

Torch

a publication of the Kalamazoo Christian Schools

Spring 2019



Exploring God's World



GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

Marc Verkaik



I am asked quite often how the year is going. People ask about enrollment and if the year is successful.

How do

you measure success in a school year? Sure, I can give statistics and numbers. I can share how enrollment has exceeded our expectations, or I can talk about the status of our capital campaign. I can also share how we have outperformed our budget.

Yet, when I talk about the success of our school year, I want to measure it by our mission. Have we prepared students to serve God? Have we equipped them with knowledge, skills and a Biblical vision for life so that God's Kingdom is advanced?

During our Annual Meeting a few weeks ago, our administrative team shared a few stories of how

our students and teachers have succeeded in carrying out our mission. One story that I shared tied in with one aspect of our mission (a Biblical vision for life) and our theme for the year - ***Growing in God's Word.***



We are very intentional about documenting how our elementary students are growing in their knowledge of God's Word. Students place a pebble in a vase each time they memorize a verse. As you can see that vase is getting quite full!

Success is measured by more than memorizing scripture and putting pebbles in a vase. The last part of our mission is to advance God's Kingdom. Our elementary students took those verses and applied them to a local problem – hunger. Throughout the year students brought in food and raised money for Loaves and Fishes. Our 3rd and 4th graders were able to visit and see where their donations go. These activities not only helped us to grow in our knowledge, but also allowed us to advance His Kingdom. Now that is success!



We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way; bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God. ~Colossians 1:9b-10

International Treats

Sue VanHamersveld

The third annual International Food Fest (formerly Chinese New Year's Celebration) was held on February 21, 2019. In celebration of our international students, the student body and teachers at KCHS shared in a meal that the international students prepared and served. The menu included food from their home counties: fried rice, egg rolls, sweet and sour chicken, rice noodles, and leeches (google that) from China, and Swedish meatballs and Danish cookies from Denmark. Our Chinese international students are Leo Luo, Lucy Yu, Yue Wang, Liuxun Zhou, Sunny Huang and Billy Zhang, and our Danish

international student is Mike Ravn. This event is a highlight of the school year and a fun way to celebrate our international students.



CLASS OF 2019

Sue VanHamersveld

Congratulations to the Top Ten of the Class of 2019

In alphabetical order:

Easton De Jong
Jasmine Dhillon
Zachary Kranstz
Rachel Pease
Darby Rynd
Jackson Schut
Harley Seelbinder
Kylee VanBeck
Andrew VanDongen
Nathan Wenke



YWCA WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Congratulations to Eva De La Cruz, the Class of 2019 winner of the YWCA Woman of Achievement Award. The faculty chose Eva as someone who demonstrated excellence in academics, extracurricular activities, school and community involvement, and qualities of character and thought consistent with the mission and vision of the YWCA. Eva is the daughter of Estefan and Dawn De La Cruz.

EAGLE SCOUT HONORS

Stephanie Kranstz

Zach Kranstz earned his rank of Eagle Scout in February, 2019 and will be honored on Sunday, June 16, 2019 at 1 PM. Only three Scouts will receive this honor so it will not be a long ceremony. Many have had an impact on him throughout his years at KCHS and he would love the support.

The ceremony will be at Pathfinder Church (formerly known as Portage First United Methodist Church), 8740 South Westnedge Avenue.

All are invited!



For You are my hope, O Lord God;
You are my trust from my youth.
~Psalm 71:5 (NKJV)

SENIORS PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

Patti Landstra

Aquinas College - 1
Arizona State University - 1
Auburn University - 1
Calvin College - 8
Cosmetology graduate, going to work in a salon - 1
Glen Oaks Community College - 1
Grand Canyon University - 1
Grand Valley State University - 3
Hope College - 1
Kalamazoo College - 1
Kalamazoo Valley Community College - 19
Kellogg Community College - 2
Kendall College of Art and Design - 1

Kettering University - 1
Lake Superior State University - 1
Landscape Work - 1
Loyola University Chicago - 1
Marine Corps - 1
Michigan State - 3
Michigan Technological University - 1
Pepperdine University - 2
Trinity Christian College - 1
University of Michigan - 1
University of Northwestern Ohio - 3
University of South Carolina - 1
Western Michigan University - 6

KCSA Mission Statement:

The Kalamazoo Christian Schools, in partnership with Christian families and churches, prepare students to serve God responsibly in His world by equipping them with knowledge, skills and a biblical vision for life, for the advancement of His kingdom.

ISRAEL: CONTINUING THE LEGACY

Scott VanDyke

When Parchment Christian Reformed Church finished its mission as an organized church, the members wanted its money to bless the community. The members donated a portion of that money to allow teachers at KCSA to experience the land of Abraham, the Israelites, and Jesus during the summer of 2013. The church in Parchment wanted teachers to bring the past experience of the saints to our students today.

After learning and studying there, teachers naturally shared the blessing of that experience in KCSA classrooms. However, we also wanted to share it with our students in person, so that they too could walk the land. To that end, high school teachers, Dawn Brown, Scott VanDyke, and Tammy Eaton organized a trip for 30 high school students over interim and spring break, 2019.

Some of the sites we visited included the wilderness where Abraham and David traveled, a couple of Herod's palaces, the Church of the Holy Nativity, a praetorium like the one in which Jesus was condemned, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Though the biblical people were gone, their heritage and legacy echoed in the places and stones we visited.

Throughout our travels, we received new insights to familiar Bible stories. Each day our guides, Jeff and Karen Blamer, blessed us with more Biblical images, bringing these stories to life. Khalil, our guide in the land, shared new pictures of living in modern Israel and the plight of the Palestinian Christians who live there. Each student and leader felt the presence of God at different times and places. Some felt overwhelmed and closer to God while on the Sea of Galilee. Some felt God's presence in En Gedi: sitting by a waterfall while listening to a teaching about living water, feeling that from God and thinking about sharing that with another person. The Jordan River was a powerful site. Many of the students entered the



water for a baptism of repentance or rededication, and each person had time to sit quietly by the water and pray. On the final day of the trip, the students made videos sharing their favorite site or moment. It was exciting to hear that those favorite moments and places were as diverse as the students' reasons for choosing them.

God speaks and reveals Himself to each of us in such a personal way. With so much information, thought and introspection we couldn't process everything at once, but seeds were sown for our own legacies. Returning home just before Holy Week, our faith and lives were renewed by walking and encountering the places that Jesus walked and taught.

If you would like more information about any part of the trip, feel free to speak with the chaperones: Dawn Brown, Scott VanDyke, Tammy Eaton and Andy Eaton. Or talk with one of the students: Sara Baas, Emma Bertrand, Samantha Bertrand, Jenna Blackwell, Joshua Bouma, Maggie Carless, CJ Carrel, Will Carrel, Lynsey Cook, Claire Dommer, Drew Eaton, Ben Hart, Noah Hartwell, Zoe Hazelhoff, Michael Keckler, Rachel Leep, Trevon McDaniel-Leake, Spencer Meachum, Sam Netz, Abby Norris, Josie Russell, Zach Shires, Megan Snook, Evan Triemstra, Grace Triemstra, Madison Triemstra, Konraad VanDyke, Sarah Wenke, and Maria Willis.

EXPERIENCING GOD'S WORLD

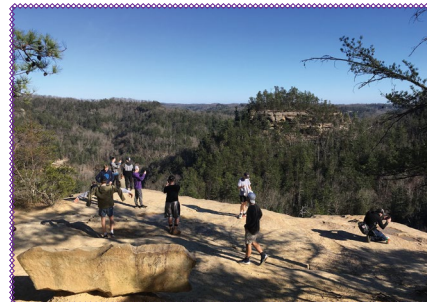
GET ON THE ROCK

Jeff Offringa



Mr. Offringa took eleven students to Kentucky for a climbing and camping trip in the Red River Gorge as part of the "Get on the Rock" interim class. The group endured 30 degree temperatures the first night but had great weather for rock climbing the next day. Students hiked, climbed and belayed each other on the cliffs, and learned about the geology of the Red River Gorge. Everyone

really enjoyed this amazing opportunity to experience the beauty of God's creation.



Ohio Zoos

Rachel Pease and Julia Gibson

The Ohio Zoo Interim included a tour of four zoos in five days. On the first day, the drive down to the Columbus Zoo was anything but boring as we played lots of games and got to know each other better, all while staying off of our phones. On our five mile trek through the Columbus Zoo, we saw a lot of animals and no one was eaten by an African lion! Back at the hotel, everyone was pretty tired but a few of us watched Michigan State take on Minnesota to reach the Sweet Sixteen.

Day two was a group favorite, as it included petting a penguin, holding a baby kangaroo, and seeing a sloth and baby cheetah up close. We also experienced a behind the scenes tour of the Columbus Zoo's manatee rehabilitation program. That afternoon we traveled to The Wilds, a safari park and conservation center, where we stayed in a lakeside cabin.



Day three was rainy and cold at The Wilds, which pushed back our scheduled safari tour a few hours. The boys made everyone delicious omelets and we entertained ourselves with a euchre tournament, puzzles, and watching Jackson catch stink bugs out of midair. Our postponed safari included some really

cool animals like takin, African painted dogs, and

camels. We also fed and pet the rhinos and giraffes. Our group learned a lot about the animals, such as what a takin was (a cattle chamois or gnu goat) and that camels spit during their mating season. Each student chose an animal observed during the trip, completed a short research project and presented at the bonfire that night while eating s'mores.

Day four began with an early morning departure for travel to the Cleveland Zoo. During a behind the scenes reptile tour, we learned about Cleveland Zoo's participation in a species survival plan to protect the Puerto Rican Crested Toad. We also made Kayla pet a snake since she was standing as far away from it as possible, and some of us held a giant millipede that crawled across our hands! After a short walk in the zoo, our tired group had dinner at Outback where Eva tried and failed to speak with an Australian accent.

On the final day, we toured the Toledo Aquarium. We enjoyed the touch pool, learned about quarantining fish, and fed the fish in one of the big tanks. By the end of the trip, we were all pretty tired and a little tired of zoos too, but I think the entire group would agree that we would definitely go again!





During spring break 2019, seven members of our two families (Randall, Christee, Lily and Emilee Dyk and Steve, Elijah and Isaiah Dyk) had the opportunity to visit the Karin Clinics in Gulu, Uganda. We spent part of our time at the two clinics, working on projects that the staff there don't always have time to get done. We also had the opportunity to travel with their outreach team to nearby villages, mostly testing for and treating malaria.

A highlight of the week was

visiting several schools and getting to meet some of the students that we sponsor. Prior to the trip, our kids spoke to their classmates and requested donations of shoes and socks. We were able to collect 170 pairs of shoes, and we filled seven suitcases with shoes, socks, and some medical supplies to bring with us. It was a great experience for all of us to deliver some of the donations to the villages and schools. We also brought soccer balls, and our kids quickly discovered that playing with the kids was a great way to build relationships even if not everyone speaks the same language!

Steve Dyk also brought money from the high school students who

had donated their leftover change after buying lunches throughout the year, and we used that money towards building a new outdoor kitchen at one of the clinic buildings.

Gulu is truly blessed to have the Karin Clinics and their dedicated staff providing Christ-centered care and compassion every day to their community. We were blessed to be able to participate briefly in the work they are doing. We are thankful for the support of our church and school communities, and we hope to continue to help support this ministry in the future.



Mexican Market

Consuelo Enriquez and Mayra Matta

In April, the Spanish Immersion first graders visited a community Mexican market and a bakery to complete their social studies unit about communities. How wonderful and exciting to hear students apply their Spanish language and math skills! They asked questions about different items at the stores and then proceeded

to the cashiers to buy their selections. They communicated well with the store employees as well as with a baker. At the end of our trip, the students enjoyed a deliciosa (delicious) Mexican pastry!



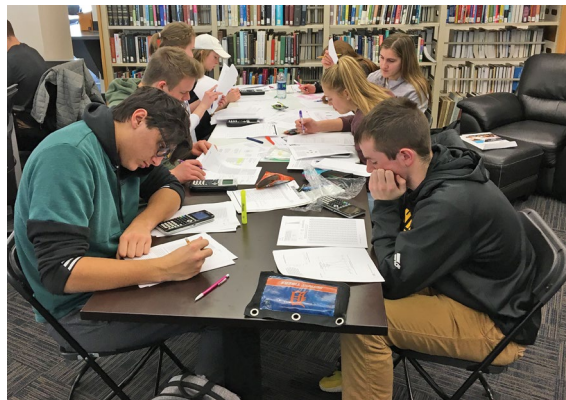
TEAMS PLACES THIRD IN NATIONAL COMPETITION

Al Nieboer

Four teams of KCHS students participated in the national TEAMS (Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science) competition; this year's theme was "The Engineering Brain". Teams of students ranging from middle school through high school participate in this problem-solving event each year at various sites across the country, competing by division and based on school size. On February 19, 2019, thirty-two students traveled to Trine University in Angola, Indiana to represent Kalamazoo Christian at this event.

The goal of the TEAMS competition is to have students work collaboratively to solve real world engineering problems, using their collective knowledge and skills from the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The problems this year included these topics: Cognitive Neuroscience, Considering the Brain as Hardware, Brain Decision Making, The Invertebrate Brain, Artificial Neural Networks, The Brain as Computer, Traffic Engineering, Probability and Uncertainty.

The competition includes three



components that cover various aspects of these topics. Prior to the competition day, each team of students collaboratively researched, wrote, and submitted a 1000 word essay. At the event, each team completed 80 multiple choice questions and then worked on a design/build hands-on project. This year's essay challenge requirement was for each team to imagine the application or implementation of artificial intelligence toward a product and to predict the future effects of this product's use on individuals and society.

National rankings were released in April once scores for all three components were tabulated for each participating school. Results for Kalamazoo Christian were once again very encouraging. Special recognition was awarded to our 11th/12th Team B for placing third in division #1 consisting of 82 teams and to our 9th/10th Team for finishing third in their division of 39 teams.

Congratulations to our TEAMS students for the effort invested in this competition and for giving Kalamazoo Christian such good recognition at the national level.



MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH TRIATHLON

Jenna Batts



On April 25, 2019, sixteen 7th and 8th grade students traveled to Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois, to participate in Trinity's Annual Spring Math Triathlon. Competing against 18 other Christian middle schools

(from Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, California, and Michigan) in individual, team, and relay events, K-Christian took home second place overall! Eighth grader Rachel Allabaugh tied with three other students for the second best score in the individual event, competing against over 260 other top math students. In the relay event, each school's team members race to answer correctly as many math problems as possible in 6 minutes. K-Christian tied for first in this event! Congratulations to the 7th and 8th grade Mathletes!

8th grade team members are: Rachel Allabaugh, Lee Lanting, Aubrey Herder, Annika Sytsma, Nick Mitchell, Drew VanderLaan, Isaiah Keller, Dawson Lute, and Ethan Verkaik.

7th grade team members are: Kadrian Barnett, Bryce Broekhuizen, Thomas Batts, Jovie Cochran, John Nowell, Connor DeVries, and Jacob VanDyk

Jacob Williams wrote an article that was published in the New York Times on April 28, 2019. He entered a contest back in February when the newspaper put out a call for students to write an article about what they think is unfair in schools. Jacob's article, titled "A is for Annoying," talks about the perils of having a name at the end of the alphabet. He references being last in line, being anxious while waiting to get a test back, etc.

Jacob hopes to be a nonfiction writer when he grows up, and he was very excited for this opportunity. When asked about what it means to him, he said, "It feels good to do something well and people acknowledge it. It's the helping hand that says, 'I can do this well, and I should pursue that in life.'" Hopefully this is the first of many published works for Jacob, who is currently in seventh grade.

Great job, Jacob! We're proud of you!

Christine Webb, 7th Grade Teacher

"A IS FOR ANNOYING"

Jacob Williams



IN TODAY'S WORLD, "unfairness" is a word used a lot in the news, but today I want to discuss unfairness in schools. Or, more specifically, the unfairness of having a last name that begins with a letter near the end of the alphabet. If you also have a last name that begins with a W, X, Y or Z you understand my struggles. After a while you get accustomed to always being last – being the last in line, the last to be called up

to get your homework back and much, much more.

I'll give an example: I will be sitting in the back of the class when the teacher says that after a week of grading we will finally be getting our exams back. The other students mutter among themselves trying to guess what grade they will get. At this point I have sweaty palms – I'm ready to get my exam back and either tell my parents I did well or begin making up excuses. The teacher calls out: "Ash! Broekhuizen!" And at this point, I have realized that it'll be 10 minutes before I get my exam back. Because, of course, the teacher is going in alphabetical order. Which means I will just have to sit back and wait for my entire class to get their exams back before the teacher finally gives me mine.

What's unfair in schools, you ask? Alphabetical order is what's unfair in schools.

KCHS BOYS GOLF

Brian Seifert

Our seniors are leading the way for the golf team this year. Elijah DeVries, Ben Cramer, and Josh Bouma each have their best and lowest 9 hole/18 hole average scores in all of their years of varsity golf.

Currently, the Kalamazoo Christian varsity golf team is second in the standings in the Southwest Athletic Conference with two conference meets to go. On May 11, 2019, KC varsity golf won the Lawton Invite, shooting a 319, led by Josh Bouma's 75 and Kylin Geresy's 79. Sophomores, Kylin Geresy, Taylor Roberts and

Kyle Nash have had good first years playing varsity golf and are improving each round.

Our JV golf team has improved over the season, led by Ty Pettit and Max Duong. Freshmen, Isaac Hoeksema, Ashton Van Sparrentak, Aaron Graves, Ben Netz, and Sam Meyers have been contributing nicely.

The KC golf teams have been blessed to play at Kalamazoo Country Club the past two seasons. Having access to the country club's incredible facilities has been such an asset to our growing and developing program.

We look forward to our regional tournament at Milham Park Golf Course. A 6th straight year to the state tournament is at stake. This year, the Division 4 state tournament will be held at The Meadows on the campus of Grand Valley State University.



2019 KCHS BOYS VOLLEYBALL

Stan Heeres

Kalamazoo Christian High School is one of twelve Michigan high school boys volleyball teams participating in the Michigan Boys Volleyball Conference this year. In 2018, KCHS was one of only four boys' volleyball teams in Michigan. The Michigan Boys Volleyball Conference was spearheaded by Jason Heerema, Athletic Director for Grand Rapids Christian High School (GRCHS); Brad Poel, GRCHS Coach; and Aaron Smaka, Assistant for Grand Haven boys team. The conference is divided into two six-team divisions: Lakeshore and Metro. The Comets are in the Metro Division along with GRCHS, St. Philip, Lansing Public, Lowell, and Bath.

On May 6, 2019, the KCHS Comets faced off with the GRCHS Eagles for the Metro league championship. After several lead changes and long rallies throughout the 3rd set, the Comets came out on top 15-13, capturing a share of the league championship and bringing home the trophy. Visit www.kchsvb.com and click on "League title match vs. Grand Rapids Christian" for a link to the match. Regionals and Finals were held on May 13 and May 16, 2019.

Before the Comets team formed, several lunch meetings were held to determine level of interest, availability and potential practice days. Because the sport is so new, players from the Comet varsity girls program have been helping out with instructions and technique. Stan Heeres coaches the boys' team with the help of Ana Ruggles and Zoey Williams.

This summer Kalamazoo Christian will offer Boys Volleyball Skills Camp, July 15-18, for middle school boys entering grades 5 through 9. Forms are available at www.kcsa.org.

For the last two years, the Michigan High School Athletic Association has discussed adding boys' volleyball as an official sport. Boys volleyball is the fastest growing high school sport in the USA and many more states have plans to add the sport. Several of the coaches in the six Metro division teams, along with others are part of the national committee to grow boys HS volleyball.

More and more Michigan colleges are adding the sport and looking for players. High school matches often see two to four college coaches in attendance. Adam Ritsema, the only senior member of the 2018 Comet team, took his talents to Calvin College where his team finished 9th in the nation.



Front: Tanner Rynd, Ethan Bouma, Tucker Seelbinder

2nd row: Harley Seelbinder, Aaron Verkaik, Ethan Plemmons

3rd row: Jackson Schut, Andrew VanDongen, Nathan Wenke, Lucas Vanderkooi

Back: Easton DeJong, Carson deJong

SALMON IN THE CLASSROOM

Brooke Mulder



On April 30, 2019, the 6th grade students traveled to Berrien Springs to release the salmon fingerlings that they raised in science class this year. The fish were stocked into the St. Joseph River, one of the many pre-approved DNR stocking locations. Students learned how to acclimate the fish to the water, completed a nature scavenger hunt, and listened to biology Professor Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske from Andrews University talk about our Great Lakes Watershed. Despite the rainy day, the groups of students did a great job setting the 40 fish free. Lizzy Prais, one of the 6th grade students wrote, "I learned that we have to take care of life. Even if it's not human. We have responsibilities not just to ourselves but to nature."

The tank will not sit empty after the salmon release. Our school has been selected to participate in the

DNR's new SLIME program. SLIME (Sea Lamprey in Michigan Education) is a program where participants of Salmon in the Classroom can host two adult sea lamprey after completion of their salmon release. The class discussed this invasive species during our ecology unit, and now students will have the opportunity to see the sea lamprey up close and personal as we finish up the year. We are so grateful for everything that we've learned from this project and for the opportunity to work with the DNR as stewards of God's awe-inspiring creation.



Elementary Art Show

Lori Gavan

The elementary art show was held May 9-10, 2019 in the art room, music room, and up and down the hallways and showcases of the building. All of



the students from Young 5s through 4th grade had artwork displayed. These students worked extra hard throughout the school year to create their wonderful masterpieces. What a thrill to see so many parents and grandparents celebrating with us and giving the students an outpouring of accolades for their skills and talents as young artists. As I looked at all of the art representing our school year, I was overjoyed that God's hand had directed and brought me to Kalamazoo Christian Elementary School. This first year with the students, staff, parents, and



grandparents has been fantastic. Thank you for making me feel a part of this school family, thank you for encouraging the arts in our school, and thank you for the many prayers for a successful year.

In the spring of 2009, Kalamazoo Christian Schools embarked on a journey to bring dual language education to the Kalamazoo Christian School community. Through a partnership with add.a.lingua, the school began to build and develop a track that families could choose for their students beginning in preschool, kindergarten, or first grade. The pioneer class of Spanish Immersion students began their immersion experience in the fall of 2010 as kindergarteners. In using a total one-way language immersion model, this group embarked on an educational journey to become bilingual, biliterate, and globally minded citizens.

In grades preschool through fourth, students receive all of their content instruction (math, reading, writing, science, social studies, and bible) in their second language, Spanish. Beginning in third grade, time is allocated throughout the week for English specific skills that will not naturally transfer between the two languages.

During the middle school years, grades five through eight, students transition from full immersion to partial immersion as they begin to switch classes and become blended with their English-only peers. This transition time allows students to grow socially and academically as they begin to switch classes, interact with new peers, and see content-specific teachers.

Dual-enrollment for Spanish Immersion Students at KCHS

In the fall of 2019, the pioneer



class of Spanish Immersion students will begin ninth grade at Kalamazoo Christian High School as dual-enrolled students at Western Michigan University. Through a partnership with the Extended Universities Program at WMU, this pioneer class of students at KCHS will take university-level Spanish courses each year in high school. The goal is to build upon students' academic achievement, promote cross-cultural intelligence, and to attain high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy.

Initially, Dr. Lindsay Jeffers from WMU will instruct Intermediate Spanish II at the Kalamazoo Christian High School campus. The following semester, and for the rest of the prescribed dual-enrolled courses, students will work in 3000 level courses through WMU's Department of Spanish. These dual-enrolled students are slated to take one university course per semester, totaling 25 credit hours throughout their high school careers (roughly the same number of credit hours as compared to a minor in Spanish at WMU).

Why Dual-enrollment?

High school students who choose to become dual-enrolled receive many benefits. The first benefit is that students continue to receive high quality instruction in the target language of Spanish. Spanish Immersion students at Kalamazoo Christian Schools are working to develop native-like tongues in Spanish, so it is important to maintain the quality and intensity in the Spanish language that the immersion program provided to them in elementary and middle schools. Another benefit of dual-enrollment is that students can earn free college credit while in high school. With the state covering a large portion of the dual-enrollment fees and tuition accounting for the rest, students are assessed no additional charge for taking these courses. The final reason a student would choose dual-enrollment is that they can graduate from college faster. With 25 credit hours already earned, not only are they more likely to graduate from college, but they will be able to do it in substantially less time.

ENGAGING IN GOD'S WORLD



KCSA is blessed to have many talented photographers who voluntarily give of their time and talent to capture the many ways our students, faculty and families engage in God's world. A sampling of this spring's activities include chapel buddies, STEM week, exploratories, grandparents day, preschool dads night, father-daughter dance, geography bee, pastors chapel, and more. We are grateful for the many ways that God is present and working in the lives of our students.

Picture Book Author Visits KCES

On February 19, 2019, students at KCES enjoyed a special author visit from Wendy BooydeGraaff, who wrote and published a picture book entitled *Salad Pie*. This book is a delightful story of a creative girl who enjoys the solitude of outdoor play, but learns to accept the companionship of a new friend. Ms. BooydeGraaff shared the story with students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade. She told them about the process of writing a book, editing and revising the story, working with an illustrator, and finally getting it published. Ms. BooydeGraaff's visit was extra special since she is a sister-in-law of first-grade teacher, Melissa Baas.



World War II Fiction Author Visit



Local author and KCSA alumnus, Dave DeVisser (class of 1972), recently treated fourth and fifth grade students to a presentation, sharing his interest and knowledge of World War II. Students received a glimpse of what it was like to live a soldier's life and to be a part of the D-Day events. DeVisser's enthusiasm was evident for teaching young people about this important part of history. In his recently published fiction book, *Willy and Sherman: Battle on the Beach*, DeVisser offers a creative look at the journey and friendship of Willy the Jeep and Sherman the tank, as they travel overseas for participation in the D-Day invasion. Thank you, Mr. DeVisser, for visiting our school and for sharing copies of your book with us!

Snipe Attack at Science Camp?

Kim Meyer

We have conflicting reports of a possible snipe attack on the night hike at Camp Rogers! A fearless fifth grade teacher reported it was either snipes or overzealous fifth grade boys wanting to scare the girls as they climbed up yet another dark hill. Other memorable events of the three day trip included shooting a bow and arrow, starting a fire with

flint, making up a cabin theme song and participating in a fierce fishing battle (which the girls narrowly won with one fish). We were immersed in God's creation, searching for salamanders, looking at pond invertebrates, building shelters and canoeing around the lake. We even heard an owl hooting. Students were encouraged to step out of their comfort zones both on the zip line platform and at the candlelight chapel, to take a stand for Christ. Although at times soggy and tired, everyone returned with fond

memories and felt truly blessed to share this adventure!



On May 16, 2019, the Kalamazoo Christian Lady Comets traveled to Hillsdale College to battle for a spot at this year's Division 4 State Tournament. After a long day of tennis, our Lady Comets finished in 2nd place, which officially qualified them for a spot in the upcoming State Tournament at Kalamazoo College. Highlighting the day were three players who walked away with Regional titles.

Eva and Elizabeth DeLaCruz and Rachel Pease have had significantly successful seasons. For the second time in their high school careers, seniors Rachel and Eva have partnered together to be one of the top feared doubles teams in the state. Following in her sister's footsteps, sophomore Elizabeth has anchored the singles line-up and has compiled a winning record with her never-give-up mentality.

Varsity Tennis

Kyle Weener



Retiring from KCSA this year are Elementary Administrative Assistant, Lori Vigen, and Torch Publications Editor, Cheryl TenBrink.



Lori Vigen: For 21 years I held the responsibility of being one of the faces of KCSA in the front office. I started at North Christian and moved to what was then called KC West Elementary when it opened in 2000. I have done just about everything you can think of in the office, from taking attendance to taking a student with a broken collar bone to the ER to meet the parents (even used my son's hockey gear that was in my car to stabilize her arm for the ride). Some of my favorite moments were move-in day at the current building where we moved 17 semi trucks of stuff and I coordinated all the activities that day, the annual chapel for K-12 and Pastors, coordinating the fall open house, and the highlight of the year – Grandparents day!

The most exciting day ever was the day in the first fall at KC West Elementary when we had a fire – yes, an actual fire – in a classroom of the new school. It was started by a science project in a fifth grade classroom and just caused a lot of smoke and mess. With three responding fire departments, it was quickly taken care of and all the students were fine, but the legend of that day has lived on in the memories of everyone there that day (including my own son who was in 3rd grade at the time).

RETIRING STAFF MEMBERS

When I started at North Christian, I wasn't totally sure what I was getting myself into when Nick Kool, principal at North at the time, asked me if "blood bothered me". I immediately answered with a quick smile, "Obviously you don't know that I am married to a mechanic?" We both laughed at that one.

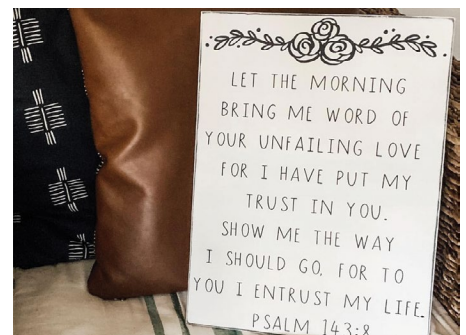
As time marched on I grew to love the laughter and faith of a community of believers that became my family. My days were usually busy and many have left me with smiles from so many young faces that I have had the privilege of meeting along the way, and I wouldn't change a single moment of service to God's Kingdom of believers. My faith has grown in ways I could have never imagined because of all the people God has brought into my life at K-Christian. I will be forever grateful for the wonderful memories and life friends I have, thanks to this community.



Cheryl TenBrink: I am retiring with 15 years of service at KCSA, spending the past six years as the Torch Publications Editor. Prior to that, from 1991-2000 I held the position of elementary Spanish teacher for grades three and four at South, North and East Christian Schools. One of the biggest joys for me was to see how many of my young Spanish students continued their studies in high school. Our introductory language program was nothing like the current immersion program,



but the exposure to learning a language in a fun way encouraged students to continue their studies and not be intimidated. In the years between my positions, I was a substitute teacher in all grades and served as a volunteer on the Association board, high school board, finance committee, TRIP Program coordinator, middle and high school hot lunch, grad bash coordinator and school photographer. I also earned a second degree in Graphic Design, which equipped me with the skills to serve as the layout and design editor of the Torch for the past six years. I'm grateful for the relationships that have formed over the past 28 years and the way in which the Kalamazoo Christian community enfold and adopts new members and becomes like family, a very important thing for this Grand Rapids transplant. We are moving back to the Grand Rapids area in June to be closer to family, and I will miss so many who have blessed me over the years! And I'm forever grateful to the Kalamazoo Christian Schools for preparing my own three children to serve God in His kingdom.



THE ALUMNI *connection*

A NOTE FROM CONNIE *alumni director*



Friends and Family of Kalamazoo Christian Schools,

Happy Spring! As we anticipate the end of the school year, we are so blessed to see how God has been faithful to Kalamazoo Christian Schools. We celebrate our 141st anniversary with strong enrollment, financial peace, and new relationships growing with our supporters and alumni. The efforts for the Alumni Directory are continuing to build our community. We appreciate everyone who has taken the time to update their information with Publishing Concepts, Inc. If you have not yet, know that we are eager to learn more about your careers, families, and post-graduate adventures. Upon completion of this campaign, we will be very excited to have our alumni database updated.

HOMECOMING 2019

We were delighted to honor the classes of 2009, 1994, 1969, and 1959 at this year's homecoming. What a treat it was to welcome back alumni, honored parents and grandparents, and former state champions as we cheered the Comets on against the Falcons of Constantine.

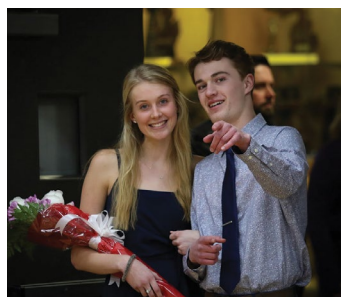
Our honored alumni were welcomed on campus with some light refreshments and a time of fellowship before participating in the Kalamazoo Christian homecoming traditions - naming our homecoming court and recognizing grandparents nominated by their high school students. Thank you to all who made this year's event a success!

This summer, we are excited to announce the 18th Annual KCSA Tiger Bus Trip to Comerica Park. We invite alumni, families, and friends of Kalamazoo Christian to join us on July 24th to watch the Tigers take on the Philadelphia Phillies. RSVP before June 7 to secure your place on a comfy charter bus for just \$75 - complete with a light lunch and lots of fun!

Have you been impacted by Kalamazoo Christian? We'd love to connect with you. Send me an email at cvanderslik@kcsa.org to schedule coffee, lunch, or a tour of the school. And as always, watch for future events for our alumni and friends by visiting kcsa.org!

Enjoy your summer and God bless.

- Connie Van Der Slik



COMING UP!

July 24 - Annual Tiger Bus Trip. Contact Connie Van Der Slik for more details at cvanderslik@kcsa.org
Class of 1979, assemble! Your reunion is coming up in Summer 2020. Your class organizers will soon reach out with more information.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS *David Zuiderveen (1996)*



I am far from perfect, but I know the meaning of life. I know Who loves me, Who made me, and Who I follow.

For KCHS grad David Zuiderveen (1996), becoming a college graduate, football team captain, All-American athlete, and NFL lineman were only steps on a journey leading the young athlete to the best part of his life: a relationship with Jesus Christ. Though faced with many challenges throughout life, Zuiderveen credits God's amazing grace for pulling him through and giving him purpose.

David Zuiderveen grew up in Cooper township and attended North Christian School. After struggling with his parents'

divorce as a young teen, he lived with his mother and siblings and some with his father in various rental houses until graduating from high school. "I can remember asking my mom why she sent me to a Christian School," he said. "She told me, "'David, you can grow up to be an NFL football player or a successful businessman but if you don't love Jesus, I'll have failed as a mother. You can grow up to live in a small town and have an insignificant career, but if you love Jesus I will have succeeded as a mother.'"

Zuiderveen's grades suffered and the wrong choices he made in high school resulted in limited options to play college football. Ferris State University took Zuiderveen as a preferred walk on, where he later became an All-American defensive end. "Football became my vehicle to vent frustration in my life," he said, "and that anger led to success on the field."

In his senior year at Ferris, Zuiderveen played in the Cactus Bowl, the Division II all-star game in Kingston, TX. In April 2001 he signed a free agent contract with the Atlanta Falcons. "I was pursuing what the world said would bring me satisfaction," he said. "Accomplishment, prestige, money - all the things a successful athlete could obtain. If this is what the world said

would make me happy then why was I still empty?"

Shortly thereafter, Zuiderveen found himself in a Georgia hotel room on his knees, giving his life to Jesus Christ. "I told God I didn't want this world anymore, I asked HIM to forgive me for all the bad things I had done and I told Him if He would lead me that I would follow Him."

He was later released from the Falcons and returned to Kalamazoo, where he reconnected with fellow KCHS grad Tricia Huyser. The two were married in 2002 and had four children (Will, Dawson, Reagan, and Ellory). Zuiderveen worked at Chemstation in sales and later became a Strategic Account Manager at Pfizer Animal Health (Zoetis). He and long-time friend Dan DeBoer (KCHS '96), started Arcadia Chemical, Inc. headquartered in Lawton, MI.

The Zuiderveen family has chosen to send their kids to Kalamazoo Christian Schools. "I know it's a sacrifice, I know it costs. But I know people who in hindsight would trade their money and possessions to have great kids," he said. "And I believe with all my heart that choosing to put kids in these schools helps to ensure that they will grow to love Jesus and become world changers."



Andrea Jackson (1999)

Some of Andrea (VanDerSlik) Jackson's favorite memories from KCHS are her back-to-back softball state championships, prom, participating in school musicals, homecoming week, and

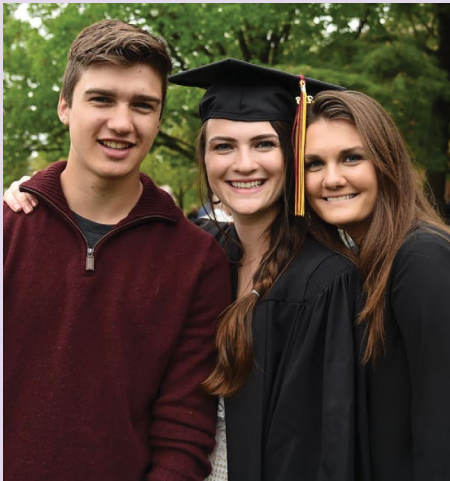
supporting the boys' basketball team during the post-season.

After graduating from KCHS, she attended Western Michigan University and earned a degree in Psychology, followed by a Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology. She is now employed as a Speech-Language Pathologist for Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency (KRESA), and works with preschoolers who have varying developmental disabilities.

"Professionally, my greatest achievement has been earning my masters and getting to work with some very special children as they learn to navigate this world, often in a little different way than the world would typically expect."

Jackson has two children, Hudson (6) and Grant (4) with her husband of 13 years, Devon Jackson. "As a wife and mother, the best part of my day is connecting with my husband and my boys and hearing about what they accomplished or achieved, whether big or small! I LOVE hearing about all that my boys learned or did to explore and experience God's amazing creation, and to hear how their relationships with friends, teachers, and daycare providers have stretched them and helped them grow."

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS *Jessica Bouma (2014)*



I still remember some of the chapels I had at Kalamazoo Christian. I think over my years, those messages stuck with me. My faith developed and grew at Kalamazoo Christian and gave me the courage to not back down when it was tested later.

KCHS alumni Jess Bouma looks back on her time at Kalamazoo Christian fondly. The 2014 graduate took home a state title in tennis, played on the volleyball team, participated on student council, and was so inspired by Mr. Hoffman's math classes that she ended up pursuing a career in a math-based field. But most importantly,

Bouma's KCSA experience strengthened her faith and set her up with knowledge and skills to help her navigate through difficult situations.

After graduating from Kalamazoo Christian, Bouma attended Calvin College where she received her degree in Engineering. During her time there, she also studied abroad in Costa Rica and Brazil, worked as a tutor and babysitter, participated in dance guild, and and competed in singles and doubles for Calvin's women's tennis team.

In the summer of 2018, she took a job as a Safety Test Engineer at Nissan Motor Co, and moved to the East side of the state. "My day to day job is running vehicle crash tests," she said. "I have been blessed to work in a field that helps to save lives. I remind myself of that everyday. I want to always use my talents to help others."

Since leaving Kalamazoo, Bouma has developed a heart for sustainability. "My passion is driven by the conviction that we, as Christians, need to be good stewards of the earth. Jesus is often an advocate for those who don't have a voice. I choose to advocate for the

environment."

She demonstrates her heart for sustainability in her role as a committee leader for the Nissan Green Team, which pushes for more sustainable office space and organizes sustainability events.

She also maintains several relationships from her time as a Comet. "Some of my closest friendships have come from Kalamazoo Christian. Some of my close friends and I started a chain letter after leaving high school. Since we had decided to go to different colleges, this was a great way we could stay in touch. Our letter is now over 150 pages long and still going."

Bouma has learned a lot about faith in her college and career journey. "I have found as I have gotten older, that there is a lot of gray space in what is right and what is wrong. I have found myself in those situations throughout college, work, and will continue to face them. That is when I remind myself of Who I represent, when I am in that 'gray space.' I pray that God gives me daily wisdom and strength to always make the best decision, no matter how small or big it may be.



Paul Bierenga (1974)

After losing his mother shortly after high school, Paul Bierenga learned early on how crucial faith is to a life of purpose and hope.

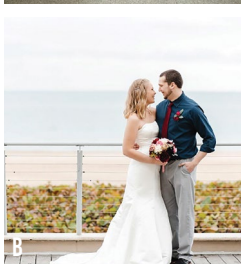
Bierenga graduated from KCHS in 1974. Shortly thereafter, he began working for a moving company through his church

connections. He met his wife Cathy at church in Oshtemo.

Paul now works as an Equipment Operator for the city of Kalamazoo. "I'm doing what I always wanted to do; run heavy equipment and drive big trucks," he said. He has two sons, Chris (wife Melissa and son Mason) and Stephan, and resides in Kalamazoo.

But perhaps he is best-known for his ongoing work in youth ministry. From leading small groups to driving various vehicles on serve trips, Bierenga has been working with youth for nearly 30 years. "My wife and I really feel that we have a gift of reaching kids. I want to hear what's going on in their lives, get into their heads, find out how they address and work through problems... not solve them...just be there to listen."

Paul recognizes his relationship with Christ as his main motivator in life. "I honestly don't know how people who don't believe get through life. Life is hard enough with that knowledge. I can't imagine going through life without it. I don't think I could've gotten anywhere close to where I am in life without faith."



WEDDINGS

A Phil '12 and Anna VanStrien
09.22.2018

Carson '14 and Lydia Straube
10.20.2018

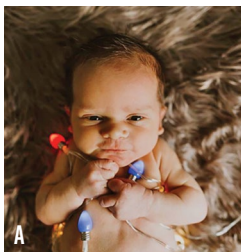
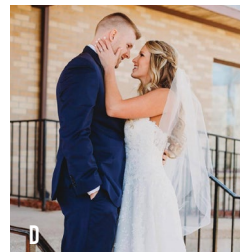
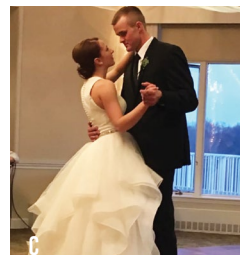
A Michael '09 and Ashley Meyering
12.29.2018

B Nick and Kristi '15 (Burchett) Csiszar
01.25.2019

C Cole '15 and Ashley '14 (Miller) VanOosten
04.07.2019

D Sam '10 and Rachel VanderBent
04.13.2019

Jon '11 and Katie Bontekoe
05.03.2019



BABIES

Henry James DeKoekkoek
11.06.2018
Tyler '10 and Sarah DeKoekkoek

Kendall DeMoore
Mason DeMoore
11.21.2018
Casey '10 and Lindsay DeMoore

Addalyn Mulder
11.08.2018
Matt '01 and Kristen Mulder

Edward Jay William Hilton
11.13.2018
Travis '09 and Emily Hilton

A Hayes Gant
12.08.2018
Josh and Kate '02 (Engbers) Gant

Andrew Benjamin Curry
01.11.2019
David '96 and Deb '96 (Schuring) Curry

Jude Stephen VanderMeer
01.12.2019
Greg '01 and Stephanie VanderMeer

B Louisa Jo Morren
01.15.2019
Jay and Rachael '08 (DenHartigh) Morren

C Kate Elizabeth Schwabauer
Michael Kenneth Schwabauer
01.25.2019
Adam '04 and Laura Schwabauer

Evelyn Ingram
02.08.2019
Alec and Ali-Marie '09 (Thompson) Ingram

D Paul Leon Wassink
02.08.2019
Bradley and Jenny '08 (TenBrink) Wassink

Everly Rose Stephens
02.09.2019
Anthony and Carley '01 (Moerman) Stephens

Dorthy Fay Duffield
02.24.2019
Brian and Megan '03 (Greydanus) Duffield

Silas Michael Zuiderveen
03.26.2019
Michael '02 and Taylor Zuiderveen

E Adilynn Grace Izenbaard
04.10.2019
Matt '07 and Melissa '07 (Winegar) Izenbaard

Bryson Frederick Gould
04.11.2019
Ryan Gould '12 and Caitlin Bale

F Hollis Adrian Sportel
04.11.2019
Charlie '11 and Madison '10 (VanOosten) Sportel

G Raelyn Sue Giebel
04.11.2019



Collin '14 and Shawna '14 (DeHaan) Giebel

Caroline May Cooper
05.13.2019
Kevin '10 and Anna-Kathryn Cooper

SHARE YOUR ADVENTURES WITH US!

Do you have a life update you'd like to share? Or an alumni who deserves a shout out? Contact Connie VanDerSlik at cvanderslik@kcsa.org to be featured in our next TORCH newsletter!

OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF SECOND IMPRESSIONS

Patty Gruizinga

Our awesome volunteers are the heart of our store and help make Second Impressions a huge success! While their ages vary, one thing our volunteers all have in common is their dedication to Christian education and to helping families have affordable access to it. Behind every school fundraiser, like the Spring Auction or Think Big, an army of volunteers is hard at work to pull off the event and to raise money for our school. The largest fundraiser is our school's thrift store, which directly gave KCSA families \$450,000 in this school year alone.

Second Impressions has 125 volunteer slots to fill every week. Some work on the sales floor face-to-face with the Kalamazoo community, and some work in the back sorting, cleaning and hanging the donations. Each volunteer is vital to our daily operation.

I was recently talking with two of our newer volunteers, who each agreed to



assist with a different department. They told me that they enjoyed cleaning up an item in anticipation of someone else getting some use out of it, especially when they put an item out on the shelf and then later see it in a customer's cart. "It's fun to know that it will get used again and also benefit our school. We like to compare notes about how much we sold each day!" They like the camaraderie of working with friends,

and when on vacation they often think about texting a "co-worker" to see what's happening at the store. If this sounds like something that you or one of your family members would like to try, call Cheri or Patty at 345-7757.

Here are our volunteer needs for the summer:

Any weekday, 1:00-4:00 (flexible) - Sorting and putting out clothing or workbench items

Mondays or Wednesdays, 10:00-1:00 - Assisting a pricer in housewares

Mondays, 1:00-4:00 - Cashier

Tuesdays, 8:30-1:00 - Delivery truck (requires heavy lifting)

Wednesdays, 4:00-7:00 - Cashier and furniture sales (May-Aug.)

Fridays, 10:00-1:00 or 1:00-4:00 - Furniture sales

Saturdays, 10:00-1:00 or 1:00-4:00 (flexible)

KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

by Larry Stehouwer,
Volunteer Executive Director

A couple weeks ago, a random errand led me to an impromptu visit with an old friend I respect and admire. I think this was a Holy Spirit moment, as it had been years since I'd seen this old friend.

We reminisced about the work and people of years past and how life has changed. Most interesting was our conversation about the Kalamazoo Christian School Foundation. I am part of the Foundation today - he was part of the Foundation Board in its infancy, the 1990's and early 2000's. He shared that years ago the foundation had a lofty goal of reaching an endowment of a million dollars to

benefit KCS. He inquired, "Does the Foundation still exist? Will it continue to financially support and sustain Kalamazoo Christian Schools?"

I answered a resounding "Yes!" God has blessed both the schools and the Foundation with many resources and talents. That sustained support is both humbling and amazing. Today the Foundation assets have reached \$4.3 million. The Foundation consistently provides \$150,000 or more each year in support of KCS students and families. Our 1877 Society, those who have informed us that KCS is in their will, has grown also.

Kalamazoo Christian School Foundation is one of the ways God provides

sustaining resources for KCS - a real tangible annual financial blessing to students and families.

The Foundation hosts events and information meetings throughout the year. A first Wills Seminar was held on January 17, 2019 and forty society members enjoyed fellowship time at a gathering on April 25, 2019.

Please plan to attend one the following upcoming educational events sponsored by the Kalamazoo Christian School Foundation:

"Understanding Estate Planning for Retirement" on October 17, 2019 at Kellogg Community College

"Wills, Trusts and More



The 1877 Society

for Young Persons/
Families" in January,
2020 (date, time and
location to be determined)

You can donate directly to the Kalamazoo Christian School Foundation, and you can name it specifically in your will or trust. If you have any questions about the Kalamazoo Christian School Foundation, please contact Larry Stehouwer (lstehouwer@kcsa.org, 269-760-4711) or Kaitlin Feddema (kfeddema@kcsa.org, 269-343-5772).



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UNITED IN PURPOSE

Featuring

Lou Holtz



Legendary Football Coach

ESPN Analyst

Man of Faith

Hosted by Kalamazoo Christian Schools
and the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of
Kalamazoo

Miller Auditorium | October 21, 2019

When the Kalamazoo Christian football team joined with Hackett Catholic to form a United team in 2014, it marked the beginning of a lasting partnership. Fast forward to 2019 and that partnership has born another alliance to benefit faith-based education in Kalamazoo. The Think Big Kalamazoo committee has joined with the Catholic Schools of the Kalamazoo Diocese and the Notre Dame Club of Kalamazoo to raise money for Catholic and Christian education.

Known for his candor, humility, and quick wit, Lou Holtz's inspirational witicisms made him a favorite among his players, and one of the greatest speaking legends in America today. Speaking last year to a group of Notre Dame seniors he said, "Have faith in God, because God won't make your life easier, but He will always be there with you....We are born basically to serve our Lord and to help other people."

Lou Holtz will speak at the VIP fundraising dinner on Monday, October 21, 2019 at 5 PM on the stage at the WMU Miller Auditorium, followed by the main event at 7:30 pm. Tickets for the main event are on sale for \$25 at www.kalamazoounitedinpurpose.com. For dinner tickets or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Kaitlin Feddema at (269) 381-2044 or kfeddema@kcsa.org.

Mary Denison, Think Big Committee