

## A Full House: DePaul Cristo Rey's Challenges in Its Seventh Year



When the first bell rang on Thursday, August 17, it signaled the start of a new school year at DePaul Cristo Rey, just the seventh in the school's history, and carried with it the anticipation of all the academic, professional and social growth that's ahead.

Starting school that day were 110 new students, continuing the trend of full freshman classes and increasing interest among transfer students. Those new students were warmly welcomed, but they put a face to the challenge that continues to plague school leaders – how to continue serving students on an outdated campus that is at capacity.

DePaul Cristo Rey's original buildings were built for elementary and preschool students, which raised the following questions:

- How to feed 340 high school students in a cafeteria designed for 60 small children?
- How to optimize learning in classrooms sized for 20 small bodies?

- How to keep students safe crossing a parking lot and moving among five buildings with a combined 18 doors?
- How to manage competitions, crowds and safety at high school athletic events played in a grade school sized gymnasium?
- How to best address the very real day-to-day needs of our students for meals, clean clothes, and physical and mental health care that have a huge impact on their education?
- How to best continue supporting our graduates when they move from this campus to the wider world of college?

School leaders, board members and outside experts have grappled with these questions since the school opened in 2011 and more intensively in the past two years. Their questions, research and ideas have led to the development of a campus master plan that addresses these very real barriers to enrollment growth. It also focuses on how to make space for staff and resources that support DPCR students' complex, diverse needs with services not typically found in traditional high schools.

Specific details about the master plan and how it will support the school's growth will be shared in the months ahead. Stay tuned or contact President **Sister Jeanne Bessette** with questions at 513.861.0600 or [jeanne.bessette@dpcr.net](mailto:jeanne.bessette@dpcr.net).





## A Letter From the President

**Dear Friends of DePaul Cristo Rey,**

Believe it or not, I'm one of those people who spends too much time sitting at a computer.

But that seat feels more like a three-legged stool, not a desk chair. That stool has legs in the past, the present and the future. I am in daily conversations with people about our school, its mission, its history, and most importantly, its students. I tell and retell the founding story of both the Cristo Rey Network and DePaul Cristo Rey in particular. Thus I always seem to have one foot in the past.

Lest I stay mired in the past, I have to be constantly aware that the second leg of my stool is what is happening in the current moment with our students. On a daily basis we strive to meet our students' ordinary and extraordinary needs. We recently assisted a member of DPCR's Class of 2017, now a college freshman, with several critical missing links to help her get started in college. This included staff members driving her to another state for orientation and move-in, connecting her to a geographically closer Cristo Rey school, assisting her in obtaining a working cellphone, providing job leads for her through our network of friends (she's been hired!), and even putting some rescue funds on a debit card. Any one of these problems would have undermined her strong start in college; collectively they were proving to be a nightmare for her!

The third foot of my stool is always firmly planted in the future. From the day the Sisters of Charity launched this school, I have also stayed focused on next year, the next five years, the next 20 years. How will we support this growing school? Who will partner with our Corporate Work Study Program? Where will our students come from and what will they need when they arrive? Who will share their resources with us? How will this school grow to meet emerging needs and enrollment? Who will help to lead it?

Our cover story focuses on how we are shaping our future, creating a campus master plan while also recognizing and enhancing the resources needed to keep students in school through college. Advancing our mission is the work of many, many people – board members and volunteers who bring their wisdom and experience; staff and students who contribute their hopes; architects, engineers and contractors who are helping us figure out how to make the best use of our resources; and donors whose generosity is turning our plans into reality.

And lastly, speaking of past, present and future, we are thrilled to introduce you in these pages to our new principal, **Christopher Wilke**. After four years at DePaul Cristo Rey as teacher and Corporate Work Study co-director, Chris assumed this new position on August 1, 2017. He is already a wonderful, thoughtful partner in our educational endeavors, and he is poised to lead our school into a very robust future. Read more about him on page 5. DPCR's future has never looked brighter! I am so pleased and grateful that YOU are part of it.

With gratitude and hope,

*S. Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D.*

**Sister Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D.**  
President/CEO





# Sixth Annual Golf Classic is Best Yet



*DPCR President Sister Jeanne Besette, Golf Chair Bart Kohler, and DPCR Board of Directors Chair Barb Bennie.*



*The winning female foursome (left to right): Ellen Perazzo, Ann Turner, Barb Rohs and Kathy Carselle.*



*The winning male foursome sponsored by Ross, Sinclair & Associates: Steve Stefanou, Matt Staarmann, Joe Huber and Geoff Leder.*



*Ready to golf – S. Patrick Ann O'Connor and S. Thelma Schlomer of the Sisters of Charity, a Gold Sponsor of the event.*



A new location, beautiful day, enthusiastic golfers and volunteers, and generous sponsors all combined to make the sixth annual DePaul Cristo Rey Golf Classic the best one yet.

This year's classic was held on Monday, September 25 at the Western Hills Country Club. DePaul Cristo Rey Board of Directors Member **Bart Kohler**, president of **TAKKT America**, chaired the event and was joined by 100 golfers. DPCR students were on hand to welcome and assist golfers as they arrived and to sell raffle chances on the course. The Golf Classic raised over \$65,000 for the DePaul Cristo Rey Tuition Assistance Fund.



*Students (left to right) Miah '20, Grace '20 and Heaven '18 helped welcome golfers and sell raffle chances.*



*Luke '18 helps load clubs for golfers*





# Jane Yost Embodies Spirit of Service



**Jane Yost** discovered DePaul Cristo Rey through a friend and quickly aligned herself to the mission to transform students by helping them realize their full potential. She has brought knowledge and experience to her volunteer fundraising efforts from her time spent volunteering at her children's

schools and her church, as well as 40+ years as the CFO of family-run Yost Pharmacy. She has also brought a great big heart for our students.

Jane was the chairperson of the third Rey of Light Scholarship Benefit, which she took to new heights, in part by embracing and advocating for newer bidding

technology even though it had never been used at DPCR's event. While she prefers to be behind the scenes and is reluctant to accept accolades for her important work at DPCR, make no mistake; Jane is a force. She is a doer and a guide. "Education is something no one can take from you," she says. "I am so pleased to be a small part of the success of this program."

Jane and her husband, Dick, raised their four children and saw the positive life impact of a good, Catholic education and want to give that same opportunity to other children who can't afford it. She not only gives her time and talents to make this happen, she also shares her network of influence. The treasured friends that Jane introduces to DPCR have also embraced the school.

DePaul Cristo Rey is blessed to be on the receiving end of Jane's servant heart and her passion for our mission. She is an Igniter of Change, embodying DPCR's Spirit of Service.

## Alumni Profile

### "DPCR inspired me and prepared me to go after the life I want"



**Jasmine Luna Villa** graduated from DePaul Cristo Rey in 2016. Now a sophomore fine arts major at **Mount St. Joseph University**, she shares what she's been doing since graduation.

*"When I started at DePaul Cristo Rey, I really hadn't given too much thought about what my future would look like. Watching DPCR's first graduating class collectively get accepted to college, and experiencing their excitement, was inspiring. I decided I wanted to follow their example and be a student who goes to college."*

*My parents moved to the United States and sacrificed so much so my brothers and I could have a better life and a different future. DPCR inspired me and prepared me to go after the life I want. I remember my first day at the Mount; I knew what to expect and the steps I needed to take in order to succeed.*

*This past summer I participated in the Mount's Summer Employment Program which is similar to DPCR's Corporate Work Study Program. I worked at Su Casa Hispanic Center helping pre-k to second grade Hispanic children improve their English, Spanish and math. I also had a marketing role promoting programs, creating event flyers and engaging with parents. I walked away from that experience thinking I might want to be an art teacher.*

*I use what I learned at DPCR in my studies and employment; it has helped me feel more confident. I know that I will have those lessons to apply through the rest of my schooling, career and life in general."*

# Meet Our New Principal Chris Wilke



A new era is underway at DePaul Cristo Rey with **Christopher Wilke** now leading the academic program as the school's second principal. Chris is no stranger to the DPCR community having joined the faculty in 2013 as a social studies teacher and serving the past year as co-director of the Corporate Work Study Program. A graduate of the University of Dayton, he holds a master's degree in educational administration from Xavier University and spent 15 years as a teacher and administrator in Greater Cincinnati Catholic schools prior to teaching at DPCR. Here he shares his vision, plans and hopes for DPCR and our students.

## **What is your vision for the academic program as DPCR progresses from a new to a mature school?**

For students, my goal is to strengthen their college readiness by focusing on research based writing, ACT test preparation, and developing within them a sense of questioning and inquiry, as well as critical thinking skills. For faculty, I am focused on enhancing cooperative teaching strategies, critical thinking and inquiry strategies, and developing a comprehensive coaching and mentoring framework so teachers can best serve the needs of our students.

## **How do you plan to engage and support parents in their critical role in their students' success?**

First I want to find out what our parents want from the school in terms of ongoing education for them as the parents and guardians of college-bound students. Then I hope to re-engage families through monthly evening opportunities that address the issues that they have told us are of greatest concern or practical need to support their students as they transition to college.

## **Why are you giving renewed focus to the guidance and college counselors at DPCR?**

The guidance counselors are the main resources students have to achieve their acceptance into college through the college exploration and application process. We have invested in our counseling department so it is fully staffed and equipped to ensure our students are getting into the colleges they want and receiving the scholarship money they need. We have also invested in a full-time counselor to support our alumni in college with the addition of our Director of Graduate Success **Larisa Wright**. In addition, our partnership with Beech Acres has proven so incredibly valuable as their social workers help our students through personal, social and emotional challenges so they can stay focused on academics and college preparation.

## **Why did you want to lead DPCR as principal?**

I admire the courage and strength of our students, and they inspire me in so many ways. I want to help them have the best high school experience they can and to leave here stronger than when they started. I believe the way to best serve our students is to give full attention to our teachers. I'm incredibly excited to work with our teachers through professional development and ongoing training, while supporting and challenging them to improve so that they are fully equipped to push their students to be those critical thinkers who have the strength and capacity to keep persisting when it gets tough.



# "Welcome Home!"

## Reflections from Nazareth Farm

By Julie Murray, Religion Teacher and Service Coordinator



*Teacher Julie Murray, Josmary '18, Ian '19, Alejandra '18, Sakura '19, and Teacher Michael Delaney.*

After riding five hours on windy roads, mountains and highways, four students (**Josmary '18, Alejandra '18, Ian '19, and Sakura '19**), Spanish teacher **Michael Delaney**, and I hopped out of the school van to be greeted by the Nazareth Farm staff. We were welcomed with hugs and the greeting, "Welcome home!" as if we were long-lost family members. We quickly learned all about Nazareth Farm and its four cornerstones: simplicity, community, prayer, and service. These cornerstones came with their own challenges as we spent a week in service at this Catholic community in rural West Virginia.

Nazareth Farm is committed to living out the themes of Catholic Social Teaching, so they challenge their volunteers to also live them especially by being environmentally conscious through composting, taking bucket showers, working in the garden, using an outhouse, turning off the lights, and being mindful of water use.

With the help and guidance of Nazareth Farm staff members, we put siding on houses, worked on roofs, and learned more about the process of repairing houses

for residents in this Appalachian community. We were challenged to get to know students and adults from all over the United States to form our own community. One very important way we built this community was by turning off our cell phones, and getting to know the people who were right in front of us. We played outside, hiked a mountain, held chickens, told stories about our lives, and so much more. As a community we celebrated prayer in a variety of ways throughout the week.

I was beyond honored to watch our students grow in faith, community, simplicity, and love. They found a "home" at Nazareth Farm. It was clear that their minds and hearts had been deeply impacted by all that they experienced. Service adventures like this remind me of why I became an educator: to help students open their minds and hearts to the world around them, and to empower them to be the person God is calling them to be. By the time we left it was clear that God had touched each of our students in a unique way, and that their experiences at Nazareth Farm will remain a part of their life in the future.





*Several students participated in the week-long Fun With Science Water Camp sponsored by the English Language Learning Foundation, Inc.*



## Student Reflections on Nazareth Farm Week

*"What I got out of Nazareth Farm was a changed perspective. I never typically go out of my way to meet new people, but Nazareth Farm*

*coaxed me out of that habit of sticking to myself and what I already know. I talked to people who I never thought I'd even come into contact with at Nazareth Farm. I feel like I've changed in that I'm much louder and open than before, and I'm more open to change than ever before. I also think about how I can help others more now than before."*

**Ian '19**

*"What really made an impact on me personally was seeing the genuine love and care that everyone had toward one another and toward the people we went to serve. I enjoyed not only serving with new people, but learning from everyone how adventurous we all can be if we are willing to step out of our comfort zones and try something new."*

**Alejandra '18**

## Students Learn, Lead, Serve Over the Summer

The "lazy, hazy days of summer" is not a fitting description for how DePaul Cristo Rey students spent their summer break. All had a reading and writing assignment to complete over summer vacation and many worked summer jobs, some at their Corporate Work Study Program sites, others at Kings Island, fast food restaurants, community pools and recreation centers. Others did service and volunteer work including the Nazareth Farm trip. With funding from a grant through the **Cristo Rey Network®**, DPCR connected many students with summer programs including:

- King Program at the University of Cincinnati
- Cristo Rey Student Leadership Conference at Saint Martin de Porres, Cleveland's Cristo Rey High School
- Buckeye Leadership Academy at The Ohio State University
- DAAP Camp (College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning) at the University of Cincinnati
- Elmhurst College Mathematics & Science Academy
- Fun with Science Water Camp sponsored by the English Language Learning Foundation, Inc.
- Georgetown University Summer College Immersion Program
- Inner Space Camp at Eastern Kentucky University
- Jazz Academy at the College-Conservatory of Music at UC
- Red Cross Leadership Development Camp
- Lindner Summer Institute: Project Leadership at UC's Carl H. Lindner College of Business
- Miami University Accounting Program
- Ohio Business Week at Ohio University
- Opportunities to Learn about Business at Wabash College
- Summer Honors Engineering Camp at the University of Dayton
- Summer Scholars Program at Miami University

## New Partners, Sponsors Putting Greater Cincinnati's Future to Work

The school year opened with a new principal, 110 new students, and 16 new partners in the Corporate Work Study Program. We welcome:

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We thank these and all of our Corporate Partners, as well as the Sponsors who underwrite students working in nonprofit organizations. New Sponsors this year are:

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## Two New Members Join DPCR Board

Two new members have joined the DePaul Cristo Rey Board of Directors.



**S. Barbara Davis, SC**, recently retired after a 43-year career as a Catholic elementary school teacher, principal and consultant followed by nine years working in college advancement. She serves as the liaison between

DePaul Cristo Rey and the Sisters of Charity Corporation Board for Sponsored Ministries.



**Robert Kissel** is the CEO of **KDM P.O.P. Solutions Group**, which is a partner in the Corporate Work Study Program. He brings to the board more than 30 years of experience providing fiscal, strategic and operational leadership.

Both have been appointed to three-year terms.

## DePaul Cristo Rey Educators Are Outstanding

Three DePaul Cristo Rey teachers have been named Outstanding Educators by **Cincy Magazine**.

Recognized as the "Best of the Best" by Cincy are: Art Teacher **Lauren Macke**, Math Teacher **Kyle Nobbe**, and Spanish Teacher **Fernanda Torres**.

They were among elementary and secondary teachers from around the area chosen by a selection committee that noted they are exemplary educators who, "went above and beyond expectations."



Lauren Macke



Kyle Nobbe



Fernanda Torres



# 2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT

## Thank You for the Priceless Gift of Education

*"When I received the college acceptance letter from my "dream school," I jumped for joy like I had just won the lottery! In a way I had, because nothing is more priceless than having the opportunity to receive an education."*

*– Ke'Aira Harris '17*

For the students and graduates of DePaul Cristo Rey, the gift of an education is indeed priceless. Before they enroll here many have been in low-performing schools or have moved among several schools, and they don't often see their futures filled with possibilities.

By taking students from their uncertain pasts, through raising their academic and professional expectations, DePaul Cristo Rey transforms them from unsure freshmen to seniors who experience the exhilaration of that first college acceptance letter, and then onto graduation and college enrollment.

All is only possible with your support because, while the gift of education is priceless, the cost of quality, college-prep education is real, and it would be out of reach for these bright students without you. Thank you for seeing their bright futures and joining us to create priceless moments and opportunities with them.

*The following list contains the combined totals of the Annual Fund and Rey of Light scholarship support contributions received between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017.*



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*"We are enthusiastic supporters of students who want better lives, work hard and want to invest in their education. DePaul Cristo Rey and the "promise of hope" gives us confidence we can make a big difference for these students in our own back yard."*

**Susie and John Lama**  
*Friends and Supporters*

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*"One of the best things about my freshman year was the experience of becoming a part of something greater than myself. The family vibe at DePaul Cristo Rey means you can really open up and talk to anyone. I left behind a school where there were fights and drama, and I wasn't academically challenged. Here teachers who don't even have you in class still know your name and who you are. It was a refreshing change."*

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*"DePaul Cristo Rey is not a school for the meek of heart. The curriculum and work study program call for boldness, consistency or as the school community likes to say 'grit.' The teachers give their students all the necessary ingredients for success; they love them and respect them. They challenge them and then provide the assistance to meet and succeed at their challenges. They have high expectations of their students."*

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*Being a Corporate Partner with DePaul Cristo Rey aligns perfectly with our company core values and allows us to bring those values to life in a tangible way. The students who come to us are trailblazers on such a cool journey toward college and we love being an active part of that goal. We take pride in our involvement with DPCR and would be honored to have a former student seek us out for employment after college as a capstone °of their journey."*

**Mark Rudy**  
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*"My position at DePaul Cristo Rey is what I prayed for - the opportunity to work with under-represented student populations and help them gain access to college and achieve a degree. The American education system is dysfunctional; however, I see education as a tool of social justice that allows students to minimize inequalities because it gives them opportunity and choice."*

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*"DePaul Cristo Rey's commitment to its students is inspirational and I'm honored to be a part of it. We constantly hear about division all over our country, but DPCR is this well-oiled machine that unites people, not just locally, but on a national level. It creates a ripple effect that restores faith in communities. Those that can, help those that can't; as a city and individually we pull together and help students be the best versions of themselves. It's exciting and I believe that DPCR has just scratched the surface of its already impressive success."*

**Alison Warning**

2017 Rey of Light Chairperson



*"DePaul Cristo Rey feels like a second home. People here accept me for who I am, and I am happy to get up every morning and come to school. My Corporate Work Study Program jobs have also all been happy environments with people who enjoy working there and make me feel like I belong. They've shown me jobs take hard work and dedication. At DPCR you learn to work hard and be responsible and that's rewarding."*

**Josiah '19**



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*Hiring students since year one*

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*"It is an incredible feeling to be able to go to bed on a Sunday, excited for what's in store for Monday – instead of dreading it. I joined the DePaul Cristo Rey family in June 2016, and that feeling has continued to propel and motivate me every day. When I ask myself, "What is it about this place?" there is one simple answer for me: the students.*

*Their grit. Their tenacity.  
Their contagious energy.  
It makes me want to work  
harder, better, smarter.  
Every day, I leave school  
knowing that I have learned  
something new from these  
kids – and I wouldn't  
have it any other way."*

**Saloni Hemani**  
*Curriculum &  
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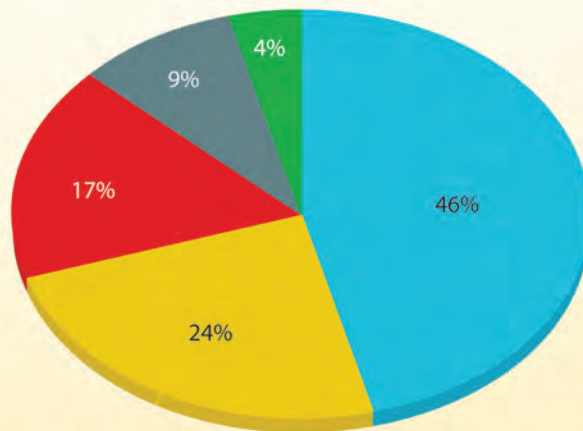
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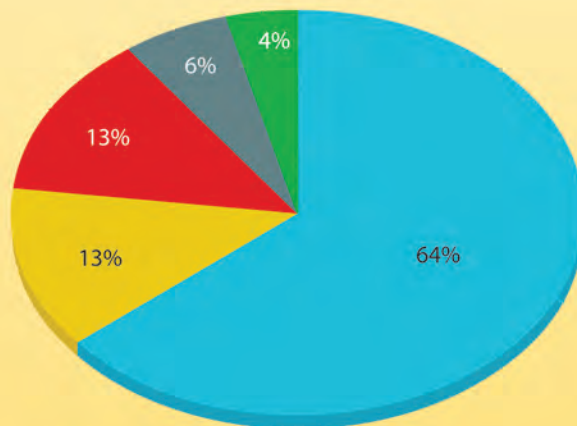
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- ADVANCEMENT
- CORPORATE WORK STUDY PROGRAM
- EDCHOICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
- GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS
- FAMILY CONTRIBUTIONS

### EXPENSES




- PERSONNEL
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The background of the flyer is a vibrant, colorful city skyline at night. The sky is a mix of purple, blue, and green, with a rainbow-like glow. The city skyline is in silhouette, with various skyscrapers and a bridge visible. The "Rey of Light" logo is prominently displayed in the upper left, featuring a yellow arc and a star.

# Rey of Light

DePaul Cristo Rey High School

**Rey of Light** is the premier fundraising event for DePaul Cristo Rey High School. Over the past five years, it has raised over \$2 million to benefit DPCR students.

**Rey of Light 2018**  
**April 28**

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