



DEER CREEK

PRIDE

Winter/Spring 2016

Mission

Deer Creek Christian School partners with families to help children grow in **Academics, Faith, and Character** for Kingdom service.

PRINCIPAL'S POST

SCHOOL CULTURE (IT'S A BIG DEAL)

by Brian Verwolf,
Head of School

When schools are places where people genuinely care for one another, research shows that attendance improves, students have fewer behavior problems, and students *like* school more. They are motivated to learn, work harder, and achieve more.

Deer Creek Christian School uses as a model what the Apostle Paul says in his letters about living as a Christian community. We're intentional about helping students develop biblical character.

Schools are significant agents for enculturating children. It's true that students throughout the world today show increasing depression, anxiety, aggression, overdependence, and disobedience. Within this context, Deer Creek is living up to a higher

mission as we actively seek ways to promote shared values.

Little excites me more than listening to students resolve conflicts with one another, or seeing a student pick up a piece of trash in the hallway simply to keep our school in top shape. Culture improves character. And character breeds Kingdom servants.

It's great to know that we don't have to put any "spin" on what's happening at Deer Creek in order to make ourselves feel good. We have genuine reasons to be thankful and inspired! We are confident in our foundation and thoroughly optimistic about our future.

Thank you for your confidence in the work we do. Thank you for your partnership and support. Please pray with us for the culture of Deer Creek and the choices we make together to shape it. ♥



DEER CREEK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Preschool-8th grade
425 Exchange Street
University Park, IL 60484
www.dccsonline.org
708-672-6200

 facebook.com/
DeerCreekChristianSchool

Deer Creek Preview Week! February 22-26, 9a-2p—

Call to schedule, or stop by for a tour. **February 25, 6-8p**—Meet your teacher and the school leadership.

PRESCHOOL: LEARNING LOVE



by Erica Gaffoy

As an Early Childhood Teacher at Deer Creek, I have the joy of introducing our youngest learners to the school community. Our curriculum puts a lot of emphasis on language development, discovery, confidence/self-esteem, and large and small motor skills.

Several years ago, at the close of the school year, a parent told

me about how he was working on adjectives with his daughter. When he pointed at my picture, his daughter said “love.” This story showed me that I was really making an impact in the lives of my students.

That is why I love being an Early Childhood Teacher. I love that I get to encourage a love for learning in children, and by this share a love for Jesus Christ. ♥

PRE-K: BUILDING SKILLS



by Mrs. Popko

Deer Creek’s K-4 is a curriculum-based, Christ-centered program. Children this age are developing writing skills, social skills, and number/letter recognition. We build on students’ prior knowledge to further these skills. Our goal is to also introduce kindergarten concepts like writing sentences, recognizing punctuation, reading, rhyming,

addition and subtraction, classroom structure, and more. I have such a passion for teaching the 4’s. I have taught this age group for 20 years and have seen children learn a lot of “firsts.” This is my favorite part of the job. I feel so blessed to be teaching at a Christian school where students learn who Christ is and how to have a personal relationship with Him. ♥

KINDERGARTEN: TRANSFORMING



by Mrs. Von Thaden

This is my 13th year teaching Kindergarten, and I love it! The kids are so excited about learning, and that makes it fun to teach them.

It is remarkable what they learn in a year! They transform from non-readers to readers in only a few short weeks. They mature so much—academically, physically, and spiritually. This age is the time

to learn phone numbers, addresses, and shoe-tying. They practice fine motor skills using scissors, crayons, and glue. They have responsibilities in the classroom so they feel like they are part of our classroom family.

By the end of the year, they should have a firm grasp of the reading process. In addition, I want my students to be independent learners, a skill that will prepare them well for first grade and beyond. ♥

ACADEMICS

CELEBRATING THE ARTS

by Tammy Rivera, Fine Arts Fair Coordinator

We have been created to create! This is one of the hallmarks of being image-bearers of God. Deer Creek's Fine Arts Fair gives us an opportunity to celebrate and showcase some of this unique creativity.

Middle School students will be choosing two projects from three categories: Writing, Visual Arts, and Music. Elementary students will be participating by submitting an approved Visual Arts or Music piece.

I'd like to express a huge thank-you to Mrs. Camilleri, Ms. Deur, and Mrs. Lindahl for their work in organizing student projects. Please celebrate the arts with us on **Thursday, April 14, 6:00–8:00pm.** ♥



CHARACTER

LET'S R.O.A.R!

Character training is an essential part of Christian education. As learning facilitators, we must model and acknowledge excellent character.

Deer Creek is on an adventure to celebrate monthly character traits/themes for the rest of the school year. We want these character traits to permeate student choices, teacher lesson plans, and school chapels. School-wide goals will be set at the beginning of each month with fun celebrations to follow when we hit our target. Specifically, we'll be honoring students who are: **R**espectful (1 Peter 2:17), **O**bservant (Proverbs 1:5), **A**ccountable (1 Peter 1:13), **R**eflective (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

You'll be hearing more about these traits and how we encourage each other in developing them throughout the year. Together, let's ROAR!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS—

➤ **Monday, February 22:**

Enrollment for 2016-2017 opens

➤ **February 22–26:**

Deer Creek Preview Week!

From 9:00am–2:00pm during this week, you can visit the school, walk the hallways, and see what daily life is like at Deer Creek. Call to schedule, or just stop by.

➤ **Thursday, February 25, 6:00–**

8:00pm: Meet your teacher and attend a Q&A with school leaders.

➤ **Friday, March 18, 5:00pm:**

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: An Evening for Deer Creek

Charles, Daniel, and David Lotton—former grandparent and parents of Deer Creek students—will open their studio for tours and donate a number of their world-renowned Art Glass pieces for auction. Proceeds will support the vision for Deer Creek's future. For

\$15 per person, enjoy terrific

food (hosted by Crete Church), be fascinated by the art of glass-blowing, connect with friends new and old, and help support our mission. RSVP at <https://aneveningfordeercreek.eventbrite.com>.

➤ **Saturday, May 21, 12:00pm:**

Deer Creek Golf Outing

Join us at Lincoln Oaks in Crete. Your \$100 registration includes four-person scramble, lunch, range, dinner, and prizes.



DEER CREEK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

425 Exchange Street, University Park, IL 60484

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ALUMNI, ILLUMINATED

“YOU WERE A BLESSING TO ME”

by Heidi (Swets) Woldhuis,
Class of 2004

After graduating from Deer Creek in 2004, I was homeschooled for high school, and I began working at Sunrise Greenhouse in Grant Park, Illinois.

In 2011 I moved to Costa Rica, where I spent six months teaching English as a second language at a Christian school. I also worked at a print shop that translates and publishes Christian literature in Spanish. These experiences helped my faith grow in big ways. I also gained new respect for my former teachers!

When I returned from Costa

Rica in 2012, I started working again at the same greenhouse. Shortly after that I started dating Trevor, the boss's son. We got married in 2013 and had a baby boy in April of 2015.

I am now a stay-at-home mom for Elijah, and there is nothing in the world I'd rather do. We are part owners of the family greenhouse where Trevor works. God has richly blessed me throughout the years.

I want to thank the faculty and staff at Deer Creek who shared their time, love, and lessons with me

and shaped me into the person I am today. You were a blessing to me, and I am grateful. ♥

Deer Creek graduates, we'd love to hear from you! Please email us and share where you are and what you're doing: info@dccsonline.org.

