

WATCH US RISE

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



From the Desk of the Head of School



Dear Cornerstone Community,

As we close another impactful year at Cornerstone Christian Academy, I am honored to reflect on the incredible strides we've made together. This year has been marked by growth, innovation, and a deepening commitment to the mission that defines our work: to educate children, including those from underserved families, in an environment that fosters academic excellence and spiritual development.

One of the highlights of this year has been the introduction of new programs, such as the inaugural Teammate Chapel, which has brought donors and students together in meaningful ways. Partnerships like the one with YMCA Camp Tockwogh have continued to enrich our students' lives, offering experiences that expand their horizons and build lasting skills. These moments remind us of the profound impact community and connection have on our students' growth.

This year, we also celebrated the legacy and future of Cornerstone through our 35th Anniversary Gala. It was a privilege to share the stories of our alumni and students who are living testimonies of the power of a Cornerstone education. Their achievements inspire us to aim higher as we prepare for the next chapter in our school's history.

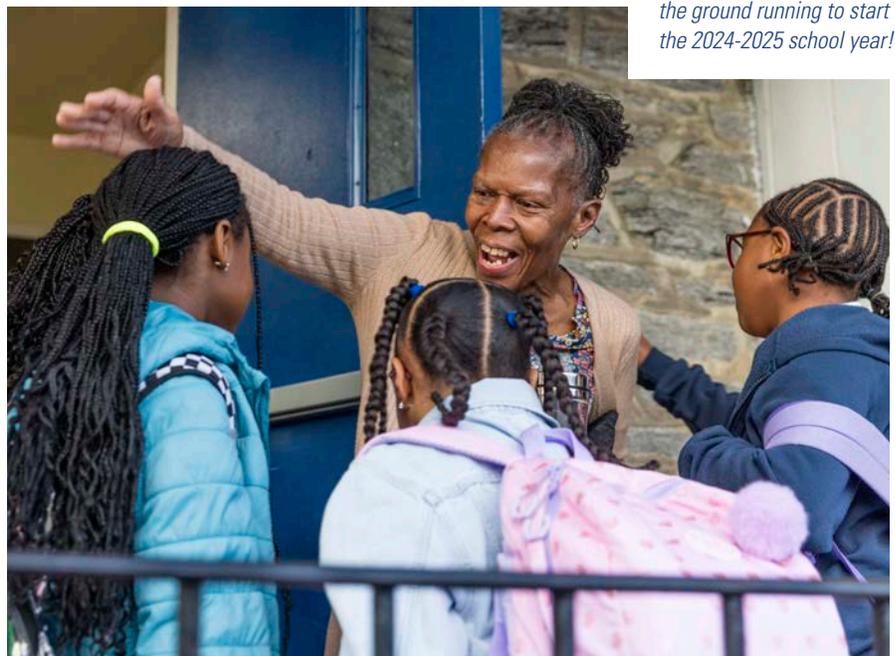
None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our donors, partners, and volunteers. Together, you have helped create opportunities that transform lives and provide a firm foundation for future success.

Thank you for your continued dedication to Cornerstone Christian Academy. As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission, inspired by the resilience and promise of our students.

With gratitude,

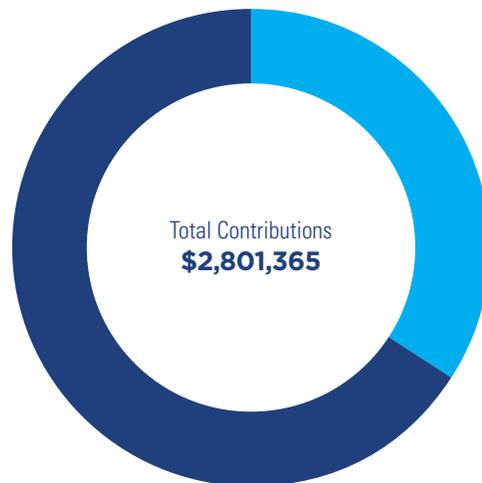
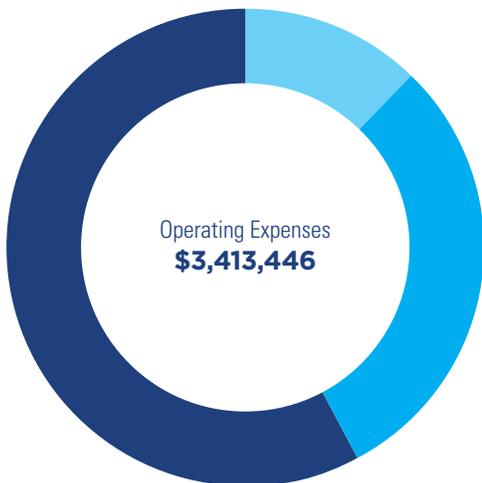
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BMcNeice'.

Brandon McNeice
Head of School and CEO
bmcneice@cornerstonephiladelphia.com



Inside this Issue: We hit the ground running to start the 2024-2025 school year!





74% Annual Giving
\$2,801,365

16% Other
\$605,298

10% Tuition and Fees
\$388,085

58% Programs and Activities
\$1,985,743

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12% Maintenance and Management
\$411,195

66% Unrestricted
\$1,852,189

34% Scholarship
\$949,176



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*Your support provides resources
and staffing for programs like
our stringed instrument lessons*



Donor Spotlight



Jim and Barbara with students at Teammate Day, 2022

A decade of dedication with Jim and Barbara Dolente

For over 35 years, Cornerstone has thrived in large part due to the planning, effort, and generosity of donors who take an active interest in the direction of the school—and who play a direct role in the lives of our students. As Jim’s tenure on Cornerstone’s Board of Trustees comes to an end, we recognize and thank both him and Barbara for over ten years of dedicated support.

“Jim and Barbara Summers introduced us to Cornerstone,” Jim recalls. “We were good friends and I knew he wouldn’t steer us wrong. I remember our very first visit to campus: we saw the second grade classroom and it was just amazing to see how energetic and involved the students were.”

After a few years of giving, Jim accepted an invitation to join Cornerstone’s Board in 2016. “The Cornerstone Trustees are a very dedicated group of individuals,” he shares. “They are fully committed to doing what is best for the school in every way. It’s a pleasure to deal with a Board when everyone is involved and committed.”

“What I’m most proud of is being a Teammate,” Barbara shares, as she recalls joining the program

in 2019. “Our most recent student, Kevin, was just extraordinary! I loved the trip to Waltz Golf Farm (for Spring Teammate Day in 2024) and seeing the kids in-person. Sometimes we would share our time with other students as well, but they’re all so adorable I wanted to be a Teammate to everybody!”

When asked about the best part of being involved with Cornerstone, two things came to mind: “First of all, seeing the kids succeed and graduate is such a wonderful thing; and working with a Board who is so committed to what they are trying to accomplish.

Jim’s Board tenure came to an end earlier in 2024, but as he and Barbara look ahead to the future, Cornerstone remains a large part of it. “We’ve expanded our donations, but Cornerstone remains one of the thrusts of our expanded philanthropy,” he says. “We always have an eye out to facilitate connections to the school—quite a few of our friends and business associates have donated.”

“You really walk away feeling like you’re truly doing something to help these kids”, says Barbara. “Cornerstone will always be a part of our lives.”

The story of over ten years of involvement with Cornerstone:

- 2013**
Jim and Barbara make their first gift to Cornerstone, after making a visit to Cornerstone as guests of Jim and Barbara Summers.
- 2016**
Jim joins Cornerstone’s Board of Trustees.
- 2019**
The Dolentes become Teammates with their first student DeAndre McLeod, Class of 2022.
- 2022**
The Dolentes return to the Teammate Program and are paired with Kevin Hunter, Class of 2024.
- 2023**
Jim and Barbara are Lead Sponsors at Cornerstone’s 35th Anniversary Celebration Event.
- 2024**
Jim’s Board tenure ends but the Dolentes’ generous philanthropy continues.

“We always have an eye out to facilitate connections to the school. Quite a few of our friends have donated.”

2023-2024 Volunteers

Volunteers

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Don Ball
Judith Baltimore
Sterling Baltimore
Jade Barron
Anita Bell
Gregory Bell
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Jason Brown
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Mike Chamberlain
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The Park in a Truck Initiative
/Playful Learning Landscapes
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YMCA Camp Tockwogh

Volunteer Organizations

Harrisonburg Mennonite Church
Lenape Valley Church
Paoli Presbyterian Church
Wayne Presbyterian Church

Want to get involved?

If you or your organization are interested in volunteering at Cornerstone, or you wish to stay informed of all Day of Service opportunities, contact Gayle Gaskin, Community Engagement Manager at ggaskin@cornerstonephiladelphia.com



You can turn your Pennsylvania tax dollars into scholarships for Cornerstone students!



If you are a resident of Pennsylvania and you expect to owe at least \$500 in state tax, giving to Cornerstone couldn't be easier. By taking advantage of these programs, you can use your PA tax liability to directly support our students' scholarship.

You are now eligible to participate in Pennsylvania's EITC and OSTC tax programs with a state tax liability of only \$500 or more.

There is no easier way to support our amazing students than by taking advantage of this tax credit opportunity, all while receiving a 90% credit!

This program is open to businesses or individuals who expect to owe a PA tax liability of only \$500!

"Participating in this program allows our family to support Cornerstone above and beyond what we typically give. We can maintain our normal charitable contribution and supplement that with the amount we would otherwise be paying in taxes to the state." - Greg Esterhai, Cornerstone Trustee

Getting started is easy! Find out how you can support our students by using money that would otherwise go to state tax payments.

Email EITC-OSTC@cornerstonephiladelphia.com or visit wearecornerstone.com/tax

It's easy to participate:

- 1 You want to turn your PA tax liability into scholarships for students at Cornerstone Christian Academy.
- 2 You expect to owe at least \$500 in state taxes.
- 3 Contact us today to start supporting our students. Scan the QR code at right to learn more. It's that easy!



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Partner Spotlight



Cornerstone and YMCA Camp Tockwogh have partnered for over 15 years to provide summer camp experiences that include archery, boating, and more.



YMCA Camp Tockwogh: Partnering to provide new experiences for Cornerstone students during the summer

The 15-year long relationship between Cornerstone Christian Academy and YMCA Camp Tockwogh—located roughly 90 minutes from our campus, in Worton, Maryland—has provided our students with unique experiences not offered in Southwest Philadelphia. These experiences include interacting and living with people from different countries, states and cities, and diverse socio-economic backgrounds; learning aquatic skills such as swimming, sailing, paddling, and water skiing; participating in camp fires, skit development and performances; playing sports like rugby and archery, and going on outdoor nature hikes.

“Tockwogh is an amazing place to be... it offers activities that some kids have never done before.”

- Aniko K., Class of 2025 and Tockwogh camper

“Almost all of the Cornerstone students return home longing for more time at Tockwogh”, assures Ron Bond, who facilitated this mutually beneficial partnership in his role as both a Cornerstone Trustee and former Board member at Camp Tockwogh.

“This is a tremendous chance for our kids to be treated to a change of scenery”, adds Gayle Gaskin, Cornerstone’s Community Engagement Manager and facilitator for Cornerstone’s Camp Tockwogh families. “From city life to the great outdoors. They are exposed to diverse experiences, they make new friends, and develop skills that build character and support healthy growth. I am glad that we are able to provide this at no cost to our students and families.”

“The cost is split 50-50”, explains Elizabeth Staib-King, Executive Director at Camp Tockwogh. “We raise money to bring the kids to camp and Cornerstone contributes the rest.”

“We are looking at ways to accommodate as many students as Cornerstone is able to send, because they are the ideal Tockwogh campers.” she continues. “The camp was founded on the premise of bringing kids out of the city to explore nature, and I think there’s something profound about being outdoors, riding a horse, shooting a bow, or sailing a boat.”

We are grateful for this partnership. While it started back in 2009, it is more popular than ever with our students.

“Tockwogh is an amazing place to be,” shares Aniko K., one of the five Cornerstone students who attended the camp this summer. “The camp offers adventures and activities that some kids have never done before. For example, My favorite is water skiing. People can go there to make friends, have fun, and be outdoors.”



Tockwogh offers opportunities year-round for people to come and retreat, as well as leader-in-training programs for teenagers. “I’ll feel like I’ve really arrived when I have a Cornerstone student working as a Camp Counselor” says Staib-King.

“Cornerstone kids are very well rounded. If I could fill my entire camp with kids from Cornerstone, I’d be happy.”

- Elizabeth Staib-King
Executive Director,
YMCA Camp Tockwogh

The partnership goes beyond financials and camp opportunities, it is based in a shared philosophy: “Cornerstone and Tockwogh are in sync,” she concludes. “We are both trying to provide the most well-rounded experience for children to take with them in the future.”

Event Spotlight



Cornerstone 35: A night of celebrating our mission and preparing for our future—together

The end of the 2023-2024 Cornerstone school year in the spring, coincided with the culminating event of our year-long 35th Anniversary programming, a celebration gala held at the Springfield Country Club.

The Cornerstone community of students, alumni, families, teachers, staff, donors, and supporters were in attendance to help celebrate almost four decades of fulfilling our mission.

Guests were treated to highlights from our past as well as insights into the future of the school. This vision was spearheaded by new Head of School, Brandon McNeice hosting several conversations on the event stage that presented the case for Cornerstone over the next 35 years.

A youth panel of current students and recent graduates shared their perspectives on how Cornerstone has prepared them for success after graduating. Class of 2022 Valedictorian Nicholas Dreckett explained that "Cornerstone prepared me to be a leader, and gave me the confidence to run for Student Council President as a freshman. (Nicholas is attending

String Theory Performing Arts High School and recently wrote and produced his first play.)

The night continued with a panel of experts in the field of education in the Philadelphia region: Brandon Jacobs, Director of DEIB at Carney Sandoe & Associates, and Dawn Chavous, who had recently formed the Education Reform Alliance under Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle Parker. The audience was treated to an analysis of Cornerstone's role in the evolving educational and political landscape of our city, and shared our desire to become educational thought leaders throughout the region.

No celebration would be complete without a stirring performance by the Cornerstone choir, who brought the house down and sent our guests home with a song in their hearts.

Thank you for attending, and supporting our school for over 35 years.





Donors, staff, faculty, students, alumni, and families celebrated 35 years of Cornerstone Christian Academy at the Springfield Country Club in Spring 2024.



Poll: Cornerstone Middle School's favorite sports



Hello, my name is **Benjamin Johnson** from the 7th Grade class. This article will be about the most popular sport in Middle School at Cornerstone. To figure this out, I surveyed most of my middle school classmates about what their favorite sport is.

I created a document that asked, "What is your favorite sport to play?" and "What sports do you play?" I printed out the document and passed it out to the Middle School students. After a week of surveying, I counted up all the submissions and did the calculations to figure out which one received the most votes. I then created a pie chart showing the results. I will highlight the sports that are offered at Cornerstone and those that are not.

I am doing this because I have always heard people chat about what the best sport was, in their opinion. I was curious if what they said was correct, so I chose to do this in order to show the diversity of sports the students at Cornerstone could enjoy.

After totalling my results my conclusion is as follows: I have learned that the most popular sport in middle school was Basketball with 31% of the votes, and football followed in second place with 20%.

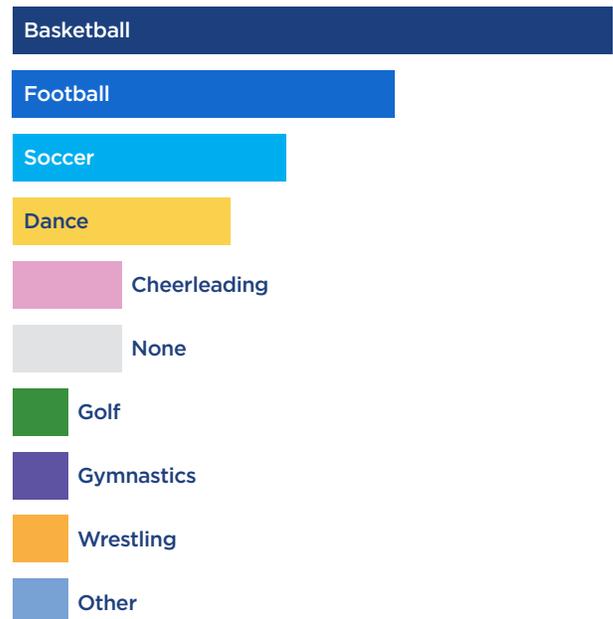
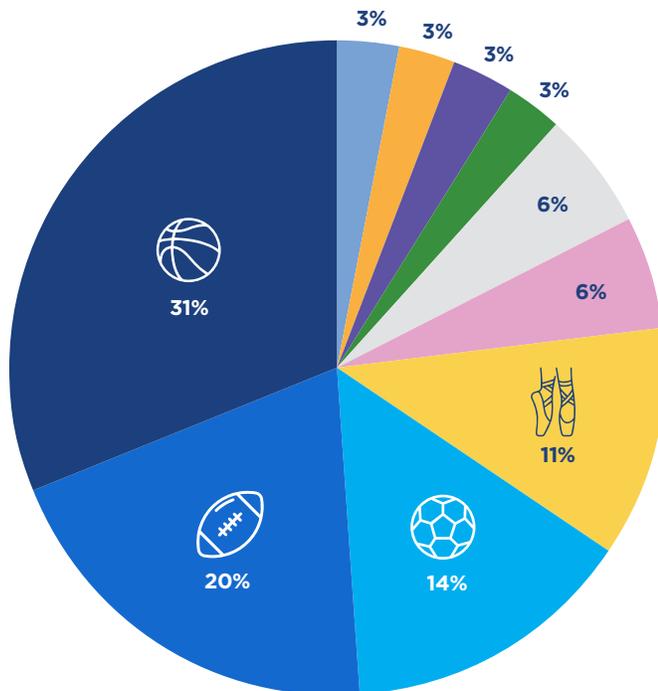
I have realized that a majority of the boys at the school chose football, soccer, or basketball as their favorite sport, while a majority of the girls chose gymnastics, dance, or cheerleading. The most popular choice among Cornerstone girls was dance, with 11%.



My personal favorite sport is soccer and I hope Cornerstone can add a team in the near future. Some of the sports that we have had at our school in the past have been basketball (the Cornerstone Warriors played in 2020 before the pandemic), baseball, soccer, and even track and field.

As you can see, our students love to play sports!

Benjamin is in the 7th grade. He is a Student Ambassador for the second year, and he looks forward to graduating in the spring of 2026.





Our very first Teammate Chapel kicks off our program year



This year we hosted our first Teammate Chapel to start off the 2024-2025 Teammate Program!

This Friday Chapel Service was dedicated to those donors who make annual contributions to our Scholarship Fund, and commit to being paired with a middle school student to provide them with additional support and encouragement throughout the year.

After Chapel, our Teammates, students, and parents had a chance to mix and mingle, in order to get to know each other. Many Teammates commit to building a relationship with their student over a three-year span...from 6th through 8th grade. The event was a great opportunity to establish a connection between our donors, students and their families.

Teammates communicate via written correspondence during the year, and meet in person for two Teammate Days—one in the Fall here on campus, and another at a field trip outing in the Spring.

If you are interested in becoming a Teammate, and making a direct impact on the life of a Cornerstone student, email our Community Engagement Manager Gayle Gaskin at ggaskin@cornerstonephiladelphia.com.



Ways to give to Cornerstone

Your generous financial contributions are essential to our continued growth. See below for all ways to support Cornerstone, including online at wearecornerstone.com/donate.

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P.O. Box 5520
Philadelphia, PA 19143.

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When making an online gift, you also have the option to set up a recurring gift on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis.

Tax credits

Through the PA-EITC and PA-OSTC programs, individuals and businesses can direct your state taxes to support scholarships at Cornerstone.

Gifts of stock and securities

Contact your broker to make a gift of stock or securities to Cornerstone.

Planned gifts

Bequests, charitable gift annuities, cash and other planned gifts can be directed to Cornerstone. The benefits of a planned gift can include sizable income and estate tax deductions, favorable capital gains tax, income and a lasting impact at Cornerstone.

Give through your IRA

As a qualified charity under the IRS, Cornerstone is eligible for an individual to donate up to a maximum of \$100,000 of your required minimum distribution from your IRA without paying income tax.

Employee giving programs

If your employer matches charitable contributions, you can increase your impact by directing their match to Cornerstone.

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Our Mission

The mission of Cornerstone Christian Academy is to educate children, including those from under served families, in an environment that provides the highest standards for academic achievement and spiritual development.

Our Vision

It is our vision to be a model urban Christian school where students are grounded in faith, shaped with Christ-like character, and equipped with knowledge and skills to excel in high school, college, and throughout life.

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