



The Herald

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What a Difference Two Years Can Make!

Two years ago, in January 2013, *The Herald* announced the MCA High School. Two years later, after much planning, a major construction project, and the addition of new teachers and high school courses, the MCA High School is very much a reality, and one that is thriving, offering our students a beautiful facility, challenging and meaningful instruction, and teachers that care. In addition to these things, which are really only a continuation of what students have within the Lower School, the high school grades of our MCA Upper School have some very unique features, and this issue of *The Herald* highlights three of them.

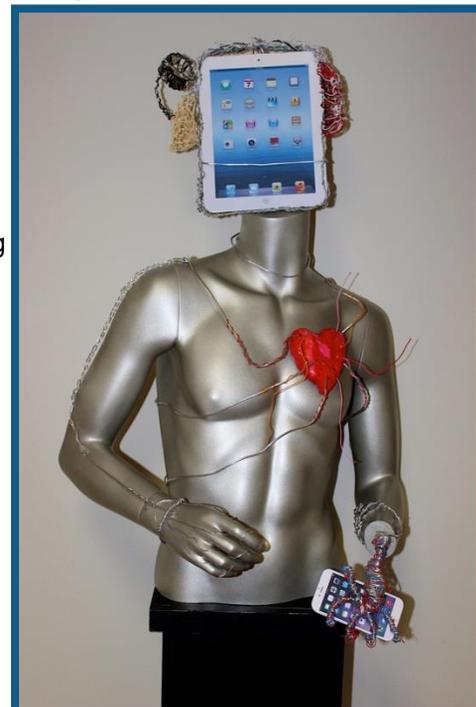
The Millennium Colloquium

Colloquium: an academic seminar of a broad field of study.

One of the unique features of our high school is the colloquium. At regular intervals, students take a break from their prescribed course of study to pursue a relevant topic in depth. A colloquium may include a guest speaker and an off-campus activity. It will always include topical readings, discussions, and seminars. The highlight of a colloquium is the opportunity for students to express what they are learning in a way that highlights their strengths and interests. At the beginning of this school year, for high school students, the first three days were devoted to exploring the concepts of body, mind, and soul and how they were nourished. In October, students traveled to Camp Hanes for a colloquium on "The Quest." This colloquium helped the students reflect on the quest upon which they embarked in this inaugural year of the MCA high school. Along the quest, there were trials and tribulations, but through the hardships, students, faculty, and administration grew together to create something amazing. Students learned to nurture relationships with, not only their peers, but also with their teachers and their families as well. To help instill values learned, students traveled to Camp Hanes where they participated in both low and high ropes courses designed to foster team building. Students also participated in a Paideia seminar reflecting on former NC State University Coach Jim Valvano's ESPY Award speech. In this speech, he outlined the quest he endured building a championship winning college basketball coach and battling cancer.

The five-day January colloquium on "Technology and Human Flourishing" featured Dr. Mike Shields, CEO of Cyber Vigilant Systems as guest speaker. This extended winter colloquium allowed students to explore technology and its impact on humans throughout history, for example, from the invention of the stirrup, which changed how wars were fought and won, to the internet, and even to future-tech ideas and concepts and possible results of those technologies. In addition to readings and hands-on projects to present ideas learned, students traveled to Wake Forest University's biomedical research laboratory where they were given a special tour to learn about technologies used there.

The February colloquium will focus on "ordo amoris," the ordering of loves, and students will spend a day off campus serving those in need. Plans are in the works for a two-day colloquium trip in April.



Meet Lance, a wire sculpture built and designed by students to reflect the interconnection of technology and humanity.

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Arts after Hours

While our students are working to build a solid foundation of learning in their core courses, they have the opportunity to explore special interests through our Arts after Hours. These free after-school courses include visual arts, chorus, instrumental music, photography, and domestic arts. Students may accrue credit hours towards graduation through these courses.

Student Government

In keeping with the MCA Upper School motto, "Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders," high school student government offers a rich experience. While each class will elect class officers and have regular class meetings, each class will also elect representatives to one of six councils: student life council, athletic council, literary council, house council, development council, and services council. During this first year while we have only freshmen, each student serves on one of these councils. Through the councils, students take responsibility for every aspect of school life. The purpose of student government is for students to become self-governing, to experience opportunities for leadership, and to take responsibility and ownership for all facets of life in an upper school.

Student government is currently structured in two layers: the class meeting and the councils. Class meetings occur monthly, and are led by the class officers under the guidance of teacher advisors, and involve all members of the class. The ninth grade advisories area subdivided into councils, which will rotate by trimester, giving each student the opportunity to serve on three different councils throughout the year. The councils have responsibility for specific areas of school life and are accountable to the student body as a whole.

These are the six councils served by our students:

Service Council: Plans and executes school-wide service opportunities. Plans and arranges connections with the wider community including guest speakers, field trips opportunities, etc.

Student Life Council: Plans social events for the Upper School. Plans regular activities that promote the spirit of the school in engaging ways.

Athletics Council: Works with the athletic director to promote school athletics. Encourages enthusiasm and sportsmanship within the student body. Promotes fitness and wellness among the student body.

House Council: Schedules housekeeping tasks, manages lunch and coffee times, and makes suggestions for beautification of the school.

Literary Council: Manages the Upper School library, makes recommendations for book purchases, promotes literacy within the student body.

Development Council: Works with Mr. McCrary, Mrs. Braley, and Mrs. Browne to promote the upper school to the existing lower classmen and the community. Makes suggestions for the continued development of the high school.



Three cheers for the high school! **Amber Golding** (left), **Candy Draughn** (center) and **Marla Grubaugh** enjoy a great day at lunch on the patio, another of the unique experiences for our students.