Shannon B. Jones Passion Pursuit Awarded!

The Shannon B. Jones Passion Pursuit for Creative Learning endowment celebrates the contributions of Shannon Jones, beloved former Ricks administrator and community member. The endowments celebrate Shannon’s unique passion for passing on the love of learning and igniting that spark in a child’s soul. The annual grant from the Endowment is be used to help enable one or more children each year to pursue their passion through a grant for learning and exploration beyond their normal curriculum.

This year’s recipients of the award are:

- Angelina Akdis to pursue her passion in fashion design
- Alessa Kust to pursue her passion in writing

Shannon’s Passion Pursuit is the chance a child’s spark needs. Those who see the spark, who nurture and cherish it, now have the opportunity to ignite it and watch it blaze. Should you wish to contribute to the endowment fund, please look for the Annual Fund flyer which will be sent in the coming weeks.

Willy Wonka is coming to Ricks!

Mr. Kevin Walton and many of our students have a passion for musical theater, and we all can enjoy their productions! On Wednesday, May 10 at 7:00 pm, come to Davis Auditorium in Sturm Hall to see our own perform in Willy Wonka! It will be a great show and fun for all. Free Admission!

Grade 8 Dinner/Graduation

We are hard at work preparing for the annual Grade 8 Graduation events, and are looking forward to celebrating this accomplishment with the Grade 8 students and families. As is traditional, there will be four main events.
May 24-26, students will lead their Portfolio Celebrations. Parents have received a Sign-Up Genius where they can select a time for their child's celebration. Parents and students are welcome to invite other family, friends, teachers, etc. to attend.

On May 31 at 5:00 pm, the Graduation Dinner will take place at Driscoll Hall. This dinner if for Grade 8 students and their guests. Invitations were sent out today outlining the details.

Graduation takes place June 1, 2017 at 9:00 am at the Frederic C Hamilton Family Recital Hall. This is a community-wide event and we welcome and encourage you to join! Students in Grade 3 and up will attend the Graduation, as well. Younger students will greet our graduates with cheers as they return to Ricks following the ceremony. Grade 8 students and guest are invited to attend the Graduation Luncheon at Ricks directly after the ceremony.

Incoming 5th Grade Middle School Information Session

Incoming 5th grade students and parents are invited to attend an information session on Wednesday, May 10th from 8:00 – 9:00 am. Information will be provided to students and parents pertaining to middle school. Please meet in the upper school commons area at 8:00 am.

In-School Variety Show

Does your child have a hidden talent or skill? Have they ever wanted to perform in front of others but have not been given the chance? Well on Tuesday, May 16th from 1:00-2:30 EC and Primary students will have the opportunity to enjoy the annual student Variety Show. Auditions for the Variety Show will be held during lunch on May 1st, 2nd, and 3rd for students in Kindergarten through 4th grade. Please help your child limit their talent or skill to no more than 3 minutes. Sign-up sheets for auditions are located outside the Multipurpose Room. Please review this rubric so your child knows what we will be looking for during auditions.

Spring MAP Testing, Grades 3-8

We will be administering the end-of-year MAP tests in May. Eighth graders will test on Thursday, May 11 and Friday, May 12; 3rd - 7th graders will test on Thursday, May 25 and Friday, May 26. As always, please be sure your child is well rested and has a good breakfast.

Cinco de Mayo

Cinco de Mayo is right around the corner! This is a wonderful holiday that celebrates Mexican-American heritage and roots. In Spanish class, students will be learning about the meaning of the day and the history behind the celebration. Due to a reaccreditation that the school is doing that week, we will not be celebrating in grand manner as done in years past. I encourage families to take advantage of the many celebrations that take place in and around the Denver area over the May 5, 6, and 7th weekend. Please contact Kristina Campos (kristina.campos@du.edu) if you have any questions.
Class Placements for 2017-18 – EC and Primary Students

Next month, we will begin doing some initial class placements for returning EC and Primary students for the 2017-18 school year. When placing students into classes we look at a variety of factors in order to achieve balanced groupings, such as academic and intellectual strengths, gender, special needs, student relationships, etc. We will continue to enroll new students over the coming months, and some families may leave unexpectedly over the summer. This is typical in all schools.

We will be announcing class placements and teacher assignments after the summer. You can expect this information to be emailed to you in early August.

If you would like to share any pertinent aspects related to your child’s placement, please feel free to email Anne Sweet (anne.sweet@du.edu) or send a note in writing to the Director's office. **We will not be taking requests for specific teachers,** however we will consider your input in regard to relationships / friendships or learning needs. Please note that to maintain balanced classes, requests will be considered, however, we cannot guarantee all requests will be granted. **Please provide this information in writing by May 10, 2017.**

Additionally, in class, all students will generate a list of peers they would like be with next year, and teachers will take this information into consideration as they construct classes.

2016-17 Yearbook Orders

Orders for this year’s yearbook are open until **May 1, 2017.** If you have not had a chance to order your yearbook, please follow these instructions. Visit Balfour.com to place your order, and contact Karie Wyckoff (karie.wyckoff@du.edu) or Balfour directly (link available on the ordering site) with any questions.

This Week in the Classrooms

During their Passions with a Purpose unit, 3rd and 4th graders have heard from many individuals who wanted to share their own passions. Rachel Wolf spent time in Peace Corps, and as she told the students, she definitely plans to go back. To her, Peace Corps is about more than just changing the world; it is a chance to share one's knowledge and learn from others. It is a chance to make lives better for you and the community you are in, while also learning and using the skills of those in your community. Thank you, Rachel!
Team work was definitely a theme this week as our Early Childhood students cooperated while building and biking!

**Sports Update**

The Ricks baseball team played away on Monday and beat Mile High Academy 10-4. Girls' soccer lost at home against Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning (RMSEL) by a score of 0-6. Boys baseball beat Denver Academy by a score of 6-3 on Wednesday. The girls' soccer team beat Boulder Country Day School at home on Thursday by a score of 3-2.

**First Tee Golf Program at Ricks**

The 3rd and 4th graders are learning how to play golf through the First Tee golf program during PE. In the program, Coach Jason works with the golf pros from the DU golf team and the PGA to teach the students how to play. At the end of the unit, the students will go on a field trip to Highlands Ranch Golf Course on May 24th.

**EC Updates**

Since the weather has warmed up, we are spending more time outside. Please make sure your child comes to school wearing sunscreen, or that you stay long enough in the morning to apply it here. Feel free to send along hats and sunglasses for extra protection if you'd like.

Sodex Food Services trial for preschool, preK, and Kindergarten will run between May 8 and May 19. Parents may access the food request form here if you need to make any changes. If you are opting out of the program, please let your child’s teachers know by May 1.
Summer Fun at Ricks

Summer at Ricks blends fun summer activities with rich learning experiences for children ages 3-6. Click [here](#) for more information or to [register](#).

RCA Happenings

**New Parent Welcome** on Thursday, May 4, 2017 from 5:00-6:30 PM at Morgridge College of Education. *Adult-only event.* Please RSVP no later than Monday, May 1st.

**Many ways to show your appreciation on or before National Teacher Appreciation Day, Tuesday, May 9th:**

1. Publicly recognize your child's Ricks Center teacher(s) for all the great things they do including teaching our children to collaborate, create and innovate. Use [#WhyILoveRicks](#) or [#ILoveRicks](#) on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Great Schools) or share a personal note of appreciation and share a copy with your teacher(s). We will gather posts on social media and display for teachers on the 9th.

2. We will be providing cutouts for students to write messages to or draw pictures for their teachers. Look for them in "Friday Folders" later this week/early next. Please take those home and have your kids create a message/picture and make sure to bring them back to school. Please place them in one of the baskets we will have around the school all next week. Please put your teacher's name ON the cutout.

3. A coffee bar (morning) and box lunches will be provided to all Ricks' staff on May 9th. We will use the conference room behind the front desk as our primary location. Here is a sign-up genius if you are willing to help with set-up and clean-up for either of those events: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/4090A4BA9AD2CA0FD0-teacher](#)

4. Some classrooms have room parent coordinators who are organizing an extra something from parents/students. You are welcome to help coordinate and/or contribute to that effort.

**RCA Meetings:** Thank you to all who attended the RCA meeting on Friday, April 21st. We appreciate your participation! The next meeting will be Friday, May 19 at 8:45 AM in the conference room behind the front desk. All are welcome!
Save the Date

May 3-5  All day  AdvancEd Reaccreditation visit
May 4  5:00-6:30 pm  New Family Welcome
May 9  Teacher Appreciation Day
May 10  8:00 – 9:00 am  Incoming 5th grade student and parent information session
May 10  7:00-9:00 pm  Willy Wonka, School musical performance, at Davis Auditorium, Sturm Hall
May 15 – 19  MS Field Trips: Washington, DC; Yellowstone, WY; Keystone Science School -Walden, CO
May 23  Field day (Volunteers needed!!!)
May 24  3rd and 4th grade Golf field trip
May 24  5:30 - 7:30 pm  Sports Banquet, Multipurpose Room at Ricks
May 26  6:30-8:30 pm  Upper School Social, 5th-8th grade
May 31  5:00-9:00 pm  Grade 8 Graduation Dinner – Driscoll Hall (invitations to be sent soon)
June 1  9:00-12:00 am  Grade 8 Graduation - open to the entire community - Frederic C Hamilton Family Recital Hall, Lamott School of Music
June 1  12:00-1:30 pm  Grade 8 Graduation lunch for Grade 8 families and students
June 2  Last Day of School, half day dismissal (Preschool – 4th dismisses at 11:45 and 5th– 8th dismisses at 12:00)

Around DU and Beyond...

Storm Warning Exhibit
At DU, a climate change exhibit that’s thoughtful, shocking and sometimes even humorous...“Storm Warning: Artists on Climate Change & the Environment” continues through April 30, at the University of Denver’s Vicki Myhren Gallery. It’s free.

The Heart and Science of Parenting

Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

Collaboration, Compassion, and Curiosity

Ricks Center Website  Ricks Center for Gifted Children
Ricks Center Facebook Page
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