

# *The* Warrior Partner

For volunteers, donors,  
alumni, family, and friends  
of **Liberty Christian School**

SPRING 2022





## What does community at Liberty Christian School mean to you?

Community is anytime you have a group of people gathered around a common purpose that do life together.

Here at Liberty Christian, our community is strong and powerful because we come together for the common purpose of educating our children through a biblical worldview. When you talk about a community doing life together, that means experiencing the successes and discouragements that life brings, and having a biblical worldview as our starting point is what makes us unique in the way we respond to one another.

Jesus commands us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, but he also calls us to love one another at a higher level. I feel like that is a key piece to our community that makes us different. As believers, we interact differently. When we pray for each other, when we have loss, when we experience highs and lows: it's all really influenced by our core values and who we are as a school and community.



Dr. Blair McCullough, President

The main thing that draws us together is that we partner together in a common purpose to raise leaders for Christ. To me, that's the most beautiful thing.

## Community isn't something that can be built overnight. What would you say are the defining pillars of the community here at LCS?

Nearly 40 years ago, our foundation was built on Christ and God's Word. Our core values are the Warrior Way, which are to Embrace God's Truth, Strive for Excellence, Demonstrate Leadership, Value Scholarship, Exhibit Christ-like Character, Pursue Service, and Build Community. These are the defining pillars of Liberty Christian. When you build relationships and manage the day to day of a school through these uniting factors, it creates a community that we all long to be a part of.

Being a school is not easy. There's a lot of amazing things that happen, but there's also a lot of challenges. We're all rallying for our students in all situations. But, boy, when you can come together under the banner of Jesus Christ, it makes for a really solid, strong community because it's built on a strong foundation, not a foundation of sand, as the Word says.



## What do you appreciate about our staff community?

I believe our staff is truly called to serve this community, and because of that there's a level of shared commitment and camaraderie that is extremely unique and special. Each staff member is dedicated to meet the needs of the students and families represented here. It's truly like a deep-rooted family for them.

## What do you appreciate about our parent community?

The fact that Liberty parents share in our common desire to instill the love of Christ in their children, it motivates them to partner with us in a more intentional way. I would say many school communities have a vision to educate children and to prepare them for their future. That's definitely something that we all can rally around.

**What would you say to alumni that feel a lot has changed since they were at Liberty? What would your message be to them about our community?**

I don't know if everybody knows this about me, but my family and I spent seven years in South Korea at a private Christian school. One of the first things they told us before we went out to the mission field was you're going to experience a whole new culture: and it's not wrong, it's just different. And so that kind of became our mantra. It's not wrong, it's just different.

What I would say to any of our alumni that may see things that look so completely different from what they experienced is: it's not wrong, it's just different. It's a natural progression for a school to grow.

But what has not changed are the core values and the mission of Liberty Christian School.

The school is continuing to strive to grow academically but also in finding more ways to help our students grow spiritually, and grow in their leadership. All of the things that you see in the Warrior Way are things that we're constantly striving for.

One of the things I'm most proud of is that we've been very intentional in keeping our long-standing traditions that Liberty has had for many years. So don't judge us by change. Take time to look at it because it's not wrong, it's just different.

**What would you say to all new families about the Liberty community? What do you think is most important for them to know?**

I would say it's a thriving, welcoming community. And like any community, it takes purposeful initial steps to put yourself out there and get involved. Once you get involved, I think you're going to find quickly that the Liberty family will pull you in as one of their own.

We're unique in that we are four schools in one with Preschool all the way up to Upper School. You have small communities that develop in each of those schools and you also can find communities that develop through co-curricular programs and activities.

But at the end of the day, I think our families do a really good job of supporting each other, celebrating each child's gifts and talents, and serving our community.



But here at Liberty, because we are a Christ-centered school, our parent community is not only rallying simply to prepare students, but they're doing it in a way that's focused on the spiritual formation of their children and what God is doing in their lives. And those are critical desires for our families.

**What's your one wish for our student community?**

It's my wish to foster an environment where our students truly feel like they're a part of this community. The things that we do are specifically designed for them. It's not just about the student body as a whole, but it's also about each individual student.

I think we do a good job, but we have opportunities for growth. God creates everybody differently with unique gifts and talents. At the end of the day, I would love for every student to graduate feeling seen, known by our staff, and confident in knowing who they are in Christ.



# Thank you, donors for supporting our Community!

Your gifts provide resources  
that support our staff in making  
an impact in the lives of our  
Liberty students!

Here are some items you  
helped fund this year:

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- Biblical Worldview Conference
  - Tuition Assistance
  - Teacher Sustainability
- 5th Grade Victory Retreat
  - Lower School Chapels
  - STEM Resources
  - Playground Upgrades
- Outdoor Classrooms Awnings
  - Band Instruments
- Lighting and Sound for Fine Arts Performances
  - Art Photography Equipment
  - Indoor Golf Putting Green
- Football 2 Man Bull Sled, Fisher Lineman Shoot, Sack Back Tackle Sled, and Jugs Machine
  - Baseball Field Improvements
- Track & Field, Cross Country, Baseball, and Volleyball Uniforms
- Track & Field and Cross Country Record Board and Timing System

**AND SO MUCH MORE!**



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“As campus pastors of the Spiritual Life team we have the unique honor and privilege of getting to serve you and your amazing sons and daughters by discipling them in the way of the Lord. We love getting to build relationships with the students on all of our different retreats and mission trips. But the best thing about this is we get to spend every day with your students in the hallways, at lunch, and everywhere they go.”

**SAM DOW**

Spiritual Life Children's Minister

“My favorite thing about working at Liberty is the smaller class sizes and getting to work with students individually to help them grow creatively and spiritually.”

**JOANNA MANN**  
Art Teacher

>>>







Dr. Craig Hazen



Dr. Sean McDowell



Dr. J.P. More



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"I love that I get to talk about Jesus. That is the biggest difference at Liberty. These kids are acting like Jesus acts and living like Jesus lives. You do not get that anywhere else – and it's because of you. I'm so thankful and blessed to be here."

**KATIE SAYERS**

Primary School Teacher

"What I love about being at Liberty is that I get to impact young lives. We get to pursue excellence, teach them discipline, prepare them for the world they are going to be going into one day and we get to do it all in the name of Jesus."

**DAVID NEILL**

Director of Sports Performance

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## Who are John Luke and Courtney Spitler in the Liberty Community?

That depends on who you ask.

They've held many titles in the 16 years their kids have been students at Liberty Christian School: bulletin board Mom, board member, coach, Fine Arts set builders, Chili Cook-Off judge, Warrior Club members, and event volunteers, to name a few. By the time their youngest graduates, they will have had students at Liberty Christian for 23 years.





They say they've witnessed miracles in the classroom, in kids' lives, in people's marriages and families. But what stands above the rest, what they say makes Liberty an investment unlike any other, is the life-altering impact of spiritual life that is deeply interwoven into the school's DNA.

"It's a time and financial commitment we choose to make every year because it's important to us that our kids are getting a Christian education, being challenged, prepared for college," Courtney said, "but also that our kids are in a school that loves them as much as we do, and that our kids are in a school that wants to partner with us to create Christian leaders for the future."

John Luke says it takes a village to raise a child – they've had one graduate, Avery, and three currently attending Liberty; Allie, Annalee and Crews – and you want to be intentional about who those villagers are.

"Here at Liberty, there are so many different people who pour into your child, who love on your child in a manner in which it supports and complements what we do at home and what we want for our kids," he said. "And to me, that is the difference."

"We can teach math anywhere. We can teach science anywhere. But to do it in such a way and in an environment that creates that extension, that complement of the Christian community that we're looking to create for our children: that's why (we choose) Liberty."

Take the Fine Arts department for example. All four Spitler kids have been part of theatre, which makes sense given the artistic talents of Courtney (who formerly worked in theatre professionally) and John Luke (a singer and player of three instruments).

While the state championships and individual accolades their children win are worth praising, those achievements pale in comparison to the bigger, eternal picture.

"Our theatre department, our arts department, and all of our teachers overall teach our kids that their core and their center is who God says they are," Courtney said. "Who God says they are is the center of their being."

"And I think that's what we consistently teach. I don't think any of our teachers, coaches, directors, administration; no one prioritizes winning over their sense of self and who God created them to be. And that's what I want for my kids."

Mission trips are another "very authentic" spiritual life part of the Liberty community, says John Luke. They serve as a weeklong period of fasting where students have comforts stripped away, serving others becomes paramount, they present the gospel multiple times a day, and people from all different walks of life come together for a common purpose.

That's when, John Luke says, attitudes, perspectives, and even worship can change – and that's when the best versions of students are revealed.

"Seeing a student step on the field and take the ball and do something amazing or seeing a student take the stage and give an outstanding performance, those are awesome," John Luke said. "But seeing a student encounter Christ in a new way – there is no close second. And that's why I love it so much."

A perfect example: a mission trip to Guatemala. Students were challenged to share the gospel via a skit to complete strangers in an area containing several shops. After the skit concluded, students broke off into groups to pray over individuals. John Luke says he was asked by some students to speak to one woman in particular.

Through a translator, she told the group she wasn't shopping in the area, but that she was down the street when a voice told her to get up and go for a walk, which led to her seeing the skit. Some teary-eyed back-and-forth with the woman revealed her belief that her sins were too great for her to be redeemed.

When the shock of her profession wore off, the Liberty group rallied around her, explaining God's grace is sufficient for all sin regardless. The entire group surrounded her, extending their arms out to pray over her as she received Jesus as her savior.

*"Seeing a student step on the field and take the ball and do something amazing or seeing a student take the stage and give an outstanding performance, those are awesome, but seeing a student encounter Christ in a new way – there is no close second. And that's why I love it so much."*

– JOHN LUKE SPITLER

The beautiful, unforgettable moment had one more revelation. The woman said she didn't have enough money for rent, threatening to push her back into her old way of life. John Luke said the students immediately got all of their money together – Jeans Day money, plus what they had saved for souvenirs, coffee, food – and gave it to the woman. They even went into shops and tried to sell their possessions.

"These are high school students from Argyle, Texas, who, for the most part, don't want for anything. And they see a need and immediately they jump into action," John Luke said. "They would have sold the shirts off their back, and they basically did."

John Luke, who's earned the moniker "Papa Spitler," says he runs into students from that trip and that moment is still burned into their minds.

"That's the benefit of a Christ-centered environment," he said. "The experiences that we create fortify your faith so that when you go off to college, when you go off into the world, when you go off into a job, you're taking that experience with you."

"And nobody can rob you of that. Nobody can reason that away. Nobody can science that away because you saw the Holy Spirit speak to a desperate woman, and tell her to get up out of a room and go for a walk. She walked right into students presenting the gospel. She prayed to receive Jesus right there. And then you revolutionized her future: her eternal future, and her future here on Earth."

"I'm humbled. And that's how the Lord works."

That humbling experience, and many more along the way at Liberty Christian, were made possible for the Spitler family because of Courtney and John Luke's desire and relentless pursuit of getting involved in the Liberty community.

And they wouldn't have it any other way.

"I'm sure there are many schools where you can find connections with people," Courtney said. "I'm not sure that you can find your family in every school, and that's what we have at Liberty. We're better parents because of Liberty. Truly, I think it's benefited us as much as it's benefited our children being a part of this place."

Like most private schools, tuition at Liberty Christian covers only 85 percent of the cost to educate. Your support for annual fund needs is critical to our success.

## Warrior Club Supports the Liberty Community

The items below were funded through 2021-2022 Warrior Club participation and support. Thank you, Warrior Club, for making a difference through these unique opportunities and items providing more ways to advance the passions and interests of each student and family. **Your giving makes the difference!**

### ATHLETICS

- LED L-Warriors Logo Sign
- Pitching Machine
- Training Goals
- Custom Team Tent
- High Jump Standards
- Football Run Through
- New Football Uniforms
- Team Bats
- Boss Portable Treatment
- 10 Gallon Gatorade Coolers
- Game Ready Knee Sleeves

- Vmaxpro VBT System
- Tennis Ball System
- Volleyball Poles and Net System
- Rogue Bike

### FINE ARTS

- Kiln for Art Department
- Dance Team Nationals Registration
- Primary School Lights for Christmas Program
- Orchestra for *Into the Woods*
- Spotlight Stage Setup for Christmas Play in Black Box

### ALL PROGRAMS

- Replaced Warrior Club Tents for Events
- New Warrior Mascot Suit
- Black Lights for Black Light Pep Rally

**Our athletic advertisers** provide additional resources to support multiple athletic and fine arts programs. **Thank you to our valued sponsors!**

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# 2021-2022 Fiscal Year in Philanthropy – We reached our goal!

Thank you for your continued support in advancing the mission of Liberty Christian School. Steadfast donors, volunteers, alumni, grandparents, and families like yours continue to create the difference by supporting Liberty’s greatest needs.

## Amazing Warrior families accomplishing amazing things for the Liberty community!

*“Thank you to our Liberty family for the continued support! The impact of our community is felt through the continued prayer, encouragement, financial gifts, and volunteering. Thank you for generously donating your efforts to our mission. You allow us to make an eternal impact through our students! We could not do it without you!”* – Blair McCullough, President

### How to Give:

- Online at [www.libertychristian.com/give](http://www.libertychristian.com/give).
- Call:  
Dedra Brynn, VP of Advancement: 940.294.2129  
Ashley Jordan, Development Officer: 940.294.2054  
Chad Lewis, Development Officer: 940.294.2056

### GIVING

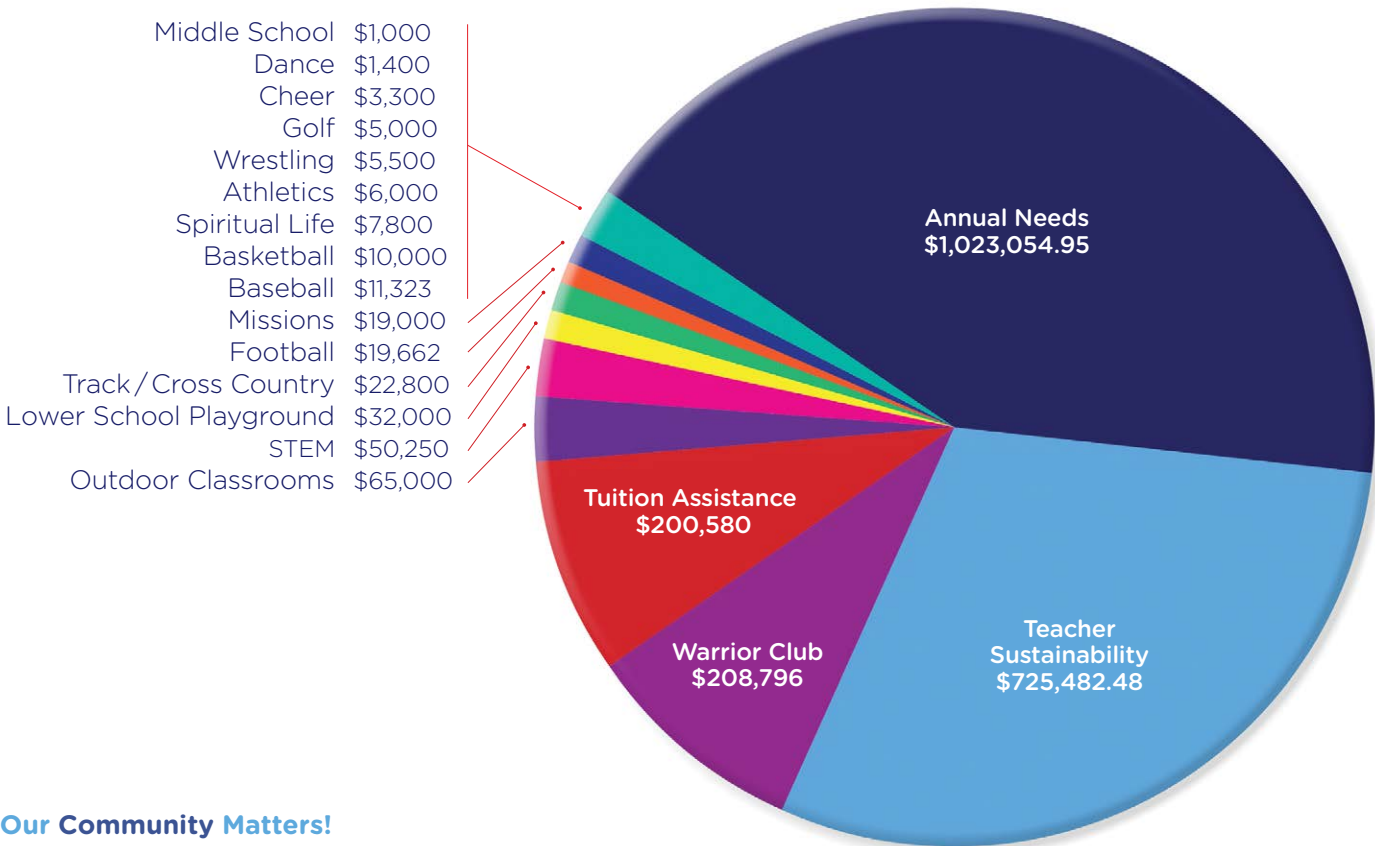
- Total Giving \$2,417,948.43
- Annual Needs: \$1,023,054.95
  - Warrior Club Support: \$208,796
  - See other giving below!

### DONORS

409

### ANNUAL GIFTS

- 1,119 Total
- 21 gifts \$20,000 to \$100,000+
  - 29 gifts \$10,000 to \$19,999
  - 50 gifts \$5,000 to \$9,999
  - 109 gifts \$1,000 to \$4,999
  - 910 gifts \$1 to \$999





## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

# Alexis Airington Class of 2003



### Reflection on one's life, both personally and professionally, can often lead to one question: How did I end up here?

Sometimes, there is no clear-cut answer. That's not the case for Alexis Airington (who might be better known by her LCS Class of 2003 peers as Alexis Barker). A mission trip to Belize during her freshman year at Liberty changed her life.

That trip – along with several other mission trips, the wilderness trip, and impact discipleship opportunities – gave her a heart for short-term missions, which set in motion more than she could've imagined as a high school freshman.

Her latest in a long list of accomplishments: being named one of the winners for Liberty's Distinguished Alumni Award.

Alexis, who is "extremely humbled" to receive this year's award, said one of her biggest lessons learned while at Liberty was from Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all of your heart, as working for the Lord, and not for men."

It's not difficult to see she took that mindset to heart. Since graduating from Liberty, she has appeared in several national ads as an actress. She also created Improv Cookie Company, where she bakes cookies and transforms them into edible art, which has featured anything from Reba to "Star Wars," to Dude Perfect, and characters from "The Office."

"Liberty gave me my foundation as a creative artist," Alexis said. "I was encouraged by teachers to foster that creativity and pursue fields in which creativity made an impact."

But the accomplishment most dear to her heart is getting to write, choreograph, and train hundreds of high school and college students in evangelistic drama that has been used to share the gospel all over the world.

## 2021-2022 Distinguished Alumni Award

*An honor given annually since 2013 to one male and one female alumni for outstanding achievements in their career, admirable conduct and character in service at church and in family life, and current connection to the Liberty family.*

"To be a small piece of the puzzle of people getting to visually see the gospel presented is something I will always cherish," she said.

Alexis worked in youth ministry through camps and Denton Bible Church for 15 years. This gave her and her husband, Travis, the opportunity to serve on mission trips to Trinidad, Austria, and Romania. She currently serves in Bible Study Fellowship as a host and has been a new family ambassador for Liberty this year.

Her servant's heart was forged at Liberty, especially when she was taught to seek out answers by using and understanding the Bible.

"The Lord used my peers, staff, teachers, coaches, and families during my time at Liberty to impact my life in so many ways," Alexis said.

Now, her Liberty Christian School experience has come full circle. She has two children who are Warriors: Hudson and Hadley. She says she's grateful her kids have the same opportunities as she did when she was a Liberty student.

And who knows what moment – maybe a mission trip or encouragement from a teacher – could spark a similar life-altering moment she experienced as a high school freshman on a mission trip to Belize.

"Yes, the campus has changed, and the school has grown," she said, "but the heart and mission of Liberty is the same."

## CONGRATULATIONS Class of 2022!



Liberty Christian



## Matt King Class of 2002

### From small beginnings come great things.

This nugget of wisdom from the book of Proverbs is a concept familiar to Matt King, whose family has been a part of and involved with Liberty Christian School since 1985 (the school opened two years prior). He started attending Liberty himself four years later in 1989.

"It means that I'm getting old," King, part of the Class of 2002, joked.

It also means he's seen how the school has transformed from humble beginnings in Denton to the flourishing school it is today with its more than 1,100 students.

Matt is one of two winners this year for Liberty's Distinguished Alumni Award.

"It is an honor to be recognized by LCS as it played a large role in my character and personal development," he said. "I am proud that I am able to continue my relationship with LCS as an alumni and parent."

Matt remembers Liberty experiencing rapid growth in the early stages of its existence at its first location in Denton. He recalls a locker room turning into a weight room and then into a history and Bible class all within a short time-frame. There was even a pool in the middle of campus at one point. And there were portables: lots and lots of portables.

He believes, despite all the structural change, Liberty remains the same now as when he was a student because its underlying goals have remained consistent.

"Having a Christian-based curriculum is paramount to the growth in our children that can have a real-world impact," he said.

Professionally, Matt has served in the financial services industry for 15 years, with 11 of those coming at Merrill Lynch. His main goal as an advisor is to help alleviate financial concerns and give his clients time to focus on other aspects of their lives.



"I believe one of the greatest accomplishments in life is to have a positive impact on others and I hope to do that with everyone I work with," he said.

Matt says his greatest accomplishment so far is his family.

"I have a wonderful wife, Adrienne, and two great children, Carter and Caroline, who are all a part of the Liberty family," he said.

Matt says Liberty Christian School prepared him by providing a solid foundation physically, academically, and spiritually to have conviction in his beliefs once he graduated.

"Oftentimes, it is an intimidating circumstance in life when moving out of our comfort zone," he said. "I always felt prepared for the challenges and obstacles that I faced when my time at Liberty as a student was complete."

Matt has taken those learned lessons and applied them to mentoring young athletes through youth sports, as well as "worshipping with my family regularly and leading them in daily connection with God."

Another area where Matt believes Liberty prepared him well was developing his spiritual armor.

"Liberty helped equip me with an understanding of God's word and gave me confidence to apply that knowledge in my daily life," he said.

All of this – his spiritual development, preparedness for life after Liberty, and the same opportunity for his own children – became possible for Matt because of a leap of faith Liberty's founders took. And that's not lost on him.

"It is remarkable how far Liberty has come," he said. "With any successful organization, reflection on the beginning always serves as a reference to the present. I am thankful for our past Liberty families leading the way, helping to build Liberty to what it has become. I believe Liberty has an even brighter future."





We are grateful to hear why our families love to generously give to Liberty through volunteering, serving, and financial giving. Your support makes a lasting impact for our community!

## Why I give to Liberty...

...I love giving to Liberty because of the positive impact this school is having on our children - not only with the superior education but also with the Christian principles it instills in them. I will be volunteering next year as well!

... Liberty's faculty and administration work diligently to ensure my daughter receives a high quality Christian education, which is very important to me as a parent. Serving at the school and giving towards the needs of the school is just a small way of showing my appreciation for all they do to help me succeed as a parent by reinforcing Godly principles within the classrooms and within the athletic programs.

... Because this world is broken and Liberty has the incredible opportunity every day to permanently impact the lives of our students and their future families on earth and for eternity.

... BECAUSE THE BIBLE MATTERS.  
BECAUSE CHRIST-LIKENESS MATTERS.  
BECAUSE WHEN WE INVEST IN  
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, WE ARE  
INVESTING IN ETERNITY.

**OUR COMMUNITY  
MATTERS!**

Save  
the date!

HEART *of* LIBERTY GALA

OCTOBER 1, 2022