



Onward & Upward

THE AVERY COONLEY SCHOOL

WINTER 2022 MAGAZINE AND ANNUAL REPORT

Legacy of Leadership

In its 115th year, The Avery Coonley School reviews its history of thoughtful leaders.

Summer Program Success

This year's program thrived in summer with plenty of unique and dynamic courses.

Honoring Chicago

Take a look inside The Avery Coonley School's Group 3 classroom as they travel back in time.

4

Legacy of Leadership

Summer Program Success

9

In a year like no other, The Avery Coonley School worked hard to create an engaging, exciting, and dynamic Summer Program that kept students curious and wanting more during their break. With plenty of fun classes, activities, and adventures, this year's program was one to remember!

12

Honoring Chicago

Finding Joy in a Pandemic

16

During harsh winter months, The Avery Coonley School's Physical Education teachers found unique outlets to bring joy to the lives of their students. Learn more about the efforts made by The Avery Coonley School's teachers to brighten up the school year.

From the Head of School

Dear Friends 3

Features

Legacy of Leadership 5
Summer Program Success 9
Honoring Chicago 12
Finding Joy in a Pandemic 16

Support from the Community

Report of Giving 20
Financials 22
Giving Circles 26
Parent Participation 30
Alumni Give Back 34
Tribute Gifts 35
Endowment & Other Gifts 36
Annual Auction 38
Sponsors 43

Around Campus

Ways to Support ACS 45
Welcome and Thank You 46

Alumni News and Events

Alumni Council 52
Class Notes 54
Graduation 60
Salute to Class of 2017 61



FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



DEAR FRIENDS

The 2020-2021 school year was undoubtedly one to remember. Yet, As I head into my last year as The Head of The Avery Coonley School, I still find myself amazed by the resilience of our community and how quickly our faculty and staff, students, and community adapt to unprecedented changes, continuing to persevere onward and upward. We could not have done this past year without all of your help, thoughtful encouragement, and positivity.

As you read through this year's Annual Report, you will discover stories of our school year amid a pandemic and get a closer look at the fantastic work done by students, teachers, our community alike. Additionally, one of the most beautiful things about this year was watching our community come together when we needed it most. With that being said, I am proud to announce that we received our most significant gift this year, which you will see reflected in this report.

The ACS Fund, together with the Annual Auction, raised \$685,010 for the school's operating budget in 2020-2021. Your financial support during this critical time helped to ensure a safe and innovative learning environment for our students. Your unwavering generosity and support for our school continue to amaze us every year.

Thank you for your continued support.

With deep appreciation and thanks,

Paul Druzinsky

Paul Druzinsky, Head of School



Legacy of Leadership

BY RACHEL BUCEK

It's been 115 years since The Avery Coonley School first began as an institution. 115 years full of excitement, joy, and harnessing a love for learning rooted in discovery and curiosity. 115 years of classes, traditions, and deeply committed staff, faculty, families, and students coming together to make one incredible community.

As the school leads into its next academic year, it's fitting that we take a trip down memory lane and honor those who have helped build its foundation. With an abundance of beautiful stories accumulating over a century, The Avery Coonley School has a more remarkable history than that of which can be encapsulated in just a few pages.

While they continue to grow their institution, change is inevitable, but one thing remains; the leaders of The Avery Coonley School continue time and time again to leave a lasting impact on the school. Knowing personalities, leadership styles, and passions all vary reminds us that there is no one right way to lead, but leadership is dynamic, like the school itself.

While the school will welcome a new head of school this year, this cornerstone of The Avery Coonley School's history is the key to unifying and preparing them for a new leader. Join us as we look back at some of their influential trailblazers and the formative roles they played in shaping the school.

This year, faculty, staff, families, and the broader ACS community received a letter from the current Head of School, Paul Druzinsky, announcing his departure from the school at the end of the academic year.

"I am so fortunate to have the honor and pleasure of serving as Head of The Avery Coonley School for what will be my eighth and final year. I have loved being part of a community whose passion for learning is boundless and where faculty, staff, and parents work together best to serve the needs of our gifted and wonderful

students. In a year designed to keep people as far apart as possible, ironically, I've never felt closer to students, parents, staff, and Trustees than I do right now. From life in zoom meetings to Pop-In with parents to town halls to car lines, to lunch, recess, study halls, group chats, and emails, I have loved my time spent in support of this great institution."

Paul's presence on campus will be deeply missed. From a yearly reading of "The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein to fun bow ties and many cheerful car line greetings, The Avery Coonley School will continue to be motivated by his love for the community as they move forward in remembrance of the remarkable work he has done for the school.

"This past year has been incredibly moving. Watching faculty and students do so many creative things outdoors with our space and forming relationships with the students has been encouraging. My favorite thing is getting the opportunity to interact with the kids. Whether at car lines, in the classroom, or at recess, they energize the whole school. They are the reason we do what we do.

Over the last two years, leaders had to quickly prioritize what's important for their schools and constituents. For me, while it's always been near the top of the list, the pandemic has made me realize how valuable working together as a



community is. Regardless of the issues or common day-to-day problems that occur, we must work together. In some small way, I hope my legacy will convey how important that is and how well The Avery Coonley School community has demonstrated that.”

In step with Paul’s call for unity, The Avery Coonley School welcomed a leader in 2001 that shared a deep love for the ACS community. From implementing tablets for teachers (beginning the 1:1 technology ratio on campus) to starting the full-day kindergarten program and building a middle school wing, the late Tom Kracht, while only here for 3 ½ years, left a significant impact on the school.

“There’s unique, and then there’s Tom Kracht.” states Anna Lenhardt, Secondary School Coordinator and former Middle School Head.

Relative to The Avery Coonley School’s mission to help bright and gifted children embrace the joy of discovery and the thrill of creativity and begin their journey as lifelong learners, Tom encouraged a genuine excitement for learning among the ACS community. With a special love for nature and a deep appreciation for the school’s history, he had big dreams of restoring the grounds built in 1929. The year he passed away, the Fund-A-Need restored the rock pond to its original intent, surrounded by plants, in honor of his character and role in making The Avery Coonley School what it is today.

“He took a personal interest in everyone who worked here,” states Anna. “He made you feel like you made a difference, regardless of what your role was. He was also very connected with the kids and frequently visited classrooms. He brought enthusiasm and happiness with him into every room he walked into. It’s not something he learned or could have done any other way. It’s just who he was. He wasn’t afraid to look silly. He got involved in everything we did, and he did it with great delight.”

Long before expansion wings and tablets, history was made when John Malach took over the role of the headmaster in 1960, beginning the school’s transition to gifted education. John altered The Avery Coonley School’s narrative while spending over a decade helping develop a new mission that allowed the school to take a logical and successful step in the right direction for progressive education and intentionally building on the traditions, passions, and educational theories that had been present since the school’s inception.

This created new pathways for The Avery Coonley School to reach and engage with gifted learners. With John’s leadership, hands-on learning experiences, and knowledgeable educators, students developed independent and collaborative problem-solving skills while learning to pursue their unique interests.

The school’s engaging and stimulating learning environment is unique and, just like all beautiful things, started with a simple dream. 115 years ago, Queene Ferry Coonley saw a need to serve students differently and more intentionally. Seeking to expand the educational opportunities for her four-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, she established The Cottage School on her estate in Riverside, Illinois. Joined by Lucia Burton Morse and Charlotte Krum, the three women teach under Froebel’s kindergarten principles and are precepts of the progressive education movement.

At its core, The Avery Coonley School has a history of creating spaces for students to flourish in a culture where the drive to learn transcends all other differences. Helping children become life-long learners begins with acknowledging the critical role a school and its leadership plays in their development. Past, present, and future world-changers walk the halls of The Avery Coonley School, following in the steps of great leaders who have led before them. This is their space, where they come to learn, grow, and discover.



Tom Kracht reading, working, and learning alongside students.



Mr. Malach having a conversation with a student while looking out over the cloister.

A Look at Our Leaders

Lucia B. Morse
1906-1940

Edward M. Read
1979-1987

Anna M. Lenhardt
March-June, 2005

Frances McLees
1940-1942

Richard P. Ericksen
1980-1987

Dr. Linda M. Murphy
2005-2007

Dr. David Russell
1943-1950

Dr. John A. Rhodes
1988-1991

Paul A. Barton
2007-2014

Dorothy Weller
1950-1960

J. Gaston Favreau
1991-2000

Paul Druzinsky
2014-2022

John P. Malach
1960-1974

Susan J. Thompson
2000-2001

Dr. William Kindler
1974-1979

Thomas. A. Kracht
2001-2005

The undeniable theme of shared excitement for learning amongst The Avery Coonley School's leaders shines brightly throughout its history. As life-long learners themselves, assisting students in realizing their intellectual, emotional, social, creative, and physical potential while recognizing the unique needs of gifted children has created a timeless community built of mutual respect that nurtures an appreciation for education and others. 3



Summer Program Success

BY RACHEL BUCEK

Over a year ago, the global pandemic forced schools across the nation to close. Life in front of a screen became a new normal, and summer programs went virtual. Fortunately, with ample safety measures in place and a highly committed faculty and staff, The Avery Coonley School was able to remain open for in-person learning throughout the 2020-2021 school year. While the year progressed, excitement spread throughout campus as ACS faculty and staff prepared to safely bring students on campus for the 2021 Summer Program.

Serving 450 Students (61 of which were from ACS) from 130 schools, the program brought in camp goers from 36 cities and 3 states (IL, CA, and NY). The program, designed to bring a fun and dynamic experience into children's summer break, was filled with unique and engaging classes, creating an excellent environment for kids to learn and grow together!

Courses like Motown Movements, Archery, Theater Arts, and Exploring Math kept students excited and eager to learn.

This year's program, led by The Avery Coonley's School Summer Program Director, Sally Johnston, was one that students will never forget.

"During the summer program, students have the opportunity to delve into experiences that don't always avail themselves in the course of a regular school year. For example, in the "Escape!" class, students must work collaboratively, cooperatively, and come to a consensus while working in groups to solve many logical, mathematical, and word puzzles each day surrounding the daily theme. Their enthusiasm is palpable as they make discoveries, play on each other's strengths, and learn to solve new puzzles they may have never been challenged with before. Once each group of students has solved their respective puzzles, the groups come back together as a community to relish in their reward once they unlock all the locks. A true community feel emerges within this class over the session as students learn to rely on peers they had never known before."

Sunshine Echevarria, Summer Program Teacher.

While the course guide of this year's Summer Program was, in fact, unique, The Avery Coonley School recognized that many students had missed out on essential experiences provided in a typical school year. Avery Coonley carefully curated a wide variety of classes filled with plenty of experiences and opportunities for campers to be engaged in practical learning activities that otherwise may have been missed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Because of COVID, I didn't get to do any dissection in my regular middle school science class. Dissecting a worm was pretty interesting. We also dissected a cow's eye, and we learned about how the anatomy of a cow's eye is different from a human eye. I felt like a doctor!"

Jonah Meslin, Summer Program Attendee.

From counselors to teachers, the success of this year's program was indeed a group effort. In addition to ACS staff working and supporting the program, the school also received help from children of ACS staff and Alumnus, Ben Broach.

While each member of the Summer Program team was focused on giving students a great summer experience, many of the counselors found themselves feeling impacted as well. This includes Daniel Clivaz, who shared that working as a counselor for 7th and 8th graders solidified his decision to pursue his dream of becoming a PE teacher.

"Working with the kids this summer let me know that I could have a direct impact on children's lives right now and into their future. It also affirms why I want to work with kids. Their energy and enthusiasm make me feel young and remind me of the joy of childhood."

Managing and ensuring the success of this year's program was no easy task, but under the leadership of Summer Program Director Sally Johnston, classes, campers, and counselors thrived. Sally began with The Avery Coonley School's Summer Program in 1997 as a counselor herself. She taught Social Studies at ACS the following year and then took over as Director of the Preschool Summer Program in 1999 while also starting the full-day program. Her first year as Summer Program Director was in a COVID world.

"In 2020, my team and I developed a completely remote summer program conducted on zoom and attended by over 300 students including both local as well as international students. The 2021 in-person Summer Program presented its own challenges. We offered in-person cohorts with a wide variety of classes as well as the return of swim lessons. We built on our strong foundation to create a program lost to our traditional program as restrictions allowed. We developed three cohort models offering students opportunities to take classes of special interest while exposing them to 'something new.' There was concern that the lack of choice offered to families would hinder our success this summer. But the ACS Summer Program has a long history of offering enriching and engaging programs for students from all over. That history brought many of our regulars back and many new families to the Summer Program. We had an incredible team of experienced teachers and engaged counselors providing another amazing year for our students through enrichment as well as recreational programming."

While these past two years have certainly been different, the Summer Program still managed to bring smiles to faces at The Avery Coonley School and is excited to return with hopes of creating something just as special for camp goes this upcoming year!

Honoring Chicago at The Avery Coonley School

Take a look inside The Avery Coonley School's Group 3 classroom as they travel back in time.

BY RACHEL BUCEK

The Great Chicago Fire, The Field Museum, and more! Take a closer look at how The Avery Coonley School is honoring their city in Group 3 classrooms every year!

At The Avery Coonley School, an annual research project done by Group 3 students transports you to downtown Chicago faster than any Metra Train or Pace Bus ever could!

Just as history continues to impact our lives and grab our attention, so does one project on campus. Encouraging students’ curiosity for decades, an independent study of Chicago’s deep history creates new learning opportunities for students and teachers alike. Topics ranging from The World’s Fair to railroads to the great Chicago fire unravel questions, inspire discussions, and captivate a classroom as they take a trip back in time.

“We’re here to help build kids’ curiosity of places and events.”
Jen Vaughan, Group 3 Teacher

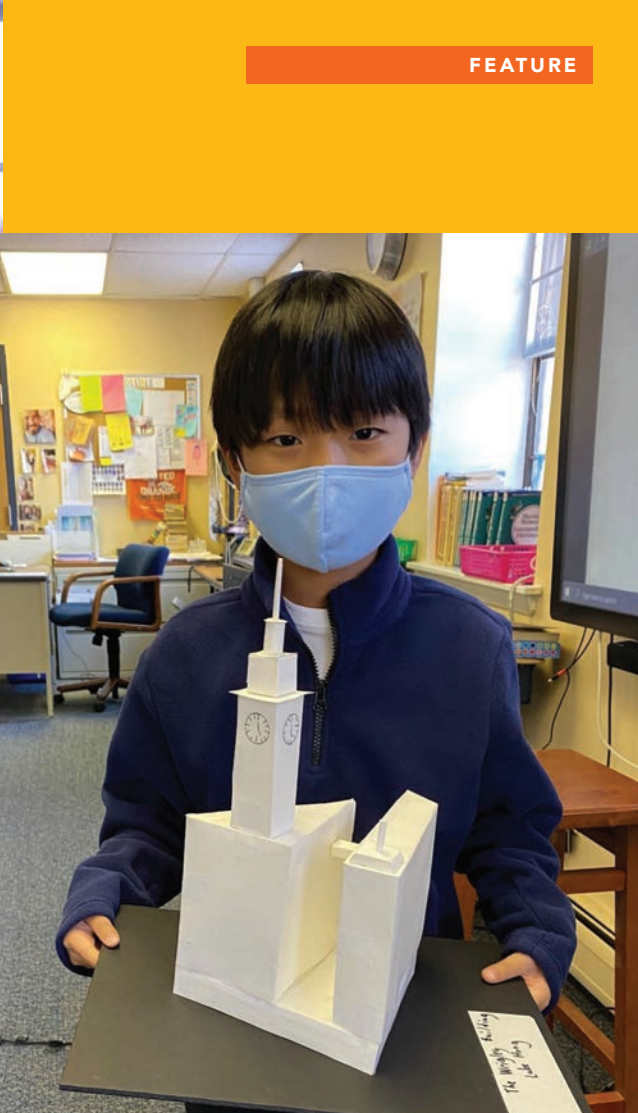
The Avery Coonley School builds on students’ natural curiosity as they seek to better understand various events, times, and places in Chicago. Connecting life events to an institution of Chicago’s history does more than give students familiarity with where they live.

It allows them to use skills they learned throughout the year to choose a topic they are passionate about and use different modes of expression to embrace the interconnection of the city’s life and its people throughout time.

Group 3 teachers combine reading, writing, and social studies curriculum to guide students in independent research of a chosen topic, organization of information, and a final presentation to the class. During a typical school year, the students also take a field trip downtown to help build excitement and inspire topic ideas. This project also encourages students to gain confidence in public speaking, gather and relay information, and pursue a deeper understanding of a wide range of topics.

“It was so fun! I got to dress up as Daisy, Mrs.O’Leary’s cow who started the great Chicago fire.”
Ava Yeh, Avery Coonley School Student

This engaging class project is an ACS favorite. Intricate dioramas, insightful research, and fascinating class discussions create a space where students share their findings in a unique and collaborative culture.



**GROUP 3 STUDENTS
LEARN THE
IMPORTANCE IN
DISCOVERING MORE
ABOUT THEIR CITY.**



**THE AVERY COONLEY
SCHOOL STUDENT
BODY IS MADE OF
320 STUDENTS FROM
40+ DIFFERENT
COMMUNITIES IN THE
CHICAGOLAND AREA.**

For students at The Avery Coonley School, “tell me more” goes to their core. Honoring Chicago in their classrooms is just one of the many ways the school’s unique curriculum offers room for bright and gifted students to discover and dive deep into their passions.

“The winter months provide an opportunity to create memories that will last a lifetime.”

“I fondly remember all the great “snow days” we had during recess. The school had a toboggan slide (the school-owned toboggans) and many kids, including me, also stored our sleds at the school. All of this is to say that I have many memories of “snow days” during my decade at ACS.”

CHIP FRY '67



Finding Joy in a Pandemic

There is something special to be found at the top of The Avery Coonley School's sledding hill.

BY RACHEL BUCEK

It's filled with smiling faces, cheerful belly laughs, and chatter between students navigating COVID-19 together. Since its founding in 1906, The Avery Coonley School has created collaborative learning opportunities for critical thinkers and independent, lifelong learners. While they are best known for serving gifted learners, those who are a part of their community will tell you it's their unique traditions that set them apart from the rest. This includes the long-standing tradition of winters.

The school has a history of embracing the cold Illinois winters with plenty of puffy coats, sleds, and excitement while utilizing their outdoor learning spaces. This year was no exception. Students bundled up and eagerly awaited outdoor activities during the winter months, as its playfulness and unique traditions create a fun and joyful learning experience for all.

“I started in 4th grade (1961/1962) and graduated in 1966. Winter was always fun when there was snow. The hill for sledding and the toboggan slide was something we really loved. We'd spend our physical education time going up and down - who could go the farthest? When the rock pond was frozen, Mr. Ray would let us skate. It was so much fun!”

Cathleen Fitzgerald Schultz '66.

Last year, The Avery Coonley School community came together to navigate change with an immeasurable amount of wisdom and thoughtfulness. As winter months began to approach, Physical Education Teachers Adam Metcalf and Joe Schallmoser wanted to do something special for the community.

Mr. Metcalf entered and received The Northeastern District of IAHPERD grant for the school, which allowed them to purchase quality plastic sleds for current and future students to use while social-distancing on our school's sledding hill.

In a year of change, students needed a simple way to spend time with their peers and have fun while also releasing the pandemic's stresses at a safe distance. While investing in proper sledding equipment was essential, its impact on students is far more significant. The Avery Coonley School's Physical Education teachers knew that continuing winter traditions would be a perfect way to cheer up students of all ages.

"Having a unique outlet to get exercise and socialize while sledding gives our students a much-needed boost during this difficult school year."

Adam Metcalf, Physical Education Teacher

In addition to being a fun activity, sledding is connected to The Avery Coonley curriculum in several ways. It strengthens core muscles while targeting three gross motor skills: proprioception, motor planning, and balance. It also impacts a student's social-emotional element, encouraging them to take turns, read social cues, and engage in teamwork. These are all inherent parts of an outdoor sledding experience, but something special about the community at The Avery Coonley School reaches beyond this. It's more than just sledding. It's about bringing joy into the lives of their students.

Additionally, The Avery Coonley School knows that these fun winter months aren't just for students to enjoy. Parents rejoiced as they received the following email from Paul Druzinsky, Head of School, that included the two words every student and parent long to hear, "Snow Day."

"I believe now, more than ever, that snow days, which are generally rare, are times to have fun and create lifetime memories. Our students and staff work tremendously hard, and the rare snow day is something all children should experience, especially in these unprecedented times. Life is too short! If we ever do close, see it as a chance for sledding, hot chocolate, extra sleep, and a special moment for your children."

Paul Druzinsky, Head of School

The winter months provide an opportunity to create memories that will last a lifetime. The Avery Coonley School thrives on its uniquely collaborative environment and students' drive to learn. Deeply involved parents and highly committed faculty support this community of motivated, high-ability children who learn together and learn by doing. They welcome, include, and support each other in their diversity.



Report of Giving

The tradition of philanthropy started by Queene Ferry Coonley continues to be a vital part of the success and well-being of ACS.

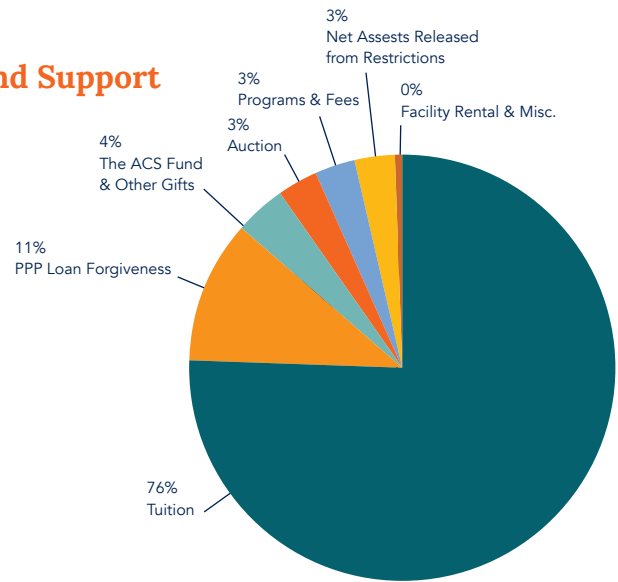
Charitable giving supports the life of The Avery Coonley School and our students on a daily basis. It is evident in the classrooms, where small groups of motivated children, highly-trained faculty, an innovative curriculum, and technology all interact in magical ways. It is seen in the rich offerings of the arts, physical education, and extracurricular activities that address the development of the whole child. Philanthropic support makes possible the remarkable array of physical spaces of this beautiful and historic campus. It is in the school pride and spirit that build a strong and welcoming community. It is in the financial aid that ensures that an ACS education can be within the reach of as many families as possible. All of this, and more, is made possible by the contributors acknowledged in this Annual Report.

Each year, the School conducts two major fundraising programs that are lead by the Development Office: the ACS Fund and the Annual Auction. Charitable gifts to the School may also be directed to one of three major endowment funds: the General Endowment, which supports a wide range of School needs; the Professional Growth Endowment, which provides vital resources for the ongoing professional development of faculty; and the Financial Aid Endowment, which supports the goal of broadening access for qualified students of all socio-economic backgrounds.

The Avery Coonley School extends a warm thank you to the Board members, parents, alumni, alumni families, grandparents, faculty, staff, businesses, and other friends who generously who generously supported the School in the 2020-2021 school year. Every gift received supports the School's commitment to providing a transformative education for the students of today and tomorrow, inspires others to give, and represents the collective power of our community.

How ACS Works Financially

2020-2021
Revenue and Support



Revenue and Support

TUITION INCOME LESS NEED BASED FINANCIAL AID **\$7,280,065**

Full tuition is charged to all students who attend the School. ACS awards financial aid to qualified recipients based on financial need calculated by School and Student Services (SSS), managed by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). Partial financial aid was awarded to 61 students during the 2020-2021 school year.

THE ACS FUND AND OTHER GIFTS **\$446,817**

The ACS Fund is generous charitable support from current parents, alumni, grandparents and other friends of the School to help pay the additional expenses not covered by tuition.

NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS **\$258,645**

Contributions received with donor-restrictions that were spent during the year. Majority of this amount was spent on financial assistance due to COVID-19 and on playground equipment.

AUCTION **\$259,631**

Net proceeds from the ACS Annual Auction helps bridge the gap between what tuition covers and the actual costs of educating students at ACS. Currently, the gap is \$4,544 per student.

PROGRAMS AND FEES **\$281,841**

Net income from the After School Program, Summer Program, testing services, and new student fees assist with paying for the variety of addition programs and services offered by ACS.

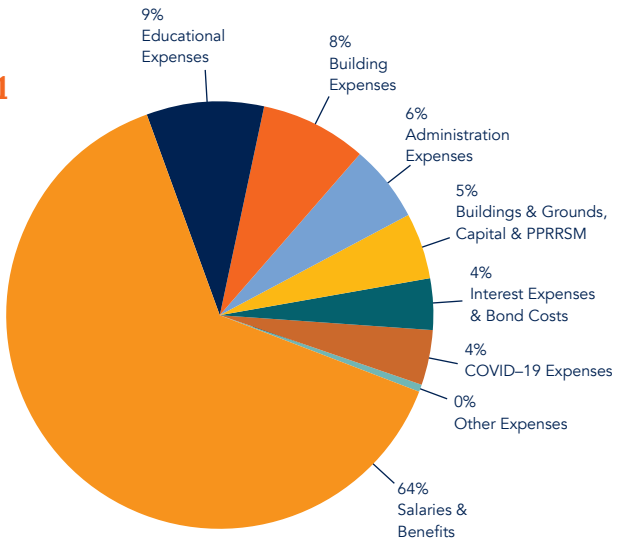
FACILITIES RENTAL AND MISCELLANEOUS INCOME **\$16,398**

Net revenue generated from the rental of school facilities and other programs sponsored by the School.

PPP LOAN FORGIVENESS **\$1,051,192**

ACS received a federal PPP loan for \$1,051,192 during the 2019-2020 school year. The loan was forgiven the following year and is considered income.

2020-2021
Expenses



Expenses

SALARIES AND BENEFITS **\$6,145,687**

Salaries and benefits for faculty, staff and administrators. The benefits include retirement contributions, health insurance, life insurance, disability, and FICA contributions.

EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES **\$869,802**

Expenses related to instruction including educational software, curricular materials, textbooks, technology equipment, classroom supplies, educational professional growth, standardized testing costs, as well as spending to fulfill requirements of temporarily restricted donations.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES **\$569,341**

Includes property and casualty insurance, financial and legal costs, photocopying, postage, office supplies, telephone, professional growth for the administration, and membership dues for school associations.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE **\$789,504**

Contracted maintenance services including custodial, landscape services, snow removal, utilities, maintenance supplies, and repair costs.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS, CAPITAL AND PRRSM **\$476,217**

Capital improvements to the campus as well as PRRSM (Provision for Plant Replacement, Renewal and Special Maintenance) funding.

INTEREST EXPENSES AND BOND COSTS **\$393,539**

The Village of Downers Grove issued Revenue Bonds on the school's behalf. The principal and interest payments represent the current cash outlay to cover the Middle School addition and a portion of the Lower School renovations.

OTHER EXPENSES **\$1,577**

Other operating expenses not covered in other categories.

COVID-19 EXPENSES **\$414,832**

Additional cleaning, equipment, personnel, testing, and other items related to COVID-19 mitigation for the school year.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES - OPERATING FUND

For the Period Ending June 30, 2021

	Actual	Budget	Variance
Revenues and Support			
Tuition income	\$7,280,065	\$7,098,175	\$181,890
Programs	\$230,408	\$225,872	\$4,536
Fees	\$51,433	\$36,500	\$14,933
Facility Rental and Misc. income	\$16,398	\$12,000	\$4,398
Internally generated income	\$7,578,304	\$7,372,547	\$205,757
Special Events	\$259,631	\$225,000	\$34,631
Unrestricted and annual giving	\$446,817	\$300,000	\$146,817
Net assets released from restrictions	\$258,645	\$0	\$258,645
Forgiveness of PPP loan	\$1,051,192	\$1,051,192	\$0
Total support	\$2,016,285	\$1,576,192	\$440,093
TOTAL INCOME	\$9,594,589	\$8,948,739	\$645,850
Expenses			
Salaries and benefits	\$6,145,687	\$6,187,694	\$42,007
Educational	\$869,802	\$1,047,004	\$177,202
Administration & Staff	\$569,341	\$648,300	\$78,959
Maintenance	\$789,504	\$681,560	(\$107,944)
Building and grounds, capital, PPRSM	\$476,217	\$315,000	(\$161,217)
Interest expense and bond costs	\$393,539	\$394,349	\$810
Board expenses	\$1,577	\$1,000	(\$577)
COVID-19 expenses	\$414,832	\$450,000	\$35,168
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$9,660,499	\$9,724,907	\$64,408
2020-2021 surplus/(deficit)	(\$65,910)	(\$776,168)	\$710,258
Special expenditures and allocations	\$65,910	\$776,168	(\$710,258)
Net Change in Undesignated Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0

An independent auditor's report is available for review in the ACS Business Office.



William Zhong, Group 5
Seahorse Pride, 2021, Watercolor 8"x11"
 The opportunity to feature artwork in the magazine was won at the ACS Auction.



2020-2021 ACS FUND LEADERSHIP GIVING CIRCLES

Thank you to the following members of the School community who supported the ACS Fund during the fiscal year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

Elizabeth Coonley Circle

Honoring the only child of Avery and Queene Ferry Coonley, and the first student of the school, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$10,000 and above.

- Mr. Michael Beckley '88
- Mr. Peter and Mrs. Kathleen Danakis
- Mr. Lloyd "Chip" Fry '67 and the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
- Mr. Frederick '55 and Mrs. Kay Krehbiel
- Mr. John H. Krehbiel, Jr. '51
- Mr. John '74 and Mrs. Karin Kukral
- Karin Bain and John Kukral Foundation
- Dr. Steven and Mrs. Amy Louis
- Amy & Steve Louis Foundation
- Mr. Martin and Mrs. Catherine Slark
- Anonymous

Jens Jensen Circle

Honoring the famed landscape architect and naturalist who designed the school grounds including the stunning rock pond garden, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$7,500 to \$9,999.

- Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Lisa McClear
- Nickum Foundation

Waldron Faulkner Circle

Honoring Avery and Queene's son-in-law and the architect of the 1929 school building, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$5,000 to \$7,499.

- Mr. Gerald and Mrs. Marian Jablonski
- The Gerald & Marian Jablonski Charitable Fund
- Mr. David and Mrs. Heidi Keeling
- Mr. Matthew and Ms. Lana McKenna
- M.R. Metzger Family Foundation
- Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
- Mr. Joel and Mrs. Shannon Weinberger
- Mr. Aloysius Wild, III and
- Dr. Caer-Eve McCabe

Henry Chapman Mercer Circle

Honoring the designer and ceramicist who created the fireplace, floor tiles and the Cloister triptych, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$2,500 to \$4,999.

- Dr. Anup Bendre and Dr. Anuradha Perni
- Mr. Jeffrey and Mrs. Debra Bruns
- Ms. Mary Ellen Bull '79
- Mr. Kenneth Chang and Dr. Julia Espel
- Mr. Shepley and Mrs. Frances Chen
- Mr. Carl and Ms. Elizabeth Clark
- Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Deb Clarke
- Mr. Christopher and
- Mrs. Jennifer Douglass
- Mr. Matt and Mrs. Suzy Ennis
- Mr. Ryan and Mrs. Kathleen Havlick
- Dr. Bryce Higa and Dr. Anna Stanislaus
- Dr. Rishi and Mrs. Nidhi Kapoor
- Mr. Naufal Khan and Mrs. Asma Afridi
- Dr. Jae and Mrs. Jiyeon Kim
- Mr. Robert '79 and Mrs. Jingjing Kipp
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- Ms. Andrea Hornickle
- Dr. Matthew and Dr. Joanna Van Beek
- Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Lisa Vaughan
- Dr. Huanzhou Yu and Dr. Xiaofei Dong
- Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Laura Zeman

Lucia Burton Morse Circle

Acknowledging our first Head of School and Mrs. Coonley's collaborator for over 30 years, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$1,000 to \$2,499.

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- Mr. Iqbal Anwar and Mrs. Tashmin Lopa
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- Dr. Jeffrey Yeh and
- Mrs. Stephanie Lizaso Yeh
- Dr. Jian Zhang and Dr. Lan Hong
- Dr. Hui Zhao and Dr. Yi Zhou
- Dr. Yunde Zhong and Dr. Shuli Wang
- Anonymous (5)

Thank you to the members of the school community who generously supported the School in the 2020-2021 school year. Contributions to the ACS Fund and other funds resulted in \$799,788 in support of ACS! Your generosity enabled the school to ensure a safe and innovative learning environment for our students during an entire school year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Special thanks to the following volunteers for their significant roles in securing philanthropic support.

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Signaling a decades-old tradition of a new school day at ACS, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$250 to \$499.

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Symbolizing the special place of serenity and action at the center of the school, this Circle recognizes contributors of gifts up to \$249.

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One Day,
One ACS

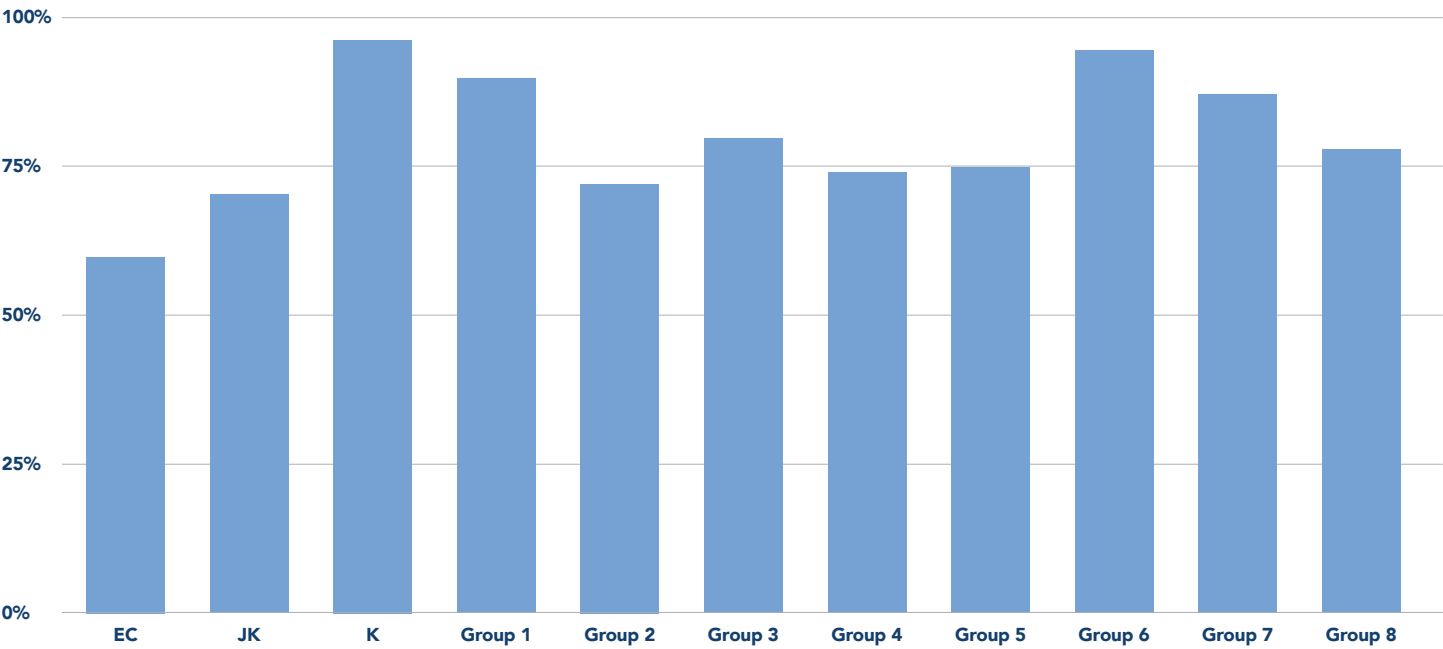
A very Coonley’s first-ever Day of Giving was held on December 9, 2020, with fun spirited challenges held throughout the day in support of the school.

Thank you to the generous ACS community for collectively raising \$41,000 for our school and students!

Grateful parents continued Queene Ferry Coonley’s spirit of giving during the 2020-2021 school year with their support of the ACS Fund.

Parent giving is critical to help bridge the difference between the cost of tuition and the actual cost of educating each student at ACS. Thank you to the 81% of school families who made a gift to the ACS Fund in the fiscal year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021. Kindergarten parents of the Class of 2029 led the way with 94% participation!

ACS FUND CONTRIBUTIONS BY GROUP



PARENT PARTICIPATION IN THE ACS FUND

Early Childhood - 60%

- Mr. Zachary and Mrs. Katherine Barnett
- Dr. Arvin and Mrs. Kelly Bhatia
- Mr. Jeffrey Buchheit and Mrs. Kimberly Borden
- Mr. Brian Crumbaugh
- Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Elizabeth Foran '02
- Dr. Ankush and Mrs. Amrita Goel

Junior Kindergarten - 70%

- Mr. Saqib and Mrs. Jennifer Akhter
- Dr. Adnan and Dr. Stefanie Ali
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- Mr. Joseph Dominguez and Mrs. Amy Trojecki
- Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Jennifer Garetto
- Mr. Jason and Mrs. Lita Gillis
- Dr. Rishi and Mrs. Nidhi Kapoor
- Mr. Ian and Mrs. Alyssa Neitzke
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- Mr. Mark and Mrs. Suzanne Schlei
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- Mr. William and Mrs. Lindsay Sickinger
- Dr. Matthew and Dr. Joanna Van Beek
- Anonymous

Kindergarten - 94%

- Dr. Michelle Andreoli
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- Dr. Arvin and Mrs. Kelly Bhatia
- Dr. Kunal and Mrs. Amola Bhatt
- Mr. Kenneth Chang and Dr. Julia Espel
- Mr. Sean and Mrs. Jamie Dougherty
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- Mr. Robert and Mrs. Nina Tipton
- Dr. Mark and Mrs. Jennifer Youngblood
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Alumni supported ACS financially through their gifts to the ACS Fund, our endowments, and other restricted funds. They also give back to the school through service on the Board of Trustees, the Alumni Council, DEI Council, as guest speakers for special events and other volunteer opportunities. ACS alumni remain connected to their alma mater through the Annual Auction and a wide variety of other events, programs, and activities. With deep gratitude, we recognize the ongoing support of ACS alumni.

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Thank you to the alumni who contributed to a variety of funding areas during the fiscal year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

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On May 22, 2021, the ACS community celebrated the 39th Annual Auction, Onward and Upward - Together We Rise. Although the year did not allow for a cherished in-person celebration, the bond and shared spirit helped our Avery Coonley family move onward and upward together.

We express our sincerest appreciation to chairs Nidhi Kapoor and Malini Patel, who championed this beloved event for a second year! Thank you to the committee members and volunteers who spent countless hours to plan the festivities and to all who contributed to the Auction as sponsors, donors, and bidders. The generous spirit of the ACS community resulted in \$258,463 in support of the school and the Fund-A-Need for the Performing Arts Center lighting upgrade!

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2021 FUND-A-NEED

Lights, Camera, Action! This year's Auction Fund-A-Need project provided \$20,150 in underwriting support to upgrade the Performing Arts Center (PAC) lighting system. For nearly 30 years, the PAC has served as the gathering place for ACS students and families. Home to many of the school's most memorable events, this outstanding venue plays a significant role in our students' remarkable and important performances. We eagerly await the day when we can gather again in the PAC as one school community.

The theater's outdated lighting system was in need of an upgrade to convert from an analog system to a digital one. Thanks to the ACS community, our students can once again be in the spotlight during their time to shine! This project included new electrical infrastructure to accommodate the transition from an analog lighting system to a digital one. New LED lights, commonly referred to as "lamps" in theatrical lighting, replaced the traditional incandescent bulbs. In addition to the substantial energy savings, the LED lighting and new control board will be programmable and easily adjustable to accommodate a variety of lighting needs for performances. Thank you to the following donors who raised their virtual paddles in support of this important cause!

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 Mr. Michael and Mrs. Heather Getty
 Mr. Jason and Mrs. Lita Gillis
 Mr. Brian Gilmartin and Dr. Lisa Karaitis
 Mr. Donald and Mrs. Catherine Glass
 Dr. Ankush and Mrs. Amrita Goel
 Ms. Allyson Gorman
 Ms. Andrea Hornickle and
 Ms. Julie Swinehart
 Mr. Edwin and Mrs. Raquel Johnson
 Mr. Phil and Mrs. Julie Johnson
 Mr. William and Mrs. Carolyn Johnson
 Dr. JB and Mrs. Elizabeth Joo
 Dr. Rishi and Mrs. Nidhi Kapoor
 Mr. Zachary Kennedy '11
 Mr. Naufal Khan and Mrs. Asma Afridi
 Mr. Robert '79 and Mrs. Jingjing Kipp
 Mr. Tom and Mrs. Anna Lenhardt
 Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Lauren Ligammari
 Mr. Ravi and Mrs. Jane Malhotra
 Mr. Jason Meslin and
 Ms. Rebecca Malotke-Meslin
 Mr. Dimitre and Mrs. Katerina Marinov
 Mr. Gerard and Dr. Lisa Martin
 Mr. Ted and Mrs. Jenny McKendall
 Mr. Matthew and Ms. Lana McKenna
 Mr. Vageesh and Mrs. Desia Mehrotra
 Dr. Uday and Mrs. Sheetal Narahari
 Dr. Udit and Mrs. Malini Patel
 Mr. Viktor and Mrs. Oksana Perekhzhuk

Mr. Kevin '69 and Mrs. Janet Peterson
 Mr. Andrew and Mrs. Dina Pilipczuk
 Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
 Mr. Mark and Mrs. Suzanne Schlei
 Mr. Brendan and Mrs. Mary Sheehy
 Dr. Farshad Sedaghat-Yazdi and
 Dr. Anisha Shetty '95
 Mr. Kenneth and Mrs. Kelly Shipman
 Mr. Scott and Mrs. Michelle Stastny
 Mr. Shane Stiles and Mrs. Jill Jackson
 Mr. Girmantas and Mrs. Sigita Urbonas
 Mr. Joel and Mrs. Shannon Weinberger
 Mr. Aloysius Wild, III and
 Dr. Caer-Eve McCabe
 Mr. David Wilner and Ms. Melanie Leonard
 Mr. Lee and Mrs. Alexandria Zachos
 Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Laura Zeman
 Anonymous

This report reflects gifts received between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021. If any errors or omissions are noted, please accept our apologies and contact the ACS Office of Development at development@averycoonley.org or 630-969-0800.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Thank you to the generous business partners who provided financial support at a leadership level of \$1,000 or more during the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Sponsorship provides a unique and valued opportunity to support ACS.

For more information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact the Development Office at 630-969-0800 or development@averycoonley.org.

Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



Our experiential, collaborative learning. Our accelerated and enriched curriculum. Our deeply committed faculty and inspiring alumni.



They are only possible because dedicated donors come together to back up their belief that our children can't wait.



Together We Are More



"When we think of Avery Coonley, we wonder if fellow alumni share our tendency to first recall its idyllic campus... We give to help the school stay resilient so future students will have the same opportunities to form their own memories."

THE KIPP FAMILY



"My time at Avery Coonley was so formative to my youth. I continue to give back each year to help enhance the experiences of current students to ensure their time is as formative as mine was."

SHILPA RUPANI '99



Support from the community enables ACS to provide a transformative experience for all students, now and in the future.



01

MAKE A GIFT

Visit www.averycoonley.org/donations to make a gift or learn more about the ACS Fund. ACS also accepts gifts of cash, checks, wire transfers, and stock or securities. If you have questions about making a donation, please contact the Development Office development@averycoonley.org or 630-969-0800.

The Avery Coonley School is an IRS approved 501c3 tax-exempt organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by the law. Our Federal Identification Number (EIN) is 36-2171680. Your gift will be acknowledged with a letter and receipt.

02

MATCHING GIFTS

Many employers will double or even triple the impact of their employee's philanthropic giving through matching gift programs. ACS welcomes gifts that are matched by donors' employers. The matching gift will be consistent with the purpose of the donor's gift, usually the ACS Fund.

Matching gifts are credited to the employer and soft credited to the generating ACS donor. Contact your human resources department to find out if your employer offers a matching program.

03

HONOR AND MEMORIAL GIFTS

Consider honoring a loved one, friend, or beloved teacher or staff member through a gift to The Avery Coonley School. Along with our gift, please include the name and address of the person whom you are honoring or relatives to be notified of the gift.

The honoree(s) will be notified of your thoughtfulness with no mention of the gift amount.

Welcome and Thank you

FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES

In 2021-2022, a few faculty members transitioned into new roles at ACS.

Konrad Pawelek

Konrad Pawelek added the role of JK Teaching Assistant to his description this year, in addition to being the ACS Orchestra teacher.

In 2021-2022 we welcomed a few new faces to our team! The following professionals have joined the ACS Faculty, Administration, and Staff this year.

Carrie Cerri

Carrie Cerri joined The Avery Coonley School as a Junior Kindergarten Teacher this year. She began her teaching career in Urbana, IL, and then taught in Massachusetts and Maryland. Additionally, as the Maryland Director of Best Buddies Intl., she worked with over 600 elementary and high school students to enrich the lives of individuals with disabilities (and their general population counterparts). Carrie has also worked as a writer and editor and spent many years as the Alumni Relations Director at a small liberal arts college. She is excited to return to her first love, teaching, at such a prestigious institution that puts the needs of its students above all else.

Chris Holstein

Chris Holstein is Avery Coonley's new Director of Facilities. His Facilities career started back in 1988, and he has always worked in the industry that he loves. He has worked in various facilities, including retirement communities, hotels, libraries, and school districts. Chris is excited to work within the school system and serve the community's families and children.

Jim Leesch

Jim Leesch joined the ACS faculty in January of 2021 as a Math Teacher & Group 6 Advisor. Working for 27 years in Middle School education, Mr. Leesch began teaching in his hometown of Savannah, GA, as a math and drama teacher. Upon moving to Illinois, he worked for 23 years in middle school at The North Shore Country Day School, serving in multiple roles. He is a member of the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics and the Illinois Council for Teachers of Mathematics. Mr. Leesch has also taught in the Spectrum and Apogee programs at Northwestern University's CTD program. He served in the US Army reserves as the Executive Officer for the headquarters company of the 85th Division.

Keia Mitchell

Keia Mitchell joined the faculty of The Avery Coonley School as a Seventh and Eighth Group Literacy teacher in 2021. Throughout her career in education, Mrs. Mitchell has previously taught all grades K-12 in all subjects with a focus on English, and Language Arts. She received a degree in Communications with a minor in both Communications Research and Journalism from The University of Washington and pursued her Master's degree in Educational Technology from Moreland University.

Mrs. Mitchell credits her father and extended musical family for instilling a passion for the Humanities and The Arts. She also volunteers and assists US Army Veterans like herself. Finally, whenever possible she participates in charitable "legacy family" events for both Motown, and Chess Records.

Noah Willis

Noah Willis joined the ACS staff in 2021 as Evening Maintenance. As a former contractor of nearly a decade, he specialized in carpentry. He decided it would be more fulfilling to branch out and try other trades in a more comprehensive environment.

Welcome and Thank you

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

We'd like to welcome the following new ACS Board of Trustees who have joined the board in 2021.



Jeffrey Chen

Jeffrey Chen believes that a well-rounded education is the key to a better community, country, and world. He joined the Board of Trustees to continue Avery Coonley's heritage of educating kids to become thoughtful and responsible citizens and leaders that direct their talents and competencies to make significant impacts on society, each in their own unique way. As a parent of two students at ACS, he can see they are well on

their way. Jeff is an Information Technology consultant and has assisted Chicago Public Schools on many Human Resource Systems and Student Information Systems projects. He is also on the Board of Trustees of the Union League Boys and Girls Club, which serves over 15,000 youth each year in some of Chicago's most underserved neighborhoods.



Margie Davis

Margie Davis joined the Board of Trustees because she is committed to the mission and vision of ACS and enjoys staying connected to her love for gifted education and life-long learning. She is driven by her passion for seeing students thrive and grow into people who make a difference in the world around them. Margie believes the most important thing we can do for our children is investing in their education early on to give them the knowledge and foundation for success, confidence, and empathy in a changing world. Margie's oldest

daughter, Abby, is a member of the class of 2020, and ACS was a place Abby was challenged academically, cultivated her values and voice, and developed into an independent and self-motivated high school student. Margie is a LifePlan facilitator and coach who pushes her clients toward clarity amid complex stories, leading them to greater understanding and purpose. While her daughter was a student at ACS, Margie volunteered on the Holiday House committee, Book Fair, Room Parent and served one year as Vice President of HSA. Outside of work, she loves traveling, time with her family, and playing tennis.



Shilpa Gokhale

Shilpa Gokhale '94 has been involved with the Avery Coonley School for many years: first as a student, then as a member (and later President) of the Alumni Council, and now as a member of the Board of Trustees. Her experiences as a student at Avery Coonley instilled in her the belief that a love of learning carries through a person's life and that the culture and community of Avery Coonley nurtures this love. She attended Georgetown University, Johns Hopkins University, Pritzker School of Law, and Kellogg. She taught elementary school through Teach for America, worked in higher education, and practiced law in New York and Chicago. Shilpa likes to watch Jeopardy, travel with friends, and spend time with her niece and nephew during her spare time.

Welcome and Thank you

FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

In 2020-2021, we said farewell to several faculty and staff members who have moved on to new adventures or retired. We wish them well and thank them for their service.



Sean Culligan

Sean Culligan joined The Avery Coonley School in 2017 as an after-school receptionist. He then went on to help with aftercare before taking a full-time position with the facilities team. Sean's enthusiasm and positive attitude were always present. Even in the face of dirty or complicated jobs, he found humor and lightheartedness in the situation. Despite the

long hours and hard work at ACS, Sean never lost sight of his goals and continued to attend college in the hopes of working in the Biological Sciences. That dream was realized when he accepted a position at Valent BioSciences. He will be brainstorming solutions for farming in places where the soil and water conditions are poor and diminished. We are excited to see where the future will lead Sean.



Andrew McCormick

Andrew McCormick worked at The Avery Coonley School for 16 years, beginning his career at 19 years old. As the Facilities Director, he took great care of our buildings, keeping them warm in the winter and cool in the summer, setting up for our many events here at school, and keeping our classrooms safe during the pandemic. Andrew accepted a position to manage facilities for a large school district, fulfilling a lifelong dream. He has undoubtedly left a significant impact on everyone at The Avery Coonley School for all he has done to take care of the community for the past 16 years.



Leslie Gutierrez

Leslie Gutierrez came on board at The Avery Coonley School a little more than 16 years ago. She began at the inception of the separate JK and Full-day Kindergarten programs. She had a unique way of tuning into the students, asking them questions, listening intently, and finding ways to add humor to many situations. Her understanding of developmental needs and her knowledge of supporting young, gifted learners allowed her to interact with the children, which kept them engaged and participatory. She is lively and animated in front of her students. Her positivity, generosity, and inclusive nature will be greatly missed.



Kirill Taranouchtchenko

Kirill Taranouchtchenko joined The Avery Coonley School in 2019 during winter as a long-term substitute. During his time as a substitute, he blended seamlessly into the seventh group advisory team and the role of Group 7 and 8 Social Studies teacher. Throughout his time at ACS, his passion and commitment to social studies and the student body were a constant in many of our lives. His warmth, adaptability, and graciousness will continue to serve him well as he embarks on his next journey.

Alumni News

R.J. is pictured here with his wife Brianne, and his sons Tyler and Braden.



Dear fellow Avery Coonley School Alumni,

I am thrilled to begin my tenure as The Avery Coonley School Alumni Council President. As an ACS Alumni Council member for four years, I have enjoyed connecting with other alumni and especially with my classmates from the class of 1995.

I would like to express my gratitude to Shilpa Gokhale, our most recent president, for guiding our council the past three years. Under her leadership, our council hosted the first ACS All-Class Reunion in 2019 and expanded our programming for our alumni, which included our first “Conversations with ACS Alumni” event.

Please be on the lookout for more information regarding our upcoming events this school year:

- Career Networking Event, March 2022
- Green Living, April 2022
- Life Skills for Young Alumni – Financial Planning, TBA

I invite you to let us know what “Onward and Upward” has looked like for you since graduating from ACS. Together, I look forward to strengthening the bond between all of us and to supporting and celebrating our alumni.

Ramon “R.J.” Lopez ’95
ACS Alumni Council President

ACS ALUMNI COUNCIL - ONWARD, UPWARD AND BEYOND

The ACS Alumni Council is the volunteer organization of The Avery Coonley School. The Alumni Council engages with alumni of the ACS community through a variety of means, including a regular newsletter, events, and other forms of outreach, in order to maintain and further enhance alumni connections with the school.

Council Members

R.J. Lopez ’95
Alumni Council President
Sharon Binter
Retired Science Teacher
Anathea Carrigan ’18
Madelyn Flynn ’16
Shilpa Gokhale ’94
Angela (Solis) Hinze ’04
Shannon Horn ’06
Anna Lenhardt
Retired Middle School Head
Carissa (Angerhofer) Means ’89
Michael Mikuska ’01
Sonia Mittal ’96
Simrit Patel ’94
Shilpa Rupani ’99
Zoë Vainkos ’08
Barbara Cosentino
Associate Director of Alumni and Community Relations

Class Agents

In coordination with the school’s Associate Director of Alumni Relations, and Alumni Council, Class Agents keep the contact information of their classmates current, communicate regularly with their class, and assist in facilitating reunions and other social events.

Charles Crespi ’71
Mary Ellen Bull ’79
Patrick Fry ’80
Blake Glidden ’87
Katie Grube ’96
Jaimie Mazur and
Shilpa Rupani ’99
Brittany Thompson ’01
Marysa Leya ’03
Angela Solis ’04
Jessica Bollow and
Matt Cook ’05
Shannon Horn ’06
Andrew Van Duyn ’08
Erin Gillen ’16
Anathea Carrigan and
Siona Jain ’18
Fiona Reenan ’19
Abby Davis ’20
Shayla Patel ’21

Class Notes

1943

David North '43, after a career that included journalism, public relations, government service and Democratic Party politics, still has a fulltime job, albeit from home, as one of the nation's leading immigration policy analysts. He is a Senior Fellow with the DC think tank, the Center for Immigration Studies.

1986

Chris Agos '86 was a guest on the podcast "You Booked It!" which focuses on helping aspiring entertainers build a career in the entertainment industry. Chris spoke about his 25 year career as an actor and voice over talent.

1988

Michael Beckley '88 appeared on "Modern CTO," a weekly podcast that has over 88K followers. Michael is the CTO and Co-Founder at Appian Corporation, a low-code automation platform for building powerful business applications faster.

1989

Christos Hayward '89 has been comprising his writings into a single series.

1990

Christian Goodwillie '90 received The Communal Studies Association's 2021 Distinguished Scholar Award in recognition for his scholarly study of communal societies, both past and present, concentrating on those in the United States. This is the CSA's highest honor. Christian also expects his new book, "Richard McNemar: Frontier Heretic and Shaker Apostle," to be published by Indiana University Press in 2022.

Ritu Kathpalia '90 is an Independent Consultant with Arbonne International LLC., and runs a Facebook group dedicated to focusing on positive behaviors.

1991

Arsalan Iftikhar '91 has published his most recent book "Fear of a Muslim Planet". Arsalan is an international human rights lawyer, global media commentator and author.

1993

Katie Grube '93 returned to ACS to serve as the evening speaker for the 2021 graduation.

1999

Emily Bernard '99 provided four frontline moms getaways for the amazing work they do for their communities during the pandemic via her travel company "Tiny Trips". Emily stated, "Those who are out there keeping us safe, keeping us healthy and fed...These are people who spend all their time taking care of others and we wanted to give them a chance to take a break and take care of themselves."

2001

Natalie Self '01 was named Cortex Innovation Community's Vice President of Equitable Economic Impact. Natalie will lead the organization's new diversity and inclusion strategy

2002

Priyanka Rupani '02 joined Francis W. Parker School as its newest Assistant Principal. Priyanka previously served as the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. She was also the Alumni Speaker for the 2021 morning graduation.

2004

Kathryn Breisch '04 founded "Uncover Education LLC", an organization to help schools develop social issue-oriented curricula and culturally responsive teachers, especially in upper-level STEM content areas.

David McAlpine '04 was named Manager, Broadcast Media Relations at General Motors, leading GM's broadcast and digital media strategies for corporate and product and brand initiatives. He also serves as a spokesperson on general corporate issues.



It took an extra year, but the Class of 2000 finally had their 20 year reunion. It was wonderful to see you again, 2000! Pictured above are Zaki Sheikh, Kara Peters Martin, Anne Stava-Murray, Marta Dehmlow Hernandez, Jaime Breedlove Fagerburg, and Sagar Shah. Not pictured are Harry Rosenberg, Tara Singh, and Anand Vora.

The Class of 1971 reconnected via Zoom to celebrate their 50 year reunion! Pictured, top to bottom and left to right are: Charles Crespi, Kent Fuka, Claire Preston, Richard Eddy, Fergus Ferrier, Nancy Norbut, Fucinato, Greg Mitchel, Jennifer Whiting, Julie Falen, Patricia Strong and Robin Buckley.

Mike Zevin '04 was part of the research collaboration that recently detected a mystery object inside the puzzling area known as the “mass gap” — the range that lies between the heaviest known neutron star and the lightest known black hole.

2005

Liz Melton '05 published an article in the online magazine Medium.com about performance reviews and how to improve them.

2006

Anna Heun '06 partnered with MHK Architecture and Planning to open their Aspen Branch office alongside her husband, Nathan Moore. Anna is an advocate for sustainable design and was also invited to present at the Precast Concrete Institute's National Convention in 2017.

James Kubik '06 is the CEO and Co-Developer of Somewear Labs, a company produces pocket-sized, wearable, lightweight satellite hotspots that allows users to send and receive texts, and transmit SOS messages. The product won an Edison Award, which honors excellence in new product and service development, marketing, human-centered design, and innovation.

Anisha Vyas '06 was featured in an article by “The Newsette”, detailing her amazing job of Senior Manager of Engineers & Safety at Universal Studios. This feature was part of an overall Campaign by the US Chamber of Commerce to increase the number of women in STEM fields.

2007

Krystle Leung '07 is a Resident Physician in Boston. She published an article in the National Center for Biotechnology Information entitled “On Isolation: Gowns and Glass.” The piece talks about the impact of COVID-19 practices on doctors caring for patients.

Rhys Louis '07 was part of a team of wildland firefighters combating the Red Salmon Complex Fire in 2020.

Hanna Mielke-Maday '07 was awarded 2nd place in the Arts, Education, and Social Sciences Division for her poster titled “Medical Student Attitudes Toward Substance Use Disorder Across The Undergraduate Medical Education” in Florida Atlantic University's 11th Annual Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) Research Day.

Meredith Fore '07 published an article in Symmetry Magazine about English being the official language of science, and

the impact of this on foreign scientists. Meredith is a science writer and communicator.

2008

Emily Temple-Wood '08 was quoted in a “Healthline” Article regarding flu shots. Emily is currently a Resident Physician, and has been featured in Scientific American for her work writing and editing Wikipedia entries on the accomplishments of women scientists.

Andrew Van Duyn '08 was part of the NYU Law team that participated in the regional rounds of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Moot Court Competition. He was also selected for The Hague Academy of International Law's Centre for Studies and Research, which brings together young scholars from around the world to research international law issues.

2009

Miranda Herzog '09 served as one of three Executive Editors on the Cornell Law Review e-board for the calendar year of 2019.

Charlotte Kanzler '09 took top prize in the Morgridge Institute for Research Ethics Cartooning Contest. Charlotte is a graduate student in the UW-Madison Cellular and Molecular Biology program.

2010

Zoe Briskey '10 is the founder and executive director of South Side Stage. Zoe developed the idea of creating an inclusive, artistic community from her strong ties to the South Side of Chicago. Viewing the misrepresentation of marginalized communities in theatre, specifically to her identity in the LGBTQIA+ community, Zoe formed her vision to bring the opportunity to artists on the South Side that she wishes she had when she was developing her artistic identity.

Jack Larrabee '10 appeared on the NBC trivia show “Weakest Link,” hosted by Jane Lynch. He was voted off in the second to last round because the other contestants rightly thought he was a tough competitor.

2011

Edward Carson '11 is pursuing a Ph.D. at Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, OH. He is conducting research on Extracellular Vesicle Cellular Therapeutics for tissue regeneration in Orthopedics, and has presented a review at the 2021 Conference for the International Society of Cell and Gene Therapy.

Zach Kennedy '11 was the 2021 ACS Alumni Auction Speaker. Zach is based out of Chicago and pairs his passions for

communication and engineering by working as an Air Systems Sales Engineer with Ingersoll Rand.

2012

Meena Jagadeesan '12 was selected for The Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans Program. The Fellowship honors the contributions of immigrants and children of immigrants to the United States. Meena's fellowship was awarded to support work towards a PhD in Computer Science at University of California, Berkeley.

Mahesh Kumar '12 joined the Teacher in Residence Program at KIPP New Jersey after graduating from Georgetown University.

2013

Robert Falconer '13 was part of a Clemson University student team, led by Dr. John DesJardins, that created a “negative-pressure” device that is being deployed for use by emergency medical technicians. The device won The 2020 InnoVision COVID-19 Response Award for Technology Research.

Jake Fauske '13 helped initiate new diversity and inclusion action and activities on behalf of the school and fraternity, in his role as president of the undergraduate chapter of Sigma Chi Fraternity at The University of Chicago.



At Avery Coonley, we build friendships that last a lifetime. Pictured here, from left to right, are Malika Ramani, Madeline Cohen, Maria Harrast, Nikita Menta and Chitra Balakrishnan, all members of the Class of 2013. This group of friends have gathered together every year to reconnect and strengthen their bond. It was wonderful to see you all again, alumni!

2014

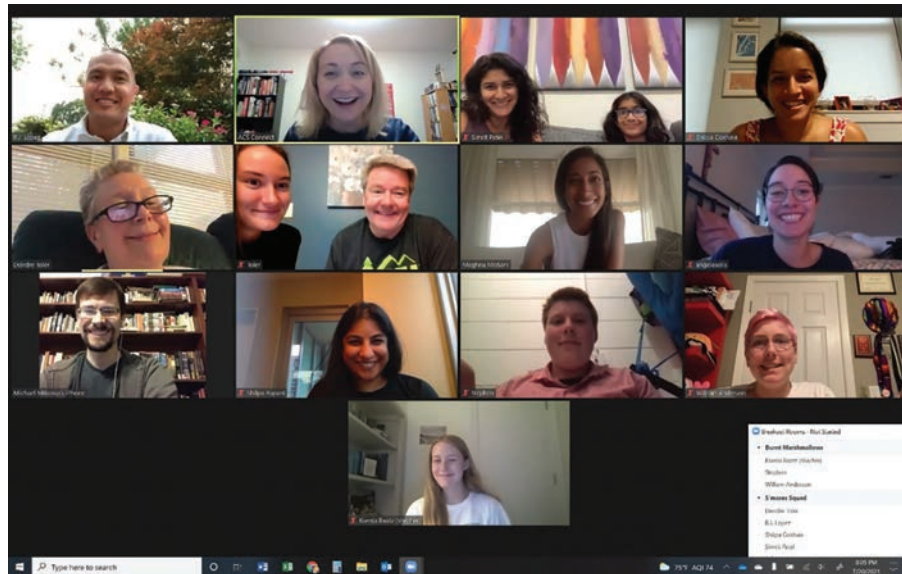
Mikayla Gilles '14 was featured in the digital magazine “1.11ven”. The article spoke about her career as a rising singer, songwriter, pianist, and model, and featured links to her most recent songs and modeling portfolio.

Hunter Morris '14 presented at UMASS Amherst, Isenberg School of Management's Virtual Sales Summit about Influencer Marketing and Digital Image in the marketplace. He is currently the Director of CK Creatives at CK Talent Management.

Fatima Tourk '14 had her article, “The Mediterranean diet in preventing Alzheimer's disease” published in the Spring 2020 “George Washington University Undergraduate Review”.

2015

Yaseen Ahmed '15 completed an internship with the Center for Policing Equity, a research and advocacy organization that uses data to identify and measure racial bias in policing, shed light on police behavior, and work with police and communities on envisioning ways to improve public safety. Yaseen, specifically, helped support youth and policy work—including youth advocacy in Ithaca's “Reimaging Public Safety Collaborative.”



Dania Baig '15 was elected President of “Mixed Company of Yale University,” a college a cappella group that has toured all over the world.

2016

Lauren Kramer '16 participated in the Brown University telecast featuring the gymnastics team. They discussed the impact of the pandemic on the sport, and each teammate's future plans.

Frankie Sheehy '16 is a Staff Writer for the Vanderbilt University Hustler, focusing on the sports section.

2017

Simone Baillargeon '17 and **Madeline Esposito '17** were recognized as Commended Students by the National Merit Scholarship Program. **Christopher Sapinski '17** was one of the 2021 Semifinalists, with **Ben Broach '17** being named a National Merit Scholar.

On July 20th, alumni and friends gathered on Zoom to play S'more trivia! Categories included “Movie Clips”, “Classic Board Games”, and “TV Nerds and Geeks”! Pictured above are **R.J. Lopez '95**, **Barbara Cosentino**, **Simrit Patel '94**, **Annie '25**, **Shilpa Gokhale '94**, **Deidre Toler '73**, **Ned Toler '76** and his lovely daughter, **Meghna Motiani '02**, **Angela Solis '94**, **Mike Mikuska '01**, **Shilpa Rupani '99**, **Stephen Walsh '20**, **Will Anderson '20**, and **Ksenia Baatz '20**. Not pictured is **Shayla Patel '21**.

The program recognizes high school seniors who have excelled in academics and have the potential to succeed in rigorous college studies.

2018

Ninabella Arlis '18 is a National Merit Commended student, **Brandon Bousquette '18** is a National Merit Semifinalist,

Juliana Gomien '18 is a National Merit Semifinalist, and **Cat Stocki '18** is a National Merit Commended student.

Noah Hansfield '18 and **Cate Stocki '18** earned 2020 - 2021 All-State Honors through the Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA). Noah received All-State Honors for Jazz Piano, while Cate was received All-State Honors for Harp.

2019

Adam Kipp '19 and his nonprofit “Protect Our Community Group” was recognized by the Indian American Medical Association for their work during the pandemic.

2020

Toby Yang '20 had a perfect score in Algebra 1 and was the Illinois math contest state champion.

2021

Jaden Fauske '21 is already committed to University of Louisville for baseball, despite currently being a freshman in high school. He is considered to be the number one 2025 baseball player in Illinois overall, and is ranked within the top 185 in the country.

In Memoriam

Gordon MacWorter '43

Bruce Rutherford '49, age 84. U.S. Army Veteran, Insurance Agent. His memory will be kept alive by his former wife and dear friend, Jill Adams Rutherford of Downers Grove; his children, Dean Rutherford, Robert “Bob” (Jennifer) Rutherford, and Sarah (Carlos) Rutherford Guarin; his grandchildren, Eva, Gavin, and Lydia; his sister Madlynne Ramsey; and, brothers Jay (Judy) Rutherford and Ross (Debbie) Rutherford.

John Hoth '53, age 82, U.S. Air Force Veteran, retired Journeyman Millwright at Reynolds Metal Company, McCook, IL. Loving and devoted Husband of Kathryn, nee Reece; Loving Father of Laurie (John) Giner, John J. (Julie) Hoth, and Carrie (Angelo).

Fred Krehbiel '55, age 80, Former CEO & Co-Chairman of Molex Inc, passed away June 3, 2021. Fred was born on June 2, 1941, graduated from Downers Grove North High School in 1959 and Lake Forest College in 1963 with a bachelor's degree in political science. In addition to his career at Molex, Fred was an active civic leader who served on many boards including The Avery Coonley School. Fred is remembered for his integrity, work ethic, sense of humor, creativity, positive attitude, humility, generosity, and his love of travel and Irish art.

He was happiest when reading a good biography, playing with his grandchildren, working on his photo albums, or planning the next big adventure. Fred is survived by his wife, Kay; his sons, Liam (Karen) and Jay (Silvia); grandchildren Jack, Morgan, Anthea, August and Adele; his brother, John; and many loving nieces and nephews.

Audrey Edmiston '62, Age 73, of Marseilles, passed away May 16, 2021. Audrey graduated from Hinsdale Central High School, Class of 1966, and received her Bachelor's Degree from Weber College. Audrey loved horses, painting, and gardening. She is survived by her two children, James (Suzanne VanHoesen) Edmiston and Renee (Phillip) Campagna, and her three grandchildren, Cole, Ryan, and Addyson Campagna.

Thomas Findley '62, MD, PhD, age 71, passed away April 18, 2021. He received his MD from Georgetown, class of '77, and his PhD from the University of Minnesota, class of '83. His specialty was Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. He is survived by his second wife, Patricia, his two stepchildren, Molly and Peter, and a grandson, Benjamin. He was always fascinated by the human body, devoting his life to learning and teaching others about fascia, creating the first International Congress on Fascia Research in 2007, which continues to meet triennially.

CLASS OF 2021

Congratulations to the Class of 2021! As this year's Class President Dilan Mehta stated in his graduation address, "I know nobody expected or wanted to graduate in a year with masks on their faces, six feet between their friends, and plexiglass on three sides of them. The world should never forget the lives we lost, the memories we lost, and the communities that suffered, but also the communities that were brought together, the memories we will always have, and the lives that were touched during this pandemic... I know nobody wanted to graduate this way, but in my mind, nothing changed my outlook on this year at school. We were together, and that is the bottom line. It was all we needed to have a great time. For me, this year was just as fun, if not better than any other. It was not recess equipment, the playground, or even the shining sun that made this year amazing. It was all of you."

Special thanks to Ross Dettman Photography for once again creating this amazing picture of our graduates. It is actually a composite of each alum, which the photographer put together into a one seamless photo.

Our Class of 2021 is excited to be continuing their education at the following secondary schools:

High School Choices – Class of 2021

Benet Academy
Dawson School (CO)
Downers Grove North High School
Glenbard East High School
Glenbard West High School
Hinsdale Central High School
Hinsdale South High School
Lake Forest Academy
Lovejoy High School (TX)
Lyons Township High School
Marmion Academy
Naperville Central High School
Naperville North High School
Nazareth Academy
Northside College Prep
St. Ignatius College Prep
Southland College Prep
University of Chicago Lab School
Walter Payton College Prep
Westmont High School



CLASS OF 2017

Additionally, our Class of 2017 has matriculated into higher education! We are happy to share that our alums are continuing their learning at the following colleges and universities:

College Choices – Class of 2017

Babson College
Boston University
Brown University
Cornell University
Davidson College
DePaul University
Harvard University
Indiana University
John Hopkins University
Miami University of Ohio
Northwestern University
Princeton University
St. Louis University
Stony Brook University
Tulane University
University of Chicago
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PHILOSOPHY

We believe that the joy and excitement of learning must begin early in life. We place a high premium on developing the desire in our students to become critical thinkers and independent, life-long learners.

We assist our students in realizing their intellectual, emotional, social, creative, and physical potential by promoting academic achievement, character development, self-reliance, self-confidence, independent thought, and personal fitness.

We recognize and are sensitive to the unique needs of gifted children. Within a traditional structure, we provide acceleration and enrichment, and foster a supportive atmosphere that provides opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, and risk-taking.

We believe that diversity is the foundation for a strong, competent, and compassionate community. Therefore, we value racial, religious, economic, and cultural diversity in our student body, faculty, and staff.

We strive to build a community that encourages understanding and mutual respect and nurtures appreciation of the individual, civility, gratitude, honesty, kindness and consideration, responsibility, and volunteerism.

MISSION

The Avery Coonley School is an independent school whose mission is to provide a learning environment that is appropriate both for academically bright and gifted children who are motivated to learn and have demonstrated the potential for the scholastic achievement necessary to succeed in a challenging academic program, in order that they may become positive, productive, and respectful members of society.

The new online ACS alumni page and directory,

THE SEAHORSE PORTAL

is coming soon!



ACS is launching a new and improved alumni portal. The new portal will enable alumni to reconnect, feature a searchable directory, network, get involved, and more. All alumni will automatically be signed up and notified once the portal launches.

To opt out, email alumni@averycoonley.org by 3/15/2022

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Production Credits
Rachel Bucek, Editor
Contributing Editors: Carolyn Johnson,
Barbara Cosentino, Rebecca Malotke-Meslin,
Sarah Perron
Lake County Press, Printer

The Avery Coonley School cares about the environment. This magazine is printed on recycled paper with soy-based inks.

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Serving preschool – grade 8
academically bright
and gifted students

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