



New Visions in Education

FALL/WINTER 2010

Published two times a year for alumni, parents and friends of Northwest Academy



Rachael Torchia

Fundamental, (6th grade) Class Photo

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Theatrical Magic!

Arts After Hours Spotlight

Wade Willis won a Drammy Award in 2009 for Best Direction of a Musical for the production of *Into the Woods*. New to Northwest Academy's faculty this year, Willis teaches Vocal Music to 7th and 8th graders, as well as two Arts After Hours classes: Vocal Music and Musical Theatre. Willis is currently revamping the vocal music classes as well as planning two Performing Arts Showcases, scheduled for December 2010 and May 2011 to give students in music, dance and drama a chance to perform.



"The first thing I noticed is that our students are hungry to make progress. We are moving forward at a very fast pace. If students are bored, it is usually because I am not moving quickly enough, not the other way around," says Willis. "Our potential progress is limitless." According to Willis, music is emotional, physical, cerebral and spiritual. "When we make music, we are fusing the four aspects of our humanity into one experience."

NWA Junior Katy Buddeke sees this first hand in her AAH Vocal Music class with Willis. "We are learning all aspects of music, not just vocal techniques. The class offers training in

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Words from the Head of School

By Mary Vinton Folberg

Oh, what a joy it is to be in education at this school! I love the beginning of the school year and never tire of listening to the excitement of middle school students telling me what they did in their classes. I love the new-found freedom and growing maturity that our former middle school

students feel in their first week of high school. The freedom of having an off-campus pass that allows them to try out all the great food carts and eateries in the city. Budding food critics, the smells coming from their small “to go” boxes are often the hot topic of discussion in the Commons. I love when students give me their approval of a new teacher I have hired. (They always seem to know they are the ultimate evaluators and that I truly do value their feedback.) I love hearing from an English teacher swooning about a prose phrase a new 6th grader has just written, and then hearing that the same 6th grader accidentally caught a microwave on fire re-heating his lunch!

Our educational environment has more to teach these beautiful young people than how to operate a microwave...we have their curiosity to whet, their creativity to nurture, their brains to fully engage, and their imaginations to fuel. This process we call education is connecting to the intellectual, imaginative, emotional, visual, and thoughtful energy in the classroom, and it is the teacher who works that magic with our young people. Our influence on the young people we receive in the 6th grade as children, and graduate at the end of the 12th grade as confident young adults, is profound....a gift, actually, to us who are so rewarded by the ultimate growth of these students.

Newsweek's July 9th issue discusses the creativity crisis in the United States—a result of the preoccupation with standardized tests and rote memorization, at the expense of deep and imaginative thinking, of seeing relationships, of drawing inferences, of divergent and convergent thinking. And as *Newsweek* points out, this can happen in any classroom with any subject; it is not dependent on the arts. The fresh ideas and new thoughts our world so desperately needs are asserted/uttered/written on a daily basis by our students who have not lost their childhood love of learning, as well as their interest in creative pursuits. And at NWA, this creative process happens in math classes as well as poetry classes!

We are, once again, so grateful to our families for giving us the privilege of spending time with these students. And, what a joy it is to work with our incredible teachers and excited, energetic young people!

...We have their curiosity to whet, their creativity to nurture, their brains to fully engage, and their imaginations to fuel.

Announcing: Immersion Language Program

Northwest Academy & French American International School
It has just been announced that Northwest Academy and the French American International School are partnering for the 2011-12 School Year in offering immersion language programs for high school students.

French and Mandarin Immersion courses will be held at Northwest Academy's downtown location, and will be supervised by FAIS. Students attending other Portland area high schools may enroll through FAIS; for full-time students at NWA, the immersion program is covered as part of their full-time tuition plan. Courses are fully accredited and run a full school year.

[theatrical magic cont.]

... theory, as well as how to perform for an audience. Plus, we work with students from 5th grade through high school and I love mixing with students from other schools as well."

In Willis' Wednesday Arts After Hours Vocal Music class, he wants to create complete musicians whose instrument of choice is their voice. "They will study note values, tone, balance, sight reading, dynamics, and articulation while studying many genres of vocal music – from art song to jazz to classical music."

For his Musical Theatre students, Willis helps them tell a story through song. "What I love about musical theatre is that it combines singing, acting, and movement in order to tell a story. To me, that's when theatrical magic happens. Performing arts is also a good way to boost a student's self-confidence," says Willis.

Rachael Torchia

SOCCER AND INDIGENOUS LIFE IN CHIAPAS

An old and flattened soccer ball was the sole means of communication

between nine NWA high school students and a group of

ten-year-olds in the small Mexican village of La Acteal. As part of a Global Exchange Reality Tour in June 2010, these nine students joined NWA photography teacher and middle

school coordinator, Rachael Torchia for an educational exploration of the politics and human rights issues of Mexico's indigenous people.

"Our students amazed me with their ability to grasp complex world issues in a country and political situation so far removed from the Pacific Northwest," said Torchia. "This trip was designed for adults but our students showed an

excitement and empathy that surpassed their age. They all brought sketchbooks and cameras, as well as open minds and became thoughtful, intelligent and compassionate travelers."

For senior Joe Biesemeyer, the trip opened a door into the indigenous struggles he learned about first-hand from local campesino organization leaders, activists, educators, students and artisans. Through his camera lens and personal interactions, his interest was sparked and he has decided to devote his senior thesis to the indigenous rights movement in Chiapas.

Ben Saeks ('13) recalls visiting a school for indigenous youth that was completely off the grid. "The school was self sufficient and built from fallen logs," remembered Saeks. The students grew their own food, made their own shoes and even collected and filtered their own water. "I respect this resourceful way of

living and when I returned to Portland I was more conscious of my own spending habits."

Before our students left the small village, they took up a collection and made a difference for some small Mexican children...a brand new soccer ball! They left Chiapas as seasoned travelers with the confidence and curiosity to continue learning about the larger world.



NWA students Joe Biesemeyer, Avery Worthington, Michael Hill, Scott Harris, Ben Saeks, Mitch Wood, Nora Millar, Phin Worthington and Riley Hoke pose with Beatriz Aurora, a Chiapas-based painter and activist, in a gallery displaying her work.

PSSST... Do you know an exceptional student who would thrive at NWA?

Admissions season is here and NWA offers monthly First Thursday Open Houses. "The monthly open houses take the mystery out of the admissions process and give prospective parents a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the classroom," says Lainie Ettinger, Director of Admissions. "I love visiting classrooms with families and letting them see firsthand the magic that takes place when you combine small classes, engaged teachers and curious students."

Do you know someone who may be interested in NWA? Our Open Houses take place on the First Thursday of each month from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Come tour our school and learn more about NWA from parents and faculty. Call Lainie Ettinger at 503-223-3367 ext. 104 or lettinger@nwacademy.org. Private tours are also available upon request.

OPEN HOUSE:

Nov. 4, Dec. 2, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, March 3, April 7, May 5

IMPORTANT DATES:

December 1, 2010: Early Decision Admissions Application Due
February 1, 2011: Regular Admissions Application Due

Student News



Annabel Cantor

Annabel Cantor, current NWA Preparatory student (7th Grade), will appear in the title role of *The Little Prince* at Shaking The Tree Theatre. The show runs through November 13. For tickets, visit www.brownpapertickets.com. Annabel will also play the title role in the Northwest Children's Theater performance of *Annie* from December 10 through January 2, 2011.



Amber Mitchell

Amber Mitchell, a preparatory student (7th grade) will also be performing in NWCT's production of *Annie* as one of the orphans.



Kenni Revel

Kenni Revel, a NWA senior, was recognized as a National Merit Semifinalist. Kenni has been a NWA student since her sophomore year. A videographer for Blue Box Theater, Kenni also filmed rehearsals and productions of *I Am My Own Wife* and assisted in set design.

Current NWA students (and sisters) Nina, Leksi, and Nikki Kostur all have prominent roles in this year's Portland Ballet performance of *La Boutique Fantasque* which is playing Thanksgiving weekend at the Newmark Theater. Nikki will be playing the part of the lost child (the equivalent of Clara in *The Nutcracker*), Leksi will be performing the very coveted role of the white poodle and Nina has the role of a beautiful Matruschka doll.



Nina, Leksi, and Nikki Kostur

NORTHWEST ACADEMY INVITES YOU TO

CLUB CABARET RADIO CITY

A fundraiser for the NWA Scholarship Fund
Silent and Live Auction, Dinner and Student Performances

**Saturday, March 5, 2011
Portland Art Museum**

We are looking for your support!
Join us: Volunteer with us or Donate to the Auction!
Buy your tickets and reserve your table today.

Contact Laurel Keppy at 503-223-3367, ext. 103 or lkeppy@nwacademy.org

Upcoming Events...

Romeo & Juliet
December 2nd – 4th & 10th – 11th at 7:30 pm; Dec. 5 & 12 at 5 pm
An Arts After Hours Project Theatre Winter Production featuring students from middle and high school, as well as faculty members and guest artists. Blue Box Theater, NWA
Admission: \$10 adults, \$5 students; Parent Pass \$40 for 8 shows

Winter Performing Arts Showcase
December 13th – 14th
A collaboration between the music, vocal, dance and theatre classes at Northwest Academy.



NWA Holiday Party and Student Performances
December 17th 7 – 8:00 pm
Exhibits and Performances
Buchan Building



Club Cabaret Auction, Dinner and Student Performances
March 5th

Portland Art Museum
Tickets: \$150, Sponsorships start at \$1500
Contact Laurel Keppy, 503.223.3367 x 103 or lkeppy@nwacademy.org for tickets and sponsorship opportunities



Neverwhere by Neil Gaiman
May 13th – 14th & 20th – 21st at 7:30 pm; May 15th at 5 pm
An Arts After Hours Project Theatre Spring Production
Blue Box Theater, NWA

Spring Performing Arts Showcase
May 17th – 18th
A collaboration between the music, vocal, dance and theatre classes at Northwest Academy.

Esprit: Spring Showcase of Student Talent
May 25th – 26th
Winningstad Theatre

Events are added regularly...

for complete updated information, visit www.nwacademy.org

Product Design in the Big Apple

For Northwest Academy freshman, Kia Greene, a recent summer trip to New York City meant more than excursions to the Statue of Liberty and Times Square. Enrolled in the summer program for high school students at Parsons The New School for Design, Kia chose a two-week class about product design. Her challenge: to improve an everyday object based on the current market. Kia chose a “night light” and constructed her prototype using a series of mirrors. “Most of our



models didn’t work, but just as we learn at NWA, it is the work and the process that counts. We have to think creatively to find a solution to a problem.”

“I loved the experience of living in New York with students from as far away as Hong Kong and Taiwan,” said Kia. As the youngest student in the class, Kia was constantly in the company of older international students, as well as professional designers and working artists she met through her mother, Katherine Topaz. “I realized the world doesn’t end after NWA,” said Kia. “I am now enrolled in French and Mandarin and would love to travel to China next year. There is so much I can accomplish and now I have new connections and friends in other countries.”

New Staff and Faculty

Aidan Currie

Spanish 1, Algebra 2 and Earth Science

Aidan is a native Oregonian born in Bend and recently relocated to Portland. Since graduating from St. Olaf College with a degree in Environmental Studies, he has spent time living and working in South Korea, Minneapolis and Portland. Before coming to NWA, he taught English in South Korea and ran his own organic root beer business in Northfield, Minnesota. He spent the summer teaching science to 40 students from the United Arab Emirates. As an environmentalist, musician, cook, gardener and occasional visual artist, Aidan looks forward to engaging students artistically, especially in math and science.

Andy Davis

Life Science, Biology, Advanced Biology and Modern Conflicts

Andy has done extensive research on Mammary Cancer Genetics at the University of Wisconsin - Madison and Osteoporosis Risks in Men at OHSU. Additionally, he has worked in city government developing environmental policy. A graduate of both UW-Madison and the Lewis and Clark Graduate School of Education, Andy is also a sponsored rock climber, allowing him to explore new places and develop his passion for photography.

Cynthia Plank

Music

Cynthia comes to NWA with 10 years of excellence in music education. Known for her well-trained musicians, Cynthia has performed flute, trombone, vocals, drums and electric bass professionally and holds both a Bachelors and a Master's degree in music education.

Karen Meister

Fundamental Math and Pre-Calculus

Karen comes to NWA with over 10 years of experience in math education. She has taught in schools as geographically diverse as Seattle and Hawaii. A graduate of the University of Colorado, Karen has a background in surveying with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, which she currently utilizes with her company, Terra Prima Landscaping, based in Portland. Karen also teaches tango, flamenco, chess and piano outside of NWA.

Jacqueline Pitter

Systems Administrator

Jacqueline is joining NWA following an eight-year career in software development at Hewlett-Packard working on Macintosh Print Drivers. A graduate of Reed College with a B.A. in Mathematics, she enjoys sailing, distance running, camping, soccer, coffee, food carts, her dogs and volunteering with the Vancouver Police Department as one of their trained volunteers.

Wade Willis

Vocal Music and Musical Theatre

Wade has been a working professional actor, director and educator for over 25 years. He is currently an adjunct professor at the University of Portland in the Theatre Arts department. Wade received his Bachelor's degree from the University of Oregon in Music Composition and Vocal Performance and a Masters of Arts in Teaching from Pacific University with certifications in Theatre Arts and Vocal Music.



Rachael Torchia



Owen Carey

NWA Welcomes New Board Members



Kristin Crain

Kristin has been involved in marketing, business development and public relations for the architecture and design field for over ten years. At ZGF Architects, she leads efforts to secure design commissions nationally and around the globe. She currently serves as Treasurer for the Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS) Oregon chapter and is an Associate Member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). She is also an instructor for the University of Oregon School of Architecture and Allied Arts' Context of the Profession course. Kristin holds degrees in both Journalism and Sociology from the University of Kansas. She loves traveling to explore other cultures, and as a Kansas Jayhawk alum, she is an avid college basketball fan.



Bernard P. Franceschi, CFP

As co-founder of McDonald Franceschi, LLC, Bernie provides comprehensive financial planning and investment advisory services. A graduate of Boston College (cum laude) with a B.S. in Accounting, Bernie also holds a Master of Divinity from Andover Newton Theological School. With a passion for the arts -- especially jazz and opera, Bernie also spends his time gardening, cooking Italian cuisine, woodworking and keeping tabs on his four adult children, all in their twenties.



Paul Holden

Paul is a graduate of Linfield College with an undergraduate degree in Accounting. Since graduation, Paul has dedicated his professional career to the healthcare industry as a public accountant and consultant serving hospitals, long-term care companies and mental health agencies on the West Coast. Paul is also a member of the Oregon Healthcare Financial Management Association's leadership team, serving currently in the role of finance education co-chair. Paul has a passion for history, specifically painting and architecture and enjoys world travel.



Betsy Meier

A native Oregonian and parent of a NWA Exploratory student (8th grade), Betsy is an active supporter of NWA, currently serving as the Club Cabaret Chairperson and the Development Committee Chair on the Board of Trustees. She also co-chaired the Outward Bound Auction and was involved in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Chris Dudley Foundation. Betsy enjoys traveling, reading, politics, spending time with her family -- and watching Duck football!

Make a Donation and Support NWA's Annual Fund...

Please join Northwest Academy's board, faculty and staff by making a gift to the Annual Fund this fall. Your contributions not only support NWA's programs, facilities and financial aid, but our students, faculty and staff as well.

Like all independent schools, NWA relies on these contributions, which this year will represent 12% of the school's overall operating budget. We are grateful for the support from our families - parents, grandparents, alumni and alumni parents. Our school is also fortunate to receive support from individuals in our community, as well as local foundations and corporations.

Many employers participate in employee-giving campaigns such as United Way or Global Giving. Some local companies also match their employees' gifts to NWA. Please check with your employer to see if a donation to NWA can be included in your workplace campaign this fall.

Thank you in advance for your tax-deductible gift to Northwest Academy this year. NWA could not thrive without the help of all our generous supporters.



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Find out why Northwest Academy students thrive.
It's how we teach. **And how they learn.**

OPEN HOUSES

**First Thursday of the month
from 11 am to 12:30 pm**

November 4, December 2, January 6
February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5

please RSVP to 503/223/3367 ex. 104
lettinger@nwacademy

NORTHWEST ACADEMY

An independent college preparatory school, grades 6-12,
located in the heart of Portland's downtown cultural center.

www.nwacademy.org



Rachael Torchia, NWA Photography Teacher