

FALL 2016

ANCHORAGE

The Magazine of the Annapolis Area Christian School



School Spirit shines at **HOMECOMING**2016



ANNAPOLIS AREA
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

IN THIS ISSUE

Alumnus of the Year Award – Call for Nominations!
Annual Report 2015-16

A Message from Mr. K

Standing Together for the Sake of Christ and Kids

I've had the great privilege to be a part of the AACCS family since 2012 and now I am a quarter of the way through my 5th school year. I feel blessed to be part of a community that stands together for the sake of Christ and kids. If you've ever glanced at my introduction on our school website, listened to me share in a community setting, or just engaged in a little casual conversation with me, then you have seen or heard words that speak to our relational Christ-centered culture. It's my first and foremost priority.

Our school culture is not perfect, because we are not perfect, but it is filled with a community that cares about each other and cares about the person of Jesus Christ.

During my time here at AACCS, I've watched Pre-K'ers advance along to the upper elementary grades, lower school students have moved into middle school and the students who were freshman when I arrived, began their freshman year of college just two months ago. I have seen firsthand the influence of our culture. Our graduates are prepared, but even more than academically prepared, we hope they are inspired to be relational, life-long learners who are equipped to engage, influence and impact their world for Jesus Christ... that is the fruit, the harvest of a Christ Centered Culture.

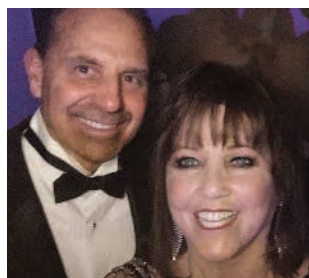
The equipping that takes place at AACCS is not something that our students "arrive" at during their time here, nor is it arrived at with a college degree or a rewarding career. In fact, it is not a destination at all. It is a part of a life long journey that we believe is most

successfully fostered in a home where Jesus Christ is honored, involvement in church is valued, and a Christian School education is woven systematically into their early education through 12th grade years. The Christ-Centered Culture that we strive to create at AACCS is maximized when these three ingredients of home, church, and school come together in an Ecclesiastes 4:12 kind of way...." And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him....a three fold cord is not quickly broken."

You see, our school culture is different. It is not perfect because we're not perfect, but it is filled with a community of families, faculty and staff who all care about each other, and care about the person of Jesus Christ. The result of that "different" kind of culture is what I like to call "THE EAGLE EXPERIENCE." The relational focus nurtures a culture that is experiential and because it is experiential, it is life changing and because it is life changing, it is real and lasting.

Thank you for being such an important 1/3rd of our home, church, and school AACCS Culture. It continues to be my great privilege to serve as the Superintendent of AACCS and The Eagle Experience. †

*In His Service and Yours,
Rick Kempton, Superintendent*



ANCHORAGE is the magazine of Annapolis Area Christian School. The magazine is distributed to school parents, alumni, parents of alumni, and friends of Annapolis Area Christian School. A downloadable version is also available online at aacsonline.org.

MISSION STATEMENT

We engage students in an education of excellence enabling them to impact the world through a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

STAFF

- Rick Kempton, *Superintendent*
- Bob McCollum, *Principal, Upper School*
- Rick Slenk, *Principal, Middle School*
- Nancy Pavlischek, *Principal, Lower School, Annapolis*
- Karl Graustein, *Principal, Lower School, Severn*
- Glen Cole, *Chief Financial Officer*
- Graham Thorpe, *Chief Advancement Officer*
- Jennifer Good, *Chief Communications Officer*

ALUMNI should direct news information to akastendike@aacsonline.org or contact the Alumni Relations office at 410.519.5300 x2116.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

To email a member of the board, please use the format first initial and last name @ aacsonline.org unless otherwise noted below.

- Michael Edmonds, President
- Karen Cole
- Warwick Fairfax
- James Mackrell
- David Mitchell
- Mary Robertson
- Cedric Sims
- Dan Smith – dansmith@aacsonline.org
- Mark Solsman
- Nancy Thomas

ABOUT THE COVER

School Spirit Shines at Homecoming

ART DIRECTION & DESIGN

Breanna Wheeler, '01
Color Wheel Creatives, LLC
www.colorwheelcreatives.com

PRINTING SERVICES

Nelson Anderson, '99
Anderson Minuteman Press,
Glen Burnie & Columbia
www.minutemanmaryland.com

CONTENTS

- 3 Campus Perspectives
- 8 Anchor Fund
- 9 Alumni Profile: Emily Girsch
- 10 Alumnni Updates & News
- 11 Annual Report 2015–2016

Campus Perspectives



• Lower School :: Severn •

MS. VANN AS A BEACON OF STEADFAST JOY

by Karl Graustein

She is the first to arrive at school each morning and the last to leave each evening. She is the first to greet students and the last to say goodbye. She is an amazing gift from God to our school. She is Ms. Vann.

Vandola Robbins, or “Ms. Vann,” helps oversee the before and after-care program at our Severn Lower School campus, and she works in the school office. She has worked at AAC

for 13 years. Eleven of those years were at the Annapolis Lower School campus and the last two at the newer Severn Lower School campus.

Ms. Vann grew up in Delaware and moved to Maryland in 1996. Ms. Vann & her husband, Marvin, have four children and two grandchildren, and one loveable Pomeranian named “Bear.” Plus, she views the AAC

She laughs and rejoices with the students. She encourages imaginary play and resolves conflicts. She treats bumps, bruises, and scratches. She inspires smiles. She makes the hour before school and the multiple hours after school a ton of fun. Plus, she has an amazing gift for fashion and flare.

Each morning, Ms. Vann unlocks the school, and she welcomes students as early as 7:00am. Under her caring and watchful eyes, students get to play in the gym before school begins. Basketballs, footballs, scooters, and lots of fun mark the start of each day.

The fun continues each afternoon after dismissal. About 40% of our students go to aftercare, and they love

it. Older and younger students play and laugh together. Ms. Vann has created an environment rich in joy, play, nurturing, and safety.

Her students describe her like this:

- “If we get hurt, she helps us and she looks after us.”
- “She is very sweet and kind.”
- “She loves to help.”
- “She is caring.”
- “She takes care of us like a mom.”

Our staff love her too:

- “Ms. Vann loves the staff and the kids with all her heart.”
(Mrs. Allred)
- “Ms. Vann has been a valuable asset to our school for many years. The only job she hasn’t stepped into when someone else could not be there is that of the principal. She is dependable and flexible. It has been a pleasure working side by side with her, and I am blessed to call her my friend.” (Mrs. Beylo)

The Severn Lower School is so grateful for Ms. Vann. She demonstrates joy and faithfulness. She is an amazing gift from God to AAC

• Lower School :: Annapolis •

CURIOUSER & CURIOUSER

by Nancy Pavlischek

“It’s always changing.”

“We get to choose what we want to do.”

“We have time to play.”

“We get to move around.”

What child wouldn’t enjoy a PreK class that provides all that? When I talked to our four year old students recently, those comments confirmed what I already knew. Anne Schmidt, Kindergarten Readiness teacher at the Annapolis



Lower School, is the creative force behind a learning playground for curious young minds.

To really know the Annapolis Lower School, you need to meet Mrs. Schmidt. Her joyful laughter and her creativity



are legendary. Through storytelling, variety, the element of surprise, and flexibility, Mrs. Schmidt enhances and helps to develop the curiosity already present in most young children.

Recently a praying mantis landed



on their window. Setting aside the current activity, the class gathered around to watch and wonder about this most beautiful insect. Both the children and the teacher grabbed the opportunity to exercise their curious minds.

What was it about God's creation that was so fascinating that day, and what could they learn together?

Mrs. Patti Smith, Annapolis Lower School librarian, says, "Mrs. Schmidt

uses the library more than any teacher in the school – both with fiction and non-fiction. She is always looking for ways to expose her students to new things and to make learning fun. When she incorporates reading into that fun, they begin to think reading itself is fun."

Albert Einstein said, "I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious." Curious students who want to learn may not always have the highest grades, but chances are good that they will do well in life. Most of us would never voluntarily spend the day in a classroom of four year olds, and yet Anne sees no better way to use her God-given gifts. She is preparing her young students to pursue the type of learning that lasts a lifetime. ✝



• Middle School :: Annapolis • GOD'S GIFT OF A "CIRCLE OF FRIENDS"

by Carrie Soldano

We love our middle school community chapels, when the whole school gathers to share stories of how God is working in our lives, or stories of our struggles to live out a genuine Christian life. At our first community chapel this year, one of our 8th grade students took a few moments to stand up, spoke a few simple words - "I love circle of friends" - and then was helped by several others to sit back down. This resulted in wild clapping and cheering because it captured something true and beautiful, not only because Jackie had chosen to share her heart, but because "Circle of Friends" captures how highly we value

our community of love.

You see, Jackie is a student with Down Syndrome who came to AACs as a 7th grader last year. We partnered with a consultant and her parents to prepare for Jackie's education, but we never could have been prepared for how this step toward a more inclusive school would impact the Christ-centered culture of our community. We first saw this impact become visible through the program called "Circle of Friends."

"Circle of Friends" is a program that pairs a student who is at risk for social isolation with a small group of peers who volunteer to minister to this student through real relationship; they meet once or twice a week to develop friendships and enjoy one another's company while helping that student develop new social skills. Jackie's communication skills improved

dramatically through her interaction with her friends in circles and in classes, and to some degree, we expected improvement.

"Circle of Friends" is a program that pairs a student who is at risk for social isolation with a small group of peers who volunteer to minister through real relationship.

But what we did not expect was how this small group program eventually touched the rest of the fabric of our community just though the process of introducing Jackie and the Circle of Friends idea to all three grade levels. Many students wanted to be in Jackie's circle, and by the middle of the year, students who had not been trained for Jackie's circles began to organically and

independently form circles of friends around other students, circles not initiated by adults but instead by students who had the eyes and hearts to see others at risk for social isolation and to respond with love and compassion. It was becoming part of our culture, part of who we are and what we do as Christians.

The second blessing from the Circles of Friends program and Jackie's inclusion in 7th grade classes was that it helped us see in a concrete way an

essential aspect of the Christian community. Jackie loves others so easily, and we learned through relationship with her that she has tremendous strengths and gifts, especially relationally and socially where her ability to form and nurture relationships though love is in many ways more highly developed than the rest of us. We experienced in real life the biblical idea undergirding the inclusive school concept: We are all made in the image of God and each given both gifts and challenges, and when we accept one

another in light of this truth, celebrating one another's gifts and encouraging one another in our challenges, the result is the community Christ envisions for us, a community of mutual love and edification. This community of love is one of our highest needs and values, and our understanding of this explains why we responded with such jubilation to Jackie's simple proclamation, "I love circle of friends!" †



• Upper School :: Severn •

STEM ADVANCES AT THE UPPER SCHOOL

by Madelyn Smith & Graham Thorpe

When Madelyn Smith had the chance to take over the AACCS engineering and technology programs at the Upper School, she found some wonderful things; mainly a lot of success with the Iron Eagles Robotics team and a passionate portion of the student body that wanted to learn more about STEM in our current world. She also brought a healthy discontent for the engineering options at AACCS and was looking for ways to improve what had become a stable elective for interested students. Mrs. Smith immediately went to work looking to replace the Engineering Our Digital Future class with a more detailed and up to date Engineering II class. The Engineering II class fit the AACCS academic structure in a better way and provided updated studies that brought a new level of challenge to the students. In addition, the move

STEM Day involves inviting Lower School students to participate in a STEM-based learning experience.

coincided with a larger engineering program goal of one day being able to link 4 years' worth of engineering studies that would give graduates a stronger base for engineering study in college and beyond. As Mrs. Smith plans for the future of engineering and STEM at AACCS, the hope is to add Engineering III where students would be able to take on a real-world problem; spend an entire semester trying to creatively engage with it; and expand their skills by using innovation to resolve practical issues and obstacles. All of this took new dollars to make possible and Mrs. Smith reached out to her USNA contacts at the Strategic Systems Programs office and petitioned for a \$27,000 grant for STEM initiatives. AACCS was awarded these funds and began to receive them during the 2016-2017 school year.

In conjunction with these improvements, she also spearheaded a

movement within her Engineering II class that puts the emphasis on interactive learning. The students are required, as a part of their final grade, to implement a STEM day. The STEM day involves inviting students from Kindergarten through 2nd Grade from the AACCS Severn and Annapolis Lower Schools to participate in a STEM based learning experience. The Upper School students have to create the theme for the day, work as a team, decide and present on the experiments for the day, keep the event within a budget, and then actually build, setup, and manage the process that the lower school students go through. In a very real sense, they become the teachers for the day. The success of this day is a fine example of taking something that is good, and making it better! Plus, it unites our schools in learning goals that further the mission of AACCS. AACCS is excited about the potential of engineering and STEM in the years ahead. †

AACS Fall Festival





ROCK WALL & MOON BOUNCE

PHOTO BOOTH

FACE PAINTER

CAKE WALK

GAME TENTS



The Anchor Fund

for AACCS

by Graham Thorpe '97,
Chief Advancement Officer

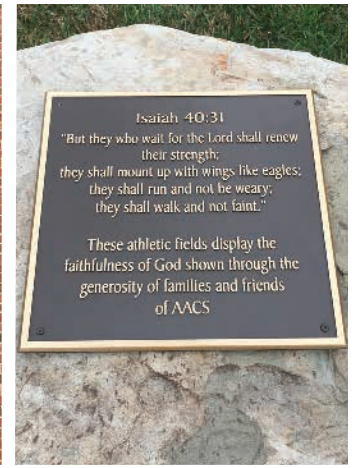
Author Mark Dillon, former Vice President for Advancement at Wheaton College and the American Bible Society states to “give and get in the kingdom is to see God in, under, and through every aspect of the philanthropic process.” At Annapolis Area Christian School we get to see God working in, under and through the lives of so many people who are a part of this ministry. The Holy Spirit moves

The Holy Spirit moves and compels

our community to give;

*The Lord God causes the growth
and receives all the glory.*

and compels our community to give; the school receives with gratefulness; and the Lord God in heaven causes the growth and receives all the glory. There is much joy in giving freely knowing God is the provider of all that we need. And, from our perspective, there is also much joy in the “asking.” We find it incredibly fulfilling to partner with like-minded followers of Christ as we jointly move forward to invest into the lives of kids here at AACCS. As the Lord leads and compels you this year, please consider AACCS as one of the ministries you will cheerfully give to. Your giving enables many lives to meet and “see God” at AACCS and beyond. ✝



*AACCS has a long legacy of
mission-centric givers
advancing the ministry
of our school.*



Alumni Profile:

EMILY GIRSCH, Class of 2009

she wanted to be a storyteller, but she didn't know how to turn it into a career until she considered journalism.

During the yearlong senior project, she created an informative video news story about how the practicum prepared alumni for college and their future careers. The project utilized writing, interviewing, videography, and video editing skills.

As Emily reflected on her time at AACCS she had this to say, "My teachers at AACCS taught me the importance of using my voice to promote positive change, and that's what journalism is. It's being a voice for the voiceless."

After graduating from Towson University in 2013 with a degree in Journalism, she spent two years working

behind the scenes at Fox News Channel in Washington, D.C. before moving up to an on-air position at a Fox affiliate in Binghamton, New York. In September 2016, she started working at Fios 1 News in New York City where she covers crime, politics and local events for the network. †

Emily Girsch is currently a news reporter at Verizon FiOS 1 News in New York City. She first became interested in broadcast journalism at AACCS and studied the career in depth through her senior practicum. While at AACCS she was the president of the Thespian Society and she knew

"My teachers at AACCS taught me the importance of using my voice to promote positive change, and that's what journalism is."



UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

**WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 14, 2016**

**Alumni Christmas
Reception**

7:00-10:00pm
Federal House in Annapolis

**WEDNESDAY,
JANUARY 4, 2017**

**Young Alumni Chapel
& Luncheon**

Chapel: 10:30-11:35am,
Kerr Center

Lunch: 11:40am-1:00pm,
Kilby Athletic Center

*Alumni are welcome to visit
classrooms and teachers all afternoon!*

*To RSVP for the above
alumni events email
akastendike@aacsonline.org*

Alumni Association Update:
ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR
– Call for Nominations! –

The AACS Alumnus of the Year Award will be given to an alumnus who exemplifies the AACS tradition of excellence and has brought glory to the Lord through their personal accomplishments, professional achievements, leadership in their community, or exemplary service to others.

Nominations are now being accepted from alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the school. All nominations must be submitted by August 1, 2017 by completing the nomination form found on the alumni tab on aacsonline.org.

To join the Alumni Association Awards Committee, contact Ashlee Kastendike in the Alumni Relations Office at akastendike@aacsonline.org. ⚓



**ALUMNUS
OF THE YEAR
AWARD**



HALL OF FAME

**Congratulations to the 2016
Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees!**

BECCA THORPE

Class of 1996 • Basketball

MONICA WAGONER SISK

Class of 1998 • Volleyball

CORINNE RODDY MCGOWAN

Class of 2005 • Volleyball

JOEL DERECHINSKY

Class of 2006 • Lacrosse

HARRISON TULL

Class of 2006 • Lacrosse



For more information on the Athletic Hall of Fame and to view inductee bios, please visit the Athletics Tab online at aacsonline.org.

MARRIAGES & ENGAGEMENTS



Paul Knight '97 and **Samantha Grunberg** were married on September 10th at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge, MD.



Rebekah Nix '09 and **Logan Perdue '09** were married at the Old Westminster Winery on September 10, 2016. Becca and Logan met at AACS and started

dating their junior year. The wedding ceremony was officiated by Pastor Trip Beans '96. Jenny (Nix) Haines '08 was the Matron of Honor and Emma Perdue '14 served as the Maid of Honor. Best Man Brian Stevens '09 and Groomsman Jake Packet '09 also honored the couple as witnesses. Becca and Logan both attended and graduated with honors from UMBC. Logan works for Apple, Inc. and is a graduate student at UMBC. Becca is employed by the Department of Defense. They currently live Arnold, Maryland.

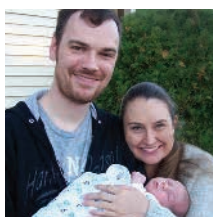


Amy Topp '09 married **Dana Sproul** on September 17, 2016 at Prospect Bay Country Club in Grasonville, MD. The happy couple is currently living in Pasadena. Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. Sproul!

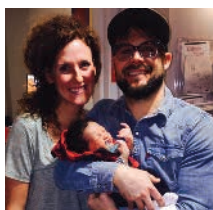
BIRTHS



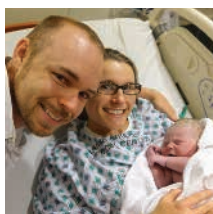
Garth Thorpe '01 and his wife, **Vasu**, welcomed **Riya Maran Thorpe** on April 15, 2016. She weighed in at 7 lbs. and 8 oz.



Dan Ingram '05 and his wife, **Amanda**, welcomed their baby boy **David Richard Ingram**. He arrived September 13, 2016 at 7:49 am weighing 7 lbs. and 4 oz. and was 21 inches long.

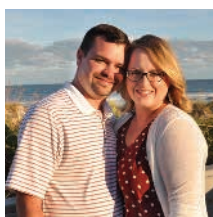


Corinne (Roddy) McGowan '05 and her husband, **Brad**, adopted a precious baby boy, named **Floyd Bradley Lawrence McGowan**. He was born on February 15, 2016, weighed 6 lbs. and 9 oz., and was 19 1/2 inches long.

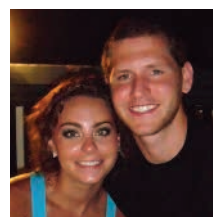


Meredith (Young) Grigg '07 and **Charles Grigg** welcomed their baby boy, **Peyton Walker Grigg** on August 26, 2016. They couldn't be more in love with him!

OTHER NEWS



Breanna (Dennison) Wheeler '01 and **Greg Wheeler '00** celebrated their 12th anniversary on August 14, 2016. The couple met and dated while attending AACS, and married after college. Breanna recently celebrated 10 years as the Owner and Art Director of Color Wheel Creatives, LLC., a graphic design studio; Greg recently celebrated 10 weeks as a government contractor in the information management field. The Wheelers live in Millersville with their children, **Caleb (7)** and **Evelyn (6)**.



Sarah (Wood) Myer '05 began her career as a licensed Realtor in 2016. She is working full-time in the Annapolis Fine Homes Office of Long & Foster in downtown Annapolis. She loves helping buyers and sellers make their real estate dreams come true. To quote Sarah, it's like "being a fairy godmother!" Sarah and her husband, **Noah, '05**, live in Edgewater with their sweet puppy **Lexi**.



Brian Ingram '11 was officially sworn-in as a student attorney in the University of Baltimore Clinical Law Program for the Fall 2016 semester. Brian has been an intern in the Public Defender's office in Baltimore since January 2016. He was awarded a UBSPI grant and also serves as one of the Criminal Practice Clinic student attorneys.



On June 16, 2016, **Steven Ridings '12** was drafted by the Seattle Mariners in the 29th round of the 2016 MLB June Amateur Draft out of Messiah College. Steven was the 867th pick of the more than 1,200 that were selected over the draft's three-days. His minor league assignment was with AZL Mariners (West).



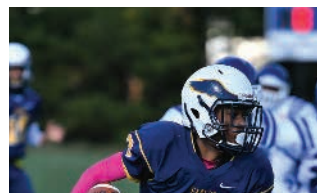
On Memorial Day 2016, **Katie Kinsey '13** became a Division I national champion as part of a UNC's ladies' lacrosse team. She is pictured here with her proud parents, **Diane & Paul**. Hard work and dedication pays off. Congratulations Katie! †

Do you have some exciting news to share with us? We'd love to hear it!

Email your updates to akastendike@aacsonline.org to be included in the next issue's Alumni News announcements!



HOMECOMING





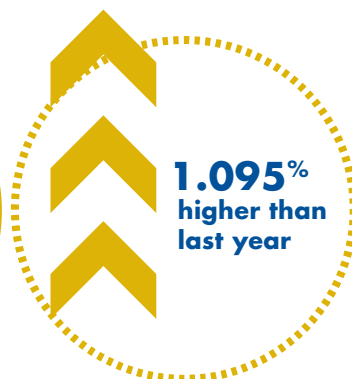
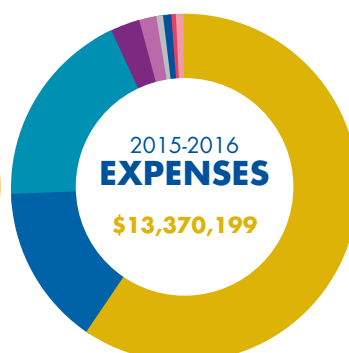
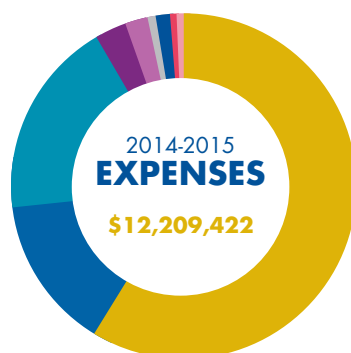
2016





2015-2016 Annual Fund

EXPENSES



The theme reflected in the 2015/16 financial results is growth as AACs enrollment increased by almost 10%. More than half the increase was due to opening a new lower school in Severn with stronger re-enrollment also contributing significantly. This growth translated into both higher revenues and expenses, but the categories making up those totals remained relatively unchanged in proportion to one another. The bottom line improved to a small decrease in net assets which is a good result during the launch and inherent under utilization of the new Severn facility during its first year. ⚓

by Glen Cole,
Chief Financial Officer



ANNAPOLIS AREA
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

*For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable
according to what a person has,
not according to what he does not have.*

2 CORINTHIANS 8:12

DID YOU KNOW?



College
enrollment for
Class of 2016



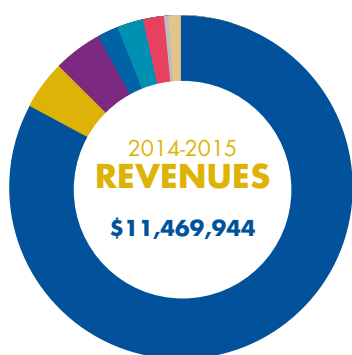
Graduates
since 1985



Increase in
endowment
giving

Report Year in Review

REVENUES



ANNUAL GIVING

2014-2015

ACTUAL

\$512,541

2015-2016

ACTUAL

\$539,256

5%
INCREASE
in giving

ENROLLMENT

LOWER SCHOOL 262

MIDDLE SCHOOL 208

UPPER SCHOOL 396

866
TOTAL ENROLLMENT

STUDENTS RE-ENROLLED 646

NEW STUDENTS ENROLLED 220

FULL TIME TEACHERS 73

FULL TIME STAFF 51

124
FACULTY & STAFF
(full time equivalent positions)

4

Campuses in
Anne Arundel
County

92%

School-wide
re-enrollment
rate

LOWER SCHOOL :: ANNAPOLIS
710 Ridgely Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401

LOWER SCHOOL :: SEVERN
61 Gambrells Road
Severn, MD 21144

MIDDLE SCHOOL :: ANNAPOLIS
716 Bestgate Road
Annapolis, MD 21401

UPPER SCHOOL :: SEVERN
109 Burns Crossing Road
Severn, MD 21144



ANNAPOLIS AREA
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MILLERSVILLE, MD
PERMIT #22

410.519.5300 aacsonline.org

Save the date!

2017 Spring Spectacular Dinner & Auction

A Taste of Italy

Saturday, April 22, 6:00 pm

Kilby Athletic Center, AACCS Upper School

Silent & Live Auctions • Live Entertainment • Italian Cuisine

Proceeds benefit the AACCS Anchor Fund.

For more information, contact 410-519-5300 x2116
or akastendike@aacsonline.org

