Creativity, Innovation, And Expanding Our Vision For 21st-CENTURY TEACHING AND LEARNING
InSights is the official all-school magazine published twice a year (December and June). Its purpose is to keep the CNG community informed about the overall life of the School and its members. We encourage you to write articles or letters. Please contact or submit them to the editor.

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PRINTED BY
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Can You Believe It?!
A Few Thoughts about a Dream Achieved . . .
and a Future Conceived.

by: Dr. Eric H. Habegger
CNG Director

Seventy-five years ago, our three CNG founders shared a bold dream. They dreamed of creating a special place of learning that did not exist in Colombia at that time—a co-educational, non-sectarian, American-style school for a diverse student community. During this celebratory year in our history as a school, we might find ourselves thinking, “Can you believe it? We have already reached our 75th Anniversary milestone.” A dream that began with a mere 28 students and 2 teachers has now grown to a community with 1200 families, 1825 students, and 400 staff members. Wow, can you believe it?! Yet, this same mind-boggling realization should also beg the follow question…So, what’s next for us?

In thinking about our response to that question, I suggest that we consider the words of the noted American scholar and author, William Arthur Ward, whose challenge might remind us of the profound vision of our original CNG pioneers back in 1938: “If you can imagine it, you can achieve it; if you can dream it, you can become it.” As we consider the school that has blossomed from their nascent dream 75 years ago, I believe that we must all challenge ourselves to take up the proverbial torch as trustees not only for the CNG of today but also for the CNG that will serve the children of our children. Will future generations look back upon us a century from now and feel the same sense of gratitude that we bestow on our CNG founders? Will we have dreamed an equally praiseworthy vision for the future as standard bearers of the CNG pioneer spirit for promoting paradigm-changing education?

In simple terms, the CNG of today fully understands our tremendous responsibility to dream as well as to conceive the CNG of tomorrow. The Insights Magazine that you now hold in your hands provides you with a powerful glimpse of the unfolding dreams and aspirations of our students, teachers, and administrators who are currently working together on creating a groundbreaking and bold future of learning at CNG, and more importantly, making it happen TODAY. In this edition you will read about the “Four C’s” of 21st-century skill development in practice right now in the primary school. You will see elementary students exploring learning through Geoboards, creating iBooks, and Skyping with renowned neurologists in a dynamic global learning environment. You will learn about project-based learning and Next Generation Science Standards in middle school. You will feel the impact of service learning in students’ lives at the high school. You will see through the eyes of students and coaches the importance of our activities programs in expanding their horizons. You will also travel to China to hear our graduates talk about the opportunities that CNG provides for a global learning experience. And you will discover much, much more about creativity and innovation at CNG reflecting our ongoing pioneer spirit in holistically developing our students in mind, body, and character.

Yes, can you believe it? We have reached our 75th birthday as an institution, and we celebrate a dream achieved thanks to the vision of our CNG founders. Yet unlike the sobering impact of the age factor in normal human life, our school enjoys a unique reality in always remaining “forever young” as an educational institution. In many ways during this anniversary year, we are actually entering the next phase in our lifecycle as a place of learning with an expanded notion of a future still yet to be conceived but already in forward motion. Dream with us. Conceive it with us. And join us in becoming the Next-Generation CNG!
Grandparents and other older adults can be very important people in children’s lives. They play a vital role in our children’s lives. Our children feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when they know that people in their extended family and community are interested in their education.

Grandparents & “Grandfriends” Day recognizes the importance of our heritage, our community, and relationships across generations.

We held a very special celebration at CNG! On April 4, 2013, more than 800 grandparents and “grandfriends” visited our campus to share unique and unforgettable moments with their grandchildren. Our Director, students and teachers had the opportunity to thank them for the vital role they play in our children’s lives.

Moreover, Annie’s impact has gone beyond just leading the Learning Center. Annie is an inquisitive reader and a perpetual student who is always up to date on the latest methods, therapies, strategies, and research in the area of special needs and counseling. In addition to this knowledge is the clinical eye she possesses to help her interpret the data collected on different cases and come up with solutions. She is constantly sharing what she learns with her personnel so that they can apply this knowledge with their students. She is always up to date on the latest methods, therapies, strategies, and research in the area of special needs and counseling. Annie is an insatiable reader and a perpetual student who is constantly sharing what she learns with her personnel so that they can apply this knowledge with their students. She is always up to date on the latest methods, therapies, strategies, and research in the area of special needs and counseling. Additionally, Annie has had a television program and a newspaper column, written several parenting books which support both CNG and Colombian families who are learning how to educate their children. She has also had a television program and a newspaper column. She has also written several parenting books which support both CNG and Colombian families who are learning how to educate their children.

Annie has created a place where families can bring their children with special needs knowing that they are going to be challenged, taught how to handle their problems, motivated, cared for and prepared to face the future. CNG has been a home for children with cerebral palsy, hearing and vision problems, autism, and many other learning challenges. They have all found a safe haven where they can blossom and glean at their own speed, socialize, and reach goals they otherwise would not have been able to achieve. The Learning Center has changed many lives and brought hope to many parents who at some point felt there was no future for their children in Colombia.

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Annie’s reputation and quality of work are definitely associated with the heart of CNG. This heart has distinguished us from every other school in Colombia. Over the years we have been known as a school that radiates warmth and sensitivity; a school where children’s needs come first. Consequently, the CNG Learning Center has been mentioned by SACS as being recognized as one of the best in the international school world. The importance of Annie’s work and influence was also honored this year by the Ministry of Education who granted her the highest award possible in the Colombian educational world, La Orden Simón Bolívar. You can confirm her philosophy for educating children who have special needs by walking into the Learning Center and reading the motto prominently displayed on the wall — “If I can’t learn the way you teach, can you teach the way I learn?”

Annie’s commitment to helping children has impacted and changed the lives of many families. These families know how important her contribution has been not only with the special needs children, but also through the wise counseling she has exercised over the years. Annie’s departure challenges us to ensure that her legacy continues. These challenges can be summarized as follows:

1. Give children, who have the right to an excellent education regardless of their abilities, the opportunity to grow and develop their potential.

2. Integrate these children into the school in order to give the rest of the CNG community the possibility of sharing time and space with them and their families. As a result we will continue to learn about being tolerant, respectful, and sensitive to other people’s needs. These three qualities contribute to the proper education of our future leaders, leaders who have a heart and a sense of social responsibility.

3. Carry on with the inclusion program. The professionals who have taught or worked at our school have been challenged to meet the needs of all children, therefore, becoming better professionals and better human beings.

4. Continue transmitting the love and acceptance for all children — no matter what their challenges, remembering that all children can learn, all children can progress, and all children should be embraced as unique individuals.

We thank Annie for this wonderful legacy at CNG that will continue into the future.
Through out the years the Learning Center has helped thousands of students reach their potential and today we want to honor all those dedicated and amazing specialists who have made this possible.

Luisa Cuellar, was our the first Special Education Teacher in 1975. She began supporting only 8 students and now that her retirement is approaching we want to thank her for all she has done. Luisa we will sure miss you!!

Years later, as the school grew, more people join in to create the Student Services Department. Among this amazing group of dedicated teachers we had Annie de Acrevedo, who started as a volunteer and then became the director of the Student Service department, thanks to her positive and accurate vision and mission that focused in giving ALL children a chance to thrive in their school life according to their needs.

Nowadays, it is an honor to know that the Learning Center serves more than 200 students, and over 50 staff members divided into areas such as: Special Ed., therapists, psychologists and a team of inclusion teachers guided by Claudia Nigrinis, all of these under Annie's support and leadership.

On this very special occasion we want to invite you to reflect on Annie's devotion to her students, teachers and CNG families. Thanks to her and her staff we can proudly say that CNG does give an opportunity to all children to study in an inclusive environment that accepts and respects their differences. She has been devote to her job, she has teach others, she has support a lot of students with learning difficulties and their families.

Now, how can we celebrate these great achievements without thanking Clara Ines de Ucros, our right hand, always ready to support and help each one of us with a bright smile. She has been an angel to all of us.

Let’s honor the ones who gave students a chance to achieve success at their own pace!

By Lina María Bravo
Learning Center Specialist

*Colegio NUEVA GRANADA* June 2013
The school year went by so fast and we are getting close to summer vacations.

During the school year, the PTA organized activities for the community. In August we hosted a welcome breakfast for new families (also held in January), and a welcome brunch for teachers and administration staff.

In October, our students enjoyed wonderful stories read to them by two professional storytellers: Penelope PENNY Walter and Alleyoop HIRSCH.

The PTA honored tradition by hosting a Thanksgiving Dinner in which 400 people shared a wonderful meal while listening to CNG’s Great Little Singers Choir. It was a very special and memorable event.

As every year, the PTA gave Christmas presents to teachers and staff, in recognition for their hard work throughout the year.

In April we had our biggest community building event which was the CNG Bazaar 2013. On behalf of the PTA, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the community for participating in it. We, the PTA board members and some volunteer parents, worked really hard to let you have a wonderful experience and a fun day, despite the weather that, of course, we can’t control. May this be the perfect scenario to thank my colleagues for their support: Beatriz Bustos, María Isabel Cifuentes, Natalia Gómez, Milena Lieberzon, Ana María Lizarralde, Beatriz Londoño, Angélica Molina and Adriana Rodríguez. Also I want to thank the PTA assistant, Luisa Fernanda Saavedra and our accountant Germán Torres for their invaluable help. There are also some members of our school who, as always, gave us their best, to make this wonderful event happen: Dr. Eric Habegger, Monique Duchamp, Mariana Gómez, Juan David Vásquez and his magnificent team.

Special thanks go to all the principals, teachers, NHS high school students led by Pedro Vázquez; parents and students who collaborated with us in many different ways. Thank you for volunteering!!!

Last but not least I want to thank all of the food, kermes and recreation providers and our sponsors:

- ALLIANZ
- AUTOGERMANIA
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- BOSQUES DE LA PRADERA
- FUNDACION CISV
- COINZA
- GLOBAL EDUCATION
- MAZDA
- NISSAN
- GRUPO ORA (ZAMBO)
- PRADOS DEL ESTE
- UNILEVER
- UNIVERSIDAD PILOTO
- VIVA COLOMBIA
- ZOOM PRODUCCIONES

We take pride in sponsoring CNG’s Parent Soccer Team who for the fifth time, became the Champions of the UNCOL’S SOCCER TOURNAMENT. Way to go guys!!!!

We wish you a wonderful and rested summer!!!

Cordially,

Marcela Serrano
CNG PTA President
El gran objetivo de esta actividad era exponer diferentes perspectivas del gran problema que Colombia ha vivido por más de cincuenta años y la opción que se nos abre con el proceso de Paz. Para esto, se invitó a un grupo de personajes de la vida pública nacional para que nos contaran su perspectiva personal.

Los oradores que estuvieron presentes en el evento fueron: el expresidente Andrés Pastrana, Enrique Santos, ex general Rafael Colon, León Valencia líder y vocero de la ONG Corporación Arco Iris (Además Guerrillero del ELM, desmovilizado hace más de veinte años), y el representante a la cámara Iván Cepeda (Hijo de Manuel Cepeda, Senador, líder de izquierda asesinado en el ciclo de violencia del narcotráfico de los años 90).

El tema que tratamos, como lo dice el título son los diálogos de paz que el gobierno está desarrollando con las FARC. Hablamos también sobre los intentos anteriores que hicieron para acercarse a este grupo guerrillero y qué se debe hacer para que este proceso no falle como los anteriores. Reconociendo en cada uno sus logros y dificultades.

El enfoque de estas charlas también era el de informar a la población civil y a los estudiantes que vamos hacer el futuro del país, en el marco de un escenario posconflicto. También entender el propósito detrás de cada punto que se esta tratando en la Habana.

Las charlas mostraron perspectivas diferentes que enriqueceron las ideas sobre el proceso de paz y así mismo, sobre la historia reciente de nuestro país.

Hubo un alto nivel de participación y compromiso y al mismo tiempo un elevado interés por hacer más frecuentemente este tipo de encuentros entre nuestra comunidad.

Cerramos este evento con alto nivel de compromiso por nuestro país y una conservadora confianza por lo que estos diálogos nos puedan ofrecer.
Looking back to my time in China seems like a dream. Four years ago I went to China for a month and I never expected that, through CNG I would be able to fulfill my dream to go back as an exchange student! Wow! Hats off to CNG!!! Special thanks to Kevin Zhang for believing and supporting me to make it happen.  

Hello Kevin!  

After so much work at CNG in order to earn this privilege, there I was on a flight of 10 hours filled with hopes and expectations, I was eager to learn as much as I could. I was so motivated remembering a modern, clean, prosperous, and safe Shanghai. At my arrival in Shanghai, I was exhausted and completely loved it, it was already time to come back. I didn’t want to leave China! I was fascinated with the unlimited resources and wonderful opportunities China gave me. I had to study about 25 characters (words) a day and writing them was the most challenging part of all. Nevertheless, with discipline I learned a lot and I took advantage of my classes. Since Mandarin is such a difficult language for us westerners, I plan to go back every summer to improve the language and become fluent.

Six months went by like a flash, it was like a dream. When I finally settled down and completely loved it, it was already time to come back. I didn’t want to leave China! My heart cannot express the overwhelming experiences that I was able to live. I appreciate my CNG teachers for making this journey successful. My Chinese students. As a Mandarin student this only encouraged me to step outside of my comfort zone and practice harder, in order to eventually be able to have a decent conversation with them, or with anyone and did not like any food sold at any peer in class. At the beginning, English was so motivating remembering a modern, clean, prosperous, and safe Shanghai. At my arrival in Shanghai, I was exhausted and completely loved it, it was already time to come back. I didn’t want to leave China! 

If you need more information please contact me at: lauradurand@gmail.com

By: Laura Durán  
CNG Alumnus
This past April, the technology department organized the second version of the technology showcase. The event was open during three days to all the CNG community and it featured more than 100 technology projects developed by CNG students from grades 2 through 12.

The participants had the opportunity to explore a variety of available projects. These projects are grouped by topics and grade levels on the CNG technology integration site, where members of the community still have access to these projects.

From Scratch programming projects to Flash animations, from posters to QR codes, from blogs to websites, the technology showcase was an opportunity for students in all different grade levels to appreciate the different activities that are done in technology classes, enrichment through multimedia program and in the different technology integration projects created in academic classes every day.

Events like this, provide us with spaces to display and share students’ success in their use of technology for learning, and create the perfect opportunity to recognize the time and effort that students put forth in creating quality projects that are worth sharing.

In addition to the showcase, a collaborative activity was organized for all participants to make a contribution to the vision for educational technology in our school by answering a single question: “In your dream school what types of technology do you envision and how are they being used?”

Using Padlet, an online application used to create a virtual open canvas, students from K through 12, teachers and administrators worked on this question and left their personal impression on what a “dream school” should be in regards to technology and its use.

Listed below is a sample of the four hundred fifty-four various individual and creative responses to our experience of working together during these three days:

“I wish CNG had robots who do everything for you and hover boards to go up to the busses.”

“Every e-book to be available at the EVL for us to have further access to reading.”

“A clean, modern/contemporary learning environment where people can socially interact with each other, with modern technology where we can have the responsibility of having their own device to use, a school that comes up with cool and revolutionary way for the benefit of both teachers and students.”

“My dream school is a place where technology is used wisely and students are taught what they can achieve with it. Technology would be used for almost every class and it would be used for making learning easier.”

It is truly amazing what our students are able to do now with technology and exciting to be a part of the visionary future at CNG. It is an honor, a pleasure and a responsibility to build on these dreams of educating with excellence in the use of technology.
I recently read a book entitled 21st Century Skills by Bernie Trilling and Charles Fadel. In it, the authors explore how the world we live in has changed drastically over the past few decades and they grapple with the question: How can we prepare students to meet the challenges of today’s and tomorrow’s world? A world that is much more complex and connected than when we were children.

The authors discuss the importance of traditional core subjects, the ones we remember from our youth — reading, writing and arithmetic — but they also point out the importance, the necessity, of teaching our students skills that they will need to succeed in this very different world they live in, such as creativity, critical thinking and collaboration, as well as digital literacy skills which enable them to access, evaluate and use the tremendous amount of information that is literally at their fingertips. Finally, we should be instilling in our students the life skills to use all this learning in a productive way in society. They’ll need flexibility, adaptability, social skills, responsibility, and leadership skills.

Insuring that our students have the necessary core knowledge they need for future schooling as well as making sure they acquire important learning and life skills is a tall order, but it is one we continually strive to achieve in the Primary School. In this edition of Insights you will have the opportunity to read about some of the different ways our students (and parents) are building this foundation for future learning. You’ll read about how our second graders not only learn about economics, but are able to get hands-on experience as well. You will hear from a K5 and a first grade teacher who presented on skills needed for the twenty-first century at an educational conference in Argentina. In addition, there are articles from PS parents on our on-going, award winning nutrition program, from a PS counselor collaborating with parents through a parenting book club, and from our PS Library Director enthusiastically sharing an example of how people and technology in our library are supporting second grade students in their beginning research projects.

These articles are just a few examples of how the PS community is striving to meet the challenge of offering our students a balance of the best from the old, tried and true while also preparing them with skills and experiences they will need in this brave new world.
During the spring semester, our second graders were assigned a project on Vertebrates. Each student was responsible for investigating an animal that they were curious about. This was a stimulating task which involved a process that students needed to begin developing in a stronger manner. After all, they were taking their first step into the lifelong skill of research. As the PS Library Director, I thought it would be an opportunity to join forces and so I proposed to the teachers to allow me to take part. They were all open so I climbed aboard. What came afterwards was not only enriching but fun. Together, the entire second grade team and the PS Library were embarking on a whole new and different journey.

We decided that I would introduce the topic during the second grade students’ library period. I chose a book called *Animals with Backbones* by Elaine Pascoe. It explained what vertebrates are and described the five major groups accurately (fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals). The key learning skill during this session was to have the students take significant notes. This was demanding for them. Nonetheless, the results were amazing!

The next goal was to teach students what a “bibliography” was and the importance of always including one when doing a research project. Together, we wrote a basic bibliography they could attach to their initial notes.

Now, we were ready to go over their previous knowledge and fill in a bubble map using Post-Its with the examples of vertebrates they had found.

We had a terrific time. It was great to see how enthusiastic the children were and how many animals were included. These post-its were sent to the classrooms for completion.

During the next session the students were supposed to choose one vertebrate they wanted to study and begin their research. When the students arrived at the library, we had put out our best selection of informational magazines and non-fiction books about animals for the students. I was pleased with their library skills because they knew exactly where the animal books were and how to locate the call numbers for the titles they chose.

In the following two sessions the students continued taking notes from different sources including websites such as EBSCO, one of our school’s databases. It was impressive to see them filling in bibliography forms for each source they used.

Finally, the students filled out a self-evaluation and completed a survey to rate the library’s efficiency and performance. Their sets of notes were sent to their teachers with whom they continued to enhance their research skills and write their final drafts.
During March and April, 2013 all the Primary School classes from K4 to 2nd grade joined to create an amazing Art piece. The idea was to integrate the elements of Art (line, form, shape, color, texture) with nature. This unconventional approach to making Art produced an enormous amount of positive feedback from the community, and at the same time, taught our students that Art is everywhere and can be created with anything. This project moved everyone who saw its evolution and changed the way they see Art and nature.

This creative EARTH ART project allowed our students to become more aware of how powerful a group can be when they work together to transmit meaningful concepts to others. Our beautiful grass design made of soil, grass seeds, and stockings, took two months to transmit meaningful concepts to others. Our beautiful grass art sculpture, which was a thrill to witness the students’ enthusiasm for learning about new ways to take care of their bodies while also learning about how to care for our Earth.

As Sandra and Shavina have continued to lovingly develop and expand the SKIPERS program at CNG, they are also looking for ways to share it with other interested schools. They have gone on to start a Power Garden at our sister school, Fundacion Hogar Nueva Granada and have been fielding questions from other schools. Recently, Skipers won 3rd place in the “Corazones Responsables” award granted by the Fundacion Colombiana del Corazon! This award is a recognition to the best national programs involved in the prevention of cardiovascular disease and the promotion of healthy lifestyles and habits.

We in the Primary School are excited about the opportunity our students have to learn about the benefits of healthy eating habits in an experiential, “get-their-hands-dirty” way. And we are especially thankful for another example of CNG parents who are eager to invest their time, knowledge, and effort for the good of our Primary School students.

Primary’s Favorites:
- Tasting: Kale chips!
- Activity: Worm hunt!!
- Recipe: Jaime Oliver

Smashed Peas and Fava Beans with Fresh Mozzarella (Adapted From Jamie at Home: Cook Your Way to the Good Life, by Jamie Oliver)

- 1 pound of peas in their pods, or about 5 ounces shelled
- 1 1/2 pounds of fava beans in their pods, or about 9 ounces shelled
- Small bunch of fresh coriander
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- Juice of one lemon
- Extra virgin olive oil (at least 2 tablespoons)
- Kosher salt
- Heirloom bread like sourdough or ciabatta

Preparation:
Shell the peas and fava beans, and remove some of the fava bean skins if they are tough. If you prefer, blanch the fava beans in boiling water for 5 minutes, and slip off the skins.

Add the peas, fava beans, mint, and lemon juice to a food processor. Blend until the peas and beans are in small bits, then add the Parmesan cheese and about one tablespoon extra virgin olive oil. Blend well and then check for texture. You will probably need to add at least one to three more tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil to get a smoother, creamier texture. This will really depend on the texture of your peas and beans, and how much you want the “crunchiness” of the fava beans to show. Add salt and pepper taste, and the dish is ready!!!

To serve, top sliced bread with some of the peas and fava bean puree. YUM!!
"We are currently preparing students for jobs that don’t yet exist... using technologies that haven’t yet been invented... in order to solve problems we don’t even know are problems yet."
—Richard Riley, Secretary of Education under President Clinton

The new era began in 1994. We didn’t notice it but that’s when it was born. The industrial age began to subside while the "Knowledge Age" began to take over in the developed countries. It was in 1994, in the United States, when, for the first time in history, the amount of money spent on technology and its services exceeded the amount spent in manufactured goods. Soon after that, the same happened in other developed countries and the new "Knowledge Age" took over the workforce. Even though manufactured goods are still needed, the high paying jobs are those that require creativity and expertise.

A few years ago, 400 hiring executives of major multinational companies were asked a simple but significant question: "Are students graduating from school really ready for the workforce?" Their unanimous answer was: "Not Really"

They all agreed that students were lacking a few basic skills but a great amount of applied skills. These applied skills have been identified as:

- Oral and written communication.
- Creative Problem Solving and Critical Thinking.
- Professionalism and Work Ethic.
- Teamwork and Collaboration.
- Applying technology.
- Leadership and project management.

With these skills identified, a new organization was born: The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) is an American organization that advocates for 21st Century readiness for every student. As the United States continues to compete in a global economy that demands innovation, P21 and its members provide tools and resources to help the U.S. Education system keep up by fusing the 3Rs (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic) and the 4Cs (Critical Thinking, Creative Problem Solving, Communication, Collaboration and Teamwork, Creativity and Innovation).

Here at CNG we are getting our students ready for the Knowledge Age. Through the development of Teamwork and Collaboration, students are able to solve problems creatively by using CPSM (Creative Problem Solving), a technique developed by Dr. Donald Treffinger, director of the Center for Creative Learning. Students are grouped into teams of five or six and are taught how to work as a team. They are given guidelines to follow as they work together to use their creative thinking by generating many ideas on how a problem is to be solved. Students are then taught how to use critical thinking to choose the best idea to solve this problem. Students work collaboratively as a team to develop that idea for solving their problem while find a creative way to communicate that idea.

This method is easily integrated in Reading. Students are not just asked to read a story and test their comprehension. They are asked to use CPS to solve a problem. For example, using the story of The Three Little Pigs as an example consider the pigs safe in the brick house and the Big Bad Wolf is still outside. Find ways to get the pigs out of the house? Brainstorm ideas: pick the best one, work in a team to present a solution to this problem. In Math, students are given non-conventional story problems. These are problems that require a higher level of reasoning and different ways to solve them. This is an example:

**How Many Berries Did I Eat?**

I have a blueberry bush with nine blueberries and a raspberry bush with seven raspberries. I ate some blueberries and some raspberries. Now there are four blueberries and four raspberries on my bushes. Did I eat more blueberries or more raspberries? How do you know?

Check your thinking by using pictures or numbers to show how many blueberries I ate and how many raspberries I ate.

Also, a "challenge" (or a problem) is given to the teams to solve within a certain amount of time. For example, building the highest tower possible by folding paper only...the highest tower wins...

We have found that students really enjoy these challenges, and, at the same time, they are learning those identified applied skills which are part of the 21st Century learning.

At CNG we are getting kids ready for the future!!
As a good Canadian, I shy away from bragging. It’s frowned upon; it’s just not our way. But I’m going to step out of the mold for a moment as I can’t resist sharing a bit about the innovation, collaboration and celebration that characterize our learning community these days. Allow me to elaborate, just a little. I won’t overdo it. Promise.

In the Spotlight, our elementary student recognition initiative, was originally designed to honor noteworthy approaches to learning or positive dispositions exemplified by students. Each month over the last two years we have come together to celebrate something special about each student. We have featured two classes at a time and invited parents in. In advance, teachers have chosen the quality each student is recognized for, and students have reflected, prepared a written statement, received a special certificate and shared on stage about how it is that they display this quality. A moment all theirs. Palpable pride. In the spotlight. A good thing.

But now, dare I say, our In the Spotlight celebrations are really something to behold. They have evolved to be a celebration of classroom learning in progress, too. Indeed, as a result of inspired teaching, collaboration, and the innovative use of technology, month after month, we are being treated to presentations which showcase powerful practices and purposeful uses of technology to engage, enrich and integrate students’ learning of specific content and skills. You can see the most recent video projects on the flat screen outside of our office or view via links on the updated CNG webpage in ES section. Read on in this edition of Insights, too, to learn more about some of the projects undertaken by teachers, inspired by Chris Davis, our Literacy Enrichment/Multimedia Specialist. You will be impressed and you will see: in the Elementary School, we are working to integrate technology to engage our learners. We embrace innovation and creativity. We love to celebrate our students. There, done bragging.


Why is creativity important in a school setting? Schools are the places where children spend the most time when they are growing up. Children go to schools to “learn” and knowledge is indispensable to progress. Creativity, on the other hand, seems to have been important to humanity since the dawn of time. In this sense, I have always wondered what our ancestors felt when they accidentally “created” fire by rubbing two sticks together, or how this changed their life and ours!

Dr. Seymour Papert1, MIT mathematician, computer scientist-creator of the computer programming language LOGO, and renowned educator, visited my school in Chile in the eighties. At the time, he was doing extensive research on the use of computers for children and had asked our school to pilot a program on the use of LOGO, in exchange for which IBM would supply a fully equipped computer lab with “personal computers.”

On that occasion, Dr. Papert gave a motivational speech encouraging our teachers to “teach” as little as possible arguing that education sometimes curbed the children’s creativity; I can still remember his example. He had collected several pictures of birds drawn by young children, before and after entering formal schooling, and the pictures of those children who had not entered preschool yet, were full of unusual details and definitely more interesting, from an artistic point of view, than those of slightly older school children who had been “taught” how to draw.

When one of the teachers raised her hand to inquire why he thought that this happened, Dr. Papert smiled sheepishly and then gave a very simple, but shocking answer: “It is our fault as teachers because we represent authority to the child.”

This may sound like a political statement, but it makes more sense than meets the eye. A young child who is allowed to observe and then depict his or her surroundings freely, without being told how to do it, is more likely to observe spontaneously if he/she does not feel threatened or directed in any way and is free to take as long as he/she wishes. If, subsequently, he/she is given a pencil and allowed to “draw” what he/she has observed, the result will probably be a little masterpiece.

Ancient Romans, on the other hand, valued “otium” a Latin word that could roughly be translated as “leisure” and which for them was important in order for their academic work to come to fruition. Otium allowed them to create. Thus, “free time” was not considered a luxury or a waste of a valuable resource, but an important need.

Something like this may have been what Henry David Thoreau meant when, in his Walden he said: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life: living is so dear... I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life... to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms.”

So it would seem that two necessary “ingredients” to foster creativity are “time for leisure”, in order to be in the mood to create, and a non-threatening environment, so that “authority” and “rules” will not get in the way.

When I walk through our halls and see what our students and teachers have “co-created” I feel confident that there is enough “substance” to foster creativity at our school. The next step might be to create a “virtual” learning environment, with fewer obligations, time to think and form meaningful relationships, where adults and children can feel included, where they have the time and desire to learn from one another, and where their individual efforts can contribute to the “glory” of a greater and more meaningful whole: the school, the country, and/or the world.

If our students spend the most significant part of their lives at school we must make sure that we trigger their creativity in all subjects and in all fronts by providing an exciting, risk-free environment for boundless, unrestrained learning and creating. Because each child is unique, (in Dr. Seuss’ words, “Today you are you. Tomorrow you may be a poet or a president, if you ever can get there.”), schools have a responsibility not only impart knowledge but to teach their students what they are and the possibilities that they have to become a Michelangelo or a Beethoven.4

Perhaps, in so doing, our world can become an exciting and more fraternal world for all humankind. As Thoreau says, life is so dear that we cannot go through it without enjoying it to its fullest and giving to our world the best of ourselves.

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1 Born in Pretoria, South Africa in 1928.
2 Henry David Thoreau (1817): See Walden. Or, Life in the Woods, for the full quote.
3 From: Oh! The Places You’ll Go!
4 Pablo Casals (1876-1973) talented Spanish cellist thought that schools should not only teach facts such as 2 + 2 = 4, but should also make the students aware of their uniqueness and of how each one may have the seed of genius within him/herself. I “paraphrase” his example of Michelangelo and Beethoven.
By: Joy Verben  
Elementary School Literacy Coach

CNG’s Elementary School knows how to celebrate learning. As you walk down the Elementary hall, you are surrounded with visual evidence of how each student’s learning is part of the larger community. CNG students remind us that learning is a shared effort, not a competitive display of competencies.

The bigger picture: Third Grade Elementary Portfolio Celebrations

In early May, parents packed the classrooms for Elementary Portfolio Celebrations where every visitor came face to face with an expert learner who owned their own learning. As I sat with Manny in Third Grade, he taught me what it means to use alliteration in Spanish, how to create equivalent fractions in Math, and what constitutes a want versus a need in Social Studies. (Hopefully, one day, he’ll be driving those three luxury cars he wanted.)

With just a glance, it was apparent that CNG Elementary students are not only learners, they are the teachers of their learning. Want to know more about classroom learning? Ask a student. As Hanna Bing-Zaremba reminds us, “While I was sharing my portfolio, I learned that many people can learn from you and that you can learn from many people too. For example, a girl taught me that you could read really fluently if you just tried and I taught her that reading is important for life. If you don’t read, you won’t know as much and reading is fun. So you can always help others learn.” Hanna sends a clear message to us all that learning is collaboration.

Accountable talk: Fourth Grade Book Clubs

When you think of the traditional book club, you probably imagine a group of adults discussing a novel they read at the end of each month. Fourth-grade students know that book clubs can be so much more. As students tinkered with Shelfari, a protected, online book discussion site provided by Amazon, it became immediately apparent that our students celebrate their learning by growing ideas collectively.

When asked about Book Clubs, Julian Camacho stated, “It’s a great opportunity for each person to share their thinking about the book and have a discussion so you can get to a better conclusion. In class, we reflected on the chapter we just read, and, when we were done reflecting and reading, we discussed it and asked questions and told predictions. If someone thought a character is feeling this way be-


Like when we were talking about Claudia and Jamie (From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler) who ran away to the Metropolitan Museum, we were thinking what if they ran out of money. Some of us thought they would, some of us thought they wouldn’t. When they went for a bath at a fountain, it was a wishing fountain, so every time they went for a bath they could collect money. That evidence made the other students agree. The other students didn’t have any more supporting details that they would run out of money and not have anywhere to collect more money.”

Eloquently put, Julian’s quote teaches us that learning doesn’t happen in a bubble. While each student reads independently, shared book discussions bring their learning to life. It happens within a community. By using text evidence and supporting details to defend positions, students practice being accountable for their discussions, using evidence to prove their comments, and push their thinking about topics from the book into the larger society. While they are building literacy, they are also constructing a foundation as effective critical thinkers in a global society.

Literacy learning: Fifth Grade Informational Writing

The Daily Dissection newspapers are plastered everywhere as fifth-grade students teach the community about the precious body systems that sustain our lives. You can learn about functions, healthy choices, diseases, and everything in between.

As informational writers, they know that their obligation to the reader is to teach them something important to their lives. Mateo Gomez explains, “You can read our writing on: www.celebratecng.blogspot.com. People can go into that website and read them. At the end of the book, there is a link which you can click and it takes you to a review form where you can grade us on the information, the pictures, and you can say what you liked about the book and what you wish we would have done.”

When asked why this is important, Mateo added, “We are able to share our books with many people and for them to learn new things. Also, it helps us to learn new things like how to review books or how to make it. In the reviews, when I looked at them, they told me what I should work on and what I should fix. And they also told me if people like the books.

That is important because you can make changes to your book to make it better and it will help you become a better writer.”

By soliciting on-going feedback from others, CNG Elementary students know they can capture an invested audience who can further extend learning. With technology, peer, teacher, and parent involvement, our students are becoming resourceful learners who recognize that every moment is an opportunity to learn and celebrate learning.
In third grade, we loved using the iPads for our science research surrounding biomes and ecosystems. Students who usually have a hard time getting motivated to do reading and writing projects, were extremely motivated and eager to jump into this work with the use of the iPads. I use the two iPads in my room for help with spelling, writing, math, and documentation. Students are able to record their thinking out loud and listen to their ideas again. It’s great with reading your own writing and then listening back to how your ideas followed the writing sequence. I was just learning more about math programs for advanced students and I would love access to more iPads in the classroom so I could set up small groups based on levels in math and have students independently working on solving math problems, showing various strategies and their own learning literally in their hands, we began to understand that we are experiencing an exciting new pivotal period in education where technology is creating a level learning field and where teachers are learning the power of being humble before their students, sharing the learning alongside them. There is no “eu- reka” key on the keyboard, but our recent book-making project illuminated how the iPad connected with other forms of collaborat- ive technology, is becoming an integral part of shared learning.

Our book-making project picks up to- 
ward the end of the Lucy Calkins Writer’s Workshop cycle when students write drafts of non-fiction text. For revising and editing, the students engaged in paper and pencil editing and lived debates on the finer points of grammar, spelling, and sty- listic construction. Post debate, students moved to the computers to continue their collaboration online as they dissected one document a day to produce a near-perfect text. Mini-lessons revolved around gram- mar and spelling patterns that teachers noticed among the groups. A live edit was projected on screen at all times.

Classes for this week were true language workshops and seemed to respond to Pasi Sahlberg, Cambridge Professor of Finland, addressing Teachers College at Columbia, when he called for US schools to look at their own past when trying to figure out Finnish success in education. “We copied you,” he said, and went on to explain that collaborative learning was one of the im- portant elements the Finns learned from studying the US system. Once texts were finalized, students copied and pasted from Google Docs into the Book Creator app on iPads. Collaborative learning continued as students usually consulted each other for the best way to import graphics from the web, create their own digital illustrations using the Paper app, or photographing their own drawings. Teachers and students played the role of graphic designers finding the right visual balance, selecting the best fonts, and pro-
ducing professional looking eBooks. The texts then became audio books as students recorded their voices.

Publishing and sharing are important elements of writing so eBooks were then exported as PDFs to the web using Scribd, posted to our blog, and sent out to a larger learning community of families, friends, and other classrooms across the globe. With Google Forms, the class created a book review using their writing rubric and leaving space for free comments. Students could then access summaries of responses complete with pie graphs on how they had been rated among their readers.

Continuing the celebration, QR codes were created and posted next to student pictures in the elementary hallway. Publishing events were shared between classes as stu- dents walked around with iPad scanning codes and sat down to read and review each other’s publications. Walking the hallways, students came across gems of reading like Tania Grimberg’s book about beaches which became a video multimedia event as she acted out the entire book in her sun- glasses and stationary bicycle. Sergio Casilla taught everything you want to know about Peguaro, while Jiho Park published 67 pages on atoms and matter. The fifth grad- ers focused on body systems created profes-
sional looking informational texts complete with infographics, diagrams of anatomy and intricate descriptions of each system. Come walk the elementary hallway with your smart phone or iPad, scan some of the QR codes on the wall, and see for yourself (we are quite shameless in our pride of them).

Since the fifth graders were working on books about body systems, they decided to extend their research by organizing a series of interviews with real doctors, two by Skype, and one father visited the class. Authors of the muscle system book were left with specific questions about Duchenne’s Muscular Dystrophy so we contacted Dr. Melissa Spencer, profes-
sor of Neurology and co-director of the Center for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy at UCLA. She skyped in for a video con- ference and answered students’ inquiries using diagrams on genetics and anatomy. Dr. Nicholas Lancaster, MD from Georgia, fielded questions about the nervous sys-
tem and general care of the body, and Dr. Andrés Mejía from Bogotá, father of one of our students, provided a conference on bone fractures and surgery. For homework, students collectively produced their notes into a wiki using a Google Document, or-
ganizing and editing each other's postings.

Finally, as an elementary school, we gather in the theater to hand out and celebrate the whole process of learning. Since digi-
tal collaboration was the theme of these projects, the fifth graders began recoding Carlos Vives’ “Volver a Nacer”, a project which spread over the whole school for a few days, and even inspired one teacher to get carried away with himself and send out an invitation to Carlos Vives to come record. Well, there are limits sometimes, but we will continue to find creative ways to collaborate together and project out learning beyond the classroom walls. The are proving to be a valuable asset in this quest, although we keep in mind that “it is not about the technology”. It never was. It’s about the learning.
Back in the olden days of 1980, when I was in fifth grade, I remember doing an informational writing project about countries. I picked Sweden, home of my Viking ancestors. Leafing through the pages of dusty encyclopedias in the school library was my best method of finding information about the foods, customs, holidays, and so on that would fill the chapters of my booklet. I carefully copied notes on my 3 x 5 notecards, and later transferred that onto lined paper in perfect cursive handwriting. Later I drew in crayon and markers a lovely Swedish flag for my construction paper cover and stapled it together. Voila! I had published my book. I was so proud! I should have been, because it was an excellent project, typical of the times.

Fast forward 30 + years, and here we are! I know that I am rather old school teacher when it comes to many things, but being a teacher does force a person to keep up with the times, especially when it comes to technology. Some might say I’ve been dragged into this century, but lately I’ve experienced a rather steep learning curve thanks to Mr. Chris Davis and his wild ideas about integrating technology into our classroom. While doing our latest fifth grade Informational Writing project, I learned a lot. I was scared I might not be able to handle the magnitude of the project, but thankfully the fifth graders were my teachers.

Imagine a room of 21 fifth graders all completely engaged (some might even say obsessed) in the process of creating their own electronic books about the body systems. Well, there are some traditional note-taking methods we used to get our drafts ready, but mostly, this was a high-tech and ambitious project. Long gone are the days of encyclopedias being the primary source. There is still a place for them, but mostly the students used a variety of books and websites to collect their data. We also embarked on a campaign of Skype interviews and live interviews with doctors willing to give us their time, so the students could practice their question-writing skills, and use active listening to take notes as they heard the doctors’ responses.

Publishing was a monumental task. Each child had a table of contents, multiple chapters, exciting text features like diagrams, charts, clip art, glossary pages, and interactive features with recorded readings for each page. As they took the time to figure out how to insert the text, edit, and create their masterpieces, we all learned tricks and tips along the way with the Book Creator application.

Lastly, the students created links to surveys where their readers could evaluate the book and leave feedback that could improve their writing. In the end, I know the kids were so proud of their professional projects, and every one of them would say they learned a lot along the way. I know they will carry these skills forward into Middle School and beyond.

Before I embarked on this fascinating journey, I was fearful. Maybe we are all a little afraid of the unknown. However, it turned out to be more incredible as a finished product than I could have envisioned. These books are far more impressive and interactive than I had imagined. So this old school teacher actually managed to learn a few new tricks along the way... and actually liked it!
inspiring the elementary classroom:

integrating performance assessment and self-assessment to promote meta cognition

I've always loved the quote, “I am not a teacher, but an awakener,” by Robert Frost. This quote always comes to mind when I see a student really empowered to take control of their own learning. As my students sit on the edge of their chairs, braced to watch their own performance assessments on film, the quote comes to mind. They have previously set goals and are now urged to take on the task of self-assessment. Through a series of careful steps, students are getting ready to use their higher-order, or metacognitive thinking skills. These skills include, but are not limited to: synthesizing, analyzing and evaluating. Several times a year, I take my students through this process during a unit with a product-based goal. The ultimate goal is to achieve these thinking skills while simultaneously performing meaningful self-assessment.

According to Bloom's, students are generally thought to be able to utilize the higher order thinking skills around 6th grade. By careful scaffolding and multiple forms of modeling, we are attempting to reach this point at a much younger age. A key idea here is that by using a metacognitive approach, I can help students take control of their own learning by letting them define their own learning goals and monitor their progress in achieving them. With the use of a class set of I-Pads that are available to check out and a video camera, students are able to use the technology at their disposal, which greatly enhances this type of project.

To reach the metacognitive level, students will follow 3 main steps, under my guidance.

1) Before: Develop a plan of action.
2) During: Maintaining/Self-monitoring the plan.
3) After: Evaluating and adjusting the plan.

Secondly, students are asked to self-monitor their progress. I found that by using the one set of I-Pads available to check out in Elementary School, I was able to really enhance this step of the process. Using an app called EduCreations, students are able to take multiple photographs of their projects. They can then record their voices over the photos, marking them up as they explain their thinking. They then play those recordings back as they check the rubric to see if they are hitting their marks. This is done alone, in pairs, or in small groups. The feedback they give themselves and their peers is very illuminating. Students are truly evaluating and analyzing and therefore tapping into those higher-order thinking skills. They may at this point ask themselves: Am I on the right track? Should I move in a different direction? What strategies do I need to use if I don't understand?

The final piece is the self-assessment. Once students have created a work product, they are ready to self-assess. They are able to do this especially well since they have already assessed others who have done the same project. I have found that a wonderful way to do this is in the form of a performance assessment. Students are not only assessed on the content, but also on speaking and presentation skills. These can be filmed with anything I have on hand. We later play back the performance assessment and the students will grade themselves using the rubric they were given at the beginning of the project. I have found this to me a ground-breaking moment for them and it is incredible to see how honest and objective they are in self-evaluating. At this point they can set goals for future projects and think about how they will utilize the skills they have learned in other subjects. They ask themselves: How did I do? Did I do better or worse than expected? What could I have done differently? How can I apply this line of thinking to other problems? As a teacher I love to see the end result—students who have identified their own strengths and areas for improvement. They take these to heart much more than an assigned grade.

In order to do step one, students are given a rubric or a study plan with the requirements of the project. At this point I find it helpful to show the students examples of last year’s products. This could be a video of a previous presentation, a poster, a written product, etc. They will study the rubric and evaluate the examples. This really helps them to fully understand the project and the measures by which they will be graded. It is very powerful for my students to have a full understanding and visualization of the final product they are working towards before beginning. Students are encouraged to ask themselves some of the following questions: What in my prior knowledge will help me with this particular task? How should I get started? What is my learning goal?

Another quote by Alan November that I feel sums up the process and my line of thinking: "We have to stop spoon-feeding kids curriculum tests and homework. They need to be self-directed. They need to be lifelong learners, which means they need to be empowered to take control of more and more of their own learning." - Alan November.
The Future is Already Here!

Don’t Look Now – the future is already here!

Don’t Look Now – The Future is Already Here!

These are exciting times at CNG. Now in our 75th year, we have a long and honored tradition behind us and an exciting, visionary future in front of us. Our parents, students and teachers LOVE being a part of the CNG family and look forward to what our promising future brings. The problem is that the visionary future we’ve eagerly been preparing for is upon us right NOW, particularly in the area of technology. How so, you might ask? Look around you and you will see most of our community members with mobile phones. These devices connect every one of our users to the rest of the world through wireless networks and the Internet. In addition, our users may also have one or more other types of tools such as netbooks, iPads, laptops, e-readers, or a host of other portable electronic devices (PEDs) too, which also connect them to the rest of the world electronically. To give you a sense of the scale of that connection, our users are linked to approximately 2.4 billion other folks around the world who can access the Internet. They can browse over 50 million current websites currently in existence, which by the way, contain approximately 1 trillion pages of information on that thing we call the World Wide Web. This access to the rest of the world’s connected users makes for exciting times in ways that we could only imagine as we were growing up. I’ll use my own case as an example. Many years ago, during my own middle school years, my educational experiences were limited to the teachers and resources available on our school grounds and those other places that we visited on field trips (one memorable experience, I even learned how Oreo cookies were made!) and our more regular sports competitions in other rural towns. As a result, my world was pretty small then and my perspective of that world was limited to what I saw on television, read about in the local newspaper, or the worldliness of my classroom teachers. With this limited pool of information, the quality of my classroom teachers was pretty important, as many of my positions and beliefs were shaped by them and their view of the world. As you might imagine, schools with great teachers produced great students, but the playing field was not level because not everyone had access to a great teacher. Contrast that time to the one of the world we live in today. While great teachers are still an important variable to a quality learning experience, our field is not now so teacher dependent. With the electronic resources available to our students, they can now carefully examine their own values and assumptions, along with all the basic principles surrounding a given issue. Students may now easily ponder alternative points of view, and address why things happen as well as how. With virtually unfettered access to the rest of the world, whether through e-chat collaboration with other students, or learning from other teachers and experts from around the world through digital means, students may be connected whenever they want, at the click of a button. Students can now be instantly connected to real world resources, allowing for direct conversations between the learner and the source of the knowledge they are studying. Imagine being able to online chat with the scientist responsible for a new discovery after having read her study or the author of a new work of historical fiction and his rationale for the theme of his book and his characters choices. Having ready access to writers, thinkers, explorers and scientists, make the who, what, when, where and even how of knowledge readily and universally available.

With this expanded knowledge base, the breadth of what our students know and can do will improve dramatically. What our students produce with these new skills and knowledge does not have to be limited to a campus classroom wall or a bulletin board display. Instead, that work can now be posted on the Web and shared with their student peers from around the world, whether that student is in the classroom next door (intranet) or across the globe (Internet). In short, with technology, it is truly a small world after all and today’s students will benefit tremendously from these tools.

While our access to technology will benefit our community of learners tremendously, there are important issues that still need to be addressed, and one. CNG currently has around 8000 students, 200 teachers and 200 other assorted employees. All of these folks are potential Internet users, many with multiple PEDs, all of which require access to adequate Internet bandwidth to use effectively. As you might imagine, with this number of users, we need lots of bandwidth, but how much bandwidth is enough to serve all of those users? What is the appropriate mixture of wired and wireless access? Which of those 640 million websites should be available for access and which should be blocked for inappropriate content and who decides which is which? What should our community code of ethics for the use of technology look like? How do we create wise consumers of modern media? As we all know, students are presented with a variety of challenges everyday around these issues (anyone heard of cyber bullying?), so we need to create an environment that they can be safe and successful in.

As we ponder giving all of our users Web access, should we also control the types of devices that they use or let them choose their own? What sorts of software should we use and what type of training should we provide our users to ensure that they know how to take full advantage of those programs? What sorts of data should be stored on our own servers and which should be hosted on the Cloud (servers containing our electronic files but stored elsewhere)? What should a given digital classroom look like? Should it have Smartboards, desktop computers, video beams, laptops, HDTV monitors, Apple TVs, docking stations? The list of possibilities is extensive and everyone has an opinion as to what constitutes best practice. How about the technology that students use? Should CNG provide students with 1-1 laptops or should we allow them to bring their own devices? What about our course offerings? Should all clases be offered on our brick and mortar campus or should we offer online courses to our students? Should those online courses also be available on the Web to students from other schools in a sort of shared common curriculum? What additional skills do our students (not to mention our teachers and other staff) need to operate successfully in this new environment? They have access to HUGE amounts of information on the Web’s one trillion pages of information. How do we develop for our students a skill set focused on accessing and making sense of that massive amount of information, and using it in forming creative solutions in ways that develop their minds, body and character? How does CNG give them the tools that they will need to condense their net travels down to experiences that are both meaningful and productive? How do we ensure that the journey is focused on the learner and the products they produce and not about the type of technology used?

At this point we have more questions than answers. While these are exciting times they are also challenging times as we have lots of work in front of us as we attempt to catch up to the future that is here now. With that said, this is a good problem for us to have because CNG has both the desire and resources to address our challenges head on. I look forward to working with our very capable and tech savvy community of stakeholders – which in-
As a new teacher this year at CNG’s middle school, the message has been loud and clear—“Honored Traditions, Visionary Future.” As the wife of a CNG graduate, I understand and value the traditions that are a part of this incredible school. As a teacher of adolescents, I appreciate the idea that CNG is not afraid to embrace change in the way we teach and communicate with our students and their families. Throughout this year I have seen amazing teachers and administrators use technology and innovative teaching practices to develop critical thinking skills and improve communication, per CNG’s honored tradition of excellence in education.

From Skyward, to three-way conferences, to blogs and to websites, the CNG middle school has looked to the future for ways to communicate more efficiently and effectively with students and their families. Communication is a critical part of education, and CNG is impressive in its commitment to communicate about student progress, behavior, goals, and opportunities. The spring three-way conferences are an example of how CNG teachers and administration are honoring tradition while moving toward the future. As a teacher, hosting three-way conferences in my own classroom was a special opportunity to invite parents in to see the space their children occupy for many hours every week. It allowed parents to see the way the classroom is organized and the tools at their children’s disposal, while also allowing for more intimacy than the gymnasium provided in the fall. As we move forward, students will be playing a much larger role in the conferences. As a teacher, hosting three-way conferences in my own classroom was a special opportunity to invite parents in to see the space their children occupy for many hours every week. It allowed parents to see the way the classroom is organized and the tools at their children’s disposal, while also allowing for more intimacy than the gymnasium provided in the fall. As we move forward, students will be playing a much larger role in the conferences.

Another innovative teaching practice that has been adopted at CNG is the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP). As an eighth grade English teacher, I can see the powerful impact that this curriculum is having, especially on reluctant readers. I am honored to be a part of TCRWP, and I am excited to move into year two of its implementation.

Speaking of challenges, when an organization is open to the future and willing to implement change to move in that direction, there will inevitably be challenges. CNG is fortunate to have the support of an outstanding group of families who share feedback and have been willing to bear with us, as we embrace the future. I feel honored to work at a school that is made up of a community of parents and families who are willing to make changes in order to support the development of the school and the students.

The future continues to look bright at CNG middle school. As we strive to honor tradition, we will continue to look towards the future to adopt practices that make us the best middle school around!
Why do we believe in human leaders at CNG?

Colegio Nueva Granada.

Leadership is a very powerful trait that is a must for our students to possess as we prepare them for life in the 21st Century. It could go in the right direction or in the wrong one. Human beings have witnessed and experienced with either joy or agony, what positive and negative powerful leaders have done along their journey on earth. We have seen great empires and communities falling down and breaking apart because they were led through the wrong path. We have also seen the damage that our planet has suffered as the result of either a lack of leaders, or the presence of negative ones. On the other hand, we have had the joy and pleasure to enjoy what good leaders have done, for example, in the political and the social arenas, by fighting for equality and rights.

I strongly believe that we need leaders, but a very particular kind of leaders: we need “human” leaders.

We have all experienced leadership at some point in our lives, some being leaders themselves, and others being influenced or guided by others. But do we know what leadership truly is? I guess an objective approach to this question would be to say that there is no concrete answer to it. As it happens with personality or emotions, with leadership there is no black and white, we are all different and unique leaders, and we can be leaders under different situations. However, there are some characteristics that we, as educators, seek in our students. In the first place, we look for knowledge, responsibility, intelligence, vision, and audacity. We need citizens who know the world in which they live, its needs, its problems, and its potential. But are these enough to define a leader? You are right, they are not, but they are definitely a good start.

What are the forces behind knowledge and intelligence that boost up and complement the leader inside of us? 21st Century education integrates a variety of tools to develop good, healthy, and appropriate character traits along with the daily lessons. I strongly believe that this is the key to develop the forces that build up a human leader: integrity, humility, tolerance, passion, persistence, openness to experience, conscientiousness, among others, are necessary characteristics that a real human leader must have, and those are traits that I see in the students at Colegio Nueva Granada.

Why do we believe in human leaders at CNG?

The Middle and High School students currently enrolled at CNG are experiencing one of the most important stages in life: adolescence. Adolescence is a crucial phase in which our body, mind, and character start changing at a tremendous speed. We immerse ourselves in the process of building up and defining who we are, and who we will be for the rest of our lives. You might be now digging into your memories and trying to remember those moments, situations, actions, and people who were part of that growing and enriching stage of your life. Now try to compare them with those of your kids. See any difference? Of course you do!

As a 23-year-old teacher I find myself surprised, sometimes even shocked, when I witness my students’ interactions and listen to their conversations, both in class and outside it. When I think about myself as a 13 or 14 year old I see a completely different picture, and I only graduated from High School six years ago, which I think is not so long ago. However, the reality is quite different, in fact, six years is a lot of time. The world is evolving and developing at an incredible pace. Being up to date is a very demanding task for educators and institutions, but I am happy and proud to say that CNG is prepared to provide the students with the best tools, knowledge, and environment to make them succeed as human leaders. You can be sure that once every student is inside our school, they will find a place to express their ideas, feelings, learn to help others, develop their personality, their character, and start building their life as capable professionals.

To conclude, I would like to share with you some wise and touching words that I heard from the musician, Yanni, a person who has helped heal this world through music. He said: “I just want you to remember that everything great that has ever happened to humanity, has begun as a single thought in someone’s mind. And if anyone of us is capable of such a thought, then, all of us have the same capacity and capability, because we are all the same. I know that our world is going through a very difficult time right now but I will never lose my faith in humanity and in our incredible ability to overcome just about anything that we are challenged with.”

That is why we need human leaders, that is why we are working hard to build them up, that is why we, teachers and parents are here for, to guide and support those who will produce those powerful thoughts.
In its first official year, Junior Model United Nations (JMUN) turned out to be even more successful than expected. With two full models -- both with their belts, the middle school program certainly gained valuable experience and knowledge during a truly unforgettable year. With the majority of CNG delegates having little to no MUN experience, these students definitely held their own at both the JMUN (Junior Model United Nations) in March 2013 here in Bogota and also at COSMUN (Columbus School Model United Nations) in Medellin in late April 2013.

At JMUN, which was located at Camera de Comercio Sede y Centro Empresarial in Chapinero, CNG was well represented by 16 delegates: Daniel Vargas (Australia), Pablo Quinero (Chile), and Lorenzo Lizarralde (Switzerland) in the DISEC Committee; Natalia Cala (Australia), Santiago Cala (Chile), and Simon Escobar (Switzerland) in SPECPOI, Max de la Espriella (Australia), Samuel Urrutia (Chile), and Gabriela Franco (Switzerland) in the UAR, Juan Pablo Posada (Australia) and Gaston Siegmund (Switzerland) in ECOSOC, Michelle Akerman (Australia) and Manuel Hernandez (Switzerland) in Derechos Humanos; Jorge Trujillo (Papalexopoulus) and Manuel Toro (Paul Polman) in the Bilderberg Summit; and Salvador Robayo (Earl of Clancarty) in the Congress of Vienna.

We also had Maria Paz Rios working for the Logistics Committee and Kelly Habegger as a Floor Secretary. There were two delegates from CNG who won awards in their committees or in front of 30 sometimes hostile delegates had some significant "floor time" and were not afraid to voice their country's positions in front of 50 sometimes hostile delegates in their committees or in front of more than 100 in the General Assembly. Our delegation numbered 12 and included: Lorenzo Lizarralde (North Korea) and Santiago Cala (Libya) in DISEC, Daniel Vargas (Afghanistan) and Samuel Urrutia (Libya) in the UAR, Juan Pablo Posada (North Korea) and Gaston Siegmund (South Korea) in SPECPOI, Salvador Robayo (South Africa) in the Security Council; Daniel Vargas (Afghanistan) in UNEP, Gabriela Franco (Afghanistan) and Samuel Urrutia (Libya) in the IAEA, and Max de la Espriella (South Africa); Jorge Trujillo (Afghanistan), and Kelly Habegger (Libya) in the WHO.

For those students who were able to make the trip to COSMUN in Medellin, they were rewarded with a terrific experience. Not only did they get to see the beauty that the city offers, but the conference itself was extremely intense. Once again, our JMUN group went up against older and more experienced (mostly high school) delegates, but proved that they could handle this added pressure. Every single one of our delegates had some significant "floor time" and were not afraid to voice their country's positions in front of 50 sometimes hostile delegates in their committees or in front of more than 100 in the General Assembly. Our delegation numbered 12 and included: Lorenzo Lizarralde (North Korea) and Santiago Cala (Libya) in DISEC, Daniel Vargas (Afghanistan) and Samuel Urrutia (Libya) in the UAR, Juan Pablo Posada (North Korea) and Gaston Siegmund (South Korea) in SPECPOI, Salvador Robayo (South Africa) in the Security Council; Daniel Vargas (Afghanistan) and Samuel Urrutia (Libya) in the IAEA, and Max de la Espriella (South Africa); Jorge Trujillo (Afghanistan), and Kelly Habegger (Libya) in the WHO.

Maria Paz Rios was also selected to be a Co-President in the SPECPOI Committee. This is a great honor for an 8th grader. Because of the success our delegates had this year, next year is sure to be a special one. In our future plans are the possibilities of participating in three or four conferences with one of them hopefully being an international model to be held in another country. The experiences this year's 6th and 7th grade delegates received should help propel them into setting higher goals for which-ever committee/role they select. There is one thing that is for sure, the Junior Model United Nations program at CNG is definitely ready for real and our delegates are eager and ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

When picturing our students’ daily lives, the image almost always includes a cell phone, an iPad or an iPod. Students are constantly being bombarded by technology and they are completely comfortable and even compelled to use it in their day to day lives. Most of that technology is social consumption. Our students watch YouTube videos, add pressure. Every single one of our delegates had some significant “floor time” and were not afraid to voice their country’s positions in front of 50 sometimes hostile delegates in their committees or in front of more than 100 in the General Assembly. Our delegation numbered 12 and included: Lorenzo Lizarralde (North Korea) and Santiago Cala (Libya) in DISEC, Daniel Vargas (Afghanistan) and Samuel Urrutia (Libya) in the UAR, Juan Pablo Posada (North Korea) and Gaston Siegmund (South Korea) in SPECPOI, Salvador Robayo (South Africa) in the Security Council; Daniel Vargas (Afghanistan) and Samuel Urrutia (Libya) in the IAEA, and Max de la Espriella (South Africa); Jorge Trujillo (Afghanistan), and Kelly Habegger (Libya) in the WHO.

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In order for our students to be competent citizens in the future, they must be comfortable creating with technology. The platforms they will use might not have been invented yet, but if they become comfortable trying something new, if they learn how to manipulate, edit, and modify it, they will be better prepared for the society of tomorrow.
What is the difference between a homozygous individual and a heterozygous individual in terms of their genotypes? Chances are good that unless you are a geneticist, biologist, or science teacher you probably can’t remember, but if you were really pressed to figure it out you would probably do the same thing that geneticists, biologists, and science teachers do when we don’t remember a fact or a definition: Google it? In today’s world we have the power to access nearly the entire breadth of human knowledge from devices that we carry around in our pockets. Any time that we don’t remember what a word means or need to know the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow (whether it be African or European) we are never more than a few seconds away from the answer. So why do schools spend so much time teaching things that anyone with Internet access can discover in less than the time it took you to read this paragraph?

In order to produce learners who are prepared for 21st century careers, schools need to focus on “The capacity to innovate – the ability to solve problems creatively, or bring new possibilities to life – and skills like critical thinking, communication and collaboration are far more important than academic knowledge,” according to Harvard education specialist Tony Wagner. What this means in terms of teaching and learning at CNG is that we need to develop true learners who are intrinsically motivated and equipped with the skills to search out necessary information then use it in a creative way to solve a problem and not just search engines who can recall all of the facts placed into their heads by teachers and then forget them immediately after the test. As a learning community, CNG is working hard to meet this goal.

Any time that we as humans face changes to our normal and accepted ways of doing things there is always a sense of apprehension that goes along with it. To assuage that fear, all we need to do is look at some of the ways that teachers on campus have already begun to prepare students to be 21st century learners and the successes they have had. We have English teachers at CNG who have expanded the typical class plan of reading and writing to include critical literacy and presentations of learning in multiple media such as videos and interactive displays to develop communication skills using the new technologies that surround us. There are teachers working to develop responsibility, collaboration skills, and the ability to sort through the vast supply of knowledge available and choose that which is accurate and relevant through student-lead jigsaw projects where each student has specific roles and areas of expertise to contribute to the larger learning goal of the team. CNG educators are experimenting with flipped classrooms where students watch and listen to lectures as homework and spend their time in school working to solve problems and design experiments since these are the most important skills we can teach. The Middle School and High School science departments are adopting the Next Generation Science Standards for the 2013 – 2014 school year as these standards put an emphasis on performance and skills rather than just a knowledge of those facts and definitions like “heterozygous” that can be Googled.

All of these innovations at CNG are just the tip of the iceberg as we have a huge and energetic faculty constantly working to create the best possible learning environment for our students. All members of the school community must willingly follow the lead of these teachers as we work toward producing learners ready to have an impact in today’s world. Knowledge is not enough; we must teach students how to think, ask the right questions, solve problems, and most importantly make them excited about learning for CNG to become the great 21st century institution that it wants to be.
This last March a group of us students made a presentation at a technology conference mostly designed for adults, not for kids. At 7 a.m. in the morning, as we headed to the buses, we were all nervous, thinking, “What if they laugh? What if we forget what to say?”

When we got to the buses, Mr. Harper, Mr. Thomas, and all the other teachers (we think so much) were waiting for us and helped us to calm down. As we were arriving we were thinking about what we were going to say and all of us were pretty nervous. Next we watched some presentations and thought of some more ideas and tools that we could use for our presentation. Then it was our turn to present. We can’t explain how we felt. It was a mixture of nervous-happy and nervous-scared all at the same time. Mateo shared that he felt like he had butterflies in his stomach. Andres said he felt very happy and nervous at the same time, Kish felt excited.

We started our presentation talking to some of our own teachers. They gave us some tips about presenting and then we walked up to the board. We projected our Prezi on the board and we started to talk. The idea was that, as people turned to present, we would see our presentation and stop to listen to ours and then move on. Our presentation was basically about “Technology in School”, how to use it and the different kinds of tools and programs that are available. First we did a little introduction about what the presentation was about, and then we explained about “flipbooks”, which we use for our e-portfolios, reflections on our learning, and summarizing concepts. The real purpose of a blog is to communicate, but we also use it as a binder and e-portfolio. Then we talked about the different platforms we use for demonstrating what we have learned.

We showed them an iMovie about mitosis made by Mateo Martinez. He used stop-motion as an animation technique to make many pictures look like a movie, but they were really just still-drawings he had made. Check out all Mateo’s work at gr7science52.edublogs.org.

After we showed everyone our Prezi, we were happy to watch another presentation about the power of using Prezis as a presentation tool. It was a coincidence because we had presented using a Prezi because we see it as more creative and interesting than a PowerPoint. Most PowerPoint are very boring and in our view, Prezis are almost always more fun and somehow easier to understand.

Finally, we showed them a MyeBook, made by Kish Dubey. Myebook is an electronic book creator that lets the user create online books, which we had used in our science genetics project. First we summarized the concepts that we wanted to teach, then we wrote a script, and finally we drew pictures to go with the script. Check out all of Kish’s work at gr7science64.edublogs.org. In the end we showed our conclusions on why technology is important.

Our presentation was pretty good. We think it was one of the best ones there, and we had many adults tell us the same thing. One thing none of us understood was that people actually had their presentations and information about technology on large pieces of poster paper. We were the only group that presented about technology with technology. Although we all felt nervous at the beginning, we soon forgot about those butterflies and really got into the excitement of being presenters and having so many people listen to us. Needless to say, many people were interested in our presentation. They took photos of us and we began to imagine that maybe we were going to be famous in other schools.

All in all, we had a lot of fun, learned a lot and got to present a great Prezi to many people from many schools.

As a final note to all the parents at CNG and all over the world, when your son or daughter is spending a lot of time on his or her computer, that doesn’t necessarily mean that they are playing a game or are chatting on Facebook with their friends. As we have shown here, they could be creating an online presentation or doing an activity that his or her teacher has assigned, or even researching a topic. Take the time to check.

To our teachers, it is the 21st century! Most schools around the world are evolving by adopting technology and using it in their classrooms. We are not saying that a notebook and pencil is a “bad” way to teach. They are still useful, but research has shown that through these technology tools, learning can be more fun and more educative. This is why we highly recommend that all teachers begin to use more technology in their classrooms.
Adding to that, teachers must incorporate “21st-century skills” while competing with distractions that did not exist in my eighth grade world: Facebook, Minecraft, YouTube, and much more. “21st-century skills” is not just a catchphrase for educators. Nor are these skills specifically tied to technology. Actually, they center on the “4 Cs”: communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. One way to address this challenge is through project-based learning, or PBL.

PBL-Online.org defines PBL as “an instructional approach built upon authentic learning activities...designed to solve a problem and generally reflect the types of learning and work people do in the everyday world outside the classroom.” Okay, so real-world questions, using the basic knowledge of the subject matter. What does this mean in middle school language arts?

It means that ultimately, students must produce a real-world product with their learning, such as a public service announcement about an issue they feel strongly about (CCSS: “Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as an effort to communicate with a specific audience”). They have a world of ideas about which web 2.0 tools are the best ones for projects. And then there are the ideas that come from students themselves: students will put more effort into writing they know will be viewed by a “face-to-face audience.”

COLLABORATION: Much collaboration can occur online— for example, a group of students might use Popplet.com to brainstorm and map out ideas for a project. Or, they might use Skype to interview an expert. In the past, my students have Skyped with award-winning author Laura Resau, as well as XGames Champion and rock climber Toni Allen. Of course, face-to-face collaboration is still encouraged. But, technology transcends the limitations of time and place, allowing more collaboration than was possible before. And teachers must incorporate “21st-century skills” in the classroom to add technology to the mix. Through project-based learning, students are able to show what they can do with what they know. It’s an exciting time to be a teacher and I hope that my excitement translates to students in the way the material is presented, taught, and assessed.

CONNECTING CSS AND 21ST-CENTURY LEARNING WITH TECHNOLOGY AT CNG

“What we have to learn is to do, we learn by doing”

Aristotle

by Terry Thomas
Middle School Teacher

“The illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

Alvin Toffler, American writer and futurist

COLLABORATION: Much collaboration can occur online— for example, a group of students might use Popplet.com to brainstorm and map out ideas for a project. Or, they might use Skype to interview an expert. In the past, my students have Skyped with award-winning author Laura Resau, as well as XGames Champion and rock climber Toni Allen. Of course, face-to-face collaboration is still encouraged. But, technology transcends the limitations of time and place, allowing more collaboration than was possible before.

COMMUNICATION: As far back as 2000, research showed that students will put more effort into writing they know will be viewed by a “face-to-face audience.” Eighth-grader Hyman Abadi states that “I tend to write better, more, and deeply through the computer.” Then there’s the fact that aside from face-to-face interactions, most communication relies on technology. Students have access to be given opportunities to try out these different forms of communication (Skype, blogging, even email) in school. This in turn leads to more, and better COLLABORATION (see above).

CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING: In English classes of yesteryear, it seemed like the ultimate assessment or proof of understanding was “The Essay.” We wrote persuasive, narrative, humorous, and how-to essays, just to name a few. Today, students still write essays, but often they are enhanced with hyperlinks, videos, graphics, or other digital presentations that deliver information in a fun, succinct, and innovative way. They have a world of creative possibilities open to them when they act in their own videos and post them to YouTube, make a podcast on Audacity, or use Glogster to make a digital poster.

When students are asked to figure out new ways to deliver their message, they are able to be not only more creative but to use their critical thinking skills as well, deciding on the “how” by looking at the “what” and the “who” of their intended message. Fortunately, CNG students are comfortable with and eager to use technology. Natalia Acero, eigth-grader, says “Working in my computer is easier because it is faster and I get to post my work online so that other people can see it. I could fix my work when I felt I needed to while with paper, I would have to wait until I got it back and then write it all again and turn it back in.” Daniel Echeverry, in grade seven, also notes a practical advantage, stating, “...when you go to school you don’t have to take a heavy binder, you can just take a slim iPad.”

At CNG we have many people who make technology integration possible, many of them working behind the scenes so that we don’t have to think about it. I am amazed, grateful, and excited because, every day, I can visit new websites, try out new web 2.0 tools, and share resources with colleagues and students via the Internet.

We are lucky enough to have a set of iPads available for student use. Reserving these, along with laptops, ensures that every student has a device. I am grateful for the expertise of our Tech Department, especially Joe Harper, who responds quickly if I have a technology problem. In the library, Martha Linares is always willing to add free apps to the iPads upon request. Shaventl Allen, high school technology teacher, seems to have an endless supply of ideas about which web 2.0 tools are the best ones for projects. And then there are the ideas that come from students themselves: new app suggestions, different ways of using the highlighting or note-taking features on a Kindle, or simply taking notes on an iPhone and uploading them directly to a blog.

The EIA Common Core State Standards demand more from both students and teachers. “21st-century skills” add a whole new set of standards to the mix. Through project-based learning, students are able to show what they can do with what they know. It’s an exciting time to be a teacher and I hope that my excitement translates to students in the way the material is presented, taught, and assessed.
Many people don’t know this about me, but I chose CNG as my professional home for one reason and one reason alone – the people. In fact, the High School teachers whom I met when I was on campus made a deep and lasting impression – here were people who were connected to students, cared deeply about the subjects they were teaching, and were thoughtful about the best ways to engage students in the learning process in order to cultivate and foster the leaders of tomorrow.

Learning is a complex, powerful, intuitive process. Great teachers think about this fact each and every minute they teach. In fact, outstanding educators are awed by this knowledge for within lies the understanding that each student is a unique individual who requires a singular connection, a distinctive approach, and sometimes a magical moment in order to achieve at his/her fullest potential. And these excellent teachers, they focus on this above all else. It is these teachers who first attracted me to CNG.

It is these teachers who make a mark on our high school students – who serve as models and guide students along their paths of learning. It is these teachers who look for new and creative ways to teach, to engage, to motivate. It is these teachers who assist students to see the world through new eyes, to write and speak their vision, to communicate clearly, fully, deeply. It is these teachers who help students realize service to others is noble and fundamental and one of the most important gifts we can give ourselves and others.

It is these teachers who bring excellence to the table, who ensure students continue to strive for greater personal excellence, push boundaries, and go where no one has yet gone. It is these teachers who show students the power of creating, the power of being, and the power of what can be. It is these teachers who help students realize service to others is noble and fundamental and one of the most important gifts we can give ourselves and others.

Teaching is a creative, rigorous, thoughtful process. The teachers of whom I write are constantly reflecting, questioning, thinking, researching, wondering. They seek to understand how students best learn, why they learn (or don’t), and how their interactions can further their students’ knowledge, abilities, skills, and passions. They are rarely still. They are rarely content. They are rarely satisfied.

It is these teachers I hold before myself and before you. Not as idols but as models. They are essential to the teaching and learning process in which they engage day in and day out – faithfully, thoughtfully, meticulously. As we continue to expand our vision of 21st Century teaching and learning, we must never lose sight of the teachers who sit at the center. Teaching and learning are distinctly human processes which require models of passionate, caring, thoughtful learning in order to make a mark on the students who they teach. It is these teachers who bind me to CNG.
As the President of the National Honor Society I can say that hard work always pays off, and this year NHS really proved that statement to be true. I have heard many people say during my entire school career, both students and people from outside the school community, that the school lives in an impenetrable bubble. I like to think that as the members of the NHS walk every Wednesday at 11:50 into room H202 that the bubble pops a little bit. Here NHS members engage in discussions and volunteer to do their part in making this society better.

This year the NHS has not only been able to tackle one of the school’s greatest and most difficult events, Thanksgiving, but was also able to make it the best one yet. As a team we were able to make 240 baskets for all the school’s General Services’ workers. The National Honor Society also accomplished seven successful bake sales and three car washes, in which we raised over $2,665,350 during the two events. This year we also introduced, once again, the long awaited Dodgeball tournament. With the tournament entrance fee we donated 900 diapers and 30 bags of leche Klim to Fundacion Hogar Santa Rita. We also broke the record of attendance to one of the most awaited nights of the year, the MTV Night and raised $4,075,000. In total we raised $14,638,950. Donating $3,000,000 to Fundacion FISULAB in order to pay all surgery expenses for Juan David, a kid with cleft palate from Tolima. Until now we have also accomplished more than 2,200 social service hours and still have two more months of volunteering to do.

With great relief and joy I can definitely say that hard work really pays off and this year we have set the bar higher for the members to come. However I am confident that as new and even more brilliant students enhance our group, the National Honor Society will keep on growing and we will raise the bar higher every year.

I want to further exemplify what the four pillars of the National Honor Society mean and what I think are the qualities a leader and a member of the NHS must have.

Leadership, the first pillar, is more than standing in front of a large group of people, it is the capacity to earn the trust of a group of individuals and make something extraordinary out of it. A leader is a person that possesses confidence and inspires in others the desire for virtuousness. A leader demonstrates persistency, joy, and a constant endeavor to make society a better place for others, and doing so without changing what he or she stands for.

The second pillar, Scholarship is the ability a leader speaks so highly of and what makes a leader stand out from a group of people. Scholarship is to strive for learning and overcoming academic barriers; it is the push to understand what we are made of and what things are made for. It is not only learning what we are obliged to pursue, but also learning beyond the limit and applying those skills on a daily basis.

The third pillar is Character. Character is defined as the personality of an individual. However I would say that character is created overtime. It is the impulse to defend your thinking, to make what’s wrong right, and to stand up for what you believe in. Character builds upon mistakes and learns from them, it is the courage to make decisions that will most likely affect many positively, regardless of the outcome.

The final pillar is Service; it is what a member of the National Honor Society gives to the community that surrounds him or her. It is a gift in return for what we have earned, a way to replenish what has made us honest, hard working, and qualified members of NHS. Service is that for which we stand for and we work so hard to give.

That being said, I finish this year with the security that all the members have done their absolute best to leave a mark on the school. We shall be remembered as those that gave it all without expecting anything in return. Anything that begins in our hearts will always excel over something that is done for a prize.
Appreciating every stage in our life is fundamental for our personal growth. CNG’s Leadership is the perfect place to develop one’s character and leadership skills no matter the level of participation - beginner, intermediate, advanced or leader of leaders.

Leadership has been active in school for decades and these many years have proven the potential that this group has to form exemplary CNG graduates. The group’s influence on its members and the rest of the community is evident on a daily basis. Whether it is a simple task such as picking up trash after lunch or applying our first-aid knowledge in stressful situations, we embrace the responsibility of setting an example. We are constantly seeking to improve our community welfare through hands-on projects led and created by us.

The experiences we live as members of Leadership teach us the skills to build character and responsibility that guide us to become the envisioned leaders we aspire to be.

Have you ever dreamed about being someone’s hero? By this, we mean saving someone’s life. We never thought we would have the opportunity to learn how to help someone in a medical way. If you think about it, in these types of situations a regular teenager would probably feel scared and would want to hand the issue to a responsible adult. The safety of the person was never in our hands because we had no knowledge of how to handle these kinds of situations. The second retreat of Leadership this year was Wilderness First Aid training, and regardless of the level - beginner, intermediate, advanced, or leader of leaders - it was a completely new subject for us, a new topic we could explore. Even though this retreat was only a weekend’s experience, it was an intense learning opportunity. We realized that most of the things we thought we knew were myths and that people could actually use this sort of basic education. Also, it made us understand that learning First Aid is very important to our daily life, especially in rural areas where it’s very difficult to get medical attention in a short amount of time compared to the safety and speed of the city. Thanks to this retreat, many people learned and got prepared for an incident where you don’t need to automatically hand it over to a responsible adult, but you can act on it, like a leader.
Experience is delightful for the artist. It builds on their criteria and the beauty of our creative culture. CNG arts week encourages student awareness and passion towards the arts, and looks to kindle individual creative potential. Additional to arts week, our school offers a variety of art programs, and among these, the AP art classes provides students with the tools to achieve enhanced skill levels, often leading to greater opportunities for careers in art. Specifically, the AP 2D design course has facilitated my preparation to study design abroad. In addition, this course has helped me discover my passion and introduced me to the lifestyle I have before me. For all the artists out there: explore your potential and take advantage of what CNG offers. It may unveil a preview to your future.

by: Stephanie Vainsberg
High School Student
4. **Self-awareness:**
   - 9th grade student is aware of his learning difficulties therefore knows and understands his learning style.
   - 10th grade student identifies learning strategies and coping mechanisms that work towards maximizing learning potential.
   - 11th grade student builds upon learning strategies and coping mechanisms that work towards maximizing learning potential.
   - 12th grade student applies learning strategies and coping mechanisms that work towards maximizing learning potential and avoids strategies that impede his/her learning.

5. **Pro-activity:**
   **Initiative:**
   - 9th grade student has the willingness to consult with others and is aware that there are multiple solutions to a problem.
   - 10th grade student is willing to consult with others, and is able to find at least two solutions to a problem.
   - 11th grade student consults with others and is able to weigh the different options when multiple solutions to a problem may exist.
   - 12th grade student consults and is flexible in choosing the best solution out of all the possible options.

   **Advocacy:**
   - 9th grade student knows that there are consequences and resulting outcomes from his/her actions.
   - 10th grade student knows and understands that there are consequences and resulting outcomes from his/her actions.
   - 11th grade student assumes responsibility for the consequences and resulting outcomes from his/her actions.
   - 12th grade student advocates for oneself.

6. **Perseverance:**
   - 9th grade student understands the need for multiple attempts towards solving a problem.
   - 10th grade student is willing to attempt multiple times in order to solve a problem.
   - 11th grade student identifies when the strategy being used is not giving results and is willing to find a new strategy to solve the problem.
   - 12th grade student identifies when the strategy being used is not giving results and is able to find and implement a new strategy to solve the problem.

7. **Goal Setting:**
   - 9th grade student identifies goals that need to be set according to the given circumstance (yearly, monthly, projects, tests, behavior, etc.).
   - 10th grade student identifies goals that need to be set within a specific time frame.
   - 11th grade student defines strategies to reach those goals.
   - 12th grade student identifies realistic and attainable goals and strategies that need to be met within a given time frame.

8. **Use of support systems:**
   - 9th grade student accepts that the support available is a tool for achieving the solution but not the solution per se.
   - 10th grade student identifies the different resources available (books, internet, peers, teachers, parents) and is able to consult them if needed.
   - 11th grade student identifies when help is needed and is willing to accept the options offered.
   - 12th grade student actively seeks the support of different resources.

Additionally, we support students fostering very important life skills, such as keeping an agenda, ensuring that students bring their work and necessary materials to class and that they use their time appropriately, as well as developing trustworthiness within their peers and teachers.
practical passions

by: Maria Spence
HS English Teacher and Theater Production Assistant

A million years ago I graduated from college with two passions: literature and theater. Generally speaking, neither one of those areas is a huge money-maker unless you hit it big in either one. "What will you do with a literature degree?" people asked me. And even more often, "what on earth will you do with a minor in theater?" Fair enough questions I suppose being thrown at a young woman just beginning her journey into adulthood, and for a long time I thought people had a point. Although, I was able to use my literature degree as a basis for my teaching, the question remained, just what was the point of all that time I had spent in the theater? How would it help me in life? Wouldn’t it have been better spent in business classes, really learning something about earning a living? Something practical?

But here’s the thing: theater is practical! It doesn’t guarantee you financial success, or give you a piece of paper that motivates companies to boost your salary. Yet it has given me valuable skills that have served me well in whatever I have put my hand to, in life. How many professional adults do you know who are mortified by even the idea of speaking in front of groups of people at a meeting or conference? My experience in the theater has made me completely comfortable in front of people, whether they be adults or children, in just about any situation. Taking part in theater can augment self-confidence and comfort with yourself like little else can. Recently during our rehearsal process for the latest CNG musical Once Upon a Mattress, a parent wrote to me of her primary daughter’s transformation over the semester saying, “I have seen an incredible change in her these past few months. From very, very shy, to outspoken and, at times, somewhat theatrical (I mean this in the most complimentary of senses). There is no doubt that her participation in rehearsals and group activities has played a huge role in this transformation.” And that effect isn’t reserved for only primary students. Camila Silva, a tenth grader who has performed in the musical for the last two years eloquently explains her feelings about theater. “As a child I had never been so interested in theater, given the fact that I had always been very shy. It was very intimidating for me to stand up on a stage and pretend to be someone I wasn’t. Yet, I’m the kind of person who likes to read books because of that thrill you get every time you step into another world and get to be someone entirely different. Now I’ve discovered that theater and reading are not so different after all. One still feels a lot safer than the other, but with both I get to experience how it would feel to be someone else at least for a couple of minutes. Theater has also helped me in the process of overcoming my shyness and pushing me into trying new things. I’m learning to take risks and just have fun.” Those are powerful testimonies as to how being a part of a production can stretch and expand you. Now isn’t that practical?

In addition to building self-confidence, being a part of a theatrical production forces you to strive toward a better understanding of non-tangible skills, such as how not to be overwhelmed by a seemingly gigantic task and how to be a part of a team. You learn that attacking a big project is all about breaking it into pieces and tackling those systematically. You begin to comprehend that no matter how good you are as a part, you belong to a whole, and success for everyone is the ultimate goal, not just success for yourself. This understanding has taught me valuable things that I will never forget, and things that DO make up a part of my everyday life. It has taught me respect, responsibility, strength. Most importantly, it has taught me to never, ever give up.” There’s no doubt life can be hard. What an incredible lesson to learn as a young person: the value of perseverance and commitment. Again I ask you, what’s NOT practical about that?

Is being a part of a theater production for everyone? Perhaps not. But here at CNG we believe that for those who choose to be a part — whether on stage or behind it — there are benefits — practical, real, immediate — that result. I wish I had understood these ideas back in the day when people questioned my passions. I didn’t. But understanding them now allows me to pass these ideas back in the day when people questioned my passions. I didn’t. But understanding them now allows me to pass these ideas on to my community by confidently engaging students in building a production and encouraging them to unapologetically pursue this passion.
As we face the challenges of the 21st century’s educational revolution oriented toward promoting the creative ability of our students, it is important to keep in mind that they must enter the process of developing a creative attitude and use technology as part of their learning strategies in the classroom.

Technology advances during this century are inevitable and keeping up is fundamental. The use of technology in the classroom helps to promote communication skills and allows us to know in a timely manner what is happening in the world. Within the classroom it also creates the necessary space to discuss the risks and consequences of this knowledge.

Recognizing the worth of creativity in technology also gives us the opportunity to link it with art and other subjects that are traditionally artistic. In this manner we not only make good use of technology and its implementation in the classroom but we are also provided with an artistic space which allows each student to develop his/her capabilities to the fullest extent. The formative purpose of CNG supports and orients these processes that are at the forefront of education. We are constantly searching for goals and strategies through which students materialize their creativity and convert them into tools in their professional and personal lives.

One of the projects that is developed with my students in class is the creation of a yearly magazine called IDEAS. The publishing of this magazine is a perfect example of the integration of creativity and technology. Our goal in developing IDEAS is to voice students’ thoughts about cultural and social issues in the world through the language of literature and art. This goal follows the school’s mission, which is “Educating the mind, strengthening the body, and developing character for leadership and service in the world of today and tomorrow.” IDEAS magazine lets readers know we’re trying to impact society with our skills, and getting to know CNG’s different thoughts and opinions about social issues in Colombia and the entire world.

Following are a few comments by students in my Electronic Publishing class:

“It was an experience that at first I found long and difficult. Yet, as the process progressed, I learned a lot about this school and its fine arts and activities. The work showed a great variety and amazing quality. The fact that the book is composed of English, Spanish, French, and Mandarin Chinese, shows how intriguing this school is and the students who are a part of it. I am very proud to have helped with the creation of the Magazine and it has proved to be a great experience.”

by: Nathan Levenson
11th grade student

“Electric Publishing might sound too hard, but it is a very fun and interesting class. I got to publish the Ideas book and get a look at my peers work. The Ideas Magazine incorporates student’s work and teacher’s help, so in the end the book is from all of us. In Electronic Publishing, we just got the chance to put it all together and show the students that their work is in fact appreciated. This class is a great learning and uncommon experience, therefore I encourage others to take it and take full advantage of it.”

by: Daniel Camacho
11th grade student

“Being in the Electronic publishing was a very interesting and enriching experience, not only because I learned how to work with different Adobe programs that are very useful in today’s technological world, but because I got to be a part of the IDEAS Magazine. I was on the editing and production part of publishing this year’s issue of CNG’s IDEAS Magazine. From the beginning of the course we were communicating with different teachers, explaining what the magazine entails, and collecting different works of students, taking pictures of several art and graphic design projects, and finally, editing them and compiling them into a publication. It is an honor and a personal success to see the final product finally put and available for High School, and the whole CNG community, to enjoy it. Hopefully they will learn from it as much as we, the Electronic Publishing class of 2012-2013, learned from the making of the third publication of IDEAS Magazine.”

by: Daniela Berenguer Puerta
12th grade student
March 1999. It was a sunny afternoon, I sat in my booster seat and admired the line of green emerging from the cobblestone roads. The trees appeared evenly, each the same distance from one before. The grass was splattered with yellow-green weeds and the sky was clear blue with almost no clouds. Little did I know, this day would install the label I would wear for the rest of my school years.

I turned and with bright green eyes looked at my mom who was attempting to avoid taxis and motorcycles. “Mami…” I said, “The trees are talking to me.” She jerked the steering wheel, nearly brushing the taxi in front of her and turned to me “What?! Honey what are they saying to you?” I smiled, looked back, and with the most innocent five-year-old eyes said, “They are telling me to hurt lots and lots of people.” My mother froze. My smile widened.

After the incident, my mother tested me for various neural disorders, including schizophrenia. I picked the clay dough out of my hair for weeks after the measuring of my brain waves. To everyone’s surprise I was a perfectly normal child, except, for one thing; I had ADHD. Back then, ADHD was not a widely known learning disability but it was prevalent. My brain doesn’t produce enough of the chemical dopamine. My brain also shows a much slower metabolism in areas that control my attention span.

Through out the years I have struggled emotionally, physically, and academically because of my disability. Having the attention span of a gold fish, it was very hard for me to pay attention in my classes and remember to turn in my work. My teachers detested me, as I was usually the disturbance of the classroom’s Zen-like atmosphere. As the years progressed I became more and more embarrassed about my low grades and lack of impulse-control. In middle school my self-esteem hit an all time low. Nobody wants to stick out like a sore thumb in middle school; yet with my slow responses, slow reflexes, and lack of filters, I did just that. I had to learn to cope with my academic struggles and control my impulsive behavior. It is something I have yet to fully accomplish, but I can say that I have come a long way since then.

I went from a C/B student in middle school and early high school to a straight A (with an occasional B) student in 11th and 12th grade. I accomplished my goals of getting into the NHS, learning Mandarin, and challenging myself to take up to 4 AP courses a year. The struggle has not been an easy one, but if I had to give a brief definition of my high school years it would be that “I survived ADHD.”

**by: Sophie Noel**
High School Student

**by Jack Akerman**
High School Student

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**Surviving the Electronic Pull**

**Constantly, alone with friends, I find myself disconnected from the real world. I find myself disconnected when I start relentlessly surfing the web, browsing Facebook, or just playing a video game. But it is not only at home, immersed in an electronic device, where I feel disconnected. Whenever I hang out with my friends and they take out their cellphones in the middle of the conversation silence just hangs in the air for five minutes. They will quickly write a message, skim their e-mail, and who knows what else. Then the typical comment will be: “Where were we?” Conversely or not, we are living in an era with a constant ‘electronic pull’. People get together, but place their cellphone at a reachable distance. A cell phone interruption has become not only excusable, but also normal.

This ‘pull’ is omnipresent. It exists whenever you go. In a restaurant, a TV screen might catch your attention and you’ll become deaf to the outside world. It is not until someone makes eye contact with you, touches you, or blocks your sight that you realize that time flew and that you’ve been stuck to the screen for ten minutes. Your intention might have been to catch a glimpse of a game score or preview the newsflash, yet you were unable to disconnect and lost perception of time.

This occurs everywhere, at any time, in everything you might do. You might quickly want to play a round at some video game and so you continually keep postponing things that are actually important. While you have to do your homework. You might want to see a single post on gagg or check a notification on Facebook but you start making up excuses for yourself: “just until one post is really good and funny” or “I just have to stalk one more interesting person.” A quick browse might become an hour that could’ve been much more useful. A single episode might become three or four. The most worrying thing is that this is happening to older generations as well. My dad may suddenly take out his Blackberry to view his e-mail in the middle of conversation with the excuse that it’s work related. My mom might take out her iPhone to play a quick game such as Scrabble with Friends. Conversation suddenly pauses and resumes afterwards.

The most worrying aspect to me is what we will become. If this is what the older generations are, just imagine a generation that was born with this ‘electronic pull’. Will we text ourselves even when standing beside one another? Will it be offensive to speak directly to someone? I don’t know, but I don’t want to find out.

Surviving this pull, this temptation, is easier than you might think. You must continuously object to these waves that screens send. Keeping to your time limits and goals also works. You must be strict with yourself. Doing one hour of homework might bring as a reward half an hour of messing around. But only half an hour. Most people may not keep to their time limits and would continue delaying and procrastinating. If this is the case for you, I suggest tattling siblings. If you keep them close and you divorce from what you should be doing, they’ll immediately start with: “If you keep playing I’ll go and tell Mommy that you’ve been playing instead of doing homework.” Of course there is a weakness to this method: bribes and blackmail. This is what you must abstain from. It is much easier than keeping yourself to your time limits, but you must resist.

I assigned my siblings ‘police standing’ to make sure that homework is completed. In return, I reminded them of it too. If my sister’s efficiency starts decreasing I remind her and she can decide to take my advice, or not. It is an agreement with mutual benefits but it may be annoying.

There are many more solutions to this 21st century problem, this is just one. We have to face this pull and do something about it. We must control the temptation before it controls us.
Student Council’s main purpose is to make its representatives be the voice of the students in school. In Student Council, we try to organize many activities to make the students interact more with one another and with the school. In this organization, we have the representatives and we choose them according to what we think they are capable of doing. In this way, we learn what a good leader is supposed to have and why it is important to be very careful about whom you pick.

We also learn how important it is to be committed to something and to have to do sacrifices for whatever is more important. The fact that there is a specific amount of absences you may have or else you get kicked out, is a way to tell you that Student Council must be one of your first priorities and that your position in this organization is too important for you to take it for granted. For me personally, setting my priorities is very difficult because I have so many things in my head, that I don’t have time to organize myself. But learning this from a school organization will definitely help me in the future.
The past two years have been a time of significant change and progress for CNG's secondary science department, and 2013-14 promises to be another landmark year. Five major improvements have been undertaken, and as a result, CNG students have more choices and the ability to pursue a richer and more diverse science education than ever before.

Course Sequence Change

Beginning in school year 2011-12, the sequence for science courses was shifted to better align with U.S. and international schools, and more importantly, to provide a greater number of options for students with an interest in the sciences. Basically, the old 9th grade science class was dropped, and the default science courses were shifted one year earlier. As summarized in the table below, the new sequence gives students options beginning in grade 10, rather than grade 11, and allows our future scientists and engineers to pursue multiple Advanced Placement (AP) science courses beginning in grade 10. In addition, this sequence ensures that our bachillerato diploma candidates will have completed a full year of biology, chemistry, and physics before they sit for the SABER exam.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 9</th>
<th>Old Sequence</th>
<th>New Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science 9/pre-AP</td>
<td>Biology/pre-AP Biology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>Biology 10/pre-AP Biology 10</td>
<td>Chemistry/pre-AP Chemistry + AP Biology/APES (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>Chemistry/pre-AP Chemistry + AP Biology (optional)</td>
<td>Physics/pre-AP Physics + AP Chemistry, AP Biology/APES (optional) or science elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>Physics/pre-AP Physics + Organic Chemistry + optional AP science</td>
<td>AP Physics, other AP science, science elective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AP Sciences Booming**

Due to our sequence change and the motivational efforts of our science faculty, AP science enrollment is booming. Our science teachers know that CNG students can tackle the most challenging courses. In the past few years, we have encouraged all our students with an interest and aptitude for science to strive for excellence and prepare themselves for university by taking on the challenge of one or more AP science. Interest in the AP sciences is at an all-time high (see Table 3), and our science faculty is determined to see this trend continue.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>AP Physics C</th>
<th>AP Biology</th>
<th>AP Environmental Science</th>
<th>AP Chemistry</th>
<th>All Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**New Elective Courses Offered**

CNG students have recently been occupied with selecting their courses for the upcoming school year, and “selecting” is a key word because they now have three new science electives to choose from. As outlined in our 2013-14 High School Academic Program Guide, these one-semester classes give our students options to pursue areas of interest outside of the three core scientific disciplines. Astronomy students will explore the night sky and ponder the immensity of the universe with Dr. Tim Cuthbertson. Nutrition and a Healthy Lifestyle, taught by Ms. Chandler Patton, will give students insights into eating and living healthfully. Finally, Jesus Suarez will help our bachillerato candidates improve their understanding and hone their skills with his SABER Science Prep class.

**New Integrated Science Course**

Another new science course was launched in school year 2012-13. In recent years, it had become clear to members of the science faculty that some students with identified learning needs were not well-served in our rigorous, college-preparatory chemistry and physics courses. Integrated Science was designed to meet the needs of those students being served by CNG’s Learning Center. The class, taught by Cinda Goodhope-Cuthbertson, is a three-year, spiraling program that utilizes a conceptual approach to give students a solid introduction to a broad range of science topics.

**New Science Standards Adopted**

CNG is committed to providing students with the best education possible, and the foundation for any school’s program is a sound curriculum based on clearly written standards and benchmarks. After a year of evaluating three public drafts of a cutting-edge set of new standards, the secondary science department has concluded that the future of science teaching is the Next Generation Science Standards (http://www.nextgenscience.org/). These standards and “performance expectations” were developed over a three year period by a group of experts from The National Research Council, the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Achieve. The final version of the standards was released in April of this year, and the middle and high school science teachers unanimously decided to join 26 states in adopting the standards for our students. Parents and students are encouraged to visit the Next Generation website and explore the standards that are set to guide science education at CNG and around the world for many years to come.
El programa, entonces, contribuye con la alfabetización del adulto, la cual tuvo en cuenta los circunstancias concretas. Los estudiantes del CNG cambian de rol, y asumen los roles de profesores, guías y aprendices. Éste es un espacio que confronta a nuestros alumnos de 9º a 12º con la realidad, que les exige repasar sus conocimientos, compartir sus saberes, cumplir con una responsabilidad social y experimentar la placer de ayudar a otros a dar un paso hacia adelante en una circunstancia concreta. Los estudiantes del CNG cambian de rol, y se convierten en guías y profesores de los adultos. Este año desarrollamos un plan de acción que nos permitiera evaluar y mejorar la calidad del programa, el cual tuvo en cuenta los siguientes aspectos:

- Capacitación docente: asistimos a talleres dictados por el Colegio Cafam, líder en programas de validación para adultos.
- Difusión, conocimiento y elaboración de materiales.
- Evaluación: diseñamos portátiles e instrumentos de evaluación, para lo cual contamos con los alumnos que no viajaron durante la semana de CWW.
- Promoción: al finalizar el año escolar, daremos los correspondientes certificados y diplomas a quien complete el ciclo en el cual se matriculó.

El programa, entonces, contribuye con la alfabetización del adulto, la capacitación que le permite promoverse como persona, avanzar en su bachillerato y concurrir con mejores habilidades en sus desempeños laborales.

De igual manera, este semestre se dio inicio a los diferentes Clubs con el Colegio Fundación Nueva Granada (taller de lectura creativa, arte, música, coro, mandarín y deportes) y también consolidamos el Club del CNG con Best Buddies, organización internacional cuyo objetivo fundamental consiste en abrir caminos hacia la integración social de las personas con discapacidad cognitiva en el país.

OTROS PROGRAMAS

Por último, durante la semana de CWW trabajamos en nuestros programas regulares así como con otras fundaciones con las que no habíamos trabajado en años anteriores, como HandsOn Bogotá, AetiTu, Nutrinfantyl y Cepytin.
As a department, it would be simple for Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities to be satisfied with our current status. We have high participation rates in all areas, teams winning championships locally and nationally, a rich and diverse selection of before and after school activity options for students and an unmatched tradition of excellence. As easy as it would be to rest on our laurels, it is not the Condor way. ’75 years of existence has shown us that the Condor Nation expects and deserves continuous improvement no matter how great our accomplishments. With that always in mind, our job is to consistently ensure that there is never a question mark at the end of the statement, “How to Make a Condor Fly to New Heights.”

In athletics this year, we have seen individual teams and school championships in several local tournaments, in UNCOU League play, and at both the High School Binationals and the Middle School Bogotá Invitational Games (a national event to replace the canceled MS Binationals in Cerrejón). It is clear that our practice has proven successful, however we have identified some areas for growth and are planning for long term improvement.

Our major initiative for the 2013-2014 school-year focuses on the Primary School. We will be encouraging parents to register interested students in our “PS Sports” program up to three days a week. The principal objectives of this initiative are to see SMILES on each child’s face every day, to give them a chance to learn about and enjoy all of the different sports CNG has to offer and to plant the seeds of commitment to team, as well as a life-long love of fitness and good sportsmanship. Our youngest student-athletes will have a chance to practice soccer one day a week all school-year, while rotating through six other sports on two additional days. Finally, they will have several Saturday Condor Festivals over the school year to show their parents their progress and let them join in on the fun.

In the Classroom Without Walls program, we continue to believe strongly in the importance, educational value, and team-building opportunities that these experiences have to offer. With hiccups occurring due to some of the changes that took place this school year, as CNG continues to streamline systems and policies, we saw a dip in participation and a concern over rising prices. Taking all of this into account, we are committed to offering our CNG families the following for the 2013-2014 school year: similar or lower prices for every trip, multiple easy payment options directly with our CWW providers, payment plan options, affordable cancellation insurance due to injury or illness, early and regular communication with reminders about pending deadlines, and the same high level of itinerary options with incredible learning opportunities for our students.

Condor Activities hosted record numbers this year for both programs offered and student participants. The community is clearly happy with the structure. Our next step in this area is to help our instructors improve their practice to provide an even better experience for our students. This year, Condor Activities Director, Sótila Barco, has planned professional development sessions for our activity leaders on group management as well as reporting progress to parents. With the commitment to provide our instructors with new and innovative teaching tools and strategies, we are confident that students and parents will continue to be satisfied with our programs.

Our House program is also facing an update. As our beloved Prof. Guillermo Hernandez retires, we hand the reins over to longtime CNG teacher and Coach Maria Alicia Orozco. Our community has been privileged to have a great man like Prof Hernández put his stamp on teaching, coaching and the House system over the last 38 years, and we are committed to reinforcing the strong nest he has left the Osprey, Falcons, Hawks, and Eagles. Along with the continued growth in the sporting options at recess, special academic competitions, and field days, we will formally bring our character education outside of the classroom and recognize behaviors that represent those ideals that we believe so strongly in.

The passion that has kept the House fire lit burns brightly in the heart of our new leader and she is the perfect successor to honor our past and bring us into the future.

In the Department of Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities, our mandate is to constantly consider how to make a Condor fly to new heights. We consider, adjust, change, discuss, and start over whenever necessary, while never settling just because it has always been that way. We mirror the direction of the school as a whole and embrace the challenge of continuous improvement. Our Hawks, Eagles, Osprey, and Falcons deserve the best, and we strive to give our Condor Nation just that.
For three days I was able to live an extraordinary experience through the Primary Classroom without walls program. I was amazed to see how all the kids were engaged with all of the activities according to their age group. I heard them ask amazing questions, give excellent answers and best of all saw them interact with nature in ways they had never experienced before.

These programs allow our children to learn outside the classroom and to see what they have learned inside the classroom applied in the real world. They not only have the opportunity to learn about different ecosystems, the water cycle, and the different textures found in nature but there are also starting to develop environmental awareness a very important element for our future leaders.

Classroom Without Walls trips offer our children a learning experience that will remain in their memories, allowing them to grow mentally, physically and emotionally.
My first year at CNG I was invited to travel with my students to the Amazon Rainforest and I was thrilled. What better classroom to teach Biology than the Amazon rainforest? I also happened to join the Classroom Without Walls (CWW) Amazon team the year Aaron Kaio, the then 9th grade social studies teacher, was working with teachers to transform the academic curriculum around the trip. His goal was to prepare students for the trip by teaching relevant background knowledge they would need to truly appreciate the complicated social, economic, and environmental issues unique to this part of the world. According to Butler (2006), “the Amazon is home to more species of plants and animals than any other terrestrial ecosystem on the planet — perhaps of the world’s species are found there. However, the Amazon’s relatively recent transition into a major player in the global economy has resulted in large-scale deforestation and forest degradation” with more than 1.4 million hectares of forest having been cleared since 1970 (Butler, 2006). Mr. Kaio and the other teachers of ninth grade students felt it was important to explore these issues in depth before taking students into the Amazon rainforest. When I was asked to be the trip leader for the 2013 CWW trip I wanted to honor Mr. Kaio’s legacy by continuing to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum that would allow each teacher to highlight important global and local issues in the Amazon rainforest while still teaching important benchmarks in each of their classes. This process took months of collaboration as a ninth grade team and within departments. The result of this cooperation was an interdisciplinary Amazon unit that was taught in most ninth grade classes before and after the CWW trip.

Before students left for the Amazon they read articles, watched films, and did research on global issues affecting the Amazon in most of their classes. They were asked to think about questions like, what say should the international community have in the protection of the Amazon? And, does the possible affect deforestation has on the global climate make the Amazon an international or global commodity as opposed to belonging to individual governments? After working on these questions from social, philosophical, and ecological perspectives, students put what they learned into action on their trip when they asked informed questions to guest speakers, interviewed colonists living in the Amazon, and photographed the incredibly diverse flora they observed in the rainforest.

When students returned to campus, they were asked in almost every class, from science and social studies to English and fine arts, to use their experiential knowledge to further explore and analyze what they learned in their wall-less classroom and the knowledge gained in their traditional classrooms space. Finally, students exhibited their projects to eighth grade students and their teachers during Arts Week.

This was our first year to fully teach an interdisciplinary Amazon centered learning unit and we have many new and exciting ideas for next year. However, the response from teachers, parents, and students has been exceedingly positive. In a recent poll, students were asked if they were glad they went on the trip. It was not surprising when 99% responded that they “glad” or “very glad” they went to the Amazon. On the same survey, almost a third of students reported that before they trip they were nervous about the trip or that their parents forced them to go. This change of heart by a significant percentage of students highlights the very reason CNG encourages participation in CWW trips.

At CNG we believe that many important learning experiences must take place outside the classroom. Most students thrive when asked to participate in an outdoor experiential education. Often, outdoor learning experiences push students safely out of their comfort zones and help them realize they are capable of far more than they originally believed. Students can overcome fears, gain confidence in their problem solving abilities, and build friendships through shared experiences. Below are CWW anecdotes from 9th grade students on their favorite activities and what they learned on the trip.

References
CANNONING IN TRADITIONAL CANOES IS VERY DIFFICULT!
Mathias Kling
Jungle trekking was a fun experience that we were able to do in the Amazon. We had the chance to go and walk through the rainforest and learn many facts about the plants and animals. During jungle trekking they teach us to be careful about what we touch, because we never know if the plant or animal is poisonous and can harm you. We also learn about some of the history of rubber trees that were used many years ago. You could still see the marks people left when they extracted the rubber. We also learned to use the jungle with a Ceiba tree. They call the “phone of the jungle”. If you are lost, you just hit the tree to cause an echo that can be heard many kilometers away. We learned more about the jungle in different ways by going on the CWW trip. Like what to do and what not to do in the jungle. Also we learned to appreciate the jungle because it is full of plants, animals, fungi and much more. The Amazon is not an unlimited resource and we need to take care of it. Jungle trekking was a very fun experience and one that I will always remember. It is not every day we get to walk through this magical rain forest of the Amazon.

Jungle Trekking Juan Carlos Giraldo
While on the Amazon CWW trip you get to experience a whole new perspective on camping. It’s all fun and games when you go camping with your friends in a tent, but when you hike 10 minutes into the jungle, also referred to as the middle of nowhere, it’s almost too enticing. Your first night at the Amazon is not very comfortable anyway, but when you are told you are going to be sleeping in a hammock with a garbage bag over your head as your only means of protection, you can even imagine you will be sleeping that night.

When you wake up the next morning you will feel the rainforest coming to life around you. At the Amazon you get to experience a whole new perspective on camping. It’s all fun and games when you go camping with your friends in a tent, but when you hike 10 minutes into the jungle, also referred to as the middle of nowhere, it’s almost too enticing. Your first night at the Amazon is not very comfortable anyway, but when you are told you are going to be sleeping in a hammock with a garbage bag over your head as your only means of protection, you can even imagine you will be sleeping that night.

When you wake up the next morning you will feel the rainforest coming to life around you. While we were in the Amazon, we participated in an activity that the Zambo staff called “Arts and Crafts.” There can’t be a trip without some arts and crafts activity, right? However, this was the most enjoyable part of the trip. We were given a piece of paper, a knife, and a few tools to make a fan out of palm leaves. While we were in the Amazon, we participated in an activity that the Zambo staff called “Arts and Crafts.” There can’t be a trip without some arts and crafts activity, right? However, this was the most enjoyable part of the trip. We were given a piece of paper, a knife, and a few tools to make a fan out of palm leaves. We followed the instructions of the Zambo instructors right? However, this was the most enjoyable part of the trip. We were given a piece of paper, a knife, and a few tools to make a fan out of palm leaves. We followed the instructions of the Zambo instructors right?
En nuestro viaje a Ciudad Perdida con grado décimo de 2013 descubrimos que aquel lugar es una metáfora de nuestras vidas: es un camino que recorres de diferentes formas para llegar a un sitio.

Igual que ocurre en la vida, nuestro recorrido en el camino se inició con expectativa y alegría. No sabíamos lo que aquel sendero trae consigo, sólo caminando podríamos descubrir y vivir nuevas experiencias. Quién sabe cuáles serán las mismas que, muchos siglos atrás, indígenas de la tribu Tayrona vivieron y que hoy en día los Kogui luchan por mantener. Nuestro grupo de caminantes del siglo XXI inició la marcha de diversas formas: algunos lo hicieron de manera acelerada, otros calculaban cada paso, y otros no encontraban sentido al acto de caminar por lo cual decidían sentarse o asumirse derrotados prematuramente por aquel camino a recorrer. Sucedía también que llegaron momentos de amargura, tal vez la misma que un día la madre tierra sintió al ver que los hombres decidieron plantar coca en ella; o quizás era un sufrimiento similar al de los indígenas que observaban cómo sus hermanos menores se mataban entre sí, en disputa por controlar la tierra.

Caminar por Ciudad Perdida no es sólo un viaje en el cual, en una curva del camino, encuentras un amigo con el que se comparte una historia; tampoco puede reducirse al simple conocimiento de una cultura indígena o la sensación de percibir de cerca el daño que la coca le ha hecho a nuestro país. No, caminar por Ciudad Perdida es encontrarse a uno mismo. Ese encuentro ocurre gracias al alejamiento, a estar seis días sin saber nada de quienes te rodean en la vida cotidiana, al alejarse del ruido, las comodidades y las distracciones que no te permiten percibir las sensaciones de la vida, ni te conceden el silencio, ese que hace que te escuches y te sientas plenamente vivo.
Extracurricular activities are very important for our young students because they allow them to explore their talents and special interests. The school offers a wide range of them, in many areas, through Condor Activities. As a teacher, I enjoy doing Writer's Workshop because I love to write and I want to share what I have learnt with my younger fellow writers. They, in turn, allow me to stay in touch with teaching and to be in synchrony with their interests and special needs as they tread the not-so-easy path of becoming the leaders of tomorrow's world.

by: Paulina Varón
3rd grade Mr. Kreibich

“I think that Condor Activities are the best because we learn new things. For example, we can learn skating, play-dough, writing, drawing, dancing, carpentry, ballet, basketball, soccer, choir and many other activities. These activities are important because if you want to be an architect or a sculptor, the play-dough classes will help you 100 because you have learned to build things with it.”

by: Sarah Mojica
3rd grade Mr. Teinert

“I think that Condor Activities are important because, for example, in Writer's Workshop you are improving your writing. In other Condor activities like piano, guitar, etc. you are learning to play different instruments. I think that Condor Activities such as instruments and writing (that is, teaching activities) are important because you also have fun at the same time. They are also important because they exercise your brain.”

by: Hine Vela
4th grade Ms. Anderson

“I think that Condor Activities are important because of the music, stacking, or those types of things. They are important because I have violin classes. This is one of my Condor Activities and it is important for me. This is an opinion of mine, but I think that they are important to everyone.”

by: Arianne Gleiser
5th grade Ms. Forman

“We need Condor Activities so that we can learn and have fun at the same time. Like if you are in play-dough you can do play-dough sculptures and talk and laugh at the same time. You can have a lot of fun with Condor Activities. That is why we need them.”

by: Lillian De Visser
4th grade Ms. Streur

“I think that Condor Activities are important to students because without them students would not be able to explore their own interests. It is important to have many different activities because students can learn new things. For example, when I started Gymnastics I was a bit scared but when I started practicing a lot I began to like Gymnastics very much.”

by: Pablo Ibarra
3rd grade Ms. Kreibich

“I think that Activities are important for me because they make me exercise and have better health and they also give me the chance to have fun. For example, I was in LEGO once and I learned how to take photos and how to move the Lego pieces. I needed to have a lot of patience to take the photos and I learned that too.”

by: Sarah Mojica
3rd grade Mr. Teinert

“I think that Activities are important for students because without them students would not be able to explore their own interests. It is important to have many different activities because students can learn new things. For example, when I started Gymnastics I was a bit scared but when I started practicing a lot I began to like Gymnastics very much.”

by: Pablo Ibarra
3rd grade Ms. Kreibich

“I think that Activities are important because you get to choose from so many options and can try so many different things. This is very important because if you do not like something, you can drop it and choose something else until you find an activity that you really like. The options that Condor Activities offer you are so many and so varied that there are very different activities to choose from.”

by: Pablo Ibarra
3rd grade Ms. Kreibich
Life brings us different situations, some good some bad. Life also brings all kinds of people and the ones you least expect are the ones that have the biggest impact on you. Sixth grade was the year I met a person who not only became my coach but he also became a father, a mentor, and most of all a great friend. During all these years he not only taught us how to play a game but to love it, he taught us that happiness is the key of success and he not only created a team but a bond so strong that we became a family. The values we learned by his side made us become better people on and off of the field. I speak on behalf of all my team; I speak in the name of all the students who had the privilege to meet him, to share the school years with him. Prof. Hernández has been and always will be the soul of this school.

I recall our training every Tuesday and Thursday from 2 - 4:30. His method was unique, he had two rules; be happy and love the game. The boys soccer team trained so hard to become better and better each day: their coaches wanted them to achieve perfection and in my opinion this was what every other coach in the world would do. Not Prof. Prof was different; we played, we laughed, we joked, he maximized our talents personally because he knew we were all different. Every day he worked on making us love each other, and every day we became better friends. It feels as if it was yesterday when we were at Binationals in la Guajira, when during the first game he arrived late singing and dancing; nothing mattered more than being happy.

Half-times in a game are used to talk about the performance of the players during the game, but with Prof they could be water fights, jokes, and lots of food. Our experience with Prof proves that happiness is the key to success, that enjoying the game is more important than anything else because it makes us leave everything on the field, that friendship on a team is much stronger and has a bigger impact than any other relationship between the players. Once again, Prof’s method is unique, but the Prof method made us the people we are today and it made us love the game the way we do.

Our team would play two to three tournaments in one year. With his smile, his strength, and his support we would always fight in the finals. I still remember he would say “Chamitas este año tenemos que ganar porque es mi último” and he laughed. Today, seven years later, I am two months away from my graduation and he is still here by my side laughing, singing, and with the same huge heart.

I first met him full of kindness and strength. Every day I look at him and give him a hug. I am thankful with the world for putting someone like him in my life. I am thankful because he gave me the biggest, most precious gifts someone can receive: a family, a friend, and the key to happiness on the field and in my life. Today, I am starting a new phase of my life and he will always be in my heart. The years of training will always be with me. He not only taught us to play soccer! With him we learned to enjoy life to the fullest and growing by his side we received the best example of how to do it.
Huella de Bogotá

En la medida que pasan los años… pasan las personas… y queda esa huella imperceptible, que con el paso del tiempo, cuando se acumulan las horas de entrenamiento, los sacrificios mutuos y las satisfacciones personales, plasmamos en las mentes y corazones de nuestros estudiantes-deportistas, convirtiéndonos así en una segunda familia, que comparte esa pasión consolidada con el tiempo y que representa nuestra más grande satisfacción personal.

Eso niños y niñas que se acercan a nosotros cuando apenas son unos pequeños de siete u ocho años, que a duras penas llegan a la altura de nuestras cinturas, con la única expectativa de ver que pueden aprender de nosotros y que al final salen más altos, fuertes y hábiles que nosotros mismos, reflejando en sus vidas, esas pequeñas importancia cosas, que son tan relevantes en la naturaleza humana:

Disciplina, compromiso, pertenencia, trabajo duro, respeto, esfuerzo, concentración y perseverancia.

Todas ellas que representan ese valor agregado que tiene el deporte en nuestras vidas, en la formación personal y en el crecimiento de nuestra sociedad.

Jueves 18 de Abril
día de contrastes. El día se tornaba cálido por la alegría contagiosa de los niños, además del calor en la salida nos acompañaron durante el viaje, la bulla y los cánticos de los niños no cesaban. Un aroma de fútbol impregnó el recorrido que llevaría a muchos a cumplir un sueño para pocos niños, muy pocos niños en verdad, y que a última hora la lluvia, escasa por esos días hacia su aparición.

Nos dirigíamos al más grande escenario deportivo en el que se puede jugar fútbol en la capital: el estadio El Campín. Allí estaban los niños de segundo grado de la clase de fútbol, ante ese tapete verde como fue denominado por algunos de ellos, donde pudimos disfrutar el hecho de que se acostaran, de que acariciaran con sus sueños que se hacían realidad en ese momento, sus rostros de alegría.

Así fue que pudieron conocer el estadio, las gradas, los camerinos, donde se había preparado Lionel Messi meses atrás. Montaron en ascensor, pudieron divisar la cancha desde los palcos reservados para las grandes personalidades únicamente, y finalmente lo más esperado, el hecho de poder entrar a la misma y pisarla, correr, llevar un balón por unos instantes con los pies, ya que la lluvia no nos permitió acceder como queríamos a la grama.

Seguiremos trabajando con nuestros niños para que muchos de ellos puedan disfrutar de ello así como lo hicieron los pequeños futbolistas de segundo grado en esta oportunidad.
Cada año, en tradición que algunos de los colegios adscritos a la red de SACS desarrolló en su región o ciudad los juegos binacionales, un evento que por años ha buscado estimular la participación de las instituciones y sus estudiantes en un evento competitivo que define en cada edición el mejor desempeño deportivo. Todo esto va de la mano de claves normas de conducta que crean lazos de amistad, deporte limpio, participación, y camaradería. Son cuatro o cinco días en el que la región, la edad, el género y el acento no tienen relevancia. El gol, el punto, la canasta y la cantidad de puntos logrados en la jornada son el tema principal al bajar el sol.

En el año 2012, al interior del CNG tuvimos la oportunidad de desarrollar los juegos binacionales de Middle School con un excelente resultado, tanto en lo competitivo como en lo organizacional. Fueron cuatro días de competencia tana que nos llevaron a ser los campeones de los juegos y, paralelo a ello, a obtener el premio como el mejor desempeño deportivo. Todo esto fue gracias a la confianza depositada por la institución y el nuevo Director de Deportes Lic. Jonathan Chéniere.

En esta ocasión y gracias a la confianza depositada por la institución y el nuevo Director de Deportes Lic. Jonathan Chéniere, emprendí la tarea de ser el director adjunto del evento: escenarios deportivos, listos, salones y espacios de concentración para cada delegación, hidratación, materiales, zona de comidas, almorzar, refrigerios y un montón de detalles que llevaron al logro obtenido hicieron parte de las tareas que nos pusieron nuevamente en el centro de los juegos, tanto al Montessori British School con su organización interna, como a cada uno de los departamentos interdisciplinarios del CNG que facilitaron la organización y desarrollo pusieron al colegio nuevamente en los altos estándares que siempre lo han caracterizado.

Para la administración fue un logro más, un escenario de la dirección al mejoramiento continuo, con humildad y mucho orgullo. Para los estudiantes y deportistas fue un recuerdo imborrable para la memoria de la institución.

Este año los juegos estarán dándose las bienvenidas en las calurosas y amables tierras de la Guajira, pero desafortunadamente por eventos que se salen de las manos de la organización SACS, los juegos fueron cancelados. Sin embargo y cuando todo estaba dicho y cerrado, emprendieron en asociación con el Montessori British School, sacar adelante los B.I.G. 2013 (Bogotá Invitational Games), con un total de siete (7) colegios entre los que se contaron el Colegio Nueva Granada, nuevamente nos llevamos el título como campeones de los juegos:

- CNG ganadores de la copa general.
- Girls’ Volleyball ser lugar.
- Boys’ Volleyball ser lugar.
- Boys’ Soccer ser lugar.
- Girls’ Soccer: 3er lugar.
- Girls’ Basketball: 2do lugar.
- Girls’ Basketball B team: 3er lugar.
- Boys’ Volleyball: 4to lugar.

Estudiantes Nominados al Equipo de Ensueño:

- Girls’ Soccer: Emily Rosas, Emilía Game, Miranda Uribe, María Umana
- Girls’ Volleyball: Natalia Acero, Olivia Galvis, Gabriela Copello, Mariana Duran
- Girls’ Basketball: Isabella Velasco, Isabela Serna, Cristina Botta
- Boys’ Soccer: Gabriel Cury, Camilo Romero
- Boys’ Soccer: Manuel Ruiz, Sebastián Gómez

Entrenadores ganadores del “Sportsmanship Award”

- María Alicia Orozco: Girls’ Volleyball
- Fernando “Chico” Navarro: Boys’ Basketball
- Diego Cárdeno: Boys’ Volleyball

Los juegos binacionales de Middle School 2012 significaron una gran oportunidad para mí, cuando fui nombrado director de prensa de mantener actualizado el web site del colegio de la mano de los compañeros de publicaciones. Tuvimos que diseñar, montar y enviar el boletín diario informativo a cada una de las delegaciones y apoyar la dirección general y fue una experiencia de mucho aprendizaje, un nuevo camino que recorrer y la oportunidad de estrechar lazos con otros profesionales.

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Gracias, Adelante CNG!!!
Despite being a well-known afterschool sports program at CNG, many people fail to recognize what Gymnastics is all about. Whether it is because of lack of knowledge or some sort of absurd prejudice, people often fail to grasp the idea that this is an Olympic sport, performed by both men and women, which requires an individual’s use of strength, concentration, and innovative capacities in order to manage mastery of our greatest instrument: our body.

Gymnastics is not recognized as a sport that has high participation rates from CNG population of all ages, yet our athletes participate in UNCOLI competitions, festivals, and showcases throughout the course of the year, where students get the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and progress in front of teammates, parents, and judges. However, since Gymnastics is not a part of the Binational Games, it is a sport that is often overlooked, and our athletes often fail to receive special support and attention for their progress and accomplishments.

Training in a Gym where rain water leaks from the roof, making our equipment wet and often times unsafe for the gymnasts, and having to change in small bathrooms which could use some remodeling, are only some of the challenges we come across in our training. Perhaps in compensation, this year the Gymnastics Team received new floor mats, a new balance beam, and even a set of Olympic rings. This, along with two sets of parallel bars, several trampolines, balance beams, and other apparatuses make our training ground one of the best, especially when compared to those of other schools.

Moreover, with the excellent work of our coaches, we are pushed to make the most of each element, even having boys work on the balance beam and girls on the Olympic rings. Each coach is specialized in a specific element, so they help us maximize our potential in each of the different areas. We enjoy having a strict working environment, where the athletes can enjoy class with their fellow teammates but not get distracted from the overall exercise. It is the perfect place to combine both physical and mental capabilities and, with the guidance of our coaches, explore the different moves and tumbling techniques our bodies are capable of performing.

The workout is never too shy of impossible, yet our willingness to work hard and our positive attitude make it so that even after a tough day at gymnastics, you are still up and ready for the challenge of the next. The coaches love to toy with our bodies, stretching and straightening backs, legs, arms, and torsos almost to their breaking point. Despite the pain we know that the harder we train, the better we will become, and this is motivation enough to continue giving our best at practice.

We are happy to see that the Gymnastics Department is constantly changing for the best, seeking new coaches, equipment, taking us to specialized Gymnastics centers when ours is unavailable, and even trying to organize a trip to the Tampa Bay Gymnastics meet during the upcoming months. We hope these positive changes encourage more people to participate more actively with this sport, whether it be as an athlete or giving recognition to the talented students who make a part of this team.
Los estudiantes de Robótica participaron en la séptima versión del encuentro de robótica ROBOT AL PARQUE, organizado por la Secretaría de Educación Distrital y la Fundación Francisca Radke.

El evento se realizó el 28 de febrero en el Instituto Pedagógico Nacional con la participación de 18 colegios públicos y privados de Bogotá. El Colegio participó con tres grupos conformados por alumnos de Elemental y Escuela Media en tres categorías: Básica LEGO 1 (Seguidor de línea - Arrastre), Básica LEGO 2 (Seguidor de línea - Recolectar) e Intermedia LEGO (Seguidor de línea continua e intermitente - Recolectar). Cada categoría tenía como objetivo construir un robot hecho con las plataformas de LEGO MINDSTORM NXT, capaz de recorrer una pista marcada con una línea negra hasta encontrar un objeto de forma cilíndrica, el cual podría estar ubicado en cualquier parte del recorrido, y llevarlo a lo largo de la línea negra hasta un depósito ubicado al final del recorrido.

Para poder participar en la competencia se realizó una convocatoria interna de los estudiantes del grupo de robótica, conformando tres grupos de estudiantes, dos grupos de elemental y un grupo de escuela media. Los grupos definitivos fueron integrados por los siguientes estudiantes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESTUDIANTES</th>
<th>GRADO</th>
<th>GRUPO</th>
<th>ROBOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lucas Muñoz Cubides</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Grupo 1</td>
<td>FRED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandra Montaña Lamus</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grupo 1</td>
<td>Escuela Elemental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Máximo Pastine</td>
<td>4</td>
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Los grupos trabajaron en la construcción, programación y entrenamiento de los robots durante las clases de robótica; los estudiantes intercambiaron conocimientos en el proceso de aprendizaje colectivo y trabajo en equipo, permitiéndoles afianzar su conocimiento de robótica en mecánica, lógica y programación básica.

Los estudiantes y profesores vivieron con intensidad la competencia, entre la emoción y el sufrimiento en cada enfrentamiento eliminatorio. Superar cada una de las rondas y llegar a la final con un equipo, fue una ocasión única de representar al Colegio, como parte de un solo equipo, apoyando a cada uno de los robots en sus enfrentamientos, y una oportunidad de conocer a estudiantes de otros colegios, con otras maneras de asumir y sortear el mismo reto.

El Colegio obtuvo el tercer puesto y fue una experiencia enriquecedora e insobrecable para cada uno de los asistentes. Fue un espacio de divulgación de conocimientos y experiencias en el área de Robótica, que generó una cultura de trabajo y desarrollo en proyectos a nivel nacional. También incentivó el trabajo en equipo y la generación de nuevas tecnologías.

Links de interés:

En los siguientes links hay información y los videos realizados por la Fundación Francisca Radke y el Ministerio de Educación de Colombia.


http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YoTMjM2wqx8