At the start of our 99th year, we welcomed another diverse group of families, bringing our total number to 255 families and 361 students. Our newest students have roots in many places around the globe, including Algeria, Australia, Belgium, China, Congo, Iran, Israel, Jamaica, Malaysia, Ukraine, and more.

C&C’s 25 Groups journeyed on more than 100 trips, from the IIs who explored the world of C&C (Jane’s office and the Block Yard) to the XIIIIs who took a weeklong trip to New Orleans. In addition to our students’ customary journeys, the VIIIs made history by being the first school group to visit the Mary A. Whalen oil tanker at the Container Terminal in Red Hook, Brooklyn. The VIIIs took a trip of another kind—back in time—and reenacted the sale of Manhattan to settlers in the actual Dutch language that was used to negotiate with Native Americans in the 17th century.

We enhanced our music, arts, and athletics programs, taking full advantage of our space at 201.

At 201 and on fields around the city, our after school athletics offerings—soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, and running—continue to grow. With the creation of Xs/XIs teams this year, our Xs came out in droves. For example, soccer alone featured a record of 47 total children participating!

201 also provided our students and families a flexible resource. There, we hosted daily Butterbeans lunch prep, Upper School lunch, team sports practice, add-ins, twice-weekly Skills classes, and more. The gym resonated with musical performances and plays and we even hosted our first Downtown Independent School Consortium (DISC) 8th Grade dance.

Our teachers make a special effort to introduce their Groups to a wide variety of classroom speakers.

Among experts from an array of fields—everything from archaeology and engineering to writing and Wall Street—our local brain trust of C&C parents were invited in to bee keep, cook, create blueprints, felt, woodwork, and more with our students!

In addition, a wide variety of speakers spoke to our parents. For example, The New York Times reporter Jenny Anderson initiated a thoughtful conversation about the racial and economic challenges present in private schools when she spoke with the Parents Association and Parent Diversity Group.

Our teachers aren’t just teaching children . . .

True to C&C’s mission, professional development continues to be a significant part of our year. Twenty-eight of our staff represented C&C at more than 75 conferences and workshops.

Our teacher-experts make a point to instruct and lead at many of these events. For instance, William Harrison and Debbie Severin were invited to present on how young children learn through block play at Bank Street College’s Infancy Institute; Kate Turley and Jane Clarke represented C&C as panelists at Sarah Lawrence College’s Faces of Progressive Education in the 21st Century, discussing pioneering progressive schools and unit blocks; and, XIs teachers Jessica van der Salm and Rebecca Kaye were selected to present their XIs curriculum work on letter writing at the National Council for the Social Studies Conference. Jessica and Rebecca then shared their presentation with the PA.

Learning teaching by teaching learning. This was also a busy year for our student teacher program. Fifteen student teachers, the majority from Bank Street College of Education, supported teachers, enriched children’s experiences and learned from both. Nine taught in the Middle and Upper School, while six taught in the Lower School. One even assisted our Lower School Learning Specialist.
Sharing what we’re learning. C&C has long been a required destination for nursery through university educators, and this year—with more than 170 visitors—was no different. In addition to hosting colleagues from locales as close as BMCC and as far-flung as Japan and Moscow, we welcomed our first group of high school students with a history class from Saint Ann’s School in Brooklyn. The young visitors said they “left better informed, not to mention awestruck and inspired by the kind of learning and sense of mission that was palpable at all levels.”

In a particularly challenging year, the C&C community once again showed its strength and willingness to give.

With the PA and Community Outreach at the helm, C&C organized an immediate and tremendous response to Hurricane Sandy that supplied labor, home goods, toys, food, and more than $8,000 in gift-cards to residents of the hard-hit area of Broad Channel, Queens.

The Annual Fund had a record-breaking year, raising 14 percent over the prior year, with 100 percent of faculty and staff donating and 94 percent of parents contributing.

Three hundred parents and friends (our most ever!) attended C&C’s annual Spring Benefit and took in stunning views—and an equally stunning art collage comprised of work by C&C students. Thanks to our parents, we had excellent flourishes, including an Amorino Gelato truck. Fund-an-item raised an all-time-high $75,000 for financial aid.

C&C received much deserved recognition, appearing in several local and national media outlets, including The Villager, The Wall Street Journal (not once but twice!), and The New York Times. In addition, C&C was included in a photo display of independent schools in Times Square, a celebration of children’s literature at The New York Public Library, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Info-packed Wikipedia entries for Caroline Pratt and City and Country School are finally available, thanks to last year’s Communications Committee.

Our Communications Office’s printing press kept quite busy as well, publishing a wealth of information and news in print, on our website, and in social media. This year’s Alumni Newsletter included a profile of painter/alum Dahlov Ipcar ’31 and our first ever C&C Archives Mystery. In Currents, we took a close look at our extensive and successful High School Process. Find ALL of our publications online.

We launched The C&C Gallery on our website—a new feature of our digital collection that looks at the big picture of a C&C education. Curated by C&C archivist Jennifer Marck Moran, our inaugural exhibit on the students’ work with illustrated signs shows how the common thread of communication is woven throughout our program.

In other notable staff news, Kate Turley added to her long-held role within NYSAIS as Vice-Chair, Commission on Accreditation when she was elected to NYSAIS’s Board of Trustees.

Ian Klapper, in his new role as Technology Integrator and Support, kept our community up-to-date regarding the curriculum-steepled technology work he does with VIIs-XIIIs with a presentation to the PA.

Our new Middle and Upper School Director Alex Ragone was selected to chair what became a sold-out panel on Speed Innovating at the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) conference, which was attended by over 4,000 school heads, administrators, and teachers. The panel facilitated connections between 200 attendees and experts with 15-minute, information-packed sessions covering topics curated by Alex’s committee.

And finally, big congratulations to the XIIIs Class of 2013! These 15 students were accepted to a broad range of celebrated high schools. Their final decisions have placed them at Berkeley Carroll, Columbia Prep, Darrow, Dwight, Eastern Christian (NJ), Friends Seminary, Grace Church, LaGuardia, LREI, Packer Collegiate, and Poly Prep. Watch their graduation videos online.