



Pantego Christian Academy is celebrating its Diamond Anniversary. One of the components of gemstones is each stone's stability, referring to the gem's resistance to loss of quality and deterioration over time. The strongest gem of all, is the diamond. Because it has withstood the test of time for 60 years, and because of its continued value in the lives of students and families, those who find PCA often feel as if they have found a diamond.

While the world is rapidly changing, the heart of Pantego Christian Academy has remained constant.

"The purpose, passion, and place of

rooted here for generations. It is not uncommon for an Arlington family to choose PCA because they have driven by our campus for 30 or 40 years. When a family is looking for a Christian atmosphere and a stable presence, they remember us. That is a special thing!"

The mission of Pantego Christian is "Equipping servant leaders to honor Christ and impact the world." Dr. Ferrell says that God, in his mercy, has sustained this mission, "and we have not wavered."

For six decades PCA has equipped the whole child through academic excellence, athletics, and spiritual formation. "When we say servant leaders, we train students

to contribute to the world in redemptive ways," Dr. Ferrell says. "For decades, we have curated service opportunities through mission trips globally and stateside, and through entire school days devoted to serving the community. But beyond those

things, we want students to live with integrity, to work hard, and to serve self-sacrificially, just as Christ came to serve.

"When we say honor Christ, we mean to obey his commands for the purpose of knowing and loving him better."

Pantego Christian Academy was started by Pantego Bible Church (now Central Bible Church) as a ministry to the community in 1963 and had its first graduating class in 1992. In the past 60 years, Pantego Christian has grown from one kindergarten class to now more than 600 students, ranging from 18 months to seniors in high school. The organization now employs more than 100 faculty and staff.

PCA started with just its elementary building. In the 1970s Pantego Bible Church built what served for many years as the school's one secondary building. PCA purchased the old Stripling and Cox in 2006 and transformed it into its high school building. In 2017 it converted adjoining open land into a regulation-sized football field. Throughout the past decade PCA has added the Mitchell Athletic Center (which includes indoor archery, batting cages, and a weight room), boys and girls locker rooms in the Emler Field House, a state-of-the-art dance studio, art studio, and a new auditorium.

"In 2022 we completed building out the second story of the high school, which enabled us to separate our middle and high school divisions," Dr. Ferrell says. "Right now, the

school sits on 14.5 acres in the heart of Arlington and contains seven buildings. We seek to have a growth mindset. We are always looking at how we can continue to steward our resources well."

PCA's curriculum has always been robust. Since its first graduating class in 1992, PCA has increasingly become more college prep, Dr. Ferrell says.

"We now offer 11 AP course offerings and 13 dual credit courses," she says. "Many of our students graduate as sophomores in college with upwards to 30 hours completed."

Students have been accepted to state and Christian universities across the nation, including Princeton, Stanford, Brown, Dartmouth, Georgetown, Rice, and Vanderbilt.

Pantego Christian Academy has been committed to staying current with advancements in technology. Its high school students are challenged with AP computer classes, engineering classes and coding education. Students have access to a fully functioning Mac Lab that is utilized for photography and engineering classes. High school students utilize a one-to-one device program using a laptop for most of their academic endeavors.

Elementary and middle school students also have laptops to use at their disposal for academic purposes and are trained in using the Google platform, as well as Google Suite.

Both divisions have also been competitive in Robotics over the past eight years.

Dr. Ferrell notes that 60 years ago, the school's founders could not have imagined how advanced education would be in respect to technology; however, PCA continues to carry on the tradition of setting the standard in Christian education.

"A rich Christian school experience is our fundamental commitment at PCA, so that each and every day your child, even your family, is immersed in sound Biblical teaching, mentoring and dynamic spiritual growth," she says.

PCA's physical growth continues, as well. Building out the second story of the high school building this year has been a major milestone. The physical separation of the middle and high schools has given autonomy and intentionality to each division.

A favorite story of PCA's history is referred to as "The Miracle on Turpin Drive," and it occurred in 1981. Turpin Drive used to be a street that cut straight through the campus, connecting Park Row and Valley Lane. At that time, PCA faced financial concerns. The leadership and core families joined to pray about the school's future.

During the worship and prayer service, one man stood up and said, "This is God's school. I strongly feel it is not time to close the doors." The

people present then felt prompted to give what they could that night to keep the school up and running, knowing that the school needed exactly \$50,000. Person after person shared the various amounts they could give, and when it was all tallied up it totaled exactly \$50,000. The group erupted in singing "Great is Thy Faithfulness" and in prayers of thanksgiving.

"Since that time," Ferrell says, "PCA has had the great honor to lead many students to Christ and to help countless grow in their relationship with Christ."

One of the things prospective students and families can find at PCA is a lifelong community of support and friendships. The PCA Family shows up both in times of rejoicing and times of mourning.

The school has 15 alumni and former students on staff as teachers, coaches, and administrators.

"We have many spouses of alumni who come to work at PCA," Dr. Ferrell says. "Additionally, we have many 'legacy families,' composed of students whose parents are alumni. PCA students grow into adulthood with some of their best friends having come from their time at PCA."

As the school marks its Diamond Anniversary, its "family members" revel in both its history and in its "history in the making" – even in realms not imagined at the



Pantego Christian Academy

Celebrating 60 years as a local treasure

PCA has remained the same through the decades," says Head of School, Dr. Kathy Ferrell. "Arlington is a special place, and many families have been