

COMMUNITY PICNIC

Reviving a Tradition

Last year, we decided to celebrate the start of the school year with a Founder’s Day picnic. We saw it as an opportunity to share some of Community School’s rich history with our families. It was also an opportunity to revive a tradition that had been on hiatus for a few years. We officially restored the ritual as an annual event this past September. To bring it back, we added a few modern conveniences. For example, food trucks and pizza by the slice took the place of homemade picnics. People are busy. It’s hard to make time for these things, but our research tells us that, more than anything, people are searching for community – a place or group that is inclusive and welcoming. And what the picnic represents, is a pathway to forming that community. We watched as students of all ages danced freely to the live music played by our own alumnus, Logan Hollandsworth. New parents chatted with others for the first time, while returning families reconnected after the summer. By the end of the evening, adults were teaching kids how to double-dutch jump rope. Linda Roth took a turn spinning ropes. We are sure there was a hula-hoop or two in play. The air literally buzzed with community and connection. Our founders would have been proud to see that at Community School. Going forward, we will continue to make time in our busy fall calendars to hold this event. We hope you’ll join us in doing the same.

BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY:

One Pet at a Time by Tulie Kaschub

If you had been at Community School recently, you would have felt the excitement buzzing around campus. You would have seen and heard of the hatching of our new baby chicks. But you also would have seen and heard so much more. You would have seen an ever-growing conga line containing both middle school and preschool students (and every age in between!) on the morning that our first chicks were hatching. You would have heard those same children singing out name suggestions for our baby birds as they wound their conga line in and around our playground, stopping now and then to help each other reconnect to the line. You would have seen nearly all of the students in the school endlessly streaming in and out of the classroom where the eggs had been incubating for twenty-one days. You would have heard their hushed voices, barely containing excitement, while they watched in wonder as the tiniest cracks appeared in the eggs and grew to reveal the bodies of tiny baby chicks. You would have seen students choosing to forgo their recess time for a chance to watch for new chicks hatching. You would have heard reluctant readers reading stories to the new chicks. You would have heard the gentle whispers of students who are usually loud. You would have heard even the quietest of our quiet students say hello and welcome when they met the chicks for the first time. And at the end of the week you would seen and heard the sadness we felt when one of our baby chicks died. You would have seen us comfort each other, you would have seen, heard, and even felt the solemnity of saying goodbye.

For us, having animals in the classroom and on our campus is so much more than pet care. It is about sharing the ups and downs of caring for the animals, being invested in somebody else’s well-being, sharing responsibility and bittersweet moments. Doing all these things together, as a community. It’s who we are.

NEW PRESCHOOL

PLAYSCAPE ON CAMPUS



Last spring, with fundraising efforts tied to Roanoke Valley Gives, we raised over \$5,000 during a single day of giving. A portion of these funds was dedicated to the construction of a playscape designed specifically for our youngest students. Over the summer, with the help of staff and a couple of very dedicated volunteers, this pint-sized oasis took shape. It includes natural features such as a willow hut, a mud kitchen and hand-crafted wooden swing seats. It’s a treat for our youngest and smallest students and gives them a wonderful space to invent, create and play.



Middle elementary student, Lauren Lavinder, cuddles a chick in the sunshine.

About the author: Tulie Kaschub teaches middle elementary at Community School. She has graced the school with her positive energy and wisdom for 16 years.

COMMUNITY

NEWS

2019

TRAIL BLAZING

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Hiren Patel

Please accept my warmest of welcomes for the 2019-2020 school year. This September’s return to school marked the twelfth year of, what has become for us, a family tradition. For twelve years I have watched my daughters thrive at Community School. My eldest, now in high school, still returns to campus on occasion and is always welcomed back by teachers and former schoolmates. My youngest daughter has the opportunity to enjoy just two more years of the unique learning environment that the school offers. I continue to be amazed by the fact that their experience has been so unlike my own primary school experience. My daughters have looked forward to and love returning to school each fall. That is a reflection of, not only the curriculum, but the faculty and staff involved in crafting a school home in which our children flourish every day. I hope your family shares an experience similar to ours. It's an honor and a privilege to serve on the Board of Trustees and to be a part of the group working to ensure Community School's place as a leader in education in Virginia’s Blue Ridge now and in years to come. Last year we quietly announced our intention to embark on a capital campaign, The Next 50, a campaign to deepen our roots and cultivate our future. Our intention is to see this campaign culminate in the year of our 50th anniversary, 2021. I am excited to see that, with the hard work of my fellow trustees, this campaign is gaining momentum. I hope you will join me in committing to support Community School’s Annual Fund and also take some time to check in on The Next 50 to see what is in store for our school’s future.



BACK ON CAMPUS

CS Alumni Return as Parents

There is a trend on campus. Parents, who were once students, choosing Community School for their own children. Their reasons are varied, but we love hearing about their experiences as CS parents.

"Tons of time outside, hands on learning, small classes "

"Teachers who ENJOY THEIR JOBS"

"Enjoys learning"

"Trips that develop independence"

"Understand that learning can be fun"

"Think for himself"

It’s exciting to see alumni returning to Community School in this way. Welcome back!



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BE YOUR BEST TO GIVE YOUR BEST

Friday Groups of Community Connection and Self Reflection

Our middle school Friday Groups have long offered students a wide range of opportunities to study a topic in-depth for five to six weeks. Teacher led, but student driven, Friday Groups allow students to explore regional wildlife and terrain, take on a physical challenge, develop a new skill, increase their understanding of a different culture or expand their connection to the community through service projects and off-campus trips.

Recently, two teachers (Gina Kohler, Drama, Movement, Mindfulness and Nicole Cooper, Technology) created a Friday Group called “Be Your Best to Give Your Best.” The two-part experience involved activities on-campus and at the Gainbsoro YMCA. Part one focused on exploring self-identity as well as representation through sports, movement, mindfulness and empowerment. The second part focused on local community building through service-based cooking. They identified local groups and organizations for which they could provide home-cooked items and treats. Students played a part in selecting and collaborating with the organizations.

As part of their study, students were asked to reflect on when they are at their best and why that matters. They engaged in a series of practices including physical fitness and dance movement, acts of kindness toward one another and identity mapping that explored and named the ways we self-identify with respect to race, gender, age, ability, sexuality, religion and location. They considered how they could engage their own communities through generous actions.

Like most Friday Groups, this Group offered students a way to connect and learn in a way that is unique to Community School. This experience specifically, helped students realize and connect the work of self and self-care through acts of generosity.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Thanksgiving Art Show and Reception

November 26, 2019 – Reception at 2 p.m.

Moody Student Center, Hollins University

40th Annual Strawberry Festival

May 1-2, 2020, Elmwood Park, Roanoke

Spring Arts Festival

May 22, 2020

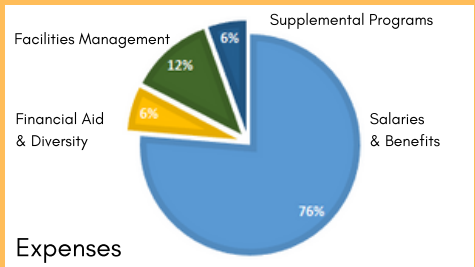
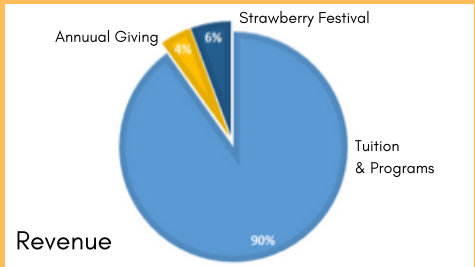
Celebration

June 4, 2020, duPont Chapel, Hollins University

COMMUNITY SCHOOL'S ANNUAL FUND

Thanks to the generosity of Community School’s alumni, families and friends, last year’s fundraising efforts yielded more than \$125,000 to support the programs and unique opportunities that help our students grow as individuals. Off-campus learning, visiting speakers, Friday Group resources and financial aid are just a few of the things that are enhanced through contributions to the Annual Fund. Dollars raised support nearly 10% of Community School’s budget and are essential to foster our continued focus on the whole child. **To give to Community School's Annual Fund, go to www.CommunitySchool.net/Give.**

REVENUE & EXPENSES 2018-2019



THE NEXT 50

An Update from Campaign Chair, Cassie Hunt

I am the mother of two Community School students and a member of the school's Board of Trustees. In my role as a trustee, I have the opportunity to help Community School build on its exceptional past as we undertake our largest fundraising effort ever: The Next 50 – a campaign to deepen our roots and cultivate our future.

I come into this role having spent my career in philanthropy, helping people make an indelible impact on schools, hospitals, theaters and museums through their generosity. I love my work and was honored to be asked to lead Community School’s capital campaign. In my work, we spend years cultivating relationships so that our donors know the value in what we are asking them to support. At Community School, our amazing teachers have been doing that work for decades. This explains the overwhelmingly positive responses we are receiving from our initial requests for support. Parents, grandparents, alumni and friends of CS, already know how transformative this place can be and they are eager to play a part in The Next 50.

At Community School’s Thanksgiving Art Show on November 26, I look forward to sharing with you our progress so far including, pictures and floor plans for the new building that will house the middle school, enrichment classes and administrative offices. In the meantime, I would welcome the chance to share more information with you on how our dream can become our children’s reality.

Cassie Hunt is the mother of two Community School students, a member of the Board of Trustees and the Campaign Chair for The Next 50. When not volunteering a ton of her time with Community School she works full-time as the Executive Director of Advancement Operations at Washington and Lee University. If you’d like to talk to her about how you can make an impact on The Next 50, please contact her by email at crhunt@wlu.edu.



2020 MARKS 40 YEARS OF STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

May 1981

"Dear Parents, Relatives and Friends of Community School, WE DID IT! We reached our goal of \$2000, in fact we exceeded it by \$600.... It was, by all accounts, a highly miscalculated adventure in terms of the amount of work that would be required to deliver 2000 shortcakes and 1000 sundaes to the masses. To give you some idea, on Thursday evening around 7:00 p.m., after working since 10:00 a.m., we had capped, washed and sliced only half of the needed quota of strawberries for the next day. We rallied our forces around 7:30 p.m. and by 12:00 a.m. we had sliced the last STRAWBERRY. Friday brought the same amount of strawberries and the task was completed by 10:30 Friday evening. Five hundred plus quarts of strawberries is a lot of strawberries to say the least, just ask some of the slicers."

We’ve come a long way in nearly 40 years! The Strawberry Festival is now a well-oiled machine with mechanized berry slicers, an industrial kitchen and reams of notes that detail timelines and volunteer needs. We now cap and slice approximately 7000 pints of strawberries and make nearly 10,000 shortcakes! Where would we be without the creativity and drive of our early Strawberry Festival pioneers? How fitting that we mark our 40th during a year when our school theme is Trail Blazing! Join us this year for Community School’s 40th Annual Strawberry Festival. Always the first weekend in May!

