

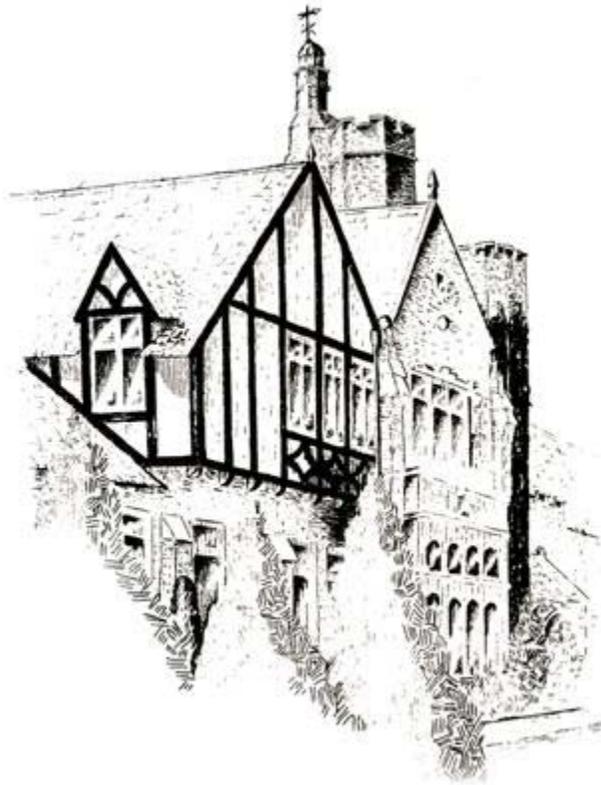


CASTLEMONT HIGH SCHOOL

College Prep Small Learning Communities

**Castlemont High School Alumni Association
(C.H.S.A.A.)**

**5th Anniversary Report
(2004-2009)**



“Build on and make thy castles high and fair, rising and reaching upward to the skies.”

May 2009

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I. Introduction and Background

Origins and Founders

The idea for an alumni organization had been around for a long time before 2004. It took a few "older" alumni, together with some "younger" alumni, to make it a reality. Carol Berry ('66), her sister Diana Becton-Smith ('69), and others had been meeting as the Angel Network for years, and they talked about the importance of forming a community of alumni and friends who could provide support and continuity.

After organizing a December 2002 All-Class gathering at Castlemont High School, which included students, alumni, and faculty, the Angel Network collaborated with Thuy Thi Nguyen ('93) and others to set up the initial planning meetings, to shape the structure and draft by-laws, and to incorporate as a non-profit entity.

Founders:

Carol Becton-Berry ('66)
Debra Lindo
Diana Becton-Smith ('69)
Doug Allen Taylor
Eleyette Worth ('69)
Gary Yee ('62)
Judy (Tart) Baloney ('66)
Lanna Bulter-McCoy ('69)
Thuy Nguyen ('93)

The Founders started the Castlemont High School Alumni Association (CHSAA), and officially incorporated with the State of California on November 22, 2004. CHSAA's mission, as stated in its *Mission Statement, CHSAA By-Laws Article II, Section I*, is to:

- To promote fellowship among Castlemont High School (hereinafter, "CHS") alumni;
- To highlight the legacy of Castlemont High School alumni and continue the legacy with each graduating class;
- To initiate, encourage, and conduct activities to benefit CHS; and
- To affect positive changes in the lives of students currently attending CHS, recent graduates, and former students.

CHSAA focused on promoting Career Day and joined forces with Greg Hickey, '56 to co-sponsor the all-class picnic. The founders also hoped to raise enough money for an annual scholarship or other awards, and established the alumni hall of fame to recognize distinguished alumni who carry the Knights-name with honor and inspire our current students to believe in their own potential.

By Fall 2004, CHSAA had grown to 99 paid members, including 11 from the Class of '50, and 9 from the Class of '69. By Spring 2007, CHSAA boasted more than 200 members total, with 66 paid members that year. The oldest members were Eva Wilson from the Class of '38, and the youngest member is Wilmon Hubbard, Jr. from the Class of '04.

Currently, CHSAA has more than 101 paid members, with 30 lifetime members.

Annual membership dues are \$25. Lifetime membership dues are \$225. A member becomes a lifetime member by paying \$225 or being an annual member for nine years. Members who graduated in the past ten years pay an annual reduced rate of \$5. All current Castlemont seniors receive honorary membership for one year, if they fill out the membership application form. When a pair of Castlemont graduates is married, they can be lifetime members, together, for \$250: They may each pay \$25 annual memberships for five years, or one may pay \$225 for a lifetime membership and the other becomes a lifetime member for \$25.

The General Membership of CHSAA, as defined by its by-laws, consist of all students who have attended, or are attending Castlemont High School, who pay membership dues, and who are willing to abide by and conform to the rules set forth by the association. Current and former teachers, administrators, school board members, community members, and supporters are eligible for Associate Membership with all the rights and benefits of regular Members except for voting and serving as Officers.

Leadership Through the Years

CHSAA's Officers and Members of the Board of Directors are entirely volunteers. The Executive Board consists of the elected Officers and Directors. Elected Officers are the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian, and their terms of office are one year, and there are no limits on the number of terms served. There are a total of twelve (12) Directors divided into three (3) groups of four (4). Directors' terms are for three years, with four Directors being elected each year at the Annual General Membership Meeting to replace those Directors whose three (3) year terms have expired.

The Executive Board regularly meets for two hours throughout the year, usually four times a year, and committees meet on an as-needed-basis. Occasionally, the Executive Board also holds half-day retreats to plan for the upcoming year. For instance,

in Fall 2007, the Executive Board held an all-day retreat to make the transition to the new President, Toni McElroy ('69) and plan upcoming CHSAA activities.



Executive Board Retreat, Fall 2007

Presidents:

Thuy Thi Nguyen, Class of '93 (2004-2006)
Toni McElroy, Class of '69 (2007-2009)
Kim Dung Nguyen, Class of '99 (2009-current)

Board Members (Current and Former):

Alice Spearman, '69
Leo (Bill) W. King, '56
Carol Becton-Berry, '66
Carol Hayes, '62
Carole Bennett-Knowles, '66
Debra Lindo, former Principal
Diana Becton-Smith, '69
Donna Butler Ambeau, '69
Eleyette Worth, '69
Gary Yee, '62
Greg Hickey, '56
Kim-Dung Nguyen, '99
Lanna Bulter-McCoy, '69
Lita Jackson, '78
Lorraine Caldwell, '64

Pamela Bull Brooks, '69
Patricia Preyer, '82
Rich Klier, '58
Roxana Larsen, '51
Shelia Mack, '69
Stephanie Allen
Toni McElroy, '69
Victor Littles, teacher



January 2007 Board meeting

Financial Statement

As of May 30, 2009, below is CHSAA's financial statement:

CHECKING	\$2,081.06
SAVINGS	\$11,933.52
CRUISE ACCOUNT	\$1,582.22
TOTAL ON HAND	<hr/> \$15,596.80

About Castlemont High School

Castlemont High School was founded in 1929. It is a public high school within the Oakland Unified School District in Oakland, California.

Since 2005, Castlemont is no longer a traditional high school. The three small schools form the Castlemont Community of Small Schools. Those three schools are:

Castlemont Leadership Preparatory School, Castlemont Business and Information Technology School, and the East Oakland School of the Arts.

As described on the school's website, the original building was built in medieval style, so the first class of students to enter its halls adopted the names and traditions of the age of Knights and castles. Chivalry was the code of the knight. It commanded him to be fearless, loyal to his feudal lord; to obey and defend the church, to feed and clothe the poor, to fight to death for justice and always be true to his promised word. The legendary King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, the most courageous and chivalrous knights in Britain, personified the ideal at which all young fighters aimed. King Arthur proved right for the throne of Britain and his right to lead these great men by pulling the magic sword, Excalibur out of a rock in which it was embedded. Merlin, who made the table round because all Knights were equal, provided the table at which the Knights sat.

Castlemont's motto is: "build on and make thy castles high and fair, rising and reaching upward to the skies."



II. For Members

Annual General Membership Luncheon

The Annual General Membership Meeting of CHSAA is held to carry out the purpose of CHSAA, update the members on activities of the association, report on the association's finances, meet old and new alumni, reminisce with pictures and memorabilia, and elect new Officers and Directors. The Executive Board selects the place and time of the meeting, usually in January or February of every year.

The Annual General Membership Meetings in 2004 and 2005 were held at the Castlemont High School's library. At the first meeting, members voted for the first full slate of Officers and 12 Board Directors. The members also divided into groups to help prioritize the main activities for the association: Career Day, Hall of Fame, Picnic, Crier (newsletter), and Endowment.

For the first time, on Saturday, February 25, 2006, more than 90 people (65 alumni) gathered at Francesco's for the 3rd Annual General Membership Meeting. The members were briefed on past activities: Old School picnic, holiday gifts for teachers and staff, and Career Day. The highlight of the day came when former Principal Lee Nell Jennings donated a \$1,000 in honor of her father to the Impact Fund. The members also discussed how to find the owner of a class ring found in Vietnam. The members then had fun with College Bowl trivia conducted by former teacher, Linda Halpern. Three teams competed- the "Dream Team," the "We Deliver Team," and the "Cheerleading Team" (equipped with pompoms!).



2006 General Membership Luncheon's College Bowl trivia game





2006 General Membership Luncheon at Francesco's

On Saturday, January 27, 2007, more than 60 people filled Francesco's Restaurant at the Annual General Membership Meeting. Besides reviewing the association's activities in the previous year, CHSAA also recognized 12 lifetime members with beautiful framed Castlemont certificates. CHSAA thanked Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ritter for the \$57,000 of scholarships that their family foundation has provided to Castlemont graduates through the years. The student speaker spoke eloquently about her experiences in the small school structure, and the attendees participated in the second annual "college bowl." The new website was unveiled. The luncheon also served as a fundraiser for the Impact Fund, which raised \$2,575.



2007 General Membership Luncheon: students and alumni who have received Ritter scholarships

The February 28, 2008 Annual General Membership Luncheon, also held at Francesco's Restaurant, had more than 65 attendees. Besides the usual selection of the Alumni Hall of Fame and officers and board members for the year, then-President Toni

McElroy introduced the cruise trip and showed a video by Carnival Cruise. CHSAA also gave small raffle gifts.



2008 Annual General Membership Luncheon: alumnus wins raffle



2008 Annual General Membership Luncheon: then-President Toni McElroy ('69) welcomes everyone

The February 28, 2009 Annual General Membership Luncheon, held at its traditional location, Francesco's Restaurant, had almost 100 attendees. Then-President Toni McElroy reported on the previous year's activities and four alumni were inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame.

Ye Alum Castle Crier

All paid members of the CHSAA receives the Ye Alum Castle Crier, the official alumni association newsletter. Since its inception, eight (8) Criers have been published, usually twice a year, thanks to Communications Committee whose co-editors are Gary Yee ('62), Roxana Larsen, ('51), and Lita Jackson ('78). The Crier updates members on activities of CHSAA such as the Annual General Membership Luncheon at Francesco's Restaurant and Career Day at the school. It also includes class reunion news such as the Class of '69 reunion, sports updates such as the school football team winning the OAL Silver Bowl for the first time, news about the school such as the three small-school configuration, and alumni in the news such as the passing of Lloyd Duck (June '48).

Alumni Hall of Fame

Each year, CHSAA inducts four individuals in the CHSAA's Alumni Hall of Fame. The purpose of the Alumni Hall of Fame Awards is to recognize alumni who have distinguished themselves and who are serving as role models for students and other alumni at Castlemont High School. A total of 24 individuals have been inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame.

The Sports Hall of Fame Alumni Award is given to an alumnus who has excelled in an athletic endeavor and exemplified the sportsmanship spirit of Castlemont. *The Community Service Alumni Award* is given to an alumnus in recognition of outstanding commitment to the service of others. *The Gold Key Alumni Award* is given to an individual for dedication and service to the Castlemont High School Alumni Association. *The Distinguished Knight in Shining Armor Alumni Award* is the Association's highest award and is given to an alumnus for representing the true spirit and ideal character of Castlemont High School alumni.

Anyone may nominate a candidate. At the 2004 and 2005 Annual General Membership Meetings, attending members voted for the awardees. At the 2006, 2007, and 2008 Annual General Membership Meetings at Francesco's Restaurant, anyone may nominate one or more individuals by filling out a Nomination Form and submitting it via email or mail, and only attending members of the luncheons voted. The 2009 Alumni Hall of Fame inductees were nominated using the same Nomination Form, although the selection of the inductees were conducted online using SurveyMonkey.com and the four awardees were inducted at the 2009 Annual General Membership Meeting luncheon at Francesco's.



Then-President Thuy Nguyen ('93) presented Alumni Hall of Fame awards to Karen Korematsu-Haigh (daughter of Fred Korematsu, alum inductee), Gary Yee ('62), and Carol Hayes Cavalli ('62) at Career Day 2004.

The following individuals have been inducted into the CHSAA Alumni Hall of Fame, receiving the *Distinguished Knight in Shining Armor Alumni Award*; *Community*

Service Alumni Award; Gold Key Alumni Award; and Sports Hall of Fame Alumni Award, respectively:

2005 Hall of Fame

Gary Yee, Class of '62
Fred Korematsu, Class of '37
Carol Hayes, Class of '62
Joe Morgan, Class of '61

2006 Hall of Fame

Muriel Hand, Class of June '50
Shannon Reeves
Greg Hickey, Class of '56
Gerry Laws, Former Teacher

2007 Hall of Fame

Diana Becton Smith, Class of '69
Mel J. Caughell, Class of June '41
Myrna Baston, Former Counselor
Lloyd Duck, Class of June '48

2008 Hall of Fame

David Heagerty, Class of '45
Patricia Preyer, Class of '82
Roxana Larsen, Class of '51
Tom Tancready, Class of '49

2009 Hall of Fame

Sheridan Downey, III, Class of '59
Ester Dixon, Class of '66 & Teacher
Robert E. Beechler, Class of '52
Will Souza, Class of '54

Website

For three years, CHSAA had a website link to the school website: <http://tlc/ousd.k12.ca.us/castlemont>, and anyone who wanted to contact CHSAA could do so by emailing castlemontalumni@yahoo.com.

At the 2007 Annual General Membership Meeting luncheon, Board member Kim Dung Nguyen ('99) and her husband, Todd Mills (not an alumnus, but married to one) unveiled the new Website (www.Castlemontalumni.org). They designed the new website, provide regularly updates, and paid for the hosting and annual fees. The new website provides up-to-date information about CHSAA events, as well as news from the



Castle. All Ye Alumni Castle Criers are posted on the website, along with a listing of all CHSAA members. There are also pictures of class reunions and CHSAA activities.

Lapel Pins, Visors, and T-shirts

For the past five years, CHSAA has designed and sold various alumni paraphernalia such as lapel pins, visors, and t-shirts. Greg Hickey ('56) and Gary Yee ('62) have spearheaded these projects, and all proceeds go to CHSAA for operation of the association and the CHSAA Impact / Scholarship Fund. Alumni can also buy these paraphernalia at discounted rates when they pay their membership fee to join CHSAA. The lapel pins, starting 2007, were provided as a congratulatory gift to every graduating senior at graduation.



Greg Hickey ('56) and Thuy Thi Nguyen ('93) dons CHSAA t-shirts.

III. For Alumni

Old-School & All-Class Picnics

Greg Hickey ('56) organizes a picnic every other year for Castlemont High School alumni. Most attendees are alumni from older classes such as Class of '39 to Class of '64, hence the name "old school picnic". It is often held at the Alameda County Fairground, in Pleasanton, with attendance ranging from 600 to 1,000 alumni, family, and friends. The number of those attending the picnic grows each year. One year, for instance, a cut-out 50's 'hotrod was made and alumni had their pictures taken with the hotrod.



Old-School Picnic: Married alumni couple, Jim Hand (January '50) and Muriel Hand (June '50)

On September 25, 2004, CHSAA organized an All-Class picnic at the Alameda County Fairground in Pleasanton also. It was the first all-class picnic, with over 100 people in attendance.

Class Reunions

Besides the All-Class Picnics and Multi-Class Reunion Cruise, CHSAA also provides information about class reunions. CHSAA's website (www.CastlemontAlumni.org) posts update-to-date information on class reunions, including pictures of various class reunions. Information about these class reunions are

submitted from reunion organizers to CastlemontAlumni@yahoo.com or Greg Hickey ('56). The Ye Alum Castle Crier also posts information and reports on class reunions.



Reported in Ye Alum Castle Crier, 40th Reunion for Class of '64



Posted on www.CastlemontAlumni.org: Class of '58th – 50th Reunion Pictures

The Cruise

January 29 to February 2, 2009, CHSAA's then-President, Toni McElroy ('69) organized a "Multi-Class Reunion and Super Bowl Party at Sea", a cruise to Baja, Mexico to bring alumni together and raise money for scholarships. Sixty-six (66) alumni, friends, and family signed up, with the oldest member from the Class of '49 and included most recent graduates. Ms. McElroy donated her cruise commission, thereby raising over \$2,000 for the Impact / Scholarship Fund



IV. For Teachers, Staff, and Administrators

Winter Holiday Gifts

December 2005, CHSAA presented 130 teachers, staff, and administrators at the three Castlemont small schools a small holiday gift (an apple shaped notepad with pen) with the following note:

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

*In appreciation of
your dedication to our students*

Castlemont H.S. Alumni Association



December 2006, CHSAA once again gave every teacher, staff, and administrator at the three Castlemont small schools a box of chocolate See's Candies, also with a note of appreciation. The gifts were well received.

Teachers Inducted Into Alumni Hall of Fame

Teachers, Staff, and Administrators are also members of CHSAA. They have also been nominated and some selected as distinguished alumni. One retired counselor, Myrna Baston; an alumnae and current teacher at Castlemont, Ester Dixon ('66); and former teacher/coach, Gerry Laws, have been inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame for their service to the Castlemont student community.



Luncheon at Career Day

At the December 2007 Career Day, CHSAA invited the teachers, staff, and administrators from Castlemont Business and Information Technology Small School (CBIT) to join alumni and other presenters for a complimentary luncheon.



V. For Students

Career Day

One of CHSAA's major programs is Career Day at Castlemont High School. Since its inception, CHSAA has organized a half-day program for students, particularly juniors and seniors.

Career Day programs usually consist of breakfast for all the presenters and an assembly program in the morning, with alumni introducing themselves, when and where they graduated, and what career field they are currently working in. At the assemblies, the students are also introduced to the inductees of the CHSAA Hall of Fame, offering moments of inspiration for the students. Students are then broken off into workshop sessions where they choose which career-talk to attend. Each workshop is led by at least one of the alumni presenters. The students are provided opportunities to interact with the alumni presenters and ask questions about the presenters' respective professions and educational opportunities.

The first CHSAA-sponsored Career Day occurred on April 23 2004. Twenty Castlemont High School alumni introduced Castlemont juniors and seniors to the world of work. Professions range from public safety to health care (doctors and nurses), to the owner of Fouchet-Hudson Funeral Home, to Superior Court Judge Diana Becton-Smith and school board members Alice Spearman ('69) and Gary Yee ('62). The Peralta Community College District also presented information on educational and career opportunities. Doris Limbrink, a well-known pastor with Acts Full Gospel, was the keynote speaker.



Career Day 2004. Reggie Green ('73), and Career have breakfast together.





Preston Pleasants ('66), Lita Jackson ('78), and Carol Becton-Berry ('66) at Career Day 2004.

The second Career Day occurred in Spring 2007 when CHSAA co-sponsored with Peralta Community College District, but this time, held at Youth Uprising, or YU!. YU! is a non-profit supported by Alameda County and the City of Oakland, and many grants, to advance youth leadership development as a means of affecting positive community change in the Castlemont community. Its building is located adjacent to Castlemont's campus. The keynote speaker was Contra Costa County Superior Court Judge Diana Becton-Smith ('69).

On December 17, 2007, Career Day was held at Castlemont Business and Information Technology Small School (CBIT). Dr. Sandra Weatherby ('82), a Kaiser Permanente physician and alumnus, and Ms. Alicia Romero were the keynote speakers. Career Day Founder and former Castlemont counselor, Myrna Baston, read a poem she wrote many years ago about Career Day for Castlemont students.



2007 Career Day: Dr. Sandra Weatherby ('82), Kaiser doctor.



Career Day 2007: Alumni on Stage at Assembly

Knight Lapel Pins for Graduating Seniors

Every year, CHSAA gives each graduating senior a graduation gift: a lapel pin with the Knight logo and alumni carving. The purpose is to congratulate the students for their accomplishments and to welcome them to the alumni association. CHSAA also sponsors an announcement in the graduation ceremony brochure, again congratulating the students and their families.

Impact / Scholarship Fund

Since its inception, one of CHSAA's main focuses is to support the students currently attending Castlemont. That is why CHSAA immediately started to build an endowment for students at Castlemont. Private donations and money raised from membership dues, paraphernalia sales, and membership luncheons contributed to the endowment. In January 2007, CHSAA officially announced the establishment of the *Impact Fund* and notified the three small-school principals, teachers, and staff. With the *Impact Fund*, CHSAA took one step further to invest financially in Castlemont students.

CHSAA requested administrators, teachers, and staff to identify students who are at a crossroad, and a small gesture of care and financial support could be a turning point in students' lives. Impact Fund criteria are:

- ✓ Demonstrate that other resources have been explored and exhausted;
- ✓ Demonstrate need;
- ✓ Demonstrate impact such fund would make on the student(s); and
- ✓ Have 2.0 Grade Point Average in core subjects.

There is no deadline to apply as funds will be awarded on an as needed basis. There is also no cap on the amount of money awarded. The amount to be awarded will depend on need and funds availability. To recommend a candidate, teachers, staff, and

administrators are asked to send CHSAA a letter describing how the student meets the criteria. Students may also apply directly to the Alumni Association.

CHSAA has offered two Impact Fund awards: to a student (Victor Sandifer), and to a special one-day program (coordinated by Victor Littles, a teacher at Castlemont).

Coach Joe Pleasant contacted the CHSAA to ask if the association could help sponsor one of his most promising students attend a premier basketball camp. In 2006, CHSAA awarded sophomore, Victor Sandifer, \$250 to help defray his expenses. The student successfully finished the camp as a first team member, and continued to excel as a scholar athlete. Not only is he a star guard, but his coach says he carried a 4.0 in all his school work). Several top colleges, including Stanford and UCLA expressed interest in Victor, thanks to his presence at the camp.

The other award (\$500) was given to the school to conduct a one-day violence prevention program.

Math Night

On May 29, 2007, Richard Klier ('58) worked with the Math Department at Castlemont, and held its first club event: Math Night. A guest speaker described how viruses take shape, how they mutate to neutralize the effect of medicines, and how medical science changes to regain the upper hand. Nine students from Castlemont presented math topics.

In 2008, Richard Klier ('58) organized Math Night at Mills College for Castlemont students interested in math. Mr. Klier partnered with a Castlemont teacher to bring three students to Mills College to present mathematical concepts such as "the Monty Hall Problem," "Pascal's Triangle, and "Harmonic Series." Castlemont students, teachers, staff, alumni, and members of the public are welcome to attend.

Students / Alumni Basketball Games

CHSAA started the students/alumni basketball game in 2007 and helped the Castlemont basketball team organized the game in 2008. In 2008, for instance, CHSAA gave complimentary cookies and soft drinks to all who attend, and set up a table to distribute information about the alumni association.

Other Events

Occasionally, CHSAA sponsors events organized by other groups at Castlemont High School. For instance, on April 7, 2005, CHSAA donated a cake for the 125 attendees of the Castlemont Basketball Awards potluck dinner celebration.

VI. Acknowledgements

Castlemont High School Alumni Association is grateful to the leadership through the years, and especially acknowledges Leo (Bill) W. King ('56), Jim Hand (January '50), Muriel Hand (June '50), Greg Hickey ('56), Rich Klier ('58), Carol Berry ('66), Eleyette Worth ('69), Diana Becton-Smith ('69), and Thuy Thi Nguyen ('93) for contributing to this 5th-anniversary report.

