

PETROGLYPH

magazine

The Alexander Dawson School

spring/summer 2011



As I indicated in our last *Petroglyph*, Dawson is one of only three nationally recognized, fully accredited independent schools in Southern Nevada. I am proud to say, after 18 months of professional scrutiny by the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools (PNAIS), we recently received re-accreditation from PNAIS for another seven years!

But, what does this mean, and how does accreditation impact our students?

PNAIS, a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Commission on Accreditation, is a voluntary membership organization that promotes high educational quality for its schools through the establishment and advancement of comprehensive standards. Accreditation by these organizations indicates that Dawson meets or exceeds their standards and good practices of high quality schools. This means we have the necessary resources to achieve our stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, are substantially doing so, and have shown evidence that we will continue to do so in the future.

In other words, we are not only accountable to our students, parents, faculty, staff, and Board, we also adhere to national standards of excellence and best practices in academic programs.

In addition to promoting school improvement, accreditation provides many other benefits:

- Assures parents and the general public that Dawson is focused on providing a safe, enriching learning environment while maintaining efficient, effective operations;
- Provides school leaders with an independent, non-governmental validation that Dawson is effectively delivering a high quality education;
- Eases the transition as students move from one accredited school to another by accepting the student's credits and academic records;



- Provides educators and school leaders with deserved recognition for going beyond the minimum to demonstrate ongoing commitment to quality;
- Provides educators with valuable information about effective practices in other schools through participation on peer review teams.

Because NAIS views accreditation as an ongoing process of school improvement, Dawson is required to submit a report to its visiting teams within 18 to 36 months after the site visits. This report must address all of the team's recommendations and illustrate the ways in which Dawson has utilized these recommendations to improve our program and operations. We are also required to provide annual reporting, which will help keep us on track in preparation for our next accreditation visit in 2019.

Our accreditation shows our commitment to maintaining NAIS standards and is another reason why Dawson is considered one of the best schools in Nevada!

Michael Imperi, Headmaster



(left to right) Pre-k students Ella Maurice, Olivia Campbell, Stone Spiegel and Jake Williams performed “Lollipop, Lollipop” as part of the Early Childhood Spring Show.

1 | CELEBRATING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Dawson students, faculty and staff soared above the rest this academic year, garnering a variety of prestigious awards and recognitions.

4 | WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

The ECEC celebrated the Week of the Young Child with special activities each day to bring awareness to the importance of quality education for young children.

5 | CLASS OF 2011 GRADUATES

59 students graduated from Dawson this year, heading off to high schools and boarding schools in the fall.

7 | DAWSON ALUMNI

Dawson 2007 graduate Jacques Homan just finished his junior year at Blue Ridge School in Virginia.

9 | CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Lower School students travelled the world with passports in-hand as they learned about other countries.

11 | DAWSON COMMUNITY SERVICE

Continuing to participate in a variety of activities to better the community, Dawson students made a difference in the lives of countless people.

14 | REACH FOR THE STARS GALA

More than 250 people attended the Gala at Crystals, helping to raise more than \$184,000 in net proceeds for the School.

15 | STUDENT PORTFOLIOS

See what students have been up to in visual arts classes this semester.

Celebrating ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Once again, Dawson students, faculty and staff received recognition and awards from state, regional and national competitions in academics, performing arts, visual arts and athletics. Students also made a difference in the lives of many people through an array of community service activities.

SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & MATH

Dawson Future Cities team Dubai Millennium, composed of Michelle Okeke (seventh grade), Adora Nwokike (seventh grade) and Zane Mechem (sixth grade), won First Place and Best Model at the Regional Future Cities competition. This team went on to represent the region at the National Future Cities competition in Washington, D.C., where our students won two special awards: "Best Communications System" and "Best Residential Zone."

Dawson Future Cities team Nova Statio Mars Investigato, composed of eighth-graders Ryan Chakmak, Robbie Netzorg, Damien Horton and William Neme-Micula, won a special award at the Regional Future Cities competition for "Most Innovative Solution to an Environmental Problem" and the award for "Best Presentation."

In this year's Las Vegas Regional MathMatters competition, Dawson fifth-grade students won three of the top 10 places, competing with more than 150 students. Branden Lee won second place, Bori Yahng was awarded fourth place, and Ian McCue won seventh place.



Dubai Millennium Future Cities Team members Michelle Okeke (seventh grade), Adora Nwokike (seventh grade) and Zane Mechem (sixth grade).



Carson McCue (first grade) with his winning poster, "Groundhog Weather."

First-grader Carson McCue received an honorable mention in the Nevada Chapter of the American Statistical Association 2011 K-12 Statistics Poster Competition for his poster entitled, "Groundhog Weather." He moved on to represent Nevada in the national competition in May and won Honorable Mention.

Two Dawson fifth-grade students won awards at the Beal Bank Southern Nevada Regional Science & Engineering Fair Awards. Finn Keilty won third place for his project, "Nature's Original Color," and Logan Dixon was awarded an honorable mention for his entry, "Melting Mechanics." These two students moved on to represent the region at the national competition.

The Math Olympiad is a series of five contests, and each contest is a set of five math problems that are considered "nonroutine" and require more flexibility and strategy to solve. Students earn one point for each correct problem, striving for a perfect score of 25. Dawson's top scorers in this year's competition were fifth-graders Ian McCue and Bori Yahng, who each scored 23 —only 2 points under a perfect score.

The Dawson Rubik's Cube Team participated in a Rubik's Cube competition at the Las Vegas Science Fair Expo. The team was awarded a \$100 prize and put forth their best time ever, completing 25 cubes in six minutes and 51 seconds.

VISUAL, PERFORMING & WRITING ARTS

Two students were awarded the Silver Key for photography in the Southern Nevada Regional Scholastic Art Awards competition:

Ryan Blount (eighth grade) for his photograph, "The Glaring Ruler," and Zack Murdock (seventh grade) for two pieces entitled "Mystical Flower" and "Running Out of My Shoes".

The Jazz Band scored two superior ratings and one excellent rating in the Clark County School District's Middle School Jazz Festival.

The Dawson Middle School Choir received 1st Place Superior rating in their category, and a 1st Place Superior Overall, for their performance at the Music in the Park Festival at Knotts Berry Farm.

Dawson fifth-grader Nico Politis won 2nd Place (out of 123 entries in the Fifth Grade category) in the Vegas PBS Kids Go! Writing Contest for his story "Pack Life."

ATHLETICS

The seventh- and eighth-grade flag football team won the Red Rock Athletic Conference Division Championship. The fifth- and sixth-grade flag football team was Division Runner-up for the Red Rock Athletic Conference.

The seventh- and eighth-grade girls' volleyball team made it to the Conference semi-finals.

The boys' seventh- and eighth-grade basketball team, as well as the boy's fifth- and sixth-grade basketball team, were Conference semi-final participants.

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Finn Keilty & Logan Dixon won awards at the Beal Bank Southern Nevada Regional Science & Engineering Fair.



Dawson's seventh- and eighth-grade flag football team won the Red Rock Athletic Conference Division Championship.

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The girls' fifth- and sixth-grade basketball team also made it to the Conference semi-finals.

Dawson's 12 & Under Intermediate United States Tennis Association (USTA) Jr. team and the 12 & Under Beginner USTA Jr. team were season champions in their respective divisions, as well as tournament finalists.

LEADERSHIP

Chase VanKalsbeek, seventh grade, was nominated by faculty and administration at Dawson to receive a \$2,400 merit scholarship to attend McCallie School's Character Leadership Community Program this summer in Tennessee. This prestigious summer program integrates on-campus learning experiences

with off-campus expeditions to collaborate with leaders in fields that shape the environment, combining high-level classroom challenges with hands-on, real world experiences.

SCHOOL

The School was selected by the Hanban Asia Society and the Chinese Ministry of Education to be a Confucius Classroom. Dawson was the only school in Nevada to be selected for the program, representing one of 60 schools in the U.S. with this designation.

The Early Childhood Education Center received accreditation from the Northwest Accreditation Commission. ■



Members of the Dawson Rubik's Cube team with Middle School teachers Matsuko Freeman and Kristin Norton.



Fifth-grader Nico Politis poses with Headmaster Michael Imperi after Vegas PBS Kids Go! presented him with an award for his story "Pack Life."

Early Childhood Celebrates Week of the Young Child



Students listen for instructions before heading out to ride on Bike Day.



Students show off their hula hoop skills during the WOYC Carnival.



Sonia Singh and Ava Cohen take a few minutes from enjoying breakfast to pose with teacher, Mrs. Worthey, on Pajama Day.

The Week of the Young Child, now in its 40th year, is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), which is one of the accrediting entities of Dawson's Early Childhood Education Center. The purpose of the Week of the Young Child is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

This year, pre-school and pre-k students kicked off the week by dressing in their favorite pajamas and enjoying a Pancake Breakfast in the Dining Hall with their families. Later in the day, the Head of ECEC Ms. Tara Hall and Headmaster Michael Imperi read books to the students.

On Tuesday, students were visited by local heroes, including firefighter and Dawson dad, Joe Vanek; Air Force pilots John Kent and Tyrone Cofield (also a Dawson dad); and two officers from the Las Vegas Metro K-9 Unit. Later that day, students practiced being heroes when they decorated capes to wear during a superhero treasure hunt.

Students celebrated Bike Day on Wednesday, when they were able to place personalized "license plates" on their bikes and spend the morning riding around campus.

On Thursday, students wore their favorite sports team apparel and played various sports on the field. They raced through an obstacle course, tried their luck at a gigantic inflatable bowling game, ran around the field playing inflatable hockey, and had fun with some parachute games.

The culmination of the week was the WOYC Carnival, with games, food and lots of fun. Pre-school and pre-k students were joined by the kindergarten classes for fun games, face painting, popcorn and a family lunch.

"Every year, students and families love the Carnival," said Ms. Hall. "Their favorite days are always the Carnival and Bike Day. They always have a great time throughout the week." ■



*The future belongs to those who believe
in the beauty of their dreams."
- Eleanor Roosevelt*

A milestone is defined as an action or event marking a significant change or stage in development. For the 59 eighth-graders pictured here, graduation day marks a major milestone in their lives. On June 10, 2011, with more than 500 family members, friends and faculty on hand, Dawson's 9th Annual Graduation Ceremony was a celebration of student achievements and filled with excitement, reflection, and the anticipation of new beginnings.

Few people captured the essence of the moment as well as eighth-grader Sabrina Close. Winner of the 2011 graduation essay contest, Sabrina noted that just as she was feeling comfortable in her own skin, "All I keep thinking is - it's too soon [to leave Dawson]! I want more time!"

Yet, Sabrina also said, "The Alexander Dawson School has provided opportunities that allow me to be myself. They've taught me to believe in myself, because I can honestly say, they've always believed in me."

Sabrina closed her address with a wonderful bit of humor. "Cliches become cliches because they are so often truisms," she said. "So, my fellow classmates, we have been given the tools we need to succeed. Our futures are bright, the world is our oyster. Now spread your wings and fly."

Student awards were given recognizing excellence in all subject areas, as well as awards for students who achieved the greatest improvement in each area.



Photo by David Finrock, photography teacher

The ceremony concluded with the newly minted graduates embracing each other, and there were plenty of cameras to document the moments of joy and sadness.

“Graduation is the culminating event each year for us as a school,” said Dr. Russell Smith, Head of Middle School. “Every year, we bid a fond farewell to a group of students we’ve come to know so well, and we are both excited for their future and saddened by their departure. For them, it is not simply a part of the cycle of Dawson’s existence; it is a landmark achievement that marks, in many ways, the end of an era in their lifetime,” he added.

This year’s graduating class continued the tradition of donating a legacy gift to the School. Graduating families donated more than \$5,000 for a new scorer’s table and matching padded chairs for the Gym, as well as a new wooden podium for the Middle School to be used in community meetings, school events, public speaking opportunities, and at graduation each year. ■

BISHOP GORMAN HIGH SCHOOL

Rohit Billakanti
Emily Esrig
Alec Fink
Taryn Fuhrman
Shelby Herbst
Addison Hesser
Collin Higgins
Monique Koman
Collin Lazenby
Evan Link
Chase Maddux

Jordyn Malkin
Kara Moore
Kyra Moore
Ariella Najmabadi
Austin Nobis
Chase Nordling
Grant Robbins
Zachary Robinson
Hannah Rogers
Alexa Weidenfeld

CLARK COUNTY MAGNET SCHOOLS

Weston Bennett, West Career & Technical Academy
Sabrina Close, West Career & Technical Academy
Chaz Fernandez, West Career & Technical Academy
Branagh McMullan, West Career & Technical Academy

Shoshana Arad, Las Vegas Academy
Kennedy Jones, Las Vegas Academy
Joshua Mirman, Las Vegas Academy

PALO VERDE HIGH SCHOOL

Andrea Dilibero
Cassandra Dilibero

Makenzie Paulk
Hayley Smith

FAITH LUTHERAN JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

Brandon Davis
Branden Durcholz
Harrison Langford

Peter Kelesis
Robbie Netzorg
Ethan Wolfe

THE MEADOWS SCHOOL

Ryan Blount
Ryan Chakmak
Dionne Giang
Drake Gordon
Spencer Henry

Damien Horton
Michael Jin
William Neme-Micula
Katie Oder
Melanie Shackelford

BOARDING SCHOOLS

Rachel Baxter, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, NH
David Eyler, Tabor Academy, Marion, MA
Griffin Hadrill, The Stevenson School, Pebble Beach, CA
Madison Markham, The Masters School, Dobbs Ferry, NY
Kelsi Pich, The Stevenson School, Pebble Beach, CA
Andrew Poggione, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, NH

OTHER PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Alaezia Benjamin, Word of Life Christian Academy

OUT-OF-STATE SCHOOLS

Anna Benham, Fairfax County, VA
Karli Wattles, Mountain View High School, AZ

UNDECIDED

Morgan Tyler

Celine Zack

Alumni

DAWSON

Jacques Homan, class of '07



Jacques Homan, 2011

“...I ALWAYS TRIED TO KEEP THE BIG PICTURE IN MIND — HOW I COULD BEST PREPARE FOR COLLEGE.”

Jacques Homan came to Dawson in 2004 as a sixth grader, and when he graduated from eighth grade in 2007, he was already focused on his path to college. For Jacques, whether or not to attend a boarding school was never a question. “I loved Las Vegas and all my friends here,” said Jacques, “but I always tried to keep the big picture in mind — how I could best prepare for college. I knew a boarding school would provide that preparation, so I enrolled in Webb School of California in Claremont.”

Jacques felt his travels during Middle School helped prepare him for boarding school life. “I started traveling abroad with different groups, and my mom never went on any of the trips. This gave me a true sense of independence, as well as the ability to adjust and adapt quickly to different situations. I have since been to about 13 countries,” he said.



Seventh Grade, 2006



Eighth Grade, 2007

Still, Jacques admits that the transition to boarding school wasn't entirely easy. “The responsibility of cleaning my room, and doing dishes and laundry was a bit difficult,” said Jacques. “But more than that, learning time management was definitely hard, as well as the whole adjustment of changing to a new environment permanently.”

After two years at the Webb School, Jacques came to the difficult conclusion that it wasn't a good fit. “Part way through my sophomore year, I realized that Webb was not the right school for me. I made some great friends, but

I felt I needed a change,” he said.

With his mother's support, Jacques made the decision to apply to a different school for his junior and senior year. The decision paid off, and Jacques just completed his junior year at the Blue

Ridge School near Charlottesville, VA. "Blue Ridge definitely fit my needs better," he said. "The school offered more academic assistance, and has a much more challenging athletic program, both of which are important to me."

After leaving Dawson, athletics became a central part of Jacques's life. He has dedicated himself to wrestling, and through the last several years has competed at the state level. "Last year, I qualified for the Virginia State tournament, one of the most competitive states in the country," he said. "Next year, I will be the team captain, and I hope to earn All-State Honors, as well as prepare for competing at the national level."

Jacques credits Dawson with preparing him academically and keeping him focused on his future. "Dawson did an exceptional job preparing me for the academic rigors of high school because much of the material I learned at Dawson was much more advanced than that of other middle schools," said Jacques. "I feel this gave me an advantage over other high school students."

Now setting his sights on college, Jacques is already planning for the future. "First, I want to get into one of my top colleges, which include Loyola Marymount University, the University of Arizona, Louisiana State University or Penn State," said Jacques.

Always looking forward, Jacques already knows what he wants to do after college. "I'd like to major in business and minor in kinesiology, which is the study of how the muscles work corresponding to exercise and nutrition. My ultimate goal is to own a gym that incorporates kinesiology and is uniquely devoted to the development of high school and college athletes."

For those Dawson graduates entering high school, Jacques has some important advice, "Stay on top of your studies because there might not be someone there to push you."

And Jacques's outlook on college? "Of course, I look forward to furthering my education," he said, "but I'm also looking forward to having fun." ■

WE ASKED RECENT GRADS ...

How was your first year of high school and what was the transition from Dawson like?



"I think Dawson prepared me not just academically, but socially and emotionally as well. Choosing a high school was a difficult decision for me, but teachers were able to help me and give me advice, and I was able to find a school that suited me best. Academically, I was beyond prepared for Meadows; Dawson always taught their students to push themselves and to be their best, and I felt that this quality definitely helped me through my freshman year. I was terrified to leave Dawson's safe environment and everything I knew, but it turns out that because of my nine years there, it wasn't as difficult as I thought to move to Meadows."

- Alexis Ross, '10

"My first year of high school at Thacher, a boarding school in Ojai, CA, was incredible. Although nothing could have completely prepared me for boarding school life, Dawson did a great job. Even though the transition to dorm life was tough, the transition to more rigorous academics was a breeze. Mr. Martin and Mr. Browne's English classes well prepared me, and Dawson's science program prepared me to do the best work possible in Thacher's physics class, and I received a physics commendation at the end of the year. Without Dawson, my first year of high school would not have been as enjoyable."

- Pascal Cevaer-Corey, '10



"Originally, going to St. Paul's, I was nervous and scared to leave the protection and familiarity of home. And I probably will not be able to recognize what St. Paul's has truly done for me until long after graduation. So far, I can say this much: as part of this community, I have been more confident about who I am — St. Paul's helped me identify certain strengths I never knew I had. I never really considered languages to be a forte of mine until I came here; I never thought I

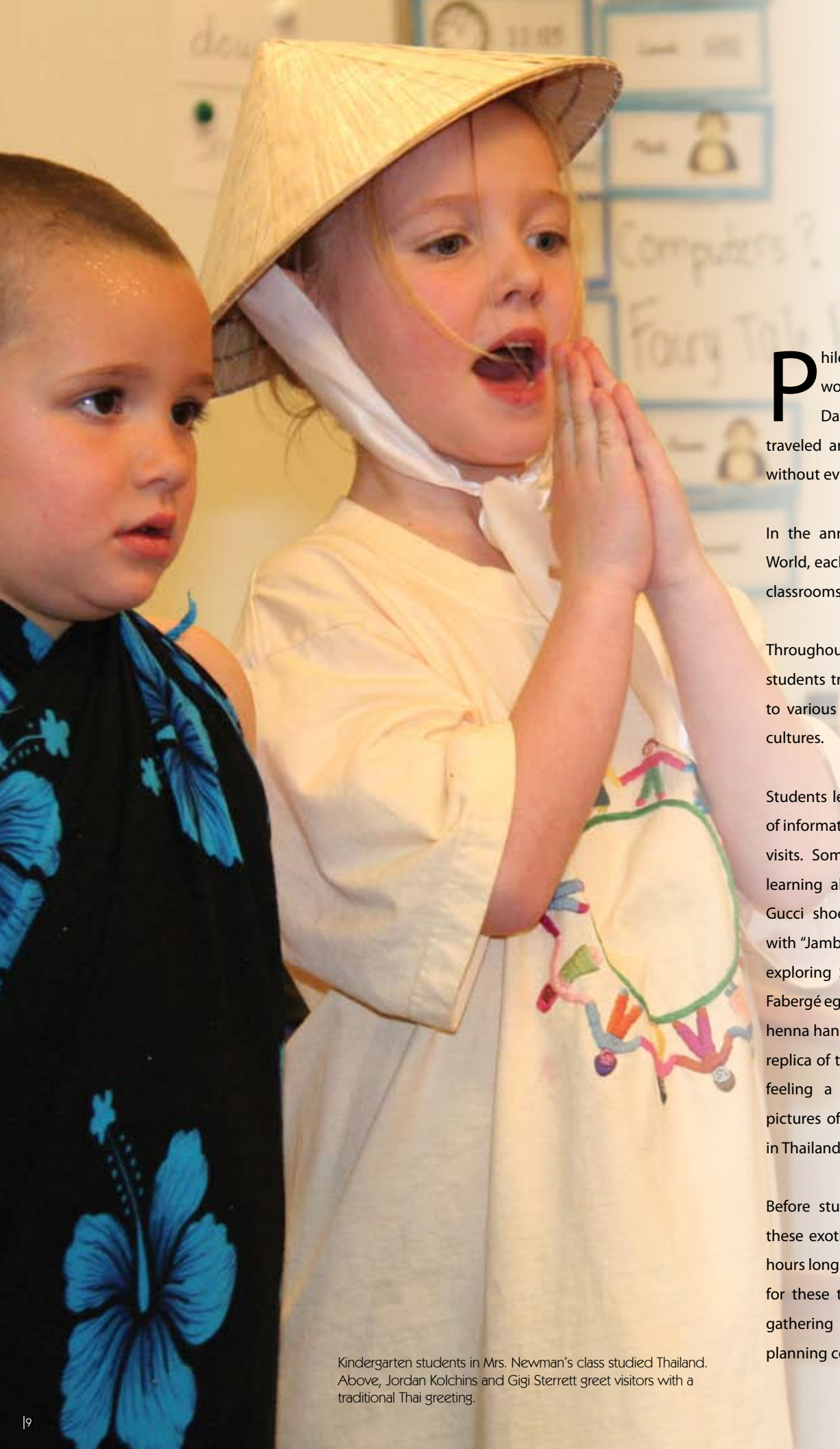
had the courage to do public speaking. Yet, next year I will be taking two languages, and debate has been one of the most amazing experiences here. Like Dawson, I feel St. Paul's has brought out the best of me, honing my strengths and better defining who I am." - Giles Bischoff, '10

"Preconceived notions of drugs, violence, and an impersonal experience echoed through the minds of Dawson students when I mentioned I would be attending public school. Nothing could be farther from the truth! I have found that my freshman year at Clark High School was the most open, kind, and accepting of any experience I could have imagined. Since the first day, my recognition as a valued member of the Clark Orchestra brought me into a social group and a second home in which to bond. At the same time, I found the schoolwork challenging and engaging. With conviction, I can say that Dawson prepared me well for an amazing first year of high school!"

-Michael Kwok, '10



Don't forget to check out our Dawson Alumni Facebook page: [facebook.com/dawsonalumni](https://www.facebook.com/dawsonalumni)



CÉL

A R O

Phileas Fogg traveled around the world in 80 days by way of train. Dawson's Lower School students traveled around the world in one week without even leaving the building!

In the annual Celebrations Around the World, each grade level transformed their classrooms into different countries.

Throughout the course of the week, students traveled with passports in-hand to various countries to experience other cultures.

Students left each country with a wealth of information and fond memories of their visits. Some of those memories included: learning all about Prada handbags and Gucci shoes in Italy; being entertained with "Jambo," a traditional song in Kenya; exploring Siberian Tigers and the art of Fabergé eggs in Russia; getting an intricate henna hand tattoo in India; seeing a small replica of the Trojan Horse in Greece; and feeling a little claustrophobic viewing pictures of a very crowded water market in Thailand. Whew, what an expedition!

Before students were whisked away to these exotic places, teachers spent many hours long before school began preparing for these trips, selecting their countries, gathering resources and research, and planning costumes and other details.

Kindergarten students in Mrs. Newman's class studied Thailand. Above, Jordan Kolchins and Gigi Sterrett greet visitors with a traditional Thai greeting.

CELEBRATIONS UNDER THE WORLD

By Tammy Miles, Curriculum Coordinator

In late February, students began exploring essential questions about culture, people, places and environments.

During Celebrations Around the World, students took ownership of their learning. Each was given the opportunity to hone in on a specific area of interest and deeply research this area. These ranged from food to clothing and fashion, to the animals native to that region, to arts and crafts.

When visiting each country, students learned things that one never finds through a quick internet search. They also informed their audiences by creating maps, travel brochures, posters and graphs, and performing oral presentations, short songs and dances.

What makes this unit so compelling is the rich integration of literacy, social studies, technology, research and the arts. Faculty members collaborate on many levels during the planning stages, learning from each other.

During the week of travels, there is a flurry of excitement in the air as students prepare to showcase their knowledge with Lower School peers, family, friends, and the School community.

"Celebrations Around the World gives our students an opportunity to study various countries to increase awareness and appreciation of different cultures," said Janet Ishkanian, Head of Lower School. "We want our students to be able to see beyond themselves, and by exposing

students to different countries, we hope to 'open their eyes' and give our students a memorable experience."

She continued, "It's a great way to teach differences and similarities among cultures, which is crucial in having students understand our world."

Indeed, the students of Dawson's Lower School came away from this unit with a new appreciation of various cultures, peoples and places, as well as wonderful memories of the experience. The unit was intense, the students worked hard, and, like Phileas Fogg, each and every student felt a sense of accomplishment. ■



Fourth graders in Mrs. Lopez's class perform "Jambo," a traditional Kenyan song. (left to right: Ethan Ben-Rey, Sam Kaplan, Adrik Lazarou and Kainoa Mossler).



Second graders in Mrs. Jacobsen's class (left to right) Lily Uhm, Masden Sterrett and Reese Rosebeck, studied Greece, where they taught peers about the Trojan Horse, among many other things.



Making a Difference in the Community

Contributing Authors: Rita Marie Bioni, Cheri Garner & Amanda Murray-Musgrave

“The best way to
find yourself is to
lose yourself in the
service of others.”

— Mohandas Gandhi

Pictured above: Participants in the St. Baldrick's event gathered for a group photo after having their heads shaved to raise money to fund research for childhood cancer.

Dawson believes it is important for students to contribute to their community through service to others. Community service is essential for developing an understanding of the interdependence of society, and students in all grades participate in community activities to broaden their awareness of volunteer opportunities.

Each year, individual divisions choose an area of concern on which to focus its community service activities. This year, Early Childhood students focused on animal welfare, Lower School students focused on hunger, and students in Middle School focused on health.

In October, each ECEC classroom adopted an endangered animal species from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), which gave each classroom a plush animal and information packet. The students studied their animal's characteristics, habitat, diet and reasons why it is endangered. The students continued to study their endangered animals throughout the school year.

During the holiday season, Early Childhood collected items for animals in need at the

Nevada Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NSPCA). The ECEC collected blankets, bleach, soap, toys, bedding, towels, paper products and food for the no-kill shelter. A representative from the NSPCA educated the students about animals and how to care for them. She also talked with them about how to help return lost dogs and the importance of microchipping (the insertion of a microchip under the skin) their pets for identification purposes.

“The purpose of community service in Early Childhood is not only to help others, but also to educate our students about the needs within their own community and to show them that, even though they are very young, they can make a difference,” said Tara Hall, Head of Early Childhood Education.

In April, representatives from the Those Left Behind Foundation visited the ECEC students with one of their therapy dogs. The Foundation provides homes for pets of people entering assisted living facilities or hospice care. It also rescues animals who have been abandoned and/or abused, as well as providing therapy dogs to work with special needs children.

Following the visit, the ECEC hosted a bake sale and silent auction fundraiser for the Those Left Behind Foundation. Each classroom painted a portrait of their adopted WWF animal, and these were sold in the silent auction. All told, the ECEC Bake Sale & Silent

Auction raised over \$1,900 dollars for the Those Left Behind Foundation.

In conjunction with their theme of hunger, Lower School students embraced the Rex Bell Backpack Project again this year. Rex Bell is a Title 1 elementary school in Las Vegas with 82 percent of students living below the poverty line. Many Rex Bell students receive their main meal at school, which means they have less to eat during school holidays.

Students collected canned goods, healthy snacks, single serving juices, puddings, ravioli, macaroni and cheese, and cereals. They took turns packing the food in backpacks that were also donated for the project. The backpacks were distributed to Rex Bell students prior to the Thanksgiving break.

In the Spring, Lower School focused on the nutritional needs of infants and small children who receive services from Safe Nest, which provides shelter, food, clothing, counseling, education and other services to families in domestic abuse situations.

Kindergarten students collected baby food, diapers and wipes; first and second graders collected individually wrapped snacks; and third and fourth graders brought in canned and boxed foods.

“I strongly believe to whom much is given, much should be expected. I’m inspired by the generosity and commitment to service by Dawson students and families.”

-Michael Imperi, headmaster

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Marley Jones, Tyler Albano and Lauren Canda pet their new furry friend, brought to the ECEC by a representative from the NSPCA.



Lower School students pose with Mrs. Aurbach and Ms. Bioni among the Rex Bell Backpack Project donations.

Making a Difference in the Community

Continued from previous page

Middle School students focused on the theme of health this year. Their biggest fundraiser was a head shaving event for St. Baldrick's, a nonprofit organization that funds research to cure childhood cancer. The Dawson community had more than 62 shavees sign up and raised more than \$89,000 for St. Baldrick's, making the School the top fundraising middle school in the nation in the history of St. Baldrick's, which began in 2000.

Initially, the goal was set at \$17,000 – what many thought was an admirable goal for the Dawson community. Organizers were amazed when they quickly surpassed the goal several weeks prior to the event.

“We were thrilled at the level of support we received from our students, parents, teachers, and community partners. The event exceeded our expectations in every way,” said Cheri Garner, Dawson fifth-grade teacher and event organizer.

Even Headmaster Michael Imperi decided to shave his head when the fundraising total surpassed \$84,000 to make Dawson the top fundraising middle school in the nation. “When faced with the opportunity to push us over the top, it was an easy decision to shave,” said Imperi.



Dawson students, faculty and parents participated in a 5K run to benefit the Nevada Cancer Institute.

In addition to their support of the St. Baldrick's Foundation, students raised more than \$7,000 by participating in the Nevada Cancer Institute's 5K run in October. An additional \$300 was added for the Middle School's "Think Pink" day, where students purchased pink shirts to show support and bring awareness to breast cancer.

Spearheaded by two Dawson Middle School students, Edward Rastgoo and Ryan Blount, the H₂O Project raised funds to help provide clean water in Africa. Students sold snacks and refreshments after school to reach their goal of \$4,000 to build a well in an African village.

While community service has always been important at Dawson, efforts have steadily increased through the past few years, with this year being the most successful year of community service thus far.

“I strongly believe to whom much is given, much should be expected. I'm inspired by the generosity and commitment to service by Dawson students and families,” said Imperi. ■



Pre-K student Stella Gray enjoys a treat at the ECEC Bake Sale & Silent Auction, which raised more than \$1,900 for the Those Left Behind Foundation.

Reach for the STARS AT CRYSTALS

This year's seventh annual Reach for the Stars Gala raised more than \$184,000 for Dawson.

More than 250 attendees enjoyed gourmet food and live music at Wolfgang Puck Cucina and Pizzeria at Crystals in CityCenter. Popular live auction items included the Headmaster for a Day, first-in-line carpool passes, the Dawson Wine Cellar, a pitching clinic with Hall of Famer Greg Maddux, a culinary all-star dinner party, a private tour of the Nethercutt Museum, poker lessons from pro-player Howard Lederer, and a weekend trip to Napa.

A highlight of the evening was the Dawson Treasure Chest, which contained \$3,000 cash. Dawson friend Toni Rose held the lucky key that unlocked the coveted treasure.

Nearing the close of the event, attendees raised their paddles high during the Paddle Raiser to generously donate a total of \$11,500 for the purchase of five flat screen televisions to be placed throughout the School to enhance communications. These screens will provide slide shows of events, videos and important school announcements.

"We are grateful to the parents and friends who attend the Gala in support of the School. It's their participation that makes the night a true success," said Headmaster Imperi. ■



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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Southern Wine and Spirits of Nevada
Shift4 Corporation

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Suzie & Howard Lederer
Dana & Anne White

BRONZE SPONSORS \$5,000

Fletcher Jones III, *Fletcher Jones A Family of Fine Dealerships*
Heather & Jim Murren
Helen & Jack Nethercutt, *Merle Norman Cosmetics*
Anne Mazzola & Russell Rosenblum
Laila & Anthony Spiegel

TABLE SPONSORS \$2,000

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This print was created by Theo Bonding, pre-k. He drew on a foam printing plate, rolled the foam block with ink and then transferred the print to paper.



Rebecca Paik, third grade, created and painted this piece in ceramics class.



This painting was done by Elaine Zhang, second grade.



These colorful flowers on canvas were painted by Izabella Tu, kindergarten.



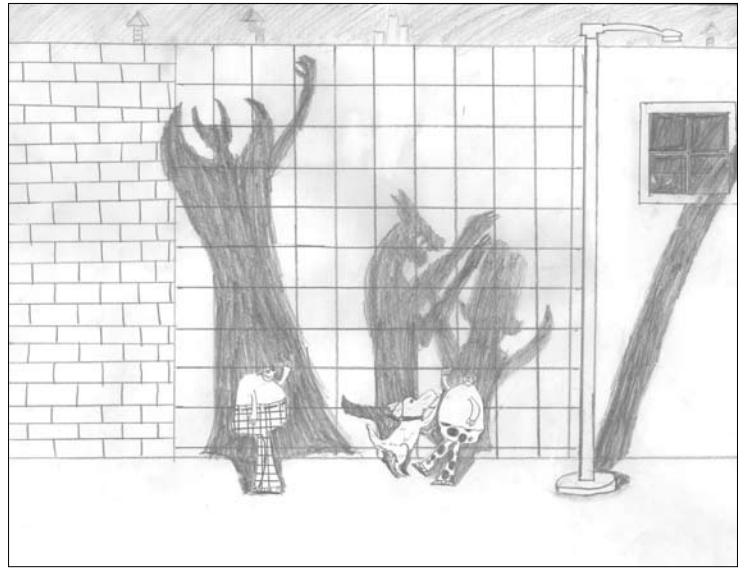
Chase Maddux, eighth grade, took this digital photo entitled "Spikes."



Pre-K students drew on a foam printing plate, rolled the foam block with ink and transferred the print to paper. This print was created by Onah Nwapa.



Sixth graders Sabrina Altermann, Gigi Bonanno, Jackson Langford, Drayson Little, Edward Rastgoo, Lukas Sandoval and Ben Student created this face using their hands in a team-building exercise in Mr. Clemson's advisory class.



Andrew Jayne, seventh grade, created this pencil drawing with a focus on shadows.



Chinaza Politis, first grade, used a cardboard and a layered painting technique to create this masterpiece.



This painting on canvas was created by Emma Crawford, kindergarten.

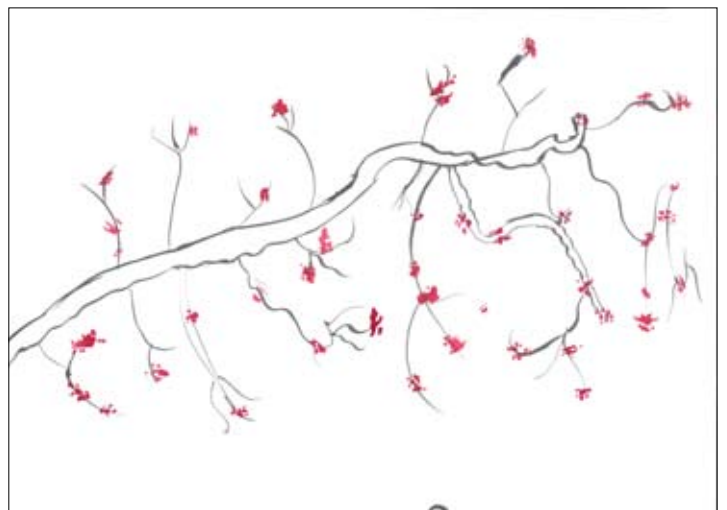
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Spencer Henry, eighth grade, created these toucans using colored pencils and shading to show texture.



This photograph was taken by Kara Hamrick, sixth grade.



This Chinese plum tree was painted by Reese Rosebeck, second grade.