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# HEARTWOOD

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2021-2022 Aspen Academy  
Community Resource Guide

# heart• wood

/ˈhärt,wood  
noun

the dense inner part of a tree trunk, yielding the hardest timber.

Dear Aspen Academy Community:

We are excited to bring you the newest edition of Aspen Academy's 2021-2022 Heartwood Community Resource Guide. Reflecting on our challenges and triumphs of the past year allowed us to gain perspective and it has created an atmosphere of excitement, joy and gratitude. We are excited to share plans and preparations for renewed parent engagement. We have so much to celebrate.

By keeping your copy of the Heartwood handy throughout the year you will have important dates, events and contacts at your fingertips. We hope that the information helps all of our new families feel WELCOME and

immersed in our unique community while also allowing our long term families to renew their opportunities for connection and growth.

We would like to thank all of our parent and teacher contributors, Aspen Marketing and Communications Team's - Jordyn Linnell and Theresa Letman, as well as Aspen Academy administration for all of their efforts in bringing this newest edition of Heartwood to our community. We look forward to a wonderful and memorable 2021-2022 school year with each of you.

In Kindness,  
Erin Chain and Amanda Jackson



## AMANDA JACKSON

BROKER ASSOCIATE, REALTOR™

Amanda is the proud mom of Katie Oriol (3rd), Weston Oriol (7th), Brady Oriol (Grad), Jackson Oriol (Grad).

Heartwood Community  
Resource Guide sponsored  
and provided by



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AMANDA  
JACKSON



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# A Letter From Our Head of School, Kristina Scala

## **One Rule: Be Kind**

Never before have we all so genuinely craved “normal.” Last year, we rose to the challenge of on-campus education, demonstrating: support, understanding, leaning into the uncomfortable and unknown, love, listening, grit, resilience, determination, empathy, and levity. These attributes shined through in spades in our students, faculty and staff, and parents. It was a year that proved -- in spades -- the culture of Aspen Academy, in which there are no passengers, only crew.

As we look forward to 2021-2022 (our 17th year), we eagerly build on what we’ve learned, how we’ve grown, and how we will continue to lead and transform education.

Our one rule has always been, “Be Kind.” This year, as we return to normal, there come opportunities for us to connect and engage after a year of sheltering and quarantine, with kindness at the forefront. We have the opportunity to focus on creating a space of belonging, after long being out-of-touch with one another physically. For the families who have been here for a few years or a decade or more: we are grateful to you for being our “heartwood.” For the families who joined us last year (at an unprecedented time) and the families who are new to Aspen: we welcome you and look forward to getting to know you even better. Most of all, we look forward to the way your child will grow, learn, and lead over the next year.

I’m eager for us to gather again as families -- not just our students and faculty. We may not be able to anticipate everything the coming year will bring, yet we can pour kindness into each moment and model for our students.

Over the past 17 years, I’ve never been more excited for a year to begin: for us to shake off the dust of last year and to greet our community like the family they are to us, with a sense of belonging for all. I am excited for the many staff and faculty returning -- as well as the new members of our team who share our values and commitment to next generation education, leadership and entrepreneurship, and community strength and service. Onward!







**Aspen  
Academy  
Values**



# Academic Directors



**Pre-K-  
4th Grade  
Director**

## **Dana Kohls**

Welcome! It is a thrill to lead as Lower School Director of Aspen Academy. It is truly an honor to be a part of a community living and holding each other accountable to the values of kindness, hard work, and seeking to do good in all facets of life. Combined with the values of Aspen Academy, our exceptional team of educators will strengthen next-generation education skills through relevant, meaningful, and engaging learning and reinvigorate our commitment to character and leadership development through Future Holders one-of-a-kind curricula and instruction. Relationships are at the heart of a thriving community and it is my goal that each student and family feel a strong, deep sense of love and belonging during a time that will put our commitment to those values to the test. We are committed to one another more than ever and I look forward to knowing and serving all students and families in the upcoming year!



**5th-8th  
Grade  
Director**

## **Corey Sampson**

Welcome to the Middle School! After a whirlwind of a year, we are excited to have our kids back in the building to grow, learn, and lead. I look forward to continuing to support our students' learning and the work of our talented and caring teachers. Our middle school teacher team has a combined experience of teaching well over 10,000 students. I know that we, as a school community, recognize how exciting and important these adolescent years are and how we can support them and make each student feel a deep sense of belonging. We support them in our intentional approach to leadership development, building their strengths and awareness of those strengths to make the greatest impact in their home and community. Our academic program is challenging, integrated, and engaging. We promote learning not just in the classroom, but with real world experiences and project-based lessons. The successful middle school student isn't just a student who will succeed in high school, but will succeed inside and outside the classroom and be prepared for life. We can't wait to work with you all as part of this journey.





**Director  
of Leadership  
and Programs**

## **John Woodward**

Hello and welcome to a new school year! I am so looking forward to getting to know each one of you personally. My family has landed in Colorado after profound experiences teaching and learning around the world. We have moved from Massachusetts, Maine and Maryland to Brazil, Qatar, Thailand, and most recently, Malaysia. Phew! We could not have landed in a better place: Aspen Academy and beautiful Colorado!

Whether teaching in unique spots around the world, leading and sparking change in schools and organizations, or parenting, my experiences bloom with our DEI initiatives and our innovative approach to hands-on and contextual education, just two of the characteristics that make Aspen Academy so special. I am thrilled to be in a place whose values are simple yet profound, deeply rooted and meaningful, and where each individual's strengths, passions and talents are discovered, nurtured, curated and celebrated.

As the Director of Programs and Leadership and a natural connector and bridge builder, I will be working closely with our Academic Directors, our fantastic Essentials team, Katie Becker, Yuzo Nieto and Jennifer Gravlee in leadership development and more. Thank you for the warm welcome; now let's go have a wonderful year!

## **Directors' Contact Information**

### **Dana Kohls**

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### **Corey Sampson**

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### **John Woodward**

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# Three-Legged Stool

At Aspen Academy, we are committed to developing students who learn for life, not just for school. This includes focus on three key areas:

## Leadership + Entrepreneurial Development

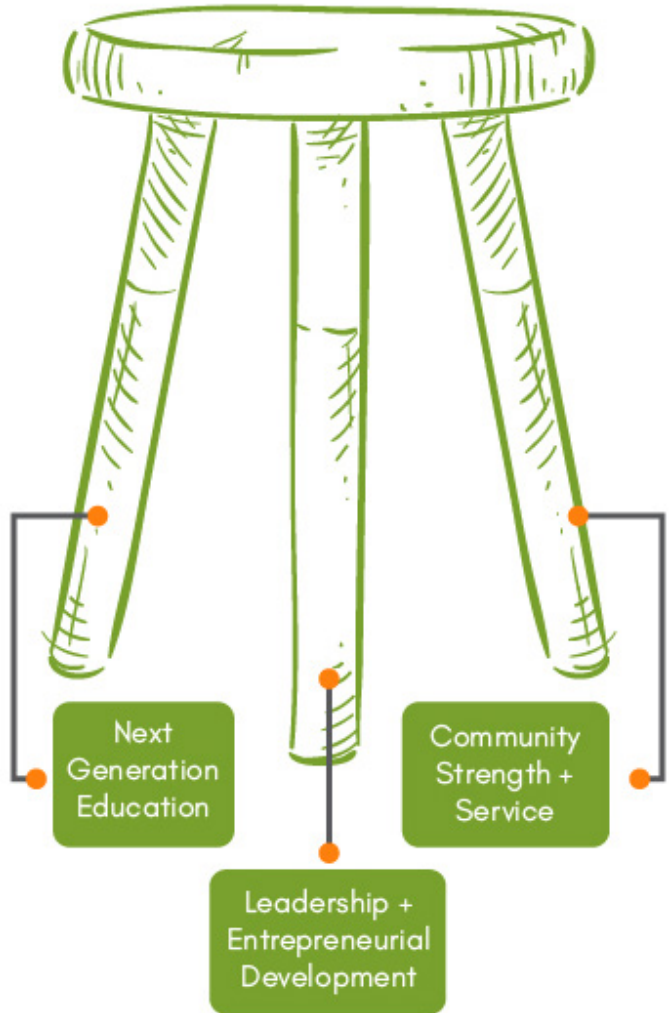
Unique among other schools, Aspen Academy has a strong emphasis on leadership and entrepreneurial development.

## Next Generation Education

Since our inception in 2005, we have remained focused on developing passionate, lifelong learners who graduate from our school empowered to be confident, curious and innovative.

## Community Strength + Service

Our students are taught skills and participate in activities to help them become engaged members of the local and global community.







## OUR MISSION

We edify and inspire students and educators to grow, learn and lead.

## OUR VISION

We are a national leader in innovative and transformative education.





# Aspen 101

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Enjoy this quick introductory course on some common terms/phrases/unique pieces that make our amazing school one of a "Kind."

## Parking Lot»

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Your child's safety is our #1 priority. Parking lot etiquette is expected from all of our families, your child's caregivers and your extended family. Please remember to drive:

- Without your phone.
- Slowly (9 mph).
- Carefully.

Please work on the life skills of crossing roads and navigating a parking lot safely with your student.

For pick up and drop off instructions, please see the school plan.

Parents can provide their children permission to walk or bike ride to/from school as appropriate, given age of child.

We will continue on our staggered drop-off and pick-up times assigned by grade levels. This year, older siblings' start and end time will be assigned to correspond with that of their youngest attending sibling to provide the greatest convenience for parents.

In order to ensure the families are able to park and retrieve their children at the appropriate time, we ask that parents or caretakers pick up children and immediately proceed home.

## AMP'd»

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Aspen Morning Program (AMP'd) pronounced "amped" takes place on various Fridays from 8:30-9:00 a.m. AMP'd is a fully student-run program featuring Broadcast news, grade level performances, essentials showcase and student talent corner. Please stay tuned for more information on how to participate and tune in!

## Conferences»

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### Fall Conference Days:

October 7th (5:00-7:00 p.m.)

October 8th (All day/No School)

### Spring Conference Days:

February 3rd (5:00-7:00 p.m.)

February 4th (All day/No School)

Conferences are a great opportunity for one-on-one time with grade level and essentials teachers. PreK-3rd conferences are between parent and teacher and 4th-8th is between parent/student and teacher. Enjoy time with the amazing team at Aspen Academy that supports your family!



# Field Trips»

## **What is the school field trip uniform? Why is this required?**

We do not have any field trips scheduled for the 2021–2022 school year, however, if circumstances change, here's our field trip uniform: Black pants or skirt, white shirt with Aspen Academy logo. When we take our students into the community, we are proudly representing our school as well as optimizing the safety of each child. A black and white consistent uniform allows our chaperones to keep everyone in direct sight. Please refer to the Family & Student Guidebook for everyday school uniform guidelines.

# Last Day »

Friday, June 3rd will conclude our 2021–2022 school year. Traditionally we come together as a community and celebrate our children on the last day of school. Our cherished 8th graders and their beloved families are celebrating a culminating year and moving on. Meanwhile, our dear Kindergartners are celebrating a year that has allowed them steadfast practice as a crew member within our Aspen Academy community. We celebrate their ability to uphold our values through their positive behaviors personally and academically. Witnessing the young

hearts and eyes of our Kindergartners, alongside our 8th grade young adults, sends an impactful visual message of the movement of precious time among all of our lives. Plans for these events will be released once we are closer to the end of the school year.

# Parent University »

Parent University provides opportunities for our parents, grandparents, and community to learn and grow together. These engaging sessions are scheduled on the second Thursday of most months beginning at 9:30 a.m. There may also be a few evening or weekend events scheduled and most sessions will be recorded. We have membership in the Parent Information Network with events you can also attend. For more information view page 21 or visit: [aspenacademy.org/parentu](https://aspenacademy.org/parentu).

# PIP »

Personal Instruction Profile. Each student's PIP is written by teachers after an extended assessment process. The PIP contains: a student's strengths, areas of focus, and their yearly goals. PIPs are delivered to your email a week prior to Fall Conferences.







## Aspen Leadership Institute(ALI)

The Aspen Leadership Institute is Aspen Academy's secret sauce that allows our alumni to have a strong emphasis on leadership and entrepreneurial development. Our cornerstone curriculum content with Bear's Student Enterprises (BSE), Student Mentor Project, Service Learning, Entrepreneurs Expo, AMP'd and Future Holders' daily content lessons, were written to honor the inherent worth and infinite potential of each and every one of our students.

### Bear's Student Enterprises

Our capstone program in which 8th grade students operate a variety of businesses on campus including the Bear's store, Bear's cafe, broadcasting to put on AMP'd.

### Student Mentor Project

Every year, each student has the opportunity to either be a mentor or mentee. Our older students, in grades 4-8, are often seen interacting, reading, teaching and sitting alongside their mentee in grades Pre-K - 3. This relationship holds strong through the school year as they attend events together as well as play games and fun activities in relation to our leadership topics.

### Service Learning

Our students are taught skills and participate in activities that enable them to become engaged members of the local and global community. The Aspen Academy student body participates in over 7,000 hours of service learning annually and is involved with age-appropriate and relevant service projects throughout their time at the school.

### Entrepreneurs Expo

A family favorite event at Aspen Academy is the Entrepreneurs Expo where each grade shows off the class business they created for the year. Problem solving and collaboration are key skills that are established leading up to and showcased at the expo.

### AMP'd

Every other Friday, our students participate in a student-led, school-wide performance called AMP'd. Every AMP'd is packed with comedy, talent, and amazing performances showcasing two different grades each show.



## Leaders Always and Everywhere

Our on-campus Leadership classes are daily 30-minute classes fueled by our Future Holders curriculum and revolve around a monthly practice to engage and inspire our students in their leadership of self, others, and as global citizens.

Here are the 10 Practices:

- 1. LEAD YOURSELF:** You Matter. Live with purpose. You can do big things.
- 2. YOUR MIND IS YOUR SUPERPOWER:** You can't change things outside of yourself, but you can change what's inside.
- 3. TIME IS YOUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE:** How will you spend it?
- 4. CHOOSE JOY:** Be genuinely grateful in your interactions; happiness comes from within.
- 5. BETTER TOGETHER:** Extraordinary things happen with the cooperation of many minds.
- 6. BE CURIOUS:** Always ask what's possible.
- 7. THOUGHTS ARE THINGS:** Everything starts with an idea; you give it life.
- 8. BE THE DIFFERENCE:** Serve a cause greater than yourself.
- 9. LEAVE YOUR MARK:** Always leave it better than you found it.
- 10. HAVE AN ADVENTURE:** Play and rest are just as important as working hard.



Jennifer  
Gravlee

**Leadership Coach**

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## Aspen Ventures

True to our vision, Aspen Academy believes in transforming education. As such, we have two homegrown ventures that fuel that vision: Future Holders and MODI.



**Future  
Holders**

**Future Holders** was founded to expand our impact in the development of personal leadership, finance and entrepreneurial skills of our nation's youth. Our proprietary curriculum of over 2,000 lessons is hosted in an online platform and currently serves over 1,200 students in schools across the country. We recently launched the app based, gamified version of curricular content for an adaptive, engaging way to enrich learning with the life skills critical for future readiness.

Our MODI furniture line helps students MOve and Discover for improved memory, attention, mood and academic achievement.

Developed in partnership with feedback from First Grade students, Kristina Scala received the patent for the MODI design in 2019. Sales from MODI support Aspen Academy.



Katie  
Becker

**Executive Director  
of Aspen Ventures**

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## Elevating Ourselves and One Another

"Rather than looking outward in an attempt to predict an outcome, we turn inward towards our identity. We have the power to base our decisions on who we are -- or who we want to be."

- Adam Grant, Originals

Elevate is a comprehensive and centralized program that is imbued in the culture of the school here at Aspen Academy. Within Aspen Academy's entrepreneurial development and personal leadership programs, the Elevate team supports students, parents and teachers as we celebrate the unique qualities that each individual brings to the Aspen Academy family.

Recognizing that parents are the primary educators of their children, the Elevate program is consistently intentional about the authentic partnership that it creates with parents and guardians in the development of all children. Meeting students where they are, the Elevate program consistently utilizes coaching, intervention and professional

development to support others in achieving their full potential along the academic and social-emotional continuum.

The Elevate team is composed of two school counselors and two learning interventionists. Students' social-emotional health and wellness stand as a priority for every student and it is recognized that bringing next generation education that is transformative to students' lives begins with self-care and recognition of the dignity of each person. Parents are invited to communicate early and often with the Elevate team. Early and regular communication is a fundamental best practice that allows students to begin working on any number of life challenges throughout their time at Aspen Academy.

The Aspen Academy community enjoys celebrating the unique learning styles of each student as well. In celebrating neurodiversity, we recognize that when every student feels seen and heard, and ultimately has a voice the entire community significantly benefits. Teachers, parents, counselors and students begin from a place of self-awareness and self identity as students gain confidence in their personal learning styles, while providing individualized academic intervention as needed, and personal instruction plans that address the needs of each student individually.

Aspen Academy is a truly special place. While recognizing each individual for who they are and inviting them to show up as their authentic selves, we promote



# & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

every member of the school community. Students are able to enjoy a more colorful life experience while building a more balanced world. Each year we see that students exponentially grow towards a place of empathy for others in their pursuit of a global citizen through their local level experiences.

Aspen Academy provides a wonderful environment for us all to create a culture that emphasizes our core

values; Be Kind, Do Good, Work Hard and Make the World Better. We look forward to our partnership with you as we collaborate on your students' growth and development throughout the course of this next school year.

Jessie Skipwith  
Director of Elevate



Jessie  
Skipwith

**Director of Elevate &  
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Wimbish

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Learning Interventionist**

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# Aspen Academy Traditions

by Amanda Jackson, Debbie Schwartz, Becky Mershon, Jess Weidknecht

From Pre-K through 8th Grade, Aspen Academy encourages ever-increasing independence and critical thinking. Aspen has several grade level growth opportunities that have become consistent traditions that are recognized and celebrated by our community year-after-year. Whether it is igniting individual, intellectual curiosity in the 2nd grade Biography project, or fundamental teamwork and analytical thinking in the 6th grade Roller Coaster project, or finally, entrepreneurial development that culminates in a capstone presentation in the 8th grade Shark Tank competition, the growth that is witnessed in each student across the milestones of their Aspen Academy career are both rewarding and inspiring!



## Grade 2: Biography Project ➤➤

"The Second Grade Biography project was a huge developmental leap for my son, Ben. This was the first large independent project that tied in social studies, communications and literacy. It was amazing to see Ben's excitement about this project. He chose Admiral Nimitz and in an unbelievable twist, Ms. Letman was able to put him in contact with the Nimitz family! Ben worked so diligently (along with the entire grade) and was excited to present his project to the parents, other students and 2nd grade. It was so special to see the entire community come together to celebrate this project. It is something so unique and special to Aspen Academy!"

**Debbie Schwartz,**  
**Mom of Ben, 4th grade**



## Grade 5: Roller Coaster Project ➤➤

"All three of my kids have very different interests, talents and strengths and Aspen has been able to address all of them as the unique individuals they are. Two of my children have had the opportunity to participate in the 6th grade, "Roller Coaster





Project." This unique group project lets their imaginations run wild as they work through the engineering, math and art of the project while utilizing products that would have otherwise been recycled or thrown away. The group portion of the project allows for collaboration, planning and the transfer of ideas between peers which is a small lesson in a much greater life lesson. Like all of the amazing project-based learning opportunities at Aspen, the process of the project takes precedence over the actual product. Parents, I know it's hard but please let the kids do this on their own as much as possible! What they learn from projects like these will be taken with them always and knowing that they did it with ideas from their own amazing brains instills confidence and the always sought after Aspen grit. Projects like these are invaluable learning opportunities that are hard to find in many other schools. Just another way Aspen shines!"

**Becky Mershon, Mom of Addie, 3rd grade, Derek, 7th grade and Trevor, Alumni**



**Mershon Family**

**Grade 8: Shark Tank ➡**

"I have been a parent at Aspen Academy for over nine years now.

During this time I have been fortunate enough to mentor 8th graders while they develop and promote their businesses during the Shark Tank competition. It is quite rewarding to see these young students create a business of their choosing, develop a comprehensive business plan and then present in front of a panel of judges.



For our family, watching our daughters grow from young, curious elementary school children into mature, confident entrepreneurs with the ability to present in front of a group of adult professionals is something very unique and special. This project instills entrepreneurship and leadership qualities to these young kids and a very unique ability to enter High School at a different level than most kids around them. As a parent, I highly recommend being a part of Aspen's Shark Tank competition and work with these kids as either a mentor or judge. It's a very rewarding and fun way to meet young entrepreneurs and help them through the process."

**Jess Weidknecht, Mom of Kate, 8th grade, Sofia, Alumni**



**Weidknecht Family**



In order to stay up to date with calendar changes--Please find the link to our online calendar and instructions to sync with our calendar via the QR Code below.



## AUG

9-10 New Faculty & Staff Orientation  
11-24 All Faculty & Staff Pre-Service  
23 Registration Day  
25 First Day of School

## SEP

2 Back to School Night  
6 No School - Labor Day  
24 No School - In-Service/  
Teacher Professional Development

## OCT

7 Evening Conferences (5-7pm)  
8 No Classes - Conferences  
11 No School - Fall Break  
29 No Classes - In-Service/  
Teacher Prof. Development

## NOV

22-26 No School - Thanksgiving Break

## DEC

20-31 No School - Winter Break

## JAN

3 No Classes - In-Service/  
Teacher Prof. Development  
17 No School -  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
21 State of the School, Entrepreneurs  
Expo, Early Dis. (In-Service)

## FEB

3 Evening Conferences (5-7pm)  
4 No Classes - Conferences  
18 No Classes - In-Service/  
Teacher Prof. Development  
21 No School - Presidents' Day

## MAR

21-25 No School - Spring Break

## APR

22 Service Expo

## MAY

13 No School - In-Service/  
Teacher Professional Development  
30 No School - Memorial Day

## JUN

3 Last Day of School  
(Early Dismissal at 12pm)

## KEY

- All School Event
- No School or No Classes
- Early Dismissal (12pm)

- A AMP'd
- C Conferences
- D Dress Down Dollar Day
- E Early Dismissal (12pm)
- F First Day of School
- G Gala
- L Last Day of School
- N No School
- T Town Hall





# Aspen Academy Calendar

# 2021-22

## AUGUST

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	F	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## SEPTEMBER

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## OCTOBER

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## NOVEMBER

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## JANUARY

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## FEBRUARY

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## MARCH

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## APRIL

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## MAY

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## JUNE

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## JULY

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31						

\*IMPORTANT COVID-19 INFORMATION: Aspen Academy fully anticipates holding all events as specified above. We plan to follow state and county health protocols for gatherings, and will keep you continually informed as to how these events may be impacted.





Starishevsky  
Family

## Alumni Profile: Byron Starishevsky

My name is Byron Starishevsky and I am a senior at Kent Denver. I first started at Aspen Academy as a second grader and little did I know that Aspen was about to teach me some of the most important lessons I have ever learned. Two of the most important to me were leadership and public speaking.

Aspen Academy taught me to be a leader and to always do the right thing. In fact, the school's values are, "Be Kind, Do Good, Work Hard, Make the World a Better." These values, philosophy, and access to programs like the Student Civic Organization, Student Ambassador Program and Bear's Student Enterprises taught me how to be an effective leader and communicator to my peers and school. These experiences enabled me to discover my love and passion for leadership positions. I was able to carry this passion into high school where I continue to seek out and be successful in leadership roles.

While most people shy away from public speaking opportunities, I never turn

one down. I owe this confidence in my public speaking abilities to Aspen Academy's curriculum. Fortunately, Aspen recognized the importance of public speaking at an early age. In every grade, we had numerous public speaking opportunities. Because of this, my confidence in my communication skills skyrocketed during my seven years at Aspen Academy.

After graduating from Kent in 2022, I plan to attend a four-year private university with a major in business management. With the education and experiences that Aspen provided me at an early age, I know that I am well equipped to be a successful business leader!



Byron  
Starishevsky



# Parent University

Parent University provides opportunities for our parents, grandparents, and community to learn and grow together. These engaging sessions are scheduled on the second Thursday of most months beginning at 9:30 am. Most sessions are recorded for parents unable to attend live. We have membership in the Parent Information Network with events you can also attend.

**For a full schedule of parent universities, recordings of past events or to register, visit: [www.aspenacademy.org/parentu](http://www.aspenacademy.org/parentu)**

## **Lower School Universities**

### **Parenting without Loosing Your Mind: Love & Logic for Youngsters**

with Kerry Stutzman  
SEP 9 | 9:30 a.m.

**Understanding the Singapore  
Math Model** with Dana Kohls  
OCT 14 | 9:30 a.m.

**Self Regulation and Development  
Expectations of Young Children,  
Pre-K to 2nd Grade** with Ali Schroer  
NOV 11 | 9:30 a.m.

## **Middle School Universities**

**Understanding Anxiety and  
Depression** with Alex Yannacone  
SEP 9 | 9:30 a.m.

**Courageous Counversations** with  
Jessie Skipwith and Cindy Hewatt  
OCT 14 | 9:30 a.m.

### **Substance Abuse, How to be Proactive and Warning Signs**

with Lynn Burrell  
NOV 11 | 9:30 a.m.

## **All School Universities**

**New Year! New YOU! Prioritizing 2022!**  
with Kristina Scala  
JAN 13 | 9:30 a.m.

**Diversity Equity and Inclusion**  
with Jessie Skipwith  
FEB 10 | 9:30 a.m.

## **FutureHolders**

with Katie Becker  
MAR 10 | 9:30 a.m.

### **Cyber Security and Parent's Role Over the Summer**

with Justin Wibmish  
MAY 12 | 9:30 a.m.





# Parent Civic Organization

The Parent Civic Organization (PCO) is Aspen Academy's volunteer parent leadership group.

Our goal is to create an intentional school community that works together to support the needs and efforts of the teachers, administration, students, and families. The PCO exists to create an edifying experience that inspires greater aspirations for authentic community leadership. We are proud of our unique civic leadership structure that is modeled after our federal government system and includes all community stakeholders.

Every parent is a part of Aspen Academy's Parent Civic Organization. Each year your contribution of \$100 per child creates the budget that allows Aspen Academy to live its values outloud! The PCO budget funds gatherings and celebrations that embrace our values.

Each one of us is part of the creation and sustainability of a diverse and driven parent community that strives to support Aspen Academy's mission and vision. Biannual full PCO meetings are a chance for parents, with or without a leadership position within the PCO, administrators, teachers, and community leaders to:

**BE KIND:** Collaborate and inspire members of this sacred space.

**DO GOOD:** Set positive intentions and lean into sharing your unique gifts of time and talent.

**WORK HARD:** Make this the most amazing place possible for the small humans that walk Aspen Academy's halls on a daily basis.

This helps our students have every tool necessary to **MAKE THE WORLD BETTER.**

## PCO MISSION:

"Together we inspire an enthusiastic and intentional community of families that foster Aspen Academy's mission, vision and values."

## Full Parent Civic Organization Zoom Meetings

ALL parents are welcome and encouraged to attend  
on September 16, 2021 and March 17, 2022  
from 8:30-10:00 a.m.



# Community Events

## Back to School Night >>

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**SEP 2 | 5:00-6:30 p.m. | Grade Level Session 1: 5:00 p.m. | General Session with Head of School: 5:30 p.m. | Session 2: 6:00 p.m.**

Parent attendance is mandatory. Please find childcare for your children so that you and all the other parents can fully concentrate. There will be two sessions for each classroom ensuring opportunities for parents with multiple children to attend the various class sessions. This will be a virtual event.

## Back to School Coffee >>

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**AUG 25 | After Kiss and Go**

All Aspen Academy parents and caretakers are invited to join your Parent Civic Organization for coffee and meet other parents at Aspen.

## Family Work Days >>

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**OCT 23 and MAY 14 | 11:30 a.m. -2:00 p.m. @ Aspen Academy**

Family Work Day events are for the Aspen community to come together and help refresh and clean up our campus. There are several options this year which are all on Saturdays for the whole family to join.

## Parent Cocktail >>

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**OCT 1 | 6:00-8:00 p.m.**

This annual event is the time to get to know all the wonderful parents, grandparents, and directors in our Aspen community.

## PCO Service Event >>

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**FEB 23 | 2:00-5:00 p.m. | Packs of Hope**

Packs of Hope is a non-profit humanitarian organization committed to the vision that every child deserves hope. We partner with the community and county human service agencies to provide backpacks filled with essential clothing items to children and youth who are transitioning into out-of-home or foster care. For an updated list of on going community events please view our weekly newsletter or go to [aspenacademy.org/about/calendar](https://aspenacademy.org/about/calendar)





# Communications

We strive to share relevant and engaging communication with our community using tools that give you access wherever you are! Below are a few tools parents have noted as their favorites to keep them informed:

## Canvas:

Canvas is a trusted source for grades, assignment information, social events in the classroom, and tracking daily academic progress. Every feature in Canvas has been designed to make access smooth and easy for you, and to make teaching and learning even easier. If you have trouble logging in, please speak with your director for support.

## Newsletters:

Every Thursday, you will receive a newsletter from the Marketing and Communications Office with school events and activities. Read this weekly for important upcoming events that your student is involved in, invitations to events, and informative updates from faculty and staff. If you are not receiving the newsletter please reach out to our Marketing Manager, Jordyn Linnell at [jordyn.linnell@aspenacademy.org](mailto:jordyn.linnell@aspenacademy.org).

## Social Media:

Follow us on any or all of the below social platforms to stay in the loop, watch AMP'd when you can't make it, or read blogs that our staff is writing.



@AspenAcademy



Aspen Academy



Aspen Academy



@Aspen\_Academy



@Aspen\_Academy

## Calendar:

Parents can access every Aspen Academy calendar on our website. From this location you can also add the Aspen Calendar to your Outlook, Gmail, or iCal calendars using the RSS feed. Look for more information in the newsletter.



# PCO Care Committee + Birthdays

Your PCO dollars are at work! This year's PCO budget will provide teachers and faculty members \$100 on their birthday and a \$75 gift card prior to the holiday break. For your convenience, the Care Committee maintains an updated Teacher/Staff Favorites list.

Susan Perkins	9-Jan
Cathy Shematek	23-Jan
Brian Fleck	27-Jan
Jessica Cho	29-Feb
Theresa Letman	6-Mar
Paul Noel	10-Mar
Amber Craig	14-Mar
Jack Assaf	14-Mar
Mary Ann Dawson	19-Mar
Brooke Jenzano	22-Mar
Phillip Romero	26-Mar
Mike Brunstetter	2-Apr
Courtney Gray	6-Apr
Kate Stein	17-Apr
Brett Walder	24-Apr
Maya Pingle	29-Apr
Jessie Skipwith	11-May
Bailey Taber	13-May
Michelle Grindle	26-May
Jennifer Gravlee	1-Jun
Bridget Farr	3-Jun
Lisa Teets	8-Jun
Chris Holtzem	9-Jun
Eric Peterson	19-Jun
Jennifer Kubik	1-Jul
Megan McKnight	1-Jul
Lilly Raboin	2-Jul
Nicole Witcher	8-Jul
Calynd Gee	19-Jul
Carrie Pettigrew	22-Jul
Fabiola Lopez	24-Jul
Marianne Roe	24-Jul
Corey Sampson	26-Jul

Brittany Stream	29-Jul
Katie Hamel	4-Aug
Kristina Scala	8-Aug
Leslie Kinne	10-Aug
Jordyn Linnell	11-Aug
Dana Kohls	16-Aug
Debbie Cordero	18-Aug
Cindy Hewatt	23-Aug
Octavia Betz	24-Aug
Olivia Rodriguez	26-Aug
Katie Behrmann	28-Aug
Jenny White	28-Aug
Marie Boneck	30-Aug
Jade Croghan	6-Sep
Maureen Mullen	10-Sep
Lynda Sailor	13-Sep
John Woodward	14-Sep
Torri Parker	18-Sep
Bridget Noel	30-Sep
Rachel Sachs	7-Oct
Lara Hutchison	9-Oct
Julie Moreau	11-Oct
Alex Jennison	12-Oct
Zanna Geier	18-Oct
Sarah Harris	3-Nov
Zach Couchman	6-Nov
Yuzo Nieto	9-Nov
Justin Wimbish	12-Nov
Kate Shaw	17-Nov
Karen Leyva	19-Nov
Annette Calhoun	4-Dec
Molly Babineaux	17-Dec
Kaitlyn Dawn Dinner	18-Dec
Katie Becker	20-Dec



Use the QR code to view our staff favorites list for gift ideas.





# Community Engagement + Development

We have a lot of exciting plans for our community this year! Let's CONNECT!

Whether this is your first year at Aspen Academy or your 10th, congratulations on being a part of an amazing community. We have the monumental opportunity to create a very special year for Aspen Academy. Our students and our families are ready to connect and belong and there are grand plans for events, volunteering, adult educational opportunities and gatherings.

I am excited to spend another year together, get to know you better and tap into your passions and experiences as we plan our campaigns and our engagement events.

If you have questions or ideas of how you can get involved, please give me a call! I am always looking for event planning and fundraising partners. Or just grab a cup of coffee and chat, let's CONNECT!

Debbie Cordero  
Director of Development and  
Community Engagement  
debbie.cordero@aspenacademy.org  
C: 720-331-4853  
O: 303-346-3500 ext 105



Debbie  
Cordero

At Aspen Academy we are committed to running lean and maintaining a balanced budget. We are proud to provide our high quality education for one of the lowest costs in the metro area. The tuition you pay supports teacher salaries and fixed costs, which is why we ask you to contribute resources to support additional, vital programs. This year you'll be asked to share your time and talents through volunteering. We will also reach out for you to participate in the following fundraising campaigns and events.

## Annual Fund >>

Begins August 23, 2021 and will culminate on December 7, 2021 with our celebration of Aspen Giving Day. At Aspen Academy, our Annual Fund supports continuing professional development for our teachers, tuition assistance for select students and continuous improvement and updates of our curriculums. Look for your opportunity to participate as we begin our school year.





## Graduate Gift >>

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The 8th Grade Class of 2022 and their families will partner with our development team to contribute a designated gift to honor their time at Aspen Academy. This tradition honors the legacy of our students as they continue on to high school.



## Grand Days >>

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**NOV 19, 2021 AND FEB 17, 2022**

Each year we celebrate the special people in our students' lives. Mark your calendars now, and look for more information to come on our virtual and in-person events for the 2021-2022 school year. We have GRAND plans to share our community and classrooms with our grandparents and grandfriends.



## Grand Council >>

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Are you a grandparent of an Aspen Academy student? We want to hear from you as we cultivate and tap into the wisdom only you can bring to our community. Please reach out to Debbie Cordero to start the conversation of how we can partner in success.



## Gala and Capital Campaign >>

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**April 30, 2022**

Traditionally this event draws our parents together to celebrate our community. Look forward to more information and opportunities to attend and volunteer your time to this fun-filled evening. Donations and proceeds will be directed to this year's campus capital improvement project.



## Legacy Giving >>

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Our success is due to our community for everything you have given to support our program. If you or your foundation are looking for a way to continue to impact the world and the lives of children, join us this year as we learn and educate our community about planned giving opportunities.



# Teacher Talk:

Summer is always a beautiful time to recharge and relax. Here are a few summer adventures from our teachers!

## Mrs. Calhoun >>

### Pre-K Instructor

Mrs. Calhoun had a busy summer with hiking and traveling, a highlight was the absolutely beautiful Mt. Evans. She set out on America's birthday (July 4th) to conquer the summit of 14,271 feet. Climbing to the summit was both exciting and extremely tough! When Mrs. Calhoun got to the top she was greeted by the sweetest sight: a mountain goat with two babies in tow. Mrs. Calhoun shared that, "moving to Colorado two years ago, is the most beautiful decision I've ever made!"



## << Mr. Brunstetter

### 7th/8th Grade Instructor

The Brunstetter family enjoyed some quality time this summer. The Olympics inspired and awed the youngest to oldest Brunstetter. Pool time at the neighborhood pool was a must for the whole family and in August they went to Disneyland!





## Mrs. Gravlee >>

### Leadership Coach

Mrs. Gravlee trained, planned, and prepared for her first solo backpacking trip! She hiked the first two segments of the Colorado Trail. The backpacking trip covered over 30 miles with 7,000 feet of climbing.



## << Mrs. Perkins

### 6th Grade Instructor

Mrs. Perkins was able to catch up with friends and family this summer. She was lucky enough to go to Broncos training camp and try out the Happy Camper and Little Man Ice Cream with Mrs. Cho and Ms. Raboin.



## Mr. + Mrs. Noel

### 3rd and 1st Grade Instructors

The Noels were able to celebrate their daughter, Navy meeting her great-grandfather. They had a blast being back East for the summer.

# Teacher Talk Continued



## ◀ Ms. Raboin

### Math and Essentials Instructor

Ms. Raboin spent her summer connecting with and learning about the outdoors in the Rockies. She learned how to camp and fish and enjoyed atv-ing and hiking.



## Mrs. Leyva ▶▶

### Spanish Instructor

Mrs. Leyva and her husband, Leo embarked on two large road trip adventures covering 11 states spending the most time in Washington, Oregon coast, Wisconsin, and Illinois. They enjoyed mouthwatering seafood, stunning views, and had great time to connect with each other, family, and friends. Now it's time to start a new adventure in the fall- we will be hosting a high school student who is related to Leo. Chris will be moving here from Mexico in order to finish high school and pursue his dream of going to college in the US. Let the next big adventure begin!





## Ms. Pettigrew >>

### Pre-K Instructor

One of Mrs. Pettigrew's summer adventures this year took her to Atlanta, Georgia, a place where culture and history are prevalent on every corner. Ms. Pettigrew shared the photo to the left sharing, "here we stood at the threshold of the birth house of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."



## << Mr. Wimbish

### Middle School

#### Learning Interventionist

Mr. Wimbish shared that the summer was full of relaxing, self-care, and reconnecting with family and friends! To fill his time he took some road trips, hikes, and is excited to share he is learning to play the drums.



## Ms. Pingle >>

### Dance Instructor

This summer, Ms. Pingle enjoyed time with her family, but had the pleasure of meeting dance icon Lil Buck himself! Lil Buck was an inspiration in the dance classroom last year, as all grades watched this Memphis street dancer who created "Jookin" take on ballet in his own style and with true artistry. Ms. Pingle told him about the great movement that was accomplished last year- with his help! He was MOVED by this and sent back this photo of his flexy arms! Good job Aspen Dance and Movement Exploration!



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# ONE RULE: BE KIND

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Aspen Academy maintains high expectations for our students' behavior and we espouse only one rule: Be Kind. It is amazing to see what happens to a school community when the bar is raised highly, proudly with trust that each of the children will meet the standard that has been set.

As adults of this school, parents, staff and faculty each hold the supreme responsibility of modeling this rule for our children, their friends, and the other adults in the building. Please be mindful always of your important role and let your thoughts, words and deeds reflect a commitment to kindness.

In conjunction with parents, we develop our students' character and leadership skills on a daily basis and we emphasize:

Your character is defined by what you do,  
not just by what you say or believe.

Every choice you make helps define the kind of  
person you are choosing to be.

Good character requires doing the right thing, always.

What you do matters, and one person can make a big difference.

The consequence of good character is that it makes you  
a better person and it makes the world better.

