

Curious



# NEWSMAGAZINE



HARRISBURG



ACADEMY

FALL | WINTER 2013

# Message from THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



## Dear Academy Families and Friends,

Without a doubt, preparing Academy students for the remarkable challenges of the 21st century requires us to help them develop critical skills. During their education journey at the Academy, our job is to help them learn to become problem-solvers, analytical and creative thinkers, and leaders who possess outstanding oral and written communication as well as mastery of quantitative and digital literacy. At the same time, we know our students must learn more than just a mastery of these skills.

Academy students will achieve professional and personal success only if they develop an additional set of equally essential “character” skills. These skills are rooted in a sense of personal integrity, ethical decision-making, and moral courage. In short, this means helping students develop their own “moral compass.” This kind of character building is central to the mission and core values of Harrisburg Academy, and for that matter, is one of the key elements that differentiates independent schooling.

With this in mind, I am pleased to share with you the Academy’s daily efforts to encourage personal traits that shape the character of our students and foster their integrity. In this edition of the NewsMagazine, you will learn about 15 flags that were created to stand as visual reminders of the character traits we collectively think are essential to developing the personal fiber of our students. I hope you will take time to read about the Academy’s commitment to character building and the beautiful and unique collection of flags created by Tina Phillips with the input of our students, faculty, and staff.

How well we teach students to master skills necessary for the 21st century will be a hallmark of our school. How well we foster students who act according to the timeless values of being honest, respectful, grateful, courageous, and fair will be a hallmark of their personal integrity and a benefit to our future world.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.



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Libraries have played and will continue to play a critical role in the education of our children. We explore their relevance in today's fast-moving, ever-changing world.

### RECOGNIZING HISTORY AND TRADITION THROUGH CHARACTER 11

Character and academic excellence have brought the Academy into the 21st century. When faced with a challenge, one needs only to look to the narratives of the character flags for inspiration, says Parents Association president, Roberta Boch-Parker.



Second grade's flag, "Courageous."

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Harrisburg Academy's character flags, created by Tina Phillips

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## PHOTOGRAPHY AT ITS FINEST

Thank you again to our faithful Academy community for generous photography support: Academy parents Grace Lightner (mother of Leilani '24) and Gene Trindell (father of Sarah '16 and Katherine '19), alumni father Mike Barrett (father of Matt '08), and friend of the Academy, Amy Spangler. More information about their respective photography and professional services can be found below.

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# INSPIRING INTEGRITY – CHARACTER FLAGS PROJECT CONTINUES THE CONVERSATION

“...Sow a character, and you reap a destiny,” Charles Reade, a popular 19th century English novelist and dramatist once said. One of England’s highest paid novelists at the time, Reade’s writings centered on topics such as strength of personal character, social injustice, interpersonal conflict, and societal perceptions of certain groups of people.

Even 150 years later, we remain fascinated to read the same sort of topics in our own newspapers and periodicals. The details of a publicized controversy become small talk at our lunch tables and water coolers, and we eagerly wait to hear some sort of outcome. Why are we so interested? The answer is simple — strength of character (or at times, the lack thereof) is a timeless theme and relevant to societies everywhere. We understand that to be a true leader, one must not only demonstrate knowledge and skill, but also moral integrity. And in these stories of character, we see a piece of ourselves.

Instilling strong character and a moral compass remains a critical part of children’s formative years. Independent schools such as Harrisburg Academy are well-suited to respond to the challenge. According to the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), United States independent schools, though distinct in their individual missions, share a common commitment to teaching young people both academic skills and the importance of hard work, leadership, personal responsibility, and good citizenship. In fact, “integrity and ethical decision-making” is listed as one of seven essential capacities students will need to succeed in the 21st century according to NAIS’ 2010 member call-to-action, “A Guide

to Becoming a School of the Future.” How is Harrisburg Academy continuing to enforce the importance of character education? With the flair, diversity, and creativity you would expect from our school.

## GETTING STARTED

Harrisburg Academy celebrates a 229-year history of producing successful graduates who reflect strong personal integrity in college and beyond. But the school wanted to take its longstanding commitment to character building even further by representing it visually. Consequently, the Academy began its character flags project in 2012 with the intent to create 15 vibrant-yet-purposeful flags to represent the traits most important to the Academy community, said head of school, Jim Newman, the originator of the project. These traits were intended to reflect the Academy’s mission and core values.

Students and faculty participated in the process, brainstorming a long list of traits. Ultimately, the list was reduced to 15 traits that Early Childhood and Lower School art teacher, Tina Phillips, brought to life with her remarkable artistic talent. With the generous financial support of the Academy’s Parents Association, Phillips’ 15 multimedia compositions made the transition to flag form. To conclude the production stage of the project, Newman and the division heads worked to assign each flag and the character trait it represents to a single grade, purposefully connected to the grade because of the respective trait’s relevance to children of that particular age.

“There were endless possibilities with how each character trait could be depicted,” Phillips

said. My designs are just one interpretation of each word, with some being more obvious than others. Ultimately, we hope our students will look at these flags and make their own interpretation about the designs, the character words, and the meaning of the traits in each of their lives.”

Appropriately, the Academy’s students had their first opportunity to begin the discussion around the character traits, the flags, and their meaning in front of a packed house at the All-School Thanksgiving assembly in November. More than 40 students and faculty paraded the new flags across Louis Lehrman Gymnasium for their classmates to see, and many took a turn speaking about the meaning of the traits.

“When we say, ‘Let’s get down to business and begin a job,’ we mean it,” commented Noel Potter ’12. “Perseverance [the 12th grade character flag trait] is a trait particularly well-suited for the senior class because of all we have worked through to reach this point. We have persevered through countless essays, lab reports, and other projects,” he said.


“At this time of year, we stop and think about being thankful,” offered Nick Idrovo ’24 and Hannah Keep ’24 [the 1st grade character flag trait is “thankful”]. “We are happy to have a home to live in, friends and family to share our joy, food to keep us healthy, and others in our community to help us learn and grow. In all parts of our world, everyone should be thankful to have these gifts,” they said.

The flags have found their permanent home in McCormick Auditorium, but will be available for classroom use throughout the year and present at important grade-specific, division, and All-School events.

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CHARACTER TRAIT	GRADE	FOLKTALE OR INSPIRATION	
	Cooperative	HATS (Threes)	“Duck Giving Friend Kitty a Ride” <i>Featuring two natural enemies showing cooperation.</i>
	Curious	Junior Kindergarten	“Very Interesting!” <i>Featuring a giraffe being curious about a creature very different from himself.</i>
	Generous	Kindergarten	“How the Kangaroo Got Her Pouch” <i>Featuring the Australian folktale about a kangaroo showing generosity to a wombat.</i>
	Thankful	1st Grade	“Simple Pleasures” <i>Featuring a design inspired by Pennsylvania Dutch folk art.</i>
	Courageous	2nd Grade	“Courageous Little Deer” <i>Featuring the lion and the antelope and a design inspired by African textiles.</i>
	Respectful	3rd Grade	“The Lion and the Mouse” <i>Featuring the Aesop’s Fable of the same name.</i>
	Honest	4th Grade	“The Empty Pot” <i>Featuring a children’s story about the Emperor of China and an honest boy.</i>
	Fair	5th Grade	“Anansi the Spider” <i>Featuring the African / Caribbean folktales about a trickster spider-man teaching about being fair.</i>
	Disciplined	6th Grade	“Icarus and Daedalus” <i>Featuring the ancient Greek myth of Icarus and Daedalus and wings that allowed man to take flight... with risk.</i>
	Independent	7th Grade	“Soaring Hawk” <i>Featuring a strong bird, with a design inspired by Northwest Coastal Indian art.</i>
	Open-minded	8th Grade	“Open Mind Design” <i>Featuring an abstract, colorful graphic design showing many minds coming together with unified understanding.</i>
	Positive	9th Grade	“The Sun and the Wind” <i>Featuring a children’s story about getting results from having a positive attitude.</i>
	Empathetic	10th Grade	“Reflection” <i>Featuring a design of water and reflection... and depicting feeling empathy by seeing others in yourself.</i>
	Responsible	11th Grade	“John Henry Being Responsible” <i>Featuring the American folktale of man rising above machine to prove the worth of his colleagues and himself.</i>
	Persevering	12th Grade	“Odysseus and the Sirens” <i>Featuring the classic Greek myth of Odysseus, his epic journey, and his confrontation of the Sirens.</i>





continued from page 2

## THE BIGGER PICTURE

Although the benefits of an Academy education are many — outstanding academics and teaching of 21st century skills; hands-on exposure to enrichment areas; a personal and safe classroom setting; tangible outcomes such as outstanding test scores and strong college placement, to name a few — character education is an equally important element in “educating the whole child.” The character flags project provides a visual reminder of this.

“This is ‘educating the whole child’ at its best and a big part of the education journey,” Newman said. “The Academy’s character flags project formalizes and puts context to the things we have already been doing in our classrooms, including the classroom models of Responsive Classroom in Early Childhood and Lower School, Developmental Designs in Middle School, and formalized Morning Meetings all the way up to Upper School.”

Rather than have a structured ‘character education’ program at the Academy, we take a less formal approach and encourage “living” character education, said head of Early Childhood and Lower School, Kevin Muirhead. “We believe strongly as a group that these 15 characteristics are the character traits our students should have when they leave the Academy, and we provide the opportunities to have a discourse about their value and how to

demonstrate them in what we are already doing in our classrooms. The flags are another way to emphasize a long-time focus of the Academy in a manner that is relevant to students of all ages.”

Teachers play an integral role in modeling the character traits made visible through the flags. “Because our students are in contact with their teachers every day, when they see them demonstrating these concepts purposefully and sometimes, unwittingly, that is what matters most,” Newman added. “When a teacher shows respect to students, is thankful or displays persistence in working with his or her students, children notice. The right classroom environment creates character building, and character building creates the right classroom environment — and our school provides both.”

A recent National Public Radio interview with Paul Tough, author of “How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character,” substantiates this growing belief in the value of character education to a child’s overall education and success in life.

“Absolutely, cognitive skill and IQ make a big difference; vocabulary matters,” Tough said. “But the scientists, the economists and neuroscientists and psychologists who I’ve been studying and writing about are really challenging the idea that IQ, that standardized test scores, that those are the most important things in a child’s success. I think there’s lots

of evidence out there now that says that these other strengths, these character strengths, these non-cognitive skills, are at least as important in a child’s success and quite possibly more important.”

## FLYING IN THE CLASSROOM

Although the project has just taken flight, the flags have been well-received by the Academy’s faculty. “I think the whole idea behind having a flag that represents the character and integrity of each grade level is both unique and exciting,” said junior kindergarten (JK) teacher, Jackie Stabach. Stabach thinks “Curious,” JK’s assigned trait, is a perfect match for this age of children because they are “so full of curiosity in all they do.”

According to Stabach, her mostly four-year-old students are like “sponges for information.” They are fascinated by everything and want to learn as much as they can about the world. “They want to touch and hold everything, and they want to know the purpose behind it — from letters of the alphabet to using a pencil to write! My role as a teacher is to help build this curiosity,” she said.

*Nicholas Idrovo ’24 and Hannah Keep ’24, speaking about 1st grade’s flag, “Thankful.”*





A few weeks ago, JK was studying opposites and was engaged in a “sink or float” science experiment. Stabach gave an overview of what the class would be doing — looking at a clear tub full of water, examining different items, and testing these items in the water to see if each would sink or float. She explained to the children that some items are heavy and some are light, and as she placed each item into the tub, she continued to reinforce the idea of “heavy and light” and asked the students to guess if an item would sink or float.

“This was such a successful experiment,” Stabach said. “Not only were the children interested in the items I provided to them, they were curious to see if there was anything else they could put into the tub to test. They took charge of the experiment and we had to continue the project the next day because we ran out of time to test these additional items!” Curious, indeed.

Second grade’s assigned character trait is “Courageous.” “Beginning in this grade, students really start to become more independent,” reported 2nd grade teacher, Tim Leary. “The word ‘Courageous’ really fits — in 1st grade, students learn routines and get used to having regular homework. In 2nd grade, we ask them to go a step further by comprehending, analyzing, and writing more about what they discover. It takes a lot of courage to step out of their comfort zone.”

While asked to be more independent, 2nd grade students are also charged with having the courage to complete more collaborative work with classmates. This fall, the class completed a Native American social studies project in which each student was assigned a different region and a native tribe that lived within the region. Each was required to research both the region and the tribe extensively. In addition to completing a project by themselves,

the students were expected to work with an assigned small group both to compile a report and to present their findings to their peers.

Moving along to Middle School, 6th grade’s assigned character trait is “Disciplined,” an appropriate trait for this age group because it means to be trained to improve a skill or a specific pattern of behavior. “The goal at Harrisburg Academy is for its 6th graders to become independent and lifelong learners,” said Middle School science teacher, Lakshmi Shrikantia. “The students in science class are always encouraged to ask questions and think outside the box. They are taught to relate lessons learned in class to the real world, for example, the chemical changes we talk about in class to cooking an egg or baking a cookie at home,” she explained.

“As the school year progresses, I see my 6th grade students becoming more mature and independent in the way they handle the open-ended and the critical-thinking questions,” she continued. “The Middle School After-School Science club offers them an opportunity to wear their scientist hats once again and reinforces the skills they are learning in class. This systematic and repeated training by instruction and practice on a daily basis leads to being disciplined.”

Appropriately, the trait for 11th grade is “Responsible.” Eleventh grade is the year in which high school students must take ownership for their future. Starting very early in the academic year, students have the opportunity to meet over 50 college admissions counselors visiting our school in the fall. The students must be responsible for attending appropriate sessions and following protocol for follow up with college and universities in which they are interested in applying. Students are also required to take an Academy-taught college preparation course, attend the Academy’s Winter College Fair and

speak with college representatives, complete their resumes, write college essays, perform mock interviews with college admissions counselors, and ultimately, return in the fall of their senior year with a college list prepared and a readiness to apply to their top choices.

“By taking advantage of these many opportunities, our students start to learn more about what they like and don’t like about colleges and really refine their college application list,” explained college counselor, Giulia Rinaldis Hollister. “This translates into a well-prepared senior who completes his or her applications early in the year and is a strong, connected candidate in the applicant pool.”

“Flags that depict character traits are really an excellent way of visually reminding our students of all ages about how they should behave,” Shrikantia added. “Reinforcing these traits from a very young age will help build stronger adults for a better tomorrow. Research has showed that developing good character traits in a child can help him or her learn better and make more friends at school — and eventually succeed in life.”

“To me, the one word that captures the 15 character traits used on our flags is ‘Integrity,’” Newman concluded. “At the same time as we all would define integrity differently, when you see our list of 15 character traits, they encompass what personal integrity is to the Academy and its individual students.”

**Top Left to Right:** Emmie Kuhn ’27, shares her thoughts on HATS’ trait, “Cooperative” at the All-School Thanksgiving assembly — “We should be cooperative.”; Dr. Jim Newman, head of school, unveils the character flags to the entire school at the All-School Thanksgiving assembly in November.




RESPONSIBLE

# GROWING THROUGH GLOBE-TROTTING – OUR SECOND GROUP OF IB SCHOLARS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

Harrisburg Academy Upper School students continue to discover a world of interest beyond their classroom experiences. Although they are longstanding participants in forums and leadership programs throughout the world, our students set a new precedent for involvement this year. Their summer 2012 experiences included medical programs at Boston universities, bioethics study at Johns Hopkins University, medical mission work in Madagascar, and even volunteer work on a medical optics team in Belize. And the list continues... including participation in the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards program, Habitat for Humanity, National Youth Leadership Forum, Global Works (Fiji), Navajo and Hopi Native Americans hands-on volunteer work, and academic programs at many colleges including Bard College, Columbia University, Cambridge University, and La Sorbonne University in Paris.

Perhaps the most celebrated group of international scholars, however, is the Academy's own International Baccalaureate (IB) Scholarship for Summer Study recipients. Here's what the three 2011 IB scholars had to say about their remarkable travel experiences abroad and how they are forever changed by this opportunity.



*Photo taken by Claire Gianakas '13  
during a sunset cruise on the  
Darling Harbour in Sydney, Australia*





## CLAIRE GIANAKAS '13 – “National Geographic Student Expeditions: Australia”

The hardest part of any new venture is the beginning. The beginning is the moment of highest uncertainty, the moment with the greatest possibility, the blank slate. As I sat alone in the Los Angeles airport, I was not underestimating the difficulty of starting something new. I glanced down at the itinerary I was holding in my hands. “National Geographic Student Expeditions: Australia!” gazed up at me from the first page. And there was the blank slate. It should be easy — doing something you have dreamed of your whole life... traveling to Australia to photograph its majesty and its mystery. Yet I hesitated. I started thinking about the journey I was about to embark on. What would the next three weeks bring?

My program began with a 15-hour Qantas flight to Sydney. Over the next five days, we explored the city and its history with a Darling Harbour boat cruise, attended a South Sydney Rabbitohs rugby game, walked around the Sydney Opera House, and visited the Taronga Zoo with everyone’s favorite animal... the kangaroo. During our stay in the city, I also began my photography assignments, which focused on Australia’s variety of architecture. I was particularly inspired by the “integrated”

feel of the city. Soaring skyscrapers stood next to antique churches and unbelievable structures like the Opera House. As I stood in the heart of the city, I could not help but be amazed. Not only was the city perfectly clean, relaxed, and welcoming, but it also managed to convey the rich history and culture of Australia and its people.

The next leg of our expedition brought us to the vastly unexplored Outback. We touched down in a one-room airport near Uluru. We learned about the Aboriginal Dreamtime stories, participated in lengthy hikes through Uluru, Kata Tjuta, and Kings Canyon, visited the Aboriginal Cultural Centre, where we got to speak with an Aboriginal man who explained how they are preserving their culture in the modern world, and camped for a week in below-freezing weather all while struggling to travel along a bush track that was more like a wild obstacle course than a path at all. The magic of the Outback is something that is impossible to describe. After immersing myself in its rich culture, it is clear to me that it is a place you must visit to understand. It is clearly a supernatural place.

We next travelled to the Daintree Rainforest. Here we met with Ulla, our National

Geographic expert. Ulla had recently been working in Papua New Guinea with a tribe that still mummifies its dead. The night she arrived, we got to view her work and learn first-hand about her experiences as a photojournalist. Throughout our time in the rainforest, she gave us advice and provided assistance with our assignments. This section of the trip included hikes, two days snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef, and presentations of our projects.

Through this experience, I was able to enrich my view of the world and learn about other cultures. My program allowed me to combine biology and history with journalism and photography. This experience has confirmed my belief in an interdisciplinary approach to learning and to life. The IB program had already pushed me to see the world from many perspectives and to accept a global point of view, but after travelling to Australia I am able to understand the value in this even more. Having a global focus is a fascinating way to learn about what connects the world instead of what makes everyone different.

*Claire Gianakas '13 (center, in white) and the National Geographic Student Expeditions group in Australia's Daintree Rainforest.*





## NICK SCHMIDT '13 – “Abbey Road Programs – Modern Civilization (Central Europe)”

This past summer, thanks to the IB Summer Study Scholarship, I embarked on a month-long journey that would take me across Central Europe. When choosing a summer program, I had two primary objectives: to go somewhere I had never been with a culture I had never seen and to find a program that would give me something beyond a typical tourist's experience. I accomplished both.

The best way I can describe the trip I chose is by calling it a “moving history classroom.” We visited some of Europe's most dynamic and historically rich cities: Berlin, Prague, Salzburg (my personal favorite), and Vienna, covering areas of history spanning from the Habsburg dynasty through World War II and the Cold War, and all the way up to modern-day society.

Starting in Berlin, we immersed ourselves in the history of World War II followed by the Cold War. With the Holocaust being the subject of my Extended Essay and an area that has always fascinated me, I relished every museum, every memorial, and every historical site. We even had the opportunity to visit the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and learn about the German stance on the war and how German history teachers approach it today. Aside from its history, however, Berlin was an experience by

itself. It is by far the “edgiest” city I have visited.

Next, we journeyed to the Czech Republic capital of Prague. Upon arriving, the city's sheer beauty blew me away; the old town was especially picturesque. If I had spent my time there simply walking around and marveling at the buildings and squares (which I admit, did constitute much of my Prague experience), I would have been content. However, this would have been doing the city's complex history a disservice. In particular, Prague, being so steeped in Communist history, has an absolute wealth of information concerning the rise and spread of Communism. Accordingly, my friends and I took it upon ourselves to experience everything Prague had to offer — an outdoor concert, modern art museums, the Jewish Quarter, and a chocolate factory, to name a few.

Following Prague, we took a short “vacation” from the serious history and made a pilgrimage to Salzburg, Austria. I immediately fell in love. Salzburg is so visitor-friendly, so exciting, so jaw-droppingly picturesque, and so culturally rich that it made quite easy work of stealing my adoration. Biking along the river, shopping for the perfect Austrian hat for my friend, and enjoying coffee gelato with my two friends are memories I will

truly cherish for the rest of my life. And, of course, no trip to Salzburg would be complete without a “Sound of Music” guided tour!

We spent the last week of the trip in Vienna, Austria. Here, we took a step back from the more recent war history and instead, immersed ourselves in the splendor of the Habsburg dynasty. Schönbrunn Palace, the summer residence of the Habsburg family that is the equivalent of France's King Louis XIV's Versailles, was a marvel to behold. In addition, the Habsburgs' city residence, Hofburg Palace, was equally large and magnificent. Besides that, Vienna was a cultural treasure in and of itself with vibrant coffee houses, city streets, restaurants, and museums.

In so many respects, this trip was a once-in-a-lifetime experience from which I will reap the benefits for years to come. I left Vienna as a stronger, more independent person, with two amazing lifelong friends, and with a broader global perspective that will undoubtedly enhance my success in college and my professional career.

*Nick Schmidt '13, poses in front of the John Lennon Wall with friends in Prague, Czech Republic.*





## ERIN SHEFFER '13 – “Summer Study Programs – Study Abroad in Paris, France”

As a recipient of an IB Scholarship for Summer Study, I was able to spend three amazing weeks exploring and studying in Paris this past summer. After eating breakfast each day, my friends and I would choose our excursion for the morning. The daily options included visits to museums, parks and monuments, and even hot air balloon rides. During these trips I experienced most of the main tourist attractions of the city, such as climbing the Eiffel Tower, going to the Arc de Triomphe, exploring the Opera Garnier (the theatre that inspired the opera house in the “Phantom of the Opera”), and visiting Notre Dame.

Museum visits were a typical excursion and some of my favorites. My second day there, we went to the Rodin Museum, which is the home of the famous Thinker sculpture. We also visited the Louvre Museum, which was even larger than I thought it would be. Though I didn't fight my way through the crowd to see the “Mona Lisa,” I saw dozens of amazing works there. My favorite museums were l'Orangerie and the Musee d'Orsay, as they are the homes of so many of my favorite paintings: Claude Monet's “Water Lilies” and many pieces by

Vincent Van Gogh. We also went to a few modern art museums like the Pompidou Center and the Japanese Culture House. These were two of many new experiences I had as I had never visited a modern art museum before this trip.

After a quick lunch and some exploring, it was time for class. While in Paris, I spent my afternoons attending class at the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris. I took both a French language course (very practical – I learned polite expressions to use when ordering food and general metro etiquette) and an art history course (interesting to me because we would study a certain movement and then be able to see an original piece from this movement the next morning during a museum excursion).

The best part of my day, though, was the free time I had after class. That was when I got to explore the city the most. My roommate, Lily, and I had the same schedule so every day we would take the metro to different parts of the city. Our favorite place to go was Le Marais, or the Jewish quarter, featuring historic sites like the homes of Victor Hugo and Nicolas Flamel, but also shopping and great restaurants.

After exploring and eating dinner in our neighborhood, we enjoyed evening excursions. Weekends were a time for larger excursions

still — celebrating Bastille Day was one of the four I enjoyed. Another was a visit to Disneyland Paris, which admittedly, was not very French, but it was another new experience for me as it was my first time in a Disney theme park. We also spent a day at Versailles, an interesting and impressive place. The fourth was spending a day in the Loire Valley, the home to many French chateaux and where we visited and learned the histories of the palaces.

As a student of French and Spanish, I have always had a strong interest in other languages and cultures. This opportunity to study in Paris allowed me to pursue this interest. I learned about French art and cuisine and the simple experience of living there, but I also learned about myself. I learned that I was able to communicate in another language and that I could navigate a foreign city on my own. But most importantly, I learned that the interest I have in foreign cultures is sincere and I cannot wait to understand more about them as I continue my studies of the French and Spanish languages in college.

*Erin Sheffer '13 (third from left) with friends in front of Notre Dame in Paris.*



## POSITIVE

# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE 21ST CENTURY LIBRARY

By Heather Shumaker, MS/US Librarian

With the influx of technology and the Internet, I am often asked about the future of libraries and their role in education. I love having that discussion! With a smile, I dive into my long list of how libraries are changing but not going away. For my job as a librarian, I describe myself as being a 21st-century Traditionalist because I think it is important to embrace the limitless electronic resources but not lose sight of the habitual skills learned through library experiences, such as categorizing, sequencing of tasks, thinking critically, and exploring. In truth, the library field has gone through many adaptations over the years, but its purposes remain the same: to offer a welcoming environment for learning, to hone proper research skills, and to promote reading and lifelong learning.

Harrisburg Academy's Middle School / Upper School Library offers a pleasant, inviting, and positive environment in which students can study,

work, read, and explore. The library provides 10 computers and supports the Upper School's Bring Your Own Device program, so students visit the library for accessing online resources, reading on their electronic devices, and utilizing traditional resources (fiction, nonfiction, reference books, newspapers, and their own textbooks). It is my hope that students find their library visits to be a positive experience and the space itself to be a comfortable place in which to work.

Through collaborative projects between the classroom teachers and me, the library is the place where students learn and hone proper research skills. Starting with Middle School Science Fair, I teach my youngest students how to research utilizing various print and electronic resources as well as how to create a works cited page. Continuing into 9th grade and Upper School, my students' lessons expand to include advanced searching in our subscription databases. They are

all learning research skills that help them with critical thinking and problem solving. Students are encouraged to use many types of resources, too, so that they are well-prepared to face the unknowns of the 21st century and the challenges of the future.

The third purpose of the library is to promote reading and lifelong learning. Through offering a variety of books and our many subscription databases, the Academy offers its students the ability to experience the lives of diverse characters, learn about history, and explore other cultures. Reading, whether for pleasure or for an assignment, is a positive influence, for it fosters the imagination, teaches tolerance, and shows various viewpoints. It is my goal that through offering a welcoming environment, teaching research skills, and promoting a love of reading, the Middle School / Upper School Library will continue to build these positive traits within our Academy students.



MS/US librarian, Heather Shumaker, instructs Travis Kreider's 9th grade World Foundations classes.

## GENEROUS

# RECOGNIZING HISTORY AND TRADITION THROUGH CHARACTER

By Roberta Boch-Parker, Parents Association President  
(mother of Paige '22)

As president of Harrisburg Academy's Parents Association, I have had the good fortune to get a behind-the-scenes look at the evolution of our fantastic character flags project. It has been exciting from the start, and my enthusiasm has grown ever since! With the completion of each flag — colorful depictions of animals, folktales, and epic poetry representing traits such as courage, empathy and independence — the project became more endearing to me. And what a source of pride, as the project's significance becomes further evident. After all, what good is education without strong character?

When Dr. Newman first presented the concept of the flags to me last school year, describing it as "Harry Potter-esque," I thought, "What fun!" One can envision the flags mystically suspended over the heads of our young scholars as they dine in John Butler Davis Gallery. Harry Potter notwithstanding, there are a variety of possible uses for these emblems of Academy character, and listening to the proposal brought to mind not only whimsical images, but more earnest ones, as well. Instead of spells, students can conjure up their own stories to go along with the beautiful artistry. When faced with a challenge,

one needs only to look to the narratives for inspiration. Imagine the pageantry as young flag-bearers carry their class heraldry onto the stage during school ceremonies in McCormick Auditorium; or picture the hallowed halls of the Academy draped in the colorful banners. It is a bit of wonderful pomp and circumstance worthy of our esteemed institution and its students.

At Harrisburg Academy, we are constantly looking forward, as we should; but recognizing our history and tradition — the ideals that have served us for over two centuries — is important, too. Indeed, character and academic excellence have brought the Academy into the 21st century, making it one of the oldest private schools in the nation. And now, as our students prepare themselves for success and fulfillment in this increasingly complex and ever-changing world, the traits that inform their decisions, creativity, and virtue are all the more significant.

Parents Association president, Roberta Boch-Parker (left, mother of Paige '22), and Pam Hathaway (mother of Emma '22, Annabel '24, and Liliana '26) at The John Harris Circle Donor Reception in September.



# ELECTION

# 2012 & YOU, THE STUDENT

## EDUCATES WHILE CELEBRATING AMERICAN FREEDOMS

Harrisburg Academy kicked off its new Centers program in October with a Center for Global & Local Citizenship evening panel discussion, open to the public, entitled, “Election 2012 & YOU, the Student.” Academy community members were invited to a private meet-and-greet reception with the panelists in the Middle School / Upper School library before the main event. The panel’s focus was unique because it examined the presidential election from the perspective of today’s high-school-aged student and soon-to-be registered voter.

“We were excited to welcome several noted political experts to the panel, including Dr. G. Terry Madonna (Franklin & Marshall College), Dr. Christopher Borick (Muhlenberg College), and Dr. Roberta Winters (League of Women Voters),” said Center director, Amy Miller. The panel also included the voice of our students — Academy senior, Noel Potter ’13, and freshman, Wesley Sheker ’16, participated in the discussion by lending their distinct Democrat and Republican-minded perspectives. And to keep everyone on target, the Academy enlisted the help of John Micek (father of Joely ’23), a political reporter for The Morning Call of Allentown) to serve as the moderator.

“There is a lot at stake for young voters,” Madonna answered, repeating the lead-off question. “I think some decisions will be made in the next couple of years that are going to have a profound impact on the lives of Americans. Think about this — if everyone sitting here were on Medicare, you would take out healthcare services from the Medicare Trust \$200,000 more than you would put in. Now multiply that by 75 million people! Government, over the next four to eight years, is sitting on the precipice of a huge set of decisions we’re going to have to

make about how to pay for that,” Madonna said.

Borick encouraged the importance of students paying attention to politics and current affairs because of universal relevance. “It’s something everyone has to deal with,” he said. “Whatever your careers are — from business to education to law to the arts — policy matters. It’s going to affect everything you are going to do.”

Winters shared different bits of wisdom with the students about the importance of seeking sources that provide accurate candidate information. She also shared some history about elections in the United States and how they have changed over the years. “The idea of debates actually stemmed from a student!” she shared. “In 1956, before many of you in the audience were even born, there was a student at the University of Maryland who asked the president if they might have candidates come to the university and actually answer questions by the students about the issues. Eleanor Roosevelt got involved and she thought it was a wonderful idea and that was basically the premise for the Kennedy-Nixon debates.”

But center stage went to the Academy’s student panelists, answering questions with the confidence and poise of panel colleagues well beyond their years. The students’ extensive research and preparation, and their deductive thoughts on the issues and how they were addressed by each candidate’s platform, were obvious to attendees.

“I started my research by focusing on the presidential and vice-presidential elections and watching the debates,” Sheker said. “In those debates, the candidates focused on what they would do. The first thing I did was fact-check their statements. After that, I researched deeper

into each issue and thought about my own opinion on the issue versus the candidates’ opinions. I formulated my opinion based on what I thought was important to me and to other students my age and the candidates who represent those opinions.”

“NPR (National Public Radio) has always been a part of my life and was my main source of news,” Potter said. “As any good Harrisburg Academy student knows, we should make sure we have good sources — and that means going to the “primary source” for information. I visited [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov), which included the president’s official positions on the issues. I also visited Governor Romney’s website and his position on the issues. I watched campaign speeches and the president’s official speeches, and when I had time — a rarity for Academy students — I used fact-check websites to see what non-partisan groups are saying about the truth of the candidates’ statements,” he added.

Reflecting on the success of the event, Miller stated that it highlighted the core ideals of local and global citizenship and the duties and responsibilities that come with living in the United States. “The panelists underscored how to be an informed voter in the midst of conflicting media messages and seemingly endless government gridlock. This event celebrated the freedoms we all — students and adults, alike — have as American citizens,” she said. “We are so grateful to the Robert Douglas Woldorf ’88 Memorial Fund for financing this impressive event and are so proud of our student participants.”

*Opposite: Student panelists, Noel Potter ’13  
& Wesley Sheker ’16.*







# BEING RESPECTFUL... A WAY OF LIFE AT HARRISBURG ACADEMY

By Virginia Halbert

*(grandmother of Jacob '17 and William '20; mother of John '85, Karen '85, Jim '86, and Doug '90)*

A knowledge-based education is important; a value-based education is equally important. Without good values and character traits, one will fail. I have noticed that Harrisburg Academy provides both; students and teachers alike are treated with respect and dignity.

One afternoon, I was driving my two grandsons and their two friends home from school, and just to make conversation, I asked them, "What is your favorite thing about Harrisburg Academy?" I was startled when all four responded in unison: "There are no

bullies!" How better to say that all of the students respect each other? I have been to many Academy school programs and it just takes a teacher or the head of school to raise their hand and the entire assembly of students is quiet. What respect!

Being respectful is an attitude towards things, peers, authorities, and yourself. Being respectful is critical for success, and it is such an important part of one's education. I know the best way to teach respect is to show respect. This is part of the Academy's way of life and it

helps prepare students for success.

In my involvement with the Academy, I have noticed the teachers are able to focus on each individual student. The teachers know their students and their mannerisms well. This healthy relationship between the teachers and the students begins at a very young age. Harrisburg Academy brings out each student's best potential through its arts, science, music, and sports programs. Each student is given a chance and shown that he or she is valued, honored, and respected at the Academy.

*Save the Date*

**H**

*Spring Soirée*

**APRIL 13  
@ LEVEL 2**

A night of fun awaits so don't miss out. Cocktails, dancing, and auction. Harrisburg Academy parents, alumni, and friends are invited to attend.

For more information, please contact Beth Zak in the Development Office at 717.763.7811, ext. 396. See you at the Soirée!



## PARENT AMBASSADOR GROUP LEADS “WORD ON THE STREET”

By Jessica Warren, Director of Admission and Marketing

There is strength in numbers! Each year, more than 70 percent of all families who inquire about admission at Harrisburg Academy say they heard about our school through “word of mouth.” That is both a staggering and an exciting statistic.

We rely on members of our school community to act as ambassadors — both formally and informally — and we view these ambassadors as a critical link between the school, prospective families, and the broader community in general. To strengthen this link, the Admission Office created an official “Parent Ambassador Group” in the fall of 2011. Ambassadors meet monthly and volunteer their time to learn more about the Academy — where they also gain the occasional “insider’s tip” to new and exciting things going on here at school. Ambassadors are then asked to share this information, passion, and goodwill with their friends, family, co-workers, and community members to help add credible context to the all-important “word on the street.”

What else might a Parent Ambassador do? Our volunteers have been active at critical admission events, including our Admission Open Houses, New Parent Dessert Nights, and First Family events, to name a few. And believe it or not, with the Academy’s increased use of social media, blogs, and other electronic communications, just taking a moment each day to visit our Facebook page, read the Spartan Spirit blog, or follow the Academy’s Twitter feed is yet another great way these cooperative parents are engaging in the two-way conversation about the advantages of an Academy education.

The Parent Ambassador Group currently has more than 30 parents and alumni parents involved and looks to grow to 50 or more this academic year. This offers Parent Ambassadors and administrators alike a regular opportunity to proactively raise issues, discuss strategy, and brainstorm ideas related to recruitment and retention of students.

The Parent Ambassador Group supports the Admission Office’s continued effort to recruit the best and brightest students the area has to offer. In one short year, the group has become a vital component of the school’s success in achieving its recruiting and retention goals. Monthly morning meetings are held at the Playhouse Café in Lemoyne and we are recruiting new members for 2013! Do you have a free Friday? Are you a member of our alumni community? Are you an alumni parent, perhaps? Or are you a current parent looking to get more involved? Please contact the Admission Office to learn how you can become an immediate valued member of this group.

*Above: The Miceks: John (trustee), Joely ’23, and Marni, at the Bird-In-Hand 5K in Lancaster on Sept. 7, 2012. Marni Micek is a Parent Ambassador.*





## IN THE FIRST PERSON: GRATEFULNESS FOR GROWTH AND PERSPECTIVE

By Will Schmid '12

At first, the transition from life at home as a high school student to college life in the greater New York area was complicated. As I expected, there has been culture shock as well as the simple fact of dealing with a new way of going to school. Luckily for me, New Jersey is not what it is portrayed to be in the media. It is full of regular students and young people like me who are adjusting to college just like every other college freshman across the country. Part of why I am so happy to have left home and gone to college outside of Pennsylvania is that being in a new environment has made me much more thankful and aware of my own upbringing.

Growing up in Pennsylvania, I never thought much about living near the Hershey chocolate factories or being in a suburban area. Even attending Harrisburg Academy seemed like a normal way of growing up to which everyone could relate. Now that I have left home

and started my first semester of studying communications here at Seton Hall University, I have finally begun to understand that I am not only glad, but proud to be from Central Pennsylvania and to have had the upbringing I did.

As I talk with my friends who have come to Seton Hall from across New Jersey, New York, and much of New England, I have found it comical to see their fascination with the fact that I am from a different place and was a member of a graduating class of 32 students. Just like every other student from Harrisburg Academy, I was acutely aware of the size of our school and was surprised at how easy it was to adjust to having only two hallways for an entire high school.

I was worried that this small class size would make it difficult for me to transition to a medium-sized university of 5,000 undergraduates, but the transition has been

smoother than I ever could have imagined.

I am not sure who to thank for this easy transition. I know I must acknowledge Seton Hall for making it such a fluid shift, but I must also thank my classmates and teachers at Harrisburg Academy, too. I learned much more than how to analyze texts, write papers and solve an equation; I also learned how to adjust to situations, deal with people, and grow as an individual. I could not be more thankful for how lucky I have been, and I can only be grateful to all those who have helped me. Best of luck to the Class of 2013 on making their own college decisions this year!

*Will Schmid '12 (left) poses for a photo with fellow Academy Class of 2012 graduates (David Remmel '12 and David Levine '12) at a pre-graduation event last spring.*





## IN THE FIRST PERSON: PREPARED TO PURSUE MY DREAMS

By Vincent Duong '12

THE Johns Hopkins University. Even now, I sometimes feel like this is all still a dream. There is really no way to truly describe the immense culture shock of college. Starting off with a clean slate was a huge adjustment, especially transitioning from a graduating class of 32 students to a class of approximately 1,200. Becoming a resident of the campus was a familiar adjustment for me, having attended several summer camps that required me to live away from home for extended periods of time. I was somewhat already accustomed to living on my own and exercising a wider range of responsibilities. College, however, has been an experience unlike any other that I have had before.

I am currently on track for pursuing a molecular and cellular biology major with a minor in Spanish for the professions in the Kreiger School of Arts and Science at Johns Hopkins. I am also considering picking up chemical and biomolecular engineering as a second major in the Whiting School of Engineering. On top of this, I plan to declare myself pre-med for my time here.

With the aid of the International Baccalaureate curriculum at Harrisburg Academy, I was able to place into calculus II and applied chemical equilibrium and reactivity (with lab). I am also taking general biology I (with lab) and participating in phage hunting, a lab course in which I am conducting my own research on DNA sequencing. Out of these four courses, three contain labs that are highly intensive. With this course load, time is a limited and a precious commodity. My experience at the Academy, however, taught me to properly and effectively manage my time, allowing for a smooth transition here at Hopkins.

Just like my time at the Academy, I am working to balance the role of "student-athlete" and stay involved in co-curricular activities. Intramurals have allowed me to maintain my strong athletic personality with basketball, soccer, tennis, and even ultimate (Frisbee), badminton, and volleyball. I have joined the Students for Environmental Action chapter on campus and the Vietnamese

Student Association, as well.

Ultimately, I plan on completing my undergraduate studies and attending medical school at Columbia University. Why Columbia, you might ask? Because the school has a new program that incorporates both diagnostic cardiology and surgery, a skill set that will aid me in achieving my ultimate desired profession as an interventional cardiologist and cardiothoracic surgeon with a specialty in robotic surgery.

The college experience – especially a highly rigorous one like Johns Hopkins University – is an adventure I am ready, willing, and excited to pursue. And my experiences at Harrisburg Academy are the reason why.

*Vincent Duong '12 (center) dances to the cheers of classmates at a John Hopkins University freshman orientation event called "Playfair" last summer. Playfair was a collection of icebreaking activities designed for students to meet as many people as possible in a short amount of time.*



FAIR

## RISING ABOVE THE CHALLENGE

The thrill of victory! The agony of defeat! We have all had our moments experiencing both, many of us in the realm of athletic competition. Indeed, athletics are an important co-curricular offering that complements lessons learned in the classroom. They play a strong role in encouraging teamwork, hard work, discipline, and how to balance successfully a busy schedule. Perhaps more important, they encourage good sportsmanship and fair play.

International student Lisa Lee '13 has loved sports her entire life — as a spectator, manager, and player — and appreciates the opportunity she has had to participate in Harrisburg Academy's competitive athletics over the past four years due to its no-cut athletics policy. Back home in South Korea, there were no organized sports in which Lee could participate. She played intramural girls' soccer and ran track and field, but these teams did not compete against other schools' sports teams.

"I am fortunate to play sports [here]," Lee said. "I can enjoy and play what I love and feel passionate about, and I truly appreciate the opportunity. Through this, I learned how to be part of a team, how to work with peers and teachers outside of class, and most importantly, to discover what my potential is both physically and mentally."

Lee plays on the school's Varsity Girls' Basketball and Varsity Girls Soccer teams in addition to spending a few seasons serving as manager when she was sidelined due to an ACL injury. "Basketball has always been my only passion besides academics," Lee said. "Unlike other sports, basketball provokes my highest mental and athletic potential. I enjoy testing my endurance and strength as I sprint to the ball. I also love observing opponents' footsteps to anticipate their moves; with this tactic, I can break down any player formation and triumph! However, the best part of the sport is hearing a lovely swoosh of a perfect shot," she added.

Lee credits her Academy athletics experiences in helping her to build healthy social relationships and learn to rise to a challenge. She went through intensive physical therapy for five months to recover from tearing her ACL in 2010. It was all worth it, however, because she was able to return to the court and the field, her passion.

"Even after getting ACL surgery, I have stuck with the basketball team because they are like family. Athletics teach the importance of determination as well as the basis of working together and the overall idea that hard work produces results," she said. "And all of these traits transfer into my education at the Academy. In group projects, teamwork and patience are necessary. The need for diligence is even more prevalent with the challenging work load and subject matter, which at times can be overwhelming. However, because of my learned diligence from athletics, I know that if I work and study hard enough, I will be able to excel in my studies, too."

Lee plans to attend college in the fall and major in biochemistry, going into a pre-medical program.



For photos of our student athletes, please visit us online:  
[www.harrisburgacademy.org/fall2012teams](http://www.harrisburgacademy.org/fall2012teams)





## DOUBLE THE FUN... THE SHEKER TWINS TELL ALL

Wil Sheker '19 (#17) and Ben Sheker '19 (#10) are twins who have played soccer since they were five years old and were members of the Academy's Middle School Boys' Soccer team this fall. We caught up with them (independent of the other) to find out what the experience was like — playing for the Academy, playing with each other, and confusing competitors and teammates, alike, by being twins on the same team!

### What position do you play?

*Wil* – I play defense and midfielder.

*Ben* – I play all over, but my favorite position is forward. I like forward so much because it gives me a chance to score goals, and I think we all like to score! I don't like to play midfield... I never have. It's just not me.

### What is the greatest lesson you have learned playing soccer this year?

*Wil* – Being a good sport and always being a team player, whether on the field or not.

*Ben* – To do a trick move correctly. When I tried a "rainbow" at practice, I was very embarrassed when I missed it. I was playing and I tried to do a "nutmeg" and then a "step-over" in the same play when the defender closed his leg — and I knew I let my team down. So from then on, I knew I had to watch closely when trying moves like that.

### Do you enjoy playing on your brother's team?

*Wil* – I do... especially when we are on the field together. I think we have a connection; I know what he is going to do, so I prepare myself. He is also like having a personal helper. I can help him with what he needs to work on and he can help me with what I need to work on (I am pretty good at it all, so he needs the help, Wil jokes).

*Ben* – It's fun competing against my brother because I always like competition and he brings it to me!

### What is your favorite part about playing soccer at Harrisburg Academy?

*Wil* – Having all my nice friends there and having Spartan pride.

*Ben* – Having fun with the coaches and team before the game and during stretches. Jokes are what makes a team a team. They bring the team closer as a whole.

### What is your brother's favorite part about playing soccer at Harrisburg Academy?

*Wil* – Mostly the same as me, but he might say otherwise.

*Ben* – Competing against me and looking for good competition, too! We have a huge rivalry, which every brother probably has in sports. We are very competitive against each other when we play. We try to keep it friendly, but sometimes the rivalry slips into play and then we have to win.

### Do your teammates get you confused since you are twins?

*Wil* – Yes, but most of the time it was coaches having trouble when one of us was playing and one was on the bench. They could congratulate the wrong brother for a good move!

*Ben* – Most of the time they get it right, but the time we were both on the field and I scored, they said "Yeah, twin you got it!" and I held up a "B" with my hand so they knew who to write down in the book. Most of the year the coaches had trouble telling us apart, which was fun because we never knew what we could pull off when they could not tell us apart...

### We have to ask the standard question now... Have you ever swapped uniforms and pretended to be your brother during a game?

*Wil* – We have never done that but we have thought about it! My mom's cousins played basketball and they were twins — Mitch and Mike. They were known to switch uniforms from time to time.

*Ben* – We have thought about it, but we have never switched jerseys.





## GOING THE EXTRA MILE (OR 26.2)

“Persevering” is the 12th grade character flag trait. Appropriately assigned, it takes persistence to achieve all the requirements for graduation at the Academy and to endure the new-found rigors of college life. But beyond high school and college and into “adult” life, the 15 character traits displayed on the flags continue to take on importance when tackling new challenges and opportunities. Such is the case in the story of Frank Townsend (father of Quinton ’22 and Joshua ’24), a dedicated runner who has made it his personal life goal to run a full or half marathon in all 50 of the United States.

Townsend began running four years ago when a friend and co-worker encouraged him to come out and participate in a 5K race with him. Meeting other people and seeing runners of many abilities made him realize there was more to running than just winning the chase — many of the people running this race merely wanted to finish. Others wanted to come out and have fun with friends or family. Still others chose to run for a cause, in memory of an important friend they had lost or in honor of a family member fighting an illness. Regardless of the reason, few were hesitant to share their story and the personal goals they were trying to achieve.

Townsend, too, discovered he had his own goals. “I try to live life and do things with purpose,” he said. “I lost my father to a heart attack when I was 21 years old and this inspired me to get out and get healthy. Within a week of running the initial 5K, I had caught the ‘bug.’” Townsend’s family started to come out to support him, and he continued to build his running circle by encouraging others to join the challenge or to volunteer at events.

In the first year, Townsend gave his sneakers a workout by running upwards of 52 5K events

and a few longer 10K races. He was proud of his accomplishments thus far, but it was time to face a new challenge — to complete a marathon. “As a kid, I always dreamed of doing one,” he explained, “but I never thought I would. Marathons were intimidating.” But Townsend persevered and took on the Harrisburg Marathon (with the help of a good friend who supported him by biking next to him from mile 16 to the end). And yes — he finished it!

“My message is truly, if you can believe it, you can achieve it. You HAVE to believe in yourself. And at some point, that’s eventually what I did. I realized that as long as I had confidence that I would finish, my body would will me on to finish,” he added.

During his travels, Townsend happened to sign up and run the Virginia Beach half marathon shortly thereafter. He says he thought to himself, mid-race, “This is scenic!” and started to consider how he might be able to not only meet new runners and hear their stories, but also experience the delight of running in new locales. Then he happened to read a book about a runner who completed 50 races in 50 states and his goal became clear — he would do the same. As of this magazine going to print, Townsend has checked 21 states off his list.

Some marathons were more memorable than others. “In Nashville, there was a tornado! I was running along and I looked up and the sky was dark and swirling,” he recalled. “Sure enough, there was a tornado nearby. They cancelled the race because of it. And when I went to the airport to fly home, we had to travel west to go east to avert it!”

Townsend ran the New Orleans Marathon, only a few years after Hurricane Katrina, to see how the town was rehabilitating. He was

amazed to see that many areas were still abandoned, their buildings still displaying the “X” marks spray-painted on their sides by emergency workers during search and rescue efforts after the storm.

And in 2010, Townsend ran the New York City Marathon. He had always dreamed of running this race and was delighted to be one of 45,000 people granted a bid from an entry pool of over 100,000. Two days before the event, he caught the flu. Because he knew the odds of getting a future bid were limited, he chose to run the race anyway. “You can do anything if you put your mind to it,” he reiterated.

Townsend works hard to balance his passion for running with an active family life and work schedule. His wife and sons are now runners, too, and many times, they join him at shorter races. For the longer out-of-town marathons in which his family does not accompany him, he still tries to engage his sons. Before I go,” he said, “I always make a point of looking at state maps with them and showing them where I will be. We identify the state capitals, and we look online to see what is interesting about that particular state. And when I get home, the boys love to wear my medals.”

“It’s been quite a journey so far,” he concluded. “It is tough, but like most of the great things in life, you have to work hard for them. It’s doing the difficult things that make people stand out... being someone who can go that extra mile.”

*Right: Frank Townsend and his sons, Joshua ’24 (left) and Quinton ’22, at the 2011 Harrisburg Jingle Bell 5K run.*





Upper School science teacher, Mary Toth (mother of Alison '16, Krista '18, and Michael '20), was a recipient of a 2012 Trustee Fellowship and traveled to Iceland in June. This small European island offers much when it comes to nature and science, on top of its rich culture and history. Iceland boasts glaciers, volcanoes, black sand beaches, basalt caves, waterfalls, green pastures, lava fields, snow-capped mountains, geysirs, and much more. Toth was able to learn firsthand about the country's measures to remain an environmentally sustainable nation, including geothermal energy, land conservation, and reduced waste production.

A well-known tourist spot in Iceland is the Blue Lagoon; a geothermal spa with "magical" healing waters. This lagoon is actually a scientific wonder also. It is produced from a natural hot spring and contains strains of bacteria found nowhere else in the world. Scientists are studying the genome of these bacteria in order to replicate their medicinal properties for treating skin conditions, such as psoriasis and eczema. The opportunity to travel to Iceland and experience all of this was unforgettable and will impact what she teaches in her science classroom here at Harrisburg Academy, she said.

***Clockwise from top left:*** A piece of an iceberg on a beach at Jokulsarlon, or "Glacial River Lagoon," in southeast Iceland. The lagoon formed only in the last 35 years due to melting glaciers; The divide between the North American and European tectonic plates; Gullfoss, or "Golden Falls," in southwest Iceland. The falls are a very popular tourist attraction; A hike to the highest waterfall in Iceland...Toth and her husband got lost and made their own trail up the mountain!; Taken along a boiling stream in Reykjadular, or "Smoky Valley," Iceland. It was a two-hour hike through steaming streams and mini-ponds formed from geysirs/hot springs. Hikers carry swimsuits and sit in the "natural hot tubs" within the stream!







Dave Shover (father of Taryn '22 and Jeremy '24) participated in a tour with American Music Abroad this past summer. American Music Abroad arranges and organizes music tours for non-professional student and adult musical groups. Shover showed his Academy pride all over Europe!

**Top Clockwise from Left:** With American Music Abroad students in Dinkelsbühl, Germany. The Circle H on the sign symbolizes a bus stop; Spending time in Venice, Italy with the American Music Abroad Silver tour; Taken above the village of Wintertux, Austria. The Peak is called Gefrorene Wandgrat Bahn and stands at 3,250 meters.

**Bottom Clockwise from Bottom Left:** Kristina and James Pae, visiting Washington D.C. over Columbus Day weekend. James particularly enjoyed his trip to the National Museum of the American Indian; Retired Academy English teacher, Lee March, visiting with Alan Lundeen '06 in Seattle this past August. Both very much enjoyed the reunion — and the cup of cappuccino they shared!; Colin Ritchie '26 at Shenandoah National Park's Skyland Resort; Julie Eddy enjoys the scenes of Volcano Atilan in Panajachel, Guatemala during her Trustee Fellowship in July 2012; Karl Qualls (father of Hayden '18 and Hadley '25) in Paris this past summer.





## VICTOR BROMBERT: DISCOVERING ONESELF THROUGH A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

“My fortuitous acceptance into Harrisburg Academy for a brief year was a real turning point in my life,” recalled professor Victor Brombert ’41 at the Academy’s annual Alumni Achievement Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony this fall. Brombert received the Academic Achievement award, an award that recognizes an individual whose achievement in scholarship, innovation, or research is acknowledged and respected by his or her peers and a wider community.

Brombert grew up in Paris and escaped from France in 1941 on a banana freighter when Europe was being invaded by the Nazis. He arrived in the United States, enrolled at Harrisburg Academy, and graduated as valedictorian the following spring. After serving in the United States Army, Brombert returned stateside to attend college. He completed his bachelor’s degree at Yale University, worked to obtain a doctorate from Yale, and taught for 25 years, serving as chairman of the department of romance languages. He went on to teach another 25 years at Princeton University, where he served as chairman of the council of humanities. Between 1949 and 1986, Brombert wrote more than a dozen books on literary criticism, as well as “Trains of Thought,” his wartime memoirs.

The Academy community was fortunate to hear Brombert speak twice — both at the awards ceremony and at a special Homecoming Weekend presentation for Middle and Upper School students the day before.

“It was a moving moment for me speaking

to the students,” Brombert said, “As I tried to explain what it [his Harrisburg Academy experience] meant. From the memories of a 17-year-old refugee, it seemed as though the Nazis were going to win the war. I arrived in this country two months before Pearl Harbor. It was late in the war for Europe, but America was not yet at war. Arriving in the United States and enrolling at Harrisburg Academy was a turning point in my life.”

Brombert said that he was not an ambitious student when he arrived in Harrisburg, but credits his Academy experience as one of renewal and second chances. Compared to the rigid, uncompromising and competitive French educational system, he found the Academy’s atmosphere to be open, encouraging, supportive, and trusting. “What I discovered at Harrisburg Academy is at the root of the American educational system at its best. This encouragement to be able to make choices in one’s life was very important,” he said. “I had the responsibility for ‘creating’ myself, for ‘making’ myself, for making choices, and then living up to them.”

Brombert believes in the importance of a liberal arts education, stating that an Academy education can and should lead to college. “They are the years one can really make a discovery of what one wants to do. They provide a certain independence of family pressure, freedom to make choices and to correct one’s original intentions, and to find one’s way,” he said.

“I am passionately committed to the notion of teaching and learning in the

extraordinary experience of the American liberal arts programs,” he continued. “There is an importance of joyful teaching — not to indoctrinate, pontificate, or communicate, but to stimulate and provoke. Students should be encouraged to ask questions and to even question the professor, not just to repeat what they hear, but to develop one’s own voice.”

Brombert adds the Academy’s Academic Achievement award to his career-long list of achievements. Perhaps the most notable of these many achievements was his Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur (Legion of Honor) receipt in 2009. This award is the most prestigious award of France and was bestowed upon Brombert by Pierre Vimont, the French ambassador to the United States. The award itself was created by Napoleon in 1802 and is given for gallantry in military action or distinguished service in military or civilian life for work that enhances the reputation of France through scholarship, arts, sciences or politics.

*Top Left: Director of development and alumni relations, Jess Ritchie, presents Professor Victor Brombert ’41 with the Academic Achievement award at Harrisburg Academy’s 2012 Alumni Achievement Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony during Homecoming Weekend this October. Top Right: Professor Victor Brombert ’41 shares his courageous story and passion for liberal arts education at the 2012 Alumni Achievement Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.*





*Five remarkable alumni were honored at the 2012 Alumni Achievement Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. Pictured here, from left (front): Professor Victor Brombert '41 (Academic Achievement award) and Tami Swartz '85 (Professional Achievement award); (back): Anish Visisth '97 (Athletics Hall of Fame inductee); William St. John '99 (Rising Star award); and Vishal Vasisth '95 (Athletics Hall of Fame inductee).*





## IN THE FIRST PERSON: TAKING THE PATH LESS TRAVELED

By Tom Kelley '06

My parents raised me to realize that to be successful, I would have to be independent and take charge of my life — and that this starts with a good education. I came to the Academy after a period of academic challenge in the public school system. My early years here were great, with hands-on teachers like Mrs. [Charlotte] March and Mr. [Steve] Stewart who worked with us every day and focused on our individual education needs.

Early during my Upper School years, I decided I wanted to attend West Point and become a doctor. My teachers and coaches supported me in this goal as I developed character both on the field and in the classroom. When I played lacrosse, Coach George Gonzales taught me that “when you fail, don’t focus on it... keep yourself in the game.” Academically, I was not the “super star,” but Mrs. [Mary] Toth and others saw that I had a plan, it was my own, and I was going to

follow through with it.

By the time I graduated from the Academy, I had an area of study on which to focus in college that would serve as my gateway to medicine: microbiology. Certainly, I would not have pursued such a path without the thoughtful input from Mrs. Toth. There was failure, though, when I was denied entry to West Point due to a spontaneous lung collapse during my senior year. Remembering what Coach Gonzales had taught me, I didn’t focus on the failure. Instead, I got on with pursuing my ultimate goal, went to college, and joined the Army through ROTC (Reserve Officers’ Training Corps). In college, I did not have the focused attention that I was used to from the Academy teachers, but never the less, the lessons I carried with me from the Academy served me well. I took what I learned, focused on the path ahead of me, and did things the way I thought would work — and they did.

My parents and I still talk about how going to the Academy was the best thing that ever happened to my future. I was set up for academic success by being constantly challenged, I was allowed to grow as I wanted to, and I was supported along the way. I am now in medical school at Temple University and am pursuing a career in surgery. I will be in the Army when I finish, and I don’t plan to stop there! I hope to someday be a cardiovascular surgeon and to create new ways to operate on and treat heart disease. I will have to take the initiative and study under teachers who are focused on both successfully educating their students and fostering independent thinking. In a sense, I will have to go back to the Academy.

*Above: Tom Kelley '06 at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas for his medical officer training in 2011.*





## PAYING IT FORWARD THROUGH TIME, TALENTS AND TREASURE

By Becky Stevenson '89

Harrisburg Academy is a special place. It is a terrific academic institution, but also so much more. It is the foundation for lifelong learning, friendships, and opportunity. While I graduated more than two decades ago, it is still an important part of my life.

This past summer, I became president of the Alumni Council, succeeding Joe Gillette '82 who has maintained strong ties to the school despite living in New York City. He always went the extra mile to be active in this role, and his vision for building a strong and connected alumni network was inspiring. With the momentum he created, I was thrilled to be able to take the ball and carry it forward. It has been a great experience so far, and I am delighted to be able to advance the mission of the Academy and to give back to the place that's given me so much. As I've spent more time in this role, I have come to see the various ways that so many alumni are generous to the school — through their time, talents, and financial support.

The Academy always has had a group

of loyal alumni, and as I've become more involved, I have observed that many other former students have stayed connected with the school for the same reasons I have. They recognize the impact the Academy had on their lives and want to give back. We recently hosted the annual Alumni Achievement Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. The award recipients are chosen by groups of committed alumni who work with the Alumni and Athletics Offices to choose the winners. The Hall of Fame committee spends countless hours, led by the leadership of Leigh Myers '06, to choose former athletes deserving of the award. It's through their gifts of time that the program is successful.

Perhaps the greatest example of generosity I have witnessed over the past several months has been the outpouring of support from the Academy community through leadership gifts and The John Harris Circle. Over 80 individuals and families stepped forward to pledge their sustained support for the Academy, and their

philanthropy is making a profound difference for the school. This group of parents, alumni, and alumni parents has made an investment of more than \$725,000 to support the Academy's students and faculty. Every dollar we raise to serve the school makes a difference, and the level of generosity we have experienced through programs like The John Harris Circle is tremendous.

The generosity of the Academy community far exceeds its size. I am proud to be part of the growing number of alumni who are giving back to ensure the school can continue to offer a curriculum and experience like none other in our area. I welcome any thoughts or ideas other alumni have about further promoting and growing the program and outreach we do for you. Please feel free to contact me at [rebecca.stevenson@capbluecross.com](mailto:rebecca.stevenson@capbluecross.com).

Thank you to all members of the Academy community for your ongoing support and generosity. Harrisburg Academy would not be the special place it is without you.



# THE JOHN HARRIS CIRCLE... PHILANTHROPY AT ITS BEST

By Beth Zak, Development Associate

What have 83 donors and \$725,000 over a five-year period done for Harrisburg Academy? They have provided a remarkable platform for the Academy to move forward with a new tradition of giving. Launched just one year ago, The John Harris Circle is a sustainable fundraising initiative that allows us to offer an unmatched educational experience for all Academy students. Additionally, it allows the Academy to grow philanthropy from our parents, alumni, alumni parents, faculty and staff, and special friends.

The John Harris Circle is an integral part of the annual Academy Fund. Its members contribute annual leadership gifts and are also ambassadors for what an Academy education provides. By developing this leadership donor contingency, we have established a way to inspire others to support the Academy. Being a leader takes on many roles, but most importantly it shows that meeting the immediate needs of a student's day-to-day life at the Academy is a top priority.

## In just one short year, The John Harris Circle has:

- Helped to prepare students for a successful future by teaching new and innovative programs with a core curriculum that includes world languages, science, and technology
- Allowed for a continuation of high-quality,

unique programs like the Upper School's Creativity, Action, Service program (CAS) that provides a framework for experiential learning and teaches the importance of providing service to the greater community

- Provided a series of educational off-campus opportunities for students so that their learning not only takes place in the classroom, but in many places throughout the region allowing enrichment through hands-on experiences
- Supported a diverse student body by providing access to students from all ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds
- Provided top-notch visual arts and music education programs for every student
- Employed a well-credentialed, talented faculty, and provided continuing education opportunities and fellowship programs for our faculty so that members can continue to instruct students at the highest level

By continuing to build The John Harris Circle, we are able to make the necessary steps to ensure that our fine school is poised for the future. We invite you to join us as a philanthropic partner and help us continue growing the Academy's mission. For more information or to make a pledge, contact Beth Zak in the Development office at [zak.b@harrisburgacademy.org](mailto:zak.b@harrisburgacademy.org) or via phone at 717-763-7811, extension 396.



*All photos were taken at The John Harris Circle Donor Reception in September. **Top to Bottom:** James and Elena Dailey (parents of Julia '23 and Jack '25); Mark and Catherine Gebauer (parents of Louise '16) and Claire Gianakas '13; Ron Ferris (associate alumni parent), Candi and Blair Trogner (parents of Blair '93 and Curt '95), a member of the Academy's Foundation Board.; Luke Bent '13 and Hannah Shea '14. **Right:** Dr. Jim Newman, head of school, and Nick Schmidt '13.*







**A**

**Joe Gillette '82**

Joe is the chairman and CEO of Stage 2 Networks, a cloud communications leader in the New York metropolitan area. This past September, he proudly accepted two Stevie Awards for the business. Stage 2 Networks received a Gold Award for Executive of the Year as well as a Silver Award for Company of the Year, awarded in the Telecommunications category at The 10th Annual American Business Awards presented in San Francisco.

**B**

**Dr. Jeffrey Morrison '88**

Jeff recently was featured on "The Dr. Oz Show," where he discussed how body type affects an individual's metabolism. He was also a guest on the daytime talk show, "The View," where he addressed nutritional concerns about various foods including organic produce and wheat. To watch the full-length video, visit [www.morrisonhealth.com](http://www.morrisonhealth.com).

**C**

**Sarah Longwell '98**

Sarah recently was featured in The New York Times for her involvement with the Log Cabin Republicans, a group that works to promote core conservative values while advocating for the freedom and equality of gay and lesbian Americans. Sarah currently serves as national secretary of the board for the organization. She's also on the leadership committee of the Young Conservatives for the Freedom to Marry.

**D**

**Erin (DeRemer) Giambrone '06**

Erin and Nino Giambrone were married on Oct. 13, 2012 at Paxton Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg. A reception followed at Moonstone Manor in Elizabethtown. Many Academy alumni and friends were in attendance, including (from left): Julia Conroy Parkins '00, Bob Miller '01, Erica Pettis '06, Eric Pettis '78, Kyle Nicholson, Erin and Nino Giambrone, Michael DeRemer '01 (hidden behind his sister), Devin Dadigan '06, Sydney Otto '05, Kaitlyn Baer, Bobbie Somerville, Kyle Baer, Jack Elder, and Kathy Widmer.

Erin is a special education teacher at The Vista School in Hershey, a school for children with moderate to severe autism. She and Nino reside in Harrisburg.

**E**

**Ryan Lysaught '06**

Ryan graduated from Penn State's Dickinson School of Law, passed the Pennsylvania bar examination, and recently was hired as an assistant public defender in the Appeals Department of the Dauphin County Public Defender's Office.

**F**

**Emily Mackin '06**

Emily recently married Lieutenant Marc R. Yonkers. The wedding and reception were held at Veritas Vineyard and Winery in Afton, Va. They were joined by fellow Academy alumni: Julian Gantt '03, Arthur Winer '03, Daniel Hawkins '03, and future alumna, Claire Mackin '16.

After graduating from the Academy, Emily received a degree from University of Rochester. Additionally, she earned a degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, where she is now pursuing a master's degree. Emily is currently employed by the Veterans Administration in Baltimore and is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer.

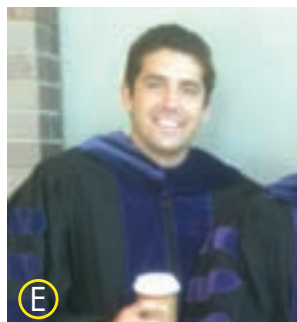
**Ian Parker '06**

Ian has made the successful transition from serving as an intern for Stage 2 Networks in New York City to being fully employed there as a client account manager. Stage 2 Networks is a cloud communications leader in the New York metropolitan area. Joe Gillette '82 is the chairman and CEO of the organization.

**Jasmine Gould '07**

Jasmine began a new position as the director of business development for Strategic Consulting Partners (SCP). She recently graduated from George Mason University with a degree in global affairs and opened up SCP's new headquarters in Arlington, Va. in order to pursue work with the federal government in the Washington D.C. area.





## Thomas Cheney '09

Thomas completed his studies at the University of Newcastle, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England. This past summer he was in the process of applying for jobs and applying to complete a law degree at the Open University. After obtaining the law degree, he hopes to pursue a master's degree in international law at the University of Kent as the school has a module on space law. Thomas plans to pursue a career in the space sector.

G

## Alex Willis '10

Alex recently founded the "Be a Mikey Project," a philanthropy and faith-based non-profit organization dedicated to raising money, material aid, and awareness of adopted children of Pomfret and Tosca in South Africa, and the Emmanuel Christian Organization outreach projects in Angola. "Mikey" is the English spelling of the Afrikaans word, "maatjie," and it translates as "friend." Currently, Alex is a sophomore at Juniata College. To learn more about the "Be a Mikey Project," visit [www.beamikeyproject.com](http://www.beamikeyproject.com).



H

## Leah Hirsch '11

This stunning photo of Leah Hirsch '11 was recently featured on the Pennsylvania Ballet's Facebook page. It was taken during the rehearsals for the company's holiday performance of "George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™." Leah is a Ballet II Dancer with the Pennsylvania Ballet. *Photo by Alexander Iziliaev*



## Mary Russek '12

Mary is happily enrolled at University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music. She is one of only 15 violinists enrolled at the prestigious conservatory. Mary performed in her first orchestra concert this past September and her current solo repertoire includes "Ciaccona" by Vitali, "Sonata in E minor" by Veracini, "Violin Concerto No. 4" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and "Romanza Andaluza" by Sarasate.





# REMembering REUBEN

When the Harrisburg Academy community observed its time-honored Thanksgiving tradition of the annual Alumni Basketball Games, it did so with mixed emotions. This year's event provided the same opportunity for alumni and their families to get together and reconnect, but also served as a tribute to Reuben Mitrani '10, a recent graduate who passed away this fall while studying abroad in Switzerland. Alumni Adam Chernicoff '10 and Max Bernstein '09, and Varsity Boys' Basketball head coach, Steve Pancoski, organized the presentation. Prior to the start of the men's game, friends and loved ones acknowledged Mitrani's meaningful role in the Academy community and in the world at large.

"For many years I've had the opportunity to watch the Upper School basketball games and would enjoy every single moment of the wins and losses," said head of school, Jim Newman. "One of the things I've thought about was how Reuben would have been the ideal teammate, with his intensity, his fun, and his commitment — and of course, his gold sneakers. When I

think back on watching him play basketball, I realize now what he modeled for our players on the court and in the classroom. We were quite lucky to have Reuben here at the Academy."

"This gym is one of the places that Reuben really lived," recalled his mother, Donna Orbach. "His breath is here; his sweat is here; frustration sat on that bench while exhilaration went up for a rebound. We can only say thank you for wanting to remember Reuben meaningfully, for loving him, for teaching him, for coaching him in life, and for being his teammate, friend, and mentor. Remember who Reuben was to his team, school, friends, and family as his life slowly becomes a legacy to all of us."

The men's game and the halftime Half-Court Shot Contest were both played in honor of Mitrani. Beyond the evening, the school will rename its Most Improved Player award for Varsity Boys' Basketball to The Reuben Mitrani '10 Most Improved Player Award. "Reuben always played with emotion and intensity and consistently inspired his teammates at games and practices," said Pancoski. "For his efforts,

he earned Most Improved Player his senior year. This is a fitting way to remember him."

Harrisburg Academy students, alumni, and friends continue to remember Mitrani by wearing athletic arm bands in his honor. All proceeds from the sale of the bands will be donated to the Reuben Mitrani Memorial Fund for Emma Kaufmann Camp, where he spent many happy summers.

**Top Left:** Academy students and alumni sold athletic arm bands reading "REMember" in memory of Reuben E. Mitrani '10. All money raised from arm band sales will be donated to the Reuben Mitrani Memorial Fund for Emma Kaufmann Camp. **Top Right:** Senior class members of the 2009-10 Varsity Boys' Basketball team (SIAC League Champions). Pictured here in 2010 (from left): Zach Cohen '10, Adam Chernicoff '10, Alex Merluzzi '10, Sebastian Rauenzahn '10, Reuben Mitrani '10, and Natimi Black-Heaven '10. Although not pictured here (because he graduated in 2009), Mitrani's teammate, Max Bernstein '09, won the Half-Court Shot Contest this year.

## WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE LOSS OF ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF HARRISBURG ACADEMY

Mr. Doug Clemmer (husband of former dir. of food service, Judy Clemmer)

Ms. Ruth Jane Dunn (former teacher)

Mr. Scott N. Garonzik '71

Ms. Maria Antonia Keating (former Trustee)

Mr. Shawn Mishkin (associate alumnus)

Mr. Reuben E. Mitrani '10

Mr. Les Sheared (former bus driver and food service employee)

Mrs. Gene Tatnall (former teacher)

Ms. Elizabeth Wingate '98

Mr. Jack W. Yust '33

**CORRECTION:** In the Spring/Summer 2012 NewsMagazine, we incorrectly included Harry Banzhoff, III '69 on our In Memoriam page. He is alive and well. His father, Mr. Harry G. Banzhoff, II '42 is the alumnus who passed away.





## WE WILL WIN.

Tommy Kirchhoff '18 and his brother, Sam '20 are on a mission. They're determined to win the battle against the disease known as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or ALS. Two years ago their father, Tom, was diagnosed with the progressive neurodegenerative disease.

"At first I was really sad and wasn't sure how to react or what to do," says Tommy. "My dad's best friend, Mike McElrath, sent him an email with the words 'We Will Win' at the end, and it's become our motto ever since."

Since then, these middle schoolers have banded with other members of the community to fight back and raise funds and awareness for ALS research. They've sold hundreds of bracelets, participated in two ALS walks and a motorcycle ride, and even helped raise money at a silent auction. "That was my favorite event. I got to bid on prizes with a bidding machine that worked like an iPod. It was pretty cool," says Sam.

The family has a special relationship with Adam Breneman, a local football star who has committed to play at Penn State University next year. They have teamed together to raise funds through a special

fundraiser called "Catch the Cure." Through the efforts of Adam, Tommy, Sam and many others, they've raised over \$1.5 million in funds for ALS research and hope to raise a lot more.

When asked why he's participated in all of these activities, Tommy replies, "I just want people to know about the disease. One or two people in 100,000 get the disease. That's like only one person in the entire [Penn State University's] Beaver Stadium. People need to know those things. The more that people know, the more they can help fight against it." To find out more about Catch the Cure, visit [www.catch-the-cure.com](http://www.catch-the-cure.com).

***Gifts to the Academy Fund make it possible for Harrisburg Academy to support and attract students of the highest caliber. Please visit [www.harrisburgacademy.org](http://www.harrisburgacademy.org) and click on "Support the Academy".***

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