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& Ms. Hush

**Special points of interest:**

- A+ certification? Qualify for dual enrollment next year!
- Musical virtuoso on page 2.
- Haiti relief right her at home.
- Self portraits- a la math-class.
- Dog lover? Check page 3.
- The fitness room is open for business!

**Inside this issue:**

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## Dual Enrollment Means Twice the Opportunity

by Mr. Smith

The Wright College Dual Enrollment/College Bridge Program at AMRCS is in full swing for the Spring 2010 semester.

There are a total of 25 AMRCS seniors (Class of 2010) taking English, Math, and/or Computer Networking / A+ Certification classes this semester. The English and Computer classes are offered next door at Wright's Humboldt Park Vocational Education Center (HPVEC), while the Math classes are offered at Wright's main campus.

ASPIRA and Wright College are paying the tuition, books, and fees for these classes. Students receive college credit for these classes and the classes also count toward AMRCS graduation requirements.

Graduates from the Class of 2009 currently attending universities like the University of Illinois at Chicago, DePaul University, and Bradley University were able to use up to 12 semester hours of college credit earned while at AMRCS.

The current AMRCS junior class will take the college placement Compass Test this May to determine their eligibility for summer and fall classes at Wright College.



Mirta Ramirez students take a variety of college courses tuition-free thanks to Aspira and Wright College.



### Student Spotlight: Jesus Ortiz

by Ms. Hush



Jesus Ortiz and his group have been together for years and travel regularly to share their art.

Jesus and his cuatro are in the center of the back row.

Did you know that we have a cuatro playing star amongst our student body? Meet Jesus Ortiz, a sophomore student who is an expert at playing the cuatro, a

smaller version of the guitar with four or more strings. ("Cuatro" means four in Spanish, but Jesus's instrument has ten strings.)

Jesus began playing the guitar at the age of 12, under the influence of his father, Miguel Ortiz. He was fascinated by the guitar and would join his father playing the guitar during the family's annual traveling tradition of serenading their neighbors with song during the Christmas season.

Soon after he began guitar lessons, Jesus's teacher encouraged him to try his

hand at the cuatro. Since that day, there's been no turning back for Jesus, who quickly mastered the cuatro and has been asked to play at many music venues in Chicago, including Harris Theatre, Old Town School of Folk Music, and Chicago Theatre. He has also produced two CDs.

"I like everything about music," said Jesus. "It relaxes me and I like to be on stage and thinking about how I'm going to be famous."

Jesus keeps up his skills by practicing at the Music

### Students Helping Haiti

Mirta Ramirez students are collecting money for earthquake victims in Haiti.

The students have participated in various fundraising activities such as out of uniform days, Africaribe Night, Open Mike, and food and baked good sales. Students have also solicited donations from family and friends.

Mirta students have collected over \$900 for earthquake victims. ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois will match their donation for a total of \$1800. Way to go White Tigers! Keep up the good work!

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Ms. Dean's students cre-

ated posters to encourage people to make donations to Haiti. We have used this catastrophe as a teachable moment! Our students have watched CNN live and discussed the commentaries regarding viewpoints, their need for assistance, and what we can do to help. The students created posters using attention grabbing pictures of the Haitian earthquake victims, statistics, and a catchy one liner/phrase to grab your attention and hopefully appeal to your sense of compassion to help to rebuild Haiti.

We will be sending home a letter home in both English and Spanish to make the parents aware of what we are trying to accomplish with the posters and

By Ms. Dean and Ms. Suddeth

getting donations for Haiti.

Our students were greatly affected by the earthquake in Haiti. When they saw the pictures and heard the cries of the victims they wanted to help! It was incomprehensible to them that 80% of Haitians live on less than \$1 a day. They rationalized how they spent a dollar on nothing and could gladly give up their bag of morning hot chips and energy drink to assist a family in Haiti.

We were very proud of their responses and willingness to help; we dedicated Black History Month to this cause. When you see the posters, please take time to read them and encourage others to explore ways to help.

Ms. Dean's students created posters to encourage philanthropy after the disaster in Haiti.



### Integrative Pet Healthcare

Working with animals is something many students consider for their careers. However, most students do not know what it is really like to work in animal care.

What types of jobs are there? What do you do during a typical day? What education do you need?

Nine Mirta Ramirez students got to find out the answers to these questions when they visited Integrative Pet Care to learn about rehabilitation and homeopathic medicine for dogs and cats.

These students are: freshmen Shelby Gomolinsky, Vanessa Rivera, Nancy Diaz, Karina Cruz, Ana Mendoza, Luis Gil and Ivette Lopez as well as sophomore Edwin Martinez.

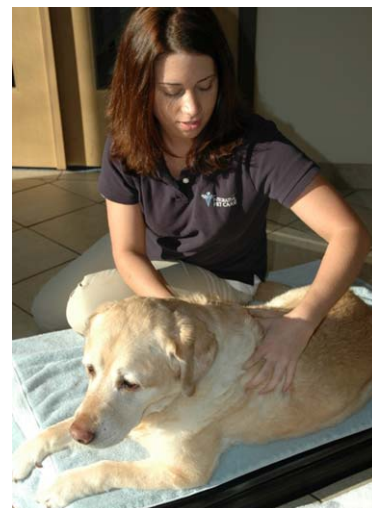
Students got an up-close look at swim and hydro therapy, massage therapy, and therapeutic exercise with things such as: land treadmills, physio balls, balance boards, therabands, trampolines and ramps.

The friendly and welcoming staff at Integrative Pet Care also gave the students

By Ms. Edwards

a tour of the facility and explained the day to day operations. The Veterinarians and Animal Rehab Therapists answered the students' questions and provided insight into their careers. The students were even able to reward my dog Georgie with treats after she completed her therapeutic exercise.

The students left energized with smiles on their faces and maybe a little dog slobber, too.



Taking care of pets means more than giving them food and water, as our students learned, it also involves giving quality medical care, even though they cannot tell you where it hurts.

### PBIS Rewards: Sophomores' Success Stories

Last quarter, sophomores with a GPA of 2.0+ and a clean detention record attended a field trip to the Museum of Science and Industry. There the students engaged in various exhibits as they toured and completed a scavenger hunt.

Many students enjoyed the U-505 Submarine ex-

hibit where they saw a German submarine from World War II.

Other students enjoyed the *You!* where students experienced various attractions that taught them about themselves and the human body; and not to forget learning about the future where many students

By Ms. Fahey

learned that the next thing they might be texting is a hug.

Team 10 also went on a field trip to the bowling alley on February 5th as a reward for meeting their semester 1 goals in class-participation and behavior. Way to go Team 10! Now, which team will be next?

### Data Analysis Self-Portraits

Students had to gather and organize data in ten categories over a week's time period. After analyzing the data by calculating the mean for each category, they graphed the data according to given directions, i.e. left ear showed how much time they spent on listening

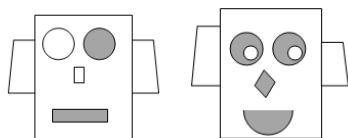
to the music and left eye on reading. The graphed data represented their glyph self-portrait which sample self-portrait students used to solve problems involving areas and perimeters of different shapes as well as areas of shaded regions.

By Ms. Gaj

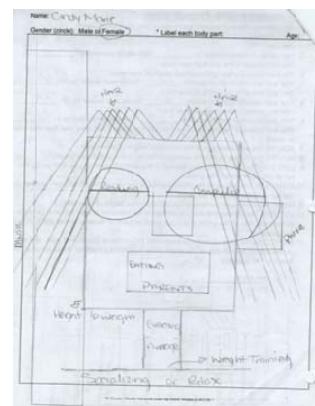
How to read some parts of the graph:

- Shoulders = socializing with friends or relaxing alone
- Width of mouth = eating
- Height of mouth = talking to parent(s) or guardian(s)
- Right ear = talking on the phone
- Left ear = listening to music
- Right eye = using of the computer and watching TV
- Left eye = reading and studying

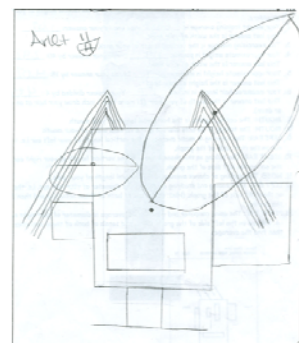
Nose = working or chores



Part of the presentation was a worksheet with some of the glyphs shown above. Students were challenged to find the area and perimeter of the entire head and area of the head without shaded region.



Sophomores Cindy Nunez and Arlet Martinez clearly love music, their computers and TV. It seems like these girls must be great multi-taskers!



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**Vision**

**AMRCS** will create and support innovative curriculum targeting all students, including students with disabilities, in order to develop their academic, work-place, technological and citizenship skills for postsecondary success.

**Mission**

**AMRCS** is a community of empowered learners who are ethical, passionate risk-takers. All students, including students with disabilities, feel safe, secure, and accepted in our small school with a family-like atmosphere. We offer rigorous, practical, student-centered curriculum from devoted professional educators, which is rooted in a technology-driven educational environment. Through outreach to parents, guardians and the community, AMRCS fosters culturally aware, confident leaders who are prepared to pursue and succeed in higher education and fulfilling professions. We are an accountable community that promotes uncompromised excellence at all levels – students, staff, faculty, and administration.

We're on the web:  
<http://mrcscs.aspirail.org/>

**P.E.P. Grant Brings New Opportunities to MRCS**

By Mr. Moran

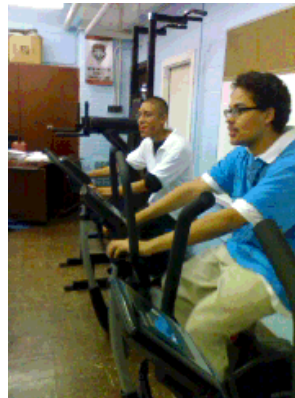
**Hey students,  
ever complain that  
adults don't listen to  
your side of things?**

If you have not heard yet, our school was approved for a federal grant allowing us to build a significant amount of exercise equipment to start our own fitness room. The purpose of this grant is to help our student body increase their activity minutes.

Since we have little to no facilities for Physical Education classes, a fitness room is the next best thing for getting daily exercise and helping our students get some sort of physical activity during the week.

Our fitness room is up and ready to go we will be holding exercise classes after school every day. You have the opportunity to participate in these classes if you want to get

involved with the P.E.P group. Members of the P.E.P group keep track of the daily minutes physical activity. They experience a variety of ways to work out such as: weight lifting, step aerobics, martial arts, cardio-kickboxing, dance, running and, as the weather gets nicer, intramural sports.



Share your ideas, concerns, and your art through the school newsletter. Reach the whole school with your vision for the school by submitting articles and art to the newsletter. You can submit a hardcopy to the box inside the door at room 101 or you can email the editor at [RBindewald@mrcscs.aspirail.org](mailto:RBindewald@mrcscs.aspirail.org).

