

BB&N: The Link Newsletter

October 2009

Features

Spotlight Story: Renovated Beginner Space Creates Room to Explore

“I’m building a pirate ship!” Dylan Zukowski ’23 yells, wide-eyed and smiling while laying down a giant wooden block to build the “base” of his ship along the floor. Across the room a group of girls stand holding glue sticks, carefully cutting shapes and giggling as sunlight floods the wide-open space behind them.

Teachers hop from various project to project, offering guidance yet leaving just enough room for the youngest learners at BB&N to fully explore their surroundings. This is the essence of the new enhanced facilities for Beginners in the Morse Building—time and space to support the ever expanding BB&N curriculum.

“This is our very first year and we’re working towards a very current and dynamic early learning program,” said LS Director Sue Scarborough. “We really wanted to allow for exploration and more hands-on, in-depth projects. The new space is absolutely fabulous—the teachers and students are thrilled. We’re just beginning to see the possibilities!”

Completed in late August to accommodate the shift to a full-day Beginner program, the dramatic renovations include brand new classrooms that open up into one big room via moveable doors, a 168-square-foot “big blocks and dramatic play” area, art ateliers, and a shared kitchen that serves as a springboard for learning about cooking as well as science.

“The blocks area is really the focus of the room, it’s an incredible creative play area,” said Beginner teacher Shera Selzer. “BB&N is really valuing the earliest learners all the way up to the high school level.”

Project manager Cynthia Westerman ensured the space was completed on time, and said that the entire project ran smoothly.

“There were no major surprises, and we were able to finish on schedule,” Westerman said.

Redesigning the two classrooms has allowed for teachers to use the new space as one large room with shared spaces, or two smaller classrooms. Because of this change, Beginner teachers are now able to collaborate on a variety of projects and feel very united as a grade, something that has been an incredibly positive shift for the program.

“There were a lot of projects we wanted more time for, and we really wanted to make sure the children were getting the full experience,” Said Beginner teacher Christina Dello Russo. “The other huge shift is the new communal aspect—the room is not meant to be two separate classrooms. Last year while we weren’t divided as a team, we were divided by space because of the big wall in between the two rooms. Now there’s much more flow.”

Last October Beginner teachers met with Cambridge-based firm Jonathan Austin Architects to discuss plans for the new space. After several meetings and observing Beginners in their classroom setting to see what educating children at this age looks like, the architects got to work on a very carefully planned renovation that began this past June.

“We came up with ideas about the way we teach and what the space should look like and then we sat with the architects,” said Selzer. “They listened and were totally excited—they implemented everything down to the fun little details. One of the things we’re really thrilled about is how the space really honors young children.”

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the blueprints of the new space.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a full photo gallery.

Inside The Classroom: Discovering Drawing with I’man Solomon

Amidst a pencil sketch of Michael Jackson, a perfectly shaded NBA basketball, and master study representing one of Ansel Adams’ breathtaking landscapes, a brightly colored “Peace” sign hangs from the ceiling of I’man Solomon’s classroom on the Lower School campus. It is this combination of calmness and creativity that captures the essence of what it’s like to be a student in I’man’s serene art studio.

“I want you to finish your value charts first, and then you can work on your landscapes,” he says to his group of sixth graders who have Solomon for drawing as part of their seven-week rotation of the arts.

A value chart, Solomon explains, is basically a grid value of grey tones so students can explore shading and the importance of finding a light source when composing a drawing. Before beginning their master study drawings of Adam’s work, sixth graders must first practice their skills in a series of art exercises.

“I basically use exercises I learned from MFA studio art classes,” he explains. “It really allows the kids to get down the basics before they jump into a project. They seem to relax and get into it.”

As students carefully hover over their drawings, Solomon walks around the classroom offering helpful reminders and advice on various shading techniques. “Be sure to do some crosshatching and really observe your values,” Solomon says, as he puts on a Harry Potter book on tape for the students to listen to as they work. “Tipping your pencils in a certain way makes shading a little smoother.”

“I’m a student in this class,” says 6M homeroom teacher Sharon Mathieu who has been taking Solomon’s drawing class with her students for the past several weeks. “I always really loved art as a kid, and I’m excited about me joining in this rotation.”

The easy going, open door nature of Solomon’s classroom provides the perfect environment for creativity. Students quietly sketch their portraits, occasionally talking amongst themselves as they work.

“Why did the easel cross the road?” asks one student, smiling. “Because it wanted to go painting!”

This elicits several giggles including some from Ms. Mathieu, who playfully reminds students she can’t hear the Harry Potter tape playing in the background. As part of their rotation in the arts, sixth graders study drawing with Solomon for several weeks, first doing exercises and then moving into landscapes and finally portraiture studies. Solomon reminds students to bring in a black and white headshot of a person for next class.

“It can be anyone—a celebrity, your favorite sports player, a family member, a picture of yourself, anything that you find compelling,” he says.

A BB&N mainstay, Solomon has been at the School for over 20 years. A graduate of Massachusetts College of Art, he first arrived at BB&N in 1989 as the Lower School multicultural coordinator and part-time art teacher. After former art teacher Peggy Porter retired, Solomon took over teaching Lower School art full time.

“It’s great to be around the kids, see their progress through the years and just hear them talk about their lives,” he says. “It’s a lot of fun.”

BB&N Faculty Expand Horizons with Travel Grants

When English teacher Sharon Krauss tackles Dante's *Inferno* with her Upper School students this year, she'll be speaking with more authority than usual. Thanks to a BB&N faculty travel grant, Krauss was able to visit Dante's place of exile in Ravenna, Italy this summer. "I paid a disciple's visit to his tomb, and will be able to report to my students about it when I teach the *Inferno*," says Krauss.

Krauss' experience was made possible by one of BB&N's annual faculty travel grants, awarded to faculty members to provide them with resources to travel and explore areas of interest.

In addition to Ravenna, Krauss's trip served as a homecoming of sorts, allowing her to explore her great-grandfather's homeland, a place she has always felt she "belonged" to.

From an ancient baptistery in Pisa, to the town of Cannaregio, home of the first Jewish Ghetto—and from Trieste, the adopted home of writers James Joyce and Rainer Maria Rilke, all the way to the Italian Riviera vineyard towns of Cinque Terre, Krauss found intellectual and spiritual wisdom to take with her and pass along to her students.

"It's a good thing, I think, to discover that the world has places as beautiful as what we imagine," said Krauss. "I was reminded, too, that traveling is in itself a state of being—of being alert, aware—I aspire to in my daily life—a living souvenir."

Just up the coast from Krauss, French teacher Mireille Ciani spent her summer travel grant exploring Greece with her daughter, Cara. Over a two-week period, Ciani and her daughter spent three days in Athens, four days on a tour of the antique sites, and four days in the Santorini archipelago.

"The highlights on our tour were the theater at Epidauros, with its symmetry and grandeur; the temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion with a blazingly beautiful sunset behind it; the monasteries built on natural sandstone rock pillars of Meteora; the awe-inspiring ancient site of Delphi overlooking the Gulf of Corinth and a valley filled with olive and Cyprus trees," she said.

Embracing the long-standing BB&N motto, "languages are your passport to the world" Ciani relished the opportunity to explore another culture after having taught French for so long.

Meanwhile French teacher Brigitte Tournier headed southwest to the French Polynesian islands for a decidedly un-Parisian look at French culture. Traveling with her son Edward '01, Tournier spent 10 days between Tahiti, Moorea (where Captain Cook landed during his 1777 voyage), and Bora Bora.

“Tahiti exceeded my wildest expectations in that it combined a genuinely French cultural experience with all of the exoticism and indescribable beauty of the South Pacific islands,” said Tournier. “What further made this experience an unforgettable one was that I was able to share it with my son, Edward...who very much enjoyed being able to speak only French for the entire days of our trip—something he is not readily able to do in LA!”

The two spent time enjoying the local cultural and experiencing the beauty of “lush vegetation” contrasted with “volcanic peaks” and turquoise waters. “Maururu rao—‘thank you very much’ in Tahitian—to BB&N for this unique and unforgettable experience!” said Tournier.

Talented New Faculty and Staff Join BB&N

BB&N welcomes the following faculty and staff for the 2009-10 year:

Jaime Bard '98, Lower School Grade 6 English

A BB&N graduate, Jaime returns to the School as a sixth grade English teacher. She previously worked at the Longy School of Music as Chief of Staff, managing and supporting others in the achievement of their own goals, and served as Director of Admissions at the Advent School. Some of her other work experiences include teaching inner city students, hiking in the desert, and managing a music conservatory.

Karina Baum, Upper School Biology

Karina has been an Assistant Professor at Boston University for the past five years. Previously an Intern and a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Brandeis University, Karina also served as a member on the Premedical and Pre dental Advisory Board as well as the Retention and College Life Committee at Boston University. She is proficient in Spanish, Hebrew, French, and Portuguese.

Michael Bernstein, Upper School Math

Most recently, Michael taught upper school Math and coached middle school basketball at Beaver Country Day School. An Adjunct Professor at Boston University's Metropolitan College in the Computer Science Department, he was the 2008 recipient of the Class Gift Award in recognition of excellent teaching. Michael was a Software Engineer at a variety of corporations prior to entering the world of academia.

Joan Bomfim, Upper School Physics & Chemistry

For the past three years, Joan has taught AP and Honors Chemistry and managed departmental chemical inventory at the Convent of the Sacred Heart. The founder of Happy Endings—a program which tutors students in various high school subjects, including Chemistry, Algebra, Geometry, English, Biology, Earth Science, French, Spanish and U.S. History—Joan is also an avid volunteer,

participating in activities such as advisor for the Belmont Science Club, Belmont Bicycling club and National Honor Society.

Jennifer Carvalho, *Upper School Mathematics*

Jennifer arrives at BB&N after a three-year stint teaching Mathematics and coaching track at the Moses Brown School, where she also set up a sharing website for the Math department that organized hundreds of previously written assessments and activities by topics and levels. Her teaching experience expands outside the United States, as she previously taught at Colegio F.D. Roosevelt in Lima, Peru.

Christa Crewdson, *Middle School Drama*

A teacher, director, actor, and playwright, Christa most recently taught theatre to eighth graders at the Boston Latin School and Qualters Middle School. She directed a full length musical, a non-musical, and a one-act play for the state middle school drama festival, and also founded and performed in Improv Jones—the first Providence Improv Festival. She has directed numerous plays in and around the Boston area, including *Sweeney Todd*, *My Fair Lady*, *Peter Pan* and *West Side Story*.

Jackie Deysher, *Assistant Director of Alumni Affairs*

A recent graduate of Bowdoin College, Jackie was a part of the Varsity Women's Squash team and served as a member of the Young Alumni Leadership Program. Throughout her college career, Jackie interned at Christie's, Sotheby's, and the Museum of Fine Arts. Jackie learned basic Italian while studying abroad in Siena, Italy.

Jessica Dillon, *Data Analyst*

Jessica joined the External Affairs Department in May after working at BB&N as a Development Assistant for the past year. In 2006 and 2007, Jessica traveled much of the world, visiting Ireland, England, Scotland, Italy, Madagascar, Mauritius, Australia and finally New Zealand, where she worked at Auldhouse Computer Training as a Training Coordinator. Jessica also worked as an intern at The San Francisco Zoo, where she maintained 50 species and presented educational tours to school groups.

Carolina Gomez-Kramer, *Lower School Spanish*

For the past three years, Carolina has been the founder and lead teacher of *1-2-3 Spanish Together*, which is a Spanish immersion program designed to involve families in early foreign language experiential learning and play. An intern at Cultural Survival, Carolina was involved with the Guatemala Radio Project, facilitating communication with Guatemalan partners and building workshops in indigenous communities. In addition to volunteering at the Guatemala Institute for Integral Spanish and Friends of Nira Rock Urban Wild, she has also traveled to Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Columbia, and Ecuador.

Donald Johanson, *Bus Driver*

Donald comes to us from Design Systems, where he worked as a Consultant for the past 17 years. He began his career working part-time in college as a bus driver for the Vocell Bus Company, but decided to take a break from this career path after he graduated. He has also worked at First Student as a school bus driver.

Colleen Klein, *Manager of Extended School Year Programs*

Colleen has worked at BB&N as a Consultant of Auxiliary Services for the past three years, and was previously the Founder and President of ASAP4Kids—an after school activities program in private primary and secondary schools in the Boston area. In her spare time, Colleen enjoys photography and horse back riding.

Rachel Loughran, *Stewardship Coordinator*

Arriving at BB&N from the Alzheimer's Association in Watertown, M.A. where she was the Development Officer since 2005, Rachel has also worked as Associate Director of Development at Harvard Graduate School of Education. Among her numerous responsibilities at Harvard, Rachel created the *Honor A Teacher* program—a targeted fund-raising drive aimed at increasing unrestricted support for HGSE. An avid runner, Rachel has competed in several Boston Marathons, and was a group leader for Boston Marathon training as well as a coach for *New England Runner Magazine* and the Arthritis Foundation.

Meg Macri, *Database Manager*

Joining the External Affairs Department in February, Meg previously worked for Pitcairn Tours, where she provided group tours throughout the greater Boston area, and was a Communications Advisor and an Account Manager at PeopleSoft, Inc. for five years. Meg has volunteered at the Watertown Cooperative Nursery School as a Co-President and Fundraising Board Member, and at the W

Ruth McDonough, *Upper School Arabic*

Ruth began her career as an Arabic language teacher, and over the past year has been a co-facilitator of the English Conversation/ Literature Club at The New Vision Learning Center in Damascus, Syria. An avid traveler, she has studied in Amman, Jordan and Aleppo, Syria. Her interests include running, road cycling, long distance backpacking and organic gardening.

Ki Perry, *Director of Development*

Ki came to BB&N in June from the Kingsley Montessori School as the Director of Development. She was also Director of Development at the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence and Teen Voices. Ki has volunteered at The Steppingstone Foundation as a tutor and mentor and at Teen Voices, as part of the Development Committee.

Laura Prior, *Lower School Grade 3*

Laura comes to us from Greenwich Academy where she taught first and third grade for two years, in addition to tutoring reading and math weekly to first and

second grade students. As an active volunteer, Laura has been a mentor for the Foundation for Excellent Schools as well as a project volunteer, repairing homes for families in the Southern Appalachian Mountain Region. Proficient in French, she also enjoys running, tennis, hiking, and traveling.

Maura Pritchard, *Lower School Kindergarten*

A Graduate Intern in the Teacher's Training Institute program on BB&N's Lower School campus in 2005-2006, Maura returns to BB&N after working as a first Grade teacher at the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School for the past three years. She is proficient in Spanish and has served as a contracted translator at the Center for Special Child Health Services for the past seven years.

Anthony Reppucci, *Lower School Beginner Teacher*

Working in the field of education for the past 11 years, Anthony began his career at the Stein Education Center working with students with developmental disabilities. He also taught a full day preschool classroom at Kid's International School in Nagoya, Japan before teaching first grade at the Cambridge Friends School for the past three years.

Kelley Schultheis, *Middle School Science*

Kelley has spent the last ten years working with middle school students in a variety of programs. She comes to us from the Wellesley Public Schools as an eighth grade long-term substitute of Physical Science. Previously, she worked at the Museum of Science as a Middle School Program Coordinator. She has also worked as a science educator at the Catalina Island Marine Institute.

Donald Schultz, *Lower School Grade 4*

Donald comes to us from Cambridge Friends School, where he taught an academically challenging curriculum to fourth graders for the past four years. Previously, he taught two years at both the Newton Public Schools and the Dover Public Schools. He also has experience as a Human Resources Data and Production Specialist.

Sadie Sham, *Upper School All-School Receptionist*

Starting at BB&N in October, Sadie previously worked as an Editorial Assistant at *Povo.com* and as a Tour Consultant at Smithsonian Student Travel, where she was committed to developing relationships with clients to produce loyal customers. While attending University of Central Florida, Sadie started her internship position as the only freshman in the Media Relations department, which eventually progressed into a paid part-time position as a Sports Information Director. She also interviewed popular recording artist Gavin Degraw and pitched the story idea to *Axis*, where it was published.

Paige Sweet, *Middle School English*

For the past three years Paige has worked as a seventh grade English teacher at Francis W. Parker School, where she was the Middle School Community Service

Coordinator. She was also elected by her colleagues to serve as a representative on both the New Teachers Committee and Social Committee.

Angela Tabb, *Upper School Learning Specialist*

Angela has spent the past seven years teaching at the Tilton School as a Social Science teacher. In addition to coaching Ice Hockey, Soccer and Lacrosse, she is the co-founder of *Girls Fitness*, a program that promotes and develops individual fitness and lifestyle goals. In her spare time, Angela enjoys dancing, yoga, Pilates, and outdoor education.

Dottie Williams, *Library Assistant*

Dottie is a BB&N parent who has volunteered and worked at the Middle School library for several years. She previously worked at Little, Brown & Company in book editing for 17 years, and was also a Senior Editor at AOL Time Warner Book Group in Boston. In 2002, as a Freelance Editor, Dottie edited *Southern Accents on Color* and rewrote the manuscript of *Living with Kids*. In addition she has been an active volunteer in various community organizations, including the Friends of Belmont Public Library and Beacon Academy in Boston.

Wes Williams, *Upper School English*

Wes comes to BB&N from Milton Academy where he taught English to the ninth grade and Non-Fiction Essay Writing to Seniors. He has spent a majority of his career teaching in either the Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate Programs. Wes has also taught a First Year Writing Seminar class at Boston College and English and Literature classes at Chaparral High School.

Keeping You Up to Date

BB&N to be Highlighted on NBC's *Today Show*

The *Today Show*, featuring correspondent Tiki Barber, visited BB&N's football practice on September 10th to report and film a piece on how high school athletic programs are managing the issue of head safety and concussions among its athletes, with a particular focus on strategies and technology being adopted by schools to address the issue.

According to the *Today Show* producer, BB&N's varsity football team was chosen as the subject of the piece because of its track record of being a leader when it comes to vigilant and proactive management of head safety issues. "We see BB&N as an example of a school doing things the right way," said the *Today Show* producer.

The School's commitment is demonstrated very clearly by its early embrace of two important advances:

1) the computer-based ImPACT testing program, specifically designed for the

management of sports-related concussion, which has been mandatory for all grade 7-12 students for the past few years; and

2) the football team's acquisition this year of Xenith helmets for its players, equipment considered to be state-of-the-art in its use of air-filled thermoplastic shock absorbers that can accept a wide range of forces and still moderate the sudden jarring of the head that causes concussion.

During the visit, Tiki Barber interviewed Coach John Papas, several players, trainers Kathy Gruning and Chuck Richard, and Xenith's president, Dr. Vin Ferrara, a former Harvard quarterback. The BB&N players got a real kick out of hanging out with Barber (*shown above interviewing the players*), a terrific running back with the New York Giants until he retired two years ago and moved into network journalism.

The producer estimates that the air date for the report will be sometime during the week of October 5.

Ice Cream Social Kicks Off Middle School Year

Middle School students, faculty, and parents gathered last month for what has become the most delicious rite of passage known to BB&N, the ice cream social. The annual event served as the perfect chance to reacquaint with old friends, meet new ones, and make multiple visits to the homemade sundae bar expertly manned by Middle School parent volunteers.

Ninth Grade Parents Welcomed to Upper School Community

While their children were away at Bivouac, ninth grade parents enjoyed cupcakes and other desserts as a welcome to BB&N's Upper School. Many parents were eager to share stories and enjoyed a slide show of their children in the midst of their two-week adventure at Bivouac.

Chess News

As the students in BB&N's Lower and Middle Schools prepare for another great year of chess in 2009-10, [click here for a summary of 2008 highlights](#).

BB&N Remembers Cary Girod With Memorial Planting

In early September, BB&N students, faculty, and staff huddled together on a clear fall day in the garden behind Renaissance Hall, to mourn the loss of beloved Upper School math teacher Cary Girod, who died tragically over the summer in a biking accident near Raymond, Washington. Several faculty members spoke, recounting her fun-loving nature and zest for life, attributes which clearly carried over to the classroom. In honor of Cary, who was extremely passionate about

environmental awareness and a “fan of all things pretty,” community members planted bushes and bulbs in the garden. [TOP](#)

2009-10 Community Directory Updates

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to access a password-protected document listing the first round of updates for the 2009-10 BB&N Community Directory. Also, we feel compelled to note for the record that the correct phone number to reach Kim Gold, coordinator of psychological and learning support services, is 617-800-2227.

Teacher and Student Team Up for Art Publication

Upper School English and Art History teacher Rob Leith and senior Karen Su saw the fruition of an unique student-teacher collaboration this summer with the publication of Leith’s catalogue essay, *Harold B. Warren and Mount Desert Island*. Authored by Leith, and designed by Su, the 32-page, full-color pamphlet recounts the history of famous painter Harold B. Warren and his unique attachment to the island more commonly known as Maine’s Acadia National Park.

“Karen proved to be enormous fun to work with, incredibly patient, resourceful, and meticulous,” says Leith. “This was my eighth publication but the first in which I was able to work directly with the designer, and I believe it made a huge difference in the outcome, of which I am very proud.”

Working during vacations and long weekends, the effort benefited both Leith and Su.

“She also got some real world work experience and a credit in the catalogue,” said Leith. “I got much more fun out of the process and a close connection with a wonderful young person who is now one of my Art History students.”

Annual Lift-Off Dinner Sets Tone for Senior Year

3...2...1...Lift-Off! This September, senior parents and students gathered for an informal kickoff event to mark the start of the Class of 2010’s last year at BB&N. As seniors and their parents feasted at this year’s dinner, various teachers and administrators took the podium to spur on the class and allay any early jitters they might have about their final campaign at the School.

Harvard Professor and former trustee Richard Light, P ’89, ’91 served as the evening’s guest speaker and captivated students and parents alike with anecdotes and inspiring advice. Speaking of the diverse options available during senior year, Light encouraged students to stretch their boundaries.

“Try something new,” said Light. “Don’t just try get your requirements out of the way.”

Community Celebrates Iftar Dinner

The BB&N community celebrated the Islamic holy month of Ramadan on Friday, September 18, during the annual Iftar dinner. Delicious Middle Eastern fare accompanied by music and presentations made for a delightful evening celebration.

Save the Date!

One School-One World, November 14

BB&N’s triumphantly successful all-campus multicultural festival, One School-One World, returns for its eagerly awaited encore appearance on Saturday, November 14. The free event will be held from 11-2 PM at the Nicholas Athletic Center and will highlight and celebrate the depth and breadth of our student and faculty community.

One School-One World will once again take on a vibrant street-fair atmosphere, complete with a main stage, student performances; a student-run DJ booth; sports and game demos, and art work from all three campuses. The festival will offer foods reflecting the various cultures/histories of our BB&N families. All clubs, organizations, and programs have been invited to set up informational tables.

One School-One World is organized by Lewis Bryant, Director of Multicultural Services, and parent Kate O’Kelly, event producer. As Bryant described the first year of One School-One World, “The festival not only brought greater awareness of all the diversity programs and initiatives at the school, it also gave everyone a chance to celebrate our community under one roof.”

More details about the event will follow in the coming weeks. If you wish to volunteer in the event planning, please email Kate O’Kelly at klokd@yahoo.com.

Athletics Highlights from the Summer

Junior Stephanie McCaffrey has been named to the player pool of US Soccer’s national U-17 team. The forward from Winchester, Mass., is the only New England native on the 56-player roster, and will vie for a spot on the final team that will compete in the 2010 FIFA U-17 Women’s World Cup in Trinidad & Tobago.

Senior Derek Papagianopoulos, a star performer on BB&N’s football and wrestling teams, placed fifth in USA Wrestling’s Junior National Championship held in Fargo, North Dakota in late July. The 245-pound Papagianopoulos

competed as a 285-pounder at the tournament, which is widely considered to be one of the elite national competitions.

Associate Athletic Director and Women's Ice Hockey Coach Laurie (Baker) Mutch was a member of the gold medal-winning 1998 Olympic women's ice hockey team whose induction to the United States Hockey Hall of Fame was announced this summer. The induction ceremony and dinner will take place on December 1st at The Westin Boston Waterfront Hotel.

Nine Students Named National Merit Scholar Semifinalists

The College Counseling Office at the Upper School shares the impressive news that nine BB&N students have qualified as National Merit Scholar semifinalists this year, a tremendous showing that places BB&N as one of the top three private schools in the region. These results speak volumes not only about the remarkable capabilities of our students, but also about the quality of the learning environment that our teachers work so hard to foster at BB&N. Congratulations to these scholars!

BB&N Science Students Clean Up at MSMR Awards Again!

Continuing a trend of the past few years, BB&N Upper School students won three of the five top prizes in the grade 9-12 level of the Massachusetts Society for Medical Research's 18th annual student competition held last June. Suvayan Roy '11 won first place, Natalie Kingston '12 won second place, and Kris Boelitz won honorable mention. The competition required students to submit a poster exploring a recent research advance of their choice made at a New England organization. Students are asked to tell the story of their selected discovery using a balance of text and graphics.

Campus Voices

Lower School Sue Scarborough, Director

The fall season is tantalizing to the senses—seeing the colorful leaves appear, feeling the chill in the air and the warmth of a cozy sweater, and smelling wood fires from fireplaces in the evening. Sound is not always a sense we associate with fall, yet this year, at the Lower School, the sounds of fall are all around me and signify the exciting changes that are happening on our campus.

As I walk through the Morse Building, I hear the sound of cheerful Beginners enjoying their new classrooms with their teachers encouraging them to build a structure in the big block area or make a new creation in the spacious, inviting art space. Next, as I pass through the New Wing, I hear fourth graders speaking French or Spanish and feel the excitement as they plan what their next cooking

project will be, or how they will use the Smartboard to learn about a famous artist or hear music from a different country. Moving into the Brick Building, I hear the enthusiasm in students' voices as they talk about each of their teachers for Language Arts, Math, and Social Studies, lamenting that they have never had so many notebooks before, yet feeling very grown-up and independent.

And how do I get to hear all of this? Because I have two offices now on the Lower School Campus – one in the Morse Building with our youngest students, and one in the Brick Building with our oldest students. From these two vantage points, I can hear so much!

So for me, this year fall is all about sounds, and they lift my heart with joy and gladness to see so many happy students and teachers working together to make the beautiful music of fall on the Lower School Campus.

Middle School **Mary Dolbear, Director**

A special warm welcome back to everyone.

That said, the transition from the quiet calm days of August feels far away already, and by now, even the newness of opening days is starting to feel distant. It's amazing how quickly we all manage to swing back into gear as the familiar routine of school takes hold.

Transitions can often be difficult, and when they don't last very long, I think that's a good thing—especially for 11-13 year olds. At the Middle School, we only have two grades and each year, over half the school is new to us. In those opening days, there is such an incredible range of emotions, hopes, fears and everything seems to collide into spinning worlds for our students. As a faculty, we have found that the best approach is jumping in head first. And if we get it right, we just roll into a collective hummmmm. We are always pleased when we hear reports from parents and students alike that the students feel comfortable quickly and there didn't appear to be much of a transition.

Let me take you back to early September. We enjoyed two wonderful days of orientation and community building before official classes began. The students have an opportunity to get to know each other, their individual homeroom groups and together they create a sense of community through a range of fun, creative activities designed by faculty. The goals and approaches for each grade are distinct and developmentally appropriate for our program. The focus of the two days for the 7th grade is right here at 80 Sparks Street so they can acclimate quickly. The students work in small groups through challenges and games. A highlight on day one is the campus scavenger hunt that gets them all running through the buildings to allay their documented number-one fear of "getting lost". The 8th grade piloted a new activity this year called the "Hair Razing Race"

organized and overseen by the local Boston company, Team Bonding, Inc. The focus was on leadership and team-building and to help bond the group at the start of the year, the 8th graders were challenged in a myriad ways as they traveled around the Boston landscape in search of clues for the next stage of the race. In their small Advisor groups, the students use their collective skills to solve problems, get to know each other, and the town we will all call "home" over the coming year.

It's always a joy to see the transformation of the faces of our students during the opening days. In the middle years, it takes energy to tame the incredible blend of nerves and excitement racing through the minds and bodies of our students. Upon first arrival, voices are serious and quiet, muscles are often tense, eyes are darting in all directions in anticipation of potential social interactions. Students are anxious and unsure of the routine. The body language is easy to read and we do what we can to help, but our work is most rewarded when within the first week, sometimes even by the Ice Cream Social, the tone begins to lighten. There is a visible shift. Smiles suddenly abound and the kids feel calmer. The student's pace and gait can shift; there is positive energy. There is an upbeat tone and a palpable sense of relief. Dare I say a sense of hope and pride? They feel welcomed and begin to see this place as their own.

On Sparks Street, much awaits us this year, but there is nothing better than a smooth and wonderful beginning to set the tone and lay the groundwork for another spectacular year.

Upper School **Jack Knapp, Director**

In my remarks to the Parents' Association on "Meet the Deans" night on September 14, I translated excerpts from Richard J. Light's book, *Making the Most of College*, into ten things students can do to take full advantage of their time at BB&N.

Please note that any mistakes are mine alone and should not be ascribed to Professor Light.

Ten Things Students Should Do to Make the Most of Their Time at BB&N

1. Keep a personal time-log for a week toward the beginning of the school year. Record what you do half-hour by half-hour. Then evaluate what you do and how important it is to you, eliminating that which is truly wasted. Texting a friend or watching a favorite television program is not truly wasted time, for example.
2. Find an activity or activities in which to engage. This should consume ten hours a week. Social isolation is a major reason for both unhappiness and not

taking full advantage of the opportunities available. Participation in the arts and various service endeavors correlate closely with contentment and academic success.

3. Seek out and learn from a student or students who come from different backgrounds than your own. This extends beyond the classroom to eating lunch with someone with very different views from your own, inviting her/him to your house, etc.

4. Constantly seek to refine your critical thinking skills in an atmosphere where conversation can be so rich. Try to synthesize arguments for yourself, drawing evidence from multiple sources.

5. Advocate for yourself and, when you seek extra help, be prepared to ask specific questions about that which you do not understand. “Why” is a very powerful word.

6. Take a course in which you think you have no interest; try an extra- or co-curricular activity where you have no experience.

7. Join a support group. This group can be based on gender, ethnicity, or a host of other circumstances but it is important to realize that others share your experiences.

8. Remain true to any religious convictions that you find important. Belief almost always inspires respect among peers, even if it is accompanied by social sacrifice.

9. Find a mentor, a member of the faculty who will take particular interest in you and your activities while you are at BB&N. This need not be a formal relationship with a teacher or advisor, just a special sense that you have a “go-to” person at the school.

10. In working toward these goals, recognize that the beginning of the school year is the ideal time.

All School

Rebecca T. Upham
Head of School

I would like to give you a “heads up” about some exciting news that we will be able to share with you next week.

As you may remember, we announced last November the establishment of the first-ever endowed teaching chairs (two of them) and instructorship in BB&N’s history. In this way, BB&N has gained an important, tangible way to celebrate the

outstanding dedication and talent of our finest teachers and future leaders, and to recognize the exceptionally valuable contributions these faculty members have made to the life of the school.

Next week we will announce the inaugural faculty recipients of these endowed positions. I can tell you that the boost that these chairs and instructorship will provide to the teaching and learning energy at our School will be tremendous!

At this time, I would like to describe to you the names of these three endowed positions:

The Founding Paideia Master Teacher Chair

The Founding Paideia Master Teacher Chair takes its name from the ancient Greek noun paideia meaning “education” or “training,” and comes from the verb paideuo which means “to teach.” Paideia was the process of educating humans into their true form, the real and genuine human nature. Since self-government was important to the Greeks, paideia, combined with ethos (habits), made a man good and made him capable as a citizen or a king. This education was not about learning a trade or an art but was about training for liberty (freedom) and nobility (the beautiful). Paideia connotes the cultural heritage that is continued through the generations.

As noted in BB&N’s Mission Statement, “The connections between our faculty and students are at the heart of our School.” In establishing the Founding Paideia Master Teacher Chair, the donors have recognized the importance of the life of the mind, and the essential role that BB&N faculty have played in the life of the School since its founding by training young minds for the future.

The Jeanette Markham Master Teacher Chair

The Jeanette Markham Master Teacher Chair honors the Founder of The Buckingham School in 1889, who also served as its first Headmistress until 1901. Miss Markham is remembered as both wise and witty; her imagination, humor, candor, and boldness were unusual in that era. Among her progressive ideas was the belief that a school could be a place where children not only worked but lived, a place as much for their delight as for their instruction. As a colleague reflected, “Miss Markham had very high ideals, and pupils and teachers felt compelled to come up to them. She was also extremely particular about details; nothing was passed unless it was the very best that the student could do, and Miss Markham had confidence that you could do whatever was asked.”

In establishing the Jeanette Markham Master Teacher Chair, BB&N recognizes the impact this Buckingham legend had on its earliest students and their families. More than anything, Miss Markham was known as an extraordinary teacher. Through the Markham Chair, BB&N celebrates and recognizes t his legacy of teaching excellence that lives on at our School today.

The Marian W. Vaillant Future Leader Instructorship

The Marian W. Vaillant Future Leader Instructorship honors the third Headmistress of The Buckingham School who served the School with intellect and passion, dignity, and grace of spirit from 1935 to 1962. Miss Vaillant took each student seriously, holding each to the highest standards of behavior and teaching all the value of participation and engagement in the world beyond oneself. Among the many things for which she is remembered are her dedication to helping others through an active community service program, her lively interest in the School's dramatic productions, and Monday morning assemblies in which she put students' lives in a larger context through discussion of current events.

The Marian W. Vaillant Future Leader Instructorship recognizes the special contributions that promising early and mid-career faculty have made to the School community, their academic accomplishments, and evidence of personal growth. We know that it is this group of faculty who will become the next generation of master teachers and will sustain BB&N's academic excellence for decades to come.

These three endowed positions have become a reality at BB&N thanks to the extraordinary generosity of three early donors to the Opening Minds Campaign, each of whom has requested to remain anonymous. We extend our deepest gratitude for their support of the mission of our School.

Be sure to check the news page on the School website next week to learn about the faculty recipients!

Giving Update

[A BB&N Parent Fund Primer:](#)

www.bbns.org/donate

WHO: Parents, Alumni/ae, Past Parents, Grandparents, Faculty, Staff, and Friends

WHAT: The BB&N Parent Fund

WHEN: 2009-2010 School Year

WHERE: Throughout the BB&N community, near and far

WHY: It's all about the **GAP**...that is, the **GAP** between tuition dollars and the actual cost of educating each student. The BB&N Parent Fund helps to fill that

GAP and meet the annual financial needs of the school. This year the **GAP** per student is **\$6,680**.

HOW: Through the tireless efforts of an army of Parents, Alumni/ae, Past Parents, Grandparents, Faculty, Staff, and Friends, all working together to reach out, on all levels, to all constituencies, to ask for support of what is of greatest value to all of us...education and our children.

This year, the BB&N Annual Fund goal is **\$2.25 million dollars**, which will fill the **GAP** and guarantee our continued commitment to Financial Aid, Faculty Professional Development, Technology, Faculty Compensation, the Academic Program, Arts, and Athletics. In the end, the Fund plays a crucial role in continuing the tradition of excellence that defines a BB&N education.

As we begin to kickoff the 2009-2010 BB&N Parent Fund, kindly consider joining our outreach effort and inquire about ways to become involved as a Parent Fund Solicitor or participate at one of our many Phonathons throughout the year. We welcome your enthusiasm on behalf of BB&N and your participation. Every gift counts, no matter the size!!! You may make your gift online at **www.bbns.org/donate**.

Kindly contact **Jo-Ann Lovejoy**, Director of Annual Giving at 617-800-2723, or email jo-ann_lovejoy@bbns.org for further information and to learn more about ways to volunteer. You may also contact one of our Parent Fund Co-Chairs for further information: Lower School, **Gina Foote**, P'22,'17, Middle School, **Barbara Southcote**, P'13,'14, Upper School, **Amy Sassoon**, P'11,'09.