



# The KNIGHTLY NEWS

Columbia Christian School • PreK-12th Grade

November & December 2022

## Leadership Lunches



Developing young people as leaders is one important aspect of helping students to fulfill the mission of Columbia Christian Schools, thus the recent launch of a new initiative called "Leadership Lunches." Every quarter, guest speakers from all walks of life who have shown themselves to be Christian leaders of exemplary character and effectiveness in their areas of expertise are invited to speak to student leaders at the school. These events are held on Fridays throughout the year during "long lunches" so that students have an opportunity to fellowship over a meal to learn important principles from these community representatives.

### Important Dates:

**January 19**

Last Day of Semester 1

**February 4**

Fun Fair & Open House

**February 6**

Parent Teacher Fellowship Meeting

**January 29-February 12**

**February 13-27**

Korean Student Visitor Programs

**February 13-17**

Elementary Read-A-Thon

**February 27-March 1**

ACSI Accreditation Visit



The inaugural speaker was Mr. Jimmy Bisenius, an entrepreneur who sold his first company upon graduating from college. Mr. Bisenius, who has invested internationally, founded several companies and is currently running Verathon Academy, an alternative learning environment for students. His presentation at Columbia began with a formal interview conducted by current student body president Dawson Vensel. During the interview and beyond, Mr. Bisenius shared stories of lessons learned, including insights on building relationships with truth and integrity, sharing how his faith has impacted and informed his work.



The second special guest was Rev. Dr. Eric Anthony Joseph, president of Multnomah University. On December 2, student leaders attended a catered meal where Dr. Joseph shared principles of effective leadership -- entertaining and inspiring students with stories of his own leadership development and lessons learned along the way. Students had an opportunity to engage in a Q&A session with Dr. Joseph, prompting the allotted time to run over, but it was well worth it to see the audience engaged and pressing in to learn more about what it means to lead. Using the GiANT framework of servant leadership, students learned about the five main voices: Nurturer, Creative, Guardian, Connector, and Pioneer, taking a personal profile assessment and then discovering more about not just their voices, but understanding the leadership voices of others. A good time was had by all!

Administration at Columbia Christian is excited to offer these opportunities for students to catch a vision for how they might impact their own spheres of influence, dream big about how God might use them, and be inspired by the stories of "normal" people who allowed God to equip them to be high impact individuals in their communities and beyond.

### HOST FAMILIES NEEDED

International students at Columbia treasure the memories they share with their host family during their stay.

If you want to learn more about participating in this rewarding program -- including specific dates, stipend payment, and student details -- contact the office at 503-252-8577 or [info@columbiachristian.com](mailto:info@columbiachristian.com).

# Supporter Spotlight: Karen Banks



Retirement congratulations are in order for Karen Banks! After almost seven years of working at Columbia, Mrs. Banks recently made the decision to step away from full-time employment. During her service at the school, Karen filled a variety of roles including substitute, office support, ELD (English Language Development) teacher, international coordinator, and administrative assistant. The administration expresses their appreciation to Karen for blessing the Columbia family with her welcoming demeanor and willingness to work in many different areas.

Reflecting on her time at Columbia, Karen shares, "I'm eternally grateful for these past years assisting our administration, teachers and staff, students and parents. Welcoming and supporting international students has also been an unimaginable gift, one that I now leave our Columbia community to embrace going forward. Jesus may have instructed us to go into all the world, but at Columbia He actually brings the world through our doors!"

## Community Service: Foster Care Donation

Columbia's winter service project this year focused on collecting needed items for DHS Child Welfare to provide to 75 local foster children. The families gave generously; students filled a truck with donations of clothing, socks, books, diapers, wipes, and toys.

Principal Deborah Miller commented, "Words really can't express how grateful we are as a school administration for the tremendous outpouring of items for our foster child donation drive held just before Christmas break. We were astounded as the students filed out of their classrooms with an endless line of bags, boxes, and assorted items to load into a truck. The workers at DHS were possibly even more astounded than we were when they came out to help unload. They were incredibly thankful and I was incredibly PROUD of our Columbia community. We did a good thing, and I believe the Lord was honored and glorified in our offering. Great job, everyone!"





# Snapshots of Winter



6th graders got a pie to the face as one of the rewards from elementary Jog-A-Thon this year. The Academy Six students were great sports!



Prayer Warrior Buddies watched "A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving" and feasted on the snack described in the film: popcorn, pretzels, jelly beans, and toast.



The junior class raises funds from operating the concessions stand during athletic events. Thanks to PTF for sprucing up this space!



1st grade students enjoyed a field trip to the Festival of Trees -- extending their classroom studies about Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas traditions around the world.



Teachers were wrapped up as presents as part of the high school pep rally during Spirit Week.



Circling up in the gym to sing the school song is a decades-long tradition at Columbia.



One elementary student enjoyed the honor of "President for the Day" including pulling the alarm for the school fire drill.



All-school caroling was one of the highlights of the week leading up to the Christmas break.



Campus can get quite chilly during the winter months, but it makes for some beautiful scenes.



# Homecoming 2022-2023



If you've been involved at Columbia for any length of time, you know that Homecoming is an annual tradition during basketball season. This year's ceremony was held during halftime of the boys' varsity game against Open Door (Knights were defeated 42-48); the gym was packed with current families, alumni, and other friends of the school.

Represented on the Homecoming court this year were six senior princesses: Heleana Hetrick, Fiat Thaweesuksathian, Simona Tigu, Lisa Hartwich, Gabriela Alvarado-Rubio, and Carrienne Womack. Congratulations to all the ladies, and in particular, to Queen Lisa!



## Winter Drama: The Curious Savage



Audiences agreed that Columbia Christian Drama Department's production of *The Curious Savage* was heartwarming and enjoyable. Including six performances over two weekends in December, it was a well-executed program that showcased the talents of several students – including cast and crew.

Director Sam Schultz reflected on the program, "It was an absolute joy working on the play with these students. *The Curious Savage* has always been one of my favorite plays, and they blew it out of the water. Their care and love for the characters brought them to life in a real way that made the play unforgettable." Special appreciation is extended to school administrators Ami Vensel and Deborah Miller, Pearl Howarth for coordinating all the parent volunteers, Clara Brandt for bringing the youngest actor, and Daniel Carver for building the set.





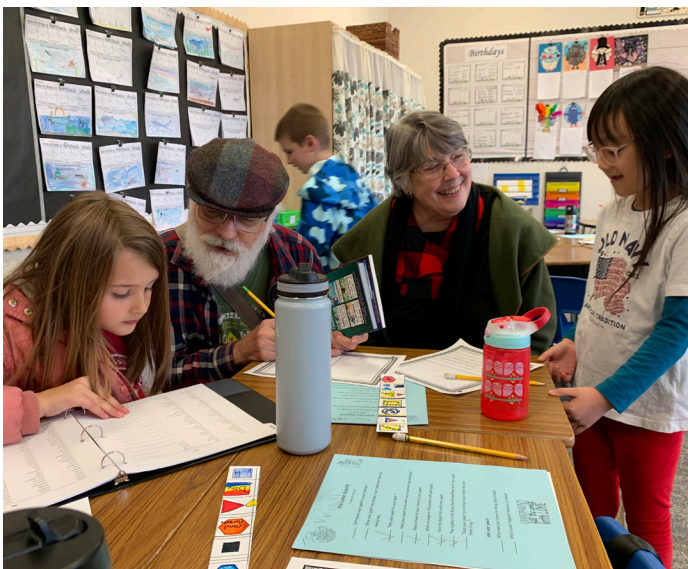
# Honoring Our Vets

Columbia's 2022 Veteran's Day Program utilized the many gifts and talents of the student body to honor the men and women who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. The auditorium was packed in celebration of these heroes. Some elements of the showcase included: flag ceremony by the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, poems and readings from different classes and student leadership, songs by the middle and high school choirs, and several musical performances.

Pearl Howarth, Columbia's registrar and guidance counselor, was an integral part of planning the program. She commented, "I am so glad that Columbia has an annual all-school assembly to honor Veterans. It is always especially meaningful for our community to see the names of family members who have served in the armed forces. This year we paired our program with Grandparents Day, which also gave us an opportunity to invite some of our students' favorite mentors to be in the audience for their performance. Thank you to Eastside church for sharing their auditorium with us for special events like this."



## We ❤️ Grandparents!



In conjunction with Veteran's Day in November, Columbia Christian hosted a special event for Grandparents. This fun-filled day opened with a continental breakfast in the Upper Johnson Center. Middle school students served coffee while President Ami Vensel and Principal Deborah Miller shared school updates and words of appreciation with the guests. Following the meal, the gathering moved to the Eastside Church of Christ auditorium for the school-wide assembly and program. Finally, the attendees were invited to join the children in their classrooms for a variety of activities.

Students enjoyed having their grandparents (or other special relative or friend) join them at school for this unique experience. Many of the guests remarked that it was a memorable day for them as well.



# Christmas Programs

Music instructor Zach Frunk directed two Christmas events to get Columbia's family and friends in the holiday spirit. Mr. Frunk shared, "I am very proud of all of the students' work to put our Elementary Christmas program, and our "Carols and Cocoa" concert together. I am especially thankful for the Pre-K through 5th grade classroom teachers for all of their help and support. I would also like to thank Christy Barrett, Dr. Miller, and Mrs. Vensel for their contributions in putting the two programs together. I very much appreciate everyone who attended the concerts and look forward to the next ones!"



## ELEMENTARY CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



Hosted in the Eastside auditorium, the elementary showcase included performances by students from Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade. The audience enjoyed several classic Christmas songs and a couple of new pieces.

## CAROLS & COCOA



Columbia's middle & high school Christmas event featured several vocal and instrumental ensembles from 6th through 12th grade. After enjoying the music, guests at this evening occasion in the Johnson Center celebrated with hot cocoa and refreshments.



# FUN FAIR OPEN and HOUSE

Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup> 10:00 AM

## Who Should Attend?

- **New Families:**  
Learn more about *excellence* at  
Columbia Christian
- **Returning Families:**  
Bring a friend, connect with  
old friends.
- **Everyone:**  
Have some FUN with us!



GAMES

PRIZES

TREATS

COLUMBIA  
CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOLS





# Vensel's Voice



President Ami Vensel

## Write the Vision

What does having a VISION really mean?

Let's say your family is planning a road trip this summer to visit and explore the Redwood National and State Park in California. What planning and preparation needs to happen now in order for this to happen? Things like arranging time off work, creating a budget, researching opportunities and experiences in the park, creating a schedule/ plan for each day, determining mileage, lodging, reservations, and the list goes on. Planning a road trip takes planning and preparation.

Let's make it a bit more personal. Have you ever thought about your road trip (journey) as a parent? What planning and preparation needs to happen now for you to prepare your child for adulthood -- to experience an abundant life in Christ?

Your vision determines your future. God speaks to the importance of having a good and clear vision, *"Then the LORD said to me, **Write the vision.** Make it clear on tablets so that anyone can read it easily"* (Habakkuk 2: 2). Having vision is to see what God sees; we clearly see the things God puts in our hearts and visualize them becoming a reality. Vision provides purpose and direction. Without vision, people have no purpose, no destination, and no path of direction. The same is true for any family, church, business, school, or organization.

A seed was planted over 75 years ago, a seed [vision] initiated by God and given to us. **Write the vision:** *We believe Columbia Christian School has been established and called by God to lead an ever-growing number of students in the greater Portland area to know and love him, to equip them with a biblical worldview and a strong academic foundation; to enable them to discover and develop their God-given gifts for abundant living and life-long Christian leadership and service.*

This is Columbia's purpose and direction. We must continue to write the vision. We must continue to announce, declare,

share, and proclaim our vision -- that others will listen to it and will want to be part of it.

*"When there is no knowledge of God, the people are unrestrained. But how great is the nation that knows and fulfills the laws of God"* Proverbs 29:18



## Newsletter Staff

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