



e-Newsletter | Winter 2007

Dear Friends,

Winter greetings from KIPP Ascend! Our students and staff have been working very hard since the holiday break, and we look forward to another year of academic gains in the classroom, as well as new beginnings for our eighth grade class.

As we mentioned last fall, our students have been highly recruited by top high schools from the region and across the country. We are thrilled to share the news that many of our eighth graders have already been accepted to competitive high schools, such as The Latin School, Lincoln Park, Whitney Young, and Lake Forest Academy!

Since December, four students -- Derion Barnes, Takia Broomfield, Mia Oliver, and Ashley Taylor -- have been notified of their acceptance to Culver Academy, a boarding school in Indiana. Additionally, Shakiyla Bolden, Patricia Estes and Deja Manuel are Daniel Murphy Scholars, a prestigious program that provides four-year high school scholarships and educational support services to economically disadvantaged students from Chicago. And just recently, we received word that 30 of our students have been accepted to Noble Street, a high-performing local charter school. As you can see, we are well on target to reach our goal of all students attending high schools of choice. We anticipate many more acceptance letters arriving in students' mailboxes over the next couple weeks, and we will be sure to keep you updated with their high school destinations.



In case you missed it, KIPP Ascend was featured in the [January issue of Crain's Chicago Business](#), as part of the magazine's annual call for city improvements. The article highlights our school and student achievements in its recommendation for implementing an extended school day district-wide.

This is certainly a special time at KIPP Ascend, and our success would not be possible without your continued interest and support. Thank you! Read on for more recent school news...

Student Orchestra Shines at Holiday Performances

What a joyful and merry holiday season, thanks to our spirited Rhythm & Strings Orchestra! Led by Orchestra Director Lisa Minish, the students spread holiday cheer at two major performances during December. Playing to a packed house at the downtown Old Navy Flagship Store on December 9th, the Orchestra entertained shoppers with a full set of holiday favorites. After the performance, Santa surprised the students with a pizza party and gifts – fleece jackets, scarves, gloves, and gift cards – all of which were purchased with generous contributions from Old Navy employees. The following Friday night, students drew a standing ovation after performing center stage at the SAP employee holiday party.



Thank you, Old Navy and SAP, for your amazing support of our music program!

Inaugural Career Day a Success



"Where can a college degree take you?"

We posed this question to students as they prepared to participate in our school's inaugural Career Day event on December 1st. Twenty-five local professionals met with our students individually and in small groups in a college fair format, and KIPPsters honed their interpersonal skills while learning more about our volunteers' college and career experiences. Attendees included an architect, a nurse, a firefighter/paramedic, a graphic designer, and two pharmacists, among many others. Antwon McGruder, Vice President of Bank of Montreal's

Capital Markets, considered the event to be an "invaluable" way to "deliver skills and tools that will definitely be needed later in life." Based on the overwhelmingly positive response, we have scheduled a Spring Career Day on Friday, May 11. Please plan to join us!

Holiday Appeal Update

Thanks to our incredible supporters, the 2006 giving season was an especially bright one for KIPP Ascend. To date our school has raised \$46,700 through the annual Holiday Appeal mailing, and we have **you** to thank! Your unwavering support of our mission continues to enhance the lives of our KIPPsters each and every day. Please plan to visit us this spring and see how your generous gifts directly impact the next generation of scientists, artists, and world changers.

KIPP Expands in Chicago

Just before the holidays, the Chicago Public School Board of Education approved KIPP's request to add three more schools over the next four years. We are very excited to have CPS provide this much faith and support in the work that we do. This is the first time Chicago Public Schools has approved multiple schools over multiple years to a school group.

The support of CPS is a reflection of the great work and success of the students and teachers at KIPP Ascend. Our students are focused on learning and making good decisions, and our committed teachers are dedicating long hours to make learning an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

As we begin the next phase of our expansion plan, we look forward to engaging more community members, securing financial support, and recruiting our next school leader to create more opportunities for students on Chicago's West Side. If you are interested in learning more about how you can be involved with KIPP's expansion in the Chicago area, please contact [Mark Medema](#), Executive Director of KIPP Great Lakes.

Mark Your Calendars!

It's College Madness, baby! On Thursday night, March 22nd, enjoy tournament action at our **2nd Annual Spring Benefit** in Grand Central's Private Room from 6-9:30PM. All proceeds benefit KIPP to College, our high school placement and scholarship program for the hardest-working middle school students on Chicago's West Side. To learn more about the evening's festivities or to register online, visit our [homepage](#).

Our quarterly **Breakfast Open House** is the perfect time to visit our school to learn more about how KIPP Ascend is putting students from Chicago's West Side on the path to college. Bring a friend, neighbor, or co-worker, and come see our hard-working students in action! The next Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, April 24th at 7:30AM. Please [RSVP to Lauren Winkates](#).

Back by popular demand, KIPP Ascend's **Spring Career Day** is scheduled for Friday, May 11. Join us and share your college and career experiences with our college-bound middle school students. For more information, please [contact Lauren Winkates](#).



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About KIPP Ascend

Founded in 2003, KIPP Ascend Charter School is a tuition-free college preparatory middle school serving over 300 students from the Austin, West Garfield, and North Lawndale neighborhoods on Chicago's West Side. 100% of students are African-American and Latino, and nearly 90% qualify for the federal free/reduced-price lunch program. Students choose to attend class from 7:25 AM to 5:00 PM during the week, every other Saturday, and four weeks in the summer - almost 70% more time in class than traditional public school students! - so that they can gain the knowledge, skills, and character traits necessary to succeed in top-quality high schools, colleges, and the competitive world beyond. At KIPP Ascend, students "climb the mountain" to college!

If you know someone who would be interested in receiving updates from KIPP Ascend, please use the "Forward email" button below. If you would like to unsubscribe from this quarterly e-newsletter, please [email us](#).