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STAR/CSF-FW Times



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“Foundations are what keep us strong...the more our children can benefit from their foundation academically, morally and emotionally-the better our community can be. Quality education can help break the cycle of poverty and enrich a child’s future.”

STAR/CSF FW

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In Tribute to John Walton, Co-Founder CSF (1946-2005)

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“On August 3, 1968, Patrick Watkins was a sergeant first class in the U.S. Army. He'd long been a professional soldier-airborne, Special Forces. This time, his job was running operations along the Ho Chi Minh trail for a top secret military outfit known as SOG.



The initials stood for Studies and Observation Group. The name was innocuous but its work was deadly. Members of SOG came from all branches of the military. They were all volunteers...

On that day in 1968, Sergeant Watkins was in an aircraft directing the activities of a SOG team on the ground below. The team had been inserted into South Vietnam's A Shau Valley, not far from the Laotian border. There, the six-man team had encountered as many as 400 of the enemy. The team was under intense fire. Two team members were killed and three others wounded.

The only uninjured member of the team, a medic, had just radioed Pat Watkins and in a calm voice had requested an air strike on his own position. Sergeant Watkins called in the air support and brought it down hard on the enemy and, by necessity, on his own men, too.

The medic on the ground was John Walton of Bentonville, who died... in the crash of an experimental airplane he was piloting...It wasn't something

he'd talked much about himself.... The air strike drove the North Vietnamese back. John Walton carried one badly wounded comrade to a helicopter landing zone, treated the wounded men and stayed on the ground until everybody else was loaded into a helicopter.

Two helicopters were shot down trying to rescue the team. A third, flown by a South Vietnamese crew, finally managed to land and withdraw the surviving members of the team.

One of the things Pat Watkins remembers about John Walton was that he didn't have to be there at all. He was a volunteer at least four times over. He left college to volunteer for the Army, then volunteered for jump school, for the Special Forces and for SOG. Even then, he could have had it easier. As a medic, he could have worked in a Special Forces dispensary, but he preferred assignments in the field. He did recon missions right up until the day he went home.

He survived that day in the A Shau Valley with only a scratch. Upon returning to his base, John Walton finally noticed that a bullet had lightly grazed his hand. Even so, the wound still would have merited a Purple Heart. But John Walton wouldn't hear of putting in for an award for such a minor injury.

His Silver Star was awarded on the recommendation of

Sergeant Watkins, who actually put John Walton in for the Distinguished Service Cross, the country's second-highest decoration for valor in combat. Pat Watkins still thinks his friend deserved the DSC... He was one of the finest combat soldiers I met in Vietnam.”

I had the distinct pleasure of meeting John Walton and speaking with him about our shared passion for children and their education! His enthusiasm and commitment were evident in the way his eyes lit up when discussing my role as Executive Director of the Tarrant County program! He simply said “Thank you for making this dream happen for these kids.”

In awe as to how his dedication to funding educational choice had given the opportunity to so many children, we discussed how those children had a brighter future, full of promise. I told him my job was filled with many blessings because I was able to see the first hand results of his efforts!

We salute John and his extraordinary gifts he shared with many children around the United States!



As we celebrate this beautiful season, our prayers are with the Walton family in memory of this extraordinary man who gave so much for all.

Ted Forstmann



Ted Forstmann, senior partner of Forstmann Little & Co., has been elected Chairman and CEO of CSF. He co-founded CSF with the late John Walton in 1998 and served as

Chairman until 2002, when John Walton took on the role. Ted states, "John Walton was one of the greatest philanthropists of all time. His passion for creating equal opportunity in education for all children was unmatched. Through his generosity, tens of thousands of children are receiving quality education." Forstmann added: "John didn't just provide funding that allowed CSF to grow beyond our dreams, but he also devoted so much of his time and energy. He was a rock..."

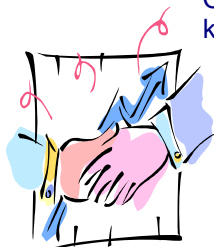
"With Ted leading our board," Darla Romfo, President of CSF commented, "CSF's commitment to expanding educational opportunities for low-income families can continue to be met."

STAR students shine!

Every STAR student from St. Rita's Catholic School in Fort Worth received Outstanding report cards for the first quarter. Congratulations to these STAR students!

- **Brenda Aguilar**
- **Lauren Antwine**
- **Michael Hernandez**
- **Malik Mason**
- **Erikha Mason**
- **Pedro Romero**
- **Anton Wilson**
- **Sophia Wilson**

71% of STAR students attained **Honor Roll** status while **78%** achieved **Perfect Attendance!**



Outstanding STAR students received a free "Putt-Putt Miniature Golf" certificate along with a letter commending them on their achievements!

Local Waiting List Just Under 1200 Families

Daily phone calls are received in the STAR/CSF FW office from parents asking for help! Heart wrenching reasons are given: their child is not being challenged, they are bullied, they need more than what they are receiving. As parents, they want the best education for their child and they have sought our name and phone number for help! Our only answer is to put their child's name on our waiting list...



If you are interested in sponsoring a student, please let us know! Your gift goes directly to the school and student and their parent are responsible for exemplary effort attendance and academic excellence.

If you know of someone who is interested in helping a great student who needs more in education, please give us a call at 817-332-8550! Tell them it's the reward of a lifetime! Parents and students are so appreciative of the opportunity!

Thanks!

From a STAR parent... "We would like to express our greatest appreciation for our generosity toward our family. Your kindness is a major addition to our daughter's education. Thank you again. May God bless you and all your works."

From a STAR student... Our class is going to San Antonio to visit the missions! I am so excited! Once again, this wouldn't be possible without you, thank you! God Bless You!

Sponsors love hearing from their kids, but so do the children love writing! The relationships built here today, are something that the child will take with them to high school, and through the rest of their life!



In Memory of Fred Pergande

Board Member, John Pergande states:

"My father dedicated more than 20 years of his life to helping others who needed a roof over their heads, a hot meal in the stomachs, or just someone to listen. I was touched by the creation of this memorial fund at STAR/CSF. In much the same way that my father sought to help those in need, STAR/CSF opens doors of opportunity through educational choice."

STAR/CSF Ft. Worth serves elementary school students who so desperately want a choice in where they attend school. They realize success in their educational endeavors will help them attain a chance at the American Dream!

Our prayers are with the Pergande Family and our appreciation for the kindness of donors who created this Memorial Fund in Fred's name.

School Choice News

From School Reform News, December 2005, ...With Gallop and other surveys showing that up to half of all American parents would gladly switch their children out of public schools if the government supplied a voucher or tax credit...In the words of Rudolph Giuliani, "...you would see a significant number of ...private schools develop." From Virginia Walden Ford, "As I looked at the happy faces of the families who came to celebrate educational opportunities for their children, I was reminded of why it is so important to continue to advocate on their behalf for quality education for all children."