



COLUMBIA ACADEMY

Columbia Academy News

Principal Update, March 2017

RISE UP

RESPECT
INTEGRITY
STRENGTH
EXCELLENCE

UNDERSTANDING
PRIDE



Greeting from Columbia Academy,

You probably know who our grade level administrators are, but did you know:

Mr. Awsumb, our 6th grade Assistant Principal, is the son of the late Roger Awsumb, better known as Casey Jones who had a daily television for children from 1958 through 1972 in the Twin Cities. (I remember the show well.) John looks like his dad and carries on his legacy of warmth and kindness. John was a high school athlete, excelling in hockey, and has never lost his passion for local sports teams including his beloved Gophers. John is also an accomplished musician who performed in the US and Europe for many years, including opening for the likes of the Replacements and Billy Bragg. John's wife is the principal of Fridley High School and they have two children at home and one at the University of Iowa. John is our light, the world's greatest optimist—really!

Mr. Miller, our 7th grade Dean of Students, comes from a family of educators and graduated from Columbia Heights High

School. Being a young man that means he attended Columbia

Academy (Central Middle School at the time) not so very long ago. Mr. Miller was the starting quarterback for Heights and excelled in baseball as well. Matt started his career in education as a PE teacher at Washburn High School before moving back to his alma mater where he served as Dean of Students and the Athletic Director. Matt was working on the 35W bridge when it collapsed and received the Above and Beyond Citizen Honors, awarded by the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation for his heroic acts to save lives at the scene. Matt and his wife are the loving parents of three lovely young girls. Matt is the calm, still water in our topsy turvey world.

Mr Ostby, our 8th grade Assistant Principal, grew up in the far northern town of Thief River Falls. Rick was a linebacker at Bemidji State and has degrees in both PE and Special Education. Mr. Ostby worked for the Osseo school district as a teacher for the Emotionally and Behaviorally Disturbed and as a Dean and has been an Assistant Principal at Columbia Academy for the past eight years. Mr. Ostby and his wife are the proud parents of two boys. Mr. Ostby is a passionate fan of the Gophers and a favorite among our students who trust his big heart and enjoy his sense of humor. Mr. Ostby's experience in the building and his sharp mind help us to provide a fair and consistent response to misbehavior and he is also our master scheduler. Rick is our rock, solid in a crunch.

We are a team and I appreciate greatly the hard work of these three fine administrators. I can assure you that your children are in good hands.

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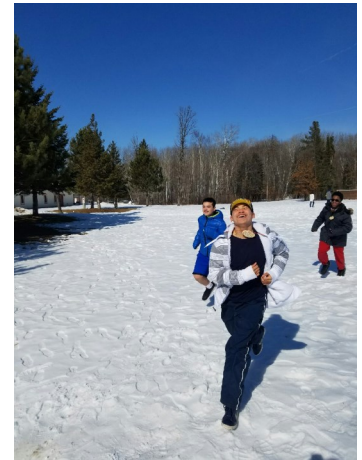
Celebrating Academic Success at CA

Columbia Academy held its second annual Academic Honors Night. With over 800 people in attendance, this was a big event for our school. We are proud of the hard work that results in academic achievement and the development of life-long habits for success. Thank you to all who attended this celebration intended to show our students the high value we place on learning. Congratulations to all of our A and B Honor Roll students who were recognized at the event,



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Speaking Spanish in the North Woods



Ms. Nelson, CA Spanish teacher, organized and led a group of 30 students to Concordia Language Academy's Spanish weekend camp. The students spent the weekend eating typical foods from Latin American countries and speaking Spanish in fun and educational activities. When students arrived, they went through customs which required them to change their dollars into "pesos", choose a weekend Spanish name, and turn in their cell phone! The students had Spanish speaking counselors in their cabins and in all their activities. Students who did a really great job of speaking only Spanish were recognized for their achievement each day. It took lots of fundraising on the part of the students and Ms. Nelson to raise enough money for the trip. Thank you to the many who donated their time and money to this great opportunity for our students to learn Spanish, get a taste of what it feels like to be immersed in another culture. We hope it will encourage them to continue to learn Spanish.



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Ms. Humpal named semi-finalist for MN Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Alison Humpal, our English Language Arts and Reading Department Chair, for reaching the semi-final round in the selection process for MN Teacher of the Year award! Ms. Humpal is a passionate advocate for meeting the needs of all students through high expectations and intensive support. In addition to being an 8th grade teacher, Ms. Humpal leads her department and our Equity task force. She also has been highly involved in helping develop and provide staff development in the area of literacy to our staff. Ms. Humpal hails from Wisconsin and roots for teams whose colors are red or green, but she also is a big fan of Columbia Academy sports and can be seen braving the elements to cheer on our teams. We are proud of Alison and to have her on the CA team.



CA Artists Display their Work

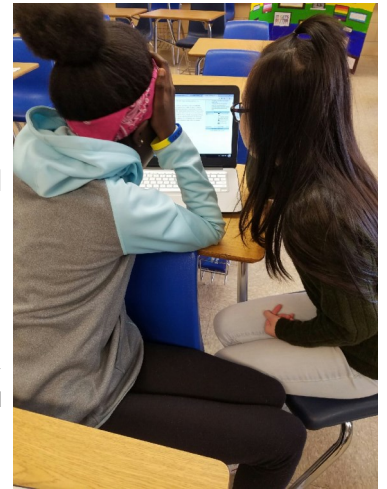
Congratulations to Lidya Kennedy for winning 2nd place in the Middle School division for her movement print! In addition, Columbia Academy art teachers Arnie Hamel and Steph Nowak each had two students entered in the annual Art Educators of Minnesota Youth Art Month Show. Congratulations to the other students selected for the show: Brianna Valle Sanchez for cubism drawing, Noemi Morales for her crowd scene painting, and Calvin Kazee for his surreal collage.

In addition, Columbia Academy had 76 pieces of student artwork in the annual Banfill-Lock Art Exhibition last month. Pictured to the right are some of the CA artists whose work was on display.



CA History Day Projects

Students at Columbia Academy have been busy working on History Day projects. Topics for History Day projects are self-selected by students around a common theme. This year's theme is Taking A Stand in History. This year 28 of our students have qualified to compete at Regionals. Many more students have put in lots of hard work both during and after school to research and create their presentations. Students can choose to do an exhibit, paper, website, performance, or a documentary. History Day provides a platform to apply research and literacy skills to go deeply into a single topic and to strive for excellence in presenting an excellent final product. We believe History Day is what education is meant to be, personal, deep, and long-lasting in its impact. Congratulations all 7th and 8th graders who participated and thank you to our Social Studies teachers who will continue to put in many more extra hours to make this a great event for our students! You can find more information on History Day by [clicking here](#).

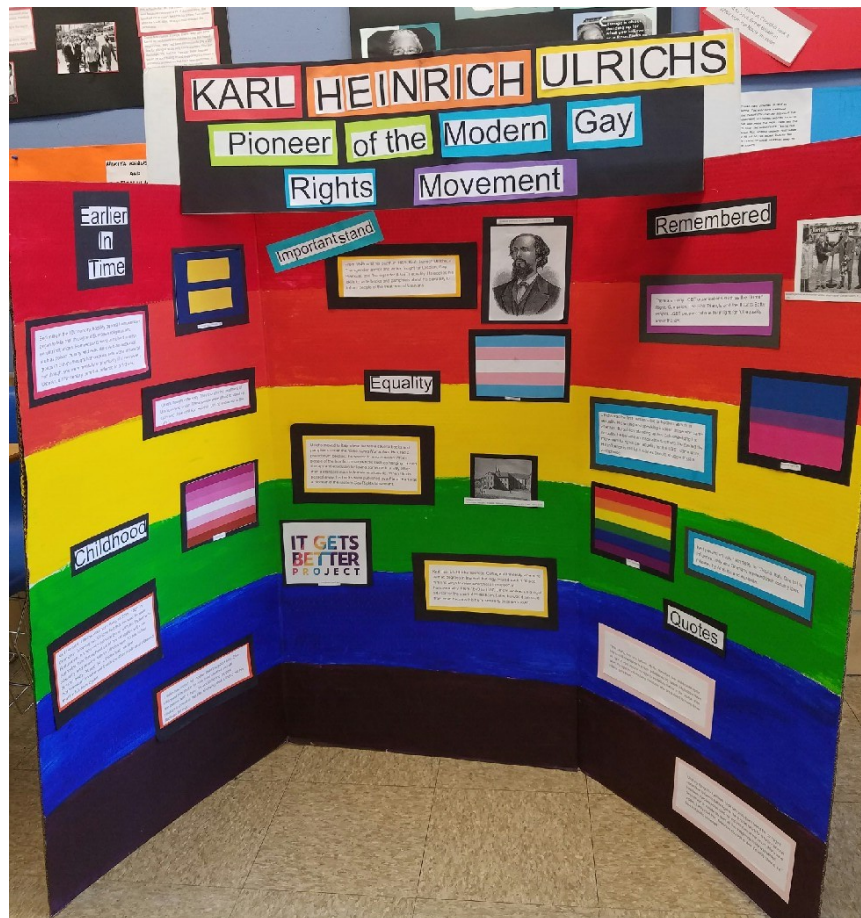


7th Graders

Aaliyah Dumoulin
Zach Severson
Amara Thompson
Jessica Dixon
Ava Sanders
Kwot Anwey
Hoang Phong,
Simon Graves
Elliot Sarkinen
Katie Loper
Kaleb Lewisa
Ellen Zeimet

8th graders:

Gael Torres
Nesma Abu Ammo
Gissel Inamagua
Jon Arias
Devani Montes
Tenzin Dolkar
Iona Burton
Valerie Barrera
Jennifer Hernandez
Nedwa Abdi
Junnior Lucero
Zachary Riemermann
Majid Ali
Levi Wooldridge Pierce



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Congratulation State Champs!

Congratulations to both the Columbia Heights 6th grade girls and 8th grade boys traveling basketball teams. Both won state titles in their divisions! We will proudly hang their banners in our gym alongside our state champs from last year's 8th grade class. Go Heights!



Conferences & Scholastic Book Fair

The second semester Parent Teacher Conferences took place on March 2nd and 7th with approximately 40% parent participation. We appreciate the many good conversations with parents who attended and look for suggestions on how we can encourage greater participation next year. The CA Scholastic Book Fair took place at the same time and sold over \$2000 worth of books. A big thank you to Media Specialist Anthony Strand worked with former CA Media Specialist Valija Springstead for all their hard work. Columbia Academy will be able to keep approximately \$700 for the purchase of additional books. We believe a good book is a powerful thing—perhaps the most effective way to help a student become a lifelong reader.



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Theater students review Nina Simone

On Feb. 22nd 8th grade theater students saw a performance of "Nina Simone: Four Women" at Park Square Theater in St. Paul (see attached photo). The play is based off of civil rights activist, Nina Simone's popular song "Four Women". Students had the opportunity to first research topics surrounding Nina Simone and the Civil Rights before seeing the play as well as create poetry inspired by her work. Students were then asked to write a review for the performance after seeing it. Here are a few excerpts from their reviews:



"The play is something you will want to see if you are interested in the dramatic genre. If you like singing, serious topics, and a little humor, this is the play for you!" De' Angelo Richards

"...if people are interested in the Civil Rights movement they should see this play because it explains the past, relates to the present, and may even foresee the future." Adnan Ozegovic

"The costume designs showed the unique personalities of each character... they used the stage space well and engaged their audience through eye contact and song." Valerie Barrera Estrada

CA plunge

An intrepid group of CA teachers took the polar plunge to raise money for the Special Olympics. With their brave run through the water, they raised close to \$1800 which will help support Unified events that bring together students in the building for fun activities that build understanding and friendship.



MCA Growth Goals

Please be talking to your child about the importance of performing at their very best on the upcoming MCAs . Growth goals have been set based on their performance last year and the work they have completed this year. Here are three important reasons for students to give their best effort:

- MCAs are used to help determine which students need additional support including summer school and other interventions
- MCAs show how your child is performing relative to other students across the state in the same grade level
- MCAs show how much growth your child is making on an annual basis. The MCAs can help you gauge your child's level of effort in school

Pick up Times

A reminder that school ends at 3:15 each day. Students who are not participating in after school activities should make their way home at this time. We understand that picking up your child is not always possible at this time, but we want to also make sure we have a safe environment in our front lobby. In April, we will begin locking the front lobby at 5:30. Students involved in after school activities have the opportunity to take the bus home at 4:30 and 5:30. Thank you for working with us to make sure your child gets home safely each day.

Sign up now for Spring Sports

We encourage our 7th and 8th graders to sign up for a spring sport. 7th and 8th graders have the opportunity to participate in Track and Field, baseball or softball, lacrosse, synchronized swimming, and boys' tennis. Sign up forms are available at the Hylander Center. Lots of fun!



CA Bow tie? We like it!