



# The Herald

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## A Vision of Honor at MCA

All Millennium Charter Academy students, from third grade up, are asked to sign the MCA Honor Code which states, "As an individual with endowed worth and value, I will honor others with the same respect that I am due. I will uphold the high ideals of this institution with integrity by being respectful, honest, compassionate, responsible and courageous."

Lower school students sign the code at home with their parents, and upper school students sign the honor code publicly in front of their teachers and peers. Why would we choose to interrupt valuable class time for such an event? It has to do with the MCA vision of developing virtuous, intelligent citizens who think well, and who, as leaders, contribute to our communities, our nation, and the world. MCA is founded on three pillars: Scholarship, Character, and Community. The Honor Code is build directly on the pillar of Character. It is equally as important as is Scholarship in MCA's endeavor to be a premier liberal arts, classical school of choice.

Perhaps the answer to why we'd take class time away for such an event can best be answered by messages delivered in the signing events themselves.

MCA high school students addressed students in grades six through eight during their ceremony. Madison Meadows, MCA 10<sup>th</sup> grade, talked about how students should respect others. She said, "With the honorable students that we are being molded into, comes many great moral lessons. Honor leads us to respect others, because they have the same worth we do. We are also learning to stand without fear for what we believe in." Dalton Collins, another MCA 10<sup>th</sup> grader, told the students, "Honor is something that cannot be taken away by anybody but yourself. As said by William Lyon Phelps, 'You can be deprived of your money, your job, and your home by someone else, but remember that no one can ever take away your honor.'" Lastly, just before the students came to sign their pledge, Jessica Huson, also an MCA 10<sup>th</sup> grade student, talked about how the MCA Honor Code had some similarity to The Constitution of the United States. She said, "We, as citizens, have the freedoms of speech, religion, petition, and equality. But along with these freedoms, we also have expectations. These expectations are to insure that our freedom is not abused. For example, we have the freedom of speech, but you cannot scream "fire" in a movie theatre. We have the freedom to bear arms but you cannot use them at your free will. This correlates with the qualities of the Honor Code Signing here at Millennium. The honor code promotes balance within the school system. In middle and high school, we get much more freedom as individual students. With all of this freedom, there also has to be order. The honor code signing provides that needed order. The Millennium Honor Code is about verifying that the student knows their expectations as an individual and will not abuse the rights and freedom they have received. The Honor Code is not just a paper you have to sign. It holds a very important and honorable meaning to our school. So as you step up to sign this document, do not just sign it because you have too. Truly think about the meanings and qualities that the honor code holds and sign it because you want to commit yourself to its ideals and values."



6th - 8th grade students come forward two at a time to sign the school's honor code while their classmates look on.

High school students also participated in an honor code signing. The guest speaker for this event was US Navy Ensign Jesús Dominguez. Ensign Dominquez has a Masters in Counseling and a Bachelor of Business Administration and is bilingual in Spanish and English with some fluency in Japanese. While in the military he worked with orphanages in

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*US Navy Ensign Jesús Dominguez challenges Millennium Charter Academy high school students to seek real truth as they mature into adults.*

Japan, Djibouti, Philippines, Kenya, and the Republic of Korea. He helped lead humanitarian efforts in Ishinomaki, Japan, after the 2011 tsunami. He has served in Iraq, Jordan, Bahrain, and the Pentagon as a Marine captain and executive assistant to a top-ranking general in the U.S. Marine Corps. He is currently a Navy Chaplain Candidate Program Officer.

Ensign Dominguez challenged the high school students to seek the truth. He said, “Today, though some of you may want to know what truth is, I cannot give it to you, for you must find it yourselves. However, if there is one thing I want you to remember from this entire presentation, remember this – Seek truth with all your courage and commitment, and it will find you. Your pledge today includes words like honor, courage, and commitment, pillars of character. However, without the proper foundation, they, too, are pillars of character found in men like Adolph Hitler and Kim Jong Il of North Korea. This morning I have given you the tools to win the battle. All you need to do is find the enemy, push past it, and seize truth so that in everything you do you may find meaning and purpose.”

At MCA, honor is important in everything we do, from teaching children to read, to participating in athletic and academic competitions, to sending our graduates off into the world to make their own way. Honor is important and necessary in a life of meaning—a hope and vision we have for every MCA student.

*Also on the day of the MCA Honor Code signing, MCA 8<sup>th</sup> graders participated in a live streaming event sponsored by Discovery Education where they met US Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer and listened to him explain about the details of his job.*

