

CORNERSTONE SCHOOLS

2010 - 2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Character

Commitment

Education

Excellence

Goals

High Performance

Leadership

Love

Partnership



Celebrating 20 years of Changing Detroit, One Child at a Time.



Photo courtesy of The Detroit News Archives

“A tree is known by its fruit; a man by his deeds. A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love.”

Saint Basil

Dear Friends:

Cornerstone had an outstanding year. When I reflect upon the ongoing work, what I think of first is the opening of the Leadership and Business High School. This has happened mainly because of the generosity of many who have demonstrated that the greatest gift one can give is to help another have a more abundant life. Secondly, I see the ongoing educational excellence that is exhibited daily. Cornerstone has a proven educational model that works!

A generation of our children and young people are now seeding our communities. It has been both humbling and exhilarating to sit in an audience and see Cornerstone’s first physician of internal medicine receive her degree; to learn that a Cornerstone alumnus will graduate this spring with a dual degree from Harvard – law and an MBA – and have a position waiting for him; to visit with former students who let me know where they are working, about their families, and ultimately their lives.

The fruit of Cornerstone’s work comes forth yearly from a tree that is deeply rooted. A Christ-centered culture filled with what it means to be of good character with an understanding of moral clarity that allows our students to make ethical decisions and the right choices. We continue to seek to educate our students to become servant leaders.

Cornerstone students have a program and curriculum that are measurable. High standards matter. Teacher performance and student achievement are aligned to strategic goals, initiatives, and specific outcomes. Cornerstone is ISACS accredited and ISO certified to ensure educational and operational excellence throughout the organization.

However, excellence is not just a data point. Instead, we ask of ourselves – are we being transformational? Are our students taking what they are learning into the world to not only have sustaining lives for themselves but to help others have better ones as well? That is what the work continues to be. Each day, the Cornerstone team takes up this noble task that often becomes tedious and is accomplished only with discipline, hard work, and intentionality. Every day is a learning one and it is not to be wasted.

“This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it... Oh Lord grant us success.”

Cornerstone has been blessed by its broad and beloved community. Thank you for being a part of this important work and for contributing to the growth and fruit of the schools, our children.

With warmest regards,



Ernestine L. Sanders
President & CEO

Why a Cornerstone Education

After another successful year, Cornerstone Schools continues to distinguish itself with an educational experience unlike any other. Which makes perfect sense, because Cornerstone is entirely unique in its approach. “Strong academics, measurable outcomes – this is our starting point,” says Ernestine Sanders, President and CEO of Cornerstone Schools, “We have an excellent learning community, but there’s so much more here.”

Anyone who has ever walked through the doors of a Cornerstone school knows there’s a certain feeling that that arises from the moment you walk through the doors. “Each child thrives, you are welcome, everyone is engaged – it’s encompassing,” explained Ms. Sanders. “You can even tell this by how our campus looks; everyone cares about this place – the children, the parents, the Partners, the teachers, the custodians,” she shared.

No matter what day you visit, or whom you might speak to, you’re sure to have the same uplifting experience. Children are at the center of it all, but this nurturing environment allows everyone who participates to learn and grow. Members of the community gladly give of their



1991 students

“As I listened and shared with the Cornerstone Faculty at their retreat, I was inspired by the authenticity and openness shown by all. The ability of each one to verbalize her/his belief in Jesus and the desire to teach the students the strong values which that entails is an active and loving quality which puts a seal on the purpose of this great work. Ernestine Sanders gave encouraging words and her spirit was filled with wise educational philosophy and deep witness to the Faith upon which the founding members built their hopes and our schools. I feel privileged to be part of Cornerstone’s story.”

Meg Canty, RSCJ Religious of the Sacred Heart
Former Head at the Academy of the Sacred Heart, Bloomfield Hills
Founding Cornerstone Board Member
Now living in Albany, New York

time talent and “treasure,” which is the real reason children flourish at Cornerstone. “What we have here carries on in our lives,” said Ms. Sanders, “These relationships are fruitful for everyone involved.”

As the only school in Detroit that will offer a complete Pre-K through 12th grade program, students receive an education that is as thorough as it is rigorous. Those in the Pre-K are reading by the end of the program. Every third grader receives and learns the violin. Middle school students learn economics from a college professor.

“The goal is to take children beyond an education to how they see themselves and the world around them,” Ms. Sanders told us. That’s why the curriculum includes lessons like respect, generosity and kindness as well as mathematics, languages and music. The goal is to create powerful messages that will assist students in making the right choices when the time comes. Ms. Sanders stated. “A culture of learning, a culture of what it means to be of good character, and a culture of giving back is what Cornerstone is about.”

Cornerstone also continues to harness the power of collaboratives with major universities, schools and organizations. For instance, an association with Northwood allows children to earn college credits



2011 students

"We as teachers think of ourselves as gardeners, planting seeds, hoping they will grow, and doing all that we can to bring forth the best fruit."

Larry Jaminet
4th Grade Teacher
With Cornerstone since 1994

in high school. A collaboration with Michigan State University offers young children a deeper understanding of music, while it helps the university discover better teaching methods. A reciprocal arrangement with Cranbrook brings both student bodies together for lessons. "We've found that not only do the children learn but they become more tolerant of others. In fact, they often become friends," explained Ms. Sanders.

Efforts like these result in a better understanding and appreciation providing a deeper exploration and a more enriching education. This experience has been further expanded with the Cornerstone Leadership and Business High School welcoming its first freshman class in the fall of 2011.

Now, 9th graders can enjoy the next level in a Cornerstone education, and a new class will be added each year until the high school serves students through graduation. This allows children to receive the benefits of educational excellence and Cornerstone's broad and beloved community in a whole new way. Using the latest in learning as well as real-world experience, the High School will guide these young adults into the challenges and opportunities of today's global economy. A hands-on Internship Program is central to the program.

Naturally, this Internship Program will serve as an invaluable learning experience for those who attend the school. Equally important is the fact that "new graduates who took part in an internship program are more likely to have received a job offer than their peers who decide to forgo the experience," according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers' (NACE's) 2010 Student Survey. The study found 42.3% of the seniors who had Internship experience and proceeded to apply for a position received at least one job offer.

Featured on CNN as "One School That Gets It Right", Cornerstone is sharing knowledge with other schools looking for assistance in making the same sort of positive change across the nation. A true success story, Cornerstone serves as a model for learning institutions.

From Pre-K through High School, a safe, nurturing environment and the development of a well-rounded individual is always key to the Cornerstone process. According to Ms. Sanders, it comes down to the idea of balance, "Here, we teach that success and the greater good can co-exist peacefully. That is what transforms lives for good and will create a new city for all."

20th Anniversary Celebration



We cannot believe how quickly it's flown by, but in 2011, Cornerstone Schools celebrated 20 years of transforming lives through an excellent education. Today, we can't help but wonder if those who first announced their intention "Facere Omnia Nova," "to make all things new," ever imagined achieving so much in such a relatively short time.

Thanks to Cardinal Adam Maida and his call to action at the Detroit Economic Club in the fall of 1990, something truly exceptional was set into motion. Clark Durant and a core group of caring individuals worked hard to make the Cardinal's dream come true. Built on the cornerstone of faith, the success that has happened since then has been nothing short of miraculous.

Over the past year, there have been many efforts to commemorate and celebrate two wonderful decades of precious memories and accomplishments. Meanwhile, Cornerstone has been literally "paving the way" to excellence in education for the next 20, 30, even 50 years to come. Creating a place where character and kindness is every bit as important as technology and academic rigor.

On May 19th, more than 500 Friends and Partners of the Cornerstone community gathered at the Andiamo Banquet Center in Warren to celebrate this important anniversary. It was an emotional night of story telling and sharing memories. Guests heard from a number of students and Partners including Detroit's First Lady, Yvette Bing. In addition, our current board chair, Judge Michael Warren, and Co-Chair of the Turning Point Invitational, KC Crain, filled the eager audience in on Cornerstone's new Leadership and Business High School, our newest link to a bright future for our students.

This event was made possible by Joe and Rosalie Vicari of Andiamo and event sponsors Macro Connect and St. John Providence Health System. We are grateful for their support and generosity.

Special Partner Mornings at our campuses followed the banquet on September 20th, 21st and 23rd. Students and their Partners planted spruce tree seeds in the hope that what grows will serve as a reminder of the strength of their support. Truly, the seeds planted in partnership are every bit as beautiful! With God, faith, and hope we believe that the Cornerstone community will continue to grow and flourish as we move forward through the next twenty years and beyond.






Cornerstone published a special 20th Anniversary Book to share the story of how “Changing Detroit One Child At A Time” came to fruition. It tells the history of Cornerstone, an amazing and inspiring story. Perhaps what is most impressive is that the school has remained steadfastly true to its mission from the beginning and continues to do so:

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.

With the completion of the first phase of our new high school, the power of this vision has become even stronger. A true community effort, the model will result in Cornerstone offering the only Pre-K through 12 program in the city. And not just any program - but the quality of a Cornerstone education serving many more generations of Detroiters!

With the gracious support of Partners and Friends, Cornerstone will continue to ensure a holistic, rigorous education for the children of our city for decades to come. With each graduating class, we will all reap the rewards of what we have sown.

Facere Omnia Nova.



“Over the last twenty years, Cornerstone Schools has matured into a robust community. Its ethos of hard work and caring has produced a school that stands apart. Christ is our cornerstone, Partners help secure the foundation, and our parents and faculty are enduring pillars as together we raise high our students. God bless us with joy as we continue this work.”

Anne
Cornerstone Schools Librarian
With Cornerstone since 1991

Detroit Free Press

Cornerstone Opened the Way for More City School Options

The following article appeared in the Detroit News on August 25, 2011. It's an excellent look back at the origins of Cornerstone Schools, the success of the schools, and the future that everyone at Cornerstone is working toward.

In the fall of 1991, Detroit was engaged in some of the very same frustrating arguments about education that exist today.

Deborah McGriff, who served as superintendent of Detroit Public Schools for about the blink of an eye, was fighting to give parents more choices within DPS about where to send their children. The bitter resistance she met is now the stuff of legend in national education circles.

Meanwhile, Cardinal Adam Maida and Clark Durant, a lawyer coming off an unsuccessful run for the U.S. Senate, were set to open the first Cornerstone schools. Their idea was simple: Give parents a low-cost, high-performing option outside of the city's public schools.

This was long before the explosion of charter schools in the city, and way before the Skillman Foundation began its Excellent School Detroit effort to identify and promote high-performing schools. This was well before most people were even open to the idea that urban education might best be structured through many alternatives and options. So in that sense, Cornerstone and



Students make their way to classes at
Detroit's Cornerstone School in May 2009

*File photo by Andre J. Jackson
Detroit Free Press*

Durant, in particular, were the spark for a lot of the educational innovation we're seeing in Detroit today. In the 20 years since, Durant's relentless advocacy for educational options has helped inspire several large-scale initiatives that give city parents quality choices outside of DPS. The charter movement, the number of independent schools cropping up around the city - it all really started with Durant and Cornerstone. It's hard, even frightening, to imagine what education in the city would look like today if Cornerstone hadn't set the pattern it did in 1991.

The Cornerstone system now has 1,400 students, and a few years ago opened two charter schools to complement its independent schools and open opportunity to even more city families.

This fall, Cornerstone will open a high school focused on leadership and business.

Based on a student's skills and interests, the school will set up partnerships with local businesses to offer work experience and, more important, a four-year workplace relationship that could lead to all kinds of possibilities.

It's a model Durant is borrowing at least partially from the Cristo Rey school in southwest Detroit - yet another of the innovative schools that followed in Cornerstone's footsteps.

"This is just our next step," Durant told me recently, while he was preparing for

Aug. 29, when he'll host the eighth Turning Point Invitational golf tournament at Oakland Hills. Durant said the new high school would not have been possible without the annual fund-raiser.

And while it's amazing to think of what Cornerstone has accomplished in 20 years - 95% graduation rate, 91% of its kids going to college - Durant, now chairman of the Cornerstone Board and once again a U.S. Senate candidate, says it's also important to consider what the staff at Cornerstone has learned over that time.

The comparison between Cornerstone's independent and charter schools, for example, is revealing, he said. Cornerstone has been able to maintain much more stability in the population at the independent schools, where tuition is about \$3,000 a year, than it has at the publicly supported charter schools.

The families, he said, are largely the same. But their expectations are different. Durant believes parents who pay for their children's schooling, even if only nominal tuition, are more involved and will hold students and the school more accountable. Charter school families, he said, may be overly caught up in educational "shopping," constantly seeing new options instead of sticking with one choice, which is important to long-term success.

These are all lessons that should be shared across the educational landscape in Detroit. Cornerstone isn't for everyone. Its independent schools cost money some families don't have, and they embrace religious beliefs some families might not share. Even its charters can't be for everyone. And no one in the city has yet figured out how best to serve the high number of special needs kids.

But other schools, including DPS, should be learning from what works and what doesn't at Cornerstone, and applying it to bigger swaths of the school-age population.

Innovation is supposed to be leading to broader excellence, everywhere.

Durant started something important 20 years ago. The rest of us have yet to fully pick up the mantle and finish it for kids all over Detroit.

*By Stephen Henderson
Detroit Free Press Editorial Page Editor
Thursday, August 25, 2011*

Passing Along Lessons Learned at Cornerstone – Joshua Gatlin

Joshua Gatlin is a Cornerstone Alumnus who has achieved some amazing things since his time with Cornerstone. He has fond memories of everyone at Cornerstone, including his Partner, Walter Czarnecki, former Chairman of the Board for Cornerstone Schools and a current board member of Cornerstone Charter Schools (you'll find Mr. Czarnecki's profile in this Annual Report). Joshua currently lives in South Carolina where he works as an aerospace engineer.

Joshua came to Cornerstone in 2001 for the 7th Grade. His parents had relocated to Detroit a couple of years earlier and he'd been in a local school since they arrived. His parents found out about Cornerstone and decided that it was the place for Joshua because it promised an even better education. From day one, this focused young man noticed a difference at the school.

"The other school wasn't really challenging – Cornerstone was," Joshua said. "It was a better environment all together, classes, teachers, the kids too," he explained. As one of four or five "new kids" Joshua was quite happy to get a Partner, Mr. Czarnecki. They established a rapport very quickly. "He gave me tips on a lot of little things in school. I was new and I wasn't sure if I was happy to be in Detroit – we were from Oklahoma before that," he said. "Mr. Czarnecki told me how to go about things. He told me to calm my jets, and to have fun where I was at," Josh remembered.

He took Mr. Czarnecki's words to heart, and proceeded to join the basketball team, make friends, and excel in his studies, especially math. "Mr. Czarnecki showed me how to treat school, that it was going to be my door to other things. He said to enjoy it but to take it seriously," explained Joshua. "I tell my younger brother the same thing all the time."

Joshua loved playing basketball and thought both his teachers and coaches were "really cool, good people." He went on to become student government president, and enjoyed music and Spanish classes. Joshua also spent a lot of time collecting binders of information about different airplanes. Mr. Czarnecki was there for him the whole time. Said Joshua, "I didn't realize what he did until my second year. Mr. Czarnecki could have been any regular person, but he had a busy job, a lot to do and he still made time for me – it made me feel special."



After completing the 8th grade, his family relocated to Texas where his father had a better job opportunity. Joshua told us, it wasn't easy, but he was ready for it. "It's good to try something new," he says. He went on to Woodland High School in Texas, where he chose aerospace as his degree his freshman year. He continued to play basketball, achieve good grades, and finally, graduate from high school.

Despite the fact he and Mr. Czarnecki had been out of touch for a while, Joshua thought about how his Partner had always been there for him with advice and decided to reach out. "I sent him a thank you note and a graduation announcement," shared Joshua. "After all he'd done for me and others, I wasn't sure if he'd ever received anything like that." The letter began,

"Without your support, my graduation would not have been possible..." Mr. Czarnecki considers that letter one of his most meaningful possessions.

Joshua went on to study at North Carolina State and make his dream of a career in aerospace a reality. It seems he always loved planes and wanted to focus on aerospace or aeronautics. With two parents who had been in the Air Force, he had grown up around aircraft, airshows and the like. Despite the fact he knew he would miss his family back in Texas, he says he thought it was a good idea to "get out on my own because at some point I would anyway."

After five years of studying aerospace engineering with a minor in business administration, Joshua graduated in May of 2011 - and had a job offer in June. He now works in Greenville, South Carolina for Avenger Aircraft and Services, where he does consulting. "People or companies come in with their planes to make sure they're ok or get FAA approved," explained Joshua. "We take them apart piece by piece to make sure everything is up to par - what isn't is replaced so it's flight worthy." He's currently working on a project with Lufthansa on the restoration of two aircraft from the 1960s.

Joshua speaks with his family every day, and once his student loans are paid off, is considering getting his pilot's license. Even more importantly, he looks forward to giving back to others. "I wouldn't trade my experience at Cornerstone for the world," shared Joshua. "I just wish I was there from the get go rather than just 7th and 8th grade but I'm happy I finally got there." We are incredibly proud that one of our former students is such a resounding success.





Cornerstone Opens Horizons – Devon Taylor

Cornerstone Schools strives to make a lasting impression on students. Alumnus Devon Taylor has proven this to be true on all levels, from her career accomplishments to her heartfelt activities within the community where she lives and works. We had an inspiring chat with Devon from her home in Alabama where she works as an epidemiological analyst.

Devon Taylor was born in Atlanta but her family moved to Detroit where she spent most of her school-aged years. She started middle school with Cornerstone in the 6th grade. “I believe that my mom didn’t want me in the public school system. She wanted to ensure I received an excellent education,” Devon told us. “We tried for a magnet school with a lottery system and I didn’t get drawn,” she explained. Looking for another option, her mother discovered Cornerstone and enrolled her.

Devon looks back on her time at Cornerstone fondly. “I think it was a great experience,” she shared. The fact that it was an 11-month school year was a boost for her, mentally. She also enjoyed being able to take Spanish classes, which she found very beneficial. The people around her further enhanced such diverse program offerings. “It was a good group of kids,” she said, “the teachers were good too – they influenced me to interview at some of the elite high schools.” What she really appreciated was the fact that Cornerstone pushed children to open their horizons.

One great example of that was the Partner Program. “It was really memorable for me,” said Devon, “My Partner and I were pen pals for years and that was fun.” The two talked about a number of typical subjects, from school to their families. “It made me feel like I had another friend, another person I could share with...it opened up my view to speak with someone not just in my neighborhood but someone on the other side of town,” she added.

Despite moving frequently with her family (her mother worked for the airlines), Devon still believes that Cornerstone broadened her world view. “At school they led me to realize there was more to life than my little block,” she told us. It also taught her a lot about giving back. But we’ll get to that in a bit.

After the 8th grade, Devon attended high school and went on to her undergraduate studies at Tufts in Boston. She then proceeded to earn a Masters Degree in Public Health, Epidemiology and International Health at the University of Alabama in Birmingham where she graduated in 2006. “At some level I think I always wanted to be in the health field and be of service to people,” she stated. “I was drawn to that – being able to help out a whole community.”



"I've spent my career studying intentional efforts to influence remarkable changes in behavior across the world. Cornerstone's leaders have developed the most intentional, systematic and effective system for influencing the lives of young people I have ever seen. They are grounded in good social science, inspired by genuine love and driven by a commitment to measurement that will ensure they bless the lives of students for many years to come. I came as a curious researcher and left as a convert to your impressive organization."

Joseph Grenny
New York Times bestselling author
Chairman, Unitus
Co-Chairman, VitalSmarts

Prior to graduating, Devon was offered a job at MetMind. She accepted it and was given training for infection control practitioners at hospitals. It was just a matter of time before she was approached with another opportunity - to be an epidemiologist at the Alabama Department of Public Health. There she handled the tracking and investigating of health issues for the state. After that, she became an epidemiological analyst. "It's a lot of technology, things like data analysis, geographic information systems and mapping to focus on allocating proper use and distribution of resources," she explained. She helps the management and managers of the Alabama Health Department with disease control. Her position also entails helping officers with numerous special projects.

Despite working plenty of hours in the name of community health, Devon is extremely active once she's out of the office as well. "I attend church and I sing in the choir," she shared. "I also started a girl scout troop. Though I don't have any kids of my own, I ended up with 20 of them!" she laughed. In addition, she is part of a service sorority. "We hold lots of fundraisers, provide needed service, get high school students scholarships, just to mention a few of the things we do," she said.

Devon spends countless hours helping others on the job and off. We asked her if she related that to her experiences at Cornerstone. She replied, "From my personal experience, I think the curriculum, as well as the Christian

values, provided a good foundation." She went on, "It's about becoming a good person, understanding that loving and helping people is as important as academics. That comes from human values reinforced on a day to day basis."

The manner in which Cornerstone enforces good behavior and academics definitely resonated with her. "It teaches you that to be successful not only in your career, but in your life," she said. For all of these reasons, Devon is strongly in favor of children attending Cornerstone. In fact, she told us "If Cornerstone had a high school when I'd graduated I'd probably still be in Detroit." Definitely, food for thought.



"Without our progressive leaders, we wouldn't have the wonderful programs we do such as the comprehensive music program, drama, Plato, Chinese and, of course, the new high school.

My life has been enriched through my years teaching at Cornerstone through all the things that I have experienced here. It has been especially wonderful to work in a Christ-Centered environment and be able to help impart those values to our young people."

Barbara Hart
Primary and Middle School
Computer Teacher
With Cornerstone since 1996

New Beginnings

The 2010-2011 school year has been a meaningful milestone for our broad and beloved community. Celebrating 20 years of educational excellence has been gratifying for everyone involved in this resounding success. It has also proved to be the perfect time for the next phase of development for Cornerstone Schools, "New Beginnings."

Ernestine Sanders, President and CEO of Cornerstone Schools, coined this inspiring phrase in tandem with the launch of the newest Cornerstone school. "Our founders set out to 'make all things new' when Cornerstone came to be in 1991. We have the opportunity of a lifetime to build on what we have and know to start a new beginning with the Leadership and Business high school," said Ms. Sanders.

Though Cornerstone's mission, philosophy and vision have never changed, the task at hand was a bit different in the early days. With Detroit schools in decline and a lack of appropriate choices, the primary goal was to offset the situation with unparalleled excellence. "Poverty doesn't allow choice. We knew we could create an alternative so there would be choice," explained Ms. Sanders.

After 20 years, not only has that goal been achieved but new goals are always taking shape. "Maturity shows you what you need to add, where you need to go next," Ms. Sanders said. Today, it's about adding more layers, transforming what has already been established to take Cornerstone far into the future.

At a time when Cornerstone's broad and beloved community can actually see the fruits of their labor, it continues to explore the possibilities of other realms. Always proactive, Cornerstone has been a dynamic entity since day one. "When your core mission is education, you

always start new with each school year,” Ms. Sanders shared. “This new program is not only built on the best learning pedagogy and the data that Cornerstone has amassed, but also a high school educational design that is new and fresh.”

“I see the process like weaving a cloth on a loom,” Ms. Sanders stated, “Now we can add more color and more pattern to create a stronger, more vibrant piece.” Now, the idea is to move into neighborhoods and translate the Cornerstone mission into a transformative catalyst for the city, the state, and the country. New relationships will bridge divides. Strong leaders will build an equally robust society.

“New Beginnings” is about much more than opening the doors to a new high school, as exciting as that reality is. Ms. Sanders told us, “Contrary to the thought of this being about a building, the building is actually designed to accentuate the learning.” This effort is about extending a valuable cultural and learning experience to children who will not only be highly knowledgeable but also contribute positively to society. As Ms. Sanders stated, “Students are the greater good.”

The strategic planning for this innovative high school began more than seven years ago. The vision was to start a small and rigorous high school, totally in sync with the established Cornerstone culture. At that time, plans for this endeavor were built into Cornerstone’s Strategic Plan. Goals were clearly established to “start an excellent, academically rigorous



urban high school with a specified focus on cultivating leaders.” Students would be prepared to attend a university or college, enter the military, or be engaged in a trade or business school upon graduation.

Anyone familiar with Cornerstone knows that academics are just part of its particular brand of education. The students would also be prepared to “lead a good life after the completion of school and entry into the workplace.” Self-responsibility, citizenship and an appreciation for giving back will be every bit as important to student success.

Partnerships and collaborations are another striking aspect of a Cornerstone education. By bringing in business leaders from a variety of industries and educators from other learning institutions and a variety of businesses, children discover ways to network, expand their current reality and plan their future reality.

With these outcomes in mind, the Cornerstone Board of Directors voted to have the high school open in the fall of 2011. Immediately after, faculty, staff, and leaders throughout the community formed a committee to create a program, curriculum, and measurable outcomes for each area and facet of the school. The larger committee was broken into smaller committees to get the specific tasks accomplished.

The team was made up of many dedicated individuals including Ernestine Sanders, David Bologna, Cheryl Bush, Mari Byrd, Scott Cairo, Jason Filie, Donna Fitzgerald, Gerry Frank, Clifford Harris, Everett Herberger, Mona Kidder, Hope Durant Loomis, Carol Mansfield, Matt Morin, Loraine Murphy, Dave O’Connor, Linda Phillips, Denise Stein, and Susan Williams.

Now, 20 years after Cornerstone first began, it is on track to expand its influence to even more children. With the completion of the first phase of the high school, many look to the future with great anticipation. Said Ms. Sanders, “The first graduating class of 2015 is here at the Leadership and Business High School because of the generosity of others who have given so unselfishly so that they may have a more abundant life.” Fortunately, at Cornerstone, life is full of new beginnings.

“I am very thankful to be working at Cornerstone Schools. Cornerstone is a special place that changes those who step through its doors. I have seen this countless times with our students, but I know it is true for the staff as well, and it is most definitely the case for me. Being here has helped me to grow in humility, faith and patience; it has enabled me to better see God’s beauty and goodness surrounding us, most especially in His children.”

David J. O’Connor
Cornerstone Leadership &
Business High School Principal



The Children are the Stars – Walter Czarnecki



Perhaps one of the best ways to illustrate 20 years of Cornerstone’s broad and beloved community is to speak with a Partner who has been with us since the very beginning, Mr. Walter Czarnecki, Executive Vice President, Penske Corporation, former Cornerstone Schools Chairman of the Board and now Cornerstone Charter Schools board member.

Mr. Czarnecki was originally from the Detroit area, moved to New York and then back again with Penske’s headquarters. Over the years, the native Detroitier always had his eye on his hometown. Said Mr. Czarnecki, “I could see what was happening to the city, particularly in public education and the failure of it all.”

Early in 1991 after moving back to Detroit, Mr. Czarnecki became reacquainted with Clark Durant. “Our parents knew each other and I was just trying to reestablish a network again,” shared Mr. Czarnecki. As a result, Archbishop Maida invited Mr. Czarnecki to his residence for brunch about Cornerstone at Clark’s suggestion. Not only did he attend, but he liked what he heard and decided to become involved. Just nine months later, the first Cornerstone Schools opened.

“There was an incident that convinced me that Cornerstone was on the right track,” Mr. Czarnecki told us. There was a Christmas program going on and two women were standing in the corridor. Mr. Czarnecki couldn’t help overhear them talk. One woman asked the other how her grandson was doing. She replied, “My grandson is in the 2nd grade at Cornerstone and can already read better than his 9th grade brother in public school.”

This was only 90 days into the first semester of the school year at Cornerstone. It was what Mr. Czarnecki called his “AHA!” moment. “They are really on to something here,” he thought. From that point on, he and his wife, Ginny, worked more closely with Clark and the rest of the Cornerstone team to help deliver an excellent education to the children of the city.

Early on, Ginny Czarnecki came up with a phrase about Cornerstone: “It’s not a designer charity.” She realized this was truly a jump in, roll up your shirt sleeves kind of organization, which resonated with both of them then – and still does. Mr. Czarnecki was on the advisory board for a few years, then on the board, and then served as Chairman of the Board for another seven years. Today, he serves on the board of Cornerstone Charter Schools.



“Mr. Czarnecki is a nice person. He helps me on Partner Morning. I hope he is my Partner for a long time.”

*Barrington Thrower
Kindergarten*

Both active Partners, the Czarneckis also met some very impressive students, one, being Joshua Gatlin, a featured alumnus in this Annual Report. Though partnered with Mr. Czarnecki for a short time, he left grateful for the time they spent. In fact, years later, Joshua sent him a graduation announcement and a thank you note in 2009 when he graduated from Woodland High School in Texas.

“I’ve been blessed to play a small role in the growth of the school,” says Mr. Czarnecki. “I’m grateful to have been there in the school’s biggest time of crisis in 2008 and 2009, when we weren’t even sure we could continue to exist.” Those were the years of severe economic challenge across the country, particularly in Michigan, when Cornerstone lost 30 to 40 percent of its funding.

He’d wake up in the middle of the night wondering, “Are we going to survive, and if we

do, what are we going to look like?” said Mr. Czarnecki. “Without our culture, we would have been a shadow of our former selves, and we would have been compromising what it was about. Which means we’d have to start all over again.” Thankfully, better things were ahead.

Mr. Czarnecki calls those days “a privilege, a blessing and a challenge.” A dedicated group of people including Clark Durant, Ernestine Sanders, Bill Pulte and other Partners and friends rallied around Cornerstone to make sure it survived and that the Cornerstone culture continued. “Maybe it was a good thing,” he shared in hindsight. “We had to focus on how we could make the school sustainable and reach even more children.”

Creating the charter schools, while retaining the independent primary and middle schools at the Nevada Campus, resulted in valuable progress. “We’ve been able to migrate the

culture and set some precedents along the way,” said Mr. Czarnecki. He added, “I think the product that came out the other end is better than ever.” Because of all the hard work of Partners, principals and staff who were able to “hang in there,” Cornerstone is now well on the road to financial stability.

The day we spoke to Mr. Czarnecki, he had brought a guest to Cornerstone. The gentleman was captivated by the orderliness and discipline and poise he witnessed. “The thing is, it’s the same experience every day, even if a guest isn’t coming,” Mr. Czarnecki explained. “I’ll match our students to anyone, anywhere, – academically, how they comport themselves, anything.” Even more impressive when you consider that many children of Cornerstone come from difficult circumstances.

As for the future, two more charters will be opening in the next two years, one a primary, the other the Cornerstone Charter Health High School. Said Mr. Czarnecki, “I see the Cornerstone model being replicated, and only limited by resources. It’s a model that works – it has for 20 years. It goes back to that ‘AHA!’ moment in 1991. I knew it then and we’ve been at it for 20 years with great success.”

Czarnecki credits the leadership of Clark Durant and Ernestine Sanders, the faculty, staff and administration for bringing optimum performance out of every Cornerstone student. But in the end, he says, “the children are the stars.”

Helping Detroit Through Education – Dr. Joseph Lupo & Family



As the successful owner of Lupo Chiropractic Center, Dr. Joseph Lupo says that when it comes to life, “you don’t ever know and you can’t always plan. You just do what’s going to put you in the right direction, work hard, and make adjustments as you go.” That approach eventually led Dr. Lupo and his family to Cornerstone Schools.

Dr. Lupo was born and raised in Detroit. He came from a large family and his mother worked hard at Chrysler to support them. She was a loving woman who definitely had her hands full. Eventually, she enrolled Dr. Lupo in Catholic school. “If it wasn’t for the quality of education and discipline, I don’t know where I would have ended up,” he shared. “The right education made all the difference.”

After a stint at Chrysler, he attended Macomb Community College, started a painting and remodeling company, became a general contractor, worked for HUD, and earned a bachelors degree at Wayne State University when he turned 27 – working the entire time. His goal was to be an electrical engineer, but one day, out of the blue, a friend in pre-med told him he’d thought he’d be a good chiropractor.

He decided it was a great idea and at the age of 32 (married with two children and a new home) he told his wife, Sandy, that he wanted to go to school in Georgia – the next day – and she would follow. Sandy said that it was fine, which probably explains the strength of their 42-year marriage. Lupo graduated from Chiropractic school at the age of 37, opened up a practice on east 8 Mile Road and has been busy for the past 33 years!

“I’ve been blessed and I’m of the philosophy you need to give back,” says Dr. Lupo. Sandy’s sister, Corinne, and her late husband Paul, an attorney, were strong supporters of education and decided to introduce the Lupos to Partnership at Cornerstone in the late 90’s. Dr. Lupo watched what was happening in the city over the years. Once the Lupos saw how the children of Cornerstone conducted themselves, says Dr. Lupo, “The way they spoke, the way they smiled, it blew me away. I thought – we have an oasis here.”

He went on to share, “Education was my savior, I knew the importance of it for others.” The Lupos immediately realized the significance of being a Partner, believing that “we as private individuals can make things happen, better than the government can.”

In 2008, the Lupos were invited to the “Be A Tiger For Kids” event. The long-time Tigers fan brought his family and staff. By the end of the game he stated, “We have to commit to Cornerstone on a bigger scale.” He wrote a generous check on the spot to “show the school what they are doing is a good thing.” It wasn’t long after that Hope Durant Loomis, Cornerstone’s Vice President of Development, met with Dr. Lupo to thank him for the gift. “That really got the ball rolling,” laughed Dr. Lupo.

He said it is not only the great work that Cornerstone does but the attitude of the entire organization. “Everyone is so appreciative it makes you feel incredibly good and you want to do more. You feel like you’re putting your money in a good place,” he stated. “I don’t have the skills to help the children of Detroit with education, but I’ll gladly support those that do. I can do it through Cornerstone.”

Now grown, Lupo’s children, Dr. Jeff and Dr. Jesse Lupo are chiropractors as well. They are also part of Cornerstone’s broad and beloved community. “I took them to Be A Tiger for Kids and told them to step up and try to lead by example,” said Dr. Lupo. Both are “on board” and believe in the Cornerstone mission. “Cornerstone exists for the students,” he says.

Last year after Christmas, the Lupos got to thinking. “We always exchange gifts and I don’t need a darned thing,” said Dr. Lupo. “So we decided to do it differently, that we needed to do a little bit more for Cornerstone.” The family made yet another donation for a simple reason. “There is somebody actually doing something about the issues in Detroit and I have to support it,” Lupo stated.

Dr. Lupo appreciates that Cornerstone is more than excellent academics, but also a culture that gives students a solid foundation for life. “It’s not just what you do in school, it’s what you do out of school,” he told us. In fact, he shared a story about a Cornerstone Alumnae, Chartease Jackson, attending a chiropractic recruiting night. “They had everyone take a turn speaking. And when the microphone was passed to this young high school student, everyone was amazed at her poise and speech.” It was obvious to Dr. Lupo that she was “a Cornerstone girl.”

Dr. Lupo has been with Cornerstone for seven years. His entire family is involved with Cornerstone. And now, he has started offering internships to Cornerstone high school students, as well. “I think Cornerstone Schools are amazing. I wish there were far more of them,” said Dr. Lupo. “I’ve been in the school and get incredibly emotional at what is happening there.”

He added, “I love what I do, I don’t ever plan on retiring.” Thankfully, that plan includes Cornerstone.



“Being at Cornerstone Schools has really changed my life. My first and only year at a public school helped me to see what a privilege it is to have a good education at Cornerstone. A lot of people don’t have that opportunity.”

Justin Hails
6th Grade
Cornerstone Middle School



Cornerstone Capital Campaign – Multiplying Cornerstone’s Impact

In the 2010-2011 school year, Cornerstone assembled a committee to develop Renewal of Hope 2.0, a Capital Campaign designed to continue Facere Omnia Nova – To Make All Things New. This campaign is not just about current needs, but of building a long-term future for Cornerstone.

Since day one, Cornerstone’s goal has been to transform the lives of children through an excellent education, with the belief that it is a moral imperative and an economic necessity for children, for our city, for all of us. This initial vision has created a model resulting in extraordinary success on all levels.

Cornerstone has not launched a Capital Campaign in almost ten years. The reason for this campaign is about more than bricks and mortar. The goal is to construct an enduring, overall structure that will make Cornerstone sustainable for the long term – 20, 30, even 50 years from now. Only in this way can we be certain that children will be able to receive the same level of education and community that our students receive today.



“We want to guide the maturation of Cornerstone by broadening and enhancing its strengths. We are striving for a greater breadth of educational offerings, expanded learning opportunities, a reintroduction of our emphasis on math, science, the arts and physical education, better resources, attracting the best teachers and principals, and multiplying Cornerstone’s impact as a model of excellence for other schools,” says Hope Durant Loomis, Cornerstone’s Vice President of Development. Concepts such as self-directed learning, citizenship, respect, self-responsibility and a broad education will continue to be an integral part of the model.

Our belief is that true sustainability begins with the Cornerstone Leadership and Business High School, which will serve to solidify all things Cornerstone. Not only does it allow our students to continue with the excellence of a Cornerstone education and values beyond the 8th grade, but it also enables them to give back immediately. It extends the idea of our broad and beloved community, as the high school students serve as Partners to students in the primary school. These mutually supportive relationships help all who attend Cornerstone Schools to learn the value of giving back.

In addition, Cornerstone will be the only Pre-K through 12th grade school in the city, creating a learning community that is both academic and cultural. We have recently started the second of four phases, set for completion in the fall of 2013. Therefore, it is vital for us to keep up the momentum of this bold, renewed approach. This will bring our special brand of education to even more students, securing their future as well as that of Cornerstone Schools.



“Cornerstone schools is a leader in education for our youth providing a foundation of learning unparalleled in the State of Michigan. Our students who attend Cornerstone Schools, graduate with high honors and attend prominent universities as a result of our excellent curriculum and teachers.”

Andra M. Rush, CEO
Rush Trucking & Dakkota
Integrated Systems, LLC.

Efforts will be furthered through three basic opportunities:

1. Capital giving that will renovate and expand the physical design of our Nevada campus to fit our vision.
2. Program start-up giving to invest in the new programs needed to achieve our academic goals,
3. Endowment giving and internships to provide student scholarship and faculty chairs to ensure continued access, vitality and excellence.

On this path, we look forward to ongoing access to Cornerstone Schools for future generations of children, preparing them for life and creating a new city for all. If you are interested in making a financial commitment to the Renewal of Hope 2.0 Campaign, please contact Hope Durant Loomis at 313-892-1860 ext. 268.



Community-Building Events

Cornerstone events are a primary means for raising money to provide scholarship assistance to the children who attend our schools. Events are also a venue for introducing someone new to the Cornerstone mission. Several events are held each year: Cornerstone Pistons Scholars, The Ford Purchasing Golf Outing, The BSP Cornerstone Golf Classic, Be A Tiger For Kids, The Henkel Golf Fore A Cause, The Vinnie Johnson Invitational, and Cornerstone Women For Scholarship Golf Invitational. Attendance at these events ranges from 40 to 6,000 people. From golf outings to sporting events, every gathering is vital to the growth and support of Cornerstone's work. None of these would be possible without the support of event sponsors. We are grateful to every one of our event sponsors listed on the following page, who supported one or more Cornerstone events in 2010-2011.



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Cornerstone Revenues

Our 2010-2011 fiscal year was a time of transition as we planned to open the Cornerstone Leadership and Business High School. Our schools generated income of \$6,970,298 and incurred expenses of \$6,349,637 resulting in an operating surplus of \$620,661.

Expenses included a \$1.5 million dollar loan, repayable over 5 years, this being the second. This non-interest-bearing loan was obtained from select Partners and friends to Cornerstone Schools to help us weather the severe economic circumstances felt nationwide, but even more greatly in Michigan and the Detroit area. Cornerstone is up to date on its loan payments. As in years past, most of our income came from our broad and beloved community of parents, Partners, friends and other donors. In 2010-2011, students were able to receive an excellent education thanks to this generosity.

Many thanks to the Partners and Friends who gave to Cornerstone and to those of you who have continued to support our mission.

- 450 people gave to Cornerstone for the first time this year.
We are grateful for their generous support and hope they will continue.
- We had 280 Partners, including 20 new Partners, compared to 305 partners a year ago.
- Current partners renewed at a rate of 85%, falling short of our goal of at least 90% for the year.
- Our total Partner giving was up about \$106,000 from last year, totaling \$2,146,022, as compared to \$2,039,760 in 2009-2010.

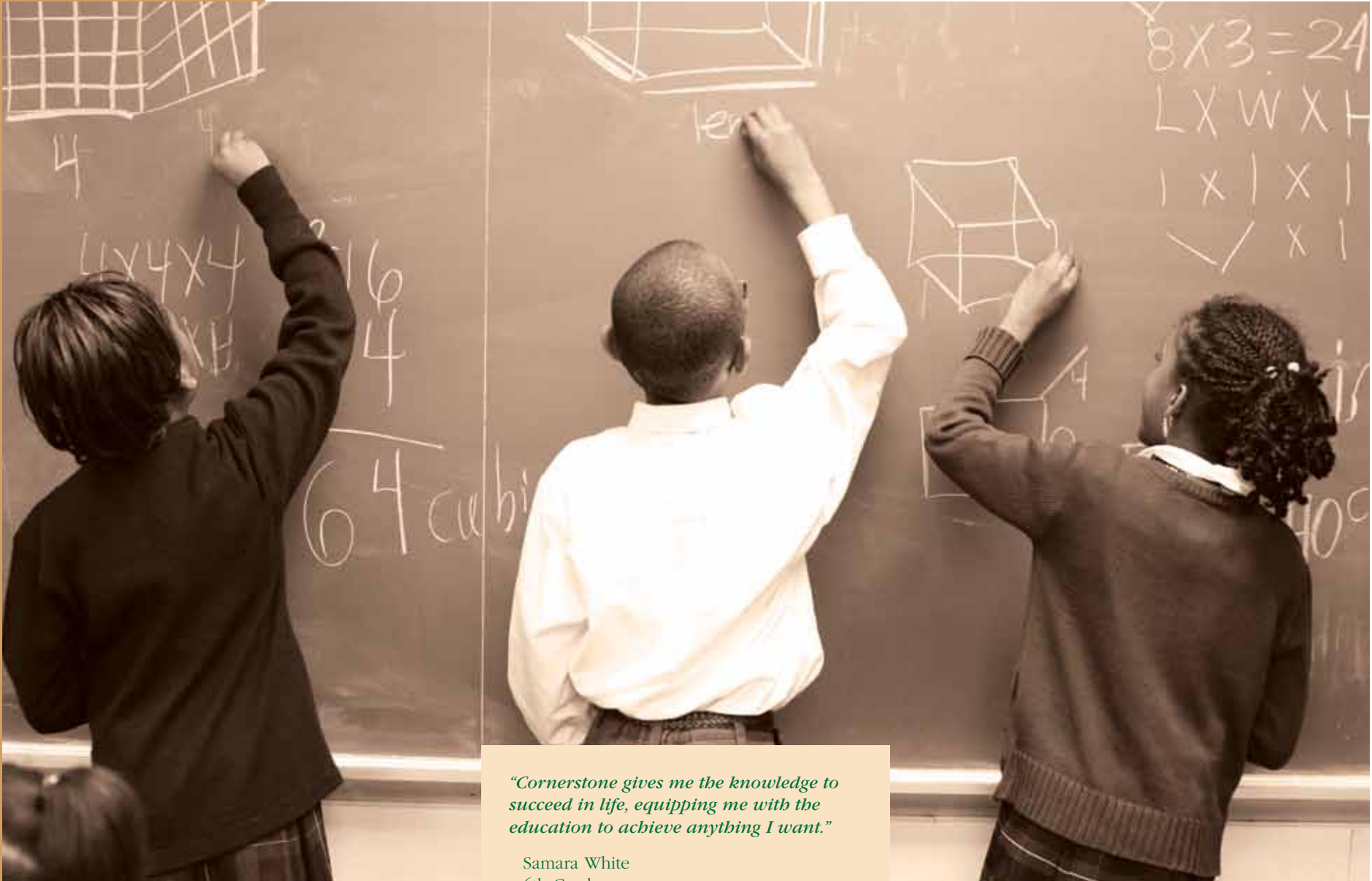
CSA | Financial Overview | Fiscal Year 2010-2011 (unaudited)*

	Actual 2010-11	Budget 2011-12
Total Revenue/Support	\$6,970,298	\$7,284,947
Expenses		
■ Administrative	\$1,720,599	\$1,996,326
■ Academic Program/Instruction	\$3,255,803	\$4,011,810
■ Development, Events, Communications	\$1,373,236	\$1,351,649
Total Expenses **	\$6,349,637	\$7,359,785
Surplus (Deficit) ***	\$620,661	-\$74,838

* 2010-2011 audited financial statements will be available upon request.

** Excluding depreciation

*** The surplus seen in 2010-11 is due to some capital campaign revenue received at the end of 2010-11. The expenses related to that revenue were not incurred until fiscal year 2011-12. Thus, the surplus reflected is primarily a timing issue. Additionally, in August 2009 two of the three campuses previously operated by Cornerstone split off to become Charter Schools. These numbers are predominately for the Nevada campus; however, development and marketing services continue to be provided to the two charters as well.



"Cornerstone gives me the knowledge to succeed in life, equipping me with the education to achieve anything I want."

Samara White
6th Grade
Cornerstone Middle School

A Special Thank You

We offer heartfelt thanks and gratitude to those who make an excellent education possible for the children of Cornerstone.

Thank you also to the many donors who wish to remain anonymous. We appreciate your generosity.

This list is comprised of donations received during the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year (8/1/10 - 7/31/11). Every attempt has been made to list donors accurately. If there are errors or omissions, please contact our Institutional Advancement Department at:

Partners@CornerstoneSchools.org

Thank you.

"I have partnered with Cornerstone Schools over four years and it has been the most fulfilling, rewarding and wonderful experience I have partaken in. I watched a boy grow into an awesome young man who aspires to be a pediatrician. Knowing my 60 minute visit once a quarter may have helped foster that kind of vision fills my heart with joy and keeps me coming back.

I love Cornerstone Schools and what you do. Every child deserves an education that will prepare them for the next chapter of their life. The Cornerstone team continuously demonstrates the passion and dedication it takes to help develop each student and send them into the world with character, integrity and ambition."

Angela M. Heard
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Mr. & Mrs. John W. Wickett
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel R. Wiggins
Mr. Jack E. Williams
Ms. Jennie Williams
Ms. Laura Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Williams
Ms. Shalynda Williams
Ms. Stephanie Williams
Mr. Urrond Williams
Mrs. Lena Willis
Mr. Robert A. Wilson
Mr. Eric Winter
Mr. Kyle Winer
Ms. Nancy J. Wojtowicz
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Wolf
Mr. Robert W. Woodall
Mr. & Mrs. Dale Woolace
Ms. Sandra Woolfall
Mr. Fred A. Woolsey
Ms. Tymecka Wray
Mr. Robert T. Wright
Mr. Thomas A. Wrobel
Ms. Karen Young
Ms. Linda Young
Mr. Jeffrey Zaleski
Mr. Mark Zawislak
Mr. & Mrs. Philip R. Zink
Mr. Michael Zinn



"The Cornerstone Partner Program joins individuals in a mentoring setting...people who care about children, who realize that we're all in this together and that every little bit helps in mentoring life's most beautiful and precious young minds to help expand their horizons, to see their qualities shining through."

Toney Gibbs

Dr. David P. Rutt, Ph.D.
Mr. Jim Ryan
Ms. Almerna Ryans
Mr. Abdullah A. Saleh
Ms. Mary M. Savage
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick A. Scalera
Ms. Margaret Scheffke
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Schilling
Mr. Scott Schueller
Ms. Marie Schwanitz
Mr. Alexander A. Schwiebert
Mr. Dick Scott
Scott Advertising Inc.
Mr. Bill Scott
Mr. Eugene Seaborn

Ms. Jill R. Simpson
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Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sirna
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Ms. Gladys Sledge
Mr. Robert Sloan
Slusky & Walt, P.C.
Ms. Christine Smiggen
Ms. Carolyn E. Smith
Mr. Jack D. Smith
Mr. Jason Smith

Ms. Stephanie Stamas
Ms. Kay Stanfield Spinks
Mr. Bob Stefl
Mr. Herbert Steiger
Mr. Ronald L. Stene
Stephen Auger & Associates
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Stephens
Ms. Lenore M. Stewart
Mr. LaMonte Stinnette
Mr. Guy Stockard
Mr. Mary J. Stockwell
Ms. Arlene H. Stone
Mr. Erik J. Stone
Ms. Marlene Storc



Our Board of Directors – A Legacy of Leadership

It takes a special group of people to lead an organization like Cornerstone. They need to have a heart for the city of Detroit. They need to care about children and their success. They need to be people who have a passion for education and see clearly the advantages an excellent education can provide, not only to the individual child, but to the city as a whole.

Twenty years ago, Adam Cardinal Maida asked Clark Durant to serve as the first Chairman of the Board of Cornerstone Schools. Maida and Durant assembled a team with heart, caring and passion to serve as the Founding Board. Cornerstone owes much of its current success to the foundation laid by these first leaders.

Clark Durant, Chairman

Sister Margaret Canty

Roger DeMeyere

Reverend Thomas McClain

Reverend Eddie Edwards

Richard A. Walawender

Michael Timmis

Nancy Timmis

Following in the footsteps of the Founding Board of Directors is our current Board. This team provides the leadership to help forge the path for Cornerstone's success over the next twenty years.

Michael D. Warren, Jr.

Chairman of the Board

Judge, Oakland County Circuit Court

Anthony F. Earley, Jr.

Vice Chairman of the Board

CEO & Chairman, DTE Energy

KC Crain

VP-Publisher, Autoweek Media Group

Clark Durant

Founding Chair, Cornerstone Schools

David Lewis

Lewis & Munday, PC

Mark T. Pulte

Owner, Pulte Holdings, Inc.

Cornerstone Schools Leadership Team

Ernestine Sanders

CEO and President

Hope Durant Loomis

Vice President of Development

Loraine Murphy

Academic Dean

Monica Thompson

Principal - Nevada Primary School

Dennis Wrosch

Principal - Nevada Middle School

Dave O'Connor

Principal - Leadership & Business High School

The Pearson Group

CFO

Nicole Banks

Director of Human Resources

Rick Wilson

Director of Facilities

Janice Perzigian

Director of Marketing, Events and PR

Mari Byrd

Director of Admissions



*Changing Detroit,
One Child at a Time.*

For additional information, please contact:

The Institutional Advancement Office
313.892.1860 x297

e-mail: Partners@CornerstoneSchools.org
or visit our website at:
CornerstoneSchools.org

