



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Pop the Corks! Chester School To Open in Fall 2008

It's happening! The wonderful arts and academic school in Chester that we've dreamed about for so long will open in September—and it will be a public school!

Named the Chester Upland School of the Arts, the school will open with 160 children in pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade and will add one grade per year. Each grade will have two classes of no more than 20 children each.

At the Chester Upland School of the Arts (CUSA), children will fall in love with learning. They will gain skills and knowledge that will carry them far in school and in life. Most important, they will



learn to become powerful people and to use their power to effect change in the world.

What makes CUSA special

CUSA's outstanding educational program will be based on:

- A culture that celebrates the joy, curiosity, and creativity that children bring to everything they do
- A rich arts program, with music, dance, or visual arts every day for every child
- An educational model that encourages children to ask questions, think critically, and create their own learning projects with the help of expert teachers
- A relentless pursuit of academic excellence
- A core philosophy of nurturing character, so that children become caretakers for themselves, their schoolmates, and the community
- Extensive involvement of parents in their children's education
- An extended school day with after-school academics, arts, and sports for children beginning in second grade.

School district partnership

I am especially pleased that this superb school will be a public school, created in partnership with the Chester Upland School District and its new, visionary superintendent, Dr. Gregory Thornton. CUSA will be housed in the district's former Parry School at 9th and Fulton Streets, and its school's basic education program will be funded by the district as it is in every other elementary school. Our nonprofit organization, The

continued, over

Come Hear Us Sing!

SPRING CONCERT
Friday, May 9 and
Saturday, May 10,
8 p.m.
Lang Concert Hall
Swarthmore College

SPRING CONCERT ON TOUR
Sunday, May 18,
4 p.m.
St. Peter's Church
In the Great Valley
Malvern

SUMMER CONCERT
Friday, July 25 and
Saturday, July 26,
8 p.m.
Lang Concert Hall
Swarthmore College

Admission free—No tickets required

Chorus and School: A Shared Mission

What will happen to the Chester Children's Chorus when the Chester Upland School of the Arts opens in September? It will become bigger and better!

The chorus will continue to provide an after-school, Saturday, and summer program that offers talented children from the entire Chester-Upland School District a rigorous music education, cultural enrichment, and the opportunity to perform sophisticated music before large audiences. We will assure that even more children benefit from chorus membership by doubling our size from 75 to 150 children over the next five years.

Students at the Chester Upland School of the Arts (CUSA) will be invited to join the chorus on the same basis as children in other schools: by demonstrating musical aptitude and interest in the auditions

I conduct each year in every second-grade classroom in the district. CUSA will have only two second-grade classes, so the majority of CCC members will always be drawn from the approximately 26 second-grade classes in other schools.

Ultimately, the chorus and the school are engaged in the same mission: offering Chester children a wealth of musical and other opportunities to enrich their lives.

—John Alston



To make a tax-deductible contribution to the Chester Children's Chorus, please detach this coupon, complete, and mail to:

Chester Children's Chorus, Swarthmore College, Department of Music and Dance, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore PA 19081

☐ Enclosed is a check in the amount of ☐ \$35 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ Other: ____.

(Check should be payable to Swarthmore College with Chester Children's Chorus in memo field)

☐ Please charge my gift to my:

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express
Card # _____

Expires: ____ / ____ Amount to charge: \$ _____

☐ My gift will be matched by my employer.

(Please enclose your signed matching gift form.)

☐ Give online at www.swarthmore.edu. Choose "other fund" and specify "Chester Children's Chorus." **THANK YOU!**

What's News



An ad hoc 22-voice **Chamber Choir** sang at a Martin Luther King Jr. day service at Congregation Ohev Shalom, near Swarthmore. The children sang beautifully and were very interested in the Jewish service, which included long passages in Hebrew.

The 25 nine- and 10-year-olds in the **Junior Choir** are musically fearless and love to sing harmony. At the December concert, they had a blast singing a jazzy arrangement of *Jingle Bells* that included some bebop scat choruses.

Chorus members **Nkenge Daniels, 18, Jabree Reaves, 17, and Jenniffer Foster, 14**, are members of the Swarthmore College Chorus this year. They will sing Bach's *St. John Passion* in German at the May 2 concert in Swarthmore College's Lang Concert Hall.

Nkenge shows his musical versatility and enlivens Chester Children's Chorus concerts with able performances of the **inspirational rap lyrics** he writes for pieces the chorus sings.

The chorus will **grow to 90** members this summer ...

Fourteen chorus members take **piano lessons** from our teachers Mateo Gloistein and Amie Richan ... The **Composers' Circle**, where children study harmony and composition with

director John Alston, has grown to seven members ... Nine chorus members receive **individual tutoring** in math and English from Swarthmore College students. Stephanie Hsu '08 coordinates the tutoring program.



Read with a Child This Summer

Our chorus members are bright and curious. Most of them love to read and talk about books. They love it more and learn more when they read with adults who can help them with vocabulary, ideas, analysis, and conversation.

If you are an adult who would like to get to know a child and nurture his or her love of reading, please join our corps of summer reading volunteers. If you can come for two or more successive weeks, you will read with the same child each day, so that real bonds of friendship can develop. Children whose "buddies" can be with them for the entire five weeks feel especially fortunate! Our reading hour is 11 a.m. to noon, Monday through Wednesday and a few Thursdays, beginning on June 23 and ending on July 24.

We welcome both men and women who are at least 20 years old.

You will find complete information about the reading program and a downloadable registration form on the You Can Help! page of our Web site, www.chester-childrenschorus.org. You may also call the chorus office for information at (610) 328-8180.

Pop the corks ... (continued)

Chester Fund for Education and the Arts (The Chester Fund), will provide funds for arts education, the extended school day, a full-time teaching assistant in every classroom, and other enhancements. The Chester Fund is the new name for the organization formerly called the Chester School of the Arts, Inc. The name change reflects the change in mission from operating our own school to funding enrichments in a district school.

Principal, teachers, students

When this newsletter went to press in early March, The Chester Fund and the school district had begun a nationwide search for a principal and teachers, seeking inspirational leaders who will be devoted advocates for the children.

Any child living in the district will be eligible to attend CUSA, providing his or her family signs a contract specifying the educational supports to be provided at home. Should there be more applicants

than places, a lottery will be employed to fill the classes, with an attempt to provide geographical and gender balance.

Fund-raising

The Chester Fund must raise about \$1.86 million to meet its funding commitments for the first two years of operation. By early March we had raised \$1 million, half from a \$500,000 Sunshine Lady Foundation challenge grant and half from individual contributions to match that grant. We will extend the school through 8th grade and will decide by 2012 whether to continue it through 12th grade. CUSA's potential to provide outstanding education in Chester has generated significant excitement and support, and we are confident we can sustain and improve the school as it grows.

Information on the school and how to support it financially is available at www.chesteruplandschoolofhearts.org.

—John Alston

CHESTER CHILDREN'S CHORUS

John Alston, founder and director

Andrea Knox '64, managing director

Elisa DeNofio, assistant

Advisory Board

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Leslie Price, treasurer

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Wendy Emrich

Edmund Jones '39

Mary McTernan

Sandra Robinson

Jay Tucker

Voice

The Newsletter of the Chester Children's Chorus
Andrea Knox, editor

Phillip Stern '84, designer

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Department of Music and Dance

Swarthmore College
500 College Avenue

Swarthmore PA 19081

(610) 328-8180

ccc@swarthmore.edu

www.chesterchildrenschorus.org

