



WINTER 2022

# CLASS NOTES

THE LATEST HAPPENINGS FROM CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY TO YOU



## WE GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

The first trimester of school not only brought students back into the building, but also marked the return of our in-person Friday Morning Friends volunteer program. The program allows volunteers to come to our school each Friday to read a variety of books to our youngest scholars. In previous years, the volunteers would lay out beach towels in the cafeteria and read one-on-one with the students. This year, however, the volunteers visit the classroom to read to an entire class of kindergartners.

The students listen intently, only stopping occasionally to take a wiggle break, and they always have lots of questions for the volunteers afterwards. Some of our kindergartners' favorite books so far have been *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* and *Don't Push the Button!* Thank you to all of the dedicated volunteers who generously give their time to read with us on Friday mornings. If you are interested in helping to instill a love of reading in our youngest scholars and would like to participate in our Friday Morning Friends reading program, please email [mbeebe@ccsafoundaiton.org](mailto:mbeebe@ccsafoundaiton.org).



## Alumni Spotlight

*College check-in with Sean DeShields*



When we first reached out to Sean DeShields, Class of 2021, to check in on his college experience, the first thing he said was "college is going very well. I'm really enjoying it! It's making me a better person and I'm learning a lot," followed immediately by, "I miss CCSA so much. I'm a saber forever."

Sean is using all of the skills he acquired during his time at CCSA to thrive and succeed at Bowie State University, an HBCU in Maryland. Sean was a star player on the CCSA varsity basketball team, and has decided to turn his passion for sports into a career by majoring in sports management. He intends to join the varsity basketball team at Bowie next year, after he's had some time to acclimate to his new found independence

and to focus on his academics.

Like many students, Sean initially found the transition from high school to college to be challenging. He credits his teachers and mentors at CCSA with instilling a sense of accountability that has helped him triumph in his new endeavors. He said, "I had teachers that would regularly pull me off to the side to have conversations about accountability and having to prepare for the real world when I graduated. This helped me a lot with life after graduation and when I started off in college." Sean was able to successfully manage the transition, finishing his first semester strong and feeling enthusiastic and confident about his future.



Sean takes great pride in Chester, his family and CCSA and keeps in touch with his former classmates regularly. He ultimately wishes to set a good example for students looking to follow in his footsteps, including his sister who is currently in 4th grade at CCSA. He is eager to come back to speak with our older students about his experience and hopes to help them develop the confidence that they need to successfully transition to college once they graduate.

## Classroom Conversations

*"Our Tribute to Andrew Turner"*



In the first trimester of visual arts class, our middle school scholars were tasked with creating works of art inspired by renowned Chester artist Andrew Turner. Turner is known best for his portraits, depictions of jazz music, and cityscapes of Chester and Philadelphia. After watching an Andrew Turner documentary, Digital Arts teacher Desire Grover encouraged her students to embrace Turner's "Dirty brush" technique, using a brush saturated in a mixture of colors, to create Turner-inspired paintings of their own homes. Music is a central theme in Turner's paintings, so Ms. Grover also collaborated with the students to create jazz instrument still-lives that captured the soul of jazz music. The students decided to title their collection of paintings "Our Tribute to Andrew Turner."

## Community Partners

*The Philadelphia Union Foundation*

The Philadelphia Union Foundation (PUF) and CCSA have formed a partnership to offer exciting engagement opportunities for our students. Each week our elementary school students participate in **The SWAG**, a free soccer training program for young athletes ages 4 through 8. During





their Physical Education classes, students are taught the basics of soccer by former professional and collegiate players. In addition to The SWAG, the PUF has selected CCSA as its primary school partner for the new iAM Project. The program focuses on three core pillars: inspiration, aspiration, and mentorship.

The iAM Project leverages a network of inspirational speakers, academic and professional mentors, and corporate partners to expose CCSA students to a wide variety of career opportunities. Corporate partners include Lincoln Financial Group, Global Neurosciences Institute, BIMBO Bakeries, Kevin Durant Charity Foundation, and Neumann University. In early December, 33 of our 10th grade students participated in an event at Subaru Park, home of the Philadelphia Union, celebrating their acceptance into the program.



## Saber Athletics

After more than a year of virtual learning, our student athletes returned to play! For the first time, our girls volleyball team qualified for the district playoffs, with several players named to the All-District Team. Our boys junior varsity & varsity basketball teams, as well as our boys and girls middle school teams, are only midway through their seasons but have already shown talent and grit on the court. The varsity boys basketball team, coached by Dan Spangler, scored their first big win against Phil-Mont Christian Academy on January 21, 2022. Meanwhile, the co-ed cross country teams competed for the first time since the team's inception two years ago. Both the girls and boys on the middle school team set multiple personal bests this season and hope to continue doing so once track and field resumes in the spring.



Our competition cheer team had an exciting year by qualifying for regionals. Their season is wrapping up with a final competition on February 6, 2022. The middle school and high school cheer teams have brought energy and inspired our athletes throughout their games. Athletics and extracurricular activities provide a meaningful outlet for our students and, this year in particular, they provide an inspirational return to normalcy for our entire school community.

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our mission and believe in the future of  
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