

1711 N. CALIFORNIA AVE.  
CHICAGO, IL 60647  
(773) 252-0970



Volume 2, Issue 1

September 24, 2009

Editors: Mr. Bindewald  
& Mrs. Hush

**Special points of interest:**

- Behavioral Support is taking effect!
- Freshmen got a head start this year.
- MRCS has a Soccer Team!!!
- Valentino Cabrera is a legitimate artist
- Who's Yuki?
- Classes are covering stuff that matters.

**Inside this issue:**

Behavioral Support and Rewards	<b>2</b>
Soccer Shenanigans	<b>2</b>
Student Spotlight	<b>2</b>
Flash Forward	<b>3</b>
History Connections	<b>3</b>
Thinking Outside The Box	<b>3</b>
Freshman Advisory Kick-off	<b>4</b>

**Greeting from our Principal**

Welcome to the new 2009-2010 school year! We are very happy to receive our new group of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and our returning students. Our hope is that every student will find AMRCS to be the ideal environment to further their educational and personal goals. Our curriculum offers unique challenges and opportunities and we expect our students to participate in this process actively and re-

sponsibly. This Student Handbook will assist you in understanding how we keep a safe, respectful, and orderly environment so that the teachers can teach and the students can learn. High school is the period when the future of our students is shaped and we take this very seriously!

We are very proud of the students and their families

**Ms. Asaf**

who have taken the awesome challenge of being part of the AMRCS learning community. We work hard, attend more days and start earlier than most schools, but we have many support systems to ensure success. It is up to each student and his/her family to fully participate for maximum benefit.

I wish you all the best!  
Ms. Karime Asaf

**Freshman Connected!**

Above the main staircase at AMRCS hangs the ASPIRA Pittire. The note cards attached to the Pittire are a daily reminder of the personal goals and reasons why each of the fifteen participants of AMRC's first Freshmen Connection program want to go to college.

The five-week Freshmen Connection program is designed to help rising freshmen get accustomed to their new school while building academic, social-emotional skills, and meeting new friends.

"Freshmen Connection was the funnest month of my summer vacation," said Christopher C. of the new class of 2013. "What I liked about F.C. was the activities, all the teamwork, and the classes that we had.

**By Mr. Maisonet**

The college preparation was very helpful. [Freshmen Connection] guided us to knowing what to be prepared for these four years of high school."

The weekly program that ran through June and July, was split into day and afternoon sessions, with Fridays being dedicated to field trips.

The Day Program consisted of an hour session of Math, Advisory and English. Twice a week, during the Afternoon sessions, students were given the opportunity to meet with upperclassmen (Senior Youth Leaders) and challenge themselves in team building games and sports.

The first field trip took the rising freshmen to North-

eastern Illinois University where they participated in a scavenger hunt and met with an admissions representative to understand the importance of a strong start in their high school career.

The F.C. students and teachers were later challenged to overcome their fears as they scaled NEIU's Rock Climbing Wall, as a metaphor for the confidence they would have to build for a freshmen year.

Ana M., who is extremely afraid of heights, gazed at the five-story wall, took several deep breaths, roped up and started to climb. "I was really scared, but I wanted to see how far I could get. I was encouraged by everybody saying 'Come on, you can do it! It's not even that scary.'"

## Behavioral Supports and Rewards

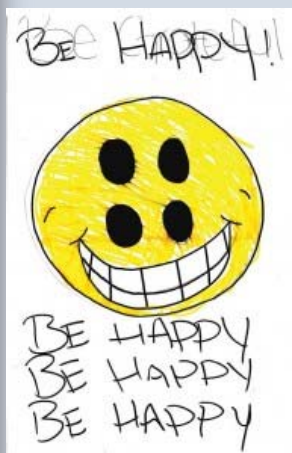
by Mr. Chen

This year, Mirta Ramirez is trying a new system of positive consequences for students, to reward students who do well. Examples include weekly raffle tickets for excellent students, which are then drawn for gift certificates. As a reward

for students with no referrals or un-served detentions, the sophomore class went to Humboldt Park for team-building exercises. Along with the rewards, we are coming up with more supports for students whose behavior needs improve-

ment.

We are working hard to ensure that students not only face fair, consistent consequences for negative behavior, but also that they have positive rewards for positive behavior.



Valentino Cabrera's drawing was on the cover of New City last week.

Below is the link to New City.  
<http://art.newcity.com/>



## MRCS Soccer Shenanigans

by Mr. Bindewald

If you've been outside after-school in the past week's you may have noticed some new activity in the yard.

About forty-five students have joined Coach Moran and Coach Bindewald for soccer practices.

At this point, it is little more than an over-active, hot and sweaty club, but everyone has aspirations for more. One thing is certain, MRCS soccer will be playing at least one team from A.E.C., maybe two.

Practices are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday—from 3:15 to 5:00. If you are interested bring all the appropriate gear and a bottle of water.

Looking for Girls' Soccer? It's coming this spring!!!

## Student Spotlight

### Don't Fear the Reaper, Valentino Cabrera

by Mrs. Hush

When one first looks upon Valentino Cabrera's drawing "Be Happy," one might not immediately grasp all of the significance behind the four eyes and smiling face. The inspiration behind the drawing? Says Valentino, 16, a sophomore at AMRCS high school, it was an assignment he received during Aspira's After School Matters that inspired him to come up with the artwork. "They asked us to draw something for the elderly so that they [the elderly] would not be scared of death." Cabrera responded with his personal vision: "Be happy. Don't be afraid to die. Live your life to the fullest." But there's more behind the drawing. Cabrera explains that the logo—with its four

eyes—also symbolizes that Cabrera is different from others. "I'm not the same as everyone else," he says. Cabrera's artwork certainly stands out from the crowd. Since the age of 9, when his father taught him how to draw, Cabrera's passion toward art has spread like paint on a mural. He's won many awards and has been asked to design murals for friends' homes. He describes his style as "urban art."

In addition to his father inspiring him to draw, Cabrera identifies with rapper Kid Cudi, who began rapping as a way to express his feelings around the death of his father. "When my grandfather died, instead of rapping, I started drawing," says Cabrera. "My art is my voice."

When asked what advice he would impart to other Aspirantes, Cabrera says: "Be

yourself and don't follow other people."

### Tear by Yuki

A tear falls gently to the ground. Though quiet, it is the only sound.

The world around me, bleak and grey has neither shade nor shade of day.

The earth beneath my feet is naught but what my horrid mind has wrought.

And rot it does, but leaves no warmth. Painful, it brings nothing forth.

I stare at nothing,, and nothing calls... nothing hears and nothing stalls.

Within these walls of my own prison, the only thing I want to do is listen.

While I may listen, I cannot hear except for the loneliness of that one tear.

## FLASH Forward

by Ms. Sanchez

The senior computer class is currently working in Flash. We have created quite a few small animations and are working on using basic skills and tools. We will soon begin our Flash project.

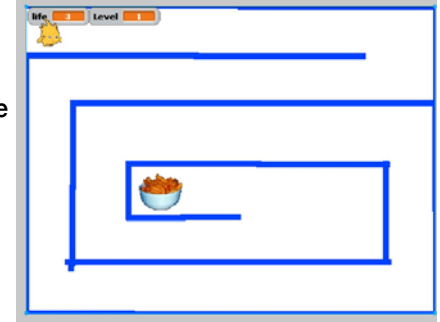
Seniors need to remember to bring their jump drives everyday and to back up their work in multiple copies. Any work, exercises, assignments, and updates

can be found on our moodle website at <http://moo.morainevalley.edu>. All of the students know how to use and access this site from their home computer.

Flash is not a necessary program to install on the home computer, but is always helpful. There are legal and free 30-day trial versions that are available for download either by

searching for them or going to adobe.com. I do not have any legal copy of the program to give to students to take home, and downloaded versions from such sites as limewire may contain viruses and are not recommended.

If there are any questions or concerns about the class please feel free to contact me by e-mail at [jemstar7@aol.com](mailto:jemstar7@aol.com)



Students are making games in Mr. Wheadon's class. Here is Alejandra Perez's maze game called "Mr. Munch."

## History Connections

by Ms. Krall

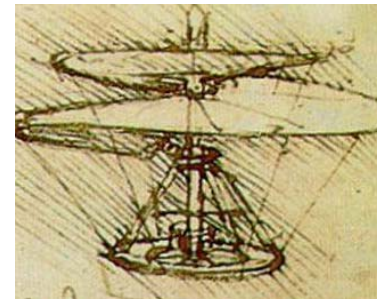
The sophomores are discovering the connection between history, science and human achievements or progress. Students have been challenged to design and invent an original idea which will catapult their generation into the history books as well as the 21<sup>st</sup> century, just as Leonardo da Vinci did during the Renaissance period.

In essence, the students are producing a neo-Renaissance era. This project will include the study of the Renaissance and its influence on American society, but will go beyond the written word to better understand its importance.

Some of the current "under-construction" projects include: a system to control

the earth's climate, a machine which will fight wars instead of soldiers as well as a small device that will help prevent heart failure.

All students and parents will be invited to see our finished inventions later this year.



"under-construction" projects include: a system to control the earth's climate, a machine which will fight wars... a small device that will prevent heart failure.

## Thinking Outside of the Box

by Mr. Clarke And Mrs. Trivedi

The school year kicked off with the Patterns Unit. Students are learning to identify and describe a pattern, and to make a prediction based on their analysis. An Elmo, a digital presentation device, has been introduced into the classroom. This equipment enables students to present and share their work in class, and it helps to create a stimulating student-centered classroom. Students recently

completed their first Problem of the Week (POW), a thought-provoking question that required them to think outside the box. "We play fun, but challenging games," says Irene Cervantes. "Things are explained step-by-step to have a clear understanding of the problem."

\*\*\*

In Mrs. Trivedi's Algebra I class, students will learn

about evaluating variable expressions, order of operations, finding patterns, translating and solving real life problems, and creating algebraic models. Students will also be given a topic from Algebra I to research and present. They will present to the class how the content and math skills from their topic are useful in everyday life.

**Aspira Inc. of Illinois  
Mirta Ramirez Computer  
Science High School**

1711 North California Ave.  
Chicago, Illinois 60647

Phone: (773) 252-0970  
Fax: (773) 739-2330

**Phone Extensions:**

<b>Principal: Karime Asaf</b>	<b>Ext. 3240</b>
<b>Student Advocate, Family Liaison: Zaira Lugo</b>	<b>Ext. 318</b>
<b>Registrar: Gloria Otero</b>	<b>Ext. 322</b>
<b>Attendance Clerk, Family Services: Janet Miranda</b>	<b>Ext. 329</b>
<b>Head of Security: Osvaldo Lugo</b>	<b>Ext. 310</b>
<b>Special Education, Case Manager: Laura Edwards</b>	<b>Ext. 351</b>
<b>Freshman Advisor: Joel Maisonet</b>	<b>Ext. 315</b>
<b>Sophomore Advisor: Candice Ramirez</b>	<b>Ext. 326</b>
<b>Junior Advisor: Michelle Figueroa</b>	<b>Ext. 330</b>
<b>Senior Advisor: Nicolette Rivera</b>	<b>Ext. 312</b>



**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/>

**Freshman Advisory Kicks-off with Team Building** By Mrs. Louis

This year's freshmen are an incredibly bright and energetic group, and we are going to learn a great deal from each other. So far this month in advisory we've done a lot of team-building—the picture is of some Team 4 members doing a communication challenge in the auditorium.

In World Lit, we are in the middle of a “grammar boot camp,” which is tough, but going very well. Coming up, we'll study Chinese culture, philosophy & poetry.

Right: Karina Cruz, Rodrigo Ascencio, and Cassandra Garcia work together during the first week of school to build a replica of an object they cannot see, but is described by a classmate.

