

Sister
Jeanne's
Legacy
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DePaul CRISTO REY HIGH SCHOOL **MATTERS**

Seniors Receive Red Carpet Send-Off to Historic Senior Year

DePaul Cristo Rey's Class of 2020 had an unforgettable drive-through graduation ceremony on May 26. With campus closed and Ohio schools still under social distancing orders due to COVID-19, DPCR leaders made every effort to ensure graduation was memorable. A virtual commencement was videotaped and shared with the class the day before the drive-through ceremony where each senior stepped out of the car, received a DPCR blessing, and walked a red carpet to receive a diploma and gifts. A cheering line of teachers and staff saluted them as they drove away. Turn to page 6 and read about the Class of 2020's noteworthy accomplishments.



Rey of Light Goes Virtual June 18-20

The need is still there, the sponsors are still on board, and the auction and raffle items are still up for bid. Now the only thing missing is YOU – join us for a virtual Rey of Light June 18-20. Read how inside.



From the President

My Dear, Dear Friends,

Thinking back to the start of this academic year, we simply could not have predicted how different a school day could look as we keep living into a pandemic-altered future. And yet, DPCR thrives. The creativity and energy that DPCR's entire staff has brought to keeping education alive despite stay-at-home orders has been absolutely inspiring. That our students have used the very grit that always impresses us to stay engaged and to keep learning inspires even more. And the generosity and care that so many in the community have offered us are further signs of how invested people are in this mission.

I would like to express a few inadequate words of gratitude as I prepare to leave DePaul Cristo Rey. It has been the blessing of a lifetime to be entrusted by the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati to serve as founding president of this school. I consider myself one of many cofounders: the Sisters of Charity; feasibility study volunteers; the first team of people who left other jobs to take a chance with me; our many board and committee members over the years; volunteers who have filled jobs and raised critical funds; donors who have generously shared their own resources; business leaders and supervisors who have forged a new path for young people to become this region's youngest professionals;

new teachers and staff members as we expanded; and, oh my goodness, the parents who entrusted their precious children to a brand new school. They did this – like we all did – because their hope exceeded their caution!

A drive up or down I-75 is revealing a new iconic building just north of the Hopple Street exit. No one will miss DePaul Cristo Rey as they travel this busy section of highway. But even more important than that is what goes on INSIDE. The people of DPCR are its heart and soul. And the students coming out of DPCR are really our legacy. To date, 20 of our alumni have graduated from college. The Class of 2020, who have had such an historical ending to their four years of high school, will soon head to college with enthusiasm and some trepidation. And the new students who arrive at DPCR this fall will continue the legacy that YOU have helped us build, a legacy of integrity, faith, tenacity and purpose.

With a most grateful heart,

S. Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D.

Sister Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D.



"Sister Jeanne is a transformational visionary. With the assistance of many others, she has built a firm foundation (and a new school!) laying the groundwork for success in the present and for years to come."

S. Barbara Hagedorn, SC
Past President,
Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati

"Sister Jeanne came to Cincinnati and created a place for us to create ourselves. DePaul Cristo Rey is a sacred place made possible because of her willingness and courage to say, "Yes" to the Holy Spirit, "Yes" to the Sisters of Charity, and "Yes" to our own individual dreams."

Paul Ebert, Principal



ESSETTE'S LEGACY ★



2016

"Sister Jeanne's love for students, her expertise as an educator, her creative vision, her dedication to her Franciscan values, her commitment to the Sisters of Charity, and her determination that every DPCR student can graduate from high school and college have all made DePaul Cristo Rey flourish far beyond our original expectations."

S. Joan Elizabeth Cook, SC
Immediate Past President,
Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati



2018

"It would be difficult to imagine anyone more perfectly suited than Jeanne Bessette to initiate and bring our Cristo Rey school to fruition. She empowered students to develop into scholars and businesses to realize their responsibility to engage with underserved Cincinnati teens."

Vicky and Rick Reynolds,
Co-Chairs of the Building
Futures Together. For A
Greater Cincinnati Campaign



2012

"At Sunday Mass I listened to the bass guitar strumming listenable serious, impactful rhythms. Why was I not surprised - it was Jeanne Bessette."

Harry Santen, Friend of DePaul Cristo Rey

"Some people are born entrepreneurs, some gregarious, some orators, and some strategists. How fortunate for DePaul Cristo Rey that S. Jeanne possesses all these talents."

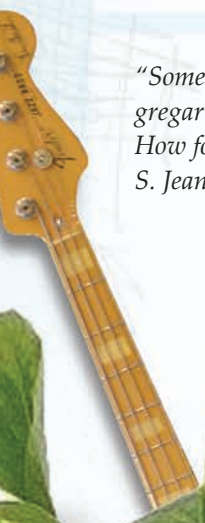
Barbara Bennie
DPCR's First Volunteer,
Past Chair and Current Member
of the Board of Directors



2017

"I'd like to say thank you to Sister Jeanne for the countless hours, long meetings and behind the scenes negotiations that have gone into providing such a rich education offered at DePaul Cristo Rey. I've been super impressed with the importance she has placed on ensuring that DPCR sees its graduates to and through college. She's allowed students' voices to be heard."

Joe Whittle '17, Student
Loyola University Chicago



WHEREVER YOU GO

Words and Music by
David Haas

“Learning at Home is Hard” Students, Teachers Pivot in Pandemic



“Learning at home is hard when you’re used to going to class. In my house, it’s so repetitive I had to find a way to stay engaged and focused – that’s been hard, not to mention not getting to see my friends.” **Jullius ’23** summed up the feelings of many DPCR students as the reality of distance learning set in among the fear and uncertainties of living during a pandemic. Perseverance, flexibility and resilience are qualities DePaul Cristo Rey strives to nurture in students. They, and everyone else, had to draw upon

those qualities these past few months. In March, with just a day’s notice that Ohio’s Governor was ordering a statewide school shutdown,

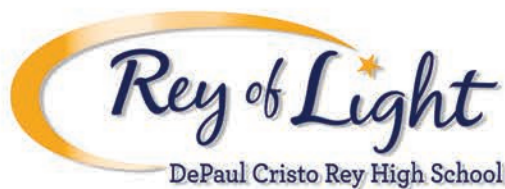


DPCR’s Academic Leadership and IT teams finalized and launched a distance learning plan. Staff quickly identified those students without home internet service and provided devices (hotspots) to allow them online access. A DPCR tech hotline was set up to troubleshoot students’ and teachers’ technology issues.

Daily morning prayer and announcements moved to the Zoom platform to feed the faith and hope of the DPCR community.

Still the weeks dragged on and the inevitable set in – there would be no return to campus this school year. While school work continued, staff also responded to a growing need for emotional support, coaching students through frustration, time management and motivation challenges while making referrals for those struggling with bigger issues.

For some students’ families the pandemic took a greater toll with job losses and lack of access to community resources such as food banks. Again, staff and generous donors stepped up tapping the newly formed **Students & Family Support Fund** to help with rent and utility payments as well as a deposit so one family could move out of homelessness. On a greater scale, school leaders organized a care package distribution in April attended by over 200 students. Masked teachers and staff lined the driveway and handed out brightly colored bags filled with snacks, hygiene supplies and fun Bruin swag giving students’ a reminder of the Bruin community’s love and support. As the school year ended, a **Reimagining Task Force** was already at work making plans and contingencies to safely re-open the campus when the time is right. News on that will be shared with families throughout the summer.



Needs You!

As they watched the quarantine shut down schools, businesses and events, Rey of Light organizers held out hope that this event might still survive. The annual scholarship benefit is DePaul Cristo Rey's most significant event to raise funds for student financial aid. But as the April date got closer, it became apparent an in-person event could not happen. However, Rey of Light will come alive as a virtual event **June 18-20**. It had to survive, the need to support students and families is greater than ever.

"The mission of this school comes into focus even more during this time. These students can and will change the trajectory of their families' economic lives if provided the opportunity and environment to do so. Rey of Light provides critical tuition funding for these students," explains **Cindy Howell**. Cindy and her husband, **Andy**, are co-chairing Rey of Light with **Barb** and **Joe Rohs**.

Generous sponsors and donors have already committed \$300,000. Many of the original silent auction items and some of those donated for the live auction will now be available through online bidding via cell phone, laptop or tablet. The paddle raise for scholarships that's been so popular at past auctions also continues as Fund-A-Need giving through the DPCR website: depaulcristorey.org/giving.

Last year, Rey of Light raised over \$700,000 so there is a big gap to fill. The co-chairs are confident others understand the impact of the event and DPCR's mission. "The administration, teachers and support staff love, respect and believe in the students. Rey of Light is about funding quality education for the students and supporting the belief that DPCR is making a difference in another person's life," says Barb.

With Gratitude to Our Rey of Light Sponsors:

PRESENTING SPONSORS:



PLATINUM SPONSORS:



GOLD SPONSORS:



TECHNOLOGY SPONSOR:



SILVER SPONSORS:



AUDIOVISUAL SPONSOR:



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AK Steel	Kroger Health and Personal Finance	Julie and Brian Ross
Ameritas Life Insurance Corp.	Jenny and Bill McCloy	RSM US LLP
Bahl & Gaynor	Ann and Doug Miller	Anne and Jim Shanahan
Baker Hostetler	Kathy and David Miller	Katherine and Tim Stautberg
Barb and Dan Bennie	Terri and Paul Muething	Taft Law
Cassady Schiller CPAs & Advisors	Dawn Newsted	Tennessee Golf Trip
Marilyn and Chris Dolle	Gina and Dan Prickel	Alison and Tim Warning
Forward Edge LLC	PwC	Western & Southern Financial Group
Fund Evaluation Group	Katie and Nick Reilly	Jane and Dick Yost
JoAnn and Gary Hagopian	Rohs Family	

Please join us virtually and make your support of DPCR's mission tangible. Visit depaulcristorey.org/giving to make an online Rey of Light gift, or reach out to **Lisa Muething** to ensure you receive the link for online bidding. She can be reached at lisa.muething@dpcr.net or 513.861.0600, ext. 317.



A Senior Year for the History Books

Every graduating senior this year will have stories to tell of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their senior year. DPCR's senior class continued to push forward academically even as the school shutdown dragged on and one senior milestone after another was canceled. They will hopefully be the only senior class in school history to have a virtual commencement; we salute them for their resilience, leadership and four years of success culminating in:

- **100% college acceptance**, recognized in a schoolwide celebration on February 13.
- Earning over **300 institutional scholarships** totaling more than **\$13 million**.
- Completing over **1,400 college applications**.
- Earning acceptance to **596 four-year colleges and universities**.

Seniors Earn Impressive Scholarships

As a class, the 65 seniors have earned over \$13 million in merit-and academic-based scholarships. Among them are:

Fredy Ayala '20 – full-tuition Cristo Rey Scholarship to **Xavier University**.

Robyn Blackwell '20 and **Jeriah Cook '20** – full-tuition Education First Opportunity Scholarships to **Eastern Michigan University**.

Thalia Grant '20 – full-tuition scholarships to **Fisk** and **Morehead** universities as well as the prestigious Mamie Earl Sells Scholarship from the **YWCA Greater Cincinnati**.

Samba Koita '20 – William G. "Pop" Fotsch Engineering Scholarship that combined with other aid covers full tuition at **Marquette University**.

Emily Rubio-Mora '20 – DePaul Cristo Rey Achievement Scholarship for full tuition, room and board at **Mount St. Joseph University**.



Fredy Ayala '20 (center)



Congratulations to the Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Two outstanding seniors have earned the highest honors in the senior class.

Jeriah Cook '20 (left) was named valedictorian as the graduating student with the highest weighted grade point average in the senior class. She plans to attend

Spalding University in Louisville and major in Early Childhood Education. She

is a graduate of **St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School**. **Thalia Grant '20** (right)

is the Class of 2020 salutatorian, recognized as the graduating student with the

second highest weighted grade point average in the senior class. She plans

to attend the **University of Notre Dame** to major in Business Analytics.

She attended **Cincinnati College Preparatory Academy** for elementary and middle school.

Campaign to Support Grads Passes Million Dollar Mark

From computer loans to tuition grants to transportation home for summer breaks – DPCR's college-enrolled alumni benefit from the staff and funds DPCR has designated to support their college completion. The second phase of DPCR's **Building. Futures. Together. For a Greater Cincinnati Campaign** is underway to raise \$6 million to sustain the Graduate Success Fund into perpetuity. DPCR leaders are pleased to announce that already \$1 million has been given by generous individuals and foundations.

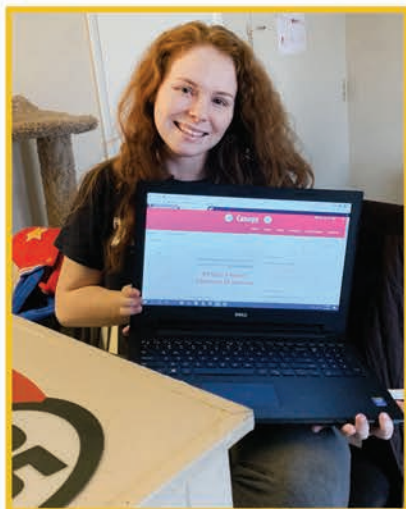
This spring DPCR received a \$15,000 gift from the **Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation** and a significant estate gift, both designated for the Graduate Success Fund.

The coronavirus pandemic has put additional financial strain on DPCR grads enrolled in college, making the need for the Graduate Success Fund even more critical. If you would like information on how to support this fund, please contact **Sparkle Worley**, vice president of advancement, at 513.861.0600, ext. 320 or sparkle.worley@dpcr.net.

Grants Help Stranded Grads

When the pandemic closed college campuses some DPCR alumni were stranded, losing their on-campus housing, jobs and meal plans. Others, who relied on campus computer labs, had no way to participate in their new online classes. Using emergency grants from the **Graduate Success Fund** and the **Cristo Rey Network's®** Alumni Emergency Assistance Fund, Graduate Success Director **Larisa Wright** helped 22 graduates during the pandemic. Refurbished computers from **The Community of the Good Shepherd** Catholic parish meant grads such as **University of Cincinnati** student **Shannon Johns '18**,

could continue classes. "If it wasn't for the additional help I received from DPCR, it would have been extremely difficult for me to finish strong. I was blessed to receive a laptop so I could finish my sophomore year with straight As," says Shannon. "I mean it when I say I couldn't do it without DPCR."



Shannon Johns '18

Celebrating our College Graduates

Despite a pandemic, our newest college graduates gave us cause for celebration this spring. We are proud to spotlight them and their success as they journeyed from being DPCR's first graduates to college graduates!



Ruarashe Chimusoro '15

Darrion Arnold '15
Business Management,
Wilberforce College

Rico Bush '15
Behavioral Science,
Mount St. Joseph University

Ruarashe Chimusoro '15
Economics,
University of Cincinnati

Heather Cook '17
Associates Degree in Science,
University of Cincinnati
(matriculating to
bachelor's program)

Ana Deleon Venegas '16
Associates Degree in
Early Childhood Education,
University of Cincinnati
(matriculating to
bachelor's program)

Brandon Ford '15
Accounting,
Wilmington College

Kristin Hughes '16
English,
University of Dayton

Jasmine Luna Villa '16,
Fine Arts,
Mount St. Joseph University

Maria Luning '15
Criminology,
University of Findlay

Christopher Mester '16
Integrated Ministries,
Moody Bible Institute

Someone Mundy '17
Associates Degree in
Liberal Arts,
Chatfield College

Alexis Nizigiyimana '16
Organizational Leadership
and Human Resources,
University of Cincinnati

Alexis Reeves '16
Biology,
Rust College

Bridgette Tiquet '16
Criminal Justice
and Psychology,
University of Cincinnati



Maria Luning '15

Partners and Students Shift to the New Business ‘Normal’



An example of one of the safety barriers Corporate Partner KDM P.O.P. developed to help retailers keep their workers and customers safe.

Flexibility, adaptability and persistence – essential business skills at any time, and never more so than when the COVID-19 pandemic upended every aspect of business and lives.

When Ohio’s governor ordered the March shutdown of all schools, it also meant no students could report to worksites as part of DePaul Cristo Rey’s Corporate Work Study Program (CWSP). Then, as the full impact of the virus and the need to social distance became clearer, students weren’t able to return to their worksites before the school year ended. They earn grades and academic credit for their CWSP participation, so to keep students’ professional progress on track, they pivoted to a virtual CWSP curriculum along with their academic lessons. CWSP online activities and assignments helped students enhance their email etiquette, organizational skills, financial literacy and budgeting, entrepreneurship, and Microsoft Office skills.

“The health and safety of those who work at our Corporate Partners, particularly in healthcare, was very much on our minds and in our prayers,” explains **Abby Held**, CWSP executive director. “Students sent their supervisors emails and videos to show their love and appreciation. The supervisors’ feedback was heartwarming; they truly missed the students!”

Several Partners shared their innovative approaches to maintaining their business and serving their customers. **KDM P.O.P. Solutions Group** has been a CWSP Partner since 2014. The company develops and produces retail solutions for the point of purchase industry such as signage and other marketing tools. During the pandemic, KDM’s focus shifted to offer retailers social distancing solutions. Explains **Ron Welch**, national sales manager, “We began offering very creative solutions to allow retailers to continue their business during the pandemic. We’ve developed new products such as safety partitions for stores, offices and hospitals; drive-through window barriers and counter products for the restaurant industry, and signage solutions for businesses now offering curbside pickup.”

Another of DPCR’s Corporate Partners, **CR architecture + design**, focused on sustaining the spirits of its clients. CR staff quickly developed an outreach campaign to offer digital encouragement and work from home tips, as well as physical care packages. CR has been a DPCR partner since 2013.

While students and partners have shown resilience these past months, Abby sums up the hope for the future. “We can’t wait to be back at DPCR next school year and once again send our students to CWSP partner work sites!”

Search Firm Assists Committee Seeking DPCR's Next President

A Cincinnati executive search firm has been retained to lead the search for DePaul Cristo Rey's next president. The hope is to have this leader in place this fall.

With the announcement last fall that **Sister Jeanne Bessette** would leave at the end of this school year, the Board of Directors launched a search for her successor. That search did not lead to the next president, so the Board has decided to accelerate and augment the process by engaging **Gilman Partners** to conduct the search. Until a new president is named, **Tim Stautberg** will serve as interim president beginning July 1. Tim has been a member of the Board of

Directors since 2018 and has served as DPCR's chief operating officer since October. He spent most of his career with **The E.W. Scripps Company**, including serving as chief financial officer, senior vice president, Newspapers, and then president and CEO of Journal Media Group, the publicly traded spin-off and merger of the Scripps Newspapers Group and the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, before retiring in 2016.

We look forward to sharing news in the months ahead about DPCR's second president.

Breakfast Celebrates Partnerships



At the February Corporate Partner Leadership Breakfast, DPCR also honored nine organizations who have partnered with the program for the past five years.

These are:

- 84.51°
- Children's Home of Northern Kentucky
- Cincinnati Union Bethel
- Cintas Corporation
- City of Cincinnati Law Department
- The Dental Care Plus Group
- Hamilton County Juvenile Court
- Warsaw Federal
- WAVE Foundation at Newport Aquarium



Bill Butler



5-year Honorees

"Having DPCR students in the workforce is a win for both the students and employers," said **Dan Sink**, CEO of **Corporex Companies, LLC**, as he accepted the company's Corporate Partner of the Year award. Dan spoke at DPCR's annual Corporate Partner Leadership Breakfast on behalf of Corporex Chairman **Bill Butler** who committed to the CWSP from the first year the school opened in 2011. Corporex also sponsors students working in the nonprofit sector through the **Butler Foundation**.

Boys Basketball Team Earns DPCR's First State Title

Players, Coach Win Conference Honors

The Bruin Boys Varsity Basketball Team brought home the school's first state title in any sport after a nail-biter game against New Hope Christian Academy (Circleville) 50-47 on March 7. The state title in the OCSAA (Ohio Christian School Athletic Association) capped an incredible season. The Bruins were co-champions of the OVCC South League (Ohio Valley Christian Conference); they won the OVCC Conference Tournament and the OCSAA Southwest Regional Championship. They finished the season with a record of 26-3.

Additionally, for the first time, DPCR claimed both the Girls and Boys Player of the Year awards in the OVCC. **Jurrien Nelson '20** was named Boys Player of the Year.

Taylor Mincy '23 earned the girls title. Girls Head Basketball Coach (and DPCR college counselor) **Bernard Caldwell** was named the OVCC Girls Coach of the Year.



Bernard Caldwell



DPCR Campus Transformation Almost Complete

The new “face” of DPCR is visible from not only Central Parkway but from busy I-75. This new academic building is near completion thanks to the success of the **Building. Futures. Together. For A Greater Cincinnati Campaign** which raised \$20.8 million. It's expected to open in August.



DPCR Has New Chief Financial Officer

Randy S. Koehler II has been named Chief Financial Officer. As CFO, he oversees all activities related to DePaul Cristo Rey's business and financial management including the annual audit, budget process, facilities, human resources, and information technology. A graduate of the University of Rio Grande in Ohio, Randy holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and is a certified public accountant. Prior to joining DePaul Cristo Rey, he served as vice president of Finance and Administration at Cincinnati Christian University and in earlier positions as a senior accountant for Wellpoint, Inc., Western & Southern Financial Group, and Kamphaus, Henning & Hood, CPAs.



S.Catherine Kirby, SC, PhD: A Tribute and a Thank You

By Sister Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D.



On April 14, DePaul Cristo Rey lost a giant in our short history when **S. Catherine Kirby, SC, Ph.D.** passed away after suffering several strokes. Her work in bringing a Cristo Rey school to Cincinnati began several years before the school opened its doors to students in the summer of 2011. S.Catherine helped assemble the working group of approximately 75 people

who assisted in planning the school and conducted the feasibility study which led the **Cristo Rey Network** to approve our school to be opened by the **Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati**. She brought to that work her expertise as an educator, scholar, researcher, administrator, and assistant

superintendent for secondary schools. Her engaging so many people in the feasibility study ensured that the school would be a project informed by many but also embraced by many. She was on the search committee which hired me 11 years ago and was a founding member of our Board of Directors. She was one of the recipients of our Founders Leadership Award this past September along with **S. Barbara Hagedorn, SC**.

Catherine was a true friend to our school and became a dear friend to me. From helping me unpack dishes when I moved to Cincinnati to teaching me to go through Kentucky to get to Riverbend on my third night in Cincinnati, from teaching me the ins and outs of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and advising us in recruiting students, her support has been without parallel. Our new social services center will be named for her because of a generous gift from one of her dear friends. Generations of DPCR students will owe her a debt of gratitude, even if they never had the chance to know her as so many of us did!



^{9th} ANNUAL *Golf Classic*



Western Hills Country Club

*Join Chair Dick Haglage
of the DPCR Board of Directors*

**Western Hills Country Club
September 28, 2020***

- Four-person scramble format
- Skills contests on the course
- Proceeds benefit student tuition assistance

For more information
contact: Lisa Muething
at lisa.muething@dpcr.net
or 513.861.0600.



** If state health restrictions are lifted.*