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**Westfield PTSA**  
**Minority Achievement Committee Newsletter**

**THE MAC**

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**9th Edition June 2008**

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**The Chairman's Corner**

**Mark Richardson, MAC CHAIR**

We are rapidly approaching the end of another successful school year. I hope you were able to attend the Spring Parent Coffee. If not, you missed a wonderful evening and an opportunity to stay in touch with current happenings in minority achievement at Westfield.

Congratulations to all of our 2008 graduating seniors. We wish each of you continued success as you enter the next stage of your adult experience.

It goes without saying that the success of this committee is entirely due to the volunteer services of many parents, educators, administrators and friends of Westfield High School. I'd like to take this opportunity to extend a sincere thank you to everyone for all your hard work and commitment to the goals and mission of this committee.

Visit the site often as we continuously update the site with information you can use.

<http://ptsa.westfieldhs.org/MinorityAC/minorityAchievement.htm>.

There is a wealth of information in this edition of the MAC. Please take time to read the articles and take advantage of the many opportunities at WHS to get involved and become an advocate for your child. Have a great and relaxing summer.

**MAC BBQ June 5**  
**You Don't Want to Miss It!**

The Westfield High School Minority Achievement Committee (MAC) in conjunction with the PTSA and the Principal's Cabinet will host its first annual end-of-year Barbeque on Thursday, June 5, from 5:00-8:30 p.m. We will have plenty of your favorite barbeque specials, including barbeque ribs, smoked chicken, fried fish, hot dogs and hamburgers and plenty of sides. Music and contests are also on the menu. For more information, please contact Mark Richardson or Tim Thomas.

**Moving Forward for a Better Tomorrow**

**Dear Parents,**

It has been a terrific year at Westfield High School and we have continued to investigate and implement measures to improve academic achievement for all students. Among the measures in place to focus on minority student achievement are the Principal's Cabinet, the Academic Challenge group, Bulldog Buddies, Bulldog Block, BITS Tutoring, The Alliance of Concerned Men, and the Women's Leadership Group. I am extremely proud and appreciative of the hard work and commitment of the staff, the students and the volunteers who collaborated this year to make these programs a success and I can assure everyone that Westfield High School is committed to eliminating the minority student achievement gap. If you were present at the last MAC gathering, you heard several young men give testimony to the support that they have received through their participation in one group, the Alliance of Concerned Men. While intervention and support programs are helpful, we must also recognize the invaluable role that classroom teachers play in the positive development and encouragement of minority students.

Further reflection and staff development opportunities will serve to enhance the repertoire of strategies necessary to impact achievement for all students at Westfield High School. Finally, I would like to thank Mark Richardson and the entire Minority Achievement Committee for their tireless efforts and collaboration for the success of our students. I hope that everyone has a restful and enjoyable summer and I encourage you to stay involved in the MAC. As someone once said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. WORKING TOGETHER is SUCCESS!"

Go Bulldogs,  
Tim Thomas  
Principal  
Westfield High School



**Westfield High PTSA Jennifer Campbell, President**

By now, with less than a month until graduation, it is time to take stock of the past school year. What were the successes? What needs to be changed or improved? Do you and your student feel connected to the school? Hopefully, we can learn from what we have done and experienced, and continue to strive for excellence in education at Westfield. We need parents to continue to be involved as your child's education advocate. Being involved in the PTSA is always a great way to get started.

We continue to strive for increased parent involvement in the Minority Achievement activities. By doing so, hopefully we continue to narrow the achievement gap, but we're far from done. Thank you to Mark Richardson for his leadership with MAC, as well as Carol Jasper, Nancy Tortorello, Bill Bernstein for their coordination of the BITS tutoring program and the BITS volunteers. As always, thank you to Celeste Peterson for continuing to edit and produce this MAC newsletter this year as well as her long-standing commitment to helping kids from all backgrounds in a variety of important ways.

Congratulations to the Class of 2008!

Whether your kids are in still in high school or going off to college, continue to intervene in their lives. Find out what they are doing, who their friends are and how they spend their time. Kids still need a moral compass and need to be exposed to some of your parental values even after they've moved out. We hope that graduates will share their experience as they increase in wisdom and be a role model/mentor for those in the younger grades. What I often hear from high school seniors when they've applied to colleges is that they wished they took their schoolwork more seriously in their freshman and sophomore years.

On a practical note, please encourage your students to read over the summer, so they don't lose the skills they have kept up during the school year. All students entering 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade are required by the county to read at least one book over the summer. I'd suggest that they take some notes after or while each book is read! Some kind of assignment will undoubtedly be due the first week of school in September. Go to <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/readlist/index.htm> for more information about reading lists for each grade level.

Save the date for the Bulldog BBQ, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, where students can pick up their schedules, sign up for various clubs, socialize and grab a bite to eat. If you haven't done so already, sign up for our free PTSA on line newsletter at <http://ptsa.westfieldhs.org/subscribe/subscribe.htm> to stay informed about important dates and information.

Have a happy and safe summer!



Senior Graduation  
June 18<sup>th</sup>  
Last Day of School  
June 13<sup>th</sup>

## The Year in Review: Focus on Communication

As the school year draws to an end we start to look at the school year in review. The members of the Minority Achievement Committee (MAC) also review the things they have done well and what they would like to improve upon. For the coming year would like to help you improve your communications with the school. It is important that everyone feels welcome and concerns or kudos thoroughly communicated. Please start your initial communication with your child to determine if his/her concerns are with the teacher or other school administrator. Contact the teacher and cc the counselor via e-mail. If you do not have access to a computer call the teacher and the counselor and leave a message. You can also send a note to the teacher via your child asking that the teacher and or counselor contact you. Please describe to the teacher the best way to contact you. If you are still are unsuccessful please contact the school office at 703.488.6300 and ask when the next MAC meeting will be held. At the MAC meetings there are committee members available to listen to your concerns and help advocate on your behalf. We want to help you; we encourage you to use us.

### First Annual Erin Peterson Golf Tournament

The first Annual Erin Peterson Golf Tournament was held on April 7, 2008 at the Chantilly National Golf and Country Club in Centreville, VA. There were 141 golfers and over 60 volunteers.

Eggspectation restaurant started the golfers out with a hot breakfast and a healthy box lunch was provided. There were lots of raffle and silent auction items donated from merchants, neighbors and many other supporters in the community. Former Redskin players Ken Harvey and Charles Mann were among the 141 golfers. A memorial resolution was presented to the Petersons by Delegate Chuck Caputo of the 67<sup>th</sup> District. The day ended with the presentation of prizes to the first, second and third place golfers and a wonderful buffet dinner. An approximate estimate of \$65k was raised for the Erin Peterson Fund (EPF). The EPF plans to recognize a minimum of two seniors annually for leadership in athletics and a commitment to excel in academics. The mission of the scholarships is to inspire future generations of Westfield students to emulate Erin's strong sense of duty, love of school, and compassion for all who were in need. The planning for next year's tournament has already begun; a date should be announced soon!



### IT'S THE MAC ATTACK

- Have you talked to your child about their goals and how going to college or pursuing a career explored in one of the career academy clusters will help them to obtain these goals?
- When was the last time you sat down and talked to your child about the importance of education and its value?
- Middle and High School students whose parents are involved make better transitions, maintain quality work, develop more realistic plans for their future and are less likely to drop out of school. Get involved today!

**Be pro-active  
THINK ABOUT IT!**

### An Interesting Year Away From Home

Arielle Jasper, Former WHS graduate and BITS Tutor

It has been an interesting freshman year being away from home. I am a student at Marshall University in Huntington, WV, majoring in Forensics and a minor in Early Childhood Education. I chose to do education since I work at a daycare center in Chantilly when I am home. People tell you about how great it is being away from home, but I can tell you that it's not all that. You miss your friends, parents and the close ties that you have in close knit environments such as your church, neighborhood and yes even at high school. I am so thankful to all my classmates, teachers, counselors and Tim Thomas for encouraging me even when I came home on breaks to keep on striving to do well in school. I have finish my first year and passed all my classes. Horary!!!! My point; keep on reaching for your goals.

**BITS**



It has once again been a wonderful BITS year. Enrollment up and grades soaring as noted from our analysis done this year. We send our thoughts and prayers to our seniors, who are all going off into the world and thank them for their wonderful support in the BITS program. We are looking forward to the next school term and hope to have many of our tutors back with us, as well as new tutors looking for an opportunity to help their peers. BITS will start again in October. Stays posted and have a great summer. Thank you.

## MAC Fact

**Definition:** a historical insight about a person of color or an event concerning persons of color designed to help shape and uplift pride in the heritage of our minority youth

## February Black History Month



### March on Washington

by Shmuel Ross

The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom took place in Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963. Attended by some 250,000 people, it was the largest demonstration ever seen in the nation's capital, and one of the first to have extensive television coverage.

1963 was noted for racial unrest and civil rights demonstrations. Nationwide outrage was sparked by media coverage of police actions in Birmingham, Alabama, where attack dogs and fire hoses were turned against protestors, many of whom were in their early teens or younger. Martin Luther King, Jr., was arrested and jailed during these protests, writing his famous "Letter From Birmingham City Jail," which advocates civil disobedience against unjust laws. Dozens of additional demonstrations took place across the country, from California to New York, culminating in the March on Washington. President Kennedy backed a Civil Rights Act, which was stalled in Congress by the summer.

The March on Washington represented a coalition of several civil rights organizations, all of which generally had different approaches and different agendas. The "Big Six" organizers were James Farmer, of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); Martin Luther King, Jr., of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); John Lewis, of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); A. Philip Randolph, of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Roy Wilkins, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and Whitney Young, Jr., of the National Urban League. The stated demands of the march were the passage of meaningful civil rights legislation; the elimination of racial segregation in public schools; protection for demonstrators against police brutality; a major public-works program to provide jobs; the passage of a law prohibiting racial discrimination in public and private hiring; a \$2 an hour minimum wage; and self-government for the District of Columbia, which had a black majority.



## May

### Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

by Ricco Villanueva Siasoco

#### Origins of APA Heritage Month

May is Asian Pacific American (APA) Heritage Month—a celebration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Like Black History and Women's History celebrations, APA Heritage Month originated in a congressional bill.

#### Congressional Bills Establish Celebration

In June 1977, Representatives Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution that called upon the president to proclaim the first ten days of May as Asian/Pacific Heritage Week. The following month, Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga introduced a similar bill in the Senate. Both were passed. On October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution designating the annual celebration.

#### APA Becomes Month-long Celebration

In May 1990, the holiday was expanded further when President George H. W. Bush designated May to be Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to

mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants. Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated with community festivals, government-sponsored activities, and educational activities for students. This year's theme is "Lighting the Past, Present, and Future."

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Do you have a question, or an issue you would like us to write about? Would you like to submit an article? We want to hear from you; contact;

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**MAC Editor: Celeste Peterson**  
703 793-4947

**BITS Coordinator: Carol Jasper**  
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