

WINTER 2015



Communities In Schools of Lakewood

Helping Kids Prepare For Life

www.lakewood.ciswa.org | (253)-589-7489

January is National Mentoring Month

CISL currently supports 78 matches in 13 schools. Multiple studies show that mentoring helps young people to make responsible decisions, stay engaged in school and avoid risky behavior.

Catherine Cannon shared with us why she mentors. "I'm a mentor because I want to make a difference in a child's life. If I can bring a smile or build their confidence, they are more likely to reach the goals they set for themselves."

Oakwood Site Coordinator, Adriane Wilson, enjoys watching students grow after meeting their mentor for the first time...

"I would describe it as a cage full of birds that have been locked up for a long time. When you release the door to open the cage, the birds are at first stunned and not quite sure what to do. Then they realize there is an opening. When they finally get into the open air, they stutter

and stumble for a minute but then they are off and flying into the unknown with wings flapping full of excitement and relief. That's how I would describe a student when they start meeting with a mentor."

Please read the bios of students who are eagerly awaiting a mentor. If you, or someone you know, can devote one hour a week to meeting with a student, please contact Bre Wilson at 253-589-7489 or sign up on the CISL website at www.lakewood.ciswa.org.



Students Waiting for Mentors

- **Eighth grade:** "Fantasy and suspense are my favorite subjects to read. I like to talk and play video games. I would like to learn to play the violin." Her teacher specified she could use a mentor who could help her develop social skills as she has trouble maintaining healthy friendships.
- **Third grade:** "I like science, math and reading. I want to learn about earthquakes, the heart and magnets." He tends to withdraw at school and needs help developing social confidence.
- **Third grade:** "If I could learn something new, I would want to learn how to take care of animals. I want to be a veterinarian and I like art." A mentor could provide her with academic support as she lacks positive role models in her life.

Bre Wilson, Mentor Coordinator & her mentee have been meeting together for two years.

Partner in the Spotlight: Pierce County Library

Students at Tillicum Elementary have enjoyed a five-year partnership with the Tillicum branch of Pierce County Library. Every student in the ASP has their own library card and visits the library at least once a month. They are experts at navigating the library and tapping the resources it has to offer. They also receive information about special events for families.

"For the past three school years, we have looked forward to the visit of a special group of children with incredible potential," writes Tillicum Librarian, Jeanine Adams. "As we interact, we are anxious to play an important part of unlocking this potential by introducing our love of books and the library experience."

The partnership continues to expand...

- Art Club students display projects in the library;

- Librarians make requests for specific items to go along with themes for the library; and
- When CISL started a second-grade reading program after school, librarians stepped up to bring a box of books to students every month.

Because students are comfortable at the library, they visit the library even when school is out, often with their families.

After School Highlights

After School Partners: Southgate, Oakwood, Tillicum, Tye Park & Lochburn Middle School



Oakwood Students Shine! - Adriane Wilson, Oakwood Site Coordinator

On Nov. 18, Oakwood ASP students displayed arts and crafts projects and performed the play *Rainbow Fish* in front of friends and families. Most had never performed in front of an audience and were excitedly nervous. The play is based on Shel Silverstein's book, *The Giving Tree*.

Jody Coppedge-Pope, theater background, did a great job making sure students memorized their lines and knew exactly where to go on the stage. Rosita McKnight taught students four songs that were performed after the play.

Site Coordinator, Adriane Wilson, described the day of the play.

"Before the evening performance, students were in a frenzy decorating the gym, hanging curtains they had made from scratch, getting into costumes and setting up chairs. Second-grader, Paris, had a major part in the play and was so nervous she almost dropped out. Just before showtime, Paris was running around the gym, rehearsing lines and searching for her family. When she spotted them she jumped for joy.

During the play I paid special attention to Paris. After delivering one of her lines, she whispered to herself, **'I can't believe I just did that.'** Surrounded by ASP staff and friendly faces in the audience, she rose to the challenge with grace and dignity and delivered her lines flawlessly. Staff and family members were very proud of her. Her smile never left its place and that is something, as a site coordinator, and a parent, I will never forget. It was the best play ever!"

Americorps Members

Making a Difference

Ruth Rosas, Tye Park site coordinator, is managing the ASP, supporting mentors and helping students during the day. She is bilingual and loves working at the school. She wrote the following: "I am originally from South Central LA where I grew up in poverty most of my life. Luckily, my hunger for higher education was fueled by some inspiring teachers and I earned my BA at the University of Puget Sound. I was the first in my family to attend AND graduate from



Kaytie Smith



Ruth Rosas

a private four-year university! I love to go hiking, camping, rock climbing, dancing and run marathons."

Kaytie Smith works primarily at Southgate Elementary School but she also assists at Tye Park Elementary and Lochburn Middle School. She grew up in Lakewood and attended Hudtloff Middle School and Lakes High School. She recently graduated from Pacific Lutheran University with a bachelor of arts degree in fine arts.

"Throughout my college experience, I worked with students in after-school programs," stated Kaytie. "I led several clubs including PE, arts, crafts and homework and am excited to support students in CISL programs."

CISL, City of Lakewood, and The Health Department Team Up at Tye Park

- Dave O'Keeffe, Executive Director

Each Friday, 50 students in grades 3-5 meet after school to engage in fitness and healthy youth activities. CISL site coordinator Ruth Rosas manages the program; city of Lakewood provides fitness staff/bussing; and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department provides funds for school nurses to lead healthy lifestyle activities.

The Healthy Youth Program focuses on teaching students to develop good daily habits, as summed up in "5210", a community-based initiative in Pierce County that promotes eating five fruits and vegetables, limiting screen time to two hours, exercising for one hour and drinking zero beverages with sugar.

"Students are enthusiastic about coming to class each week and have shown understanding by connecting one lesson to the next," said school nurse and lead teacher in the Healthy Youth Program, Nancy Parks. "For example, the week after a lesson on reading and decoding food labels, the class had a lesson on healthy drink choices. Part of the lesson required several students to organize empty milk cartons, soda bottles, juice containers and water bottles from the most healthy to the least healthy. One of the students who rated a juice container unhealthy explained, 'Even though juice is supposed to be healthy, I don't think it is. I looked at the food label and it said the drink was only 22 percent juice and had 49 grams of sugar. That's too much!'"



Funder In the Spotlight

Key Bank

Key Bank has been a long-time supporter of several Communities In Schools affiliates in Washington state. They recently awarded CISL a \$2,500 grant for the Champions Mentor Program. Key Bank gives more than \$18 million annually to nonprofit organizations in the form of philanthropy, corporate contributions and voluntarism. They focus on transformational grants in three areas that foster economic success: financial education, workforce development and diversity. Key Bank also matches dollar for dollar employee donations to nonprofits, up to \$2,000 per year. CISL is fortunate to have Key Bank VP and Area Team Leader, Anthony Velez on our board of directors.

Champions For Youth Breakfast - Save the Date

On March 26, CISL will host the Champions for Youth Breakfast at Old Country Buffet in the Lakewood Towne Center. Breakfast is served at 7:00 a.m. and the program runs from 7:30-8:30 a.m. There is no charge at the door and a call for support will end the program.

Students and volunteers will share about their experiences and Erin Jones, Director of Equity and Achievement for Federal Way Public Schools, will be our featured keynote.

Funds raised at the breakfast support After-School, Mentor and Readiness to Learn Programs that support 1,500 Clover Park students.

To reserve a seat, simply call the CISL office at 589-7489 or email kidsandfamilies@cislakewood.org.



Erin Jones, Keynote Speaker

Don't have the time to mentor but still want to support Lakewood students? Tax deductible donations can be made online at www.lakewood.ciswv.org or mailed to CISL, 6402 100th St. SW, Lakewood, 98499



A Heartfelt THANK YOU to Donors, Mentors, Partners & School Staff

The phrase, "it takes a village to raise a child" never gets old. Launching young people into productive lives—especially those who live in challenging situations—requires that communities, parents and schools work together. As we enter a new year, CISL would like to thank all who partner with us in any way. Thank you for investing your time, your resources and your passion in kids whose potential is unlimited. It's your support that helps CISL pursue its mission of "surrounding students with a community of care, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life." Thank you for being that village that raises children to new heights.

Surrounding students with a community of support. Empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

January is National MENTORING MONTH



#TogetherIam “graduating”

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

In honor of National Mentoring Month, CISL is launching an internet campaign entitled **#TogetherIam**.

The goal is to show that the relationships we build together directly influence who we become.

We will be featuring students who have shared with us how their mentor has changed them. One third-grade boy told us, **“#TogetherIam a good friend!”**

Please share your thoughts and experiences with us throughout the month to celebrate our mentors and friends by using the hashtag.

