

“CJA always let me know the different options I had. There is college, but there are routes other than college. They showed us a path to where we want to be.”
– Sherman

Sherman Reed,
Class of 2013, with
cousin RaiVyn,
Class of 2030



A.M.D.G.
SUMMER 2025

CLICK TO GO TO EACH SECTION

“ When I read the pages that follow, I can only marvel at the success of our students and alumni. As we begin our 21st school year, I’m awed by how our CJA community has grown from a school for 19 boys in 2005 to a campus serving more than 360 boys *and girls*, hundreds of alumni and over a thousand High School Bridge students. ”

Dear Friends,

When I began my teaching career as a wide-eyed 21-year-old at a Nativity middle school in Baltimore called St. Ignatius Loyola Academy (SILA), one of my first students was a bright and hard-working sixth grader named Cameron Newsome. Cam lived in a neighborhood called Sandtown two miles northwest of SILA, and his dad walked him to school each day to keep him safe and save on bus fare. Cam was an incredibly impressive young man and a joy to teach and coach.

Cam and his classmates taught me about what an excellent school needed to be. They inspired so much of what we have strived to build at Chicago Jesuit Academy, so I could only smile when Cam recently let me know that he would be in Chicago for business and asked to tour CJA as part of his preparations to serve on the board of The Loyola School – a new Jesuit elementary school in Baltimore.

When Cam and I walked the hallways of CJA, we fell into an easy conversation about our children, and we both quickly agreed we had each been fortunate to marry well above ourselves. Cam caught me up on his journey from SILA to an elite boarding school, an undergraduate degree from Georgetown, and a successful career with Huron Consulting. We also discussed some of the successes and failures that had marked our lives across the past 27 years.

Throughout our conversation, I couldn’t help but hear the echoes of what you will read on the pages that follow. When Cam recalled the sacrifices that his dad had made for him, I thought of **Ms. Denham’s** reflection about why she chose CJA for her twins, **Serenity** and **Sincere**. When our conversation turned to how hard it can be to find your way from high school to the start of a meaningful career, I could hear **Sherman, Jamari** and **Vale’s** thoughtful remarks about their unique paths since their graduation from CJA.

When I read the pages that follow, I can only marvel at the success of our students and alumni. As we begin our 21st school year, I’m awed by how our CJA community has grown from a school for 19 boys in 2005 to a campus serving more than 360 boys *and girls*, hundreds of alumni and over a thousand High School Bridge students. Please know we remain so grateful for your generosity and the disciplined sacrifices you make in partnership with us and our students and alumni. **Thank you for believing in each of them and their great promise.**

In gratitude,

Matthew Lynch

Matthew Lynch



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Serenity,
Ms. Denham
and Sincere

“WE BELONG HERE”

In 2022, CJA began admitting girls, opening doors for families like the Denhams. Now, twins Serenity and Sincere attend fourth grade together. Here, the twins and their mom, LaTrice Denham, share what makes CJA a special place.



How did you learn about CJA?

Ms. Denham: I did the research. When we did the tour, I said, "I don't need to see anything else." The music room! The nurse's office is a real doctor's office! I just fell in love with the school and all that it has to offer.

What do you like about CJA?

Sincere: I like how they teach me new things. I am reading better, and now I know multiplication.

“If you want your child to have a good education and to be in a good, safe, loving, welcoming environment, CJA is the place.”
– Ms. Denham

What is your relationship to their teachers?

Ms. Denham: I love them. They keep me updated on everything. I love the relationship that the teachers and I have with each other. It's a very open relationship. They are patient. They are really working with my kids. From where they started, they have just shot up. Sincere's growth in Reading is remarkable.

What did you notice when you first started at CJA?

Sincere: I made some friends on the first day of school!
Serenity: I keep getting better and better at Math. I am good at Reading, but I still need help. I read long books, but sometimes I need help breaking down the really big words.

What co-curricular are you in?

Serenity: I'm in Girls on the Run. I like that the teachers are really understanding. Right now, we're learning about friendship.
Ms. Denham: With the friends she has here, they like her for her. She likes that she is a part of something, and I love the community she has.

How does having two teachers in each classroom help with their learning?

Ms. Denham: It's a beautiful thing. Every child can get the attention they need.

What would you want a parent reading this to know about CJA?

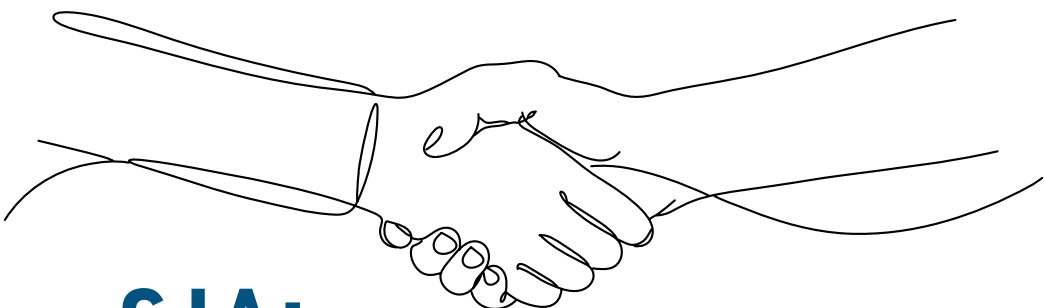
Ms. Denham: Apply! This is the school for your child. If you want your child to have a good education and to be in a good, safe, loving, welcoming environment, CJA is the place.

If you had a friend thinking about coming to CJA, what would you tell them?

Serenity: I would tell them to please come here because CJA helps you get better with what you're having a hard time with. The teachers can help with whatever problems you're having.
Sincere: I would tell them to come here because this is a really nice place. I really fit in, and they will fit in.
Ms. Denham: This is our school. We belong here. It's nice to belong.

What does it mean to be part of the CJA community?

Serenity: To be part of this community means a lot. I feel loved.
Sincere: It feels like everyone in this school... we are family.
Ms. Denham: There's respect and commitment. It just feels welcoming, it's warm, it's kind, it's gentle... I just love it.



CJA: THE DOOR THAT'S ALWAYS OPEN

Each alum’s path from their best-fit high school to the start of their career is unique. What remains constant is the unwavering support of CJA’s community, most notably through the College & Career Persistence (CP) Team. Here, three alumni share how the CJA community shaped their journeys to success.

Looking back, how did your time at CJA shape your path since then?

Vale: I ended up at CJA because my mom would always drive down Jackson Boulevard and see Christ the King College Prep and CJA. When she learned more, she enrolled us! Much of my family is in Ecuador, so I only have my immediate family here: my sister, mom, dad and my uncle with Down syndrome. I’ve never been part of the majority in more than one sense, so I’ve had to learn how not to close myself off. Starting at CJA was a first major step for me. CJA showed me how to adapt and be open to new things. I started playing trumpet at CJA with Mr. Carroll, and I did jazz at CJA

and in high school. In seventh grade, I analyzed the musical *Hamilton* and the history around that with Mr. Diehl and, thanks to a CJA donor, I got to see the actual play. I trace a lot of my writing ambitions to that class with Mr. Diehl. Now, I am a sophomore at Cornell College, majoring in Psychology and Music Composition.

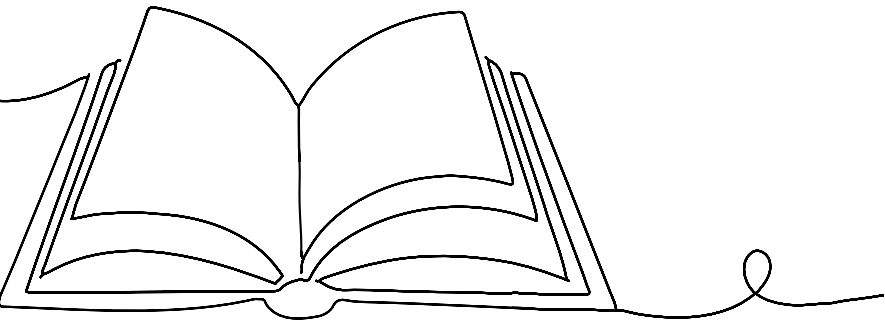
Sherman: Jamari and I have known each other since before pre-K. At that time, CJA was just a tiny school in Marillac House, which was where my daycare was. I always wondered, “What are those guys doing up there?” I enrolled at CJA, and all my friends from CJA grew up together. I remember going home and texting each other from our parents’ houses,



**VALENTIN
ANDRADE**
CJA (2019)
The Thatcher School (2023)
Cornell College
(2027)

**SHERMAN
REED**
CJA (2013)
Christ the King Jesuit
College Prep (2017)
Revolution Workshop (2022)
Contractor, McHugh
General Contractors

**JAMARI
BREWER**
CJA (2013)
Noble Street College Prep (2017)
ISU Bloomington (2022)
Credit Analyst,
First Mid Bank



and now we have our own houses, our own kids and responsibilities.

Jamari: Like Sherman, I'm still connected to a lot of the people I went to CJA with. My closest friends are friends from CJA.

After I graduated from Illinois State University in Bloomington in 2022, I got an internship in downtown Chicago as a Financial Analyst with The Heico Companies. Mr. Jon Hicks, who was a CJA Board Member and a Managing Director at Heico, was a huge advocate for me. That internship was an amazing opportunity I learned about through CP, and I got to continue interning at Heico until I found my first job.

How has CJA's College & Career Persistence Team supported you over the years?

Sherman: CJA always let me know the different options I had. There is college, but there are routes other than college. They showed us a path to where we want to be. CJA is a lifeline.

I went through a program CJA referred me to called Revolution Workshop. They trained me for three

months. After the program, I found a contractor, and I am now part of his team. We're constantly growing, constantly tackling bigger projects, but I like that. I'm really good at being the glue: organizing people and things to make sure they are where they need to be.

Vale: I learned about a boarding school, Thacher, at a summer camp CJA helped me attend. When I applied and got in, Thacher gave me a generous scholarship, but there were still costs outside of tuition. CP supported me with those costs. They also gave me the academic and social advice I needed. Through every step of the way, I'm thoroughly grateful for what CJA has offered me.

Jamari: CJA and my high school were very structured. The training wheels were taken off at college. I had to find my discipline, which was a challenge. I fell back on CJA's instruction to guide me in

CJA always let me know the different options I had. There is college, but there are routes other than college. They showed us a path to where we want to be." – Sherman

creating that. The CP team helped me through the entire process. I don't think I would have graduated without CP to call back on to set some goals and map things out.

Who inspires you, and how do you define success?

Vale: Success is a hard word to define because everyone has different expectations. If I can do something I love while not worrying about making a living, that would be enough for me.

Jamari: My kids inspire me. I have two sons: Mauri is three, and Major is one. They're so amazing. My community gets boxed in by what people think we can do with ourselves, so if I can represent a different avenue of thinking, that inspires me. Money allows you to buy what you need, but it doesn't buy happiness. What makes you happy is going to dictate your success.

Sherman: To me, success in life is doing what you want to do. It means having the funds to create your vision in the real world and with the people you care about.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Vale: In 10 years, I want to be working with teenagers, writing a lot of music for them, and playing music with them. I like art therapy because it



can be used in a subtle way to make people realize what they want to change about themselves.

My dad's a therapeutic counselor who works primarily with addiction, grief and loss, and that is what I want to do with high school and college students but use therapy techniques that rely more on creativity.

Jamari: In 10 years, my sons will be looking at some high schools, maybe playing sports. Who knows what the

little fellas are going to be into. I just get to watch them grow. Career-wise, I want to be in a management position.

Sherman: I want to keep growing: doing things I want to do, but also things I never thought I'd do. I want to own a house, and I want to start building cars again in addition to working on houses. My goal is to buy a new truck for my business this year and then save up the capital for the house the next year.

7.3x

CJA alumni are 7.3x more likely to earn a post-secondary credential within six years of graduating from high school than their peers from the West Side who attended CPS neighborhood schools.

What advice would you give our 8th graders?

Jamari: You're not too cool for school! Man, you're going to miss it, so just embrace it.

Vale: You will never know everything, and that's okay. What is not okay is to not be curious. From the big to the small things – like how to introduce ourselves – CJA prepares you to go out into the real world and still be challenged by it, but have the tools to overcome those challenges.

Sherman: Keep trying. No matter how many times you fall, just keep trying. Eventually, one of those times you will get back up, and it'll be the time that you learn how to stay up.

“My baby cousin, RaiVyn, is now at CJA. It's good that the girls can experience what we experienced. Growing girls need a resource just like we did. We have a brotherhood, and I hope they get a sisterhood.” – Sherman

What do you hope for the future of CJA?

Jamari: I hope that CJA continues to impact lives. I see friends come back to CJA and be welcomed with open arms. I know countless people CJA has opened doors for. Keep changing lives.

Sherman: I'm glad CJA opened a girls program. My baby cousin, RaiVyn, is

now at CJA. It's good that the girls can experience what we experienced. Growing girls need a resource just like we did. We have a brotherhood, and I hope they get a sisterhood.

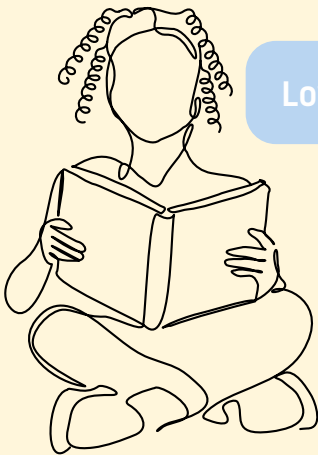
Vale: I agree. An institution like CJA allows for doors and opportunities that just wouldn't otherwise be available, and that has an impact. All these seemingly small moments have such a butterfly effect.

The passions I found through CJA, from music with Mr. Carroll to composition with Mr. Diehl, influenced my college major – they got me to where I am. These opportunities are seeds planted that grow in fundamental ways you can trace back to a couple of moments of real importance.

I've watched large structural changes: adding third and fourth grade, adding girls and expanding the opportunities that CJA offers, like the High School Bridge Program that my mom works on. Seeing that in real time, I can already tell the widespread impact that CJA is having. I'm really excited to see how it continues to affect people positively.



WALKING WITH STUDENTS AND ALUMNI THROUGH THE AGE OF 25



Lower School >>

SUMMER PROGRAMMING
CP facilitates access to scholarships for students and alumni to attend camps nationwide and covers transportation costs.

Middle School >>

HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
CP guides students through the high school selection process, scholarships, testing and interviews.

High School >>

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION

During high school, CP checks in on students at least once every six weeks and supports academic, social and emotional success and summer programming.

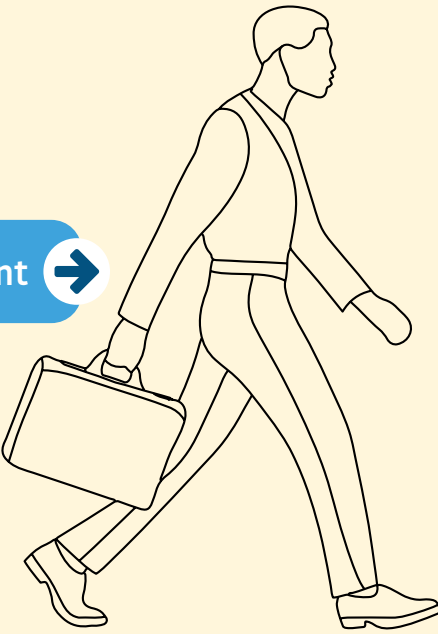
Post-Secondary Education >>

POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION
CP works with rising high school seniors to decide their best next steps, whether college, a certificate program or immediate workforce entry.

MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

CP accompanies alumni on their path to employment by connecting alumni to internships, certificate programs and job opportunities. CP also supports building professional networks.

Meaningful Employment ➔



CURA PERSONALIS: CARING FOR THE WHOLE STUDENT

Rooted in the Jesuit principle of *cura personalis*, CJA provides comprehensive support through individualized instruction, on-site healthcare, extended-day programming and ongoing alumni services that continue well beyond graduation. These resources help us ensure our students are equipped to thrive long after their time at CJA.

EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY AND YEAR

Our 9-hour school day and 11-month school year support academic growth, provide hands-on learning opportunities and include co-curricular activities during the school day.

CO-TEACHING MODEL

With two adults in each classroom, students have access to individualized learning and build strong, trusting relationships with their teachers.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Alongside our faculty, four learning interventionists and a speech and language pathologist work with students who need support to make content digestible and tremendous academic growth possible.

SOCIAL WORK & NURSING

Four social workers and a full-time school nurse help our teachers and staff address our students' physical, mental and social-emotional health.

HEALTHY STUDENTS PROGRAM

Students eat a breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack each day and have opportunities to stay active through P.E. and athletic co-curriculars.

WALKING WITH ALUMNI THROUGH AGE 25

We empower and support our alumni as they transition into their best-fit high schools, pursue post-secondary education and build pathways to meaningful, fulfilling careers.



"Being part of the CJA community is a really big blessing. Not many people have a College and Career Persistence Team to guide them through the high school process and beyond. To have somebody to guide you, that's a really big thing. I'm thankful I was able to get the opportunity to come to CJA."

– Josiah, Class of 2025

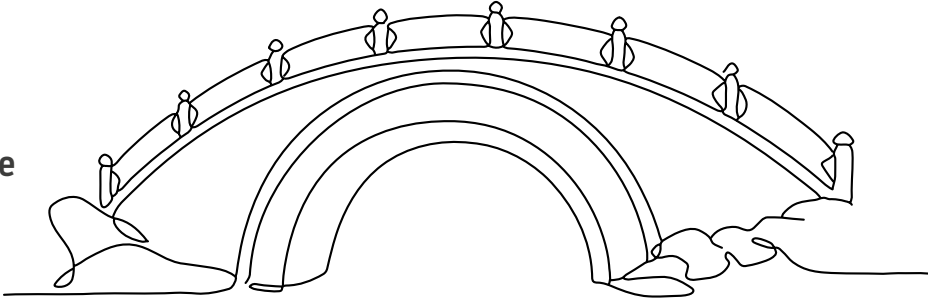


91%

91% of students ended the 2024–25 school year testing at, above or within one grade level in Math. 46% of these students started the year two or more grade levels behind.

SCALING OUR IMPACT: HIGH SCHOOL BRIDGE

Chicago students have the right to a well-resourced high school education, but the placement process is complicated to navigate alone. High School Bridge (HSB) exists to change that.



With over 500 high school options in Chicago, finding the right school can feel like an impossible task, particularly for families in communities impacted by historical disinvestment on the South and West Sides. Students in these communities who will be the first in their families to attend college, or have GPAs below 3.0, have a particularly difficult time accessing a well-resourced high school. High School Bridge offers access to clear guidance and information about quality education options so students

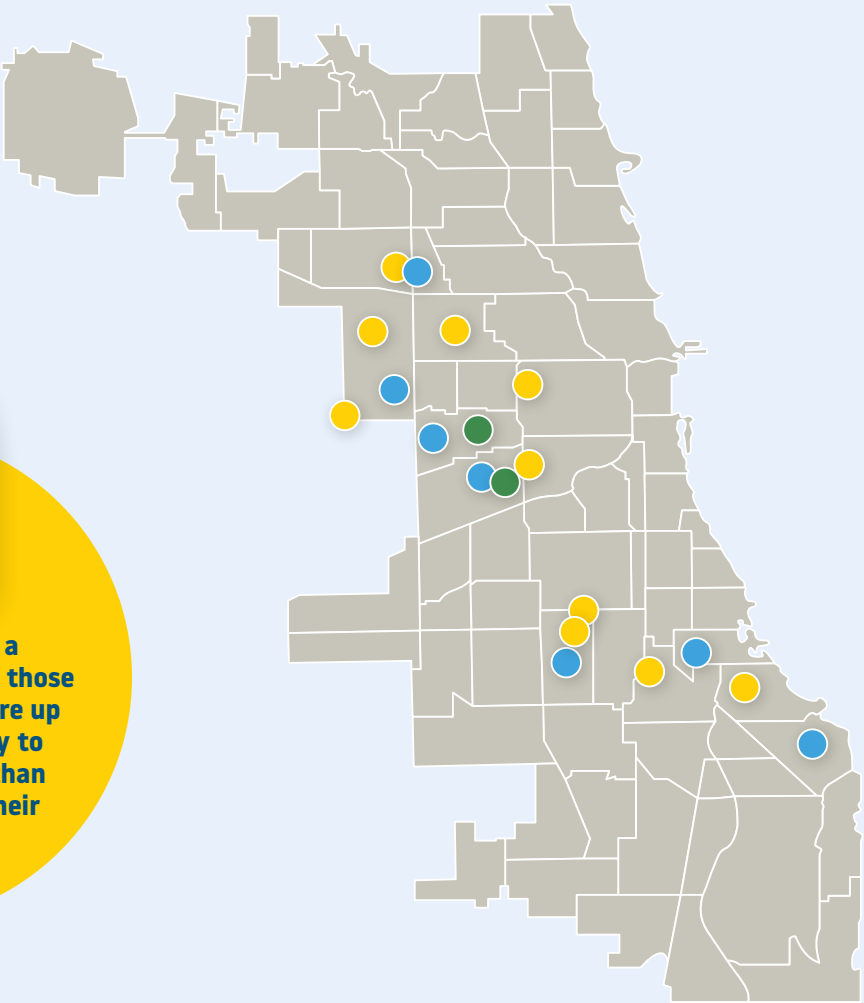
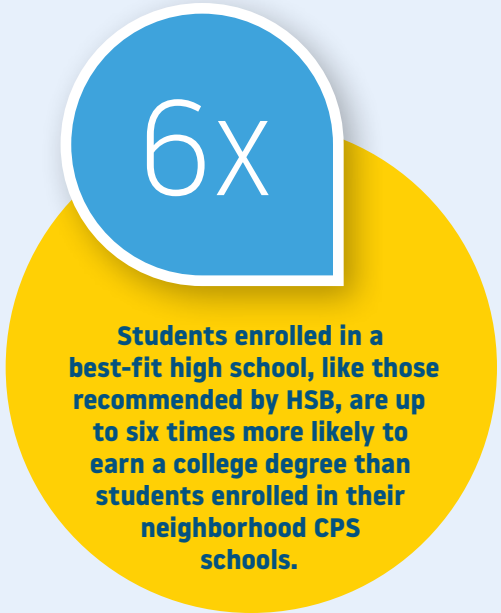
and families can make informed decisions. Starting in seventh grade, HSB counselors work with families to find schools that are geographically and financially accessible, demonstrate

“It’s a relief knowing High School Bridge goes with our students to high school, because otherwise they walk out of our doors and we can’t support them like we did.”
– Partner School Guidance Counselor

strong academic and post-secondary outcomes and nurture students’ social-emotional wellbeing. HSB counselors continue to accompany students all the way through tenth grade, equipping them with the tools and resources to build a strong foundation for their future. Thanks to our generous benefactors, we can provide these services at no cost to our partner schools or their families. Through High School Bridge, students are finding, enrolling in and persisting at their best-fit high schools, giving them a 6x better chance of earning a college degree than their peers who attend their neighborhood CPS high schools.* This year, HSB will serve 1,290 students across 15 schools. By 2027-2028, we will partner with 19 elementary schools, helping nearly 2,000 students transition to high schools where they can succeed and thrive.

HSB PARTNER SCHOOLS

- CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
- CPS/CHARTER SCHOOLS
- INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



CURRENT AND FUTURE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARTNERS

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- Academy of St. Benedict the African
- Augustus Tolton Academy
- Maternity BVM
- St. Angela
- St. Ann
- St. Catherine-St. Lucy
- St. Genevieve
- St. Malachy
- St. Philip Neri

CPS/CHARTER SCHOOLS

- Chavez MAC
- Daniel Webster Elementary School
- Great Lakes Academy
- Hammond Elementary School
- Morton School of Excellence
- Providence Englewood
- Spencer Elementary
- Wadsworth STEM

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

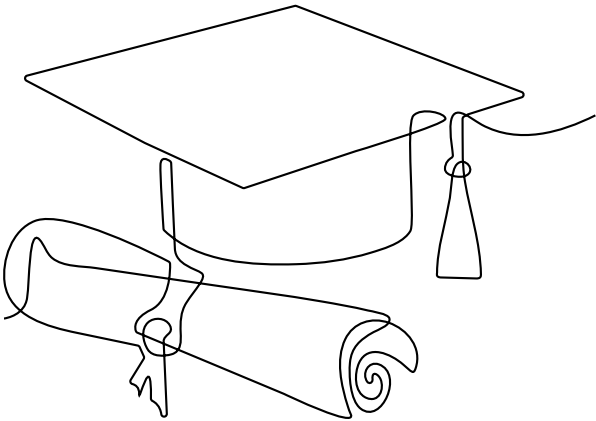
- Altus Academy
- Holy Family

**Data from the University of Chicago's To&Through Project Milestone Tool tracks longitudinal educational outcomes, including high school graduation, college enrollment and degree attainment for students who attend CPS public, public charter and selective enrollment high schools.*



CLASS OF 2025

The Class of 2025 will attend the following high schools:



PRIVATE CATHOLIC

- Brother Rice High School
- Christ the King Jesuit College Prep
- Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
- Fenwick High School
- Holy Trinity High School
- Loyola Academy
- Marist High School
- St. Ignatius College Prep

- ### OTHER PRIVATE AND BOARDING
- Bennett Day School
 - Chicago Hope Academy
 - Groton School

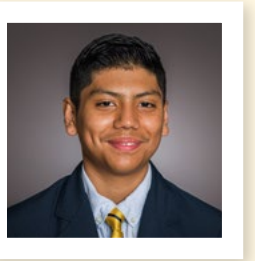
- ### CHARTER SCHOOLS
- Pritzker College Prep

GRAD-AT-GRAD AWARD WINNERS



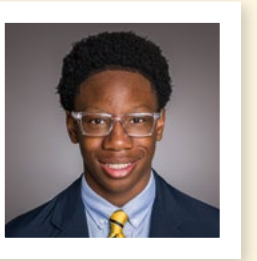
OPEN TO GROWTH

“**Julian** accepted every bit of critique – positive or negative – with a smile and willingness to try again. I speak for all at CJA when I say we will miss you and your positivity next year, but we are so excited to see you continue to flourish at Bennett Day School.”



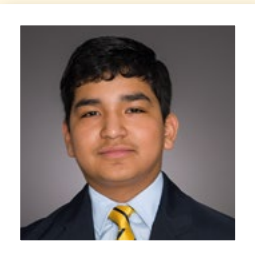
LOVING

“While working hard to cultivate his learning, **Jayden** is quick to put others ahead of himself in helping them also achieve success. He ensures the success of the entire team, often stepping outside his comfort zone to do so. He is gentle and kind and recognized as a ‘great friend’ by his classmates.”



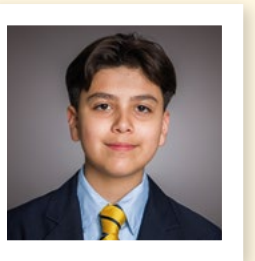
RELIGIOUS

“**Jamal** leads not by being the loudest voice in the room but by consistently doing what is right, even when no one is watching. His actions reflect a deep commitment to compassion, kindness and justice. Whether offering help, showing patience in difficult moments or encouraging others, Jamal lives out the values we instill in our graduates.”



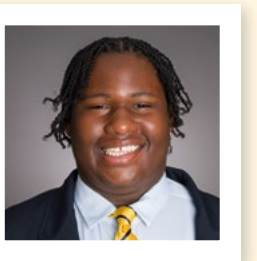
COMMITTED TO DOING JUSTICE

“**Danny** speaks up – not to be heard, but to make sure others are seen. He has a rare kind of courage – the kind that quietly challenges systems most adults accept. Danny, keep leading with love. You remind us what it truly means to love mercy, act justly and walk humbly.”



SEEKING INTELLECTUAL EXCELLENCE

“**Daniel** is great about sharing his knowledge with others. He is a natural teacher, and it has been noticed and commented on by the volunteers in Robotics. It’s one thing to seek intellectual excellence, but it is a person for others who shares intellectual excellence with others in a kind and loving way.”



THE PHOENIX AWARD

“What the world needs more of is people who are willing to not only rise from their own ashes, but to walk with other people on fire and lift them up. And let me tell you, **Larry** is willing to walk with anyone, shower them in love and grow together.”

OUR FINANCIALS

Benefactors who choose to support CJA are investing in the long-term success of our students. That investment signals a belief in our students’ promise – not only academically, but also as young people who are committed to doing justice in the service of others.



SCHOLARSHIP LEVELS

Full Cost \$29,500/year

A Full-Cost Scholarship takes into account the approximate true cost per student per year at CJA. This cost is in line with the amount spent by many suburban public school districts whose average school day is two hours shorter and whose school year is two months shorter than CJA’s.

Half Cost \$14,750/year

A Half-Cost Scholarship covers half of the cost of the extended school year, extended school day, full-time school nurse, social workers, reading and math specialists and co-curricular programming which make a CJA education unique and exceptional.

Quarter Cost \$7,375/year

A Quarter-Cost Scholarship covers one quarter of the cost of a student’s education throughout their time at Chicago Jesuit Academy.

Four-Year Sustainable Scholarship

More important than the scholarship amount is the commitment to support a student throughout their fifth- through eighth-grade years at CJA. We invite our benefactor community to consider a four-year commitment of an amount that is the best fit for them.



If you are interested in learning more about becoming a scholarship benefactor, please contact **Danielle Pernini, Vice President of Development**, at (773) 696-4907 or pernini@cjacademy.org.

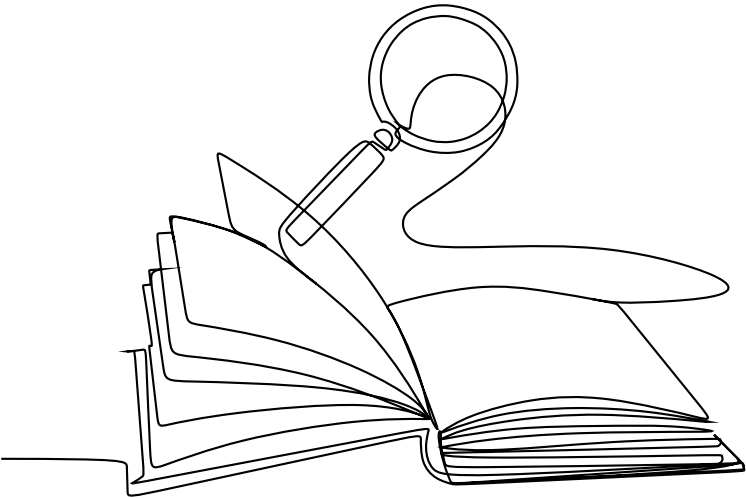
ANNUAL FUNDRAISING BY PROGRAM

The majority of CJA’s annual fundraising supports our students’ scholarships. By raising student scholarships in four-year pledges and funding our 3rd- and 4th-grade classes through other generous donors’ commitments, we ensure we have the resources necessary to serve every student from their enrollment at CJA through their eighth-grade graduation. Over 85% of scholarship benefactors choose to renew their four-year commitment in support of our students.

Alongside our students’ scholarship needs, some donors choose to direct their support to specific aspects of our work such as our Healthy Students Program, our College & Career Persistence Program, our High School Bridge Program or our Arts & Music Program. Others make unrestricted gifts to our Annual Fund, which allows us to direct their support toward the most immediate needs of our students and alumni.

Each year, we aim to raise more than our operating budget so we can continue to grow our enrollment responsibly. In school year 2025-2026, we will enroll over 360 students in grades 3-8. When we grow to full capacity in school year 2027-2028, we will serve 426 CJA students, 350+ alumni and nearly 2,000 High School Bridge students across Chicago’s South and West sides. None of our work would be possible without the incredible generosity of our benefactors, and we remain grateful for their choice to contribute so meaningfully to our community and for their shared belief in the great promise of the students and alumni we serve.

Scholarship	\$ 6,609,300	54%
Annual Fund	\$ 4,490,210	36%
Special Programs	\$ 1,214,903	10%



SPENDING BY DEPARTMENT

The majority of spending at CJA during the 2024-2025 school year directly supported the Academic School Day, ensuring a 12:1 student-to-teacher ratio and funding for four social workers, four specialists in our Learning Resource Center and a full-time school nurse. The Operations Team managed the technology, campus safety and buildings and grounds needs of our students and alumni. The Development Team raised \$12.3 million in support of the near-term scholarship needs of our students and the long-term needs of our alumni. The College & Career Persistence Team worked with our students and their families starting in seventh grade to prepare for the transition to high school and accompanied our alumni as they matriculated through high school, post-secondary education and career pathways to meaningful employment. The High School Bridge Team partnered with 13 schools across Chicago to support nearly 1,000 students and their families in finding, enrolling in and persisting at their best-fit high schools.

Academic School Day	\$ 6,815,346	63%
CP and High School Bridge	\$ 1,790,267	17%
Development	\$ 1,102,917	10%
School Operations	\$ 1,038,179	10%

OUR SUPPORTERS

FOUNDERS CIRCLE

The following donors have generously contributed over \$400,000 in support of our students since the founding of CJA in 2005.

Anonymous (6)
Barclays
Matthew J. † and Christine C. Botica
Helen Brach Foundation
CA Student Living/Scott Family Foundation
Chicago Blackhawks Foundation
Dan and Maureen Connolly
Conway Family Foundation
James and Catherine Denny Foundation
The John & Susan Dewan Foundation
Tom and Sheila Doar III
Michael and Peggy Dwyer
Foglia Family Foundation
Gallagher 312 Foundation
Gary and Karen Gardner
Paul Gearen
The Gies Foundation
Brian and Christina Greviskes
Haag Family Foundation
Daniel P. Haerther Trust
Joel and Stacy Hock
Bob and Patty Huffman
IMC
Jewel-Osco Foundation
Michael and Lindy Keiser
William and JoAnn Kunkel
Little Wing Fund
Mallof Family Fund at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Bill McIntosh
The Howard and Kennon McKee Charitable Fund
Adrienne Meisel and Rand Sparling
Midwest Province of the Society of Jesus
Martin and Lauren Modahl

Mullooly Carey Foundation
Michael L. and Suzanne M. Nelson
Mary B. and Patrick A. O’Neil Foundation
Office of Justice Programs
Perkins Malo Hunter Foundation Fund
Perry Family Charitable Foundation
Maralyn and Michael † Reilly
James T. and Michelle A. Ryan Foundation
Sanborn Family Foundation
Sarah M. Schmidt
William J. and Barbara A. Schmidt Family Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Michael D. Searle Trust Under the Will of John G. Searle – Searle Family Trust
William S. and Nancy E. Thompson Foundation
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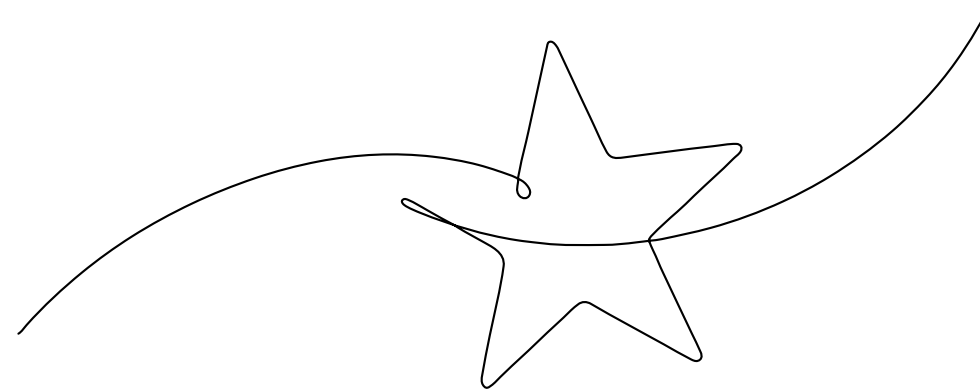
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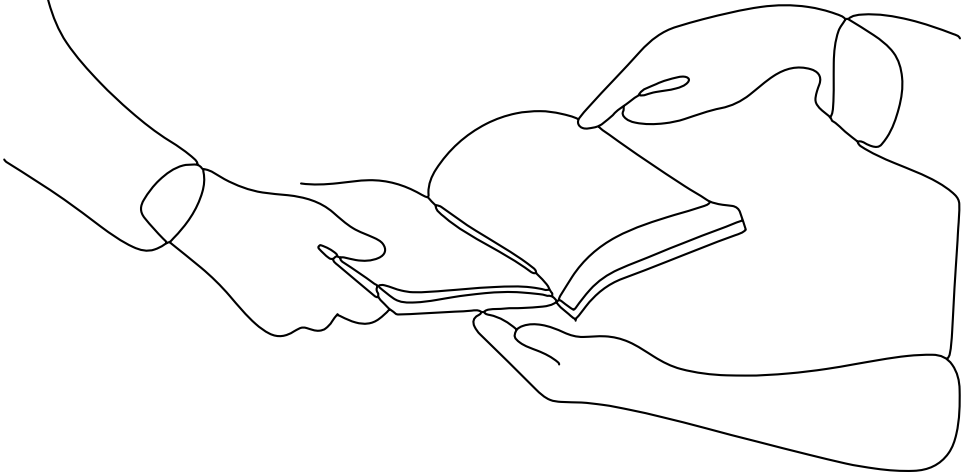
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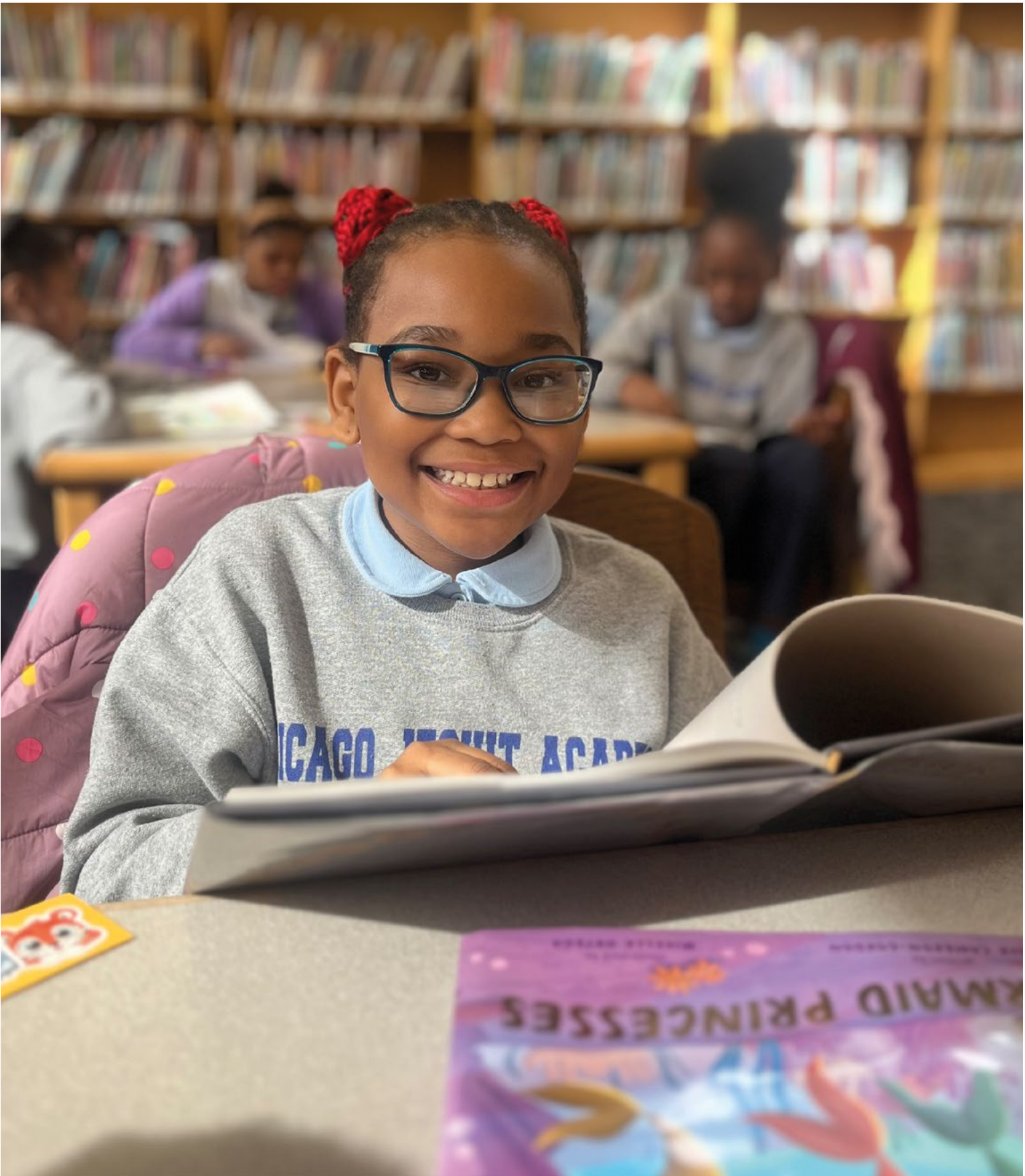
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