

loosening chains

westside christian high school

spring 2009

on purpose

WRITE US

We welcome your letters. Please send letters online to onpurpose@wchsonline.org

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Westside Christian High School

WESTSIDE ALUMNI WATCH

Chris Yocum (1988) and his wife, Christina, have 5 children, ages 19 through 4. He has his own screen printing business, Witness Apparel (witnessapparel.com), and serves as youth minister at Tigard Church of God.

Mother of nine-month-old Lucy, **Shawn (Querin) Hill** (1991) graduated from OSU in 1996 with a BS in Speech Communication. She currently works in sales. You will find Shawn and husband Eric rooting for the Beavers during football and baseball seasons.

After serving as a licensed assistant administrator for an assisted living center for many years, **Peggy Haskell** (1995) made a career change and now manages human resources and government contracts for Master Key Consulting. She and her eight-year-old son, Tommy, reside in Beaverton.

Dan Clay (1995) received his BA from Multnomah Bible College and served as a union organizer for over a decade before being elected president of the largest non-public sector union in Oregon, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, in November.

A Registered Nurse in the emergency department at Providence Portland, **Janet (Haskell) Burchett** (1996) recently earned her degree in Nursing from the University of Portland. She and husband Kamron have been involved in missions work in the heart of the Amazon with Ray of Hope during the past two summers.

Megan (Wilson) Elliott (2000) passed her board examinations in July to become a licensed Music Therapist after graduating from Marylhurst University with a degree in Music Therapy. She works for Earthtones Music Agency. Megan and husband Josh live in Lake Oswego.

Professional music artist, **Evie Haskell** (2002) married Rev. Josh Herndon in September 2008. They serve in youth ministry at Central Assembly of God in El Sobrante, California. In the fall of 2008, Evie's song, *My Beautiful Everything*, was selected for a Top 20 Worship Album by Indelible Creative Group. For more information, see eviehaskell.com.

David Jeffery (2008) is in his first year at Southern Methodist University, where he has started a human rights group on campus. David is studying Political Science, African-American Studies, and Human Rights.

Please send us your alumni updates at onpurpose@wchsonline.org.

Financial Aid – A compelling need.

In the early days, Christians would pool their personal resources to meet the needs of fellow believers. Barnabas, for example, sold his land and contributed his money to help others (ACTS 4:36-37).

Historically, in tough economic times American believers have contributed generously to meet the needs of the less fortunate. *Giving USA* reports that "religion shows little effect in giving during recessions and little effect from slowdowns."

Within our own community we have families that are struggling with financial needs and unemployment. We have the opportunity to reach out, to pool our resources, to give from our abundance to make a difference in the life of a fellow student – a classmate of your son or daughter – who wants desperately to continue attending school at Westside.

Financial aid is a compelling need within our own community. And I believe God's people – the Westside community – will rise to the occasion and emulate early believers like Barnabas.

Let's work to keep our Westside family together. Will you help?

Two Ways to Help

- Write a check today or contribute easily online at www.wchsonline.org. Please designate your gift to Financial Aid.
- Save the date to participate in or assist with the Bridge the Gap Golf Tournament on Monday, July 13.

For more information contact Steve Pringle at pringle@wchsonline.org or by phone at 503.697.4711 X311.

"Give and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full — pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over and poured into your lap." LUKE 6:38

on purpose

on purpose is more than a name – it's a significant part of Westside's vision: to intentionally prepare our students for a greater purpose in life.

on purpose is published three times yearly for the broader Westside community to give you a glimpse of what makes us unique.

Simple Gratitude

BY DOREEN DODGEN-MAGEE

If you're an American, and if you've ever read a newspaper, watched an hour of television, or received an unsolicited email, you've likely heard the phrase, "It's just our way of saying thanks!" Retail establishments ranging from restaurants to car dealerships are all too happy to thank us by giving us an incentive to come back for more. Most of us don't even notice it anymore. We've become immune to being thanked and immune to thanking in some degrees. We skip through Thanksgiving on the way to Christmas and dutifully mutter, "thank you," as our hostess pours our coffee, but how often are we intentional with our thanking?

That got me thinking more intentionally about gratitude and giving thanks. "Gratitude," by definition, means "readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness." There is something active about this word that is often missed in our communication of it. At the root there is an alertness implied in the meaning and a call to be ready.

In the Orthodox Christian tradition the word "attend" is sung loudly and clearly immediately before the Scripture passage is read at worship. It's hard not to pay attention when I've been reminded in an unusual way to "attend" or, to put it differently, pay attention as though this really matters.

What if every time I walked out of my home or emerged from my car I heard the word "attend" sung loudly? "Attend to those who serve you." "Attend to the small and large gifts that come your way through the day." "Attend to the faceless folks who cooked the meal you ordered at a restaurant or took the stain out of your shirt at the cleaner or harvested the sugar you put in your coffee this morning. Pay attention to them. Be ready to thank them, and be quick to return the kindness."

Last month I ran an errand for my sister-in-law's parents. They had purchased a crib for their new grandbaby and needed it to be picked up at Babies-R-Us. On the way into the store I passed numerous strollers and parents pulling children from, and depositing children into, car seats. Everyone was in

a hurry, and no one seemed particularly happy. Caught up in my thoughts, I nearly ran into Dion, who was dutifully attempting to contain the massive amount of garbage that had been heaped to overflowing onto and around the lone garbage can at the door. There he was in all his (maybe) 19-year-old glory, sporting his Babies-R-Us "uniform," picking up diapers, coffee cups, and toy wrappers in an effort to complete his task of taking out the trash. Without thinking much I said, "Thank you so much for doing that. I'm so sorry that we are all such slobs." The look on his face threw me off at first. I couldn't tell if he was thinking, "Who is this crazy woman?" or "Oh my goodness (OK, he probably wouldn't say "goodness"), someone noticed." He muddled around for words and then briefly thanked me and looked away.

I didn't think anything else about this interaction. I went in, got the crib, and, as I bent down to try to lift the box, it suddenly became airborne and flew into Dion's hands. Now Dion was smiling broadly with the crib resting on his shoulder, and his entire body beaming. He was thrilled that he had noticed a need and could carry my package out for me. More gratitude was expressed by me (How did I ever imagine I was going to carry the crib out to the car by myself anyway?), and then he said, "That was the first time I've been thanked by anyone for emptying the trash. Thank you."

I cannot tell you how humbled this experience made me. While I was thrilled and energized to be part of such

a beautiful exchange, I was also made painfully aware of how often I have the power and means to help people feel better from the inside out, and I don't exercise it.

Being truly grateful demands intimacy and communication. It requires stopping, is best served with lots of eye contact, and, when done especially well, uses words that make me vulnerable.

"You have been so thoughtful to me." "I am so aware of your efforts for my benefit." "I had a need and you met it." These are just the thanks for the obvious and present actions taken by those in my life whom I can see and touch. What about my unexpressed gratitude to the many people who serve me everyday that I rarely even think of: the postman, the coffee shop employee who arrived early enough to bake the

muffins and fire up the espresso maker, the janitor who works until midnight to clean the office building where I go to the doctor, and the seamstress in China who made my jeans?

Sometimes all we may be able to do is prayerfully remember those who serve us. Other times we can take a few extra moments to recognize people in unusual ways. We can always remember to "attend," and in so doing, stop, look into their eyes, and thank them. When practiced, this posture of thankfulness and attitude of gratitude becomes a natural place from which we live, and our meager words and acts of thankfulness become powerful in the lives of others. Try it. Look into the eyes of those who serve you and speak from your heart. Thank you in advance for holding me accountable to do the same.

PUT IT TO WORK

I've joked many times that it's impossible to breathe at Westside without receiving a thank you note for doing so. I love this about this place. If you've served lunch to the teachers and had every single one of them approach you to thank you, you know this. If you bring a dessert for the sports award banquet and receive a formal notice in the News You Can Use, you understand this. I recently worked with the Mr. Westside contestants and marveled at how many times they specifically sought me out to thank me.

You have all done an excellent job of fostering an attitude of gratitude in this community. Now it's time to take it a step further. Let's get creative about the ways we express gratitude and about becoming conscious of those whom we may never see, but to whom we owe deep debts of thanks.

Give it a try this week. I suspect you'll find that the blessing will flow both ways.



BUILDING ON A FIRM FOUNDATION

BY DON WESTERBERG

In early February millions of people watched Kurt Warner lead his team in a losing effort in Super Bowl XLIII. He lost the game, but won my respect. Before the kickoff he was called out onto the field to receive the Walter Payton Man of the Year Award, given to the individual who most demonstrates a heart of humanitarian service in the community. Warner's First Things First Foundation (Matthew 6:33) is involved in a variety of causes including flood relief, taking sick kids to Disney World, and building recreation centers and children's hospitals. He has never forgotten the lessons he learned through his well-documented, though serpentine, path to three Super Bowls.

As an educator, I often wonder if my former students remember the things that were taught and demonstrated while they were in our environment. This week I was blessed by reconnecting with a Westside alum who has not forgotten the lessons he learned.

Dr. Jimmy Grierson was a junior in high school when we first met. He transferred to Westside in 1988, from an area high school whose student body numbered in the thousands because he couldn't find a niche in a crowd that large. But at Westside he found a perfect fit. He immediately threw himself into choir, drama, basketball, student government, and the spiritual opportunities the school offered.

He sums up his experience in this way.

At Westside I found a family and a foundation. I was surrounded by a group of talented student leaders who set the tone of respect, service, and leadership in the school. We really meant it, and the impact was felt by everyone in the class. We were united in times of prayer. People's hearts were in the right place.

In my senior year at Westside as the ASB Vice President, I got my first real taste of leadership. Through this experience I came to realize that you can actually sit down and plan things that will impact people's lives. Today my leadership at the clinic and hospital is an outgrowth of the foundation that was laid at Westside.

After Westside, Jimmy graduated from Pacific Lutheran University and subsequently from the University of Washington Medical School. These were years of tremendous growth and stretching. From the confidence he gained as a leader at Westside, he chose to head up a service organization at PLU, participate in student government as a Student Body Senator, and continue his involvement in drama.

The interests that had been sparked at Westside continued to impact his direction in Medical school.

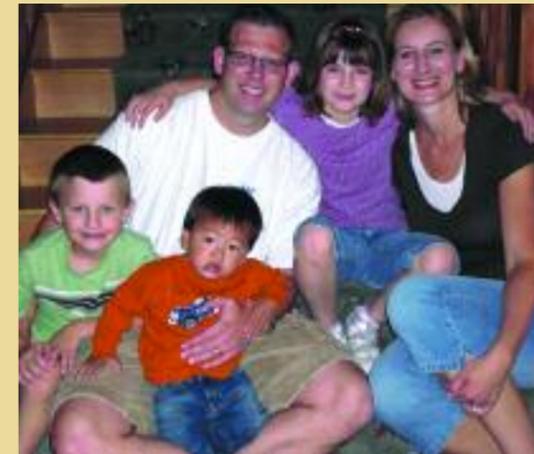
I had been so intrigued by our discussions of medical ethics in Senior Bible that I took a number of classes on medical ethics, which God used during my residency when I served on the Ethics Board at Southwest Washington Medical Center.

As Jimmy continued to identify the links between his Westside experience and present endeavors he said,

One of the key lessons that Westside taught me was that life is not about me but about other people. As a family medicine doctor, I am there for some big moments in life. In the course of one day I may be handing off a baby to a mom who has had a rough pregnancy, helping a patient through depression in the face of domestic violence, or comforting an older patient through end-of-life issues. It is humbling to be involved. But the worldview that gives me perspective at those times was shaped back at Westside.

Jimmy has been practicing family medicine for five years in Stanwood, Washington, located between Seattle and Vancouver, BC. He and his wife, Linda, have three kids, a daughter Hannah, age 9, a son Jonah, age 6, and Micah, an adopted son from Korea, who is turning 2. "They help keep balance in my life, and it is a privilege and a challenge being a dad. It helps me know what is important at the end of the day".

With all the excitement of an expectant father, Dr. Grierson is awaiting yet another birth, the birth of a dream. In June of



Jimmy and Linda Grierson at home with their children, Jonah, Micah, and Hannah.

this year Jimmy will open the doors of the Safe Harbor Free Clinic — the only free clinic near the I-5 corridor between Seattle and Canada.

This is the result of a mission trip he took to Haiti in March of 2008. Accompanied by his mission's pastor, another doctor, and two nurses, the team saw over 900 patients and did a myriad of procedures in just eight short days.

Upon his return he began to brainstorm with his pastor and finally determined that God was leading him to start a free clinic for those who do not have medical insurance in his area. He discovered that 100,000 children and adults in the three counties surrounding his practice have no coverage. He applied for and was granted non-profit status, was able to receive permission to work out of rooms in the Medical Center he uses for his practice, and has been recruiting a team of volunteer physicians to help staff it.

I was humbled to read the vision for Safe Harbor Free Clinic...

Our vision is to provide urgent medical care to the uninsured in the community. To provide referral service to connect them with local church and government resources to meet their medical, emotional and spiritual needs. To reach outside of the local area for funding and volunteers from area churches to help meet the needs of the uninsured in Island, Snohomish and Skagit County. To share Christ's love through the service of caring Christian medical professionals and volunteers.

Jimmy reflects that a lot of what he learned at Westside is woven into the fabric of this vision.

As we ended our conversation, I asked Jimmy if he had anything he would like to convey to the present generation of Westside students. He summed it up this way.

Nothing is impossible. Follow your dreams.

Have a confidence that God has a great work for everyone to do.

Be involved in your community, and use the foundations that Westside builds to do something for Christ; this can take on many forms.

Once you learn the secret of humility, you find the secret to true happiness. We are only on this earth for a short time, so take advantage of the opportunities that God gives to you.

As I reflect on my time with Jimmy, I rejoice with what God has done in him and will do through him. Like Kurt Warner he has learned that it is not the pizzazz of the lights but the power of the life that counts. That's not surprising, since they both take their plays out of the same playbook.

Relational Aggression

BY DR. DOREEN DODGEN-MAGEE

On the heels of the recent domestic violence claims against 19-year-old singer Chris Brown, now is a perfect time to talk with your adolescents about relational aggression in all its forms. Relational aggression is a term that includes the range of actions and intentions from bullying and hostile gossiping to acquaintance rape. The common factor in all of these occurrences is a perpetrator harnessing his or her power in the form of words and/or physical actions and using it to hurt, threaten, or control another person.

While many forms of relational aggression may leave no physical marks on your children, it has the potential to deeply wound them both internally and within their community. Cyber and cell phone bullying are especially common in high school settings and have the potential to emotionally and socially "undo" a student because of their far-reaching potential and the fact that they are largely hidden from parents and school authorities. They are essentially private ways of hurting someone very publicly.

It is crucial that you, as the primary adults-of-importance in the lives of your children and their friends, acknowledge that relational aggression exists even in Christian contexts. Relational aggression has serious consequences for children who are its victims. Increased incidence of depression, social anxiety, and impaired social relationships are all correlated with this form of bullying. By arming yourself with tools and information and being willing to broach uncomfortable topics, you provide a jumping-off point for conversations that may help your child relationally throughout his entire life.

Quick Tips and Resources:

- Ask your children not only who their friends are, but also how their friendships are going. Ask about what types of people they find themselves drawn to and who they find they don't connect with at all. Get to know, and encourage them to observe, what their relational style is and gently begin to address tendencies that may make them vulnerable to bullying.
- Educate yourself about relational aggression and cyber-bullying. Here are two helpful resources: www.stopcyberbullying.com and www.opheliaproject.org/main/relational_aggression.htm
- If you suspect, or have heard directly, that your child is bullying another child, act quickly. Do not wait. Get help from a teacher, school counselor, or psychologist. It is far better to act quickly and be wrong than to be slow to act and have a well-worn bullying habit created in your child.
- If your child begins to isolate from friends, seems distressed or keyed up after receiving communication from particular individuals (or after being with them), find a way to explore what is happening in non-confrontational ways. Make it safe for your child to tell you that he is being bullied. Stay calm and make a plan with your child about how to get him what he needs to make the behavior stop.
- Teach your child to assert herself and provide her with opportunities to tell someone else what is going on relationally if she feels she cannot tell you.
- Do not assume that your child is not at risk for perpetrating or being the victim of relational aggression simply because he attends a Christian school.



it's about reconciliation

BY IRVIN M BROWN

As I write this, we are in the season of Lent, a season of penance, reflection, and fasting – a season which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption, reconciliation and salvation.

As we ushered in the season of Lent, Westside students put their faith into action by setting aside time, talents and treasures for the sake of mercy and justice. It was a week built on prayer, sacrifice and praise – a week put on pause to remind us that we are in this together and desperately need each other. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote on the walls of a Birmingham jail cell, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

When Dr. King wrote these words in 1963, he was deeply troubled by racial injustices that were prevalent in this country. He could see that a focus on racial superiority was all wrong. Instead, he felt a fervent need for all Americans to set aside their own personal agendas and do what the Prophet Jeremiah proclaims,

"This is what the LORD says:

*'Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom
or the strong man boast of his strength
or the rich man boast of his riches,
but let him who boasts boast about this:
that he understands and knows me,
that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness,
justice and righteousness on earth,
for in these I delight,'
declares the LORD."* (JEREMIAH 9:23-24).

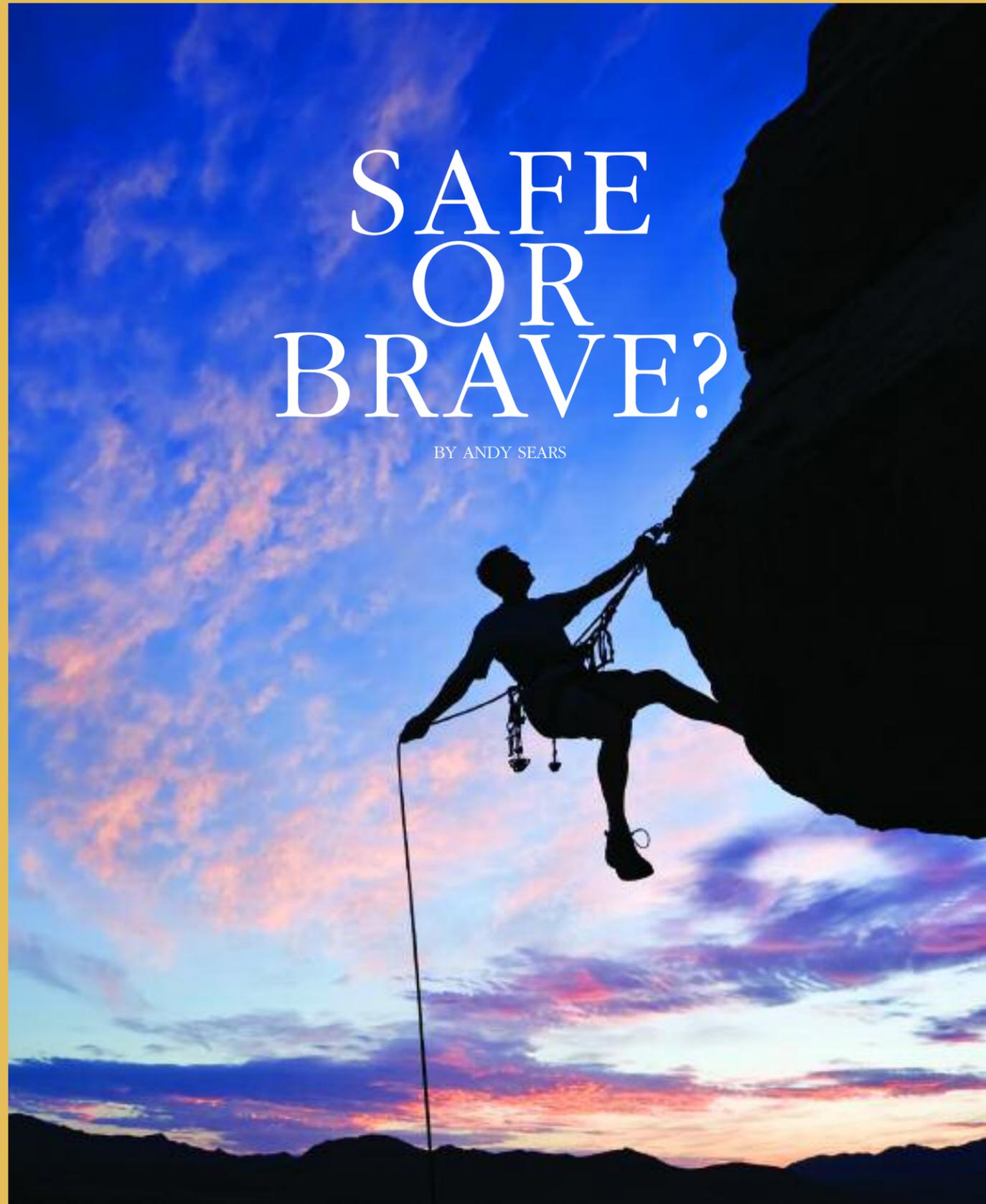
Despite over three decades of a concerted effort to rectify past racial injustices, race remains a crucial aspect of American society, one which complicates our social interactions and frequently undercuts our Christian testimony. It is something that Westside should not ignore. Rather, we have the unique opportunity to take on the challenge of exploring racial reconciliation and can serve as a model of what it means to be a grace-filled and genuine community.

It is an ambitious task, but one we are compelled to undertake. In January, our faculty and staff gathered to discuss race and reconciliation. We came to the conclusion that race is the proverbial "elephant in the living room". We all know it's there. It sees us, and we see it – making living uneasy. Yet we ignore it for fear of being rejected or offensive.

Rev. Billy Graham said it perfectly, "The number one problem in our world is alienation, rich versus poor, black versus white, labor versus management, conservative versus liberal, East versus West... But Christ came to bring about reconciliation and peace."

As we prepare for Resurrection Sunday, let's thank God for sending His Son to die for us that we might be reconciled to God. And let's renew our determination to reconcile ourselves with all of our brothers and sisters in Christ – in the Westside community and beyond.





SAFE OR BRAVE?

BY ANDY SEARS

As a parent it's easy for me to value and focus on my children's safety, comfort, and success. But an honest concern I have is that in my natural desire to keep my children safe and secure I might actually hurt them. This might seem counter-intuitive, but I am being challenged by the idea that we cannot be brave and safe at the same time because character qualities like bravery and courage are always developed in the presence of some sort of fear, discomfort, risk, or danger.

As I reflect on my own life as a teenager, I am thankful that my parents were brave. They allowed me to fail, they used life experiences to train and instruct me, and they encouraged me to be courageous in Christ.

Twenty-two years ago I was a gangly 14-year-old who was passionate about sports, dreaming about my first car, and hungry for adventure, when my youth pastor told me about a two-month summer missions experience in Haiti. This was an interesting time in the history of Haiti, which made the trip even more frightening to my parents. My journey fell between the resignation and escape of Jean Claude Duvalier in 1986 and the failed election of 1987, which resulted in the loss of thousands of lives. I remember leaving early from Haiti in the summer of 1987 on the last flight out of the country before the airport shut down. My memories of Haiti include road blocks, protests, mobs with machetes, bucket showers, people trying to give us their children, soldiers with automatic weapons, extreme poverty, Haitian people who were deeply dependent on Christ, and Christ's clear and powerful presence within me.

After leaving Haiti and landing in the Florida Keys, our team spent time debriefing our experience, and it was during this time that I made a commitment to Christ to actively pursue Him for the rest of my life. Since that experience I've had times when I've lost the

focus of my commitment, but I continue to come back to that monumental experience in times of doubt, transition, and struggle because it was a marker in my life when I saw very clearly in scripture and in vivid reality that God cares for and responds to the needs of the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40).

As I look back on this experience and put myself in my parents' shoes, I am so thankful that they had the courage to let me go. I could have

"We don't believe something by merely saying we believe it, or even when we believe we believe it. We believe something when we act as if it were true."

Dallas Willard, Renovation of the Heart

spent that summer safely at home pursuing a variety of interests and passions that revolved around me, but instead my world expanded to include the poor, and God placed a greater vision in my life. It wasn't necessary for me to travel to a developing nation to find Christ and come to a more complete understanding of His character, but it was necessary for me to find a way to step out of my safe, self-focused world.

Last year I had the privilege of meeting Sean Litton, an attorney with International Justice Mission (IJM), a Christian human rights organization. Several years ago Sean was presented with the choice of staying in his prestigious and lucrative position at a major D.C. law firm, or serving in a small Christian organization in a remote part of Asia where he would work to rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, and

plead for the widow (Isaiah 1:17). Sean said that what was holding him back from accepting the position with IJM was his desire for comfort, security, control, and the pursuit of success.

At first glance nothing about these values seems problematic. I start each day with the comfort of a warm cup of coffee. I value the safety our cul-de-sac represents, and I appreciate the accolades of my peers. What Sean found, however, was that in his willingness to release comfort, he found adventure. As he felt less secure, he grew in faith. When he was forced to release control, Christ provided miraculous solutions. And when his own success was no longer the goal, he gained the deepest relationship with, and knowledge of, Christ that he'd ever experienced in his life.

This is our vision for our students. Bravery over safety. Our school could be very comfortable, secure, and controlled, and we could support the pursuit of self-focused success, but we've been called to a greater vision. That vision is to prepare ourselves and our students for a life of purpose that is rooted in a deep relationship with Jesus Christ and that displays His character as we pour ourselves out for our neighbors.



"If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it."

Matthew 10:39

CHANGE THAT LOOSENS CHAINS

BY DEB GIVENS

com.pas.sion - noun

BY MARTA SEARS

The word compassion comes from the Latin words *com* [with] and *pati* [to suffer], giving it the meaning “to suffer with.”

In Spanish it is even easier to see: *con* [with] *pasión* [passion] which also means “suffering.” (Think passion as in Passion Week, the week of Jesus’ suffering leading up to Easter Sunday as vividly portrayed in Mel Gibson’s movie *The Passion of the Christ*.)

Since I heard this action-oriented, verb-like definition of compassion, God has been showing me that in order to have compassion for people, I can’t remain distant or unaffected by their pain.

To truly have compassion for others means I have to be willing to enter into their suffering in some way.

The incarnation has to be the most beautiful, creative, unpredictable display of compassion history has ever known. What else can rival God, the Divine, the Creator of all things, voluntarily leaving the blessings, glory, and perfection of His heavenly home in order to enter the messed-up world of human beings, become one of us, suffer with us, and ultimately die for us?

Jesus’ paramount example of compassion has made me realize that if I’m truly going to follow Him, it’s going to cost me something, just as it cost Him. If I’m going to obey Christ’s call to extend compassion to those He called the least of these, as well as to those particular people he brings into my life, I too will have to give up much of my comfort, security, privilege, and abundance.



Student leaders Connor Magee (front), Ryan Riggins (left), and Tyler Munds (right).

“TO SEE HER HAND YOU NEED TO LOOK LOW. LOOK DOWN. THAT’S WHERE SHE LIVES. LOW TO THE GROUND. LOW ON THE PRIORITY LIST. LOW ON THE SOCIAL SCALE. SHE’S LOW.”

MAX LUCADO

Who is this desperate woman? In most countries she wouldn’t even be labeled a woman yet. At the age of fourteen, this girl has been working for her family for nearly two years. Not cleaning homes. Not cooking. Not washing clothes. Instead, she’s been servicing men from her new home – a brothel. She no longer dreams of living “happily ever after”. Chances are good she will never be tenderly held by a loving husband. She’s not alone. Each year more than two million children are exploited in the global commercial sex trade (UNICEF). This is just one small segment of the overall problem.

When Westside students heard details of these atrocities, their hearts ached. No one had to tell them to care. No one had to prod to get them to take action. They responded on their own as the hands of Christ. Inspired by the book, *Be the Change*, written by 15-year-old Zach Hunter, Westside students took ownership of this issue. The result of their determination was “Justice Week”, a student-led and -initiated campaign designed to raise awareness about current slavery issues around the world and to demonstrate first-hand how a small group of people can truly make a difference.

The week featured a series of talks by Mike Hogan, Regional Director for Church Mobilization for *International Justice Mission* (IJM), Erin McNamara from *Transitions Global*, and Enric Sifa, fellow Westside student and survivor of the Rwandan Genocide. Each brought a unique perspective to the issue of injustices around the world and in our own backyard.

Hogan painted a vivid picture of the severe human trafficking problem that is rampant in many corners of the world. According to the U.S. Department of State, human trafficking is the world’s third largest criminal enterprise, after drugs and weapons. Hogan encouraged the students to be diligent and persistent in their efforts to

take action against injustices like this. “You may not be able to do everything, but you can take on evil even if you only save one child,” stressed Hogan.

Erin McNamara brought the reality of the situation much closer to home. “According to the National Center of Missing and Exploited Children, 300,000 American children are being trafficked for sexual exploitation,” explained McNamara. “Ninety percent are born and raised right here in this country.” In Oregon, law enforcement officers are encountering three to five girls per week who are victims of trafficking. Erin’s organization, *Transitions Global*, empowers survivors of sex trafficking with the opportunity to heal and recapture the most basic of human rights – freedom, dignity, health, and hope.

Sex trafficking is just one of many injustices occurring around the world.

Westside student and Rwanda Genocide survivor Enric Sifa, shared his story with his classmates. Fourteen years ago Rwanda exploded in violence. Over the course of 100 days, the militant Hutu militia slaughtered every Tutsi they could hunt down, leaving the streets littered with bodies. Enric was one of the lucky survivors. Sadly, Enric’s father was bludgeoned to death while at work, and his

mother was killed several years later under the corrupt leadership that had taken over his village. Enric spent six years living as a street kid before he was taken in by some people in a local church.

Enric asked his classmates not to feel sorry for him. He considers himself lucky compared to approximately one million members of his tribe who lost their lives during the genocide. Instead,

Enric challenged the students to become more aware of injustices around the world and take a stand against them.

Westside students took these challenges to heart and partnered with IJM to support their student-led campaign *Loose Change to Loosen Chains* by collecting loose change throughout the week from students, staff, friends, and family members. IJM will use the money to assist those victims of slavery and other forms of oppression they are able to free. As a visual reminder of this effort, Westside teacher, Roger Allcroft, fabricated a six-foot tall scale. On one side of the scale was placed seventy pounds of bricks, symbolic of the amount of bricks an average slave working in a brick kiln is expected to carry on his head all day. On the other, was placed a large container to collect the change. Numerous times the stu-

dents saw the scale tip as the money outweighed the bricks before the daily deposit in the bank.

Their goal was to raise enough money to assist three slaves rescued by IJM—approximately \$1500.

Westside students stepped up to the challenge. They became passionate about fighting injustices around the world. Did they reach their goal? You

bet. In fact, they raised over \$2500 – enough to assist at least five slaves.

The impact of this week will not die after a check is presented to IJM. For many Westside students, the things they heard this week have stirred up a passion that will carry into their adult lives. They are determined to be a voice for others who can’t speak for themselves.

ON JANUARY 1, 1863, PRESIDENT LINCOLN FORMALLY ISSUED THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION, CALLING FOR LIBERATION OF ALL SLAVES AS “AN ACT OF JUSTICE”. THREE MILLION SLAVES WERE DECLARED TO BE

“THEN, THENCE-FORWARD, AND FOREVER FREE.”

SIMILAR SCENARIOS WERE PLAYING OUT OVER IN EUROPE. A CENTURY AND A HALF LATER, THE NEWS OF ESCALATING MODERN-DAY SLAVERY HAS SHOCKED THE WORLD. AN ESTIMATED 27 MILLION PEOPLE ARE ENSLAVED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TODAY.

KEVIN BALES, DISPOSABLE PEOPLE

"Life is ten percent what happens to you and ninety percent how you respond to it." Lou Holtz

TAKING CHARGE OF THE 90%

BY KIRK AND MARTY LAYTON

Life happens. It's as simple as that. Or maybe not. It's true that much of what comes our way is out of our control. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. The real test is how we respond. And that's not always a simple answer, nor one that is the same in all situations.

Over this past year Westside students have been faced with many life experiences in and around the court, field, or track. As a spectator on the sidelines, it has been encouraging to see how well the environment and mission of Westside has prepared our students for these experiences. While the world would teach them to react one way, our kids have responded differently. More often than not they have responded in ways that honor Christ and one another.

During last year's basketball season, we hosted a strong

rival to Westside. Those who have attended our basketball games know that space is a little tight! When the opposing team's student fans pointed out our cramped student section by taunting our students with disparaging remarks about being in a "zoo", the Westside students responded by taking on that identity. By the very next school day they were proudly sporting Westside Zoo t-shirts. This year the marketing class has supported this new identity with a popular line of Westside Zoo apparel. Our kids chose to rise above the fray and embrace with pride and dignity what to some might seem like a limitation!

This past fall Westside student Nate Mays suffered a serious football injury while playing for Beaverton High School. Word spread, and within an hour nearly a hundred Westside

students, parents, and staff gathered at the hospital to support Nate and his family. The following morning our students demonstrated their love for Nate by arriving at school early to carry out Christ's command in Philippians 4:6: "*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God*". This was a touching testimony to many who watched our students' response in this situation. God was faithful to their appeal. After a remarkable recovery, Nate is ready to take his place on the Westside baseball team.

Another Westside student, Stephen Nelson, also plays football at Beaverton High School. At nearly every home game you will see a large contingent of Westside students wearing Stephen's number, cheering louder than any of the student groups in the stands, all for one Westside player on his local public school team. The support shown Stephen was not lost on the Beaverton High School student body. It was hard to miss the strength of our students' commitment to one another.

This year's JV2 basketball team successfully integrated boys from four different junior high schools to come together for a very successful season. While they enjoyed incredible success on the court, ask any of them what the highlight of the season was, and you're likely to hear that it was the camaraderie of the team during the bus rides to and from games with Coach JD.

Occasionally a ref will make a call that is a little hard for the Westside players and fans to swallow -- sometimes more than one call. During one such game, these "questionable" calls were numerous and likely impacted the outcome of the game. Our team ended up losing by one point, despite an incredible fourth quarter performance by one of the players. This player was spotted speaking with one of the referees after the game. When asked, the player explained that he was apologizing to the ref for his frustration during the first half of the game. That post-game interaction represented what Westside values and applauds far more than the on-court performance of any student.

The Westside Eagle mascot -- not "in the game", but definitely "a part of each game" -- demonstrates a wonderful way to participate in the athletics of Westside apart from donning a uniform. Okay, while we certainly wouldn't want to put our head in that costume, we are so very glad there are students who so enthusiastically and energetically add to our school spirit by doing so. There were a few students who, upon not making the basketball team, chose to support the team as the Eagle. That admirable choice demonstrates strength of character.

As evidenced by these stories (and countless more), sports at Westside are about so much more than just the games themselves. There is opportunity to learn to work together toward a common goal, to deal with disappointment, to encourage a teammate, to set an example among your peers, and to sometimes stand alone. There is opportunity to submit to authority despite disagreeing on the direction, to be humbled by a defeat and still exude a gracious spirit, and to forge relationships out of common effort rather than commonalities. There is also opportunity to really learn about yourself -- what to be proud of and what to allow God to work on.

Indeed for every challenge our students face, opportunities abound. Our teens are learning the importance of their responses to what life brings their way. Keeping their focus on Him, they're taking charge of the 90%.

BASKETBALL TEAMS EARN DISTRICT PLAYOFF BERTH

VARSITY GIRLS:

THIS SEASON WAS ALL ABOUT CHANGE AND PERSEVERANCE FOR THE LADIES. UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF THEIR NEW COACH, BILL STEPHENS, THEY WORKED HARD TO LEARN NEW OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS.

ADDITIONALLY, THEY STARTED THE SEASON WITH THREE OF THEIR RETURNING SENIORS INJURED OR ILL. DESPITE THESE OBSTACLES, THE GALS LEARNED QUICKLY, WORKED HARD AND ENJOYED SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT AS THE SEASON PROGRESSED.



AT THE END OF REGULAR SEASON PLAY THEIR RECORD OF 10-6 PUT THEM SOLIDLY IN FOURTH PLACE, EARNING THEM A BERTH IN THE DISTRICT PLAYOFFS. THEY CAPTURED A WIN IN THE FIRST DISTRICT PLAYOFF GAME AGAINST THE FIFTH PLACE DAYTON PIRATES, BUT FELL SHORT ON THE NEXT TWO GAMES AGAINST VALLEY CATHOLIC AND WILLAMINA.

THREE PLAYERS WERE HONORED WITH ALL-LEAGUE AWARDS: SENIORS SARAH STAROPOLI AND GRACE WENTZIEN EARNED SECOND TEAM ALL-LEAGUE, AND SENIOR BRENNIA SIGLER RECEIVED HONORABLE MENTION ALL-LEAGUE.

VARSITY BOYS:

DESPITE A TOUGH GAME LOAD AND PLAYING IN THE STRONGEST LEAGUE IN THE 3A DIVISION, THE BOYS WRAPPED UP THE SEASON IN 5TH PLACE WITH A LEAGUE RECORD OF 7-9. THIS WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO EARN THEM A SPOT IN DISTRICT PLAYOFFS. THEIR PLAYOFF BID ENDED WITH A HEARTBREAKING LOSS AT DAYTON.



ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASON CAME WHEN THE BOYS TRAVELED TO SHERIDAN, A TEAM THAT WAS UNDEFEATED IN LEAGUE PLAY AND RANKED SECOND IN THE STATE IN THE

3A DIVISION. THE WESTSIDE EAGLES KNEW THEY WOULD HAVE THEIR HANDS FULL, BUT CAME MENTALLY PREPARED TO TACKLE ONE OF THE DIVISION'S BEST. THEY DID NOT DISAPPOINT AS THEY HANDED SHERIDAN THEIR FIRST LOSS IN LEAGUE PLAY WITH A FINAL SCORE OF 64-51.

TWO PLAYERS EARNED ALL-LEAGUE AWARDS: JUNIOR AUSTIN LAYTON WAS HONORED WITH A SECOND TEAM ALL-LEAGUE AWARD, AND SENIOR DIMA YOVKO RECEIVED HONORABLE MENTION ALL-LEAGUE.



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YOUR CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We are continually striving to reach out to our students and "equip servant leaders in God's Kingdom for the next generation by educating and developing the whole person for the glory of God."

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Contact Andy Sears with your thoughts on how you'd like to impact tomorrow's leaders today!

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