HopeHall SCHOOL

A School of Our Own

Connecting Children. Creating Community. Changing Lives.

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Director's Corner

Collaboration and Cooperation

"Ubuntu: We are who we are through one another; our humanity is bound up in one another."

—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

During the month of February, our character development focused on empathy, putting ourselves in someone else's place, looking at a situation from their perspective, and treating them the way we would want to be treated. We will continue to build on this theme because there is precious little evidence of it in the world around us.

One concrete thing our school did to practice empathy was to make sacrifices and bring in money to help support the **Leukemia and Lymphoma Society** through a project called Pennies for Patients. After learning about Leukemia, Lymphoma, and other forms of Cancer impacting the blood, our children, most of whom live in families experiencing significant economic challenges, brought in whatever funds they could, and with the support of all of us who are adults at Hope Hall, we raised money to help support the important work of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. This newsletter has to go to print before our **Pennies for Patients** Drive is finished, so I can't give you the exact dollar amount raised yet, but I can tell you that much empathy and compassion has been at work. Some of the kids have even said things like "Sister, I used empathy and brought in some of the money I got for my birthday."

This month, our focus will be on two values that are critical for building a strong Community. These values are **Collaboration and Cooperation**. Many people think these two words mean the same thing. They don't. Many people think everyone knows what these words mean. This isn't always the case. And yet, fully understanding the meaning of these words, and actively practicing them, is critical for building a strong Community, whether at home, at work, in school or in our neighborhood. Some of what you are about to read will sound familiar to you. That's because **Collaboration** and **Cooperation** was our theme for March last year too. I am repeating the focus this year because these two values require a great deal of practice for us adults as well as for our children.

I believe that our children are unfamiliar with these words because they are seldom used in everyday vocabulary. In fact, three opposing values seem to get the most attention in our world today: fierce competition (someone always has to win, everyone else loses; getting ahead and being first/best at whatever the cost is what matters); rugged individualism (me first, what's good for me is what should be good for everybody, it's all about what I want/need), and lastly, "Because I said so, that's why."

Collaboration and **Cooperation** run contrary to these prevalent societal values, and yet they **are basic to what it means to be human. Collaboration means working together with others to achieve a common goal.** Cooperation means almost the same thing, but for me there is a slight difference. **Cooperation means working together for a common goal, but it also means getting along with those with whom you are working, honoring differences of opinion and styles of doing something, and appreciating the fact that there is always more than one way to achieve any goal. In other words, collaboration is <u>what</u> you do in working together, and cooperation is <u>how</u> you do it.**

John Burgh, a leading expert in the science of the unconscious and how our brain works without our awareness, says that humans come "factory equipped" for compassion, generosity, and cooperation. In fact, one of our innate, built-in goals is to cooperate. **In other words,cooperation is what God always intended when God created humans.**

In a book titled <u>The Book of Joy,</u> the Dalai Lama states that so much of our stress is created by our seeing ourselves as separate from others. This goes along with the quote I started my Director's Corner with—Archbishop Tutu's African word

Director's Corner

Continued

Ubuntu-we are all connected. When we see ourselves as separate from others, when we are constantly comparing and making judgments about how we're performing and the performances of others, when we think we have to have all of the answers, then stress, anger, frustration, and fear take over.

If you need evidence of this, take a look at the partisan politics, and the fear of anyone who is not just like us, or who does not share our point of view, that dominates our schools, our nation, and our way of thinking. This is not what God intended for us when God created humans. **We were created to be social beings who need each other in order to be our best selves. We were created to be a community, collaborating and cooperating with each other to achieve the best outcome for all. We were created to be interconnected, not un-connected.**

During March, our emphasis in classes will be on the fact that each of us is responsible for, and essential to, the success and learning of all, and two different perspectives can create a whole new third and better way of getting something done.

Here are some things you can do to help reinforce the values of collaboration and cooperation at home:
1. If you have assigned "jobs" or responsibilities to your child(ren) at home and you have to constantly remind them to do it or find yourself "yelling" at them because the job isn't done or isn't done correctly, try this. Sit down with your child and explain the importance of the job for the good of the whole family. Tell your child that you know s/he cares about the family and that this job will help everyone. It doesn't matter if this job is doing the dishes, or making their bed; it's important and the family is counting on him/her to do it. **All children, especially our students, need to know that people are counting on them.**

2. When your child does the job that you've given them to do, don't just take it for granted. Tell your child that you appreciate what a big help they are to you and the whole family. **Those words and a hug from you mean a lot more than an allowance.**

3. As parents of our students, please be sure that the job you have given your child is something they're capable of doing successfully. Most of our students have memory problems and when they get home from school they are mentally worn out. If you ask them in the morning to turn on the crockpot at 4:00 p.m. when they get home, they could easily forget and the whole family will be negatively impacted. **Setting up a routine of daily responsibilities or a visual reminder system, such as a white board, of what their role is in contributing to the well-being of the whole family, will increase your child's ability to succeed, and decrease stress for everyone.**

4. Check yourself on how well you are doing in your own situations at work. Are you simply collaborating with others to get the job done, or are you adding the dimension of cooperation to that job, letting others know that they matter? **Do you stay out of workplace gossip and offer to support a co-worker who may be struggling or feeling overwhelmed? Do you stop yourself from judging others and seeing them as "wrong?"**

5. When working with others to accomplish something, if you and someone else in the group have differing points of view as to how best to do it, **try active listening.** Listen to what's of value with the other point of view, see how you can merge it as a "both-and" idea, and see if what is created is a whole new, and probably better way of accomplishing what you need to get done.

I truly believe that as we all grow in paying attention to our interconnectedness and operating in **collaboration** and **cooperation** with others, we will find this increasingly easy to do because it is "in our hard drive" and what God "programmed" us to do. We will also find ourselves and our children much less stressed.

Count on my prayers for each of you as God blesses our effort to become more fully human and live in community with others.

Sister Deana

United Way

CHOOSE HOPE HALL UNITED WAY DONOR OPTION #2108

Does **your workplace** promote giving to **United Way**?

Did you know that **the ONLY way** Hope Hall students receive funding from the United Way is through **donor designation**?

Please consider choosing option #2108 to help ensure our students have access to the type of education they need and deserve.

Field Trips Expose High School Students to Exciting Career Opportunities in the Trades

Hope Hall has a **Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Program** unlike any other in the Rochester Area. High School students are required to take accredited, sequenced courses in woodworking in order to graduate as well as classes in financial management and business writing that teach them budgeting, resume writing, how to apply for financial aid, and many other vital skills. In addition, our **College and Career Transition Coordinator, Mrs. Selena Wentz,** helps students explore a variety of career opportunities, exposing them to areas of interest, and helping them to understand whether college or a skilled trades program might help them to pursue their career goals and set them on the right path to economic independence.

Two recent field trips, open to interested Hope Hall high school students, exposed them to careers in the trades. On Friday, January 26th, students went to **Arc + Flame Center,** Rochester's premier training facility in New York for welding, glass, and blacksmithing classes. At Arc + Flame, the students started out with a classroom introduction before demonstrations and hands-on experiences. They were exposed to different types of welding and they got to create customized metal plates. They also learned how to cut metal. Students had a great time and at least a few are considering enrolling in the training program after high school to pursue a career in welding. This was the second field trip Hope Hall students took to Arc + Flame. **Founder and Executive Director of Rochester Arc + Flame, Mr. Michael Krupnicki,** welcomed students last school year as well.

On Thursday, February 15th students went to **Conolly Printing** to learn about the printing industry and see a printing press in action. Conolly Printing has been Hope Hall's printer for nearly two decades, printing our newsletter, event materials, and much more. During the Conolly Printing field trip, students:

- Met with **Mike Giugno, owner of Conolly Printing**
- Asked many great questions about economics, equipment, job requirements, and stress level
- Were shown the Pre-Production Room where the Production Manager prepares the printing jobs for customers.
- Watched the Production Manager print an example of student work
- Visited the Digital Printing Room where they met a Graphic Designer and Sales Person. The Graphic Designer explained how he uses the computer programs he learned in college at his job at Conolly Printing.
- Lastly, students went back to the Production Room where Mr. Giugno showed them how ink is applied and how paper is cut and folded.

Students were surprised to learn everything that goes into the printing process and enjoyed learning more about this career opportunity. Hope Hall's CDOS program strives to expose students to a variety of employment fields and help students understand that there are multiple paths to achieving personal success and economic independence. According to the 2023 Career Advancement in Manufacturing Report by Xometry and The Women in Manufacturing Association, 82% of manufacturing companies are experiencing a labor shortage, so Hope Hall graduates interested in careers in the skilled trades will have a variety of employment opportunities.

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Where differences are celebrated, learning challenges are overcome, and lifelong success begins, one student at a time.

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