

Fall 2009

GSA *Matters*

News for the Families and Friends of **GEORGE STEVENS ACADEMY**

SPOTLIGHT ON MATHEMATICS

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On the Cover

Mathematics teacher and department chair Paul
Gilden with students.



FROM THE HEADMASTER



The first quarter of the school year has come and gone. Leaves have changed color and drifted to the ground, accompanied by the first snowflakes. The academic year has gotten off to an excellent start, and we have welcomed several new staff members and one new teacher into the community: **Mark Ford** and **Marge Longwood** are new dorm parents for the boys' and girls' dorms respectively.

Caroline Richards is teaching the sophomore history curriculum and psychology, and has quickly earned a reputation for being a rigorous and enthusiastic teacher. Ms. Richards recently led a field trip to Boston for forty-nine students [*see story on opposite page*], a terrific example of connecting classroom learning with on-site experiences.

The Office of Student Services saw some major changes over the summer. While Bags Brokaw is taking a one-year leave of absence, **Martha Garfield** '82 has assumed responsibilities for college and vocational counseling. **Trudy Bell** took on new challenges in the Development Office, and **Vicki Doolittle**, mother of junior Nick Doolittle, is now the school Registrar.

The opening days of school witnessed the largest number of add/drop requests in recent memory. These changes in student course requests are difficult to anticipate. For example, AP Environmental Science is usually offered every other year, but because seventeen students wanted it this year, we adjusted schedules to make this possible. We offer eight AP courses in ten separate class sections for a total AP enrollment of 153 students. A second surprising demand this fall was for *Latin Fundamentals*. Occasionally offered in the past, spring pre-enrollment led us to expect perhaps a half dozen students. However, a surge of interest over the summer resulted in a Latin class of twenty-five students. These offerings, along with several new courses—*Advanced Fitness Training*, *Guitar Making*, *Public Policy*, *Book Arts*, and *Home Renovation*—are reminders that GSA tries hard to offer classes that students want to take.

In keeping with GSA's mission to serve the needs and interests of all our community's students, we work to preserve flexibility in offering courses that students want and need for their post-secondary ambitions, whether academic or vocational.

John Greene, Headmaster

Mission

George Stevens Academy is an independent high school located on the coast of Maine. Grounded in its traditions and commitment to the area's small towns, the Academy is a caring educational community invested in meeting the needs of each student. The Academy offers a challenging, comprehensive program of studies that fosters intellectual inquiry and the pursuit of knowledge, inspires creativity, develops self-reliance, and prepares its graduates for a purposeful life in an ever-changing world.

NEW ACTIVITIES PERIOD



This year, GSA's weekly schedule includes an "activities" period held on B-day afternoons. Activities range from sports to games to academic clubs and teams. Academic support sessions are available, too, for math, science, English, Spanish and ISOS.

"Enrichment" activities offered during the first semester include: *Global Challenge, Jazz Combo practice, Acoustic Guitar Jam Session, Soccer Ball Juggling, Movie Club, Ultimate Frisbee, Tennis, Model UN, Arts and Crafts Club, Spanish Club, Weight Room, PSAT/SAT Math Skills, Community Action Group, A Capella, Open Gym, Civil Rights Team, Outing Club, Student Council, Math Team, Lego's Robotics, Mock Trial, National History Day, Knitting, Academic Decathlon, Chess Club, and National Art Honor Society.*

◀ **Sarah Elliott '10 learns to cast on in Sue Jellison's Beginning Knitting activity.**

BEANTOWN FOR A DAY

On October 17, social studies teacher Caroline Richards took forty-nine GSA students to Boston for a day of cultural exploration and adventure. The bus left at 5:30 AM. The

weather was fine, the students were excited, the chaperones seemed unfazed. The first stop was the Boston Museum of Fine Arts where *World History* and *Western Civilization* students took in art and artifacts from ancient Egypt, China, Greece and Rome. Then off to brave the crowds at historic Quincy Market for great food and shopping. Concluding the day: a trip to the Charles Playhouse for a production by the *Blue Man Group*.



Mathematics Matters at GSA

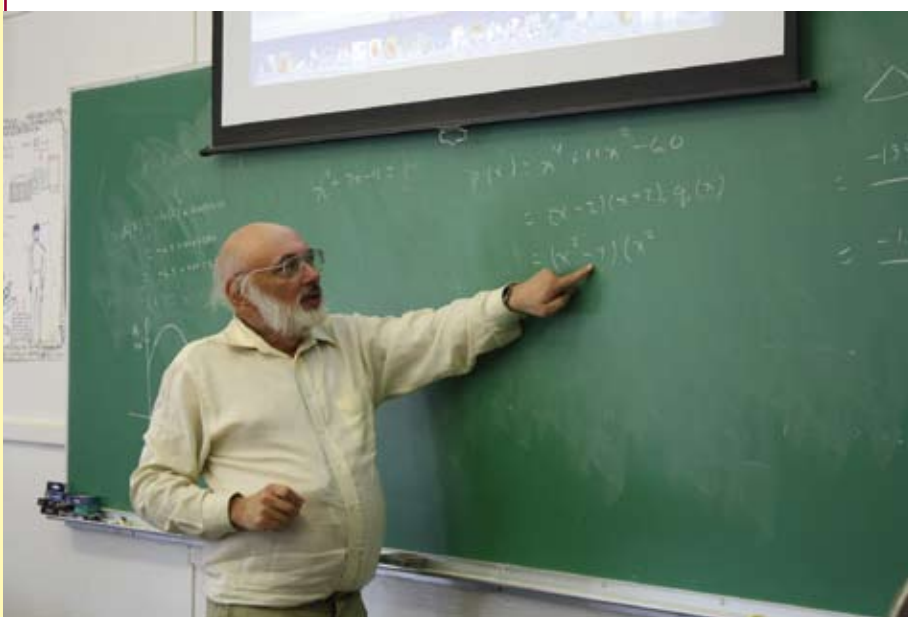
This fall, GSA's Math department began the school year with exciting new equipment: math classrooms are now outfitted with ceiling-mounted projectors and software simulating the TI-84 graphing calculators that upper-level math students use, projecting images of students' calculators onto a screen in the classroom. The projectors also display a wide range of computerized exercises and demonstrations keyed to geometry textbooks, as well as the computational engine Wolfram Alpha and other internet resources.

This technology upgrade was made possible by the very generous gift from an anonymous donor who wished to honor **Paul Gilden** and his many years of inspiring teaching. Paul has been a member of GSA's faculty since 1996 and covers *Algebra I Honors*, *Algebra II*, *Advanced Math*, *AP Calculus (AB)* and *AP Calculus (BC)*. Paul also serves as advisor to GSA's Chess Team, and, every spring, he heads off to the midwest to score national AP exams.

Students in **Frank Bianco's** *Business Math* class learn by doing. Last spring eighteen students created a school lunch business, "The B-Day Grill." The grill served a three-course grilled lunch to GSA students for just \$5. Behind the scenes, *Business Math* students managed every aspect of the business: they developed a numbers-based for-profit business model, planned menus, ordered food and prepared meals. They learned to keep the books, develop statistical analyses of costs and sales, create profit-loss statements using Quickbooks software, and make recommendations for improvements and cost efficiencies. This year the Business math class is offering the "A-Day Buffet." Earlier this month, Mr. Bianco's students partnered with **The Simmering Pot**, a community soup kitchen supported by the Blue Hill Congregational Church, and prepared and served meals for over 120 people.

Martha Horne, the most veteran math teacher at GSA, came to the school in 1986. As well as teaching Health, Martha teaches *pre-Algebra* and *Algebra I*. The anonymous gift to the Mathematics Department

has enabled Martha and Rachael Lowe to pilot "Aleks" in their classes, an online math fundamentals software program. Used to complement the one-on-one teaching in these classes, "Aleks" helps students work individually to reinforce and consolidate basic skills.



*To read more about Mathematics
at GSA, visit the Web site at
georgestevensacademy.org/math*

◀ Paul Gilden



◀ **Frank Bianco** uses one of the department's new overhead projectors to analyze bulk food price comparisons in Business Math.



▲ **Martha Horne** teaches Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1.

Rachael Lowe joined GSA in 2005 and teaches *AP Statistics*, *Geometry*, *Geometry Honors*, *Lab Geometry* and *Algebra II*. She uses the new computer projector every day and thinks it's made a real difference in helping students retain what they're learning and develop math self-confidence. Rachael also coaches the Math Team: This year, forty students—13% of the entire school!—joined the team, which competes against schools in both Hancock and Washington counties. Twenty-eight students were able to attend the first meet, held in Deer Isle: two finished with perfect scores, and the team placed second overall, just 5 points behind Washington Academy. There are three meets left in the year (at Bucksport, at home, and at Ellsworth) and Rachael is feeling confident: "We've begun the year even stronger than last year, and I think we have an excellent chance of coming out on top. We have some terrific talent on the team." Stay tuned.



▲ **Rachael Lowe**



Exponential Giving

After retiring from Maine Maritime Academy where she had taught engineering technology and mathematics, **Caroline Herrick** began volunteering her time and expertise tutoring GSA students. Since 2007, Caroline spends several hours two days each week in the Library welcoming all comers for help with math. As students have gotten to know her, the demand for her help has increased. "The students are a joy to work with, and I greatly value my time with them," says Mrs. Herrick. Here she works with student **John Ludlow** '10.

Important Dates

Nov 20	Noon dismissal. Faculty Inservice
Nov 21	International Night at Rec Center
Nov 25	11:30 dismissal
Nov 25 - 27	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 2	Senior Parents' Financial Aid Night
Dec 4	ISIP proposal worksheet due
Dec 9	Holiday Concerts
Dec 23	Holiday Break begins
Jan 4	Classes resume
Jan 11 - 15	First semester exams
Jan 12	Parent Association meeting
Jan 15	2nd Quarter/1st Semester ends
Jan 18	MLK Day. No school
Jan. 22	Final ISIP proposal due
Feb 1	Juniors' & Junior Parents' Night
Feb 5	Signed ISIP contract due
Feb 13 - 21	February Break
Feb 22 - Mar 5	Independent Study
Mar 15	Completed ISIP notebook due

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Libby Rosemeier, Dean of Students, at 374-2120. We would be happy to talk with you or set up an appointment for a meeting to discuss your child's needs.

COLLEGE & VOCATIONAL COUNSELING



Martha Garfield '82 returns to GSA for a year as Director of College and Vocational Counseling, replacing Bags Brokaw who is on leave. Martha has worked for the University of Maine as an Academic Advisor to first-year students, and as an adjunct instructor in the English Department. She has also been an Academic Advisor with the Maine Educational Talent Search, providing career, academic, college admission, and financial aid counseling to high school students through individual and group counseling sessions.

Martha reports: "The college & vocational counseling team has been busy this year. We have a class of ninety seniors, and at least 85% to 90% of them expect to apply to some sort of post secondary institution—a four year college or university, a community college, or a vocational training school. About a dozen students have already applied for Early Decision or Early Action. It's a great group of motivated seniors!"



◀ International students have experienced several traditional seasonal New England events, including the Blue Hill Fair, the Common Ground Fair, and (left) apple pressing at a local orchard.

Photo by GSA parent Meg Maiden.

▼ Hippolyte Le Guay '10 (France) inspects Halloween decorations in the boys' dormitory.



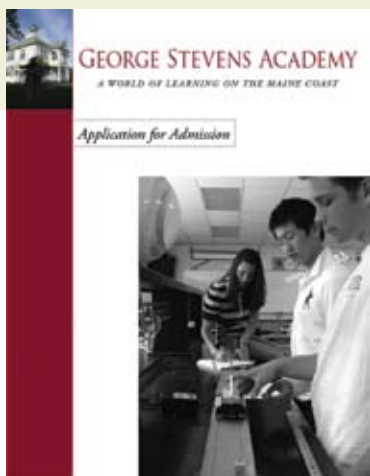
It Takes A Village....

Thanks to the many people who have lent a hand this fall to help out in the dorms: supervising student activities, providing treats and special foods for students, relieving dorm parents, and more. Special thanks to *Mary Pat Champeau, Jill Cohen, David Stearns, Rada Starkey, Liffey Thorpe, Libby Rosemeier, Mark Messer, Buzz Masters, Judy Mathewson and Laurie Stearns.*

We are always looking for volunteers to help with our residential life program. If you think you might be interested, please contact Sheryl Stearns or Ander Thébaud.

If we have inadvertently omitted your name, please forgive us! And let us know so that we can correct the oversight.

RECRUIT BRAZIL! RECRUIT RUSSIA!



International Program Director **Sheryl Stearns** and Residential Life Director **Ander Thébaud** attended the ICEF (International Consultants for Education and Fairs) Latin America Workshop in São Paulo September 30th through October 2nd. Over the course of two days, they met with more than fifty educational consultants from all over Latin America, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela. These consultants assist students and their families in finding schools in the USA and elsewhere. Comments Sheryl Stearns, "Of course, the purpose of our meetings was to tell agents about our wonderful school and community. One of our recruiting goals is to strengthen the diversity of our international student population."

From the 23rd until the 25th of October, Headmaster **John Greene** and **Sheryl Stearns** attended the Alphe Russia Workshop in St. Petersburg, Russia. They had individual meetings with fifty educational consultants, and were encouraged by the positive conversations they had about GSA. Sheryl Stearns observes, "Russian students are increasingly looking away from attending boarding school in the UK, and becoming more interested in what the United States has to offer."

FACULTY NEWS

Katie Greene Art Show

The Haystack Mountain School of Crafts exhibited works by artist and GSA art teacher **Katie Greene** September 27th through October 22nd at the Center for Community Programs on Deer Isle. Shown below: *Yellow Flower*, Katie Greene, mixed media, 2009.



GSA Faculty Attend NEAS&C Workshop

Jill Cohen, Assistant Head of School, **Rada Starkey**, Director of Development, and **Sheryl Stearns**, Director of International Student Program, joined twenty-five faculty members and administrators from other schools for a New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEAS&C) evaluation workshop on September 24th at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts. School accreditation relies on a voluntary, peer review process, engaging more than 3,400 educators in the region on hundreds of reviews in any year. A self-study process of twelve to eighteen months is undertaken by schools in regular review cycles.

CAMP BEECH CLIFF 9TH GRADE ORIENTATION



On Friday, September 11th, seventy-two of GSA's new 9th graders, along with their advisors, attended a challenge course program at Camp Beech Cliff on Mount Desert Island. Under the guidance of Camp Beech Cliff counselors, students worked together in advisory groups to solve problems using creativity and teamwork on low ropes courses. The weather was wonderful and the kids were awesome! It was a terrific way to build class unity for GSA's class of 2013.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

Thanks to the support of so many, the International Program Orientation's three day camping trip to Acadia for our new international students was a huge success!



Stepping up to serve as camping leaders were [Heather Albert-Knopp](#), [Erich Reed](#), [John Allgood](#), and [Dave Lee](#). Tents, sleeping bags, and other gear were loaned by [Barbara Fleck](#), [Dan Kane](#), [Brian van Emmerick](#), [Lola Bogyo](#), [Tracy Lameyer](#), [Haydee Foreman](#), [Libby Rosemeier](#), [David Stearns](#), [Jim Fisher](#), [Jim Modisette](#), [Zoe Weil](#), [Meg Maiden](#), [Jill Cohen](#), [Jill Knowles](#), [Patti](#) and [Jim Hutchinson](#), [Darlene Hatch](#), [Nancy Colwell](#) and [Bags Brokaw](#). With their help, and the involvement of more than forty GSA "student

ambassadors," Orientation 2009 was a tremendous success. *Thank you all!*

If we have inadvertently omitted your name, please forgive us! And let us know so that we can correct the oversight.

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS & AP SCHOLARS



▲ Molly McEntee, Max Reiter, and Headmaster John Greene.

Molly McEntee '10 and **Max Reiter '10** have been named National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists based on their performance on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT). Molly and Max join a pool of 16,000 other U.S. students who will compete for NMS scholarships. An estimated 1.3 million high school juniors and sophomores take the test each year. Two other students, **Gregory Fisher '10** and **Michael Senter-Zapata '10**, will receive Letters of Commendation from NMS for their outstanding performance on the test.

The College Board has announced that four current GSA students and eight 2009 graduates have been named 2009 AP Scholars: *Scholars* are **Marjorie Freimuth '09**, **Acadia Jacob '09**, **John Ludlow '10**, **Emily Peake '09**, **Emily Pettigrew '09**, **Max Reiter '10**, **Hannah Van Der Eb '10**, and **T. K. Vu '10**. Named *Scholars with Distinction*: **Grace Bell '09**, **Roz Brokaw '09**, and **Allison Fleck '09**. **Jenny Powell '09** was named *Scholar with Honor*.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY



Thirty-three juniors and seniors have been named to the National Honor Society, joining eight current members in the senior class. They are: **Annie Ames '11**, **Abigail Bowden '11**, **Sarah Brown '10**, **Mindy Carter '11**, **Anna Clapp '11**, **Martin Conte '11**, **Passage Crampton '11**, **Thomas Crowe '11**, **Ariel Dauk '11**, **Stephanie Davis '11**, **Adam Delong '10**, **Nicholas Doolittle '11**, **Elizabeth Doyen '11**, **Katherine Doyen '11**, **Samuel Eley '11**, **Sarah Elliott '10**, **Victoria Grindle '11**, **Grace Jackson '10**, **Min-Young Jung '11**, **Emily Lowell '11**, **Molly McEntee '10**, **Coral O'Brian '11**, **Bjorn Peterson '11**, **Thanapat Phattharaboopatha '11**, **Dustin Piskura '10**, **Max Reiter '10**, **Jennifer Snow '11**, **Elias Springer '10**, **Thomas Strehan '10**, **Keira Tachibana '11**, **Hannah Van der Eb '10**, **Sabrina Vivian '11** and **Carla Weed '10**.

MICHAEL SENTER-ZAPATA RECOGNIZED BY NHRP



The National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) has named GSA senior **Michael Senter-Zapata** a 2009 National Hispanic Scholar. Although the NHRP does not

provide a financial reward, being named is an important academic recognition. The program sends a list of all recognized students to subscribing colleges and universities that are particularly interested in academically outstanding seniors of Hispanic/Latino heritage. Qualification for recognition is based on critical reading, mathematics, and writing skill scores on the PSAT/NMSQT and a strong grade point average.

NOAH SAWYER ON LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Noah Sawyer '10 has been appointed to the Blue Hill Library Community Planning Committee. The Committee has been created to seek input from the public of their vision for the peninsula in ten years. The goal is to help the Library Board set priorities for the library as a regional entity with a more focused budget in the years to come, according to library director Rich Boulet. The committee, facilitated by Tom Morris, is using *Planning for Results* by Sandra Nelson, an American Library Association-published curriculum that helps public libraries envision, evaluate and respond to community needs.



MOCK TRIAL VICTORY

GSA's first-ever Mock Trial team won an extremely close match against Brewer High School on Monday, November 2nd. The trials were heard before the Honorable Andrew M. Mead, State of Maine Supreme Court Justice, and Steven Mogul, of Gross, Minsky, & Mogul. Sixteen students joined GSA's team this year, coached by Assistant Head of School, Jill Cohen: **Forest Barkdoll-Weil** '12, **Abby Bowden** '11, **Eric Burns** '10, **Alice Cariveau** '10, **Ariel Dauk** '11, **Elizabeth Doyen** '11, **Katherine Doyen** '11, **Vica Grindle** '11, **Peter Howell** '13, **Courtney Koos** '12, **John Ludlow** '10, **Jessica MacCannell** '11, **Ian McMillan** '10, **Imogen Page** '13, **Bjorn Peterson** '11 and **Kara van Emmerick** '12.

SAVE MY POLAR BEAR



Happy Revolution, a music group made up of students **Lucy Jakub** '13, **Imogen Page** '13, **Max Hurvitt** '13 & **Lorna Stephens** '13, created and published an original music video

and a Web site last summer titled "Save My Polar Bear," aimed at raising consciousness about climate change and the growing threat to polar bears. You can watch the video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmF7jnwJoJg and visit the Web site at savemypolarbear.info.

POWERSCHOOL PARENT PORTAL

This fall, parents and students were invited to register for access to GSA's Web-based grade report software, PowerSchool. Armed with a password and UserID, parents may now get a "snapshot" of how their child is doing academically. The "quick lookup" feature also provides a record of absences from school and a link to the Daily Bulletin.

FALL SPORTS WRAP-UP

Golf

Coach: Dwayne Carter

The golf team season achieved a 4-4-1 record, and they went on to compete in Class C state matches where they placed seventh overall. **Storme Macomber '11** qualified for the individual State Class C championship; despite the frosty weather he placed 15th. This was the first time in eight years that GSA's golf team got to the states. All members of the team contributed to the scoring in every match, and at the end of the regular season they beat the undefeated Ellsworth team.

Cross Country

Coach: Tim Farrar



The girls' team was Sea Coast champion for the third year in a row. **Lakota Bowen '12** finished 14th out of 76 regional meet runners, taking her to the individual state meet where she did very well: she ran a personal best in the 5k race, and earned 34th place overall.

In boys' cross-country **Gavin Rodgers '13** was a top runner and made the top 30 runners in the PVC conference meet earlier in the season.



Boys' Varsity Soccer

Coach: Dan Kane; Assistant Coach: Bill Gray

The boys' team had enough season wins to earn them a place in the preliminary playoff game. They held #1 Orono to a scoreless game until losing in overtime. The boys ended the season 6-8-1. **Pierre Dillon '10** was selected as a 1st Team PVC All-Star and **Nick Kane '11** was selected as a 2nd Team PVC All-Star.



Girls' Varsity Soccer

Coach: Steve Bemiss; Assistant Coach: Stephen Bemis; Assistant Coach: Kayte Lacasse

The girls' team finished the season in 5th place. They beat Houlton 3-0 in the quarter-final match, but lost to #1 ranked Orono in the semi-final match 2-1 in overtime. The season ended at 9-6-2. **Stevie Theoharidis '10** was selected as a 1st Team PVC All-Star and **Lydia Clapp '10** was selected as a 2nd team PVC All-Star.



GSA JAZZ BAND PERFORMED AT THE BLUE HILL FAIR



NAVY NORTHEAST ROCK BAND OF NEWPORT, RI

EDGAR ALLEN BEEM



▲ Edgar Allen Beem speaking with Michael Kazmierczak and student Rebecca Coffin '11.

IN OUR BACKYARD

In October, **Edgar Allen Beem**, southern Maine columnist, art critic, and contributing writer for *Down East Magazine* and *Yankee Magazine*, was a guest speaker in **Michael Kazmierczak's** elective English course, Maine Writers. In addition to reading from his recently published book, *Backyard Maine: Local Essays by Edgar Allen Beem* (Tilbury House, 2009), Beem talked about becoming a writer, shared stories from his professional life, and encouraged students to empower themselves as individuals by learning to use language effectively.

Thank-you notes from students included the following comments: "I really liked the way you listened to our opinions while still keeping your own;" "I found myself wanting to read more of the stuff you write;" "As soon as I got home, I was telling my mom about the visit."

Beem enjoyed his visit as much as the students did, commending them as "bright, attentive, and responsive."

Mike Kazmierczak, chair of the English Department, teaches a Journalism elective course—and practices what he teaches. In August he appeared as a guest columnist in the *Weekly Packet*, sharing a delightful and funny personal essay on *the summer that wasn't*, "Maine Doesn't Love Me Anymore."

If you missed it, you can read it on the GSA Web site at www.georgestevensacademy.org/kazmierczak-essay.



STUDENT WORKERS! CONSTRUCTION AHEAD!

In January, GSA students will be building custom-designed sheds and garden structures. The cost of each building covers materials and transportation. A \$100 deposit is required. Space is limited and these structures are built on a "first come, first built" basis. For more information or to order your shed, contact **Tim Farrar**, Instructor, at 374-2808 or stop by the wood shop during the school day.



Industrial Technology

Up Close

On October 27th **Alden Colby**, industrial technology teacher, took five students to The Boat School in Eastport, and to Washington County Community College in Calais. The students were given an extensive walk-through of the facilities, saw a demonstration of fiberglass vacuum forming, toured the campus labs for gas and diesel engines, house construction, plumbing, electrical training, nursing, and were introduced to WCCC's new outdoor environmental program. The students got to visit campus apartments and were given information about grants and scholarships available next year.



(L to R): **Josh Jones '10**, **Michael Bryant '10**, **Dustin Douglass '10**, **Jake Smith '10**, and **Kevin Eaton '10**.

ALL-STATE JAZZ AUDITIONS

On October 16th, **Steve Orlofsky** accompanied fifteen GSA students to the University of Maine at Augusta to audition for a place in the All-State Jazz Festival. Five of the fifteen were accepted to the Festival, which will be held on January 7th, 8th and 9th at Bangor High School. GSA will be represented in each of the four festival ensembles:

(Left to right): **Eric Burns '10**, tenor saxophone, will play in the Honors Jazz Band. **Emmett Scott, '11**, piano, will play in the Honors Jazz Band. **Sam Eley '11**, drums, will play in the rhythm section of the Jazz Choir. **Annie Ames '11**, trumpet, will play in the Jazz Band (2nd year). **Max Hurvitt '13**, trumpet, will play in the Jazz Combo.



ALUMNI PROFILES

JOSH ELLIOTT '08



Josh Elliott '08 is a sophomore at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy, New York, where he is a Games and Simulations Arts and Sciences (GSAS) major with a concentration in cognitive science. A talented math student, Josh is discovering diverse opportunities that involve mathematical skill sets.

What types of projects do you work on as a GSAS major?

I am currently working on several independent software design projects. Whenever you do any work in computer science you are constantly working to optimize your code to make it as efficient as possible. For example, last semester I designed a program that was used to simulate a bank. The program had to create, organize, and manage several hundred thousand accounts. There would then be a stream of transactions, including creating and deleting new accounts. The code needed to handle each of these requests as efficiently as possible in order to complete all of the transactions in a certain amount of time. Other projects that have involved high amounts of optimization problems include a Netflix simulation similar to the bank program but with higher level search algorithms, and a simple number sorter that used a large variety of search algorithms to sort over a million numbers in just seconds.

What does your class schedule look like?

I am currently taking courses in *Interactive Narrative*, *General Psychology*, *Introduction to Communication Theory*, and *Biology*. I have also taken *Game Mechanics*, *Game Design*, *History and Culture of Games*, *Computer Science I*, *Computer Science II*, *Calculus*, *Discrete Structures*, and *Physics*.

What stands out about your GSA math experience?

I think one of my most memorable experiences was sitting in Mr. Gilden's algebra class my 8th grade year, being really excited that the class went at such a fast pace and the fact that he enjoyed teaching it as much as he did. I also remember junior year in Mr. Long's class, with all of the discussions about theoretical mathematics such as fractional dimensions, as well as strange advanced math things that were just really interesting.

What are your post-RPI plans?

After RPI, I hope to work for a game design studio. My eventual goal is to start my own small company of five to six people working on small innovative individual projects as well as hiring out to larger companies.

Do you have any advice for those current GSA students interested in similar fields?

Just start doing it. For example, if you want to make games, just start whenever you can. If you want to start working on computer games, try to learn a language like C++ or Python. If you can't, that's fine —take some paper, some dice, whatever you can find, and just make things. My best projects up to this point have involved nothing more than a pencil, paper, and a good imagination.



ALEX PFISTER '06

Alexandra Pfister '06 is a senior at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. Alex's studies incorporate creative thinking and problem solving and emphasize the fact that a solid mathematics background will serve you well in numerous related fields.

What are you studying at Bowdoin?

I'm a Biology major and a Dance minor. Currently I am taking a biology class that focuses on RNA, and a physics class. I am also working on two independent projects: my senior honors project and an independent study choreography project. My honors

project is a research project in neurobiology. Under the guidance of my professor, I am studying an aspect of neuronal regeneration in crickets. In my independent study in dance I am co-choreographing a dance based on biology. During my time at Bowdoin, I have taken a couple math classes, including *Multivariate Calculus*, *Biomath* (modeling biological systems), and *Calculus-based Physics*, and I was well prepared for these courses by the math teachers at GSA. What is most important about the math background that I received from GSA was that my math teachers taught me how to think about and analyze a problem. The field of biology revolves around solving puzzles: experimenting, interpreting the results, and then creatively piecing the results together to come to an understanding of a system. I have only been successful in my biology studies because of my ability to solve a problem.



Where do you think you will be heading after graduation?

I'm still deciding whether I want to apply to medical school or to a Ph.D. program in biology. I am going to take a year or two off after I graduate from Bowdoin to figure out whether my interests lie at a lab bench or in a hospital. I am also hoping to travel to Japan and Trinidad to study drumming after I graduate.

Do you have some memorable GSA math experiences?

My most memorable experience at GSA is the time that I spent in math classes with Mr. Gilden and Mr. McKeon. Mr. Gilden always came up with terrible math puns to keep us amused in class, and Mr. McKeon frequently illustrated his lectures with sardonic yet somehow relevant cartoons.

What would be your advice for current GSA students?

Work hard at GSA. The more passionate you become about a subject, the more fun it is to do your homework. Go to class excited to learn and become actively involved in the school both in and outside of class. In high school you are just beginning to discover your interests. Let your teachers inspire you. If you leave GSA with the ability to clearly express yourself verbally and in writing and are able to solve a problem, you can be successful in anything you like.

Honoring Our Educators

Great teachers are the foundation of great education. When you make a gift to the George Stevens Academy Annual Fund, you directly support every GSA student by enabling the Academy to retain outstanding, dedicated faculty. Every gift of every size makes a difference.

In honor of our educators at George Stevens Academy, past and present, we invite you to make your gift in honor of a GSA educator who has influenced your GSA experience, or the experience of someone in your life.

Your support lets our faculty know that their work as teachers, advisors, coaches, and mentors is truly appreciated. If you believe in great teaching that endures for a lifetime, please make your gift to the George Stevens Academy Annual Fund today.



THE ALUMNI CHALLENGE

GSA's alumni face an unprecedented challenge: if total alumni participation in the Annual Fund reaches 20% by June 30, 2012, and holds steady or increases for two more years, the Annual Fund will receive \$60,000 in unrestricted support, pledged by friends in the community. To meet the 20% goal, 700 of our 3500 Alumni will need to contribute to the Annual Fund.

Remember, this challenge is about *participation!*

Every gift of *any* size will help meet this challenge. *Your* participation really can make the difference. Our goal for the 2009-2010 Annual Fund is to reach Alumni participation of 11%: that's just 385 alumni donors!

It's easy (and eco-friendly) to make your gift online at georgestevensacademy.org/onlinegift. And consider our new *Scheduled Giving* option, which allows you to make your gift in installments — a simple, automatic, and convenient way to support GSA. Thank you!



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