

The Avery Coonley School

Magazine

Fall 2015 – Winter 2016



*What We Love About ACS –
An A to Z Guide*

The Avery Coonley School

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Our 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.

Approved by The Avery Coonley School Board of Trustees on October 18, 2014.

Mission Statement

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.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on October 18, 2014.

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Dear Readers,

What do you love about The Avery Coonley School?

The answers to that question would vary depending on whom you ask. Current students might talk about their friends and the experiences they share, while alumni might offer a more nostalgic look at some of those special events and traditions that are so central to ACS. Current parents would probably point to the strong academic foundation and outstanding peer group. Parents of recent graduates could echo with an appreciation of how well their children are prepared for their next steps. Faculty would no doubt talk about the camaraderie of the staff and the wonderful challenges and opportunities of teaching at an independent school for gifted students. The tight-knit community, the beautiful and inspiring campus, and the caring, individual attention would likely also be high on many people's lists.

This variety of "favorite things" is, of course, a good thing! It is also an important reminder that, depending on where you are in your ACS journey, your values, needs, and expectations may be different from someone else's. The school's academic rigor may be the most important thing right now, but someday that may be supplanted by memories of the Thanksgiving Program and Spring Fair and all of those lessons learned outside of the classroom. As a school, we try to be cognizant of all of these perspectives. That can be challenging. But it is a sign of a vibrant, active, and multifaceted community, and therefore is the type of challenge that we gladly welcome.

In this issue, we offer a look at some of ACS's "mosts" – most memorable, most significant, most distinguishable, most iconic. Some are mentioned only briefly, while others are examined in much greater detail; photos and graphics, lists, quotes, and reflections of all shapes and sizes are used to convey ideas and trigger recollections. The idea is not so much to highlight individual pieces, but to present a broader look at the wonderful, eclectic, diverse whole that is The Avery Coonley School. We can never portray the full picture, but we hope to convey some of the complexity that makes this place so special. And we also hope that each reader will be able to say, Yes, I DO love that about The Avery Coonley School!

We also take a look at some of the notable events around campus, including our ongoing building renovation project, and introduce our new staff and Board members. The Annual Report for 2014-15 is contained here as well, showing the wide and generous support from all of our constituencies – a further testament to the great love that so many have for ACS!

Enjoy reading!


Chris Portman, Editor

Dear Friends,

I have had the honor and pleasure of working in the independent school world for over thirty years, and have experienced the full range of schools, children, programs, cultures, and communities. And while most schools overall have more in common than not, still, there are unique qualities about ACS which make it a truly lovable place! The ACS traditions certainly are at or near the top of what I love the most. From the Halloween parade to the Thanksgiving program, from the Immigration and Ethnic celebration to having two graduations, these traditions bring out a joy and special bonding among the students, and between faculty and students, that is rare indeed. Most if not all the traditions also engage the parent body in a way that truly creates the "ties that bind" the whole ACS community together.

I also simply love the uniqueness of our students. Our students are kind and thoughtful to each other and to the adults at ACS. While this should not be something exclusive to ACS, there is something about the special interactions between our older and younger students, and between the faculty and students, that stands out for me in ways much more palpable than I have experienced in the past. Sitting and watching the older and younger students at the Thanksgiving program and seeing the Eighth Group helping the Kindergartners during Holiday House warms my heart. Observing our students at athletic events display sportsmanship to the other team, and encouragement to each other, gives me a real sense of pride in our student body. And while we are a very academically rigorous school, the spirit of cooperation and group work and the lack of "competition" among students to achieve the highest grades is refreshing, as this is typically not the case in similar school settings.

Lastly, what I love about the entire community is the diverse nature of our families. As I wrote in an earlier piece, it feels like one is "walking into the U.N." when first arriving on our campus. This diversity enriches our students, faculty, and parents in immeasurable ways, and brings stories and experiences into the life of the School that shape our students for a lifetime. We celebrate and embrace all faiths and all ethnic backgrounds, which is rare indeed these days, and for me, highlights ACS as a most lovable, unique school. It is a place that I am happy to call home.



Paul Druzinsky relaxing in the Cloister with some students. Another great tradition – taking advantage of the wonderful ACS spaces!

Paul Druzinsky
Paul Druzinsky, Head of School

A



Z

What We
Love
About ACS –
An A to Z Guide

There are lots of things to love about The Avery Coonley School. From friendships to field trips, academics to extracurriculars, technology to traditions – the ACS experience is a multifaceted mural, making myriad memories.

How best to describe the sources for all these positive feelings and fond recollections? We could present survey results or SAT scores, or discuss curriculum maps, class overviews, and calendar highlights. We could publish comprehensive histories or individual stories, or interview alumni and profile faculty. (And we have, in fact, done many of these in past issues and will do so again in the future.)

Instead, we now take a tour of the alphabet, with each letter inspiring a reflection on some special ACS element. This is not intended to be a comprehensive or authoritative list. Some may wonder why Halloween was not the choice for “H,” or if sledding or the Summer Program merit more attention than seahorses. And why do so many of our iconic features happen to begin with the letter M?

What follows then is an often serious, frequently sentimental, and occasionally whimsical look at some – but by no means all – of the lovable aspects of ACS. We invite you to come up with your own list of favorite features, alphabetical or not. Everyone’s experience is slightly different and each opinion is valued – as the saying goes, there’s no explaining love!



Books

By Jennifer Schaffer '06

At Avery Coonley, we marked time through reading. We began as the ones who listened: in First and Second Group, when our teachers and librarians would read to us while we sprawled out on bean bags and pillows. Our teachers knew how to read aloud with theatrical skill, knew where to pause, intake a quick breath, change their volume or tone. They made the stories come alive and left us hanging on each word. We listened with a rapt attention rare in seven-year-olds.

But sometimes, it wasn't the teachers or librarians who read to us. On very special days, the older students – our reading buddies – would come to visit the classroom. They would bring along books to read to us; in time, they read *with* us. When we were the youngest in school, these Seventh and Eighth Groupers seemed impossibly old and full of wisdom.

the Arts

From the very beginning of the School, the arts – music, drama, visual arts, dance – have been a central part of the ACS curriculum. This focus began with our Progressive Education roots. When the mission changed to gifted education in the 1960s and 1970s, a conscious decision was made to continue to emphasize the arts as an essential component of the ACS experience. Many of our alumni have gone on to very successful careers in the arts, and all of our students benefit greatly from the multiple opportunities to speak and perform in front of other people.



Music, art, and drama have always had a key role in our curriculum; the top photo is from our predecessor school, the Junior Elementary School, circa 1920; the bottom photo shows a scene from the Eighth Group play in 2015.

We looked up to them in that particular way young children look up to siblings five years older; and for those of us, like myself, who had no siblings, our reading buddies offered us one hour each week where we had someone who would not only help us pronounce long, strange-looking words, but also give us advice and share funny anecdotes. The reading was crucial, yes, but it was also a way of making a new friend. Literature was never a solitary act: through books we entered new worlds full of characters, and we shared those characters with our teachers, our reading buddies, our friends.

These ritualized storytimes whetted our appetites. As we progressed through the particular magic of each Avery Coonley year – the special cubicles of Third Group, the Frank Lloyd Wright field trip of Fourth Group, the ceremonious move to Middle School – we read, voraciously. When we didn't know what to read next, we went to the library, and the librarians would pluck a selection off the shelf with expert knowledge. We read in the Cloister, we read on the playground, we read as we perched on the brick steps after school. (Even today, if you walk around ACS, you will find yourself bumping into students of all ages with their noses pressed into books.)

We grew up in books. And we wrote them, too. Avery Coonley taught us that the magic of literature was one that we ourselves could create. ACS emboldened us: our teachers taught us to write stories and illustrate them. They would print, bind, and laminate our stories so that we could see the final product come to life in a complete book and hold our stories in our hands. Of all the traditions at Avery Coonley, that of creating our own books stands out for me: It was my first encounter with the thrill of authorship. Before writing became my career, ACS taught me the joy in sharing imaginary worlds with others. We were all readers, and we were all authors. We were active, eager participants in the ongoing life of fiction.

And then, as our years at ACS sped past, we became the guides, the readers-aloud. Suddenly, we were the ones guiding a First or Second Grouper through picture books; we were the ones telling the stories. Each of us took on this duty with the seriousness of a blood oath. We were kids, all of us, but the act of being on the other side of a book made us feel a certain weight of responsibility: we were initiating these younger students into a world rich with wonder, a world that would go on to shape us all for the rest of our lives. The world of reading.

Much has been written about the endangered status of literature, the way in which young people are turning away from books and towards social media. But so long as places like The Avery Coonley School exist – places where young people can encounter technologies new and old in harmony, where children grow up through reading and writing, where students can hold their own stories in their hands – the magic of literature will not be lost. A lifelong love of books: I can think of no better tradition to pass on.

Jennifer Schaffer is a graduate student in the English Faculty at the University of Cambridge. She holds an honors degree in English Literature and Creative Writing from Stanford University and graduated cum laude from Phillips Academy Andover. At ACS, she was an active member of the Drama Club, Student Council, and Fighting Seahorses volleyball team.



Older-younger student “reading buddies” have a long history at ACS; in the bottom photo, the author, Jennifer Schaffer, joins her Kindergarten reading buddy, Samia Abdul-Qadir '14.

Cloister



Thousands of students have journeyed through the Cloister; the Class of 2010 posing in front of the White House on their trip to DC (right).

The literal and figurative center of the school, the Cloister and courtyard serve many purposes. At its most practical, the covered walkway provides an easy and efficient way to get from one area of the building to another in any weather. The courtyard is a venue for many group activities, like Spring Fair, orchestra concerts, and World's Fair – it is a place to come together to celebrate and learn. The passageways provide a visual reminder of the connections among the groups and the journey from Kindergarten through Middle School. It is a place for fresh air and quiet reflection, a calm center within the storm of activity. At its most abstract, the Cloister gives us pause and provides perspective. It reminds all of us that beauty matters.

DC

One of the great ACS field trips, Seventh Group's journey to Washington, DC brings together many of the school's best features – the camaraderie and close sense of community among the students, teachers, and parents; the opportunities to learn by doing and explore outside the classroom; and the emphasis placed on civility and mature, responsible behavior. The DC trip and the other overnight field trips help to create a lifelong bond among the group and create indelible shared memories.



Each Day

By
Erin Portman '07

*Each day begins with a scramble
to assemble assignments and posters
coats and instruments
lunch and sports gear
to remember the hectic particulars but*

*Each day begins again with a gentle curve of asphalt
and a black red white low long shape
emerging amid and below and in front of
forests of tranquility.*

*Each day they arrive first in trickles then in floods –
the students, ranged from toothless grins to knowing strides,
and they shout and they run and they laugh and then
they gather, sit, look up as*

*Each day the teachers do all the age-old things –
open doors, lead adventures, provoke creativity –
and they know that eager glint as it flashes in an eye,
so they let their students explore hands- and heads-first,
but they know also the blush of hesitation,
so their hands stand ready with a helping nudge.*

*Each day, in sets of sixteen, curious and young,
armed with protractors and paintbrushes,
bilingual dictionaries and bulky anthologies,
they follow the decades of footsteps before them.*

*And with each day's end, we leave home, go home;
And with each day's end, a new day promises the same and more.*

Science Fair
World's Fair
Fall Fest

*F*airly Flush with *Fairs and Fests* & *Other Fun*

Fairy Tale Day
Native American Fair

Shakespeare Fest

Heritage Festival



*A few of our many fairs and festivals:
Greek Fest (top left); Book Fair (bottom left);
Spring Fair (top right); Immigration and
Ethnic Fair (bottom right).*

"Poetry, prayer and song have always been stepping stones to higher thinking and living. Thoughtful adults when alone readily approach these heights; two or three, when in accord, may do so; but we desired to help a group of children and young people to find the paths leading in this direction. To this end, in our School, a few quiet moments each morning have been dedicated, when the entire School meets for reading and music."

Queene Ferry Coonley



Gathering, or Service, was originally a daily activity, with the entire study body assembling in the library.

Gathering

A poem, play, Pledge of Allegiance, or student performance. The library, gym, or Performing Arts Center. Daily, weekly, or now every "G" day on the seven-day rotation, for a few minutes or a full hour.

The content, venue, frequency, and duration of the all-school Gathering – originally known as the morning Service – has changed and evolved over the years. But despite the varying details, the heart of this event, and its importance in the life of ACS, have remained constant.

Gathering is a chance for students of all ages to assemble together in one spot, to share news, to entertain and educate one another, to take turns on center stage. It builds community and provides a source of both inspiration and recollection. Current students look forward to Gathering, anticipating the day when their silent film is shown or their one-act play is produced. For alumni, it is more fond memories, snapshots of unique ACS moments.

Hundreds of Ways to Help

One of the most striking things about The Avery Coonley School is the high level of parental involvement in the daily life of the school. From the Home and School Association to First Group Horizons to Holiday House, these Helping Hands are everywhere. This tradition of volunteerism has been present since the School began. Our Home and School Association – one of the first formally established parent-teacher organizations – started right after the move to our current location in 1929. The HSA, and other parent volunteers, have played an invaluable role ever since.



Barnali Khuntia and Deb McGarry, chairs of this year's Auction, are two of the many ACS parent volunteers.

I

ndependence

Independent schools offer a number of distinct advantages; among these are the ability to...

1. Create a mission that meets specific student needs; and...
2. Design a curriculum and support system that fulfills those needs for each child.
3. Establish a strong sense of identity and community.
4. Seek and celebrate diversity in all its forms.
5. Control student population, class size, and student-to-teacher ratio.
6. Instill a sense of responsibility and focus on character development.
7. Provide the opportunities and environment to explore and take risks safely and confidently.
8. Construct and maintain a physical environment most conducive for student growth.
9. Offer teachers more support and more freedom to perfect their craft.
10. Know, care for, and cherish each individual.

J

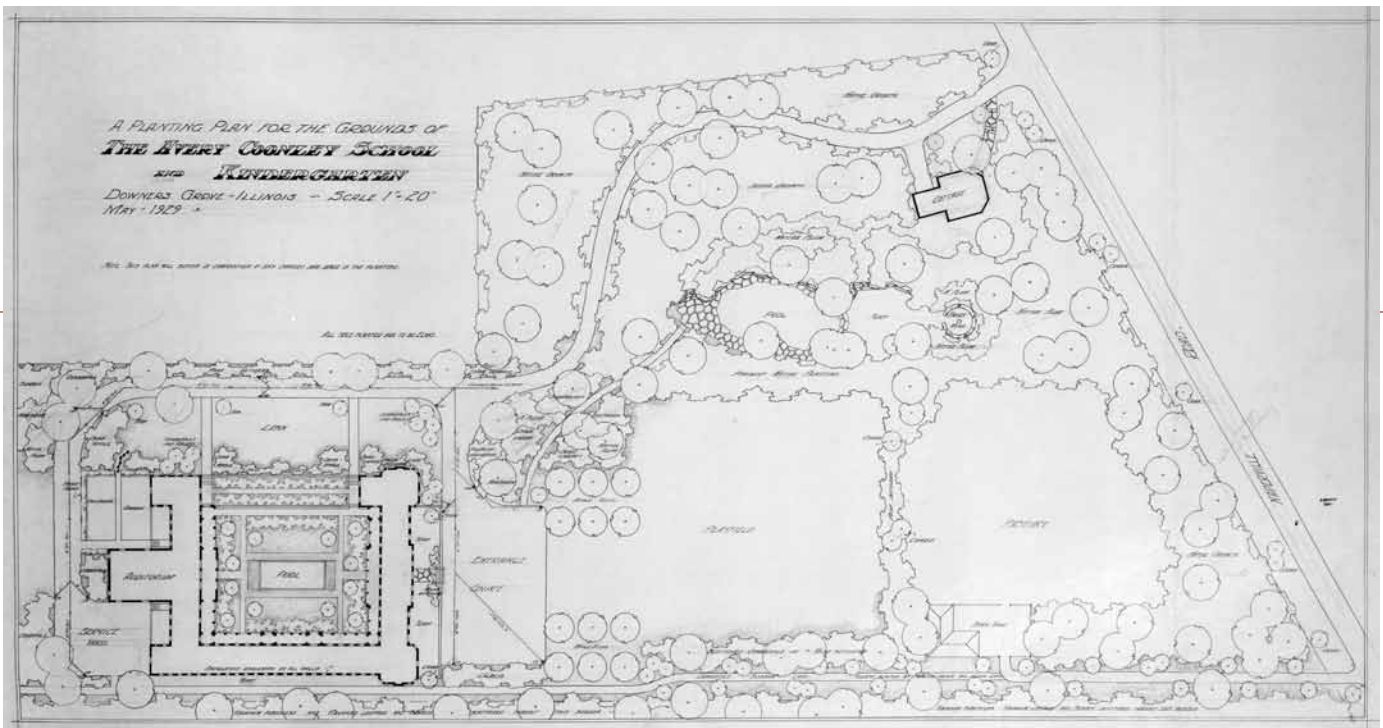
ens Jensen

There is a common misconception that Frank Lloyd Wright was involved in the design of The Avery Coonley School. Wright did design the Coonleys' house, as well as the Coonley Playhouse (Mrs. Coonley's first newly constructed school building), both in Riverside, and he and Queenie remained friends throughout their lives. But Wright had no role when ACS was planned and built in 1928-29.

One of Wright's colleagues and frequent collaborators, however, did play a significant part in the look and feel of the ACS campus. At the time of the School's construction, Jens Jensen was one of the foremost landscape architects in the world. Known for his work with both public – Jensen designed many of the great Chicago parks – and private spaces, Jensen was also one of the country's first conservationists. He was a strong advocate for the use of native plants, and he believed that a place's design aesthetic should reveal and highlight its natural beauty.



The curving driveway is a common Jens Jensen feature – there are no straight lines in nature.



Jensen's philosophy is clearly evident throughout the ACS campus, and his design work created many of the school's most beloved features. The gentle, curving entrance is a Jensen signature; he often said that there are no straight lines in nature – "Curves represent the unchained mind full of mystery and beauty." He also frequently exclaimed, "No clipped hedges!" and the natural feel of the school clearly comes from his hand. Like Wright, Jensen loved to manipulate spacing and groupings so that the whole design was never fully visible from any one perspective, invoking a sense of joy of discovery, particularly for the youngest eyes. The reflection pool and the rock pond are outstanding examples of the range in which Jensen used water features, and the garden area around the rock pond, restored in 2006 to reflect its original design, is the best statement on our campus of his aesthetic and his genius.



Jensen's plans for the ACS campus (top). His original design for the area around the rock pond was restored in 2006; each directional view offers a different perspective.

Kindergarten

The genesis of The Avery Coonley School can be traced to two great educational movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Progressive Education, established by Francis Parker, John Dewey, and others, was a marked change from the one-size-fits-all educational movement of the one-room schoolhouse, and introduced experiential learning, character education, the arts, and a more individualized approach to the classroom. The Kindergarten movement, which had begun several decades earlier in Germany, emphasized the importance of early childhood education and the smooth transition from home to school life. Mrs. Coonley was a leading voice in the Progressive Education movement, but her first love, and the focus of much of her early work, was the establishment of Kindergarten programs.



Part of the genius of the ACS design – a homelike atmosphere that also includes unique components like the Third Group learning spaces.

Mrs. Coonley opened Downers Grove's first Kindergarten in 1912. It proved to be immensely popular, so additional grades were added, and that school eventually evolved into The Avery Coonley School. Much has changed since that first Kindergarten but, remarkably, even more has stayed the same. A time traveler from a century ago would find much that would be familiar in our Early Childhood and Kindergarten programs. A warm, safe, familiar physical environment. Hands-on activities designed to aid academic, social-emotional, and physical development. A focus on music, poetry, painting, and other arts. The development of both the students' sense of self-identity and their sense of community, and the building blocks of respect established among the group. Teachers who seek solutions rather than answers, and who are learners, questioners, and explorers too. And, above all, happy and excited children who love coming to school each day!



Learning Spaces

“I remember being so impressed with the school during my interview in 1977. When they took me to the Third Group classroom, I was delighted to see the learning spaces. My college roommate's older brother, Larry Busch, designed them in 1970 for Lucille Kaut, the Third Group teacher at that time, who believed that her students at this age were ready for a private place to work independently. The learning spaces represent and reinforce both of the major themes of Third Group – independence and teamwork. Students are encouraged to try again and dig deeply to solve problems while working on their own. Equally important is the ability to share and work together to solve problems – such as how to get to the top space without disturbing too many of your classmates along the way! Originally there were enough spaces for each child, but over the years, students have had to learn to share and take turns as enrollment has grown. Each year, it was so much fun to introduce our new crop of eager students to their first learning space. They had been anticipating this day since their first visit to the school, and now it was finally here! Alumni always visit Third Group and recount fond memories of the iconic learning spaces – they are at the top of the list of favorite spots at ACS!”

*Jeanne Snyder
Third Group Teacher (1977-2015)*



M

aple Tapping, May Pole, and Mercer Tiles

Mercer tiles (top left) adorn our fireplaces, are found on many of our floors, and are most prominent in the triptych mural at the north end of the Cloister; the May Pole dance is one of our oldest traditions; members of the Class of 2016 tapping the maple trees in Second Group, another long-standing tradition (bottom right).

Mmm. Some of our most memorable moments and meaningful milieu begin with the letter... *M.*



Nature



By
Bertha Stevens
ACS teacher, 1929-1947

Tapping maple trees, watching a tadpole turn into a frog or a chick hatch from an egg, studying water or soil or air quality, observing one's "personal space" in the forest through the seasons, selecting and growing native plants, marveling at life teeming under a microscope, digging, prodding, scooping, planting. These – and many more – interactions with the natural world are part of the everyday life of ACS. Students from EC through Eighth Group spend countless hours gaining a deeper understanding of their surrounding world, both on and off campus.

Nature study has been a key component of The Avery Coonley School curriculum from the very beginning, a main feature of the "learning by doing" approach of Progressive Education, and no doubt aided by the school's fantastic and varied natural setting. The philosophy behind this pedagogical choice can be clearly seen in this collection of writings from Bertha Stevens, who taught First through Fourth Group science at ACS from 1929 through her death in 1947. A 1939 Washington Post article called Miss Stevens "one of the most gifted elementary science teachers in the country."

"All" is such a little word, but everything is in it! A little girl once said this, thinking in a general way of suns, worlds, moons, and whatever they contain. For more than a year her education at the Avery Coonley School had dealt with these ideas in a simple, understandable way.



It seems to be true that the average grown person thinks of the natural world, or the universe, as a set of more or less separate objects, events, and experiences. You can test yourself in regard to this by saying or reading the word "nature" and noting the picture or the thought that it immediately calls to your mind; and you can carry the test farther by repeating it. Do you see or think of the stars, the woods, a flower, a landscape, or some other single thing? Or do you see nature – or think about it – as an organization or system of which all single things, like a star and a flower, are part?

Whether one's earthly life be of the present, a thousand years ago, or a thousand years hence, the whole of nature must offer or have offered to his thought some sort of picture of its "now." But we get a more representative idea of all nature if we think of it not as a still picture, but as a moving one. The picture should be conceived as moving, whether we are thinking of nature from one eon to the next, from one century to the next, or from one moment to the next. The activity of nature is perhaps its most fundamental fact. Everything in nature is moving, vibrating. Even that which we call physically dead is undergoing change. No movement of nature has been found to be final.

The interest I have in using subject material drawn from astronomy, geology, and other natural sciences did not grow out of a predisposition to teach science. I was looking primarily for the material which could promise most in the way of awakening children's thought and leading it on, of widening their outlook and deepening their understanding, of developing their fineness of feeling and their response to beauty and rhythm. Now, after some years of working with natural science material with children between the ages of six and ten, I am convinced that it can do all this, if we will let it.

Teachers will do better things for children, and be better science teachers, if they will think of science, not as something to be taught, but as one of the most potent agents at their command for bringing out the abilities of children – for stirring thought and initiative, for increasing appreciation, imagination, intelligent wondering and understanding. If children have adequate first-hand experience in science, they will reach out for information; it will not need to be imposed. To do something and watch what happens, to feel substances, to see objects through a magnifying glass or microscope, to observe living plants, animals, insects, flowers, and rock formations in their natural setting, to have a chance for curiosity to arise and to find its own answers – such activities provide a basis for understanding and further questioning which can never arise from mere book study.

Even little children can see all around them the orderliness of the cosmos, our universe, if their eyes are opened to it. But the plan for teaching will itself need to have order and continuity to bring children easily into such realization. Not the sweeping historical continuity, because children of seven, eight, and nine are not ready for that, but rather continuities at hand. The rain falls, springs are fed; streams are filled and flow to sea; mists rise from the deep and clouds are formed, which break again on the mountain side. The seasonal pageantry of plant life, in its span of growth, apparent decay, and growth again, is observable in its entirety; so also are the chain of sequences between caterpillar and moth, and the shorter series of bird and egg. Children come to recognize nature, seen at any stage, as in the process of becoming.

We are part of the universe. Thus, a child, in playing out her dramatization of the sun's reflection upon the moon as seen by a person on the earth, is heard announcing to her four helpers: "You are the sun, you are the world, you are the moon, you are a ray of light, and I am the little girl."



Exposing students to nature and taking advantage of our School's magnificent physical setting have always been key goals of the curriculum.

Old Library & Performing Arts Center



Although very different in many ways, the “old” (or original) library and the Performing Arts Center actually share a lot in common. Both are simple but beautiful in design, functional but also inspirational. Together they have served as the main venues for early morning all-school gatherings since the opening of the school, and both have hosted other cherished traditions, like the holiday poetry reading. Generations of students have “taken the stage” in both, performing musical or dramatic works, or sharing dreams or discoveries with their school-mates. Both are large enough to accommodate a crowd and small enough to feel intimate. Although each type of space can be found in many other elementary and middle schools, the old library and the PAC both feel unique to our school. They highlight the importance of place in the ACS experience; countless student memories are centered there.



Members of the Class of 1938 enjoy quiet reading time in the original library (top); today, the orchestra comes together nearly every week for practice in the PAC.



*Q*ueene Ferry Coonley

She was an educator, interested in both groundbreaking theory and everyday practice. She was a feminist and a suffragist, a Christian Science practitioner and a patron of the arts. She was a philanthropist, mentor, and leader, requiring little and giving much. She was a wife, mother, grandmother, friend, small in stature but large in personality. She had classical tastes and innovative ideas, relished tradition and welcomed innovation. She sought beauty everywhere and brought out the best in everyone. Queene Ferry Coonley was our founder; she remains our guide.





Seahorse Power!

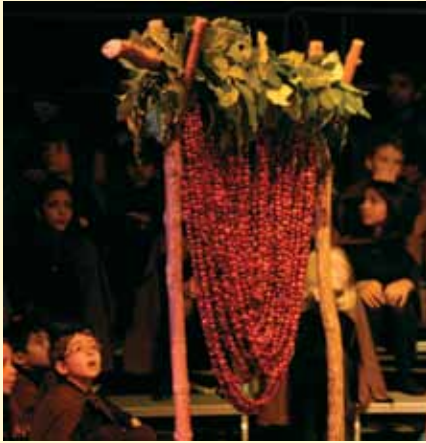
Rock Pond and Reflection Pool

Some of our most iconic spots and symbols: the reflection pool in the Cloister, the rock pond, and a few of the many seahorses found on campus.

How many schools of our size have two distinct water features on campus? The rock pond and reflection pool have both seen their share of student activity over the years. But their value transcends function. Numerous adjectives could be applied to both – tranquil, inspiring, beautiful. They help to center us physically and emotionally; they provide perspective literally and figuratively.

Why a seahorse? That certainly ranks among the top 10 “frequently asked questions” about ACS!

We know that Mrs. Coonley chose the seahorse as the symbol for the school either just before or soon after the 1929 construction. Through the years there has been some speculation that this choice and the unofficial ACS motto – Onward and Upward – derive from the forward and ascending swimming motion of the seahorse. But in fact, the seahorse is one of the few fish that can actually move in all directions, and there is no evidence that Mrs. Coonley erroneously believed otherwise. She was more likely simply attracted by the seahorse’s beauty, uniqueness, and distinct individuality in the larger ocean community – ideas very much in tune with her beliefs about early childhood education.



*"It was Picasso's Farmers' Market and
Liberace's Yard Sale. It was half elegant,
half figment, and all ours:
the Annual Incommunicable Seahorse
Thanksgiving Noun."*



"A long long line of curious great kids...peeking around their friends' shoulders, waiting their turn."

The Pilgrim Age

When the leaves start to crunch on the ground and Christmas lights rise in the streets, then it must be September and time to start thinking about Thanksgiving. It's a time to get ready for the greatest Avery Coonley tradition of them all: the annual Flubbed Attempt to Describe the Super Weird Thanksgiving Program. As a student I walked in eight processions but my memories feel unreliable, almost bewitched, like that storybook kid who falls asleep in the woods and dreams of being whisked to a banquet of elves but then wakes up alone, in a breeze that sounds faintly like music, half-wondering if it had just been a dream. The Thanksgiving Program is a group dream shared by everyone in the auditorium. I'm not a cultural anthropologist and I don't know why some rituals have such oomph – solemnity and symbolism can push buttons, but those words feel so clinical and adult, while the Thanksgiving Program is a mirage that belongs to kids.

For us students, the processional had a beginning, middle, and end that were held in three separate ecosystems. The first was a sideroom that the parents never saw. I don't want to give away any ancient seahorse secrets but the brains of the program were the adult staff in charge of this room. Nowadays we would call it a staging area, but really it was more of a livestock holding pen where students were tagged and stacked before entering the auditorium. Imagine two hundred anklebiters, lined up from youngest to moodiest, all whispering and giggling and shushing and capping each other. Not capping – capping; it was the only place post-Zorro where a cape was a verb. They swished behind us like gusts of leaves as we galloped through a maze of tables piled with food: red ripples of apples toppling from baskets, sleek eggplants, oranges, berries, greens, bundles of pale wheat leaning like brooms, a bonanza of squash, pumpkins, and gourds if those are really three different foods, and next to each item, a notecard with the name of the student assigned to carry it. The card was a potential bummer for the younger classes because no one trusted their stumpy doll hands to carry anything; for two straight years they gave me a potato.

Thanksgiving

By Blake Glidden '87

There was only one door separating this mess from the second ecosystem – the dark yonder where all the parents and adults were waiting. An eighth grader might have forty minutes to kill in the first room before it was his or her turn to join the ceremony, which sounds like a long time but you could never really relax, because you belonged to a munchkin chain gang whose younger end was swiftly vanishing down the esophagus of the door. And then it was your turn – year after year, always suddenly your turn – your moment to shuffle to the threshold, where the weather seemed to gather and a teacher goosed you through.

We walked in our socks. For a week we'd been practicing leading with our left, but for many young geniuses this was too much to remember and they disgraced Jamestown by leading with their other left. No one really cared because it was too dark to see feet. In my memory, leaving behind the jumbled first room was like opening a capsule hatch and floating into the ink of galactic space – in my memory we were being absorbed by oblivion. Which I think raises some legit questions about my memory, because really, oblivion? It was the gym. And not a big gym – big for a badminton court, indulgent for a garage, but a *dark yonder*? Sounds fishy, but such is the power of Thanksgiving.

And such is the weakness of eyewitness testimony. Over the years, I've finally accepted that the Rock Pond was never actually the sixth Great Lake, but I still believe our Thanksgiving Program was held in a proud and brave gymnasium that rose to the occasion every time. Each student walked deliberately down the aisle – we ferried that food like a kingdom of ants who had finally hit the jackpot.

We walked past all the adults, who sat serenely in the dark because they loved us, and because they hadn't brought their cellphones, since walking around with a cellphone was like carrying a futon. The darkness consumed us. A hush rippled down like glitter in a snow globe. I don't know if you could have heard a pin drop but I was taking zero chances with my potato. It wouldn't have mattered, there was only one sound in the room that anyone remembers: a curve of music that was unspooling itself from the farther corner of the gym. *Pachelbel's Canon*, performed live by the music department. A perfect fit that always sounded fresh, because these were the days before the wedding industry had rebranded *Pachelbel's Canon* into the chicken dance of classical music, back when every kid only knew the title and never questioned the odd image it evoked of Pachelbel on a hill, raining thunder and doom from his legendary death cannon.

Halfway down the aisle we started to feel tractor-beamed towards our destination, a glowing shape at the front of the room. This was the Thanksgiving Display. And I realize that *display* is a pretty flimsy word, but good luck finding a better one because whatever that thing was, it glides through language like a ghost through a net. To my eyes it was more lovely than strange, but I confess that to a camera's eye, strange makes a real comeback. We decorated the display during the processional itself: Each student walked the length of the gym and then up a few stairs to the stage, where for a few charmed seconds we stepped into the calm and swaddled world of a Cezanne still life, before placing our food on a prearranged ledge and scrambling stage left for the next student. This went on for an hour. It sounds simple but the result was not from our planet – it was from a groovier planet, a planet that cared deeply about drapery and wicker. Each year the adults watched in amazement as their children built a nine-dimensional salad bar out of disco and the fall collection of Pottery Barn.

It was weird but it worked: Yeats once wrote a poem about the Cloths of Heaven, but here were the cloths of earth, furled in the colors of harvest, a crescendo of fabric and food that crumpled and hived into a neo-Plymouth Rock. It was Picasso's Farmers' Market and Liberace's Yard Sale. It was half elegant, half figment, and all ours: the Annual Incommunicable Seahorse Thanksgiving Noun.

And that was that. We left our food as an offering to the vegetable ziggurat. We nodded silently at each other in our brown capes, a secret society of pilgrim superheroes. The oldest girls hung the lemon ring somewhere near the cranberry harpoon, and we all sang to the adults. The music changed year to year but always included *For the Beauty of the Earth*, which had become kind of a theme song and swelled through the room like a hymn should. Each year the music teacher Ms. Martin tried to get us to sing the words *flower* and *hour* using only one syllable, so each year we sang our heads off praising *flarr* and *arr* like thankful pirates. When the ceremony ended, adults and kids together spilled out the front doors, squinting in the white sun.

Or at least I hope we did, I really hope that's what happened. And I hope Mrs. Lenhardt isn't reading this right now, glancing around a room and saying to no one in particular, "Well, I see a lot of words here, but not too many that describe any Thanksgiving Program I can remember. But what do I know? I've only been running the thing thirty years. Now what's this about a tiny room where we crammed all the students and food? For an imaginary room, that sounds like quite a fire hazard."

"...here were the cloths of earth, furred in the colors of harvest, a crescendo of fabric and food..."



"For the adults and students of the Avery Coonley School, remembering the Thanksgiving Program offers a handy, permanent glimpse backwards into wonder."

She'd be right, so I can only shrug. As kids we couldn't process half of what happened. We couldn't appreciate how the Thanksgiving Program wasn't merely beautiful, but that it tied a string around our fingers that would eventually help tether our idea of beauty to specific mature virtues. Gratitude and empathy. Fellowship. Love of nature. The food was donated to the needy. The capes were ejected from society – one day perhaps we will burn them for fuel. The Golden Rule will be our guide.

But as kids, what we lacked in nuance we might have gained in grace. Everyone knows what it's like to walk around a big city in the middle of the day and then to slip inside an old museum or cathedral. It's a different realm, your footsteps clack, the world feels removed. When it's time to leave and you step back outside, at first the sounds of the city seem muted and it takes a few minutes for your brain to catch up. You might be stuck at McDonald's but your mind's eye lags behind, still levitating through the cathedral like a balloon. Of course it deflates in a hurry – even for a monk it's an impossible awareness to sustain. But for the adults and students of the Avery Coonley School, remembering the Thanksgiving Program offers a handy, permanent glimpse backwards into wonder. The details might be up for debate but the faraway feeling it revives is yours in your pocket. This morning I found some pictures of past programs, and what strikes me is how much the generations look alike. The lunatics of the 1930s are following the same recipe that the modern students used last November, same clothes and props, same body language, their faces could be my classmates or my sister. Soon it will be a hundred years. A long long line of curious great kids in that first room, peeking around their friends' shoulders, waiting their turn.

Un, Deux, Trois

L'enseignement du français à ACS est une tradition qui date de 1949. Le fait que tous les élèves apprennent la même langue présente de nombreux avantages. Cela renforce notre esprit de communauté, offre un autre mode de communication parmi les élèves, et permet de nombreuses activités transversales. Les élèves participent à des voyages en France et au Québec, et récemment notre école a établi un échange avec une école en France. (Don't understand? Ask an ACS student!)



The language has stayed the same but the teaching methods have evolved – the French curriculum developed by Elizabeth Roberts and Denise Clivaz (top left) is interactive and conversation-based. Some students – like Zoe Briskey '10 and Chris Dineff '10 (bottom) – appear on the Variety Show stage every year.



Variety Show

Completely voluntary, the Variety Show is open to all students in First through Eighth Group. With a unique theme each year – this year's was the 1980s – it showcases the wide range of skills and hobbies of our students – vocal and instrumental music, dance, comedy, and more. Many students perform six, seven, or even eight times during their ACS careers. The Variety Show offers one more fun opportunity for students to take a turn in the spotlight.



Queenie Ferry (far left) began her educational career as a kindergarten teacher in Detroit.

The *W*hole Child

*“We must study children
and be equipped to take care of,
not two hours of their day
and one-tenth of their natures,
but the whole child.”*

Queenie Ferry Coonley

X equals...

Hundreds of awards earned at dozens of competitions over many decades. Three different Middle School math sections to meet the needs and abilities of each student. Scores of alumni who have gone on to careers in various STEM fields. One-on-one attention, helping to develop skills consistently over eleven years, from EC to Eighth Group. Several opportunities to gain real world experience through special projects and extracurricular activities. However one combines the numbers, the resulting equation leads to one proven result = a truly outstanding mathematics program.

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

why

By Kristen Teague



Second Group teacher Jessica Cooperman works with students in small groups to analyze texts.

Why? Why do things work that way? Why did he act that way, or why did she make that choice? Why do we do what we do? Too often, in all aspects of our life, we focus on the end product, the what. Many talented, dedicated professionals at The Avery Coonley School work hard to provide a wonderful educational opportunity to a community of gifted learners. But why?

To recognize the importance of the concept of “why” in our lives and to focus our faculty’s enthusiasm and energy at the beginning of this school year, we shared with them a video clip of a TedTalk given by Simon Sinek in 2009 entitled, “How Great Leaders Inspire Action.” In the presentation, Mr. Sinek states that people are motivated by their beliefs – their “whys” – and, moreover, we are motivated to respond to those who clearly understand why they do what they do. In other words, people who are clear on their “whys” inspire others. Sinek repeatedly says that “people don’t buy WHAT you do . . . they buy WHY you do it.” By sharing this concept with our teachers, we were able to give them the opportunity to pause and remember that while “what” they do and “how” they do it are important, what is most important is the “why” behind their choice to work with children and provide them with meaningful learning experiences.

As we paused to examine our own “whys,” it was natural for us also to consider the many ways in which we motivate our students to think deeply and challenge them to discover the “whys” behind and beyond the content presented to them. At ACS, we truly value the high level of curiosity that our students possess and we pride ourselves in nurturing that curiosity. We understand that it is crucial for children to work to understand the answers to their “why” questions, and we provide them with many meaningful learning opportunities to explore, experiment, and investigate within our rigorous curriculum.

Our teachers attend seminars and workshops, pursue graduate work, and comb through a variety of books and research to ensure that they are implementing teaching techniques that help students to think

critically and creatively about concepts and expand their understanding of the “whys” on their learning journey. For example, we spend considerable amounts of instructional time – appropriately so – having our students analyze the texts they read. Once posed a question about something they have read, we teach our students to answer the question based on evidence from the text. We encourage them to look for and find proof on the page to support their conclusions. We scaffold their interaction with the text by asking, “What did you read that helped you form that conclusion?” or “Show me the part in the paragraph that supports your claim.” The Junior Great Books program and learning frameworks from the book *Making Thinking Visible* (R. Ritchhart, M. Church & K. Morrison, 2011) are just two of the many resources we use to create instructional strategies that give students the opportunity to engage critically and creatively with ideas and concepts.

Other examples abound across our curriculum, from “chalk talk” to the Third Group quote of the day, and from round-table discussions in Middle School to our newly implemented STEM program. Our teachers understand that challenging our talented students to synthesize information, draw educated conclusions, and think critically and creatively will instill skills that will continue to serve them well. Our students will not only be successful academically, they will also be thoughtful decision-makers in all areas of their lives.

There is a broader implication as well. People who make connections, see patterns, and practice deep thought are not only successful, but they also lead and inspire others. They are the ones who are well on their way to understanding “why” they do what they do.

Kristen Teague is the ACS Lower School Head and previously was a Second Group teacher.



Students have numerous opportunities to explore the world beyond Maple Avenue during their time at ACS.

Zoo Trips

And visits to the Morton Arboretum, tours of the Lyric Opera, and exploring Downers Grove on a walking tour. The ACS calendar is filled with these forays away from Maple Avenue, taking advantage of all that the surrounding area has to offer – the Field Museum, Art Institute, Chicago History Museum, Oriental Institute, Lizzadro Museum, Hull House, Graue Mill, Lincoln Marsh; the list goes on and on. Tracing the school’s roots at the Frank Lloyd Wright home and museum and the Coonley estate. Special classes at the Robert Crown Center and even at the Yorktown Mall. The final group trip, the day before graduation, to Great America. All of these adventures – anticipated for years and then the stuff of great memories – form the perfect complement to everyday life on campus.

Around Campus

Class of 2015

Congratulations and best wishes to our newest alumni – the ACS Class of 2015! Members of that class are attending the following high schools:

Cate School (CA)
Deerfield Academy (MA)
Downers Grove South High School
Fenwick High School
Francis W. Parker School
Glenbard West High School
Hinsdale Central High School
La Lumiere School (IN)
Latin School of Chicago
Lyons Township High School
Naperville Central High School
Neuqua Valley High School
Northfield Mount Hermon School (MA)
Phillips Exeter Academy (NH)
St. Ignatius College Prep
Trinity High School
University of Chicago Laboratory School
Wheaton North High School
York High School

Two alumni returned to campus last June to deliver the graduation addresses to the Class of 2015. Shilpa Rupani '99 gave the speech at the morning ceremony, and Nancy Doris '91 addressed the graduates in the evening. Thank you to both of our speakers!

Nancy Doris has spent most of her work career at Hollister Incorporated, working on global product development. She is also President of the ACS Alumni Council, and is an active volunteer at the School; she and her husband John have three young seahorses – John '23, Teddy '26, and Peter, who will join the Class of 2028.

Nancy spoke with the graduates about the importance of empathy and the need to combine emotional intelligence with academic abilities and leadership skills. Recalling her own days at ACS, Nancy said, "Avery Coonley shaped our emotional intelligence in so many ways." Group projects, class performances, overnight field trips, special events – they provide not only bonding opportunities, but also insight into the feelings, motivations, and passions of others. Those lessons are reinforced by special service projects, the small, tight-knit community, and the influence of wise, caring teachers.

Just as she did when she delivered a speech as Class President at her own ACS graduation, Nancy quoted from "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten," by Robert Fulghum. "Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Be aware of wonder. Live a balanced life – learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some. When you go out in to the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together." Extrapolated into adult terms, these early lessons continue to provide sound guidance on how to live a life filled with empathy. It means, as her son John told her, that "when somebody has a problem, you understand their problem, and you want to help."



ACS Class of 2015 (left); Nancy Doris '91 with her husband John Blackburn and their oldest son Johnny (above).

Class of 2011

Congratulations to the Class of 2011 on their high school graduations and best of luck in the future! Members of the class matriculated to the following colleges and universities:

*Albion College
Berklee College of Music
Boston College
Butler University
Case Western Reserve
Denison University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Illinois Institute of Technology
Illinois State University
Indiana University
Knox College
Loyola University Chicago
New York University
Northwestern University
Ohio State University
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Scripps College
Sewanee: The University of the South
United States Naval Academy
University of Alabama at Birmingham
University of California, Berkeley
University of Colorado
University of Illinois
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Southern California
University of Wisconsin
Vanderbilt University
Washington University in St. Louis*



ACS Class of 2011(above); Shilpa Rupani '99 and her mom Sujaya.



Shilpa Rupani is a Senior Customer Service Executive for the Chicago Blackhawks (and she has the Stanley Cup championship rings to prove it!). After graduating from Washington University in St. Louis and before joining the Blackhawks, Shilpa worked for several other sports teams, including the Chicago Bulls and Chicago Sky.

Shilpa emphasized the word “foundation” in her address to the Class of 2015. “ACS was my foundation in every sense of the word,” she said. The School provided not only a strong academic foundation, but

also instilled an understanding of how to initiate and develop relationships, and encouraged students to dream big. The “ability to work hard, push myself, work well with others; how to lead and follow, and expand my horizons – all began in these same halls.”

Many of Shilpa’s enduring interests and passions came of age during – and as a direct result of – her time at ACS. A trip to Tokyo brought to life her project on Japanese holidays and festivals, and she continues to love anything related to French culture. While she was at ACS, she was a big sports fan, particularly of Michael Jordan, and dreamed of being part of the Grant Park championship celebrations. Having learned that anything is possible through hard work and perseverance, Shilpa shared her story of riding through the confetti-filled city on a double-decker bus in 2010, part of the Blackhawks’ victory parade, and arriving – just as she dreamt as an ACS student – at a joyous Grant Park.

Around Campus



The renovated classrooms (left and bottom) feature age-appropriate furniture that can be easily reconfigured for different purposes, and the changes enhance the charm of the original design while incorporating the very latest technology. The remodeled and reconfigured library (above and opposite right) has three small study rooms and a large conference room, comfortable, flexible seating, and a variety of spaces to facilitate individual and small-group work.



New Life in an Old Space

Called “the most beautiful school in America” when it opened in 1929, The Avery Coonley School’s buildings and grounds have always played a central role in the overall school experience. Much more so than most other schools, members of the ACS community remember the architectural features, charm, and idiosyncrasies of the physical setting. Memories are grounded not just in time, but also in a distinct place – on the floor of the old library, in the Third Group learning spaces, by the bookshelves in Mrs. Grussing’s classroom.

Now in its tenth decade, the original ACS building structure has held up remarkably well. But like any older building, it is showing some wear and tear. For the last several years, the School’s administration and Board of Trustees has explored ways to make the structure more functional and the classroom spaces more flexible, while also enhancing its beauty and allure. Teachers, students, alumni, and parents offered input, plans were drawn, and funding for Phase I of the renovation was secured.

The initial work began in the summer of 2015, focusing on the west side of the original building – which now houses the Second, Third, and Fourth Group classrooms – and the “new” library, which was established in 1993. Much of the work involved the infrastructure – a new cooling system was installed, the electrical service was expanded and updated, and the plumbing was improved. The rooms also received new carpeting, improved lighting, increased storage, and more flexible, age-appropriate furniture. Interactive, touch-screen monitors were installed in each room, bringing the latest presentation, research, and conferencing technology quite literally to our students’ and teachers’ fingertips. The renovation also created several small-group work spaces, making collaboration much easier and more effective.



Thanks in large part to the generosity of Auction Fund-a-Need donors, the iconic Third Group learning spaces were rebuilt and moved to the second floor (above left).

Funding for this and future renovations comes in part through our *Journey Forward Together* capital campaign. Depending on the amount raised, similar renovations for the south wing of the Cloister, and possibly the east wing, will take place in the coming summers. This is truly a unique opportunity both to honor the past and to create a learning environment that will serve the students of today and tomorrow. More information can be found on the School’s website, www.avery-coonley.org, under the “Support ACS” tab.

Around Campus



Fighting Seahorses!

Freddy the Fighting Seahorse has joined the ACS family! Although the fighting seahorse has been the school mascot for many years, we were very excited to debut the new, “real-life” mascot this fall. Be sure to keep an eye out at the next ACS sporting contest or special event – you never know when Freddy will make an appearance!

Nos amis français

Twenty students from Joseph Niel School in Muret (near Toulouse), along with their English and math teachers, visited ACS last October. While here, they attended classes, participated in several field trips, and experienced the Chicago area with their host families. The visit was part of our ongoing relationship with the Joseph Niel School – many of the French students stayed with the same ACS students who visited them last June!



Freddy the Seahorse leads cheers at a boys' basketball game; our French visitors were able to experience a variety of ACS classes and activities, including “Instincts for Survival” in P.E.



Grandfriends' Days

Grandfriends' Day is always one of the happiest days of the year at ACS, and this year was no exception! Hundreds of grandparents and special friends joined our students in the classroom and shared songs, stories, special projects, and snacks. Thanks to everyone for making this day so memorable!

Grandparents and other special friends visit classrooms, enjoy a sing-along, and create many happy memories.



The Auction is Coming!

Save the date for our 34th Annual Auction – Friday, April 22, at the Morton Arboretum! Join us – either live or remotely – for Floraison, a celebration of the amazing process of growth that each ACS student experiences. The evening will feature cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and the opportunity to support the School while winning fabulous vacations, great dining, sporting, and cultural experiences, terrific items for your home, and other one-of-a-kind opportunities. We are excited to open up the bidding to everyone in the ACS community, whether you are able to attend the event or not – you will even be able to bid remotely on some items before the big night! Look for more details coming soon.

Around Campus

Happy Trails !

Two ACS teaching giants retired last spring – Maria Kerhulas, who taught language arts at Avery Coonley since 1987, and Jeanne Snyder, a Third Group teacher since 1977, both decided to close their remarkable teaching careers. Generations of students and parents thank you and we all wish you very happy trails!

Given their youthful appearances, it is hard to believe that Jeanne Snyder (top) and Maria Kerhulas (bottom) devoted a combined 66 years to The Avery Coonley School!



1998

We love to hear what our alumni are doing! Please visit the Alumni portion of our website www.averycoonley.org and register; you will be able to post updates and see news and photos from your classmates and friends. You can also email information to cportman@averycoonley.org or share a note in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. We look forward to hearing from you...thanks!

Elizabeth (Larrick) Lindemulder is the Director of Partner Products for ParkWhiz Inc., an Internet-based service that allows customers to find and book parking in and around Chicago.

2007

Haley Sims graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Engineering, and remained at Stanford to pursue her Masters in Engineering. Haley was a member of the Cardinal Swim Team, and was named to the All-Academic PAC-12 team for her performance in the classroom and in the pool. In January, Haley and her brother **Burke Sims '05** were inducted into Downers Grove North High School's Athletic Hall of Fame.



Cathy Pearson '61 (whose mother taught Kindergarten at ACS) and her friend Laurie Coonley Warfel, visited campus in May.



Edward "Ted" Hayes '51 stopped by ACS last spring. He was in town promoting a conference celebrating the life and career of Winston Churchill. Ted has a PhD in Political Science and taught at the University of Wisconsin and Ohio University, with a primary focus on the history of World War II.



Members of the Class of 1991 gathered before Christmas for an impromptu meeting; (from left to right) Reepal (Shah) Dalal, Tony Engel and his wife Heidi, Neel Khosa, Kenton Barello, and Rory McKenna.



Members of the Class of 1994 held a mini-reunion at ACS this past summer: (from left to right) John King, Reena Desai, Tiffany Bohn, Simrit (Chhatwal) Patel, Bonnie Glaser, Cliona McKenna, and Elizabeth (Wallis) Grethen.

2009

Evan DeLorenzo has recorded and released an alternative rock album called “My Teeth Shine.” The music reflects a wide variety of styles and influences, and eleven of the songs are accompanied by music videos. Evan, a junior at Pomona College, worked on the project with over 50 peers from the Claremont Colleges. The group’s name is “Details” – check out their great sound at <https://open.spotify.com/album/5qYA1RLNEiJeXb2q648hWW> or at <https://soundcloud.com/detailsband/sets/my-teeth-shine>. You can watch the music videos on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKMeRefV8shJ-Ob-3ZKoPch7Ujpx1QzWn>.

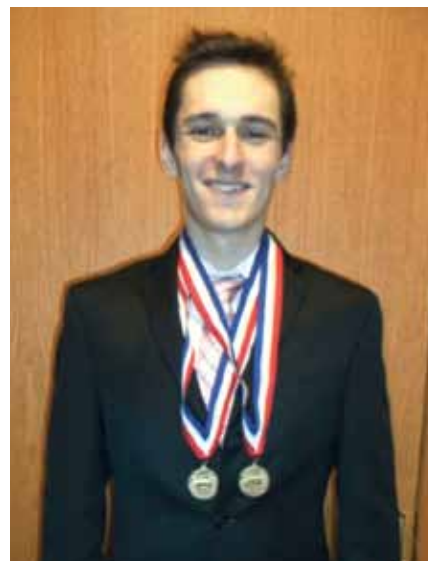
2012

Meena Jagadeesan was one of 40 high school seniors nationwide named as finalists in the Intel Science Talent Search, one of the most prestigious pre-college science and math competitions in the country. She will join the other finalists in Washington DC in March to compete for awards provided by the Intel Foundation, which encourages students to tackle challenging scientific questions and create technologies and solutions that will positively impact lives. Meena’s project is titled “The Exchange Graphs of Weakly Separated Collections.”

David Kwok was one of ten Illinois High School students selected to the 2015-16 Daily Herald Leadership Team, which recognizes students who excel in volunteerism and community service. David works with his brothers at Olive Theory Pizzeria; the restaurant’s mission is to “bake a better world” through sustainability and community service. David is a senior at Hinsdale Central High School.



Several alumni returned this year to watch the 85th Annual Thanksgiving Program, including (left to right) Caroline Loughman '12, Caroline Fry '12, Mahesh Kumar '12, and Yaseen Ahmed '15.



Zachary Kennedy '11 was a two-time Illinois champion in Speech. Zachary finished first in the IHSA competition in both Original Oratory and in Humorous Duet (with his Downers Grove South teammate Reese Richardson).



James Knuckles '99 and Silvia Camporesi were married in the summer of 2014 in Italy. (Left to right) Jeff Knuckles (ACS alumni parent), Dr. Silvia Camporesi (bride), James Knuckles (groom), Barbara Knuckles (ACS alumni parent and former trustee).



(left to right) Loey '15 and Maisie Bull '11 joined Derek Rippe '11 and Ashlei Sellinger '11 for Benet Academy's production of Mary Poppins last spring. Derek played George Banks in the musical, and Ashlei played the flute in the pit orchestra.



The Report *of* *Giving* *to* *The Avery Coonley School*



Charitable giving supports the life of The Avery Coonley School on a daily basis. It is evident in the classrooms, where small groups of students, highly-trained faculty, an innovative curriculum, and state-of-the-art 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. Charitable support makes possible the amazing array of physical spaces of this beautiful and historic campus. It is in the traditions, special events, and trips 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.

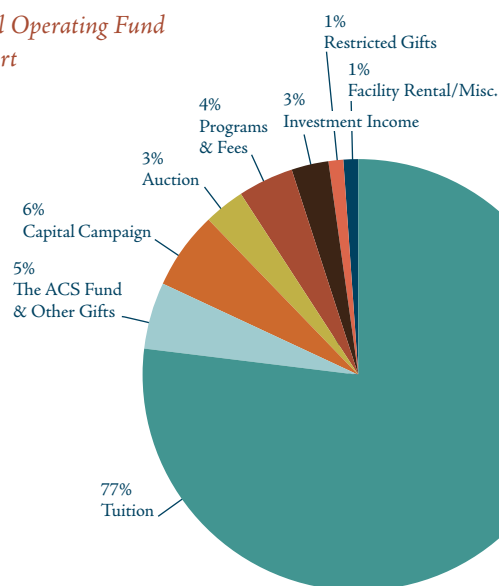
Each year, the School conducts two major fundraising programs that are coordinated through the Office of Development: the ACS Fund and the Annual Auction. Charitable support may also be directed to one of the three major endowment funds of ACS:

- ♦ The General Endowment Fund, which supports a wide range of needs and opportunities of the School
- ♦ The Professional Growth Endowment Fund, which provides vital resources for the ongoing professional development of the ACS faculty
- ♦ The Financial Aid Endowment Fund, which supports the goal of broadening access for qualified students of all socioeconomic backgrounds

The tradition of philanthropy started by Queenie Ferry Coonley in the early 1900s continues to be a vital part of the success and well-being of ACS. When asked, please advance the mission and continue this tradition of philanthropic support. Charitable contributions at all levels are gratefully received and will be put to good use educating current and future generations of students so that they may reach their full potential, follow their dreams, and become positive, productive, and respectful leaders of society.

How ACS Works Financially

2014–2015 General Operating Fund
Revenues and Support



Revenue and Support

Tuition Income Less Need-Based Financial Aid \$6,031,124

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 27 families during the 2014-2015 school year.

ACS Fund and Other Gifts \$363,546

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

Capital Campaign \$444,838

The ACS Journey Forward Together Capital Campaign is a multi-year campaign to modernize and upgrade the original school buildings. This amount includes cash and pledges received during the 2014-2015 school year.

Auction \$245,981

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 well in excess of \$3,000 per student.

Programs and Fees \$331,329

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

Investment Income \$226,303

Income earned on operating cash, designated cash, and a portion of the interest earned on the endowment.

Restricted Gifts \$102,006

Donations made to the school whose use is temporarily restricted by the donor. The funds are released to income as the expenditures which meet the restrictions are incurred.

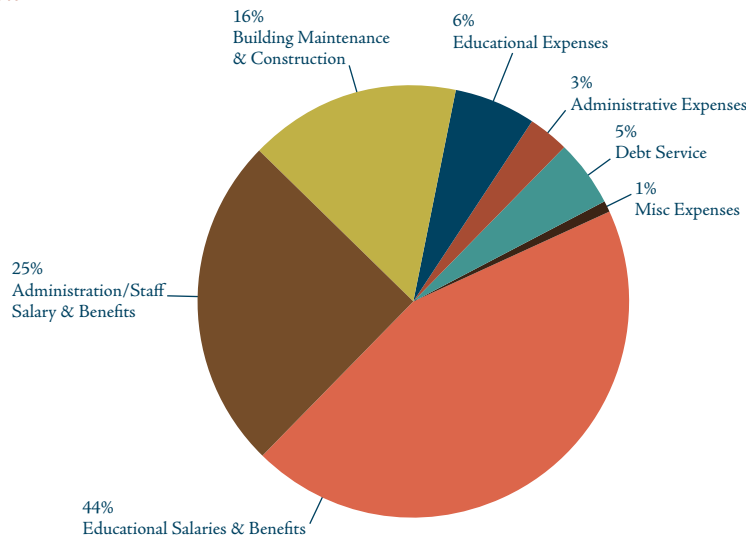
Facilities Rental and Miscellaneous Income \$39,282

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

Expenses

Educational Salaries and Benefits	\$3,199,193
Salaries and benefits for faculty and assistants. The benefits include retirement contributions, health insurance, life insurance, disability, and FICA contributions.	
Administration and Staff Salaries and Benefits	\$1,841,307
Salaries and benefits for administrators, nurse, maintenance, and ACS staff. The benefits include retirement contributions, health insurance, life insurance, disability, and FICA contributions.	
Building Maintenance and Construction	\$1,118,709
Contracted maintenance services including custodial, landscape services, snow removal, utilities, maintenance supplies, and repair costs. Also includes a portion of the construction costs for the Second, Third, and Fourth Group classrooms and library renovations completed during the summer of 2015.	
Educational Expense	\$450,554
Expenses related to instruction including educational software, curricular materials, technology equipment, classroom supplies, educational professional growth, standardized testing costs, as well as spending to fulfill requirements of temporarily restricted donations.	
Administrative Expense	\$228,755
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.	
Debt Service	\$357,382
The Village of Downers Grove issued Revenue Bonds on the school's behalf. The principal and interest payments represents the current cash outlay to cover the Middle School addition and a portion of the Lower School renovations.	
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$36,186
Expenses used by the Board to cover Board expenses, including the Head of School search.	

2014–2015 General Operating Fund
Expenses



2014 – 2015 School Year

Statement of Income and Expenses – Operating Fund

For the Period Ending June 30, 2015

Revenues and Support

Tuition income	\$6,031,124
Programs	\$282,634
Fees	\$48,695
Investment income	\$226,303
Miscellaneous income	\$8,369
Facility rental	\$30,913
<hr/>	
Internally generated income	\$6,628,038
Auction proceeds	\$245,981
Restricted gifts	\$102,006
Unrestricted gifts	\$808,384
<hr/>	
Total support	\$1,156,371
<hr/>	
Total income	\$7,784,409
<hr/>	

Expenses

Educational	\$3,649,747
Administration	\$2,427,444
Maintenance	\$476,798
Building and grounds	\$641,911
Other expenses	\$36,186
<hr/>	
Total operating expenses	\$7,232,086
<hr/>	
2014-2015 surplus/(deficit)	\$552,323
Special expenditures and allocations	(\$552,323)

Net Change in Undesignated Fund Balance	\$0
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An independent auditor's report is available for review in the ACS Business Office.



THE ACS FUND

AND ENDOWMENT FUNDS

The Importance and Tradition of Giving

The Avery Coonley School recognizes and acknowledges gifts from the following parents, grandparents, alumni, alumni parents, faculty and staff, foundations, corporations and other friends. This generosity enables the school to remain one of the nation's finest independent elementary schools. The ACS Fund supports operations in the current school year by filling the margin between the approximately 83.4% of the operating budget covered by tuition and a balanced budget. Income from the various endowment funds further impacts all areas of school life. A "100% in 100 Days" Parents Campaign was highly successful in securing support from school families in the first half of the school year, with over 95% of school families fulfilling pledges. Once again, every member of the ACS faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees supported these funds. Gifts to the ACS Fund totaled \$323,891 with an additional \$25,149 directed to the restricted and endowed funds listed here. Special thanks to the following volunteers for the important role they served in securing philanthropic support for the 2014-2015 ACS Fund and Endowment Funds:

The ACS Fund Leadership Team

Chairs

Mark and Jacqueline Gupta

Alumni Chairs

Nancy Doris Blackburn '91 and
Tim Doris '90

Alumni Parent Chairs

Dan and Deb Clarke

Faculty and Staff Chairs

Michelle Schaub and Linda Ward

Grandparent Chairs

Hans and Judith Fauske
Jim and Marlene Pearson

Group Liaisons

Stephen Smith and Gale England Smith
Early Childhood – AM

Michael and Tobin Baum
Early Childhood – PM

Edward Moore and Erica Rogers
Junior Kindergarten – AM

Nikki Haggerty
Junior Kindergarten – PM

Brian Gilmartin
Kindergarten

Mark and Penny Kukla '88
First Group

AnnMarie Fauske
Second Group

Anu Perni
Third Group

Franklin Tan
Fourth Group

Bill and Reagan Atwood
Fifth Group

Lisa McClear
Sixth Group

Anjan and Anu Asthana
Seventh Group

Jefferson and Catherine Reiter
Eighth Group

2014 – 2015 ACS Fund

The 2014-2015 ACS Fund

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. Frederick '55 and Mrs. Kay Krehbiel
Mr. John '51 and Mrs. Kennetha Krehbiel
Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Lisa McClear
Nickum Foundation
Rev. Dr. Linda Nelson
Mr. Martin and Mrs. Cathy Slark

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

Mr. John and Mrs. Ann Grube
Mr. Robert Jacobs
Mr. Walter and Mrs. Lily Polowczak
Mr. Brett '76 and Mrs. Antonia Pritchard
Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Cindy Stathakis
Dr. Franklin and Dr. Peggy Tan
Mr. William and Dr. Farah Turk
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Wiggin

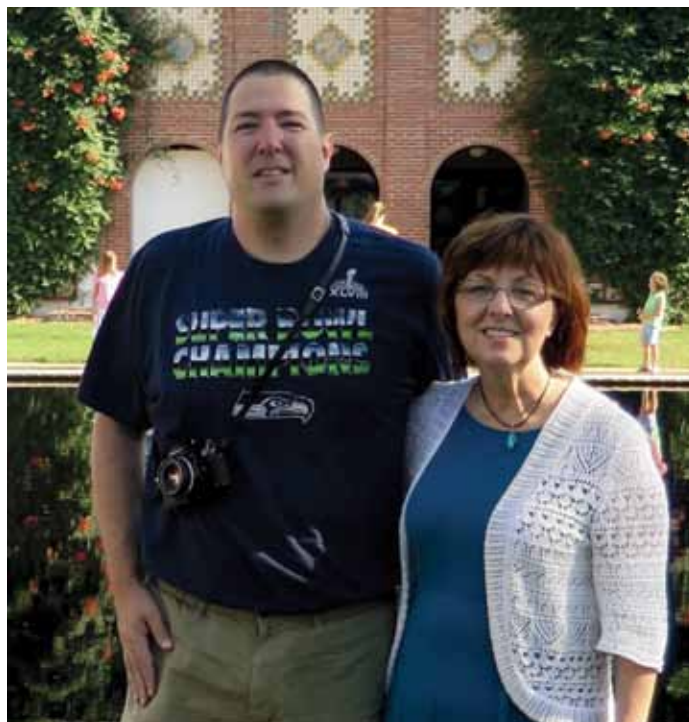
Henry Chapman Mercer Circle
Honoring the designer and ceramicist
who created the fireplace, floor tiles, and
Cloister triptych, this Circle recognizes
contributors of \$2,500 to \$4,999.

Mr. Anjan and Mrs. Anuradha Asthana
Mr. Aamer and Dr. Zainab Baig
Mr. Daniel Chan and Ms. Shuling Lee
Mr. Maneesh and Mrs. Archana Chawla
Mr. James and Mrs. Pamela Crouthamel
Ms. Elizabeth Esposito
Mr. Joshua and Mrs. Jessica Friess
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, Mr. Lloyd A. '67
and Mrs. Colleen Fry
Mr. Mike and Mrs. Sue Gould
Mr. Mark and Mrs. Jacqueline Gupta
Mr. Matthew Hornbach '91
The Joseph and Catherine Johnson Family
Foundation - Catherine E. Richter Johnson-
Armstrong '79, Catherine J. Richter,
Ted Richter '78, Rebecca Richter Steiner '87
Dr. Kishin Ramani and Dr. Suman Kaur
Dr. Jae and Mrs. Jiyeon Kim
Mr. Daniel Krzeczowski and
Mrs. Susan Bray
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Daiva Majauskas
Mr. Timothy McMahon and
Dr. Michelle Andreoli
Mr. Dan and Mrs. Mary McNamara
Mr. Brendan and Mrs. Mary Sheehy
Mr. Kevin and Dr. Diana Viravec
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Weinberger
Anonymous

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.

Dr. Nouri and Mrs. Shatha Al-Khaled
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Tobin Baum
Dr. Anup Bendre and Dr. Anuradha Perni
Mr. Eric Benson and Ms. Stephanie Sayegh
Mr. John Blackburn and Ms. Nancy Doris '91
Mr. Robert, Jr. and Mrs. Tracy Blackburn
Mr. William and Ms. Joanna Bradford
Ms. Mary Ellen Bull '79
Dr. Kenneth Candido and Dr. Durre Shahwar
Mr. Eric and Mrs. Dana Carlson
Dr. Asad and Dr. Farah Cheema
Mr. and Mrs. Shepley Chen
Dr. Steven Chough and Dr. Anna Park
Mr. Franklin and Mrs. Helen Chow
Dr. Steve Chung and Mrs. Jihyun Kim
Mr. Carl and Ms. Elizabeth Clark
Dr. Paul and Dr. Laura Crossan
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Crylen
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Kathleen Danakis
Mr. John and Mrs. Allison Davis
Mr. Ajay and Mrs. Priya Desai
Mr. Edward Tim Doris '90
Mr. Paul Druzinsky
Dr. Michael Elasaad and Dr. Stephanie Cravens
Mr. Yong Fan and Mrs. Tzu-Ling Yeh
Dr. Neal and Mrs. Teresa Fischer
Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Kelly Flynn
Mr. Jedidiah Gaetz and Ms. Angela Aman
Mr. Joe and Mrs. Kristina Gillespie
Mr. Brian Gilmartin and Dr. Lisa Karaitis
Dr. Nayan Gowda and Dr. Deepti Shivakumar
Dr. Raj and Dr. Nina Goyal
Dr. Vivek and Dr. Sonal Gupta
Mr. Ian and Mrs. Dianne Guttermann
Mr. Asgar Hakim
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Holecek
Dr. Blake and Mrs. Beth Horio
Dr. Victor Hu and Dr. Denise Nigro
Mr. Joe Hughes and Ms. Michelle Soudier
Mr. Shailesh and Mrs. Prajakta Joshi
Mr. Naufal Khan and Mrs. Asma Afridi
Dr. Andrew and Mrs. Yongtae Kim
Mr. Robert '79 and Mrs. Jingjing Kipp
Mr. Yan Kong and Mrs. Yun Liu
Mr. Kirill and Mrs. Laura Krylov

Mr. Ravi Kuchibhotla and
Ms. Padmaja Putcha
Mr. Mark and Dr. Panorea Kukla '88
Dr. Selvakumar Kunchithapatham and
Dr. Shakila Meerapatel
Mr. Miles H. Lasater and
Dr. Glyn Elizabeth Lasater '92
Ms. Rocio Lopez
Dr. Steven and Mrs. Amy Louis
Mr. Sailen and Dr. Shital Manek
Mr. James, III and Mrs. BJ Marshall
Mr. Gerard and Dr. Lisa Martin
Mr. Todd and Mrs. Dottie Martin
Mr. John and Mrs. Diana McDevitt
Mr. Edward Moore and Dr. Erica Rogers
Dr. Frederick Mueller and Ms. Cindy Leicht
Mr. Jeff and Mrs. Jill Mueller
Mr. Mohit and Mrs. Shobhina Mutreja
Mr. Stephen Olechowski and Ms. Liza Diaz
Dr. Michael Olson and Dr. Karen Barbera
Mr. Thomas Pace
Dr. and Mrs. Udit Patel
Mr. and Mrs. James Pearson
Mr. Imran and Mrs. Niema Qureshi
Dr. and Mrs. Adam Ramsey
Mr. Vittorio Williams and
Ms. Megan Rasmason
Mr. Jefferson and Mrs. Catherine Reiter
Dr. Saleh Rifai and Mrs. Chams Atassi
Mr. Patrick Sapinski and
Mrs. Minh Tran-Sapinski
Mr. Edwin Savarimuthu and
Ms. Dhevi Kandasamy
Mr. Tapan and Dr. Kavita Shah
Mr. Christopher Lok and Ms. Josephine Sheng
Mr. and Mrs. Rich Smurawski
Mr. James and Mrs. Jill Stocki
Dr. Karim Tourk and Dr. Aamirah Dhar
Dr. David and Ms. Angela Tse
Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Lisa Vaughan
Mr. Sreeram and Mrs. Uma Veluchamy
Mr. Kevin and Dr. Diana Viravec
Mr. Aloysius Wild, III and
Dr. Caer-Eve McCabe
Mr. Jason and Mrs. Christine Winchester
Anonymous (2)



Joel Donofrio '86 recently visited campus and posed with his former teacher, Anna Lenhardt.



Members of the Class of 2011 returned to campus last June to celebrate their high school graduations; the faculty, staff, and ACS Board wish them all great success and happiness in college!

Maple Tapping Circle

Representing one of the School's most cherished traditions, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$500 to \$999.

Mr. Ricardo and Mrs. Barbara Alvarado
 Mr. John and Mrs. Artemis Anos
 Mr. William Atwood and
 Mrs. Reagan Atwood
 Mr. Chadwick and Mrs. Evgenia Baatz
 Mr. Emile and Mrs. Christine Baillargeon
 Mr. Srikanth and Mrs. Lavanya Batchu
 Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Bohnen '70
 Mr. Matthew Bousquette and Mr. John Jacobs
 Mr. Dimitri and Mrs. Becky Carrigan
 Mr. Jeffrey and Mrs. Victoria Chen
 Dr. Bulent Demirtas and
 Dr. Meltem Urgun-Demirtas
 Mr. Sriram Divakar and Ms. Vandana Malali
 Dr. Meghan Flannery
 Mr. Patrick '80 and Mrs. Nicole Fry
 Ms. Karen Riley Gilles
 Dr. Max Gilles
 Mr. Dennis and Mrs. Nikki Haggerty
 Dr. Minh Hoang and Ms. Eonju Hwang
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred Huebner
 Mr. Salman and Mrs. Samreen Imami
 Mr. Stephen and Mrs. Sharon Jaster
 Dr. Kabir Julka '93 and Mrs. Reena Julka
 Mr. Sonny and Dr. Sabira Khalil '84
 Mr. Barry and Mrs. Heather Kincaid

Mr. David and Mrs. Lekha Knoepp
 Dr. Sri Komanduri and Dr. Kamo Sidhwa
 Mr. William and Ms. Jill Kramer
 Mr. and Mrs. Wai Lau
 Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Dawn Lawler
 Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Jane Lee
 Mr. Wei Li and Mrs. Jing Xing
 Dr. Ted Liu and Mrs. Ellen Huang
 Mr. David and Mrs. Deborah McGarry
 Mr. Daniel McGinn and Dr. Daesman Suri
 Mr. Rajiv and Mrs. Anita Mistry
 Mr. George and Mrs. Connie Molitor
 Mr. Gene and Mrs. Suzanne Mraz
 Mr. Frank Natanek and Mrs. Erin Brehm
 Mr. Paul and Mrs. Jillann Olejniczak
 Mr. Jaime Olguin and Dr. Bonny Chen
 Mr. Edmond and Mrs. Sarah Opler
 Dr. Dalip and Dr. Lubna Pelinkovic
 Dr. Todd and Mrs. Heather Pleune
 Mr. Paul and Mrs. Patricia Purcell
 Mr. Ravi and Mrs. Carolyn Ravichandran
 Ms. Kristine Rodriguez
 Dr. Everett Smith and Mrs. Rita Drenga
 Mr. Stephen Smith and
 Dr. Gale England Smith
 Mr. Li Song and Ms. Helen He
 Mr. Chad and Dr. Ashley Stoecker
 Dr. Robert and Mrs. Michelle Strugala
 Dr. Theodore Troe and Dr. Eve Mara
 Mr. Charles and Mrs. Amy Wright
 Mr. Anthony and Dr. Nicole Zangler
 Dr. Hui Zhao and Dr. Yi Zhou
 Dr. Yunde Zhong and Dr. Shuli Wang

Bell Ringers Circle

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

Mr. Baird and Mrs. Carolann Allis
Mr. Walter Anderson '80
Mr. Alex and Mrs. Danielle Andrade
Mrs. Mary Arnos
Mr. John and Mrs. MaryAnne Benas
Mr. Snehal and Mrs. Jignasa Bhavsar
Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Gracetrue Buzzard
Mr. Paul Carey and Ms. Sherri Lasko
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Emily Consolazio
Mr. and Mrs. Dave Davis
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Denys
Dr. Andrew Dombard and
Dr. D'Arcy Meyer-Dombard
Mr. Kristian and Mrs. AnnMarie Fauske
Mr. John and Mrs. Rima Franklin
Mr. Adam Gastolek and
Dr. Aneta Paniczko-Gastolek
Mr. Dennis and Mrs. Nicole Gilhooley
Mr. James and Mrs. Julia Gleitsman
Dr. Atul and Mrs. Valli Gupta
Mr. John and Mrs. Grace Harrast
Mr. Roy and Mrs. Lisa Henrickson
Mr. William and Mrs. Elisabeth Heun '70
Ms. Elizabeth Hwang
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Tracy Izhaky
Mr. Ivan and Mrs. Sanja Jovanovic
Mr. Houman and Mrs. Parastoo Kashanipour
Mr. Alok and Mrs. Barnali Khuntia
Mrs. Jeanne Kipp
Mr. Mahesh Kumar '12
Mr. Matthew Lange and Dr. Cathleen Ayuste
Dr. Jinman Lee and Mrs. Yeojung Cho
Dr. Zhibao Ma and Ms. Eenam Sin
Mr. Bradley Malone and Ms. Stellitsa Rozakis
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Markunas
Mr. Ted and Mrs. Jenny McKendall

Mr. Tushar and Mrs. Kerul Mehta
Mr. Jason Meslin and
Ms. Rebecca Malotke-Meslin
Mr. Charles Mottier '70
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Kristina Murphy
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Laura Murray
Mr. Arunas Navickas and Ms. Deanna Targosz
Ms. Colleen O'Leary '12
Mr. Fraser and Mrs. Jacquie Orr
Mr. Gregory and Mrs. Dominika Orzikowski
Mr. Alesh and Mrs. Binita Patel
Mr. Rupesh and Mrs. Simrit Patel '94
Mr. Umang Patel and Mrs. Susan Danial
Dr. Sanjeev and Dr. Melissa Pradhan
Ms. Nickola Rollins-Blankenship
Mr. Jeffrey and Mrs. Tiffany Routier
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Kristen Ryan
Dr. Milind and Mrs. Sani Shirsat
Mr. Parry Singh
Dr. Perry Soriano '86
Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Beth Spiegel
Mr. Rajcan and Mrs. Yuanna Surface
Mr. Sailesh Thakur and
Mrs. Ramapriya Subramanian
Mr. Derek and Mrs. Ying Timmermann
Mr. Todd and Mrs. Beth Treleven
Mr. Theodore Tylman '48
Mr. Ramesh Venkataraman and
Ms. Krishnaveni Iyer
Mr. Ashish Vora '92 and
Ms. Amanda Boatright
Mr. Andrew and Mrs. Patricia White
Mr. Nathan and Mrs. Susan Wilda
Dr. Michael Wince and Ms. Pamela Cox
Mr. Keith Woodruff and
Dr. Monina Quindipan

Cloister Circle

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

Mr. Philip Adler and
Ms. Sarah Goddard Adler
Mr. Asif and Mrs. Faryal Ahmed
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Anna Andrusenko
Mr. Ranjit and Mrs. Bhavna Bahadur
Mr. Michael Baker and Ms. Brigit Amburgey
Mr. and Mrs. Justin Batzel
Dr. Zain Bengali and Mrs. Nagla Fetouh
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Bohn
Ms. Tiffany Bohn '94
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Bosco
Mr. Scott and Mrs. Nadia Bowman
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Bray
Mr. David Breisch '99
Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Tammy Bristol
Ms. Sharon Brockschmidt
Ms. Alice Brown
Dr. Ryan Burgette and Ms. Sheila Frederick
Dr. Patricia Campione
Mr. Hoon and Ms. Catherine Chun '77
Mr. R. Ramas and Ms. Jan Ciampi
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Ciccione
Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Gina Clinnin
Mr. and Mrs. Alain Clivaz
Ms. Madeline Cohen '13
Dr. and Mrs. David Cook
Ms. Jessica Cooperman
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Barbara Cosentino
Mr. Evan DeLorenzo '09
Mr. Pan J. Demetrakakes '70
Dr. Stewart and Mrs. Laura DeSoto
Mr. Ali Dib and Dr. Hala Taha
Mr. and Mrs. David Dundek
Ms. Sunshine M. Echevarria
Mr. Michael Ecker '73 and Ms. Beth Levy
Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Jane Egan
Mr. Anthony '91 and Dr. Heidi Engel
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Laurie Ernst
Mr. and Ms. Kent Evans
Mr. Robert and Mrs. Eveyln Fahey
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Ferguson
Dr. Robert, III and Mrs. Celia Finley
Mr. John Fitzgerald '63
Mr. Hershel and Mrs. Carole Fitzpatrick
Ms. Lauren Flentge

2014 – 2015 ACS Fund

Mr. and Mrs. Steven Flentge	Mr. and Mrs. Grant Lauinger	Dr. Neel Shah and Dr. Amee Majmundar
Mr. Michael Flynn '13	Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lenhardt	Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Grace Shin
Ms. Caroline Fry '12	Mr. Stephen '66 and Mrs. Rachel Lester	Mr. Usman and Mrs. Maribel Siddiqui
Dr. R. J. Michael Fry and Dr. Shirley Fry	Dr. Marysa Leya '03	Mr. Burke Sims '05
Mr. and Mrs. John Gallo	Mr. Edward Liczwek, II	Mr. and Mrs. David Sims
Mr. James and Mrs. Trecia Gandurski	Dr. Patrick and Mrs. Maggie Lynch	Ms. Gabrielle Sims '10
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Garetto	Mr. Frank and Mrs. Jean Mallory '38	Ms. Haley Sims '07
Mr. Pankaj and Mrs. Swati Garg	Mr. and Mrs. Gerard Martin	Ms. Madeline Sims '10
Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Charlene Geary	Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Daile McCann	Mr. Adam Smith '09
Ms. Cathleen T. Gillen	Mr. Andrew McCormick	Mr. and Mrs. Charles Snyder
Mr. Luke Gillono and	Ms. Elizabeth McKay '06	Mr. and Mrs. Carmen Soldato
Mrs. Jennifer Marvel-Gillono	Mr. Evan and Mrs. Beth McNish	Mr. Gregory and Mrs. Margaret Spitzer
Mr. Donald and Mrs. Catherine Glass	Dr. Rajeev and Mrs. Tejal Mehta	Mr. Chris Stewart and Mrs. Lori Broach
Mr. Blake Glidden '87	Ms. Elizabeth Melton '05	Dr. Arthur and Dr. Barbara Stoecker
Ms. Brittany Glidden '89	Mr. Adam and Mrs. Suzanne Metcalf	Mr. Michael and Mrs. Jennifer Strohl
Mr. Jay Godla and Dr. Srilata Gundala	Mr. and Mrs. David Mitchell	Mr. Donald Strumillo, Jr. '06
Ms. Anne Graves '70	Ms. Jessica Mossuto	Mr. and Mrs. Karthik Subramanian
Mr. Jeff and Mrs. Heidi Groulx	Mr. Stephen Mugg and	Dr. Albert and Mrs. Joan Sunseri
Mr. Richard and Mrs. Dehn Grunsten	Dr. Lisa Metzger-Mugg	Ms. Alison Sunseri '05
Ms. Abigail Gupta '14	Mr. Horace Nash '68	Mr. Will and Mrs. Jaime Surdyski
Mr. Michael Gupta '12	Mr. Damien and Ms. Elaia Neff	Mr. and Mrs. Randy Taylor
Mr. Allan and Mrs. Rachel Gutierrez	Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Nelson	Mr. and Mrs. Brayer Teague
Mr. and Mrs. Efrain Gutierrez	Mr. Trac Nghiem and Mrs. Kulchitt Vilaichitt	Mrs. Nancy Heath Tuttle '50
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Diana Halley	Mr. and Mrs. David Oldham	Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Van Howe
Mr. David and Mrs. Amy Hansfield	Mr. James O'Leary '07	Mr. and Mrs. William Ward
Mrs. Colleen Hanson	Mr. John O'Leary '05	Mr. and Mrs. Edward Weidman
Mr. John and Mrs. Julie Hausheer	Mr. Martin O'Neill and Dr. Theresa Lee	Mr. Jeffrey Westbrook and Ms. Kelly Stokes
Dr. Stuart and Mrs. Laura Heimburger	Prof. Damian Ortiz and Mrs. Adeena Weiss	Mr. and Mrs. Brian Wetta
Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Hogan	Ortiz in loving memory of Antonio Ortiz	Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Wilson
Ms. Lynne Hurdle	and Jack J. Weiss	Mrs. Lisa Wiltz
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hyma	Mr. Keith and Mrs. Susan Ozsvath	Ms. Karen Winterhof '01
Mr. Rajeev and Mrs. Heather Jashnani	Ms. Cathy Lou Pearson '61	Mr. Neal Winterhof '96
Dr. Adivaraha and Dr. Soumya Jayasankar	Mr. and Mrs. David Perez	Mr. Peter Winterhof '04
Dr. Byron Johnson and Ms. Jinni Ali	Mr. Julius and Mrs. Jennifer Pohlenz	Mrs. Joan Wootan '42
Mr. Edwin and Mrs. Raquel Johnson	Mr. Shawn Potzinger and Mrs. Alexis Byrant	Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wysopal
Drs. Thomas and Deepa Joseph	Mr. and Mrs. John Reenan	Anonymous (5)
Mr. Neil and Mrs. Amy Kane	Mr. Ryan and Ms. Dana Reko	
Dr. Purav and Mrs. Amisha Kapadia	Mr. Erich Remiker '12	
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Karpel	Mr. David Reynolds and Mrs. Wendi Wilson	
Mr. Edward J. Karpel, Jr. '93	Ms. Nancy Ries	
Rev. and Mrs. Chris Kerhulas	Mr. Allen Rogers	
Mr. Matthew and Mrs. Maria Kiely	Mr. Matthew and Dr. Sabine Rolnick	
Mr. Danny and Mrs. Shirley Kim	Mr. and Mrs. Jay Rose	
Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Klein	Dr. John Rowan	
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Koenigsmark	Mr. and Mrs. Guy Savard	
Mr. Leonard and Mrs. Monique Koenigsmark	Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Schallmoser	
Mr. William Krafft '48 and Mrs. Lois Krafft	Mr. Matthew and Mrs. Michelle Schaub	
Mr. James and Mrs. Nancy Langer	Mr. Mark Schindler '67	
Mrs. Patricia Lansdale-Rice '41	Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Schmidt	
Ms. Catherine Larrabee '08	Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Sedlack	
	Mr. and Mrs. John Seger	

The ACS Fund Participation by Group

Early Childhood AM – 81%

Dr. Asad Aziz and Mrs. Maryam Mujahid
Mr. Michael Baker and Ms. Brigit Amburgey
Mr. Brian and Mrs. Julie Bickel
Dr. Minh Hoang and Ms. Eonju Hwang
Mr. Rajeev and Mrs. Heather Jashnani
Dr. Adivaraha and Dr. Soumya Jayasankar
Mr. Edwin and Mrs. Raquel Johnson
Mr. David and Mrs. Lekha Knoepp
Mr. Wai and Mrs. Jessica Lau
Mr. Timothy McMahon and
Dr. Michelle Andreoli
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Jillann Olejniczak
Mr. Jaime Olguin and Dr. Bonny Chen
Mr. Martin O'Neill and Dr. Theresa Lee
Prof. Damian Ortiz and
Mrs. Adeena Weiss Ortiz
Mr. Rupesh and Mrs. Simrit Patel
Mr. Stephen Smith and
Dr. Gale England Smith
Dr. Yunde Zhong and Dr. Shuli Wang

Early Childhood PM – 100%

Mr. Michael and Mrs. Tobin Baum
Dr. Zain Bengali and Mrs. Nagla Fetouh
Drs. Thomas and Deepa Joseph
Mr. Gene and Mrs. Suzanne Mraz
Mr. Umang Patel and Mrs. Susan Danial
Mr. Julius and Mrs. Jennifer Pohlenz
Mr. William Rentz and Ms. Laura Brauneis
Mr. Usman and Mrs. Maribel Siddiqui

Junior Kindergarten AM – 95%

Mr. Baird and Mrs. Carolann Allis
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Anna Andrusenko
Mr. Scott and Mrs. Nadia Bowman
Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Gracetrue Buzzard
Mr. Maneesh and Mrs. Archana Chawla
Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Gina Clinnin
Mr. Joshua and Mrs. Jessica Friess
Mr. Dennis Jr. and Mrs. Nicole Gilhooley
Mr. James and Mrs. Julia Gleitsman
Dr. Atul and Mrs. Valli Gupta
Mr. Allan and Mrs. Rachel Gutierrez
Dr. Minh Hoang and Ms. Eonju Hwang
Dr. Adivaraha and Dr. Soumya Jayasankar
Mr. Alok and Mrs. Barnali Khuntia
Mr. Zhibao Ma and Ms. Eenam Sin
Mr. Edward Moore and Dr. Erica Rogers
Mr. Damien and Ms. Elaia Neff
Mr. Fraser and Mrs. Jacquelyn Orr
Prof. Damian Ortiz and
Mrs. Adeena Weiss Ortiz
Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Grace Shin
Mr. Andrew and Mrs. Patricia White

Junior Kindergarten PM – 95%

Mr. Alex and Mrs. Danielle Andrade
Dr. Ryan Burgette and Ms. Sheila Frederick
Dr. Paul and Dr. Laura Crossan
Mr. Ali Dib and Dr. Hala Taha
Dr. Nayan Gowda and Dr. Deepti Shivakumar
Mr. Dennis and Mrs. Nikki Haggerty
Mr. Roy and Mrs. Lisa Henrickson
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Tracy Izhaky
Dr. Byron Johnson and Ms. Jinni Ali
Dr. Kabir and Mrs. Reena Julka
Dr. Purav and Mrs. Amisha Kapadia
Mr. Matthew and Mrs. Maria Kiely
Dr. Patrick and Mrs. Maggie Lynch
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Daile McCann
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Jessica Bollow spoke on behalf of the Class of 2005, the Auction's honored guests.

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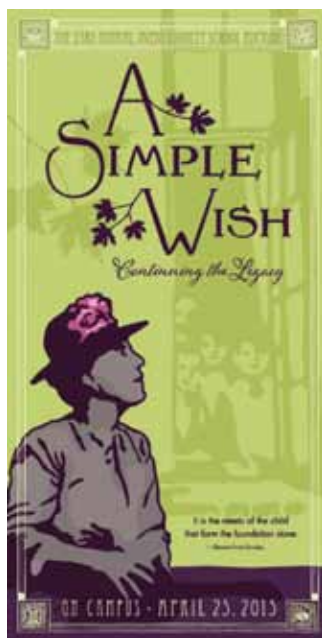
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2015 Auction



The 33rd Annual Auction was held on the ACS campus on April 25, 2015. The event netted \$232,212 for the School. Contributions to the Fund-A-Need, which were directed to the rebuilding of the iconic Third Group learning spaces, totaled \$30,252. The Auction, together with the ACS Fund, helps to fill the gap between tuition revenue and operating expenses, allowing us to continue to provide an outstanding educational experience for each of our extraordinary students. The evening also offers a wonderful chance to create lasting memories with friends old and new, thanks to the generosity and effort of the following volunteers and donors.

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Second Group

Archana Chawla

Third Group

Peggy Tan

Fourth Group

Reagen Atwood

Fifth Group

Farah Cheema

Sixth Group

Nina Goyal

Seventh Group

Grace Harrast

Eighth Group

Additional Volunteers

Sarah Adler

Chams Atassi

Bhavna Bahadur

Zainab Baig

Stephanie Benson

Anjana Bhargava

Bo Blackburn

Nadia Bowman

Archana Chawla

Eli Cordero

Heidi Engel

Allison Davis

Andrew Dombard

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2015 Auction

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The 2015 Fund-A-Need

This year's Fund-A-Need provided \$30,252 in underwriting for the renovation of the Third Group learning spaces. The iconic learning spaces were rebuilt in the summer of 2015 as part of the School's ongoing renovation project. First constructed in 1970, over a thousand students have enjoyed the spaces through the years. With the generous support of the following donors, many generations of current and future students will also form fond memories within this unique feature of the ACS experience.

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2015 Auction

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Mary and Brendan Sheehy (top), and Patrick Fry, Brian Gilmartin, and Steven and Christine Bosco (bottom) enjoy "A Simple Wish."

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Josh and Jessica Friess (left) and Tracy and Bo Blackburn celebrating another very successful Auction.

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This report reflects gifts received between July 2, 2014 and June 30, 2015. If any errors or omissions are noted, please accept our apologies and share them with the ACS Office of Development.

Welcome New Staff

Gwen Cooper joins the ACS faculty as a Seventh and Eighth Group literacy teacher. She holds an undergraduate degree in English from the University of Illinois and a master's degree in secondary education from Arizona State University. She began her career as a fifth and sixth grade English teacher at BASIS Peoria and later moved into an administrative post as the school's Director of Student Affairs. Upon relocating to Chicago, Mrs. Cooper joined Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development and worked as the academic dean for the Equinox program. In her spare time, Mrs. Cooper enjoys baking new confections, traveling near and far, and defending the rights of the Oxford comma. Generally, she likes to do all of these activities in the company of her three favorite companions: her husband and two cats.



Shannon Horn '06 returned to ACS this fall as the new Associate Director of Alumni Relations. After graduating from Avery Coonley, Shannon attended Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts, where she served as a Head Tour Guide in the Admissions Department and earned nine varsity letters across four sports. She then went on to Northwestern University, where she graduated with a double major in Psychology and International Studies. Shannon served on the executive board of Northwestern Community Development Corps for two years, chairing panels on civic engagement and managing the public relations team. Additionally, she interned with the Center for Companies That Care's AIM High college preparatory program for at-risk Chicago public school students. In addition to her duties in the Office of Development, Shannon assisted Mr. Schallmoser with the ACS volleyball program this fall, coming full circle after having begun her volleyball career as a Fighting Seahorse.



Welcome New Staff



Carolyn Johnson joined ACS this Fall as our new Director of Development. She spent the last ten years working in the Development Office at the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA), most recently as the Director of their Annual Fund. Carolyn also has experience working for two other non-profits, Catholic Charities and Head Start. During Carolyn's tenure at IMSA she became familiar with ACS and became a big fan of our own graduates and former parents. She is a native of the western suburbs, growing up in Woodridge and attending Downers Grove South, and feels like she is "coming home." Carolyn and her husband Bill have two children, Calvin and Grant.



Tracy Nemecek is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) and has joined ACS as our new school counselor. She received her B.A. from the University of Notre Dame and an M.A. in Community Counseling from Loyola University Chicago. Ms. Nemecek has experience as a school-based counselor, working within preschool, elementary, middle, high school and college settings. Ms. Nemecek has over 15 years of clinical experience, working with children, adolescents, and adults in private practice, and she has a particular interest in creating programs aimed at strengthening personal development, stress management, and interpersonal skills. When not working, Tracy enjoys spending time with her husband, who is the Dean of Faculty and Academics at Lake Forest Academy, and two daughters, and she likes gardening, cooking, reading, and shopping for antiques.



Dina Tufo has joined the ACS staff as a Fifth and Sixth Group literacy teacher. For the last six years, Ms. Tufo taught sixth and seventh grade English, Language Arts, and Social Studies at Parker Junior High School in Flossmoor. She received a degree in History with a minor in English and Secondary Education from North Central College, and returned to North Central to obtain a Master's in Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Leadership. Ms. Tufo is passionate about fitness and leading a healthy lifestyle – you may see her and her fiancé riding their bikes or running through the neighborhood. She also loves chocolate, the Blackhawks, and all things Disney.



Jennifer Vaughan is our new Third Group teacher. She has a B.A. from the University of Rochester in Psychology and a MA in Early Childhood Development from the Erikson Institute. Ms. Vaughan is also currently working toward a M. Ed. in Reading from National Louis University. Before coming to ACS, she taught preschool in Washington, DC and in the early childhood programs of both Francis W. Parker School and the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools; Ms. Vaughan also served as a maternity substitute for us last year. She lives with her husband and three children in La Grange. During her free time, Jennifer enjoys reading, running, and exploring the U.S. with her family.

Welcome New Board Members



Kevin Peterson (top left) is a proud member of The Avery Coonley School Class of 1969. After ACS, Kevin went to Downers Grove North High School and then to the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Architecture, where he graduated with honors. He founded his own architectural firm, K. Peterson Associates, Inc., in 1981, and still serves as President and Principal Architect. The firm is involved in a wide variety of building types and sizes, mostly commercial, but with a significant number of single- and multi-family projects as well.

Kevin is the recipient of the American Institute of Architects School Medal and Certificate of Merit. In addition to his professional affiliations, Kevin is a member of the Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association, the Red Feather Development Group, the United States Green Building Council, the Theatre Historical Society of America, and the Naperville Historic Preservation Commission, among others. In addition to his work with the Board of Trustees, Kevin has also served on ACS's Alumni Council, Building and Grounds Committee, and the ad hoc Building Renovation Committee.

Kevin and his wife Janet have two children. In his free time, he enjoys cooking, playing the guitar, motorcycling, and flying his beautiful Cessna 182 Skylane.



Brendan Sheehy (bottom left) currently trades equity options for Gelber Group. He began his career working for O'Connor and Associates in San Francisco, and then in 2004 moved to PEAK6, where he specialized in volatility arbitrage of individual equity options. While at PEAK6 Brendan was manager of various trading groups, assisted in firm risk management, and ran trader and college recruiting. He grew up in Munster, Indiana, and graduated from Indiana University with a major in Finance and a minor in Economics.

Brendan has been an active volunteer at ACS. He has served as a tour guide for four years, co-chaired the Silent Auction committee in 2013, and was the co-chair of the Auction in both 2014 and 2015. He has also served on the School's Development Committee for several years.

Brendan and his wife Mary met in California, and they moved to Chicago in 2000. They are the proud parents of ACS students Frankie '16 and Nolan '18, having joined the School when their older son was in Kindergarten. In his spare time, Brendan coaches the boys' basketball and baseball teams and attends professional sporting events, particularly baseball games, with them. He also likes to read, especially books about economics, and the Sheehy family loves seeing live music; they are regular attendees of Lollapalooza.

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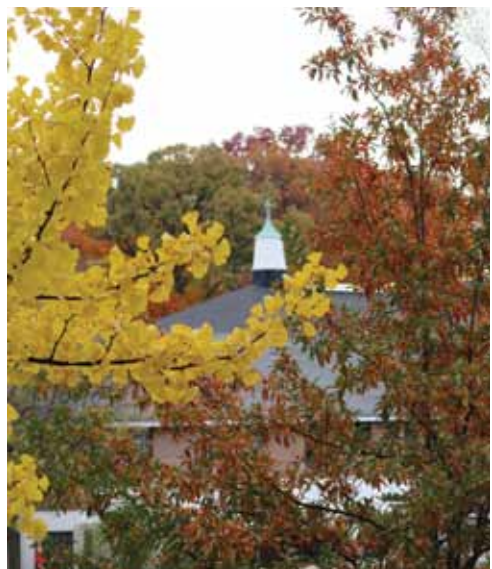
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