THE WORLD IS OUR CLASSROOM, PAGE 3

Travel changes people. It changes the way you view the world around you, and it changes the way you view yourself.

PREPARING OUR SENIORS FOR THE FUTURE

Our senior career focus project is something that graduating seniors since 2011 always describe as one of the most beneficial and applicable experiences they had at ACA.

The project has several parts and takes place over the course of the second semester. The senior English teachers, Mrs. Nikki Hill and Ms. Carlson Coogler, will be working with their students in conjunction with Mrs. Blakley, Curriculum Director, to prepare the students for success.

Through classroom instruction, seniors first learn the basics of the job interview process. They will complete job applications, create personal data sheets and a professional resume, and acquire and practice interviewing skills. On Thursday, March 22 they will participate in mock interviews at ACA. Local businessmen and businesswomen will volunteer their time and each student will have a face-to-face, individual mock interview. After the event, the students will also learn how to compose a formal business thank you letter.

Then, on Thursday, April 12th the seniors will spend a full school day job shadowing a professional in their desired field of study. Some students – those who are considering several different careers - will even “split” their job shadowing day and spend the morning in one occupation and the afternoon in a different area. With the help and guidance of their teachers, the students will locate their own hosts for job shadowing and, in the process, learn how to conduct themselves professionally.

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**AP & Dual Enrollment**

Interested students and parents in grades 10 and 11 should attend the Advanced Placement versus Dual Credit presentation on **Monday, January 29, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.** The meeting will be held in the gym at ACA.

The AP teachers will present information about their courses. UA Early College and Shelton State Dual Enrollment representatives will share valuable information about their programs. The presentation will give parents and students the necessary information to decide if Pre-AP/AP or Dual Credit is right for them. The application process and the necessary skills for success will also be discussed.

9th grade students and parents who are considering AP or Dual Enrollment later in their academic course of study are also invited to attend to learn more.

Questions about the meeting may be sent to Mrs. Diane Jones, ACA Guidance Counselor, at djones@acacademy.com.

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**PREPARING OUR SENIORS FOR THE FUTURE**

*Continued from P1*

through phone calls and emails. There have been some incredible job shadowing placements in the past. Students have shadowed labor and delivery nurses and witnessed child birth; they have stood next to physicians during surgeries and other medical procedures. We have had seniors up in the air with pilots and on the scene during a potentially suspicious death with a homicide detective. Students have returned from job shadowing with the resolution to pursue a hypothetical career with passion and confidence, and some find their experience will push them to consider different fields than they had in the past. In either scenario, job shadowing is a long-lasting and remarkable experience.

Finally, the seniors will end their semester with a career-based formal research paper that will prepare them fully for the caliber of writing that will be expected in their college papers and essays. After spending a day in a desired field of study and after completing extensive research for their papers, the students will be well-informed about the occupations they are considering prior to even graduating from high school.

*If you are interested in participating in senior mock interviews or in hosting a student for job shadowing, please email Christine Blakley at cblakley@acacademy.com.*

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**Important Calendar Changes**

Due to some very unusual weather patterns this fall and winter, ACA students have missed a total of 3 instructional days. For Dr. Carden, the decision to cancel school is always a difficult one – and nothing is more important than the safety of our ACA family.

Even though some area schools will not be making up missed class time, we believe that we should use every opportunity that we can to provide our students with the best educational experiences possible. For that reason, the school calendar has been modified. **February 19th was originally scheduled to be a day of teacher in-service with students out of school; however we WILL have school and students should be in classes. In addition, April 20th was originally on the school calendar as a “weather day,” but students and teachers WILL be in school on that date, as well.**

Thank you for your support of ACA academics and for your prayers for our Headmaster when he has to make challenging assessments of the weather and student well-being.
The World is Our Classroom

Travel changes people. It changes the way you view the world around you, and it changes the way you view yourself. We say “the world is our classroom” because we have made travel an integral part of the educational experience at American Christian. It fosters togetherness and teamwork and personifies the family atmosphere that we want at our school. While growing closer together, our students experience learning that has come alive. It allows them to see, hear, and touch what they have learned about.

Travel begins early with kindergartners watching zookeepers feed gorillas in Birmingham. Classes dress-up and make clay pots at the Moundville Archeological Park. Students sound the horn on a fire truck and play with the lights in a police car. Fourth grade students don’t simply learn about the state government, they spend the day in Montgomery seeing how it works. Fifth grade classes learn about lizards and frogs in the classroom and then hunt for spiders by flashlight while spending the night at Camp Cosby. Our sixth graders learn about the framers of the Constitution before visiting Washington D.C. While there they walk in the footsteps of Washington and Jefferson and learn in the shadows of the White House and the Capitol Building. An education at American Christian transcends what can be learned in a classroom alone.

While working at a sea lab, our high-school students see firsthand what pollution can do. Students have gazed at the Rio Grande and the Rocky Mountains and reflected on what it must have been like for the pioneers who first saw them. Groups have stood at the steps of the Acropolis in Athens and pondered the great thinkers of the world. They have wandered the halls of the Louvre and imagined Da Vinci and Van Gogh painting in a dimly lit room. They have seen a swaying field of wheat in Pompeii and reflected on what it was like when Vesuvius erupted and covered the land with ash. They have sat on ancient rocks in the ruins of Corinth and listened to the lessons of Paul from our campus pastor—just footsteps from the church those lessons were meant for. Our students have spent Easter on the island of Patmos, quietly reflecting in a cave where John first wrote the book of Revelation. Students leave these sights with more than knowledge. They leave with an understanding of things that they had never encountered before.

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We take our students to places in Tuscaloosa and across the world because it ignites inside them a passion to learn. That passion is evident in the face of a student when he or she encounters a dolphin, and it is evident in the look of seniors standing on the steps of Trocadero and gazing across the Seine at the Eiffel Tower rising up before them. Students understand that there is more to the world than just what they see every day. They are immersed in cultures that they might have misunderstood before, and they learn to respect other viewpoints even if they disagree.

This semester, there still several ACA trips on the horizon. The 9th grade will travel to Dolphin Island from February 25 to February 27th. 10th grade students and parents are headed to New York City from April 14th through April 18th. The seniors will take their final class trip of their high school career when they travel to Israel on March 7th through March 16th. Details for a junior trip are still being finalized and more information will be shared soon.

CLASSROOM TO CAREER

On Thursday, February 8th, juniors at ACA will attend an exciting event sponsored by the West Alabama Works and Shelton State Community College. Area businesses and the Chamber of Commerce will participate.

WOW 2.0 is a 2 day event which targets high school seniors and post-secondary students on the first day (February 7th) and high school juniors on the second day (February 8th). Students will be able to speak with post-secondary schools, as well as meet with industry-professionals in a job fair setting. Personal, pre-scheduled interviews will occur with interested high school seniors and post-secondary students on Wednesday, February 7th. Thursday, February 8th high school juniors from the 9 county Region will have the opportunity to meet with post-secondary schools and industries. This event will allow additional connections between industry and potential workers to be made, with the goal of filling the more than 4,000 high growth, high demand jobs available in West Alabama.