



State of the School Winter 2014



AIM Academy
Innovative teaching, fearless learning.

A Letter from Pat Roberts and Nancy Blair

AIM—Innovative Teaching, Fearless Learning and now, *Boundless Futures*. How do we define *Boundless Futures* at AIM? By ensuring that all of the critical success factors are in place for an amazing future for AIM students with their inspiring accomplishments in the classroom, on the field, on stage, and beyond.



We continue to be in awe of the confidence and talents of our students as they demonstrate every day that academic achievement provides the launch pad for their passions and interests to soar. Here are just a few of our student highlights:

- AIM Robotics Team wins First Place for Team Play and Collaboration at **FIRST® LEGO® League** competition;
- Two AIM High School teams selected to compete in city-wide **Startup Corps Entrepreneurial Competition** – Sophia '16 and Andrew '17 and Hallel '16;
- Fifth Grade students impress family, friends, and faculty with their research and presentation skills;
- Eighth Grade Students prepare for a week of scientific exploration at the **Teton Science School**;
- Austin '16 competes for a Summer Scholarship to Tisch School of the Arts at NYU;
- AIM Alum, Jon Fuiman '12 excelling in Communications and hosting a radio show at Elizabethtown College;
- Six AIM students slated to compete at the **Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival** 2014 Shakespeare Competition in March;
- **Kettner Griswold**, renowned Pegasus satellite engineer, comments on the incredible engineering and innovative talent of AIM students;
- Arts at AIM take flight with many independent student filmmakers including Shawn '14, Sophia '16 and Tav '18.

Of course, AIM students benefit from our talented and devoted faculty whose inspired teaching is garnering professional recognition locally and nationally. We are pleased to recognize

- **Susan Braccia**, AIM Art and Club: **Arcadia University Adjunct Professor**, Differentiated instruction in art education for special populations; STEAM Program Instructor and Creator. **Museum Educators Roundtable**.

- **Amy Holt Cline**, AIM Science and Robotics: Only classroom teacher participating on a national STEAM working group in Washington DC known as the **Innovation Collaborative: Bridging the Arts, Sciences, and Humanities**. The group is comprised of national members from such organizations including the National Science Teachers Association (**NSTA**), the National Art Education Association (**NAEA**), National Science Foundation (**NSF**), National Institutes of Health (**NIH**), Make Magazine, Drexel University and many more.

And we are very excited for the AIM leadership team to welcome **Allison Enslein** as **Head of Lower School** in July. We are also very grateful for the outstanding AIM parent community and their contributions of time, talents and support.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania showed its belief in AIM with the awarding of a **\$1.5 million Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grant** in December 2013 in support of the new AIM Arts and Recreation Community Center. We are now that much closer to achieving our goal of a campus that includes all the facilities our students need and deserve and a center to accommodate all the teachers who look to AIM for training.

Once again the AIM Academy senior class is demonstrating that the Return on Investment (ROI) of an AIM education can be substantial. The total merit scholarships received at publication for the AIM Class of 2014 is over \$600,000 and growing, with an average scholarship award of \$40,000 per student.

Thank you for your belief in and support of AIM. Together the AIM board, faculty, staff, students and families have accomplished much, with even more to follow with boundless futures!

Pat *Nancy*



Inspirational AIM for the Stars Gala Exceeds All Records!

The 6th Annual **AIM for the Stars Gala** to promote literacy for students who learn differently and celebrating AIM Academy took place on Thursday, November 14, 2013 at The Hyatt at the Bellevue. **Pennsylvania First Lady Susan Corbett, Lt. Governor Jim Cawley, and The Honorable Patrick Kennedy** were in attendance along with the Greater Philadelphia education community including university partners, legislators, corporate sponsors, and AIM families, friends, faculty, and staff.

Over 400 guests joined with supporters across the region to raise \$250,000 in support of literacy for all students who learn differently.

AIM honored **James M. Maguire, Sr.** and **David and Evan Yurman** with the Sally L. Smith Founder's Award—three inspirational leaders who have overcome learning challenges in their lives and through their success, leadership, and spirit, have made significant contributions to enhance education opportunities for children who learn differently.

To hear the inspirational words of our honorees and speakers and for a full gallery of images for this wonderful night for AIM and students who learn differently, visit www.aimpa.org/aim4stars.



AIM Academy Thanks Our Generous Sponsors

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AIM Academy Signature Programs

S.T.E.A.M.

In 2013, **Amy Holt Cline**, AIM science teacher, joined a national STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) working group in Washington D.C. known as the ***Innovation Collaborative: Bridging the Arts, Sciences, and Humanities***. This group is focused on discussing the importance of the arts/science intersection in formal and informal education. The group is comprised of national members from such organizations including the National Science Teachers Association (**NSTA**), the National Art Education Association (**NAEA**), National Science Foundation (**NSF**), National Institutes of Health (**NIH**), Make Magazine, Drexel University and many more.

AIM is excited and proud that Amy Cline is a part of this conversation **as the only classroom teacher on the committee**. Amy is contributing lessons and ideas about how STEAM can be integrated into the classroom and beyond. The work of this committee will be shared with the Congressional STEAM Caucus. When Amy was asked to present to the group



in Washington, D.C. earlier this year, she used the following AIM Academy Middle and Upper School science unit topics to illustrate the potential of an interdisciplinary STEAM curriculum:

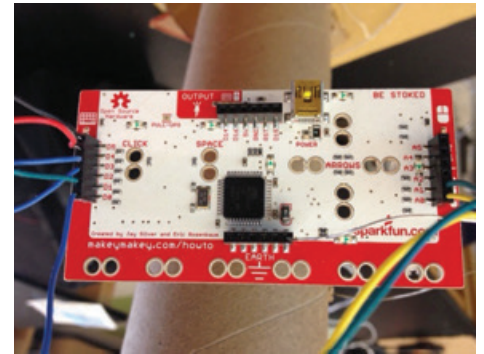
Design Science Lab - 8th Grade



Marine Phytoplankton: 3D Models
(Science, Technology, Art/Design)



Bioluminescent Robots
(Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design)



Makey Makey Circuit Boards
(Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design)

Biology - 9th Grade



Dendrology Unit: Internal Anatomy of Trees - Hand built tree rings
(Science, Art/Design)



Seafloor Interactions: Submersibles, Benthic Habitats, Invertebrates, SeaPerch, HabCam
(Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design, Math)

AIM Academy Signature Programs

Performing Arts

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was a wonderful success! An outstanding cast of young thespians from grades 6 through 12 transported the audience through the looking glass to follow that rabbit to a delightful, entertaining world of childhood fantasies. The play gave a modern view to an old classic, where nonsense makes quite good sense.

Congratulations to the cast, crew and everyone involved with this amazing production! Special thanks are extended to AIM faculty members Maryanne Yoshida, Emily Bolles and Emily Pritchard for their dynamic leadership and to the AIM families who support their students in the Drama Club. Produced by special arrangement with Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., Englewood, Colorado.

Come join us for AIM Academy's Spring Musical: ***The Music Man***, by Meredith Wilson. Performances are scheduled for Friday, May 2, 7 pm; Saturday, May 3, 7 pm; and Sunday, May 4, 2 pm at the Arts Bank Theater, University of the Arts, 601 South Broad Street, Philadelphia.

The Music Man is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).



Startup Corps

Two AIM Academy Upper School students, **Andrew '17** and **Sophia '16**, have been selected to present at **TEDxSoleburySchool**, a one-day event at the Solebury School in New Hope, PA featuring inspirational students who share their passions and ideas regarding key components of change and innovation. The goal is to spark deep discussion and enable you to be part of a social and global change.

AIM is extremely proud that Andrew and Sophia were selected to discuss their business, **Opportunity Rise**, which was started as part of AIM's innovative **Startup Corps** elective. At AIM Academy, Startup Corps works with Upper School students to

plan and start real businesses, developing them into the next generation of entrepreneurial leaders, thinkers, and creators.

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TED Talks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x=independently organized TED event. This very special event will take place on Sunday, May 18, 2014 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Solebury School Theater and will be free of charge.

AIM is also grateful to Sophia and Andrew for their very generous \$1000 contribution to the AIM Scholarship Fund. This represents proceeds from their business and donations they raised.

Another AIM Startup Corps star is **Hallel '16** who launched the **Rising Chef Challenge**, an organization that will host a regional cooking competition for high school students. To generate the funds needed to host this event, Hallel has cultivated corporate sponsors, sold branded apparel, and has hosted a smoothie bar at AIM. Scheduled for May 2014, the competition will showcase the region's culinary talent.



AIM Academy Signature Programs

Focus Week

AIM Academy Middle and Upper School students celebrated the second annual **Fall Focus Week**.

Students explored and experienced fields of study in a one week intense program. Small teams were arranged around student interest areas as they align with AIM's **Four Threads to the Future**. This

program allows students to tap into their special talents and passions and pursue 21st century skills of collaboration and problem-solving while preparing for college and beyond. Students who learn differently are part of an elite group of entrepreneurial thinkers who lead the most successful organizations in the world.



The 2013 Fall Focus week offerings included Mock Trial, STEAM, Video Production, Culinary Arts, VEX & LEGO Robotics, Stained Glass, Green Architectural Design, Urban Photography & Poetry and many more. Each group included a community partnership and outside expert to lend skills and knowledge to the experience. All of the students had the same mission – to visualize, create, communicate, construct and problem solve – all essential 21st century learning skills. All groups met at the end of the week and shared their group presentations with the AIM community. AIM students and faculty all look forward to the next Focus Week experience!



Robotics

AIM Academy Robotics Teams are enjoying planning, preparing and competing in team competitions this season. **AIM Robotics Team 7748** experienced a great day of competition and teamwork on Saturday, January 17 at the West Shore VEX Toss Up Qualifier in Shiremanstown, PA. **AIM Wolf Pack Robotics** turned in a strong performance and made it to the semifinals and tied for third place.

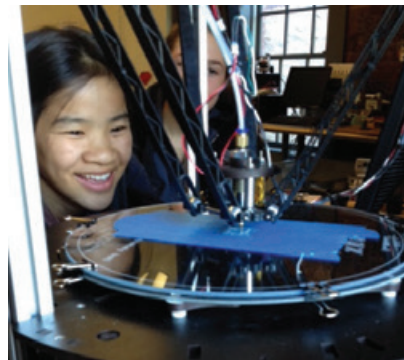
AIM Team 17976 Wolf Pack Robotics had a great experience in a FIRST® LEGO® League competition in December 2013. The team took first in one of the judging categories, **Core Values**, and brought back a trophy to AIM!

AIM Academy Robotics continues to expand and members and faculty look forward to more competitions in 2014.

AIM Robotics and Engineering students constructed a 3D printer from a kit and have been creating objects and special projects.



One highlight was the design, creation and presentation of a checkers game board to the Lower School. Even more exciting projects are planned for the 3D printer and the AIM Engineering and Robotics program!





Soccer



Homecoming



Basketball



Fall Fest



Educator Dr. Nancy Dyson Visits AIM Academy

Dr. Nancy Dyson, a researcher and educator as well as the coordinator for an NICHD (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) funded intervention project on number sense recently visited with AIM math teachers. She discussed her work and research with Dr. Nancy Jordan at the University of Delaware and consulted with first grade teacher Kate O'Reilly who has implemented their program with her students. Dr Dyson shared some interesting resources with AIM including a website for the National Math Panel Report. AIM was delighted to welcome Dr. Dyson to collaborate with AIM faculty on number sense and looks forward to her next visit.



Boundless Futures

In October, AIM Academy hosted our **Annual College Fair**. Representatives from colleges and universities from all over the country visited AIM and met with Upper School students, families and faculty. It was a wonderful opportunity for the AIM community to speak to admissions representatives and learn more about many great colleges and university programs.



We strongly believe that the Return on Investment (ROI) of an AIM education can be substantial when it comes to college preparation, acceptances and scholarships. For the third straight year, the AIM senior class has received strong college acceptances and as of early February, over \$600,000 in merit scholarships. During the next months more acceptances will arrive and the current AIM average scholarship award of \$40,000 per student will increase. To date AIM students have received acceptances from the University of Arizona, University of Denver, Drexel University, University of Pittsburgh, Philadelphia University, Seton Hall, Iona, SUNY Canton, Morehouse, West Virginia Wesleyan, Johnson and Wales and many more.



Alumni Profile: Jon Fuiman AIM '12

AIM was proud to welcome back **Jon Fuiman, Class of 2012** as a special guest and presenter at the AIM for the Stars Gala in November. Jon had the honor of introducing James M. Maguire, Sr. to the over 400 guests at the event. Mr. Maguire was the speaker at Jon's commencement and Jon considers Mr. Maguire to be an inspiration and role model.



In his remarks, Jon shared "I feel incredibly connected to our Honoree. He is a symbol of what perseverance can accomplish. For the many students who he and his wife sponsor as Maguire scholars, he is a lifeline for them as they take on college. He is a testament to how kindness and a belief in others' true potential can bring out the most in them."

Jon is studying Communications at Elizabethtown College where he writes for the College newspaper, *The Etownian* and hosts a radio show on the college radio station WWEC-FM.

Freshman Forum Added to the High School Curriculum

Fall 2013 marked the start of an exciting new addition to the AIM Upper School curriculum, Freshman Forum. This is an important enrichment group for all ninth graders at AIM Academy. The talented AIM Integrated Services team leads this class that meets once a week. Students focus on concepts that are crucial to personal, academic, and professional success in high school and beyond. Topics include, but are not limited to, research skills, career exploration, formal and professional writing skills, public speaking, interview skills, goal setting, problem solving, and resume and portfolio development. In addition, students explore the concepts of excellence, ethics, and engagement as they apply to the standards held by schools, organizations, and professions.



AIM Gives Thanks

All of us at AIM Academy—our Board, staff, faculty, and especially our students and families—deeply appreciate the support from individuals, companies, foundations, and government for the education AIM provides for students who learn differently and training for teachers throughout this region.

On December 23rd, AIM Academy was notified that Governor Corbett had authorized the release of \$1,500,000 in Redevelopment Authority Capital Program (RACP) funds for the **AIM Recreation and Arts Community Center** project. We are overjoyed by the Commonwealth's recognition of the urgent current and future educational needs both AIM Academy and the AIM Institute for Learning and Research address in Pennsylvania. We appreciate all the support and enthusiasm for this project and know that together, the AIM community will rise to the challenge of breaking ground in 2014.

This year also saw the introduction of the AIM Institute for Learning and Research **Brook J. Lenfest Teacher Training Scholarship Fund**. Funded by a generous \$50,000 grant from the Brook J. Lenfest Foundation, scholarships are awarded to in need schools and school districts demonstrating a commitment to teacher training in the top research-based approaches to assist children to reach their academic potential. Educators serving qualified schools within the Greater Philadelphia region are especially encouraged to apply. Visit www.aimpa.org for the complete AIM Institute calendar and to apply.

We are proud to announce the creation of the **Maguire Scholars Program for Upper School Students** at AIM Academy. Beginning in the fall of 2014, the Maguire Foundation will award \$6,000 in scholarship support to three AIM 9th Grade students. These scholarships are renewable for each of the four years of high school given that the Maguire Scholar maintains standards consistent with the qualifications outlined at the time of their selection. Selection as an AIM Maguire Scholar will be based on financial need as well as academic and community good standing. Applications are available through AIM Admissions to enrolled and accepted students for the AIM Class of 2018 as of Fall 2014.

The Maguire Scholars program continues AIM Academy's important legacy of scholarship and joins with **The Albert M. Greenfield Foundation**, the **Stan and Arlene Ginsburg Foundation**, and many others who have made the education of so many outstanding AIM students possible.

AIM also wants to acknowledge here the business community which has embraced Pennsylvania's **Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC)** and **Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC)** programs to turn their PA tax burden into scholarships for deserving students to attend AIM Academy. From \$1500 to \$50,000, these funds have changed the lives of students who learn differently and their families. To learn more about these programs, contact development@aimpa.org.

THANK YOU TO ALL!

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***Bold** represents support of \$50,000 or above.*

2014 Summer Enrichment Program

The transition back to school in September is an important one for all students. This is particularly true for students who learn differently. AIM Academy educators believe that summer learning and summer fun can go hand in hand and demonstrate that in our **Summer Enrichment Program for all grades, June 30-July 25, 2014.**

This year, Lower School students will be immersed in the wonders of China as they embark on a fun and educational exploration of culture and traditions as part of AIM's unique academic club methodology. Mornings will be spent on academic enrichment and the *Wonders of China*. An optional afternoon component will feature traditional camp activities in sports, music, and performing arts.



At each grade level the program focuses on the skills and subjects critical to students.

Lower School students (grades 1 through 5) will benefit from small group instruction in Reading and Writing, multisensory Math computation and fluency, and the arts-based study of subjects such as History, Science, and World Cultures.

Middle School (grades 6 through 8) and **Upper School** (grades 9 through 12) students will focus on individualized reading and writing instruction, the development of math skills, specialized instruction in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Design, and Math) and instruction in the use of assistive technologies for note-taking, study skill development, and time management.



College Preparatory work will also be offered to rising 11th and 12th graders with concentration on ACT Math and Verbal, and an essay writing boot camp.

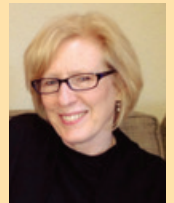
For more information or to apply, visit www.aimpa.org or call (215) 483-2461. Open houses at AIM are held monthly and parents interested in the summer program are encouraged to attend.

Head of Lower School Allison Enslein

AIM Academy is pleased to announce that **Allison Enslein** has accepted the position of Lower School Head beginning July 1, 2014. Allison's training and experience make her uniquely qualified to lead the Lower School and will add value to AIM's immediate goals and future vision.

Allison holds a Master's Degree in Special Education/Learning Disabilities and an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education. She spent twenty years in the Midwest working with children at the elementary, middle, and high school levels as a classroom teacher, reading specialist and Orton-Gillingham tutor.

Prior to moving to Pennsylvania four years ago, Allison was founding director of the Children's Dyslexia Center in Danville, Illinois. In 2010, Allison became Head of School at Center School, in Abington, Pennsylvania.



Allison is a fervent advocate for children with learning disabilities and is committed to ensuring that every child develops a love of learning and experiences success in the classroom. She is excited to join forces with AIM's dedicated faculty and looks forward to working together to create boundless futures for AIM's students and their families.

New Disney Partnership to Focus on 21st Century Skills

AIM Academy is delighted to announce a partnership with the Walt Disney Company beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. This exciting partnership is offered through the innovative **Disney Youth Educational Series**. This significant partnership will not only begin to guide our students as they embark on the Four Threads to the Future programs in the Upper School, but also solidifies AIM's leadership as a 21st century school.

During the 2014-2015 School Year, students in ninth and tenth grades will travel to Walt Disney World in Florida

during Fall Focus Week for a full immersion experience in the following areas: Arts & Design, Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Global Competency & Social Sustainability, and Science & Engineering. As part of this week, students will be introduced to rigorous academic studies and full application of those principles. They will experience first hand how the teachings from the Four Threads Framework translate into important global initiatives and they will be provided with a wide array of college and career study options.



Access to the Experts

Susan Ebbers

The Sense and Structure of Academic Vocabulary: From Kinder to College

Saturday, April 5, 2014 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



In this interactive session, participants will explore English word formation, particularly the processes that prevail in academic words, from *predict* to *preposterous supposition*. We will reflect deeply on metacognitive processes and instructional practices that facilitate word learning and comprehension. This session applies to K-12, with text excerpts and sample lessons across the grades, aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

Susan Ebbers has focused her research on morphological awareness, vocabulary, measurement design, and interest as a motivational variable. For her dissertation work, she created a tool for measuring word-learning aptitude. She has taught primary and secondary grades and was awarded by the district for her contributions to literacy. She also served as a K-8 principal. With her publisher, Cambium Learning, Susan has authored four supplemental programs for developing vocabulary, morphology, and/or multidimensional decoding.

Nancy Hennessy, M.Ed., LDT-C

The Comprehension Construction Zone: Using a Blueprint for Effective Instruction

Monday, May 12, 2014 • 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



Reading proficiency—the ability to read words automatically and construct the meaning of complex text simultaneously—is critical to student achievement given the demands of current educational environments. Session participants will surface critical schema regarding comprehension processes and delve into a blueprint for organizing comprehension instruction. This framework calls for the development of essential language and cognitive processes, reflects the research and aligns with the standards.

Nancy Hennessy, educational consultant and past president of the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), is an experienced teacher and administrator. Nancy is a national trainer for Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) and currently, the Director of Academic and Professional Practices at AIM Academy. Nancy is an honorary member of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society, is the 2011 recipient of IDA's Margaret Rawson Lifetime Achievement Award and NCIDA's 2012 June Lyday Orton Award.

Access to the Experts are \$125 per session. (Student discount: \$50 off; Group discounts are available, call for details.) **To register and for more information on this and the complete AIM Institute Professional Development calendar, visit www.aimpa.org.**

... By Invitation Only ...



AIM Academy's Second Annual Research to Practice Symposium

"Listen to the Voices of Language, Literacy and Mathematics Research"

Monday, March 17, 2014

Ken Pugh, Ph.D.



Director and President of Research, Senior Scientist, Haskins Laboratories, Yale University

Louisa Moats, Ed.D.



President, Moats Associates Consulting, Inc.; Vice President of the International Dyslexia Association

Daniel B. Berch, Ph.D.



Professor of Special Education & Applied Developmental Science, University of Virginia Curry School of Education

Kate Cain, BSc. DPhil.



Language & Cognitive Development, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

Nancy Hennessy, M.Ed.



Director of Academic and Professional Practices, AIM Academy

Timothy N. Odegard, Ph.D.



Director of Research and Evaluation, Wilson Language Training

Save the Date

Take a look at your Annual Fund dollars in action:



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Your 2013-14 Annual Fund donations really make a difference!

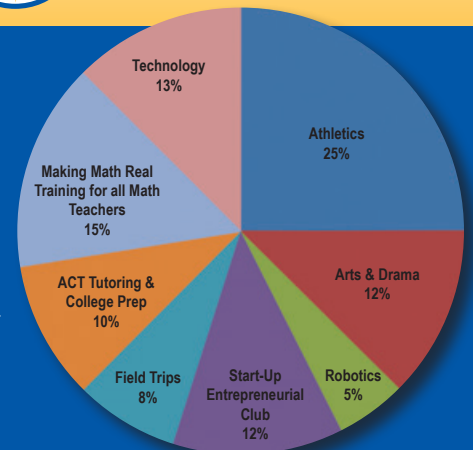
This pie chart provides a look at your support in action.

If you have already made your contribution, THANK YOU!

If not, we hope you will help us reach 100% participation by the AIM community by June 30, 2014.

We each have the power to enhance the experience of every student in our school.

Visit aimpa.org/Donate



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For sponsorship opportunities and to register, visit aimpa.org.

SAVE THE DATE

Race to Read
5K & 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk
Saturday, April 12, 2014
Starts at AIM Academy

AIM for Kids
7th Annual Golf Classic &
Auction Dinner Extravaganza
Tuesday, May 27, 2014
Whitemarsh Valley Country Club

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