

March 2017

A Sweet Repeat

The mission of Quest Charter Academy is to provide a diverse student body with an innovative, world-class education, rich in math, science and technology, focused on preparing students to become bold inquirers, problem solvers and ethical leaders.

Quest graduates will be skill ready for post-secondary education to meet the challenges of a competitive global workforce.



The Quest High School varsity boys' basketball program, in only its third varsity season, win back-to-back Regional Championship Sweet 16 seasons! See the complete story on page 9.

Middle School: 2612 N Bootz Ave., Peoria, IL 61604 Phone: (309) 222-8719 Fax: (309) 685-8801
High School: 2503 N. University, Peoria, IL 61604 Phone: (309) 402-0030 Fax: (309) 685-3001

www.questpeoria.org

From the Executive Director



Nicole Couri Wood, Ph.D.
Executive Director

It is hard to believe we are already to Spring Break. As we think forward to next year, we have included a copy of the calendar 2017-2018 school year in this mailing. Also included is a copy of your student's third quarter report card.

We have some exciting news to report.....our Middle School parent/guardian participation at the third quarter student led conferences was an outstanding 81.4%! Three of the Middle School classrooms achieved 100% participation which is our target for every advisory. **Please mark your calendars for our 4th quarter SLC's (Student Led Conferences) which will be held on Thursday, April 27 from 4-7 p.m. and Friday, April 28 from 10:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.** Please note that we have altered these dates from Friday/Saturday which is currently on the calendar because we have had a low turnout on our Saturday sessions so are hoping this will work better for our families. Your student's advisory

teacher will be reaching out upon our return from Spring break with your scheduled conference time. As always, we are looking for 100% attendance and we thank you for making this a top priority! We look forward to our continued partnership on our Quest to be the best! Thank you for all you do.

As part of our personalized learning plan for every student, we work to make sure each student has exactly what they need to have their individual needs met. We accomplish this through daily custom learning time—45 minutes of individual support. Our students and staff take this time very seriously and we use those minutes wisely. We check our progress every month through a 15-minute online assessment in reading and math through a program called Star 360. You may be familiar with this data from your student led conferences. The program sets a growth target for each student and we watch to ensure they are trending on their growth target line. We are so pleased to report that Quest Charter Academy has 93% of our students trending on their growth targets in Reading and 94% in Math. This is outstanding progress and we are proud of our students for being focused and working so hard on their individual goals. Keep up the great work as we move into the final quarter of the year!

Our annual open enrollment period has come to an end. We are proud to report that we have a 91% re-enrollment rate for the 2017-2018 school year. We received 412 new applications for just 115 available seats. We are excited to welcome our new families into Quest Charter Academy and we look to our current scholars to serve as role models for our incoming students.

As part of the final piece of our Strategic Plan, we are thrilled to launch Career Academies at Quest High School for the 2017-2018 school year for Freshmen and Sophomores. The Freshman Academy is designed to support students as they transition from Middle to High school. Teachers will collaborate to develop common expectations for the students and develop materials activities and events to support student successful completion of their first year of high school. Another focus of the team is to help ninth grade students make an informed decision as to which of the College and Career Academies they will enroll in beginning their sophomore year. Our current freshmen are using Career Cruising which we will use along with their course grades to determine which career academy they will enter. The career academies will provide real-world experiences with local businesses and professionals, linking school-work and the workplace. Regular coursework will be presented within the context of the academy's focus. These academies will help ensure Quest graduates are better prepared for college and the workforce.

We are gearing up for our first special fundraising event—Quest Throwback Prom on Saturday, April 8! If you are interested in attending, please log on to www.questthrowbackprom.com to make your reservations and come have fun supporting the students of QCA!

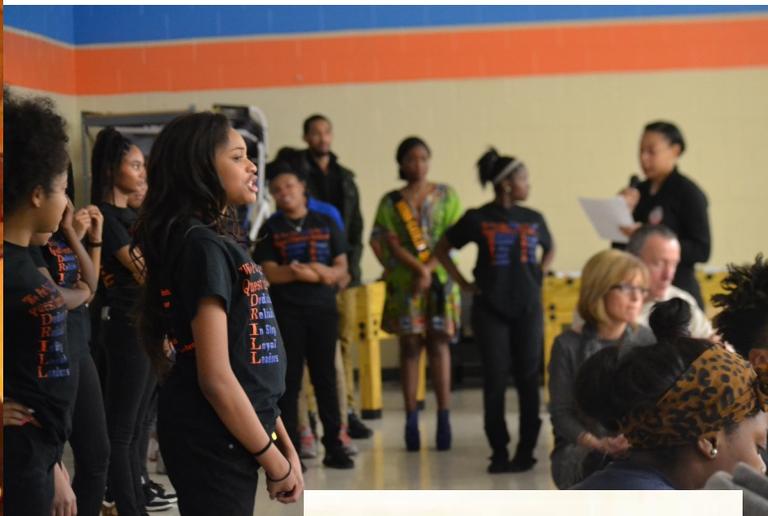
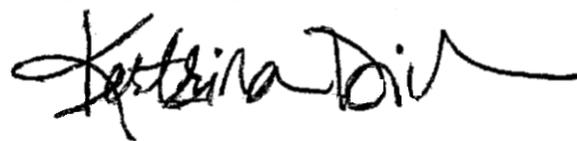
This week, we held a wonderful celebration of life for Mr. Glen Barton, our former Board Chairman and visionary behind the creation of Quest Charter Academy. If you had an opportunity to know Mr. Barton, then you know he was an incredible man who was deeply committed to high levels of academic excellence for our students. Our celebration of life was held to honor Mr. Barton and included the unveiling of a memorial wall, and a dedication of the High School campus which has formally been renamed the "Glen Barton High School Campus." The next time you are at our High School, please look for the dedication plaque over the entrance doors then, as you come into the entry, please look to your right and you will see the wall dedicated to Mr. Barton, along with the story of this incredible man who gave so much for the students of Peoria. It is a beautiful tribute to a truly special man!

We know you have a choice in your child's education and we thank you for partnering with us on our Quest to be the best! I wish you all a restful and enjoyable spring break with your family.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Nicole Couri Wood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Family Engagement is Key

If you read Dr. Wood's article, then you've already learned that the Middle School's parent/guardian participation at third quarter student led conferences was a whopping 81.4%....CONGRATULATIONS and THANK YOU to all of you who took the time to be engaged in your child's education and to help make Quest exceptional. As we continue to create opportunities to engage our families, my strategy as a family liaison is to reach as many families as possible by providing family learning institutes that will peak the interest of everyone and would be conducive to helping students be the best they can be. On February 7, the students had the opportunity to listen to award-winning storyteller and author, Brian "Fox" Ellis. Fox brought to life historical stories that every student seemed to enjoy. On February 28, in honor of Black History Month, we hosted a celebration where our very own Quest Middle School Drill Team performed, along with Bradley students doing poetry. During this time of year we are all anxiously awaiting for sunny skies and blooming flowers; however, as we embark upon our final nine weeks of school, I encourage our families to make a commitment to take advantage of our end of the year events, please mark your calendars for the week of April 10-13, as we will be having open house/orientation for new families whose child's name was chosen through the enrollment lottery. We would very much like parents to assist us in welcoming new families. I am in the process of planning a Family Learning Institute for the month April on the Harm and Dangers of Social Media. On May 2, there will be a (pre)Cinco de Mayo celebration, to help our students learn more about the Hispanic culture. We will end the year by having a Spring Festival, a fun time for our families to come together, eat, and participate in games.



FTC Robotics Rolling Along

What an exciting year this has been! We had a new format of League Play this year which allowed us to have four competitions. With each meet we learned what we did well, where we needed work, and made improvements for the next round. After our league meets were done, Quest Gators placed 13th and Techna Gators placed 29th out of our division. We didn't qualify to move on, but there is a wildcard chance to attend the World Championship that will be decided in early April. Work continues on the robots just in case we get selected.

We were at Bradley University on March 17th and 18th demonstrating our FTC robots at the *FIRST Robotic Competition*. We showed our robots to the public, informed them on the FTC program, and let other younger kids drive our robots. Several parents commented that, based on what they saw of our teams, they would like to have FTC robotics at their schools. This shows our students can showcase their knowledge and enthusiasm to make Quest a top notch STEM school.

Our focus now is to learn more programming languages, better sensor utilization, and more game specific building elements such as lifts and drive trains. We'll be working on this along with more outreach opportunities to help the community with volunteer efforts and showing others the need for STEM education.

If you would like to learn more about the Quest robotics teams or any of the FIRST Robotics programs please contact Darrin Munter at dmunter@advancedtech.com or visit <http://www.firstinspires.org/>



Middle School Scoop

From the Interim Principal



Nicole Couri Wood, Ph.D.
Executive Director &
Interim Middle School
Principal

I want to take this newsletter to share with you some outstanding achievements we have seen at our Middle School over the last quarter. Please take a moment to celebrate with your student and encourage them to talk about their goals for this quarter.

To begin with, we had our highest parent/student attendance to date at Quest Middle School during our 3rd quarter conferences! Congratulations to our entire school community for reaching 81.4% attendance at our student led conferences. We participated in a challenge, as each advisory was working toward the goal of 100% attendance, and three advisories hit that target! Congratulations in 5th grade to Mrs. Carrol's advisory, in 6th grade to Ms. Trammel's advisory, and in 7th grade to Mrs. Maarouf's advisory! Congratulations in 8th grade to Ms. Readeker's advisory who hit 85% attendance. All four top winning advisories enjoyed a delicious lunch from WingStop on the stage with Dr. Wood on St. Patrick's Day. We had fun celebrating our achievement!

Please mark your calendars for our final SLC of the year which will be held on April 27th and 28th. I am challenging our school community to work to break our record! Please note that we have altered the dates from Friday/Saturday to Thursday/Friday in hopes that we will have a higher percentage of participation.

Congratulations to our highest performers on Dreambox (Math) and Lexia (Reading)! These students scored the most points at their grade level! They are honored at our monthly core value assembly. Did you know your student can log into Dreambox and Lexia at home and continue their progress? If you are interested, please ask your child's advisory teacher and help your student accelerate at a faster pace!

January Dreambox Dynamos: Kenneth Grant, Emmanuel Banegas, Donte Williams
January Lexia Leaders: Jackeline Petcera Garcia, Amira Jackson, Destiny Jackson

February Dreambox Dynamos: Anthony McDonald, Jesus Perez, Kyle Osterman
February Lexia Leaders: Emily Bayless, Amira Jackson, Stephanie Espana

We will be also celebrating our honor roll students who have achieved A/B honor roll all three quarters at a special breakfast in April. Be on the lookout for an invitation after Spring break!

Parents and guardians, I am asking for your assistance with attendance. Our attendance target is 96%. The first half of the year we averaged 95% but, since we returned from the winter break, our attendance has been down. We understand there has been a lot of flu this year and we certainly want our students to stay home if they are ill, but we ask that if your student is not ill, please have them at school on time at 8:30 a.m. Thank you for making this a top priority! Let's finish strong this year!

Finally, I wanted to let you know that we are in the process of hiring our new Principal for Quest Middle School! We had a wonderful turnout with 20 applicants. We are moving into our third round of interviews this week and hope to have an announcement in April!

We know you have a choice in your child's education and we thank you for partnering with us!



GATORS ATHLETICS
Middle School

Dr. Nicole Couri Wood

- The 7th grade boys basketball team gracefully finished their season in the semifinals of the regional tournament.
- The 8th grade boys' basketball team finished their season in the regional finals.
- The girls' junior varsity and boys' 8th grade teams played in the March Madness The Experience "Jump Ball Jamboree."
- Congratulations to the boys' 5th/6th grade team which finished 0-3 but learned a lot while playing all the games against older 6th grade teams.
- The boys'/girls' soccer & track teams are having tryouts. These seasons kick off right after Spring Break.

Middle School Partnerships in Action - U of I College of Medicine at Peoria



The University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria's medical students organized another fantastic session for the GUIDES program (Guide, Understand, Inform, Drive, Educate and Serve) early in the third quarter. The session focused on smoke inhalation. Students rotated through three stations with different scenarios—one with a representative from the Peoria Fire Department who had a “dummy” and taught the students how to perform CPR; at one station, a “patient” was unconscious and the students had to assess the situation and decide how to respond, and the third was another “patient” who was conscious but exhibiting symptoms of smoke inhalation. These hands-on sessions do a great job of engaging the students and keeping them interested in careers in the health care field.

CELEBRATIONS

Each month, Middle School students celebrate core value award winners, student of the month, and the new Dreambox and Lexia awards. In advisory class, students nominate a fellow student in their advisory who exemplifies the core value of the month. Students write about why the student should win the award. In addition, grade level teacher teams choose one student per grade level who has consistently exemplified all of the Quest core values; this is the Student of the Month. Each of these award winners has a picture on display on our Celebrations bulletin board in the main hallway. At the end of each quarter, we also recognize students with perfect attendance and those who are on the A/B Honor Roll. We are really enjoying showcasing our scholars and all that they are doing! Following are some of the January winners whose parent was able to attend the assembly:



High School Happenings

From the Principal



Robyn S. McCracken, EdS
Principal

Happy Spring! It hardly seems possible that it is already March and we are at the end of third quarter. It is a great time to reflect with your student on his/her progress thus far and their goals for the final months of the year. It is also a good time to look at your student's first semester grades, talk about their goals for their second semester, and develop a plan to achieve those goals. Student success is the goal for all of us. We always encourage best efforts, set high standards, and want every student to learn to their fullest potential.

Quest teachers are dedicated to providing each student with learning opportunities that are academically challenging for students. On Fast Friday, teachers have been working with students to address their individual learning needs and academic achievement. We continue to use our NWEA, Map and STAR 360 assessment data to set individual learning goals and gauge where they are in learning target. Please contact teachers with any questions and/or concerns you may have regarding your students' academic progress this quarter.

As we prepare our students in college and career readiness, the juniors completed their final practice SAT test on March 17. These practice tests give students an idea of what types of questions to expect and how the test is structured in preparation for April 5 SAT test date. Because the SAT is a curriculum and standards based assessment, our teachers and counselors use these test results to improve instructional practices, determine educational interventions, and career planning.

Our counselors are meeting with every 8-11th grade student about their course requirements and selection for the 2017-2018 academic year. At these conferences, counselors discuss with students their required courses at each grade level and create their individual plan.

Beginning in 10th grade, students will use their Career Cruising matchmaker results to choose one of our College and Career Academy pathways: Freshmen Academy, Informational Technology Engineering Manufacturing (ITEM), Information and courses within a chosen academy created to prepare students for specific career. Pathways provide students with a plan to connect coursework in high school with work-based and service learning opportunities (site visits, job shadows, guest speakers, etc.) Students will develop and integrate academy projects with business/civic/ postsecondary/ communities within each Career Academy.

The realities of graduation and life after high school are now looming for our seniors. Our seniors are starting to feel the natural excitement for the big moments in May and beyond. Please mark your calendars for the Graduation ceremony on May 25 at 6:00 p.m. at the Woodruff Career and Technical Center auditorium.

Thank you for your continued support and interest! If you have any questions or concerns about your student's progress, please do not hesitate to ask.

Robyn McCracken

Hands-On Psychology



In Psychology, students learned about the physical, cognitive and social development of infants and children in their human development unit. Students got an opportunity to apply what they learned when two classroom "guests" came to visit, 5 month old Liam Donlan, son of psychology teacher Mrs. Donlan, and 7 month old Cedar Herrmann, daughter of Assistant Principal Mr. Herrmann. Students were able to hold and play with the infants finding age appropriate toys and watching to see what physical milestones they had accomplished.



College Corner

As we approach the last nine weeks of school, we have moved into the final stages of preparing seniors for graduation and college. Senior students have met with ISAC (Illinois Student Assistance Commission) staff several times since the semester break to finish the FAFSA, discuss scholarship opportunities and how to apply for them, and complete college applications. Representatives from ICC have also been on hand to answer questions about enrolling in dual credit classes next Fall. Our class of 42 seniors have accumulated more than \$2 million in scholarship offers to date. We have held two college tie ceremonies this quarter where students who have been accepted to a four year college/university are given a blue and orange striped tie to signify and celebrate the achievement. A college night has been planned for March 22 where representatives from ICC, Eureka College and ISAC will be on hand to help parents understand what to expect this Fall when their student begins their college career. With our current juniors, we have been very busy scheduling several college visits, preparing their schedules for the 17-18 school year, and testing them for dual credit classes at ICC. Our juniors have also taken several practice SAT tests to prepare them for the formal SAT on April 5. Please encourage your junior to continue to practice on their own for the SAT using Khan Academy or any of the other resources that have been recommended. Finally, meetings have been held with small groups of Freshmen and Sophomores regarding their class schedules for next year. We will begin doing the same for our current eighth graders who will be coming to Quest High School in the Fall.



Service is the Key



Key Club has been very busy this winter and spring with bake sale fundraisers, preparations for the Easter Egg Hunt as well as officers getting ready for the District Convention and Leadership Conference. Our members have organized bake sales for the half days and the week of finals here at the high school. We started this in the first semester to raise funds and it went so well we have continued the practice. We also have been busy stuffing eggs, getting flyers put up and making Easter crafts for our egg hunt coming up April 8th from Noon to 2:00 at the High School. Bring your families out to chase after some eggs! Our club officers attended the District Convention and Leadership Conference in Oak Brook, Illinois where they were able to celebrate our club's achievements this past year, cast their votes for the new Governor and mingle with over 400 other Key Clubbers.

Dream it... Be it... Do it...

Becoming an “Annie’s Girl”



In memory of State Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth’s mother, community leader Annie Jo Gordon, Representative Gordon-Booth has created “Annie’s Girls,” a group of one junior or senior girl from each of the eight high schools in Representative Gordon-Booth’s legislative district. Through the program, each participant will be connected with a local mentor—a woman in a leadership role in the community—who will provide encouragement, job shadowing opportunities and career advice. The program will also sponsor each participant’s high school junior or senior prom. The program’s emphasis will be on service and leadership. We congratulate our very own senior, Chessica Doss, who was chosen to be one of the inaugural participants in Annie’s Girls!



GATORS ATHLETICS

High School



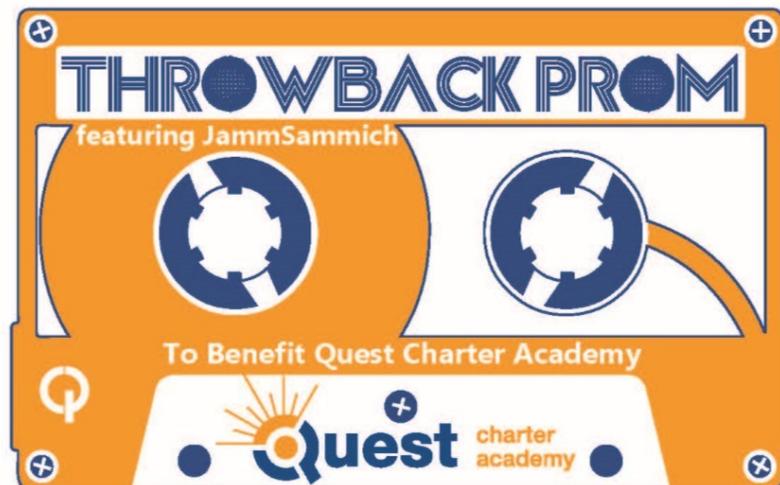
The Quest Gators historic, record-setting season came to a close in early March. The Gators did something no Quest team has done before, winning 28 games, finishing the season 28-5. For the second year in a row, the Gators won the Peoria Heights Thanksgiving Tournament, Monmouth United Holiday Tournament, won an IHSA 1A Regional Championship, and made it to the Sweet 16 Sectional Championship. This team beat three state-ranked teams: #7-4A East Moline, #9-3A Morton, and #10-1A Mendon Unity, which are also program-firsts. No team in the Peoria-area has won a Regional Championship the last two years in a row, let alone making it to the Sweet 16 in their respective class. As a program, the Gators freshmen, JV, and Varsity teams were a combined 52-17, which

is absolutely outstanding feat for any program to accomplish. In addition to these outstanding team accomplishments, we also had program first’s for individual awards; Senior Chaz Sardin scored his 1,000th career point against Farmington, and exits the program as the all-time leading scorer and Senior Jaylon Huff grabbed his 500th career rebound against Putnam County, and exits the program as the all-time leading rebounder. Chaz Sardin was also named to the AP 1A All-State 2nd Team as well as the IBCA 1A/2A 3rd Team All-State. This is the first time a Quest player has ever been selected to an all-state team. Lastly, Coach Michael Jenkins has been named one of the IBCA District 12 Coach of the Year for the second year in a row; a remarkable accomplishment. The Gators have a full summer again packed with games and tournaments so be sure to keep up with the Quest Gators, and Peoria’s most successful team the last two seasons!

Mark Your Calendar:

- March 27—31 - SPRING BREAK
- April 5 - SAT test for Juniors
- April 27—Student Led Conferences, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- April 28—Student Led Conferences, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- April 14—17 - Easter break
- April 21—High School Talent Show
- April 27—Student Led Conferences, 4-7 p.m.
- April 28—Student Led Conferences, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- April 29—High School Prom
- May 25—High School Graduation
- May 26—8th Grade Class Trip
- May 26—Early Dismissal (Noon) for Staff Professional Development
- May 29—NO SCHOOL (Memorial Day)
- May 30—8th Grade Promotion Ceremony
- June 8—Last Day of School

Have you ever longed to be able to re-live or re-do your high school prom? Or maybe you never went to your high school prom so you want to capture it? Well now you can! Introducing Quest's first special fundraising event



APRIL 8
7 P.M. - 11 P.M.
WAREHOUSE
ON STATE

Tickets on sale now!

www.questthrowbackprom.com

PEORIA
CHARTER SCHOOL
INITIATIVE

