

A Letter from John Mancuso, Executive Director, CDI, and Howard Friedman, Principal of MCNDHS

We think of this as a newsletter for investors, albeit an unusual one. We offer no tips on stocks or bonds. We make no predictions. We deal in a different kind of futures market: the future of young people. It's an investment that pays a lifelong dividend.

When New York City youngsters drop out of high school, the investment made in them by the Department of Education and the City of New York is lost. On average, those kids earn \$260,000 less in their lifetimes than will those who graduate.

They also lose the even greater earning potential of college grads. And a frightening percentage of them wind up in the criminal justice system. MCNDHS and CDI can help to recoup that 'lost' investment by enabling these young people to go back to school and by providing the support they need. We work to ensure that they earn their diplomas and go on to college and/or meaningful careers. Our College Office, with staffing unrivaled by any other public school, helps students with admissions and financial aid. Each year, thanks to private donations, CDI is able to provide them with a total of \$35,000 in scholarship support. Our new Life Links program also assists post-graduates with college and career assistance.

By spending a brief time with this newsletter, you'll learn more about these worthy young people and what we offer them. Won't you please join us in giving them the help they deserve? It may be the most worthwhile investment you'll ever be asked to make.

the future of young people ...an investment that pays a lifelong dividend.

Comprehensive Development, Inc.
Manhattan Comprehensive
Night & Day High School
240 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10003



CDI, serving the youth of MCNDHS, provides wraparound counseling, tutoring, college, career, legal and post-graduation assistance.

College Days Ahead for More MCNDHS Students

Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High School (MCNDHS) was founded on the idea that it would provide older, disadvantaged students a last chance to earn their high school diplomas. Ninety percent of its seniors now do just that, and many are setting their sights higher. College education, once an unlikely if not unthinkable goal, is now within their grasp. Thanks in large part to CDI, more students are now applying for admission to college and, once accepted, are choosing to enroll.

Lena Eberhart, director of the newly formed office of College and Career Services, says that the staff's efforts are showing strong results. Last year, the share of MCNDHS graduates accepted to college jumped from 38 to 59 percent, and although this year's returns are not yet final, Lena is confident that acceptances will rise to about 65 percent—slightly above the national average for all American high schools. These are

amazing results, considering the unique obstacles these students face. Members of this year's graduating class have been accepted to fine private colleges, including Ithaca, Clarkson, Skidmore, Polytechnic, as well as top SUNY schools in Binghamton, Stony Brook, and Albany. What are the causes for this striking improvement?

"First, of course," Lena says, "the school is doing a wonderful job of preparing these young people academically. But at CDI we've also

I was exposed to an array of opportunities at MCNDHS, most made possible through the Student Life Center and the College Office. They funded my trip to Brandeis, and without it, I wouldn't have decided to go there.

*Ria Roberts '06,
now attending
Brandeis University*



Dacia Clare, an MCNDHS graduate, and Lena Eberhart. Director of College and Career Services

become more proactive, seeking out students who wouldn't otherwise come to us and consistently following up with them on their post-graduation planning." Lena has two full-time advisors on staff who have provided a wide variety of college services for more than 535 students this year. Among these are financial aid advice, college essay editing, career guidance from guest speakers, college fairs and trips, letters of recommendation, and SAT prep clubs.

"When you talk to students about post-graduate planning," Lena says, "all kinds of barriers come up: academics, family responsibilities, finances, personal problems, housing. It's our responsibility to address all these by helping students problem-solve and find resources to overcome these obstacles."

Current students are not the only ones to benefit from CDI's college

services. As part of this year's new Life Links program, Lena and her staff have counseled more than 133 MCNDHS alumni, whose post-graduate progress they continue to track. "We've always served alumni who need help," she points out, "but now we contact all our graduates a few times each year to remind them of what services we offer and to check on their progress." Alumni

continue to need guidance and advice about registration, transfers to other schools, and scholarship aid. Many alumni also come to CDI for resumé assistance and advice about career options.

Providing and obtaining scholarship aid for students is, in fact, one of CDI's most important roles. Each year, it contributes \$35,000 to help MCNDHS graduates pay for college costs.

Lena's team works with the students to secure additional aid from the colleges who admit them and foundations who offer scholarships. The role of individual donors is essential. They support CDI's scholarship program and give individual scholarships to students they come to know.

"These students work hard to plan for college, but sometimes it's difficult for them to make it happen," says Lena. "Finances are often an impediment. It's not just tuition—it's money for books, transportation, and, in some cases, child care. We don't expect to get them a full stipend to a private school, but it's amazing what a small amount of money can do. When you lift any burden, it's a real help. There's also a psychological effect when we acknowledge these students by giving them a scholarship. It really makes a difference when they know someone has confidence in their ability to succeed."



Lari Stanton (third from left) and friends from MCNDHS

So what's next on Lena's agenda? She points out that, despite CDI's efforts, not all of the students who are admitted to college are able and willing to go. "Some of them just aren't ready yet," she says. "But that's what we'll be focusing on: making sure that the ones who are accepted to college actually get to go."

The Gift of Confidence

Dorrie Susser's husband didn't graduate from college, and he knew that young people need encouragement to pursue an education. When he died, she asked people to forego the flowers and send donations to CDI. Their gifts paid for a year of college for a graduating MCNDHS senior. Dorrie and family continue to fund one such scholarship each year. "We look for the neediest kid in the class who has an engineering sort of mind, as my husband did," she says. "It tells these students how good we think they are and gives them that spark of confidence my husband so deeply valued. So our scholarship gift is a good way to honor his memory."

A Feeling of Purpose

On Lari Stanton's first visit to MCNDHS, he noticed a plaque on the wall with a list of names commemorating the founders of the original school, which was built in 1904 by prominent members of the Jewish community to educate the daughters of newly arrived immigrants. One of the names was strikingly familiar to him. "What a coincidence!" Lari thought. "It really is fate."

The instrument of fate that brought Lari Stanton and MCNDHS together was an article in *The New York Times*. "About eight or ten years ago," he says, "I read a story about this wonderful school and decided to offer my help."

Lari has since provided scholarships to many MCNDHS students and funded program initiatives, and he is now sponsoring a dozen summer internships at The Cooper Union. "When I was young and just starting out," he says, "I had a mentor who gave me psychological support and loaned me money to help establish and further my business. I hope to do likewise for these youngsters."

Lari periodically visits with MCNDHS and CDI's leadership to discuss the school's progress. "I love going there, for graduation and other events," Lari says. "I've become friendly with some of the teachers, and with many students, even beyond graduation. Now, for example, I'm providing a scholarship for a biology major at CCNY who's going on for her doctorate."

As with many donors, Lari has the financial resources to provide assistance because of his own success in business.

He invented the Isotoner glove, which is comfortable and especially beneficial for people with arthritis and lymphedema. He once owned what was, fifty years ago, the largest glove company in the world. After selling it to Sara Lee, he continued to run it for another twenty-five years.

Now retired at age 79, Lari enjoys his philanthropic connection to the MCNDHS community because he "likes to see young people improve and make something of themselves. It gives you such great pleasure and a feeling of purpose, an experience like no other. Material things don't offer sustaining satisfaction. Knowing you're doing something good for another person is far more rewarding."

And oh, about the name on that plaque. It was Julius Kayser. A hundred years ago he owned the largest glove company in the world.

College Office Giving Opportunities

- \$65** pays for a CUNY application
- \$150** college tours for two students
- \$500** a year's worth of textbooks
- \$1,400** a year's tuition at a CUNY Community College

To make a tax-deductible donation, please mail a check to:

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