



*Changing Detroit,  
One Child at a Time.*



Phillip Braxton, a 4th Grader at Lincoln-King Academy with his partner, Andy Boschma.

# THE CORNERSTONE PILLAR



Dear Friends,

Now that the holiday season has passed, we are facing the promise and excitement of a brand new year.

So many inspiring things happened in 2009. It was a historic year for Cornerstone. We created two new videos that capture the spirit of Cornerstone and help to communicate our message, had a fabulous Pistons Scholars event at the Palace and several successful golf events throughout the summer and fall, and had the best Be A Tiger For Kids event, yet. An important milestone in 2009, is the opening of two charters which will allow Cornerstone to provide an excellent education to even more children in Detroit and to help make all things new again in our city.

The need for Partners is ever so present. In fact, many of our children at Washington-Parks and Lincoln-King Academies lack a Partner Morning Friend to sit with them on Partner Morning, which is a huge disappointment for the children. We at Cornerstone are focused on broadening our base and finding a Partner for every student so that all children who attend our schools can experience the life altering relationships that occur through this wonderful program. We ask that you come and bring a new friend or two to our March Partner Morning, especially if you come to our Washington-Parks and Lincoln-King Partner Mornings as the need at the academies is so great.

Our next Partner Morning is scheduled for the first week in March. If you would like more information about encouraging others to become Partners, please contact me, or your Partner Advisor.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Cornerstone Pillar.

All my best,

Hope Redmond  
Vice President, Institutional Advancement

## Cornerstone is on Facebook



These days, it seems everyone is on Facebook. And we are no exception! In fact, we have just updated the page for Cornerstone. We have found it is an excellent addition to our web site to keep interested parties informed about upcoming events and to introduce others to Cornerstone. So be sure to check it out to see what's happening next.

[Click here to visit us on Facebook](#)

### Upcoming Events

Pistons Scholars Night	February 19
Washington-Parks Partner Morning	March 2
Lincoln-King Partner Morning	March 3
Nevada Partner Morning	March 5



Tickets still available. [Click here for details.](#)

*1st Quarter, 2010*

## Giving the Gift of Education - A Cornerstone Partnership

We have all struggled with finding the perfect gift - whether it be for the holidays, birthday, or other special occasion. We would like to share the story of the Beale family, who believe in giving gifts that make a difference in the community, change lives, and last a lifetime.

This past Christmas, Cornerstone Partner, Bob Beale was searching for the perfect gift for his wife Denise. After introducing Denise to Cornerstone this past November and seeing how moved she was after learning about the Cornerstone mission and its successes, Bob knew he found the perfect gift for Denise – a Cornerstone Partnership. Bob contacted Hope Redmond to inquire how he could make such a gift possible. Cornerstone made giving the gift easy for Bob by providing a customized Gift Card with the name of the student that Denise would support as a Partner on Partner Morn-

ing. “Denise was both surprised and moved by such a thoughtful and heartfelt gift. Her eyes got misty after opening the envelope. From her reaction, I knew I had found the perfect gift for Denise. She is looking forward to attend Partner Morning in March and meet her student partner. In fact, our 23 year-old daughter is anxious to attend as well. This is a mission we can support as a family,” says Beale.

Their story got us thinking – the gift of education is ideal for all those who care about children, education and the future of our city ... and does not need wrapping! We ask you to remember Cornerstone and add it to your gift list or provide the gift of a Cornerstone Partnership to another. It truly is a unique gift that will transform a lives – the life of a child, and the Partner that supports them.



## Lights, Camera...Cornerstone!

The second half of 2009 was spent producing an original video designed to bring the Cornerstone story to life. “All Things New Again” is a pleasure to watch. Our thanks to Communicore, Epic Motion, RMS Productions, Kinetic Post and everyone else who helped make this inspiring video a reality. Its professionalism and creativity was literally a gift to Cornerstone from a number of our caring friends. The video is posted on the Cornerstone web site. We encourage you to visit [CornerstoneSchools.org](http://CornerstoneSchools.org) and click on the Multi Media icon to view “All Things New Again” and other Cornerstone videos; or, click on the Multimedia icon to the right.



[Click here to view Cornerstone videos and commercials](#)

Best friends are nice to have,  
but not all of them are true.  
If they ever saw you sad and gloomy,  
they'd try to comfort you.  
They have your back 24/7,  
no matter what you do.  
So choose your best friends wisely,  
if it's the last thing you do!

~ Kierrah Roberts  
7th Grade  
Washington-Parks Academy

## Cornerstone Annual Report



[Click here to link to the Annual Report](#)

For your convenience, the Cornerstone Annual Report for 2008/2009 is now available on-line. You will find information regarding every aspect of the Cornerstone effort, including a powerful vision for the future. If you would like a printed copy of the Annual Report mailed to you, please contact Patricia Posch in Institutional Advancement: 313-892-1860 ext. 212.



## A Teacher to Cheer About - Jason Filie

We are proud to share an in-depth look at one of our dedicated teachers, Mr. Jason Filie. As both a teacher and a coach at Cornerstone, he reaches our students on many levels.

Mr. Filie attended Detroit Public Schools and graduated from Grosse Pointe South High School. Mr. Filie is also a graduate of Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree in economics. He has taught social studies at the Nevada Middle School since 2000. In addition, he has coached the girls' and boys' basketball as well as the co-ed soccer team.

Mr. Filie recently shared a few thoughts on his involvement with Cornerstone:

As a teacher, my passion is to help my students get the very best education possible, using all of their abilities to their fullest potential. I believe that athletics have a huge

impact on a student's ability to achieve success in life. I also want my students to understand the great importance they will have one day as citizens of this nation; how events in our country's history have made that possible; and to know their civic responsibility.

On the field, I want my players to know that the effort and time they put into their physical goals are as rewarding as their educational efforts - and that the two are interconnected. A team that communicates well performs better on the field.

I feel students should be able to communicate their thoughts and ideas in the classroom. There are parallels between academics and athletics: Improving a part of your game takes hours of hard work and repetition, as does learning a new language or a math formula or memorizing part of the U.S. Constitu-

tion. I teach my students that adversity will always be a hurdle, on and off the field, and that knowing how to jump over them is a life skill.

Using the Cornerstone mission statement as a guide, I strive to open my students' eyes to the importance of reaching their full potential, of respecting others and their ideas, and making the right choices and taking responsibility for their actions. I want them to appreciate their freedoms and to realize that not everyone in the world enjoys our liberties. We are responsible for making our democracy work.



## Annual Surveys - Ensuring "Excellence In All We Do"

Annual Surveys are an important element of our ISO Quality Management System. They show our commitment to continuous improvement and helps us ensure "excellence in all we do." In December, a survey was distributed electronically to over 5,000 members of our broad and beloved community. The following are highlights from the survey.

- When respondents were asked about why they support Cornerstone, the most popular answer (72%) was that they want to encourage positive change in Detroit. They also answered that they want to improve the lives of children and that they want to support quality education.

- A large majority of respondents (87%) have recommended a family member, friend or employee to become involved in Cornerstone. We hope you will continue to do so, as many of our children are still in need of a Partner.

- Only 31% of those surveyed said that they would consider making a donation to Cornerstone as a gift to another. We encourage you to read the story in this issue about Bob and Denise Beale, and their experience with giving a donation to Cornerstone as a gift. It was moving and powerful for them, and

impacts the life of a child at Cornerstone.

- When asked about their preferred methods for receiving information about Cornerstone, the most popular answer (89%) was e-mail. We are grateful for this response because we can use more of our resources to help more children.

- 95% of those who responded to this survey ranked their overall experience with Cornerstone "Above Average" to "Excellent." This is good news, indeed, for all those who work to provide the support systems that allow Cornerstone children to receive an excellent education. From our President and CEO to our principals, faculty and staff, we all take pride in that number and will work to continue to maintain those high standards.

Many of those who responded had some very good suggestions for improving what we do and how we do it. We are grateful to those who completed the survey and the feedback and suggestions provided.

Please contact your Partner Advisor if you have a suggestion or idea for improvement at Cornerstone. We welcome your input.

*"Faith  
sees the invisible,  
feels the intangible,  
and achieves  
the impossible."*

~ Author Unknown



## Partners Create Sustainability

Partners are a vital component of our community. Without the support of our Partners our mission could not continue. There are various ways in which one can support the Cornerstone mission through the Partner program. We need your help to expand the Partner community so that every student who attends our schools can experience the life altering benefits of Partnership.

Partners who attend Partner Morning give of their time and treasure to help another have a more abundant life. Others may not have time, but support a student financially (in whole or in part). Some partners send representatives to attend Partner Mornings on their behalf. Still others give of their time by being a Partner Morning Friend to a child. All are needed and much appreciated. Without financial support, Cornerstone will not survive. Without the gift of time, our students will not meet others from different walks of life to encourage them, guide them, befriend them, and love them.

While our Nevada campus has become the most popular campus for Partner Morning attendance, there are many students at our Washington-Parks and Lincoln-King Academies that do not have a Partner. None of us became successful on our own. All were helped by another. Come and spend time

with a child and help him or her to learn and grow and share.

Today, we need 200 additional Partners at each of our Washington-Parks and Lincoln-King Academies (400 total). We have found that most of our Partners are here because someone they knew, loved or respected asked them to be a part of the life a child at Cornerstone. Do you know someone who would like to be a Partner or a Friend to a child at one of our locations? Will you bring him or her to our March Partner Mornings? Tell someone today! Then, tell someone else. Please, reach out to those around you.

If you would, we can visit your business or social or civic club to present the Cornerstone mission and how those in attendance can help change the life of a child and create a new city for all. We recently addressed the employees at Pepsi Bottling, EDSI and Taubman Asset Group, which resulted in 30 new Partner Morning Friends at the December Partner Mornings. Let's make 2010 a banner year for Cornerstone and ensure that every student has a Partner to call friend. Call your Partner Advisor to schedule a presentation to your employees, co-workers and club members today!



Middle School students Logan Brown and Paige Swanson work on cards for patients at the Webber Cancer Center with Cornerstone Partner Ann Nicholson at the December Partner Morning.



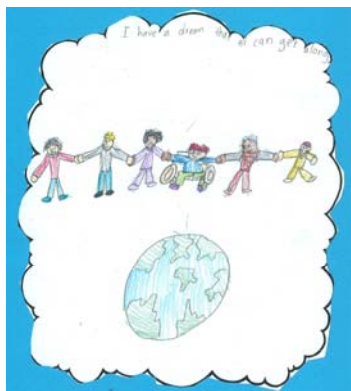
Nevada 3rd Grade student Kamryn Lacy teaches her Partner, Eugene Kelley about the violin at the December Partner Morning.

## Student Art Gallery

In celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Cornerstone students were asked to produce artwork entitled, "I Have A Dream."



I Have A Dream: No Violence  
~ Austynn Bradfield  
3rd Grade - Nevada Campus



I Have A Dream That Everyone  
Can Get Along  
~ Elijah Walker  
3rd Grade - Nevada Campus



I Have A Dream: No War  
~ Kejuan Farrell-Bey  
3rd Grade - Nevada Campus

## Concert Choir Performances in Demand

It has been an incredibly busy time for the Cornerstone Concert Choir, headed by Choral Director, Mr. Eric Gardner, affectionately known as “Maestro.” In addition to all the hours the choir practices, they are also being featured at a number of high-profile performances.

On Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, the entire 43-member choir performed at the Generations Concert for Veterans at the Fox Theater.

“It was so touching for the children,” shared Mr. Gardner, “They had a chance to speak with Mike Cox, Representative Dingle, and experience the tremendous amount of history on stage.” Aside from performing, the students were able to learn about Michigan’s important role in WWII, something Mr. Gardner was extremely familiar with. “It was an emotional night for me as my father was a disabled Air Force veteran.” And all this emotion definitely connected with the audience, triggering a standing ovation. “Clark Durant told them if they got a standing ovation, he’d make sure they had the best ice cream in the city. They are defi-

nately looking forward to it,” he smiled.

The choir’s schedule continued with an appearance at Mayor Dave Bing’s inauguration on January 8<sup>th</sup>. A small stage meant numbers had to be reduced, therefore primarily 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders performed while other members cheered their group on from the audience. Paul W. Smith, a Cornerstone friend, gave the Cornerstone students a rousing introduction. The choir sang a memorable rendition of Sammy Davis Jr.’s *Hello Detroit*. “The kids went all out and gave a 150%. The audience loved it” said Gardner.

Next stop? The National Anthem at the Pistons Game on February 19<sup>th</sup> at the Palace of Auburn Hills.

“The children look forward to Concert Choir,” says Gardner. “It provides them memorable experiences and unique opportunities to perform in special venues because of the partnerships we have at Cornerstone.” This is a perfect example where the Cornerstone broad and beloved community

makes a difference in the lives of children. Mr. Gardner summed it up beautifully, “Our children are like little stars who are nurtured and supported so they can shine.”



The Cornerstone Concert Choir on stage at the Fox Theatre on January 8th for the inauguration of Detroit Mayor Dave Bing.

[Click here to view the Concert Choir performance from the December 13th Generations Concert](#)

## 3rd Annual Marine Holiday Party Hosted by Atlas Oil

Student artists at Cornerstone’s Nevada campus were busy at work upon their return from Christmas vacation. Our student artists were commissioned to create over 300 Christmas ornaments and decorations for a special holiday gathering held at Selfridge National Guard base on January 9<sup>th</sup> for local members of the Marines and their families.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Marine Holiday Party was hosted by Cornerstone Partners Sam and Nada Simon of Atlas Oil. Mr. and Mrs. Simon requested the assistance of our student artists to help create a festive holiday environment along with other area schools. The students’ decorations were well received and adorned Christmas trees, tables, stair cases and more!



### Our Mission

Our broad and beloved community of friends will make possible an excellent education for children so as to prepare them for life and leadership. On this journey we will seek to follow Jesus as a sure path to a fulfilling life and servant leadership.



### Comments or questions about the newsletter? Please contact:

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313-892-1860 ext. 212 or visit our website:

[CornerstoneSchools.org](http://CornerstoneSchools.org)