

The
Avery Coonley School
Magazine *Fall 2014*



Continuity

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 January 21, 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 January 21, 2014.

*Cover: In the design of the original building, an outdoor Cloister – rather than internal hallways – was chosen for both practical and esthetic reasons.
Table of Contents: Fall colors were particularly vibrant this year on the ACS campus and in the adjacent forest preserve.*



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Dear Readers,

The Avery Coonley School recently marked its 85th birthday.

We of course trace our history directly back to Mrs. Coonley's first school in Riverside, which opened in 1906, and to the Junior Elementary School, which began in 1912, just west of Main Street in Downers Grove. But it was on September 30, 1929, that we first opened the doors at our present location. With the new building came a new name – The Avery Coonley School, in honor of Mrs. Coonley's late husband.

What was that first day like? Our archival records convey a great deal. We have the guest book from opening day, telling us the names of the teachers and special visitors; outstanding photos of the interior and exterior of the building; an article from the Downers Grove Reporter describing the debut and calling the school “the most beautiful in America.” And, most significantly, we have the memories of alumni who were there on that first day.

Even with all of these records, it is impossible to know exactly what the school was like, but it is safe to conclude that a great deal about ACS has changed in those 85 years.

We now do things with technology that could not have even been imagined in those early days. The teachers and staff from opening day are of course all gone, replaced many times over by new generations of educators. There have been three major building additions, and the Gatehouse, originally built as a residence for the Head of School, has been converted into our Early Childhood center. With all that additional space, we now have twice as many students as there were in 1929. And our mission has evolved – in the 1960s, we shifted from our progressive education roots to a greater focus on gifted education.

With all of these changes, to what extent can we say that we are the same Avery Coonley School that we were on that first day? Last year in these pages we explored the “ACS Way,” trying to pinpoint that special elixir of ingredients that makes ACS so unique and memorable. In this issue, we take a close look at the extent to which that essence has changed and evolved over the years, and to what extent it has stayed the same.

We examine this idea of “continuity” from several different angles. Through the perspective of two of our most experienced teachers, Jeanne Snyder and Patty Crylen, we get a first-hand look at how the past connects to the present in multiple ways. We also hear from several of our alumni, including two whose own children are now ACS students; two others reflect on the ongoing impact of ACS during the high school and college years. With a new Head of School in place, it also makes sense to look back at one of the most influential Heads in our history, John Malach, and his family. And no issue on continuity would be complete without an article on at least one of our great traditions, so we offer a lighthearted look at Halloween at ACS. This issue also includes our Annual Report, which, without stretching the theme too much, highlights the ongoing role that philanthropy plays in the life of the school. Finally, demonstrating that “the more things change...” we welcome our new faculty and Board of Trustee members.

Would a visitor from 1929 recognize today's ACS? It is an abstract question, but with very practical implications. I invite you to reach your own conclusion as you read what follows. Enjoy!


Chris Portman, Editor

Dear Friends,

I am extremely excited to be the new Head of The Avery Coonley School! That adjective “new” necessarily implies change – new leadership, new decisions, new ideas. While there is a certain excitement that comes with this, I understand that there can and should be a healthy apprehension as well. What exactly will change?

One hallmark of a great school like ACS are the rich traditions, rituals, and practices that tie generations of graduates together; they are at the heart of what makes ACS such a successful school. At the same time, great schools are also defined by how they adapt and move forward, offering “cutting edge” curriculum together with the most forward-thinking methodologies, faculty, and staff. Thus I have found that one of the most difficult and ongoing challenges for heads of school is striking the right balance, finding the right timing and, most importantly, identifying the right things to change and the right things to leave untouched.

The most important component of successful change is to admit that change is hard for most institutions, and specifically for most people. We as a species have survived these millions of years because we are creatures of habit, for better or worse. Routine and predictability are how humans survive, and it is only when true crises occur that our ability to adapt must exceed our need to remain the same. Logic usually doesn't help – otherwise we would all pay careful attention to the food pyramid, exercise every day, and never smoke or drink. Alas, it usually takes a “health crisis” to motivate someone to make such a change.

From this lesson I have learned that unless a school is indeed in crisis (financial, enrollment, etc.) it is best not to change too much at one time. For one thing, unfortunately, at first blush change implies criticism of what exists, rather than simply acknowledging that most things can always be improved. And people do not want to feel like they are being criticized! Changing things too quickly can also be as dangerous as changing too much. School cultures are not created overnight; they are created over years, if not decades. Hence it is unrealistic to think that one can, will, or should change a culture quickly. Meaningful change is slow, deliberate, and carefully limited.

A healthy institution, like a healthy individual, must constantly assess this balance between continuity and change. The Head of School's role is to view all components through the lens of the school mission and to keep the needs of the students first and foremost in virtually all decision-making. Hence a lot of time should be taken to look at the practices and policies of a school to gain insight into how well they serve both the students and the mission. From this will emerge the areas where change should be considered, as well as those areas that are at the heart of a school and should continue for decades to come. I am happy to report that in my first three months at ACS, I have found many things that should – and will – continue “as is,” and a few areas where I know that, working together, we can grow and develop and make ACS an even better school.

I look forward to my role in the ongoing life of The Avery Coonley School!



Paul Druzinsky, Head of School



*Paul Druzinsky, enjoying a beautiful fall day –
Chicago's climate was no doubt a factor in his
decision to move back to the area!*



Traditions, Technology

Both have their
Space

by Joel Donofrio

Meet Jeanne Snyder

Education: BA in Elementary Education and Master of Education degrees from University of Illinois.

Career: A teacher since September 1970, has worked at Washington School in Urbana, Oakwood School in Richton Park, and Chicago Latin School. Has been Third Group teacher at The Avery Coonley School since August 1977. Outside of the classroom, has served on numerous professional committees and organizations, including the ISACS and NAIS Boards of Trustees. She was the co-founder of FEAST and Cultural Connections diversity activities at ACS.

Family: Married to Charlie since 1970. He has his own law practice in Oak Brook, specializing in corporate law.

“We have canine kids. At present there are three dachshunds – Woof, Harmony, and Flare – standard wire-haired. They travel to our Vail home with us where we have been spending our summers and Christmas breaks for many years.”

Hobbies: Both Jeanne and Charlie Snyder are avid bicyclists, enjoying both mountain and road biking. “I also love to travel and have been going on trips every spring break for about 25 years with friends, mostly from school. Our T-shirts say, ‘Life’s a beach, and then you dine.’ That’s pretty much what we love. We have been to Europe several times, Hawaii, Mexico, Costa Rica, and many places in the Caribbean.”

How long does it take something to move from an innovation to a tradition?

There's no definite answer, but the time-frame keeps getting shorter.

It wasn't long ago that email was an innovative way to communicate; now it seems quaint in a world of texts, instant messaging, and Skype.

In the realm of education at The Avery Coonley School, the Third Group learning spaces were such a new innovation in 1970, they were discussed nationally in *LIFE* magazine. Today, several generations of students have read books, studied, and imagined within them.

And Jeanne Snyder has been there for almost all of it.

The longtime Avery Coonley teacher is proud of the way innovation, technology and new ideas have been incorporated into the curriculum during her 38 years as a Third Group teacher. But she's also pleased that traditions such as the Camp Edwards trip, Thought for the Day and, yes, the learning spaces have been part of the ACS experience for generations of students.

With retirement in the near future, Mrs. Snyder reflected on her 45-year education career, which began in 1970 at Washington School in her hometown of Champaign-Urbana.

During her first year in the classroom, a college friend showed Mrs. Snyder the *LIFE* magazine article about the learning spaces. Her friend's brother, Larry Busch, designed them.



The story about the learning spaces appeared in the November 6, 1970 issue of LIFE magazine.

"When I came for my interview later in the 1970s, it was in that room (with the learning spaces). I said, 'I know who designed them,'" Mrs. Snyder recalled. "They've been there ever since 1970, and I hope they're here forever ... The kids really enjoy them, and when alumni talk about their time at Avery Coonley, the learning spaces are the most-loved indoor space in the school."

From the start, when previous Third Group teacher Lucille Kaut incorporated them into her daily time with students, the learning spaces have helped in the goal of establishing independence.

"We do so many things in groups and as a team, but you also want the students to be self-reliant," Mrs. Snyder said. "By the time you're a Third Group student at Avery Coonley, you have skills you need to work independently. When you're in your learning space, that's your chance to be self-reliant."

Of course, it's not just students who benefit from teamwork. Mrs. Snyder has gone from someone who was guided by colleagues and inspired by veterans such as Mrs. Kaut to being a mentor herself for many current Avery Coonley teachers.

She has particularly enjoyed working with her friend and Third Group teaching partner, Nancy Ries, and the feeling is mutual.

“Working with Jeanne the past 20 years has been amazing. She is a true partner because of her constant support both personally and professionally,” Ms. Ries said.

“Personally, we have shared the loss of our parents and the death of our beloved Head of School, Tom Kracht. We have also shared the marriage of my two sons and the birth of my grandchildren,” she added. “We truly know each other so well that we could finish one another’s sentences. Jeanne is a caring friend to me in every respect and the best teaching partner I could ever have had.”

Mrs. Snyder and Ms. Ries have worked as a professional team for over two decades, planning new lessons and incorporating new technology, such as tablets, into the classroom.

And the varying talents and interests of new students ensure that every school year is different.

“The kids do that for you,” Mrs. Snyder said. “You’re given different individuals every year, and you have to tailor (instruction) to the skills and needs they have. You may have the same general curriculum, but the way you approach it changes depending on who you have in front of you.”

When asked what advice she would give current and future teachers, Mrs. Snyder said “the overarching thing would be to create memories for kids.”

“You know they’re going to learn the academics – that’s a given with the curriculum and the type of students we have,” she added. “But you never know when you’re going to affect somebody, or how. That could be in a good or a bad way, so it’s a big responsibility. What you hope for is having people come back and say you made a difference in their life.”

As an example, Mrs. Snyder cited a recent profile of Gabrielle Green in this magazine. An ACS Class of 1990 graduate, Green referred to being a eight-year-old who first learned about slavery in Mrs. Snyder’s class.

“By then I had known about, and had personally experienced, the prejudices that other people held against me simply based on the color of my skin, but I never knew where the deep-seated history of such treatment came from until Mrs. Snyder taught this lesson,” Green wrote. “This unit, perhaps more than any other, shaped who I became and ultimately led me to my life’s work of defending poor, often minority, criminal defendants.”



Nancy Ries (left) and Jeanne Snyder have taught Third Group together for over two decades.

Working with Jeanne is like working with the best of both worlds: she has the wisdom, perspective, and insight that comes with thirty-five plus years of teaching experience and expertise, together with the energy, openness, and drive of a first year teacher. She is always one of the first teachers to embrace change, integrate new technology, and mentor new teachers. My lasting memory of Jeanne will be the initiative she took to start the Cultural Connections program. This program has proven to be a wonderful opportunity to help our students understand the amazing diversity of backgrounds of our families. As the Head of School, I also gained a deeper appreciation of the richness of different traditions present within the ACS community by attending Cultural Connections. Thank you, Mrs. Snyder, for this gift and the countless others you have given over the years to the students of ACS.

Paul Barton, former Head of School



Working with and getting to know students on a close individual basis is a hallmark of both Mrs. Snyder's teaching style and the ACS philosophy.

Reflecting on Gabrielle Green's words and career, Mrs. Snyder said she was touched to know that one of her passions — promoting diversity and being inclusive of a variety of cultural backgrounds — was passed on to one of her students.

Mrs. Snyder also hopes to affect students in more subtle ways. From the beginning of her ACS career in 1977, she has presented and discussed a "Thought for the Day." The worn-out collection of thoughts were put to paper based on a book of sayings Mrs. Snyder's mother gave to her at the start of her teaching career.

On the first day of the school year, Mrs. Snyder's daily thought is this: "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift. That's why they call it the present."

"My mom talked about that, about every day being a gift, and lived it, even when she was dying of cancer. Enjoy the moment. So that one means a lot to me," she added.

Enjoying retirement is something Mrs. Snyder and her husband, Charlie, will do in the near future — although she admits "it will be strange not to be putting supplies out and designing bulletin boards. It's a little bittersweet ... knowing that I won't be doing these things much longer."

Retirement plans include continued travel, bicycling and a possible move to Arizona. She hopes to volunteer to help the Wounded Warriors Project, and probably will occasionally work as a substitute teacher or tutor.

"I can't imagine not being around kids at all. I would probably go through withdrawal," she said with a laugh.

Overall, Mrs. Snyder was pleased that the Avery Coonley goal of lifelong learning has held true for both her students and herself.

"ACS has been a huge part of my life for so many years. I have seen it grow and change, but no matter what, it remains an amazingly special place to be — whether you teach or learn there. The traditions are unique and the people truly care about one another."

Meet Joel Donofrio

A Chicagoland native, Joel Donofrio graduated from The Avery Coonley School in 1986, then from Downers Grove South and the University of Iowa. His first year at ACS was in Third Group, with Mrs. Snyder. He is an assistant editor at *The Coeur d'Alene Press* newspaper in North Idaho, where he lives with his wife, Cathy, and teen-age children Anthony and Joanna.



Every first-year teacher at ACS should be blessed with a Joel Donofrio in his or her classroom! From Joel I learned that ACS students are “regular kids” in one sense, and anything but “regular” in so many others. In Fifth Group, Joel was passionate about writing and storytelling and he loved cartooning and comic books. His desire to excel at those things, together with his insatiable energy, inquisitive nature, delightfully quirky sense of humor, and warm and open nature all combined to help this English teacher know she wanted to spend the rest of her career working with students just like him.

Anna Lenhardt

*(top) Joel Donofrio during his days at ACS;
(bottom) Joel with his daughter Joanna at Glacier
National Park, summer 2014.*


By Patricia Crylen

Starting this fall, this is the 35th year that I have driven onto The Avery Coonley School campus. For the first fourteen of those years I was an ACS parent; our son Curtis started in Junior Kindergarten in 1980, and our daughters Kathryn and Carolyn joined him when they were old enough for JK. In 1994, I joined the ACS faculty as an Early Childhood teacher. During those years, I have experienced nine Heads of School, scores of teachers, and hundreds of students and their parents. Much has changed during those years but, remarkably and wonderfully, so much more has stayed the same.

One constant is the beauty of the campus. For those three-plus decades, I have been overpowered by the picturesque, serene scene at the top of the hill. Every year I would point out the changing colors of the leaves to my children, and they would reply, "Yes, Mom – just like last year!" But now that they are grown, they share my deep appreciation for the incredible beauty of the place. It is inspiring and comforting to know that many of the same trees have stood guard over our fields and playgrounds since the school began here in 1929. And Curtis is even talking about making a replica of the Third Group learning spaces in his own home!

Traditions are, of course, another important aspect of the continuity among generations, and ACS has lots of them. For the students, these traditions serve almost as rights of passage as well as something to look forward to each year. Every Group has at least one, and some have two or three. The students are familiar with them from seeing photos or hearing about them from older students, siblings, or at Gatherings. It gives them something special first to look forward to and then to remember about each year. These traditions serve as a timeline and help them keep track of their days at ACS. They also provide a common and a group memory.

Over the years I have enjoyed looking at all of the old photos of the school and reading about its history. When students or alumni look at these photos and see children from a different time tapping the maple trees, acting in a play, sailing boats in the reflection pool, making clay objects, playing in the orchestra, or numerous other things, it elicits their own memories of such events; there is a connection to all of those who have gone before and those who have yet to come through the halls of ACS. Each photo taps into our own memory banks and stirs up thoughts, feeling, emotions, even smells. These photos are probably the most concrete evidence of our shared experiences, and each of them truly is worth a thousand words.

It's
Fall Again!




*Patty Crylen in one of her favorite spots at ACS –
by the rock pond overlooking the campus.*



The Early Childhood setting and curriculum create a homelike atmosphere.

Another thing that had a big influence on our own children, and on countless others, is the fact that the teachers always read to them. In First Group, Linda Ward read them chapter books and I can still picture the children gathered around her, getting as close as possible so as not to miss a single word. In Third Group, Mrs. Snyder read them *The Phantom Tollbooth* and my kids had to get the video years later because it was such a fun story. In Fourth Group, even though they were quite capable of reading on their own, Mrs. Grussing read to them everyday. The books that Ann read to them – including *James and the Giant Peach*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and *A Wrinkle in Time* – will forever hold a special place in their literary memories.

It is easy to talk about the special events, photos, and books that we associate with The Avery Coonley School. It is much harder to describe the relationships that are formed here. But even more than all of those other things, the bonds that are established with classmates and teachers are the heart and soul of that ongoing connection that so many people feel for ACS. Being around like-minded peers, having the freedom to exchange ideas with them, sharing so many experiences – that all creates an incredible sense of community, a feeling of being an important part of a larger whole. I love everything about ACS, but those relationships are the main reason why I look forward to coming back every year.

I know that our own children benefited so much from their ACS experiences that, as a teacher, I very much want to be able to provide those same advantages to my students. It always makes me happy when alumni come back and tell us how well prepared they were for high school; that happens all the time. It is not just the academic preparation either. I think our graduates have always gained a sense of confidence in their abilities and in who they are as students and as people. They go on to do such amazing things, but I am even more impressed by the kind of people they become, making positive contributions in the world.

Our children had so many great teachers at ACS, including Mary Boyle, Denise Clivaz, Dave Dundek, Linda Gollan, Maria Kerhulas, Jeanne Kipp, Anna Lenhardt, Debbie Murphy, Jeanne Snyder, Linda Ward, Jeff Westbrook, Donna Wetta, and more. Mrs. Boyle was magical in the way that she could make the kids feel comfortable and allay any fears that they had about starting Kindergarten. Mrs. Kipp was not only an outstanding teacher, but she also made certain that the girls in her classes knew that they too could excel in math without any stigmas or worries. So many great teachers – but the best of the best was Ann Grussing.

I do not remember any special big activity or event in Mrs. Grussing's Fourth Group class, yet it is one of the most memorable years for our children and for me. Early in the year we had curriculum night and I remember Ann telling the parents that it was our job to love and listen to our children and her job to teach them – if she needed help, she would let us know! Ever so gently, Ann moved our children from our loving, over-protective arms, to independence and responsibility. She taught them how to be organized and that they were the ones responsible for their work, not their parents.

Ann was a storyteller and had a special gift for making learning fun. She expected hard work and young adult behavior from them, but she still let them be children and have many childhood moments, like holding a puppet while listening to a story. She made up games and the children had as much fun if recess had to be held in the classroom instead of outside. One game the children loved was "Dictionary." I think sometime later this was an actual game you could buy, but not when our children were in school. Ann would pick a word from the dictionary and show it to three students; one of them would give the actual definition and the other two would make up a definition. You got points by having your classmates pick your definition. It was great fun and lots of laughter came with the game, and at the same time it was a very effective way to expand the students' vocabularies and familiarize them with the dictionary.

Ann was always impeccably dressed and professional. You never doubted that she spoke with knowledge and authority, yet never in a condescending way or with any malice or ill will. Ann was soft spoken and kind to all. She let the children see and know her as a real person; she respected children and they respected her in return. Ann was the personification of integrity. You wanted to do and be your very best when in her presence because that was the way she lived her life. What an incredible role-model she provided to the whole school community! In all my time at ACS, I have only heard her name spoken with the utmost regard. Everyday, she continues to serve as a mentor to me, and what I learned from her as a parent lives on in my teaching.



I have heard so many alumni come back and say that Linda Ward or Jeanne Snyder or Anna Lenhardt look exactly the same. And it's true – they have seemed to defy the aging process! But I think what these alumni are noticing and commenting on are not so much their physical appearances but rather their personas; they remember the bond that they formed with these amazing teachers, and it is that memory that stays constant over time. Some of those greats from the past are of course gone now. But because we are such a small community and because we form such close relationships, their legacies live on in very real ways in today's outstanding educators. Just like those special traditions and memorable books, just like the serenity and beauty of the campus, the connections that we have formed with those who came before us create an indelible impression on us. They change us and shape us in ways that we can only begin to imagine.

And look – the trees are bursting with their fall colors again!

(top) Curtis Crylen, a member of the ACS Class of 1990; (bottom) Carolyn '96 and Kathryn '93.

Building a Legacy

Over the years, dozens of our alumni have chosen to send their own children to The Avery Coonley School. This year alone, nine of our current parents are also alumni of the school. These “legacy” families are an obvious and important part of the continuity that is such a vital component of the ACS experience. They also offer a unique perspective on what has changed over the years, and what has stayed the same. Alumni memories of their time here shape and influence the educational decisions that they make for their children, whether that choice includes ACS or not.

Two of our alumni-parents – Panorea Kukla '88 and Anthony Engel '91 – here share their thoughts on why they picked ACS for their children. They also discuss what it is like to experience the school from a new, adult perspective!



Anthony Engel and his daughter Maya, summer 2014.

When our older child, Maya, was getting old enough to go to “big kid school,” we were not sure where she should go. Maya had always shown intellectual curiosity, and we wanted to nurture that in her. We didn’t want her to get bored with school and to lose her enjoyment of learning. My wife Heidi and I both value education a great deal, and we wanted Maya to have the best foundation that we could give her. We investigated our local public school, but the enrichment opportunities available in the younger grades were quite limited in scope. We were concerned that she would not be challenged there.

A Special Understanding

by Anthony Engel '91

Heidi’s dad was a public school teacher for many years, and he continues to substitute teach in retirement. This influence on Heidi is part of why she had always expected our children to go to public school. When I brought up Avery Coonley as a possibility for Maya, Heidi had to take a step back to consider this.

I think Heidi was willing to keep an open mind, in part, because I had a special understanding of The Avery Coonley School. I graduated from ACS in 1991, and I think that I experienced the entire curriculum (other than “Senior Kindergarten” as it was then called). I’m still in touch with a number of my fellow classmates and have fond memories from my childhood. Tapping the maple trees in Second Group, playing in the spaces in Third Group, Mrs. Lenhardt’s enthusiasm for the Cubs (which I believe continues to this day), learning and speaking French, competing on the Spelling Team (seriously!), going on field trips, computer class (such as it was at the time!), and more. I believe that the experiences I had at ACS provided me with a strong foundation for my later learning. Both academic and non-academic components of that education have contributed to who I am today.

Maya started attending ACS in Kindergarten and is now in Second Group. We believe that ACS is a great fit for her, as she has continued to be challenged and has been able to expand her boundaries in so many ways. It has also been quite special to see the experience through her eyes, simultaneously with my own, as a parent and alumnus. I have enjoyed being a parent volunteer for the First Group trip to the Lizzadro Museum, attempting to teach kids how to decorate cupcakes during a “Horizons” session, and helping the Girls Scouts with cookie sales and delivery.

Maya has made good friends in her first two years at ACS. We have been fortunate to get to know her friends as well as their parents. Whether it has been at birthday or holiday parties, or trips to the Bristol Renaissance Faire or Chicago museums, we’ve enjoyed time spent with her school friends and their parents. We even ran into some school friends at Disney World during Maya’s Kindergarten spring break.

Sending Maya to ACS has required a serious commitment of time and resources, but we believe it has already paid dividends. We look forward to what the upcoming years will bring!



Our Hymn of Grateful Praise

by Panorea Kukla '88

I have very fond memories of the ACS Thanksgiving Program. In fact, I still sing “For the Beauty of the Earth” to my boys – Nicholas, who is in First Group, and Ariston, who is in Kindergarten. I am not certain that they enjoy hearing it, but for me it brings back feelings of security and happiness. Those are the emotions that I most associate with The Avery Coonley School. Even today, when I walk through the Cloister, I always flashback to being a little girl again and having those feelings of innocence and well-being.

I also enjoyed how much music and art were incorporated into my ACS experience. I was a member of both the orchestra and the chorus and I treasure the memories of all of those concerts. Although I am less than average in my artistic ability, I still remember doing so many things in class, from using the dark room, the jigsaw, and the potter’s wheel, to making our own paper and silk screens. Looking back, that was pretty amazing!

These memories and sentiments certainly influenced us in our decision to have our sons apply for admission to ACS. As parents, this is one of the most important decisions that we have to make for our children and, knowing the school and its programs so well, I felt very comfortable with our choice. I really wanted my sons to have the same opportunity to experience a very tight-knit group, and at the same time be provided with superior teaching and learning experiences, just like I did. I truly believe that it was my time at ACS that molded me from the start and helped me reach my full potential today. In my opinion, the education and overall experience at ACS is unmatched, and I wanted to provide that to my children.

Of course, not everything is the same as it was when I graduated in 1988. The physical space has greatly expanded, and I feel much less intelligent as an adult when I see the Middle School students with their tablet computers and enormous backpacks. But I still feel like I’m twelve whenever I see Mrs. Lenhardt or Mrs. Kerhulas – they have not changed at all!



I will always have a special place in my heart for them. Traditions are also very important to me, and I am glad that they continue to be an important part of the school today. I also still get those feelings of security and happiness when I’m in the original parts of the building, and I’m excited that my boys will be able to make those same connections between the school’s atmosphere and their learning.

Nicholas and Ariston are still a little too young to fully appreciate that they go to the same school that their mom did. But my older son is beginning to ask a great deal of questions about ACS; he understands that I am the resident expert. As they get older, I am sure that this will have even more meaning for them. My own understanding and appreciation for the school will also grow and develop as I experience things as a parent rather than as a student. That will certainly happen this November, when I attend my first Thanksgiving Program in 26 years!

(left) Panorea (Penny) Kukla with her husband Mark and their sons Ariston and Nicholas; (right) Penny, far right in the foreground, dancing at Spring Fair.

Ready for What Follows

Each year we are anxious to hear where our alumni will be attending high school and college. The lists of school choices are always impressive. But even more noteworthy are the reports from our young alumni of how well prepared they are for life after ACS and the advantages they have over their peers in high school and beyond. The skills that our graduates take with them extend beyond academic abilities, and include things like curiosity, creativity, executive functioning, and a love of learning.

Two of our young alumni – Madeline Cohen '13 and Peter Wiggin '09 – reflect here on the ways in which their ACS experiences prepared them for high school and college. It is encouraging to hear that an Avery Coonley education extends well beyond Eighth Group!

Top Ten Tips for High School

by Madeline Cohen '13

Dear Class of 2015,

At some point in Eighth Group, each person in my Advisory group wrote letters to his or her future self. I received mine in the mail just a few months ago, over a year since it was written, having forgotten what it even was as I tore open the envelope. Inside I found a letter riddled with questions: What was the first day like? Who are your friends? What backpack did you buy? And I thought back to myself over a year earlier, confused and overwhelmed by the idea of leaving ACS and its familiar brick walls and the thirty people I grew up with. I knew I was going to the Latin School of Chicago, but that was about all I knew. Going into high school, I wished there was some sort of guidebook or “how to” where I could just check off the steps to making new friends or getting settled in new classes. So now, having finished my first year, I thought I might attempt to do just that: offer my ten most valuable pieces of advice for making the transition to high school.

1. Pick a school you love. High school may only be four years but, as clichéd as it sounds, these four years are some of the most transformative ones of your life. Remember the importance of strong academics but know that there's more to a school than just being academically challenging. It's also about opportunities and community and values. I first visited Latin in Fifth Group for a math contest, and I think part of me saw the orange and blue on the walls and felt at home. Come time to choose a school, I looked more into Latin and found more parallels: both Latin and ACS shared similar, 100+ year histories, whole-school morning Gatherings, and most importantly, similar values. In a way, Latin felt like an extension of ACS to me – similar, but still bigger and different. You might want that. You might not. But whatever you choose, whether it is a public, private, or boarding school, make sure it's a place you'll be proud to call home for the next four years.

2. Sign up for a sport or a play or something that starts over the summer. This way, your first day of school will actually be your twentieth. Even if you've never heard of field hockey before, even if the only theatrical performance you've done was the Third Group play, take the risk.

You'll have friends, at worst acquaintances, to stumble with into the school year, and you'll feel like you already have a place. I joined the cross country team, and some of the people I met on the first day of practice are still my closest friends. Just being on campus that month in advance makes everything seem familiar, and by the time school starts, most of the pressure associated with the first day is gone.

3. This may be the most difficult one of all – don't judge by appearances. It's hard, because going into a new school where you know nobody, there isn't much else to judge people by. I admit that I was guilty of this, quick to assume I knew how friendly people were based on their facial expressions, or how outspoken they were based on their participation in get-to-know-you games. Most of the time I was wrong. So keep an open mind and assume only the best of everyone you meet, and you'll be less blinded by your speculations as you meet new people and make new friends.

4. In the first few days and weeks of school, plan to invest almost as much time and effort socially as you do academically. It goes against everything you've learned about productivity and time management, but in these first few days and weeks, talking during a study hall can be more beneficial than doing homework. I, like most people from ACS, hadn't ever had to worry about making new friends. I would return summer after summer to see the same people with whom I played kazoos in Kindergarten, spent my first day in Middle School, and travelled to DC. The introductions to all my new classmates were foreign to me, and for the first time, meeting people took work. But high school is about branching out and having new experiences, so even if you're going with other friends from ACS, push yourself to meet new people.



(top) Madeline Cohen (third from left) with her classmates Robert Falconer, Michael Flynn, and Veda Mehta; (bottom) Madeline with the third place trophy earned by her Latin School team at the State Cross Country finals last fall.

5. You're going to be busy in high school. Choose wisely and invest yourself in things you really believe in, whether it is clubs or service projects or classes.

Challenge yourself with whatever you do and always try your hardest, but don't worry too much about tests and grades and GPAs. At the same time, don't be afraid to take a step out of your comfort zone. With the diverse selection of courses that nearly all high schools offer, it can be a time to experiment. Join an obscure class, take a photography elective, be part of a ping-pong club, or run for student government – you might discover a passion you never knew you had.

6. **Be early.** It's something that I'm forced to do because of my commute, leaving by five in the morning to beat the traffic (that would turn my hour-long drive into a three-hour one.) Although a twelve-hour school day may seem excessive, I've found that being early gives me time to put myself together, actually eliminating stress. It's a small, unexpected piece of advice, but it has positively shaped my high school experience in a way that I never could have imagined.

7. **Keep in touch with friends from ACS.**

There will be times when you're unsure of something, and when you don't know where to turn, your old classmates will always still be there for you. At Eighth Group graduation, you'll all promise to keep in touch, talk to each other every day, and visit each other on breaks. But as everyone settles into their new routines and schedules become more hectic, you'll find yourself overwhelmed with other priorities. So as your year becomes increasingly chaotic, make a conscious effort to reach out to your old classmates, plan small reunions or visits back to the school. The four, eight, even eleven-year relationships among ACS classmates are too meaningful to not be preserved.

8. **You'll most likely be inundated with freedom. With that comes the freedom of choice, and more importantly, the responsibility to make the right choices.**

Especially at Latin where there's an open campus and you can (to some extent) choose the number and types of classes you want to take, it can be tempting to take the easy path. Yes, it's easier to have three free periods and leave for three-hour lunches. It's easier to go to the beach in the middle of the day or schedule your first class at noon. But this is where choice comes in, where you have the opportunity to make either the right or wrong decision. This is preparation for the real world, where these types of choices are ones we will have to make daily, every decision impacting the future. Freedom when used wisely, however, presents opportunities greater than ever before. The amount you are able to accomplish in high school greatly depends on what you choose to do with your freedom.

9. **There are parts of ACS that you won't be able to leave behind.** A student in your math class will remind you of someone from ACS. There will be countless times when you'll begin a sentence with "remember when..." only to realize that you're the only one who has this memory from DC or knows the Halloween song from French class. Winter break will never really arrive without the sing-along, summer will never really start without the maypole, and the year won't feel complete without Shakespeare and Greek Fest. We grow up rooted in these traditions, and although high school takes them away, they remain a part of us, woven into our characters. Don't focus too much on moving on. Rather, appreciate the ways in which ACS molded you to be the person that you are.

10. **But if I could give you only one piece of advice, this would be it: be confident.**

Be confident in yourself, in your values and beliefs and character. No matter where you go, what you do, or who you meet, confidence is what will allow you to achieve all that you want to achieve.

This all might sound intimidating – high school is still months away, your Eighth Group year having only just begun. But the truth remains that, whether you are ready for it or not, this is your final year. So while you're still at ACS, don't stress too much over applications or shadow days or entrance exams. Be excited for high school. You're prepared for the work and responsibility, and you're more than capable of making new friends and having new experiences. More than anything, appreciate the days you have left. In two years, you too will be a sophomore, reflecting back fondly on memories from your time at ACS and your transition to high school.

I wish you all the best of luck,

Madelaine

Finding a Home

by Peter Wiggin '09



Transitions are often easier than they appear. At first, fitting in at The Avery Coonley School seemed like a monumental challenge: I was a new face in the Seventh Group, and with only 31 classmates, many of whom had been friends since pre-kindergarten, I worried that I would struggle socially. My fears proved to be unfounded, as both students and teachers were incredibly welcoming. I quickly felt at home both inside and outside the classroom. In particular, the math team and competitions offered me a comfortable identity and an easy way to make friends.

(left) Peter Wiggin at ACS with an award from a math competition; (right) Peter, summer 2014 (photo by Todd Rosenberg).



The ACS math team provided a space to apply math skills to fun and challenging problems and to learn from peers outside of class. As it required a real interest in mathematics beyond the classroom, the team was populated by many like-minded students, which helped me find a place socially. Additionally, I discovered that it increased my interest in Algebra 1 and Geometry in a virtuous cycle: each in-class lesson brought progressively more success in competition, and missed answers in competitions created new topics of interest for me in the classroom.

The math competitions also offered an extraordinary chance to travel to high schools near and far, competing individually and in teams on behalf of ACS. In Seventh Group, the opportunity to witness a piece of life on the big stage thrilled me. I scouted high schools as if on a miniature college search: What were the teachers running the contest like? Were their problems interesting or stale? Were classes small, I asked? Was the cafeteria food edible? After a while, many schools seemed to run together, but the opportunities at the Latin School of Chicago stood out. Still in Seventh Group, I wondered outlandishly whether a twenty-mile commute to high school could be worth it.

It was. After graduating from ACS, I decided to attend Latin for high school, and I graduated from there in 2013. I can safely say that those math competitions opened a door I would otherwise never have seen. The effects of my math training and competition, moreover, reached far

beyond my first day of high school. With so much practice doing arithmetic, algebra, and geometry quickly, I found that I had already carved out a role as the “math person” on our Scholastic Bowl team. Like the ACS math team, Scholastic Bowl attracted the kind of quirky people with whom I belong. I participated in Scholastic Bowl for all four years of high school, and I met two of my first and best friends through that experience.

I’m now entering my second year of college at the University of Chicago. I’m not a math major, but I’m immensely grateful for all the mathematical knowledge I gained at ACS and Latin – I needed every last bit to survive Honors Physics last year! While I hope never to take a class that hard again, it is reassuring to know that the same combination of logic and creativity required for middle school math competitions continues to serve me well in college.

Other alumni no doubt remember other aspects of their ACS experiences with the same fondness and appreciation that I have for the math team. Maybe it was tech club or Science Fair, Student Council or Shakespeare Fest, Spelling Bees or field trips. Whichever activities we favored as students, we all benefited from what we learned inside the classroom. I think we gained even more from the many opportunities to apply our new knowledge outside the classroom in fun, creative, and challenging ways.



Halloween is the perfect opportunity for ACS students and faculty to "clown around" together.

A SPOOK- TACULAR TRADITION

Many of the great traditions of The Avery Coonley School are difficult to explain to someone who has never experienced them before. The incredible emotional power of the Thanksgiving Procession is nearly impossible to convey no matter how much one enthuses about brown capes, familiar songs, and the terraced arrangement of fruits and vegetables. Likewise, describing metal buckets hanging from trees, sap strained through cheesecloth, and a smoky fire will do little to capture the joy and excitement of maple tapping.

Telling others how much fun it is to dress in costume and take several laps around the Cloister will also likely draw a few head scratches. What is it, then, about the ACS Halloween festivities that make the day such a favorite for everyone in our community?



(top left and right) Costumes like Ross Perot and Garth from Wayne's World demonstrate the students' humor and cultural awareness, and also help to identify the era! (bottom) Early Childhood teachers and students preparing for the visit to the "big school."

We are of course not unique in the ways that we celebrate Halloween, nor are our students the only children to get excited by the prospect of parties, masks, and candy. But our small size and family atmosphere seem to add a special energy to the day. It is one of the few days when so many of our students, teachers, and parents gather in one place, and bringing so much of the community together creates a charged atmosphere. And the students are not the only active participants; many teachers also don costumes and, from time to time, a few parents will also join in the fun.

ACS students are an extraordinarily creative group in general, and Halloween brings out the best in their imaginations. The costumes provide an opportunity to showcase artistic abilities, a sense of humor, and an awareness of popular culture and current events. Many students choose an individual costume, while others opt for a group entry in order to increase the dramatic possibilities.

The Cloister's close quarters provide the perfect setting to see and be seen. As much as the students enjoy showing off their creations, there is an even greater thrill in seeing what others – especially in older and younger groups – have done. The costume contest, judged by members of the Student Council, adds an element of friendly competition to the day. But there are no “winners” and “losers” on this day; the excitement is uniform and contagious, and plans for next year's costume immediately begin to percolate in many young minds.



Parent Steve Louis, aka Big Bird, often joins in the fun.

They Did the Mash



Members of Student Council performing their skit to “Monster Mash.”

After the parade in the Cloister, the students gather in the PAC for a special Halloween assembly. Pumpkins decorated by each group are displayed and each is given a special award. Prizes are given to the best costumes in a variety of categories. Members of Student Council then perform an appropriately “ghoulish” skit.

For over two decades, Jeanne Snyder has directed the performance, centering it each year around the song “Monster Mash.” This tune has become another mainstay of the ACS experience. Students remember skits from prior years while planning this year's rendition, and those not on stage greatly anticipate the time when they will have their own “graveyard smash.”



John Malach saved The Avery Coonley School.

It is a bold claim, and perhaps a bit of an overstatement. But only a bit.

When Mr. Malach, who went by the name “Jack,” came to ACS as a science teacher in 1959, the school was on rocky footing. Enrollment was down to 160 students. The school’s finances were precarious, due both to the lower student population and the death in 1958 of Mrs. Coonley, the school’s founder and main fundraising source. Many of the progressive education principles on which ACS was founded – a kindergarten program, arts curriculum, and outdoor and physical education, to name a few – were now common in public schools, making the school’s mission less unique and therefore less attractive. Help was needed, and it came in the person of Jack Malach.

Malach was born in 1917 and grew up in Dixon, Illinois. He received two Education degrees – a B.S from the University of Illinois and an M.S. from New York University. After working at local schools for a number of years, Mr. Malach and his family travelled to the Philippines, where he was headmaster at the American School in Manila for four-plus years. Malach was intrigued both by the challenges and the possibilities that ACS presented, and he agreed to return to the U.S. to teach for one year, with the understanding that he would then take over the headmaster responsibilities from Mrs. Dorothy Weller, who was retiring at the end of the 1959-1960 school year.

Mr. Malach’s contributions to ACS were numerous, but three in particular stand out.

Remembering *the* Malachs

By Chris Portman

The first, which he initiated almost immediately, was to seek an end to the school's affiliation with the National College of Education. The two schools had entered into a mutually beneficial relationship in 1943 but, two decades later, the advantages to ACS were less obvious. Malach very much wanted The Avery Coonley School to become a true independent school once again and, after some lengthy negotiations, this was finally achieved in 1965.

The second major contribution that Mr. Malach made, and the one with the greatest impact, was to rethink the school's mission. Realizing that the current path was probably not sustainable for long, Malach began recruiting and admitting only students with above average academic ability; these students also had to demonstrate good behavior and a strong commitment to learn. Mr. Malach handled the testing and supervised the screenings himself.

The transition was slow and careful – it took most of the decade of the 1960s – and, importantly, Malach deliberately chose not to abandon the school's progressive roots; instead, he incorporated into the new mission many of the traditions and philosophies that had made ACS so unique and successful. The marriage between progressive and gifted education is not necessarily a natural one. But Malach benefitted from the fact that ACS has always attracted students and families who are passionate about learning and, with careful planning, the mission of serving academically bright and gifted students, while also retaining the best elements of the past, became a very successful formula for the school.

Mr. Malach's third major contribution was more practical and, to some extent, followed from the first two. With the



school's independence and its new mission, enrollment went up, as did the cost of tuition. Malach also expanded the ACS summer program, which had begun in 1960, and instituted a more systematic fundraising effort. With these changes, The Avery Coonley School was once again back on solid financial ground and well on its way to reestablishing itself as one of the premier independent schools in the country.

Among the many families who benefited from Mr. Malach's leadership, the Crespi are particularly noteworthy – all eight of the children attended ACS during his tenure. To honor his many contributions to the school, the Crespi family established The John P. Malach Scholarship Endowment Fund in 1991.

(left) John Malach provided guidance to hundreds of students during his tenure at ACS. (above) Graduation Day, 1962. Jacqueline Malach is in the front row, the last girl on the right; her father John Malach is on the far right in the back row.

Mr. Malach was the Head of School until 1974, and then served as President of ACS for an additional five years. But he also had another role while he was here – ACS parent.

The Malachs' four children – James '61, Jacqueline '62, Jerome '66, and John '69 – all attended and graduated from the school. For years, the family lived in the Gatehouse at the entrance to the school, which was the Head's residence before it became the home for the Early Childhood program.

Mr. Malach died in 2004 after a fall. We have also learned that Jacqueline passed away on April 24, 2014, in Minneapolis. She was 66. Our sympathies go out to the Malachs – the family will forever hold an important place in the history and success of The Avery Coonley School.



Class of 2014

Congratulations and best wishes to our newest alumni as they continue their educational journeys! Members of the Class of 2014 are attending the following high schools:

*Benet Academy
Carl Sandburg High School
Deerfield Academy (MA)
Downers Grove North High School
Fenwick High School
Glenbard West High School
Hinsdale Central High School
The Hotchkiss School (CT)
Illinois Math and Science Academy
Naperville Central High School
Naperville North High School
Neuqua Valley High School
St. Ignatius College Prep
University of Chicago Laboratory School
Wheaton North High School*



(left) The ACS Class of 2014; (top right) Griffin Baum '99; (bottom right) Christopher Moran '85 with his wife Laura, daughter Claire, and parents Cabrina and John.

We once again had two alumni speakers at our June graduation ceremonies. Griffin Baum '99 delivered the morning address, and Christopher Moran '85 spoke to the graduates and their families and friends in the evening. Both are physicians - Dr. Baum is a resident neurological surgeon at the Emory School of Medicine, and Dr. Moran specializes in surgical oncology in Portland, Oregon, where he has a clinical practice and teaches residents and students at Oregon Health and Sciences University. Thank you to both our speakers!

Griffin Baum told the members of the Class of 2014 that he has figured out the meaning of life. "Just say yes. It's that simple," he told them. "Just say yes."

Baum had always dreamed of playing professional baseball, but after his sophomore year of college he began to realize that this was not going to happen – "there are a lot more short, stocky baseball players than there are places for them to play." Through a chance meeting, he was invited to shadow a family friend who researched degenerative disorders of the brain at Rush University Medical Center.

It was tempting to turn down the offer, Griffin said, but for some reason he decided to say yes. By 3:00 pm on his first day, he was dressed in scrubs, assisting in a brain surgery on a monkey. He had found his life's calling. "You will never know which experience or opportunity is going to be your pivotal moment," Baum told the students, "and unless you say yes, you may miss your chance."

Griffin closed by assuring the graduates that, in part because of their wonderful Avery Coonley experiences, they will have many opportunities to say "yes" in the coming years. "Stay true to yourselves, just say yes, and enjoy the ride. You deserve it!"

Class of 2010

Congratulations to the Class of 2010 on their high school graduations and best of luck in the future! Members of the class matriculated to the following colleges and universities:

Butler University
Carleton College
Carnegie Mellon University
Cornell University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Harvard University
Illinois State University
Marquette University
New York University
Northwestern University
Pratt Institute
Princeton University
Stanford University
University of Connecticut
University of Illinois
University of Miami
University of Mississippi
University of North Carolina
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of San Diego
University of Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Yale University



The ACS Class of 2010.

Christopher Moran, who addressed his fellow graduates in 1985 in his role as class president, told this year's group that "we will have to start with the assumption that I will have at least a little more wisdom to impart to you at age 43 than I did at age 14."

Moran reflected on the broad-based education that he received at ACS, and stated that "I am of the mind that the most important time in a person's education is in their early years because I think it sets the stage for all things to come." Being exposed to such a wide-ranging and balanced curriculum serves our alumni well, he noted, because all of the world's possibilities are open to them.

With this world of possibilities come choices that everyone has to make. Christopher advised our new alumni to make those choices carefully, and while they are young to consider borrowing "someone else's plan for awhile to get you started and give you a vantage point by which to judge who you want to be and where you want to go." After that, though, he emphasized how important it was to live one's own life and follow one's own dreams. That is the way, he concluded, to find not only success, but also happiness.

Morse Teacher Grants

The Lucia Burton Morse Teacher Grants Program is designed to fund experiences that are above and beyond normal professional development. The program, which began with money raised through the 2103 Auction Fund-a-Need and subsequent gifts by generous donors, provides opportunities for unique training, research, and collaboration with colleagues and mentors around the world. Our first three grant recipients – Physical Education teacher Adam Metcalf, Second Group teacher Sarah Batzel, and Middle School Math teacher Karen Hyma – took full advantage of this wonderful opportunity and here share some of the highlights of their experiences.



Adam Metcalf

Visiting ten different schools in ten days is intimidating enough. But as I packed my bags and got ready to fly halfway around the world to work with people I had never met in places that I had never been, I could not help thinking – *I really hope I planned all of this right!*

As part of the Morse Teacher Grants Program, I had the opportunity to travel to Melbourne, Australia and Singapore over the 2014 Spring Break. The trip was conceived and designed with the help of my personal learning network that I have established through the #PhysEd and #PEgeeks communities on Twitter. Through the connections that I have made through social media, I was able to visit an amazing variety of schools of different sizes and shapes, with different missions, serving both local and international students of all ages.

Because I had arranged the trip in large part through my Twitter connections, it is no surprise that each of the teachers who hosted me used technology in interesting and innovative ways. Many took advantage of various iPad apps, and one – Dale Sidebottom, who teaches at a SEDA sports school that partners with Cricket Australia – has even developed his own educational apps. They also used iPads and other equipment to record and track student activities, and several incorporated Google Forms and Excel to collect and sort data on individual performances. I was impressed by how they all utilized

technology to improve their teaching and provide student-directed feedback, which in turn allows each student to track his or her progress toward a unique goal.

In addition to observing all of these cutting-edge tools – and being inspired to incorporate them into our own curriculum! – I also learned a great deal about different teaching styles and methods and the importance of being efficient and adaptable. Some of the schools only had outdoor facilities, and several had limited time for phys ed activities, so it was critical for the teachers to be organized and inventive in their lessons. Almost all used an inquiry-based teaching approach, which challenges the students to question why things are done a certain way and explore ways to improve. And every one of the teachers that I partnered with had an incredible, infectious passion for the job – it was very inspiring to connect with so many colleagues who feel the same way about physical education that I do.

This was an extraordinary opportunity to build real professional relationships with some of the most reflective and progressive teachers on the other side of the world. I feel an enormous obligation and excitement to take what I have learned from this experience and explore the many ways to pay it forward. I am eager to share my newly shaped perspectives to improve my own teaching and to inspire my students, as well as other teachers, to step outside of their comfort zone, think big, and never stop learning!

Sarah Batzel

I used my Morse Teacher Grant to attend the “Project Zero Classroom” (PZC), an intensive one-week institute held at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Harvard’s Project Zero was founded in 1967 by a group of educators and scholars to study how individuals learn through the arts, and in the intervening years it has expanded to look more broadly at our practices of thinking and learning. (Anecdotally, the name comes from the fact that they were looking at these questions from scratch – ground zero – and made no promises about meeting expectations or finding answers.)

The PZC summer institute brings together educators from all across the country. We broke up into small cohorts of about ten people, and took four mini-courses during the week; there was also time to explore other topics and attend special presentations, as well as network with other teachers. The institute focused on three main areas: (1) how to deepen student engagement in their learning; (2) how to encourage young people to think critically and creatively; and (3) how to make learning and thinking more visible.

What do we mean when we ask students to think? We considered that question very closely at the PZC, and learned much more about various types of thinking and its complexity. Different students think differently, and it is important to understand and encourage this. Now, instead of asking for general reactions to, for example, a story or a poem, I will ask more specific questions, and follow up with “Why?” or “What makes you say that?” It is a movement away from a “work



completion” focus, where there is a quest for the “right” answers, and instead attempts to create more thinking opportunities, with the students engaging with the material on a deeper level. By prompting them to articulate a rationale or an explanation, the emphasis is completely different than a right/wrong dynamic, which also leads to more lively and interesting classroom conversations.

I also gained a much better understanding of how to use certain protocols to get a better glimpse into a child’s mind and thought processes. By gaining this insight into the way a particular child approaches a problem, misconceptions are brought to the surface, and I can adjust my teaching methods and connect on a more effective, individual level. Through this, I am also better able to identify successful learning for each child.

A final key piece to the PZC approach is to remove oneself from the role of expert. During our recent Colonial Days unit, I consciously engaged in the research right along with the students – going online, reading articles, watching videos – and did not set myself up as the official answer person. When they understand that there is more than one way to approach a problem, the students ponder things more creatively and gain a greater sense of autonomy and independence.

I truly enjoyed the institute and I am already seeing the benefits of this refined approach. I am very excited to continue to develop these ideas and insights at ACS!

(opposite page) Adam Metcalf (back), teaching a new game to and having fun with first grade students at St. Francis Xavier Primary School in Box Hill, Melbourne, Australia. (this page) Sarah Batzel working with students in small groups, allowing each to have a turn as “teacher;” this encourages the students to articulate their thought processes rather than just stating an answer.



Karen Hyma arranges the desks so that students sit around the table, akin to the Exeter Harkness tables, which leads to more dynamic classroom discussions.

Karen Hyma

I pursued two one-week professional development opportunities with my Morse Teacher Grant – a conference at Phillips Exeter Academy for mathematics teachers, and independent research with Professor Daniel Ansari at the University of Western Ontario.

I took three classes at the Exeter conference; there were also several mini-sessions and evening speakers, plus some social time to network with other math educators. In one of my classes, we explored in great depth the various spatial aspects of geometry, and learned how to use things like Voronoi diagrams to create useful applications for engineering and design. In another class we looked at how to write one's own math book, which was a very helpful way for me to think about our specialized math curriculum at ACS.

I also discovered many useful websites and other resources that will serve our math department well. All of the classes were limited to 12 students, and we sat around the famous Exeter Harkness tables. For the last several years, I have been incorporating more small group discussion into my teaching, so being on the student end of things was a very insightful experience!

My work with Prof. Ansari was much less structured than the Exeter conference, but was every bit as valuable. Dr. Ansari conducts brain research on how children learn mathematics, and is considered the foremost expert in the field. I had heard him speak at conferences in the past, and had contacted him about some particular aspects of his work. After I received the grant, he agreed to meet with me in person and use his university laboratory in Canada. Although he does not have a formal program for independent researchers, he very graciously opened his lab and all of its resources and archives to me. I also was able to work with the students who are studying with Dr. Ansari; several of them are conducting research that is of direct relevance to our mathematics education at ACS.

I discussed many things with Dr. Ansari and his students, including the roots of math anxiety, ways to develop early screening tests for math disabilities and inabilities, and ideas about how number sense is developed in young children. He also allowed me to download over 200 articles, which I brought back to ACS; normally, there would have been a significant fee to get these articles, if I had been able to access them at all. It was an outstanding opportunity to establish an ongoing relationship with some of the top mathematics researchers in the world.

The Exeter conference will directly impact how we teach math in Middle School, while my time with Prof. Ansari will, I believe, benefit our Lower School students the most. It was a busy summer, but with this grant I was able to not only enhance my own teaching methods, but also bring back ideas and materials that will benefit the whole school.

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!



Tim O'Brien '85 recently stopped by ACS for a visit.



Marshall Janevicius '07 (center) joined Denise Clivaz and Anna Lenhardt for dinner in Paris in June. Marshall was studying abroad in France for the semester, and the two teachers were leading a group of Seventh Group students on a visit to Paris and Muret (in southwest France).

1970s

Karen Ecker, the mother of **Michael '73**, **Steven '75**, and **Paul '81**, passed away after a brief illness in December, 2013. Mrs. Ecker was an active parent volunteer while her boys attended ACS, serving as Home and School Association president helping with many other activities.

1988

Vince Belizario is still in San Francisco currently working as a VP, Senior Strategist at Jack Morton Worldwide, a brand experience marketing agency. Vince and his wife Michelle welcomed their second child, Connor Nelson Belizario back in October 2013.



William Krafft '48 and his wife Lois stopped by ACS for a visit in June; they live in Mesa, AZ.

1989

Jonathan Hayward has been writing (more information can be found at CJSHayward.com), and is interested in hearing about web development possibilities (contact him at jonathan.hayward@pobox.com).



(above) Lisa Waitley '09, Jenny Gilbert '07, and Will Stephens '07 worked as counselors at the ACS Summer Program.

(below) Yianni Kinmas and Laura Nelson (both members of the Class of 2010) at the IHSA State Speech Tournament in February. The two were the state champions in Humorous Duet Acting and led Hinsdale Central to third place in the team portion of the event.

2011

Maisie Bull, a senior at the Hotchkiss School, will be opening for Jefferson Starship on March 28 at Infinity Hall in Norfolk, CT. Maisie, who plays the piano, guitar, and ukulele, will be performing her own work.

Samantha Young is one of six area high school seniors selected as a Suburban Life Scholar by the newspaper. She attends Downers Grove North High School.

2013

Jake Fauske has transferred to IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida.

Maria Harrast was a member of the state champion Hinsdale Central girls' golf team. The team bested runner-up Loyola Academy by 15 strokes in the two-day Class AA tournament; Maria is a sophomore at the school.



(clockwise from top left) Anna Lenhardt, Karen Winterhof '01, Elizabeth Slark '01, Amy Klein '01, Ciarra Schmidt '01, and Mary Stapleton having fun in the photo booth at the Chicago reception celebrating Elizabeth's wedding.

Through the years...

Congratulations to the **Wagner family** – Erik '99, David '01, Stephanie '05, and parents Marianna and Kurt – for their outstanding finishes in the recent Chicago Marathon!

Former ACS teacher **Mary Jo Blough** recently completed her tenth Avon Walk for Breast Cancer. Mrs. Blough, who was joined this time by her husband Ron and son Steve, has raised over \$20,000 for the cause during her decade-long participation.

Members of the Class of 2010 gathered at ACS in June to celebrate their high school graduations; (front row from left) Kate Moss, Emily Loughman, Natalie Pavletic, Zoe Briskey; (back row) Katie Portman, Maddy Sims, Ellen Woods, Erik Maday, Gabby Sims, Serena Patel, Aidan Weinberger, Jack Mitchell, and PeterJohn Maniatis.



The family of Tinker Harvey '38 recently donated three watercolors to ACS in Tinker's memory. The paintings, by local artist Mike Westover, portray early years at ACS; they are on display in the lobby outside the library.



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



Charitable giving supports The Avery Coonley School every day! It is in the classrooms where small class sizes allow teachers to innovate curriculum while utilizing state-of-the art technology. It is in the rich offerings of the arts, physical education and extracurricular activities that address the development of the whole child. It is in the special places of this beautiful and historic campus that provide a learning environment for excellence. 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 reach of as many families as possible. All this, and more, is made possible by the contributors acknowledged within this annual report.

Each year, the Board conducts two major fundraising programs that are coordinated through the Office of Development: the ACS Fund and the Annual Auction. Additionally, new families have generously supported the New Family Sustainers Circle. 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 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 Mrs. Coonley in the early 1900s continues to be a vital part of the life of this independent school. When asked, please advance the mission and continue the philanthropic tradition of The Avery Coonley School. Charitable contributions at all levels are gratefully received and will be put to good use educating the current and future generations of students to reach their greatest potential and become positive, productive and respectful leaders of society.

How ACS Works Financially

Revenue and Support

Tuition Income Less Need Based Financial Aid \$5,936,580

Full tuition is charged to all students who attend the school. ACS awards aid to recipients based on financial need calculated by School and Student Services. This aid is supported by endowment interest earnings and ACS operating funds. Financial aid families paid \$327,175 in tuition during the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

The ACS Fund & New Family Sustainer Circle \$363,539

The ACS Fund is generous charitable support from current parents, alumni, grandparents and other friends of the school to help pay the additional expenses not covered by the tuition. The New Family Sustainer Circle is a restricted gift made by new families to help maintain the beautiful and historic facilities.

Auction \$257,153

Net proceeds from the ACS Annual Auction provide additional income for the school and help bridge the gap between what the tuition payments cover and the total spent per student. Additional funds were raised for the Fund-A-Need.

Programs & Fees \$337,932

Net income from the After School program, hot lunch program, Summer Program, and testing services and fees paid for speech therapy. This also includes application, EC admission, graduation, forfeited registration, late payment and net milk fees.

Investment Income \$188,049

Income earned on operating cash, designated cash and a portion of the interest earned on the endowment. Returns on our investments have exceeded budgeted amounts.

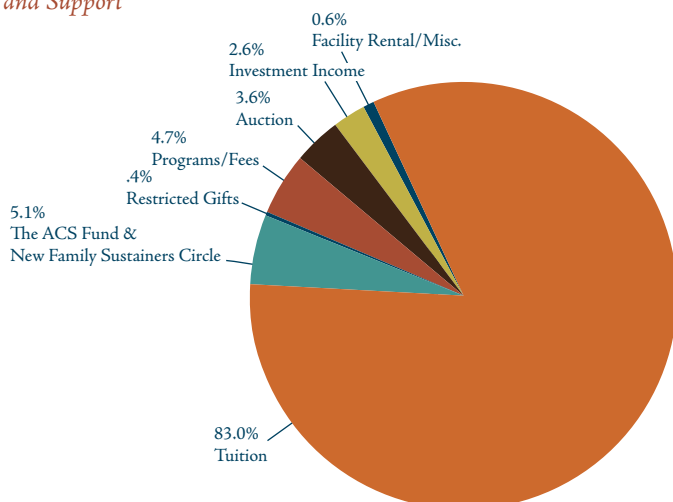
Restricted Gifts \$26,262

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.

Facility Rental/Miscellaneous Income \$40,425

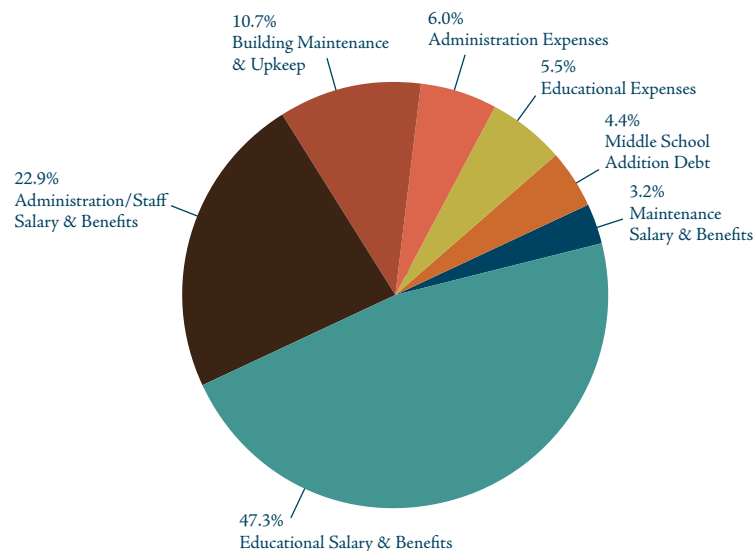
Net revenue generated from the rental of school facilities, as well as the cash rewards program on the school issued credit cards and parent programs sponsored by the school.

2013–2014 General Operating Fund
Revenues and Support



How ACS Works Financially

2013–2014 General Operating Fund Expenses



Expenses

Educational Salary and Benefits \$3,201,301

These expenses include salaries and benefits for the faculty, library personnel, and art and kindergarten assistants. The benefits include retirement contributions, health & life insurance premium contributions as well as FICA and disability contributions.

Administration/Staff/Maintenance Salaries & Benefits \$1,765,977

These expenses include salaries and benefits for the administrators, nurse and 12-month staff in the Business Office, Development Office, Admissions Office and the Maintenance department. The benefits include retirement contributions, health and life insurance premium contributions as well as FICA and disability contributions.

Building Maintenance and Upkeep \$722,458

Contracted maintenance services including janitorial and landscaping services, utilities, maintenance supplies and repair costs, and major renovations and repairs to the building.

Educational Expense \$372,612

Expenses related to instruction include educational software, curricular materials, technology equipment and supplies, standardized testing costs, as well as spending to fulfill requirements of temporarily restricted donations.

Administrative Expense \$402,230

These expenses include property and casualty insurance, professional growth for administrative staff, Development Office expenses, financial and legal costs, photocopying and postage costs, office supplies, and membership dues for school associations.

Middle School Addition Debt Service \$298,789

The Village of Downers Grove issued Revenue Bonds on the school's behalf in 2004. The principal and interest payment represents the current cash outlay for the Middle School addition.

2013 – 2014 School Year

Statement of Income and Expenses – Operating Fund

For the Period Ending June 30, 2014

	Actual	Budget	Variance
<i>Revenues and Support</i>			
Tuition income	\$5,936,580	\$5,928,370	\$8,210
Programs	298,655	295,800	2,855
Fees	39,277	36,900	2,377
Investment income	188,049	25,000	163,049
Miscellaneous income	7,861	17,000	(9,139)
Facility rental	32,564	30,000	2,564
Internally-generated income	\$6,502,986	\$6,333,070	\$169,916
Auction proceeds	257,153	200,000	57,153
Restricted gifts	26,262	0	26,262
The ACS Fund	338,038	300,000	38,038
New Family Sustainers Circle	25,501	20,000	5,501
Total income	\$7,149,940	\$6,853,070	\$296,870
<i>Expenses</i>			
Educational	\$3,573,913	\$3,656,105	(\$82,192)
Administration	2,466,996	2,402,425	64,571
Maintenance	439,886	398,445	41,441
Building and grounds	282,572	198,250	84,322
Total operating expenses	\$6,763,367	\$6,655,225	\$108,142
Current year surplus/(deficit)	386,573	197,845	188,728
Special expenditures and allocations	(386,573)	(197,845)	(188,728)
Net Change in Undesignated Fund Balance	0	0	0

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 86% of the operating budget covered by tuition and a balanced budget. Interest 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 99% 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 \$347,385 with an additional \$65,983 directed to restricted and endowed funds. Special thanks to the following volunteers for the important role they served in securing philanthropic support for the 2013-2014 ACS Fund and Endowment Funds:

The ACS Fund Leadership Team

Chairs

Anjan and Anu Asthana

Faculty and Staff Chairs

Julie Raab and Adam Metcalf

Alumni Chair

Brittany Thompson '01

Alumni Parent Chairs

Lewie and Lisa Mitchell

Grandparent Chairs

James and Marlene Pearson

Group Liaisons

Julia Gleitsman

Early Childhood AM

Erica Rogers and Edward Moore

Early Childhood PM

Brian Gilmartin and Lisa Karaitis

Junior Kindergarten AM

Nina and Raj Goyal

Junior Kindergarten PM

Penny Kukla '88 and Mark Kukla
Kindergarten

AnnMarie Fauske

First Group

Anu Perni

Second Group

Franklin Tan

Third Group

Reagen and Bill Atwood

Fourth Group

Lisa McClear

Fifth Group

Kathy Fan

Sixth Group

Catherine Reiter

Seventh Group

Stephanie Knox

Eighth Group



*Brittany Thompson
in Fourth Group.*

Why I Give...

Even though I graduated from ACS just thirteen short years ago, I recognize the life-shaping effect the school had on me and understand the importance of giving back.

When I think about why I support The Avery Coonley School as an alumna, I always return to the fact that I want other children to have the same opportunities and experiences that left such a lasting impression for me. Many of my career aspirations, personal values, and even closest friends can be traced back to my nine years as an ACS student. The Avery Coonley School is truly a unique and special place, where the teachers nurture passions, the opportunities ignite curiosity, and the resources sustain growth. I give because I want to acknowledge the impact ACS has had, and continues to have, on my success, and I want to help provide that same lifelong education for current and future students.

I also give because I know my donation will go directly to the technology, equipment, opportunities, and special programs that will enhance the ACS experience for each student. When I visit, I look forward to seeing students excited by all those things that distinguish ACS from other schools. I give because I know my donation may also help students attend who may not have this opportunity otherwise. I give because I am proud to be an ACS graduate.

The Avery Coonley School community never leaves you. With our help, we can ensure that it continues to flourish.

*Brittany Thompson
Class of 2001*

The 2013-2014 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. Christopher and Mrs. Lisa McClear
Nickum Foundation
Mr. John H. '51 and
Mrs. Kennetha L. Krehbiel
Mr. Frederick '55 and Mrs. Kay Krehbiel
Rev. Dr. Linda Nelson
Mr. Martin and Mrs. Cathy Slark*

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

*Dr. Raj and Dr. Nina Goyal
Mr. John and Mrs. Ann Grube
Mr. Robert Jacobs
The Joseph and Catherine Johnson Family
Foundation - Rebecca Richter Steiner '87,
Ted Richter '78, Catherine E. Richter
Johnson-Armstrong '79, Catherine J. Richter
Mr. Mark and Dr. Panorea Kukla '88
Amy and Steve Louis Foundation
Dr. Franklin and Dr. Peggy Tan
Mr. William and Dr. Farah Turk*

Henry Chapman Mercer Circle
Honoring the designer and tile-maker 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
Dr. Anup Bendre and Dr. Anuradha Perni
Mr. Daniel Chan and Ms. Shuling Lee
Mr. Maneesh and Mrs. Archana Chawla
Ms. Elizabeth Esposito
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, Lloyd A. Fry '67
Mr. Mike and Mrs. Sue Gould
ITW Foundation 3-For-1 Matching Gift Program
Dr. Selva Kunchithapatham and
Dr. Shakila Meerapatel
Mr. Daniel Krzeczowski and
Mrs. Susan Bray
Leslie Hindman Auctioneers,
Leslie Hindman '68
LyondellBasell Matching Gift Program
Mr. Timothy McMahon and
Dr. Michelle Andreoli
Mr. Dan and Mrs. Mary McNamara
Mr. Walter and Mrs. Lily Polowczak
Dr. Kishin Ramani and Dr. Suman Kaur
Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
Mr. Kevin and Dr. Diana Viravec
Mr. Joel and Mrs. Shannon Weinberger

Lucia Burton Morse Circle
Acknowledging our first Head of School who worked closely with Mrs. Coonley for over 30 years, this Circle recognizes contributors of \$1,000 to \$2,499.

Dr. Nouri and Mrs. Shatha Al-Khaled
American Endowment Foundation
Mr. David and Mrs. Suzanne Augustyn
Mr. Aamer and Dr. Zainab Baig
Bank of America Matching Gifts Program
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Mrs. Nahla Merhi-Barakat
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Leanne Barton
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Tobin Baum
Mr. Steven and Mrs. Cathy Bjeldanes
Mr. Matthew Bousquette and Mr. John Jacobs
Ms. Mary Ellen Bull '79
Mr. Darren and Dr. Bruna Burgener
Dr. Kenneth Candido and Dr. Durre Shahwar
Mr. Dimitri and Mrs. Becky Carrigan
Mr. Gabriel and Ms. Allison Chavez
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
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Mrs. Eli Lopez-Cordero
Mr. James and Mrs. Pamela Crouthamel
Mr. Edward and Mrs. Patricia Crylen
Ms. John and Mrs. Allison Davis
Mr. Ajay and Mrs. Priya Desai
Dr. Francis and Dr. Lorene DiIorio
Mr. John Blackburn and Ms. Nancy Doris '91
Mr. Edward Tim Doris '90
Mr. Debanjan Dutt and Ms. Himika Shergill
Ecolab Foundation
Dr. Michael Elasaad and
Dr. Stephanie Cravens
Mr. Hans and Mrs. Judith Fauske
Fidelity Foundation
Dr. Meghan Flannery
Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Kelly Flynn
Mr. Brian Gilmartin and Dr. Lisa Karaitis
Mr. Mark and Mrs. Jacqueline Gupta
Dr. Vivek and Dr. Sonal Gupta
Mr. Ian and Mrs. Dianne Gutterman
Mr. Rizwan and Mrs. Aisha Hasan
Mr. Peter Heine and
Ms. Caroline Calkins-Heine

Dr. and Mrs. Blake Horio
Dr. Victor Hu and Dr. Denise Nigro
Mr. Shailesh and Mrs. Prajakta Joshi
Dr. Jae and Mrs. Jiyeon Kim
Mr. William and Ms. Jill Kramer
Mr. Kirill and Mrs. Laura Krylov
Mr. Ravi Kuchibhotla and
Ms. Padmaja Putcha
Ms. Rocio Lopez
Mr. Patrick and Mrs. Carolyn Lynch
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Daiva Majauskas
Mr. Sailen and Dr. Shital Manek
Mr. James and Mrs. BJ Marshall, III
Mr. Todd and Mrs. Dottie Martin
Mr. Gerard and Dr. Lisa Martin
Mr. and Mrs. Richard McClear
Mr. John and Mrs. Diana McDevitt
Mr. Edward Moore and Dr. Erica Rogers
Motorola Inc
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
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Jillann Olejniczak
Dr. Michael Olson and Dr. Karen Barbera
Mr. Damian Ortiz and Ms. Adeena Weiss
in loving memory of Antonio Ortiz and
Jack J. Weiss
Mr. Gregory and Mrs. Dominika Orzikowski
Mr. Thomas Pace
Mr. Asutosh Padhi and
Mrs. Rita Anand-Padhi
Mr. James and Mrs. Marlene Pearson
Dr. Dalip and Dr. Lubna Pelinkovic
Mr. Brett '76 and Mrs. Antonia Pritchard
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Patricia Purcell
Mr. Imran and Mrs. Niema Qureshi
Dr. Adam and Mrs. Ann Ramsey
Mr. Patrick Sapinski and
Mrs. Minh Tran-Sapinski
Mr. Edwin Savarimuthu and
Ms. Dhevi Kandasamy
Sentry Insurance Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Rich Smurawski

2013 – 2014 ACS Fund

Mr. John Stancik and Ms. Krista Schwartz '81
Mr. Tapan and Dr. Kavita Shah
Mr. Brendan and Mrs. Mary Sheehy
Mr. Mack and Mrs. Patricia Shumate
Dr. Everett Smith and Mrs. Rita Drenga
Mr. Gerald and Mrs. Mary Stapleton
Mr. James and Mrs. Jill Stocki
Dr. Robert and Mrs. Michelle Strugala
Mr. and Mrs. Karthik Subramanian
Dr. Albert and Mrs. Joan Sunseri
Dr. David and Ms. Angela Tse
Verizon Foundation
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Tina Verros
Mr. Aloysius Wild, III and
 Dr. Caer-Eve McCabe
Mr. Jason and Mrs. Christine Winchester
Mr. Edward and Dr. Simge Yonter
Mr. Jun Yu and Ms. Minghao Song
Mr. Hui Zhao and Mrs. Yi Zhou
Anonymous

Maple Tapping Circle
Representing one of the School's most
cherished traditions, this Circle recog-
nizes contributors of \$500 to \$999.

Abbott Fund
Mr. Ricardo and Mrs. Barbara Alvarado
Mr. William and Mrs. Reagen Atwood
Mr. Chadwick and Mrs. Evgenia Baatz
Mr. Srikanth and Mrs. Lavanya Batchu
Beam Inc. Matching Gifts Program
Mr. Snehal and Mrs. Jignasa Bhavsar
Ms. Kristine Blenkhorn Rodriguez
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen R. Bohnen '70
Mr. William and Ms. Joanna Bradford
Mr. Eric and Mrs. Dana Carlson
Dr. Carla Carpenter
Mr. Jeffrey and Mrs. Victoria Chen
Dr. Bulent Demirtas and
 Dr. Meltem Urgun-Demirtas
Mr. Devang and Mrs. Karishma Doshi
Mr. Yong Fan and Mrs. Tzu-Ling Yeh
Mr. Kristian and Mrs. AnnMarie Fauske
Mr. Patrick '80 and Mrs. Nicole Fry
Mr. Adam Gastolek and
 Dr. Aneta Paniczko-Gastolek
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Allyson Gorman
Dr. Nayan Gowda and Dr. Deepti Shivakumar
Dr. Atul and Mrs. Valli Gupta
Mr. Dennis and Mrs. Nikki Haggerty
Mr. John and Mrs. Holly Haraldsen

Mr. Rizwan and Mrs. Aisha Hasan
Mr. Roy and Mrs. Lisa Henrickson
Mr. Fred and Mrs. Patricia Huebner
Mr. Salman and Mrs. Samreen Imami
Mr. Stephen and Mrs. Sharon Jaster
Kellogg's Corporate Citizenship Fund
Mr. Sonny and Dr. Sabira Khalil '84
Dr. Andrew and Mrs. Yongtae Kim
Mr. Barry and Mrs. Heather Kincaid
Mr. Wai and Mrs. Jessica Lau
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Dawn Lawler
Dr. Jinman Lee and Mrs. Yeojung Cho
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Jane Lee
Mr. Wei Li and Mrs. Jing Xing
Dr. Ted Liu and Mrs. Ellen Huang
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Mr. Christopher Lok and Ms. Josephine Sheng
Robert R. McCormick Foundation
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Mr. Fraser and Mrs. Jacquie Orr
Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Piven
Mr. Jeffrey and Mrs. Michelle Porro
Mr. Jefferson and Mrs. Catherine Reiter
Dr. Saleh Rifai and Mrs. Chams Atassi
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Mr. Li Song and Ms. Helen He
Sprint Foundation
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Dr. and Mrs. Para Suri
Target Corporation
Dr. Karim Tourk and Dr. Aamirah Dhar
Dr. Theodore Troe and Dr. Eve Mara
Dr. Kevin and Mrs. Kristin Tu
Dr. Danail and Mrs. Christine Vatev
Mr. Sreeram and Mrs. Uma Veluchamy
Verizon Foundation
Mr. Anthony and Dr. Nicole Zangler

Bell Ringers Circle

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

Mr. Alex and Mrs. Danielle Andrade
APG Dentistry Inc.
Dr. Asad Aziz and Mrs. Maryam Mujahid
Bank of America Matching Gifts Program
Mr. Baird and Mrs. Carolann Allis
Mr. Ketan and Mrs. Shivani Awalegaonkar
Mr. Ranjit and Mrs. Bhavna Bahadur
Mr. Emile and Mrs. Christine Baillargeon
Mrs. Bonnie F. Baum
Mr. John and Mrs. MaryAnne Benas
Mr. Adwait and Mrs. Swanandi Bhagwat
Mr. Seraphine and Mrs. Autumn Codinha, III
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Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Charlene Geary
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Mr. Roy and Mrs. Lisa Henrickson
Mr. William W. Heun and
Mrs. Elisabeth S. Heun '70
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The Gerald and Marian Jablonski
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Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Jennifer Larrabee
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Mr. Evan and Mrs. Beth McNish
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Mr. Francis and Mrs. Melanie Morrissey
Mr. Stephen Mugg and
Dr. Lisa Metzger-Mugg
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Laura Murray
Mr. Mohit and Mrs. Shobhina Mutreja
Mr. Arunas Navickas and
Ms. Deanna Targosz
Mr. Michael Oh '88
Dr. Nilesh and Mrs. Bharati Patel
Mr. Alesh and Mrs. Binita Patel
Mr. Rupesh and Mrs. Simrit Patel '94
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Vicki Parthenis, Jr.
Mr. Shawn Potzinger and Mrs. Alexis Bryant
Dr. Sanjeev and Dr. Melissa Pradhan
Mr. John Ramirez and Dr. Kimberly Bauer
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Dr. John Rowan
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Kristen Ryan
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Mr. Bradley and Mrs. LeighAnne Smith
Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Beth Spiegel
Mr. Chad and Dr. Ashley Stoecker
Dr. Don Sun and Ms. Jean Cao
Mr. Dan McGinn and Dr. Daesman Suri
Dr. Jayesh and Dr. Anupama Thakrar
Mr. Sailesh Thakur and
Mrs. Ramapriya Subramanian
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Mr. Ramesh Venkataraman and
Ms. Krishnaveni Iyer
Mr. Rajeev Vijan and Mrs. Julia Owens
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wadsworth
Mr. Andrew and Mrs. Patricia White
Dr. Michael Wince and Ms. Pamela Cox
Mr. Keith Woodruff and
Dr. Monina Quindipan
Mr. Charles and Mrs. Amy Wright
Mr. Edward and Dr. Simge Yonter
Anonymous 3

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. Asif and Mrs. Faryal Ahmed
Mr. Walter Anderson '80
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Anna Andrusenko
Mr. Amarnath Arvind and
Mrs. Lata Balagangadharan
Mr. and Mrs. Justin Batzel
Ms. Misty Baumann '73
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Ms. Barbara Blum
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Ms. Tiffany I. Bohn '94
Ms. Jessica H. Bollow '05
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Bosco
Mr. Scott and Mrs. Nadia Bowman
Mr. Brooke and Mrs. Laura Brantley
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Bray
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Ms. Kathryn G. Breisch '04
Mr. Chris Stewart and
Mrs. Lori Broach-Stewart
Ms. Alice Brown
Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Gracetru Buzzard
Mr. Shawn Potzinger and Mrs. Alexis Byrant
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Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Gina Clinnin
Mr. and Mrs. Alain Clivaz
Mr. Neal and Mrs. Daisy Collins
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Mr. Pan J. Demetrakakes '70
Dr. Stewart and Mrs. Laura DeSoto
Mr. and Mrs. David A. Dundek
Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Jane Egan
Mr. Jason and Ms. Sarah Elk
Mr. Anthony '91 and Dr. Heidi Engel
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Laurie Ernst
Mr. and Ms. Kent Evans
Mr. Wei Huang and Mrs. Kathy Fan
Mr. Richard L. and Mrs. Maureen Fear
Dr. Robert and Mrs. Celia Finley, III
Mr. Frank Finn and
Ms. Shannon Finn Connell

2013 – 2014 ACS Fund

Mr. John Fitzgerald '63
Mr. Hershel and Mrs. Carole Fitzpatrick
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Flentge
Ms. Lauren Flentge
Mr. Michael Flynn '13
Follett Corporation
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Frederick
Ms. Caroline Fry '12
Mr. Thomas Furie and
 Ms. Christine Jurish Furie
Mr. and Mrs. John Gallo
Mr. James and Mrs. Trecia Gandurski
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Garetto
Mr. Pankaj and Mrs. Swati Garg
Ms. Cathy T. Gillen
Mr. Donald and Mrs. Catherine Glass
Mr. Blake Glidden '87
Ms. Brittany Glidden '89
Mr. Jay Godla and Dr. Srilata Gundala
Ms. Katherine Grube '96
Mr. Richard and Mrs. Dehn Grunsten
Mr. Michael Gupta '12
Mr. Allan and Mrs. Rachel Gutierrez
Mr. and Mrs. Efrain Gutierrez
Mr. Paul and Mrs. Diana Halley
Mr. John and Mrs. Kiyomi Hamilton
Mr. David and Mrs. Amy Hansfield
Mr. William and Mrs. Deborah Hare
Mr. Ryan and Dr. Caroline Hawk
Dr. Stuart and Mrs. Laura Heimburger
Mrs. Marta A. Hernandez '00
Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Hogan
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Honeysett
Mr. James Hung and Dr. Wen Lu
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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. Seraphine and Mrs. Autumn Codinha III
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Mr. Alok and Mrs. Barnali Khuntia
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Mr. Peter and Mrs. Vicki Parthenis Jr.
Dr. Saleh Rifai and Mrs. Chams Atassi
Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Grace Shin
Mr. Andrew and Mrs. Patricia White

Early Childhood PM – 100%

Mr. Alex and Mrs. Danielle Andrade
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Anna Andrusenko
Dr. Ryan Burgette and Ms. Sheila Frederick
Dr. Nayan Gowda and Dr. Deepti Shivakumar
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Mr. Arunas Navickas and Ms. Deanna Targosz
Mr. Damian Ortiz and Ms. Adeena Weiss
Dr. Milind and Mrs. Sani Shirsat

Junior Kindergarten AM – 100%

Dr. Anup Bendre & Dr. Anuradha Perni
Mr. John Blackburn and Ms. Nancy Doris
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Mr. Devang and Mrs. Karishma Doshi
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Ms. Shannon Finn Connell
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Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Dawn Lawler
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Mr. Joe and Mrs. Beth Reilly
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Drs. Mark and Margaret Sokolowski
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Mr. Amarnath Arvind and
Mrs. Balagangadharan
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Mrs. Nahla Merhi-Barakat
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Tobin Baum
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Mr. Srikanth and Mrs. Lavanya Batchu
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Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
Dr. Franklin and Dr. Peggy Tan
Dr. David and Ms. Angela Tse
Mr. Ramesh Venkataraman and
Ms Krishnaveni Iyer
Mr. Rajeev Vijan and Mrs. Julia Owens

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Dr. Asad and Dr. Farah Cheema
Dr. Asad Aziz and Mrs. Maryam Mujahid
Mr. Chadwick and Mrs. Evgenia Baatz
Dr. Anup Bendre & Dr. Anuradha Perni
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Mr. Daniel Chan and Ms. Shuling Lee
Mr. Maneesh and Mrs. Archana Chawla
Dr. Steven Chough and Dr. Anna Park
Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Jane Egan
Dr. Michael Elasaad and
Dr. Stephanie Cravens
Mr. Adam Gastolek and
Mrs. Aneta Paniczko-Gastolek
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Dr. Andrew and Mrs. Yongtae Kim
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Dr. Robert and Mrs. Michelle Strugala
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 Dr. Kenneth Candido and Dr. Durre Shahwar
 Dr. Stewart and Mrs. Laura DeSoto
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 Mr. Kirill and Mrs. Laura Krylov
 Mr. Wei Li and Mrs. Jing Xing
 Mr. Bradley Malone and Ms. Stellitsa Rozakis
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 Mr. Neal and Dr. Jennifer Reenan
 Dr. Saleh Rifai and Mrs. Chams Atassi
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 Dr. Asad Aziz and Mrs. Maryam Mujahid
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2013 – 2014 ACS Fund

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Mr. Brendan and Mrs. Mary Sheehy
Mr. Li Song and Ms. Helen He
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Mr. John and Mrs. Diana McDevitt
Mr. Edmond and Mrs. Sarah Opler
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Mr. Walter and Mrs. Lily Polowczak
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Mr. Miles Harvey and Mr. Matthew Harvey
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2014 Auction

The 32nd Annual Auction was held on campus on May 10, 2014, netting \$257,153 from the proceeds of the various elements of the event. Contributions from the Auction's Fund-A-Need totaled \$60,413 which was directed to the renovation of the Mochel Commons. Together with the ACS Fund, the Annual Auction ensures that resources are available to provide a high quality, independent school education for each of its students. A wonderful evening was provided for the ACS community because of the tremendous effort and generosity of the following volunteers and contributors.



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Thanks to generous donations, the Commons was completely renovated this past summer, with new flooring, lighting, wall coverings, and tables and chairs.

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2014 Auction

Fleur de Lis Society

The Fleur de Lis Society is comprised of benefactors who provide philanthropic support at a leadership level of \$1,000 or above to underwrite the cost associated with the Auction. The Society, established in 1990, is a critical component of this event as it enables the school to put more of the funds raised directly into programs that benefit the students. Sincere appreciation is shared with all contributors to the Fleur de Lis Society.

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The 2014 Fund-A-Need

This year's Fund-A-Need provided \$60, 917 in underwriting for the renovation of the Mochel Commons which resulted in a more flexible and functional space for the students, faculty and families of The Avery Coonley School. Special thanks to the following donors to this special fund

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(top) Zainab Baig and Brendan Sheehy co-chaired a very fun and successful Auction in May; (bottom) Angela Solis '04 was the alumni speaker at the Auction, representing her classmates who were celebrating their 10-year graduation anniversary.

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2014 Auction

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This report reflects gifts received between July 2, 2013 and June 30, 2014. If any errors or omissions are noted, please accept our apologies and share them with the ACS Office of Development.

Welcome New Staff



Jennifer Strohl

Jennifer Strohl joins the ACS staff as our new Assistant Director of Development. Jennifer will be providing leadership to the school's alumni programming, annual auction, and other special fund-raising projects. She has an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University in Accounting and a MBA from the University of Washington, and she recently completed a certificate in non-profit management from the University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute. Jennifer has extensive professional and volunteer experience, including management of the Da Vinci Academy auction. Currently, she serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Steel Beam Theater in St. Charles and is an active volunteer with Elgin Academy, which her two sons attend.



Barbara Cosentino

Barbara Cosentino comes to The Avery Coonley School as the new Assistant to the Head. She has an undergraduate degree from University of Illinois at Chicago in Psychology and a Masters in Counseling Psychology from St. Xavier University. Barbara's previous experience has been predominantly in the arena of higher education, including experience in both Civic and Community Engagement and Career Services. In her free time, she enjoys relaxing with her family and friends. Barbara's hobbies are varied and include reading everything she can get her hands on, traveling to various tourist traps, and scrapbooking about those experiences.

Jessica Cooperman is our new Second Group teacher. She has an undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago in Cinema and Media Studies and a MA in Elementary Education from Simmons College. Before coming to ACS, Jessica taught in elementary schools in Massachusetts for several years and, most recently, worked in Oak Park/River Forest grade schools. She also taught English as a Second Language in Japan for a year and has lived in Italy. Jessica is proficient in and has extensive experience with the use of technology in the classroom. She loves the arts and regularly paints, sings, and swing dances.



Jessica Cooperman



Jaime Surdyski

Jaime Surdyski is our new Music teacher and Choir Director. She graduated from Bradley University with a degree in Music Education with an instrumental focus, and has several years experience teaching music at the elementary and junior high level. Jaime taught previously at Da Vinci Academy, where she was the music and performing arts teacher since 2010. In addition to teaching, she performs professionally on the trumpet and gives piano and voice lessons. Jaime and her husband have two rescue dogs, and she loves to do craft projects, spend time outdoors, and volunteer for Help Save Pets.

Welcome New Board Members



Members of the 2014-2015 Board of Trustees include (front row, from left): Jeffrey Mueller, Shannon Weinberger, Beth Horio, Sue Gould, Catherine Slark, Amy Louis, Antonia Pritchard, Anu Asthana; (back row) Mary Ellen Bull, Brian Gilmartin, William Heun, Patrick Fry, John Grube, Jacqueline Gupta, James Crouthamel, and Patricia Huebner (not pictured: William Atwood and John Harrast).



William Atwood has served as Executive Director of the Illinois State Board of Investment (ISBI) since March of 2003. ISBI is responsible for investing assets totaling approximately \$14.8 billion for the State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois, Judges' Retirement System of Illinois, and General Assembly Retirement System of Illinois. ISBI also has fiduciary responsibility for the State of Illinois Deferred Compensation Program, a defined contribution plan, whose assets total another \$3.6 billion. Since joining ISBI, Bill has managed the restructuring of its investment portfolio, established an emerging manager program, initiated the utilization of a general consultant, expanded the portfolio's exposure to alternative investments, increased the Board's shareholder activism, and made improvements to the State of Illinois' Deferred Compensation Plan.

Welcome New Board Members

In 2014 Bill was recognized as the Large Public Pension Fund Manager of the Year by Institutional Investor Magazine.

Bill has professional experience in both the public and private sectors, including service on the staff of U.S. Senator Charles Percy and in the administrations of Governor Jim Thompson and Governor Jim Edgar. In 1994 he joined Investment Counselors Incorporated, a money management firm in St. Louis where Bill was Vice President for Business Development. At ICI he was responsible for marketing, client service, and corporate operations. Bill formed Midwest Managed Money Services in 1997 through which he provided consulting services to money management firms working in the public and Taft-Hartley pension plan arenas. He worked closely with equity, fixed income, and real estate investment companies and a variety of institutional plan sponsors.

In addition to his role at ACS, Bill also serves on the Board of Directors of Working In the Schools (WITS), and the Board of Directors of the CFA Society of Chicago. He is a former Director of the Chicago Stock Exchange and is a regular speaker at professional symposia.

Bill received a Masters of Liberal Arts degree from the University of Chicago and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Southern Illinois University. He lives in Downers Grove, IL with his wife, Reagen, daughter Ainsley '18, and son William.



Antonia Pritchard is an attorney with Walker Wilcox Matousek LLP in Chicago. She started practicing law in 1991 with Keck Mahin & Cate in Chicago, and “retired” in 1998 to work at home and raise her children. In 2008 Toni came out of retirement to join Holland & Knight LLP, where she practiced law until joining Walker Wilcox in 2014.

She has been an active participant in the ACS community since 2003, when she and her husband Brett co-chaired the ACS Auction. Toni co-chaired the Auction again in 2004 and later chaired the live auction committee. During the eleven years that her three children attended ACS, Toni served in many capacities, including four years as room parent, co-chair of Chess Club, admissions tour guide, co-chair of Fall Fest Dinners, and as a member of the Policy and Planning Committee and the Development Committee of the Board of Trustees. She is the 2013 recipient of the Queene Ferry Coonley Award for her volunteer service to the school.

Toni has previously served on the Guild Board of Directors of the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Auxiliary Board of Northwestern Memorial Hospital. She has been active in *pro bono* legal service, having represented indigent clients through her work with the Chicago Volunteer Legal Services Foundation, the Judicial Advisory Council and the Legal Assistance Foundation in Chicago. She is a recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the Chicago Volunteer Legal Services Foundation.

Toni graduated from SUNY Binghamton with a B.S. in Mathematics/Computer Science, and received her law degree from Cornell Law School. She and her husband Brett live in Downers Grove. Their three children, Conrad '08, Olivia '11, and Alden '13 – along with Brett, a member of the Class of 1976 – all feel privileged to be alumni of ACS.

Welcome New Board Members



Brian Gilmartin is the Director of Finance for True Partners Consulting. He is responsible for the company's financial activities including audit, corporate finance, accounting and financial reporting, investor relations, risk management, tax, and treasury.

In addition, Brian leads the firm's Emerging Business Services (EBS) initiative, which focuses on serving the unique needs of entrepreneurial and early stage companies. EBS ensures that growing organizations understand and comply with accounting and tax rules, yet provides the necessary services to allow entrepreneurial teams remain focused on their primary objective: growing their businesses. He has served as a mentor to the portfolio teams at Techstars (a technology incubator) as well as those teams at The Impact Engine, an accelerator program addressing societal and environmental concerns. He recently served as a judge in the Life Science and Medical Innovation track at the Northwestern University Venture Competition.

Mr. Gilmartin joined True Partners Consulting in early 2006 after serving as division controller with a national home-builder. Prior to that he was with Deloitte & Touche LLP and Arthur Andersen LLP in their tax and business advisory practices where he served multinational clients in various industries.

Mr. Gilmartin is a member of the Executives Club of Chicago where he sits on the Finance Committee and the International Committee. He is also a member of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Mr. Gilmartin received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Accounting at Saint Xavier University and his Masters of Business Administration degree from DePaul University. As a state registered public accountant, he is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Illinois Certified Public Accountants Society. He was also recently been granted the Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) designation.

In his spare time he spends time with his wife, Lisa, and children, Christopher '19 and Sarah '23. He also enjoys cooking, golf, international soccer, reading and technology.

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