

The Community School

An Academic & Mentoring High School



photo by Wendel Patrick

“The Community School is an academic and mentoring high school, based in the Remington community, for young people who want to advance their education, improve their lives and better their community. Students develop their skills, knowledge, creativity, confidence, intellectual curiosity, knowledge of self, and worldview in a safe, supportive, and comfortable yet rigorous environment.”

Mission Statement

**Annual Report
2016/2017**

This was a year of continued growth for The Community School in both depth and breadth.

We worked with 24 students – 4 of whom completed their education this year and 14 of whom will continue their studies at TCS next year. Six students transferred to other high schools, all but one of whom were new to the school this year and most of whom were in the school for a short time.

It is our 35th year in operation with Tom Culotta as the teacher of what started out as a one room school house. It has been 3 years since we transformed into a state recognized private high school and our second year with an additional teacher. We brought Noah Saganski on staff this year. Noah had worked at TCS during his time as an undergraduate at Johns Hopkins University and returned here after 2 years living and working in California. This was the first year that students earned high school diplomas under the new program.

We continued the growth of our core academic program as well as our weekly seminars - creative writing, physical education and science labs. In addition to a number of special seminars and events, we substantially expanded our program of bringing in speakers who shared their life experiences, careers, and passions with the students in presentation and conversation.

During the summer of 2016, prior to the fall term, the exterior of the school building was totally resurfaced, completing major renovations from roof to sidewalk that were begun several years ago. We added a new large screen 4k interactive monitor was added in the main classroom and a smaller interactive monitor in the back classroom. Each student was assigned a laptop computer for in school use and kindles were purchased allowing students to do work at home. Textbooks were updated as part of a multiyear program to upgrade curriculum materials.

The budget remained steady with the majority of funds continuing to be raised through private contributions. Approximately 41% of operating funds were raised through grants including a special grant awarded to purchase a 15 passenger van that will be out in use next term. Tuition remained \$25/week bringing in about 9% of the budget. Although fundraising continued, this area did not meet expectations.

Volunteerism and donations in kind continue to be the primary subsidy for the school. This includes all of our seminar teachers, administrative support staff and Boards of Trustees and Advisors. In kind contributions also included lunches, school supplies, snacks as well as The GreenMount School's donation of the use of its gym and physical education teacher.

It was another learning year as we added a new class for the third year in a row. We were able to maximize resources to insure appropriate and individualized attention for each student.

The primary challenge going forward is to accommodate the continued growth in the program and assure that there is sufficient infrastructure to allow for long term sustainability and succession.

Core Academic Program

The core academic program was broken into 3 classes this term identified by Year – 1, 2, and 3.

Each day began at 7:40 with all students together watching CNN Student News followed by current events class. This research, presentation, and discussion based class was rooted in the school's goal of developing informed citizens and young leaders.

The current events class was followed by math class (fully individualized) ranging from remedial basic skills through college-level algebra.

While Year 1 and Year 2 students were in a health class, Year 3 students took a third level English class which included a trimester long class on writing research papers.



The last period before lunch divided the students into 3 groups – English 1 and English 2 ran concurrently while the Year 3 class was in a self-directed research and presentation course.

Science took place immediately after lunch with Year 3 and some of the students from Year 2 taking advanced biology and the remaining Year 2 students along with Year 1 taking physical science.

The next period was social studies with Years 2 & 3 taking United States history and Year 1 taking geography.

The last teaching period of the day was a second math class. This was followed by a short break and independent study. At 4:30 students took care of their chores and then either packed and left or stayed for the extended study period until 5:30.

Students Completing Program

Sadie Greenwood – attending the CASA summer program, a fully sponsored 6 week live-in program at Morgan State University where she will be full time in the fall

Dyrrell Moon – one of our youngest graduates at 16 years old, Dyrrell will attend Howard University in the fall with a dual major in political science/sociology

Janiah Tillery – will attend Roanoke College as a premed student in the fall and is the recipient of a full scholarship. She is working this summer as an Intern at Johns Hopkins Hospital

Chris White – has begun work for a sprinkler company where he will be enrolled in a plumbing apprenticeship program after completing 9 months



Students Continuing Next Year

Garrett Anderson
Sara Harris
Sean LaRicci
Vernon Laumann IV
Daj'a White

Kirsten Bayer
Donavin Hooper
Shane Latham
Marcus McKeever
Olivia Yates

Spencer Bayne
Donald Lacy
Jordan Leon
Caleb Rohe

“The school is absolutely amazing. It has done so many things for me – maturing me in the best way and helping me become the best person and student I can be.” Sadie

“I did gain a family here. I did find life here. I’ll miss The Community School.” Dyrrell

“Coming to The Community School was one of the single best decisions I could have made in my entire life, and I don’t think I will ever find a place quite like it.” Janiah Tillery

Speakers in our “Conversation with...” Series:

Ken Bancroft – Born and raised in Remington, Ken is the former President of St. Agnes Hospital and an active member of the TCS Advisory Board.

Jim Burger – Journalist and photographer, Jim is a resident of Remington and has been published in a variety of local and national publications. He authored an article on TCS that appeared in The City Paper in March 2016.



Mary Pat Clarke – Baltimore City Councilwoman, Mary Pat is a long-time friend of TCS, has taught a course on local government here, and is an active member of our Advisory Board.

Eddie Conway – Activist and news producer for the Real News Network, Eddie is one of the earliest supporters of TCS and lifelong leader in the Black and Progressive movements.



Mike Gallo – Former official with the Minolta Corporation, Mike led a series of seminars about his experiences from the streets of Chicago to corporate success.

Richard Gibson – Commander of the Baltimore City Police Northern District, Major Gibson brought TCS alumni Detective Jake Nickles to the school to discuss community policing.



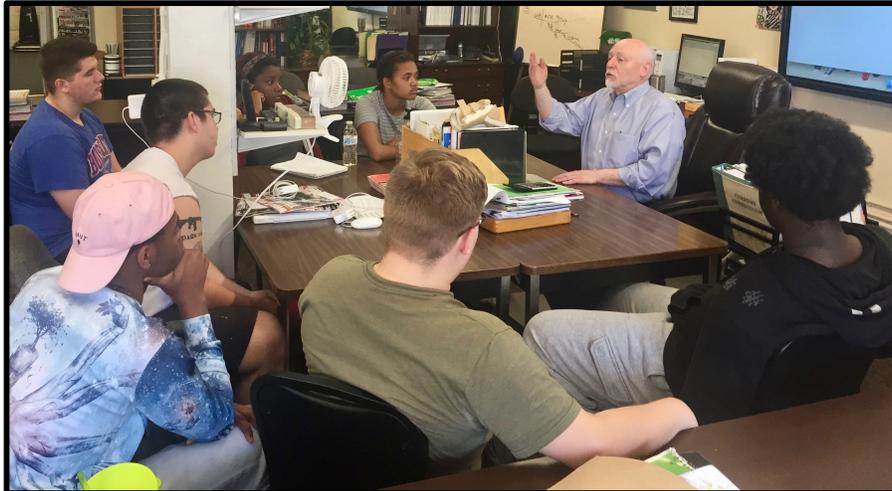
Evan Green – TCS alumni and aircraft munitions mechanic in the US Air Force, Evan shared his experiences growing up in Remington, attending TCS, and his experiences in the Air Force on his way to being stationed at Aviano Air Force Base in Italy.

Larry Gross – Executive Director of the Coalition for Economic Survival in Los Angeles, Larry has been a friend of TCS for several decades and spoke about his mom's experiences as a survivor of the Holocaust and the gas chamber at Auschwitz.



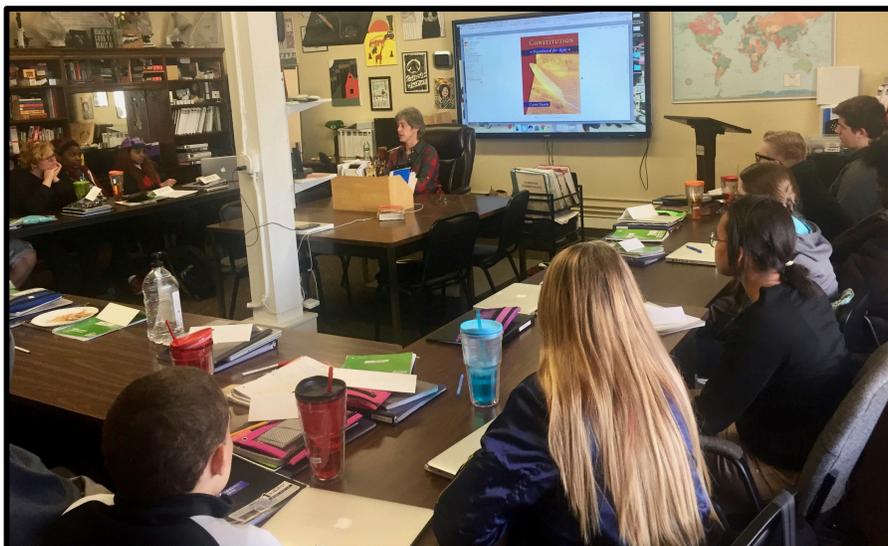
Lawrence Guy – Former Baltimore Ravens lineman, Lawrence and his wife Andrea brought Thanksgiving dinners for the students and their families and shared his experiences overcoming learning difficulties and low expectations for an NFL career.

Fleesie Hubbard – Medical researcher at the University of Maryland Hospital, Fleesie has been a part of TCS her entire life and is a current member of the Board of Trustees. She shared her experiences with travel and encouraged the students to explore the world.



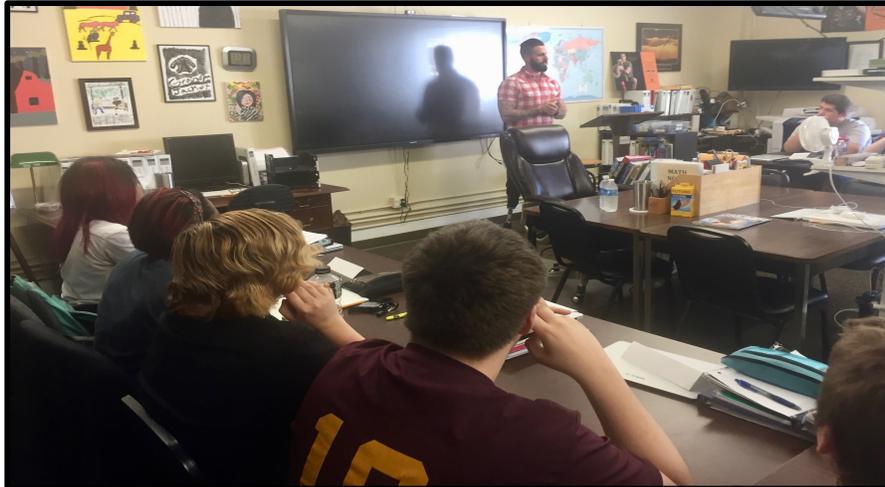
Tom Iacoboni – Founder and President of Iacoboni Site Specialists, Tom is a longtime member of the Advisory Board. He discussed creating, maintaining, and growing a successful business.

Rollin Johnson – Former Director of The Johns Hopkins Center for Social Concern, Rollin spoke about his life journey and experiences in the Peace Corp in both Asia and Africa.



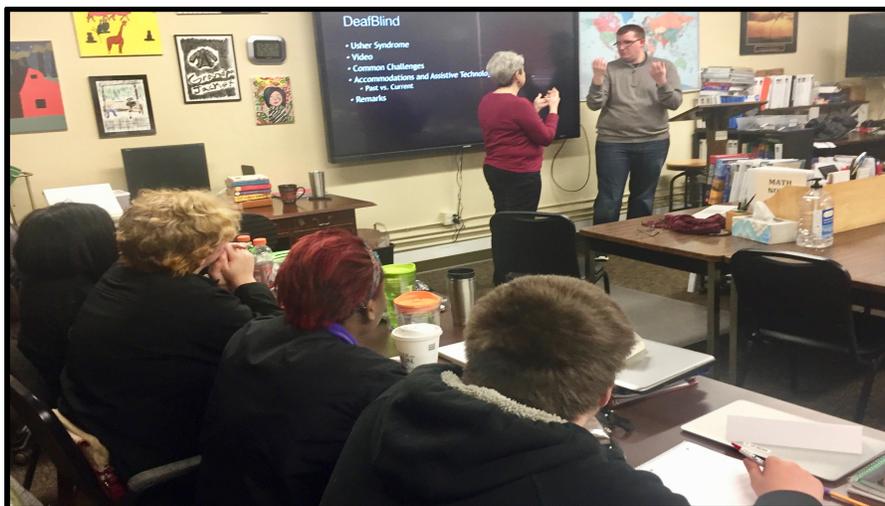
Wendel Patrick – Composer, Producer, Musician and teacher at Peabody Institute, Wendel shared his life story growing up in the Caribbean, becoming a world-renowned concert pianist, overcoming a debilitating health condition and rise as a hip hop producer and creative artist.

Sande Riesett – Founder of the Show Your Soft Side Campaign, Sande explained what brought her to create a nonprofit organization to stop animal abuse and enlist nationally known sports figures, musicians and others to help her spread the word.



Alan Scott – Professor and researcher at the JHU Bloomberg School of Public Health, Alan conducted a series of seminars for the TCS biology class in his field of immunology.

Cathy Travis – Author and former U.S. Congressional staffer, Cathy spoke about her experiences on Capitol Hill and observations on the national political changes and challenges.



Bryan Ward – Master's degree in human resources, Bryan, with sign language interpreter Kathleen Riley, shared stories about growing up with Usher's syndrome and being deafblind while making his way from elementary school through graduate school.

Matthew White – Army veteran, Matthew related his experiences in the US military including 2 tours in Afghanistan and rebuilding his life after surviving an IED explosion and amputation.

Seminars – Weekly

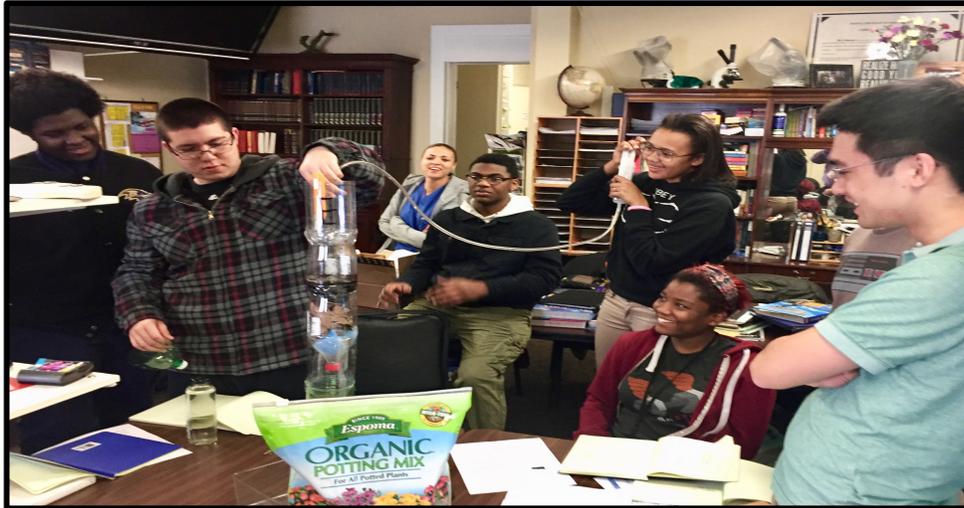
Creative Writing – Led by author **Don Riesett**, Don has taught this weekly writing seminar for over 10 years to develop each student’s self-expression, presentation and writing talent and skills. Every 3 weeks the students worked on a piece that was based on their own lives in a series entitled, “My Life So Far.” This year’s seminar included an additional weekly mentoring session where Don met with students individually.



Physical Education – Taught by **Eduardo Viana**, this weekly class is held through the kindness of the **GreenMount School** and focuses on improving physical fitness, sports skills and teamwork. Students were exposed to a variety of sports and activities including Capoeira, a martial art from Eduardo’s home country of Brazil.



CSI – a JHU student led organization, **Community School Initiative** has been conducting weekly science labs at TCS for a number of years, both to complement our science curriculum as well as to encourage interest in science and related studies and careers.



Community School Initiative Membership

Andrew Mao & Noah Stanco – Co-Presidents

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Will Ye



Special Seminars

Art Appreciation – Artists **Katie Bachler** and **Scott Berzofsky** conducted a 5 week course that included producing art pieces and a trip to the Baltimore Museum of Art.

GreenMount School Field Day – TCS students were included in this annual event held as an athletic cooperation/competition for students from The GreenMount School.



Kodactive – University of Maryland student organization, this group conducted a seminar on coding and robotics.

Ortus Academy – a financial literacy organization for students, **Aaron Velky** and his team conducted the Numis Matters workshop/game for students during 2 seminars.



Single Carrot Theatre – a Remington based theatre troupe, Artistic Director **Genevieve De May** and the folks at SCT hosted the students for 3 performances – *Savage/Love*, *Samsara* and *The Bitter Game*. A Q & A session with the actors followed each performance.

Program Enrichment

Movies - The students have watched several movies this year for education and entertainment purposes. Most of the films were deeply meaningful and were followed by discussions. These are the movies that we watched this year:

Freedom Writers

The Mission

Girl Rising

Stand by Me

Hairspray

Home Alone

The Outsiders

Hacksaw Ridge

Smoke Signals

Schindler's List



TCS Student News – Every Friday morning the students record a news podcast. Working in teams of two, each group researches news stories, writes a script, puts together a background slideshow, practices and then performs a news show. News stories range from international to local with the last part of the podcast reserved to report on what's happened in the school during the last week. Every student is required to work on at least 3 news podcasts a year, each with a different partner.



Special Events

AIAC Dinner – Every year the students look forward to the Annual **Associated Italian-American Charities** banquet where the students get a opportunity to dress up and attend as guests of **Tom and Jacque Iacoboni**.



End of Year Ceremony – This year's EOY Ceremony held at the Johns Hopkins Glass Pavilion was an extra special event because it was the first one for TCS as a state certified high school.



Sponsor Meetings – There were 5 evening meetings during the year where the students and their families and sponsors met to receive updates about the school and give their input and support.

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Teacher/Director
Teacher
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Bookkeeper
Speech Therapist

Tom Culotta
Noah Saganski
Peggy Lashbrook
Leah Culotta
Carol Berman

JHU Workstudy Students

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James Li
Mauricio Silva

Anna Bartoli
Stefani Greenwade
Marian Park
Tena Spencer

Adam Blakney
Elizabeth Helmke
Alondra Paulino
Lauren Zingaro

What Students and Families are Saying About the School

"I've seen myself grow in a way I've never seen myself grow before and I've seen other people grow with me." Garrett (Year 1 Student)

"I have seen my grandson grow into a respectful young man." Donna Robertson (grandparent)

"The school has helped me to slowly begin to accept myself." Sara (Year 1 Student)

"We've had some good experiences, like getting to meet so many inspiring and fantastic people." Olivia (Year 1 Student)

"I love TCS! It offers every student the opportunity to learn in a great environment surrounded by people that really care about them." Stacy Laumann (parent)

"This is the best year I have ever had in school. I said that last year too, but this year beats last year academically too." Donald (Year 2 Student)



"The school has made me a better person and learner" Caleb (Year 2 Student)

"I have developed so many of the TCS student traits. There isn't a place I'd rather be, and there is not a place that could grow me as much as this school has grown me." Spencer (Year 2 Student)

"I love the diversity and how the students are able to be themselves without judgment." Crystal Phillips (parent)

"I met some amazing people and I've changed as a person and a student. I love all the people here like family. It was amazing that I could learn so much in just one year." Shane (Year 1 Student)

"The school helped me believe in myself. It also helped me with learning skills. I think it helped me most with speaking out." Daj'a (Year 3 Student)

"The classroom setting is more like a community than a classroom. The students are able to learn in an organic way." Donnita McGowan (parent)



This Annual Report is dedicated with deep appreciation to all of the volunteers, donors, supporters and sponsors who make this school possible.



For more information about The Community School, please visit our website at www.tcshighschool.org

The Community School * 337 West 30th Street * Baltimore, Maryland 21211 * 410-467-4920

Thank you to the following people and organizations who have donated time and/or money this year:

The Abell Foundation * Julia Adams * Margaret Adams * Jeff Albaugh * Amazon Smile * Anita Anderson * Justin Anderson * Lenny & Gail Anderson * Appian Society * Arcadia Wine, LLC * Associated Italian-American Charities * Melissa Atkins * Katie Bachler * Barbara Bainum Trust * Bainum Family Foundation * Liz Baker * Paul Baleseros * Baltimore City Combined Charity Workplace Campaign * Baltimore Museum of Art * Ken & Paulette Bancroft * Bancroft Family Fund * Craig & Susan Bancroft * Paul Baleseros * Houston Barker * Tom & Darlene Basta * Theodore Bauer * Dave Bayer * Jennifer Bayne * Spencer Bayne * Carol Berman * Black Classic Press * Mitchell Brown * Kelly Burden * Jim Burger * Scott Calvert * Fumiko Campbell * Mike & Annette Carey * Jose Caro * Blaine Carvalho * Jake Wilder Chapman * Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke * Paul Coates * Ronald & Carole Coleman * Mike Colligan * Combined Federal Workplace Campaign * Beth Conway * Eddie Conway * Tia Cook * Dave Costello * Council of Raven's Roosts * Jessica Culotta * Leah Culotta * Tom Culotta * Tony Culotta * Nikki Dean * Carmen & Victoria Deyesu * Felix Dialioso * Jessica Donohue * Allison Dorsey & Dan Gordan * Stuart & Gayle Erdman * El Façade * Deb Falkenhan * Kathleen Filiaggi * Mac Fox * France-Merrick Foundation * Steven Franz * Gary & Cathy Russo Froman * Mike Gallo * Gary R. Bozel & Associates * David & Suzanne Gaudreau * Ed & Lisa Gavin * Ryan Gavin * Annette Gass * Major Richard Gibson * Gary Gillespie * Pat Glenn * Goldsmith Family Foundation * Joy Gramling * Evan Green * The GreenMount School * Anita Griffin-McGowan * Larry Gross * Lawrence & Andrea Guy * Jennifer Harris * Mark Harris Sr. * Dean Hartman * Jennifer Haynes * Danielle Hill * Dick Holden * Doris Hollister * John Horn * Aduke Hubbard * Fleesie Hubbard * Joyce Hudson * Marilyn Hunter * Tom & Jacque Iacoboni * Rob & Maria Jasion * Johns Hopkins University Center for Social Concern * JHU-Community School Initiative * JHU Financial Assistance Unit * JHU Neighborhood Fund * Kay Johnson * Rollin Johnson * Richard Jones * Dr. Ron & Sandy Kaufman * Lisa Knickmeyer * Kodactive * Kevin Kowal * Kathy and Dick Lamond * Nancy & Kevin Lanagan * Peggy Lashbrook * Christina Laumann * Vernon & Karen Laumann, Jr. * Vernon & Stacy Laumann * Ben Lyons * Lois & Philip Macht Family Fund * Kathryn Mahoney * Abby Markoe * Maryland Charitable Workplace Campaign * Chris & Mary Grace Mazzulli * McCormick Company * Donnita McGowan * Mary Miller * Dyrrell Moon * Joshua Mooney * Donna Nagy * Beverly Naill * Lacey, Emily, and Jade Nelson * Jeanette Norris * Carol O'Connor * Ortus Academy * Parks & People Foundation * Wendel Patrick * Crystal Phillips * Frederick & Mary Louise Preis * RCM&D Foundation * Susan Repko * Christopher Reznich * Michael Rogosky * Ravens Roost #110 – Hampden * Genny Resch * Christopher Reznich * Don & Sande Riesett * Susan Riesett * Michael Robbins * Kelly Robertson * Kim Rohe * Saint Andrew's Christian Community * Gary & Anita Saganski * Noah Saganski * Halima Saguda * Dr. Alan Scott * Seawall Development Company * Joan Senyk * Single Carrot Theatre * Anne Smith * Linda Smith * Bonnie & Stuart Stainman * Justin Switzer * Shawn Taylor * Thomas Wilson Sanitarium for Children of Baltimore City * George Tilson & Jose Diaz * Cathy Travis * United Methodist Women of Good Shepherd Church * Eduardo Viana * Dr. Ron & Barbara Walcher * Mardon Walker * Bryan Ward * Matthew White * Mitch Wilborn * Foard & Martha Wilgis * Juanita Wynn * Matthew & Christina Wyskiel * Olivia Yates * Rachel Yates * Linda Young * Zanyvl & Isabelle Kreiger Fund * along with others whose names may not be listed, but who have the satisfaction of knowing that they made a difference.