

Volume 18, Number 2  
Winter 2011

# MICDS

MAGAZINE



## The Right Fit

RESPONSIVE  
TEACHING & LEARNING:  
MICDS cultivates  
student-centered  
classrooms

**INSIDE**

Service in action, a conversation with our  
new Upper School Head, Girls on the Run and more!



# World Food Day

## MICDS VOLUNTEERS JOIN IN THE FIGHT TO ALLEVIATE HUNGER

The MICDS Class of 2014, faculty and staff spent the morning of October 15 as volunteers at the Danforth Plant Science Center's World Food Day Commemoration. The Center's Founder and Chairman, Dr. William H. Danforth '41, was on hand to thank the MICDS volunteers.

MICDS volunteers formed assembly lines to make rice and soy food protein packets for delivery to malnourished children and adults in sub-Saharan Africa. By 11:00 a.m. on Friday, 40,000 meals had been packaged. On Friday evening additional groups of Upper School students volunteered, packaging food in a friendly competition against students from local high schools.

World Food Day is a worldwide event designed to increase awareness, understanding and informed, year-round action to alleviate hunger.



Pictured from top to bottom:  
(At left) Bobby Hermann and  
Aimun Malik; (at right) Isa Mulvihill  
and Jack Zurlinden

(From left) Jeffrey Winton,  
Corey Collins, Sydney Carnahan,  
Dr. William H. Danforth '41 and  
Justin Randle

(Clockwise from left) Lindsay  
Catsavis, Liz Lewis, Blake Adamson,  
Charlotte Jones and Ian Aitken

The MICDS team of volunteers  
hard at work.

(From left) Grant Larson,  
Laure Lesperance, Adi Vallabhaneni,  
Tommy Stupp, Liv Gutenschwager  
and Elizabeth Robin; (at right)  
Amy Scheer

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#### STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY

Colored pencils that appear as story enders represent ways that MICDS is fulfilling a key priority of its 2009–2014 Strategic Plan.

Yellow pencil: Great Teaching & Learning

Red pencil: Leadership & Community Engagement for the 21st Century

Green pencil: Sustainability

## Changing Lives. Changing the World.

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### MICDS MISSION

"More than ever our nation needs responsible men and women who can meet the challenges of this world with confidence and embrace all its people with compassion. The next generation must include those who think critically and resolve to stand for what is good and right. Our School cherishes academic rigor, encourages and praises meaningful individual achievement, and fosters virtue. Our independent education prepares young people for higher learning and for lives of purpose and service."

### MEET WILLIAM SCHOENECKER '15

**Activities:** Cross Country, Track,  
Baseball, Pep Band

William Schoenecker '15 came to MICDS in the sixth grade. He is now enjoying his eighth grade year and is looking forward to the transition to Upper School next fall.

This is his MICDS.

#### Why MICDS?

I chose MICDS because I wanted more challenging classes and because they offered

many more choices than my old school, like band and foreign language. When I came for a campus tour, I immediately liked the feeling I got because the kids and teachers were so friendly. I also thought the facilities were amazing.



#### Favorite Class

I really like English because reading and writing are skills that remain important throughout your life. Also, the Middle School English teachers are some of my favorites.

#### What's Cool about Middle School

I always look forward to Chapel — it's the only time during the week that all grades come together as one big family. It's also great to have school sports teams in Middle School and I'm excited to start baseball this spring. And, after a full day of class, I love using the fitness center and the new squash courts.

#### Next Year

It will be nice to explore a new part of campus and have more classes to choose from. The level of sports in Upper School will also be a new challenge.

#### Come on over!

To convince a friend to look at MICDS I would tell them, "If you just visit our campus and meet our students and teachers, you will never want to leave!"

#### I love MICDS because...

I'm getting a top rate education while having lots of fun and good experiences.

## A MESSAGE FROM LISA LYLE



**O**n a Saturday in January, we welcomed over 100 families to campus for the Eliot Scholars Information Session. While the students who are applying for the Eliot Scholars Program took a standardized assessment and wrote in response to a prompt, their parents had a chance to learn more about academic programs and college counseling at MICDS from faculty members. I, too, got to share my thoughts with them about the opportunities that abound on our campus — but more about that later.

The idea for the Eliot Scholars Program began to take shape at a retreat for the Board of Trustees during the strategic planning process in 2008. While there are three primary areas of strategic focus to our Strategic Plan 2009 – 2014, the first and most central is a commitment to great teaching and learning, long a hallmark for MICDS. The Board wanted to make tangible our deep and long-held commitment to educating the most promising scholars. This year we have a total of seven Eliot Scholars in seventh and ninth grade, and plan to add an additional six between these two grades for the coming year, for a total of 13.

Our goal during the Eliot Scholars Information Session was to help parents come to understand the fullness of the opportunity all children enjoy in our learning community. The faculty who spoke shared their passions for — and deep knowledge in — their disciplines and made clear the delight they take in working with young people. Their presentations demonstrated their commitment to constructivist pedagogy and child-centered learning, as Caroline Leonard's work on differentiation demonstrates. Beyond the classroom, our faculty help students perform at a level they never thought possible as they compete in robotics or golf, or as they perform Vivaldi's *Gloria*.

In the pages that follow, you will find ample evidence of the variety and depth of the learning that takes place at MICDS today. As you browse these pages, you will see that we provide both a strong foundation in knowledge and skills in each discipline and the opportunity for students to delve deeply into areas of particular interest or talent. Whether a student distinguishes herself as a mathematician or as a student of history, she will also need to be invited to think deeply about such things as environmental challenges and proper sentence structure.

I hope you will be just as wowed as I am by all of the great things happening at MICDS. Our kids and the dedicated adults in our community never cease to amaze me!



**Headliners****A CONVERSATION WITH SCOTT SMALL*****Small will become Head of Upper School in July***

Following a national search, Head of School Lisa Lyle announced in December that MICDS Upper School History Teacher and Coach Scott Small was the search committee's unanimous selection as the new Head of Upper School. Scott will assume his new responsibilities in July.

Widely respected in the MICDS community as an educator, leader, advisor and coach, Scott joined the Upper School faculty in 1999 as a history teacher. As the leader of integrated studies, he played an active role in the development of the new Upper School curriculum over the past two years. His innovative classroom work has included helping to create an interdisciplinary documentary film course that emphasizes the importance of critical thinking and global awareness. He also helped oversee changes in the history curriculum in 2006 that created an innovative union of rigor, differentiation and technological execution that has become an educational model for other schools. Scott has served as Head Girls Varsity Golf Coach since 1999 and Head Girls Varsity Basketball

Coach since 2003.

Scott holds a B.A. in history from Principia College in Elsah, IL, and earned an M.A. in Southern History at the University of Mississippi. He and his wife Amy are the parents of two daughters, Alden '22, a first grade student at MICDS, and Addison, a prospective junior kindergartner. Scott sat down with *MICDS Magazine* and shared his goals and vision for the Upper School.

**WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PURSUE YOUR NEW POSITION?**

When Louise Morgan decided to step down as Upper School Head after this year, I knew whoever succeeded her would have a critical responsibility to carry forward the remarkable curricular work that has been accomplished within this division. MICDS is very special to me, personally and professionally, and I care deeply about its educational philosophy and what it means for my students as well as my own two daughters. Taking on the role of Head of Upper School is a way to deepen my connection and commitment to everyone who is part of this community and to further champion educational opportunities for all of our children.



LINDA RIVARD

**WHAT ARE YOUR IMMEDIATE GOALS?**

There has been so much change in recent years, and we need to continue to assess the changes we have made to be sure they are executed in ways that advance our expectations. We have a firm commitment to effective teaching at MICDS. While the technological demands of the classroom are constantly changing, we are on the forefront of the conversation on best practices and want to remain there. For change to be meaningful, it is my goal to ensure we remain reflective about both the process and our intended outcome.

*"MICDS is very special to me, personally and professionally, and I care deeply about its educational philosophy and what it means for my students."*

**AND OVER THE LONG-TERM?**

My hope is that we will not only sustain everything that is great about the Upper School, but continue to push ourselves to be a truly innovative school. As many have pointed out, the most relevant schools going forward will be those that nurture students to motivate themselves, and I want our Upper School to be a leader in this endeavor.

**WORKING WITH HIGH SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS**

Our student body in the Upper School allows for a high level of engagement in what I call empathetic intellectual curiosity, the desire to understand the world around us from a variety of perspectives. To empower this process, high school teachers need to be mentors and students as much as they are teachers. You must get students directly involved in learning, show them your own passion for learning and get them to take charge of their academic development — kids really respond to that. I am reminded of a quote I read recently from the French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery: "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea." Such passion is what creates lifelong learning.

**THE MICDS HONOR CODE**

We have a tradition of honor at MICDS and the expectations of the community are not something to live with but to truly live. Our students are responsible for the ethical framework of the institution; it's their school. If we are successful as a community, we are all embracing this charge.

## Headliners

### SPECIAL HONOR

#### Morgan establishes Staff Appreciation Award

In celebration of her 24 years of distinguished service to MICDS, Upper School Head Louise Morgan has chosen a unique and meaningful way to leave a legacy at our School. She has made a gift to establish the



*"My dream is for this gift to become a sustainable fund so that this award becomes an opportunity people can depend upon."*

Louise Morgan with  
Katharine Cella '11 (at left)  
and Hannah Thiemann '11

Staff Appreciation Award, which will be an annual merit award presented to employees from office support staff, housekeeping, grounds and maintenance. "My dream is for this gift to become a sustainable fund so that this award becomes an opportunity people can depend upon," she says. "As I prepare to conclude my time at MICDS I wanted to make a contribution toward something I care about very deeply."

Ms. Morgan took time to share, in her own words, the reasons behind her decision to establish this fund:

*In an intense academic environment like MICDS, the educators could not possibly be successful without the support of those men and women who work mostly behind the scenes in positions that receive little acknowledgement from the general public. All of the adults who work at our School play a role in holding up each and every student. They all have special talents that contribute to our School community, contributions deserving of recognition.*

*My ancestors were working class people. My own work experience began at age 12 when I did household chores for the couple across the street who had twins. I followed that with picking blueberries, lifeguarding, babysitting, office support, waitressing and hostessing, until I graduated from college (the first on either side of my family) and began my career as an educator, teaching in the same high school that I had attended. My ancestors had strong backs and minds; they provided the gifts of character that I cherish.*

This award will be presented annually to honorees representing office support staff, housekeeping, grounds and maintenance.

If you would like to help honor Louise Morgan, please consider making a contribution to the Staff Appreciation Award Fund. Checks should be made payable to MICDS and may be mailed to the MICDS Development Office, 101 North Warson Road, St. Louis, MO, 63124. For more information, contact Director of Development Kelly Dopman '76, 314-995-7374 or kdopman@micds.org.

### WORDS OF WISDOM

#### Dr. Wendy Mogel shares advice for parents

MICDS partnered with The Jewish Community Center to sponsor "Raising Self-Reliant, Optimistic Children in Today's World: An Evening with Dr. Wendy Mogel" on Monday, March 28, at the J in Creve Coeur. Earlier in the day Dr. Mogel led a workshop for MICDS faculty.

Middle and Upper School parents are invited to a discussion of Dr. Mogel's book, *The Blessing of a B Minus*, on Thursday, April 14, at 8:00 a.m. in the Middle School Alumnae Room. Dr. Jen Gafford will facilitate the discussion.



Dr. Wendy Mogel is an internationally acclaimed clinical psychologist and a *New York Times* bestselling author. She visited St. Louis to speak on parenting and her new book, *The Blessing of a B Minus*, which focuses on how to be an effective parent of teenagers. Dr. Mogel is widely praised for her previous best-selling parenting book, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*, and offered expert advice on raising confident, resilient kids of all ages. With warmth and humor, Dr. Mogel shared her unique advice on parenting as formed by her celebrated faith-based perspective and psychological research.

In January, Dr. Mogel took time to share some words of wisdom with *MICDS Magazine*.

### WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON CONCERN PARENTS OF TEENS HAVE TODAY?

*Parents are both afraid of and for their teens, so they exaggerate some of the "dangers" they encounter. They convince themselves that a grade of a B- equals no future. I tell parents that the whole of adolescence is a phase, certainly a challenging one, but one that can also be exhilarating if parents stay alert but not alarmed.*

*The media loves to spook parents. Remember that good judgment comes from experiences. Our kids must be allowed to make poor choices now. If we act as their sherpa, butler, ATM and secret police, they'll go off to college sophisticated but immature.*

## WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO WRITE THESE BOOKS?

*Being a parent myself, I needed to remind myself to do these things. The problems we face today are not new — they are ancient problems in new costumes. I have learned that parenting a teen requires 1/3 love, 1/3 law and 1/3 sitting on your hands.*

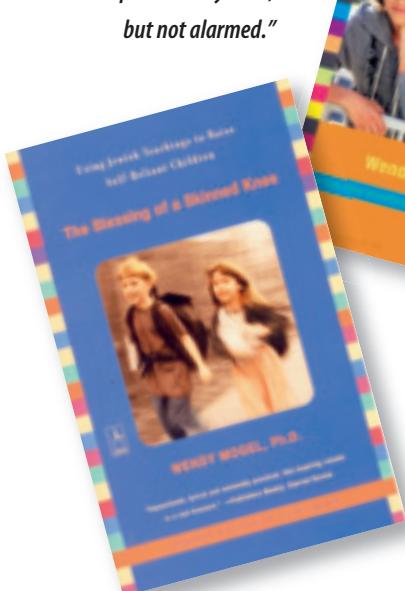
## WHY DO YOU INCORPORATE JEWISH TEACHINGS INTO YOUR BOOKS?

*One of the benefits of Jewish teachings is that they remind parents that it's important for their kids to grow up to be good people, not just good at things. Setting an example is paramount. Jewish teachings place emphasis on good deeds, on character, and community. When I talk with parents, I remind them that if they want their children to study the Torah, for example, they need to study the Torah in front of them. Children will follow your example. They may not act like they give a care, but they are listening and watching you all the time.*

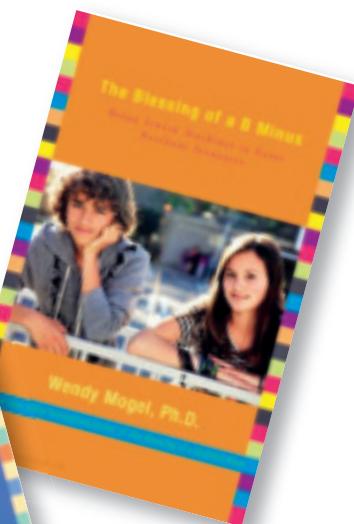
## WHAT REASSURANCE CAN YOU OFFER TO PARENTS OF TEENS?

*In general I remind parents not to take things personally, or to mistake a snapshot of their child for the epic movie of their life. From a developmental perspective, upsetting teenage attitudes and behavior are not only normal but necessary for healthy growth.*

*"I tell parents that the whole of adolescence is a phase, but one that can also be exhilarating if parents stay alert, but not alarmed."*



Dr. Mogel's books are available in the MICDS Bookstore.



*Teens are developing their independence, trying on new identities and practicing debating skills.*

*I see lots of projection in parents: She's just like her dad! My older sister! Me at her age! Oh no, this must be nipped in the bud right now! Parents who become experts at knowing their own emotional vulnerabilities have a leg up with provocative teens. I also ask parents to reframe their child's greatest weakness or character flaw as a strength instead. It's a challenge to refrain from worshipping your teen like an idol or despising them when they let you down. The Jewish story of Moses leading the people from Egypt to the Promised Land applies in this case. Moses deliberately took a route through the desert that lasted 40 years because he knew his people weren't ready for their freedom yet. Even if adolescence doesn't last 40 years, it often feels that long!*

***"I also ask parents to reframe their child's greatest weakness or character flaw as a strength instead."***



## WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE GOAL PARENTS SHOULD SET WHEN RAISING A TEEN?

*There are of course many ways to measure success. And the best methods don't use numbers such as Apgars, followed by grades, class rank, SAT scores, college placement, etc. ... One can measure a person by their engagement in what their unique temperament and talent leads them to in life, not what looks most impressive on a transcript. There is an Hassidic teaching (a Jewish spiritual tradition) that reminds parents, "If your child has the talent to be a baker, don't ask them to be a doctor."*

*To measure a child without relying on numbers, parents can ask themselves the following: Is this young person invigorated about anything that's halfway wholesome? (Even if it's not what you think would suit her best.) Even if he or she is crabby, cranky and complaining around the house, do his teachers have some positive things to say? Does an employer mention her wonderful work ethic? Does this child have at least one friend that you like?*

*Adolescence is a second preschooler-hood. Teens feel safe exhibiting their worst behavior in front of their parents because they trust them. It is so taxing socially, physically, emotionally and academically to be a teen. Teens often hold in all of their fear, frustration, and anxiety all day — it's no wonder they have melt-downs or shut you out when they get home. The flight attendants tell us to put the oxygen mask on ourselves before we put them on our children. This is good advice for parents of teens too.*

## Headliners



*'The family decided to honor Kyrle Boldt Jr.'s memory with a turtle named 'Buddy' in a place where children both learn and play.'*

### A NEW "BUDDY"

#### *Linda's Playground is home to a new sculpture*

A new friend recently made his way on to Linda's Playground outside the Beasley School, and he has found his permanent home. Meet "Buddy," a one-ton sculpture of a Missouri turtle crafted by renowned St. Louis artist Bob Cassilly, creator of the City Museum and Turtle Park.

"Buddy" is the generous gift of Mrs. Joan Boldt and Jeff '83 and Joni Boldt Ridgway, in memory of their husband and father Kyrle "Buddy" Boldt Jr. The Ridgways are the parents of Ashley '10 and Alexandra '20.

Joni Boldt Ridgway remembers her father as a kind man who loved working with young people as a long time Scout leader and volunteer, who also appreciated nature and animals. "He was known for turtle rescues," she explains. "My father would be driving along and if he spotted a turtle along the road he would stop and move it to a safe place." The family decided to honor his memory with a turtle named "Buddy" in a place where children both learn and play.

The turtle sculpture was installed on the Beasley playground over winter break. "Buddy has quickly become a place for the children to climb on, rest upon, and imagine with," says Janet McMillion, Head of Lower School. "We love seeing this wonderful sculpture become part of our daily play."

MICDS is grateful for the generosity of the Boldt and Ridgway families for this very special symbolic gift.

Above: (Clockwise from center) Alexandra Ridgway '20, Ashley Ridgway '10, Joni Boldt Ridgway, Kyrle Boldt III, Janet McMillion and Jeff Ridgway '83.

At right, The MICDS Chamber Choir: (Seated, from left) Caroline Maples, Ryan Lee, Natalie Sannes and Hadley Edwards; (Middle Row, from left) Victoria Peacock, Edward Wroten, Chris Noda, Patrick Beecher, Chelsea Kim, Michael Davidson, Aditya Nellore and Daniel Lynch; (Back row, from left) Jackson Myer, Gary Russo, Annie Trulaske, Braxton Angle, Corrine Palmer, Caroline Rouse, Blair O'Brien, Rishub Keelara, Mandy Olivastro, Alec Gualdoni, Taylor Osuji, Mason Meine, Katherine Moore, Lauren Hutton-Work and John Moore

### A PERMANENT HOME *Portraits installed around campus*

This winter, the Mary Institute and Country Day School archivists worked with the maintenance staff to find permanent locations for the official portraits of our School's former Heads. Mary Eliot Chapel is now home to the portraits of some of Mary Institute's founders, benefactors, principals, headmasters and headmistresses. Portraits of Country Day School's heads may be found in the Blanke Room on the Upper School campus. The portraits of the MICDS heads are now located in the Olson Hall Presentation Room. Special nameplates will be made to identify each portrait and honor the role each person played in our School's history. Said Mary Institute Archivist Anne Stupp McAlpin '64 of the installation, "Many of the portraits now seen in the Mary Eliot Chapel were hung there for many years. It is wonderful to have them 'come home' and join others who made such an impact on our School's history. All of us who served on John Oleski's committee were very happy to contribute to this effort."

### COMMAND PERFORMANCE *Chamber Choir invited to sing at Lincoln Center*

Distinguished Concerts International in New York City (DCINY) has invited the MICDS Chamber Choir to participate in a performance of Mozart's *Coronation Mass, KV 317 "Krönungsmesse"* and Martin's *The Awakening* on April 18, 2011, at Lincoln Center. Members of the choir will join with other outstanding choristers to form the Distinguished Concerts Singers International, a choir of distinction, accompanied by Distinguished Concerts Orchestra International.

Dr. Jonathan Griffith, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor for DCINY stated: "The MICDS Chamber Choir received this invitation because of the quality and high level of musicianship demonstrated by the singers and the exceptional recommendations given by Dana Self's choral colleagues. These wonderful musicians not only represent a high quality of music and education, but they also become ambassadors for the entire community."

► STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

► STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



GARY LOBSTEIN

## Special Events

**INTRODUCING LIT FEST*****MICDS community to spend a day celebrating literature***

The First Annual MICDS LIT FEST, a celebration of the power of words and stories to shape our lives, will take place on April 22, 2011. The day will kick off with a JK–12 “Come as your Favorite Literary Figure” Parade, book donation, and an all school gathering. Lower School students will meet for some cross-divisional interactions with the senior class and participate in literary themed activities in Olson Hall.

Parents are invited after the parade to the Presentation Room to hear from MICDS Learning Specialists and English Teachers who will discuss “Your Student’s Brain on Literature.”

Parents are also invited to a literary discussion group led by Upper School English teacher Tex Tourais as well as to hear readings from some of the creative writers from our talented senior class.

For students in the Upper and Middle School, the day will feature performances by the Saint Louis Shakespeare Festival, along with readings and chances to interact with featured authors, including Missouri’s Poet Laureate, David Clewell. Prize speaking, literary activities, and games will complete this celebration of the literary life.

► STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

*“The Writing Center at Studio STL led participants through an evening filled with activities designed to build writing and critical thinking skills.”*



*“Classrooms are working labs or studios where genuine knowledge is shared and real products are created.”*

**SUPERHERO SHOWCASE*****Beasley's Night School focuses on creative writing***

MICDS and the Lower School Parent Network Committee invited JK–4 parents and students to participate in this year’s “Beasley Night School” event — a one-of-a-kind creative writing workshop held on February 10. In opening remarks, Lower School Head Janet McMillion explained, “Classrooms are no longer places where a teacher simply tells information to students. Instead, they are working labs or studios where genuine knowledge is shared and real products are created.” In this spirit of interactive, hands-on learning, The Writing Center at Studio STL led participants through its “Superhero Workshop,” an evening filled with activities designed to build writing and critical thinking skills.

Studio STL is the newest arts center in St. Louis — focused on the literary arts and its mission to help “students discover, develop, and celebrate their individual voices through writing.”



“We believe that all kids are superstars,” said Studio STL Director Beth Ketcher. “Writing is about thinking, and tonight we are asking you to think about writing in terms of characters.” Students and parents broke into smaller groups for age-appropriate activities, with parents assuming the role of mentor for their children. JK and SK students and their parents completed four-page books by adding color and words. Following a presentation by award-winning author and illustrator Jeff Weigel, students and parents in grades 1–4 designed superhero trading cards, using a template to write key facts about their superhero (super powers, alias, weaknesses, allies, etc.) and design costumes.

► STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

► STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Top: Jeff Weigel talks with students about creating a superhero.

At left: Steve Tschudy '84 and son Tyler '24 work on their book.

Above: Addie '20 and Craig Jung work on their superhero trading card.

## Special Events



### SUPPORTING THE CAUSE

#### *Upper School makes its mark at Coaches vs. Cancer game*

"There's no question it was one of the most important contests in school history," said Kyle Adamson '11 of the January 27 varsity boys' basketball game at Chaifetz Arena. Though the Rams defeated Hannibal High School by a score of 65 to 43, the game was significant for a much greater reason. It marked the Rams' second consecutive invitation to participate in the Coaches vs. Cancer Shootout, an annual fundraiser for the American Cancer Society.

Over the past nine years, MICDS, under the leadership of Stacey Morgan and the Win With Wellness committee, has raised over \$120,000 to benefit cancer research. In support of our School's commitment to the fight against cancer, the administration made it possible for all Upper School students and faculty to attend the game during the school day. "The fact that we were playing for something much bigger than ourselves was really awesome," said Carson Pryor '11 of playing at Chaifetz in front of the entire Upper School. The combination of proceeds from ticket sales and additional fundraisers totaled an MICDS contribution of over \$4,500 to the American Cancer Society. "It was a great day for MICDS," said Athletic Director Don Maurer of the experience.

► STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*"The fact that  
we were playing  
for something  
much bigger than  
ourselves was  
really awesome."*

*"Nowinski shared his journey from WWE wrestler to advocate for the prevention and proper treatment of head injuries."*

### 2011 HARBISON LECTURE

#### *Speaker advocates brain safety*

Chris Nowinski, co-founder and president of the Sports Legacy Institute and author of *Head Games: Football's Concussion Crisis*, visited MICDS on January 18 as the Harbison Lecture speaker to discuss "The Mystery of Brain Trauma." During presentations for Middle and Upper School students,

Nowinski shared his journey from WWE wrestler to advocate for the prevention and proper treatment of head injuries in athletes and other at-risk groups. Nowinski shared "7 Steps to Brain Safety" for students, coaches and parents, and urged MICDS to practice "proper prevention, recognition and response" to this increasingly alarming issue.

After complications from numerous concussions convinced him to retire from pro-wrestling, Nowinski partnered with Dr. Robert Cantu and Boston University's School of Medicine to form the Sports Legacy Institute (SLI), which conducts research on a progressive degenerative disease of the brain known as Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) that is found in individuals with a history of repetitive brain trauma. The brain degeneration associated with CTE causes a host of complications, including memory loss, confusion, impaired judgment, paranoia, impulse control problems, aggression, depression, and, eventually, progressive dementia. Nowinski works tirelessly to build SLI's brain donation registry so research can continue and a cure can be discovered.

In closing, Nowinski encouraged students to consider the field of neuroscience, noting, "I hope I can inspire some of you to get involved in this fight to cure CTE." Following his remarks in the Upper School, Nowinski spoke one-on-one with over 30 students.

► STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING



(From left) Lily Mehdirad '14, Yasmin Mussadig '11, Chris Nowinski, Virek Biswas '11, Hannah Thiemann '11 and Raven Lingard '14

## Academics



(From left) Lauren Sugavanam '21, Sophia Covert '21 and Trevon Bobo '21

**BOOKING IT*****Second graders set one million minutes of reading goal***

The second grade class of 2021 is working hard to achieve a significant goal — a whopping 1,000,000 minutes of reading during this school year. At press time, students had already accumulated 222,267 minutes toward their ultimate goal.

Second grade teachers Jeff Horwitz and Amy Lamb report enthusiasm is so high that they increased students' nightly reading requirement from 30 to 45 minutes, noting "these students truly love reading and when we mentioned the increase, most students responded 'no problem since I already read that much anyway!'"

The idea for this reading challenge was inspired by Donalyn Miller's book *The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child*, in which she advocates providing children time to read books of their choosing. In addition, research shows that 10,000 hours of practice in a particular subject area is required for mastery. Horwitz explains, "Designing this activity as a grade-level goal requires all students to participate, and allows us to use the concept of teamwork as a motivator." Adds Lamb, "We defined it as a total minutes read goal rather than a total number of books or pages because it leveled the playing field and made it OK for students to read at the pace and level that was appropriate for them."

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

**LEGO ROBOTICS*****Students excel in First Lego League competition***

Lego Robotics is alive and well at MICDS. Two teams comprised of Middle School students participated in the First Lego League's (FLL) Eastern Qualifier Tournament in November. The Challenge 2010 theme, "Body Forward," required teams to research bio-medical opportunities, develop solutions and present those solutions. In addition, the teams competed using Lego-built robots that they designed, built and programmed for moving on a common playing surface.

Shannon Gould '18, Mia Schroeder '18, Nicole Shearing '16 and Abby Schroeder '16 were members of Team Brick Howes that competed at Webster University. They chose the eye disease retinitis pigmentosa as their opportunity. The team's solution of developing a bionic eye with similar characteristics to cochlear ear transplants earned them the tournament's "Innovation and Strategy" trophy. The team also scored enough robot performance points to advance

to the FLL Championship on December 5. On November 22, MICDS' Lego Robotics team, the Rambots, competed at Maryville University. Abinaya Lakshmanan '17, DeRon Sutton '17, Francis Posega Rappleye '17, Pravin Sivabalan '17, Jackson White '16,

Dev Sinha '16 and Rohit Srivastavawork '16 worked as a group to overcome obstacles, to build and program their Lego Mindstorms Robot and to find an ingenious solution to the problems sufferers of osteoporosis face. The team received high praise from the judges, who were particularly impressed with the poise our Rambots showed in delivering the unique solutions to the panel of judges. Though the Rambots did not advance to the next round, many invaluable lessons were learned and the team is excited to take on a new challenge next year.

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**LIVING HISTORY*****Students benefit from firsthand account of Cuban Missile Crisis***

Mr. Earle Harbison (at left in photo), grandparent and parent of alumni, visited Gabe Ashman's Cold War class in October to share his personal experience working for the U.S. government during this turbulent time. His discussion with students was scheduled to help the class prepare for their reenactment of the Cuban Missile Crisis, for which each student was assigned the role of a key player.

Following his work for the Intelligence Operations Support team of the CIA, Mr. Harbison began working for the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC), rising to the position of chief administrative officer. He was a member of the readout team that reviewed the photographs taken in October 1962 by a U2 plane during a flight over Cuba that showed evidence of Soviet missile sites under construction. Mr. Harbison described briefing President Kennedy about the situation and offered firsthand accounts of the process our government and military took to resolve the situation. In 1964, Mr. Harbison received a commendation for his work during the Cuban Missile Crisis, which he shared with students along with one of only seven remaining original photographs of the Cuban missile sites.

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING



## Achievements

### 2011 NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

#### *Four members of the Class of 2011 honored*

Four members of the MICDS Class of 2011 have been named as semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship and National Achievement programs. They were recognized at a special assembly in October. Students are named semifinalists based upon scores achieved on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). The nationwide pool of 16,000 semifinalists represents less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors and includes the highest scoring students in each state. Congratulations to MICDS National Merit/National Achievement Semifinalists for 2011: Kyle Kong, Daniel Draper Lynch, Jordan Mann and Caroline Rouse.

 STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING



(From left) Jordan Mann,  
Kyle Kong, Daniel Draper Lynch  
and Caroline Rouse

### CLASS DETURS

#### *50 students honored*

Students who achieve the highest grade point average in their respective grades at the conclusion of the academic year earn the distinction of "Class Detur" at MICDS. Students were honored for this achievement during special assemblies. Congratulations to everyone.



*"Class Deturs are students who achieve the highest grade point average in their respective grade level."*

### CLASS OF 2011

Grace Bridwell  
William Johnston  
Daniel Draper Lynch  
Caroline Rouse  
Sydney Schein



### CLASS OF 2012

Gowri Kalugotla

### CLASS OF 2013

Diana DiGasbarro  
Girija Hariprasad  
Hayley Landman  
Tally Portnoi  
George Reynolds  
Billy Van Cleve  
Casey Zuccarello

John Finlay  
Cameron Gornet  
Daniel Kaganov  
Allie Meier  
David O'Hara  
Emma Posega  
Rappleye  
Preethi UmaShanker

### CLASS OF 2017

Nidhi Bhaskar  
Rohit Chouhan  
Courtney Knapp  
Andrew Krause  
Sophia Pinz  
Annabel Warren

### CLASS OF 2014

Camille Bianco  
Adrienne Brauch  
Cassandra Collins  
Chandler Dalton

### CLASS OF 2015

Hanna Alexander  
Tilman Bartelsmeyer  
Max Bernstein  
Madi Blanchard  
Laurel Button  
Annie Childress  
Lynn Dankner  
Milly Judd

### CLASS OF 2016

Sarah Finlay  
Joshua Levinson  
Joseph McAllister  
Samuel Oh  
Michael O'Keefe  
Sarah Sant  
John Setlich

 STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

## PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

### *Two seniors named Candidates*

MICDS seniors Daniel Draper Lynch and Caroline Rouse have been named Candidates in the U.S. Presidential Scholar competition. Inclusion in the Presidential Scholars Program, now in its 47th year, is one of the highest honors bestowed upon graduating high school seniors. Candidates were selected for their exceptional performance on either the College Board SAT or the ACT Assessment. Further consideration is based on students' essays, self-assessments, descriptions of activities, school recommendations, and school transcripts. Two students from each state will be named Presidential Scholars later this spring and will travel to the White House in June.

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

## FINE ART

### *Students' work supports 100 Neediest Cases project*

MICDS Upper School students submitted original artwork to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch/United Way 100 Neediest Cases project, which sends out a call to local artists at the high school and college level. Out of hundreds of entries, judges chose 40 pieces of artwork that stood out.

Congratulations to Ted Staley '11, who won first place, and Blair Koeneman '12, who won second place. Congratulations to seven additional MICDS students who placed in the top 40:

- #6 - Abby Lowe '11
- #17 - Steven Frank '12
- #20 - Zoe Lynch '11
- #22 - Sunna Khan '12
- #28 - DeAnna Pope '12
- #29 - Frances Burkham '12
- #37 - Stephanie Clark '11

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## A NEW RECORD

### *Four students chosen for All-State Choir*

Missouri All-State Choir Auditions were held at MICDS in November. A total of 80 students from the St. Louis Metro schools were eligible to audition for 16 spots in the choir.

MICDS had 4 students (a school record!) selected to the 2011 Missouri All-State Choir:

Rishub Keelara '11 - Bass  
 Caroline Rouse '11 - Soprano  
 Patrick Beecher '11 - Tenor (Alternate)  
 Natalie Sannes '11 - Soprano (Alternate)

The choir performed at the Missouri Music Educators Association Conference and Clinic at Tan-Tar-A Resort in January.

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

*"Nine of the 40  
 recognized artists were  
 MICDS students."*



(Front left) Natalie Sannes '11, Patrick Beecher '11, Rishub Keelara '11 and Caroline Rouse '11

## NATIONAL WRITING HONOR

### *Senior recognized for writing talent*

Ted Staley '11 was one of 11 students in the state of Missouri to be awarded certificates for superior writing by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) this fall. He was nominated by MICDS last year and submitted an essay he produced for American Literature as well as a timed essay responding to a prompt provided by the NCTE. Ted competed against 1,641 of the best eleventh grade writers from across the nation and was one of only 543 students to receive special recognition.



STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

## SWIMMING STAR

### *Junior named to national team*

Annie Goessling '11 was named to the 2009–2010 USA Swimming Scholastic All-American Team. To be eligible for the team, an athlete has to meet the Junior National time standard in an individual event and have a G.P.A. of 3.5 or higher.



## Achievements



### A SEASON TO REMEMBER

#### *Girls Golf Team finishes second at State*

For the first time in school history, the Girls' Varsity Golf Team qualified for the State Competition, and went on to finish second in the tournament (another school first). Congratulations to state team qualifying members Maddy Fendell '11, Addie Harris '11, Darby Hobbs '13, Caroline Rouse '11 and Campbell Torchin '12, and to coaches Scott Small, Judy Horrell and Steve Johnston. In the individual competition, Caroline Rouse was the top medalist, finishing in first place with a score of 76-77-153. Campbell Torchin finished tied for ninth place, earning a medal with a score of 88-84-172.



### EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE

#### *Junior honored by University of Missouri-St. Louis*

Gowri Kalugotla '12 was among the 36 area high school juniors who received the University of Missouri-St. Louis College of Arts and Sciences' Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in Science. Gowri was selected for this honor based on her grade point average and her participation in science-related activities.

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

### ALL-TIME LEADING SCORER

#### *Hobbs '11 scores 1000th career point*

Congratulations to Varsity Basketball player **Delaney Hobbs '11**, who scored her 1,000th career point on December 17 in a match versus St. Francis Borgia. The career milestone came as a three-point shot that helped the Rams win the game by a score of 49-39. Hobbs, who is the all-time leading scorer for MICDS, was profiled as an athlete of the week on KSDK Channel 5.



LINDA BIVARD

## Service

### PAYING IT FORWARD

#### *Student buys school supplies for kids in need*

In August, seventh grader **Elly Weller '16** was selected as one of 100 winners of a back-to-school essay contest at Walmart. After receiving her prize, a \$100 gift card, Elly used it to buy school supplies for KidSmart, a local organization that helps students in need. Elly, who has worked as a volunteer for KidSmart, said of her decision to purchase the supplies, "I entered the Walmart essay contest for fun. When I thought about how I would use the \$100 gift certificate, I realized that my family is always able to buy my school supplies and there are many families that can't. I thought of KidSmart because my family and I have volunteered there before. They have a store where teachers can come and get free supplies for their students who can't afford simple things like paper and pencils."

STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



### THE KINDLE PROJECT

#### *Fourth grader makes impact at City Academy*

In October, **Jack Hays '19** was the guest of honor during an assembly at City Academy when he presented 11 Kindles to the student body. Jack launched "The Kindle Project" after visiting the Academy and learning that its library had none. He raised over \$2000 through donations and by washing cars and running lemonade stands. Why Kindles? Jack explains on his blog, [thekindleproject.blogspot.com](http://thekindleproject.blogspot.com), "Once a book is on a Kindle, it can be stored there forever and it doesn't wear out or need to be replaced. Lots of kids can read it! Librarians won't have to spend as much money on books and can spend more time working with kids on their book choices and stuff like that."

STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



*"Once a book is on a Kindle, it can be stored there forever and it doesn't wear out or need to be replaced."*

## THE 15-15-15 CHALLENGE

### *Young alumni encourage peers to give to the Annual Fund*

The Young Alumni Annual Fund Team has exciting news to share! Nearly 30 volunteers from the classes of 1993 – 2006, with the help of our Young Alumni Board and MICDS Alumni Association, recently launched our 15-15-15 Annual Fund Challenge. Current and former presidents of the MICDS Alumni Association presented a \$15,000 challenge to the young alumni classes to achieve 15% participation in the Annual Fund. The Team accepted the challenge, and just to keep things interesting, offered to accomplish it in 15 days. The Challenge was a smashing success. At press time 360 gifts had been received, bringing young alumni participation to 21%, more than doubling last year's rate. Way to go!

*Many thanks to the following for their exceptional leadership with this initiative.*

CHIP HIEMENZ '02

ALEX McMULLIN '04

*Young Alumni Board Fundraising Co-Chairs*

ELLIOTT BENOIST '01

CHRIS BRENNAN '94

JAMIE CORLEY '05

MATT DiGIULIO '97

JAMES DOMINICK '99

TYLER FRANK '95

ANNE GAEBE '00

JEFF GILES '94

JONO HIEMENZ '05

CHRISTINA HORAN '06

STEVEN KOKOFF '03

BOB KOPLAR '98

EMILY BRADY KOPLAR '98

MARGOT LANGSDORF '01

BIRCH McMULLIN '96

BRIAN MUELLER '00

TEE NOLAND '95

MOLLY RHODES '03

ANNA AVETT SCHOWALTER '96

HILLARY BEAN SCHUMAKER '97

HANA TEPPER TAYLOR '95

TED WATT '06

*Many thanks also to the current and former presidents of the MICDS Alumni Association who generously gave to the Challenge.*

MELISSA ENGELSMANN ACKER '80

LINDA FERGUSON BENOIST '70

SPENCER B. BURKE '65

MARY WHITE CARNAL '78

FRANK S. CHILDRESS '79

ELIZABETH DENNIG COULTER '75

JOHN M. GILLIS '85

JOHN M. HOWELL JR. '83

LISA WRIGHT NOUSS '76

HENRY B. PFLAGER III '80

STRATEGIC PLAN - LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STRATEGIC PLAN - SUSTAINABILITY

## THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

### *Parent participation is something to celebrate*

Many thanks to the 85% of MICDS parents who made a gift or pledge to the Annual Fund! We are truly thrilled with the success of this year's condensed campaign. Annual Fund dollars go directly to this year's operating budget and provides the "margin of excellence" that makes MICDS unique. Your gift, no matter the size, will ensure the future of our School's vibrant academic curriculum, exceptional faculty and extraordinary arts, athletics and extra-curricular programs. Thank you!

STRATEGIC PLAN - SUSTAINABILITY

*"We are truly thrilled with the success of this year's condensed campaign."*

## MAKE A STATEMENT

### *Consider a charitable bequest to MICDS*

We hope you'll consider including a gift to Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School in your will or living trust. Called a charitable bequest, this type of gift offers these main benefits:

- **SIMPLICITY.** Just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed. To make a bequest to MICDS from your estate, you must sign a new will or trust instrument, make an addition to your present will or create an amendment to your present trust instrument.
- **FLEXIBILITY.** Because you are not actually making a gift until after your lifetime, you can change your mind at any time.
- **VERSATILITY.** You can structure the bequest to leave a specific item or amount of money, or leave a percentage of your estate to us.
- **TAX RELIEF.** Your estate is entitled to an estate tax charitable deduction for the gift's full value.

### *We Can Help*

Please contact Amy Rhodes, Development Associate, at 314-995-7382 or arhodes@micds.org with questions about naming Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School in your will or living trust. We're happy to help without obligation. We also encourage you to visit our robust and interactive website, [www.micds.org/giving/estateplanning](http://www.micds.org/giving/estateplanning), to find the Estate Planning option that best meets your needs.

## In Memoriam

### IN LOVING MEMORY

#### Andrew N. "Drew" Baur '62

The MICDS community was saddened by the loss of 1962 graduate Andrew N. "Drew" Baur, longtime MICDS supporter and St. Louis business and civic leader, who passed away February 20, 2011, at the age of 66. A member of the Country Day School Board of Trustees from 1978 to 1983, he was the recipient of the MICDS Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1997. His

*"Always passionate about service to his community, Mr. Baur was a member of numerous civic and charitable organization boards, locally and nationally."*

life was celebrated during a February 25 memorial service in the McDonnell Athletic Center.

Mr. Baur was a member of a family with strong, multi-generational ties to our School, including his mother, Florence Noland Baur '40; siblings Edward T. "Tee" Baur '64, Barbara Baur Dunlap '64, and the late James A. Baur '69; sons Andrew S. Baur '85 and Richard D. "Todd" Baur '88; daughter McKay Baur Mills '92; former wife Catherine Shelton Bollinger '64; and seven grandchildren, including Lindsey Elise Baur '15, and Lily Shelton Baur '18. Many other relatives graduated from the school or currently are students.

Following his graduation from Country Day, Mr. Baur received his A.B. degree from Washington & Lee University and his M.B.A. from Georgia State University. He later served as a Trustee of Washington & Lee and St. Louis Universities.

Mr. Baur was perhaps best known in the St. Louis area for his long and successful

At right: Mr. Baur's senior yearbook photo



At far right: Mr. Baur as a parent volunteer



career in banking, where he was Chairman for 26 years of Southwest Bank of St. Louis; and as an organizer of the original ownership group that purchased the St.

Louis Cardinals from Anheuser-Busch in 1996. He served as a Director of the Cardinals as well as the team's Treasurer until his death. Always passionate about service to his community, Mr. Baur was a member of numerous civic and charitable organization boards, locally and nationally.

A three-year tennis letterman at Country Day, Mr. Baur was inducted into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame in tennis for his accomplishments on the courts, including reaching the State Doubles Championship finals in 1962. As a student, he also was president of the Rostrum debate organization and active in the Masque and Troubadours drama groups. After graduating, in addition to devoting countless hours to Country Day as a Trustee, he was a generous donor financially, most recently funding one of the new Hermann Squash Center courts, dedicated in March 2011. Previously, he established an endowed fund to help students who are receiving financial aid to participate in athletic trips, and he contributed to the upcoming project to renovate Lower McDonnell Gymnasium.



## Coming Soon

### VINCENTENNIAL

#### *A 100th birthday celebration for Vincent Price '29*

MICDS has partnered with Cinema St. Louis to present "Vincentennial," a multi-day celebration of the 100th birthday of Hollywood film legend and Country Day School alumnus Vincent Price '29 that will take place May 20 – 28, 2011. Special events will include screenings of more than a dozen films, lectures and events with filmmakers, critics and Price family members; and exhibits of Price-related artifacts, artwork and memorabilia. The film festival will be kicked off by film producer and director Roger Corman, who directed Vincent Price in his series of Edgar Allan Poe films in the 1960s. Another highlight of the week's activities will be a multi-media presentation on May 27 at the Missouri History Museum by Victoria Price, author of "Vincent Price: A Daughter's Biography."



Born in St. Louis on May 27, 1911, Vincent Price attended St. Louis Country Day School, graduating in 1929. He recalled his time at CDS with great fondness and often gave his theater experiences at our School credit as one of the inspirations behind his decision to become an actor. His career stretched over 55 years, beginning in 1938 at the height of classical Hollywood cinema, reaching its apex with his legendary horror films of the 1960s and '70s, and concluding with abundant voice work and fine performances in "The Whales of August" and "Edward Scissorhands."

Additional venues that will host Vincentennial events include Washington University, the Hi Pointe Theatre, Sheldon Concert Hall and the art gallery at Star Clipper Comics. Please visit [www.vincentennial.com](http://www.vincentennial.com) for additional details.

MICDS expresses its deepest appreciation to Mr. Harris Frank '43, who generously underwrote the presenting sponsorship fee.

## Calendar

**APRIL 22****LIT FEST**

For all students, JK-12, in locations across campus  
(See page 7 for information.)

**APRIL 30****MAY DAY AND AFTERNOON TEA**

*Lilly's Field*  
4:00 p.m.

**MAY 4****60TH REUNION LUNCHEON**

For the MI and CDS Classes of 1951  
*The Bogey Club*

**MAY 5****25TH AND 50TH REUNION LUNCHEON**

For the MI and CDS Classes of 1986 and 1961  
*Olson Hall Presentation Room*

**MAY 6****MI ALUMNAE REUNION LUNCHEON**

*Middle School Gymnasium*

**CDS ALUMNI REUNION BBQ**

*Upper School Quad & Alumni Dining Hall*

**MAY 7****10TH REUNION RECEPTION**

For the MICDS Class of 2001  
*Olson Hall Presentation Room*

**MAY 20 – 28****VINCENTENNIAL**

A 100th Birthday Celebration for Vincent Price '29  
*Activities and locations to be announced*

**MAY 31****COMMENCEMENT**

*McDonnell Athletic Center*  
10:00 a.m.

**JUNE 2****FACULTY & STAFF**

**"UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING"**

**HONORS**

**Chris Brennan '94** (First Grade Associate) was a recipient of the St. Louis Science Center's "Shining Star" award in November. The Shining Star Award recognizes individual educators who touch lives in very special ways. Brennan, who is the first MICDS educator to receive this honor, was nominated for starting and sustaining the Lower School Lego Club, a program that inspires students to connect their passion for building to learning team skills and creative problem solving.



Middle School Librarian **Matt DiGiulio '97** was profiled on the Office of Letters and Light blog in November for his work as a Young Writers Program Educator and his commitment to National Novel Writing Month, which inspires students and teachers to write a 175-page novel during the month of November. The blog highlighted



DiGiulio's work in Messing Library, particularly his creative and effective use of social media tools — including Flickr, Facebook, Twitter, Skype and YouTube — to share and exchange information. "Our library doesn't have just one main door; it has scores of them. Social media helps make that happen," he says in the article.

**Aaron Elliott** (Upper School Library Assistant) was profiled in the February 2011 issue of *The Quilt Life* magazine for his nationally recognized work creating portrait quilts and embroideries. Elliott, a professional quilter and artist who works under the name Michael Aaron McAllister, has won awards for his portraits and exhibits nationally in art arenas and at quilting shows. He has created over 100 embroidered quilts inspired by his love of reading that depict figures from history and popular culture. Elliott has also been profiled in *St. Louis Magazine*, *Quilting Arts and Studios*. Visit [michaelaaronsmcallister.com](http://michaelaaronsmcallister.com) to see his masterpieces.



BILL ELLIOTT

**Carolyne Hood** (Upper School Drama) received accolades this fall for her work as director of "Anton in Show Business," for the St. Louis Shakespeare Company. She earned a 2010 "Judy Award" for Best Production-Comedy from *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* Theatre Critic Judith Newmark and was included in "Their Favorite Things" by *St. Louis Riverfront Times* critics Dennis Brown and Paul Friswold. Ms. Hood was thrilled to have among her cast members **Gabby Greer '09**, **Moyo Akande '11** and **Troyaire Moore '12**.



*Honors continued >*



LINDA RIVARD

**Dr. Nancy Richardson** (Upper and Middle School German) was a presenter at the 35th Annual Women in German conference held in Augusta, MI, in October. She was a guest speaker for a workshop that addressed the changing job market. Her session was titled, "You're Teaching What?? High School as an Alternative to Academe." During her workshop she highlighted MICDS and its German program.

Dr. Richardson was also contracted to translate a teacher's manual for the beginning German textbook series *Portfolio Deutsch A2*, published by Langenscheidt, one of the premiere providers of German educational material, travel guides and dictionaries.

**Pat Woessner** (Middle School CIT) was interviewed for an article published in the November 19, 2010, online edition of the *School Library Journal*. The article, written by nationally known digital information literacy educator Dr. Joyce Valenza, was titled "Building Digital Citizens at MICDS and Beyond." It included commentary from Woessner about the Digital Citizenship curriculum he is building in the Middle School and touted our School's program as a model for other schools to reference.



Woessner was also quoted in an article posted on the Spotlight and Digital Media website titled "A New Digital Literacy: Teaching Kids How to 'Self-Police' Online" ([www.spotlight.macfound.org](http://www.spotlight.macfound.org)). In the article, he states, "It's important for adolescents to develop good habits early so they are accustomed to being cautious when interacting in wide open networks." Spotlight covers the intersections of technology and education, going behind the research to show how digital media is used in and out of classrooms to expand learning. Spotlight learned of Woessner's work through the *School Library Journal* piece.

*"Modeling oral storytelling is useful because it helps children through what can be the most difficult part of the writing process — generating ideas."*



## INSPIRATION FOR YOUNG WRITERS

### Rivinus Funds help faculty design a storytelling workshop

During the summer of 2010, JK teacher **Ruth Moulton** and SK teacher **Jenn Gillis** used Edward M. Rivinus Summer Sabbatical funds to research and develop a book-making component to enhance the reading and writing curriculum for JK, SK and first grade students. Their research included a thorough study of the book *Already Ready: Nurturing Writers in Preschool and Kindergarten*, by Katie Wood Ray and Matt Glover. *Already Ready* provides strategies to help teachers respect children as writers and guide them through their early experiences of the writing process. "We learned that oral storytelling is a critical component to helping young children develop as writers," says Moulton. "Modeling oral storytelling is useful because it helps children through what can be the most difficult part of the writing process — generating ideas. Listening to short stories often inspires children to use their imagination or write about something they know."

Moulton and Gillis found the perfect storyteller among their colleagues. Middle School Drama Teacher **Charlotte Dougherty**, a founder of Piwacket Theatre for Children, has led two storytelling sessions for JK, SK and first grade students this school year, one sharing stories based on her personal experiences, and one telling fairy tales. Says Gillis of the impact of the storytelling exercise, "Charlotte not only helped the children generate ideas, she modeled every step of the writing process for them. The children got to ask this expert questions that are pertinent to them like, 'Where do you write?' and 'How do you know when you are finished?' Writing is hard work and it is important for young children to know that there are many places to get answers."



Top right: SK Associate Kristen Kaiser shares ideas with Grayson Jakuc '23.

Above: Charlotte Dougherty leads a storytelling session.

At left: Chris Brennan '94 and Charlotte Dougherty work with first grade suthorps



"Cross-divisional work such as this is both meaningful and exciting," adds Moulton. "It's very special to listen to a young child tell a story that tugs at your heartstrings — and this particular unit gave our first graders the opportunity to be the 'the big kids' of the group."

The exercise in oral storytelling using fairy tales was especially well-timed for the first grade class, as it occurred after the children had spent a few weeks learning about and developing their own fairy tales. After the storytelling exercise, first graders returned to their classrooms "totally engaged in their writing. They wanted more and more time to write," says **Veronica Wachter**. Adds **Rita Hillsman**, "Typically first graders begin the school year with inhibitions about writing. It is amazing how much progress they have made. The fairy tale unit inspires their creativity in wonderful ways, and the storytelling exercise motivated them even more."

The exercises in oral storytelling were a perfect complement to topics these young students learn in writer's workshop — including the 6+1 traits identified as common characteristics of good writing: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency (the rhythm and flow of the language), conventions (mechanical correctness), and presentation (how the words look on a page). (source: [www.educationnorthwest.org](http://www.educationnorthwest.org))

The ultimate goal of this unit was for each student to create a book using methods that were developmentally appropriate. For instance, in JK, children tended to draw their illustrations first, and tell their story to the teacher, who wrote it down for them. "In SK, the children found ways to incorporate Charlotte's vivid language," says Gillis, "Many students tried new and juicy words to describe their characters or settings and were thrilled with their results." First graders typically wrote their story first, and then added illustrations. "Whenever we put something in front of a child we don't want to frustrate or bore them," Moulton explains. "We must know exactly where they are as they confront the task. This is one of the many benefits of writing workshop — it allows for high degrees of differentiation."

► STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

## WINTER 2011 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

### Teachers model lifelong learning

Faculty returned to campus on January 3 for their Winter 2011 Professional Development Day, during which they attended mini workshops led by colleagues and had much needed time for cross-divisional and grade level collaboration. In the morning, Lower School faculty met with JK-12 Mathematics Department Chair **Amy Scheer** to work on curricular alignment, while Middle and Upper School faculty chose from a selection of 16 workshops covering such topics as ePortfolios, Moodle, Podcasting, It's a Google World, and more. Afternoon meeting time was dedicated to JK-12 Department meetings.

"Days like the third of January make me very proud to be a member of the MICDS community," says Assistant Head of School **Jeff Suzik**. "The pedagogical and curricular expertise of our faculty is so much in evidence when our teachers step up to teach one another, and it speaks volumes about the attention we pay, as a school, to life-long learning for everyone in the community."

► STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

*"The curricular expertise of our faculty... speaks volumes about the attention we pay, as a school, to life-long learning for everyone in the community."*



Middle and Upper School teachers participated in a variety of interactive sessions.





ALISON ARMSTRONG

## WINDOWS INTO THE CLASSROOM

### *Lower School Associates create grade level blogs*

In January, Lower School Associate Teachers **Stacie Schneider, Kristen Kaiser, Herman Shepard, Chris Brennan '94, Nicole Skaggs, Alan Berkbigler, Ashley Stanze** and **Allison Armstrong** participated in two technology workshops with Lower School CIT **Greg Stevens** and Second Grade Teacher **Amy Lamb** to explore how to use blogs within the classroom. They also received training on how to add photos and embed VoiceThread recordings into their blogs. Each Associate has created their own grade level blog and made a few posts to keep parents up-to-date on classwork, special projects and activities. The blogs include wonderful photos and narratives. Blog viewers are welcome to leave comments.

From Polar Bear Day to making waffles, from math games to cup stacking and biographies — the blogs cover the dynamic learning occurring in our Lower School each and every day. "We know that parents are always looking for ways to connect with their child's day, to engage in conversation with their child about what they do when they are away from home. And at Beasley, while we pride ourselves on communicating with parents throughout the school year, the interactive technology of our Classroom Blogs is able to capture those small, yet wonderful daily moments. This is one way for Beasley parents to get snapshots of what is going on in their child's classroom

and grade, and an opportunity to connect, both with their child during dinner conversations, and with the classroom through a blog response," explains Lower School Head **Janet McMillion**.

- STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING
- STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



(Clockwise, from left)  
Third graders Pedro Madureira,  
Joe Condie, Charles Huber,  
Asher Clarke, Elli Dassopoulos  
and Nikki Niermann



STACIE SCHNEIDER

Avery Summer '24 tests  
a "blubber" glove in a  
homemade polar ocean

## CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

### *Middle School faculty embrace interdisciplinary work*



This fall, Middle School teachers **Chris Militello '82** and **Jayne Zimmer** engaged their colleagues in a discussion about the value of interdisciplinary work, searching for ways to identify common themes across the curriculum and encourage collaboration. As a first step, faculty members were invited to share their ideas during informal brainstorming sessions. These sessions took place during lunch periods and were well attended by faculty, indicating their interest in and support of this work. "Interdisciplinary collaboration has always occurred in the Middle School," Militello explains. "Our goal was to give teachers a tool that made it easy for them to share their curriculum with colleagues, hopefully creating even more connections between subject areas for students."

The inspiration for this work was twofold. Ongoing discussions to fulfill the Strategic Plan goals of strengthening vertical and horizontal alignment as well as scope and sequence between divisions have deepened the faculty's interest in learning more about their colleagues' work. The need to identify common language, definitions and required skill sets across disciplines became clear this summer during a technology seminar attended by several Middle School faculty members. When asked to define words such as "analyze" and "interpret" everyone offered different definitions. "We realized that students need to hear terminology that is consistent across departments or grade levels," Zimmer explains. "Each discipline is not an island. It is important for faculty to be familiar with content taught in other disciplines so they are equipped to help students see connections and apply analytical and problem solving skills from one class to the next."

Middle School Head **John Carpenter** lent his support to the project and created a template for recording course information on the Interdisciplinary Exploratory Group Wiki (IEG) built by Middle School CIT **Pat Woessner**. A "wiki" is a collaborative website that can be edited or added to by any approved user. The template for the wiki included spaces for faculty to identify the main units or content topics of their course, along with the key research projects, writing assignments, and core skills that

this content supports. Faculty members were also asked to indicate which topics might be flexible for moving to different times of the year as well as highlight units or areas where they were particularly interested in collaborating. Once the wiki site was complete, faculty were invited to begin entering their course information. Militello, Woessner and Zimmer made themselves available during a Late Start meeting to offer faculty hands-on assistance with adding content to their pages.

John Carpenter believes that the rewards of this work are many. He explains, "Our teachers deeply value the opportunity to work with their colleagues, but the realities of our daily schedule too often prevent these conversations from happening. Time (or the lack thereof) is too often our greatest tyrant. In this respect, the Interdisciplinary Exploratory Group is a perfect way to promote



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these vital conversations. Our curriculum is like a giant jigsaw, with each teacher individually holding a different piece of the puzzle. Putting all of our pieces together allows us to see the 'bigger picture,' which we can then share with our students. Connections that were once hidden become much more obvious, and the entire academic program is infused with new purpose and meaning. In the process, everyone benefits — teachers feel renewed and energized by their colleagues, and our students begin to make important connections between their different classes. These early successes encourage even more conversation, and the process continues, bringing ever more richness to our teachers' and student's experience."

Militello and Zimmer are encouraged by their colleagues' work thus far and describe a number of positive outcomes. For some teachers, the exercise of adding their course content to the IEG gave them valuable practice in using the wiki as a classroom tool. Curricular information is now organized in one resource and is easy to access. Most importantly, "Making connections across disciplines on a more frequent basis will deepen our students' comprehension and retention of the material covered in class and illustrate to them how certain core skills are applicable in any setting," says Zimmer.

Examples of the impact of interdisciplinary collaboration are everywhere in the Middle School. Last spring, Militello worked with **Caroline Leonard**, whose English students were reading George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, a critique of the history and rhetoric of the Russian Revolution. The students were so interested in the book that Militello devoted an extra two days in his history classes to an in depth discussion of the key players of the Russian Revolution to provide greater context for the novel. Seventh graders used data analysis skills learned in math to compile and comprehend results of the "What Do You Think of America?" surveys they wrote in history class. The P.E. and Science departments worked together on a Body Systems unit. JK-12 P.E. Department Chair **Eric Lay** explains, "Following the seventh grade's study of the cardiovascular system in science during the first trimester, the students had an aerobic training unit in P.E. during the second trimester. Since they had the prerequisite knowledge of the parts of the cardiovascular system, P.E. teachers were able to deepen the students' understanding even further using heart rate monitors and discussing how the cardiovascular system adapts to exercise, strength and aerobic training exercises."

Access to the course content of all disciplines also makes it possible for teachers to design lesson plans that reinforce topics. For example, during a brainstorming session, Math Teacher **Nancy Pierson** stated that easy access to the wiki provides the information she needs to write word problems that relate to the topics her students are learning in science.

Moving forward, Militello and Zimmer have established the Interdisciplinary Committee, a small group of Middle School faculty, who will continue to collect curricular information, look for connections and identify common definitions and skill sets to reinforce across all academic disciplines in the Middle School. Their work will also include identifying connections that can be reinforced as students transition from Lower to Middle School, and again from Middle to Upper School. "We appreciate the enthusiasm and support of our colleagues in this work that will ultimately benefit everyone," says Militello.

## STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

**"Connections that were once hidden become much more obvious, and the entire academic program is infused with new purpose and meaning. In the process, everyone benefits."**

Top left: Jayne Zimmer with Nicki Werner '14 (at left) and Shelby Sedwick '14

Below: Andre Parker '17 (at left) and Larenz Taylor '17

CHRIS MILITELLO '82



At left: Chris Militello '82 (center) with Chloe Stallion '15 (at left) and Nina Ewing '15



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# CENTER OF ATTENTION

## SERVICE IN ACTION

*MICDS community gives back throughout the year*

From making blankets, to face painting to donating turkeys — MICDS students, faculty and staff participate in a number of community service endeavors throughout the school year. This fall was no exception. The photos on these pages represent a sampling of the meaningful ways MICDS makes an effort to give back to the community.

### SCHOOL FAMILIES SERVICE PROJECT

PHOTOS BY DEBBIE HIGGINS AND GARY LOBSTEIN

On November 9, students, faculty and staff gathered in their School Families to make meaningful gifts such as fleece blankets, personal care kits, Thanksgiving placemats and wreaths for a variety of local agencies, including Lydia's House, Our Lady's Inn, Gateway 180, The Women's Safe House, Ranken Jordan Children's Hospital, Haven of Grace, Emmaus Home, Cardinal Ritter, St. Vincent dePaul Society, Sunshine Ministries, Grace and Peace, Oak Hill Nursing Home and Brentmoor Senior Living.

### 6TH GRADERS VISIT NORTH SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

PHOTOS BY SUJATA BISWAS AND ALICE GALT

In October, the sixth grade class of 2017 visited North Side Community School, a St. Louis City charter public school founded by alumni John Grote '67 and Ross Woolsey '67. The girls read to kindergarten students, helped them make paper jack-o-lanterns and joined them for recess. The boys helped with the all-school Halloween party, running the special events and helping students decorate trick-or-treat bags. MICDS sixth grade families also donated Halloween costumes for North Side students.

### 7TH ANNUAL TURKEY TRAIN

PHOTOS BY ELAINE COLLINS, GARY LOBSTEIN AND JEN SCHUCKMAN

The 7th Annual Turkey Train took place on November 22. Upper School students passed frozen turkeys hand over hand across campus to waiting St. Louis Area Foodbank trucks. Middle and Lower School students donated non-perishable food items, which were sorted and packed by fourth graders. LaCasey Milton was on hand to receive the donation, the largest the Foodbank receives every year. In total, the MICDS donation amounted to 7,770 pounds of turkey, 2,514 pounds of non-perishable food items and 8,227 meals for the needy.



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### SCHOOL FAMILIES SERVICE PROJECT

1 (From left to right) Madison Connell '19, Nick Mellanby '19, Emmy Sprong '13, Kevin Eggert '13 and Leah Thomas '13 sort baby bottles.

2 Josh Sutton '19 and Caroline Abel '16 decorate placemats.

3 Akshara Narra '13 (at left) and Darby Hobbs '13 make flower pens.

4 (From left) Rebecca Dubis '14, Cassie Collins '14 and Sunya Ahmed '14 work on a fleece blanket.



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#### NORTH SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

5 (From left to right) Sam Frank, Jack Baumstark, Ward Hanser, Jack Sant, Rohit Chouhan, Dominic Proctor, Max Goldenberg, Austin Gordon, Alex Curylo and Andrew Krause

6 MICDS helpers during an art class included (foreground at left) Skyler Halbeck, Courtney Knapp (at right) and Isabella Fox (back table at right).

7 Sophia Sjogren (at left) and Evie Mauzé give new friends a lift.

8 Mary Beth Hopkins walks with a friend.

9 (From left to right) Colleen Sliney, Evie Mauzé, Sophia Sjogren, Caitlin Halligan, Nicole Stancic, Aliyah Butler, Janey Richert and Kaleigh Riggs (In background, from left) Anya Rahman and Kayla Martin

10 Sixth Grade Dean Alice Galt visits with Anne Hunt Miller '00, a teacher at North Side.

11 Max Goldenberg tries his hand at face painting.

#### TURKEY TRAIN

12 (From left) Lower School students Alexandra Fox '19, Ian Shepherd '22, Anna Wilson '22, Kenny Townsend '19, Emma Maxwell '22 and Bjorn Sjogren '22 sort canned goods.

13 Community Service Co-Heads Nuley Seo '11 (at left) and Annie Trulaske '11 (at right) present a food basket to the St. Louis Area Foodbank's LaCasey Milton.

14 (From left to right) Eleventh graders A.J. Washington, Chris Hiemenz, Meg Theodoro, Lizzy Holbrook, Frank Sprich, Heather Cousins and Allison Cotton pass the turkeys.



10



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# THE RIGHT

## Responsive Teaching & Learning: **MICDS cultivates student-centered classrooms**

BY DEBBIE HIGGINS

**A**cross divisions and in every classroom at MICDS, faculty members strive to cultivate a learning environment that engages each and every student. They utilize such tools as the most current research on best practices for teaching and learning, wisdom gained from years of experience, input from colleagues, and what they observe in their own classrooms to respond to the changing needs of students in impactful ways.

### **LOWER SCHOOL TEACHERS EMBRACE THE RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM® APPROACH**

In the Ronald S. Beasley Lower School, the youngest MICDS students are nurtured to become their best, unique selves in a safe and comfortable learning community. Teachers and parents work as partners to create a learning environment in which all students are cared for and respected.

For several years, the Beasley School faculty has studied The Responsive Classroom® approach, a research-based set of philosophies and techniques for teaching and learning that offers guiding principles for creating safe, challenging and joyful learning environments. The Responsive

Classroom® philosophies emphasize the integration of social and academic learning. "We use Responsive Classroom® techniques throughout the Lower School, in every classroom. It helps us, adults and students alike, define who we are as people and how we do our job every day," explains Lower School Head **Janet McMillion**. The Responsive Classroom's® core principles perfectly complement a 2009 – 2014 MICDS Strategic Plan objective listed under the umbrella of Great Teaching and Learning:

*Become increasingly thoughtful and informed about the ways in which the social/emotional lives of children are inextricably linked to their academic success; develop curricula and programs that recognize and respond to this factor in students' lives*

These principles and practices, which have been interwoven into the Lower School's culture, include creating a respectful and safe learning community through Morning Meeting, giving attention to the purpose and flow of classroom design, classroom collaboration to create procedures for community learning, and a curriculum that incorporates academic choice.

### Celebrating Each Child

Building a child-centered learning community requires taking the time to learn about and understand each child and family. "Our students come to us from neighborhoods across St. Louis," McMillion says. "We do not assume that our students come from similar home environments, so we intentionally take the time to get to know each other and understand each other's background." For example, just prior to the beginning of a new school year, junior and senior kindergarten homeroom teachers visit each of their students' homes to meet them and learn about their families.



In the first grade, students begin the year with the "Me I Am" unit, which is designed to celebrate each child's unique gifts. "First graders are at the age where they have a natural desire to share things about themselves," says First Grade Homeroom Teacher **Rita Hillsman**. "We make the most of this interest and provide activities that celebrate self and family." First graders create "Me I Am" posters to share with their classmates that talk about their families, pets, hobbies and favorite things. "The opportunity to present something to classmates helps students, especially those who are new, feel more comfortable at school and helps the children get to know each other well," adds First Grade Homeroom Teacher **Veronica Wachter**. Additional "Me I Am" activities include partnering with parents to discover the story behind each child's name, and writing about feelings. Children also draw maps of their bedrooms, their tummies and their hearts — all exercises designed to celebrate how classmates are alike and how they are different. The ultimate goal for Hillsman and Wachter is to establish a classroom environment in which each child sees him or herself as a unique part of a cohesive whole. Each child creates a puzzle piece that is labeled with their name, joined with the puzzle pieces of their classmates and posted outside the classroom with the message, "We're hand

**"Teachers and parents work as partners to create a learning environment in which all students are cared for and respected."**

in hand, as you can see. We all fit together. Perfectly." Though the "Me I Am" unit was part of the first grade curriculum prior to the adoption of Responsive Classroom® approach, its objectives are a perfect complement.

What does a Responsive Classroom® look like at MICDS? The answer varies from classroom to classroom, which is part of the appeal of this approach. "The Responsive Classroom® approach offers practical, hands-on techniques that have plenty of breadth and depth, room for teachers to incorporate their individual styles and flexibility to accommodate differentiated instruction," says McMillion. Here's a look at how various Responsive Classroom® techniques are applied to Lower School classrooms.

### Morning Meeting

Morning Meeting (pictured below) offers each homeroom the opportunity to gather as a whole group, greet each other and review the daily schedule. "The Morning Meeting process provides a sense of safety and security and fulfills a psychological need that all children share," says Lower School Learning Specialist and Counselor **Vicki Thurman**. Teachers throughout Lower School report that their students rely on Morning Meeting time to help them settle into the school day. It is a time when each child is recognized and welcomed by teachers and classmates



**"This approach encourages teachers to set up the physical space in their classrooms to encourage independence, cooperation and productivity."**

and sets the tone for the academic day. Typically, teachers will post instructions first thing each morning, assigning tasks for students to complete before the day begins, such as changing shoes for PE, completing an assignment, or reading silently until Morning Meeting begins.

In the beginning of the year, Third Grade Homeroom Teacher Sarah Kiske introduced her students to a variety of greetings, such as a high five or a handshake. "Now, they sign up to share their greetings, which include very creative handshakes and dance moves — they love this part of the morning," she says. In Kiske's class, sharing time follows the greeting. Each student signs up in the beginning of the week for a particular day to share things that are important to them, such as family news, events, sports, medals or awards. Classmates are allowed to ask a specified number of questions. A group activity, such as charades, following a pattern, guessing a number, etc., concludes Morning Meeting. "In the beginning of the year, I focused on 'getting to know you' activities and later in the year we focus on more academic activities," Kiske explains. "As the school year progresses I often let the kids choose what they would like to do for our group activity."



### **Rule Creation**

The backbone of the Responsive Classroom® approach, explains Vicki Thurman, is a focus on respect and responsibility. "We tie these concepts into character building experiences like working with students to write school rules, for the playground, or for hallway behavior, written in 'kid language' and posting them for everyone to see." The Lower School team is also very intentional in its planning for the first six weeks of the school year, understanding that it is critical to set the tone for the entire year during these weeks of transition and "being new."

Using *The First Six Weeks of School*, by Paula Denton and Roxann Kriete, as a guide, Lower School teachers plan the first weeks to include activities that familiarize children with routines and expectations, help them become comfortable with the layout of their classrooms, learn about rules and procedures, and most importantly, become acquainted with each other. In those first few weeks, the central focus is to "help children see their school as a place where they belong and where they know and can meet expectations." (Denton and Kriete, 32). The same careful consideration is applied to the final six weeks of the school year, when meaningful year-end celebrations are organized so they do not

interfere with the continuity of the learning cycle. Time is also provided for children to preview the coming school year. "We make sure that children spend some time with the teachers in the next grade to help them know what to expect the following year," says Janet McMillion.

### **Classroom Organization**

The Responsive Classroom® approach encourages teachers to set up the physical space in their classrooms to encourage independence, cooperation and productivity. "People might not notice right away that the layout of our classrooms is very intentional," says McMillion. "The layout of the environment, positioning of furniture and accessibility of resources impacts the flow of the school day." Children quickly learn the layout of their classrooms, and the security of knowing "where everything goes" helps them self-manage their work and improve their organizational skills. Adds McMillion, "Every classroom must have comfortable space for group work as well as places for peace and reflection."

### **Academic Choice**

The objective of the academic choice component of the Responsive Classroom® is to motivate students to take ownership of their learning by differentiating instruction and allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work. The element of choice might vary between the content of a project, the process followed to complete a project, or the end product, explains McMillion. "Academic choice empowers students to play an active role in their learning."

In fourth grade, students received a planning sheet and a copy of the grading rubric for their recent Lewis and Clark project. Students were asked to choose how they wished to share their completed projects with their class. In some cases, students worked with a partner, others in a small group, and some worked independently.





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In second grade, students were recently assigned a project on civic responsibility. Teachers provided detailed requirements for the project, but offered students the choice to create an organization that served the community they belong to, take action on a specific need that was important to them, and create a fictional story that shared their passion for the need they addressed. "Teachers provide appropriate requirements and guidance every step of the way," notes Thurman. "However, adding an element of choice to an assignment often inspires creativity in a powerful way."

### **Partnering with Parents**

Nurturing the parent-school partnership has long been a school-wide commitment at MICDS. It is also a key component of the Responsive Classroom®, and Lower School parents are very much a part of their children's learning process. At the beginning of each school year, the Lower School hosts an evening for parents which has as its focus the home-school connection. Teachers share tips with parents on facilitating the transition back to school, setting routines and helping children become more competent and self-sufficient. Parents are also invited to write personal letters to their children's teachers, sharing what they most want teachers to know about them, as well as their hopes and dreams for their children during the coming school year.

Each grade invites parents to participate in special events or projects throughout the year as well. In senior kindergarten, the SK Café occurs once per month, and invites parents to participate in an activity with their children. Third grade parents assist with Colonial Crafts projects and the Taste the U.S.A. luncheon that celebrates the class's study of the United States. Janet McMillion's weekly parent memo also helps parents stay in touch with current Lower School news and events. "We are committed to ensuring that our parents feel informed, welcomed and connected to our School community," she says.

The Responsive Classroom® approach may look different from classroom to classroom, but the values it fosters — respect, responsibility and child-centered teaching and learning — are hallmarks of the Lower School learning community. "The Responsive Classroom® approach dovetails so perfectly with the MICDS Mission Statement," says McMillion. "It helps us live as a mission-centered school by defining what the Lower School community looks like every day."

### **THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS: GENDER RESPONSIVE TEACHING IN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

The Middle School faculty, under the leadership of **Anne Brown** and **Caroline Leonard**, is committed to maximizing the potential of its single gender classrooms. Following the ISACS

(Independent Schools Association of the Central States) accreditation process in 2007, the Middle School was charged with the task of conducting a comprehensive evaluation of its coordinate, or single gender, class model. "ISACS mandated that we take the time to avail ourselves of the most current research on how boys and girls learn, and take a closer look at our program to determine its effectiveness," explains Leonard. The MICDS Gender Responsive Teaching Committee (GRTC) began its work in the fall of 2008.

MICDS is fortunate to have experts on gender responsive teaching among its faculty, stemming from the traditions of two single sex schools, Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School, that merged in 1992 and kept single gender classes (known as the coordinate model) in the Middle School. In addition, the ISACS recommendation occurred at the same time a great deal of conversation was occurring on a national level about developmental differences in boys and girls, and an abundance of academic research was readily available. MICDS faculty participated in workshops led by national experts to better understand how and why boys and girls learn differently. Guest experts included Dr. Leonard Sax, founder and executive director of the National Association for Single Sex Public Education and author of *Gender Matters, Boys Adrift and Girls on the Edge*; Dr. Abigail Norfleet-James, author of *Teaching the Male Brain: How Boys Think, Feel and Learn in School* and *Teaching the Female Brain: How Girls Learn Math and Science*; and Rosalind Wiseman, author of *Queen Bees and Wannabes*.

**"We are committed to ensuring that our parents feel informed, welcomed and connected to our School community."**



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**Internal Research and Rave Reviews**

The GRTC collected statistical classroom performance data, and proudly reported that MICDS students are equally successful in the classroom — there is no achievement gap between girls and boys. Surveys demonstrated that most students and parents who experienced the coordinate model were pleased with the approach. Feedback from graduates and parents reveals that kids feel more comfortable in class — and because the model offers the right blend of coed experiences — like foreign language classes, arts classes and choir, extracurricular activities, chapel and lunch — students feel fully prepared to transition to all coed classes in Upper School. “I never heard a single complaint from my son regarding the single gender classrooms, and I am confident that, in fact, he was quite relieved about the policy,” notes a parent on a 2008 survey. “There was plenty of interaction with the opposite sex during other parts of the school day to keep him feeling comfortable with girls, but their absence from the classroom allowed him and his classmates to focus on the subject at hand. I think, for him, it was a tremendous advantage.”

The ultimate goal of gender responsive teaching is the same goal that all MICDS faculty strive to achieve — optimizing each child’s learning experience, academically and socially. “At MICDS, we use multiple teaching tools to best serve our individual

students,” Leonard explains. “We know that boys’ and girls’ brains develop in different ways, especially during the middle school years. Gender responsive teaching helps us tailor their learning experience to leverage these differences. While avoiding the trap of gender stereotyping, we use what we know about the ways boys and girls learn to best teach our students.”

what they know to be true about the chemistry of a given class to create the best possible learning environment. “Teachers learn to select the right tool to use with the right student at the right time,” says Leonard. “We are committed to customizing our teaching methods to suit the needs of our students without altering our high academic standards.”

### Different Approaches to Learning

What are these primary differences in boys and girls? Margaret M. Ferrara, a University of Nevada-Reno educator, conducted a study on gender differences in learning that the Middle School teachers use as a key resource. Ferrara’s paper, “The Single Gender Middle School Classroom: A Close-up Look at Gender Differences in Learning,” includes a chart that outlines learning tips for boys and girls. Girls, for example, tend to prefer small group work and open-ended assignments, engage more in class discussions and enjoy sharing what they have learned through role-playing or skits. Boys, on the other hand, thrive on competition and challenges in an active setting, prefer assignments that are “quick-paced” and completed quickly, engage in more short-term discussions and prefer to summarize a concept through a more objective, fact-oriented vehicle such as a model or poster. (Ferrara, 7)

How do Middle School teachers apply this knowledge? First and foremost, teachers focus on being responsive to the unique needs of a student or class rather than taking a “one size fits all” approach, applying

### The View from the Classroom

Ultimately, gender responsive teaching in the Middle School is about approaching the same concept or subject in a number of different ways and achieving the same end result. Teachers look for connections that tie what students are required to learn with something that is personally interesting to them. In sixth grade, Julie Johnson, holder of the David S. Turken Chair of Distinguished Teaching, created a team competition to help the boys develop healthy habits related to academic preparedness. The competition evolved when Johnson decided to teach language arts only to boys and turned to research to prepare, consulting works by Leonard Sax (*Why Gender Matters* and *Boys Adrift*) and Peg Tyre (*The Trouble with Boys*). “All of the experts agree that boys are motivated by competition,” she explains. “The sixth grade team competition motivates them to do things they should be doing, such as writing assignments in their planners,

**“The ultimate goal of gender responsive teaching ... is to optimize each child’s learning experience, academically and socially.”**

completing homework on time and behaving appropriately.” The competition also gives students the experience of being a member of a team, realizing that they will be held accountable if they lose points for the larger group. It also gives someone who might not be a star on an athletic team the opportunity to be a star on his sixth grade team.

The competition randomly divides all sixth grade boys into four teams. Teams gather at the beginning of the school year to choose a name and meet their fellow members. Every day, sixth graders can acquire or lose points in all of their core classes — teachers assign or deduct points for students as necessary for completed assignments, up-to-date planners and behavior. Johnson keeps track of all of the points and, at the end of each trimester, declares a winning team (the Steelers are pictured with her, below). The reward is a pizza party. In its third year, the sixth grade competition program remains a positive experience for everyone involved. It inspires the boys to do the right thing, and teammates hold each other accountable for their actions. The competition teaches the boys to respect one another and builds a more cohesive class. “It’s powerful when a peer reminds a student to do his homework,” Johnson explains.

“The sixth grade competition brings out the best in us,” said Nicholas LeNoir ’17 of the experience. “Since you have a goal and a team you always try to do your best.” Adds Ethan Reed ’17, “The team competition inspires us to be on our A-Game every day. I’m so glad I got the chance to be a part of this.”

The team competition also reinforces significant life lessons. “The reality of the world is that one day these boys will have to work with diverse groups of people to figure out how to problem solve and achieve a common goal,” notes Johnson. “It is important for them to practice these skills now.” The commitment to “getting it right” on the part of the sixth grade boys speaks to the positive impact of this



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program. Channeling boys’ natural affinity for competition into building healthy work and study habits has “worked like magic.”

In her classroom filled with boys, Johnson approaches teaching in much the same way a coach works with a team. “I support them with tough love, and I make sure that, above all else, we respect each other.”

Eighth Grade English Teacher Candice Baumann, who was educated in an all-girls environment and came to MICDS from a coeducational school, is thrilled to have the opportunity to teach both boys and girls in single gender classes. “The literature discussions are richer in single gender settings,” she says. “The students feel much more free to share their observations and questions. I’m convinced that both the boys and the girls discuss things in single gender classrooms that they would never talk about in a coed class.” Baumann also believes that boys in particular develop stronger writing skills in a single gender setting because they feel safe and comfortable expressing themselves in front of all-male peers. Recently, her boys’ class had the assignment of writing a free verse poem based on their reading of *The Crucible*. The boys were excited to take turns reading their poems for their classmates, and one student even volunteered to do dramatic interpretations of each one as it was read.

“It was one of the best classes we’ve ever had,” says Baumann.

**“We work in partnership with students to help them discover who they are as learners, and give them strategies to be successful.”**

### Looking Ahead

Moving forward, the GRTC continues its work, monitoring academic research, maintaining a bibliography of resources and brainstorming new ways to connect with students. Caroline Leonard is currently developing a web page at [www.micds.org](http://www.micds.org) that will include a research bibliography for faculty, testimonials from current students and parents and information to educate prospective families on the positive impact of gender responsive teaching. Julie Johnson is transitioning to the role of chair of the GRTC in 2011–2012.

“The ability of our faculty to shift between different modes of teaching has allowed us to really connect with our kids,” says Leonard. “We work in partnership with students to help them discover who they are as learners, how they learn and what they enjoy learning, and give them strategies to be successful. This continues to be the most rewarding outcome of our work.”

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

### GENDER RESPONSIVE TEACHING COMMITTEE

Kathleen Armstrong	Lisa Huxley
Candice Baumann	Jan Jacobi
Sujata Biswas	Julie Johnson
Bonnie Frank	Jennifer Schuckman
Jane Fredman	Ines Shultz
Catalina Hayes	Tom Wehling





# A Home From Away Home

**UPPER SCHOOL**  
**STUDENTS AND**  
**TEACHERS FORM**  
**LASTING BONDS**  
**THROUGH**  
**THE ADVISORY**  
**PROGRAM**

BY JILL DONOVAN

FOR THE DONOVAN ADVISORY, 2007 – 2011

**W**hen people outside of our community ask me what makes the MICDS Upper School unique, I talk about excellent teachers and motivated students, about top notch curriculum and the impressive athletic and college counseling programs, but I also mention the component that I believe helps to anchor all of the rest: advisory. Walk into any classroom on campus and you will see evidence of the advisory webbing in place — snack lists and weekly reminders, advisory trophies and gifts, a clothesline hung with memorial dodgeball T-shirts, and, always, the pictures — framed photographs, color printer photographs, and snapshot after snapshot of the same 10 – 12 students as they travel through their four-year journey together.

What makes advisory so special? How does spending 20 often unstructured minutes together, three times a week, over the course of four years add such depth and

significance to a student's overall Upper School experience? What does advisory offer that English 10 or AP Bio or Varsity Water Polo or Chamber Choir cannot? I think the core answer is both simple and profound: because advisory offers a continuous shared experience with a common set of peers and a single caring adult, it provides a deep sense of belonging that no other program can match.

“Watch what happens to an advisory group,” says Andrea Brownstein, Director of College Counseling. “By the end of the four years, the advisees end up looking like their advisor.” While no one in my current senior advisory could play my double in a movie, I appreciate the wisdom behind Andrea’s remark. When we, as advisors, do our jobs well, our advisees begin to emulate our best qualities. They start to make good decisions and correct bad ones and reflect on the difference between the two. They learn to discover and nurture their own gifts and talents and



*Because advisory offers a continuous shared experience with a common set of peers and a single caring adult, it provides a deep sense of belonging that no other program can match.*



Large photo on previous page: The Voss Advisory gathered in the library. (Clockwise from center of table) Juniors Brandon Luan, Mimi Abbott, Christine Jackson, Shelby Narke, Blair Koeneman, Katherine Moore, Jaron Randle, Michael Kohn, Austin Engelage and Rio Schimmelpfenig

then offer them in service to others. They end up, in Mission lingo, thinking critically, acting responsibly, and living virtuously and compassionately. Because our advisees feel well known — feel valued and cared about in all of their complex individuality — they feel safe enough to grow and mature.

One of my English Department colleagues turned 50 in December. His senior advisees came to school early to decorate his classroom, cheered wildly when he arrived in Chapel, and spent the entire day wishing him well. When another colleague lost his father last fall, his junior advisees brought flowers and a card that they had all signed. In my “Family Stories” literature course, in which students create an iMovie documentary about

their family as a final project, one of my favorites was the one that Lily made about her advisory. The car wash, the turkey train, the community service projects, the dodgeball tournaments, the boat races, the senior project presentations — all of these events help cement an advisory, but just as important are the daily interactions: the calls back and forth between home and school, the regular email updates, the attendance at games and plays and concerts and dances, the impromptu ice cream and ping pong parties, the advisory birthday and holiday celebrations. Even during exams (which students take in their advisory locations) advisory feels like home base.

In my early years at MICDS I had an advisee who would come into my room almost daily during his free periods and sprawl on his back atop one of the tables. With a single arm slung over his face, he rarely looked at me, but during those 5 or 10 minute “debriefing sessions,” we learned a lot about each other and I want to believe that I helped that young man weather



Above: The Donovan Advisory after the Senior Boat Race: Stephanie Clark, Michael Davidson, Tucker Ruwitch, Caroline Maples, Teddy Chivetta, Trisha Basu, Nuley Seo, Janie Kaiser and Mason Meine (not pictured: Sam Richmond)

Top right: The Baker Advisory just hanging out: (Front row, from left) Tenth graders Claire Rush and CeCe Moore; (Second row, from left) Michael Baker, Elise Elliot, George Reynolds, Katie Fuszner, Aaron Francis, Natasha Baker, John Dunagan, Charley Reed, Girija Haraprasad and Lexi Bollis

Bottom right: The Elliott-Werremeyer Advisory enjoying baked goods and conversation: (Front row, from left) Tenth graders Mashaal Zahid, Tori Peacock, Emma Klobnak, Aaron Elliott, Devin Chabot and Youssef Younis; (Back row, from left) Zach Pinz, Bill Werremeyer '65, McCraig Dove, Tad Desai, John Moore and Dennis Shultz



*The advisees learn to discover and nurture their own gifts and talents and then offer them in service to others.*





“

*Our advisories are a microcosm of the entire vital community: they are alive and dynamic spaces in which individuals who care deeply about one another are learning and growing together.*

”



the storms of his high school years. My advisees and I have lived the spectrum of emotions together — I have seen them at their silliest and their saddest, their most astute and their most baffled; they have seen me delighted and dejected, serious and deeply amused. We have shared milestones and challenges and ordinary Tuesdays after a long weekend. We've navigated scheduling and friendship dilemmas, feelings of overwhelm and tedium, anxieties about first dances and anxieties about college application deadlines. We have played on the playground, taken walks along the Grand Basin, eaten at the Boat House, read stories with first graders, spread mulch in Forest Park, shared “sporty updates,” traded New Year’s resolutions, and encouraged each other to hang in there and go the distance and press on. I have spoken about my advisees so often at home that my own sons feel as though they know them.

In May, when my current 11 stride up the center aisle of the MAC during Commencement, their parents won't be the only people moved to tears. Select a random day and walk into any advisory in the Upper School and you will feel this same kind of connection. Our advisories are a microcosm of the entire vital community: they are alive and dynamic spaces in which individuals who care deeply about one another are learning and growing together.

That is the magic of advisory at MICDS.

*Jill Donovan is the Upper School's English Department Chair. She began her tenure at MICDS in August 2003.*

STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Top: The Purdy Advisory on a scavenger hunt: (Front row, from left) Eleventh graders Hannah Akre and Madison Mann; (Back row, from left) Steven Frank, Julia Kautenburger, Jordan Evans, Philip Arnold, Jackson Myer, Jimmy Hildreth, Will Stupp, Kelsie Augustin, Madeline Townsley and DeAnna Pope

Middle: The Good Advisory at the Turkey Train: (Front row, from left) Ninth graders Elena Murawski, Lubna Abedin, Mandy Zhang, Ankita Kanakadandila and Kayla Moore; (Back row, from left) Chad Meine, Reilly Nix, Corbin Wright, Grant Larson, Tommy Stupp and Cole Campbell

Bottom: Members of the Donovan Advisory in Forest Park: (From left) Jill Donovan, Tucker Ruwitch, Alex Windsor, Trisha Basu, Stephanie Clark and Michael Davidson



# BREAKING NEWS

BY  
DEBBIE HIGGINS

BEHIND  
THE SCENES  
OF THE  
BEASLEY  
BROADCAST



PHOTOS BY DEBBIE HIGGINS

**S**INCE ITS LAUNCH SIX YEARS AGO, THE BEASLEY BROADCAST, a monthly news program hosted by fourth grade students, has grown exponentially in popularity. Lower School CIT (Coordinator of Instructional Technology) Greg Stevens developed the first edition of the Beasley Broadcast in 2005 when he was the holder of the Harriet Baur Spoehrer '24 Chair of Distinguished Teaching. He believes the Beasley Broadcast has remained a hit for several reasons, explaining, "It communicates our work at school to parents in a creative and fun way."

in a creative and fun way, it is a wonderful leadership opportunity for fourth graders, and it celebrates the spirit of community that exists within the Lower School."

Stevens acts as producer, videographer, director and editor of each broadcast, which typically runs 15 minutes. Two fourth graders, one boy and one girl, work as hosts for each show, giving up recess time to choose stories and film their commentary. Each broadcast begins with a blank slate — Stevens solicits ideas from all Lower School teachers and then allows the hosts to review

**"It  
is a wonderful  
leadership  
opportunity for  
fourth graders."**

and select which stories to include, making certain that each grade level is represented. Once the content for a broadcast is chosen, Stevens circulates through the Lower School classrooms recording footage. The Beasley Broadcast has evolved with technology. It began in an audio-only format, then expanded to include slideshows with commentary, and starting in 2009, video. Stevens also incorporates media created by students and faculty — including photos and raw video shot with Flip cameras students borrow from the computer lab. Recent features have included sharing safety rules for the playground, the third grade's field trip to Kampsville and their study of Native Americans, a visit with Lego Club members, the first grade's unit on fairy tales and book reviews by second graders.

The Beasley Broadcast provides first-hand training into what it takes to produce an actual news show. Student hosts, like many professional news reporters, film their segments in front of a makeshift "green screen" which, during editing, is replaced with special graphics that relate to stories. Students learn how to write scripts that fill a specified amount of time, become familiar with using a video camera and learn how lighting and sound contribute to the overall quality of the final product. They also review clips with Stevens to decide if additional segments are necessary to fill in gaps.

In addition to building community within the Lower School, the Beasley Broadcast encourages friendships across grade levels and helps students get to know one another. "During the typical school day, students spend most of their time with their homeroom classmates," says Stevens. "By including stories that feature all grade levels we give students a window into what's happening in other classrooms."

The goal of each broadcast, explains Stevens, is to achieve a balance of content this is informative, yet also engaging and entertaining. "Quick transitions between stories are important, and weaving in fun

and surprising elements is also critical," he says. For example, for one recent segment, students from different grades were recruited to sing along to a popular song. Another segment produced solely for its entertainment value was a piece all about spaghetti.

Hosts are usually able to preview stories and are responsible for writing their scripts, including a greeting (though sometimes they ad-lib their opening remarks), introductions for each segment and a farewell. They also read the month's birthdays. Hosts are selected by drawing names so everyone has the chance to participate. In two years, Stevens has never had a student turn down the opportunity to be a host. "It's a fun break from classes, and you still learn something," says **Graham Bundy '19**. "I like getting to use the technology and watching Mr. Stevens add cool backgrounds to the green screen," adds **Alex Fox '19**.

In addition to simply being a fun activity, the Beasley Broadcast inspires students to practice important skills in a low-threat environment. "Participating in the Broadcast as anchors helps the kids develop their public speaking abilities, fosters their creativity and gives them an avenue to come out of their shells in a relatively unintimidating setting," says Fourth Grade Homeroom Teacher **Donna Waters**. "The shows are taped without an audience, so students are more likely to speak freely and without fear of being embarrassed."

Fourth graders are the leaders in Lower School, adds Stevens. "They are our 'seniors' and it is important to give them leadership opportunities in which it is their responsibility to set the tone and act as role models for younger students."

 STRATEGIC PLAN-GREAT TEACHING & LEARNING

 STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

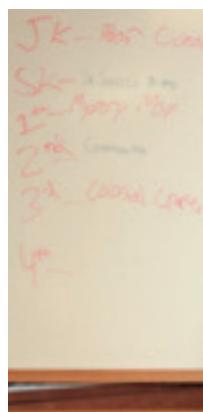


At left: Aaron Autry '19 and Caroline Weber '19 rehearse their show.

Above: Graham Bundy '19 adjusts the camera for Elsa Sjogren '19.

At right: Thomas Clarkson '19 and Alex Fox '19 brainstorm story topics with Greg Stevens.

**"It  
celebrates the  
spirit of community  
that exists within the  
Lower School."**



# SCHOOL SPIRIT

BY DEBBIE HIGGINS

## GIRL POWER

*Girls on the Run promotes friendship, fun and healthy living*

**O**n a chilly November morning, thousands of girls from across the St. Louis area, including 31 MICDS Lower and Middle School students, gathered in Forest Park to participate in a 5K race that was much more than a running event — it was the culmination of a 10-week life-changing program known as Girls on the Run. With over 150 councils across the United States and Canada, Girls on the Run (GOTR) fulfills its mission “to educate and prepare girls for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living” through a character building curriculum that offers experiential learning through running, teaching social and personal skills along the way.

The MICDS team, led by coaches Heather Hayward Huewe '87, Lisa Huxley (MS math), Sarah Kiske (3rd grade) and Kelly Neary (SK), began meeting twice per week in early September. MICDS coaches were assisted by Asha Natarajan and Karla Hutton, law students at Saint Louis University, and Claire Kerckhoff, a dietitian and health care professional. Practices began with questions for the girls about the day's topic, followed by a game related to the theme, a warm-up and a work-out. “It was our ultimate priority to create a fun atmosphere where the girls could just enjoy themselves and each other and feel comfortable participating in the activities,” says Coach Huewe.

The GOTR curriculum is organized into three subject areas that are shared through a variety of methods including discussion, role-playing, games and work-outs. Part one of the program focused on each girl as an individual and the discovery of what she stands for. Themes for practices included physical and emotional health, how drugs and alcohol are harmful, and encouraging each girl to develop a plan for living a healthy life. Part two of the GOTR curriculum delved deeper into relationships — covering topics ranging from being a good listener, to bullying, to standing up for oneself. Finally, the curriculum focused on each girl’s role in the community and included a service project. Coach Huewe’s group wrote letters and collected games for patients at Children’s Hospital. The girls in Coach Huxley’s group chose to create activity kits for the young children who visit the Family Resource Center. The girls wrote a shopping list and organized materials into craft kits with instructions to make a snowman, a gingerbread man or a Christmas tree.

*"It was exhilarating to see 4000 girls running alongside their friends, parents and teachers — it was the first distance run for many of them. The girls gained more confidence in themselves, had a wonderful time building new friendships and felt such a sense of accomplishment when they all crossed the finish line."*

Fourth graders working with Coach Kiske and Coach Neary wrote “thank you” notes and assembled treat bags for the Lower School maintenance staff, and also assisted with cleaning up the cafeteria after lunch.

“The great thing about Girls on the Run is that is about so much more than running,” Coach Huewe explains. “If the girls became interested in running, that was a bonus, but it was also OK if they participated for the fun and friendships. Running and exercise just happened to be the avenues we used to teach lifelong lessons.” Group activities included analyzing actual magazine ads to identify the hidden messages they send to young girls, or playing “Hot-cha Mama” in order to learn in a very silly way how to actively listen to others. Trust falls, running laps to earn lap bands, and learning superstar cheers to support teammates also brought a spirit of fun and inclusion to GOTR meetings.

Fifth grader Brooke Wright '18 already had an interest in running, and “liked having an opportunity to do something fun and active with friends after school.” She describes the 5K run at Forest Park as “thrilling” and says that the most important lesson she learned was “sometimes things are hard but you can still do them if you do not give up.” Sixth grader Colleen Sliney '17 adds, “I learned how to stick up for myself without being mean, not to care so much about what I look like, and also how important it is to care for others.”



(Front row, from left) Annie Weiser '18, Brooke Wright '18, Claire Burmeister '18, Kat Schoenecker '18, Katie O'Hara '18 and Sofi Carr '18.  
(Back row, from left) Skyler Halbeck '17 and Coach Lisa Huxley

At right: (From left to right) Coach Kelly Neary, Taylor Turnell '19, Elsa Sjogren '19, Olivia Proctor '19, Raevyn Ferguson '19, Labrill Collins '19, Megan Smith '19, Katie Horan '19, Madison Connell '19 and Coach Sarah Kiske

Below: The girls start their practice 5K run at MICDS.



The primary purpose of GOTR is to give young girls the skills they need to preserve their amazing spirits in the face of middle and high school challenges and into their adult lives. “Our goal was to give the girls the confidence to be their own unique, best selves, as well as the skills to stand up for themselves,” explains Coach Huewe. “As a stay-at-home mom of three young girls, I found these lessons personally meaningful too, and that in and of itself speaks to the value of the GOTR program.”

In preparation for the 5K Race in Forest Park, the girls completed a practice 5K at MICDS on November 2. Parents were on hand to distribute lap bands, run alongside the girls, hand out water and cheer for all of the participants. The enthusiasm was palpable — it was clear that the girls had bonded with each other and with



Maura Court '18 with  
Coach Heather Hayward Huewe '87

## GIRLS ON THE RUN PARTICIPANTS

Rachel Anderson '17  
Claire Burmeister '18  
Aliyah Butler '17  
Gina Carr '15  
Sophia Carr '18  
Annie Cohen '17  
Labrill Collins '19  
Ellie Connell '18  
Madison Connell '19  
Maura Court '18  
Raevyn Ferguson '19  
Shannon Gould '18  
Skyler Halbeck '17  
Katie Horan '19  
Courtney Knapp '17  
Caroline Niesen '16  
Katie O'Hara '18  
Olivia Proctor '19  
Ava Samson-Montes '17  
Mollie Schmid '18  
Katherine Schoenecker '18  
Elsa Sjogren '19  
Colleen Sliney '17  
Megan Smith '19  
Taylor Turnell '19  
Alexis Vatterott '17  
Samantha Villagomez '17  
Lexi Walsh '17  
Annabel Warren '17  
Annie Weiser '18  
Brooke Wright '18

their coaches and felt proud of their progress. “I felt very prepared for the 5K and was so excited to join runners from other schools,” says Maura Court '18. “Running makes me feel free to be me.”

The scene in Forest Park on race day was “breathtaking,” according to Lisa Huxley. “It was exhilarating to see 4000 girls running alongside their friends, parents and teachers — it was the first distance run for many of them.” Sarah Kiske adds, “The girls gained more confidence in themselves, had a wonderful time building new friendships and felt such a sense of accomplishment when they all crossed the finish line.”

*Editor's Note: For more information about Girls on the Run, please visit [www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org).*

## VIEWPOINT

BY TARA ASSI '11

### CONNECTIONS ACROSS CULTURES

#### *Learning the true meaning of global citizenship*

**H**e was about three feet tall, with tan skin, big black eyes, and dark hair. He wore the traditional white *thawb*, a dressing gown that was light-weight and had long sleeves, along with a *keffiyeh*, a black and white checkered head scarf. He seemed to be around six years old, and he was trying to sell me crinkled and dirty postcards with faded pictures of scenic areas in Syria. He was a child of the streets, and he was far too clever for his own good; he knew I would sympathize with his youth and buy the postcards. But as I was walking away with the useless purchase, shock flooded me. This boy's life was so different from mine, and I wanted more than anything to understand him. This small encounter with the young salesman stayed with me throughout my six week journey through Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt this past summer. For a month and a half I studied Arabic and Middle Eastern culture and made connections with people throughout the Middle East, including that small boy. This experience taught me so much, but most importantly it gave me insight into what it truly means to be a global citizen.

I used to believe that I was a global citizen, but that was before I knew what it truly meant. My studies abroad showed me that you can't just speak the language and automatically understand a culture. You really have to learn the core values of a culture and understand why people of different backgrounds act the way they do. I couldn't wholly understand any Lebanese person (even though I'm half-Lebanese) until I studied the history of their nation and visited the most celebrated areas in Lebanon. I had to know why the Lebanese people upheld their beliefs in order to value all that the culture had to offer. When I first arrived in Lebanon I wasn't expecting the strong yet varied religious beliefs of the people, but I learned that the nation was founded on religion. That's when I began to study even harder because I could see the connections between what I had learned in class and the people I met on the street.

I became fascinated with the foundation of countries and how different cultures borrowed from past cultures and built their own society. In Egypt I could actually see the layering of different time periods and cultures in Luxor Temple. On the bottom level was the Egyptian temple, and then columns that had been altered by the Ancient Greeks to suit their religious

beliefs. A Christian altar had been built within the temple, and on top of the entire structure there was a mosque. To see the actual layering of different cultures was pivotal: I was looking at a piece of living history, and this experience made me want to study and learn more.

Not only did my travels ignite a passion for cultural study, they also gave me a greater appreciation for both my culture and others. I learned to be truly grateful for what I have; I am so fortunate just to live in the United States, and we take so much for granted. The Middle East held treasures which I couldn't find at home; the people were so incredibly hospitable, regardless of the fact that I was a complete stranger. I remember walking through the *souks*, small street markets, and being invited into a metalworking shop to watch a blacksmith work. He patiently explained in broken English how to manipulate the metal over a cup of coffee while I played with his three year old son. When it was time for me to leave, he gave me a jewelry box free of charge. I was a complete stranger, and this man had treated me to coffee and given me something he had worked on for hours. I miss their generosity dearly, and I now have a deep respect for Middle Eastern people because I lived with them, attempted to speak their language, and studied their heritage.

My travels gave me experiences I will never forget, but most importantly they showed me that I have to have a multi-faceted view of the world and the people in it. I learned to appreciate the diversity of people and realize how much I am missing by not exploring the world around me, let alone the community I live in. In order to be successful on a global scale, you have to be able to relate to and understand people from around the world. This has to be done through cultural study. I want to be able to travel the world and have my deep respect for those from different cultures reciprocated. I want to build foundations for relationships that will last a lifetime and change the world, and I can't do that without a global education. I want to be a global citizen, encompassing all that it means, and contribute to the world as a whole.



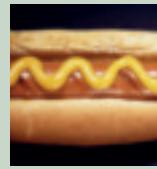
Tara Assi, a senior, has attended MICDS since seventh grade.

STRATEGIC PLAN-LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*"My travels gave me experiences I will never forget, but most importantly they showed me that I have to have a multi-faceted view of the world and the people in it. I learned to appreciate the diversity of people and how much I am missing by not exploring the world around me, let alone the community I live in."*



PHOTOS BY TIM PARKER



## HAPPY HOMECOMING!

*Carnival brings  
MICDS families together  
for fun and games*

Rainy skies failed to dampen the spirits of the MICDS families who enjoyed the annual Homecoming Carnival on September 10. Kids of all ages raced around McDonnell Athletic Center from one attraction to the other. Eighth grade students worked as volunteers, assisting the younger children with such games as a hula hoop toss, bean bag throw and a giant Connect 4. Inflatable attractions included a giant slide, a boxing ring, a bounce house and a maze. A tattoo station, which offered Rams logos, was also a popular stop and everyone enjoyed grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for lunch in the Hermann Atrium. The MICDS Campus Store also set up a satellite boutique at the entrance to the MAC that was fully stocked with Rams spirit wear. The Homecoming Carnival was a highlight of Spirit Week activities that included special dress days and the traditional pep rally and bonfire.

From top:  
Alexa Rizzo '16 sports the latest design  
in Rams face paint.

Will Goldberg '18 tries his luck on the  
bungee run.

Davis Johnson '19 (at left) and  
Harry Covert '19 show their spirit.

Zoe Carpenter '23 takes a ride on the  
giant slide.

Jisung Kim '18 gets ready to shoot  
some hoops.

Gigi Rill '15 (at right) helps  
Bianca Machain '23 aim the mallet.





*Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School*

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## PAINT IT PINK!

*MICDS continues its commitment to the fight against cancer.*

On January 14, the Rams designated men's and women's varsity basketball games versus John Burroughs School as the annual "Coaches vs. Cancer" contests, and hundreds of fans showed their support. MICDS has supported Coaches vs. Cancer, a nationwide collaboration between the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches, for a number of years. The Win With Wellness student group sponsored raffles to raise funds and set up informational displays showing statistics about various kinds of cancer. The Upper School student body wore pink t-shirts in support of the cause. MICDS has raised thousands of dollars over the past several years to support the fight against cancer.

See page 8 of Up Front for more information.

