Reflections

Recently, Mary Williams, Administrative Assistant, was heard telling a new graduate who stopped in to say good-bye, “make us proud.” At a time in education when so many want to define every piece in the education puzzle by a number, it is refreshing and affirming that the Signature community reflects expectations of stewardship and accountability for the education received. Numbers are not what we see in our reflection but rather the person. This newsletter focuses on some of those individuals who have reflected Signature globally, nationally, and locally this summer.

Globally

Signature was all over the map this summer. Teacher Attilia Gogel participated in the 2012 Japan-U.S. Teacher Exchange Program for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). She stayed with a Japanese host family and observed classrooms from the elementary level through high school. This is Frau Gogel’s fourth Fulbright Fellowship. She commented on the level of respect for teachers in Japan and the general atmosphere of civility, which she viewed as a nice break from the political bantering that dominates the US airwaves. Teacher Sara Phillips-Bourass, who joins us once again to teach French, has spent her last several summers studying and traveling in Morocco.

Teachers are not the only people from the Signature community making global connections. Some of our students traveled well beyond the Evansville culture before returning to school. Indiana University selected three of our students to participate in its Honors Foreign Language program in Spain and Mexico. Additionally, a Spanish exchange student has joined us for the year. We become a very different community of learners when members of our community return with a broadened perspective.

Nationally

Once again we are honored to be recognized in three separate national rankings. We have climbed in the Newsweek 2012 rankings to #7 in the Nation and #1 in the Midwest. U.S. News & World Report identified our school as #1 in Indiana, #5 as a Charter High School in the Nation and the #35 high school in the Nation. The Washington Post placed us #9 in the Nation and #1 in the Midwest. We are represented all over the U.S. in colleges as far away as Stanford and as close as University of Evansville. The 90 college acceptances from last year’s graduating class demonstrate the varied interests of our Signature students. These colleges ranged from schools as large as IU to schools as small as Davidson College, and from the Savannah College of Art & Design to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. We continue to have 100% graduation and attendance rates to a four year college.

Locally

Vesting oneself in a community as a volunteer is an experience that forges new relationships and expands an individual’s life perspective. Our students do this through their community service projects. Teachers have brought their passion to the students through extracurricular activities. For example, Mr. Reek facilitates numerous opportunities for students to recycle. In September the Signature students will assist the directors of Angel Mounds as they present Native American Days to elementary students from the Tri-state area. There will be a powwow with numerous Native American cultures. Many of our students have designed and executed programs that reflect their passion and desire to improve the lives of those in our community. For example, one student has designed a musical enrichment program for low-income children attending a free day care on the weekend. The students’ passions drive their interest and their commitment makes the community a better place.