

# COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL

## PARENT NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2010

As the fall quickly passes, Common Ground High School students and staff close out the first trimester. We all spent our transition days reflecting on the past trimester and participating in our annual school-wide day of service and bowling trips.

Much has happened this trimester—New Haven students learned of the New Haven Promise, a scholarship program that will cover college tuition costs at state schools. In addition, the student government participated in its first overnight retreat, we hired over 35 students for the Green Jobs Corps Program, and we finalized plans to build our new Harvest Pavilion. It has been a

busy fall!

In October Santiago Achinelli, Samantha O'Brien and Natalie Reyes went to Minneapolis to present at the first ever National Green Schools Conference. The three students presented two workshops to educators from around the country on Common Ground's student-led sustainability efforts and on how to tell powerful stories about successful schools.

The University of New Haven provided us with 25 new mentors for the Fall semester. Mentors were paired with Common Ground students, meeting weekly for 2 hours. Students completed college applications, homework,

SAT preparation. In addition, students designed projects and learned how to rebuild a carburetor, bake, and more! We will welcome 50 mentors during the spring semester.

On November 19th, the Common Ground drama club organized its first ever fundraiser, a dinner theater featuring "Dark Tidings," a lost scene from Romeo & Juliet written by Common Ground student, James Beech.

Our annual school-wide day of service provided 5 hours of support to local organizations. Students supported families at the Ronald McDonald House, participated in a beach clean up at Long Wharf, mulched and cleaned a playground, and more!



### Upcoming Events

See Below for Details:

**Saturday December 11,**

**10-2pm: Holiday Wreath Making**

**Wednesday December 15, 5:30-7:30pm: Financial Aid Night**

**Saturday December 18, 9-11am:**

**Parent Leadership Team Meeting**

**Tuesday December 21, 5:30-7:30: Awards Banquet**



## Parent Nights and Family Programs

We are happy to offer an extensive calendar of workshops and opportunities for families to be involved with the Common Ground Community. Please join us for our upcoming family events! For more information, question, or to become involved please contact Amy Champagne at 203-389-0823 x1206 or email: [achampagne@commongroundct.org](mailto:achampagne@commongroundct.org)

### Holiday Wreath Making

**Saturday December 11, 10-2:** Holiday wreath making. Celebrate nature's ornaments with a beautiful wreath made from fresh greens, vines, pinecones, and other natural materials from the farm and forest. Hot soup and snacks from our farm will be shared. Large wreath \$15; small wreath or swag \$8.

### Financial Aid 101

**Wednesday December 15, 5:30-7:30:** Join us for an information session on the college financial aid process. Junior and Senior parents are strongly encouraged to attend.

### Parent Leadership Team

**Saturday December 18, 9-11am**

The PLT reviews school policies, plans fundraisers and events, and provides advocacy support for the school community.

### Awards Banquet

**Wednesday December 21, 5:30-7:30**

Join us to celebrate the success of our first trimester. Family style meal and awards.

DECEMBER 2010



**New Haven Promise**  
MAKING THE PROMISE OF COLLEGE A REALITY  
 School Change Begins with Me.

## The New Haven Promise

The New Haven Promise is a program that promotes college education as an aspiration for all New Haven Public School students. The New Haven Promise scholarship is an annual award that covers full tuition (for up to four years) for any New Haven resident who graduates from a New Haven public school; who attends a Connecticut in-state two or four year college or university; and who meets the required residency, civic behavior, and academic performance criteria.

### What Does the Scholarship Cover?

The scholarship will provide full tuition or other financial assistance for up to four years. For students at public two or four year institutions receiving scholarships and grants, NH Promise will cover the difference between tuition and other scholarships/grants or \$2,500, whichever is greater as long as there is a remaining deficit between the total cost of education and the scholarships/grants. The total cost of education will include the costs of tuitions, fees, room, and board. For students attending Connecticut private institutions, the New Haven Promise will contribute up to a maximum of \$2,500 per year toward the total cost of education. The \$2,500 contribution will be the “last money in,” meaning it will only be made available to the student to cover the remaining costs after all other sources of financial aid have been used.

Students are eligible for two years of scholarships for two year institutions for up to three years after graduation from high school and for four years of scholarships for four year institutions for up to five years after graduation from high school..

### What Do Parents Need to Know?

In order to qualify, students must fulfill the following three requirement areas:

#### *Residency Requirement:*

In order to qualify for the scholarship, students must be New Haven residents. The scholarship is based on continuous and concurrent number of years your student has been enrolled in the New Haven Public School system and resides in the city of New Haven.

#### *Academic Requirement:*

Students must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point Average (GPA) or better upon graduation.

Students must maintain a 2.5 GPA during the years the student is enrolled in post-secondary school

#### *Civic Requirement:*

Students must have a positive disciplinary record.

Students must volunteer at a local non-for-profit, community based organization, or private sector organization for a minimum of 40 cumulative hours while in high school.

Students must meet 90% attendance or better during high school (grades 9-12)

**The New Haven Promise Program is designed to be an eight-year program (starting in the ninth grade of high school through graduation from a two or four year college or university) with the class of freshmen entering high school in 2010, making the high school graduating class of 2014 the first students eligible to receive 100% of the scholarship. The students currently in the graduating classes of 2011, 2012, and 2013, the scholarship will be a percentage of the full award as follows:**

**2011: 25% of the scholarship; 2012: 50% of the scholarship;**

**2013: 75% of the scholarship; 2014: 100% of the scholarship**

### Qualifying Colleges & Universities

Capital CC \* Central CT State \*  
 Charter Oak State College \*  
 Eastern CT State \* Gateway CC \*  
 Housatonic CC \* Manchester CC \*  
 Middlesex CC \* Naugatuck Valley  
 CC \* Northwestern CC \* Norwalk  
 CC \* Southern CT State \* Three  
 Rivers CC \* Tunxis CC \*  
 University of Connecticut \*  
 Western CT State University

### Qualifying Private Colleges & Universities

Albertus Magnus College \*  
 Connecticut College \* Fairfield  
 University \* Goodwin College \*  
 Mitchell College \* Quinnipiac  
 University \* Sacred Heart  
 University \* Saint Joseph College \*  
 Trinity College \* University of  
 Bridgeport \* University of Hartford  
 \* University of New Haven \*  
 Wesleyan University \*  
 Yale University

### Residency Requirements and Tuition Coverage

Pre K/K—12	100% Coverage
1—12	95% Coverage
2—12	95% Coverage
3—12	95% Coverage
4—12	90% Coverage
5—12	85% Coverage
6—12	80% Coverage
7—12	75% Coverage
8—12	70% Coverage
9—12	65% Coverage
10—12	0% Coverage
11—12	0% Coverage

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## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS CALENDAR, DECEMBER 2010

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Sound Lab, Science Club, Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen Prep  4:00: Sound Lab, Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen Prep	2 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Environmental Leaders Club  4:00: Dungeons & Dragons Club	3 1:30: Academic Support Makeup, Homework Center, Envirothon  2:00: Girl Scouts
6 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Sound Lab, Student Government, Art Club  4:00: Sound Lab  5-7: Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen	7 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Drama, Geek Squad  4:00: Environmental Leaders Club, Dance Dance Revolution  5-6:30: Mentor Dinner	8 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Sound Lab, Science Club, GSA  4:00: Sound Lab, Cooking Club	9 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Environmental Leaders Club  4:00: Dungeons & Dragons Club	10 1:30: Academic Support Makeup, Homework Center, Envirothon  2:00: Girl Scouts  7-10: Winder Wonderland Dance
13 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Sound Lab, Student Government  4:00: Sound Lab 3-5: Strategy Games Special, Make your own Mancala Board	14 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Drama, Geek Squad  4:00: Environmental Leaders Club, Ping Pong	15 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Sound Lab, Science Club, Columbus House Prep  4:00: Sound Lab—Album Art, Columbus House Prep	16 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Environmental Leaders Club  4:00: Dungeons & Dragons Club  5-7: Columbus House	17 1:30: Academic Support Makeup, Homework Center, Envirothon, Winterer Wonderland Service (cooking baking)  2:00: Girl Scouts
20 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Sound Lab, Student Government, Strategy Games  4:00: Sound Lab	21 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Drama, Geek Squad  4:00: Environmental Leaders Club, Floor Hockey	22 3:00: Academic Support, Homework Center, Sound Lab, Science Club  4:00: Sound Lab, Cooking Club	23 Early Dismissal—No After School Program	24 Winter Break—No School
27 Winter Break—No School	28 Winter Break—No School	29 Winter Break—No School	30 Winter Break—No School	31 Winter Break—No School

# The Sights of Common Ground High School



On November 21st, three staff members and 9 students explored Ponkapoag, a portion of the Blue Hills Reservation in Massachusetts as part of the Adventure Club's first backpacking trip. The Adventure Club offers monthly explorations on and off our site. Stay tuned for upcoming trips!



**COMMON  
GROUND  
HIGH  
SCHOOL**



Ms. Burke and Ms. Frasier's guidance groups worked with Urban Resources Initiative (URI) on our annual day of Service. The two groups assisted with tree planting at a local park.



It was an action packed and tasty night at the drama club's first ever fundraiser dinner theater, *Dark Tidings*. The event featured a missing scene from *Romeo & Juliet*, written by our very own, James Beech.