

# NEWSMAGAZINE 2016



## DIFFERENT BY CHOICE





( A MESSAGE )

# FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Academy Families and Friends,

Frequently, we speak of Harrisburg Academy as being “something more and something different.” Whether by virtue of the outstanding educational experiences our teachers create or our respectful and joyful learning environment, the Academy provides “more” for every student.

The “more” we provide to students and their parents is strongly influenced by our status as an independent school and our ability to make choices about what we offer and how we offer it. Being accredited by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools gives us the freedom to be “different” and teach to the “whole child,” construct a unique liberal arts and globally focused curriculum, and sustain a school community based on our mission and core values. As a result, Harrisburg Academy is different from and more than local alternatives.

I hope you enjoy the 2016 edition of the Academy’s NewsMagazine. This issue highlights the many areas in which choice has a positive impact on our school community. Our faculty, staff, trustees, and I understand the incalculable value that the Academy’s independent status — and freedom to choose — means to the benefit of every student and our entire school community, and you can be certain we will continue to use our liberty to choose prudently.

What incredible things we are able to accomplish together because of these choices!

With warm regards,

Jim

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## NEWSMAGAZINE STAFF

Kristina A. Pae, Editor

Mary S. Campbell, Staff Writer

## PROOFREADER

Jessica A. Warren

## FRONT COVER ARTWORK

Layout by Viscul Creative

## PHOTOGRAPHY

NewsMagazine staff photographers

Photos by Mike Barrett (father of Matt '08):  
MBarrett635.smugmug.com

Amy Spangler Photos: ASpanglerPhoto.com

Kate Landis Photography:  
KateLandisPhotography.com

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10 Erford Road, Wormleysburg, PA 17043-0894  
[www.HarrisburgAcademy.org](http://www.HarrisburgAcademy.org)

Submit class notes to:  
[alumni@harrisburgacademy.org](mailto:alumni@harrisburgacademy.org)

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## WEBSITE

[www.HarrisburgAcademy.org](http://www.HarrisburgAcademy.org)

## CONNECT WITH US!

Email us at: [magazine@harrisburgacademy.org](mailto:magazine@harrisburgacademy.org)



## FEATURE

### Different by Choice

The ability to choose is a powerful one. As an independent school, Harrisburg Academy has the freedom to make important, defining choices that craft its identity. Between the decisions made by school leadership regarding mission and governance to the thousands of individual choices, made by Academy constituents, to engage within this unique school community, everyone benefits.

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Academy students, Sophia Williams '29 and Lucy Gross '29, play dress-up during Junior Kindergarten stations time. The Academy chooses to offer a full-day JK program to provide students time for both academic and social learning.





# *Different* BY CHOICE

Brayten Kranz '29 builds a house out of LEGOs®.



Brayten Kranz '29 looks up from the LEGO® table and smiles — he is building a house. His friend across the table is constructing a boat. Although the two boys are now enjoying some independent building time, minutes earlier they and their classmates were eagerly forming the letter U out of the small pieces. Harrisburg Academy's Junior Kindergarten (JK) class, the only full-day, academically focused program in the area, is busy today. Then again, they are busy every day, learning skills that build confidence and lead to independence.

"In one week, we do a unit and learn many things, including a letter," said Jackie Stabach, one of the Academy's JK teachers. "This week, the letter is U. Among other things, we work on the letter's sound, build it with wooden pieces, roll it out with Play-Doh, and write it on chalkboards. On another day, we might practice how it is written and used in both a traditional workbook and an electronic tablet.

"As busy as we are," she said, "I am grateful we have the time to stop and say, 'Let's talk more about how this works,' when those moments arise."

Stabach says a key reason she and fellow JK teacher, Gretchen Qualls, are able to cover so much material in Junior Kindergarten is because the Academy has chosen to support a full-day setting, one of many defining elements of the

school. This power of making independent choices allows non-public schools, such as Harrisburg Academy, to create their identity and offer something truly unique and special within the educational landscape.

### DEFINING CHOICE

The concept of choice is a powerful one. It includes the act of making a selection, the power of choosing from a wide variety of options, and the benefit of selectivity in one's final choice. In education today, freedom of choice extends beyond school vouchers or tax credit programs.

The capacity to choose is at the heart of Harrisburg Academy. The Academy is an independent school, autonomous from the state and national government in its finances and governance. The Academy's trustees and administration make thoughtful choices based on data and observations, always mindful of the school's accountability to Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) and the International Baccalaureate (IB), its accrediting bodies. After meeting these standards, the Academy is free to operate as a mission-focused organization whose diverse community members — including current families, alumni, and faculty — reap the rewards of this freedom of choice.

"This small school community is the best environment in which to develop learners and really mold children in the ways that our mission

statement reflects," said Jim Newman, head of school. "If your goal is to provide children with the opportunity to learn how to assess, think deeply, and analyze, then you have to provide a structure for that. How we are organized gives us the latitude we need as educators to create that environment, set the structure, and support intimate classroom learning that is necessary to both achieve our mission and provide the best possible experience for our families."

The Academy chooses specific elements as the core of its identity to fulfill its mission. The school is small by choice to enable a personal experience for its students. It provides certain specific advantages derived from a strategic plan, school mission, and core values. And the school selects what and how curricular material is taught, not being bound to prescribed standardized tests, Newman said.

Beyond decisions that guide structure and governance, the Academy's people — enrolled students and their families, faculty members, and staff — make their own unique choices to be here. Each has his own story, inspiration, goal or obstacle, which makes each decision to join the Academy community distinct and special. Choice, indeed, brings power at the Academy, witnessed through this synergy of people and place, and created where all are committed to helping children grow from fresh, eager learners to seasoned young adults ready to take on the global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.




(Left): Vihaan Kamat '29 works on an alphabet writing activity.

(Right): Duncan Little '29 and Junior Kindergarten teacher, Jackie Stabach, share a story with the class. During the week, the students learned about the letter 'G'.







Reese Kimmel '26 studies the effects of light, water, air, and soil on a growing plant in a recent science lab class with teacher, Carolyn Estill-Shover '92.

## CHOOSING TO LEARN AT THE ACADEMY

Rooted in deep history and 232 years of educational best-practice, the Academy proudly offers a learning environment that provides student character-building opportunities, unique classroom experiences, and strong academic outcomes. The Kimmel family made the choice this year to enroll their son, Reese '26, in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade because of the school's academic reputation. For them, the benefits of an Academy education outweighed the challenges presented by their 90-minute round-trip commute to and from Tower City, the town in which they grew up.

"I believe in what we have here," said Jackie Kimmel. "Between the strong academics, exposure to different cultures, importance of physical education, and emphasis on healthy eating, I appreciate the entire package of what Reese is exposed to. We're 100 percent all-in."

Kimmel and her husband, Woody, were both educated in the Williams Valley School District and carry fond memories of their formative years, especially when they played in a nationally competitive marching band taught by renowned instructors. The district's music program still thrives, Kimmel said, as does its athletics program.

Her family admires their local community's strong support for its public schools. "It was a really big decision for us given these reasons, but the Academy's outstanding academics outweighed everything else," Kimmel said.

Of special note, Kimmel appreciates the Academy's commitment to providing true lab science to its Kindergarten and elementary-age students and has seen her son's interest in this area develop this year. "Reese really loves science with Mrs. Shover — on the days that he has regular science and science club, you would think it was Christmas!"



Junior Kindergarten students Sophia Sandhu '29, Grant Skjoldal '29, Eli Anderson '29, and Henry Gaudion '29 paint during academic choice time.



### CHOICE FROM THE START: MORE ON SETTING EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

The Academy's full-day JK program is as unique today as it was 29 years ago when the school expanded its offerings to include this program. At the time, an Academy education started at Kindergarten, when full-day preschool with a true academic focus was highly unusual in the Harrisburg area.

Paying attention to early childhood research of the mid-1980s, which stated the growing importance of setting a solid preschool foundation for children, the Academy subscribed to what experts were saying and sought to accommodate this need. Full-day Junior Kindergarten quickly became a valued component of the Academy's identity (followed by the Harrisburg Academy Threes, or "HATS," program in 1995).

"Research shows that kids of this age are so porous, soaking in everything," Stabach said. "Researchers continue to find that although Kindergarten is very important, pre-kindergarten education is even more so. It's becoming the new Kindergarten, and because of our overall commitment to academics here, adding it was a natural fit."

"It's a very special program. We do follow a curriculum but it is flexible at our choice," she continued. "We have the time to expose the students to concepts and letters and art, but still have the time for them to be social learners. Our small teacher-to-student ratios only reinforce this."

"The magic happens when the dress-up bin comes out, because the language skills come out, too!" Qualls said. "Through our unique program, we are allowing them to be academic, but also provide the little things that will prepare them for full-day Kindergarten: finding confidence and independence; speaking with a loud and strong voice; engaging with both tactile and electronic learning tools; and managing conflict in an appropriate way, among other things."

Stabach and Qualls continue to work as a teaching team at the Academy nearly 15 years after they were first hired. "When I graduated from college, I thought I'd pursue urban education," Stabach said. "Then I worked for a family whose children were enrolled at the Academy, and I knew I wanted to teach here. I get up every day and am still excited to come to work. I look forward to interactions with the children I work with and their families."

"You could feel the difference from the start when you walked into the building," Qualls said of her interview back in the mid-1990s. "You could just feel that people genuinely loved working here and choosing to be a part of this very special learning community — and they still do."

### CHOICE AT THE END: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

Just as important as solid educational beginnings, the personal support for students during their final years of high school and the college search process is at the core of the Academy's longstanding identity as a college preparatory school. For this reason, the Academy is committed to employing a full-time, dedicated college counselor. The school continues to provide sizable resources to this program to ensure student success beyond 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

College counselor, Keo Oura Kounlavong-Sabath, believes in the independent school philosophy of college counseling and its primary goals: having graduates choose and attend a college or university that is their best fit and is financially doable; be happy at their college and graduate in four years; and find satisfaction that their expectations were well-met.



Dahna Yoon '20, Tyler Quigley '20, Isabelle Borr '20, John Helm '20, and Clara Papenfus '20 visited George Washington University during the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Washington D.C. this year.



"It's shown empirically in our industry that when a college counselor can dedicate 100 percent of his or her time to this purpose, students have a higher success rate for actually going to college and graduating," Sabath said.

"It can be a very complex process, too," she continued. "There are over 4,000 colleges across the nation. To build appropriate relationships with college admissions representatives, understand the differences between many application processes, and help a student discover a school that is his or her natural fit versus a school that is a name-brand label, having this expertise and focus in-house is imperative."

The Academy's choice to support this key program, and the components of the program itself, are both measurably different than every other area school. Before an Upper School

student even applies to college, he or she has experienced a comprehensive college preparatory experience. He has seen up to 14 colleges on school-sponsored college trips; he has been exposed to more than one standardized test since his 9<sup>th</sup> grade year; and he has participated in a semester-long college preparatory class.

He has also attended Harrisburg Academy's Spring College Fair, the largest college fair in the area, and practiced interviewing with real college admissions professionals. The end result? This Academy

senior — like all of his classmates — is able to finish the college search and application process efficiently and effectively, thanks to the personal support he has received.

"Exposure is also the key," Sabath added.

"By stepping my students through the process each year in the Upper School, I can see their maturation. By the time we reach the end, I know each student I will be sending off to college. I have a multi-year view of how each will continue to grow, academically and socially, once on a college campus. College admission professionals appreciate this insight and confidence, and it can be the difference in a tough admission decision."

Sabath, herself, came to the Academy after working as an associate director of admission at Lebanon Valley College. "I made the conscious decision to 'move to the other side of the desk' because I wanted to work more with students," she said. "From the start of my career, I always knew I would work at an independent school because schools such as the Academy are willing to put in the resources, time, and effort to support a true college counseling program."



*On this year's 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip, students visited a number of colleges and universities, and national organizations, including C-SPAN.*

## INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS — TRUST IN THE “FIRST CHOICE”

Education was always perceived to be the agent of social and economic mobility, Newman said. If you wanted to improve yourself, you went to school, and people believed in the need to educate everyone.

In the 1980s, people began to question the quality of the education their children were receiving after the release of the Reagan administration’s “A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform” study. This information, coupled with the rapid expansion of technology, caused the marketplace of education to explode. All of a sudden, American families were presented with more educational options than ever

before, including public schools, public charter schools, private and for-profit charter schools, traditional faith-based schools, home schools, and cyber schools.

“And then there’s independent schooling,” Newman said. “Many don’t realize it was the first option, starting before the public school system did in the 1830s and ‘40s.” Following such a long history and tradition, independent schools still hold an immense amount of respect and trust, and Newman believes that the Academy’s success is largely based upon this principle, too.

“Our Board holds us fiscally accountable and sets standards as to how we have to act to meet our mission. But it doesn’t govern our daily

operations. Our choice is strengthened because we can act on our thoughts more quickly and more freely, thoughts that we think are in the best interests of our students.

“The degree to which we are focused on what is best for children is thorough — and we go to great lengths to provide what is best for them academically, socially, physically, and mentally,” he continued. “This partnership between trustees, school leadership, and parents is based upon trust, and it always will be. Since 1784, being independent has allowed us to craft our identity and choose the areas that are most valuable to our students and our school, and most relevant to our present-day society.”

*Harrisburg Academy’s Board of Trustees Executive Committee. Pictured from left (front): Alison Ballantine ’91 (secretary), Seth Mendelsohn (president), and Martha Peaslee Levine (Schools Committee chair); (back): Javier Idrovo (treasurer) and Keith Clark (vice president). Not pictured: Addison Taliaferro (Enrollment & Marketing Committee chair).*







# FUNDRAISING CONTINUES FOR BOLD AMBITION: THE CAMPAIGN FOR HARRISBURG ACADEMY

"I couldn't be more pleased with last summer's renovations," said music teacher, Adrienne Davis, as she stood in the Academy's brick-lined McCormick Auditorium Commons. "Every time I walk from here to the band room, I beam with joy. Not only does the brightly lit hallway encourage everyone to come to the band room, it also makes me excited thinking about the future, when this same hallway will lead to our new music suite."

Part 1 of the Bold Ambition Campaign's performing arts phase, renovations to the foyer adjacent to McCormick Auditorium and the hallways leading to the Albert and Marie Herbert Band Room, was completed in August of 2015. Fundraising continues in the 2015-16 academic year for part 2, construction of the music suite, and part 3, hallway renovations and new lockers.

"I'm excited to see the campaign progress," said Kevin Muirhead, head of Early Childhood and Lower School. "The performance opportunities that the Academy offers for the young children

in my divisions, as well as in Middle and Upper School, are wonderful. Their value to the Academy's liberal arts curriculum and its commitment to engaging the 'whole child' will only be enhanced with construction of the music suite."

The campaign's performing arts phase will conclude upon completion of a third part, the renovation of the Middle and Upper School hallways. This means new flooring and lighting, and installation of wooden student lockers. Parents of current students and Academy alumni will be able to fund the cost of installing a new locker. The names of either current students or alumni will be etched into a brass plate and affixed to the door of the locker.

"If the classrooms of the Academy have been described as the heart of the school, then the hallways are the arteries leading from this academic center," said Terry Bowie, longtime Middle and Upper School art teacher. "This circulation path that all of us travel through each day is such an important part of the

Academy experience or journey. Our new hallway renovations will help to enrich all of our lives by the engaging esthetic found in this fresh, updated architectural plan. I hope our entire community will get involved to help make this makeover a reality," he said.

"This is a great time to stand up for Harrisburg Academy," said Michael Larue '02, assistant director of alumni relations. "Our Bold Ambition campaign continues to roll on successfully. Because of the generosity of many in the Academy community, what we have achieved thus far has made a significant impact on the learning experiences of today's Academy students. Our students are our purpose, and our alumni, alumni parents, and current parents are the partners of today's students!"

The entire Academy community can support the campaign either by contacting the Development and Alumni Relations Office directly or by accessing the campaign's website at [www.BoldAmbition.org](http://www.BoldAmbition.org).



# ENCOURAGING #HACOMMUNITY ONLINE

Approximately 74 percent of adults in the United States use social networking sites, according to a study by the Pew Research Center in January 2014. The percentage rises even higher, to nearly 90 percent, for adults 18-49, specifically.

As these platforms have become increasingly more numerous and popular for managing social interactions, those in education have taken advantage of these new outlets to connect with their students and parents in teaching and learning situations.

Annette Spahr, who teaches 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Upper School, and International Baccalaureate English at Harrisburg Academy, is relatively new to the world of social media and smartphones. “In May, I didn’t even have a smartphone — I had what I called my ‘dino-phone’ — and in October, I was speaking to teachers about what I had learned about teaching using social media. I was really willing to take this risk and continue my own education.”

Over the summer, Spahr participated in the Newseum’s 2015 Summer Teacher Institute, “Primarily Digital: Teaching Media Literacy to Plugged-In Students,” in Washington, D.C. At the program, Spahr learned how to use different online tools and platforms, including Google products, Twitter, and Instagram, and then effectively incorporate these tools into classroom lessons.

Spahr designed her first lesson, “#HuckFinn Through H@ndles,” inspired by a project from the Newseum’s Summer Teacher Institute, for the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year. Over the summer, Spahr’s IB HL English students read “Huckleberry Finn” by Mark Twain. The assignment then required them

to use Twitter to discuss the presence of racism and political commentary in the novel from the perspective of one of the novel’s characters — in 140 text characters or fewer! Not only was the lesson an exercise in political and economic context, Spahr stressed the importance of self-review and editing, even down to the last character.

“I know these students very well, and I know that some of them love the opportunity to add creative flair to their work. And some of them impressed me so much — some wrote in the dialect and adopted Twitter names that were reflective of their character,” Spahr said. “I expected them to be at least mildly interested, but I was really taken aback by how enthusiastic some really were. And it made me want to do it again.”

Because the lesson was so successful, Spahr was invited to speak at the Newseum’s Teacher Open House, again in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 3. As a social media novice, Spahr encouraged teachers new to the tools to be brave about educating themselves about new technology and to surround themselves with people who can provide support when technical difficulties arise.

Spahr now has plans for more lessons using Twitter — “I really want the witches from Shakespeare’s ‘Macbeth’ to tweet!” — and a lesson in poetry using Instagram. She also wants to incorporate Google Paint into the research unit with her 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

“It’s always a good teaching strategy to use something that is familiar to your students to introduce them to something unfamiliar. I think using social media is a perfect example of accessing a student’s prior knowledge and using it to open a door to something new.”





## FOLLOW THESE OTHER ACADEMY TEACHERS ON TWITTER!

**Jean McIver and the Academy's  
Lower School**  
**@lwrschoolscoop**

"What a great way for parents to see a glimpse into what happened during the day. It's also a great conversation starter between parents and kids. Parents now can't wait to see what we post. And as more people follow, it brings better awareness to the depth of learning that happens upstairs."

**Lindsay Bowman**  
**@MissBowman33A**

"I share anything that can help my students or enhance my classes. I use Twitter to retweet current events and global issues that are pertinent to my 8<sup>th</sup> grade Global Issues course. I share and retweet information about various contests my students participate in, like National History Day and C-SPAN StudentCam. I like to share other U.S. history content, too, like important dates in history and information about local events and museums."

**Carolyn Estill-Shover '92**  
**@SciteachK4**

"Parents are busy, but we love the chance to see an update on our kids during the day. Getting a snapshot of my child's day during the week is a treat, because my heart is so invested in their experiences and happiness."



The Dragas family (from left):  
Zoe '15, Eli '24, April, Toren, and Elliott '28.

## "BRIDGING THE TUITION GAP" THROUGH CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION FINANCIAL SUPPORT

As important as relevant program and student outcomes are to a family's enrollment decision, finances play an equally important role in choosing Harrisburg Academy. The Academy recognizes the financial need of more than 35 percent of its families each year, and as such, supports a need-based financial aid budget of nearly \$1.2 million to attract and retain this diverse and talented student body.

It's important to first preface that all Academy students pay towards their tuition; there is no "full ride" for anyone. The many programs that exist to offset the cost of tuition are definitely

game-changers for many who would otherwise not be able to afford it.

There are two ways to reduce a student's tuition bill. The first is through merit scholarships, funded internally through the endowment and through the school's operating budget. The funding mechanism affecting most students, however, is the second vehicle, need-based financial aid. Financial aid is furnished internally, through the school's budget and endowment, and externally, through a number of individuals and organizations, including: private donors to the Academy

Fund; local entities such as the Donald B. and Dorothy L. Stabler Foundation, the Bravo Foundation, the Ivin S. and Virginia D. Bear Fund, and The Foundation for Enhancing Communities (TFEC), and private donors; and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's business tax credit programs, EITC and OSTC (see bottom of page 13).

"These external programs are a huge benefit for our community because they allow the Academy to spread its dollars as wide as possible," said Jessica Warren, director of admission and marketing. "We always have



more applications for financial aid than we have money available to give. These programs allow us, in combination with the school's financial aid dollars, to make tuition manageable for families working to bridge the gap of what the Academy offers in aid and what they can afford."

The Dragas family is one Academy family that benefits from the school's financial aid program. April Dragas, mother of Zoe '15, Elijah '24, and Elliott '28, is grateful. "I work very hard to come up with my children's portion of tuition in conjunction with the generosity of the financial aid department every year. Even so, it has still been difficult for a family like mine with a very humble income to make ends meet while sending our children to the school they deserve, a school they consider home. Since this support has come into our lives, I am able to sleep at night knowing my children can attend Harrisburg Academy long-term. It means so much more to us than Academy donors, business owners, and legislators could ever possibly imagine," she said.

Since 2001, the EITC program, and more recently, the OSTC program, have both enabled Pennsylvania businesses to direct up to \$750,000 of their state business tax dollars directly to Harrisburg Academy's scholarship program or to community foundations and

organizations, that in turn, pass the funding along to direct applicants or schools. Last year alone, the EITC and OSTC programs provided \$187,950 from 20 partners to support financial aid at the Academy (the list of companies that contributed is listed on the school website). The funding from EITC and OSTC helps to keep an Academy education accessible and affordable.

"Organizations like doing this because they can give money directly to the Academy or to a community group that distributes donations to private schools across the entire community," Warren said. "In addition to being eligible for Harrisburg Academy's EITC and OSTC funds, parents are also able to apply for this funding directly from these community organizations, which if received, is put towards their student's tuition bill."

Harrisburg-based TFEC is a foundation that participates in the EITC and OSTC programs, accepting business tax credit donations and subsequently sharing them with qualifying schools and individuals in the region. TFEC is committed to supporting educational choice and through this foundation, generous individuals, corporations, and organizations are actively working to enhance the community, Harrisburg Academy included.

"Giving students the opportunity to start their educational journey on a stronger foot both economically and emotionally further provides support and encouragement to help that student be successful," said Allison Moesta, TFEC program officer for educational enhancement. "We want students with strong academic backgrounds to foster their education and remember the generosity that helped them be the best they can be for the future and their involvement in building a better community for all.

"On an individual basis, attending a school with more opportunities can have a huge impact on a student's experiences and success in life," she continued. "It can open the door to so much and can introduce them to things they may have never otherwise had a chance to learn about. Each scholarship expresses a deep belief in the power of education to help today's youth achieve their dreams."

According to Warren, "It is important to recognize that families who want to choose Harrisburg Academy are being supported by all facets of the community, internal and external. By providing scholarship opportunities for a student who wishes to attend the school he believes to be his best fit, supporters are showing our whole community's belief in education."

# WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

## EITC PROGRAM

### The Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program

allows Pennsylvania businesses to donate to scholarship organizations such as Harrisburg Academy, the Whitaker Center for the Arts, and local foundations. When businesses allocate tax dollars to Harrisburg Academy, the school is able to apply the funds to middle-to-low-income student tuition bills as group and individual need warrants.

## OSTC PROGRAM

### The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program

operates the same way as EITC, but is only available to Pennsylvania students who live in poorly performing school districts. Money is tied to specific students at the time of distribution.



Interested in getting your company involved in EITC or OSTC? Please visit [www.HarrisburgAcademy.org/EITC](http://www.HarrisburgAcademy.org/EITC) for more information.

# 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION



*Middle School science teacher, Jen Klemunes, Andrew Liechty '23, and Joshua Freed '23 work on an experiment exploring the properties of rock formations.*



While many schools and educational models consider the traditional middle school curriculum 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, at Harrisburg Academy, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students also take advantage of the middle school divisional model. Multiple core-subject teachers, Circle of Power and Respect (CPR), individual lockers, and club period are just a few of the changes 5<sup>th</sup> graders experience in their transition to Middle School.

Jason Witt '22, a current 6<sup>th</sup> grader at the Academy who has attended since HATS, enjoyed 5<sup>th</sup> grade and was glad to have the year to acclimate before jumping into Middle School with both feet in 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

"We learned a lot, but at the same time, we also had time to have fun and be more social," said Jason, who has taken full advantage of the new opportunities in Middle School: he has served as a grade representative in the Middle School Student Council both his 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade year; he is a member of the Middle School Chorus and landed a lead part in last year's Middle School musical, "Honk!, Jr."; and he is a member of the U13 Lacrosse team and the Middle School Boys' Soccer and Basketball teams.

Jason's mom, Kristi Witt, saw her son become a more independent and confident young adult with the transition to Middle School that the Academy facilitated.

"Jason thrived with his academic work and took great pride in his independence with completing school assignments. He also thrived socially and with the leadership and club opportunities offered in Middle School," she said. "I think it made him feel more grown up. It didn't rush the growing-up process, but allowed him to challenge himself at an appropriate level."

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students have two core-subject teachers: Lisa Haywood for English and social studies, and Jen Klemunes for math and science. The dual-teacher model acts as a stepping stone into 6<sup>th</sup> grade, when students have a different teacher for each of the four core subjects.

Additionally, the Lower School specials teachers — Monica Velasco for Spanish and Tina Phillips for art — also teach the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes in these disciplines to allow students to transition to a more challenging curriculum under the guidance of the same teacher.

As part of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, teachers introduce new academic and emotional coping strategies to help students successfully transition to Middle School. Most notably, 5<sup>th</sup> grade is the first year students are introduced to CPR, an updated version of Responsive Classroom®

Morning Meetings in Early Childhood and Lower School. The summer before 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students read "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio, which provides an immediate opportunity at the beginning of the year to discuss respecting each other and setting boundaries.

CPR also provides an opportunity for Haywood and Klemunes to help students adjust to the new grading system, which can be one of the most shocking academic changes from Lower to Middle School.

"There's a concerted effort by the faculty to make this transition as easy as possible. By getting the big transition in early, by the time they hit 6<sup>th</sup> grade, they are ready to fly," said Haywood.

"I'd really like to reduce the fear that hovers around this step in Middle School," said Klemunes. "Everybody is alert to their needs, and they do really well with the transition."

New for the 2015-16 academic year, Haywood and Klemunes have started using the Zones of Regulation® with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. The

Zones curriculum is designed to help students be more self-aware of their mental and emotional states throughout the school day, and provides strategies to help them manage their behavior.

Each of these strategies, along with a focus of the faculty on constant and open communication not only with the students, but among themselves, creates a safe and supportive environment in which new Middle School students can explore and thrive with their new independence.

"I was excited for another year of Middle School because I really enjoyed the first one," said Jason. "My advice for new 5<sup>th</sup> graders is to try not to be a perfectionist. You still have to work hard and improve, but don't be upset if your work isn't perfect. Always shoot for 100 percent — if you can go for 100 percent, then go for it! But if you don't get all the way there, don't be angry with yourself."

According to Haywood, "In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, we're really building the scaffolding that they need later in Middle School to be able to succeed."



Alex Meyerhoff '23 and Willow Dixon '23 work on a social studies project during classroom free time. Fifth grade teacher, Lisa Haywood, has set up an informal library and lounge space where students can work and gather.





*Ben Weber '18 (left) and Kevin Zhou '18 work in the MS/US Library during study hall. Students are free to visit the library during open periods to make use of library resources and work in the quiet space.*



# ENVISIONING OUR 'LIBRARY OF THE FUTURE'

"Being a college preparatory school, I feel our focus, at least in part, is on preparing students for that next step. Research shows that many students going to college are unable to efficiently do research, and part of our job is to really help students understand how to do that."

At Harrisburg Academy, our library is always evolving and changing to better support the current academic needs of our students, while considering the demands of their future academic pursuits. Spearheaded by the Middle and Upper School librarian, currently Heather Shumaker and before her, Cindy St. John, the Academy's library has become a place for both accessing academic resources and gathering to share ideas.

Shumaker sees her role largely as facilitating access to the library resources, for both students and faculty, and promoting information literacy, or the ability to find, retrieve, analyze, and use

information efficiently and effectively. The library is also an important place to encourage reading for enjoyment.

"It's fun when kids come in and ask me to help them choose a good book. Having that direct connection with an individual student is important to me," said Shumaker, who has worked at the Academy for four years after more than a decade as a public school librarian. "But one of the reasons I wanted to come to the Academy was to get back into actually teaching and help students understand what they need to know about reading and information literacy."

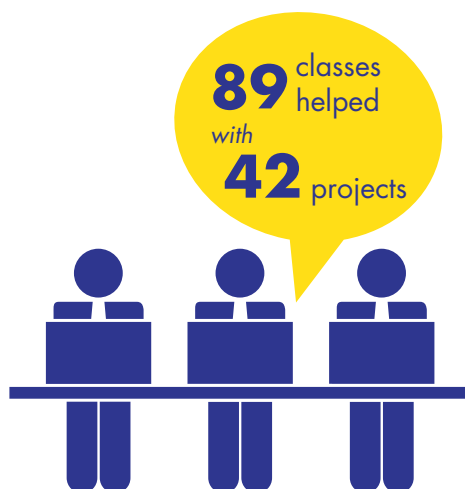
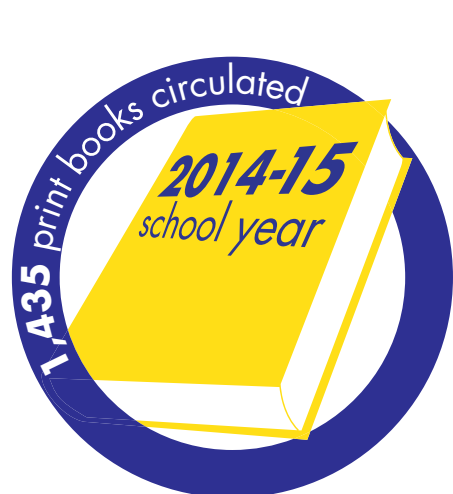
In addition to housing a collection of print books, including fiction, history, and biography books, as well as a selection of current events magazines, the Academy's library provides access to nearly 20 subscription databases and e-book collections on a wide variety of topics, including science and global issues.

Shumaker works closely with many Academy teachers to help design lessons that teach and encourage proper research procedures and information literacy. With Middle School students, Shumaker teaches lessons in the library supporting social studies research projects, English biography reports, science fair projects, and the C-SPAN video project, to name a few. In Upper School, Shumaker's class involvement becomes even more cross-divisional — she works with teachers on history projects, mathematical biography reports, and even International Baccalaureate music composition research.

During the 2014-15 academic year, Shumaker hosted nearly 90 classes in the library, teaching lessons on various subjects, including database research, website evaluation, and copyright and digital ethics.

"I can't do my job without the teachers working with me," said Shumaker, who is on track to

## MS/US LIBRARY STATS 2014-15 ACADEMIC YEAR



host even more classes in the library this year. "I appreciate their willingness to work with me, because they value information literacy, too. The fact that they support my mission helps me have an active library."

Shumaker's success in promoting the library stands on a foundation built by St. John, during her 37-year tenure at the Academy. St. John introduced computers to the library, in addition to the online card catalog and database collection. She took on the monumental task of barcoding every single book in the library. And in 2000, when a new space was built during the Campaign for Learning, St. John

moved the MS/US Library to where it now resides at the corner of the Middle and Upper School hallways.

"The Academy's library is a beautiful, expansive, jewel of a space with real library furnishings. There is room for books and computers, and it is a malleable space that can evolve and be made into something new. Things change, it is happening all the time, and the Academy has a space that can accommodate this," St. John said. For the Academy's own "library of the future," Jim Newman, head of school, believes it lies in not only continuing to encourage academic excellence, but in providing

skills that will propel Academy students to post-graduation success.

"There will always be the need to help students learn new skills and adapt to new tools, because technology is constantly changing," said Newman. "We have one foot committed to sustaining those necessary skills that help students complete their research and encourage reading for the sake of enjoyment. The other foot is committed to developing the knowledge to help our students use new tools so they can always access the information they need, whether here at the Academy or elsewhere in their success."



*MS/US librarian, Heather Shumaker, helps Alyssa Johnson '23 find books for her biography research project. Shumaker hosts classes in the library on topics ranging from information literacy and copyright issues to specific library resources.*



# BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHANGES STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS

Harrisburg Academy takes great pride in its awareness of student needs and holistic approach to meeting them. From Back-to-School Night, where parents and teachers discuss coursework, highlight performance and behavioral expectations, and share a “day in the life” of the students, to the ongoing support of school counselor, Virginia Getz, who identifies and addresses the social dynamics of each student in the context of his larger peer group, the Academy is committed to providing an experience that is something more and something different. Most important, these interactions forge strong connections between students, teachers, and parents.

At a high level, parent-teacher connections are vital in ensuring a school’s ability to function well. According to “Critical Drivers of Parent Engagement in Schools,” an article featured in Gallup.com’s Business Journal last October, this partnership is a crucial ingredient in a school’s success. Recent Gallup research found that only 20 percent of U.S. public school parents are fully engaged with their child’s school. One of the five key areas that help to ensure parent engagement, according to Gallup, is communication and involvement. “Great schools build a culture that encourages open communication and that invites parents to become involved by playing an active role in their child’s education,” the article states.

This year, in the name of reinventing an age-old program that is still relevant but “stale,” the Academy turned back-to-school on its head. The biggest changes? Moving Back-to-School Nights to the week before school started, and adding a personal Parent Connection meeting to the mix of transition activities. A primary focus was putting measures in place to improve communication, solidify the parent-teacher partnership, and provide a common place from which important conversations could occur.

“Last year, we talked a lot about making a change to how we structure our back-to-school programs,” said Tom Banks, head of Middle and Upper School. “We decided it was logical to change the timing of these events. In doing this, our parents would know exactly what their children were to experience on their first

days of school, and in turn, it would make for a better conversation between students and their parents.” Academy parent response was positive with seventy-five percent of all parents who responded to a recent survey stating the earlier Back-to-School Nights were “Very Useful” or “Useful” to their family.

According to Margaret Naguski, mother of new 9<sup>th</sup> grader, Henry ‘19, “As a new family, we were very happy to have several occasions before school started to visit school, meet other parents, learn more about what daily school life looks like, and meet teachers before the first day of school.”

The second, new component to the process, is

## TOP FIVE DRIVERS OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT

1. Leadership
2. Academic standards
3. School environment
4. Personalized learning
5. Communication and involvement

Source: Gallup research cited in Gallup.com Business Journal’s article, “Critical Drivers of Parent Engagement in Schools” (Oct. 20, 2015).

an Academy original — the Parent Connections meetings. These 10-minute meetings between teacher and individual parents are not a parent-teacher conference (that happens later in the semester when there are specific academic topics to discuss). Rather, they are a chance to discuss hopes and dreams for the year, classroom expectations, concerns, and specific things of note about each child. The meetings also serve as a way for parents and teachers to build a relationship that facilitates easier future communication, either positive or negative.

Ninety-eight percent of all Academy families participated in a Connections meeting this year, and seven out of 10 of parent survey respondents found them to be a “Very helpful” or “Helpful” to starting their student’s year off well.

“I thought the change was a positive one for everyone,” said 5<sup>th</sup> grade English and social studies teacher, Lisa Haywood. “I think it’s important to start the year off right, and meeting the parents gave me some solid information to work with. Everybody got a chance to meet me and hear what I am about, so there were no surprises. Parents gave me a very nice profile of their children, so I knew what to expect there, too.”

“Information is power,” she continued. “It helps us do our job better and it’s just one more way we can add an extra layer of service to our parents — that very personal touch.”

Head of Early Childhood and Lower School, Kevin Muirhead, has spent 37 years of his career teaching at schools of all formats across the United States. To-date, he is not aware of any other schools structuring back-to-school activities as the Academy has this year. “We want to be a great school, functioning at a high level and meeting our students’ needs. But we are also seeking to help our parents understand that there is choice involved here.”

“The Connections Meetings were more about having an opportunity to forge a bond of partnership between the teacher and each child’s parents through authentic conversation,” he continued. “Instead of blindly subscribing to what we offer, we want parents to understand that by asking questions, they are being heard. We speak to what we can do for their students, whether in programs or individualized attention or accommodation. We listen to our parents’ concerns, and want them to know that when they come away from talking to a teacher, they are respected, listened to, and responded to. And we strive to create programs that directly meet common student needs expressed to us.”

“That’s what makes us different in this market and is a true Academy Advantage.”

# ORCHESTRATING MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS THROUGH THE NEW CONSORTIUM COLLEGE FAIR

Harrisburg Academy's Spring College Fair is the largest and longest-established independent school college fair in the region, featuring more than 130 of the top-tier colleges and universities in the country and around the world. The fair continues to grow and change, and this year will serve as the anchor event of a new independent school Consortium College Fair. Five independent schools in Central Pennsylvania have signed on to participate in the Consortium College Fair: Lancaster Country Day School (LCDS), Linden Hall, Veritas Academy, York Country Day School (YCDS), and Harrisburg Academy.

The Academy is the only Central Pennsylvania independent school that hosts a college fair on-site. Although students from all schools are invited to attend, distance to the Academy and travel limitations pose a challenge to many. The Consortium College Fair will mitigate this gap by providing a full day of structured college

and university networking events — in multiple independent school locations — between students, families, and college representatives.

"Although there are many high school college fairs in the area, the Consortium College Fair is the first joint-effort fair in the area," said Keo Oura Kounlavong-Sabath, Harrisburg Academy's college counselor. "This fair will draw representatives that won't attend anywhere else in the area. Top-tier schools and even international universities will come to meet our students."

For the Consortium College Fair, representatives from a select group of colleges and universities will start their day at the Radisson Hotel Harrisburg, across the street from Harrisburg Academy. Here, they will board a charter bus and have the opportunity to visit three of the consortium schools' campuses, meeting students from all five schools.

First on the schedule is Linden Hall, where representatives will participate in group sessions and have one-on-one time with students from Linden Hall, Veritas Academy, and LCDS. In the afternoon, they will travel to YCDS to conduct similar sessions. The group will return to Harrisburg Academy in the evening to finish their day at the Academy's Spring College Fair. Consortium school students whose campuses are not visited will be bussed to a partner school to participate. All are also invited to Harrisburg Academy to attend the evening Spring College Fair and meet additional representatives from the other schools not traveling as part of the Consortium College Fair.

According to Sabath, the Academy's Spring College Fair is the culmination of the efforts of the college counseling process. "The college fair provides a point of contact for our students that we have helped orchestrate. That means that when they apply to colleges, these





schools know our students' names, which is so important. The students' experiences at the college fair also helps instill confidence in their ability to go through the college application process," said Sabath, who was an associate director of admission at Lebanon Valley College before coming to the Academy.

The joint-effort college fair benefits not only the students, by having representatives from top-tier colleges and universities visit them on their campuses, but the representatives, who have access to some of the highest-achieving students from independent schools across the entire region all in one day.

Recognizing the advantages of a regional college fair, of a caliber similar to the Academy's Spring College Fair, Linda Campbell, the director of college counseling at Lancaster Country Day School, initiated conversations

about the Central Pennsylvania Independent Schools Consortium. LCDS will be unable to fully participate in the Consortium College Fair this year due to a scheduling conflict, but Campbell and LCDS students still benefit from the new connections made by the consortium.

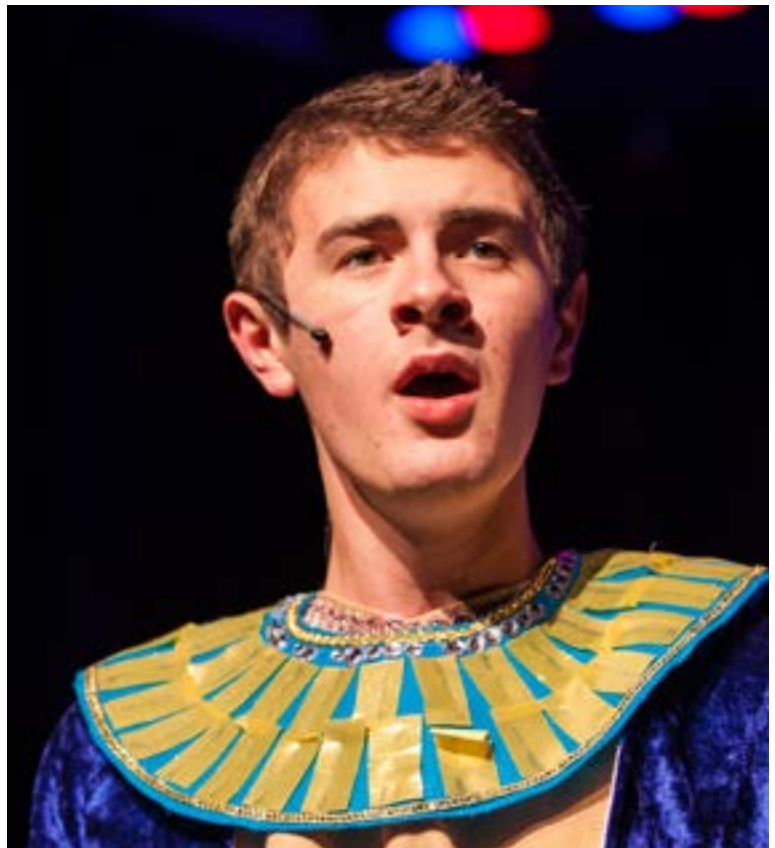
"This is a truly collaborative group. College counseling programs at independent schools have unique questions and considerations, so it is really important to have a network like this to reach out to," Campbell said.

"I really enjoy my colleagues at all of these schools, and I'm delighted to help design this opportunity. My goal is to expose students to more colleges and universities, and the Consortium College Fair will really help do that," she continued.

David McMillin, who has served as the college counselor at three different independent schools, now represents Linden Hall. For McMillin, what makes the Consortium College Fair unique is independent schools working together for the benefit of the collective student body.

"It's important for us, as college counselors, to come together and have a conversation because we work with the same representatives from colleges and universities," he said. "All of us are trying to best serve the needs of our students, and in coming together as a consortium, we have a reliable place to share ideas and determine best practices."

"It's very personal — it's not an afterthought," Sabath said. "At independent schools, college counseling is truly what it's meant to be."



# ATHLETICS & ARTS WORKING TOGETHER

It all started with a gut feeling — not easily defined or explained, it just felt right.

“As soon as I took a tour of the school, I knew I wanted to go here,” said Jeremy Duarte ‘16, a senior now in his third year at Harrisburg Academy. “It was just a gut feeling that I felt this was the school I was supposed to be in.”

Duarte settled into a routine at the Academy, and quickly found that beyond academics, the co-curricular opportunities at the school were more varied and accessible than those offered at public school.

A soccer player since age four, Duarte joined the Varsity Boys’ Soccer team and instantly found a place to make the social connections he was missing in public school. Because soccer practices start before the beginning of the academic year, Duarte said he had the chance to explore new friendships before the pressures of classroom assignments began.

Duarte is also a member of the Varsity Boys’ Tennis team, a sport he hadn’t pursued prior to attending the Academy. Although he “had never swung a racket before,” Duarte decided to give it a try after Chris Clark saw his potential in gym class and invited him to join the team.

At the end of his first year on the team in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Duarte received Most Valuable Player for the season. However, one of his most prominent memories comes from his time on the soccer team. During the 2015 season, Duarte scored on a corner kick. “It was the best shot of my life, I just stood there with my mouth hanging open. I could have quit on top after this season,” he said.

In addition to athletics, Duarte found at the Academy an outlet for his fine and performing arts aspirations — he is a member of Tri-M Music Honor Society, Drama Club, and has performed in a number of Academy musicals, including the lead role in last year’s performance of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.”

“Art is the opposite side of the spectrum from sports because it’s not so much physically demanding as it is mentally demanding. It’s about committing yourself to something you’re not looking for recognition in. You want to get better for the sake of singing in the shower or performing on stage by yourself. With soccer, you’re playing on a team with someone else, whereas in my experience, my musical endeavors have been more personal for me, both the accomplishment and the steps it takes to get there,” said Jeremy, who is also an International Baccalaureate Diploma candidate and a member of National Honor Society.

As a senior, Duarte is now facing graduation and is currently considering studying civil engineering with a minor in visual and performing arts. He also wants to continue playing soccer at the intramural or intercollegiate level. But his short three years at the Academy have made a lasting impression.

“My friends are one of the most important things that I’ve received from the Academy. I’m so grateful for what they do for me and that they’re there for me.”





Laicie Ray '20.

## PROCESS VS. PRODUCT

By John Martin, Middle School Athletics Director

When it comes to the skill aspect of athletics, Harrisburg Academy's stance is not to make the best athlete, but rather to nurture universal skills that students will be able to translate into classroom and real-world situations — patience, hard work over time, and sportsmanship. Even so, one of my favorite aspects of athletics is the amount time and commitment it takes to truly excel. It's very humbling to realize that success doesn't come to everyone, and it doesn't happen overnight.

I believe the middle school years are crucial for teaching fundamentals and stressing the importance of process with a developing athlete. As both Middle School athletics director and coach, one of the topics I discuss frequently with my players and their families is the concept of process versus product.

A great example of this concept is shooting a basketball properly. When young basketball

players shoot incorrectly, they will often say to me, "But I made it that time!" or "This is what I'm most comfortable with!" My rebuttal is always that the process of learning how to shoot correctly is more important in the long-term than the product — making the shot — in the short-term. Oftentimes, young athletes struggle with this concept because of an "instant success" mentality and wanting to keep up with their peers. As coaches, we continue to emphasize that it takes years to complete the finished product, both on the playing field and in real life.

Parents and coaches tend to discuss individual playing time quite a bit, but this discussion needs to be re-visited from the perspective of short-term product and long-term process, too. Process isn't just based on skills... it's based on leadership and maturity. A coach's role is to call his or her players into game situations where they can be successful, and when they are

truly ready to compete at that level. Academy coaches on all levels emphasize the importance of process, and I see how much they put their players' best interests at heart when making decisions at practice and in games. Ultimately, I believe that each Academy athlete does benefit — both now and in the future — from his or her coach's choices. Just step foot into McCormick Auditorium during our annual Alumni Achievement Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony to see the evidence!

Academy coaches are passionate about their sport and their players, and their commitment is evident. Each party involved — students, parents, and coaches — has a choice to make... long-term process or short-term product. I feel proud as I watch these three groups collaborate and make strong choices to help our student athletes grow over the long-term.

FOR TEAM PHOTOS of our student athletes, please visit us online:  
[www.harrisburgacademy.org/teamphotos](http://www.harrisburgacademy.org/teamphotos)

# WITNESSING THE EVOLUTION OF HARRISBURG ACADEMY

Twenty-two years ago, Middle School math teacher, Diane Innerst, was interviewed for a position at Harrisburg Academy in the very room in which she now teaches. At the time, the Academy looked very different, and her current classroom was split into multiple spaces, one being the office of the head of Middle School.

Innerst had started substituting at the Academy a few years prior, so when an opportunity came for a full-time position, it was natural for her to apply. For Innerst, what makes the Academy unique has always been the people here — the students, parents, and faculty members who inspire her.

"I love the students; they're so kind, respectful, and conscientious. I can be happy at my job here and enthusiastic about what I'm doing. You make connections with the other people you work with. It's a tight-knit community, but it continues to grow and make room for new people coming in," said Innerst, who teaches Algebra 1, Pre-Algebra, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade math.

She also enjoys visiting with her former students, now Academy alumni, particularly those who are now teachers.

"It was a really special moment when Joellen Cope Becker '04 and Meredith Scheiner '02 emailed me for advice, because they're now teachers," said Innerst, who also enjoyed reconnecting with former students at Alumni Weekend 2015. "They remember lessons from my class and now want to share those lessons with their students."

Innerst started her career teaching at Dallastown Area Middle School in Pennsylvania before marrying her husband, Joe, who was in the service of the United States Marine Corps. Innerst and her husband moved often, and she took a break from teaching to raise her two sons, Robert and Joey.

In the nearly 23 years Innerst has taught at the Academy, many things have changed. Innerst used to share a space in the Upper School science hallway with Maureen Smith — a moveable partition divided the room between the two of them. She then spent a few years in one of the modular classrooms before moving to her current space, where she has taught since then.

But she looks forward to witnessing the continued evolution of Harrisburg Academy, both the campus facilities and the pursuit of academic excellence. "It's been a pleasure coming to school every day. These have been 22 fantastic years, and I look forward to many more."





# WHY 'GOING PUBLIC' ISN'T WORTH IT

Robyn Cutchall, currently in her 18<sup>th</sup> year teaching in Harrisburg Academy's Lower School, has never been called to teach at a public school. She's had the opportunity and offers from friends, but for her, it was never worth it.

"We have the freedom to teach how we want to teach at the Academy. I've had no desire to go public — I enjoy where I am, the people I work with, and what I'm doing," said Cutchall, who is teaching her first year of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for the 2015-16 academic year. She taught 1<sup>st</sup> grade for the remaining 17 years she has spent at the Academy.

Prior to this, Cutchall taught at other types of independent and private schools, including eight years at Saint Patrick School, a private, Catholic school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. She decided it was time to make a change, and after first holding a long-term substitute position, she became an Academy teacher.

"I love the sense of community here — I feel like this is my second family. I have the opportunity to get to know families over the years and have those connections. I still keep in contact with one of the students I had my second year here, AnnElizabeth Konkel '10."

Cutchall, who has a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in education as a reading specialist, both from Shippensburg University, is enjoying her first year transitioning to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

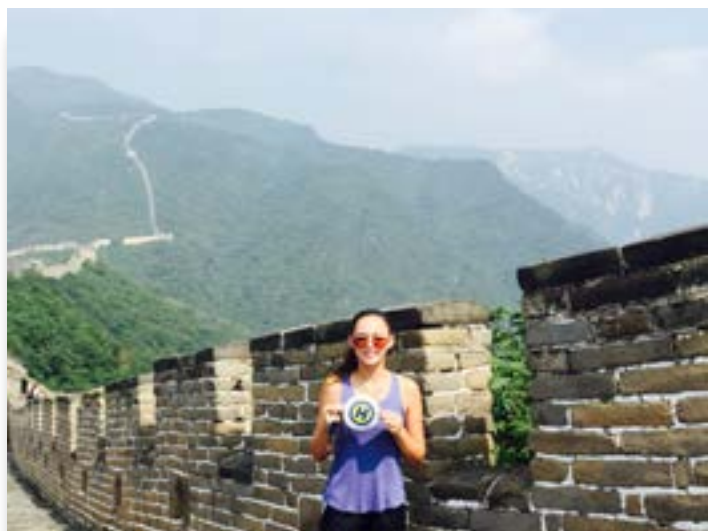
"One thing that is really different is the continent we study — now I get to learn everything I can about Asia, whereas I used to collect a lot of information about Africa," she said. "The math gets more complex, we do cursive in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and they are reading more chapter books — they are definitely more excited about in-depth reading."

Because of her transition from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Cutchall also has the unique experience of having a number of students for two consecutive years, a rarity in Early Childhood and Lower School education. She has had the opportunity to see where they left off in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and then pick it right back up, not only with the students, but with parents, too.

"I fell in love with teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade because I loved seeing the lightbulb come on. Mid-year, they just take off and they're so excited. It's contagious!" she said. "But I'm enjoying 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, too, because they're a little more independent. I'm enjoying the new curriculum and learning new things, so I know I'll fall in love with 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, too."



*Mason Morrett '26 and his 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher, Robyn Cutchall, review his work during class time.*



**Maci Wert '19** and her family traveled to China this summer, visiting sites including the Great Wall of China, Tiananmen Square, and the Forbidden City in Beijing, which served as the Chinese imperial palace from 1420 to 1912, with the end of the Qing dynasty.



**Heather Shumaker** and her family (including her dog!) visited Lunenburg in Nova Scotia, Canada this summer. The town of Lunenburg was one of the first British attempts to settle Protestants in Nova Scotia, and as such, is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site.



The Circle H traveled to the Abbey of Lorsch in Lorsch, Germany this summer with **Dominique Schnetzer**, an international student from Switzerland who attended the Academy during the 2014-15 academic year, and **Carola Hintz '16** a citizen of Germany living and studying in the United States with her family.



**Julia Toyer '23** had the opportunity to go diving in a lagoon in Bora Bora during a family cruise last winter. Bora Bora is one of the Society Islands of French Polynesia. It is said that the Society Islands were named by Captain James Hook in honor of the Royal Society, which sponsored the first British survey of the islands.



This past summer, **Jeremy '24** and **Taryn Shover '22** visited the National Aquarium and the USS Constellation, one of the six original frigates of the United States Navy authorized for construction in 1794, in Baltimore, Maryland. The Shover family also went camping in Pine Creek, Pennsylvania, also known as the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon.



**Jen Klemunes**, her husband, and sons, **Max '29** and **Jack '27**, visited Herring Cove Beach in Provincetown, Massachusetts this summer. Herring Cove is part of Massachusetts' National Seashore Park, which was established by President John F. Kennedy in 1961.



**Isabella Dressler '29** took her hammer and rang rocks at Ringing Rocks County Park in Upper Black Eddy, Pennsylvania this summer. The ringing rocks in Pennsylvania were created when magma from Earth's upper mantle seeped into the sedimentary basin 200 million years ago.





**Dominic Savarino '21** and his family visited Iowa City, Iowa this summer, the home of the University of Iowa Hawkeyes.



**Mia Clempson '27, Harper Menegat '27, and Sophia Clempson '30** met Mickey this summer at Disney's Hollywood Studios during a family vacation. And thanks to a bit of Disney magic, Harper and **Elaine Price**, her former Kindergarten teacher, spent some vacation time together while in Florida!



**Academy teachers Maureen Smith, Lisa Nazar, and Karla Sherman**, along with their children, **Amelia Nazar '17, Van Branoff '21, Charlotte Nazar '19, Sara Sherman '17, and Hayes Branoff '24** went on a road trip through the Midwest this summer. The group visited a number of national parks and landmarks, including Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and Devils Tower in Wyoming.



**Virginia Getz** and her husband soaked up some sun in Jamaica this summer.



**John Foschi '28** represented Harrisburg Academy at Beaver Stadium at the Penn State versus San Diego State game in September.



**Carina Cole '22** and her family put in quite a few travel miles this summer! She viewed part of the Berlin Wall at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio and visited Lake Louise in Banff National Park, the first established in Canada and a recognized UNESCO World Heritage Site, in Alberta, Canada.



**Ben Berger '22** and his family visited New Orleans, Louisiana and spent some time in the French Quarter. The St. Louis Cathedral, behind Ben, is the oldest Catholic cathedral in continual use in the United States.



*The Mackin family: (from left)  
Chuck, Deb, Emily '03,  
and Claire '16.*





# MAKING PHILANTHROPY A FAMILY VALUE

BY BETH ZAK, DIRECTOR OF ANNUAL GIVING

It is often said we pass along many traits from one generation to the next, but one of the most important things families can share is the need to be “doers, not takers,” said Academy mother, Deb Mackin. When you think about your legacy, imparting lifelong values to your children is necessary. The truest character traits one can teach their children are humility, service to others, and investing in well-meaning causes. These values help to shape people into community leaders and life-long philanthropists.

For 25 years, Deb and her husband, Chuck, have been a part of the Harrisburg Academy family — since each of their daughters, Emily '03 and Claire '16, was in Kindergarten. Raising their family in Camp Hill and enrolling their children at the Academy is a choice the Mackin family takes very seriously. As longtime parents, they've seen the Academy grow and thrive, and the education that has been afforded to their daughters has provided a foundation for success.

“After 25 years at the Academy, the same reasons we choose the school are the same exact reasons we've stayed — challenging academic programs, and dedicated, talented faculty who offer the very best for our daughters,” Chuck said.

“Both of our daughters are confident, self-starters, who've gained a strong sense of worth and independence at the Academy,” Deb added. “This is invaluable in terms of what it will continue to provide them for years to come. We support the Academy with our time and treasure because it has given so much back to us.”

When their oldest daughter, Emily, graduated 13 years ago, the Mackins planted the seeds of philanthropy by sharing that “the first check she should write should be back to her school,” as it was there that she received so much. Creating a legacy and inspiring others by simply giving back is no small task for a young adult, but Emily took that to heart and has done just that.

After earning a degree in history from the University of Rochester, Emily joined the Peace Corps for a 26-month stint in Jamaica. “This experience was life-changing and allowed me to look at the world with an entirely different



*Emily Mackin '03, during the 26 months she served in the Peace Corps in Jamaica.*

perspective,” she said. “I knew that I wanted to have a career that was hands-on, and my Peace Corps journey led me into the nursing profession.” Upon her return to the United States, Emily earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree in nursing (with a concentration as a family nurse practitioner) from the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing. She is currently working in surgery at the Baltimore VA Medical Center.

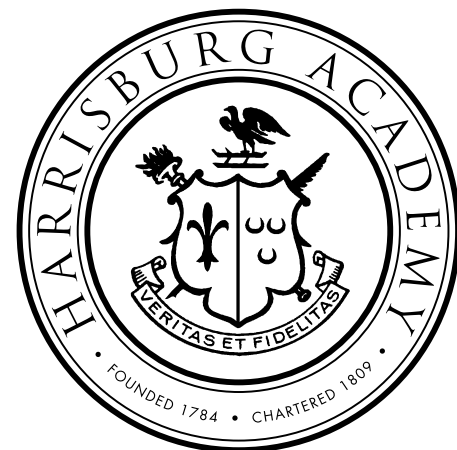
Emily feels a strong connection to the Academy community and believes her parents have been great examples of how to leave your mark on the things you value most. “I support the Academy Fund because it's where I got my start, and without donors, the Academy would cease to thrive. This is just one place I feel I can make a difference.”

In supporting a non-profit organization's institutional philanthropy, the Mackin family and many others realize that human capital is what strongly connects them to the community; it is never the amount you give, but that you

choose to give in the ways that you are able. This commitment ensures financial well-being for a school such as the Academy and provides the operating dollars so that every student and faculty member has the resources needed to work at the highest level of excellence — both today and tomorrow.

The youngest of the Mackin family, Claire, will soon graduate and begin her own experiences outside of the Academy. “I am ready to take my next step, but I have a deep connection to this school, my teachers, and the opportunities I've been so fortunate to have,” she said. “Knowing what the Academy has provided to me is something I want others to have, too — it will be easy for me to give back.”

# ALUMNI WEEKEND



## WELCOME AND OPENING LUNCHEON



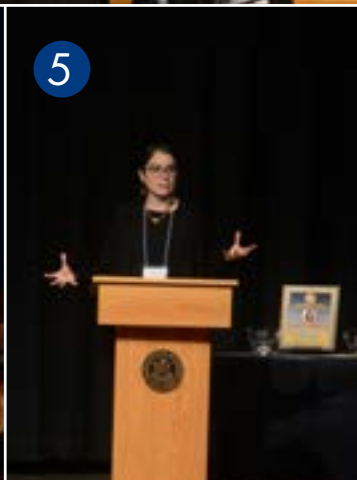
**1** Head of school, Jim Newman (center), welcomed John Gillette '84 (left) and Donald Jacobs '82 to Harrisburg Academy's first annual Alumni Weekend last October.

**2** Ralph Gillette (left) and Mickey Horner sat and visited during the Welcome Luncheon. Ralph is the former headmaster from 1978-1986. Mickey is the wife of the late headmaster, Jack Horner (who held this position from 1968-1978), and mother of Marilyn Horner Knox '76.

## ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS & ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY



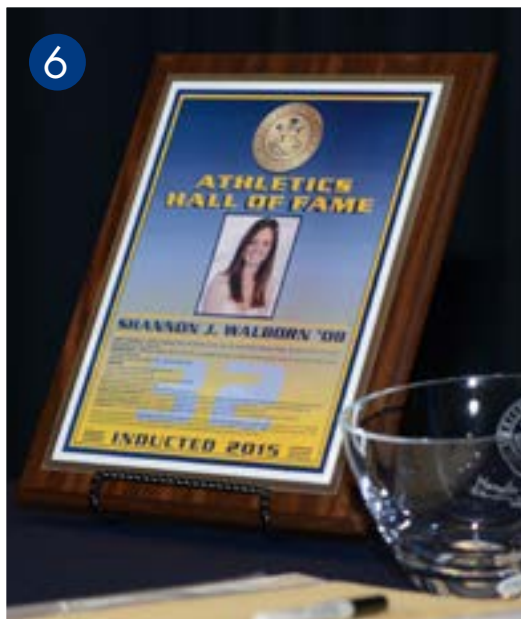
**3, 6** Congratulations to the 2015 award-winners and Hall of Fame inductees: (from left) Marylea Madiman '99, Academic Achievement Award; Alicia Dissinger '04, Athletics Hall of Fame; Daniel Shanken '89, Professional Achievement Award; Shannon Walborn '08, Athletics Hall of Fame, and Elaine Rogers '71, Service to Humanity Award. Not pictured: Ethan Titelman '97, Rising Star Award. This year's award program was woven into the school's inaugural Alumni Weekend, welcoming back over 50 alumni, 10 former faculty members, and friends of the Academy community.



**4** The school presented its first award via Skype in 2015. Ethan Titelman '97 accepted the Rising Star award, given to a young person who has demonstrated promise and achievement in his or her professional life. Ethan works as vice president of media and entertainment research for Penn Schoen Berland in Los Angeles and spoke — from 2,700 miles away — about character development through the experiences he gained as an Academy student.

**5** Marylea Madiman '99 addressed the large crowd of students, alumni, faculty, and former faculty in McCormick Auditorium when accepting the 2015 Academic Achievement Award. She is a professor who presents high-level mathematics into an art form.





## ALUMNI PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING FAIR

**7** David Kury '91 spoke to a group of students during the Alumni Professional Networking Fair about his career in video game animation while showing examples of work on his iPad.

**8** Student Hannah Roberts '16 spoke with David Pheasant '02 at the Geo Decisions booth during the Alumni Professional Networking Fair. David helped students learn more about the application of technology within the transportation and federal marketplaces.

**9** Tom Campbell '82, owner of Cross-Web Development, participated in the Alumni Professional Networking Fair. Tom shared tips about business ownership and the information technology industry with students.

**10** Dr. Arthur Winer '03 spoke with Dominic Zhang '17 about his journey to becoming a doctor and what today's medical world looks like for young, aspiring doctors.

## "WAFFLE STREET" BOOK SIGNING AND MOVIE SCREENING

**11, 13** Jimmy Adams '95 hosted a book signing event and discussion in the Middle School / Upper School library. Students, families, former faculty, and alumni enjoyed hearing about the experiences that inspired Jimmy to write "Waffle Street: The Confession and Rehabilitation of a Financier."

**12** Retired history teacher, Steve Stewart, grabbed a bag of popcorn from the concession stand before the private screening of "Waffle Street," the book-turned-movie based on the experiences of alumnus, Jimmy Adams '95.



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# JIMMY ADAMS: SELF-MADE SELF-AWARENESS WITH A SIDE OF GRITS

Millions in the United States and abroad were affected when the economy faltered in late 2008, but few revisit those days in the manner James “Jimmy” Adams ‘95 does — on a 90-by-30-foot screen.

Adams lost his prestigious management position with a major financial industry player unexpectedly at the height of the economic crisis. At that moment, so much did not feel right to him. In a flash of cathartic awareness and acceptance of the professional burnout he felt, Adams sought to renew himself by working an “honest” blue-collar job. This opportunity came to him by way of a local 24-hour waffle diner, which hired him to wait tables, assist with food preparation, run the cash register, and clean the facility when needed.

These new and somewhat comical experiences in food service were a welcome change to Adams and provided the basis of the book he later penned, “Waffle Street: The Confession and Rehabilitation of a Financier.”

Seven years later, Adams has found balance, working again in the financial services industry but simultaneously taking on the role of movie-industry entrepreneur. His memoir-now-turned-movie, also titled “Waffle Street,” is gracing the big screen at film festivals across the country, racking up awards (Best Feature at the Hollywood Film Festival, Audience Award for Best Feature at the Red Rock Film Festival), and waiting to be distributed to wider channels.

“I am proud that I stuck my neck out and did something different, and now it appears to be paying off in new ways,” Adams said. After the book was finished and released, screenwriter Autumn McAlpin contacted Adams and said she wanted to make it into a movie. They later pulled in John J. Kelly, producer of the recent movie, “Divergent,” for their production team, and Eshom and Ian Nelms to serve as directors of the film. When actors James Lafferty and Danny Glover signed on for the lead roles, Adams finally allowed himself to believe the movie would be produced and find commercial success. Even so, he remains modest and reflective.

“The whole experience from the start has been very humbling because I was laid off twice and fired once in the space of six years,” Adams said. “I grew up the son and grandson of two self-made businessmen. I always wanted to be like my dad, and I couldn’t even keep a job. It demoralizes you, and I had hit bottom. I had found corporate ladders to either be termite-infested or covered in grease, and I was done with them. I just wanted to clear my head and do something different for a while, and people [his restaurant co-workers] seemed to really respect that.”

“The only one who really questioned me was Robert, the head cook,” Adams continued. “He paid a lot of attention and was trying to discern my motivations — he thought I was playing dumb. But I can actually be really inept! It wasn’t an act,” Adams said of his many missteps while learning the ropes of the restaurant business. Even so, Robert’s character was the one who

really brought the movie together, Adams thinks. “People like role models, and his is a particularly compelling one. We’re still in touch every few weeks and he’s been a great supporter of the book and movie.”

Adams credits Harrisburg Academy and retired Upper School English teacher, Dr. Lee March, specifically, as additional supporters who helped him cultivate his writing skills and gave him the ability to tackle such a large and personal project. “The thing that Dr. March taught me was that even if you have a lot of great ideas, you have to organize them in a coherent, meaningful way,” Adams said. “I learned how to edit my own writing as a result of working with her. At the Academy, you learn how to work and to approach things critically.”

Guests at the Academy’s Alumni Weekend last October were able to meet Adams at a book-signing event and celebrate his success while enjoying an exclusive screening of “Waffle



*The movie “Waffle Street” made its Academy debut at an exclusive screening during Alumni Weekend 2015. From left: Jimmy Adams ‘95 and his wife, Becky.*



Street” in McCormick Auditorium. March was in attendance, supporting one of her favorite former students. “Jimmy was always an engaged participant in his classes; I particularly enjoyed his sparkling wit and willingness to challenge any assumptions,” March said. “His ability to distinguish right from wrong in his estimation was remarkable for one so young.”

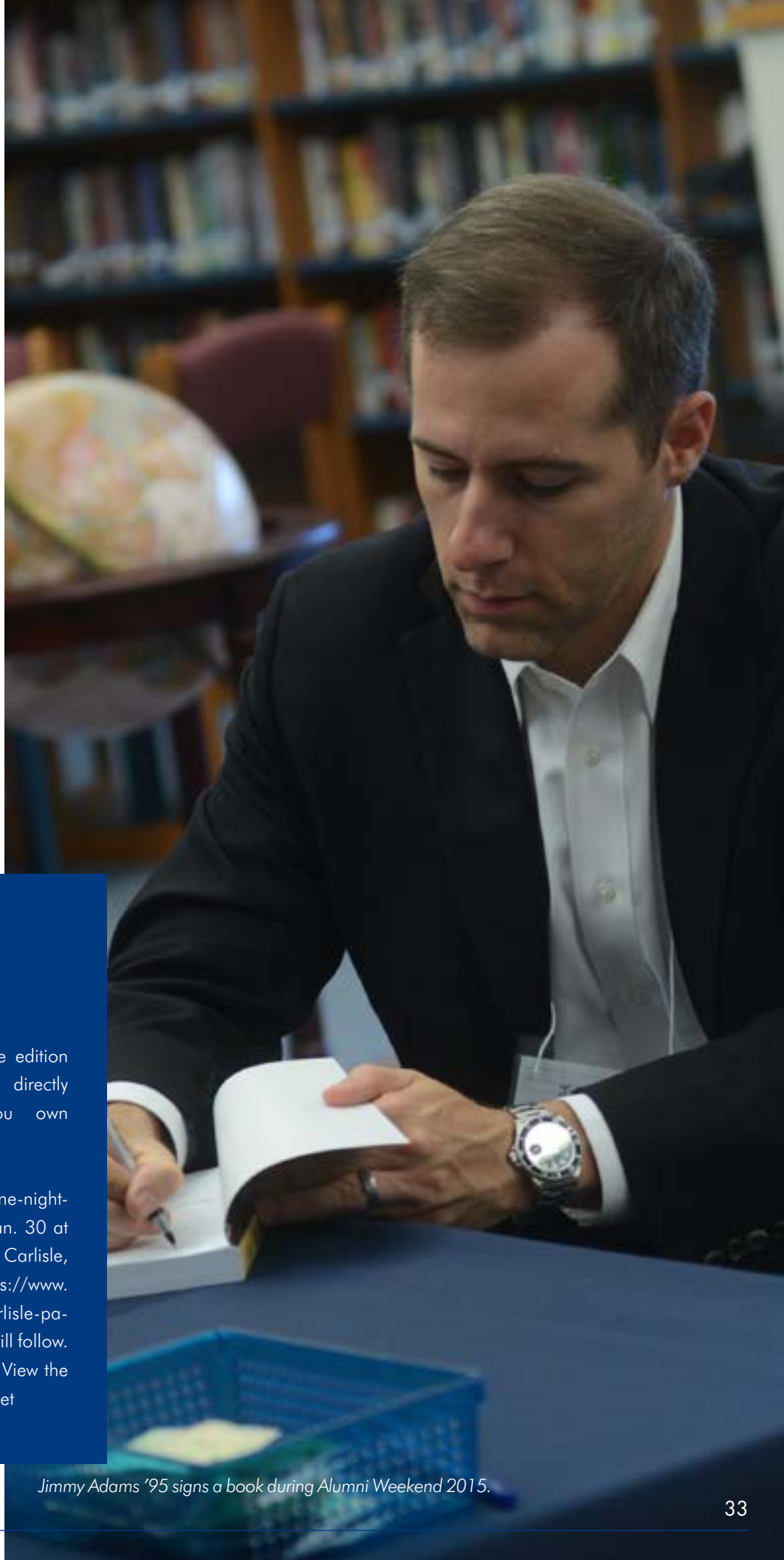
In the footsteps of his family, Adams has always wanted to build his own business and now he is getting his chance, in the most unlikely of circumstances. “That’s the great thing about movies,” Adams said. “If you have a good story, write a tight script, and get the right people involved, you can make it.”

Although the movie’s story arc did deviate a bit from the book, the main theme of the piece — and Adams’ life — remains true. “Ultimately, this movie is about finding what it is you’re supposed to do with your life that you’re good at, that you enjoy, and that is honest,” he said.

## INTERESTED IN WAFFLE STREET?

**The Book:** Purchase it in paperback or Kindle edition at Amazon.com. Or contact Jimmy Adams directly (wafflestreetbook@gmail.com) to secure your own autographed copy!

**The Movie:** Jimmy will host an exclusive, one-night-only screening of “Waffle Street” on Saturday, Jan. 30 at 7.30 p.m. at the Carlisle Theatre in downtown Carlisle, Pennsylvania (purchase tickets online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/waffle-street-film-screening-carlisle-pa-tickets-19825089376>). Q&A and book signing will follow. Movie channel and DVD release is set for 2016. View the trailer at: [www.HarrisburgAcademy.org/WaffleStreet](http://www.HarrisburgAcademy.org/WaffleStreet)



*Jimmy Adams '95 signs a book during Alumni Weekend 2015.*

# ( CLASS NOTES )

## 2016



A

### GEOFFREY ROGERS '76

A Delaware resident, Geoff has been named to the Nemours Foundation Board of Directors. Geoff is a managing director with Glenmede Trust and director of the firm's Wilmington office, which he launched in June 1999. He has more than 25 years of estate planning and financial services experience. Prior to joining Glenmede, Rogers was a vice president with Scudder Private Investment Counsel and held senior positions with Wilmington Trust Company and Delaware Trust Company. Rogers received a bachelor's degree from Washington College and is a graduate of Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program.

### JOHN SAVIDGE '86

After retiring from the Pennsylvania Air National Guard in 2014, John has kept busy. In 2015, he graduated with a master's degree in business administration, with a concentration in healthcare administration, from Lebanon Valley College. Since his graduation, John has been working as a registered nurse at Jackson Siegelbaum Gastroenterology in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

B

### RYA SMIGEL '91

Rya recently visited Harrisburg Academy on a whim, passing by one day. While checking in, she was greeted by head of school, Dr. Jim Newman, and took a school tour with him. Rya enjoyed reconnecting with the school and said she was very impressed with the entire program, especially the vision behind how everything is structured. "Harrisburg Academy is a very warm and welcoming place, and it was evident that the students, of all ages, feel the same way. An atmosphere of dynamic and respectful diversity clearly creates a stimulating learning environment."

C

### NEIL ABRAMS '96

Neil graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2000 and earned a doctorate of philosophy degree in political science from the University of California, Berkeley in 2014. He advises emerging-market investors on how to protect their property rights. Neil specializes in corruption and economic criminality and is currently completing two books on the subject: the first is an academic study of criminal corporate raiding in post-communist Europe; and the second examines corruption in Ukraine and how a venal ruling elite left the country incapable of defending itself against foreign attack. He also published two articles in the Washington Post this year.

### NEVENA ANNA MINOR '96

Nevena received a bachelor's degree in sociology from Dickinson College in 2003. In 2014 she earned a master's degree in public policy from George Washington University. Nevena says she appreciates the quality and breadth of education at Harrisburg Academy and the support she received from its faculty. She says that becoming an Academy student was one of the best things that ever happened to her.

Nevena is currently the director of federal affairs for the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) in Washington, D.C. Representing ACOG and more than 58,000 physicians, she lobbies Congress, the White House, and federal agencies to influence Medicare and Medicaid policies that improve women's access to high-quality health care.

### TED LEVIN '06

Ted earned a doctorate of philosophy degree in linguistics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology last September. After receiving his degree, he immediately began a postdoctoral research fellowship at the University of Maryland. Ted's research focuses heavily on syntax, especially anything revolving around case, agreement, and binding.

D

### ERICA PETTIS '06

Erica married Jerome Wallace on Sept. 12, 2015 in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Several Academy graduates were in her bridal party, including Taylor Pettis '10, Erin (DeRemer) Giambrone '06 and Sydney Otto '05. Pictured here (from left): Alex Willis '10, Sydney Otto '05, Taylor Pettis '10, Jerome Wallace, Devin Dadigan '06, Eric Pettis '78, Erin (DeRemer) Giambrone '06, and Aja Washington '09.

E

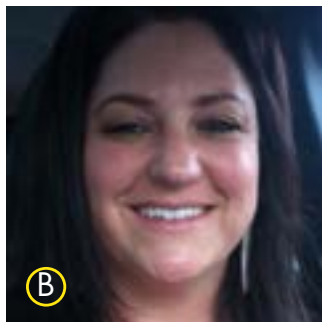
### MATTHEW BARRETT '08

Matt graduated with a bachelor's degree in international relations from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland in 2012. He then pursued a commission in the United States Air Force and was commissioned as a second lieutenant upon graduation from Officer Training School. After his recent completion of Undergraduate Air Battle Manager training, he received his combat aviator wings and will be returning to Europe for his assignment at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, Germany, flying as part of a multi-national aircrew aboard the E-3 AWACS.

### GAGE EHMANN '08

Gage is currently finishing up graduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London. His interest in chamber music was first inspired by a specific moment during rehearsals, where verbal communication ceases and in its place grows a concentrated energy focused on driving the music. That inspiration has led Gage into a unique collaboration with a composer and a choreographer. The three are attempting to display the energy of music through dance.





(B)

(C)

(E)

(D)

## MOLLY LONG '08

After graduating from the University of Kansas with a master's degree in geology, Molly became an environmental consultant at WSP Global / Parsons Brinckerhoff. She travels the country working on groundwater and soil remediation projects. Recently, she was elected to the executive committee of the Association for Women Geoscientists (AWG).

(F)

## ALLISON ZUCKERMAN '08

Allison is a 2012 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and now a 2013 graduate of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Over the course of her career, she has drawn inspiration from the overwhelming noise and commotion from the internet. The expression of her interpretation is cohesively presented through her paintings and sculptures. Repetition is the driving force behind her pop surrealist works where Western culture's stereotyping representations of the genders are being renegotiated. Paintings and freestanding 2-D sculptures/cutouts are mixed creating a viewer experience in constant flux. Zuckerman was recently honored by being selected as one of seven of the most talented and newly trained artists from the art academies in Chicago, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Odense. She premiered her work in Copenhagen, Denmark this December to positive reviews and has since been contacted by collectors to purchase her work.



(F)



(G)

(H)

## MARISSA TULIO '09

Marissa moved to Kansas City, Missouri in April 2015 to begin her career with Cerner Corporation, a leading global supplier of health information technology solutions, services, devices, and hardware. She said she travels extensively and had the good fortune to catch up with an old Harrisburg Academy friend, Andy Nguyen '09, in Washington, D.C. where he works as a pharmacist.

## NAT BLACK-HEAVEN '10

Nat traveled to Las Vegas in July 2015 to report on Conor McGregor, a mixed martial arts fighter with UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship). He reports, "I was there for six days. Each day was about 19-21 hours of work. I was there by myself, interviewing, filming, editing, uploading, and ingesting, but it was worth it. Six pieces of content went online, four on TV, three on the radio, and a number of shares on social media." Black-Heaven's work caught the attention of the head of sports news gathering at BBC, which has placed a concentrated focus on increased UFC coverage from the BBC.



(H)

# IN MEMORIAM

## DESIREE COOPER '96 (1979-2015)

The Academy community mourns the untimely loss of Desiree Cooper '96, who was found dead in her home on Nov. 2, 2015 (details at [www.harrisburgacademy.org/cooper](http://www.harrisburgacademy.org/cooper)). Recently featured in our Spring/Summer 2014 NewsMagazine as one of the Academy's fastest-rising young alumni, Desiree was just entering the prime of her life and professional career while living in Washington D.C.

Desiree pursued her passion to be an architect at North Carolina State ('01) and Temple ('05) universities. She worked for several firms across the East Coast before settling into a position as project manager with Little Diversified Architectural Consulting in Arlington, Virginia. Since her time studying at the Academy, Desiree dedicated a significant amount of time to community service projects ranging from those geared towards supporting inner-city youth to those that positively impact the environment and the future of her industry.

Desiree is survived by her parents, Norman and Vivian Cooper, and her brother, Vashawn Cooper '93, an associate alumnus of the Academy.



## DR. DAVID BUCKTHAL (1953-2015)

A good friend of the Academy, Dr. David Buckthal, passed away on Sept. 13, 2015 after being diagnosed with lung cancer. Dr. Buckthal taught Upper School chemistry and physics at the Academy for 15 years, prior to retiring at the end of the 2014-15 academic year. He was a highly respected, beloved teacher, touching the lives of many and inspiring the Academy community with his passion for teaching. He will be missed.

Current Academy students dedicated a tree on-campus in Dr. Buckthal's memory at the annual Upper School bonfire — one of Dr. Buckthal's favorite student events — at the end of September. For those who were unable to attend memorial services, the touching words of school counselor, Virginia Getz, serve as a fitting tribute: [www.harrisburgacademy.org/buckthal](http://www.harrisburgacademy.org/buckthal).

## WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE LOSS OF ALL ALUMNI, FACULTY, AND FRIENDS OF HARRISBURG ACADEMY

David J. Buckthal, Ph.D. (former teacher)

Desiree V. Cooper '96 (alumna)

Charles W. Dodson, Sr. '39 (alumnus)

James R. Hamsher (alumni parent)

Derek C. Hathaway (friend of the school)

William Lewis Kelly '66 (associate alumnus)

Margit Ellen Noro (former teacher)

Gregory M. Smith (former student)

Mary Alice Smith (former teacher)





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