

James Newman, Ph.D., Head of School

April 2011

Dear Academy Families and Friends,

Last week, the Upper and Middle school bands held their annual spring concerts led by bandmaster, Randy Gutwein, in our McCormick Auditorium. Mr. Gutwein arranged two unique concerts. Both highlighted similarities in musical orchestration developed during the Renaissance period and contemporary times. The concerts began with pieces such as "Would You Know How We Met" by Henry Purcell and "Alleluia" by W.A. Mozart. The Middle School performance concluded with "25 or 6 to 4" by Robert Lamm and "Woodchoppers' Ball" by Woody Herman. By the end of the Upper School concert, the band had the McCormick Auditorium rocking with "Stairway to Heaven," "Hot Stuff," and Donna Summers' hit, "On the Radio."

In the center of the Upper School group, were four senior boys — Davone Colbert, Doug Caplan, Philippe Coronado, and James Wilson — playing the saxophone, drums, trumpet, and French horn. Each young man has been a standout varsity athlete for four years and now this year, a leader on their respective teams. There they were — a Pennsylvania state tennis champion, a three-sport athlete, one of the most durable high-school athletes I've seen in many years, and the epitome of a "team-player" from years ago. And at their last band concert of their Academy careers, they were "raising the roof."

The significance of the Upper School band concert was not only the quality of the students' musicianship and our faculty mentoring. The concert was a celebration of the Academy's commitment to "the whole child." As uniquely displayed that evening, Harrisburg Academy is dedicated to fostering the academic, artistic, and athletic curiosity and talents of our students. Our commitment to "the whole child" recognizes that children have latent interests and abilities beyond their academic study.

As educators in the tradition of progressive liberal arts education, it is our responsibility to expose our students to the arts and athletic competition. We want to pique their curiosity and provide meaningful opportunities for them to participate in both, develop their talents, and succeed. For years, educators have known that participation in the arts and athletics fosters confidence, resilience, character, and a sense of self-worth and teamwork that cultivates the "emotional intelligence" of children and adolescents. The fact that these seniors continued to dedicate themselves to rigorous academic study and successful endeavors in the arts and athletics underscores that Harrisburg Academy actively supports the concept of developing "the whole child." The same will be true of many seniors participating in our Upper School band, orchestra, and chorus next year and beyond. **Harrisburg Academy's commitment to "the whole child," undoubtedly, is a major factor why an Academy experience is as we often say, something more and something different.**

As the budgets of other schools in the greater Harrisburg region are significantly reduced next year and in future years, please take note of what programs are reduced and eliminated. Sadly, elementary school art, music studies, physical education classes, and time in the library will be cut

Challenging our students in an environment that nurtures and inspires.

from operations. Middle and high school programs will require more and greater fees for participation, and even then, the number of meaningful opportunities for participation will be reduced. What frequently will be increased is prescriptive learning and associated series of standardized tests that don't adequately foster the deep analytical thinking and creativity skills necessary for the unique challenges of the 21st century.

As a school, we remain committed to allocating the financial resources necessary to educating "the whole child." The results of years of this institutional commitment were validated on stage last week at our band concerts, and I could not be more proud of what we, as a school community, and our seniors have achieved. Bravo!!

I look forward to seeing you at the remainder of our traditional spring events.

Best regards,

Jim