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STAR/CSF Fort Worth Newsletter

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Children's Scholarship Fund

giving parents a choice • giving children a chance

Eighth Grade Graduates Discuss the STAR Program

Congratulations to the STAR Program's eighth grade graduates of 2004! These six students exemplify the academic excellence and strong character that STAR encourages. As they prepare for high school, they shared about their experiences with the program and their dreams for the future.

When asked how STAR has helped her as a student, Jamie Jones said, "STAR ... lovingly pushes me to reach my fullest potential. STAR helps me because I know that I have to do well in school in order to keep my sponsor, so it is a good incentive for me to do well in my academics, which ultimately causes me to do well in the future. STAR also boosts my morale, my self-esteem, and self-confidence when it sends me letters in the mail, saying that I am a star student."

Ly Hoang said, "STAR has, of course, helped my family and me financially but STAR also gave me the motivation to do well in school. To know that a person I have never met before cares for me and my future is very gratifying. To know that someone trusts me to educate myself and eventually succeed in life gives me a reason to make them proud. Without the STAR program, it would have been difficult for my parents to provide me with a Catholic education. I can never thank the Star Program enough for inspiring me and making my future brighter."



Brandon Flowers

Brenton Flowers added, "STAR has helped me realize I have no limits. Now I know I can do my best in all of my subjects."

While the financial support of sponsors was greatly appreciated, their participation in STAR has had even further reaching benefits. Jamie said, "I would get so excited when I'd come home from school and my Grandma would say, "Jamie, you've received some mail for your sponsor." From that point on I knew that our relationship was personal and not objective. I know that he had taken time out of his busy agenda to write me a letter. "

"Having a sponsor means you have to try harder not just for your parents but for them also," said Ben Castro. "You have more good reasons to try and become a person who

can give back to [your] community. Mr. and Mrs. Harris, having never met me, have done such a wonderful thing for me. I hope that I too can pass it on when I am older."

Brandon Flowers said, "I see my sponsor as both a donor and a friend because he takes as much pride in my work as I do."



Ly Hoang, Ben Castro, and Jamie Jones

With this strong academic foundation, a promising future lies ahead for the graduates. They plan to complete their secondary educations at Nolan or Calvary Christian. Jamie's goals include early high school graduation "with a 4.0 GPA or higher, graduating with honors from the National Honor Society, and being valedictorian of my graduating class." As for college, she wants to attend Harvard, majoring in psychology or psychiatry. Brenton plans on attending Texas Wesleyan. Ben said he wants to go to college out of state, "UCSC in California sounds like an awesome place but so do other places

I've looked at. My mind is not made up but I know I want to graduate from college one day. I owe that to my parents and everyone else who has helped and supported me."



Brandon Flowers

Their career goals span the range from professional actress, dancer, and model to marine biologist to becoming known as "the greatest electrical engineer". Ly's ideal occupation is that of a doctor. "I would enjoy working with the sick because at the end of the day, I can say, 'I just saved a person's life.'" Brenton Flowers is interested in "becoming a lawyer and the President of the United States."

As valuable as their career aspirations are, the mature and kind character developed through Christ-centered education is priceless. "I want to leave a positive influence on everyone who comes into my life," said Ben. "I want to give my family a better life. I want to help those who need and deserve it. I want to share my wealth of knowledge and money and love with those who matter to me the most." ●



Brandon Flowers, Dominique Stevenson (CSF Recipient), and Brenton Flowers with their eighth grade diplomas from Our Mother of Mercy Catholic School.

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Parents Plead for Help

Every day parents call our office inquiring about scholarships. Every child's situation is different, some excel in their academics and thrive on challenge; some need a more structured environment than public school provides. Parents tell us of their inability to pay for private school on their own due to poverty caused by lost jobs and chronic illnesses. Some parents are students; some single moms; all are struggling to make a better life for their children.



It is hard to turn away those who so urgently need help, but right now we have no choice but to tell them gently that we are not currently giving out new scholarships. We reluctantly say that all we can do is put them on the waitlist, now numbering over 850 families, and we'll contact them when scholarships come available.

If you know of someone who shares your passion for children and education, please give them our phone number. Help us answer these parents' pleas for a choice in education.

School Choice Benefits Economy

In a June 7 article in Investors' Business Daily, Lewis Andrews stated, "There is growing evidence to suggest that widespread adoption of school choice would have a dramatic economic, as well as educational benefit." The Yankee Institute, conducting a study based on the fact that private education spends about \$2200 less per student than public school, found that educating all 47.5 million public school students privately would save more money than the annual total of all

state budget deficits. The relief to middle-income families who struggle to live in high priced neighborhoods to access better schools would further stimulate the economy. Also, as a voucher system would sever "the link between school qualification and residential location," parents would have the incentive to move into declining urban areas and renovate them. In the long term, urban revitalization could lead to higher property values and a broader tax base. As Andrews concludes, "giving parents control over the education of their children is not just sound pedagogy-it's pretty good economics, too."

Letters from Parents

Children's Scholarship Fund,

Dear Mrs. Myers,

**"Only the educated are free."
-Epictetus**

On behalf of my son, Christopher Eric, and our entire family, I want to once again thank you for helping to support a truly wonderful educational experience and making it possible for us to send him to Temple Christian School. Eric is now nearing the end for fourth grade and has really been working hard to consistently bring home good grades. In fact, we are proud to report that of the nine classes where he receives a numerical



My son, Javier Atkinson, received help from the scholarship fund for four years. He began as an eight grader at Our Mother of Mercy School and continued into Nolan Catholic High School. The help we received from the fund was tremendous.

We were blessed during his senior year with increased employment to meet the financial needs for his education. Javier graduated May 23rd with an 86.6 GPA. He has been accepted into the University of Advancing Technology in Temple, Arizona. He is pursuing a degree in software engineering. The scholarship fund has made all of this possible.

**"We believe the well-being of the entire community is enhanced when children are given a quality education that allows them to achieve to their utmost ability."
-Excerpt from the Board of Trustees' Mission Statement**

grade, six of them are A's. Equally important are the good solid values promoted by his school, values that support a Christian lifestyle and what it means to be a good citizen of the community. We look forward to continuing his education

Thank you to each and every one of your donors and supporters. My prayer is for your continued work in helping children and their families. You have been a blessing to our family. Thank you, thank you!

thanks to your support....

With warmest regards,
Chris Shulz

Blessings,
Netta Atkinson

