

GEORGE WASHINGTON ACADEMY

Equipping Minds,
Building Character

News from our community, for our community

ECHO

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FROM THE HEAD'S DESK

Changes Strengthen GWA

As you enjoy this issue of the ECHO we hope you are continually affirmed that GWA is a school deeply committed to the mission of inspiring and equipping each student. It will continue to be our goal to build passionate learners, empowering and preparing them to adapt and contribute in our rapidly changing world. Who could have anticipated that 2017 would see such major shifts in the global political landscape? Thankfully here at GWA, these changes serve only to strengthen our resolve and vision to develop students with a broader understanding.

George Washington Academy enters the 19th year of operation and now enjoys a beautiful purpose-built campus. Although the facilities are great and we are thrilled to witness our Library Media-Tech Center nearing completion, it remains our united commitment to the vision that serves as our foundation for the learning experiences we offer every day. This new facility only enhances the opportunities we seek to prepare the whole child so students are able to impact the future positively with the skills necessary to be successful as leaders, risk takers, and innovators. We are thankful for the leadership of our board, the support of our parents and the patience of our community as this phase of our model campus is now in place.



FROM THE HEAD'S DESK *continued*

GWA's Future is in Good Hands

Another very important process in the life of GWA is the succession of our leadership. As many of you already know, this will be my sixth and final year with GWA. My family and I will depart with heavy hearts, but with anticipation of great opportunities on the horizon for GWA. This year we have established a top-notch administrative team full of positive energy, innovative ideas and a healthy mixture of educational experience. Our school is poised and ready for continued advancements in our pursuit of excellence. To carry GWA into the next phase, I am thrilled to announce that our board has unanimously appointed GWA's next Head of School, Dr. Audrey Menard.

Dr. Menard has accepted this appointment and is very excited to continue leading GWA toward achieving our vision for years to come.

Over the past year at GWA Dr. Menard has established herself as a key educational leader gaining great respect from our students, parents, teachers and the administrative team. We firmly believe



that Dr. Menard is the type of leader that is needed to continue expanding and improving the academic programs here at GWA. As we have already noticed from her time at GWA, Dr. Menard is also a strong advocate for school reform. She is passionate in her pursuit of practical solutions that will reshape education in the 21st Century here at GWA.

Dr. Menard earned her doctorate in Educational Leadership, Policy Organization at Vanderbilt University; her MEd in Educational Administration at the University of Massachusetts; and her BS in Education (mathematics concentration) at Longwood University.

While working closely with the students, families, and faculty we have already felt her strong presence as she continues to bring her curricular and educational expertise to GWA. With over 25 years of educational experience as a teacher, entrepreneur, business owner, principal, and head of school in public, private, and independent school education, Dr. Menard came to the GWA community from her post as head of school at a PK-12 international day and boarding school in Arizona, USA.

Clearly Dr. Menard and her family have already fallen in love with Morocco and with GWA. In her free time, Dr. Menard enjoys traveling, cooking, reading, and walking. She is married to Brian Menard, also proven educator and a vital part of our administrative team. Together they have two children, Margaret (age 18), and Charlotte (age 16).

Please join the GWA community in congratulating Dr. Audrey Menard as our next Head of School.

Principal's Corner | Lower School

Greetings to you from the Lower School office! I enjoy sitting down to write my article for the Echo each quarter because it is an opportunity to reflect on all that has occurred in the past two to three months with an eye toward upcoming opportunities. I take this opportunity to reflect on the wonderful opportunity I have to work with GWA faculty, staff, and students each day. Additionally, I think about the privilege it is to have my own two children attend our school. Lastly, it is an opportunity to intentionally reflect on GWA's vision statement and the ways in which all that we do points to this end. This quarter, I am particularly mindful of the tall order we have to equip and empower students to serve Morocco and the global community with wisdom and compassion.



that aids in those of us who are not Moroccan feeling welcome and part of the community. Our roughly thirty percent expatriate population come from nearly forty different countries and provide a colorful cultural tapestry that blends in beautiful and complex ways.

The key to blending cultures and embracing both differences and similarities is wisdom and

Of the many opportunities we have in our school community to celebrate and honor cultural diversity, our annual International Festival is perhaps one of our best. As we are in the midst of planning this event as I write, the details present in the planning illumine the rich cultural facets of our school. First, seventy percent of our students are from Morocco. This is a distinctive of GWA for which I am particularly grateful. Our Moroccan students, parents, faculty, and staff provide a wealth of wisdom and perspective



compassion. We teach our students, both by modeling and through explicit instructional activities, that we are all responsible for making the effort needed to listen to others and attempt to understand their perspectives (even if, or perhaps especially if, different from our own). We believe that this intentional effort put forth throughout the Lower School at GWA is essential in equipping minds and building character. Our children are truly fortunate to have the opportunity to learn and grow in a multicultural context in a beautiful and hospitable country.

*Kevin R. Brenner
Lower School Principal*

Principal's Corner | Upper School

Dear GWA Community:

As I reflect back on the first three quarters of this school year, I am pleased to have learned many things about GWA and what makes it so special. One that stands out for me, though, is how much I enjoy the students. The students here truly delight me and are the inspiration that brings me to work every day to do all I can to support their learning. I feel most fortunate to interact with our students in a multitude of ways within my overall responsibilities.



First, I start every morning in the front of the school welcoming the students to school in order for them to feel like they are wanted and that we are here for them. It is also an opportunity to develop relationships and have conversations I might not have at other times. Also, starting each day with their smiles and warm wishes is a great way to start the day for me as well. There is even one Lower School girl who greets me each morning as she arrives on campus with a hug and a happy dance!

Second, I try to spend time with the students during the Middle School or High School lunches every day. This is another opportunity for me to get to know students and find out what is on their minds. I have learned a lot about their favorite classes, desired activities, general concerns, bottle-flipping tips, hit music, and much more.

Third, I have both a Principal's Advisory Council for both the Middle School and High School. These are comprised of student representatives from each grade that I selected from a pool that applied for the positions last Fall. During my regular lunch meetings with them, the students bring concerns to me to address. I also provide them with insight on new policies, plans, upcoming events, etc. We have addressed many issues this year including: upper school tardy policy modification, sharing of a teacher testing calendar with all students, development of a geofilter for Snapchat at GWA, how GWA might introduce an Honor System, sauce availability at lunch and more. I have enjoyed tremendously my engagement with the PACs as a great way to stay in touch with student concerns.

Fourth, I regularly interact with students in the halls between classes so that I am easily accessible for ques-

tions and concerns students may have. I also chaperone some school trips and help coach our robotics team, the Green Council, and the STEM club. These are more ways to encourage student interests and to help students gain valuable leadership experiences beyond the classroom.

It has been quite a wonderful year, thanks so much to our students. As I prepare to add the Head of School title to my role at GWA this summer I look forward to continuing to keep an active presence with our students in the coming year. They give me inspiration, laughter, challenges, and delight, and I love them very much.

All the best,



*Dr. Audrey Menard
Upper School Principal*

Lower School Character Assemblies

In Lower School we have been learning about and encouraging good character through assemblies each month, class activities, and having special guest readers in every Kindergarten to 5th grade classroom. *Cooperation* was the character trait of February and our students learned the acronym for TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More. Cooperation means working together for a common purpose and being on a team is a great way to practice and learn cooperation.

At each month's assembly we recognize students for demonstrating the previous month's character trait. One student is selected from each class, Kindergarten – 5th, grade by their teachers. The recipients in this picture were chosen by specialists for demonstrating cooperation during the month of February.



Students are also recognized monthly at our assemblies for “Gotchas” and “Random Acts of Kindness.” “Gotchas” are given by teachers who see students doing an outstanding act of some kind. These students go to the office and get their picture taken and displayed on the wall with a certificate. Their pictures are shown on a slide at the character assembly each month and then they take home the certificate. Random Acts of Kindness are written by students and occasionally by teachers when they witness a student showing an act of kindness to someone. These small slips of paper are collected in the office and 5 or 6 are read at the character assemblies. We are trying to see how many we can collect by the end of the school year. Showing kindnesses to others is a great way to build character.

March's word of the month was *fairness*. We talked about how fairness includes showing good sportsmanship and playing by the rules and it also means being impartial and just. Sometimes fairness does not mean everyone gets the same. Instead fairness means everyone gets what he/she needs. Some of the books about fairness that were read to students by guest readers are *Tops and Bottoms* by Janet Stevens, *I Want to Win* by Tony Ross, *The Noodle Game* by Larry Brimner, *Doctor DeSoto* by William Steig, and *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* as told by Jon Scieszka.

At each character assembly, students can bring 10 dirhams and dress in casual clothes. The donations are used to help a local charity. During February and March the money was used to help a local orphanage with needed supplies for the babies and children.

Thank you for all you do to help support your children and help them learn about character. In the 4th quarter we will be emphasizing honesty, perseverance and courage.

Education Beat | Lower School

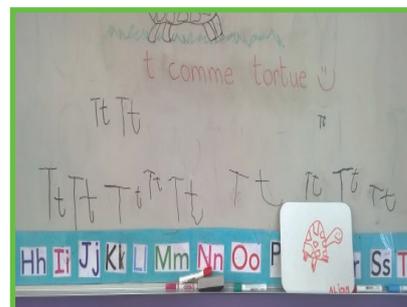
Preschool students participated in a variety of events around the theme of friendship and love. Grandparents were invited to share some time with their grandchildren in the classrooms. Children also celebrated together Valentine's Day; they exchanged cards, offered treats to each other and enjoyed a delicious cotton candy.

Again this year, we organized a parade where students were beautifully dressed up in different costumes: princesses, Avengers, fairies, Marios and so many other characters. Students paraded around the school to the rhythm of their maracas.



*Amal Hafidi Slaoui
Preschool Lead*

PreK students have finished learning how to write the letter T and are proud to present their work.



*Hélène et Gaël
French Teacher*

Francophone Week at GWA

For the 4th consecutive year, GWA celebrated Francophone Week through a variety of activities that were organized by the French department for middle and high school students.

This event was an excellent opportunity to promote French language in our school and to celebrate its richness and diversity. Throughout this week, French music was playing every day at lunch time in the MPR, and students participated in a trivia contest where they had to answer questions on different topics. This week ended on Friday, March 24th with a terrific karaoke event.

Better Together had again supported this event by giving donations to the French department to buy prizes for the contests.



Education Beat | Lower School

100th Day



Model United Nations in St. Petersburg, Russia

From March 24-30 Model United Nations (MUN) delegates participated in the 2nd conference for the 2016-2017 school year. It was led by a local school in St. Petersburg called Gymnasium 157 for the 21st year! It is a phenomenally organized conference that helps broaden the understanding of what United Nations delegates go through during an actual caucus. This year's inspiring theme was 'Making Bridges to the Future.'

Before the conference officially began we were able to spend a full day on a guided tour of St. Petersburg - or as it is also known 'The City of Palaces'. The city is filled with not only palaces, but innumerable buildings representing gorgeous architecture. Some of the highlights were the Spilled Blood Cathedral, Officers Palace, and the Hermitage Museum. We also attended a performance of authentic Russian dances and a prestigious ballet performance of 'Swan Lake' by the St. Petersburg Ballet Company.

During the conference, our delegates were pushed out of their comfort zones in multiple ways including following different rules than they are used to and most importantly collaborating with students from international schools in 16 different countries and many languages. Despite these obstacles they were all able to come together and work diligently to create viable solutions for real-life, diverse world problems that affect us all. Our 17 delegates represented Bahrain, Jordan, Thailand, and Switzerland in six different committees.

We would like to congratulate and give special recognition to Younes Skalli, a member of the ECOSOC committee, who contributed in passing a resolution and Mounia El Khalil, a member of the Environmental and Cultural Committee, for being recognized by her fellow committee members for being a stand out delegate during the debate process.

Lastly, Ms. Lopez, Mr. Sachon, and Ms. Bergerud would like to say they are so very proud of all 17 students' performances and mature behavior during our many days of travel and throughout the duration of SPIMUN.

We are looking forward to what next year's MUN conference cycle brings!



Speech and Debate Qualifying Tournament Held at CAS

Hicham ElKhayri- Lincoln Douglas debate
Youssef El Mghari- Humorous Interpretation and DUO
Sammy Seghir- DUO with Youssef

Hicham ElKhayri, Youssef El Mghari, and Sammy Ait Seghir represented GWA with class at the Qualifying Tournament in Speech and Debate on March 25-26. The tournament lasted 11 hours on Saturday and 11 hours on Sunday, with all three persevering into the third round in their respected events.

Hicham competed in the Lincoln-Douglas debate for three rounds, before narrowly losing to a competitor from CAS. The DUO team of Youssef and Sammy displayed impeccable comedic timing with their humorous routine to “Employees Must Wash Their Hands Before Murder.” After day one of judging, the boys were on top! In what the presenter described as the narrowest margin yet, on Sunday our DUO team eventually lost in a tiebreaker round, determined only by speaker points.



Please join me in congratulating these three young men this for their outstanding achievements!

*Emily Griggs
Middle School English Language Arts Teacher*

STELOS (Students Teaching English Learners on Saturdays)

STELOS is a program that allows the children of the housekeepers and bus drivers of George Washington Academy to come in on Saturdays and learn English. The best part about STELOS is that students of GWA can volunteer their time on Saturdays to help others learn English and more importantly make new friends from a different community. STELOS is a great way for GWA students to show compassion, excellence, integrity, and cooperation.

STELOS was started by Ms. Hutson, a second grade teacher, in October. She was inspired by the housekeepers and bus drivers of GWA for their hard work and wanted to give back to their community. It started with just eight children but since then has grown to twenty children coming to learn English every Saturday. Ms. Hutson finds it even more rewarding that GWA students use their Darija and soccer skills to connect with the children.

Students over third grade can volunteer with STELOS on Saturdays at GWA in room 202 from 9 am to 11 am. High Schoolers are able to earn service hours for their time with STELOS.



*Sara Hutson
2nd Grade Teacher*

New York Band Trip 2017

19 GWA Middle and High school Band students recently took the trip of a lifetime to New York City and upstate New York. Band Director Megan Walls organized and led the trip, and students were chaperoned by Emily Griggs and GWA parent, Meredith Belghiti.

The group spent the first day exploring the city and touring the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and Rockefeller Center. They also visited Times Square, Battery Park, and enjoyed riding the subway and the train to and from the city.

The next day included a tour of Ms. Walls' own alma mater, St. Rose College in Albany. Students met with the head of Global Education and toured the prestigious music department before departing north towards historic Ticonderoga. Snow greeted them on the sides of the mountains, as they drove through the beautiful Catskills and Adirondack mountains. Before arriving to Ms. Walls' hometown the group stopped in Moriah to have a meet and greet with students there and to rehearse for the music festival on Thursday. Reaching Ticonderoga that night, GWA students were greeted by students from Ticonderoga Middle and High School, as they shared pizza, conversation and fun ice-breaker games. A highlight of Wednesday night was the late-night adventure up 'Chilson Hill' to enjoy fun in the snow! Each GWA student was fortunate to stay with host families while in Ticonderoga.

Thursday was spent rehearsing, rehearsing, and more rehearsing, in order to be ready for the Moroccan-American Music Festival hosted that night at the school. Ms. Walls was joined by Mr. Iturrino and Ms. Harrigan from the middle and high schools, and together they brought unity to the combined bands and perfected their sound. That evening our students were treated to an international banquet and celebration of diversity before they readied themselves to perform. Guests came from counties away to see the compilation Ms. Walls and her colleagues had created with students from Morocco and New York. The combined band played the Moroccan and United States' National Anthems, along with The Washington Post March, Apparitions, and finished off with Disney Blockbusters. Afterwards, host families treated students to a trip to the local ice cream shop.



Winning Poems in Seventh Grade

In seventh grade English, we've been looking at the tools poets have at their disposal to create art. Students tried their hand at poetry and made some evocative and ridiculous art. We shared our poems with each other in one chaotic day. Then, each class voted on the funniest and saddest poems. Here were the final winners:

Saddest Poems

Rania Alaoui, "Blood of a Fallen Kingdom"

(free verse about colonization)

Enza Ciardo, "Turning Pages"

(free verse about someone who gets lost in reading)

Funniest Poems

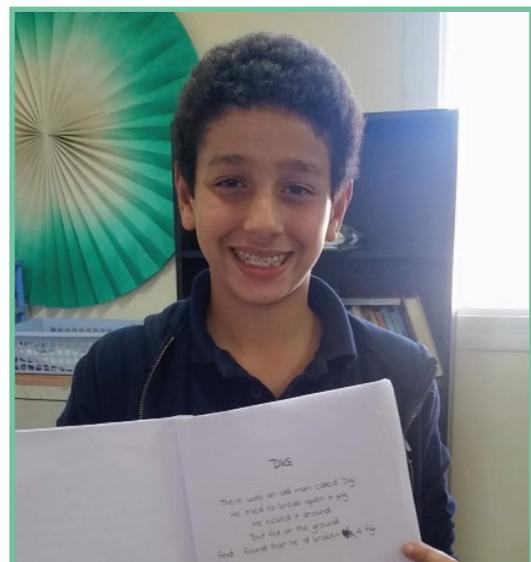
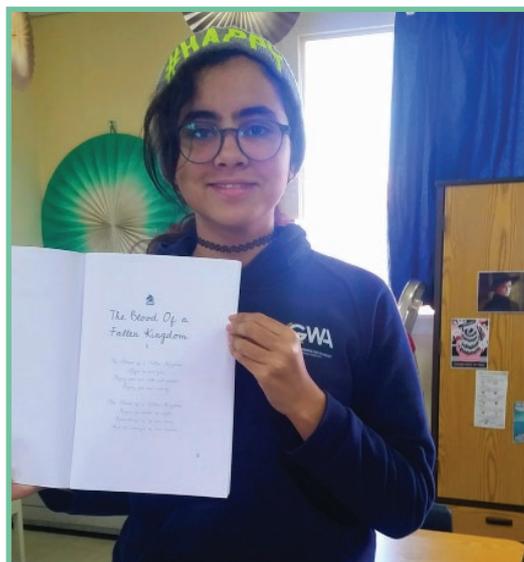
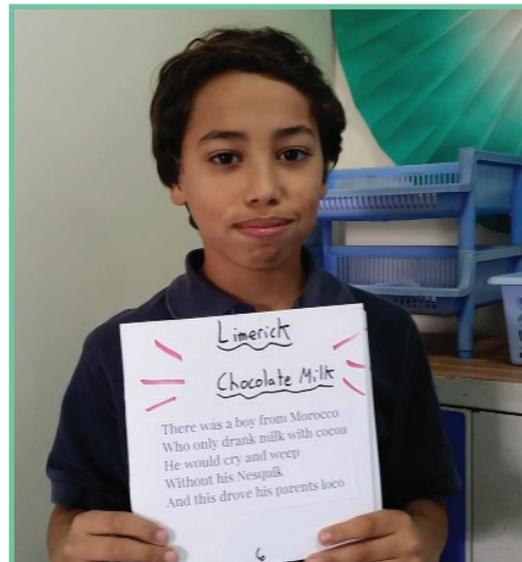
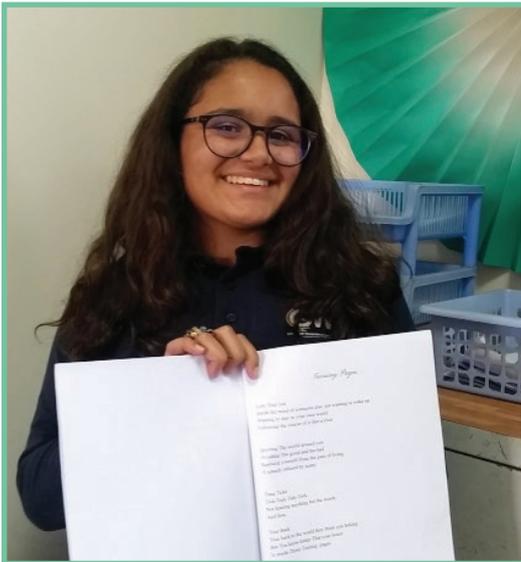
Mourad Mourdi, "Chocolate Milk"

(limerick about chocolate milk)

Ryan Zerati, "Dig"

(nonsense limerick)

Good work, seventh grade!



Small Group Counseling Experiences

Small groups are one of the ways students can benefit from School Counseling at George Washington Academy. Small Groups provide a great opportunity for intra-personal and interpersonal learning in a non-classroom setting.

The American School Counseling Association gives the rationale for utilizing groups in the counseling process:

By allowing individuals to develop insights into themselves and others, group counseling makes it possible for more students to achieve healthier personal adjustment, cope with the stress of a rapidly changing and



complex environment and learn to communicate and cooperate with others. Research on group counseling suggests that this intervention is rather robust for a variety of academic, career and social/emotional concerns.

Small groups at GWA are developed according to the needs and interests of the students, suggestions of the staff and administration, as well as the expertise of the School Counselor. Currently the following small groups are available, with student participation dependent on them being referred by parents, teachers, administration, counselors, or on their own.

Below are brief synopses of the current small groups:

Grief and Loss Support Group: Group members learn to understand the stages of grief and loss and various ways they can support peers in similar situations.

Social Club: The goal of this group is to improve self-understanding, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships. This group is open to middle-school students.

Test Anxiety Small Group: This group aims to help students recognize, describe, and manage test anxiety physical symptoms and mental barriers. There are 3 sessions focused on Preparation, Organization, and Practice to improve test-taking skills.

Psychology Small Group: Comprehension of key psychological theories and concepts in the context of an interactive environment. This group fosters understanding of self and others through communication of thoughts and feelings. This is a voluntary group for high school students, which meets after school.

Do you think your son or daughter may benefit from one of these small groups? Do you have a suggestion for another small group?

Please visit the School Counseling office and talk with the School Counselor to learn more about small groups and to see if one or more of them would be suitable for your child/children. I look forward to meeting with you. Robert Varnay, MA, LPC is the Upper School Counselor at GWA. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of New Jersey.

Robert Varnay
Upper School Counselor

College Acceptances are Rolling In!

The senior class has been busy submitting university applications this spring and many have already received offers of admission. I am proud to announce that cumulatively our seniors have received more than 75 acceptances to universities around the world! The following are just some of the universities our students have applied to and been accepted – so far!



Adelphi University
Bishop's University
Butte College
Carleton University
City University London
City University of New York
Clark University
Cornell University
Drexel University
Florida Institute of Technology
Florida Southern College
Fordham University
Goldsmiths, University of London
HAN University, Arnhem Business School
Hult International Business School
University of Indianapolis
King's College London
Kingston University
London South Bank University
Los Angeles City College
Massachusetts College of Art and Design
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Miami
New York Institute of Technology
Niagara College
University of North Florida
Old Dominion University
Otis College of Art and Design
Palm Beach Atlantic University
Pasadena City College
Pennsylvania State University
Pratt Institute

Queen Mary University of London
Rollins College
Saint Joseph's University
San Diego City College
University of San Francisco
Santa Barbara City College
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
St George's, University of London
St. John's University - Queens Campus
The University of Tampa
Temple University
Parsons - The New School
Union College (New York)
University College London
University of Bath
University of Brighton
University of Bristol
The University of Manchester
University of Sussex
University of West London
University of Westminster
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Tech
Webster University (Geneva)
Concordia University - Montreal
Queen Mary University of London
St George's, University of London
Boston University
Northeastern University
Santa Monica College
Florida Atlantic University
More to follow...

Naviance and Family Connection

GWA is pleased to introduce Family Connection – a comprehensive website that students and parents can use to plan for college and a career. Family Connection is linked with Naviance, a service that we use in our office to track and analyze data about college and career plans, so it provides up-to-date information that is specific to our school.

Family Connection allows students and parents to:

- **Get involved in the planning and advising process** – Build a resume, complete online surveys, and manage timelines and deadlines for making decisions about colleges and careers
- **Research colleges** – Compare GPA, standardized test scores, and other statistics to actual historical data from our school for students who have applied and been admitted in the past
- **Research careers** – Research hundreds of careers and career clusters, and take career assessments
- **Create plans for the future** – Create goals and to-dos, and complete tasks assigned to you by the school to better prepare yourself for your future college and career goals

Family Connection also lets us share information with you about upcoming meetings and events, local scholarship opportunities, and other resources for college and career information. You can also use the site to stay in communication with the counseling office.

Currently, 11th and 12th grade students have account access to Family Connection and have been given an orientation to the program by Ms. Casey. Parents of 11th and 12th grade students will be receiving their log on instructions via email shortly.

8th, 9th, and 10th grade students will have accounts set up within the coming weeks. Please keep an eye out for updates.

Kathryn Casey
Upper School Guidance Counselor



National Honor Society

On Tuesday March 28, GWA was pleased to welcome our 3rd group of high school inductees into the Mustang chapter of the National Honor Society. It was a small, intimate gathering of administrators, teachers, students and parents to celebrate this special occasion.

The National Honor Society (NHS) is one of the most prestigious and oldest high school societies in the United States. The privilege of being inducted comes with great responsibility. This includes maintaining high academic success (>3.5 GPA), displaying noteworthy service to others, leading by example and maintaining high standards of personal character. The guest speaker at our ceremony, Mrs. Karen Dimitroff, medical provider with the U.S. Embassy in Rabat, highlighted this noble responsibility and gave examples in her own life of pursuing character and service. These included medical outreach events in Chad and India during previous assignments with the U.S. State Department. She encouraged students to embrace and fulfill the high standards of being a NHS member.

With our most recent members joining; we have a total of 23 members! We wish a warm welcome to the newest students inducted into the Mustang chapter:

Senior - Kenza Mourji

Juniors - Mehdi Benjelloun, Yacine Benkirane, Yasmine Hajjaj, Hajar Falouhi and Hicham El Khayri

Sophomores - Nour Kherfi, Lina Bennouna, Narjis Rachad and Mohamed Benkirane

If you would like to know more about NHS, check out the website - www.nhs.us

We look forward to seeing NHS grow and impact GWA and the surrounding community in many positive ways!

Warmly,



*Hannah Hair
Chris Regehr
GWA NHS Advisors*

Athletic Highlights

GWA Mustangs

BOYS BASKETBALL

The boys JV and varsity basketball teams both had amazing seasons. The JV boy's basketball team went undefeated during the regular season and throughout the MASAC tournament, which earned them a chance to play in the championship game. Despite a valiant effort and playing hard the entire game, the JV boy's basketball team came up one possession short and finished the season in second place. The JV boy's basketball team improved tremendously and we have a lot to build on for years to come at GWA. Great job, JV boys!

The varsity boy's basketball team was made up of several young players and some that did not have a lot of experience. Despite these challenges and lack of experience, the boys developed team chemistry and an understanding of the game in a very short amount of time. The regular season was mixed with great wins and close losses several teams even counted them out in the final MASAC tournament in February. The boys brought their best and won three games in a row to earn the chance to play in the championship game. The boys played hard the entire game but came up a few possessions short in the championship game finishing the season in 2nd place.

Coach Luke Kollasch and Coach Stephen Kraus were extremely proud of all their basketball players this season. They handled themselves with class and demonstrated character in the face of difficulties throughout the season. Great job Mustangs!

GIRLS BASKETBALL

The Lady Mustangs basketball teams saw similar success as the boys teams. Our JV team was made up of girls from 6th grade all the way to seniors and all grades in between. The ladies worked extremely hard throughout the season and came up short on a tiebreaker in the tournament and finished 3rd.

Our girl's varsity team went undefeated during the regular season finishing at 6-0. The Lady Mustangs carried that winning over to pool play of the MASAC tournament in Tangier defeating RAS and AAC. GWA took on crosstown rival CAS in the semi finals. The game was close throughout and tied at 9-9 before CAS banked in a free throw with 0.9 seconds to play to take the lead for good dealing the Lady Mustangs heartbreaking loss and ending the season for our eight seniors.

Coach Red, Coach Iggy and Coach Abdeljalil want to thank all of the ladies who participated this year and hope you learned as much from us as we did from you all.

BADMINTON

The badminton team, consisting of three age groups, 10-12, 13-14, and 15+ recently competed in the 2017 MASAC Tournament in Ifrane. 39 student-athletes represented GWA and competed in singles, doubles, and mixed doubles over a two-day period. The kids competed hard, even diving on the floor repeatedly giving their all for the Mustangs. GWA finished a respectable fourth place overall but showed some promise for the future by winning the girls 10-12 singles division, and finishing 2nd in girls 10-12 double, 13-14 mixed doubles and 15+ mixed doubles.

The future looks bright for GWA badminton and we want to give the coaching staff of Khalid Sadir, Mustapha Sadir, M'hamed Hitane, and Ilyas El Mejdoub and huge thank you for preparing our players for competition.

*Red Johnston
Director of Athletics*

Athletic Highlights

GWA Mustangs

MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

The Middle School boys basketball team endured a season of skills development. Each participant grew in their knowledge of the sport. The tournament did not yield optimal results but with each game the boys played they made improvements in every area of the sport. Although the team finished in 6th place in the MA-SAC tournament they competed with a high level of sportsmanship and class.

*Stephen Kraus
Nursery Teacher*

MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL

The GWA Middle School Girls Basketball Team just finished an impressive season, finishing 2nd place at the MASAC tournament! This was the first time several of the girls had played on a basketball team, but their inexperience was overcome by their incredible work ethic, determination, and eagerness to learn. Coach Sando and Coach Botha enjoyed their time watching these girls grow over the course of the season and look forward to building on their skills next year.

*Marie Sando
US Science Teacher*



After School Activities

First Lego league

FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL) is a program that supports students in order to introduce them to science and technology in a sporty atmosphere.

The objective is to:

- make students enthusiastic about science and technology
- to equip the participants with the idea of team spirit
- to encourage students to solve complex tasks in a creative way

The basis of FLL is a robotics tournament in a cheerful atmosphere, where students need to solve a tricky "mission" with the help of a robot. The students are researching a given topic within a team, they are planning programming and testing an autonomous robot to solve the mission. The FLL Teams take the opportunity to experience all steps of a real product development process: solving a problem under time pressure with insufficient resources and unknown competitors. FLL is a small microcosmos of real business life in all its respects. It promotes real world skills like teamwork, helping others, thinking for your self and being kind. The best reason for FLL though is to have fun! And our students continue to have fun!

Our 1st competition of the 2016-2017 Animal Allies season was the 2nd Annual National Moroccan Competition. It was held on February 4th in Rabat at the Ecole Mohammadia Ingenieurs. This was GWA's second year competing in the program. We had two teams, **Wild Mustangs** brought home to GWA the 1st Place trophy for Robot Design. The team and Joshua Park brought home the 1st Place trophy for Sumo Robot.

Mustang Pride brought home the 1st Place trophy for High Score Robot Missions and placed 3rd overall securing them the opportunity to move on to the Madrid Competition.

The Madrid FLL Competition experience once again only strengthened my complete support for this program and all it has to offer our students. The team finished 2nd out of 20 teams on the robotics table with mission points. We were very excited with these results, but we were ecstatic when they announced that the team had won the award for Global Innovation. This award was for the scientific project, where the teams research a real-world problem and are challenged to develop a solution. Our students researched the abuse of the working donkey and designed a prototype called the "donklet" a heart rate monitor that signals the farmer when the donkey is stressed and over worked. The recognition for all of the hours of research that they had put into this project was incredibly fulfilling to the students.

I cannot express enough just how rewarding I believe the FIRST LEGO League program is for our students and on behalf of the students we truly would like to express our appreciation to Global Lights for their incredibly generous sponsorship this season which made it possible for us to make the trip to Madrid. Thank you!

A special thanks to Dr. Audrey Menard for co-coaching the teams with me this year. Dr. Menard has been incredibly supportive of the FFL program at GWA and I look forward to working with her to ensure our students more of these opportunities.

GWA was also invited to the Arab World Competition in Qatar, (however unable to attend) InshaAllah next year 2017-2018.

After School Activities

First Lego league



Team Wild Mustangs – 1st Place Robot Design



Team Mustang Pride – 1st Place High Score Robot Missions



FLL Madrid – Proudly Representing Morocco



FLL Madrid – Global Innovation Award

Events

6th Grade Poetry/Art

The 6th Grade Poetry/Art Night, held March 23rd, was hosted by Ms. Pettit and Ms. Griggs. Students shared their poems with parents and friends in a coffeehouse atmosphere, as poems are meant to be shared! They read the following types of poems: onomatopoeia, ode, personification, free verse, haiku, limerick, narrative nonsense and “I Am” poems. Parents were invited to view their child’s artwork, and also read from their Poetry Books, as they enjoyed refreshments to benefit Operation Smile-Morocco.



*Emily Griggs
MS English Language Arts Teacher*

Better Together

International Women’s Day



Events

Alice in Wonderland

This year the Arts Department at GWA put on our spring musical: *Alice in Wonderland*. It was our most attended musical to date and weeks before the show our school was buzzing with anticipation.

Students from 6-12th grade participated, with an amazing representation of middle school students in title roles. We are so excited for the future of the arts with the excitement and energy brought by grades 6-8.

We can't forget to mention our Upper School students who have spent years participating in musicals and dedicated their time and effort to joining us once again. They have worked their way up the ranks and fill the show with talent and expertise.

Our cast auditioned and were assigned roles in early September; then spent 3 days per week in rehearsal until our show in February. We learned choreography (dance), blocking (where to stand, and when to move), and tips to make our performance shine. After all that practice we were singing and dancing in our sleep!

We would like to send a huge thank you to everyone who helped us out. We had an amazing crew of teachers, administrators, and students who worked behind the scenes to create props, set, costumes, sell tickets, and organize people. Thanks also to the families of our cast who helped make sure everyone attended practices and came on time! We couldn't have done it without you. See you next year!



Rebecca Whaley
US Drama Teacher

Library Corner

“GWA inspires students to become multilingual, lifelong learners who pursue excellence, model integrity and honor cultural diversity” ...from GWA’s statement.

At the library we promote reading and thinking through different channels; reading activities, blind date competitions, and multilingual reading contests. This year we welcomed spring and children and young adult author and illustrator Marissa Moss. Our objective was not only to encourage and promote reading as much as it was to inspire students to read between the lines, motivate writing, ignite sparks, and encourage risk taking.

Inspire students to read between the lines

Students learn the “inside stories” and ideas behind the books the author read to them and talked about so they are drawn to them. Meeting an author in person helped students gain an understanding of what goes on in the author’s world and they are able to develop traits of good and inspired readers.

Motivate writing

When Marissa Moss visited students in classrooms or ran writing workshops. She shared her favorite writing tips and tricks. Students enjoyed these one on one author interactions. She knew how to respond to their pertinent questions and comments. Therefore, younger students were eager to give writing a try. While older students gained deeper knowledge on how to interact with the books characters, make predictions and inferences.

Ignite Sparks

Actually, through drawing workshops and journaling students were more passionate about following their dreams not only in writing but literally in pursuing passions they could have resisted to.

Encourage Risk Taking

Students shared their performances in writing, drawing, and interpreting with a different audience than teachers and students. They spoke up, expressed themselves, and did not shy away from anything that may not please the teacher. That’s how they learned to take risks and discover their unique voices.

There really is power in hearing an author’s path and we are happy our students discovered it!



*Asmaa Rias El Idrissi
Library Manager*

Behind the Scenes

Look at our amazing Media-Tech center! Each week we make progress and the shell of a building is being transformed into useful spaces for learning – the library is going to be awesome!



*Danielle Bult
Chief of Operations*

Nurse's Corner



These GWA teachers and staff members are great examples of being active and staying fit! What have you done with your family this week to encourage physical exercise? Habits children learn at home including what they drink, eat and do will stick with them for life. Let's build healthier lives together!



Women's 6K Bouskoura Run. Sunday March 12.



Planet Sport Bouskoura 15km Trail Run. Sunday March 19.

*Hannah Hair, RN BSN
Estelle Najem, IDE
GWA School Nurse/Health Educator*