

JAGUAR TRACKS

D'EVELYN JUNIOR SENIOR HIGH

10359 WEST NASSAU DRIVE • DENVER, COLORADO 80235

NOVEMBER 2009

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**D'EVELYN
JAGUARS**

The *Jaguar Tracks* is funded by the D'Evelyn Education Foundation and is prepared and distributed through volunteer efforts. Extra copies are available in the main school office.

Colby's Commentary

Using Data for Improvement

When parents received their students' CSAP results at Parent/Teacher Conferences (or from students who brought them home), a noticeable change was apparent on the first page of the packet. This colorful report, known as the *Growth and Achievement Report*, is new from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) this year. Its purpose is to demonstrate how each student is progressing toward a higher level. Until this year, students received only status scores in each of the tested areas, as well as an achievement level of Advanced, Proficient, Partially Proficient or Unsatisfactory. This new report enables parents to see the individual achievement level of their students as well as the amount of growth from year to year as compared to the growth of their academic peers.

This comparison to academic peers is an important feature of the new growth model because it shows the growth of each student in relation to other students with similar CSAP score histories. Comparing the growth of high scoring students only with other similarly scoring students gives more accurate information about how much progress students are making within that status level, and toward the next level. More information about the new growth model is available both on the reverse side of each student's *Growth and Achievement Report* as well as at a CDE website dedicated to CSAP and other information about schools (www.schoolview.org).

So, what does D'Evelyn do with all this information? The school studies the overall scores of each grade level to see if there is any insight that can be gained about how to improve student achievement. Sometimes we may find an area that needs a bit more attention, while at other times we may determine that because of the nature of D'Evelyn's curriculum, it is an area that may show low results for a particular year and "recover" in future years. While we wouldn't adjust our curriculum as a result of any one test score, we would always want to use any available data to ensure that we were providing the best delivery of our curriculum for the academic achievement of our students.

Currently, our teachers are reviewing in depth a variety of data sources, including CSAP, to see what interventions they can implement to further improve student achievement. It is possible to "drill down" into student scores for the various standards that are tested on CSAP. By using this information, teachers can get a better idea of specific skills that can be further addressed during instruction in order to help students achieve at higher levels. Along with other sources of data—ACT, Advanced Placement, course grades, behavior and attendance, and so forth—teachers can put together a picture of why students may struggle with certain concepts, and develop a plan for improvement. (For more information on these plans, see my article about Response to Intervention—RtI—in the October edition of *Jaguar Tracks*.)

As part of our professional development, we are looking at data to help us make decisions about our students and their achievement and growth. Our curriculum coupled with our instructional model, along with our highly qualified faculty, position our students to attain high levels of success. We are adding even more power to our instruction with improved questioning strategies along with the implementation of "depth of knowledge" questioning concepts. All of this hard work by the D'Evelyn faculty will guarantee that our students will achieve at the highest levels possible, and a wonderful side effect will be that our test scores will continue to be among the most impressive in Colorado!

Jill Colby,
Principal

Steering Committee

A Liberal Arts Education at D'Evelyn

By Cindy Gee, Steering Committee

Much of the attraction of a "choice" school, a smaller school or a private school is the community, and D'Evelyn is no exception. Many families are influenced to attend D'Evelyn by our "community," however "community" is a very subjective and elusive concept. To our students, their sense of community may come from sharing a rigorous curriculum, staying on campus at lunchtime, and attending the school that routinely boasts the highest ACT scores in the state. Their sense of community is having friends they have been with since they were all "sebies", and growing out of three sequential sizes of "Mean and Green" t-shirts before graduation.

To parents, the D'Evelyn community is about watching our children learn through a carefully orchestrated liberal arts curriculum; talking with our children about summer reading books that we read when we were their age (*before 1984*); and juggling elaborate carpools with other D'Evelyn parents. One parent told me that to her, the most important aspect of the D'Evelyn community was the knowledge that every family in our school had done extensive research and made deliberate efforts to enroll their children at D'Evelyn. Our community is a self-selected population of families who are deeply involved and invested in their children's education. That is our common denominator.

Our faculty is at the center of our community and they, too, are a self-selected population; a population of professional educators who care deeply about teaching. And, in my definition of community, our faculty contributes so much more than the expertise in their curriculum. We have faculty and staff who are dedicated, passionate, enthusiastic and prepared. Our children are inspired to do their best by following the example of these inspired, deeply committed teachers. Our teachers exude their joy of learning, and our children witness that joy. One much-adored science faculty member insists on being called "coach" by his students. Every student needs to experience a teacher who "coaches" them through a challenging subject. We could not hope for better role models for our children than these intelligent, accomplished and committed professionals enjoying themselves and excelling at their work.

The D'Evelyn sense of community may also include many tangibles like the stuffed jaguar, the senior lounge, improv nights and/or the letter jacket with the green "D". Those items make us smile and feel a part of our community. But I would argue that much of D'Evelyn's educational success and sense of community center around our dedicated and supportive parents and, most especially, our staff. In the words of the author James Baldwin, "children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."

If you have time to contribute more to our community and would like to run for Steering Committee, information packets are available at the front office or from any current Steering Committee member. The SC candidate forum will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 6 p.m. in the Library.

Extra Math Tutoring During 7th Hour

By Pario-Lee Law, mathematics teacher

D'Evelyn's Chapter of Mu Alpha Theta, an international high school and junior/community college mathematics club, provides math tutoring during 7th Hour for students at D'Evelyn, usually six to eight times per semester. Please encourage students who need some extra help in math or some practice with math study skills to take advantage of the remaining opportunities for these outstanding tutors to assist them. Students should sign up in their math teacher's room or in Mrs. Law's room E115. The remaining dates for first semester are:

Thursday, Nov. 5
 Wednesday, Nov. 11
 Tuesday, Nov. 17
 Wednesday, Dec. 2
 Thursday, Dec. 10

D'Evelyn Education Foundation Dinner Auction

By Cymantha Higgins, Dinner Auction Chair

The annual Dinner Auction is on **Saturday, March 20, 2010**. Please save the date so you can attend this fabulous event hosted by the D'Evelyn Education Foundation. The Dinner Auction raises money to benefit all students and helps support the school's academic programs as well as performing arts, athletics, scholarships, teacher continuing education and social activities. The auction will only be successful with your donations. Last year, parents and staff donated several hundred items and we need your help and support once again. Watch for an invitation to attend the second annual pancake breakfast, where your cost to attend is simply a donated item for the auction. Also, there are sponsorship opportunities. Since the 1997 inception of the Foundation, your contributions have supported well over \$78,000 in college sponsorships, over \$68,000 in academic support, over \$12,000 in teacher development and over \$75,000 in student activities. To maintain our high standards of excellence and achievement, we need your continued support and participation in the Dinner Auction. If you'd like to help plan this fun event, contact Cymantha Higgins at chiggins@infopipe.com.

Accountability News

By Priscilla Flanders, Accountability committee 1st vice-chair

We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude. --Cynthia Ozick

Please take a moment or two to ponder the truth of this statement. How often do we allow the clamor of our self-imposed busyness dull our appreciation of the wonderful things that occur in our daily lives? When I'm honest with myself, I have to say, all too often. With that in mind, I particularly appreciated the first few minutes of the October Accountability meeting. Lisa Papke, Chairwoman, asked us to introduce ourselves and then share one thing about D'Evelyn for which we were grateful. Heads nodded in agreement as we went around the room and commented on various aspects of D'Evelyn including: high expectations for our students; our sense of community and a safe, respectful environment; dedicated staff; spirit of excellence; variety of extracurricular activities (a volleyball game and choir concert were underway as we met); closed campus; carefully selected curriculum/sequences that have shaped student career choices; the fostering of valuable study habits that contribute to future successes; and the promotion of process and foundation by Junior High teachers designed to make the transition to High School as seamless as possible.

I challenge you to take a moment to consider this same question yourself: "What is the one thing about D'Evelyn for which you are most grateful?" Consider discussing it as a family, the next time you sit down to dinner. When you arrive at an answer, make the time to tell someone about it. Write a note to the science, math, social studies, language or literature teacher who inspires your child's passion for their subject. Thank the coach who instills sportsmanship and teamwork in your student, while pushing him or her to excel beyond their own expectations. Send an e-mail to the counselor who helped your child sort through a myriad of course or college options, and take a moment to applaud the drama, art, band and choir teachers who work many hours outside of the classroom to prepare the programs and events we so enjoy. Do your children ever share how much fun they have during Wednesday/Friday 7th hour clubs? Here is another opportunity to express gratitude to the very same teachers who enjoy your kids enough to spend yet another period with them! By sponsoring various clubs, teachers serve as role models and mentors, allowing your students to learn and enjoy new things while interacting with students in upper and lower grades who they might not ordinarily get to know. And, lest we forget, there is a whole team in the office on whom we all depend to distribute important communications while providing excellent and consistent oversight of school operations. If that isn't a reason to buy a pack or two of thank you notes, I don't know what is! Wouldn't it be great if we, meaning the entire D'Evelyn community, made a deliberate effort to develop a habit of gratitude this school year? Think about it, what would D'Evelyn look and feel like a year from now if we took this challenge seriously?

If you missed the October meeting, you didn't have an opportunity to enjoy four members of Mr. Murphy's Improv team perform a... well... improv skit. How do four team members present a totally spontaneous skit, and continue to present the same skit while randomly losing one member during each rendition until there is only one left standing? I guess you won't find out until you attend the 9th Annual Improv "Feast-i-val" event on Nov. 13. All proceeds benefit the Tennyson Center for Abused Children.

The meeting progressed as Jill Colby shared an informative presentation, which detailed various aspects of teacher professional development planned for this school year. Professional development scheduled in October included training with various data sources that will help teachers better determine how students are progressing in their coursework. As a community, we can be appreciative that common assessments and data discussions are being developed and encouraged, and intervention plans are being formulated on an ongoing basis. Jill continued her presentation with an explanation and summary of D'Evelyn 2009 CSAP assessment results and ACT rankings. For more detailed information, please reference the A/C meeting minutes available via the D'Evelyn website.

Looking forward to November's A/C meeting, we can anticipate an informative presentation and Q&A by the English Department. Did you ever wonder why and how the books your children are required to read in class and during the summer are selected? Come to the November meeting for the answers and, much, much more! In addition, D'Evelyn Alumni Survey responses will be presented by members of this A/C sub-committee. Did you know that 81% of the alumni respondents (1998-2008) would send their children to D'Evelyn if given the opportunity? What else did our alumni share? Find out during our next meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 10 from 7-9 p.m. in the Library. ***Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others. -- Cicero***

Me Funny, I Mean, Free Money

By Ralph K. Spencer, D'Evelyn Education Foundation, Board of Directors

I hope I got your attention with my hilarious title! OK, so it wasn't hilarious; how about comical? Amusing? Humorous? Alright, let's skip my feeble attempt at making you smile and talk about free money. Could you use some? If so, have I got some news you can use! At the regularly scheduled meeting of the D'Evelyn Education Foundation Board of Directors on Tuesday, Oct 20, Amy Goings, Foundation Management President, gave a report on the Sep 21 DEF Scholarship Committee meeting. During her report, I kept thinking to myself, 'Wow, we are talking about free money here.' All one has to do is ask for it in most cases. Some of this money comes in the form of scholarships while others are considered awards, since the recipient can use the funds any way he/she chooses. And it's never too soon to "ask" or, as you may have guessed by now, complete the appropriate application. Let's run through the list of free money pots to see what they are all about:

- 1) Two \$500 Athletic Leadership Council Awards;
- 2) Two \$1,000 JAGs Outstanding Athlete Scholarships awarded to one male and one female - selections by the DEF Scholarship Committee (comprised of individuals who no longer have any connection to the school and are not familiar with any of the candidates);
- 3) \$600 Excellence in Physics Scholarship - selection made by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 4) \$1,500 LeAnne Hollemans Roscow Award - candidates are nominated, selection by a group of D'Evelyn teachers;
- 5) \$1,500 Lynne Murphy Performing Arts Scholarship, selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 6) \$500 Bob Graffenberger Scholarship - selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 7) Four \$500 Performing Arts Scholarships in Band, Orchestra, Vocal, and Theater Arts, selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 8) \$1,000 David S. D'Evelyn Scholarship, selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 9) Two \$1,500 Founder's Scholarships, in recent years awarded to a Math/Science student and a Humanities student but this criteria may change this year; selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 10) \$500 Carol J. Mancuso Music Scholarship, selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 11) \$250 William R. Dowdle Scholarship, selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee;
- 12) Two \$2,500 Academic Opportunity Scholarships, selection by the DEF Scholarship Committee.

So there you are folks, \$18,850 in me funny, I mean, free money available to those students who meet the specified criteria for each of these scholarships/awards. The deadline for applications is Wednesday, April 7, 2010. Please see Counseling Office personnel for additional details.

D'Evelyn Disguise 9th Annual Thanksgiving Day Feast-i-val O' Fun

Once again, D'Evelyn's very own improvisational comedy troupe, D'Evelyn Disguise, is hosting a benefit show for the Tennyson Center for Abused Children. The show will take place in the DHS auditorium on Friday, Nov. 13 (*a week earlier than is on the school calendar*) at 7 p.m. The price of admission is only \$3, but larger donations are welcome. All proceeds from this performance will be donated directly to the Tennyson Center so that the kids can have a fun and memorable Thanksgiving Day. These are kids who have once lived in unimaginable circumstances, so please join us for an evening of joy and laughter. You will feel good knowing that you have helped brighten Thanksgiving Day for kids who need something for which to be thankful.

D'Evelyn Performing Arts

By Shari Zak, parent volunteer

"If no one ever took risks, Michelangelo would have painted the Sistine floor."-Neil Simon, playwright

The month of October was an active one for our Performing Arts students, beginning with the Jeffco Comedy Cup Challenge hosted by D'Evelyn Disguise on Oct. 3. Several area schools participated and provided an evening of great entertainment. If you missed it, there is another opportunity to experience our improv troupe – join us on Nov. 13 for the 9th Annual "Feast-i-val O' Fun".

Months of hard work and dedication culminated in several events for D'Evelyn marching band, including Regionals on Oct. 15. The band gave it their all, earning a score that was just 1.56 points short of qualifying for State. Good job, Jags! Thanks for putting your heart and soul into this season!

On Oct. 15 the senior high concert choir participated in the Jeffco Sing at Arvada High School, which is a very worthwhile way to engage, compete and learn alongside other vocalists and

choirs in the area.

On Oct. 22 the marching band hosted a cooperative taco buffet dinner with the intermediate and concert bands. The event was a great success and served as both a fun way for instrumental students to get to know one another better and promote the marching band, especially to younger students. Hopefully all interested musicians had a chance to talk to Mr. Taylor about his exciting plans for next year!

The instrumental and vocal concerts took place in October and were "standing room only" for every performance!

Congratulations to all performers, directors and stage crew on yet another successful school play, *Pygmalion*, which was performed this past weekend. It received rave reviews from all who attended!

Coming up in November is the DPA meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. in the Library. Agenda items include the DEF finance meeting report, planning for the December hot chocolate socials and volunteer coordination for the spring musical.

Getting to Know Mr. Beams

By Caroline Clode, Student Body President

Student Body President, Caroline Clode, interviewed Mr. Keith Beams last week for the *Jaguar Tracks*. Caroline talked to Mr. Beams about his experiences as both a teacher and a student of D'Evelyn. Mr. Beams teaches Spanish I, Spanish II, and 8th grade United States History. Additionally, Mr. Beams was the valedictorian of the first graduating class at D'Evelyn.

CC: Is teaching your passion?

Mr. Beams: My passion is learning. Teaching works out well also because it constantly involves learning.

CC: Have you always wanted to be a teacher? When and why did you decide to become a teacher? Why did you decide to teach Spanish and history?

Mr. Beams: When I was young I wanted to be a marine biologist, but that didn't work out because I was afraid of the ocean. Then I went to school to become an architect, but I did not like that there was limited freedom in that. I then took classes in history and continued my learning of Spanish and I liked that. I became a teacher because I could incorporate both history and Spanish.

CC: Why did you decide to teach at D'Evelyn, the high school you graduated from?

Mr. Beams: While I was teaching at a private school in Boulder County, I got a call about a job offer at D'Evelyn. I decided to take the job because it would allow me to get my teaching certificate and it would provide more opportunities in the long run.

CC: What is different at D'Evelyn now from what it used to be? What is the same about D'Evelyn?

Mr. Beams: When D'Evelyn started, it had a sense of 'underdog pride'. Since it was new, it had to prove itself in academics and athletics. This allowed for the students and faculty to be very proud of the school. D'Evelyn has lost that. However, the philosophy and curriculum has stayed the same.

CC: What is your favorite part about teaching? What is the most challenging part of teaching?

Mr. Beams: My favorite part is learning new things everyday. I also like forming the good relationships with students. The most challenging part is when doing my best to help students learn, it sometimes is not enough.

CC: What do you do when you are not teaching? Do you have any hobbies or favorite activities?

Mr. Beams: I am very involved in my local church. I'm also pursuing my masters in history at the University of Colorado - Boulder. I like taking advantage of the Coloradan outdoors by skiing, hiking, and backpacking. At home I like video games and Star Wars. I also love spending time with my wife and dog.



D'EVELYN EDUCATION FOUNDATION
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**No school - Nov. 23 – 27
 Happy Thanksgiving Day**

DATED MATERIAL

Upcoming Events

November 2009 and beyond

11/3	DEF Managers meeting	7:30 a.m.
11/9	Steering Committee meeting	5 p.m.
11/9	JAGS meeting	7 p.m.
11/10	Steering Committee candidate forum	
11/10	JRHS Boosters	6 p.m.
11/10	Accountability Committee meeting	7 p.m.
11/11	Parent Information Night	
11/12	Financial Aid Night	
11/13	D'Evelyn Improv	7 p.m.
11/17	DEF Board meeting	7 p.m.
11/18	DPA meeting	7 p.m.
11/23-24	Comp Day - no school	
11/25-27	Thanksgiving holiday – no school	
11/30	Steering Committee meeting	5 p.m.
12/1	DEF Managers meeting	7:30 a.m.

JAGUAR TRACKS

D'Evelyn Jr/Sr High School Contact Information

Main Office Number:	303-982-2600
Attendance Line:	303-982-5771
Bulletin Board:	303-982-5770

The Jaguar Tracks is funded by the D'Evelyn Education Foundation (<http://www.develyneducationfoundation.com/>) and is prepared and distributed through volunteer efforts. Extra copies are available in the main school office.

All submissions are due by the 20th of the prior month. Due to space limitations, not all information may be printed and may be edited. All submissions for publication must be sent only by e-mail to the following address: jaguartrax@yahoo.com. No hardcopy or handwritten articles will be accepted.

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Visit D'Evelyn's website for the most up-to-date information:
<http://sc.jeffco.k12.co.us/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectionid=188>