

Giff Hill School Newsletter

December 9th, 2011



Good Day Parents,

It has been an incredibly exciting and productive first semester at GHS. The students' accomplishments in the classroom, in the arts and athletics have been stunning. As I walk around both the lower and upper campuses, I see happy engaged children, joyful in their learning, being both challenged and supported by our talented, dedicated staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and honor the GHS Staff for their incredible commitment as well as the amazing job that they do with the children. We wish them and their families the happiest of holidays and a very well deserved winter break.

The heart, the soul, and the raison d'être of our school are the faculty. So it will not surprise you that approximately 65% of operating expenses go towards staff salaries. When you make a contribution to the Annual Fund, the majority of your contribution will go to paying your child's teachers, the remainder to WAPA, insurance, the mortgage, maintenance, etc.

This year's **SEEDS FOR SUCCESS** campaign is again fortunate to have been given a 9:1 challenge match. The children and teachers have shown their support. **You have only until December 21 to show yours and qualify for the 9:1 match.** Parents, this is the most important fundraising effort of the year, and our donors are hoping to see widespread participation based on categories: student, faculty, and parents. (Your child's contribution to the collection jar is a separate contribution from those we are asking for from parents). When faculty, students, and parents each achieve 100% participation, each category will receive a \$10,000 bonus from our magnanimous donors...this is unheard of generosity, and we need to show our donors that we support GHS as much as they do. **Remember the only gift that is too small is the one not given at all. Please do your part to contribute, no matter the size of your donation.**

- Seeds for Success Percentage Updates:
 - GHS Administration 100%
 - GHS Faculty 60%
 - UC Student Green Team: 76%
 - UC Student White Team: 100%!
 - LC Student Green Team: 75%
 - LC Student White Team: 51%
 - LC Students: Pre-K and 5th grade students have achieved 100%!
 - Parents 30%

GENTLE REMINDERS

Students are encouraged to participate in our canned food drive by bringing in pop top canned goods next week. This is a Green/White Team activity with points going to the team on each campus which brings in the most cans.

The Holiday Program with students in Grades Preschool-6th performing will begin at 5:30 pm next Friday, December 16th in the Great Room.

On Wednesday, December 21st all students will be dismissed at 11am for Winter Break.

GHS Spirit Gear is now available for purchase at both campuses. It is the perfect holiday present for the grandparents or stocking stuffers. Items include hats, water bottles, sweatshirts, pencils and magnets.

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All accounts must be current for children to re-enter school after the Winter Break. This includes balances on tuition, afterschool program and book fees. If you have any questions about your account, please call Ms. Christianne in the Business Office by December 15th.

UPPER CAMPUS NEWS FROM MS. LIZ, MS. MEGHAN AND MS. JILL

We invite all interested community members to attend **College Financial Aid Night** on Tuesday, December 13, 6:00pm at Gifft Hill School's upper campus. Susan Adrian, Assistant Director of Financial Aid at UVI, will be presenting an informative overview of the financial aid process. GHS junior and senior parents are encouraged to attend.

Attached is the UC Exam Schedule. Please review it with your child to ensure that s/he is well prepared for these important tests. Regular school hours will be observed during exams except for a 1:30 dismissal **for high school students only** on Tuesday, December 20

Congratulations are in order for all the hard work and dedication put forth by our **First Quarter Honor Roll** students. High Honor Roll students are: Vela Culbert, Tomas del Olmo, Sydney Knowles-Donnelly, Ty Massaquoi, Michael Palminteri, Genesis Dawson, Missy Muilenberg, Maeven Parsil, Alex Raymond, Luca del Olmo, Coral Breuning, Patrick Smith. Honor Roll students are: Kaitlyn Bleyer, Soleil Gessner, Marisa Clendenin, Evan Jones, John Ovcina, Landis Wallace, Monique Edwards, Savanna Morrisette, Alex Ray, Careem Albert, and Maggie Wessinger

Don't forget to purchase your \$10 raffle ticket to win a **CUSTOM JEEP!** Look for it displayed at the Marketplace, 2nd level. Proceeds benefit GHS's travel abroad program, "Giffts Around the Globe". Tickets are available at i Scream & Coffee Shop, The Tap Room, Connections, and St. John Hardware; you may also purchase tickets from any of our high school students.

The upper campus is gearing up for the much loved **Minimester** which will be held from January 9th through the 13th. For those of you who are new, Minimester is a one week period of time where teachers offer enrichment units in place of standard academic coursework. The units may be linked to current curriculum allowing kids a hands-on learning experience, or explore fields of possible career interest, or allow students to pursue a particular focus in more depth. The units are designed for small groups and will be held on and off campus. This year's Minimester course offerings are: sea navigation, ceramics, cooking, full day EARTH workshop with trip to St. Croix, theater, hiking, creative writing, hands-on history, and yearbook. Please note students enrolled in the theater Minimester will need to report back to school one week early from winter break on January 2.

During this time students who have not demonstrated mastery of course content in the first semester as measured by a grade of C- or better will be provided with additional academic support to help them master required concepts/material.

LOWER CAMPUS NEWS FROM MS. BETH

The holiday season is upon us and that is evident on the joyful faces of your children. It is the season of giving and in that spirit we are joining the upper campus in asking all of our students to bring in canned goods or non-perishable items to donate to those in need on St. John. Please drop off the items in the lower campus office; if you are on the white team it will go in the white box and the green team's items will go in the green box.

Thank you all for your generous donations of books, DVD's and other items for our Book Fair today. Shira Sofer, Joe Palminteri and Sandra Loeffler did an excellent job organizing the event.

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Congratulations to the top 5 spellers in the fourth grade: Kayleigh, Emaulson, Ananda Hernandez, Allegra, Muilenburg, Charlie Palminteri and Lily Schutt.

Congratulations to the top 5 spellers in the fifth grade: Luca Costello, Jada Jarvis, Kobe Liburd, Siena Wilkie and Isabella Witbeck.

They will proceed on to the school wide intermediate spelling bee on Thursday, December 15th for in- class winners from grades 4-8. The bee will be held at 8:30 in the Great Room and everyone is welcome to attend and cheer on our spellers. The winner will go on to represent GHS in the Territorial Intermediate Bee.

Our Holiday Program is scheduled for Friday, December 16th at 5:30 in the Great Room. Each class from preschool through fifth grade has created a special holiday presentation. Ms. Liz's Ribbon Dancers will be performing as well as our 4th-6th grade recorder and ethnic drumming classes that are provided by St. John School of the Arts. We look forward to seeing each of you there. Don't forget to purchase a raffle ticket for the Xbox, the winner of which will be announced that night.

Our December Student of the Month Assembly has been rescheduled for Wednesday, December 21st at 8:30 in the Great Room. One of Santa's elves will be visiting with all our students from 9:30-10:45 in the library and dismissal will be at 11:00.

We have an online subscription to TumbleBooks that we can share with you and your family for your use at home. Please visit www.tumblebooks.com/library our username is giffthill and password: books

For those of you wishing to order additional images of your child(ren), you now have the opportunity to do so. Simply log into <http://dbschool.zenfolio.com/f486674157> and then enter the password ghspictures.

UPCOMING CALENDAR

Saturday, Dec. 10, 8:00-1:00	ACT Exams at GHS
Monday, December 12, 8:15	MS Parent Meeting with Ms. Liz, Ms. Meghan, Ms. Judy
Tuesday, December 13, 8:15	HS Parent Meeting with Ms. Meghan and Ms. Judy
Tuesday, December 13, 6:00	Financial Aid Night – Upper Campus, open to public
Thursday, December 15, 8:30	4 th - 8 th Spelling Bee – Great Room
Friday December 16, 8:10	MS/HS Exams begin
Friday, December 16, 5:30	PS - 6 th Holiday Program – Great Room
Monday, Dec. 19, 8:10	MS/HS Exams
Tuesday, Dec. 20, 8:10	MS/HS Exams
Wednesday, Dec. 21, 8:30	Student of the Month Assembly
Wednesday, Dec. 21, 9:30	LC Holiday Party with Santa visit
Wednesday, Dec. 21	UC Holiday Party with Green v. White Kickball Game
Wednesday, Dec. 21, 11:00	Early School Dismissal for Winter Break

Warmest regards,
Ms. Judy