



# THE EXPLORER

## A Word from our Director

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! We're excited to see our new sixth and ninth graders who have chosen to be with us, and we look forward to learning to know all of them as they become part of our academies. As the year progresses, we'll be planning parent workshops around various topics that may be of interest, so that we will meet and talk with parents more meaningfully, as well. In addition to posting these on the website, we'll notify you by fliers or postcards.

I've been talking briefly with students about anxiety surrounding quizzes, tests, and other assessments at MA<sup>2</sup>S, and the teachers at both academies are learning or re-learning what we know from the neurosciences about the emotional centers of the brain and stress. While researching, I have found a great deal of information that is becoming available in the popular press, in addition to education journals, about changing behavior of both adults and students and how the brain holds patterns and memory that can sabotage our efforts towards improvement. This information is important for our adolescents when they become anxious, and we're learning more and more about stress in school, perhaps because of the continued emphasis on test scores and standardized tests. While some stress is valuable, the type of stress that becomes a short-circuit for learning can be debilitating. Students can learn how to circumvent a "low road" type of thinking by learning how to focus on positive results with any type of activity that they have experienced and how they were successful.

Judy Willis, M.D., M. ED. (2009), offers three suggestions for help at home. 1) **Remind your children how competent they are.** Be specific about projects that were successful, creativity, and other examples of their abilities. Help them take a few minutes to recall and focus on these strengths. 2) **Teach adolescents relaxation or basic breathing techniques.** This will help take their brain filters out of survival mode and reduce the block built by anxiety. This is moving to the "high road" by reducing the blockade of neural mechanisms that are designed to focus the brain on avoiding danger, but which, in doing so, limit higher cognition. 3) **Build confidence and help take the students' brains out of the fight/flight mode by reminding them that this is just one assessment of their knowledge.** And that they have the opportunity, within limits, to retake assessments in their various classes. Students at the middle academy also have opportunities to redo. Standardized tests (ACT and criterion-referenced tests such as the MEAP's) always have questions that students have not been taught and are not expected to know. This is the nature of those types of tests. The students need to be aware of this and not expect that they will answer every question accurately.

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## A Word from our Director-cont. from front page

My grand-nephew, a promising athlete and gifted student, entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade this year. My niece reported that he was crying and shaking for several nights during the first week of school, because he was afraid that if he played tennis he would not be able to do well in the academics. That was, quite obviously, not the case. His anxiety and concern about perfection may seem overblown, but this type of behavior becomes evident in a variety of ways with students in challenging programs. *With this in mind, please remember that, except for some courses during the senior year, our classes in both academies are year-long courses.* We are committed to this timeline for a reason. We are interested in continuing a high level of cognitive and creative processing, not simply in offering a large volume of information taught at a faster pace. And our students learn along the way to use their "executive functions" to make decisions about time management, demonstrating knowledge and choosing priorities when it's time to do so.

Your willingness to join us in helping the students learn to take the "high road" to cognitive processing rather the "low road" of fight/flight is invaluable and critical. Students will have deadlines, mandates, expectations and responsibilities. These are inevitable. It takes all of us to help them learn how to become more skilled at monitoring and changing their fear and anxiety patterns as they go through middle school and high school. Thank you for being a part of the team!

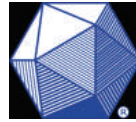
*Elise Antzaker*

Willis, Judy, M.D., M. Ed. (2009). *Inspiring Middle School Minds/Gifted, Creative, & Challenging*. Scottsdale, AZ: Great Potential Press.

## Icon designed by Erica Borucki



A big thank you goes out to Academy junior, Erika Borucki, who not only named our school's newsletter, but also designed the newsletter logo at left. Her inspiration for the logo came from an idea fostered by the Internet Explorer that many traditionally use to surf the web. Erika used Photoshop and other related software to design the logo.



The Mathematical Association of America  
AMERICAN MATHEMATICS COMPETITIONS

**Attention all Academy Students** – registration is NOW taking place for the Annual AMC 10 and AMC 12 Math Competition slated for Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The main purpose of the competition is to spur interest in mathematics and to develop talent through the excitement of solving challenging problems in a timed multiple-choice format. The problems range from the very easy to the extremely difficult. Students who participate should find that most of the problems are challenging but within their grasp. The contest is intended for everyone from the average student at a typical school who enjoys mathematics to the very best student at the most special school. Registration is voluntary. The registration is included in with this mailing and extra registration forms can be picked up from Mrs. Lange in the Academy office.

## Alumni Corner



Stacy Drob Ries graduated from the Academy in June 2003. She attended Lyman Briggs College at Michigan State University and graduated with a major in Biochemistry and a minor in Molecular Biology in 2006. She was accepted at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine where she pursued a degree in medicine. She graduated in 2011 as a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. She is currently completing her post graduate training at Botsford Hospital of Farmington Hills, MI. At Botsford, she is completing a traditional internship followed by four years of residency in Diagnostic Radiology. Stacy then anticipates moving on to a one or two year fellowship program in either Neuroradiology or Interventional Radiology.

Stacy has many words of advice for MA<sup>2</sup>S students but some of the best advice she can provide is to be proactive. Stacy comments "There are many reasons I am where I am today but one of them was careful planning. Visit your college counselors early and often. Know what you want, and then pursue your goals. Joining clubs, talking with older students, job shadowing, and volunteering are always good ways to narrow down your goals, network, and begin planning."

"The other piece of advice that I would give would be to never be ashamed to ask for advice. Whether it is academically or emotionally, too many students do not want to hurt their pride and then get in over their heads. Teachers, counselors, resident assistants, and program directors are always willing to help students in any way they can."

Stacy says that MA<sup>2</sup>S taught her the discipline and study skills that are both necessary for college. She says she felt as prepared as she could be for the academic portion of college. Emotionally she was able to cope with the transition from living at home with her parents to living on her own partially due to the fact that Lyman Briggs is a math and science residential learning community much like a home away from home.



# Armada Area Schools

74500 Burk St., Armada, Michigan 48005 • (586) 784-2100 • FAX: (586) 784-4268

Arnold A. Kummerow, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

September 15, 2011

Dear Friends,

Armada needs your help to offset some of the education reductions you've been hearing about as we begin another year of educating our future citizens. Recently the Macomb Intermediate School District's Board of Education voted unanimously to place a 1.2 mill Enhancement Special Education property tax proposal on the ballot at the Tuesday, November 8, 2011 election. The proposal will raise \$27 million that will be shared among all 21 Macomb County school districts. Funds will be used to protect and enhance programs for both special education and K-12 general education students.

If approved, here are some of the benefits for young families in Macomb County:

- Macomb County districts are working hard to meet increased statewide academic achievement standards while being challenged with an average of \$785 less available per student in state funding than allocated by Lansing in 2008. This proposal will restore \$206 per pupil which will return about \$6,000 per classroom to assist in our efforts to maintain and enhance our programs to prepare our graduates for an increasingly knowledge-based, global economy, world.
- The cost will be 20 cents a day or \$71.56 annually for the average county family. You can actually do your own calculations at [mytaxcalc.com/MacombISD](http://mytaxcalc.com/MacombISD). The tougher the times have been for some, the greater the tax deductions and rebates that are available.
- Excellent schools can also increase your own home's value. Ask any realtor: Good schools attract good home buyers!
- Every cent raised through the tax proposal will go to work only in Macomb County classrooms.
- The average county homeowner property tax bill has declined 34% in the past three years. The cost of the MISD proposal would be less than 10% of the total tax decline you have experienced in the past three years.

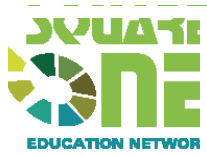
Mark your calendars now and vote on November 8. If you need to update your voter registration in order to participate in the election, our school offices will be able to assist you.

Educationally yours,

Arnold A. Kummerow, Ph.D.

*"Over 100 years of caring"*

*Equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary services available to individuals with disabilities.  
Michigan Relay Center 1-800-649-3777 (Voice and TDD)*



## Ready, Set, GO!

Square One Educational Network has awarded a \$7,000 grant to the current 11<sup>th</sup> grade Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) class to begin converting a gas powered go kart into an electric vehicle. The full-sized go-kart was donated to the school by Ford Motor Company.

A team of students in the class have already begun working on the go kart. The goal is to completely convert the kart so that it runs off of electricity – thus turning the kart into an IVD otherwise known as the process called Innovative Vehicle Design. The team is currently in the process of obtaining numerous materials to convert the vehicle. Some team members of the IDS class are slated to attend the Engineering Expo at the Ford World Headquarters in Dearborn, Michigan on October 25<sup>th</sup>. The Expo will give students the opportunity to problem solve with Ford engineers to design methods to convert the go kart to electricity.

The IVD will eventually compete at Michigan International Speedway (MIS) against other schools in Michigan that have also converted their own gas powered vehicle into an IVD.



## IDS

A team of students from the IDS class are working on converting a gas powered, radio controlled car into an electronically powered car. The students are privileged in the fact that they have a vast array of technology available to them that other high school programs may not supply. The advanced technology provides the students with hands on learning experiences and also promotes an innovative learning environment. Another group from the IDS class is researching and building wind turbines and solar panels. These alternative energy sources will be used to charge the batteries of both the full scale go-kart and the remote controlled car.

Dear Parents of Seniors,  
Please send your student's Senior Picture to be added to the 2012 Senior Composite to Mrs. Lange at the academy or you can e-mail their picture to: [plange@armadaschools.org](mailto:plange@armadaschools.org).  
Thank you!

## College Financial Aid Parent Evening – October 26, 2011

Calling all parents of seniors and juniors – On Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm, Carrie Gilchrist, Senior Financial Aid Advisor from Oakland University will be in the Gallery to provide important information to parents and students about college funding. Your child does not have to be planning on attending Oakland University to benefit from this night. This is open to all parents & students regardless of the university they plan on attending. Carrie will also answer parent questions during the session and will be available for private consultation with parents at the end of the evening. Please plan on attending if you are the parent of a current senior and need advice on the options available to fund your child's college education.



## Kroger Community Rewards Program

MA<sup>2</sup>S Student Activity account can earn money by you simply using your Kroger Plus card at any Kroger store!

Register online at [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://krogercommunityrewards.com).

- Be sure to have your Kroger Plus card handy and register your card with our school after you sign up.
- If you do not have a Kroger Plus card yet, - they are available at the customer service desk at any Kroger.
- Click on Sign In/Register
- Click on SIGN UP TODAY in the 'New Customer?' box.
- Sign up for a Kroger Rewards Account by entering zip code, clicking on favorite store, entering your email address and creating a password, agreeing to the terms and conditions
- You will then get a message to check your email inbox and click on the link within the body of the email.
- Click on My Account and use your email address and password to proceed to the next step.
- Click on Edit Kroger Community Rewards information and input your Kroger Plus card number.
- Update or confirm your information.
- Enter NPO number or name of organization, select organization from list and click on confirm.
- To verify you are enrolled correctly, you will see your organization's name on the right side of your information page.
- REMEMBER, purchases will not count for our group until after you register your card(s).
- Do you use your phone number at the register? Call 877-576-7587 to get your Kroger Plus card number.



Members must swipe their registered Kroger Plus card or use the phone number that is related to their registered Kroger Plus card when shopping for each purchase to count.

## MA<sup>2</sup>S Parent /Teacher Conferences

Wednesday, October 12th: 3:00pm—5:00pm

Thursday, October 13th: 3:00pm—5:00pm and 6:00pm—8:00pm

Friday, October 14th: No School!

## AMA<sup>2</sup>S Parent /Teacher Conferences

Wednesday, October 12th: 3:00pm—5:00pm and 6:00pm—8:00pm

Thursday, October 13th: 3:00pm—5:00pm

Friday, October 14th: No School!

### School Cancelled Notification

Armada Area Schools uses the *Instant Alert* system by Honeywell to quickly contact parents with important information, emergencies and school closures. This information is automatically sent to your home phone number. You can add your work phone number, cell phone, e-mail address on the Armada School website. Each family is allowed to maintain a secure, password protected online profile on the Instant Alert button located on [www.armadaschools.org](http://www.armadaschools.org).

If you are watching television for school closings listen for the closing for Armada Area Schools. The Macomb Academy that is mentioned in the school listings is another academy in Clinton Township. AMA<sup>2</sup>S and MA<sup>2</sup>S will NOT be named as an individual site. Cancellation for Armada Area Schools includes AMA<sup>2</sup>S and MA<sup>2</sup>S.

If Armada Area Schools is open and your district is closed, parents are encouraged to use their own discretion about driving students to MA<sup>2</sup>S. We would prefer that students not drive themselves if the weather is especially bad.

If there is a late start in Armada due to fog, ice or other emergency situation, it is likely that the Academy will not hold a morning session. Since we release students at 10:30a.m., a late start makes our morning schedule difficult.

*Armada Area Schools*  
2011-2012  
170 student days, 175 teacher days

August 30 & 31	Teacher In-service
September 6	School begins (full day students)
October 12-13	Secondary School District Conferences
October 14	Secondary Schools closed for students & staff
October 31	In-service, ½ day all students
November 21-22	All students ½ day High School exams/records Middle School and Elementary records
November 23-25	Thanksgiving Recess
November 28	School Resumes
November 30-Dec 1	Elementary School conferences
December 2	Elementary school closed for students & staff
December 16	Winter Recess begins after last class
January 3	School Resumes
January 16	In-service – no students (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
January 19	½ day all students Secondary Conferences/Elementary In-service
February 17 & 20	Mid-Winter Break
March 1-2	All students ½ day High School exams/records Middle School and Elementary records
March 19	All students – no school Secondary In-service Elementary - 1/2 day in-service, 1/2 day conferences
March 30	Spring Recess begins after last class
April 10	School Resumes
May 4	In-service – no students (prom)
May 28	Memorial Day, no school
June 5-6	All students ½ day High School exams/records Middle School and Elementary records
June 6	Last day of school

5/12/11

### Armada Middle Academy of Arts & Sciences

23550 Armada Center Road, Armada, MI 48005

Main Line: 586-784-2500

Fax: 586-784-8650

[www.armadaschools.org/ama2s](http://www.armadaschools.org/ama2s)

**Attendance Line: 586-784-2501**

### Macomb Academy of Arts & Sciences

23211 Prospect Street, Armada, MI 48005

Main Line: 586-784-2150

Fax: 586-784-8688

[www.armadaschools.org/ma2s](http://www.armadaschools.org/ma2s)

**Attendance Line: 586-784-2151**

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