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QUEEN'S QUARTERLY

The official newsletter of Chess for Success





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SUMMER UPDATES

Chess for Success has officially wrapped up programming for the summer! While we're disappointed not to offer summer clubs this year, we made this decision to ensure the strength and sustainability of our year-round programs. We're hopeful and excited about the possibility of bringing summer programming back next year.

That said, one of our staff members, Michael Malone is still running some special programming. For the past 13 years, Michael has spent his summers leading a chess club at St. Mary's Home for Boys in Beaverton.

The boys at St. Mary's often come from difficult backgrounds and struggle with self-esteem. Through chess, Michael helps them build confidence, resilience, and a belief in themselves. As the director of the home shared: "Oftentimes the boys would believe they could never win a game. And then, when they did, they'd start to believe... it just did so much for them."

We're incredibly proud of Michael and grateful for this ongoing partnership and look forward to helping him run his end of year tournament for these boys later this summer!

COACH OF THE YEAR!

In an effort to do more in the way of recognizing the amazing work of our coaches, we have begun a coach of the year award! This past year we decided to ask each regional coordinator to submit nominations for their regions. Below are the submissions!

Elementary Winner: Robin Rolfe, Sabin School

Robin is a Librarian at Sabin School. She has had an amazing year as a coach. ***She started the year advocating for more ADA compliant venues for CFS*** since she a disabled student in her chess club. Her teaching is marked by her use of efficient chess instruction combined with DBT lessons. After daily chess play, her students would regroup on the carpet where she would invite them to review how the day went and how they were able to apply both the DBT exercise of that day and the chess tactic they were working on. In February and March Robin ***organized a Parent/Community Chess night*** where she invited about 60 parents, community members and former Sabin Chess students for a night of low stress chess and pizza. In addition to this, she managed to ***coach her chess team to a 2nd place finish in the Regional Tournament*** and is heading to the State Finals. But this isn't all. Working with SUN school, ***Robin secured funding so she could continue chess in the Spring term for 2nd and 3 rd graders who didn't join chess club this year. She even inspired some parents at Sabin to start a separate chess club after school for just 1st graders***. Robin is as dedicated as they come, not only to the ideals of Chess for Success, but to the students at Sabin Elementary.

Middle School Winner: Larry Dickinson, South Meadows

For Middle, I nominate Larry Dickinson from South Meadows and Brookwood. Larry has worked with CFS for a while, and he ***consistently goes above and beyond to provide students with a positive experience*** in his chess club. It is clear that he cares deeply about our mission/values, and ***his involvement in programming and communication with other coaches in the area has been super helpful*** to me this year. He deserves this award!

Additional notes about Larry- He and his family have been vitally helpful to the organization this year. They have allowed us to use their software, BracketJD, for all of our tournaments this year and have modified it to best fit our needs. They also were a huge help in securing the location and setting up for the state tournament for us .

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NOMINATIONS:

Alexandra Lackey,
Image Elementary

Alexandra is one of our longest serving coaches in SW Washington. She is one of the coaches who truly checks every box in regards to what we hope and expect our coaches to do. She leads a lesson at the beginning of the club, gives the kids opportunities to ask questions, and then disperses them out to play games against one another, utilizing a year-long chess ladder to choose those who get to go to Regionals. She has a large club of over 30 students and does an excellent job of keeping the group together year after year, giving kids the chance to truly grow and develop. Alexandra truly goes above and beyond!

Mike Sheldon
Chapman Hill Elementary

Mike was a new coach this year, and he absolutely blew me away with his level of engagement and passion for teaching chess. It was more than just classroom management; Mike inspired students in his club to be unapologetically themselves. After my visits at Chapman Hill, I couldn't help but feel inspired myself, and I wished I could've had a teacher like Mike when I was a student. Mike is the type of teacher that positively impacts people's lives forever, and I can't think of a better coach for this nomination.

Alex Lipschutz,
Salish Ponds ES

As a new coach this year and regular substitute at Salish Ponds, Alex did incredible stepping into the role. He was responsive to communications, regularly reached out with questions, was super involved in All possible tournament options (not just Regionals), and really invested in being a good and knowledgeable coach to his students. While he may not be at the same school next year, he's interested in bringing CFS to wherever he ends up next because of how much he has enjoyed the program.

Shannon Mulcahy,
Nehalem Elementary

Shannon is a dedicated chess coach for Nehalem Elementary School. During her time in past seasons, and in the current 2024/25 school year, she has gone above and beyond to create an enriching and inspiring experience for her students, and she deserves recognition for her incredible work. Shannon has created handouts, organized competitions, implemented chess ladders to promote engagement, and overall has fostered a love for the game while promoting healthy competition and growth. Her efforts extend beyond chess skills—she consistently reinforces positive behavior, sets clear student expectations, and integrates social-emotional learning (SEL) into her coaching, helping students build confidence, resilience, and teamwork. Her leadership and commitment to her students and club have been consistent and above all expectations.

MIDDLE SCHOOL NOMINATIONS:

Sabrina Lett, Clear Creek Middle School

Also a first year coach and teacher at the school, Sabrina jumped right in with both feet and has been an incredible addition to our team. Sabrina reached out to me wanting to bring our program to their school, and I met with the SUN coordinators and were able to get a program started around January. In my first visit to the club, having not yet met Sabrina and only talking over email, I was anticipating to find a coach who maybe struggled with the group of students she ended up with and to be tripping over the curriculum a bit (what I would anticipate from most new coaches). Boy was I wrong. Sabrina had her materials prepared, additional resources even, and ran one of the tightest classrooms I've ever seen. She already had a wonderful relationship established with these students. While it was early, I still encouraged them to go to Regionals and I'm so glad they did.

Robert Gray, Roseway Heights Middle School

It's very difficult to get middle schoolers to commit to chess club on a consistent basis. Rob, however, makes it look easy. He works with his players and finds ways to accommodate their varied schedules and still attends chess club. He is very attentive to the needs of his students who range from the very emotional to the physically disabled. He is also able to keep the interest of some very high achieving players by using unique chess puzzles and former chess games. Despite his somewhat laid back teaching style, Rob always seems to challenge his students to improve every week, every day, every game. This year his hard work paid off! After losing some of his best players to high school, Rob organized his current chess club into a championship team tying with the mighty Laurelhurst team for 1st place in the Regional Tournament.

James Johansen, Neah-kah-Nie Middle School

James is the most veteran and experienced coach in our region. He is currently coaching a middle school chess club, and has done an outstanding job leading his team and deserves recognition for the impact he has made. James has a dynamic coaching style that works to elevate the abilities of his advanced players while also sparking a genuine love for the game in those just starting out. His ability to challenge seasoned players and support beginners simultaneously speaks to his talent as both a strategist and a mentor. Beyond his regular coaching sessions, James has played a key role in organizing tournaments, helping with every setup and take-down of tournament materials, and ensuring that every tournament or meeting has the resources needed to run smoothly. His constant dedication, bottomless energy, and steady leadership has provided a valuable role model for his students.

Chess for Success 28th Annual State Tournament Results

1

K-5 Individual

Suhaan Kesavan
Vihaan Kesavan

6-8 Individual

Arin Jander
Henry Rodgers
Karthik Bimod
Neil Natarajan

9-12 Individual

Misha von Dassow

2

K-5 Individual

Sriram Badri
Isaiah Fattal
Prahlada Saripalli
Axl Arun



6-8 Individual

Jayden Yu
Jordan Wolfe
Laurel Scarborough
Leo Kuhl
Liam Sliwinski
Luca Hurd
Max Reinert
Orlando Villarreal
Oscar Baldivieso

9-12 Individual

Cassady Lynn
Matthew Hui

3

K-5 Individual

Lucas Moakhampio
Corina Moakhampio
Alexander Stewart
Alden Mazzotta
Pranav Jibesh Nair
Ruthwikksai Madhan
Peter Dufek
William Thomas
Jensen Yu
Kristy Huang
Nimit Jajam
Micah Olsen
Viet Bui
Linus Mullan
Yousef Bkour
Ellis Robinson
Liem Quach
Rihaan Rahul
Emanuel Powell

6-8 Individual

Benjamin Smith
Dallas Samson
Este Christiansen
Kingston Miller
Krish Chhibber



9-12 Individual

Laynden Clause



Chess for Success 28th Annual State Tournament Results

1st Place

K-5 Team

Springville Elementary

6-8 Team

Roosevelt Middle School

2nd Place

K-5 Team

Brookwood Elementary
Edison Elementary

6-8 Team

Ashbrook K-8
Sellwood Middle School
Stoller Middle School

3rd Place

K-5 Team

Charlemagne Elementary
Pleasant Valley Elementary
Rose City Park Elementary
Sato Elementary
Tamarack Elementary

6-8 Team

South Meadows Middle school

Volunteer Shoutout!



We would like to give a big shout-out to an awesome volunteer who has been around our program for the last few years, Anh Le! Anh is the father to a student in one of our clubs and has provided us with professional quality photos at no charge. These photos are super important as they help us tell our story. A big thanks to Anh!

chess for success

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