

# Spotlight on

# Academics

## Division of Academics Quarterly Review

### A Message from M. Michele Batten, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction



The New Year has begun, and the AACPS Division of Academics is thrilled to underscore the heart of our academic endeavors—teaching and learning. Our commitment to excellence in education remains unwavering.

In the spirit of continuous improvement we embrace innovative teaching methodologies that foster active engagement and critical thinking. Our educators (teachers, principals, and central office leaders) are champions of inspiration, guiding students on a path of discovery that extends beyond the classroom walls.

The second half of the school year beckons us to explore new horizons in learning and creating an environment where curiosity thrives. Let us celebrate the diversity of perspectives within our academic community, recognizing that every learner brings a unique richness to the tapestry of knowledge.

As we delve into the myriad facets of teaching and learning, let the next marking period be a testament to our collective commitment to achieving Greatness. Together, we cultivate an atmosphere filled with intellectual growth and collaborative exploration.

Enjoy this second issue of *Spotlight on Academics* highlighting why we exist and for whom we exist.

**BELONG. GROW. SUCCEED.**

### A Culture of College



At *Annapolis High School* (AHS) the Black Student Union, AVID, and Hood 2 Good teamed with the members of the Alpha Gamma Foundation of Sigma Phi Pi Fraternity, to provide nearly 100 students the opportunity to attend college fairs on November 11 and 18. The students were invited to interact and network with other high school students from the surrounding DMV areas and learn of their options for attending a college or university. On November 11, students attended the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated College Fair in Springfield Virginia; and 6 AHS students received an onsite/immediate acceptance to an Historically Black College and University (HBCU).

On November 18, students attended the historic Alfred Street Baptist Church HBCU College Fair and were introduced to nearly 100 Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The students attending felt inspired to consider college as a future option and the experience motivated them to work hard to prepare for the next stages.

In the spirit of competition, students formed teams to complete a scavenger hunt facilitating their direct engagement with multiple recruiters to learn more about the many HBCUs at the fair.



### A Micro Message from Dr. Marquis Dwarte, Chief Academic Officer

As is the case with any business, educators provide a product. You see, our product is the knowledge upon which all ideas and societal advancements are built. This is a simple yet powerful truth that must inspire us all to take seriously our charge of educating all students.

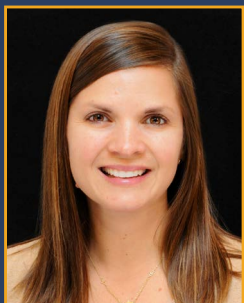
Please enjoy this issue of our Quarterly Review, showcasing many of our recent academic highlights.

... Remember... Learning is the Thing ...



## Eve Case, Coordinator

### Office of Social Studies



Eve began her career in Prince Georges County Public Schools after graduating from the University of Maryland, College of Education. Eve came to Anne Arundel County Public Schools in 2006 where she served as a teacher and department chairperson for 10 years prior to joining the Curriculum and Instruction team at Central Office.

During her 13 years of teaching experience Eve earned her Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, her administration certification, and a National Board Teaching Certificate. As a school based leader she was on the leadership committee, sponsored the Model United Nations Club, and served as an interdisciplinary team leader in addition to time spent in the role of department chairperson for social studies.

As a district level leader, Eve oversees the curriculum, assessment and, professional learning for K–12 social studies in addition to acting as department chairperson for Social Studies. Eve has had the opportunity to work with teachers and school leaders from all over Anne Arundel County as she leads her team in supporting students in alignment to the mission of the social studies office, “Social Studies in Anne Arundel County Public Schools builds empowered citizens who are educated consumers of information that can think critically, advocate locally and strive to impact globally”. Through the quest of this mission, Eve has worked to build connections for Anne Arundel County Public Schools teachers and students throughout the local community. Strong partnerships with the Maryland Judiciary, Anne Arundel Bar Association, Chesapeake Crossroads, Historic Annapolis and many others have provided opportunities for social studies learning to come alive. Student participation in Mock Trial, Model United Nations, Simulated Congressional Hearings, and National History Day programs further that mission into the co-curricular experiences that are facilitated by the social studies office.

Eve serves as a steering committee member of the Maryland Civic Education Coalition and is actively involved with the University of Maryland College of Education Alumni.

Eve is a native of Rochester, New York and still holds a special place in her heart for her hometown. Currently Eve resides with her family in Anne Arundel County, and all three of her children attend Anne Arundel County Public Schools. When Eve is not working, you can find her spending time with family usually on the sidelines of a sports field. She enjoys reading, running and traveling. Eve is from a family of educators and is proud to continue to carry on the legacy.

## Our very own EVERYDAY HERO!



Channel 2 News in Baltimore recognized Ms. Taylor Gauniel, **Ridgeway Elementary School**, for the exceptional work she and her class did during their school food drive! We appreciate the work that each teacher did to PUMP UP the AACPS food drive.

Channel 2 WMAR News visited her class and interviewed several students as well. Please take a few minutes to watch the news segment.



## AACPS Rising Star

Old Mill graduate, Mr. Dalen Parker, began his professional career with AACPS at **Tracey's Elementary** as a TSA for a special education student. After one month he became a long-term substitute in the Special Education department. During this time, he found a love and excitement for advocating and teaching special education students and began pursuing his master's degree in education while continuing as a conditional special educator.



As of today, Mr. Parker is officially a certified teacher!

His Tracey's family is so proud of his journey and thankful for all that he contributes to their community.

## AP Biology Innovation



Congratulations to Noel Pauller, a 7-year veteran Science Teacher with the **North County Knights** (25-year educational veteran) whose innovation in the AP Biology classroom will be published in an upcoming issue of The American Biology Teacher. Noel developed an alternative lab writeup and teacher resources around photosynthesis aligned to AP Biology coursework, first piloting them with his own AP

Biology students. Publication required peer review and was a time-intensive task.

Thank you, Noel, for your commitment to innovation that keeps ALL students in mind, we are excited to see how the work you started with your own students positively impacts students across the country!



## Crofton High School Senior Wins the "Better Choices, Better Tomorrow" Contest

Stretching back to the 1990's, Anne Arundel County Public Schools has had a strong partnership with members of the Anne Arundel Judiciary through a program called Schools in Court. Each year students from every comprehensive high school in the county are able to take a field trip to the Annapolis District Court. During this experience students view live court cases, listen to presentations and participate in interactive scenarios designed by a robust planning team led by the Anne Arundel County Administrative Judge, the honorable Shaem P. Spencer.

In order to extend the learning experience from the field trip, AACPS has partnered with the Anne Arundel Schools in Court team to support a yearly scholarship contest titled,



"Better Choices-Better Tomorrow." This contest allows students to react and reflect on their experience in a creative way. For the 2022-2023 school year, Emily Krucoff of **Crofton High School** was the winner with a creative writing submission. She was honored on December 14, 2023, during a Schools in Court session. In addition to a cash prize, Emily will have the opportunity to shadow a member of the Schools in Court team. Two more sessions of Schools in Court remain for this school year.

## Marley Elementary School Stock Market Game (SMG) Winners!

Ms. Karen Yancey, **Marley Elementary School** teacher/coach, along with her students and parents visited the Stock Market simulation Lab at Towson University. The day was "profitable" as students learned and then applied knowledge to win regionals and states in the Stock Market Game. Marley Elementary School celebrated (2) winning teams:

**1st place school team in the south region**

**1st place school team for the entire state of Maryland!**



## Maryland Public High School Dance Showcase 2024!

AACPS rises to the top once again at the annual Maryland Public High School Dance Showcase at Goucher College where 8 student dancers received All State recognition and 2 students received honorable mention.

The following AACPS dancers were named All-State:

- Gabi Eisele, Annapolis HS
- Mackenzie Eisele, Annapolis HS
- Emma Tippet, Arundel HS
- Cassidy Gallimore, Broadneck HS
- Adriana Jones, Crofton HS
- Sasha Failli, Crofton HS
- Celia Ann Richardson, Severna Park HS
- Marlowe Richardson, Severna Park HS



And the following earned All-State honorable mention:

- Sarah Anne Loud, Broadneck HS
- Gracie Beers, Crofton HS

In addition, AACPS had 10 schools selected for performance at the evening concert! Bravo students and teachers on this huge accomplishment!

## State Robotics Tournament

**Lindale Middle School's** Hyper Lynx Robotics Club has THREE teams qualifying for the State Tournament!

In addition, they finished the regular season with the #1 ranked team in Maryland!



# Curricular Updates

## DID YOU KNOW?

AACPS has 45 Occupational Therapists (OTs), 13 Physical Therapists (PTs), and one Physical Therapist Assistant employed in the Office of Special Services within Special Education.

The therapists work with children with different abilities who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 plan. They provide services to students in every school in the county. OTs and PTs are considered 'Related Service Providers', as they function to assist students to access and participate in their educational plan and environment.

Occupational Therapists serve more than 2,100 students to address fine motor, visual motor, sensorimotor, and school self-care needs.

Physical Therapists serve approximately 600 students to address gross motor, functional mobility, and school self-care needs.

## AP School Honor Roll

The AP School Honor Roll is a school level recognition, awarded by College Board to AP programs that deliver results for students while broadening access. Awarded annually, high schools may earn Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum level distinction in the categories of:

**College Culture** 40% of students in a graduating cohort complete 1 or more AP exams.

**College Credit** 25% of students in a graduating cohort earn a 3 or better on at least one AP exam.

**College Optimization** students in a graduating cohort complete 5 or more AP exams prior to graduation.

High schools with distinctions in each of the three qualifying categories earn a place on the AP School Honor Roll and qualify for consideration for the AP Access Award. The AP Access Award honors schools that demonstrate a clear and effective commitment to equitable access to advanced coursework. Schools earn the additional award if the percentage of AP Exam takers who are underrepresented minority and/or low-income students mirrors the school's overall student demographics.

## Overall Awards



South River  
Severna Park



Arundel  
Broadneck  
Chesapeake  
Science Point  
Crofton



Annapolis  
Chesapeake  
North County  
Southern

## AP Access Award

Annapolis & Chesapeake Science Point

## Category Recognition

While these schools did not earn an Overall Award, they did earn a category recognition.

**Silver Optimization** — Old Mill

**Bronze Optimization** — Glen Burnie

## AACPS SCHOOL LIBRARIES



A place for every AACPS student to  
#BelongGrowSucceed

2nd Quarter  
2023 - 2024  
BY THE NUMBERS

612,284  
BOOKS CHECKED OUT

24,294 BOOKS ADDED TO COLLECTIONS



RESEARCH ARTICLES ACCESSED  
THROUGH DATABASES 583,129

78,076  
eBooks Read



POPULAR TITLES

HIGH SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## AACPS Alumni



**Old Mill Middle School South** STEM Magnet Program Alumna, **Northeast High** graduate and USNA 2024 graduating Computer Science senior, Abigail Ward, was named a 2024 Rhodes Scholar.

Only 32 students are chosen annually from the United States to serve as distinguished Rhodes Scholars. They are chosen not only for their outstanding academics, but for their character, commitment to others, and for the potential for leadership in their chosen career fields.



In December, **Old Mill Middle School South** STEM Magnet Program and **Glen Burnie High School** BMAH Magnet Program Alumnus, Anagh Asatvan, returned to OMMS while on winter break to share good news with current STEM students and his former teachers.

Anagh earned a perfect score on his Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), has received multiple acceptances from medical schools around the country and will graduate from the University of Maryland (UMD) this coming spring (2024).

We are so proud of these two graduates and their peers who are soaring as they transition from AACPS STEM programs to colleges and careers far and wide.



## AFCEA Awards

(Armed Forces Communication & Electronics Association International)

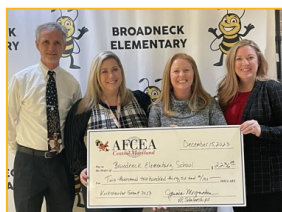
### AFCEA Grants awarded to Triple E Teachers



**Germantown ES**  
Audrey Maisel | \$4300



**Shipley's Choice ES**  
Robin Suda | \$1840.45



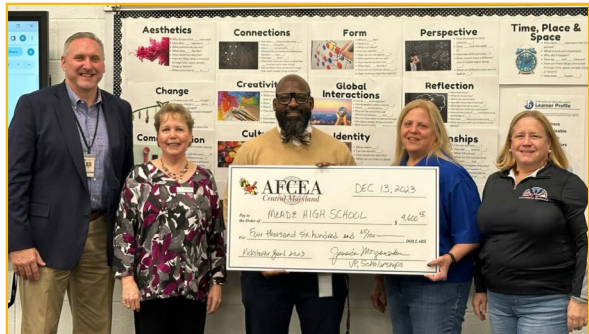
**Broadneck ES**  
Angela Wakshul | \$2000



**Piney Orchard ES**  
Scott Marsh & Holly Gallagher  
\$2237.32

Over \$10,000 awarded to Triple E this year!

### Congratulations to Meade High School!



Their Homeland Security Project Lead the Way Drone was awarded a \$5,000 grant from their industry partner, AFCEA CMD (Central Maryland Division).

## Winter Wonderland

Elementary winter-themed artwork at Westfield Annapolis Mall proudly featured over 250 students representing elementary schools in Anne Arundel County. The theme for the exhibit is "Winter Wonderland", and subject matter ranges from vibrant snowy scenes and penguins to abstract snowflake designs.



## All State Music

AACPS Music team celebrates the acceptance of 64 students to the Maryland All State Choirs, Bands, and Orchestras!

In addition, 8 AACPS students were accepted as alternates. These ensembles are seated by auditions that take place annually in November. These students will have the opportunity to engage in rehearsal and performance with nationally recognized conductors as well as student musicians from across the state in March 2024.



## Triple E



In an effort to highlight students and teachers in our Triple E Classrooms, we had the opportunity to visit **Manor View Elementary School**. This is a World Culture and Language Triple E Classroom, and the target language is Mandarin. Our Triple E teacher is Zhouzhou He who is fluent in Mandarin. In the interview, Mrs. He asks students to reflect on their experiences in Triple E and share with others so that we can all learn more about the program and especially World Culture and Language at Manor View. We are thankful to have such dedicated teachers that provide wonderful experiences for our students.

Not only will Triple E be showcased on Community Connections, we are also in the process of creating a new Triple E Video to showcase our program.



Use the QR code to view the interview session

## South River High School STEM is named a 2024 School of Distinction!

All magnet schools share the philosophy of executing innovative programs with a dedication to diversity and an unwavering commitment to academic standards—because that is the Magnet School 'standard'.

The Magnet School of Merit Awards elevates that standard to recognize member magnet schools/programs that demonstrate an exemplary commitment to academic standards, curriculum innovation, desegregation/diversity efforts, specialized teaching staffs, and parent and community involvement. Merit Awards are measured by the following criteria:



Program Overview  
Student Achievement  
Innovative Instruction Strategies  
Demographic Profile  
Parent and Community Involvement  
Awards and Achievements

The Magnet School of Distinction is the second-highest award of recognition.



## Save Our Trees Partnership

After several class visits and an assembly with our Partners-In-Learning at Save Our Trees (a program of Watershed Stewards Academy), a group of our middle school IB students participated in a field trip to Quiet Waters Park. While on site the students cleared invasive vines and shrubs from an area that will be transformed into an oasis for native plants during the 2nd and 3rd marking period field trips.

The students also took part in a "hike and learn" to the South River Overlook with Quiet Waters' Park Ranger, Liz Schiller, and Horticulturalist, Matt Pruett, who spoke on invasive plants and animals.

The creation of a native plant oasis in an area of Quiet Waters will showcase the threat of invasives and the importance of native plants as well as the students' very important contribution to the restoration of our natural environment.



## 6th Annual Unified Physical Education and Dance Showcase

*North County High School* hosted the Unified Physical Education Showcase on January 5, 2024!

North County's Unified Physical Education class welcomed Meade, Chesapeake and Glen Burnie High Schools' Unified PE classes to participate in leadership/get to know you activities, curriculum based station activities, and a flash mob dance to celebrate inclusion and advocate for being #unified in their schools. Special thank you to Special Olympics Maryland for their continued support of our Unified PE classes.

Please check out this video of one of the performances!



The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members. ~ Mahatma Gandhi

## The Power of Community Partnerships

*Broadneck High School* Signature students engaged in the ACE Mentorship Program of Annapolis visit Arlington, Virginia.



Ms. Stacy Roth, BHS Signature Coordinator, took students on a sustainability tour of the Long Bridge Aquatic Center and the Conrad Hotel. To access the whole article, use the QR code.



Two of the students plan to turn this experience into a capstone opportunity!

## Interactive STEM DAY!

Johns Hopkins Applied Physics laboratory works with USNA every year on an Interactive STEM Day for elementary students. Pictured here are students from *Solley Elementary School* engaging with USNA midshipman in a daylong exploration of propulsion, buoyancy, robotics, rocketry, biology, coding/computer science, sound and light.



## A Tornado in a Bottle

At *Overlook ES* Mr. Bulmahn's ELL students use Wixie to build community and relationships while developing their oral language skills. In this example they show how to make a tornado in a bottle:





# Student Experiences

## Cool Schools Polar Bear Plunge

The Polar Bear Plunge is part of Maryland's history. For the past 28 years thousands of plungers have jumped into the icy waters of the Chesapeake Bay all in support of Special Olympics Maryland. The dedication to the 15,588 athletes and Unified teammates is impactful and has created countless inclusion experiences across the state of Maryland.

Congratulations to the **South River High School "Snohawks"** for raising an astounding \$51,686 for Special Olympics and winning the top prize at this year's Cool Schools Polar Bear Plunge!

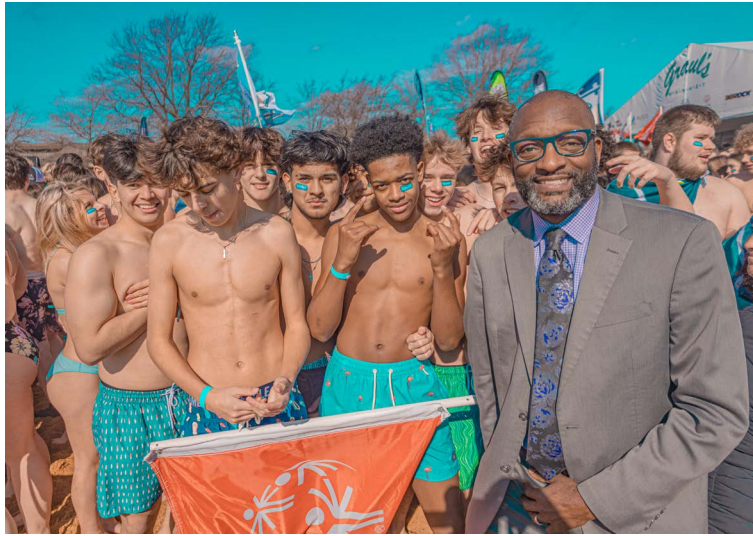
Also congratulations go to our second place team, **Arundel High School**, for raising \$44,367 and having the largest Cool Schools Team EVER – 606 plungers!

Kudos to Mr. Chris Truffer, Regional Assistant Superintendent for both of these schools who participated in the 28th Annual Plunge (for the 23rd time)!

**Magothy River Middle School** rounded out the top three teams raising an impressive \$40,836. They were the **TOP MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM** in the state!



Record number of students  
take part in Cool Schools  
Plunge WBAL-TV



South River High School



Arundel High School



Magothy River Middle School





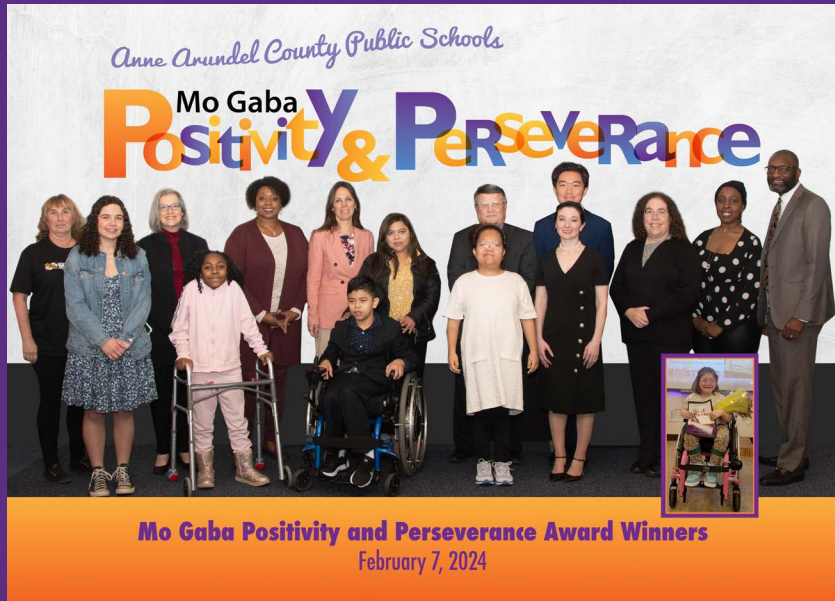
# In remembrance of Mossila Kingsley "MO" Gaba

January 26, 2006–July 28, 2020



Mossila Kingsley "MO" Gaba was a student in AACPS whose health challenges never defeated his intellectual brilliance, positive attitude, fun-loving spirit, or his ability to make others smile and marvel at his resilience.

In honor of this courageous student who physically left us too soon, the Mo Gaba Power of Positivity and Perseverance Award seeks to uphold Mo's legacy by recognizing students who embody those characteristics.



## Class of 2024 Award Winners

*From Left:*

**Taryn Reinhart**

Annapolis High School

**2024 Mo Gaba Legacy Award Winner**

**Riley Creese**

Rolling Knolls Elementary School

**Kenneth Avila-Sanchez**

Southern Middle School

**Shanna Hector**

Crofton High School

**Della Wark**

Crofton Meadows Elementary School

*(inset)*