VAN LUNEN FELLOWS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR SCHOOLS
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Joel Landskroener, 2008-2009 Van Lunen Fellow
Executive Director, Mayer Lutheran High School – Mayer, MN

Mission Statement: To prepare the next generation of Christian leaders

Genesis Virtual Academy (GVA), Mayer Lutheran High School’s online school, is now in its third year! GVA has served students from South Dakota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, and Minnesota.

Our high school, middle school, and elementary programs offer over 300 classes from which students and parents can choose. GVA now offers more than forty dual credit (college & high school) classes in partnership with Concordia University, Wisconsin and Arizona’s Grand Canyon University. Dual credit classes allow a student to take one class and earn both college and high school credit. Genesis Virtual Academy’s biggest asset, however, is our teachers.

We are blessed with an exceptional team of caring, professional instructors who in turn bless GVA students!

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John Engelbrecht, 2009-2010 Van Lunen Fellow
Executive Director, Calvary Lutheran High School – Jefferson City, MO

Tenth Academic Year
We are very grateful to be using our auditorium, cafeteria space, and gymnasium. Enrollment increased to 99 at the beginning of this year. We are blessed with an amazing group of educators who give their time and talents to our students and their families, striving to achieve the goal of Building Christian Leaders.

Gayle Renken, 2009-2010 Van Lunen Fellow
Principal, St. Timothy’s Lutheran School – San Jose, CA

School fundraisers usually mean selling popcorn, walking laps, or crab-eating feast. For St. Timothy’s Lutheran School however, it means helping those in need in San Jose.

After five Earth Day walkathons to raise money, the small Christian school decided to try something different that would also tie into their mission of preparing the next generation of leaders to influence the world.

In order to provide a meaningful way for students to demonstrate leadership skills and to give back to the community, St. Timothy’s collaborated with Helping Hands Fight Hunger to organize a meal pack-a-thon.

On May 30, teachers, students, and parent volunteers spent the entire day assembling 10,000 meals. The older students were trained first and then, after completing their shift, taught and helped preschoolers. In fact, the fifth-graders liked the activity so much that they asked to skip their lunchtime recess to have another meal-packing shift. All 10,000 meals were donated to the San Jose-based Second Harvest Food Bank.
Elisa Carlson, 2010-2011 Van Lunen Fellow
Head Administrator, Central Christian School – Redmond, OR

Business Partners Program

Central Christian School is excited about the support for our school from the business community in everything from gifts in kind to cash donations. Because of their generosity, Central Christian has created the Business Partners Program. Business Partners are companies or corporations that commit to support Central Christian School with a one to three year donation. In recognition of their giving, Central Christian makes their businesses visible in many different ways throughout our school. Our current partners have commented that the greatest benefit of their partnership with Central Christian is knowing that a class of students is praying for their business on a regular basis.
Where are we now?

Phase IV is complete. To God be the glory! This recent phase included seven classrooms, one double-size classroom, a conference room, space for the technology program, restrooms and a new entrance and driveway on the south size of the addition. We are now blessed to have a school that accommodates 612 students from 354 families. Phase IV was built at a cost of $2,000,000. As of February 1, 2014, $1,450,000 was gifted thus leaving us a debt for Phase IV of $550,000.

Reducing this debt in full is our corporate challenge. As we move forward in faith, we stand in awe at being recipients of an energized Association; excellent leadership to implement a forward-looking vision; outstanding administration, faculty and support staff; committed volunteers and committees to improve curriculum and support growth opportunities in music, athletics, art and enrichment; and supportive tuition subsidiary, Second Life Resale Shoppe.

What a privilege it is to serve northwest Indiana and south Chicagoland families with excellent education.
AS CHRISTIANS, WE’RE COMMANDED TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR MIND

That’s why at Whittier Christian High School we take academic education — the development of students’ minds — so seriously. Here, education isn’t just about grades and test scores. It’s about teaching students to think critically, to seek Truth rigorously, to understand the world from a biblical perspective, and to use their minds to honor God.

With small class sizes, highly qualified teachers, personal attention from counselors, and the flexibility of three academic tracks, Whittier Christian High School is a premier academic community with a strong record of preparing graduates to succeed wherever God has called them.

Approximately 99 percent of Whittier Christian High School graduates go on to college in any given year. Graduates have gone on to attend some of the nation’s leading colleges and universities. In recent years, students have been accepted to national universities such as Harvard, Duke, and Princeton, and leading Christian universities such as Azusa Pacific, Biola, Westmont and Wheaton.

Whittier Christian High School students consistently outperform statewide and national averages on the SAT 1 exam. Overall, the Class of 2011 scored an average of 1565, the college prep and honors students scored an average of 1588, and the Alpha Honors Program students scored an average of 1926, compared to a statewide average of 1513. Many WCHS students get an early start on earning college credits by passing Advanced Placement tests. Over the past five years, students have passed 65 percent of AP exams, consistently performing above the state and national average pass rate.

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Jane Bona, 2012-2013 Van Lunen Fellow
Principal, Immaculate Conception Catholic School – Columbia Heights, MN

Blended Learning in Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Immaculate Conception Catholic School of Columbia Heights, Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School of Mound, and St. Therese Catholic School of Deephaven are partnering with the University of Notre Dame’s Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) and the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis’ Office of Catholic Schools to become the first blended learning Catholic schools in the Twin Cities.

Blended learning is an emerging innovation in K-12 education in which classrooms integrate online learning and computer aided instruction with traditional teacher led instruction to personalize the learning experience for each child. This involves allowing students to work at their own pace and ability level to more effectively meet their individual needs and enhance mastery-based learning for all students.

Results of this model have shown great promise. In ACE’s first blended learning partner school in Seattle, WA, student growth in math and reading jumped to the equivalent of 1.5 years’ worth of growth in math and 1.22 years’ worth of growth in reading in the first year of implementation. This significantly boosted overall school academic performance in its first year.

These are the first Catholic schools in the State of Minnesota to leverage a premier university’s research and resources to deploy a blending learning model. The Archdiocese invited the Alliance for Catholic Education to consider the Twin Cities as their newest site for the model. The schools were selected due to strong local support for the partnership and affirmation of capacity to adopt the model to serve students effectively.

Downloaded on October 9, 2014 from http://school.iccsonline.org/blended-learning