - it was very good! God found joy in His work.

"Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule'... God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it...'" (Genesis 1:26a, 28). We were created to rule over the earth and subdue it; our meaning, our purpose - it's why we

exist. God says we were created to rule, to make something of God's world.

I looked into the eyes of my high school students and asked, "What has God made you to do"? What do you love? What are you passionate about? God says we were created to rule over the earth; He created us - you and me - with unique gifts, talents, interests, skills, abilities, passion, vision, and creativity!

Have you considered the honor and privilege that has been extended to us by the Almighty God to continue what He started? God has invited us to create with Him. To partner with Him. To work with Him. This is where we find purpose, enthusiasm, and joy!

COLUMBIA CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS 2022 LIVE VIRTUAL AUCTION

Registration is now OPEN!

REGISTER AT [AUCTRIA.EVENTS/CCS2022AUCTION](https://auctria.events/ccs2022auktion)

Saturday May 21, 2022

PRE-SHOW STARTS @ 5:30PM
LIVE AUCTION BEGINS @ 6:00PM

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