



President's Newsletter

The Road to 1717

January 14, 2019

In December, all of our benefactors received the 2018 Cristo Rey Philadelphia Impact Report via regular mail. You will find a link to the digital version at the bottom of this page. Here is an extract from the second page of the report ...

Dear Members of the Cristo Rey Family,

This report is packed with data that describes the impact of Cristo Rey. But every day, at Cristo Rey, we experience an impact that isn't easily described by numbers.

A few early mornings ago, I was in my office, struggling to write this letter, when a student stopped in for a visit. Patrick is a regular visitor and we both enjoy an early morning chat, so I wasn't surprised that he was interested to know what I was doing.

So, I asked Patrick to tell me about the impact that Cristo Rey has had on him, and here is what I learned ...



Patrick hated middle school. He believes that he was physically and mentally bullied by other students because he was small, very smart, and looked different than the rest of his peers. He was told that he was worthless so regularly and for so long that he actually came to believe it himself. He learned to be ashamed of himself.

Patrick avoided social interaction and deliberately sabotaged his own academic progress so as to not draw attention to himself: "I was a blank slate ... the kid in the corner. I kept to myself, on the computer. No one loved me and I certainly didn't love myself."

Patrick's mother decided to send him to Cristo Rey. He was not involved in the decision and had no expectations.

In the first week of Prep for Success Bootcamp, Patrick (and every new freshman student) heard that he was now a member of the Cristo Rey family and that we loved him. He was flabbergasted ... and skeptical! Nevertheless, those unfamiliar assertions were reinforced by actual behaviors, and Patrick began to notice that students were buying in to this unusual culture. He risked reaching out to adults and to other students, and he liked the results: "I really enjoyed the safety of Cristo Rey."

Today, Patrick is a Sophomore. He is a good student, a good worker and a good friend to others. He is curious and eager to learn. His interests and concerns are those of a typical teenager on some mornings (too much homework, "nasty" food in the cafeteria, girlfriends) and surprisingly mature on other mornings (career plans, current events, the future of Cristo Rey).

At the end of our conversation Patrick said: "Imagine what would happen if every kid in Philly could experience Cristo Rey. We would be all smiles ... all flowers growing together in a beautiful garden."

Cristo Rey is a family of people of all kinds, young and old, who learn and grow together; who help each other, depend on each other, and love each other. The impact of this culture is hard to measure, but it is easy to notice. And the impact on all of us is priceless!

We are grateful to include you in the Cristo Rey family.

Sincerely,

John McConnell
Founder and President

To view the 2018 Impact Report in Issuu, please click on the image below; or download the PDF [here](#).



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