



# ENDOWMENT FOR EXCELLENCE

Columbus High School Alumni Association, Inc.

Dear Friend:

Thank you again for your generous support of the CHS Alumni Association's Endowment for Excellence. Because of generous donors like you, the Endowment achieved its initial goal of \$500,000.

We now begin a campaign to reach our final goal of \$1 million. These funds will assist with the financial needs of over 25% of CHS students who either live in poverty, are homeless or come from low income families in need of additional support. The determination exhibited by these students to achieve excellence at school and a better life is truly remarkable.

Your continued support widens opportunities for these students and helps them reach their highest potential. CHS changes the lives of many students for the better and, as a consequence, is greatly benefiting our community. Almost 99% of CHS students graduate and attend college. Many later become the business, civic, political, education, public safety and religious leaders of our community.

Columbus High School consistently demonstrates a high level of effectiveness as a public high school. This year was no exception, as CHS is ranked "Number 1" in the State of Georgia for the second straight year and 125<sup>th</sup> in the Nation by *U.S. World Report*. Columbus High School is indeed a "crown jewel" for public education in Columbus and in Georgia. As members of the CHS Alumni Association, we are proud to continue to help highly motivated students develop their full potential at CHS.

## How Endowment Funds are Used

Each year, the Association's Board of Trustees reviews the general categories of financial needs as determined by the CHS faculty. Since our beginning five years ago, we have provided financial assistance to CHS students selected by the faculty who do not have the financial ability to fully participate in the many programs offered at CHS.

Programs receiving funds from the Endowment include:

Personal Development - One program at CHS helps students learn how to properly select appropriate clothing for college and work interviews, ceremonies, and awards programs. This program also teaches table etiquette which includes a \$45 formal dinner where students utilize their skills. Other student expenses (not required, but important) class dues, caps and gowns, graduation announcements, yearbook, senior pictures and class rings -- all part of a student's high school experience. The total cost for all of these items is approximately \$300 per student. To date, the Association has only financially supported the etiquette banquet.

Field Trips - Day trips are taken during freshman, sophomore and junior years as an extension of classroom instruction. Examples are: trips to the Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, the Atlanta Aquarium, Westville and more. These trips including travel, food and admission, and cost between \$50 and \$100 per student each year.

"Dream Trips" - Educational trips led by CHS faculty to other countries (France, China, etc.) and U.S. cities (NYC and DC) are available to students during spring break and over the summer. Over the years, the Association has been able to provide full or partial tuition for Dream Trips to several deserving students, some of whom had never been outside the Columbus area.

Technology - Many students participate in CHS's highly acclaimed Robotics Program which coordinates with NASA and participates in robotics activities at Fort Benning. CHS students successfully compete at the highest level in national robotics competitions. Participation in this program is a valuable experience for students in our fast developing "high tech" world. Due in part to this program, more CHS graduates attended M.I.T. the past few years than from any other public high school in the state of Georgia.

Another area of technology important in education is the use of computers. Some CHS students have no access to a home computer with an internet connection, which is often needed for research and assigned student projects. Some of these needs are partially met by private donations of used computers to CHS. Although students can use computers at school, this can be an impeding issue for those who must take the bus home at the end of the school day. To date, our Association has not been financially able to help in this area. With the growing Endowment, the Association would be able to supplement this area of need.

AP Exams - Students at CHS are encouraged to take rigorous classes known as Advanced Placement (AP) courses and receive college credit by passing a national exam for each course. The cost for an AP exam is \$85. Georgia no longer pays for this exam. Most students at CHS take several AP courses since Universities favorably look at the number of AP courses on a student's application. Because of the cost, some students are unable to participate in AP exams. Although students eligible for free lunch are given a reduced rate of \$65 per exam, many are still not able to afford the cost. Endowment funds are used for this purpose, as faculty determines the need.

PSAT - Students at CHS are encouraged to take the standardized PSAT test during their sophomore year. The PSAT costs \$14 and is considered by the faculty as an important experience which improves SAT scores, taken during their junior and senior years. With your support, Endowment funds will be used to supplement these costs on behalf of faculty selected students as needed.

Senior Projects - All seniors at CHS are required to organize and complete a personally selected project which involves learning a new skill such as photography, sculpting, writing a book, scuba diving, etc. Senior projects also develop student skills in organization, time management, research, writing and public speaking. CHS Senior Projects are rigorous and demanding and many develop lasting life skills important for their future. College admission officers say students who complete Senior Projects of this caliber have an advantage during the admissions process. Seniors are required to spend at least 100 hours outside of class (monitored by a teacher) on their program and develop a written portfolio, which describes and documents each stage of their project. Before graduation, each senior formally presents his or her project during an evening program at CHS to a panel of judges selected from the community. To date, our Association has not been able to help students with the cost of their Senior Projects; however, this highly effective program remains on our "wish list" for the future when more Endowment funds are available.

We hope you will make a generous tax deductible contribution to the CHS Endowment for Excellence to help the Endowment reach its \$1 million goal. Your help will ensure that CHS remains place where any interested and qualified student in Columbus can feel comfortable in applying regardless financial circumstances. As many former CHS students have attested, their lives were transformed by attending Columbus High School.

In considering your support of the Endowment, please note that 100% of all contributions to the Endowment are used for student support at CHS. The business and activities of the Association are carried out by volunteers with no paid staff. We are able to fund our operating costs (newsletters, brochures, computer support services, etc.) with fundraisers and annual membership contributions. Please also note that all Endowment funds are deposited to the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley where they are safely protected and invested.

Again, thank you for your previous support of the Endowment. Your 2015 contribution to the Endowment will help the continuation of the many life changing developments of hard working and determined students at CHS.

We thank you for your support!

Sincerely,



Burton Hewitt  
President



Cecil Calhoun  
Vice President



Ken Crumpler  
Vice President



Morton Harris  
Past President and Campaign  
Co-Chair



Robert Wadkins  
Trustee  
Campaign Co-Chair



Frank Etheridge  
Trustee  
Campaign Co-Chair

P.S. If you wish to direct your contribution for a specific purpose within the scope of the Association's charitable purpose (academic, leadership and cultural development of deserving students at CHS), please contact Morton Harris at (706) 243 - 6225 for more information on establishing a special designated fund within the Endowment.