



THE CAMPUS SCHOOL  
of Carlow University

Children of Spirit



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## Christmas PTA Fund-Raisers Nets \$4,500



December is traditionally the month when PTA-sponsored fundraising is at its busiest, and this year was no exception. Students from Trinity Hall and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders enjoyed the **Santa's Workshop** held in the Library, while the remainder of the student body had the opportunity to browse and buy on a separate day in Tiernan's second floor hallway. Thanks to Chairperson Rosalyn McCorkle and her sister Gail Washington (who traveled from Athens, Ohio for the event!) for spearheading these fun days of shopping, and for the many parents who volunteered their time and energy in wrapping gifts and assisting the students.

The **Basket Raffle** is always a main highlight of December, and this year's didn't disappoint. There were 36 baskets this year, each with a popular theme. Irene Hils did a fantastic job of organizing the donations from each classroom and

family, as well as manning most of the ticket sales. Once again, volunteer parents and students really stepped up, organizing the basket items and wrapping them for beautiful display. For a complete list of basket winners, check out the PTA website at [www.campusschoolpta.com](http://www.campusschoolpta.com) and click on "Events."

Lastly, the annual PTA **Bake Sale** changed venues, from the lobby outside of Kresge Auditorium to the library in Tiernan Hall, but that didn't stop parents, students, and friends from stopping by after the tremendously entertaining Holiday Concert. Mary Kiernan (and her mother Carol) and Anne Ward did a great job of setting up the beautiful display of cookies, cakes, brownies, cream puffs, and cupcakes and with the help of many volunteers, sold twice as much as last year's Sale! Your generous purchases enabled the PTA to completely pay for the Campus School computers.

To all of you who volunteered on these important fund-raisers, please know how very grateful we are for your time and cheerful energy. To those who bought raffle tickets, donated baskets, helped students shop, or purchased baked goods, a huge thanks for your support!

**Want to check out an exciting Campus School Basketball game? Check out the PTA website at [www.campusschoolpta.com](http://www.campusschoolpta.com), click on "Athletics," and go to "Team Schedules." You'll be able to download a schedule of all Developmental, JV, and Varsity games as well as directions to away games.**



Dear Parents,

The faculty and staff at the Campus School welcome you to 2008! We hope that you had a restful winter vacation and a very happy New Year. As we take this opportunity to reflect on 2007 and look forward to the future, the Campus School has had many exciting successes. Our students took part in the Philippines project; raising over \$2,000 for scholarship monies for the Sisters of Mercy mission. We have also encouraged stronger connections between the Campus School and the School of Education. During the fall semester, we had over 18 field observation students and our teachers took part in exciting collaborations with Dr. Abrams and her reading students and Dr. Pico and his social studies methods students. The first, second, and third graders have been filled with excitement as they use the new intermediate science lab, eagerly conducting weekly experiments and observations.

Christmas spirit was alive and well at the Campus School, with the Basket Raffle, the Christmas Bazaar, and the

Bake Sale raising money to support our School and to purchase new filtering software for student computers. The PTA has been pivotal in their support of these initiatives and we appreciate their help.

As The Campus School heads into 2008, we have taken the opportunity to make several resolutions. It is our hope that with the assistance of parents, staff, and students, we can make these resolutions come true. Our resolutions this year include:

- Continue to provide state of the art technology to aid our students' academic growth
- Foster an atmosphere of acceptance and helpfulness. In January, we will begin with our "Random Act of Kindness" program sponsored by the Student Council.
- Seek out and create staff development opportunities for our teachers to make certain our students continue to receive the best education possible.
- Together, parents, students and the staff of The Campus School will ensure that our Children of Spirit have a nurturing environment which focuses on the uniqueness of each child and encourages a spirit of true community and service to others.

The next few months are full of exciting events, including our Upper School Science Fair on January 29<sup>th</sup>, our Ice-Skating Party on February 20<sup>th</sup> and the Spring Concert on March 6<sup>th</sup>. We hope that you will come and help us celebrate all the wonderful achievements of our students.

Wishing you a blessed and Happy New Year!

Dr. Anne-Marie Balzano

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**Don't miss Dr. Balzano's "State of the Campus School Address" at the January 9, 2008 PTA Meeting in the Cafeteria at 8:30 a.m. Refreshments will be served starting at 8 a.m.**

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## SPOTLIGHT ON:

### Marlee Flaherty

*Assistant Admissions Director and Public Relations*

Perhaps you've been spying more prospective students and their parents walking the halls of Tiernan and Trinity; or maybe you've noticed the increased signage and ads promoting our School's open houses. These are two examples of the work of Marlee Flaherty.

Marlee was hired and joined the Campus School staff at the beginning of the 2007-08 School Year, in the position of Assistant Admissions Director and Public Relations. Some of her daily duties include helping Admissions Director Billie Girard with admissions details (such as tours), organizing Open Houses, and processing paperwork for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students. In the public relations area, Marlee works with appropriate staff at Carlow University in crafting print ads for various magazines, updates and makes additions to the Campus School website, and brings newsworthy items to the attention of the University's Communications Department.

Recently, Marlee added a forms section to the Campus School's website, where a parent can find activity and admission forms as well as school supplies and summer reading lists ([http://campusschool.carlow.edu/student-life/student\\_forms.htm](http://campusschool.carlow.edu/student-life/student_forms.htm)). She also represents the Campus School on various internal and external committees such as the Pittsburgh Consortium of Independent Schools.

Though born in the Midwest as the only daughter of a family of four children, Marlee considers herself a native Pittsburgher, as was her late husband. Her parents still live in the area, and assisted in raising Marlee's four children, ages 16 to 22. Her oldest, Jason, graduated in December with a degree in Chemical Engineering and will soon be working for Exxon Mobile in Houston, TX. Marlee's twin daughters graduated from Oakland Catholic,

and Brittany is studying Chemical Engineering at the University of Michigan, and Katie is studying nursing at Pitt. Her youngest child Christopher is a sophomore at Central Catholic and plays ice hockey there.

Prior to joining the Campus School, Marlee worked with AT&T, Oakland Catholic, the YMCA of Pittsburgh, the North Star Foundation, and the Northland Public Library Foundation. Most recently, Marlee worked for the Girl Scouts of Trillium Council, where she organized the Build a Dream Playhouse Auction and quadrupled the tax credit funding that was received.

A graduate of Barnard College, Columbia University (B.A.) and the University of Pittsburgh (M.B.A.), Marlee also attended the London School of Economics in England. The avid skier and swimmer understands how important it is to give a child a good, solid, holistic beginning.

"Walking into work and seeing the students is my favorite thing about working at Carlow," says Marlee. "The Campus School provides a wonderful, nurturing environment that helps children to grow and develop into self-confident, and productive members of our world community."

When asked about her future goals for the Campus School, Marlee doesn't hesitate. "The Campus School is a gem in the greater Pittsburgh area. We have the best of three worlds: a parochial school, an independent school, and Carlow University. I look forward to promoting our school to more families in the Pittsburgh area so that more children can enjoy the benefits of attending the Campus School of Carlow University."

*To contact Marlee Flaherty, please call (412)578-8777; or e-mail her at [flaherty.ma@carlow.edu](mailto:flaherty.ma@carlow.edu).*

## Crossing Guards Program Emphasizes Safety, Teamwork, Pride, and Citizenship

This past fall, students in Grades 5 through 8 had the opportunity to participate in a new crossing guard program. Faculty sponsor and Third Grade teacher Sarah Posti worked with Campus School administrators and Carlow University Police to ensure that all safety issues were covered, and the program got underway in October.

Two teams comprised of ten and nine students respectively were chosen to help monitor the stairwells during dismissal. The guards also help to keep other students on the sidewalk while walking to the buses, and not running in the parking lot when traffic is heaviest. The first team will serve until mid February, and includes Amy Buck (5); Katie Callaway (8); Michaelle Callaway (8); Karim Demian (8); Annie DeVita (5); Mathieu Lebiere (5); Rhodora Moore (5); Lucas Rosenblatt (5); Katherine Schmotzer (8); and Victoria Schmotzer (6).

The team of students that will take over cross guard duties in February includes Eileen Burke (8); Brittany Ellis (5); Angela Fazio (5); Isabella Glassmith (5); Sam Hayden (8); John Moore (5); Ryan Petnuch (5); Rachel Pregel (8); and Tess Putinsky (8).

"We thought that this program would be a great way to help make the Campus School a safer place," says Mrs. Posti. The crossing guard program also gives students in Fifth Grade — not yet old enough to serve on Student Council — the opportunity to take on a leadership role that usually has been assumed by Upper School students only. "This program really helps build teamwork, pride, and citizenship," Mrs. Posti adds.

In addition to wearing the neon green band strap at afternoon pick-up, crossing guards wear pins during the school day and help to encourage safety in the stairs and hallways. All students who serve as crossing guards will receive a certificate at the end of the year at the Spring Awards Ceremony.

The program has been so successful that Mrs. Posti is going to implement an orientation session before the start of the 2008-09 School Year, open to all interested, eligible students. All crossing guards are required to attend an informational meeting prior to starting their post and must sign a pledge. Parents also have to sign a permission slip.

*For more information on the Cross Guard program, contact Sarah Posti at [postise@carlow.edu](mailto:postise@carlow.edu).*



## When size matters: The case for small schools

by Linda Ambroso

It is easy to acknowledge that a positive school culture is essential for learning. Yet it can be difficult to enact concrete measures that foster an improved learning environment.

Research shows that when it comes to schools, size matters. According to the Small Schools Workshop and U.S. Department of Education, benefits of small schools include:

- Higher student achievement
- Increased visibility of students, and reduced violence and disruptive behavior
- Improved attendance and graduation rates
- Increased teacher satisfaction
- Cost effectiveness

The Small Schools Workshop is a group of educators, organizers and researchers that promotes "the importance of [public] school size to student learning and the role of small schools in furthering positive whole-school and systemic change." See <http://www.smallschoolsworkshop.org/index.html>.

Small schools are distinct from small class sizes. Good small schools have these features in common:

- A maximum population of 300 students in a heterogeneous mix that represents the local community

- A non-exclusive admissions policy
- A consistent educational experience for students over an extended period of time (more than one year)
- A coherent focus and philosophy of education, and a matching, integrated curriculum
- A cohesive group of teachers that collaborate and discuss the needs of their students
- A sense of shared leadership and investment
- Involvement of families

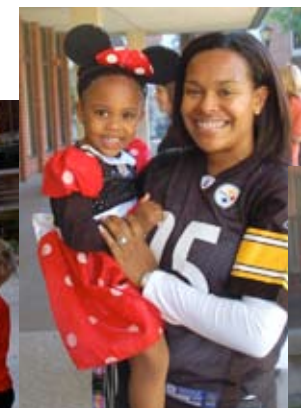
"Smallness is a prerequisite for the climate and culture we need to develop habits of heart and mind essential to a democracy," says Deborah Meier, principal of Seven Hills School in Boston. (University of Wisconsin: "The Ultimate Education Reform? Make Schools Smaller")

As taxpayers, we want efficiencies. As parents, we want individualized instruction to help our children learn. The creation of "learning academies" and "schools within schools" are ways to reconcile these issues and allow public schools to learn from the best private schools.

*Linda Ambroso is a Campus School parent and was coordinator of the Accountability Initiative of the former Charter Schools Project at Duquesne University, a non-profit, non-partisan, foundation-funded resource center for charter school planners and operators.*

Children of Spirit

## BOO!



Let's not forget Halloween! It was just a couple of months ago that clowns, ninjas, and sports figures graced our campus.



**I've been good ALL year!**



*Maria Hairston, parent and Chair of the Box Tops Program (pictured at right), presents Dr. Anne-Marie Balzano with a check for \$427.50 from General Mills. The money was earned through collection of Box Tops in each individual classroom in all grades. The Box Tops Program runs until the end of March, so students and parents, keep collecting those labels and bring them into your classroom in an envelope marked "BOX TOPS." Each classroom has a box for collection. The four classrooms that collect the most Box Tops will win a Sanremo's Pizza party, Rita's Ice, or Bruester's Ice Cream. Thanks to Maria for all her hard work on raising these funds for the School!*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, January 9: **PTA Meeting, 8:30 a.m., Cafeteria** breakfast available at 8 a.m.

Monday, January 21: **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** No School

Jan. 27 to Jan. 31: **Catholic Schools Week**

Wednesday, February 6: **Ash Wednesday**  
**Start of PTA Meager Meal Drive**

Thursday, February 14: **Valentine's Day**  
**PTA Meeting, 8:30 a.m.\***

Feb. 15 through Feb. 18: **President's Day Weekend** No School

Wednesday., February 20: **Ice Skating Party, 7 to 9 p.m.** Schenley Park

*\*Please note that this meeting may be rescheduled for an evening during the week of February 11th, dependent on the featured guest's schedule. Parents will be informed.*

**Look for our next PTA newsletter to be published (via e-mail blast) in March, when we will feature articles on the upcoming Founders Legacy in May, highlights from the Campus School basketball season, and exciting updates on what some individual faculty members are teaching in their classrooms.**

The Campus School of Carlow University, a Catholic coeducational program rooted in the values-based tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, offers a creative learning environment and provides a holistic liberal educational for the young.

**PTA Officers**

- Dana Casale, President (danacasale@comcast.net)
- Mary Kiernan, Vice President (mary@actualsizecreative.com)
- Irene Hils, Treasurer (jimirenehils@comcast.net)
- Anne Ward, Secretary (ward105@comcast.net)