This year Colegio Nueva Granada is celebrating 75 years of Honored Tradition and Visionary Future.

In an effort to honor our traditions and preserve our history, we have undertaken the challenge of reconstructing our history and publishing it in a coffee table book. Through exhaustive research and interviews, "Celebrating CNG: The First 75 Years" tells the story of our School through the eyes of students, alumni, and community members. It is a collectable, hardcover, coffee-table book in landscape format.

GET YOUR COPY NOW!
Lo mejor de la estrella, ahora en Automotores La Floresta.

InSights es el oficial 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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Colombia’s President:
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Thirty-four Writers in Their Own Right by Rebeca Donoso
Distinguished members of the Colegio Nueva Granada Board of Directors and Board President – Mr. Bernardo Cardenas; Ambassador of the United States to Colombia - Mr. Michael McKinley; Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China – Mr. Wang Xiao Yuan; Ambassador of Israel to Colombia – Mr. Joed Magen; Director of Quality for the Colombian Ministry of Education – Mrs. Heidi Yvonne Castro Valderrama; Directors of the Union de Colegios Internacionales de Bogota; Members of our Founding Families: CNG Administration, Faculty and Staff, Students, Parents and Friends of the CNG Community.

Nearly 75 years ago on September 15, 1938, three visionary people began an English-speaking school for a handful of American, international, and Colombian children. They began in a small house with 28 students, one principal, and two teachers. Today as a school with 1,828 students and over 300 teachers, we come together as a community to celebrate our three Founders – for their incredible vision, their amazing courage, and their love of learning that over the past 75 years have changed the lives of many people within and beyond our community. We begin this opening ceremony for our 75th Anniversary with a special recognition process in honor of our three CNG Founders. Please join me in welcoming our most honored guests of today who are here to help us celebrate and remember the spirit of our three Founding Members – please welcome the families of Doris Samper, F.T. Dever, and Irwin Byington. (See photos)

At the beginning of this special occasion for our community, CNG is honored to have received special words from The President of the Republic of Colombia, The Honorable Juan Manuel Santos. Mr. Juan Saldarriaga, CNG Board Member, will read President’s Santos’ message to us. (Please see The President’s letter copied in the next section).

When CNG began 75 years ago, we had not only the three Founders who started our school but also a group of parents elected by other parents who helped guide the school in making key strategic decisions. Over many years, the vision, hard work, and commitment of these special parent-leaders who have served on CNG’s Board of Directors have transformed our school from a place the educated less than 30 children to a school helping transforms education in this country and producing future leaders to help change the world. Representing this important tradition of democratic parent leadership, I would like to introduce a person who actually graduated from CNG and has now returned to serve as a member of our Board of Directors to guide our school to envision educational excellence for the next 75 years, our CNG Board President, Mr. Bernardo Cardenas. (See photo)

In more recent years, CNG began a partnership with another country and government to help us continue to expand our understanding of other cultures and languages. As a result of this partnership, we now have over 200 students studying Mandarin and five CNG students are living in China right now and receiving full scholarships with all expenses paid to study in that country. As we continue to understand that we now are part of a global society and must learn to live and work with peoples of all nationalities, I am pleased to introduce a strong partner to helping CNG students gain new knowledge for living in a diverse world, please join me in welcoming the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Colombia, the Honorable Mr. Wang Xiao Yuan. (See photo)
Our CNG Founders began this school with a belief that diversity makes us stronger. In fact, our school actually blazed the trail in providing education for both girls and boys in the SAMI classroom (yes, we were the first mixed-gender school in Bogotá), and our Founders also believed in bringing together students of different religions, nationalities, and races. These principles are still evident today at CNG where we have students from over 30 countries representing more than 20 different religions learning together. And each year we welcome more than 200 new students to our school to add to our diversity. We are so pleased today to welcome someone who represents this strength of diversity which is so important at CNG. He is a new parent and a member of an important part of our CNG community. I am very pleased to introduce the Ambassador of Israel to Colombia, the Honorable Mr. Joed Magen. (See photo)

CNG would not be here today without the support of the government of this great country of Colombia. For more than 50 years, CNG has graduated students with both the U.S. Diploma and Colombian Bachillerato Degree. Without question, our school has been profoundly influenced by the vision of the Colombian Ministry of Education, especially in the importance of including social service and the building of character as a vital part of education in schools. Representing the very important influence at CNG of Colombian educational philosophy and culture, I am honored to introduce the Director of Quality for Preschool, Primary, and Secondary Education in the Ministry of Education, Mrs. Heublyn Castro Valderrama.

At CNG, we believe in community and we believe in family. Ten years ago, we expanded our family to include the students and community of our sister school, Hogar Nueva Granada. The Hogar students have probably taught us far more than we have taught them. They have taught us to value education and how it can change lives, to make the most of our opportunities, and to maximize the doors that open when we make education our path to a better future. We share this special day of celebration with our Hogar family, who also wanted to share in return a few words with us. Please join me in thanking Perla Douer, Cristian Ladino, and Sebastian Gomez for coming to share some thoughts on behalf of our Hogar family. (See photos)

Finally, we would like to extend a special thanks and recognition to the family members of Doris Jamper, FT Dever, and Irwin Byington who have joined us today on the 75th anniversary of the founding of CNG. Family members, we want you to know that CNG will never forget Doris, FT, or Irwin – their vision, their courage, and their belief in the power of education to change lives. I would like to invite our Board President, Mr. Bernardo Cardenas, to join me in the unveiling of a special Founders’ Plaque that will be placed after this ceremony on the Primary School Building, the first building built on this campus. This plaque will forever be a part of our CNG history to honor our Founders … for without them, we would not be here today.

Now for the final part of this special assembly. I can only imagine that you have been wondering, “What’s in the big present?” Are you ready to find out? Well, it’s a big present, so we need some help moving it to the front of the stage. At CNG, we believe in the power of Honored Tradition and Visionary Future. We have talked quite a bit about our honored tradition up to now, but we should also talk about our visionary future. As I mentioned at our opening ceremony four weeks ago, I believe that you, all of you students, are the visionary future for CNG and for the world. You are the leaders who will help change the world and make it better through strength of character and knowing right from wrong. As we conclude this ceremony in celebrating the 75th birthday of CNG, I would like to ask the help of the youngest members of our visionary future, the K4 and K5 students, to help us open CNG’s birthday gift, and while they are helping me, we will be hearing a special CNG Anniversary Song sung by our 75th Anniversary Choir.

(The K4 and K5 students helped move a large present to the front of the stage. A member from each of our three Founder Families joined the Director and Board President to unveil the special gift – a huge birthday cake for CNG!)
This 2012-2013 academic year, CNG reached a special milestone — 75 years of honored tradition and visionary future. Throughout the year, a variety of commemorative events have been held to celebrate CNG's rich history while looking forward to its bright future.

**Thanksgiving Community Dinner by the PTA**
To commemorate this very special year, the PTA organized a beautiful and touching community Thanksgiving Dinner at the High School Gym. On Tuesday, November 20th, more than 400 members of our community came together as a family to celebrate and give thanks. A delicious, traditional Thanksgiving Dinner of turkey, stuffing and much, much, more was served by student Ambassadors and PTA mothers at beautifully decorated tables. Students from our Little Singers Choir enliven the night with lovely Thanksgiving songs and thank you notes and decorations made by Primary and Elementary students where artfully displayed transforming the gym into our very own cozy, festive home.

**Founders' Day All-School Assembly and Picnic**
We kicked off our year-long celebration in September with a special Founders’ Day All-school Assembly and Picnic that generated momentum on campus. During a very moving ceremony, Dr. Eric H. Habegger, our school Director presented a plaque to surviving family members of our founders in recognition of their vision, leadership and courage in establishing CNG. The plaque was later installed in our Primary Building, the first construction built on this site. The entire school community students, parents, staff and alumni then proceeded to celebrate with a picnic.

**Pinwheel Choir: Classical Music Concert in Benefit of Hogar Nueva Granada**
This event held on October 3, 2012 was a huge success. The beautiful music sang by members of the Pinwheel Choir really touched the hearts and souls of all who attended. The funds collected at the event allowed us to donate one full scholarship to Hogar Nueva Granada. This means one child will be able to attend school for a full year and receive two balanced meals, a snack, medical and dental care.
MENSAJE DEL PRESIDENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA, JUAN MANUEL SANTOS, CON OCASIÓN DE LOS 75 AÑOS DEL COLEGIO NUEVA GRANADA

Bogotá, 14 de septiembre del 2012.

Apreciados amigos:

Como antiguo alumno, me honra poder soplar estas velas con ustedes el día de hoy, a través de estas palabras.

Quiero saludar muy especialmente a Eric H. Habegger, director del Colegio Nueva Granada, así como al profesorado, a los funcionarios, a los alumnos y exalumnos, a los padres de familia y a todos los asistentes a esta emotiva conmemoración.

75 años de excelente labor académica y social confirman a Nueva Granada como uno de los mejores establecimientos educativos del país.

Este colegio ha sido formador de verdaderos líderes. Si hacemos un recorrido de las más prestigiosas instituciones públicas y privadas de Colombia, en todas podremos encontrar las huellas de un neogranadino.

¡Cuántos aportes a la sociedad colombiana no ha hecho esta comunidad estudiantil desde ese año de 1936 cuando nació el entonces Angio American School!

Una de los rasgos distintivos de su colegio es el de la diversidad cultural, patente en estudiantes y docentes, una diversidad formadora que inculca valores tan importantes como el respeto y la tolerancia.

Como he tenido oportunidad de decirlo varias veces, la educación es el riel por donde transita el progreso de una nación, y es un riel de varios destinos, dos de los cuales quisiera destacar: garantiza la movilidad social y a la vez combate la pobreza.

Efectivamente, al principio hice alusión a su labor social. Pocos la conocen pero yo soy testigo de que es admirable y como Presidente de la República me siento verdaderamente agradecido por ella. Me refiero a su proyecto Hogar Nueva Granada donde estudian niños de estratos uno y dos que viven en los barrios alejados del colegio y que espera graduarlo la primera promoción en dos años.

Este loable proyecto, que va de la mano con los altos estándares de sus programas académicos, está, además, en perfecta sintonía con uno de los principales propósitos del Gobierno nacional: reducir las desigualdades a través de la educación, alcanzar la prosperidad para todos y no sólo para unos cuantos.

Hoy, día de celebración, es también momento para tomar impulso hacia el futuro, encarándolo con optimismo y orientándolo por los principios rectores y edificantes que siempre los han caracterizado.

¡Feliz aniversario y muchos éxitos!
“It’s great to be back at CNG and I truly mean that. I can’t tell you how much of a difference attending this school made on my life and helped focus me for the future. I’ll talk some more about that. That was 41 years ago and just to give you an impact and understanding of how the relationships you build here will last you a lifetime. As I left CNG in 1971 and went off to the Air Force and I went to other parts of the world and my classmates went to other parts of the world and we really had a hard time coming back and having a class reunion. We didn’t have a 20 year class reunion. I think we had a 30 year class reunion I wasn’t able to make. So the first time I was actually able to have an opportunity to come back to CNG was when I took Command of the United States Southern Command, and that was in 2009. I had not been back to CNG in 38 years and I had not seen my classmates in 38 years and on a Sunday morning I asked the school if I could have an opportunity to come visit because it was the only window that I could build within my schedule. So at 10 30 on a Sunday morning I arrived at CNG and 13 of my classmates were here and that is out of a class of 52. So 13 of my classmates where here, we travelled and worked and toured the school and we went into one of the high school classrooms and we sat down in the classrooms and you would have thought we never left CNG. It was like we were all back together. So that’s the connection, that’s the feeling that’s what CNG means to me. And that’s why I come back and that’s why I like being here. So thank you again for the opportunity to be here.

If you look at CNG and the impact it had on me, let me explain a little bit further just from my standpoint when I arrived here, who I was. I had grown up in a small town, in southwestern Colorado, six thousand people. So, I arrived here, and think of this image. I arrived here from a small town in Colorado to a foreign country, I had never lived outside the United States, to a city of 2 million people and I walk in in cowboy boots. And my classmates are all in slacks, and some wearing coats and ties, and they looked at me and they thought I was from outer space. And even through that first year it was one of those that was very difficult as I tried to understand Spanish, to understand the school. But CNG embraced me, and really pulled me in. And my classmates did the same. They got to know me a little bit and helped change. So I went back to my town a year later and found out that that wasn’t my home anymore. My experiences had change; my outlook had change my vision had really opened to the world. So I came back and dressed a little different. I now dressed in slacks; I dressed like everybody else did. But I opened my world to the opportunities that are available and so CNG in my mind really set that foundation for me. The director talked about opportunities and that’s what I will tell you that I see. It is all about opportunities as you look to the future, and what YOU DO with those opportunities.

For the entire speech, please follow this link: http://vimeo.com/52385188
This year was a record year for Math Olympics participation in Colombia. One hundred forty-four schools with five thousand two hundred students participated in the competition. Of the initial total only five hundred forty of those Colombian students classified for the second round. CNG students made up 25 of those students classifying for the second round.

At the Primary Level there was a maximum of six hundred points possible for the contest. CNG 6th grader Kiho Park scored four hundred and forty points to place second. His teammate, fourth grader, Jiho Park finished seventh, followed by Alejandro Castellanos, seventeenth and Bernardo Cardenas finishing nineteenth. The team total won CNG first place in Colombia at the Primary Level.

Another part of the Math Olympics is the group competition held on a Saturday morning at Universidad Antonio Nariño in Bogota. This year CNG filed teams in all four levels and each team finished in second place.

Although it is not an activity that many are willing to do, it is such a great thing, that I will do anything to be able to participate in this wonderful event. There are so many different activities and types of competitions that you always like something and there are so many ways of participating in this.

The individual Math Olympics have four rounds, which get harder as you progress. The first and second round are taken at school and this is not just a national competition, it is a competition against your friends, but most importantly, yourself. By solving at least one problem, you feel that you have accomplished something. At the end of the competition you’ll begin to argue with your friends about which were the correct answers. The best thing is that you’ll get a cheese stick and a small juice box to recover your brainpower. Then, the 3rd round takes place at Antonio Nariño University. They line the desks in long rows and organize you alphabetically. This exam is usually the same for all of the levels, but the scoring works different. By then, you’ll walk to the bakery at the corner, while you argue with your mates, and buy a baguette, a croissant, or even a guava filled sweet bread. It is just delicious.

For me, the best Math Olympics test is the group test. Each school that qualified (schools qualify depending on their score and other schools’ scores) builds a team of five participants, from their top ten list, which will compete with other schools for the 1st place. The first place winner will be the only one that will be able to go to the final group round (this year in Barranquilla). There are 3 types of questions: Crossnumber, 90 seconds, and relays. The Crossnumber is practically a crossword, but with numbers. You try to fill in the most squares, and at the end you just end up putting random numbers (one digit) into random squares, since there is a limited time, 20 minutes. Then, come the go seconds, which are a set of problems in which a team choose a problem (usually 1 - 14) and they have 90 seconds to solve it. If they aren’t able to answer it correctly the next team has ten seconds, and the next one ten more seconds, and so on. If the problem goes a full round, then the first team gets 30 seconds, and then the next ten seconds, and so on. After the problem completes a new round, the problem is not answered and no one wins points. Two points are awarded for correct answers, and one point for correct explanations. Then come the relays, in which you have three chances of answering a question and after answering it, or losing the three chances, you go to the next, and after solving that one to the next, and so on and so forth. There are four of these problems.

In the national group math olympics, you do several other activities: pass on problems, individual tests, game tournaments, and we even played in a math casino! You get to meet new mathematical people since they create new, reorganized teams.

As a fan of math and everything “mathy”, I’ve participated in Math Olympics every year while I was at CNG. For me, they were challenging and rewarding occasions that allowed me to befriend others and learn more math. In all honesty, they were fun, especially those in which the CNG students as a team would compete against the other best schools in Colombia, and I wouldn’t change these experiences for (almost) anything else. What can I say? I like math, I like Math Olympics, and I thank the school for the opportunities it has given me in these things.

Jack Abkerman
High School Student

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High School Student
Patience is a virtue”, my mother used to say and that is what is involved when learning mathematics at any age. Math is a skill that only solid instruction, delivered in the optimum learning environment, time, and practice can help a student master. With this in mind CNG middle school and high school math teachers are continuing this year to implement the second year of a newly adopted math curriculum.

This curriculum is now structured within a custom-designed level approach for classes. In Middle School the three levels in each grade are Fundamental Math, Accelerated Math, and Pre-Advanced Placement. In the high school the five levels are Basic Math, Fundamental Math, Regular Math, Pre-Advanced Placement, and Advanced Placement.

The addition of the new level of Fundamental or Foundation Math benefits students and teachers alike. Because the high school and middle school hired additional math teachers we were able to build math classes with a smaller student-teacher ratio. This allows the teachers to differentiate their instruction in order to meet individual student needs. Students are more engaged in these small classes and are better able to make the most of their time in math class building the essential skills they need for success in math in college.

Algebra I is the most important math course in high school because all other courses build on it. Because Algebra I is so vital, an integral part of this new level in the implementation of a two-year approach for Algebra I. A new text was adopted for eighth grade Fundamentals of Algebra I, Part I. Foundations of Algebra I, Part 2 was adopted for the ninth grade. This two-year program is research-based curriculum that emphasizes strengthening necessary mathematical skills as well as problem solving skills.

The new level structure also benefits the Accelerated/Regular Math classes because the classes are also smaller and teachers present challenging lessons to classes where the students are grouped more homogeneously. This allows the Accelerated/Regular Math classes to move at a faster pace in order to help students master the skills necessary for success in college mathematics.

MAPS and Stanford test results show that many students at CNG struggle with computational fluency. Another new way CNG is tackling the necessity of improving computational skills is by adopting a new online support program called Mathletics in grades sixth through tenth. A new seventh grade math teacher, Francis Murphy, has had great success using this program. Mathletics, <http://www.mathletics.com>, is the world’s most used math website enjoyed by over 3.5 million students worldwide. Students know instantly how they have performed and are given step-by-step instructions when needed. Students also have the opportunity to play online math games competing against other students from all over the world improving their speed and accuracy each time they play.

While “Patience is a Virtue”, our goal is to have each student maximize their learning in the field of mathematics each year at CNG. Math teachers do that by making the best use of our time with our students in math classes, by implementing the best teaching practices, by using new and improved math curriculums, and by working to instill confidence in our math students.
Evidences of significant learning is everywhere. The classes are covered with teacher or student-made work, posters, or components of balanced literacy, plus the current work in science, mathematics, or social studies that each class is doing at that time. The visitor can see exactly what is being studied and students are prepared to answer any questions that the visitors pose. All classroom doors are open and visitors can walk in and see for themselves.

"You are supposed to be asking me questions about my work," says Caitlin, a self-confident, poised third grader, in an authoritative voice, as I bend down to look at her writer’s notebook. Dazed by the number of entries that she already has in her notebook, after barely seven weeks of school, all I can do is smile and thank her for reminding me of why I am there. She shows me a finished piece too, four pages of tight handwritten text in which she has narrated a recent sailing adventure with her father and where her voice comes through eloquently and competently.

Two minutes later I am coaching another member of my group as she confers with a pale, shy boy who refuses to speak about his work. Suddenly a smile occurs on his face. Our subject reluctantly says, "I love soccer!" We probe further and learn that he is a very good goalie who has never missed a ball. That is when we know that we can ask him to write about that. He is proud of his accomplishments in this sport. We give him three possible prompts to help him get started and send him back to his desk. Before he leaves, we make sure that he feels empowered about his writing capabilities too.

As our group prepares to go to yet another class (the learning pace for us and for everyone is quick and relentless) I look for that boy in a corner of the room and his gaze meets mine. He smiles and waves goodbye. I now know that we got through to him and I feel happy.

After experiencing this, I dream of C.N.G., becoming a school-wide lab-site of best and next practices such as the ones I have seen in New York City public schools several times already. We have the resources — both human and economic — as well as a healthy, high-spirited student population whose birthright has placed them in the outstanding position of making this dream come true for all of us.

This year, when the school is celebrating its 75th birthday, I have already seen several examples of students’ written work and teacher initiatives that point unequivocally in this direction. By becoming a TCRWP member school in Latin America, that will soon become the first TCRWP member school in Latin America, as well as the first one in the whole country of Colombia, under the leadership of Ms. Lucy Calkins, and other eminent researchers, whose goal was to raise the quality of literacy learning, thus making all students, regardless of ethnicity or economic status, eligible for admission into a good university and/or ready to join the work force, at the end of their high school education.

This initiative, along with the adoption of the Common Core Standards, already operating in 46 of the 50 states of the United States, has also been embraced by Colegio Nueva Granada, that will soon become the first TCRWP member school in Latin America, under the leadership of Ms. Lucy Calkins, and other eminent researchers, whose goal was to raise the quality of literacy learning, thus making all students, regardless of ethnicity or economic status, eligible for admission into a good university and/or ready to join the work force, at the end of their high school education.

This initiative is an effective way of honoring our traditions as we celebrate a school-wide initiative of education in the future.
Enseñar es mi mayor obra de arte.

Mario Inés Omaña
Profesora de Arte, Institución Elemental
Education helps to bridge the gap between the past and the future. However, with the exponential increase of information in the XXI century, we are uncertain as to what the future will be like in a fast-paced changing world, and therefore, how to best prepare our students. How do we prepare people for careers that do not yet exist? What we do know is that the fast proliferation of information implies that learning is no longer from kindergarten to 12th grade. Today, learning needs to be lifelong. In Postman’s (1985) words, this leaves us with two major schooling problems: an engineering problem and a metaphysical problem.

The engineering problem is a pedagogical one and it refers to how people learn and how we should teach. Today, when there is no time for improvisation, we are lucky to have a wealth of knowledge regarding instructional strategies that are research-based and best practice. Two state-of-the-art examples, just to mention a few, are Pickering, Pollock, and Marzano’s (2001) Nine Instructional Strategies and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Pearson and Gallagher, 1983). Nevertheless, the digital revolution has challenged the way we teach and learn, and further more, what it means to be literate. Nowadays, digital media is fundamental for participation in society. It is also a fact that computers are creating the new job market. The division of labor is currently determined by what is being done by humans and which by machines. The good news about the use of technology in education is that it is a powerful tool that makes Universal Design for Learning (UDL) a more feasible reality. Technology allows us to differentiate and individualize teaching so that all students can have equitable and challenging opportunities to access the curriculum and achieve learning expectations.

The metaphysical problem refers to the mission of education. This problem inexorably leads us to try and answer the essential question of: What is worth learning? Experts in the field of education have attempted to answer this by determining what is worth learning in the 21st century. The most salient 21st century skills are creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, problem solving, learning to learn, systems thinking, and leadership. “These are life-worthy skills because they are learnings that are likely to matter to the lives learners are likely to live” (Perkins, 2012).

Schools of Excellence is AdvancED’s new protocol for top-performing schools. This protocol is based on five standards and a total of thirty-three quality indicators that are reflective of current pedagogy and best practice. CNG’s adoption of the Schools of Excellence protocol will allow us to tackle the two schooling problems mentioned above. The robust standards shed light as to how teaching and learning look like in effective school systems, and also, provide a framework to determine what matters most for student learning. Schools of Excellence will let us learn from the past and honored traditions, so that we can best inform the visionary future of our students beyond the walls of CNG.

By: Liliana Borrero
Schools of Excellence Coordinator

Indeed a challenge that touches every one of us and we must become aware. “Achieving Inclusion across the Globe”, was the theme and invitation of the 2012 Convention and International Forum organized by International Inclusion and The Arc, held last October 23-28 in Washington, D.C.

RECA, the Supported Employment Network-Colombia was invited to participate thanks to our program achievements, work and training models which were recognized worldwide as “good practice for REAL WORK”. For REAL PAY for the intellectually challenged. Today over 185 people who are part of RECA have effectively transformed their lives and those of their families through real work!

Participants from all over the United States and more than 25 countries, including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cambodia, Colombia, China, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Panama, Spain and the UK came together to promote the concept of inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, I/DD.

People with I/DD and their family members are normally excluded and forgotten. Opportunities for income generating activities are limited to non-existent. Extreme poverty results in further marginalization in the community causing them to be the poorest of the poor. Availability of vocational training for people falls short of the needs. For some the only form of daily activity is in shelters. In Colombia at the age of 18 the state no longer is obliged to provide schooling or training programs leaving them floating in despair.

In 2008, RECA with its strategic partners, SENA National, Apprenticeship Service, COTTELCO, Colombian Hotel Association and COMPENSAR, started working together to consolidate training programs to promote REAL WORK. For REAL PAY opportunities that have taught us the real meaning of the word, inclusion!

It was an honor to show our work and to have the recognition of international organizations that as we, agree that achieving real work opportunities is the outer most challenge and the key to living and being included in the community. Also, to have the right of choice and to have access to education, health services which are all principles stated at the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, CRPD.

The highest point of my presentation was when I was interrupted by a self advocate, a young man with I/DD, who has learned about his rights, who asked with a pointed voice: “And what does it mean to have an intellectual disability?”So, I looked back at the panels looking for a clue. I understood that I needed to give him a human and not a technical or medical answer. So, hoping to make it clear I said: “It means you have special abilities, you learn your own way and at your own pace, you have rights and responsibilities like everyone else. You communicate in your own language and we need to understand what you want to say. You have the right to study and according to your abilities and training you may find a job. You need support from your family and the community to help you find your way. And last, you are first and foremost a person!” Applause from the auditorium made it clear the explanation was correct. This was great!

As Director of RECA, participating at the Convention was an inspiring and invigorating experience. Indeed, all of the participants were wrapped up by the desire and commitment of learning from each other’s experiences, presented advances and innovative strategies, discussed tough issues, like sterilization, life after the death of the parents and dealing with the uncertain future, financial welfare and institutionalization. Interesting and interactive workshops were held to promote inclusive communities, to join efforts to help enforce laws that aim to give people with I/DD, greater accessibility, and fuller lives within our society.

Our work has shown results and thanks to our school CNG, we can proudly, for the third year, provide inclusive jobsites at the school campus for RECA workers. Working together and opening opportunities helps people like Nixon, Maife, Miguel, Angel, and Danilo be included in the community and improve their lives. Let us hear the voice of those RECA workers at CNG and the testimonials of their co-workers, bosses, and people from the community, thus showing they are capable, reliable, hard workers, and committed individuals.

At RECA, we work passionately to uphold our vision so that individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability in Colombia may have access to effective training programs and to real work opportunities to make them active members of our communities.

Thanks to all of you who have believed in their abilities and for opening opportunities. We hope to continue growing, strengthening RECA, so that more people with I/DD have real work opportunities making their dreams and aspirations, also come true!!

An Inclusive community is a stronger community!

www.reca.colombia.org

by: Catalina Salazar Troncoso
Co-Founder and Director-RECA - CNG Alumna Class ’79

Reaching for a better future

On November 9th, 2012, the PE Department at CNG hosted an event in cooperation with the Colombian Physical Education National Association and the National Body for Physical Education for the third year. This workshop was organized by Daniel Bocanegra, Mabel Moreno, and Jose David Cardenas with the purpose of contributing to the improvement of the Physical Education programs not only at our school, but also in Colombia. We feel that this is the best way of contributing to our “visionary future.”

by: Daniel Bocanegra
P.E. Teacher / Gymnastics Coach

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Co-Founder and Director-RECA - CNG Alumna Class ’79

Looking for a better physical education future

by: Daniel Bocanegra
P.E. Teacher / Gymnastics Coach
From the moment Colegio Nueva Granada was founded, it has been a school characterized by its generosity in many different ways. In the early years, the Scouts collected presents for orphanages in December. Later, the Angel Tree project, where families found the name and age of an orphan on a big tree set up at school and they committed to buying an age appropriate toy plus a change of clothes for each child, became very popular. The NHS also organized various activities throughout the year to collect money for Christmas presents for children. Its spaghetti dinners, served at the Union Church, was famous for many years where these students cooked and served a delicious Italian meal to all the CNG families who attended.

Many orphanages and old folks homes were helped sporadically through bake sales, out of dress code days, flower sales, and other activities organized by our students. Student Council in High School and Elementary collected books for a library in Barrio Bella Flor in Ciudad Bolivar, for several years, a library which has brought many changes to the Barrio’s families over the last thirteen years.

Aside from helping those previously mentioned, CNG has always helped its workers, our Servicios Generales people. Thanksgiving and Christmas have been traditionally times to show in a special way how much their work is appreciated. Many parents in Primary and Elementary also have remembered them at the end of the year with a little something as a show of gratitude.

However, eleven years ago, CNG decided to concentrate all its “giving” efforts on the Hogar Nueva Granada. This social project, which serves families in the very needy barrios next to our school, would help CNG find a more effective way of helping while developing a sense of social responsibility in its students as well as offering the opportunity for staff members and CNG families to contribute towards making a difference in these people’s lives. Parents and alumni have found ways of volunteering, giving of their time, to support teachers in the classroom or help in the HNG library. Our CNG students also have had various moments starting in K4 in which they share academic and sometimes sports activities. Several of our High School students train Hogar children in soccer, offer dance classes, or design their Senior Independent project around the Hogar. Teachers have also generously given of their time to offer professional development to the Hogar teachers or values conferences to the children’s parents. CNG parents offer professional support as doctors, dentists, psychologists, and lawyers to the families. The CNG parent community has always been deeply and actively involved in helping out. Actually, nothing can be more gratifying than to “adopt” an Hogar child and follow his/her progress over the years since the vast majority of the students enter the Hogar at two years of age and are still with us.

We give, yet, we also get back. CNG’s generosity is equaled in many ways by those beautiful children who attend the Hogar and whose payback is the joy reflected in their eyes when they are involved with their CNG counterparts. It has also been important payback to realize that they have lost the fear of being involved with people of a different social class. Another “gift” we receive from them is the noticeable changes in their vision of life. Children who live horrific lives on a daily basis find a glimmer of hope for a better future.

As we honor tradition and look to the future, let us remember that, as Saint Francis of Assisi stated, “It is in giving that we receive.” CNG’s giving culture is changing lives of our students’ and those of the Hogar families. We are building, through this culture, a better future for Bogotá in that our CNG students will understand the importance of teaching the needy how to fish and our Hogar students will also understand that the future is in their hands if they take advantage of what they have received.

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La Fundación Bolívar Davivienda se alió a la Fundación Hogar Nueva Granada hace tres años, porque comparte la visión de impartir educación con altos estándares de calidad, que permita el acceso a personas de bajos recursos para que a futuro puedan acceder a trabajos dignos y competitivos.

Fernando Cortés

En Agrobetania estamos convencidos de la importancia de dar oportunidades de educación de excelente calidad a la población infantil de nuestro país y es por eso que siempre hemos apoyado los programas del Hogar Nueva Granada, normalmente en calidad de patrocinadores de los eventos que realiza anualmente la Fundación. Este año, por primera vez, y con un compromiso de participación de tres años, nos hemos vinculado como Mentores del programa de bachillerato de la Fundación. Nos complace inmensamente hacer parte de las diez empresas que se hacen responsables de que el bachillerato de estos jóvenes sea una realidad. Como miembros de la comunidad del CNG sentimos que la vinculación al proyecto educativo del HNG es una gran oportunidad para contribuir al desarrollo, no sólo educativo sino integral, de las comunidades menos favorecidas de nuestra ciudad.

Alberto Douer

Para Chevron Petroleum Company, ser corporativamente responsables significa poder demostrar nuestra filosofía y nuestros valores no sólo al interior de nuestras actividades de negocio sino a través de las alianzas que construimos. Chevron está en Colombia para apoyar el desarrollo y nuestro compromiso con el país y su futuro tiene profundas raíces. El apoyo como mentores a la Fundación Hogar Nueva Granada es una muestra del interés que la compañía tiene en ofrecer alternativas de futuro para el pueblo colombiano.

Esta alianza es un ejemplo de cómo buscamos hacer inversiones sociales que tengan un amplio y positivo impacto y que sus efectos se extiendan en el tiempo, reconociendo que el primer paso para lograr un cambio positivo en la comunidad es la educación. Por tal razón nos esforzamos en implementar iniciativas y proyectos encaminados a resolver problemas de cobertura y calidad educativa, brechas tecnológicas, baja matrícula y altas tasas de deserción.

Estamos seguros que esta alianza con la Fundación Hogar Nueva Granada tendrá positivos efectos en los niños y niñas beneficiarios, consolidando lo que para nosotros no es una opción sino un compromiso: el futuro del país.

En mi experiencia en el Hogar Nueva Granada

Estar en el Hogar Nueva Granada para mí ha sido sin duda alguna una de las mejores y mayores experiencias de mi vida. He pasado momentos muy agradables al lado de personas que siempre están dispuestas a ayudarme, incluso en los momentos cuando más lo necesito. Me he divertido, me he angustiado y me he ilusionado aquí en el Hogar Nueva Granada.

He aprendido muchas cosas, entre otras, a ser una persona con valores. Mentores: Sin duda todo lo que nos han brindado en términos de tiempo, apoyo y recursos no ha sido en vano. En realidad, ustedes han sido tan útiles, que con toda su ayuda hemos logrado obtener unas mejoras notables, equipos para aprendizaje e inconmensurables beneficios. Tengan la seguridad que todos esos esfuerzos muy pronto se verán reflejados en próximos biólogos, abogados, profesores, arquitectos, entre otros. Siéntanse orgullosos de nosotros.

Sebastián García Franco

Estudiante de Noveno Grado HNG
El año escolar pasado, un grupo de mamás queríamos dar una oportunidad personal a nuestros niños de dar y compartir. Nos preocupaba que no viéramos en los niños una conexión real con el Hogar Nueva Granada, la obra social que apoyamos como comunidad del CNG y que sabemos ayuda a tantas familias. Parecía que las veces que se reunían eran muy poco para crear un vínculo o enseñanza real.

Contactamos entonces a Ximena, Directora del Hogar, para que nos ayudara a buscar algún proyecto adecuado. El equipo del Hogar se esmeró por buscar un proyecto que nos interesaría a nosotros, los niños, y que se pudiera financiar con nuestro presupuesto. Nos informaron que gracias al apoyo de la fundación Revel y Real Madrid, la escuela de fútbol HNG había crecido, pero que estos niños estaban sin zapatos adecuados.

De ahí nos salió la idea de los guayos.

Unidas por el amor al fútbol de nuestros hijos, pensamos que sería lindo que los niños pudieran compartir con los niños de la escuela de fútbol del Hogar, siendo que el fútbol es un deporte que une aficionados, traspasando las barreras de edad, idioma y clase social. La idea de comprarles los guayos era que nuestros niños los entregaran personalmente y sintieran la felicidad que es DAR y no solo recibir y recibir.

Coordinamos entonces con Freddy Badillo, en el momento Director de Educación Física del CNG, quien nos ayudó a organizar un partido amistoso para integrar a nuestros hijos con los niños del Hogar. Ari Persyco y su familia, mediante su negocio de la Casa Olímpica, nos ayudaron con la compra y escogencia de los guayos. Contactamos a varias familias y completamos 45 equipos para los niños - guayos, medias y canilleras.

El día de la entrega fuimos mamás y niños. Lucas Jaramillo, profesional de fútbol, nos acompañó y les dijo unas palabras muy lindas a los niños, sobre el significado del juego limpio. El Bookstore nos donó las onzas que todos los niños compartieron.

Los papás quedaron tan contentos que nos sugirieron que siguiéramos con la campaña para incluir a más niños que seguíen unándose a la escuela de fútbol y acudir a más familias del CNG que quieran unirse al proyecto.

Seguimos entonces con la campaña, y conseguimos el apoyo de Mr. Spence, Principal de Primaria, quien apoyó de su escuela la plata del último OODC para la compra de equipos junto a algunas familias veteranas y nuevas que se unieron al grupo. Hasta el equipo de fútbol de los padres del CNG se unió al proyecto, contribuyendo parte de la plata que donaron al Hogar. (Un total de $3mil por su premio de ganar dos campeonatos seguidos del Campeonato de Fútbol de Padres de Familia UNCOLI).

La segunda entrega se hizo el 16 de noviembre de este año escolar, con 35 pares de equipos, “catere’d” de nuevo por nuestro del Bookstore. Esta vez Sergio Gahran con su familia y Lucas Jaramillo, hablaron con los niños sobre la importancia del vínculo HNG y CNG como comunidad.

Las familias del colegio que asistieron tuvieron exactamente la misma reacción que las de la primera entrega, por favores siguieron adelante con estos encuentros. Queremos que nuestros hijos tengan más vínculos positivos con los niños del Hogar y que entiendan cómo y por qué se debe ayudar.

Agradecemos por su apoyo a este proyecto a: Ary Persyco y Familia; Mr. Spence y todos los niños de primaria por la plata del último OODC del año pasado, Equipo de fútbol de Papás CNG; Bookstore; Freddy Badillo y todos los entrenadores que nos acompañaron en la primera entrega; Esther Seinjet, Gabriel y familia por fundar y apoyar la escuela de fútbol, y las familias que donaron los guayos, entre ellas la familia Acedo Pereno; Carolina Reyes, Corredor Dalvi, González Di Tertis; Gonzala Molina, Gutiérrez Montaña; I Bayona y familia, Jimena Cala, Jinich Kassin, Kassin Jamri, MC Jaramillo y familia; Méndez Urrea; Mesa Peláez, Muñoz Camacho, Maura Loewy, León Vallejo; Park Road, Ramírez Reyes; Trujillo Polanía; San Miguel Ceballos; Salazar Jaramillo, Saiz Ríos, Zuluaga González.
Dear Annie,

Last week you told us that you are leaving CNG. So many things come to my mind that I would like to express them all in this short letter.

I have had the honor to work with you for the past 8 years. You can’t imagine all the miracles I have seen, all the lives you have touched, and all the people you have given hope to.

One of the things that I admire the most about you is that you NEVER give up!!! Not even in the most complicated scenarios I saw you quitt- ing? I remember words like “Don’t worry we can do it! This case is hard but WE are strong and capable!”

You have always been very generous sharing your knowledge; you al- ways help us to find the potential of our students, and the most im- portant thing is that you taught us the CNG community a value that we will never forget: FAIRNESS IS NOT GIVING ALL THE STUDENTS THE SAME, IT IS GIVING THEM WHAT THEY NEED!

I admire your decision making, your leadership, intuition, and ENORMOUS heart. You are an example of determination, vision, and hard work. You are going to be deeply missed!!

Lastly, I want to thank you in the name of my students the opportunity you gave them. Most of them are regular classroom students or profes- sionals because YOU gave them the chance to be at CNG:

A child with Diamond Syndrome, currently a regular third grade student
A child with Auditory Processing Disorder, currently a third grade student
A child with Cognitive Impairment who is now a book writer
A child with Down Syndrome, currently a bilingual secretary
A child with Cerebral Palsy who has become an entrepreneur

I’m sorry I can’t go on and go on, but the last case I want you to remember is the following:

About twenty three years ago, an 11 year old girl went to your private practice. Her mom was desperately looking for answers because this girl couldn’t read a single word, add, or subtract. You told that mom “Don’t worry she is very smart. She has dyslexia.” You taught that girl to read and write and she was able to attend to a regular school in Colombia. That girl is now 34 years old, has a master’s degree, a specialization, and is a regular classroom student or profes- sionals because YOU gave them the chance to be at CNG… that girl is me!!

One of the things that I admire the most about you is that you NEVER...

You have all my respect, admiration and love.

Claudia Mora
Learning Center Specialist
Pocas veces en la vida tiene uno la posibilidad de encontrarse con un ser humano capaz de demostrarse a sí misma y a los demás, lo que representa la superación personal, estimulada por el amor cercano y sincero de quienes la han rodeado desde que a los 8 meses de nacida le fuera diagnosticada una Parálisis cerebral espástica. Hoy a sus trece años, es el orgullo de la familia y de la comunidad del Colegio Nueva Granada, CNG, al que le debe buena parte de esta construcción personal, pues su departamento de Learning Center, dirigido por la Psicóloga Annie de Acevedo y el equipo interdisciplinario para este tipo de casos, hicieron posible que hoy, como estudiante de primer grado en la escuela media, presente su libro, “El regalo de Navidad”, escrito gracias a los avances tecnológicos del teclado especial que sus padres importaron hace unos meses.

Con su característica de ternura y simpatía, expuso en días pasados ante el Rector Dr. Eric Habegger, del principal Dr. Bob Imholt, su familia, el Secretario privado de la Presidencia de la República de Colombia y el equipo interdisciplinario, su obra literaria, producto de muchas horas de trabajo, disciplina y esfuerzo, en compañía de su especialista en lenguaje, Catalina Artunduaga, quienes disfrutaron y aplaudieron con emoción y orgullo, este maravilloso logro personal.

un ejemplo de univi

if i can’t learn, the way you teach, can you teach the way i learn?

By: Monica Bejarano
Learning Center Inclusion Teacher

Among the many challenges teachers face every day, one of the most critical ones being to reach all of their students’ different styles of learning and being able to scaffold each and every student to his or her learning potential.

For over three decades, CNG has supported and embraced these challenges with courage, passion, and determination from its highly qualified administrators, teachers, and Learning Center staff

The Learning Center began back in the mid 1970’s with the need to serve a child who arrived from the U.S with an Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P) and who needed support. Two outstanding professionals were hired, Dr. Annie Acedvedo (CNG’s current Student Support Services Director) and Ms. Luisa Cuellar (current Reading and Learning Specialist). Thanks to these two educational pioneers, the Learning Center has continued to grow and serve children with different learning styles. Today, the Learning Center is made up of a team of over 50 professionals including, Psychologists, and Psycho-Educational Diagnosticians, Learning Specialists, Reading Specialists, Special Educators, Health Care Providers, Second Language Specialists, Occupational Therapists, Language Therapists, and Inclusion Teachers, who work towards a common goal: supporting students with different ways of learning in becoming contributing members of society. Currently, CNG’s Learning Center has been recognized as the leading Student Support Program among international schools in the region.

As CNG celebrates its 75th birthday, the Learning Center staff would like to thank all of its current students, alumni, and their families for helping make the department what it is today. Their feedback and continuous communication is not only gratifying but it encourages us to continue reaching all kinds of minds.
One of the many things I enjoy about being a Primary School principal is the opportunity to visit different classrooms and listen to children read. This may sound like a simple thing, but I still find it fascinating to go into a kindergarten or first grade room and listen to students just learning how to put sounds together to form words and sentences. Then, as students progress through the grades, I can hear the results of their practice and experience in reading as they learn to decode more effortlessly, beginning to read with expression and fluency. Of course, this is not something that just happens on its own. The time the students spend reading in class, at home, on their own and with parents, teachers, siblings and friends all combine to help make reading an automatic skill. Jeff Lough, a former colleague of mine and the former director of the Mariposa School of Global Education in California, wrote an article on reading fluency that has some valuable insights and suggestions when it comes to teaching reading to our young students. The following are excerpts from his article: “While the ultimate goal of learning to read is comprehension, reading fluency is often measured as a primary predictor of reading success. Reading fluency is defined as the ability to read words accurately and quickly, and is highly correlated with reading comprehension. Metaphorically speaking, think of learning to drive a car with a manual transmission. At first, we are using a great deal of brain power to think about the coordination of the clutch and gas while maintaining concentration on the road around us, where we are going, our speed, etc. As we become better with time and practice, the coordination comes without much thought and our brain is freed up to focus on different things such as listening to music and talking to passengers. When children first learn to read, their efforts are primarily focused on decoding individual words. Once reading the individual words becomes fluent, children can use higher brain functions to focus their energies on such tasks as understanding the meaning of what they are reading, making predictions, and identifying with the feelings of the characters. In a collaborative effort to continue the wonderful progress our students are making in reading, we would like to offer the following strategies to improve reading fluency when reading with your child at home. These strategies are not grade specific and require that your child is currently reading connected text (i.e., sentences and paragraphs). Of course, whether they are reading sentences or not, reading to or with your children daily is always a great way to improve their reading and hopefully instill a life-long love for you and reading.

Five researched-based strategies for improving oral reading fluency include the following:

1. Read with your child first by modeling fluent reading, then have her reread the text aloud independently. By listening to good models of fluent reading, children learn how a reader’s voice can help written text make sense.

2. Have your child repeatedly read passages aloud with guidance. A good strategy for developing fluency is to provide your child with many opportunities to read the same passage orally several times.

3. What your child reads makes a difference. Fluency develops as a result of many opportunities to practice reading with a high degree of success. Therefore, your child should practice orally rereading text that is reasonably easy for them—that is, text containing mostly words that they know or can decode easily. A good rule for determining the best level for independent reading is no more than one mistake in twenty words.

4. Read chorally with your child. By reading aloud with good fluency at the same time (or even slightly faster) your child will improve in their own fluency.

5. Tape-assisted reading. There are plenty of books at your child’s independent reading level on audiotape or CD. These can be downloaded online, purchased at a bookstore, or checked out from the local library. (Again, a child’s independent reading level is no more than one mistake for every twenty words). Have your child read along in his book as he hears a fluent reader reading the book on tape or CD.”

For a child, the experience of learning to read is not only exciting, it is empowering. In the Primary School, our goal is to build a solid reading foundation for our students. This means giving them the time, instruction, and strategies to master their decoding skills in order for them to begin reading with fluency, accuracy, expression and comprehension. When parents partner with us in this endeavor, our students benefit exponentially and are soon able to make the transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.”
CNG has many wonderful traditions. Among them we have a few in Kinder Four which are stellar! We would like to highlight three as they are incredibly touching and are what CNG is all about.

A few years ago someone had the idea of having the seniors present and welcome the Kinder Four children to the whole community in an all-school assembly. The result? Astonishing! Imagine having the high school gym packed with ALL CNG students, parents, and staff. The Colombian and the American National anthems fade away and the Great Little Singers’ Choir begin to sing: “Welcome to CNG, our place, our home.” as the eldest students in school—our seniors—walk into the high school gym holding hands with the youngest kids at school, our beloved Kinder Four children. It is a touching moment where we can see the immense spectrum we have at CNG. We are able to view the extremes, the ones who are about to graduate and the ones who are beginning their school life, hand in hand.

Another event which has become an honored tradition at CNG is our Kinder Four BBQ. This event was planned as a special moment when the new members of the community are given the opportunity to get together at the beginning of the school year in an informal way. This day usually begins with all the K4 parents gathering at the theater to hear an informative conference where the psychologists of our school give a few parenting tips with examples of events which have occurred in our Kinder Four classrooms during the first months of school. Parents then head to the classrooms where they will find their sons and daughters ready to present a short sing-along in the classroom. This is a magical moment where parents hear their kids singing in English and displaying what they have learned during the first month of school. Once the kids finish, families walk out to the park together to enjoy a tasty BBQ lunch of grilled burgers, bags of chips, chocolate brownies, and many wide smiles. This is when parents have the chance to get together, chat, feel at home, integrate and start building a community which may end up lasting for another fourteen years! Admissions staff, teachers, leadership students, the PS Principal, and even the CNG Director are able to enjoy some time to relax and share experiences with the parents in a very positive environment.

Finally, let us not forget our Kinder Four Holiday Show! There are no words that could possibly describe this performance. It is a truly majestic presentation where one hundred and twenty young children get together on our CNG’s theater stage and perform by speaking, singing, and dancing in front of an audience all by themselves! Parents are speechless, and are often not sure what they want to do most: take pictures, record videos, applaud, or take a tissue out of their pocket to wipe their tears of joy. For as long as we can remember, the Kinder Four Holiday show has been an honored tradition which gives the Primary School something special to feel proud of. It is a festive way to begin the Holiday Season in the most positive note of all: being part of the CNG family.

These three events have become honored traditions in Kinder Four and at CNG, where our visionary future includes a continued focus on creating a close-knit, positive environment where families feel at home and are proud to be a part of CNG’s community.
This was the last job fair of the season and it was pretty much now or never. At the CNG presentation, Dr. Habegger eloquently spoke about this incredible school with a dynamic and interactive learning environment, where visionary teachers and administrators converged to challenge students to achieve their optimal potential, whereas parental involvement was integral to the school philosophy and giving back to the community was a key tenet of the philanthropic mission. As I sat listening, a sensation came over me. I knew right then that CNG was the place for me. A couple of interviews and the deal was sealed! Fast forward four weeks and I was on a plane to Bogotá with all of my belongings stuffed into a few suitcases. The journey had begun.

Now it’s late October and I am in full swing at CNG. The culture shock has worn off and the excitement of a new challenge each day has taken its place. When asked to share my thoughts on honored tradition and visionary future, I think of the very reasons I was drawn to CNG: the unique combination of heartening back to founding principles and ideals while looking toward tomorrow with a dynamic and interactive learning environment, where visionary teachers and administrators converge to challenge students to achieve their optimal potential, whereas parental involvement was integral to the school philosophy and giving back to the community was a key tenet of the philanthropic mission. As I sat listening, a sensation came over me. I knew right then that CNG was the place for me. A couple of interviews and the deal was sealed! Fast forward four weeks and I was on a plane to Bogotá with all of my belongings stuffed into a few suitcases. The journey had begun.

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Colegio Nueva Granada kicked off our 75th anniversary celebration in September with school-wide Spirit Days, an all-school assembly, and a Founders Day picnic. As part of the Spirit Days, students had the opportunity to dress up in different garb during a fun-filled week. These dress-up days, mixed with other festive activities, demonstrated the strong sense of community prevalent here at CNG.

While teachers recognize and appreciate these special community-building events, we also often worry that these special events take away from precious instructional time. Looking for ways to turn these activities into valid, standards-based intrinsically-motivating instruction is a challenge. Since we know that when our students are motivated to read, they learn more, we are always looking for ways to capitalize on these fun, rich experiences as teaching and learning opportunities.

During our recent Wacky Dress-Up Spirit Day, I took pictures of my students and realized the resulting photographs can be great fodder for engaging activities. I decided to take these images and create ebooks in which the students themselves are the protagonists. Ebooks are simple books created with a desktop publishing software. The author can input images, write text, and design simple pages. With student permission, I created wacky stories with silly photographs of students from the Spirit Days. These ebooks ended up being very popular reading material in class with even my least motivated students eager to read them. One of the goals I have for my students each year is for each of them to “get hooked” on a book series. Writing a book series where my students are the main characters and reading it to them has been a huge motivator for my young readers. I didn’t introduce them all at once and as I read each one, I told them to be on the lookout for the next one which piqued their interest in reading them even more.

As teachers, we need to continually look for ways to capitalize on our school’s unique community-building events to promote academic growth for our students. Imagine you are seven years old and you have the opportunity to read a book in which YOU are the star, your friends are prominently figured, and there are ridiculous tales and real pictures. Voilà! You have kids clamoring to read them!

If you are interested in learning more about creating engaging, free ebooks at home or at school, visit www.realewriter.com and download the free software. If you need some help, feel free to contact me at alevinson@cng.edu.

After finishing reading the ebook series to my students, I asked them how they felt about Wacky Books:

• “I like Wacky Book 2 because nothing in there is possible, but it sure is silly!”
• “I like the wacky books because they are fiction.”
• “I like these books because they are silly, cool, and fun. The third wacky book in my favorite.”
• “I like Lucia’s power because she accidentally drank three dolphins.”
• “I like that they are strange, wacky and funny. And I like them because they are about the students.”
• “I think those books are the best in the world.”

By: Austin Levinson
Primary School Teacher
A father once told his child, “Be careful what path you follow.” To this his child replied, “Dad, you should be careful for I can follow in your footsteps.”

Building tomorrow’s leaders has always been a major mission in CNG’s philosophy. CNG teachers, parents, alumni, and administrators clearly know we are the ones empowered to make an impact in Colombian society. But how can we awaken our young children’s desire to help? Through the actions of the adults that surround them.

And last year, we did just that. In May 2012 a group of 20 parents and teachers from K4 donated both money and time to build two houses through Un Techo Para mi Pais.

The results surpassed both the teachers’ and parents’ expectations. Adults and children were once again reminded how blessed we are to have a sturdy floor under our feet and a warm roof over our heads. We were reminded that we are the ones empowered to give them the ability to dream of a future instead of thinking how to survive today.

It was surprising to discover that we, the volunteers, received as much from the new home owners as we did. We replenished our souls, while reminding ourselves that making a small difference can make a big impact in society. We were once again reminded how powerful and positive an impact we can have when we decide to get up and actually DO something.

This message was clearly received by our children. After being introduced to this project through videos and interactive talks, children could hardly wait to see their parents in action. They were so engaged and they participated by sending the new home owners the pictures they had created. The activity came full circle when the new home owners the pictures they had created, talked to their children about the activity. When children saw their artwork hanging on the walls of the homes their parents had helped build, their eyes began to glisten, they were filled with pride. The children’s curiosity was awakened and their desire to do someday as their parents had done was evident.

Leading by example is such a powerful tool that parents from other classes wanted to join in. We are excited to say our program has been expanded to include all K4 and K5 classes. What a dynamic way to develop our children’s character in becoming tomorrow’s leaders – leaders with a passion, a conscience, and a good heart.

by: Tatiana Grinberg
Primary School Teacher

75th year celebration:
Insights from a newbie

by: Carissa Becker
Primary School Teacher

Coping to CNG has been an exciting experience for me. New country, new school, new culture to learn about, and I haven’t been disappointed. This is by far the largest school I have been in and I was curious if it would have the same “home” feeling as my last place.

The first few weeks of school were daunting and I admit, I got lost a few times. Luckily, CNG is the type of campus where people are quick to offer help and show you where everything is. By the time the first all-school assembly rolled around a few weeks into the school year, I was already feeling good in my new home at CNG.

Despite still being very new to the school, I almost shed a few tears at the adorableness of the 12th graders and Kinder 4 entering the gymnasium for the first time and as my students sat down at one point during the song my first thought was “Wow, they sat down so great”, and then when they jumped up during the song my second thought was, “I am in trouble”…mine was the jumping class. But as I looked around I realized that everyone was singing and jumping and that was, “I am in trouble”…mine was the jumping class. But as I looked around I realized that everyone was singing and jumping and that was just another part of what makes this school so great, the ability to enjoy the song and what it stands for.

One thing I must absolutely applaud about CNG is their respect to the national anthem. Students and staff take pride in singing the Colombian anthem and yet take the time to learn and recite the United States anthem as well. This is the first school I have been at where it was done so well. CNG’s song’s school song is also performed with enthusiastic participation. You can hear and see the school spurt as the students sing and jump as the first notes of the song are played. I had not been warned about the jumping part the first time and as my students sat down at one point during the song my first thought was “Wow, they sat down so great”, and then when they jumped up during the song my second thought was, “I am in trouble”…mine was the jumping class. But as I looked around I realized that everyone was singing and jumping and that was just another part of what makes this school so great, the ability to enjoy the song and what it stands for.

After the speeches for the assembly we celebrated with the presentation of the 75 anniversary cake as confetti floated down from the ceiling, and the younger students jumped and cheered with excitement.

Later we were dismissed to the playground where parents joined us for a school-wide community picnic. The apprehension came back as I wasn’t sure what to do as my students wanted to go this way and that to find their families. I let those feelings go though as I realized that the students were safe, that they were at CNG with their families and that they are great kids. And with that I let all apprehension go, and enjoyed a wonderful Founders Day with good food and good company.
Many years ago, I began my teaching career at CNG. Having just completed my university studies, first in political science and history and then in education, I was pretty ‘green’ and idealistic. I really believed the sky was the limit in terms of what my 4th grade students and I could accomplish. I was especially passionate about empowering and sparking students’ interest in the world, nurturing their creativity in writing, and fostering a love of mathematics. I remember feeling deeply ‘fed’ by my classroom community and the dynamic exchange and warmth between us.

Simultaneously, I was blessed with a wonderful team of colleagues with whom I collaborated closely, and they affirmed and grounded me and my inclinations. We were big into team planning, ‘whole language’, project based learning, keeping copious anecdotal notes, and exploring Math concepts with ‘hands-on’ materials. In those days, the aforementioned were considered progressive practice. I could not have asked for a better start, and am forever grateful to my former students, colleagues and CNG community.

Indeed, I had such a positive experience at CNG and in Colombia that I chose to return in 2010, after many years teaching and in leadership in other schools and countries. To my delight, it has been like coming home in many ways. For one, core facets of school life that I experienced and valued in the late 80s— including the importance of team work, relationships, innovation and developing students’ character— still characterize CNG.

Of course, there have been changes too. Our understanding of how the brain learns best has evolved a great deal over the years, and this has led to refinements in the ways we plan, teach and assess. We also better appreciate the importance of ‘emotional intelligence’ and developing students’ complex reasoning and thinking skills – and promoting in them leadership skills and service-mindedness so they see themselves as having an active role in the stewardship of our planet and the skills to shape a kinder, wiser and more equitable world.

How fortunate I feel to have been a part of the past and present as we advance boldly towards the future. We continue to welcome young internationally trained educators, like I was way back, to work with our spirited students and dedicated Colombian faculty. And this continues to foster dynamic exchanges of experiences and perspectives, and underscores the power of collaboration and community—in our quest to achieve synergy and ensure a balance of honored tradition and visionary future for our students of today and tomorrow.
We are writers, we are teachers, and we are teachers of writing." This is the juggling act we balance daily as we move our students through their writing lives. Transitioning into a writer’s workshop model has moved instruction from replication to innovation. Students write about what matters most to them as they transcend the genres of narrative, persuasive, and informative writing; this is an incredibly empowering approach for students and teachers alike.

Implementing a writer’s workshop format under the research-based structure of the Teachers’ College of Columbia University in New York, CNG primary and elementary teachers are working hard and enthusiastically to ensure that all students become writers who can communicate effectively in an ever-changing world. Writing instruction has taken a new vision of facilitating independent thinkers who use self-direction, as well as collaboration in learning.

Embracing writing through the genres of narrative, persuasive, and informational writing, all students become more experienced writers who look for ways to address all audiences. Students sustain extended periods of time writing to ensure that their individual stamina and fluency as writers better reflect their abilities as readers.

Just like anything that we want to improve in, we must practice, and writing is not an exception. Teachers lead the way in this initiative by modeling with their own writing. Students learn the stories that make their teacher who he/she is while simultaneously encouraging students to share their stories, too. A heightened level of social responsibility is reached through the writer’s workshop as students partner with peers in rehearsing, discussing, and processing their writing efforts. Through collaboration, students extend their writing efforts in the same way editors help publishing writers move their writing forward too.

Specific skills and strategies are explicitly taught at the beginning of each workshop lesson often through teacher and/or published writers’ examples. Focus is given to strategies and skills that are transferable to all writers and genres of writing. Students then use this understanding of what makes great writing, great, to inform and shape their own writing. In this way, we are deliberately teaching students to become better writers, but not just for an individual assignment; we want their learning about writing to be reflected in their understanding of what it takes to be an effective and reflective 21st century communicator across the board. Much of the novelty of the writer’s workshop is that it is what real writers do, and there is ample evidence that shows that students flourish in this learning environment.

Self-direction is another component of the writer’s workshop and students are embracing the opportunity to empower themselves through the writing of their own voice and experiences, as well as the writing of those around them. Using skills and strategies taught by teachers, students purposefully choose and apply what will best fit their needs and particular piece of writing, just as real writers do. Students experience the messiness of the writing process—a journey that is often not linear—and we honor both their process and final writing products in publishing celebrations and in our Elementary Literary Magazine Young Voices. At CNG, we are committed to developing writers who can effectively, knowledgeably, and reflectively lead the world of tomorrow. The Teacher College’s Writer’s Workshop approach illuminates the way.
What do you love most about CNG? All the wonderful things we do here, right? The learning, playing, competing, friends and coming to school every day. These are the rituals that connect us to one another in the present, the past, and the future.

From our uniforms to uniforms, every school has its different traditions that make each school unique, and most definitely, a community. The CNG House System has been an important part of CNG since it started a beloved tradition. Each House is a sub-group within CNG that fosters pride, spirit, responsibility, and respect. Yes! All of us who have been part of CNG belong to EAGLES, FALCONS, HAWKS or OSPREYS (Ospreys is the newest House bird of the flock.) We remember competing in sport events against each other and we had lots of fun! We used to dress up in our House colors—yellow, green and red.

Up until today, students continue to participate actively and play for their Houses in a wide variety of activities and sports including recess intramurals, Jump Rope for Heart, Sports Day, Read A Thons, Poetry and Halloween Costume Contests, to name a few. Some of CNG staff and coaches such as Prof Hernandez and Maria Alicia Orozco, whom most of the alumni and current students know, have been with us for many years thus providing continuity.

In Elementary, House elections were held in September, and Captains (5th), Vice-Captains (4th) and Representatives (3rd) were elected. Students presented speeches and classmates voted in grade level assemblies that rocked with energy! They were supremely spirited assemblies and all of the students who were elected were very enthusiastic and proud! We meet weekly and students express that they feel honored and fulfilled representing their Houses. They offer positive leadership, contribute ideas for activities and school spirit, and generate classmates' involvement. These are the feelings we must instill and become a force to bond new students with old ones and build our House communities. Best of all, through it all, students experience learning and camaraderie as fun!

By: Lina Barrera
Elementary School Houses Coordinator

Colegio NUEVA GRANADA
December 2012
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
In September, fourth grader, Erin Lee, took the stage during our monthly In the Spotlight celebration in Elementary School and reflected on a strength of hers for which she was being honored: “I am independent because I like to work alone and read alone. I get help only when I need it. I think as hard as possible. I think silence is important because then independent thinkers think better.”

Two weeks prior to the ceremony, I watched Erin work collaboratively with a classmate, Mateo Rengifo. For Mateo, learning is both an independent and social experience. During the ceremony he celebrated the attribute of enthusiasm: “I show enthusiasm because when Miss Molly asks a question I can’t help myself and I shout out the answer!”

In the Elementary School we are deliberate in our efforts to celebrate a whole spectrum of learning styles. We purposefully design instructional experiences that range from quiet independent reflective times, to noisy sharing times that resemble adult cocktail parties. We foster students’ thinking, analysis, and dialogue. We want them to question and debate with one another applying Paulo Freire’s theory: processing conflicting opinions and divergent viewpoints, we deepen our understanding.

Technology advances collaborative learning utilizing the modern phenomenon of rapid crowdsourcing. In Ms. Avon’s class, for example, students worked on collaborative editing of their TC-Writing Workshop-inspired personal narratives. After weeks of constructing narratives from their own life experiences, typing their revised writing in to Microsoft Word, they learned how to copy and paste their writing pieces into Google Documents and share them online with the rest of the class.

This is not to say that technology replaces traditional learning styles or contexts; it simply enhances the journey to another level of collaboration. How, you ask? Well, in this particular situation the process continues thus: four students work on printed copies of one student’s document. They work alone, quietly, honoring independent learners like Erin. Then they come together and edit the document together, stretching Erin and honoring learners like Mateo who need external processing time. They work online in live time to edit the document and then present the writing to the whole class for a final group edit. They continue this process over a week’s time to fine tune documents, crowdsourcing grammar and spelling knowledge from the class. In this way, the class is split between pencil and paper work, presentations and debates, and online time in the computer lab.

Throughout this process, students read and reread each other’s work and their narratives intertwine. The power of the learning community takes over. As teachers, we carefully construct and lead mini-lessons and discussions, guiding individuals and groups. We circulate and prompt reflection and tweaking. But by far the most rewarding moments for teachers are when, from the sideline, we witness students take off—on mad debates on the finer points of grammar or the most riveting way of crafting a passage of text.

As the documents near completion we prepare for the final celebration. Students select the most dramatic and exciting segment of their narrative and begin practicing an oral presentation. To hone their expressive verbal skills we video tape them which we play back and they immediately assess themselves and decide to repeat or save. Some students practice with their parents on smart phones and email their best version. Santiago Afanador, for instance, went through twenty versions before he was happy with one! These video segments become trailers for the final celebration for parents. Students take the stage one by one before their classmates and share with our extended learning community. It’s a beautiful thing.
One of the goals of the Primary and Elementary math program at CNG is to strengthen our basic fact fluency. We all know that in order to improve in any activity, whether it be soccer, painting, or math fact fluency, you need to practice. What can we do as teachers and parents in order to get our students and children to practice their basic facts while keeping them motivated and interested? We think we have found the answer!

The PS/ES Math Team is proud to announce the arrival of Reflex Math! Reflex Math is a game-based program that helps students improve their fact fluency (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) regardless of the level they are beginning from. The basis of the program is to help students improve their automaticity (or quick retrieval) of basic facts. How does it do this? The program is adaptive, which means it monitors the progress of each individual child and then changes according to the needs of that child. It has many different types of reports for the teachers, so they can make educational decisions based on the progress of the students.

Here’s how the program works. Each time the students log in, they will need to complete a “Speed Cube Challenge.” This is a quick assessment to check the typing skills and some basic facts. After the challenge is completed, students go to the island where they can enter the games. Many times, they will meet Coach Penny, who will give them some instruction about different rules or some words of encouragement. Usually, students will have to complete two picture puzzles, and then they go into the different games. At the beginning, two games are unlocked for the students to play. They must complete a certain number of days where they meet the minimum usage requirement (when the green light goes on) before they can unlock a new game. As the students complete the “Speed Cube Challenge” and play games, they earn tokens. Once the green light has turned on, they may take their tokens to the store and buy things for their avatar.

Besides being able to purchase things for their avatar, students are able to check on their progress to see which facts they have become fluent in and which ones they still need to practice. If you are the parents of students in 2nd through 5th grades, you should have already seen your child using it. Look for ways to motivate your child to practice. Look over their progress chart and set goals. Celebrate milestones that your child reaches. The more encouragement your child receives from you, the more he/she will want to “strengthen his/her fact fluency” with Reflex Math! You can go to Reflex Math’s website (www.reflexmath.com) for more information.

Federico Jaramillo Echeverri was born on January 23, 2003. Federico has loved sports since he was very young. He learned to ride his bike without training wheels at 3 years old. Then he learned to skate and joined the school hockey team in K5 as well as the mountain bike group. At seven years old he learned to slalom.

Federico told his dad he wanted to become number one in the world. Three months later and after training 4 days a week at 6:00 am before school, and 2 days a week after school he participated in the Nationals and won gold medal, but this was not enough for him. He decided he wanted to beat all the existing records for his category. At nine years old he accomplished this. He slalomed and set the record at 5 ½ buoys at the 5th cut at 43 kilometers an hour, and set the record for tricks at 4,010 points which set him not only as the best skier in Colombia for his category, but currently is ranked as the number one tricks skier in the United States.

Without the support his parents and school have provided he would not have been able to accomplish this. Not only has he had teachers that encourage him and help him make up the work after missing school, but they have also been flexible in giving him the permissions to miss school in order to attend all his national and international tournaments.

Federico Jaramillo has three sisters at CNG who are also water skiers. Paula in seventh grade who just broke the national record for girls 12 and under in tricks; Isabel in sixth grade, who won the gold medal in slalom, tricks and jump, and overall at Nationals 2012, and Luisa Jaramillo who also broke the national record for girls nine and under in slalom, 3 buoys at the 4th cut at 43 kilometers an hour.

CNG is a school that not only provides the support in the academic field but also encourages children to develop their strengths and passions and Federico is a perfect example of this.
I recently read an article about three of Japan’s most prestigious companies: Sony, Panasonic, and Sharp. In spite of tremendous past successes, some question whether two of the three—Sharp and Panasonic—will survive as independent, successful entities. These comments came not from outsiders, but from their CEOs, leaders whose job it is to be head corporate cheerleaders, and who should never see the glass as only half full. How is it that companies who had until recently achieved such amazing successes, building cutting-edge products, now find themselves on the verge of bankruptcy? I believe the answer lies in the inability to separate their company’s honored tradition from the realities of the present, and the necessity to continually develop for the visionary future that will assure their ongoing success. Similar organizations that could not reconcile past, present and future were eventually relegated to the dustbin of history as a result. Remember Smith-Corona, the company who made the world’s best typewriter? They were ultimately put out of business by the word processor. How about Polaroid, makers of the wildly successful Land Camera, which popped out self-developing pictures? No longer! Or Kodak, the film and camera company, which no longer even makes film anymore, but is instead focused on making copies? All of these companies believed that honoring their successful traditions and prosperous pasts would protect them from a changing world. All either no longer produce the products that made them famous, or are simply struggling to survive in a rapidly changing world.

How does this relate to our own educational community here at CNG, you might ask? During my limited time here, after just over a year, I have had the opportunity to talk with many parents who also happen to be former CNG students themselves. Without exception, these parents LOVE this institution and the educations they received here. In 75 years of existence, CNG has clearly provided a high quality education for our graduates. Of this we can all be proud. The question is: is that which we’ve historically offered to our former students adequate for our current batch of young people? Is that which we’ve historically offered to our former students adequate for our current batch of young people? Is that quality education for our graduates? Of this we can all be proud. The question is: is that which we’ve historically offered to our former students adequate for our current batch of young people? Is that which we’ve historically offered to our former students adequate for our current batch of young people? Is that which we’ve historically offered to our former students adequate for our current batch of young people? Is that which we’ve historically offered to our former students adequate for our current batch of young people? Is that which we’ve historically offered to our former students adequate for our current batch of young people?

I do not believe that it will. I’ll illustrate that position with several examples from my own youth, growing up in rural Oregon. The world that exists now is much different than the one I experienced back then (and yes, we had cars!). I can still visualize the hand cranked wooden phone in our house that connected me to an operator who would place calls to my friends. If someone from another house was already on our “party line” I had to keep checking the phone until they were off so I could ask the operator to place my call. How did that past skill prepare me in any way for the current vast assortment of mobile devices that keep the possessor in contact with ALL the people ALL the time? It did not! As another example, my high school science classes centered on FFA (Future Farmers of America), which prepared me for a life of work on a farm or ranch in the Oregon countryside, a typical prospective job for a graduating high school student. While this type of education worked for many previous generations of rural Oregonians, did that academic track prepare me for my current life as an international educator nomad who has worked in five different countries and visited at least 50 others? It did not!

As you ponder my questions, I would like to recall a recent visit to CNG from another alumnus, General Douglas Fraser, who currently commands United States military operations in the Caribbean and Central and South America. In October, General Fraser talked to our current student leaders in an assembly. He recounted how he and his former classmates from the class of 1984, here for a class reunion, had walked into a high school classroom. With great amusement and amusement, he conveyed his impression that it was as if he and his fellow graduates had never left! The classroom setups are essentially the same now as they were almost 30 years ago.

This again makes me wonder: are the classrooms of the past, which have proven to be very successful historically, adequate for the present and more importantly, the future? For those who argue that what was good enough for you should be good enough for our current generation, I would remind you of the Panasonic, Sharp, Smith-Corona, Polaroid, and Kodak approach to this fundamental question. All of them were once great companies. I suspect that they probably wish they had another opportunity to address the same past, present, future equation we are faced with now.

For my part, I do not despair over this issue as it relates to us here at CNG, for a couple of important reasons. First, we have amazing parents, the moldable raw material of the future. Second, our parent community is incredibly supportive, making it clear that they want a world-class education for their children. Finally, our Board of Directors has charged our administrative team with creating just such a school, with a 21st century learning environment that rivals the best in the world. They trust us to hire the highest quality teachers, to utilize the best curricular materials available, and to regularly integrate technology—all with the goal of developing the body, mind and character of each and every CNG student. With this kind of support, we have no excuses for not achieving this level of greatness. If we do this right, we can continue to honor the distinguished path-way pioneered by 75 years of CNG tradition, while providing cutting-edge, research-based instruction now, all while keeping an eye on future trends in education that will benefit our learning community. The result will be students who are fully prepared to accept stewardship of the planet when they leave CNG, and equipped to take on the challenges of an ever-changing world.
Through the years NJHS (National Junior Honor Society) has given great importance to the component of Social Service. One of the places we have worked with during the last years is El Portal, a school for not so fortunate children whose parents, one or both of whom may be in jail. This experience is very enriching for us, since we become aware of the reality and hard life other kids have to endure and also of the responsibility that we as privileged members of our society have in the future.

When we went to El Portal, I felt bad for being born into such a fortunate family. It is not something we can control, but I felt like that because I knew that all these surprisingly happy children have their parents restricted to them. Despite that, they were very energetic kids, willing to receive and enjoy what we offered to them. My experience in this place was wonderful; I got to see every part of the institution. I started out playing soccer with the slightly older kids, and they kicked my butt, and then I volunteered for helping with the babies there. I was one of the few that got to take care of the babies, and when I was done feeding a certain one – which took like what seemed to be an eternity – I went to visit the other children with everyone from CNG that came with us, all of us in groups partaking in the different activities with the Portal kids. I guess everyone experienced something different while we were there. I feel like we really helped out. Playing soccer instead of going to class put a big smile on everyone’s face, and you could see how the Portal kids were relieved of their problems, albeit temporarily, when we played with them, when they made marshmallow snowmen, when they decorated cookies, when we danced, and when we talked to them. We also helped the people working there by giving them time for other things simply by looking after their babies. I gave away my soccer ball to their P.E. teacher, which the kids loved, and my friend did the same.

I believe that by going there we really do make all their lives so much happier even if it is only for a day. Going to El Portal was truly a great experience. All the things we did fit into what the school tries to teach us. By widening our worldview and understanding the problems we can become the leaders our country needs.
Five hundred and forty construction paper links form a chain that encircles room M3. Each time a sixth grade student in my class finishes a book, they get to make a link to represent all the work they’ve done this year. This enthusiasm for reading stems from the adoption of the Columbia University Teachers College Reading Workshop.

This approach to teaching reading focuses on the interaction between the reader and the text, giving students the tools to select and comprehend literature and nonfiction. Reading workshop features read alouds, where the teacher instructs students on a reading strategy, and then incorporates it into a shared short story. Once students have seen the strategy in action, they are able to use it in their own reading. For Pedro Moreno, this is the best part of reading workshop. He says, “We tell our thoughts together to get a good answer and we try to find out things like the theme of the book.” Maria Lievano adds, “I like that I can discuss my feelings about characters, events, and places.”

Choice is an essential element of reading workshop. The students get to choose their own books, which are at their reading level. Alberto Navarro appreciates this approach: “We learn and apply, but in other classes we learn, learn, learn, review, learn, and then apply.” Carlota Cruz agrees, stating, “We learn in the books we choose, so we learn better.” The constant application of new skills makes students comfortable using them in other classes and in more challenging texts.

As a first year teacher at CNG, I am thrilled to see the students’ excitement about reading grow, from watching them recommend books to each other to begging if they can read each day. Miguel Angel Perez said, “Last year I only read one book, and this year I’ve read three in two months because I am more motivated.” When the students find the right genre or author, they can often be seen sneaking a chapter at break time or in advisory.

The chain of books is not the only evidence of reading workshop’s success around campus. Librarian Cristina Gomez says, “This year we have seen an increase in middle school students visiting the library; they are very enthusiastic about the books they want to check out and read. It’s exciting to see kids come in during lunch and after-school in search of a really good book.” As our chain of books grows, so does the students’ love of reading.

Destination Imagination has returned as an extracurricular activity for CNG’s students during the 2012-2013 school year. Several teams participated in the 2012 challenge in Cali this past March and were successful, with one 5th grade team winning their category challenge and several other teams garnering awards. Those who participate show their effort, determination, and teamwork – now a part of CNG’s honored tradition. This school year CNG will be hosting the national tournament in March of 2013. As the hosts of this year’s tournament, CNG will have an amazing opportunity to celebrate its 75th anniversary by showcasing its incredible students and their ingenuity.

Destination Imagination not only allows students to become part of CNG’s rich tradition through their accomplishments, but it allows them to be part of CNG’s visionary future by developing and honing skills that will be critical to their future success as students, professionals, and responsible citizens. This is truly a unique opportunity for students to make their community proud while growing as critical thinkers and creative learners.

For parents and students who are new to Destination Imagination, I would like to introduce you to an exciting educational program where student teams use creativity, imagination, and teamwork to solve open-ended Challenges and present their solutions at tournaments. In working to solve Challenges, teams learn important life skills like time management, collaboration, conflict resolution, and creative and critical thinking. They learn patience, flexibility, persistence, respect for others and their ideas, and the collaborative problem solving process. Teams work from November to March building their solution to a challenge of their choosing. This year, students from K4 to 8th grade may participate in the tournament. K4 to 2nd grade will have a non-competitive challenge while 3rd grade through 8th grade may compete against other teams in Colombia for the chance to attend Global finals, held in Knoxville, TN in May 2013.

Please encourage your students to participate in Destination Imagination. You can find more details and a registration form in the Co-Curricular office or email any questions to the team coordinator, Michael Dumbleton at di@cng.edu.
A new shift in the Model United Nations (MUN) program here at CNG has begun. What used to be part of our “Honored Tradition,” an organization that consisted of a combined high school and middle school program, is now switching gears to separate programs. This is an exciting time for our middle school students who will be involved in the new metamorphosis of this wonderful program. They will now have the chance to represent CNG in the brand new JMUN (Junior Model United Nations) program, which is just one example of bringing our “Visionary Future” to the present.

The main difference between the two levels is that JMUN will be able to break down very complicated world issues to a level which they will understand and be able to debate. Also, at JMUN conferences, our middle school “delegates” will be debating other middle school students instead of their high school peers, which obviously can be quite intimidating.

If you haven’t ever heard of Model United Nations, it is simply a version of the real United Nations using the same parliamentary procedures that they use. Students simulate being an actual ambassador of a country and study its positions on some of the most important issues we face in today’s world. During a JMUN conference, delegates define their countries they are representing, whether they believe in those opinions or not. It really is amazing to see our students “acting” as if they are real delegates of the United Nations. Simply put, JMUN is a high energy, friendly debating forum for younger students that are new or experienced to the MUN organization. At these conferences, there are several types of committees that our delegates will be able to choose from.

Some of these are General Assembly, Human Rights, Environment, Security Council, Economic and Social (ECOSOC), and the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency).

Even though JMUN is a middle school program, it may not be for all MS students. We are looking for students who have a good track record of academics, behavior, and commitment in order to be considered for entry into this elite group. Minimum qualifications are: 3.0 GPA, 3 positive teacher recommendations, and completion of a thorough application process which includes questions about world issues to their opinions on school issues. This application process began in early November and the students selected to become JMUN Delegates will be announced in late November or early December. Our first official JMUN meeting will occur when students return from Christmas Break.

JMUN at CNG is certain to be a program that is extremely enjoyable and rewarding, both academically and socially. However, it will also be a program that involves lots of hard work and a passion to solve global issues. JMUN delegates will meet great friends, improve their public speaking/debating skills, and also learn so much about the rest of the world.
CNG’s proud history and long-standing tradition as a school of academic excellence are two of its greatest strengths. CNG, now celebrating its 75th anniversary, embraces and appreciates its past more sincerely and more vigorously than any other school I have been a part of. Additionally, CNG students and alumni will attend, are attending, and have attended some of the finest universities in the world. It is truly an honor to participate in such a rich tradition.

However, what makes CNG truly remarkable is the community’s willingness to embrace the future and thoughtfully consider new ideas as they arise. Many times the past acts to imprison and impede progress; yet, CNG’s vision statement eloquently captures the flexibility demonstrated by its community and its leadership: “Educating the mind, strengthening the body, and developing character for leadership and service in the world of today and tomorrow.”

In the spirit of developing students’ character, a new student group, Good K.A.R.M.A. (Kindness Always Returns Moral Association), has been created. Good K.A.R.M.A.’s mission is to encourage students to practice kindness with one another, take care of one another, and ensure that each student’s experience at CNG is exceptional in every way. We understand that life as a student can be complicated considering a typical CNG student’s numerous commitments: academic, athletic, artistic, and other extra-curricular endeavors. We also understand that students’ social experiences at school, both positive and negative, play an important role in shaping them as people now and in the future. While most CNG students are happy and love everything that CNG has to offer, a small number of students have a hard time adjusting and fitting in for a variety of reasons. Simply stated, Good K.A.R.M.A.’s goal is to help everyone feel welcome at CNG by encouraging openness, thoughtfulness, and kindness in interactions between students.

At this moment, Good K.A.R.M.A. is a small, middle school organization working in the present with an eye on the future. We are planning activities that will take place throughout the 2012-2013 school year that will help us fulfill our mission. At the same time, we hope that our ideas will catch on and spread in order to create a meaningful, long-lasting organization that will survive us well into the future.

Having studied at CNG from K-12th gave me the opportunity to experience first-hand all the great traditions this school honors. I hold tremendous memories of my life at CNG. The connectedness and support that students felt with their teachers and administrators made it feel like a large family. It is the fact that CNG not only focuses on academics but also focuses on making sure that its students and staff develop strong personal and interpersonal skills that drew me back, now as a Counselor.

CNG has always ensured that students learn to give back to those who are less fortunate. One of the traditions that has always touched my heart was the Thanksgiving Celebration. As a student, it was nice to be able to give back to the people who always cared so much about us and the school. This celebration allowed us to come together with older and younger students, to write letters, put baskets of gifts together and take pride in hand delivering these items to the people who in many ways touched our lives. This celebration also allowed us to take responsibility and ownership about being able to give back, not in a monetary way, but by allowing us to spend time putting things together and express our gratitude for those around us whom we sometimes took for granted. I can state, that it is thanks to these experiences and exposure of traditions that I entered both the educational and counseling fields. It is through the social values that I learned both from CNG and my family that I became motivated to help others.

Being able to experience those traditions first-hand as a student, and now as Middle School Counselor, I have the opportunity to work with the MS team on constructing a program that better adapts to the needs of our future generations and of our community, and that continues to incorporate those honored traditions. Our Middle School Counseling program works together with students, parents, teachers and administrators to not only provide the academic support needed for our students to succeed, but to also provide them with effective social and communication skills, problem-solving and decision making skills, to ensure that they become well-rounded adults. Our focus is that all students receive the necessary support in order to achieve success in school and develop into contributing members of the community.

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On a Friday morning in September, ten Middle School students anxiously awaited the moment when they would record their speeches and voice their ideas as candidates for the CNG Middle School Student Council. It was a new take on the traditional method of standing on stage and pretending that the audience was in their underwear in order to ease one’s nerves. Most students were relieved that they did not have to speak publicly in front of the student body and had the option of a redo, should they mess up. In addition, their beloved middle school principal, “Dr. Bob,” was there to watch the speeches and offer encouragement. The video was played in middle school advisories and the student body voted for the leaders who would represent them. When asked about the STUCO speeches, Dr. Imholt said, “While an eyeball to eyeball speech is the traditional way students have run for office, it was exciting to see candidates embrace a technology that will reach a wider audience. This approach also has applications for influencing events and issues that they care about in the future!”

STUCO President and eighth grader, Alejandra Lopez, held the position of treasurer last year and is prepared to lead a driven group this year. When asked how she felt about being president, Alejandra replied, “It’s really cool to be president because you can receive suggestions from other people and feel you are making a difference and helping others. I want to be able to say we had fun and that people can recognize STUCO for making a fun environment.”

In October, STUCO members led an assembly and listened to the concerns of other students. Sixth grader, Luca Cherubim was asked about the assembly and said, “I liked it because we could say what we wanted and felt comfortable doing so.” For Halloween, STUCO planned a Halloween celebration for the school. They will sponsor a costume contest for students and teachers, and may even sneak in one or two spooky surprises for their peers. “It’s special because students can show their creativity and costumes, and have fun all day long,” said STUCO Representative, Maria Triana. If Halloween is any indication, STUCO is off to a great start. The goals are to improve the CNG Middle School, better the community, and give back to those who could benefit from hard work of these young leaders.
Schools are special places. In a conversation with a three high school students this week, they shared their desire to help their peers consider the value of connections of the non-technological type rather than through texting and social media. They, as young adults, are finding their peers increasingly engaged in electronic communication while at the same time progressively more disengaged in their interaction with the peers sitting next to them. What I suggested to these students was to identify the essential difference between students virtually connected in an on-line learning environment and students together face-to-face in a CNG classroom community. For I believe that the honored tradition of face-to-face educational dialogue outweighs electronic communication in terms of building understanding, compassion, and community. For these there is no substitute for personal human interaction.

Yet, I would not give up access to electronic devices. It is awesome and inspiring that information can be gathered at the drop of a hat, that calculations can be made electronically which would have taken days to complete by hand, and that email & Skype allow us immediate communication channels with people around the world. Technology is incredible and powerful. However, we need to constantly make reasoned and balanced decisions about when, where, why, and how we use it to develop the leaders of today and tomorrow. For the essence of learning that happens through deep educational conversation and thoughtful intellectual exchange shouldn’t be traded for the immediate gratification of texting surface thoughts.

As we wrestle to find the balance between the juxtaposed ideas of honored tradition and visionary future, I am encouraged with the belief that we will embrace the best of each through the process of careful consideration and thought. It is critical as a school that we identify the ways in which technology can bring forth our vision while at the same time foster and encourage traditions that ensure the best possible education for our students. The balance is critical.
BELIEF STATEMENTS: We believe that educating the mind with accurate information will empower our students to make wise decisions, thus maximizing their individual potential and overall well-being.

We believe that strengthening the body and fostering a love of healthy living will encourage preventive practices and help address issues of dependency.

We believe that our entire school community needs to be educated about the effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs to support students in developing strength of character to make responsible decisions.

PURPOSE: Our central purpose is to educate and support our young people to make healthy decisions in order to maximize their potential for personal excellence. To achieve this purpose, CNG believes in taking a “STAND 4” the following research-based objectives:

1. Supporting positive developmental experiences for students;
2. Expanding our comprehensive health and core values curriculum;
3. Advocating for a drug-free environment and the delayed use of alcohol; and
4. Encouraging active parental involvement and the partnership of adult role models.

Colegio Nueva Granada has been working this year with the leader in substance abuse prevention, Freedom from Chemical Dependency (FCD). The FCD program is designed to help educate our students, your children, about “Making Healthy Choices.” FCD has assisted the school in setting up committees to address substance abuse and teach students how to make healthy choices. The committees incorporate students, parents, teachers, and administration. The goal is to help students make good choices by:

- Presenting students with accurate information regarding drugs and alcohol;
- Listening to students about issues related to substance abuse;
- Giving students clear, consistent expectations for behavior;
- Exposing students to positive role models;
- Rewarding them for making healthy choices.

Please watch future newsletters for information about FCD visits and ways that parents and the community can get involved.
The AP program has been around at CNG for many years now and this year we have over 500 students (7-12) enrolled in one or more PreAP and AP courses. Annual enrollment in the AP program continues to show growth in the number of students self-selecting Pre-AP and AP courses. As a result, one of our goals this year is to increase the number of students who earn a three or higher on the AP exam. To achieve this goal, it will certainly require more than just a few hours of studying on the weekends; it will require perseverance.

Many students start their high school experience with good intentions by choosing a wide variety of PreAP courses, but for any number of reasons, choose a different path in the end. Those that stay have a conscious choice to accept the demands of a challenging curriculum that is the AP. Now their challenge is to persevere. Perseverance doesn’t just mean sticking with something or not giving up when things get difficult. It means you keep trying and do your best in spite of that difficulty. Perseverance is not only a quality of one’s character, but also an essential life-skill that is needed to achieve any measure of success.

The AP program is certainly demanding and for those students who are contemplating dropping a course this year, just think for a moment about what you could accomplish by doing just those two things: doing your best and not giving up in the face of difficulty. If you ever find yourself thinking about giving up, take a weekend and read a book called Think Big, by Dr. Ben Carson. As one of the foremost neurosurgeons in the world and now Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins, he tells his story of perseverance in the face of hardship. Today, he is the world’s most renowned neurosurgeon because he understands the value of doing one’s best and he expects those around him to do the same. Thinking Big is about doing your best in spite of difficult circumstances to achieve excellence.

Preparing for the AP exam does take time, commitment, sacrifice, and essentially a lot of studying. However, it also takes the desire to persevere and willingness to give your best effort throughout the year. For many courses, preparing for the AP exam is a two year process where students take the Pre-AP course in their first year. This too can be a challenging experience because it is designed to prepare students for the academic rigor of the AP course and the work expectations are equally demanding.

Students: You will encounter many challenges along the path toward excellence: academic, personal, family, time-management, etc., but, never give up and don’t sell yourself short!

Think BIG!
One year from now, what information must students remember? This is a difficult question to answer, but one that Strategic Instruction Model sets out to answer. Since August, several groups of high school teachers, across a variety of core content areas, have participated in professional development trainings in SIM Content Enhancement Routines. Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) is an approach towards teaching and learning that involves thinking about how we choose and deliver critical content so that we do the most good for the most students. When we are talking about critical content we need to ask ourselves that question of what is most essential for students to know in the long run— the high impact information that will benefit them in their proceeding years at CNG and beyond. Content Enhancement Routines (CER) are tools for teachers to use in partnership with students to promote mastery of the key content. Since SIM is part of a larger body of educational research based out of the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KUCRL), all CERs have been rigorously field-tested in classrooms prior to publication validating their effectiveness across the board for advanced, struggling, and all learners in between. The principal components of SIM Content Enhancement Routines are:

- A Learning Device (graphic organizer)
- Explicit Strategic Instruction – providing a relatable and relevant context for students that is clear and makes sense
- Partnership Learning - co-constructing the learning device with the students to facilitate students’ access to prior knowledge, buy-in, and depth of understanding
- Ongoing Professional Development and Coaching for teachers

CERs provide a structure for students to comprehend information: information that is increasingly complex and specialized to specific content areas— what we refer to as content literacy. Content literacy can be defined as the listening, speaking, reading, writing and thinking skills required to learn in each of the academic disciplines. In addition, we want our students to go beyond basic reading and writing skills, as well as have the ability to use language, content, and reasoning appropriate for particular situations. These are high expectations, but a must when examining those presented in the Common Core State Standards, which CNG has now adopted in math, English and Spanish.

As a teacher of 13 years, I know that implementing CERs in my 9th and 10th grade English classroom became a significant part of teaching and learning for me and my students. I witnessed students who struggled with organization of ideas in writing finally discover a method that assisted them in expressing themselves clearly and persuasively using evidence and analysis, while also understanding the bigger picture of how to construct their essays. Working with other SIM trained teachers, I have observed the same type of access to knowledge in other content area classrooms. Now as a literacy coach working with teachers, I have a deeper appreciation for the content literacy expectations in other subject areas that I do not teach. Recently, I have been working with teachers on the FRAME— a routine for disseminating key topics/themes/concepts to students in which they discover the abstract meaning in a concrete accessible format. Some positive feedback teachers have shared post-training:

- “[This is] a way to break down information in a text to its most essential details so that students can actually look in depth at content that otherwise would be difficult for them to understand.”
- “[A] way to plan my units to be more explicit and enhance learning.”
- “… a useful tool for a variety of classroom situations”
- “[Students are] able to have learning that is meaningful to them because they were part of it.”

As literacy demands across the curriculum continue to grow, teachers and students need powerful teaching and learning tools such as CERs that cut down on processing time and allow teachers to deliver critical content in an accessible and engaging cooperative manner with students. For more information on SIM contact Allison Lee at ale@cng.edu and go to www.kucrl.org.
Colegio Nueva Granada exceeds the standard educational institutions through the combination of two important factors. From 1938 and all the way to 2012, its administrators, teachers, and students have striven to make it so successful. Each member of the CNG community has contributed in its success by following traditions while acknowledging the importance of the future. It is the balance of these two great values that have made CNG embrace service as a fundamental pillar. A symbiotic relationship between student organizations and student learning has developed where they both shape the school and are at the same time shaped by it. The National Honor Society (NHS) has accomplished such a relationship through service by honoring tradition and looking out into the future.

Starting in 1998, our NHS Chapter started keeping service as a priority. After all, it is a value that we can’t afford to lose within society and it needs to be promoted. This student organization has different traditions that put service into action improving another’s future. NHS takes an active role in the preparation for Thanksgiving, a time in our community for sharing and thanking. Every November, the school recognizes the work and effort of the people who work in General Services by giving them a basket of food, spending the day with them, and expressing our gratitude. The whole community gathers for one of the few times in the year, including the Hogar Nueva Granada, parents, teachers, and students to show their appreciation. This tradition has been kept alive ever since Dr. McCombs introduced it and it is still promoted by Dr. Habegger, thus recognizing its value.

For the past three years, Un Techo Para Mi País has also been an honored NHS and school tradition. Throughout the year we raise money for an approximate total of twenty emergency houses for families in need. There are two main builds (one per semester) where our community’s families, students, and teachers gather with trained volunteers for the construction of these houses. The program has been a huge success, each year with an increasing amount of donations, building more houses, and having more volunteers. It has reached a point where the school has taken it as a main social service project and, starting this year, it will no longer be the National Honor Society’s responsibility but the administration’s. As hard as it was, NHS left its main project with honor, keeping a visionary future in mind. We plan to take another foundation and make it thrive as Un Techo Para Mi País does, providing more service to our country and consequentially helping more.

Through this type of service and decision-making, we are determined to prepare tomorrow’s leaders. As an exemplary organization we attempt to promote our four main pillars: Scholarship, Leadership, Character, and Service. They are needed in order to maximize the individual potential that the school seeks to achieve. Strong leadership and service are hard to find. The school, however, aims at building it today in order to have it on hand for tomorrow. Students are the future of the world and in order to have a good one, we need to start building it right now.

The world is an ever-changing place and hard to keep up with. CNG students are aware of this and with each passing day we become more qualified to cope with it. Our institution provides us with the latest global education, pushing us to the future. Diversity is a big factor in change as well as in our school. With students from over 35 nationalities, globalization is right in front of our eyes. NHS takes into consideration the benefits of diversity in concern to its members. Different skills, backgrounds and experiences enhance the quality of ideas and solutions. With varied perspectives from strong personalities we put ourselves one step in front of the world ready to face the upcoming situations.

For the past 75 years, Colegio Nueva Granada has excelled in combining honorary tradition and visionary future for the best. W. Somerset Maugham once said, “ Tradition is a guide not a jailer.” NHS, following the school’s footsteps, uses tradition as a guide for change in hope of a better future. So far, the combination has worked well by keeping our praised traditions alive while adjusting what really needs change. This way our school remains what it has always been while keeping up to date becoming a home for positive leaders in the changing world.
STUCO is a student-formed organization that plans and carries out a number of student activities. STUCO is characterized by its effort to make the voice of each and every student at CNG’s high school be heard so that student ideas are implemented to make CNG a better place for students. Also, STUCO allows us to develop our leadership skills and know in what activities we are strong at and in which ones we are weak. STUCO is not just about that, however; it helps us develop skills to help us work into balancing and improving on our weaknesses and strengths.

STUCO is a really active group that is constantly taking part in numerous events taking place at the school, some of the most important ones are Valentine’s day, Halloween, Hogar Nueva Granada’s novena and the Easter egg hunt. But STUCO’s most well-known activity is lunch-a-month; it’s also probably the one students enjoy the most. One Friday each month, different kinds of restaurants from around Bogotá come to CNG and sell their products providing students the freedom of being able to eat different kinds of food. This activity is the biggest fundraiser STUCO has, and this money is used for all the STUCO activities.

Everyone can be part of STUCO, but there is an election process in which your whole grade level votes to select their STUCO representatives. For each grade level there are five members and two honorary members. However, STUCO tries to make it so that everybody is involved with the community, whether you are an organization member or not. Such involvement ranges from being a STUCO member to talking with one of your grade representatives to contribute your ideas and try to make CNG a better and more united community.

It’s funny, but I remember the exact moment I raised my hand during the Student Council meeting and asked to write this article back when I was a freshman. Now I’m a few steps away from walking with a toga and a high school diploma in my hands. It’s been an honor and a self-enriching experience to have seen myself grow in the pages of the Insights magazine every year since then. I saved a copy of each magazine and as I re-visit the STUCO article I wrote in chronological order I can see my face changing, my hair growing in the pictures, my grammar and vocabulary improving, but most importantly me maturing. By typing anecdotes from STUCO and my personal advice to students in high school I reflect about the choices I’ve made and how they actually impacted my character, my priorities and even my career decision. Being on the verge of as they say, “entering the real world” I could say STUCO is a great sneak peak of how democracy, fundraising, discipline, philanthropy, and teamwork should be applied out there.

Student Council has been a crucial part of my learning in high school. To me, it was almost as if I was an intern in the House of Representatives. Student Council is a job we all take very seriously. Because we are chosen by our peers and we are held responsible of representing our grade level and making their time at school even more memorable. In this student government it’s like we ran a small country, we are students working together for the students. It was in this organization where I learned the importance of doing your part, this is because we work like a machine and if someone fails to complete what was asked the machine suffers some damages. Also since we work with a different president and executive committee every year, I noticed what types of leadership really lead the group to success. For example last year our head member really tried to make all of the members welcome and invite us to really care for every event. This made the experience more gratifying and fun. But for example in my first year we had an amazing but rigid leader with this person I really noticed that even though the STUCO machine was shiny and perfect it took some of the excitement away from it. Finding this kind of balance and having live experience on how a company works is one of the most valuable lessons I will take with me from Student Council. To conclude my fourteen years at Colegio Nueva Granada I feel proud of myself of making the decision to join student council for the first time in second grade and finish my journey in senior year. We were there to make our school a better place and that is worth gold to me.
High School Social Service Director
by: Ana Maria Iturralde

Social service challenges building social responsibility

Utopia is a classic with relevance even greater today than when it was written by Sir Thomas More in 1516. The author is well known by his affable character and for being a devoted genius regarding human topics. In the book, some aspects that are against human dignity are identified, but at the same time we can identify a wide spectrum of possibilities that guarantee the welfare of society in general. These confirm that Social Responsibility must be everyone’s “job”. The Educational Institutions take on social responsibility as a duty that, when it is fulfilled, contributes to welfare and human dignity.

Our school offers a variety of projects that develop social consciousness in the students and convinces them that serving and helping the “other” are essential in order to live in a better and happier society. Social service is an activity that engages students with real-life solutions to strengthen communities, and it is a chance for our younger citizens to learn responsibility, experience the satisfaction that comes from helping others and to acquire new skills. These skills include higher-order cognitive processes, such as critical thinking and decision-making. Social service projects also teach civic participation processes and skills, including group interaction, leadership, cooperation, and political influence. In addition, service enables students to give something back to their schools and communities, create positive partnerships among students and adults by encouraging youth to make the transition to adulthood as contributing and caring members of society, and encourage a lifelong commitment to the service ethic.

Furthermore, social service is a voluntary contribution to the common good that teaches valuable lessons about the responsibilities of citizenship in a free society. Long ago Alexis de Tocqueville reported the American penchant to solve problems through voluntary associations. Today, vital services are provided through thousands of organizations created to meet needs not otherwise provided for by government at the local, state, and national levels. These activities help create a sense of concern for the public good and a commitment to voluntarism that otherwise might not be possible. It also can help students focus on their goals, connecting their service to personal interests.

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Leadership

Understanding and appreciating every stage in our life is crucial for personal growth. Sometimes, we might feel the urge to look through some old photographs or read our favorite children's book as a means to hold on to our past. New fears haunt us as we get older, from questioning what sleepover we should go to, to what college we will attend. Life is not understood decision-making stages that connect the tradition with the future. CNG's leadership is no different. The traditional level system it has, creates the same conditions for growth and maturation through different experiences in relation with your level.

There are four levels in leadership: beginners, intermediate, advanced, and leaders of leaders. Each one of these levels is an important stage in the process of becoming a leader. In order to lead others, you must know yourself and the way you think very well. The beginners level takes care of this. Once you complete the quiet introspection, the intermediate level helps you realize how you change when working with others. Since the challenges are harder, you will need to ask for help and learn from your teammates. The advanced level comes after and it is in charge of making the last fittings. It polishes your leader skills and provides you with important scenarios where these skills are of great use. Finally, leaders of leaders is the culminating stage where you apply all your knowledge for you to lead the beginners, intermediates and advanced. It has been the custom to put the levels in this order, but the outcome of such an arrangement has been extremely positive and rewarding, contributing to the formation of leaders.

As a leader of leaders, I have experienced a growth beyond my expectations. My first year, as a beginner, opened so many doors for me. It allowed me to connect with my mind and emotions through activities such as hiking a steep rocky mountain for six hours or receiving the basics for outdoor first aid. Looking back, I can see how drastically I changed. Leadership has taught me to speak when appropriate and to listen when needed, that the more you learn from others the more you learn from yourself and mature, and that being wrong is the best opportunity to learn and grow. These lessons are the fruit of the leader system tree. I strongly believe the system maximizes our individual potential in all aspects.

Experiences may shape your life or may remain as a lost memory. It is up to you to make those experiences life lessons. In CNG’s Leadership program, the experiences lived provide students with the opportunity to progress as they go through the four levels. Building character and responsibility help you become the visionary future leader you desire to be. Learning who you are and feeling comfortable being your true self is fundamental in the first years in leadership. Learning from yourself and from other people help you understand and achieve the values this organization stands for. This is not an individual operation, it is a cooperative process which transforms potential leaders through traditional context into innovative leaders.

by: Daniela Duarte and Manuel Andres
High School Students

Many people are leaders, but few are them capable of taking those traits that represent them and put them into action. Through the leadership program the leaders are given the opportunity to do exactly that.

Leadership takes the students that have potential to be great leaders and make them grow as human beings. During various activities, we are able to learn more about ourselves, in order to help others. In those activities, the program is great. We have three different retreats during the year; two of them over night and the other a first aid course. The first two are filled activities that take us out of our comfort zone and push us to our limit. It is in those times, where we are able to appreciate the moment and take the most out of it. This is what makes us grow.

One of the goals of the program is to help us help others; community service is a big must. It is important to help others, especially the people around us. Last year we started a social service activity that included many projects. We are a very big group and everybody had the opportunity to help in their own way. With some friends, we started a soccer camp with the girls in the Hogar. For six Saturdays, we trained and played with them. It was our first year, so we had many flaws, but overall it was a success because we were able to take our passion and transmit it to others. And not only that; we were able to put a smile on many girls’ faces. 18 hours of our lives changed theirs. This is something we are planning to repeat this year, never the less our goal is to make it more professional. We have the potential to really teach these girls the foundations of soccer, so they can learn and take the most out of the camp. This is a small part of the program, but imagine 10, 12 different projects all working on one goal! We as a group have the potential to change our surroundings, and that’s where we are headed.

by: Andrea Copello
High School Student
A tradition at CNG has been the lunch soccer tournament; however, this year we used a new format. We are happy to be organizing the Intramural High School Soccer Tournament this year; it has been a great experience and the tournament has been very exciting.

We have had a total of twelve teams competing in the tournament, and eight of them have already qualified for the quarter-finals. There are teams from every grade, and we even have a ninth grade team that qualified for the first place of Group B.

The games have had a great number of spectators and many of them have been very exciting. The tournament winners will receive a trophy that we hope will be passed on to the following years’ winners, as well as a pizza party. The best goal keeper, top goal scorer, and player of the tournament will receive medals to recognize their impressive performance throughout the tournament.

We are very excited to witness the outcome of the tournament, and are eagerly waiting to see who wins. We look forward to perhaps organizing a second tournament during the second semester, given the success of the current one. We invite you all to come and see the playoff games!
I had prepared some interview questions, set up the appointment and for the day of the interview to come. I entered his office, he was busy on the computer, and helped myself to a chair. We shared formal greetings, and as he turned around, I realized this was the beginning of October yet these were the first words I had ever exchanged with our new Associate Principal and AP Exam Coordinator (he is if you didn’t know). His office is an organized, cozy, little oasis awkwardly located next to the men’s locker room, in case you haven’t had the pleasure of entering yet. Right away I explained my being there, “We want to interview you for the High School newspaper. We feel that by getting to know who the new figure of authority is, we can identify with it. This is an opportunity for us to get to know you.”

We’ve all seen Mr. Viscardi emerge virtually from nowhere, wearing conspicuous sun glasses, smoothly approach the loud speaker, calmly remind the closest senior that it’s 12:35pm, and disappear again. As a person sitting in the amphitheater’s stairs, a deaf spectator to the action (all I could ever hear in that situation are the babble of some Nicki Minaj), I’ve noticed how protesting from the students has reduced each time, to the point of becoming obsolete. Of some Nicki Minaj, I’ve noticed how protesting from the students has reduced each time, to the point of becoming obsolete. When Mr. Viscardi opened himself amicably to me, even responding enthusiastically to my less serious questions. I received a big smile when he asked me about his stance on comic books and superheroes. He likes comic books. He grew up watching Superman, and particularly admires Jean Luc Picard, from, you guessed it, Star Trek. Then the obligatory question: “If you could have any superpower what would it be?” He didn’t have to think much about it: “Invisibility.” The earnestness of his answer made me think it was a twelve-year-old Craig Viscardi who was talking to me. “I always wanted to be invisible, because then I could see the reality of things. You know when you’re invisible you know what’s going on.” His argument then took an unexpected turn, “I could use that to solve a situation, for example the ability to negotiate. I have a partial interest in the Palestine-Israel conflict. It just irritates me because they’re so much and they just don’t know how to sit down and negotiate.” I then asked him if he was in the military, and visibly he responded “No! I hate the military!”

I asked him what his kryptonite was, expecting some silly pet peeve like disorder, or slow internet connection to be the answer. Instead, he put on a straight face and thought long about it, as if looking for the right words to formulate his answer. “Something that just destroys who I am as a person is an attitude of entitlement, with a sense of superiority and hostility.” he suddenly said. “Arrogance with a sense of entitlement, people who think deserve everything without making the effort.” He added. “When I get confronted with those attitudes I cannot think straight.” I asked him why. “I come from a working background. My parents divorced when I was young, and we had to work really hard to get where we were. I had to work in college, and I know the sacrifices parents have to make for their kids. Not having come from privilege, I respect the quality of working hard, making your own opportunities in life. Not everything is going to be handed to you. I think it’s a merit and a responsibility to earn that which you are given.”

I guess this explains why he’s so much against mediocrity. Later he said his message to all of us was, “Do your absolute best in everything that you do regardless if you like me personally or not. I want you to do your best.” And it’s only reasonable that he does. “I come here to help students do the best they can.” He reminds me later. In essence, that’s his job. To help us be the best we can.

It’s fun to demonize figures of authority, and be stubborn, and not listen when asked to be better, but the fact is a great majority of us don’t live up to our full potentials. Some aren’t even aware of the capacities they have. Hating or mocking a person who’s working in your favor is as stupid as it reads. Often we have fallen so deep into our own fallacy that discerning the facts is difficult. The first step we should take for living to our full potentials, is getting rid of silly preconceptions and seeing things for what they really are. In the words of Mr. Craig Viscardi, “Can you imagine where we would get to be if everybody around you did their absolute best?”

Can you?
El programa de Ciencias Sociales de nuestro colegio ha venido creciendo en su capacidad de generar amor y compromiso con Colombia, basándonos en el conocimiento e identidad con nuestra historia y nuestra cultura.

Nuestras clases son una oportunidad para que los estudiantes conozcan más su país, vean con orgullo nuestras posibilidades y presenten opciones críticas frente a los problemas que tenemos en el presente y que tendremos a futuro como nación. En cada grado, los estudiantes van aprendiendo las posibilidades que nuestro maravilloso país nos ofrece. De manera analítica, debatimos los problemas sociales y presentan sus teorías sobre la mejor forma de transformar realidades por superar.

Estamos convencidos de que la experiencia de un estudiante en nuestro programa, les da la oportunidad de crecer como personas y formarse como ciudadanos responsables, capaces de ofrecer alternativas viables en el futuro, desde su proyecto de vida. Sabemos que desde la historia, la geografía, la política, y también desde la economía y la filosofía, un estudiante del Nueva Granada tiene múltiples opciones de abordar la realidad que lo rodea, preguntándose también por la situación de nuestro país en el mundo y el papel del liderazgo en los retos del futuro. Costumbre en que nuestra formación y la oportunidad que tenemos al discutir el origen y evolución histórica del país, nos da la correa de cordear en que tenemos protagonistas dinámicos que serán agentes positivos de cambio.

Y es que para esta misión, CNG tiene a favor un enorme capital humano en sus profesores, padres y especialmente alumnos. Tenemos en nuestras manos, un potencial enorme con esta generación, que con seguridad aportará al país en el conocimiento y análisis de nuestra historia y del su grandiosa geografía.

Desde su fundación, CNG recorrió el resto del siglo XX y otros 12 años del siglo XXI. Hemos visto cómo han crecido fenómenos de violencia e injusticia que hoy somos capaces de superar. También, hemos crecido junto con el desarrollo económico del país y estrategias de integración con el resto del mundo. La experiencia conjunta de aprender de estas realidades, nos pone en un momento crucial de la historia en donde nuestros jóvenes son y serán protagonistas.

En el año de 1981 Felipe trata de organizar su corbata, a su lado tiene una carpeta de cartón con unos papeles escritos a mano y un discurso realizado en máquina de escribir. Año 2012 y Alex se encuentra organizando su corbata, a su lado tiene un maletín donde guarda su “tablet”. Siente que su discurso no está completo. El CNG este año cumple 75 años y muchas son las cosas que nos permiten sentirnos orgullos de nuestro colegio. Una de ellas, que seamos los pioneros en los Modelos de Naciones Unidas en Colombia y que después de treinta y un años nuestros estudiantes continúen hablando de lo importante que es el respeto por la diferencia, la tolerancia y la llegada acuerdos basados en la paz y la soberanía.

Estar en MUN es creer en un método de enseñanza fuera del aula de clase, efectiva desde lo académico y la humanidad. Es entender que el mundo necesita de personas que valoren la diferencia, que expresen sus ideas con respeto, sin tratar de imponerse mediante la agresión y ante todo todos que entiendan que nadie es superior a nadie. Somos seres humanos en un mundo que a veces olvida esa condición, pero afortunadamente están los delegados, jóvenes que hacen y sueñan porque esta condición no sea olvidada. MUN es un ejercicio que por ejemplo le permitirá a Alex el estudiante del CNG de raíces judías sentarse a dialogar con un estudiante del colegio de raíces afganas sobre la situación que se vive en estos países y las creencias culturales y religiosas de cada uno. Un ha de comunicación, respetuosa, tolerante y amable, donde ninguno de ellos trató de agredir o persuadir al otro de que su forma de pensar es la correcta. Terminado el diálogo hay ganadores de manos y un “hasta pronto”. Ejemplo para aquellos que no pueden convivir o simplemente escuchar al otro por sus creencias. Por eso en MUN creemos que este ejercicio logra cambiar sustancialmente el curso de la historia, porque cambia sustancialmente a los hombres y mujeres que participan en él.

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Estar en MUN es creer en un método de enseñanza fuera del aula de clase, efectiva desde lo académico y la humanidad. Es entender que el mundo necesita de personas que valoren la diferencia, que expresen sus ideas con respeto, sin tratar de imponerse mediante la agresión y ante todo todos que entiendan que nadie es superior a nadie.
The “honored traditions” of CNG in the realm of teaching and learning include lectures from expert teachers, binders meticulously organized and populated with notes from these lectures, brilliant written papers, eloquently delivered speeches, and bright posters and models adorning the hallways at every level of the school. As we look to the “visionary future,” all of these things will continue to be a part of the fabric of CNG, yet there will be more. Because one of the main components of the current school improvement plan centers on integrating technology into every classroom, those “honored traditions” of CNG will be joined by the never-ending parade of tools and skills from the “visionary future” brought to the classroom via various forms of technology and technological tools.

One group of CNG students who is most prepared to embrace this “visionary future” is the current ninth grade, themselves the “future” of the high school. Last year, in grade 8, these students were exposed to introductory video making, podcasting, blogging and over 35 web 2.0 tools through their Spanish, Sociales, English, science and social studies classes. As student Jack A. explains, “I felt that it was great to have access to these tools. This also engaged us in learning.” This year, they are continuing to build on those skills through their Computers and Careers class.

One of their favorite ways of building those skills is through what we call our Google 20% project. This is based on Google’s company practice of giving their employees 20% of their time on the clock to pursue projects of their own creation. The company has found that allowing this sort of creative freedom has led to some of their biggest breakthroughs. Many of the Google tools people currently use on a daily basis, such as Gmail, and the innovations soon to be released by Google, came from this “20%” project.

In Computers and Careers class, students are pursuing a wide variety of interests during their “Google 20%” time with great vigor. Some examples:

- advanced video editing (including special effects found in science fiction and action films),
- advanced Excel skills,
- 3D drawing online,
- monetizing websites, and
- the process for creating a mobile app.

Students use advanced internet search skills to find and evaluate resources on the web in order to learn more about their chosen skill. Pedro Juan M. has this to say about the project. “I think that this project is a great way to learn how to use a tool and apply it in a real situation.” The students also use each other and experts outside the classroom to help them find answers when they are “stuck.” When students come to class and find out it is a “Google day,” there are cheers followed by a rush to the computers and 80 minutes of the hum of students intensely engaged in learning and discovery. Watching their knowledge and skills increase at an exponential rate during these “Google days” indeed, confirms to me that grade 9 is going to be key in helping CNG embrace the tools and excitement of what technology can do in the classroom in the hands of learners, as CNG moves towards that “visionary future.”

The ninth grade “Google days” are also of great interest to the engineers at Google’s headquarters in the US. Recently, I was selected to attend the Google Teacher Academy in New York City where I learned a lot about the tools Google has to help teachers and schools be more efficient, connected and visionary in their methods. I left there as a “Google Certified Teacher.” When I shared with Google employees that we are trying out the Google “20%” project in our classroom, they expressed an interest in hearing about what happens. At the end of the year, they want us to help other schools do the same by sharing our story and successes.

The combination of grade 9 students and “Google” is indeed leading to an exciting and visionary future for CNG. According to Sam T., grade 9 is on that cutting edge “because we had excellent opportunities to be introduced to new technologies in middle school and we have three more years after ninth grade in high school, and would like for CNG to be constantly striving towards (integrating) new technologies.”

by: Shawntel Allen
High School Teacher
Edited by Terry Thomas, English Department

Colegio NUEVA GRANADA  December 2012
Feeling The “Condor Vibe”
by: Jonathan Chenier
Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities Director

Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities at CNG encompass so much of what we do K-12. In the past months, it has become clear to me that the entire community, from alumni and parents, to teachers and students, and even support staff and security guards, all share a great love for this school and a sense of belonging for reasons that clearly go beyond their primary reason for being at CNG. Visitors on our campus always seem to echo similar sentiments of a “positive vibe,” a “Condor Vibe.”

Our office is often filled with alumni, parents, teachers and students who have fantastic stories about the past, their eyes light up when they remember big basketball games, House activities, school trips, and many other noteworthy events in their school lives. They also have great ideas about what we can do today and tomorrow for our current students. More often than not, a smile comes to their faces when they share these memories of their past at CNG. That is the “Condor Vibe.”

In the pages that follow, it will be clear, that great things continue to happen at CNG, and it goes beyond the classroom. There are articles on sports, Condor Activities, House Activities and Classroom Without Walls excursions sprinkled throughout the pages. These are just a few samples of the many great things that happen in our community outside of the four walls of a classroom, and some of the things that our students will remember for life.

Our goal in the Department of Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities is to offer something beyond that primary reason of being at CNG. We want to help our community find that extra reason to smile, another reason to remember their time at CNG fondly when they move on. Whether it is Destination Imagination, team practice, a yoga session to relax after a hard day’s work, or any of the over 100 activities and programs that we offer our students and staff at CNG, we hope that every member of our community feels like they have a place on campus beyond their primary purpose, to feel like they belong and to enjoy. And most of all, we hope everyone on campus has the opportunity to feel the “Condor Vibe.”

From November 13-18, CNG student-athletes were at the Columbus School in Medellin competing amongst 11 other SACS schools from around the nation for individual sport and overall titles. Our Condors did very well.

Along with the overall title, here are the results:

**Boys Volleyball - 1st Place**
- Best Setter - Khalid Hadad
- Best Attacker - Esteban Cruz
- Volleyball MVP - David Cure
- Coaching Sportsmanship Award - Juan Baldivis

The boys came in to this tournament fresh off of their UNCOLI championship the day before, and showed the crowds that the national competition was not any different. Through the impressive play of the team, especially our senior awards winners, listed above, the team cruised to victory without even losing a set in the entire tournament. It was an impressive display from a team of gentlemen, whose coach, Juan Baldivis, took home his 6th Binationals title in a row along with the Coaching Sportsmanship Awards.

**Girls Volleyball - 1st Place**
- Best Setter - Khalid Hadad
- Best Attacker - Natalia Velez
- Coaching Sportsmanship Award - Maria Alicia Orozco

The girls also arrived with the recent title of UNCOLI champions, and breezed through the competition until the final championship match. The format changed for the last game, switching from best of 3 to best of 5. The ladies were the beneficiaries of this policy, as they lost the two opening sets, close as they were, this policy, as they lost the two opening sets, close as they were, the girls were on their way to the longest, most exciting game of the entire event. 40 minutes later, smiles from ear to ear, the Lady Condors were celebrating an improbable victory against a tough Granadino team.

**Girls Soccer - 1st Place**
- Most Goals Scored - Gabriel Maldonado
- Soccer MVP - Andrea Copello

Arguably the highest level of play among the top teams was found in the ladies soccer tournament, with the host Columbus School, CNG and Colegio Bolivar all fielding very strong teams, including two players who recently appeared on the Colombian Sub 17 team that competed at the World Championship in September. CNG met Columbus in the semi-final, and it took penalty kicks to decide a winner, with Andrea Copello stopping every Columbus attempt. In the final, the outcome was never in doubt, as CNG had a 3-0 half time lead, and hung on to win 4-2.

**Boys Soccer - 5th Place**
The boys played a great tournament, ending first round play undefeated and set in their division. They played well right into the final, dominating time of possession and shots on goal. However, as sometimes happens in sport, especially on a rainy day, the bounces just did not go their way and they came up short 2-1.

**Girls Basketball - 5th Place**
This young team of mostly underclassmen played hard throughout the tournament and came up just short in the bronze medal game.

**Boys Basketball - 5th Place**
The boys faced tough competition and an injury to their starting point guard, taking Andrew Crisp out of the tournament before the first round ended, but fought valiantly to end up 5th. They are also a young team with much promise for the future.

Games results and photos can be found on The Columbus School website (http://events.columbus.edu.co/Pages/Fotos.aspx).
Del 27 al 30 de septiembre de 2012, nuestro colegio vibró con el evento ‘Mini Basketball Festival’, que contó con la participación de estudiantes niños y niñas de 4 y 5 grado de diferentes colegios de Colombia. El resultado, unos equipos satisfechos por el desempeño y esmero que cada uno de sus jugadores entregó en la cancha, donde valores como el trabajo en equipo, dedicación, entrega y pasión, se hicieron evidentes en cada encuentro, demostrando un juego de calidad y altura.

Es un orgullo para el Colegio Nueva Granada ser forjador y maestro de estos grandes deportistas y estudiantes, pues han logrado establecer un alto nivel deportivo con procesos que vienen desde cursos inferiores, lo que nos permite ratificar una vez más que si vale la pena apostarle al deporte y que son los estudiantes deportistas del CNG el claro ejemplo de que la constancia y el amor por lo que se hace, deja grandes satisfacciones y evidencia que se puede superar cualquier límite que pueda existir.

Queremos agradecer a todos los colegios que se hicieron presentes en este festival; Albania, Altamira, Bolívar, Columbus, Granadino, Montessori, CNG A, B, C pues sin su participación no hubiéramos logrado culminar con éxito este maravillo festival.

Hacemos una extensa invitación a todos nuestros estudiantes para que sigan luchando por lo que quieren y apoyen a nuestro colegio en este tipo de eventos, que lo único que pretende es hacer de ustedes mejores seres humanos, deportistas y estudiantes.

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First of all, I must point out that I have been in gymnastics since K-5, and really understand the changes that the gymnastics as a sport at CNG has gone through, which lately have been a lot. First of all, the staff of the gymnastics team has been modified throughout the years many times, until finally we have about 6 coaches, which is a great amount for the number of people we have, and they are of an impeccable level. There are many primary and elementary students in this activity, and they divide in a very organized way to be able to give every athlete their full attention and dedication. Also, this sport has been moving, from the kiosk to the gym, which was a gigantic advance because the kiosk doesn’t offer the space necessary, which shortened the number of spots that could be occupied by gymnasts. In the gym, there can be different elements done at a time, and therefore the students advanced noticeably. Before, we would practice bars out in the park, and we would have to use really old and hurting mats to do the sport we liked, but now we have a couple of new mats for bar, our own bar inside the gym, new mats for beam, a fixed beam and vault, and some incredible new mats for floor that do not hurt us anymore, since the old ones had holes and could easily injure us.

Since Mabel Moreno took control of the gymnastics team, there have been many improvements; like the ones listed above and other factors. For example, since she got here the training is more specialized for its athletes and we are divided into groups with kids that are our same level. Also, we are now like a family, we have fun, we do lots of exercise, but having an amazing time. Honestly, it is like a type of home where we feel we can even talk to our coaches and confide in them. Also, she has invented warm-ups for every day to keep us occupied by doing the right things, and making a schedule that has to be followed weekly for everyone to do every element for much more improvement. She has also brought order to the sport, because while she is strict and expects a lot from us, she gives us all of her support and understanding. A specific schedule was made for Middle School and High School to be able to have their training without crossing with the Primary School and Elementary School, who need a lot more attention.

With everything we’ve mentioned, it is said by itself that gymnastics has made huge advantages and still will in the future, since now there were chosen two Captains for the team, which will represent the students’ opinions, so together, staff and students, we will try to make the gymnastics team the best environment we can for our athletes.
En todos estos años de trabajo con el voleibol del Colegio Nueva Granada, hemos conseguido consolidar una verdadera tradición, en la formación, no solo de deportistas sino también de jóvenes aspirantes a futuros grandes. Nuestro=_coordinator por: Miguel Angel Contreras López Volleyball Coordinator eng volleyball, más fuerte que nunca

Volleyball is a feeling!

For me, volleyball is not only a sport or a hobby, it is a feeling. When I play volleyball, I experience an unexplainable feeling of joy. When I serve, when I spike, when I set, or even if I throw myself to the floor and scrape my knee to pick up a ball; I feel happy (even if my team loses the point).

I have to admit, when I started to play volleyball I felt scared and unsure because I had never tried out for a sport. But I am glad I chose volleyball. It is a sport of teamwork but also individual work. It is a sport of rules but also of fun. It is a sport of intelligence, mind focusing, and sometimes, improvisation.

I have to confess, every day that I come to school I look forward to staying afterschool to focus, and sometimes, improvisation.

Last but not least, volleyball has given me a sense of dedication and effort. It has taught me that you need to work and practice to get the things you want and also to have a sense of effort to be able to be successful. It has made me a compassionate, social person. Volleyball, as I said, not only a sport. It gives you a lot more things than any other sport.

what UNCOLI really stands for

by Stephanie Botero and Andrea Diaz High School Students

UNCOLI, Union de Colegios Internacionales de Bogota, is a tournament in which schools from around the city come together in one nanomous, respectful, healthy environment. The tournament encourages kids to compete in soccer, volleyball, and basketball, all within a referee’s ultimate verdict and every athlete’s golden rule: fair play.

After six amazing years on the CNG volleyball team, we feel that within the multiple tournaments we participate in every year, UNCOLI is by far the most challenging yet fun competition of all.

Winning UNCOLI has become the team’s ultimate goal. We believe, actually that this is true for nearly every team within the tournament. UNCOLI impuies you to give one extra effort in the court, the competitiveness on behalf of every single opponent you face is worthy of only the most outstanding performance of all. If you fail to git it your all in the court, you lose, your team loses.

UNCOLI has helped us develop as both athletes and persons. You do gain a great physique from sports and competition; nonetheless, perhaps more importantly, you gain teamwork skills, you become resilient and patient, and you become part or something; you become part of a family.

The volleyball team is our family, and UNCOLI is just the place where we can show that to the world while we celebrate the points scored and get mad at the points lost. Yes, we get home late after the matches and yes, they sometimes interfere with social occasions, but the satisfaction you get from being on a team and from being part of such an overwhelming tournament overcomes everything else.

UNCOLI, and volleyball in general, is about feeling it. It is about being on time to the match, respecting not only your teammates but your opponents, and allowing your coach to guide you. Winning a match, winning a tournament, consists of talent, practice, sportsmanship, and charisma. An athlete is not made out of muscles only; an athlete is made out of perseverance and passion. No team is eligible for winning a tournament like UNCOLI unless every single player feels it; it is then when the perfect combination of talent and love come together into a harmonious team that will score 25 points under the cheers of their schoolmates.

The volleyball team is our family, and UNCOLI is just the place where we can show that to the world while we celebrate the points scored and get mad at the points lost. Yes, we get home late after the matches and yes, they sometimes interfere with social occasions, but the satisfaction you get from being on a team and from being part of such an overwhelming tournament overcomes everything else.

UNCOLI is by far the most challenging yet fun competition of all.
¿una promesa más en el tintero?

Año nuevo, vida nueva. Creo que nadie tiene la menor idea de hace cuanto se utiliza lo que llamamos mis 10 tazas de café, según los caledonesanos, pero que veo y veo fuera todos los días de diciembre y de cada fin de año prometiendo frente al reloj todo lo que no hicimos y que muy seguramente estará en el top de nuestras promesas para los nuevos años, que están a la vuelta de la esquina, pues bien alimentarse bien, dormir las horas suficientes para garantizar una recuperación total de la energía, hacer ejercicio o ejercicios que en algún caso no necesariamente son cigarillos a mis expensas.

En el CNG, nuestro año nuevo, vida nueva, inicia más o menos el 15 de junio de cada año, cuando el baloncesto de lo estudiantes inicia nuevamente los entrenamientos de la estructura de concreto que significa nuestro nuevo hogar, en la parte más alta de la institución, donde topamos con los cerros orientales, se encuentra ubicado el High School Gym, espacio que hace parte de la escuela alta y donde el colegio cuenta con su propio gimnasio, este espacio ideado con el objeto de prestar un servicio para toda la comunidad incluyendo estudiantes, profesores, funcionarios, colaboradores, staff, cuenta con las herramientas necesarias para adquirir programas de entrenamiento que deben responder a las necesidades de cada individuo en particular.

Los objetivos personales de cada individuo difieren de aquel que puede estar entrena, para algunas perder peso es la prioridad, para ello, trabajos en circuito con movimientos dinámicos y saltos, son una estrategia que no demanda demasiado tiempo y lleva a un alto consumo de calorias, para los que disfrutan de estar al aire libre, trotar en el soccer field, alrededor de las áreas de baloncesto y combinarlo con trabajos de carga baja y muchas repeticiones llenas a mejorar la figura, al tiempo que fortalecen el corazón y queman calorias, los más aventureros tienen la posibilidad de ganar masa muscular, aumentar la fuerza, lograr mejor definición y atreverse a enfrentar cargas altas en maquinas especialmente diseñadas, si saltar lazo, trabajar con gomas de resistencia de colores, superficies inestables o simplemente hacer contra unas series de abdominales en el objetivo particular es en este espacio donde puedes a colaborar y encontrar un espacio que poco a poco crece, se nutre de nuevos equipos, de un horario rígido para aprovechar su existencia y de un equipo de trabajo que día a día busca renovar los programas para garantizar resultados.

En la sala de weights del CNG, sudar, correr, saltar, mover cargas, crear programas, conocer ejercicios que incluso se pueden hacer en casa, pueden ser la excusa perfecta para cambiar de ambiente, conocer gente, encontrarse con aquellos de los que disfruta su compañía y al mismo tiempo liberar estrés, quemar esa energía de más, mejorar la figura sin importar la excusa, pensar incluso en las vacaciones, semana de receso, esfuerzo, fortalecer nuestro cuerpo y automatizar y aprovechar las opciones que la institución trae y ofrecen todos los días a todos y cada uno de los que hacen parte de este equipo de trabajo llamado CNG, ese que vela por la formación de los que en un futuro llevarán el curo de nuestro país.

La sala de weights pesa su servicio de lunes a viernes de 2:00 pm a 6:00 pm, con los brazos abiertos, la mejor disposición y las ganas de sacarle unas cuantas gotas de sudor, estamos atentos a darle la bienvenida.
The process of learning can be compared with the process of harvesting. Once the seed of knowledge that teachers have carefully and wisely sowed in mature and strong enough, it can be manipulated in a way that not only allows our children to receive nourishment from it, but also play with it. Yes, to play with it and conquer the world!

What usually happens after the harvest season? In the United States we celebrate Thanksgiving, in China we celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival. But, what happens at CNG? We also celebrate Thanksgiving and the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival, but at the same time, we celebrate and praise the talent and the abilities of our students by turning what is being taught inside the classroom into a reason to have fun. By the same token, we celebrate and praise the talent and the abilities of our students by turning what is being taught inside the classroom into a reason to have fun. At the same time, we celebrate and praise the talent and the abilities of our students by turning what is being taught inside the classroom into a reason to have fun.

Our kids have everything they need to be successful: loving families, talents, skills and one of the most important things, they have the privilege of having CNG as their second home. CNG is not only a school; it is a second home. CNG is not only a school; it is a second home. CNG is not only a school; it is a second home. CNG is not only a school; it is a second home. CNG is not only a school; it is a second home. CNG is not only a school; it is a second home. Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world! Yes, to play with it and conquer the world!

Thus, how can languages help CNG’s students? When we step on the “language arena” we find new words, new structures, new sounds... even new shapes (as Chinese characters) and new ideas. And what happens during this process? We also find different ways of thinking, of perceiving the world, new philosophies, theories, practices, activities... the list is endless! That’s the magic about languages, once we start learning them, our brains start absorbing an amazing amount of information, feelings, thoughts and structures that somehow mold and nourish our brain, body and soul, like a magic seed that grows inside.

I believe that our kids (and I say our because we all make part of their education and their daily life) are full of magic seeds; seeds that have been sowed with hope by each one of us —and I am including you, dear families—. Our mission? Our mission is to keep sowing seeds and making them grow with support and encouragement. Thanks a lot for letting the kids make part of this magic plantation of hopes and dreams! Thank you all with our work.
In our school, the Houses have been a big tradition for a long time. These four houses: eagles, hawks, ospreys and falcons have really left a footprint in everyone’s hearts full of memories, spirit and competition. I can say that I have been very privileged by being elected the last three years in middle school as a representative, vice-captain and now a captain. This organization has made me become a strong, confident leader willing to help others. I think that these leaves everyone a very important message like playing fair, doing teamwork and other great lessons that we can apply for our future. What I absolutely love the most about the houses is field day, for a day we can be together, do a lot of activities and really make a new friendship. There are a lot of things that houses have taught me throughout life since I was in K-4 and I think I can say the same about my friends and my grade.

Leadership is very important throughout all our school and it will always be. For many people, houses are very important and they take advantage of the opportunities they have to play and participate in the activities. Leadership helps people develop and discover their abilities and weaknesses. It is important to be a leader because you get to help others by setting an example.

The House soccer tournament was a great way to start the athletic year for the 8th grade. It consisted of teamwork, dedication and house spirit to make it enjoyable for everyone. It was a great experience for everyone that we hope to continue achieving with every grade and every activity.

On Family Sports Afternoon we spent half of the day playing in a competition that is a tradition for CNG. This involves the student’s family in competition by houses where the student and parents participate in different sports divided in three sections: 1. Soccer, spining and tabletop Handball and Basketball 2. Volleyball and Ping Pong. As a Captain I feel that this activity is the most important activity to bond families. I also think that the 99.9 percent of students like this activity because we have lots of fun and we skip half a day of school. Students also liked the end of the day with the race in which Leo and Dr. Bob sprinted half of the soccer court. “Leo will always win” said a student. I believe that this is an activity that should be done at least 2 times a year.

For many people the quiz bowl is a test of how much you know of the agenda. But that’s not true the quiz bowl also is to know the new teachers to learn about them and realize that these new teachers will be part of the CNG family from now on. So for people who want to be in the quiz bowl they need to have a good knowledge of the agenda and a good relationship with all the teachers. Good Luck.

This year we are introducing pins that you can win in the different house activities. Each pin is worth 20 points.

Elementary Eagles

We had a successful bake sale, we sold lots of goodies and we achieved our goal, now we have money to buy our House Jackets.

Elementary Hawks

We played the micro soccer tournament in elementary, we had a lot of fun and finally we won.

Elementary Ospreys

This year we are introducing pins that you can win in the different house activities. Each pin is worth 20 points.

Elementary Falcons

by: Juana Uribe  
Middle School Hawks Captain

by: Jorge Luis Rojas  
Middle School Eagles Captain

by: Carlos Álvarez  
Middle School Hawks Captain

by: Alejandro Bolero  
Middle School Falcons Captain

by: Nicolas de la Pava  
Middle School Ospreys Captain

In Halloween, we were funny, creative and scary. Every one participated and we won points for our houses.

by: Alejandro Bolero  
Middle School Falcons Captain
Karate-Do Shotokan is a martial art born in Japan, the land of the rising sun, which teaches respect for others, self-defense and self-control through physical activities. It also teaches a philosophy that can become a way of life. In Japanese, the literal meaning of Karate-Do is “the way of the empty hand”. “The way” is the whole process of seeking karate mastery and perfection and “empty hand” means that in the Karate weapons are never used and attack never comes first. This martial art is characterized by perseverance, respect, humility, discipline and commitment. Karate is not only a sport, it is a way of life where you learn many qualities not many sports can offer. Practicing this martial art for so many years has made me a stronger person in mind and spirit and a better human being. My story practicing Karate-Do is a nine year staircase, the process of reaching mastery in the sport has taken me almost all my life. I entered the Colegio Nueva Granada when I was four years old and as soon as I could, I started the Martial Arts extracurricular activity. At the Academy I met Sensei Diana Blanco, our teacher, who took me by the hand in the rise of each step and has become my very special Master and a great friend as well. She, along with Sensei Germán Novoa and Sensei César Peña have been my guides in this wonderful process.

Karate is like a tunnel, when you enter the tunnel is the beginning and the end of it is your goal. But how do you go through that tunnel? There is a rope that pulls you back and forth, in other words, the rope represents the obstacles that interfere and make you go back. Your effort pushes things forward to go through that path. Every time you take a step forward things can get complicated, but that’s precisely what strengthens you. When you leave the tunnel and you obtain victory, you get closer to mastery.

On June 2, 2012, nine years later after my start in this sport, I fulfilled my dream, obtaining my Black Belt and becoming a Sensei. Achieving this was very difficult because the mental and physical requirements are very demanding. I had to prepare myself to go through a five hour exam full of intense physical activity. Additionally I had to prepare the monography entitled Karate Ni Sente Nashi and support it with my teachers. The graduation ceremony was very touching for my family, partners, friends and of course for myself. The moment I received the Black Belt, I felt relief, inner peace, a happiness so great that words cannot describe. Seeing the public stand on their chairs and applaud endlessly was a moment of infinite happiness. The graduation was an inspiration to many people, and I hope that the students of Colegio Nueva Granada, including my brother Esteban (1st grade) follow my example, because becoming a Sensei is the best thing that can happen in life. Since then I feel the commitment to be Master, to be an integral Sensei, because as I mentioned, Karate is a sport and a philosophy that has marked my life forever.
La clase de Lego Stopmotion surgió con el propósito de enseñarle a los estudiantes las nociones básicas de la animación cuadro a cuadro y los procesos que se deben llevar a cabo para la realización de una película animada, aprendiendo a manejar conceptos como el encuadre fotográfico, los espacios y escenografías, la creación de personajes y el desarrollo de historias.

Pero más allá de estos componentes teóricos, el taller se ha convertido en un espacio en el que aprendemos a convivir todos, profesores y alumnos, respetándonos como individuos, escuchando las ideas y aportes de cada uno, y entendiendo lo importante y valioso que es el trabajo en equipo. Esto último no siempre es fácil, ya que hablamos de un proceso técnico para el que se requiere bastante tiempo y esto hace que los resultados prácticos no se puedan ver inmediatamente. A veces hay que esperar un poco y no perder la paciencia. Eso es precisamente lo que queremos que los niños comprendan al final, cuando ven sus películas terminadas, es que los grandes proyectos se construyen paso a paso, con organización, paciencia y perseverancia.

El siguiente link es para ver “El constructor”, un trabajo realizado por Miguel Cárdenas, quien después de finalizado el taller, decidió poner en práctica sus conocimientos adquiridos en la clase. ¡Disfrutenlo!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQgNmx--iKY
The success we see in futbol at CNG in the top levels is a direct result of the love our youngest players have for the sport. When our coaches asked their Elementary School players to express in writing why they loved the game, we were inundated with submissions. Elementary students handing in written work that was not going to be graded with smiles on their faces, WOW! Although we have great coaches, building a program becomes much easier when the pupils have the kind of passion exhibited in the work seen on these pages.
This year Colegio Nueva Granada is celebrating 75 years of Honored Tradition and Visionary Future. In an effort to honor our traditions and preserve our history, we have undertaken the challenge of reconstructing our history and publishing it in a coffee table book. Through exhaustive research and interviews, “Celebrating CNG: The First 75 Years” tells the story of our School through the eyes of students, alumni, and community members. It is a collectable, hardcover, coffee-table book in landscape format.

GET YOUR COPY NOW!