

Columbia Academy News

Principal Update, January 2017

RISE UP

RESPECT
INTEGRITY
STRENGTH
EXCELLENCE

UNDERSTANDING
PRIDE



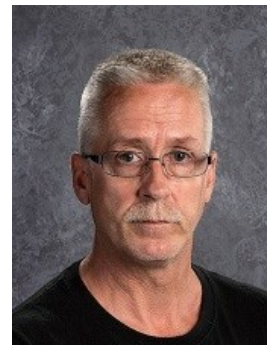
Happy New Year from Columbia Academy! We look forward to continuing to work together with you in 2017 to provide a strong education for your child. In this newsletter you will find pictures with short descriptions of some of our highlights from the past month at CA.

During the winter break, our building is largely empty but a small group continues to work on these quiet days to prepare the building for the return of students next week. Yesterday, I appreciated once again how hard our custodians work to make sure our school provides the same clean and well maintained facility to our students. I watched our custodians on hands and knees scrubbing every inch of our student restrooms. Their day included soggy tennis shoes, pants wet to the knees, sore muscles, and stiff backs. Rather than just getting it done, our crew scoured each and every inch. Certain things are a given at Columbia Academy. One of them is that our school will be spotless. It is amazing the trail that 750 students leave

in any given day; it is even more amazing how great our school looks again inside and out each and every morning.

Our custodians help build the culture of our school. During one of our Parent Teacher Conference nights, custodians Mike and Rod discovered that a teacher's car parked behind the building had a flat tire. They asked her for her key and when she came out at the end of a long day, her car was ready to go. Jim takes time on his weekends to attend CA football and traveling basketball games. Shena left a patch of grass next to our sign unmowed when she found baby bunnies this summer. Keith can be heard singing a happy tune as he drives the floor cleaner first thing in the morning.

I am proud to be in a school where the adults go the extra mile to do good work and to be kind. We are a team and each member helps make this a special place for your child. Thank you Mike, Rod, Jim, Shena, and Keith!



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Annie Jr., Wows Audiences!

The Columbia Academy Winter Musical was a major hit with two nights of large audiences. Despite dire weather warnings causing the cancellation of Friday and Saturday night shows, our Theater group delivered an amazing show on Thursday and Monday nights. Compliments to Director Tara Lorence and her team that helped our students construct an amazing set and produce an amazing show. The large caste entertained with song and dance and the timeless story of Annie. Thank you CA Caste and Crew for your hard work



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Annie Jr. continued



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2nd Quarter RISE UP Award Winner Honored

Our 2nd Quarter RISE UP award winners are pictured below. We are proud of students selected by staff to be honored for being role models for respect, integrity, strength, excellence, understanding, and pride. Our school has identified these as values that are essential to living a good life and to having a great school. Here are many of our latest group of students whose pictures will be displayed for the next quarter outside our main office.



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2nd Quarter RISE UP Award Winner continued



Rigor and relevance create engagement in CA classes



Rigor means students are all adequately challenged; relevance means students see the connections between what they are learning and the world they live in. Pre AP and Honors courses are examples of how we are committed at Columbia Academy to provide sparks in our classroom that light fires of interest that will inspire students to discover interests and capabilities. Rigor and relevance are key to making life-long learners.

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CA Girls Basketball demonstrates team spirit

The Columbia Academy girls' basketball team was a hardworking and fun team to watch this year. Many of players were fairly new to the game and made great progress in developing their basketball skills. The team had great spirit under the leadership of Coach Opatz, our 8th grade PE and Health teacher. Here is the proud team!

Columbia Academy has many other students participating in Junior Varsity and Varsity athletics at the high school including students in boys' swimming, girls' gymnastics, dance team, and girls' basketball.

CA boys' basketball will begin when students return with games January and February. The boys will be coached by CA teachers Mr. Howe and Mr. Opatz.



CA turbine engineers design, build, and test rotors



Mr. Henderson's engineering classes were busy testing their wind turbines in their final classes before the break. Students designed and built turbines that could be adjusted as they were tested by students to see what the optimum angles were for their turbines. Engineering is about adjusting based on the data collected from each iteration. Mr. Henderson has students work through the engineering process of defining the requirements, designing, building and testing, and communication. Students work on real-world projects using digital design, mathematical analysis, and group presentations. Students have the opportunity to develop these skills even further at our high school in advanced engineering classes.

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Fridays mean early morning basketball at CA

Once again, Friday start with 6:30 a.m. basketball led by CA Art teacher Arnie Hamel. Students arrive very early to have the chance to run the court with Mr. Hamel. A big thank you to Mr. Hamel who opens the gym early and provides this fun opportunity to our students. Mr. Hamel has been playing basketball with students on Friday mornings for many years now at Columbia Academy.



CA Media Center keeps literacy at the center of CA

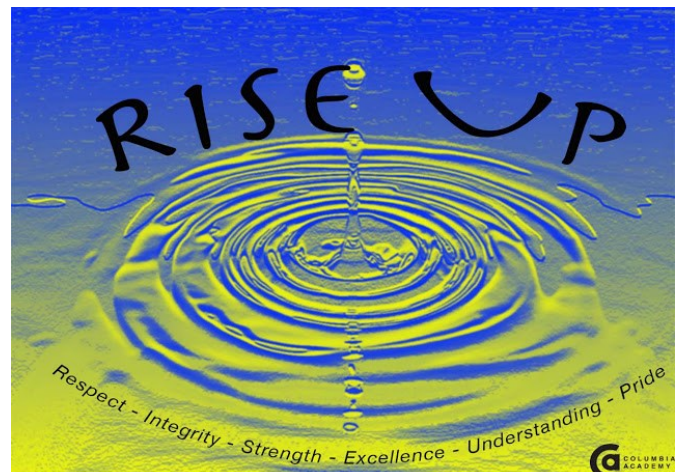
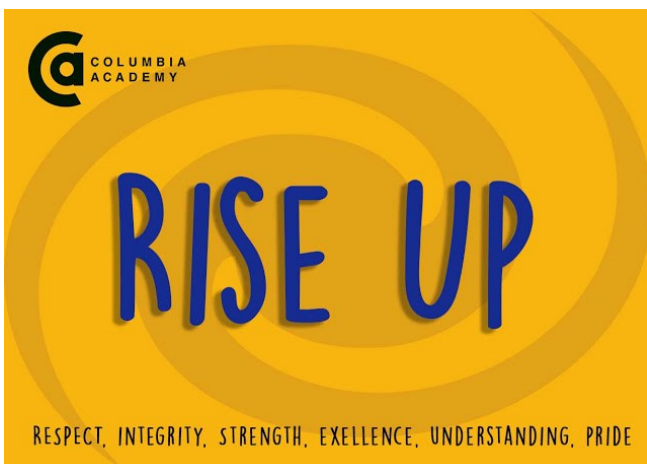


A strong literacy program needs to include access to great books. We are excited to have a new Media Specialist this year, Mr. Anthony Strand, who is an expert of matching books to students' interests. The number of books that are checked out of our library by students on a weekly basis is extraordinary. Mr. Strand works with students individually to make book recommendations but also does book talks with entire classes to highlight some of the exciting books they can find in our library. Mr. Strand works closely with our former Media Specialist, Valija Springstead, who retired two years ago and continues to return to give her time and energy to our students. Columbia Academy library buzzes with a constant flow of books—just the way we want it!

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Post Card competition

Ms. Fowler's 8th grade Media Arts students designed post cards for us to use as another way to communicate with parents. Our Parent Engagement Task Force members helped choose several winners from the many fine designs. Ms. Fowler, an accomplished Graphic Design artist herself, provides real world projects for her students including posters for events such as Annie Jr. and our school post cards.



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Installation art brings creativity to forgotten corners of CA

Interesting art work keeps appearing in Columbia Academy. Here are two more pieces from Ms. Nowak's sculpture class made specifically for corners of our Media Center. These two new pieces are part of a collection that also include sculptures at the foot of our main stairwell as well as two more hanging from above this location. Our students and staff can be seen stopping to admire the joy and creativity of each piece.



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CA Student Council Updates

Columbia Academy's Student Council organized a door decorating contest for our STAR classes around the theme of "CA—Where we all belong". Judges picked winners before our break but we plan to keep our doors decorated for the month of January. We celebrate our diverse team of students and thank our Student Council for helping us communicate this in such a colorful way!





A big thank you to Legion Post 555 for their kind gift of Honey Crisp apples for all of our teachers. They were big, juicy, and healthy and they were highly appreciated by our hard working team of teachers.

Keeping your child warm at school

Just a reminder that colder weather means students should wear warmer clothes. We require students to stay in uniform in the winter months. Options for keeping warm are buying a CA uniform fleece or sweatshirt or wearing a long sleeve sweatshirt under the uniform shirt. We do not allow students to wear their coats or hooded sweatshirts. CA sweatshirts are \$20 and CA fleeces are \$25. Both are for sale any school day here at Columbia Academy or from Embroidery is More next to the old Columbia Heights library.

Important Dates for January

January 4: Full staff meeting, 3:30
 January 9: CA Choir Concert in the PAC, 6:30
 January 10: North Park 5th graders visit CA, 9:30 – 11:00
 January 10-11: 8th graders register for High School classes (during Social Studies)
 January 11: Valley View 5th graders visit CA, 9:30 – 11:00
 January 12: 8th graders visit CHHS, approximately 9:00 – 11:00
 January 13: Highland 5th graders visit CA, 9:30 – 11:00
 January 16: MLK Day, no school
 January 17: District In-Service
 January 18-26: OLPA Math and Reading (during math and English/Reading classes)
 January 19: CA Band Concert in the PAC, 6:30
 January 26: School Dance
 January 27: No school—Full day for grading
 January 30: First Day of Quarter 3

Columbia Heights Public Schools is hiring for positions in the food services department. If you are interested please visit the employment website at <https://www.colheights.k12.mn.us/> and click on the employment tab or call HR at 763-528-4421.

Interested in helping CA students improve academically? Consider volunteering to help tutor students during the day. For more information, please call Principal Berkas 763-528-4705