



Woodlynde School

Where Great Minds Learn Differently

Head of School Newsletter *Spring 2016*



Dear Family and Friends of the Woodlynde Community,

As the 2015-2016 school year begins to come to a close, we enter one of the busiest and most exciting seasons of the year at Woodlynde School. Over the next few weeks, we will celebrate our students' many achievements, go on field trips, and bid farewell to our seniors. I hope to see many of you at one of our year-end events, and wish you all in advance a wonderful summer season.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher M. Fulco, Head of School
fulco@woodlynde.org

WOODLYNDE APPOINTS THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Woodlynde School recently welcomed three new members to its board of trustees: Andrew Gerardi P'19, Whitney Kellett P'24, and Tracy Reller P'25.

Gerardi is the vice president and co-owner of C.H. Schwertner & Son, an industrial and commercial general contractor in Bala Cynwyd. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Catholic University.

Kellett was recently hired as chief information officer at Aqua America Inc. She previously served as chief information officer at Atlas Energy Group LLC. A graduate of the University of Virginia, she holds a bachelor's degree in Economics.

Reller earned her M.B.A. in finance from the University of Southern California and her B.S. in finance from Canisius College.

RECAP: WOODLYNDE DREAMS

Thanks to your outstanding generosity and the generosity of our \$50,000 and \$20,000 Woodlynde Dreams Challenge donors, we hit a Spring FUNdraising campaign record of \$227,794 raised for The Annual Fund for Woodlynde during Woodlynde Dreams! We also had a record number of student and faculty donations.

UPCOMING OPEN HOUSES

Do you know someone who may be interested in attending Woodlynde School? We hold Admissions Open Houses at 8:45 a.m.

Tuesday, July 12 • Tuesday, October 11 • Tuesday, November 8

IN THIS NEWSLETTER:

Professional Development: The Key to Great Teaching

Sneak Peek at 2016-2017 Literacy Institute Speaker Series

Woodlynde to Celebrate 40 Years

40 Years of College Success

College Landscape More Inclusive of Learning Differences

Class of 2016 College Matriculations

Woodlynde Partners with Landmark College for New Online Dual-Enrollment Course

Faculty & Staff Milestones

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE KEY TO GREAT TEACHING

What makes Woodlynde School the region's leading K-12 college prep school for students who learn differently? More than anything, it's our caring and expert faculty who continue to access the latest in evidence-based teaching methodologies.

On our last Thursday in April, I announced in assembly that Friday was a professional development day for our teachers, and a huge cheer erupted from the student body. At the same time the students are cheering, I recognize that there are many parents who are feverishly scrambling to find childcare for their kids and are bemoaning the fact that the students have a day off from school so soon after Spring Break. Professional development days are often misunderstood by those outside the faculty and staff of schools, and I'm sure many wonder how these days are being used and whether they truly are necessary to ensure that excellent teaching and learning is happening in Woodlynde classrooms.

From a "macro" level, the need for comprehensive, ongoing professional development for teachers is a "no-brainer." Studies show that teachers who engage in quality professional development improve their instruction and assessment (Mizell, 2010). Good teaching does not happen by accident; teachers who are open to learning, growing, experimenting, reflecting, and changing become better teachers and have more success with their students as a result of their professional development efforts. At Woodlynde, we strive to provide our teachers with access to high quality professional development and partner with local and national experts to ensure the best professional development possible. While many of our teachers have deep expertise in teaching students with learning disabilities, these high-quality professional development opportunities with experts in the field help our teachers reflect on their current practices and refine their strategies to address the needs of our students even more effectively.

This semester, our teachers have engaged in two full-day professional development experiences with experts in many of the prevalent learning differences displayed by Woodlynde students. Teachers first met with Dr. Amber Gentile and former Woodlynde parent Mary Budzilowicz, both professors from Cabrini College, who had teachers engage in a simulation on dysgraphia, a learning difference which results in significant difficulty with written expression. From there, teachers migrated to a session with Dr. Colleen Lelli, also a professor at Cabrini College, who gave Woodlynde teachers specific instructional strategies to help students with weak working memory and/or slow processing. Students with weak working memory and processing often have high or even gifted IQ's and they know a lot; however, they have difficulty accessing and using the information in their brain, and this often results in taking longer to complete tasks, difficulty with reading or math fluency, higher frustration levels, and even difficulty establishing friendships with peers. Finally, Dr. Diane

Weisenberger from the Chester County Intermediate Unit presented to our faculty on central auditory processing disorder. CAPD results from a lack of coordination between a child's ears and brain. Dr. Weisenberger addressed the symptoms experienced by our students with auditory processing disorder and gave our teachers many strategies for creating better lessons and classrooms environments to help the students with CAPD.

Our April professional development day continued this in-depth analysis of the common learning difference and factors that sometimes hinder our students' classroom success. Nationally-recognized speaker Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair, whose book, *The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationships in the Digital Age*, has been a hot seller among parents and educators alike, spent time helping our teachers understand the impact of stress and anxiety in children and adolescents. She also explored how electronics are contributing to that stress. Catherine Mallam, a counselor from Haverford School District and expert on Executive Function Disorder, presented our teachers with in-depth information on this learning difference that has been increasingly diagnosed in Woodlynde students. The executive functions are those brain functions that allow a person to analyze, organize, decide, and execute—critically important functions in everything from tying shoes to writing paragraphs to solving multi-step equations—and Mallam's presentation not only furthered our teachers' understanding of EFD but also gave teachers practical strategies to address these deficits. Finally, resident social-emotional learning expert Mike Fogel, the director of Camp Pegasus as well as the architect of Woodlynde's successful "Team for Fun" and "Reputation Project" programs for 5th and 8th graders, wrapped up the April professional development day with an analysis of how the social and emotional lives of Woodlynde students are often impacted by their learning differences. Not only do learning differences impact the self-concept of students, but they also sometimes impact a child's peer and family relationships. Students with learning differences experience stress and anxiety at higher-than-normal levels, and Mike Fogel's practical strategies for helping students improve their friendships and social interactions were invaluable for our teachers.

So, while Woodlynde students are sleeping in, having a fun day with mom or dad, enjoying a three-day weekend trip, or just enjoying some time in front of the Xbox, our teachers are hard at work learning and perfecting what they do in the classroom to serve their students.

LITERACY INSTITUTE WRAPS UP FIFTH YEAR!

The Literacy Institute at Woodlynde School is wrapping up its fifth year. Created to be an engaging, expert, and topical resource for parents of children who learn differently and the professionals who serve them as well as a center for teaching children how to read, the Institute hosts a dynamic and popular speaker series each year that is free and open to the public. This year's series featured a wonderful variety of informative speakers.

In October, nationally regarded expert on homework Dr. Cathy Vatterott presented on building productive homework habits. In February, we hosted Drs. Deborah Ledley and Lynne Siqueland of the Children's and Adult Center for OCD and Anxiety who spoke on how to help anxious kids find resilience and inner strength. Just a few weeks ago in April, clinical psychologist and author Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair discussed how to raise children in the fast-paced digital age.

As the year winds down, we are eagerly anticipating all that The Literacy Institute has in store for 2016-2017.



Dr. Lynne Siqueland, Director of the Literacy Institute Penny Moldofsky, and Dr. Deborah Ledley

SNEAK PEEK AT THE 2016-2017 LITERACY INSTITUTE SPEAKER SERIES

Director of The Literacy Institute Penny Moldofsky already has an incredibly dynamic series of nationally-renowned speakers lined up for next year's Literacy Institute Speaker Series. More information coming soon.

Executive Functioning Toolbox
presented by Dr. Cheryl Chase
Thursday, November 3, at 7:00 p.m.

Thinking Differently
presented by David Flink
Thursday, February 9, at 7:00 p.m.

Raising Kids to Thrive
presented by Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg
Thursday, April 6, at 7:00 p.m.

ALUMNI CORNER

SUMMER REUNIONS FOR THE CLASSES OF '76, '81, '86, '91, '96, '01, '06, '11

The graduating classes listed above are celebrating milestone anniversaries this year! If you're a graduate of these classes and are interested in helping with organizing a reunion for your class this summer, contact rapp@woodlynde.org for support in planning your class gathering.

SAVE THE DATE!

2016 ALUMNI SOCCER GAME & TAILGATE
Thursday, November 22, from 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Alumni are invited to join us for our annual Alumni Soccer Game & Tailgate the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, on November 22.

Woodlynde alumni and faculty will team up to play soccer against the Woodlynde Varsity Soccer team. After the game, we will travel to a local eatery for our official "tailgate" where you'll be treated to appetizers and drinks. More information coming soon.

FIND THE LATEST ALUMNI NEWS AT
WWW.WOODLYNDE.ORG/ALUMNI



2015 Alumni Day Soccer Game & Tailgate



January Alumni Happy Hour hosted by Mr. Sean Sweeney



March Alumni Happy Hour hosted by Mr. Jeff Gelman '91

WOODLYNDE CELEBRATES 40 YEARS IN 2016-2017!

Woodlynde School will celebrate its 40th anniversary next school year! Founded in 1976, Woodlynde opened its doors to just 40 students at its former campus in Gulph Mills. Forty years later, Woodlynde has touched the lives of hundreds of students and continues to flourish as the region's leading K-12 college-prep school for students who learn differently. The 2016-2017 school year will be a year of reflection upon how far we've come and a celebration of the difference the school has made in so many lives. While planning is still in the early stages, we will be throwing a "Coming Home" celebration that will be accessible to all families, past and present. We hope to that you'll join us in the celebration!

40 YEARS OF COLLEGE SUCCESS!

As Woodlynde looks forward to celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2016-2017, we wanted to also look back at the decades of Woodlynde Alumni success. Here is a sampling of our ever-growing list of colleges and universities from which our alums have graduated since Woodlynde's founding in 1976.

- Albright College
- American University of Paris
- American University
- Arcadia University
- Art Institute of Philadelphia
- Ashland University
- Assumption College
- Berklee College of Music
- Bloomsburg University
- Boston University
- Bowdoin College
- Bucknell University
- Cabrini College
- Cedar Crest College
- Champlain College
- City University of New York
- Clark University
- Columbia University
- Community College of Philadelphia
- Connecticut School of Broadcasting
- Delaware County Community College
- Delaware Valley University
- Dickinson College
- Drew University
- Drexel University
- Eastern University
- Elizabethtown College
- Elmira College
- Elon University
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- Emerson College
- Fairleigh Dickinson University
- Florida Atlantic University
- Franklin & Marshall College
- George Mason University
- Gettysburg College
- Goucher College
- Green Mountain College
- Gwynedd-Mercy University
- Harcum College
- Hartwick College
- The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Hofstra University
- Howard University
- Immaculata University
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Ithaca College
- Johns Hopkins University
- Kalamazoo College
- King's College
- Kutztown University
- Landmark College
- LaSalle University
- Lebanon Valley College
- Lock Haven University
- Lynn University
- Lynchburg College
- Marietta College
- Massachusetts Maritime Academy
- McDaniel College
- Millersville University
- Montgomery County Community College
- Moore College of Art & Design
- Muhlenberg College
- Neumann University
- New York Institute of Technology
- New York University
- Northeastern University
- Northern Arizona University
- Ohio State University
- Ohio Wesleyan College
- Parsons School of Design
- Pennsylvania State University
- Pepperdine University
- Philadelphia University
- Point Park University
- Prescott College
- Quinnipiac University
- Regis University
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Rider University
- Roanoke College
- Salve Regina University
- Sarah Lawrence College
- Seoul National University
- Shippensburg University
- Skidmore College
- Saint Joseph's University
- Saint Vincent College
- State University of New York
- Stetson University
- Suffolk County Community College
- Suffolk University
- Susquehanna University
- Syracuse University
- Temple University
- Towson University
- Trinity College
- Tulane University
- University College London
- University of California
- University of Delaware
- University of Hartford
- University of Maryland
- University of Memphis
- University of Michigan
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Scranton
- University of the Arts
- University of the Sciences
- University of Vermont
- Villanova University
- Virginia Wesleyan College
- Walden University
- Washington College
- Wentworth Institute of Technology
- West Chester University
- West Virginia Wesleyan College
- Western New England University
- Wheeling Jesuit University
- Widener University
- Wilkes University
- Wittenberg University

EITC & OSTC PROGRAMS: HOW YOU OR YOUR BUSINESS CAN CHANGE A LIFE AND RECEIVE SIGNIFICANT TAX CREDITS

Close to 40% of Woodlynde students receive some degree of financial aid from the Woodlynde Scholarship Fund (WSF). Two significant sources of support for the fund are the Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) programs. Your business can change a life by providing a qualifying contribution to the WSF through either the EITC or OSTC programs. In return, your business may receive tax credits of 75% for a one-year gift or 90% for a two-year commitment.

"Tri-State Technical Sales Corporation has been able to use the EITC/OSTC program to redirect PA tax obligations to help support Woodlynde School's mission to SERVE and EMPOWER students with learning differences. Having first-hand experience with the positive impact Woodlynde can have on a student's academic career, WE FEEL IT IS IMPERATIVE TO HELP CHILDREN HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO THRIVE IN WOODLYNDE'S NURTURING ENVIRONMENT."

- Sean Ryan P'24
CFO of Tri-State Technical Sales Corporation

APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESSES IN THE MIDDLE OF A TWO-YEAR COMMITMENT AND RETURNING DONORS WILL BE ACCEPTED STARTING **MAY 16**.

NEW APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED STARTING **JULY 1**.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, visit www.newpa.com, contact Associate Director of Advancement Maura Lee at lee@woodlynde.org, or contact Woodlynde Board Member Marc Balcer at marc.balcer@gmail.com.

IF...

My Business gives \$10,000 to Woodlynde for scholarships this year,



THEN...



My business
may receive up to a
\$9,000 state tax credit.

** Please consult your tax advisor on how these programs may impact your business*

THANK YOU TO OUR EITC/OSTC DONORS

- Aqua America, Inc.
- Colonial Volkswagen, Inc.
- Harmelin Media
- Henry F. Michell Co.
- IMC Construction
- Karen Friedman Enterprises, Inc.
- Maguire Enterprises LP
- Manufacturers and Traders Trust Co.
- National City Equity Partners Inc.
- The Philadelphia Contributionship
- Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Company
- Strafford Real Estate GP LLC
- Tri-State Technical Sales Corp.

COLLEGE LANDSCAPE EVOLVING TO BECOME MORE INCLUSIVE OF LEARNING DIFFERENCES

By Jason Hoffman, *Director of College Guidance*

As Woodlynde students apply to college and begin to think about the world of potential that lies ahead, many thoughts may come to mind. Where should I go to school? What should I major in? Who will my roommate be? What clubs should I join? When should I contact disability services and set up an appointment to make sure I have my accommodations? If that last question sounds unfamiliar to you, that might be because you never had accommodations of your own in college or perhaps you thought that colleges didn't even offer accommodations of any kind. But as our world begins to change its perception of learning differences, higher education is quickly understanding the potential of these students who were traditionally labeled as "LD."

More and more, post-secondary educational institutions, like Landmark College, specialize exclusively in educating those students with learning differences. Located in scenic Putney, Vermont, this college offers an array of supports, tutoring, accommodations, emotional and social groups, and a host of other services that will help enable college students with learning differences understand and conceptualize their needs as learners and what it takes for them to achieve academic success in college.

Other New England colleges, like Curry College and Mitchell College, have implemented specific programs that assist students with various learning differences. These programs help students address their learning styles and understand exactly what kind of rigor is involved with collegiate academics. Curry's PAL program (Program for the Advancement of Learning) has students that are fully mainstreamed and constitute about 20% of each entering class. Students work in a combination of individual and/or small, credit-bearing classes with a PAL faculty member to develop strategies in areas such as reading comprehension, written language, speaking, listening, organization, and time management. Similarly, Mitchell College's THAMES Academy is an exclusive academic program associated with Mitchell College that emphasizes academic and observation-based decision making and is exclusively taught by faculty that understands the needs of the individual learner.

While these specialized institutions and academic programs have been a part of the collegiate landscape for a while, more major universities have realized the need for specific programs that address the needs of the ever-changing profile of the typical college learner. The University of Arizona's SALT Program (Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques Center) has been gaining more and more national exposure due to its inclusion on a major campus, but more importantly, for its targeted approach to addressing the needs of students with learning differences. The University of Connecticut has implemented a variety of programs to assist students, but their Beyond Access program allows students to work with a strategy instructor to identify learning strengths and shortcomings, create a positive learning environment through active networking and communication among students and faculty, as well as build the self-determination needed to advocate for themselves on campus.

The typical college landscape is evolving. No longer are standardized scores and a high GPA the only indicators of collegiate success. Dwindling are the days where a student must covertly converse with his or her professor about the extended time needed on a test. Although it may have been considered taboo at some point in the past to admit a student with a diagnosed learning difference, no longer are universities and colleges bound to the outdated views of admission. The bottom line is simple; the collegiate landscape is evolving and so with it, the idea of a typical learner.

NEW! SUMMER COLLEGE BRIDGE PROGRAM

June 27-July 22 • *For rising high school seniors & college freshmen*

Woodlynde School will offer a new program this summer for students who are about to embark on their post-secondary educational journeys. Open to both Woodlynde School students and students from area public and private schools who have just completed their junior or senior years of high school, the Summer College Bridge Program is designed to provide insight into the world of college academics.

The Summer College Bridge Program is broken into four key areas of focus that students with learning differences traditionally struggle with upon entering college – Oral Communications, Written Communications, Mathematics, and College Preparation and Study Skills. The course on college preparation and study skills will be led by the Student Disability Coordinator at Cabrini College to provide students with expert advice on how to manage time, self-advocate, obtain testing accommodations, communicate with professors, and manage anxiety.

For more information, contact Program Director and Director of College Guidance Jason Hoffman at hoffman@woodlynde.org.



CLASS OF 2016: BY THE NUMBERS

On June 10, Woodlynde will celebrate the commencement of its 39th graduating class – the Class of 2016. Yet again, 100% of our seniors who applied were accepted to multiple colleges and universities across the country - 66 to be exact. In total, our Office of College Guidance processed over 200 college applications this year. Many of our graduates received generous merit-based scholarships and aid packages, with one student being offered almost \$100,000 over the course of four years!

On behalf of the entire Woodlynde School Board, faculty, and staff, I would like to congratulate the Class of 2016 and wish them bright futures full of learning, personal growth, and happiness.

CLASS OF 2016 COLLEGE MATRICULATIONS

Members of the Class of 2016 will be attending the following colleges and universities in the fall:

- Alvernia University
- American University
- Arcadia University
- Cabrini College
- College of Charleston
- Community College of Philadelphia
- Curry College
- Delaware County Community College
- High Point University
- Juniata College
- Landmark College
- Maryville College
- Millersville University
- Mitchell College
- Montgomery County Community College
- Philadelphia University
- Rensselaer Polytechnic University
- Rosemont College
- Rowan University
- Saint Joseph's University
- Savannah College of Art & Design
- Shippensburg University
- Temple University
- Towson University
- University of Massachusetts - Amherst
- University of Tampa
- University of Vermont

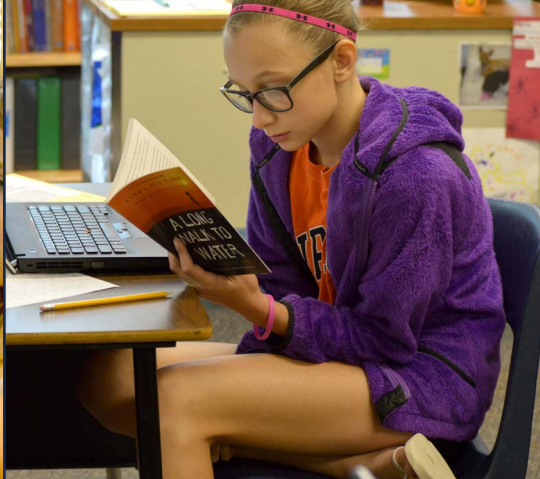
WOODLYNDE PARTNERS WITH LANDMARK COLLEGE FOR NEW ONLINE DUAL-ENROLLMENT COURSE

Woodlynde School recently became one of only three schools in the nation to partner with Landmark College, a college in Vermont for students who learn differently, to offer an online dual-enrollment course to its students.

Offered for the first time at Woodlynde during the spring semester, the Introduction to Communications course allows students to earn 3 college credits before graduating from Woodlynde. While the course is taught online, it in no way affects its rigor. Students in the course this semester are exploring the theoretical underpinnings of communication and are practicing intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, public speaking, organizational, and electronic communication skills.

While the course's topic allows students to gain an understanding of effective communication strategies, the online component of the course allows them to build independence and understand the rigors of college academics. Students are proctored throughout the semester and are able to chat with their professor through online office hours, but they are primarily independent in the completion of assignments and overall learning.

Woodlynde hopes to continue offering this dual-enrollment opportunity to its students. This is one of three dual-enrollment opportunities available for eligible seniors at Woodlynde School.



2016 SUMMER PROGRAM EXPANDED TO INCLUDE GRADES 9-11

June 27-July 22 • For students entering grades K-11

Summer vacation is just around the corner, and while this break provides a wonderful opportunity for students to relax and have fun, it also opens the door for students to lose some of the academic gains they made during the school year. This year, we are excited to announce that our Summer has been expanded to serve students from area public and private schools who are entering grades K-11 (the program previously only ran through grade 8).

The morning academic program, open to grades K-11, focuses on grade-level appropriate math, problem-solving, reading, writing, computer, and study skills. In the afternoons, K-8 students are welcome to stay for our Adventure Day Camp where they can enjoy a wide array of activities, including swimming, arts, crafts, sports, and field trips.

For more information, visit www.woodlynde.org/summerprogram. Register today! Space is limited.

WOODLYNDE IN THE NEWS

The Boardroom

Woodlynde School has named Andrew Gerardi and Tracy Reller to its Board of Trustees.

[Read the full article in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.](#)

People on the Move

The Philadelphia Business Journal highlighted Andrew Gerardi and Tracy Reller for being appointed to Woodlynde's Board of Trustees.

Plans Announced for MLK Day of Service

A photo of Woodlynde School's MLK Mural was featured in a slideshow discussing Philadelphia's 21st annual Martin Luther King Day of Service.

[View the photo from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.](#)

Woodlynde School Participates in MLK Mural Project

Woodlynde School students created a remarkable mural to inspire volunteers at the largest MLK Day of Service in the nation.

[Read the full story from *Tredyffrin-Easttown Patch*.](#)

Woodlynde School Summer Program: Learning and Fun for Children Who Learn Differently

Woodlynde's four week K-11 Summer Program was featured in Montgomery Media's *Super Summer Camp Guide*, which appeared in several local newspapers in Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery counties.

The Literacy Institute at Woodlynde School: Empowering Students, Teachers, and Parents

Chester County Life Magazine featured Woodlynde's Literacy Institute in its March/April issue.

The Secret to Homework Success

Main Line Neighbors asked Woodlynde School about strategies for homework success in their April 12 Educational Spotlight.

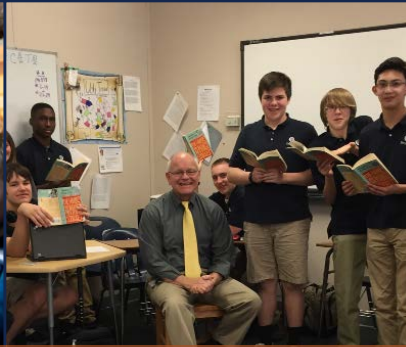
CELEBRATING OUR FACULTY & STAFF MILESTONES

Earlier this month during Teacher Appreciation Week, we honored our faculty and staff celebrating 5-year milestones at Woodlynde! Thank you for all of your hard work, dedication, and service to Woodlynde School.



40 years
of service

Mrs. Bohl
*Upper School
Science Teacher*



20 years
of service

Mr. Koch
*Upper School
English Teacher*



20 years
of service

Ms. Walker
*Middle School
Writing Teacher*



15 years
of service

Mrs. Lusch
*Kindergarten
Teacher*



15 years
of service

Mr. Ponessa
*Food Service
Manager*



10 years
of service

Mr. Kupersmith
*Upper School
English Teacher*



10 years
of service

Mr. Purdy
Athletic Director



10 years
of service

Mr. Smith
*Upper School Social
Studies Teacher*



10 years
of service

Ms. Szmajda
*Middle/Upper
School Counselor*



5 years
of service

Mrs. Crawford
*2nd Grade
Teacher*



5 years
of service

Mrs. Rapp
*Assistant Director of
Advancement,
Community & Alumni
Relations*



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, June 9

K-4 Celebration of Success & 5th
Grade Graduation
8:30 a.m.

Middle School Graduation
Penn State Great Valley
5:00 p.m.

Friday, June 10

Commencement
Penn State Great Valley
5:00 p.m.

June 27-July 22

K-11 Summer Program
Summer College Bridge Program

July 12

Admissions Open House
8:45 a.m.