



PHS Newsletter, Volume 1, Number 1 November 2018

From the Principal's Pen

Our students and staff accomplish so many wonderful projects and participate in very interesting activities that we thought we would start a quarterly newsletter to share with you. We want you to be aware of some of the excitement and challenge that your children experience.

This newsletter is also an opportunity for you to hear from your child's Head of House and learn more about our programs. The core of the programs remain the same, but we are always upgrading experiences for our stellar students.

I am also providing you a little background about our Magnet Coordinator and Heads of Houses:

Allison Wilder is starting her 20th year at PHS. She has been an English teacher, Staff Development Teacher, and is currently enjoying her position as Magnet Coordinator. She earned her undergraduate degree at William and Mary and her Master's degree at the University of Maryland.

Lisa Hawkins is another veteran teacher at PHS. She has taught English in both public and private schools. She is the Head of the ISP House. Ms. Hawkins earned her undergraduate degree at The Pennsylvania State University and her graduate degree there as well.

Erin Binns has been the Head of the Global House for 6 years. Erin earned her undergraduate degree at Allegheny College and her Master's degree at John's Hopkins University.

Kevin Lee's favorite color is orange and we see this Clemson alumnus wear it all the time. He has been an elementary, middle school and high school teacher and is also our Head of SMCS House.

Jennifer Marks has had experience at Clemente Middle School and Churchill High School. She is an alumna at Cornell University and the University of Maryland and is our new Head of Humanities House.

Enjoy our first edition and as, always, please, join us in the many experiences that we offer that include our parents!

Deena Levine
Principal

Greetings from the Magnet Office!

This fall, I've visited our feeder middle schools to share information about our status as THE "whole school magnet high school," and the reception has been overwhelmingly positive. My theme has been that our unique moniker perfectly sums up the best of Poolesville High School. First, every student here-- the whole school-- belongs to a special house with opportunities not available anywhere else in the county. And second, our students are as thrilled to be part of the larger "whole school" PHS community as they are with their houses. These sentiments were expressed and supported passionately and eloquently by our student speakers at the annual magnet information nights at PHS and John Poole Middle School. Our students truly are our greatest ambassadors and testaments to the strength of our programs.

We have a record number of eighth graders applying to our test-in magnet programs, and a record number of inquiries about the application and testing process. This year, the county moved to an on-line application, and testing will also be completed electronically; please keep this in mind if you share your past magnet experiences with interested families. The most up-to-date magnet information can be found on the MCPS website:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms/admissions/applications.aspx>

Sincerely,

Allison Wilder
Magnet Coordinator



GLOBAL ECOLOGY HOUSE

As the Global Head of House I am privileged to work with such enthusiastic and adventurous students. I know I can also speak for all the teachers in the Global Ecology House when I say that we love our jobs. Each year I am rejuvenated that the environmental and scientific problems of the world will be solved due to the innovation and passion of students like these.



The freshman are enjoying lunch at the top of Maryland Heights.

The 2018-2019 school year is off to a great start. We welcomed another fantastic class of 9th graders and they thrived on their first field study to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. The students had a great time hiking

Maryland Heights,

exploring the history of the town, and getting to know their teachers and new classmates. Despite the rainy weather for the second group, everyone had a great attitude. In true Global fashion, the freshman quickly learned that "It doesn't rain on Global, it rains on ponchos."

The 10th graders have been busy with trips to 10 Mile Creek, the Newseum, and the National Archives this quarter. They were able to really see the history of government come alive on their Archives tour, a great way to kick off their AP National, State and Government class. (Continued on page 3)

INDEPENDENT STUDIES PROGRAM

Welcome to your ISP newsletter! In an effort to keep families apprised of the awesome accomplishments of our students, I will be writing an update each marking period. I thought it would be good to begin with an additional welcome to our freshmen and their families, as you are new to our PHS family. You are joining a tradition of excellence and exploration.

What does it mean to be an ISP student?

The Independent Studies Program provides its students with excellent teachers who are dedicated to creating a multitude of educational experiences. One of the hallmarks of the ISP House is that students have choice. They have the choice to pursue classes that interest them; the choice to pursue an Areas of Focus that appeals to them to earn the ISP Certificate; the choice to join Falcon Ambassadors. Ultimately, ISP students have the choice to guide their educational paths here at Poolesville High School.

What is the ISP Certificate and how do I earn one?

Earning an ISP Certificate demonstrates that students have gone above and beyond the basic graduation requirements to pursue a rigorous, focused plan of study. The ISP House is unique in that each student is allowed to choose his or her course of study, instead of having it pre-determined. (Cont. on page 3)

HUMANITIES HOUSE

Hello parents, families and friends,
I am thoroughly enjoying getting to know the wonderful students in the PHS Humanities program.

So far I've had the pleasure of spending a day trip with the 9th graders on their field trip to the Baltimore Museum of Arts where we toured the museum's current installations, including Meleko Mokgosi's *Acts of Resistance* and Tomás Saraceno's *Entangled Orbits*. The students were able to apply the skills they have been learning in their 9th grade criticism class. Inspiration from this field trip as well as from their trips to Glenstone Mansion and the Buddhist Temple will culminate in the 9th Grade Gallery night in January, 2019. Date will be announced soon!

The 10th grade traveled to Staunton, Virginia at the end of October by way of Skyline Drive. The trees were not yet in color, but the views were amazing (and the temperature cold.) We toured the homes and grounds of two of our founding fathers, James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, and caught an energetic performance of *As You Like It* at the American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse.

The 11th grade has wrapped up its Looted Artifact Debate Project and just launched their research for National History Day. The topic this year is Triumph and Tragedy. To learn more about National History Day and the requirements for the contest see: <https://www.nhd.org/how-enter-contest>.

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SCIENCE, MATH, COMPUTER SCIENCE HOUSE

It is hard to believe that we are already one quarter of the way through the 2018-2019 school year! After teaching engineering for the past eleven years in the Science, Math, Computer Science House, it has been such an honor to take on the role of the Head of the House this year. What an amazing group of young people we have in the SMCS House! Is there any better way to start a year than to find out that we had a group of four sophomores come in first place in the 2018 High School Maryland Cyber Security Challenge?



Winning team for the Cyber Security Challenge

(Continued on page 4)

GLOBAL ECOLOGY HOUSE *Continued*

The 11th grade was impacted by the unseasonably rainy weather in early September, and trips had to be rescheduled due to the safety of the water level in Seneca Creek. The juniors were in high spirits, though, as they attended a trip to the Buddhist temple in connection with their AP World History Class. They ended the quarter with beautiful weather at Calleva where they participated in the ropes course and calculated the human vectors in connection with their Global physics curriculum. You know the trip is a success when they all have smiles when they get off the bus!



The Seniors conclude their rainy 5 mile hike at Canaan Valley with smiles.

The seniors, even in midst of college applications, are making strong strides on their Senior Projects. These projects will be on display at PHS for parents, the school, and the community to view on April 26th. I am so impressed with the dedication of the students this year and the diversity of topics they have chosen to research. I'm eager to see the final results. Our senior field trips have included delving into the biodiversity of wetlands at PHS and an overnight trip to Canaan Valley, West Virginia, for many of our seniors. This included an exploration of beautiful old growth forests, discussion of energy and mining, and a 5 mile hike (in the pouring rain) through the unique coniferous biome of Canaan Valley. The students recognized and appreciated the beauty of the region; this is always such a magical trip and a great way to start senior year.

As the first quarter ends, please know that all of the Global Staff and I are committed to helping all students succeed in all their classes. If your child has concerns about field trips, make up work, or general concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or their Global teachers.

In addition, our full list of field trips can be found on the website at:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/schools/poolesvillehs/magnet/globalecology/GlobalFieldStudyCalendar.pdf>

Please feel free to contact me [Erin M Binns@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Erin_M_Binns@mcpsmd.org) for additional updates or questions.

INDEPENDENT STUDIES PROGRAM *Continued*

ISP students should begin thinking about their Area of Focus their sophomore year, and finalize their choice by their junior year. We have developed six Areas of Focus:

- Biological and Physical Sciences (BAPS)
- Culture and Political Studies (CAPS)
- Music/Arts/Media Studies (MAMS)
- Project Lead the Way (PLTW)
- Technology and Math Studies (TAMS)
- Original Studies

Once students have selected their Area of Focus, they will choose four classes that support this focus. These classes are primarily taken during the junior and senior years, but we recognize that some students opt to start early. During their senior year, ISP students write a journal reflection for each of the four focus classes. They also complete a minimum 15-hour field experience in their Area of Focus, and write a reflection on the experience. And finally, students complete their Portfolio Presentation – addressing all of the previously mentioned components. Students who successfully complete these steps will earn the ISP Certificate and graduation tassel. We have had a high completion rate in the past, and hope to continue this trend each year.

What's new in ISP?

I thought this would be a great opportunity to introduce myself. I am your current narrator and new Head of House – Lisa Hawkins. If you have had students here at PHS for at least two years, then you probably know me as Lisa Kellert. I have been teaching English and a variety of elective for the past 13 years. I was a member of the very first ISP Committee, and I am honored to be heading the program this year and beyond. Ms. Katie Weaver is another new face to ISP. She is the new advisor to the Falcon Ambassadors – a leadership group only available to ISP students. This is her second year teaching math here at PHS, and when she isn't in the classroom or supervising the Ambassadors, you can find her outside coaching our field hockey team.

Under Ms. Weaver's leadership, the Falcon Ambassadors have had a full schedule this school year. These young people were guides and role models for our incoming freshmen during our 9th grade orientation. They served as guides and program spokespersons at Back To School Night. This year's Ambassadors are determined to make their mark. They have resurrected the PHS Powder Puff Game – yay! A great time was had by spectators and participants alike. Their toy drive is on the calendar for December, so check for upcoming announcements on the website.

Also new to ISP - field trips across all grade levels. Last year, under Ms. Leslie Gum's leadership, ISP freshmen and sophomores took a trip to the National Zoo. I plan to continue that trip this year, adding field trips for juniors and seniors, too.

INDEPENDENT STUDIES PROGRAM *Continued*

We live in an area that provides a plethora of opportunities for experiential education, and ISP is expanding to include some of them. These trips will also allow students to explore their Area of Focus, and meet experts in their chosen fields of study and/or future career paths.

Important Dates

November 20 - Report Cards Distributed
January 25 - End of 2nd Quarter

Please contact me with any questions you might have at [Lisa G Kellert@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Lisa_G_Kellert@mcpsmd.org)

HUMANITIES HOUSE *Continued*

The 12th graders are well underway with their AP Research Projects. They have conducted their initial research, put together an extensive annotated bibliography, developed a research question and written an inquiry proposal. In two weeks we will venture into D.C. to the National Gallery of Art, to participate in a lecture and discussion with one of the museum curators. This will provide a close up look at the role research plays in the Arts field. For more information on this exhibit see: <https://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2018/water-wind-and-waves.html>

Upcoming events:

12 grade: Field trip to NYC January 8

Please email me with any questions you might have at [Jennifer V Marks@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Jennifer_V_Marks@mcpsmd.org)



SCIENCE, MATH, COMPUTER SCIENCE HOUSE *Continued*

The 9th graders spent the beginning of the year learning about indirect measurement and how it blends their math and science skills along with engineering. They are currently in the middle of creating their own Indirect Measurement instruments which will be used to help them attempt to figure out the height of the antenna on the top of the Poolesville town water tower. Additionally the 9th graders took a fun and exciting field trip to the Smith Center in Rockville, Maryland where they participated in many adventurous team building activities.

Rovers, Arduinos, programming and engineering have been front and center in the 10th grade. Through a collaborative effort in their Principles of Engineering and Computer Science classes students have been working to learn how to program Arduinos, capable of incorporating a variety of sensors, to be used on Lego rovers. In addition to the work being done in their Engineering and Computer Science classes the students were able to take the knowledge they have learned in their Earth Science and Biology class and conduct a field study of the nearby Seneca Creek. The students were able to do water sampling and quality measurements.

Sophomores enjoying the field trip to Seneca Creek



The 11th grade is deep into the SourceAmerica Design Challenge, an Engineering competition where the students work with employees with disabilities who work at various non-profit organizations to help create an assistive technology which will help the employees overcome obstacles they face in the workplace. They are also working with Barbara Paulson who is conducting mock professional interviews for every SMCS junior.

With only three more marking periods remaining in the seniors' high school careers they are putting the finishing touches on their summer research and preparing to enter their work into a variety of national competitions. They are also helping our freshman class by acting as mentors. We are holding our first ever Mentor & Mentee Cup competition this year. The M&M Cup is a series of fun and engaging challenges designed to help give our freshman the feeling that they are an important part of the SMCS program under the guidance of their senior mentor.

If you have any questions for me please feel free to email me at [Kevin P Lee@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Kevin_P_Lee@mcpsmd.org).