

• np • NATIVITY PREP HOLIDAY APPEAL 2020



Dear Friends of Nativity,

In my first draft of this letter, I was prepared to tell you about the challenges of COVID and how we have worked diligently to overcome these challenges, how our new campus allowed us to space students out and have the technology to excel at virtual learning, how proud I am of our staff, students, and families for pulling together... While that is most definitely true, I did not want to end this calendar year without talking to you about another form of growth I experienced from the challenges of 2020 - that is personal growth and how challenging our thinking can help others. Here is what I've learned and appreciated from 2020.

ADAPTING

We are coming to the end of what was one of the most challenging years in our modern global history. Immediately upon hearing of the lockdown, I found myself most concerned for our families who live paycheck to paycheck. Those who were hit hardest were those in blue-collar jobs, which represent a majority of our student's families. We were able to deliver meals thanks to donors like Marcos To Go, our Graduate Support team networked to get some parents jobs, we accommodated students when their schedules changed due to an upended home life, and offered an immense increase in community services. Our families were, and still are, immensely grateful for all of you coming together to rally behind them. Our students and families can rely on Nativity to support them in whatever they need. As you can see, our 11-year commitment is more than academic. However, the resilience of our families wasn't what surprised me, I know they are strong. What caught my attention was how quickly and how well our students and their families adapted. For our students, this was not as big of a shift as it was for many of us. **Many of our students live in uncertainty, constant change, and financial hardship every day. They are used to banding together and supporting each other. Many of us who come from greater financially resourced backgrounds have a lot to learn and appreciate from our families who not only adapted, but grew from the pandemic experience.** I am grateful for being able to serve as President during this time and for the humility I have experienced working with our families.





CHALLENGING OUR THINKING

In challenging my thoughts and my thinking, there was one thought that came to mind that was more impactful to me from a Nativity perspective, and I hope this thought will be meaningful to you. The way we see and respond to students who are struggling at private schools versus how we see and respond to students who are struggling from low-income schools is often different. Our society looks at and treats students who have means as if they are already talented. By contrast, society looks at and treats marginalized students as if there is some talent in the group as a whole, and encourages us to find that talent and bring it out where it exists. We assume the children of well-resourced backgrounds will make it while picking and choosing which low-income, first-generation students have the talent to do so. **We assume that many of the students who are in a low-income situation will fail and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.**

For example, before students come to Nativity, their parents are often told "I don't see them making it." We would never say that of any student in affluent communities. We tend to have more patience with well-resourced children, saying "they are going to be a late bloomer" or "he/she will grow up eventually". What we are doing is putting marginalized students at a further disadvantage before they are even given the opportunity to make it. And students with abundant resources do tend to grow up and develop later as their parents have the means to provide added support..

Currently, only 15% of students from low-income situations who get accepted into college will graduate. At Nativity, we are increasing that by 300+%. To achieve this success and to continue to improve upon it requires a willingness to change our thinking and our approach. The climb is uniquely difficult for our students, but as I learned from seeing them adapt to a pandemic -- they are immensely strong and they can adapt to anything.

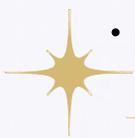


"Our students will make it through college, and given the opportunity, they will do a lot more than that."

That's what makes Nativity different. We do not allow that assumptive mindset to take root here. We see every student as talented and think "how can we draw this talent out of them." We provide opportunities where they are lacking and help them make good choices and learn from poor choices.

If you...

- have a passion for education;
- have confidence that education transforms lives and generations;
- are impressed with the approach we are taking with an 11-year commitment, high expectations for students, and ongoing support;
- believe we are attacking a critical problem in a unique way;
- are confident in the approach and see it is working...



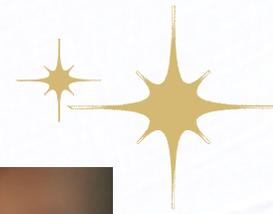
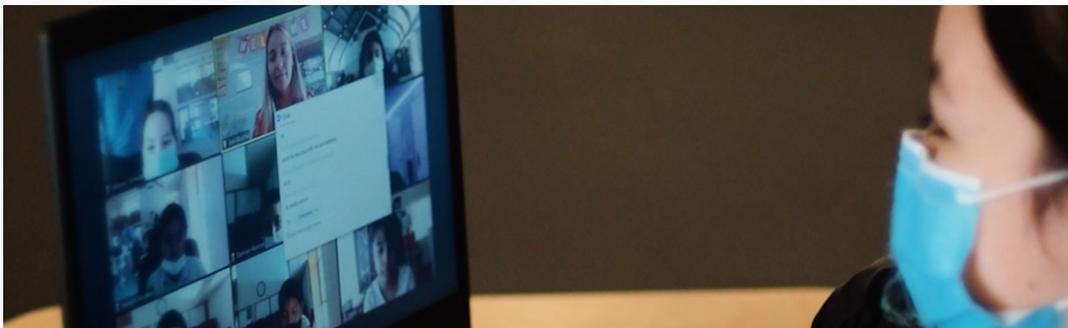
...then consider joining forces with us. Have a truly meaningful, life-changing impact on a young person who, outside of these walls, would be less likely to "make it."

Let's continue to reverse the statistics by making a mind-shift. Let's continue to engrain in these students the ability to see opportunity and to take it. Join us as we continue to challenge the thinking that is limiting those we serve and end generational poverty, one student success story at a time. Your contribution to Nativity this year-end will be an investment in our 11-year commitment to help our students and their families see and take advantage of opportunities like never before.

I hope that despite the chaos of 2020, we have learned, improved, and found ways to "re-appreciate" different areas of our lives. I wish you and your families a safe and warm holiday season. May you be blessed beyond measure.

Peace,

Dr. Gil Brady
President



**"WE SAW A STAR
AT ITS RISING"**

MATTHEW 2:2

