Indeed, you are our GLORY and JOY.
1 Thessalonians 2:20

Nicaragua Christian Academy in Managua has been blessed with full enrollment this year!
Preventing Students to Be Leaders and Servants of Jesus Christ

Founded in 1920, Christian Schools International was the first educational services organization to be established in North America, and we have been a leader in Christian education for almost a century. Education has changed a lot since 1920, and so has Christian Schools International. Anchored in this world of change is a mission that remains unchanged. We advance Christian education, and we support the Christian schools in your community.

Ultimately all of our work focuses on children. Christian Schools International does its work best by zeroing in on Christian school leaders, teachers, and the organizational structures that build efficiency and emphasis around this important work.

Christian Schools International is a collection of passionate people—paid professionals and skilled volunteers—all committed to equipping students to be both leaders for and servants of Christ in a contemporary world, and all committed to having every square inch of God’s once-perfect creation reclaimed for him. I’m honored to introduce you to a few of those passionate people.

God’s peace,

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A LOOK BACK...

1919
Graduating class of Sheboygan Christian School in Wisconsin

1920
Birthplace of Christian Schools International, Roseland, Chicago
Christian Education Support for a Busy Leader

Daystar is a growing, non-denominational Christian school, grades K-8, located in Chicago’s South Loop. Tami Doig has been an integral part of Daystar’s success. She has served on its board, taught at Daystar, and is now the principal. We wanted to find out how Christian Schools International (CSI) has assisted Tami in her leadership role.

CSI: You have participated in the CSI Principal Development Institute and Educator Leadership Development Institute events. How have these events assisted you?

TD: Both events brought a real balance to what I do. Much of the conversation was thoughtful, philosophical, looking at issues from a high level view. But there was also a good dose of “this is what we are really dealing with.” The mix of big ideas, vision, being encouraged to articulate and think, and “these are the eight things that are coming at you tomorrow morning” was great. These programs helped me prioritize and to make decisions around the urgent in relation to the vision.

Like most administrators, I had been a classroom teacher. As a teacher, you have a lot of colleagues, and there is great comfort in that. I wasn’t prepared for the level of isolation that comes with this role as principal in dealing with the issues, attending the CSI events reminds me that I am not alone. I also want to say it was remarkable how quickly people from completely different backgrounds formed relationships at the events through shared experiences. It makes for a strong community.

CSI: How has your connection to CSI benefited your leadership?

TD: It’s been huge! I was on the board of directors at Daystar before I taught here, so I was aware of CSI. And when I was a teacher, I knew about CSI’s pension plan and curriculum, but didn’t have a real sense of all of the things CSI offered. After attending ELDI, I now use all of the resources that CSI has available. A CSI principal mentor has met with me on several occasions. I have been to other CSI leadership trainings like those at Trinity Christian College. And Dave Koetje has led an advisory board at our school. I know I can call CSI and ask, “Who can help me with this?” I really appreciate the support.

My peers and I are involved in associations that are not all Christian based. CSI stands apart, as they really work around what a Christian education needs to be. CSI helps me to be encouraged and think deeply about what it means to offer a Christian education. It would be quite a chasm if those services weren’t there. I can be rather cynical, but I really believe in what CSI stands for! Daystar is different from other Christian schools in many ways, but CSI is a group of people who really encourage us to be who we are, without trying to change us.

CSI: What need does a Christian school fill in the South Loop area of Chicago?

TD: Our school has a unique Chicago location. Daystar’s mission and vision commit us to a diverse community. We serve the urban poor and the urban wealthy, and there are lots of strategies to help us do that. We are not inexpensive; 60 percent of our families do receive financial aid. And diversity is always a challenge when you are serving those from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Another thing that sets Daystar apart is that, from the beginning, we chose to serve Christian and non-Christian families. Our commitment is to have 70 percent primarily Christian, but the remainder creates an incredible diversity faith-wise. The fun part is watching not just children, but whole families, come to believe in Jesus because of this commitment. We have 50-60 parents join us each week for chapel and this is church for many of them! Eventually, many of these families will find a church to attend.

We unabashedly proclaim Jesus. When parents tour Daystar, they have to attend one of our worship times as part of the tour. We say to potential families, “We are going to tell your children that Jesus loves them, every day.” We don’t back down from it. I don’t know why some families give us their kids, but they do. Part of it is that good education in Chicago can be difficult to come by. And our philosophical approach is also different. Most people just come and feel the love of Jesus. They may not know it, but that’s what it is. We didn’t choose to serve non-Christian families to increase enrollment; it was always part of our mission. So to see all the pieces working together as these families make faith commitments and then join churches—it fills me with wonder!

CSI: Are there any new initiatives you are currently working on?

TD: We opened 17 years ago with 12 students. Eight years ago we bought a new building to serve 50 students. Now we have nearly 300 and are growing by about 25 students per year. We just added a second kindergarten and are having serious conversations about developing a high school in the city based on the same school model.
THANK YOU

We would like to thank the following individuals, churches, and organizations for the contributions they have made to Christian Schools International in support of our efforts to provide leadership and support to Christian schools around the world. Donations are for the time period of September 1, 2013 thru August 31, 2014.

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1940  
Graduating class of Ireton Christian in Iowa  
1943  
CSI begins to offer pension plans  
1946  
First student body of Oskaloosa Christian School in Iowa
Caring for Our Christian Teachers

Jan van der Woerd, from London, Ontario, has been a business coach and consultant for the last 18 years at Alpha Services Group. During this time, he also volunteered as a benefits plan trustee for the Christian Schools International Canada Pension and Insurance Plan. We wanted to find out what motivates Jan to give his time to serving Christian education.

CSI: As a trustee, what are some of the reasons you feel it is important to serve?

JV: I am committed to Christian education. I grew up in the Christian education system, and my children all graduated from a Christian school. I am proud that my four children then decided, on their own, to attend Christian colleges. I see it as a way to expand God’s kingdom. It is also important to get in front of children when they are young, making sure they are grounded, giving them the opportunity and the reason to move forward in their faith.

Serving as a trustee is a good fit for me based on my business and financial background. I felt the need to do my part, and in this role, I can use my strengths, talents, and interests to give back in a way I truly enjoy.

CSI: The pension and insurance plan provides support for our Christian school employees, including our teachers. Is that rewarding to know?

JV: I feel it is important that teachers are treated properly; in a way it is a justice issue. We need to provide for teachers in terms of how they are paid, including retirement, so they can focus on being great teachers of our children. Christian Schools International has provided the structure in order for schools to be sustainable. We can play an important part in contributing toward a teacher’s financial security in life. Obviously, we can’t provide it all, but we can provide good advice as trustees for the areas in which teachers cannot be expected to be experts, so they can instead focus on teaching.

CSI: After years of volunteering as a trustee, what would you say is our value to the Christian community?

JV: From the point of view of employee benefits, it is commendable that Christian Schools International took the initiative over 70 years ago to help Christian schools across North America. Taking on the liability of the schools is a significant responsibility for an organization. Basically, Christian Schools International created a financial institution that serves teachers and has a trade association mandate that requires membership. I believe Christian Schools International should be respected for its commitment to accept this responsibility and liability and is doing a great job of managing the fund.

CSI: How do you see Christian Schools International’s abilities in terms of trust and competency?

JV: The trust developed in Christian Schools International is built on the departments Dave Koetje and Howard Van Mersbergen manage with a high level of competency. The efficiency with which they manage the duties of pension and insurance administration is exemplary. The board has benchmarked Christian Schools International against industry standards, and Christian Schools International has stood up very well. This was also true when benchmarked based on cost if the plan were outsourced. Christian Schools International staff members really have their hearts in Christian education and are very competent when it comes to understanding the financial activities of what can be complicated plans.

CSI: How important is it for the Christian community to show support of our Christian educators with things such as the retirement plan?

JV: In essence, teachers need to be treated well. This is not to say their school boards can’t support this, but there is a level of consistency in the way teachers are treated across the North American system. Because of Christian Schools International’s involvement, we have created sustainability for the Christian education system. I’m not sure if that would be done in the same way if it were addressed at a local level. That, to me, is the benefit of a national program in the US and Canada. Christian Schools International provides that consistency, with good management. The other benefit is the economies of scale that give superior value over what can be done at a local level. There are efficiency gains that can be achieved at a national level that are unavailable at a state/provincial level. There is a very specialized competency required to manage a pension plan, and it is difficult to attract this skill level if you are not doing it at a national level.
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1962
Grade School
Glee Club at Pella
Christian in Iowa

1963
CSI Insurance plan begins

1966
Bellville Christian in Ontario
Valuable Lessons in Christian Leadership

Randy Kroll has served the Christian school community and the business community simultaneously for more than 30 years. Randy began working as a CPA in 1980. At the same time, he began his long tenure as a volunteer leader at Calvin Christian School in Edina, Minnesota. In 2011 Randy became president of Calvin Christian School. Calvin Christian serves over 400 students and families from more than 90 churches. We asked Randy how Christian Schools International (CSI) has assisted him in his role as president/CEO of Calvin Christian.

CSI: You are a regular participant in Christian Schools International’s CEO Roundtable. How has this shaped your views?

RK: The roundtable helps me understand and integrate some issues that may not come as naturally as they do for other school leaders from academic backgrounds. It is helpful to sit, listen, and learn. Conversely, as an added value, with my business background, I can bring a different perspective—an entrepreneurial perspective—the others may not. And it is fun as well!

I appreciate the relationships I have built within a core group of regular attendees. I can pick their brains regarding issues I face in my leadership role at Calvin Christian. Something like this is valuable for an executive in any organization because generally there is no one in the organization you can bare your soul to when it comes to sticky issues and ideas. To be able to do that with leaders in similar roles, along with the common bond of a love of Christian education, has proven to be very beneficial.

I have been impressed with the caliber of leaders, speakers, and discussion topics, such as the resident innovator at Chick Fil-A and the corporate trainer from the Disney Institute, who have provided effective information and have challenged us to think differently about our schools. As an individual from one school, I would not otherwise have the opportunity to become aware of the experiences of, interact with, and learn from the other leaders or speakers.

CSI: How has your connection to CSI influenced your leadership?

RK: I think the support Christian Schools International gives to Christian education is very helpful. Just today, I received an email from one of the CSI staff members with thoughtful projections of a view of the Common Core standards, suggesting we take another look at how Common Core standards may enhance what we do. CSI helps frame issues for me and provides a forum for deeper thinking on relevant topics.

CSI: Is Christian education a wise investment for families?

RK: Parents who are looking for a “return on investment” have certain expectations. The challenge for Christian educators is to help parents develop these expectations. Sometimes Christian schools sell themselves short by setting their goal of preparing a child to be college-ready at grade 12. This can be shortsighted. We should help parents reframe the questions and their expectations. If we are doing our job well, the results of a strong Christian education are going to be realized well beyond age 18, let’s say at age 35, when the student is in the prime of life in terms of vocation, family, church/ministry life, and interactions with society. It definitely sets Christian schools apart from other school choices.

This is not to take away from our commitment to a strong education. We must provide strong, relevant education that will prepare students for the future. But it is the strong, relevant education, fully integrated with a biblical perspective, with intentional and relational discipleship practices, that provides value to families and, ultimately, to the kingdom.
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL FINANCIALS

Revenue

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Expense Comparison

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<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$2,386,322</td>
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Bob and Marsha Vander Laan
Richard and Arlene Vander Laan
Bob and Barb Vander Wal

1981
Abbotsford Christian in British Columbia

1986
Delta Christian in British Columbia
Wilma VanderBaan
Elco and Joanne Vandergrift
David VanderHart
Bob and Jackie Vanderlinden
Joyce VanderMolen
Al and Evelyn VanderPloeg
Allan and Ann VanderPloeg
Margery VanderPloeg
Al and Jennie Vanderschoot
Ted and Joan VanderVeen
Francis and Joan VanderWall
Wanda VanderZee
Ivan and Lois VanDusseldorp
Tom and Betty VanEck
Drew and Betsy VanGoor
Frank and Gladys VanTil
Bill and Marge VanWienen
John and Julia VanWyk
Charlotte Veenstra
Gretta Veenstra
Ronald Veenstra
Jim and Mary Veldheer
George and Henrietta Veldstra
John and Ida Vels
Philip and Alileen Veltveld
Jack and Diane Veltkamp
Louis and Pam Venema
Carol VerBurg
Harley Verbeek
Bernice Vermeer
William and Gladys Vermeulen
John Verwolf
Cecilia Verbryk
Herman and Sadie Visscher
Freda Visser
Scott Visser
Sandy Volkers
Glenn and Marcia Voltaire
Kevin and Anna Vos
Abe and Carol Vreeke
Dave and Dorothy Vruwink
Anthony and Alice Vryvinkel
Tom and Carolyn Weeda
Henry and Joyce Weg
Douglas and Lisa Westenbroek
Ron and Mary Jean Whipple
Wilbert and Berendina Wiggers
Martha Wiens
Theresa Wiers
Burnie and Elinor Wiersma
Homer and Betty Wigboldy
Betty Williams
Theresa Wiltsie
Ena Witte
Hank and Thressa Witte
John and Lynda Witte
John and Char Witvliet
Hendrick and Johanna Wolters
John Wolters
Dan and Joyce Workman
Edward and Janet Wright
Marvin and Suzanne Wynalda
Len and Ruth Wynneke
Dave Zandee
Bernard and Patricia Zandstra
Jenny Zeedyk
Dennis and Kristen Zoet
William and Jean Zuidema
John and Laurey Zwart
Myra Zwierp
Bernard and Annette Zwiers
Tim Zylstra

Churches and Organizations
14th Street CRC, MI
Alger Park CRC, MI
Artevel Foundation, CA
Atlantic Stewardship Bank, NJ
Aylmer CRC, ON
Baker Publishing Group, MI
Bethel CRC, WA
Bethel CRC, AB
Bethel CRC, MT
Borculo CRC, MI
Bradenton CRC, FL
Calvin CRC, IL
Calvin CRC, IA
Calvin CRC, WI
Capstone Insurance Services, MI
Christian Evangelical Foundation, MI
Community CRC, IN
Cottonwood Heights CRC, MI
Covenant CRC, IA
CRC of Nobleford, AB
Creme Curls Bakery Inc., MI
Dynamic Realty, Inc., MI
Ebenezer CRC, MN
Faith CRC, MN
Faith CRC, IA
First CRC, Grosse Pointe Park, MI
First CRC, CA
First CRC, Orange City, IA
First CRC, Hudsonville, MI
First CRC, Sheldon IA
First CRC, Pella IA
First CRC, IL
Forest Grove CRC, MI
Fuller Avenue CRC, MI
Georgetown CRC, MI
Graafschap CRC, MI
Grant CRC, MI
Heritage CRC, Byron Center, MI
Heritage CRC, Kalamazoo, MI
Hillcrest CRC, MI
Hope CRC, MI
Hospers CRC, IA
Immanuel CRC, IA
Immanuel CRC, CA
Inwood CRC, IA
Ivanest CRC, MI
Kanawha CRC, IA
Lucas CRC, MI
Luctor CRC, KS
Macatawa Bank, MI
Maranatha Church, MI
McBain CRC, MI
Millbrook CRC, MI
Munder Capital Management, MI
New Holland CRC, SD
New Hope Church, IL
North Street CRC, MI
Olthof Homes, IN
Orland Park CRC, IL
Palo Alto CRC, CA
Palos Heights CRC, IL
Peoria CRC, IA
Prairie City CRC, IA
Providence CRC, MI
Ridgewood CRC, MI
Sanborn CRC, IA
Second CRC, Byron Center, MI
Second CRC, WI
Second CRC, IA
Second CRC, Kalamazoo, MI
Seymour CRC, MI
Shalom CRC, SD
South Grandville CRC, MI
Stewardship Foundation, CA
The Huizenga Foundation, IL

Memory of Myra Van Mersbergen
William and Phyllis Krombeen

In Memory of Hilda Aukeman
Gordon and Virginia Geldof
Ralph and Nellie Hutt
Nelson and Norene Aukeman
Linda Aukeman
Joyce Hutt
Nellie Den Dulk
Bob and Jean Urquhart
Christina Pryor
Thomas and Lori Aukeman
Marie Melrose
Albert and Virginia Downing
Susie Kravig

1997
Middle school students at Providence Christian in Florida

1999
A student from Unity Christian in Iowa receives a medal at a track and field event
Becoming a Christian Leader

Patty Schuurman returned to Toronto, Canada, to begin her dream job as a teacher at her alma mater, Toronto District Christian High School, and is now the vice principal. As someone who has developed her talents through Christian education and is sharing her knowledge with the future generation, we asked how her participation in Christian Schools International (CSI) events has assisted her career path and her views on Christian education.

CSI: You’ve participated in our Educator Leadership Development Institute (ELDI). How does that experience affirm your interest in becoming a Christian school leader?

PS: I have been able to participate in ELDI in a number of ways, including as a participant, promoting it at a local teacher’s convention, and twice as a guest facilitator. It’s been a fantastic program to receive something and to contribute in a small way. As a participant in 2010, it was thoroughly beneficial to learn from the expertise and wisdom of Dave Koetje, Al Boerema, Henry Contant, Bruce Hekman, Tim Krell, and Elco Vandergrift.

One year, I was able to fly to British Columbia to attend ELDI. It was wonderful to meet with teachers from British Columbia, Alberta, and the US. I learned about other Christian schools: teachers and administrators who love what they do and were passionate about education and sharing it with others. I was able to feel what it would be like to be involved in leadership and administration as the facilitators provided thoughtful examples that the participants could delve into and discuss in-depth. It was a full week with great content in a beautiful setting with thoughtful people. A real joy!

CSI: Donors give a lot of financial support so we are able to offer the ELDI events. What are your thoughts on donor support?

PS: I would like to say thank you to the donors. I feel I have benefitted in many ways. ELDI was a turning point for me. I was able to make long-lasting friendships and I remain thankful for that group of people. I refer people to ELDI whenever they ask about whether or not they should look into school leadership.

ELDI was so worthwhile in my mind, I would love to see it continue for others who are wondering whether Christian schools are a central place of education for them where they can grow. How else do you wrestle with who you are as a child of God in a place where you really want to make a difference? The funds donors give to ELDI provide the opportunity to make leadership a reality for many of us.

CSI: Your teaching disciplines are French and physical education. What is the message that you like to get across to your students?

PS: I feel passionate about both disciplines. I had wonderful French and physical education teachers when I attended Toronto Christian as a student; I respect and admire both ladies, who are my colleagues today. French has given me the opportunity to see the world in a global way and to learn that God has created cultures with amazing diversities. Regarding physical education, my favorite passage for my 9th grade class is Luke 10:27: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” Through this passage, we recognize God is the creator of our emotions, physical aspects, and our minds. Part of our physical education curriculum includes being active in sports and fitness, but we also try to learn about nutrition, wellness, and mental health.

CSI: What message would you like to share with the CSI community?

PS: I have been the recipient of so much from Christian schools as a student, teacher, and now as a vice principal. I love the things that are offered as part of our school locally and also as a CSI school. I’ve seen a lot of people who invest in Christian education regardless of organization or country. Christian schools make a huge investment in the community, so I want to give back and belong to this greater Christian family.
Caring for Our Christian Teachers

Leonard Van Drunen, former international banker and current professor of business and chair of the Business Department at Calvin College, serves on the Christian Schools International US Pension and Insurance Board of Trustees. He is willing to donate his time as a board member because he is so thankful for all who have worked over the years to help Christian schools flourish.

CSI: Please tell us about your background and how Christian education fits in.

LV: I am enthusiastic about Christian education and the role CSI plays in supporting it. CSI has always been a part of my life, even though I didn’t know it growing up! My mother taught at Holland (Michigan) Christian schools years ago. I graduated from Pella Christian High School and my children attended CSI schools. I attended Dordt College, where I had great professors who helped me develop my interest in finance. I went to graduate school at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana. My wife, Karen, taught at Lafayette Christian School when CSI’s Bob VanWieren was a principal there. Her teaching salary helped to finance my graduate school education, so I am forever in the debt of the Christian school community, which is great! I worked as a professor of finance at the University of Utah, spent eight years in New York as a vice president for capital markets for Merrill Lynch, and followed that with eight years as a managing director of investment banking for JP Morgan Chase in New York, Tokyo, and London. I have been a professor at Calvin College for the past nine years and have served on Christian Schools International’s US Pension Board of Trustees since 2009.

CSI: What are some of the ways your Christian education has impacted you and how you see the world?

LV: Christian education provided an excellent preparation for me as I moved into my professional life. I received a great education—as good as any of my colleagues, I believe—and I am thankful for it. Through my Christian education, I know God is sovereign in all areas, including math, science, business, and finance. These things are all part of his creation. Even the pension plan is part of God’s creation, and I have learned this from CSI.

Christian education is important in that it teaches students that God loves everyone, all are created in God’s image, and as children of God, all people deserve to be treated as such. This was important when I traveled and worked with a lot of different people from different faith backgrounds. I’m thankful to my teachers for impressing this upon me.

When I work and travel, I hope others are motivated to ask me the reason for the hope I have. Many of the people I’m in contact with have good jobs and such, but not an overall hope.

CSI: What do you see as the board’s value to Christian education?

LV: The pension board’s value is that it provides Christian school teachers the opportunity to focus on teaching and then continue to flourish in retirement. I feel our Christian school teachers are out there every day serving in the communities, working so hard; it is our board’s obligation to take care of their financial security for the future as much as we can. And there needs to be a good career environment to draw and retain great Christian teachers. When this happens, it is a beautiful thing.

CSI: What do you envision for the future of Christian education?

LV: Christian schools are effective and efficient in economic expenditure, cheaper per student than what we spend in public schools. But from a parent’s perspective, it is paying double with tuition and taxes. In the past five or six years, people have been facing economic difficulties, and Christian schools face a real challenge to remain affordable. Local churches and other Christian organizations can really help, and I hope these groups will reinvigorate their commitment.

When I travel, especially to China, I see that Christian schools are growing. They face huge challenges, but Christianity is booming there, and parents want Christian education for their children. So, despite the financial challenges, using a market term, I am “bullish” on Christian education!
How can we ever thank God enough for you.

1 Thessalonians 3:9