

LWA NEWSLETTER



VOL: 1

DECEMBER 2023



MISSION STATEMENT

LWA teaches and motivates students to seek, discover, embrace, and apply knowledge while exploring their personal, artistic, and academic talents in order to engage in life with a culturally respectful, civically responsible, and innovative entrepreneurial spirit for success in higher education and the careers of an increasingly global society.

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear LWA Families,

It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of 2023! Seems like just yesterday, the students were filling the hallways with their laughter on the first day of school, and now everyone is talking about their New Year's plans. As we head into the hustle of the holiday season, I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your continued support of our small and vibrant community and thank you for entrusting us with your children every day. We do not take this responsibility lightly and are honored to be part of your child's journey. On behalf of the LWA staff, I want to wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year. May you spend precious time with your loved ones, and may we all be grateful for the abundance of gifts in our lives. It is difficult perhaps to feel joy as our world is experiencing so much pain, but I think it is more important than ever to tap into the best parts of our humanity and connect with one another by truly listening and being fully present. I would like to end by sharing these words by Brené Brown: "We need to dispel the myth that empathy is 'walking in someone else's shoes.' Rather than walking in your shoes, I need to learn how to listen to the story you tell about what it's like in your shoes and believe you even when it doesn't match my experiences." May we all return to school in the new year with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to honoring one another's lived experiences. Thank you for allowing me to lead LWA into 2024; it is my privilege to do so.

Best,
Mr. Hank Williams

At Home with
the World



LOWER SCHOOL

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



For our December Student Spotlight, we bring you seven-year-old Priya Binns, a second grader who has been in LWA since kindergarten.

What is your favorite color?
My favorite color is red!

What do you like most about LWA?
I like to see everything at LWA! I like to see my friends at school. I like coming to LWA because it's so cool at school!

What do you like to do for fun?
At home I like to draw. I like to draw unicorns for my sister. I like to draw a ball for my brother.

What are you grateful for?
I am grateful for my mom and my sister. They help me all of the time!

CURRICULAR HIGHLIGHT

In order to get in the Halloween spirit, 3rd and 4th graders were tasked with writing spooky, creative Halloween stories. They explored the writing process of revising, editing, and rewriting as they swapped stories with their friends for peer editing and were so ecstatic with their final product. Of course, they were able to illustrate their stories as well! They were all so excited to share their stories at Lower School's weekly Community Meeting. -Ms. Kamil Lowe



SPECIAL EVENTS

Gobble, gobble! The Preschoolers performed holiday-themed songs for their Thanksgiving Song Festival. Displayed in the background were crafts that they worked on during the weeks leading up to their performance. The friends even made their own costumes! Videos were recorded of each child stating what they are thankful for. LWA is so thankful for our Preschool friends! -Ms. Lindsay Breslauer



MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



For our December Student Spotlight, we bring you 14-year-old Shiwen Wang, an eighth grader who transferred to LWA from China this year.

What are your hobbies? Listening to music. “Cruel Summer” by Taylor Swift is my favorite!

What is your favorite class, and why? I love P.E. because I can play badminton with my friends and Algebra because I can do some math exercises.

What are your plans for the future? I want to learn more in the future. I want to study how to make a company and get more money. I want to work in finance.

What are you grateful for?
Every teacher.

What advice do you have for younger students?
I think we should be quiet in the class and listen to teachers carefully.



CURRICULAR HIGHLIGHT

On November 17, our fifth-grade classroom buzzed with excitement as we hosted a Very Important Person Day (VIP). Each student brought in one family member to act as their VIP. The afternoon kicked off with heartwarming interviews, where students delved into the pasts of their VIPs with a set of thoughtful questions. From the place of birth to childhood nicknames, siblings, and favorite childhood memories, the interviews provided a glimpse into the rich histories of our students' families. After the 20-minute interview session, the classroom transformed into a space of shared stories and memories. Each student took the stage to introduce their VIP and shared fascinating insights gained from the interviews. Laughter echoed as cherished anecdotes and childhood tales were unveiled. The most touching moments came when students revealed their family members' favorite childhood hobbies and their cherished memories about them.

-Ms. Lauren Hill



SPECIAL EVENTS

Our students had a blast during the Middle School Friendsgiving Hangout, hosted by the amazing Shani Tillman and several other generous parent volunteers. Students played games, enjoyed snacks, and spent some quality time together outside of the classroom!





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



For our December Student Spotlight, we bring you 17-year-old Christopher Donovan Williams, a senior who transferred to LWA from Elmont Memorial last year.

What are your hobbies? Basketball and watching anime.

What is your favorite class, and why?

Basic Writing with Ms. R because of all the amazing conversations we have in class.

What are your plans for the future?

Graduate with a psychology degree and become a therapist to help others with their mental space.

What are you grateful for?

Nine college acceptances!

What advice do you have for younger students?

Don't fight the information and advice your teachers give you. Take it. It's for your own good.

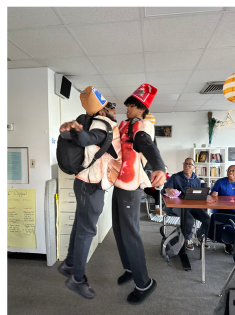
CURRICULAR HIGHLIGHT

As part of a personal essay writing unit in Basic Writing, students completed a Top Ten assignment. They each wrote about ten essential elements in their lives, such as sunsets, seafood, siblings, friendship, Friday night parties, Sunday afternoon sauce, and Mr. Williams' fist bumps. The students were then each assigned a Top Secret Top Ten partner. The pairs read each other's pieces and wrote one another a letter detailing their reactions. They wrote about the entries they found most moving, the commonalities they discovered between their own writing and that of their partner's, and offered kind and constructive feedback. The students delivered the letters to their partners during class, and everyone read them out loud, often exclaiming mid-sentence how sweet their classmates are to have written such lovely things! This was not only a meaningful writing exercise but also a beautiful bonding experience! -Ms. R



SPECIAL EVENTS

It's been a busy year so far at LWA, but two events we wanted to highlight are Spirit Week and the senior trip to Manhattan, during which the students visited a few colleges and watched the Columbia Lions women's basketball game!



Chris Ford & Chris Clark (Grade 12)



Seniors & Juniors

CROSS-DIVISIONAL EVENTS

CULTURAL HERITAGE DAY

LWA Cultural Heritage Day is a time to celebrate our school's diverse heritage, cultures, and traditions.

Encouraging our students' cultural awareness and appreciation of their heritage goes hand-in-hand with the school motto.

Celebrating our diversity and cultural heritage aligns with who we are and who we serve today to prepare us for a better tomorrow, a tomorrow when we all feel at home, at home with the world.

In honor of Cultural Heritage Day, every student wrote an "I Am From" poem, and the amazing Mr. McDaniel recorded students from every grade reading a line from their poem, resulting in a beautiful cultural mosaic of our LWA family. Please enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/DelC59Ki8ZU?feature=shared>

OUTSTANDING TIGER BREAKFAST & FRIDAY FORUM

Friday, November 17, was a very busy day at LWA, full of celebration, family, and love! The day began at 7 a.m. with our quarterly Outstanding Tiger Breakfast during which one student from every grade is honored for being Trustworthy, Innovative, Generous, Empathetic, and Respectful. A few hours later, the marvelous Mr. O'Keeffe hosted yet another amazing Friday Forum. This was the first one of the year with ACTS awards, during which we honor our students for their Academic, Community Service, Talent, and Sports skills! Some more highlights during Friday Forum included a reading of a whole-class "I Am From" poem by students in Ms. R's Basic Writing class. Next, the talented and charming Christian Ford sang a stunning rendition of "My Cherie Amour" and then transformed into a very different character while he and Lauren Mitchell performed an arresting snippet from the upcoming Upper School play *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry. We simply cannot wait for the full production, which will be held on April 12 & 13 at 7 p.m. Thank you, Mr. McDaniel, for all you do for our aspiring actors!

PARENT ASSOCIATION NEWS

Our LWA PA has been busy! We continue to support and promote our school, students and families with a variety of events and fundraisers. We are an evolving group of parent and teacher volunteers, collaborating every day to ensure that students and families experience and enjoy the benefits of our LWA community. Join us!

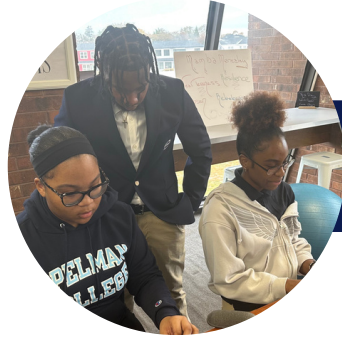


Guangxu Han (Grade 11)



Chris Ford (Grade 12)





COLLEGE CORNER

Almost every senior has completed the first round of applications, and many have already received acceptances! Some recent acceptances include University of Delaware, Pace, Adelphi, Wells, McKendree, SCAD, St. Ambrose, University at Buffalo, St. John's, Penn State, Saint Xavier, and Rutgers! Congratulations to our wonderful seniors!



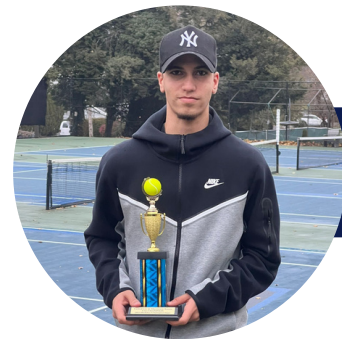
INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Monday, November 20, marked our second International Thanksgiving Luncheon, a beautiful event during which faculty served lunch to our international students, who gathered around a table to feast on traditional Thanksgiving foods. We each shared what we are thankful for, and so many of our students expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the inclusivity of LWA, the caring teachers and administrators, and especially Dr. Pagieva's tireless support of the international students. Thank you so much to Ms. Kim for putting together this beautiful event and making us all truly feel "at home with the world."



SPORTS

Congrats to Mr. Williams and the Boys Varsity basketball team on beating last year's champions Portledge at our opening game on November 20, marking an amazing start to the season! The final score was 71-54. Chris Williams (Grade 12) led the team with 21 points. Thank you to Coach Ramos and the LWA Cheer Team for putting on a great supporting performance!



KUDOS

We want to extend a hearty congratulations to our resident tennis star Ilay Haim (Grade 10). Ilay joined us from Israel earlier this year, and this past weekend, he won the Maximum Tennis 2023 Holiday Championship!

This year, the world celebrated Giving Tuesday on 11/28/2023. The day represents a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world. This year, the LWA community came together to show our strength and support for our beloved school by crushing our goal and raising over \$23,000.00!!! Every dollar raised will go toward helping support independent education and programming for our LWA Community. Thank you to all those who contributed toward making Giving Tuesday 2023 an unprecedented success! Interested in making a contribution? Visit the [LWA Giving Page](#) for more details. Thank you to our Director of Development, Nadia Kalyan, for her tireless efforts in ensuring the success of Giving Tuesday!



TIPS, TRIVIA, AND COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

TIPS

We wanted to share a few ways to connect with your family during this holiday season, so you all ring in the new year with cheer!

1. Bake Together

Bake cookies together or make gingerbread houses! Few things in life are better than a kitchen that smells like freshly baked sweets!

- Some recipes:
 - [Easy Cookies to Bake with the Kids](#)
 - <https://www.bonappetit.com/gallery/easy-cookie-recipes>
 - [Gingerbread House Kit](#)

2. Family Movie Night

Gather around the T.V. for a holiday movie night. Whether opting for a sentimental Hallmark movie or something a bit more action packed, even more important than the movie you watch will be the memories you make spilling popcorn on the couch and stealing each other's blankets. Maybe even build a fort out of those blankets, and have a slumber party on the living room floor!

3. Light Show

Visit a holiday lights tour, and let yourself be mesmerized.

- Some options:
 - <https://www.luminocityfestival.com/reserve-tickets>
 - <https://magicoflights.com/events/jonesbeach/>
 - <https://www.bbg.org/lightscap>

4. Make and Send Holiday Cards

- Some options:
 - [Cardsforhospitalizedkids](#)
 - <https://bluestarfam.org/veterans-day-card/>

5. Long Walk

Take a long walk together, and play a mini game en route seeing who can first spot whatever object you decide on, such as a red leaf, a bird, an icicle, etc.

6. Holiday Playlist

Create your own holiday playlist with everyone's favorite holiday songs. Make sure everyone has included their favorite songs!

7. Fancy Dinner

Get dressed up in your finest attire and have a super fancy candlelit dinner at home.

8. Photo Fun

Go through old photos together, relive memories, and share stories! Stories, after all, are all that we are. Use a service like [Snapfish](#) to make a few family collages!

TRIVIA

Can your child sing LWA's Alma Mater in its entirety without looking at the words? The first email we get with a video of your child singing the Alma Mater correctly will win LWA gear! Please email lwanewsletter@lawrencewoodmere.org

PLAY

DECEMBER COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

Take a picture with a tiger and email to lwanewsletter@lawrencewoodmere.org

Please be sure to indicate the name and grade of the student.

Best picture(s) will be featured in January's newsletter!

Faculty and staff are welcome to participate!



UPCOMING EVENTS IN DECEMBER



Happy Holidays!

December 2

LWA Winter Extravaganza
10:00 AM

December 5

Lower School Winter Concert
6:30PM

December 13

Faculty Holiday Show
1:30-3:00 PM

December 18-January 2

Winter Recess!
School resumes on Wednesday, January 3, 2024.

