

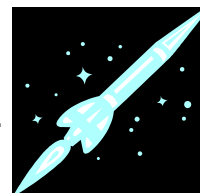


## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dr. Nelson McLeod, Principal

November/December 2009

Richard Montgomery High School



RM Rocket Pride!

## School Updates

Dear Richard Montgomery High School Community:

Thank you for a very successful Open House last month. With the start of November, let me update you on the following:

- **Keith Jamieson**, Class of 2008, was recently published in the highly acclaimed *Concord Review*. Currently, he is attending the University of Chicago, but his paper was written for his senior Extended Essay here at Richard Montgomery High School. The title was "Our Tottering State: The Third Century and the Fall of Rome".
- Richard Montgomery High School recently administered over 200 tests during the fall administration of the Maryland State High School Assessments (HSAs). As with all future administrations, the assessments were administered on-line to our students. The next scheduled sitting of the HSAs will be in January 2010. Seniors, and anyone completing an HSA course this fall semester, are encouraged to take the test. Additional information will be shared at the beginning of December 2009.
- Open House was Monday, October 12, 2009, for all MCPS schools. We had approximately 130 parents attend classes throughout the day at Richard Montgomery High School.
- Chamara Wijeratne is the Student Service Learning (SSL) coordinator at Richard Montgomery High School. Mr. Wijeratne's office is located in Room 163, his phone number is 301-610-8041, and e-mail is Chamara\_U\_Wijeratne@mcpsmd.org. Documentation of all service performed during the first semester is due to the SSL coordinator by the Friday before first semester exams begin, January 8, 2010.
- Our Homecoming Game is Friday, November 6, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. against Walter Johnson High School. Go Rockets!
- To support the "raise the rocket" campaign, Richard Montgomery High School donated \$1,000 to support this Booster Club initiative.
- Our new Educational Facilities Officer (E.F.O.) is Officer Wendy Strashensky. The E.F.O. primary function is to maintain and enhance a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff in Montgomery County Public Schools. The EFO program is an outreach program sponsored by the police department in partnership with the Montgomery County Public Schools.
- The Richard Montgomery High School Jazz Band has been invited to play at the U.S. Department of Education's 2009 National Awards Ceremony for Blue Ribbon Schools in November. The awards ceremony highlights schools that have achieved and attained higher levels of performance and shown improvement in student achievement in the United States.
- To celebrate the life of **Codi Alexander**, an annual award will be given each spring to a deserving student. A plaque in her honor will be placed in the school.

Thank you for your continued support of Richard Montgomery High School.

—Nelson McLeod, PhD  
Principal

### Important Upcoming Dates:

- 11/2: Professional Day—No School for Students
- 11/6: Homecoming Football Game, 6:30pm
- 11/7: SAT Administered
- 11/7: Homecoming Dance, 8:00 pm—11:00pm, Gym
- 11/11: Report Card Distribution
- 11/17: PTSA Meeting, Parent Series, 6:30pm
- 11/13,14,15 and 11/20, 21: Fall Drama Production
- 11/25: Early Release Day
- 11/26,27: Thanksgiving Holiday
- 12/3: String Concert, Auditorium, 7:30pm
- 12/4: Battle of the Bands Competition, Auditorium
- 12/5: SAT Administered
- 12/8: Winter Band Showcase, Auditorium, 7:30pm
- 12/12: ACT Administered
- 12/15: PTSA Meeting, Parent Series, 6:30pm
- 12/17: Choral Concert, Auditorium, 7:30pm
- 12/24-12/25: Holiday
- 12/28-1/1: Winter Break-No School for Students

### Included in this Issue:

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# College Enrollment Initiative

## **College Information Night**

As part of our College Enrollment Initiative, the Counseling Department sponsored a College Information Night. It was held on Wednesday, October 7, 2009, from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Thank you to the over 350 attendees.

The workshops included: “College Admissions Together: It Takes a Family” which was presented by co-authors Steve Goodman, Educational Consultant, and Andrea Leiman, Family Psychologist; “Writing Your College Essay” presented by Daniel Grayson, Assistant Director of Admissions, Tufts University; “Accepted: Getting Into Your First Choice School” presented by Eric Chiu, Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions; “Paying for College 101” presented by Cailin Papszycki, Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions; “ACT vs. SAT—What’s the Difference?” presented by Sean McKay, The Princeton Review; and “Roadmap to College—What Should I Be Doing” presented by Rachel Grubbs, The Princeton Review.

There were two 45-minute sessions in which attendees could select one of six workshops to attend. All workshops were offered during both sessions.

All of the workshops were well attended, and we appreciated the feedback. Thanks to a grant provided by the PTSA, each speaker received a \$25 gift certificate.

As we plan for next year’s College Information Night, we will include a Powerpoint presentation in the auditorium to explain more thoroughly how the evening will run; indicate on the program the appropriate grade levels for each workshop; and have a workshop presented in Spanish.

In addition to College Information Night, the following event will be held to provide additional information to students and parents: Financial Aid Night will be held on Wednesday, January 13, 2010. The program will be presented in English and Spanish. Beginning in March and April 2010, counselors will schedule meetings with Juniors and their parents to go over the college application process. Finally, in April or May 2010, the College Clinic will be held to discuss the college application process.

## **PrepTalk**

The *PrepTalk* newsletter is a Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery College Partnership project. The newsletter is full of helpful information for parents and students regarding college preparation and readiness.

Topics covered in *PrepTalk* include, but are not limited

to, taking tests, planning academic schedules, improving study skills, paying for college, and planning for key deadlines.

The most recent issue of *PrepTalk* is available online at:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/careercenter/resources/preptalk.aspx>.

## **Counseling Freshman Orientation**

The counseling department presented a Freshman Orientation to Counseling Services program for all ninth grade students in the career center between October 19 and October 30. The orientation program included topics such as:

- The roll of the high school counselor
- How to see your counselor
- Academic supports available
- Grading policies
- Value of the high school transcript

## **PSAT Update**

On Wednesday, October 14, 2009, Richard Montgomery High School administered the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) to nearly 1400 students. Utilizing virtually every staff member in the school, the testing session was a huge success.

Nearly 94% of all ninth graders participated in the mock PSAT offered by Revolution Prep. Students received a unique login code on their test booklet that will allow both students and parents to access their PSAT score results within two weeks of the testing using the website [www.revolutionprep.com](http://www.revolutionprep.com). Following the login, students will be prompted to enter a password. The password is the student’s last name. If a student has misplaced their test booklet and unique code, please contact Josh Neuman-Sunshine, assistant principal by e-mail [Joshua\\_D\\_Neuman-Sunshine@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Joshua_D_Neuman-Sunshine@mcpsmd.org) or by phone at (301) 610-8000.

More than 95% of all tenth graders participated in the formal PSAT offered by College Board. In addition, nearly 400 eleventh graders registered and took the official PSAT. Eleventh graders who took the PSAT are now eligible for a variety of scholarship opportunities available through the National Merit Scholarship Program. Score reports will be delivered to the school by mid-December for distribution to students. These score reports will include information on how each student performed on each section of the test and how they compared with other students taking the test.

# National Achievement Semifinalists

Fourteen MCPS seniors from six high schools have been named semifinalists in the 46th annual National Achievement Scholarship Program for outstanding African American students. They are among thousands of semifinalists—including 71 from Maryland—who were selected nationwide for their high scores on the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The program is administered by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Congratulations to our Richard Montgomery Scholars: **Adoley Ammah-Tagoe, Jodie-**

**Ann Asher, Esther E. Carlson, Yasmin Dagne, Katherine W. Eyring**

The National Achievement Scholarship Program was initiated in 1964 to honor high achieving African American students. The semifinalists now will be considered for scholarships based on their accomplishments and potential for success in rigorous college studies. Winners will be announced in the spring.

## Rocket Spirit—Homecoming

On Saturday, November 7, the Richard Montgomery High School gym will be unrecognizable. The entrance will be transformed into a palm tree canopy, the walls will be draped with thickets of vines and the bleachers will disappear behind exotic landscapes. This year the Homecoming theme is *Destination: Jungle*. This dance marks the year in which the Homecoming dance returns to the Richard Montgomery High School gym.

The Student Government Association (SGA) has been busy making all of the necessary preparations for this historic event. Ticket prices have been lowered to only \$20 plus a can of food. A student may bring an outside guest with an approval form.

The SGA is excited for spirit week which begins Monday, November 2. As part of spirit week, the SGA is collecting candy for the armed services as part of “Treats

## Diploma Program Review

This past year, the IB Diploma program at Richard Montgomery went through the five-year review process with the International Baccalaureate. All schools who offer the IB, whether at the Diploma, Middle Years, or Primary Years level, must complete the review process. The process is a professional-growth and reflection opportunity for any program, that requires data collection and reporting compiled in a document. This report is submitted to the IB North America for evaluation. We are happy to announce that the Diploma program review for the Magnet was very successful. The IB commended us for our commitment to professional development; our comprehensive C.A.S. (Creativity Action Service) and Extended Essay guidance offered to students; and the numerous systems in place within the program to support our students. They also applauded our efforts to increase the number of full Diploma students. The IB recommended that we continue to collaboratively develop subject specific plans for Theory of Knowledge integration throughout the program. We are proud of the IB World School programs at Richard Montgomery High School!

for the Troops”. Drop off any candy donations in the main office or media center.

The homecoming game is Friday, November 6, at 6:30 p.m. against Walter Johnson High School. The football game will be preceded by a pre-game “tailgate” near the RM practice field, where students can socialize and eat great food before the game. The “tailgate” starts at 4:00 p.m. During pre-game festivities, the floats and homecoming court will be presented. The SGA looks forward to the culmination of spirit week with the Homecoming Dance on Saturday, November 7. The dance will be from 8:00 p.m.—11:00 p.m.

### Get Morning Announcements by Email



The school's web site posts the morning announcements each day from the RMBC daily broadcasts. Parents can also receive the daily announcements of activities and opportunities on email. To sign up for email announcements and for more information, go to:

**[Groups.yahoo.com/group/rmhs\\_announcements.htm](http://Groups.yahoo.com/group/rmhs_announcements.htm)**

## ESOL Visits Capitol

On September 25, 2009, the Richard Montgomery ESOL department had a wonderful experience; we toured the Capitol Building. Our group of 90 students gathered in Emancipation Hall where we saw *Freedom*, a beautiful statue all in white. The tour started with a big-screen movie called “Out of Many-One”, toured rooms, saw statues from every state, and viewed the artwork in the Rotunda. Finally, the highlight of the tour was when our group met Maryland Representative Chris Van Hollen. We presented him with a Richard Montgomery High School Polo shirt. A photo of the group with Congressman Van Hollen can be viewed on his official website.

# Inclement Weather Parent Letter

November, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Winter weather emergencies, such as snow and ice, may cause disruptions in school operations, including the closure of school, a delayed opening, or an early dismissal. This letter provides information about the procedures used when such disruptions occur. Information also is provided about the weather contingency plan that would add student instructional days to the end of the scheduled school year if schools are closed for more than four days due to excessive weather emergencies.

**Closure of School:** When schools are closed systemwide, all instructional programs and extracurricular activities in schools are canceled. Private day-care providers in school buildings may elect to stay open if the schools are closed but the administrative offices are open. In extreme conditions, administrative offices also may be closed. If this occurs, private day-care programs located in school buildings are closed as well.

**Delayed Opening:** A delayed opening means that schools open two hours later than scheduled. All buses operate on the same delayed schedule and, therefore, the pick-up times are two hours later than normal. When elementary schools open on a delayed schedule, the following programs are canceled—Morning sessions of half-day Head Start, prekindergarten, and other specialized programs or field trips scheduled before 10:30 a.m.; e.g., the Thomas Edison High School of Technology morning session. Activities that begin after 10:30 a.m. will be held as scheduled. Afternoon sessions of prekindergarten begin at the regular time. Full day Head Start follows the same schedule as other full day programs. Parents should continue to check for radio, television, or Web announcements in the event a decision to delay the opening of schools is reconsidered and a decision to close schools for the day is made (by 7:00 a.m.).

**Early Dismissal:** An early dismissal means that schools will close 2.5 hours earlier than scheduled. All buses operate on that same early schedule and, therefore, drop-off times are 2.5 hours earlier than normal. When elementary schools close early, afternoon prekindergarten and other early childhood programs are canceled, as well as any special programs or field trips scheduled after 10:30 a.m. Morning prekindergarten and morning half-day Head Start students will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m. Full day Head Start classes will dismiss with regular kindergarten through Grade 5 students.

**Public Announcements:** Information about school operations is announced publicly as soon as possible on area radio and television stations, Montgomery County Public Schools Cable TV (Comcast Channel 34, Verizon FIOS Channel 36, RCN Channel 89), Outlook, on the Internet at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org), and on a recorded telephone message at 301-279-3673. Emergency e-mail announcements are available by signing up for MCPS QuickNotes on the school system's home page. If schools are closed or delayed, the announcement is made by 5:00 a.m. (or the night before if possible). If schools are closing early, the announcement is made by 11:00 a.m.

**Emergency Weather Contingency Plan:** An emergency weather contingency plan will add student instructional days to the end of the scheduled school year if schools are closed more than four days because of weather emergencies. The planned school year for students ends on Wednesday, June 16, 2010. However, if schools are closed for more than four days due to weather emergencies, the following schedule would extend the school year in order to add the necessary make-up days:

1. If schools are closed for five days, the school year will be extended by one day to June 17, 2010.
2. If schools are closed for six days, the school year will be extended by two days to June 17 and June 18, 2010.
3. If schools are closed seven days, the school year will be extended by three days to June 17, June 18, and June 21, 2010.
4. If schools are closed for eight days, the school year will be extended by four days to June 17, June 18, June 21, and June 22, 2010.
5. If schools are closed nine days, the school year will be extended by five days to June 17, June 18, June 21, June 22, and June 23, 2010.

**Weather Conditions and Decisions:** The school system uses a variety of sources of information to determine whether to close schools, delay the opening of schools, or dismiss schools early. These sources include actual physical inspection of road and school conditions by transportation officials and other staff at areas throughout the county, and an analysis of independent reports from the National Weather Service, Accu-Weather, and the news media. The most severe weather conditions within the county are used as the basis for decision-making. Consistent procedures are maintained in order to respond quickly to emergency weather conditions and protect the safety and well being of students.

All public schools within Montgomery County adhere to the same schedule concerning emergency weather conditions. The decision to change school operations is made by the superintendent of schools or his designee and affects all schools within the school system.

Sincerely,

Nelson McLeod, PhD  
Principal

## More Updates

- Richard Montgomery High School has an active medical careers club. We are in the process of getting speakers. If any parent has a background in medicine (clinical, research, or an allied health field), please contact Mrs. Ghent-Paolucci. We would love to have you come share your knowledge with our club members!
- Winter sports start on Saturday, November 14, 2009. All student athletes need to turn in the required forms before they can participate in team tryouts. The required forms include parent permission, physical, medical card, transportation form, and insurance form. Please see your coach or Mr. Maxey, athletic director, for all required forms.

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## Making a Difference

*Each month we will highlight a student who is making a difference.*

During the spring of 2007 my brother Javier and I learned of a painful situation in the country we had been born, Costa Rica. Only three out of every nine first graders, graduate from high school. Most of the drop outs are poor and most drop out in 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Those who don't finish high school can expect a life of relative poverty, working in jobs that require very little skill and pay low salaries. One of the reasons they drop out is the difficulty they find with two subjects: math and English. My brother and I decided to begin a project to alert the students of the dangers of dropping out and to help them with their English studies. We presented the project to the Minister of Education, Dr. Leonardo Garnier, that year and received his support. He suggested we begin work in the José Albertazzi High School located in Desamparados,

one of the most impoverished areas of the capital, San José. Since 2007, every summer we have visited the school and talked to the students (and some parents) and helped the students with their English studies. We believed that if we had convinced at least one student to not quit we would have been successful. We learned that we could be good motivators! I am happy to report that our project has evolved into a partnership between Richard Montgomery and Albertazzi, with the support of our Spanish Department, Ms. Solernou and our principal, Dr. McLeod. Last year Mr. Leary visited our partner school with students from the Spanish Honors Society, and we are working on a permanent link for cultural exchange, using the Internet, to help the Albertazzi students with their English – and increase our Spanish, too!

Author: Rolando Masis, 10<sup>th</sup> grade

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## Middle Years Program Update

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) welcomed 146 ninth grade students this fall. Our ninth grade students are already used to their new learning environment. The tenth grade students are juggling their school workload and their personal projects. Even with all those demands, our students find ways to be good members of the school community. We appreciate the leadership skills that the MYP students display at Richard Montgomery High School by getting involved with their class student governments. Some students are engaged in many different sports teams, clubs and other extracurricular activities.

Last month, Mr. Awono, Richard Montgomery MYP coordinator, and Ms. Fribush, Julius West Middle School MYP coordinator, organized two meetings for MYP parents. The ninth grade parent meeting was held on Thursday, September 17, 2009, in the Rocket Cafe, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Parents received an overview of the program. Mr. Awono discussed the program requirements. Each MYP student must complete a total of 30 hours of community service. The IB MYP at Richard Montgomery produces good scholars

who are also good members of the community.

On Tuesday, September 22, 2009, a meeting was held for the tenth grade parents and students. That meeting focused more on the IB MYP Personal Project process and on life after MYP. The Personal Project is an independent research project that is the culmination of the student growth in the program. After completing the Middle Years Program, students have two options: the IB Diploma Program (IB DP) or the Advanced Placement (AP). They can choose to continue with the challenge of an International Baccalaureate education by applying to join the IB Diploma Program through a selection process that includes an entrance exam, teachers' recommendations, and a review of the student performance. On Wednesday, November 18, we will host a meeting for interested students and their parents to find out more about the selection process. Students may alternatively choose the flexibility of the AP option. They can decide to take a mixture of AP, Honors and regular classes. This option allows students to tailor their educational load according to their interests. Both options are excellent preparations for college.

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Richard Montgomery High School's  
**BLACK MASKERS DRAMA**

proudly presents

Arthur Miller's

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UNRESERVED TICKETS WILL BE SOLD  
AT THE DOOR

**EVENING  
PERFORMANCES**

**AT 7:00 pm**

*Friday, November 13*

*Saturday, November 14*

*Friday, November 20*

*Saturday, November 21*

**MATINEE**

**AT 2:00 pm**

*Sunday,*

*November 15*

**TICKETS**

**ADULTS: \$10**

**STUDENTS: \$5**

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## STUDENTS OF THE MONTH — SEPTEMBER

The following students were celebrated in October during our Monthly Student Recognition Program. Each month, departments are asked to nominate students who demonstrate academic excellence in the classroom. These nominations include students who have shown improvement, great effort while tackling challenging content, or other exceptional qualities. Students selected come from all grade levels and courses. These students receive a certificate of recognition and donuts with the Principal; their photos are also posted in the Student of the Month display located in the main lobby.

<b>English:</b>	Courtney Johnny Rizwana Jordan Shai	Beebe Boykin Saleem St. Phard Tamary	<b>Social Studies:</b>	Tessa Hannah David Grant Caitlin Helena Jodi Monia Andrea	Bryant Salyer Beye Salgaller Veator Mobley Asher Ingabire Vargas Angulo
<b>Languages:</b>	Kevin Jeong Wook Wilbur Kathleen	Duan Lee Shirley Streeks	<b>ESOL:</b>	Hao Daniel Sandra Pablo	Chen Kim Delcid Luna
<b>Math:</b>	Dasia Anthony Patrick Merkisha Orly Biak Seandra Maria Felix Michael	Adams Gonzalez Hameni Lambert Lopez Par Pinkey Tamayo Chacon Ubiera Nunez Van Zutphen	<b>Interrelated Arts:</b>	Ashley Claudia Calum Cui Olivia Amy Kelly Tianna Natsinu	Lee Martinez McClelland Cheng Cobb Hosseinian Le Fulton Thodpanich
<b>Science:</b>	Sam Pedro Natalia Tara	Margolis Pimentel Portugal Wade			

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## “Every 15 Minutes” Program

Richard Montgomery High School wants to extend the idea of education beyond the classroom and facilitate in creating learning experiences that are applicable to real life situations. The possible ramifications of drinking alcohol, unsafe driving, and the impact it has on our students, their friends, and families are unfathomable to most young teenagers. On Wednesday, April 21, and Thursday, April 22, 2010, Richard Montgomery High School will be implementing the “Every 15 Minutes” program here at our school. This two day program focuses on high school juniors and seniors in challenging them to think about drinking, personal safety, driving habits and the responsibility of making mature decisions when lives are involved. The name of this nationally recognized program was conceived from the fact that every 15 minutes, someone in the United States dies in an alcohol-related traffic collision. Since these programs began, those statistics have actually decreased proving the awareness helps in the prevention. With this program, we wish to involve as many organizations and members of our community as possible.

Selected students will be involved in an overnight retreat and visit to a funeral home. Parental permission is required to participate in the program. The first day of this event involves pre-selected students being sought out by the Grim Reaper as a teenage statistic to later represent someone who has died in an alcohol-related crash. A lunchtime event involves the recreation of an auto accident as it would occur first hand. The City of Rockville has partnered with the school in assisting with this process for students to be able to recognize what would occur when losing one of their classmates.

The second day of this event is an assembly for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. A video summary of day one is presented in addition to the student participation reflections. Guest speakers share personal experiences they have had with alcohol-related or unsafe driving incidents that have affected their lives forever. Since these events sometimes evoke emotional reactions from students, the school has arranged for additional counseling services to be provided. We feel it is important to present the awareness of these issues to hopefully prevent future tragedies.

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## Report Card Information



**Second Marking Period ends:  
January 22, 2010**

**Third Marking Period ends:  
March 26, 2010**

**Fourth Marking Period ends:  
June 16, 2010**



**Report Card Distribution Dates:**

**November 11, 2009**

**February 3, 2010**

**April 14, 2010**

**June 23, 2010**

