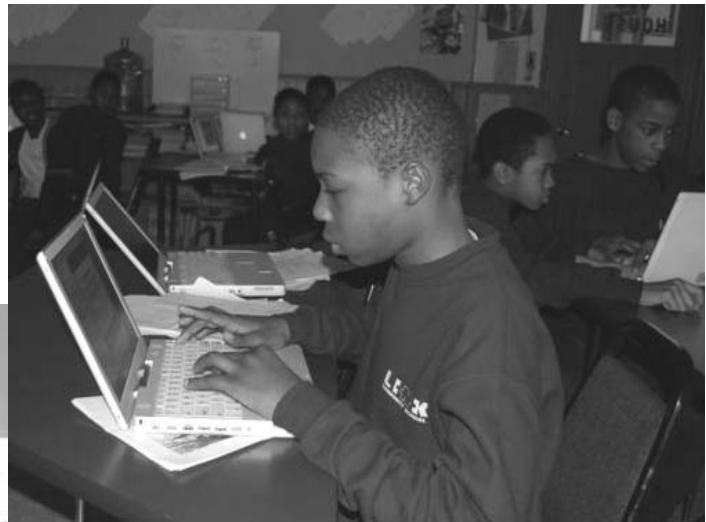




*Newark is our home  
Education is our work  
The world is our future*



## **Annual Report 2006-2007**

## A message from the Co-Chairs



Dear Friends,

The 2006-07 school year was an exceptional period for the Link community. First and foremost the education of our students, grounded in core values, by a dedicated and energetic faculty led to extraordinary results. There is a high degree of confidence from all those in leadership roles that our students are positioned for success as they move on to the next level. The data in this report will reflect in more granular detail how successful an effort it was by all involved.

The grounding that we have in core values places demands on all associated with Link. Trustees, administrators, faculty, employees, volunteers, and students are in fact held to a higher standard. And that is a good thing. While our mission provides for children of all ability levels to be educated in an academic sense, there is only one standard for values. We do believe that excellence in this area provides the strongest foundation for all of our students as they move on with their lives. It is important to communicate to you, our donors who make Link possible, that Link's Board embraces being held to that higher standard and determines our policies in a fashion consistent with a strong value system.

We have undertaken very ambitious initiatives during this school year. We began with a Board retreat last September to set the agenda and utilized our meeting time to focus on the goals we set. We are fortunate to have a combination of variables that would make any leaders envious: a strong foundation thanks to the foresight of the Sisters of St. Dominic, great energy (inspired by our students!), and the generosity of so many with their time, talent and treasure. With that as a backdrop, our role as leaders is one to relish. We are guided by a simple tenet: What is best for our students? That guidance was in place as we considered our goals. We have implemented a five year strategic plan, a continuance of the plan from 2003-05. We have positioned the school to expand for a limited sixth grade. And, we completed a feasibility study for a possible capital campaign. That sets the table for 2007-08 as there are exciting implications for Link's growth and future.

Your partnership with us in furthering the work at Link is invaluable. We are grateful to all of you for making Link the center of excellence that it is. We have much hard work ahead as we strive to grow, improve, and serve our students better. We assure you that we consider it a privilege to do that work on your behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Garavente".

Christopher Garavente

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward E. Sheridan".

Edward E. Sheridan

## A message from the Principal



Dear Friends,

I have always marveled at seeing the possessions of a noteworthy or notorious person auctioned. A tee shirt that was purchased for ten dollars is worth hundreds of dollars simply because it allegedly belonged to a particular individual. I have often asked myself how people determine how much they are willing to invest in something to which they ascribe value. The possessions are very appealing because they are unique, and this uniqueness makes them more valuable. Likewise, Link's value is in its uniqueness, and because of this, people are willing to invest in it.

It is unique for middle school students from Newark to fence, play golf and ice hockey and to travel to the Bahamas to explore marine biology and environmental sustainability. It is unique for a school in Newark to have a SMART Board in every classroom. It is unique for teachers to call students at home because they appeared to have a bad day. It is unique for 100% of the student body to support our Annual Appeal. And it is very valuable.

In this year's Report you will read about the strides we have made in accomplishing the goals of our Strategic Plan, about new partnerships, new academic programs and record-setting fund-raising. You will read quotes from members of our community about the Link experience, and you will see that we continue to strive to fulfill our mission with excellence each day.

While this Report is a celebration of all that we were able to accomplish in the 2006-2007 school year, it is also a celebration of all that you have invested to give breath to our mission. We are unique because you partner with us through contributing your many resources. The impact of your gift is immeasurable and will live through generations to come. This is unique. This is valuable. For this we are grateful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marnie G. McKoy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Marnie G. McKoy

# Our Foundation

## Our Mission

Link Community School seeks to provide an outstanding independent middle school education for Newark adolescents of all academic abilities from economically disadvantaged families. Link endeavors to create a powerful learning community built on a collective commitment to excellence and enduring core values. By building a strong academic foundation and instilling life long values, Link aims to develop students who will be successful in higher education and responsible and resourceful citizens who give back to others.



## Our Vision

Educational Excellence: To provide students of all ability levels an exceptional education on par with the best middle school education offered anywhere in the country. A Link education will provide students the academic foundation and character development necessary to be successful learners and members of their future communities.

High School Placement: To place students in top high schools in the region and country and to insure that they have the skills to succeed in those programs.

Inspiring Other Schools: To be recognized as a model urban middle school for our student success and innovative educational practices. Link aims to inspire and support the development of other highly effective schools that provide similar success for thousands of under-served students.

## Our Core Values

Respect  
Responsibility  
Honesty  
Caring  
Doing One's Best  
Following Directions

## Our History

Link, a non-denominational middle school, was founded in 1969 by the Sisters of St. Dominic of Caldwell, NJ in response to the 1967 Newark riots that left much of the Central Ward in poverty. The Sisters desired that Link be a force for restoration in the devastated city by providing educational excellence for its youth. Today, the need for high caliber education in Newark's poorest neighborhoods is as great as ever.

*Respect*

*Responsibility*

*Honesty*

*Caring*

*Doing One's Best*

*Following Directions*

# Our School

## Our Student Body

- Grades—7 and 8
- Enrollment—117
- Gender—Female 56%, Male 44%
- Ethnic representation—Black 96%, Hispanic 4%
- Geographic representation—Newark and the surrounding areas, including East Orange, Irvington and Orange
- Economic background—72% of Link families were classified as low income according to Essex County, NJ State guidelines.
- Family makeup—75% of Link students live in single parent households and 8% reside with grandparents and/or guardians.
- Academic levels—all academic abilities
- Tuition assistance—100% of students receive tuition assistance; families pay approximately 15% of the cost of educating a student.

## Our Program

- Student/faculty ratio—8:1
- Average class size—16
- Core courses—English, history, mathematics, science
- Co-curricular courses—Spanish, fine art, computers, theater arts, high school prep, music, physical education, health, and reading/writing lab
- Electives courses—change quarterly and in 2006-2007 included African Dance, karate, film criticism, French, musical instrument lessons, drama, chess, penpals, yearbook, and robotics among others
- Athletics—flag football, boys' and girls' basketball, cheerleading, volleyball
- Outdoor education— programs exploring the outdoors, building teamwork and handling challenges with Project U.S.E. and the Princeton Blairstown Center
- Community service—"Share-a-Story" at Community Hills Early Learning Center, Hillside Community Food Bank, Thanksgiving food baskets for needy neighbors

## Our Facility

- One building with 12 classrooms
- Computer, music and science labs
- SMART Boards in every classroom
- Mini labs with 3-4 computers in several classrooms
- Two mobile computer labs



# Highlights from 2006-2007

## Impressive student results

**Standardized Test Scores:** The cumulative scores of the graduating class of 2007 increased by 3.1 grade levels overall on the national McGraw-Hill CTB standardized test, far surpassing the expected level of 1.8. The scores for the seventh grade in 2007 increased by 2.4 grade levels overall versus an expected level of 0.8.

**High School Acceptances:** 100% of the graduating class of 2007 was accepted to at least one quality private or magnet high school of the students' choice. Additionally, 90% of the class was accepted to two or more schools.

**Awards:** Link's graduating class included four Wight Foundation and three NJ SEEDS scholars.

**High School Scholarships:** The graduating class earned \$1.8 million in scholarships, financial aid or grants to some of the best high schools in the country.

**Link Alumni:** A survey of Link's Class of 2003 graduates who recently graduated from high school found that, of those Link alumni we were able to reach, 43 (96%) graduated high school and two (4%) are taking an extra year to complete high school. Additionally, 100% of the 43 high school graduates enrolled in college for the fall of 2007.

## Significant academic program enhancements

- Introduced the STAR assessment program, a computerized set of tests in math and reading to track student growth throughout the year and to make instructional adjustments where necessary.
- Implemented a reading and writing lab with a curriculum aimed at strengthening students' reading and critical



thinking skills, reading comprehension and awareness of proper grammar. This program offered remediation for some students and enrichment for others.

- Enhanced the arts program by forging a new partnership with the New Jersey Performing Arts Center Artist-in-Residency program that enabled students to learn public speaking and acting techniques from a professional actor; by providing trips to tour the Montclair Art Museum and to view live performances at the NJPAC; and by adding lessons on stringed instruments.
- Completed a successful four week summer session where incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade and new 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were, for the first time, grouped by gender. Students in this program improved in their academic competence by 14% to 42% across the core subjects.
- Instituted a mandatory study hall with tutorial support for students who are at risk academically as well as students who need a quiet working environment.
- Added history and science curriculums to the Core Performance Standards (CPS) to further develop student proficiency in these areas.
- Continued to ensure maximum use of technology in the classroom as evidenced by the installation of two servers and a broadcast system through NJN and placing SMART Boards in more classrooms as well as guiding teachers in the use of both.

- Provided struggling students the opportunity to attend a one day seminar at Fairleigh Dickinson University where they learned more about how to achieve success with their particular learning style.

### **Notable institutional advancements**

- Launched the Link Community School Strategic Plan 2006-2011 to address strategic challenges and guide institutional growth over the next five years.
- Completed two key objectives from the strategic plan: a feasibility study to determine the viability of a capital and/or endowment campaign and an investigation into adding a 6<sup>th</sup> grade to the school. Work in these areas will continue in the 2007-2008 school year.
- Raised over \$1.8 million through the generosity of trustees and other individual supporters, foundations, corporations, churches, and civic groups to provide an outstanding academic program, an excellent staff and on-going maintenance of the physical plant.
- Retained 83% of faculty and staff from previous year and recruited highly effective new members for the staff including a new dean of students with an M.Ed. and experience in student affairs at an urban college as well as three new teachers.
- Increased the number of days the social worker is at Link from two to three to ensure that our students' emotional and mental well-being are addressed. The social worker provided six workshops for students on topics including teambuilding, abstinence, gang awareness and transitioning to high school.
- Hosted an open house for community leaders in the Central Ward as well as the broader Newark community so they could become more familiar with Link.

- Pursued new partnerships that complement our work with students while expanding their horizons. New activities included participation in the Sally Ride Club, an after school science club designed to encourage young women in science, math and engineering. The club, the first on the East Coast, is sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals, a long time partner of Link. Link supporter Ms. Morgan Landsberger introduced Link students to Epals, a "penpal" type program with students at the American School in London. Plans began in the winter of 2006 to partner with New Jersey Law Education and Empowerment Program (NJ LEEP) at Seton Hall University which provides mentoring and skill building programs for college bound students.
- Deepened current partnerships to include new opportunities for students to grow and develop. Athletes in Action, Inc., which has provided various activities for our boys, held a tennis clinic for the girls with tennis pro Doug Goulding. Project U.S.E., which provides some of the outdoor education programming at Link, offered a three month after school course in boatbuilding for boys.
- Provided meaningful programming for parents and guardians addressing Link policies, summer camp and program opportunities, ways to support their children academically, gang awareness, how to build a child's self esteem and transitioning to high school.
- Completed several refurbishment projects including repairing the north roof, installing new classroom and gym/balcony doors and installing a new tile floor in one classroom.



# Our Partners

*Link is grateful for the many partnerships with individuals, corporations and foundations that introduce students to extraordinary personal and academic enrichment experiences...opportunities that the students may never have without the generosity of our donors.*

## Extracurricular Programs

- Football Clinic for Boys and Tennis Clinic for Girls with Athletes in Action, Inc. and Mr. Doug Goulding
- NJPAC Artist in Residency Program
- Novartis Community Partnership Day
- Novartis "Take Your Children to Work Day"
- Playwrights Theatre's The New Jersey Writer's Project

## Mentoring Programs

- Friday Boys' Group, with Mr. Ed Reitz, Mr. Gene Crocker and Mr. Cedric Ashley
- Thursday Girls' Group, with Ms. Gloria McDonald

## After School and Saturday Programs

- Canoe Trip on the Delaware River with Project U.S.E., courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Reitz
- Fencing Program at The Peter Westbrook Foundation, courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Reitz
- Ice Hockey, courtesy of NJ Goals Ahead
- Jr. Golf Academy, courtesy of Athletes in Action, Inc./ PlaySmart, Inc./Chelsea Piers Foundation
- Lacrosse clinic, courtesy of Delbarton School
- Project U.S.E. Boatbuilding Project
- Sally Ride Science Club, courtesy of Novartis

## Summer Camps and Programs

- Camp Agawam
- Camp Border Collie for Kids
- The Island School
- Playwrights of NJ Summer Theatre Camp
- Project U.S.E. Dakota Trip
- The SMART Program at UMDNJ



## Our Graduates

*Link is proud of the achievements of the Class of '07 which resulted in each graduate receiving at least one acceptance, and in some cases more than one, to the following outstanding day or boarding independent schools, private high schools or Newark magnet schools:*

Arts High School  
Benedictine Academy  
Berkshire School  
Christ the King Prep  
Collegiate High School  
Dana Hall School  
Emma Willard School  
Immaculate Conception High School  
Lacordaire Academy  
Langley High School  
Marist High School

Marylawn of the Oranges Academy  
Milton Hershey Academy  
Miss Porter's School  
Mother Seton High School  
Northfield Mount Hermon School  
Oldfields School  
Oratory Prep  
Perkiomen School  
Purnell School  
Science Park High School

Seton Hall Prep  
Solebury School  
St. Benedict's Prep  
St. George's School  
St. Patrick High School  
St. Vincent Academy  
Technology High School  
Union Catholic High School  
University High School  
Westtown School



## Our Alumni

*Similarly we are pleased that the alumni from the Link Class of '03, who recently graduated from high school, will be attending the following colleges in the fall of 2007:*

Alan Hancock College  
Atlanta A & T  
Benedict College  
Bloomfield College  
Centenary College  
Chatham College  
Claflin University  
College of Holy Cross  
Delaware State University  
Duquesne University  
Essex County Community College

Fairleigh Dickenson University  
Howard University  
King's College  
Morehouse College  
Morgan State University  
New Jersey Institute of Technology  
Oakwood College  
Ramapo College  
Richard Stockton College of NJ  
Rutgers University

Seton Hall University  
St. Peter's College  
The College of New Jersey  
University of Hartford  
University of Maryland – Eastern Shore  
Villanova University  
Widener University  
William Patterson University  
Williams College  
Xavier University

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*Responsibility*

*Honesty*

*Caring*

*Doing One's Best*

*Following Directions*

# Our Donors

*We appreciate the generosity of our many supporters, including foundations, corporations, civic groups, churches, and individuals, who helped Link fulfill its mission during the 2006-2007 school year.*

## **Founder's Circle**

**\$50,000 and up**

---

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*"Link truly prepared me for the real world. Link opened my eyes and mind to bigger and newer experiences outside of Newark. Now, I'm ready to conquer any obstacles that stand in my way. Link put my life on the right path."*

**Jerome Brown, '04, senior at  
Morristown-Beard School**

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*"Students who attend Link learn through the Core Values that they can make a difference not only in Newark but in the world...They realize their potential and take control of their education."*

**Mrs. Araromi, mother  
of four Link alumni**

Respect

Responsibility

Honesty

Caring

Doing One's Best

Following Directions

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*We have made every effort to accurately list all who made gifts to Link Community School for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.*

*If misspellings, omissions or other errors have been made, please accept our sincere apology and bring the error to the attention of Link's Office of Institutional Advancement at [development@linkschool.org](mailto:development@linkschool.org) or (973) 642-5343.*

# 9<sup>th</sup> Annual *A Taste of Newark*

*~Honoring Mayor Cory Booker~*

Wednesday, November 1, 2006  
New Jersey Performing Arts Center  
Newark, New Jersey



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*“Link is a shining example of what schools all over this nation should be and we need to support it, help preserve it, grow it and expand it.”*

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# 5th Annual Golf Outing

Metedeconk National Golf Course  
Jackson, New Jersey  
Monday, July 25, 2006

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*Link appreciates the support of all donors at all levels of giving and offers a variety of gift options that provide donors with maximum convenience and flexibility.*

**Cash:** Writing a check or making a gift via credit card is a simple and direct way to contribute.

**Securities:** A gift of appreciated securities may provide tax benefits, including an income tax deduction and a reduction in capital gains tax liability.

**Corporate Matching Gifts:** A company or foundation that matches gifts to non-profit organizations can often double or triple your contribution. Corporate matching forms can usually be obtained from your company's Philanthropy or Matching Gift Program office and sent to Link for completion.

**Bequests:** A bequest is a gift you make by naming Link Community School in your will and can be made when drawing up your will or by adding a codicil later on. Such a gift can be made for a specific amount, a portion of the estate, or a remainder share. Bequests may provide tax benefits to the estate.

**Gifts-in-Kind:** Link is grateful for donations of goods and services that can benefit the school. Periodically, the staff identifies items for a "wish list", which can be found in our quarterly newsletter, *Link to You*.

**Gift of Time:** Volunteers may have time, a talent, or a professional skill that could benefit Link and would be greatly appreciated by the school community. Tutors and mentors are especially needed.

**Sponsor a Student:** An individual, group, company, church or organization can sponsor the Link education of an individual student. Sponsorship may be for one or two years, and can be made through a flexible installment payment option or as an annual gift.

**For more information or to make a gift, please contact:**

**Maria Pilar Paradiso**

**Vice Principal, Director of Institutional Advancement**

**Link Community School**

**120 Livingston Street, Newark, NJ 07103**

**Phone: 973-642-5343 Fax: 973-624-8521**

**E-mail: [development@linkschool.org](mailto:development@linkschool.org)**

*Gifts to Link qualify as charitable deductions as outlined in the United States Internal Revenue Code.*

*A copy of Link's letter of determination of paragraph 501(c)(3) status is available upon request.*

# Financial Summary

## from the Link Community School Audited Financial Statements

Statement of Activities for the year ended June 30, 2007

<u>Revenues, Gains, and Other Support</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u>	Temporarily <u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Foundation grants	\$ 860,539	\$ -	\$ 860,539
Contributions	898,758	135,123	1,033,881
Donations in kind	134,793	-	134,793
Contributed services	36,317	-	36,317
Parent subsidy	233,862	-	233,862
Food service program	38,297	-	38,297
Investment income	186,933	4,131	191,064
Net unrealized gain (loss) on investments	44,032	-	44,032
Miscellaneous fees and other	<u>8,497</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,497</u>
	2,442,028	139,254	2,581,282
Net assets released from restriction	<u>87,877</u>	<u>(87,877)</u>	<u>-</u>
 Total Revenue, Gains, and Other Support	 <u>2,529,905</u>	 <u>51,377</u>	 <u>2,581,282</u>
 <u>Expenses</u>			
Instruction	969,978	-	969,978
Administrative	64,362	-	64,362
Contributed services	36,317	-	36,317
Operation of plant	90,429	-	90,429
Maintenance of plant	72,875	-	72,875
Fixed charges	283,035	-	283,035
Food service program	41,448	-	41,448
Student activities	54,819	-	54,819
Fundraising and development*	343,694	-	343,694
Donations in kind	<u>134,793</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>134,793</u>
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>2,091,750</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,091,750</u>
 <u>Change in Net Assets</u>	 438,155	 <u>51,377</u>	 <u>489,532</u>
 Net assets at beginning of year	 <u>2,070,208</u>	 <u>138,625</u>	 <u>2,208,833</u>
 Net assets at end of year	 <u>\$2,508,363</u>	 <u>\$ 190,002</u>	 <u>\$2,698,365</u>

\*This figure includes expenditures associated with raising funds for Link, with providing opportunities for personal development and academic enrichment for our students, and with sustaining our alumni outreach.

# Financial Summary

## from the Link Community School Audited Financial Statements

Statements of Financial Position, June 30, 2007 and 2006

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
<u>Assets</u>		
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 605,331	\$ 585,391
Accounts receivable	66,312	35,779
Investments	1,819,081	1,376,191
Prepaid expenses	<u>14,561</u>	<u>36,327</u>
Total current assets	<u>2,505,285</u>	<u>2,033,688</u>
<u>Fixed Assets</u>		
Property, plant and equipment	686,500	656,217
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>363,249</u>	<u>369,405</u>
Net property, plant and equipment	<u>323,251</u>	<u>286,812</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$2,828,536</u>	<u>\$2,320,500</u>

### Liabilities and Net Assets

<u>Current Liabilities</u>		
Accounts payable	\$ 24,801	\$ 13,007
Unearned income	<u>105,370</u>	<u>98,660</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>130,171</u>	<u>111,667</u>
<u>Net Assets</u>		
Unrestricted	2,508,363	2,070,208
Temporarily restricted	<u>190,002</u>	<u>138,625</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>\$2,698,365</u>	<u>\$2,208,833</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$2,828,536</u>	<u>\$2,320,500</u>

*A complete copy of Link Community School Financial Statements and Additional Information, Years Ended June 30, 2007 and 2006, prepared by independent auditors, Pustorino, Puglisi & Co., LLP, New York, NY, is available from the Link Office of Institutional Advancement upon request.*

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