



ROUND TABLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF MASON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Charleston, SC

SPRING 2016

FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL



MASON PREP'S TRACK RECORD

with academics speaks for itself, with over a thousand successful graduates across our state and nation and even overseas. We have produced valedictorians at several local high schools, and our alumni have attended colleges such as Stanford and Duke, Ivy League universities, and two service academies. Just this year, nearly 60% of our eighth grade students applying to the highly competitive Academic Magnet High School

were accepted, leaving our school once again with nearly twice the county-wide acceptance rate. In addition, nine of our seventh graders achieved state recognition from Duke's Talent Identification Program (TIP) by scoring at or above the 50th percentile on the SAT or ACT compared to high school juniors and seniors! However, student life at Mason Prep is enhanced by what takes place outside of the typical academic classes.

During the late winter and early spring of 2016, Mason Prep students were exposed to a variety of experiences that are hallmarks of an independent school education. In February, our eighth graders capped off their service learning projects by demonstrating enrichment toys for dogs and cats to representatives from the Charleston Animal Society. While watching our students explain their contraptions and how they would stimulate and engage the animals, two of our guests from the local nonprofit were moved to tears. The creativity and empathy involved in this project aren't measured by any state-mandated standardized tests, but they are incredibly important parts of the Mason Prep curriculum.

Elsewhere in this issue of the Round Table, you will read about Dr. Carol Maynard and our Drama productions that she writes and directs. This year's performance of *Shaking Up Shakespeare* was one of our best plays ever. I had the pleasure of experiencing the production as a "Drama dad" for the first time this year, and it was a thrill to watch my daughter practice for months, develop her acting and speaking abilities, build her confidence, and be rewarded for her hard work through the satisfaction of a job well done. Dr. Maynard attests to the value for her cast of being "a part of something that is bigger than themselves." This theme shows up over and over again at Mason Prep, not only in our Drama productions, but also in our service learning projects and on our athletic teams. Our students are fortunate that Mason Prep is the right size to provide them with so many of these opportunities.

Finally, I once again enjoyed spending a week in our nation's capital with our eighth graders in March. Our students have been prepared well through their Mason Prep careers with the background knowledge about the people and events involved in the monuments, memorials, and museums that they visit. Just as important to me, though, is the time spent on the bus each day as we travel between our hotel and downtown Washington. I consider it a privilege to be able to weave together with our students the strands connecting the places we have visited, expanding on the themes of our nation's civil rights struggles, the sacrifices made by our soldiers buried at Arlington National Cemetery, the incredible human potential on display at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museums, and the powerful message of "Never Again" that resonates after a visit to the Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Many of our alumni reminisce fondly about their participation in a drama cast or their own class trips to Washington, the North Carolina mountains, Camp St. Christopher, Florida, or EarthShine. Although academics is rightfully the focus of the Mason Prep curriculum, the experiences outside of our classrooms are crucial in the development of the character and citizenship for which our students and graduates are known.

A FEW QUICK FACTS	nearly 60% of 8th graders applying to Academic Magnet High School were accepted (nearly twice the county-wide acceptance rate)	graduates have been <i>valedictorians</i> at several local high schools	9 7th graders achieved state recognition from Duke's Talent Identification Program by scoring at or above the 50th percentile on the SAT or ACT compared to high school juniors and seniors
alumni have attended colleges such as Stanford and Duke, Ivy League universities, and two service academies			



3rd Quarter

STUDENT HONORS

HEADMASTER'S LIST

Students with no subject grade below 93 for that reporting period.

5th grade:

Hayes Averill, Mateu Bordas, Bea Criscuolo, Georgia Dempsey, Eliza Eckert, Marley Eckert, Gannon Gottlieb, Jonah Haller, Jack Houseal, Anna Hope Jordan, Jake Koster, Owen Kreutner, Peyton Maney, Alexis Manos, Daniel McFee, Shiv Mehta, Elizabeth Mood, Katherine Nguyen, Andrew Nichols, Martha Noble, Gracie Philp, Hannah Roark, Jonathan Savage, Darden Shuman, Alex Skipper, Susanna Snider, Holden Teufel, Pierson Tran

6th grade:

Raegan Badger, Claudia Baicu, Caleb Cayouette, Bowen Enright, Anna Graves, Jacob Hochman, Lauren Huser, Alma Lutas, Zoe Mintz, Jake Myers, Colin Philp, Ella Schar, Cathryn Shippee, Zachary Skipper, Ella Small, Hope-Elaine Stowell, Claire Vaughan

7th grade:

Haley Bryan, Ryan Campbell, Anna Cook, Eliza Cook, Mills Jordan, Eshani Mehta, Mary Wallace Rainero, Amelia Stemple, Porter Zach

8th grade:

Amanda Beall, Ashleigh Anne Binz, Ansley Branson, Hampton Gehlken, Rebecca Hair, Lily Hambric, Erin Littlejohn, Maria Lutas, Piper Monk, Daniel Nichols, Matthew Sease, Sophia Wilson

FACULTY LIST

Students who maintain an overall average of 93 or higher with no subject grade lower than an 85.

5th grade:

Harris Ayers, Emily Benasutti, Neil Brown, Caroline Cochran, Kelly Enright, Laura Hamilton, Will Meany, Elizabeth Mood, Will Popelka

6th grade:

Charley Bernstein, Lilly Bridges, Sophia Colby, Callie Costa, Ansley Gianoukos, Kaitlyn Hamilton, Thomas Hilton, William Jones, Robert Mallard, Elliott Sanders, Gunnar Schachte, Leah Zimlich

7th grade:

Avery Crymes, Spiro Fokas, Diego Forte, Mackenzie Knapp, Mary Clare Kreutner, Emily Miller, Sophie Nguyen, Bailey Ohl, Lucy Oxford, Maehler Purcell, Caroline Stemple

8th grade:

Otto DeMuth, Elizabeth Edwards, Sam Morrow, Luke Noble, Matthew Roark, Jacob Schar, Cameron Shippee, Addison Stowell, Christie Tran, Sam Trouche, Mary Cathryn Wolfert

HONOR ROLL

Students who maintain an overall average of 90-92 with no subject grade lower than an 85.

5th grade:

Jessica Klump, Jasper Mann, Molly Stafford, Jackson Turrentine, Evan Waldeck

6th grade:

Nicholas Brown, Wallace Pettus, Trad Turrentine, Evie Wells

7th grade:

Jackson Ayers, Ryan Rogers, Ethan Teufel

8th grade:

Reilly Keith, John David Key, Ian Laro, Celia Mood, Jack Popelka

NICE KNIGHTS

Piper Monk, Ellen Baker, Jake Myers, Matt Boulware, Liles Fordney, Sam Morrow, Harper Warrick, Anna Hope Jordan, Martha-Anne Johrendt, Anna Cook, Caleb Bryan, Garrett Colby, Jocy Seben, McGill Woodward, Hampton Turrentine, Thomas Hilton, Eli Sherman, Ben Plunkett, Talula Enright, Will Popelka, TJ Ockerman, Jay Bearden, Zachary Dacuba, Vito Scarafle, Sims Ervin, Anna Simmons, Sophia Wolfe, Gracie Philp, Noah Bryant, Will Craig, Worth Kiger, KK Wise, Miles Skukan, Leah Zimlich, Lucy Oxford, Felix Hagar, Mary Cathryn Wolfert, Simmons Dority, Neil Brown, Grayson Massengill, Ella Winkler, Brison Shaddrix

CREATIVE WRITING

Nicholas Leite, Ellen Michael Rowell, Helms Sander, Leah Bagg, Liam Jones, Ellie Plunkett, Campbell Stryker, Talula Enright, Brooks Wetmore, Maddie Waldeck, Isabella Ragucci, Mary Gail Riley, Cole Prochazka, Benjamin Brock, Daniel McFee, Kelly Enright, Katherine Nguyen, Hannah Roark, Jake Myers, Zach Skipper, Sophia Colby, Raegan Badger, Eliza Cook, Anna Cook, Emily Miller, Mills Jordan, Lily Hambric, Maria Lutas, Sophia Wilson, Piper Monk



DRAMA - A STANDOUT PROGRAM FOR MASON PREP STUDENTS

Our drama students put on a wonderful production of *Shaking Up Shakespeare* this spring. Drama at Mason Prep is led by Dr. Carol Maynard, who has been putting on plays at Mason Prep for nearly 30 years. It all started when the school added the 7th and 8th grades and Dr. Maynard was teaching both GVC (Grammar, Vocabulary and Composition) and Literature. Dr. Maynard explains, “We were studying *Our Town*, and the students asked if we could perform the play for the school. It was their idea. The students enjoyed it so much that Mrs. Disher, the headmistress at the time who soon started our Middle School Exploratory program, made Drama an Exploratory class.”

Dr. Maynard has written most of the plays herself. “I have adapted works of Shakespeare and done spoofs of Shakespeare. I have always thought that, if I didn’t care so much about literary worth, it would be so much easier. It is a labor of love, but I believe it has taught the kids a great deal.” She adds, “When I write a play I think, ‘Can I float this boat? Do I have students who can play these parts? Will the students

enjoy playing these parts?’ I also think about the audience, which ranges from 1st graders to parents! I know the younger children will enjoy the costumes and the more physical comedy, but I also consider whether or not the 8th graders are going to understand and appreciate it.”

Typically, 60 students try out for the play each year. “I think the word is out that we have fun in Drama,” she says. “We have class three times a week and laugh during nearly every one. I love that the students are not graded because this gives them an opportunity to learn in a completely different way.”

What does Dr. Maynard believe Drama teaches our students? “It teaches them so many things – communication, expression, having a sense of confidence in presenting yourself to others. It teaches them empathy, how to understand someone else’s feelings. They learn how to work in a group and meet deadlines. They get to be a part of something that is bigger than themselves. They get to try something they may not have tried otherwise. Hopefully, we make a piece of art and they take with them a beautiful memory.”

SHAKING UP SHAKESPEARE

Written & Directed by Carol Maynard

Cast in Order of Appearance

Greeter.....Sophia Wilson
 Zach.....Hampton Gehlken
 Jack.....Cameron Shippee
 Mother.....Rebecca Hair
 Mr. Sandman.....J.D. Wise
 Dream Ballerina.....Sophie Nguyen
 Annie.....Mary Cathryn Wolfert
 Ms. Wilson.....Amanda Beall
 Witch #1.....Maria Lutas
 Witch #2.....Mackenzie Knapp
 Witch #3..... Hannah Wise
 Hamlet.....Sam Trouche
 Ghost.....Daniel Nichols
 Ophelia.....Lily Hambric
 Benvolio.....T.J. Ockerman
 Juliet.....Avery Crymes
 Romeo.....Charlie Volpe
 King Lear.....Ryan Campbell
 Fool.....Ashleigh Anne Binz
 Lady Macbeth.....Lily Hambric
 Peaseblossom.....Mary Clare Kreutner
 Mustardseed.....Eliza Cook
 Puck.....Sophia Wilson
 Othello.....John David Key
 Desdemona..... Erin Littlejohn
 Falstaff.....Reilly Keith
 Mistress Quickly.....Piper Monk
 Wall.....Matthew Sease
 Pyramus.....Cameron Shippee
 Thisbe.....Sam Trouche
 Stage Managers: Rebecca Hair, Addison
 Stowell, John David Key & Matthew Sease
 Sound: Jack Popelka
 Title Banner: Emily Miller

“The drama program is my heart. In my professional life, it’s the thing I love the best.”

- DR. CAROL MAYNARD

“My favorite part was when the guy [Pyramus] stabbed himself and died in a crazy way.”

- PATRICK VERNER, 2ND GRADE

(Patrick’s answer was accompanied by a re-enactment of the death scene!)

“My favorite part of participating in the play was seeing the talent of my classmates, like J.D. singing and Sophie dancing.”

- SOPHIA WILSON, 8TH GRADE





SUPPORTING MASON PREP

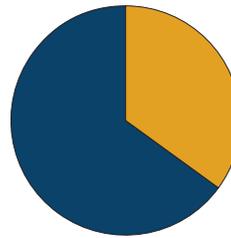
YOUR ANNUAL FUND PARTICIPATION IS CRITICAL

Did you know that participation in our Annual Fund affects our school? Beyond total dollars raised, healthy participation is a sign that our parents and supporters stand behind Mason Prep and believe in its mission. Every level of support is valued and appreciated, and every new gift helps our participation grow!

A high participation percentage - especially among parents - is critical.

- It puts the school in a strong position with our lenders, signaling that the school is stable and backed by its families.
- It makes the school more attractive to donors – individual, corporate and foundations. These donors look to Mason Prep’s closest constituents to gauge their passion for the school - active supporters attract new supporters. With the Mason Prep Foundation coming online to help find and approach donors outside of the traditional “Mason Prep family,” this is even more important.

Parent Participation = 35%



*Help Us Reach
100%
Parent
Participation
by May 31!*

Your participation reflects your belief in all that happens at Mason Prep.

ANNUAL FUND AUCTION EVENT THANK YOU!

Thank you for your support of the Annual Fund Auction Event. With your help and generosity, we were able to raise over \$60,000 for our students!

\$60,000

“We would like to thank the Mason Prep family for your support of the Annual Fund Auction Event. It was a great night, and we hope everyone had fun while supporting our students. We were impressed by the 80’s outfits (our own included!) and are always amazed by the generosity of the Mason Prep community. Thank you!”

- JACKIE AND JEFF LARO, ANNUAL FUND CHAIRS

MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM A SUCCESS

We are thrilled to announce that the matching gift program was a huge success! During the matching gift period, which ran from January through March, we raised \$22,090 which will be matched by our generous parent donors. We cannot thank these parents enough for their generosity and continued support of Mason Prep.

Total Amount to be Matched

\$22,090

Number of Gifts Matched

105

Number of New Donors During Matching Period

50

“A heartfelt thank you to our parent donors. We appreciate not only their generosity, but also their thoughtfulness and consideration of ways to encourage our donors.”

- JOANNE STEMPLER,
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT





TEACHER EVALUATION PROCESS HAS POSITIVE IMPACT

Mason Prep is constantly looking for ways to improve our students' experience. Recently, Mrs. Jordan spearheaded an effort to develop a clear, consistent and fair measuring tool for teacher evaluations. She began by soliciting faculty volunteers to serve on a committee – a representative from the lower school, one from the middle school, and one to represent all ages. This committee worked for 14 months, researching evaluations used by schools in Charleston, in South Carolina, and across the nation, to develop the evaluation process and a rubric that would be used for evaluations. After including Mr. Kreutner's input, the plan was presented to the faculty this past August.

The evaluation process uses classroom observations by Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan as well as the teacher portfolio, which includes examples of a teacher's lesson plans, study guides, assessments, etc. Teachers are evaluated using the rubric developed by the committee which measures teacher performance in six areas (see right).

In November, Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan conducted formal observations, with one administrator visiting each teacher for an entire class period. Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan also incorporated data from their informal observations, in which they visited classes for 5-10 minutes on a regular basis. (These informal observations occur daily at Mason Prep, throughout the year.) Says Mrs. Jordan, "Mr. Kreutner and I shared feedback with teachers immediately following some of our informal visits, and they have already begun implementing new strategies in response to our notes."

In January, Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan shared their observations with each other and completed the rubrics for each faculty member. In February and March, they met with each teacher to review his or her rubric and discuss strengths and suggest areas for improvement.

During the next phase of the evaluations, teachers will set one or two goals for the 2016-17 school year. These goals will be given to Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan by the end of the current school year so that Mr. Kreutner and Mrs. Jordan can make suggestions and offer help to the teachers in working toward their goals.

"There has been a very positive response from our teachers to the evaluation process," said Mrs. Jordan. "They welcome the feedback as it allows them to grow as educators."

Equitable Learning Environment

(e.g., "Teacher demonstrates an understanding of child development and learning styles.")

High Expectation Environment

(e.g., "Teacher sets high expectations for each student and works with individual students to achieve them.")

Classroom Management

(e.g., "Teacher models respect and trust during classroom interactions with students.")

Supportive Learning Environment

(e.g., "Teacher encourages students to take risks without fear of negative feedback.")

Progress Monitoring and Feedback

(e.g., "Assigned work relates to current lessons and is corrected in class or is reviewed and returned within a reasonable time.")

Positive Reinforcement

(e.g., "Teacher incorporates positive reinforcement as part of the classroom management plan.")



"The evaluation rubric that was developed focuses on what teachers are doing in their classrooms to help their students learn."

- ROSEANN JORDAN

HOW PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTING HELPS OUR STUDENTS STAY HEALTHY

STUDENTS IN GRADES 4-8 participate in the Presidential Youth Fitness Program, which helps schools teach the importance of being active and healthy. One tool provided by the program is the FitnessGram test, which we use to evaluate students in four areas, each of which is an area of focus in our physical education classes.

1. **Muscular Strength:** This is the “power” that helps you to lift and carry heavy objects. Without muscular strength, your body would be weak and unable to keep up with the demands placed upon it.
2. **Muscular Endurance:** Endurance is the ability of your muscles to perform contractions for extended periods of time. Rather than just lifting or carrying something for a few seconds, the muscles are used for longer periods of time.
3. **Cardiovascular Endurance:** This is your body’s ability to keep up with exercise like running, jogging, swimming, cycling, and anything that forces your cardiovascular system (lungs, heart, blood vessels) to work for extended periods of time.
4. **Flexibility:** Flexibility is one of the most important, yet often overlooked, components of physical fitness. Without flexibility, the muscles and joints would grow stiff and movement would be limited as is often seen as we age.

Students complete seven activities that measure these areas, and they are able to compare their scores with the “healthy fitness zone range” for their age. The activities are: curl-ups, push-ups or flexed arm hang, trunk lift, the PACER (an aerobic capacity test), mile run, sit and reach and shoulder flexibility test. These specific activities are practiced several times during the year, and the formal testing is completed during the third quarter of school. Mrs. Mary Jo Stemple, Mason Prep’s Athletic Director, stresses that all PE activities help students get stronger in each area, saying “We incorporate our training for these tests during all of our activities and warm-ups. For example, we routinely begin classes with dynamic stretching exercises that will improve flexibility, we hold planks as part of tag games that will increase muscular strength, etc. Everything we do in PE supports these four areas of health.”

Students work with their peers during practice and testing. Students are responsible for recording their scores on their individual scorecards. Comparing their scores to the healthy fitness zone range helps students identify areas where they can set individual goals for improvement. Says Mrs. Stemple, “We are teaching students to be responsible for their bodies and their health just like we teach them to be responsible for their academic classwork and to understand that a healthy body contributes to a healthy mind.”

“We participate in the Presidential Youth Fitness Program because it is a good evaluation of an individual student’s physical health. Students learn that strength, cardio and flexibility are all important and that you need all three to be able to function at your individual capability in sports and in the variety of activities practiced in PE. We want our students to excel in all the areas of health and to take these learned skills with them to the next stage of their lives after leaving Mason Prep.”

- MARY JO STEMPLE



MASONFEST: A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR MASON PREP STUDENTS AND PARENTS

MasonFEST (Families Experiencing Science Together) is a unique, fun, educational, high quality opportunity for Mason Prep students and their parents to experience real “in the field” science together. MasonFEST is designed to immerse our students in science, giving them unique opportunities to learn from professionals who are experts in their fields. Far from typical field trips, our students are given access to places, programs and equipment not usually open to the public. MasonFEST programs are for students in grades 5-8, and students attend with a parent to create a special parent/child team experience. Past programs have ranged from visiting a gibbon refuge to dissecting sharks. This unique family science program has been in operation since 1989 and is available only to Mason Prep families.

MasonFEST is special for so many reasons!

It provides access to locations, professionals, and activities which most people - of any age - never get to experience unless they choose to major in that subject at the university level

It is authentic, real-world science, not “cookbook activities” made only to teach a particular school-level concept

It is engaging and educational for adults and students alike

It goes beyond education, providing opportunities to strengthen the parent-child bond through shared, high-quality experiences

Everything is prepared and planned; participants just have to show up and everything else is taken care of

It costs only \$25 for both parent and child
- a truly great deal!

- CINDY RENKAS, MASON PREP SCIENCE TEACHER
AND MASONFEST FOUNDER

“Our family has participated in many MasonFEST programs over the years with excitement and appreciation that we have been given this opportunity to learn about and apply science in a hands-on environment. We have gone to places that are off-limits to visitors (unless you know Ms. Renkas!), and have learned from college professors, been taught by scientists who are experts in their fields, and we have those memories and knowledge to carry with us. These experiences cannot be taught in a classroom and help instill a deeper understanding and appreciation of the natural world around us. Ms. Renkas is a master of her craft and her passion is unmatched. My husband and I consider the MasonFEST programs, diligently researched and planned by Ms. Renkas, to be one of the most rewarding and unique aspects of our children’s education at Mason Prep. These opportunities are priceless, only offered by Ms. Renkas at Mason Prep, and should be embraced by the entire Mason Prep community.”

- JAMIE MITCHUM, PARENT

“I have enjoyed learning along with Lily. I would say that my husband and I probably learn just as much as Lily on each trip. I think the children enjoy seeing their parents (and sometimes Ms. Renkas) learn something new. All of the MasonFEST activities we have attended have been geared towards both adults and children. No one is ‘spoken down to.’ Questions from students and parents are encouraged and taken seriously. The group sizes facilitate one-on-one interaction with instructors. MasonFEST activities also give Ms. Renkas a better understanding of an individual student’s interests. MasonFEST is a more active method of learning that I feel is important for students of this age as they develop their own interests and begin to see how science might fit into their future. The MasonFEST activities are a fantastic addition to classroom learning and field trips involving the entire class.”

- KIM HAMBRIC, PARENT

“I attended a recent MasonFEST and enjoyed it as much as Ryan did. We went to see the Turtle Survival Alliance facility. I think it was a great experience for the kids to learn about, see, and experience endangered species - particularly, animals they may not usually think about as being endangered or the fact that they are endangered which can have long term consequences for the earth. One turtle species we saw has never been seen in the wild, so people know very little about it or what its natural habitat should be. I think it was an interesting and fun reminder that humans are not the only ones on the planet and all species need a place to live.”

- LIA CAMPBELL, PARENT

“I attended the Turtle Survival Alliance MasonFEST. It was fun because we got to see and learn about so many different types of turtles - and we got to feed them.”

- AVERY CRYMES, 7TH GRADE

“I liked the turtle MasonFEST because we don’t see these types of turtles in the wild, but you can at this special place. It was really fun going with my dad because he loves wildlife. He knows a lot about animals, but we learned new things together.”

- SUSANNA SNIDER, 5TH GRADE



MASON

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MASON PREP FOUNDATION RECEIVES TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

“The Foundation Board has been meeting throughout the school year in an effort to complete the Foundation’s initial organizational steps. In addition, the Foundation applied for and just received from the IRS its 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. The Foundation Board has also been working closely with the Mason Prep Board of Trustees to ensure that the Foundation’s goals and initiatives that the Foundation will implement next school year are properly aligned with the longer-term strategic goals that the Mason Prep Board of Trustees is finalizing now for Mason Prep. In short, the Foundation’s sole purpose going forward will be to support the mission and strategic goals of Mason Prep and the Foundation Board is excited about the role the Foundation will be playing in that regard.”

- CHARLES JORDAN, MASON PREP FOUNDATION CHAIR

CHARLES JORDAN, Chair & Parent

JIM BUSH, Friend & Supporter of Mason Prep

MARTHA CELEK, Past Parent

RICHARD DAVIS, Past Parent & Vice-Chair, Board of Trustees

ERIK KREUTNER, Head of School

WENDY LITTLEJOHN, Parent & Treasurer, Board of Trustees

DAVID MILLER, Past Parent

ASHTON PAVLISCHEK, Faculty Representative

BILL SNOW, Past Parent

ANNE STAVRINAKIS, Alumna

JOANNE STEMPLER, Director of Marketing & Development

ANGIE TEUFEL, Parent