



# Amazing Grace



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Volume 1, Issue 39

June 2011

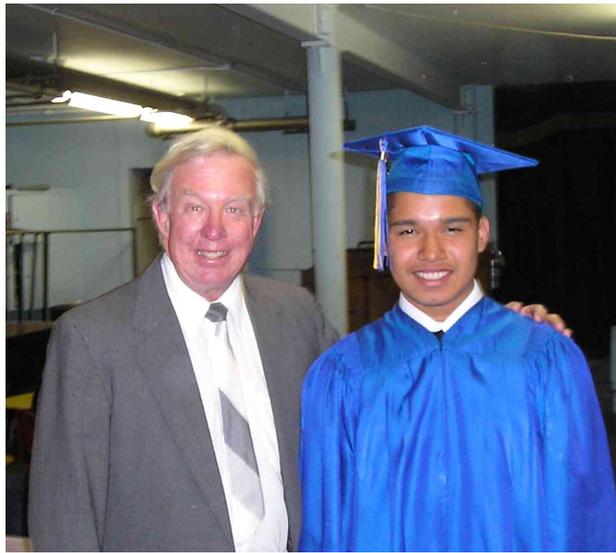
## Graduate Reflects on Time at Grace

Grace's racetrack ministry has become a vital part of our school and its ministry. Mr. Chris Candelas came to Grace as part of the Racetrack outreach. Chris shared with us some of his memories of his time at Grace and how important the school is to him.

Perhaps because neither Chris's father or mother completed elementary school, having a good education was and is a recurring theme at the Candelas home. Chris remembers his parents would often tell him to "look at the TV" and notice how the other families lived. Both of Chris's parents work long hours at the Racetrack, beginning every day at 5:00 AM and sometimes not finishing until 6:00 or 7:00 PM. "Don't be like us. Get to school. Get an education. Want something better."

This is a lesson that Chris is taking to heart. In 2009, Chris graduated from Walther Lutheran High School, Melrose Park, the first in his family to achieve this honor. He is currently enrolled at Concordia College, Mequon, in their Athletic Trainer program.

Chris's brother Jovanny, a seventh grade student at Grace,



Reverend Dave Kukenberg and Mr. Chris Candelas at Chris's graduation from Grace.

also values education. "He does his homework before he's asked about it. I never did that!"

As part of the Racetrack program, Chris would have transportation to and from school each day. While this certainly made it easier for him to attend, Chris knows there were sacrifices too.

Chris explains, "We could have had so many other things, but my parents wanted us to have a good education. Education is a way for me to get out."

Chris's memories of Grace are rich and varied. He especially enjoyed the class field trips which included Walcamp, Camp Cilca, Atlanta, GA and

Washington D.C. Chris vividly remembers the time they were NOT allowed in a room during the White House tour because President Bush was there.

Chris also remembers starting at Grace in the fourth grade. Although he had been a student at a Cicero Public School for several years, Chris's accent was very pronounced. "Yellow" sounded like "Jell-o" and some of the other students thought it was funny.

Because he was shy this new school was hard for him. It wasn't long before

Chris learned he could trust the teachers to help him improve his skills and how to make friends with the children in school.

While Chris remembers living on the racetrack his most telling remark is that the kids he used to hang out with on the track were all "troublemakers". Chris also remarked that most of his Grace friends and fellow "racetrack kids" have or will soon be completing high school. Several more are enrolled in college, earning degrees in everything from medicine to fashion.

Chris sees the importance of the Racetrack Ministry and how the faithful donors have made this outreach possible.

# UKANDU Coming to Grace!

In late June, Grace will be welcoming a work team from UKANDU, (pronounced you can do), a summer mission trip hosted by Lutheran Church Charities. This group is dedicated to helping people become the hearts and hands of Christ to those in need around the world. The approximately 240 youth and adults will be hosting 9 different VBS programs and traveling to 20 different churches and schools and six individual homes for painting, light construction and landscaping.

Members of UKANDU will work at Grace on a variety of projects that may be too big, noisy or disruptive to tackle during the school year. Some of this year's scheduled projects are updating the library (which requires moving all the books and shelves), and outdoor maintenance projects.

While the schools, churches and individuals helped reap the visible rewards of repainted rooms or a tamed landscape, some of the other benefits aren't as easily identified. "After this experience, a number of youth have continued into church work," notes Pete Imlah, the Director of Mission and Outreach for Lutheran Church Charities and the co-leader of the Chicago UKANDU trip, "This trip is a way for youth and adults to have an experience outside of their comfort zone".

The theme of this year's event is "NOW Is The Time" which is based on 2 Corinthians 2:6 "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." Now is the time to let your voice be heard in all of the earth. Now is the time for this generation to rise



UKANDU - CHICAGO

and be God's glorious church, the true hope for the nation. "NOW Is The Time" will focus on the urgency to get right with God today and to be the people and church that God desires of us.

We are proud to be a work site for UKANDU and pray that God will bless our partnership with this amazing group of people.

## THANK YOU!

Grace would like to extend a BIG THANK YOU to the following supporters who designated Grace as the recipient of their Thrivent Choice Dollars in the 2010-2011 school year. These donors are:

Brian Anderson	Mark Poland
Lorraine Rohlf	Peter Barber
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David Morgenthaler	
George Morgenthaler	
Sandra Lohmann	

We thank them for their sup-

port of our school and its ministry! Please contact your Thrivent representative if you are able to help us in this way.

A special thank you to Hector Lopez and Miguel Camargo for installing the new playground fence.

While we had the materials to make this repair, we were missing the manpower until these two Grace parents stepped forward and completed the task. Thank you!



Grace Christian Academy proudly presents a fundraising auction event

## "Bids For Kids"

Sunday, October 23, 2011

*Invitations and more details coming soon!*

*Please contact us at [graceschoolnews@gmail.com](mailto:graceschoolnews@gmail.com) if you have questions or would like to donate to this event.*