Welcome to the first issue of “Hawk's Wings,” Lift For Life Academy's newsletter. The hawk has become the Academy's athletic teams' mascot; the newsletter name also embodies the aspirations of the Academy to help students soar in academic and athletic achievement. Since Lift For Life Academy was founded, we've shared the UPLIFT newsletter with Lift For Life Gym. But the two are separate non-profit organizations, and each of us has more than enough news to fill a newsletter on our own! If you are a past supporter of Lift For Life Gym, you have probably also received their UPLIFT newsletter recently.

It has been a while since our last newsletter, and there's a lot to report! In August we added an 11th grade, coming one year closer to being a full middle and high school. Over the summer, we built a new wing with four classrooms as well as guidance counseling offices; through the united efforts of donors, our contractor, Tim Delahanthy, our teachers and their families, we were able to start the school year with rooms carpeted, painted and ready (more or less) for the first day of school. We’re still raising funds to finish paying for the addition.

Our students have made us very proud this year – eight of our high school students maintained 4.0 grade point averages and were listed in the St. Louis Post Dispatch. Our middle school students again participated in the St. Louis Optimists speech writing competition. Our high school athletic teams bring a new level of school spirit to the Academy; we have three seasons of sports including track, football, boys' and girls' basketball, softball, soccer, volleyball cross country, tennis and baseball.

Inside you'll find short articles and photos to give you a taste of all the events, classes, outing experiences, collaborative efforts and educational opportunities happening at Lift For Life Academy. It's all designed to enrich the learning experiences of our students and broaden their horizons. I encourage you to see for yourself. Call me at 314-231-2337 and I'll give you a tour!

Marshall Cohen
Founder & Executive Director

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Students Learn From an Expert

There's no substitute for experience, as businessman Alyn Essman knows. An elite class of Academy high school students got the next best thing last spring; they were chosen to participate in a special business class taught by Mr. Essman. Principal Katrice Noble identified students who were interested in entrepreneurship and other business ideas. Mr. Essman taught business and economics basics and the concept of proprietorship versus corporation, how banking works as it applies to business, and gave students an overview of the many factors involved in owning and operating a business. The entire class culminated with the students creating their own business; they chose to create a banking corporation. Principal Noble said, “This class provided a wonderful opportunity for students to learn about the complexities of business.”
Kids for Kids
Musical Gift Strikes a Chord

Benjamin Schenberg knows all about Lift For Life Academy; after all, his dad David is a board member. Ben also knows about music and understands the importance of good music instruction.

At Lift For Life Academy, we have great music instruction, but we haven’t had instruments so that all the students who want to take music classes can do so. “I play guitar and clarinet (along with the violin and piano in the past) so I am very musically inclined and I want the students at Lift for Life Academy to have the same musical opportunities I’ve had in my life so far,” Ben noted. So, for his bar mitzvah project, Ben started a drive to collect musical instruments for Life For Life Academy (he also helped teach a computer class at LFLA - and he did it all while studying for his bar mitzvah!).

This is the second year the Academy has had a music program and virtually every kind of instrument is needed. So far, Ben has collected more than 18 trombones, clarinets, violins, acoustic and electric guitars, amplifiers and keyboards from a variety of individuals, organizations music stores and schools. He’s still looking for donations. You can learn more about Ben’s project and how to donate used musical instruments by going to www.tinyurl.com/LFLmusic.

Academy Holds “College Fair”

It’s never too early to think about the future. That’s the philosophy at Lift For Life Academy, where high school freshmen are already thinking about college. The 65 students in Ms. Chandra Palmer’s Freshman Seminar spent a month researching colleges and universities. Each student was responsible for learning about three institutions that offered degrees associated with the students’ areas of interest.

“We want to instill the idea of going to college into the students as early as possible in their high school careers,” noted Palmer. “Part of the purpose of the exercise is for the students to research the grade point averages and other qualities colleges are looking for in prospective students. I think the students’ recognition of colleges’ expectations will help these freshmen stay focused on maintaining high academic achievement for themselves.”

After thorough research of each campus, the students each picked one university on which to focus, gathering information about academics, campus life and the surrounding community in which the university is located. The project culminated in a “College Fair” in which all the students played the part of college recruiters, alongside the displays they created to promote their university.

LFLA Collaborations:

Lift For Life Academy extends a heartfelt “thank you” to the following community businesses, educational and religious institutions, and community charities that have partnered with us. You help our students to see they are citizens of a larger community; these collaborations benefit us all!

- AB-Inbev
- Clayton/Brentwood Optimist Club
- College Bound
- Gateway Homeless Shelter
- Girl Scouts
- Give Kids a Smile
- Heaven Born
- John Burroughs High School
- Junior Achievement
- Lens Crafters
- Logan Chiropractic College
- MasterCard
- National Churchill Museum - Fulton, Missouri
- Rawlings Baseball
- Pepsi Beverages Company
- Rebuilding Together-St. Louis
- Royal Gate Chrysler
- St. Louis Auto & Truck Repair
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- St. Louis University
- St. Stephen Protomartyr Church
- Schnucks
- Southeast Missouri State University
- Southside Lions
- Trinity Lutheran Church
- University of Missouri-St. Louis Nursing Department
- Washington University
- Washington University Campus Y

Teacher Kati Geoppo (left) accepts some of the dozens of art supplies brought to Lift For Life Academy by Rachel Krug, a 7th grade student at Ladue Middle School. Rachel used the items as decorations at her recent bat mitzvah and party, with the plan to donate the supplies to the Academy. The donation included sketch pads, pencils, crayons, markers, paints and brushes. Thank you, Rachel!
You Can See the Smiles!

No matter how interesting a class or how inspiring a teacher may be, if a student’s teeth hurt or if their vision is blurry, they aren’t learning at the level they should be. Margene Jerrolds, special programs director at Lift for Life Academy, recognized this problem and found a way to provide a group of Lift for Life Academy students with the services they needed.

Twice last school year, Jerrolds and staff took 60 Academy students for free dental treatment though Give Kids a Smile, a national non-profit organization sponsored by the American Dental Association. We were introduced to the program by Rabbi Carni Rose of B’nai Amoona Congregation. Their mission is to offer free dental care to underprivileged children. All participating dentists, hygienists, and specialists are volunteers. Give Kids a Smile was founded in St. Louis in 2002 and quickly spread throughout the United States; a national clinic day in February is held annually where more than a million children are cared for. The clinic in St. Louis took place at the Center for Advanced Dental Education at St. Louis University.

Most Lift for Life Academy students had never been to the dentist and many had often complained of toothaches. Our students received treatments including general cleaning, fillings, crowns, caps, and even root canals. Jerrolds estimates that more than $50,000 in dental care was provided.

Roughly 75 Lift for Life Academy students received a free pair of prescription glasses though a program called OneSight, a Luxottica Group Foundation dedicated to improving vision for those in need through outreach, research and education. In December, Jerrolds and teachers brought students to a clinic held at LensCrafters stores. Students’ eyes were professionally examined and tested for infection. They got to pick out frames, and within two hours walked out the door with their new prescription glasses. All expenses were covered by OneSight.

Spring Break College Tour

Over Spring break, the Academy’s College & Career Counselor, Mr. Etoya White, took 42 high school students on a college tour. The cost of the trip was offset by private donations and a vigorous snack fund-raising effort by the students. They visited several different colleges in Tennessee specifically concentrated near Nashville. Mr. White said, “We went to Nashville because they have a variety of schools—public, private, small, large and traditional all-black colleges, too.” Mr. White noted that this was a life-changing experience for the students. For some, it was the first time they had stayed multiple nights in a hotel. The trip helped students broaden their horizons beyond St. Louis.

Colleges visited were Belmont University, Lipscomb University, Vanderbilt University, Tennessee State University, Fisk University, Middle Tennessee State University and Austin Peay State University.

Rebuild-Refresh at LFLA

One recent Saturday, volunteers from Pepsi Beverage Company, Academy students and staff, and area contractors converged on Lift For Life Academy to haul rocks, grade and lay paths, install fencing, plant bushes, trees and other greenery, and convert the Academy’s empty lot into an outdoor classroom and garden. The project was spearheaded by Rebuilding Together—St. Louis, a non-profit organization that works to preserve affordable homeownership and revitalize communities. Businesses also involved with the project include Delahanty Construction, Mosby Building Arts and Timberline Landscaping. “We are so grateful to Rebuilding Together, Pepsi and all the community businesses that have made a commitment to helping us transform this space,” said Academy Principal Katrice Noble. “When our students have an opportunity to experience the outdoors and learn in nature, it engages them with all their senses and transforms them.”

Students Visit Site of Churchill Speech

Last Spring, LFLA students learned about Winston Churchill and the Cold War with a field trip to the National Churchill Museum at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. The college is where Churchill first spoke publicly in 1946 about the danger of the Soviet Union and its satellites as “an Iron Curtain.” The museum also introduced the students to the Cold War. The Museum was founded in 1969 to honor the life and legacy of Sir Winston Churchill, who was prime minister of England during World War II. It is housed within the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermaston, a 12th century church from the middle of London, redesigned by Sir Christopher Wren in 1677. The church was badly damaged during the bombing of London in 1940 and sat roofless for 25 years. In 1965, it was dismantled and shipped to Fulton, where it was reconstructed to house artifacts and displays to help describe the Cold War and the life of Winston Churchill.
Our Own Marshall Cohen Receives FOCUS Award

Marshall Cohen, Founder and Executive Director of both Lift For Life Gym and Lift For Life Academy, was honored in May by FOCUS St. Louis, with a “What’s Right with the Region” award for his work to better the St. Louis community. FOCUS St. Louis is a locally-based non-profit organization committed to creating regional solutions through community leadership. Nineteen other organizations and individuals were also honored.

Awards were given in five categories: “Creating Quality Educational Opportunities,” “Demonstrating Innovative Solutions,” “Fostering Regional Cooperation,” “Improving Racial Equality and “Social Justice” and “Promoting Stronger Communities.” Mr. Cohen was nominated by Academy Board President John Mann, and was honored in the category of “Creating Quality Educational Opportunities.”

Students and the Community

UMSL Nursing Day

Academy high school students interested in the medical field spent a day with University of Missouri-St. Louis nursing students. They learned about diseases that typically affect African Americans, including cancer, sickle cell anemia and HIV/AIDS. This event exposed Lift For Life Academy students to potential career opportunities.

Junior Achievement/Mastercard

About 25 volunteers, professionals from Mastercard presented Junior Achievement curriculum to Academy students in 6th through 8th grades. The students participated in hands-on activities teaching them more about economics and the business world.

Heaven Born

Lift For Life Academy students sewed more than 40 pillows for "Heaven Born," a non-profit project where booklets and handmade pillows are given to women who have suffered an early pregnancy loss.

Athlete Makes Tracks

It’s hard having a track team when your school doesn’t have a track on which to practice, but that hasn’t stopped the runners at Lift For Life Academy. Coach Adrian Simms has a dedicated team of runners, several of whom haven’t got a little thing like not having a track keep them from excelling. Take Charlotte Gaddie, for instance; Charlotte (Class of 2013) managed to not only score 93 points throughout the track season, she went on to qualify for the Missouri State track meet, held in May in Jefferson City. Her personal record for the 100-meter dash is 13.3 seconds.

"Charlotte is a true scholar-athlete," noted Coach Simms. "She takes academics very seriously and shows a lot of potential in track & field. She helped bring a high level of competitive spirit to the team."

The Academy’s high school track program began in Spring 2008. The team typically practices in the school parking lot with occasional practices held on a basketball court at a nearby YMCA.

Drivers’ Education at LFLA

“What are you looking at? Where is the car going to be in 10 seconds?” is a typical question Lift for Life Academy driving instructor, David Shearman, proposes to high school students as he courageously coaches them to drive. Last October, St. Louis Auto & Truck Repair generously donated a 2001 Saturn L2 to Lift for Life’s Drivers Education program. As a result, our students have had the opportunity to receive real behind-the-wheel experience driving the streets of St. Louis at no charge to them or their families.

This past school year, approximately 70 high school students were enrolled in Lift for Life Academy’s Drivers Education class. While enrolled in the class, more than 60 students received their State of Missouri instruction permit and eight students received their state driver’s license. When they’re not practicing behind the wheel, students are in the classroom with instructor Ryan Enata, learning the basic rules of the road, consequences of drunk driving and texting, and general maintenance requirements of an automobile.

“You can’t measure prevention – there’s no telling how many lives [drivers education] saves. Driving is a life skill you will have forever. It’s also very difficult to get a job without a license,” said Shearman.

Despite its obvious importance in promoting responsible driving, less than 10% of Missouri school districts offer Drivers Education in their high school curriculum; within St. Louis City, Lift for Life Academy is the only school.

Instructors Ryan Enata (far right) and Dave Shearman (second from right) and students with the drivers’ ed car, donated by St. Louis Auto & Truck Repair.

Leave a Legacy!

You can help assure that Lift For Life Academy has the resources to educate city student for years to come by remembering us in your will or making the Academy the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Learn more by calling us at 314-436-2337.

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Hawk's Wings
Culinaria Experience

Academy high school students in Career English, taught by Stephanie Blue and Karen Hurd, have a rare real-life opportunity, thanks to a new initiative made possible by a collaboration with Schnucks Markets. Students in the class work one hour a week at Schnuck's downtown Culinaria store, bagging groceries and doing over-stock assignments. They get the benefit of work experience as well as increasing their social and life skills. When Hurd and Blue spoke to Principal Katrice Noble, she encouraged the idea; they contacted Schnucks management, which was on board immediately. On August 23, the students began work. So far, this experience has boosted their self-esteem as well as their self-confidence. Student Deja Last Name? (pictured above at Culinaria) has even started working after school as a bagger at her local Schnucks store.

Anheuser-Busch InBev's Luiz Edmond Gives Students the Grand Tour

Lift for Life Academy high school students were invited down the street to have lunch with our distinguished neighbor, Anheuser-Busch InBev executive Luiz Edmond, this past spring. As part of high school curriculum, Academy high school students are taught about a variety of professions, including business management. Anheuser-Busch InBev has been a willing community partner, helping our students with recycling and environmental projects, and beautification at the Academy and on the AB-InBev campus. Mr. Edmond was happy to expand the relationship by giving students his insights on business practices at one of St. Louis' largest companies. The students then received a private tour of the famous Clydesdale stable. There they spoke with the staff who take care of these iconic creatures. They learned about the hard work and dedication that goes into caring for the Clydesdales. Throughout the entire day the Anheuser Busch family graciously welcomed and accommodated the Lift for Life Academy students and faculty. Our sincere thanks to everyone at Anheuser-Busch InBev!

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If you would like to make a comment or complaint concerning the Academy’s federal programs and/or use of federal dollars, please contact our administrative offices at 314-234-2257 or via mail at:
Federal Programs Coordinator, 1731 South Broadway, St. Louis, MO 63104

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Hawk’s Wings
Academy Fields First Baseball Team

This past spring, Lifet for Life Academy fielded its first high school boys' baseball team. A total of 23 boys played on the team, only two of whom had ever played baseball before. Thanks to generous donations from Rawlings and the St. Louis Cardinals, every player had his own glove to keep for the entire season. The team went 1-12 on the season with the lone victory coming off of a 13-12 game against Construction Career Center. Despite their record, Coach Ryan Enata sees growth and potential for his team. They will have more experience for next season. Good luck Hawk!

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Lift for Life Academy is an exciting place to volunteer! Please call Susan Kelter at 314-436-7103 or skelter@lifftforlife.org to learn more about current opportunities.

NOTE: We apologize for any mistakes or omissions. If you made a donation during this time period and your name is not listed, or if the information is incorrect, please contact the Development Office at 314-588-0007.
Academy Students Tour SEMO

Last winter, a busload of Lift for Life Academy high school students traveled to Southeast Missouri State University to participate in "Show Me Day." Upon arrival, we were met by SEMO admission recruiter, Carlye Carter and led to the student center for a presentation about SEMO's admissions policies, financial aid, and student life. Academy students then visited displays of the many degree programs offered at SEMO. Students spoke with professors, advisors, current students, and other faculty from areas such as engineering, education, biology, history, business, as well as the many outstanding pre-professional programs.

After the education fair, LFLA students were taken on student-led tours of the campus, which included important landmarks. Students also toured the dormitory options available at SEMO. One student tour guide was a St. Louis native, and she shared her personal experiences, what she was majoring in, and why she chose SEMO. After the tour, our students ate lunch in "The Towers" with other visitors and current SEMO students, and then walked to the football stadium to enjoy a 49-13 victory over rival Murray State University. It was an informative, eye-opening and thoroughly enjoyable day for all. Our sincere thanks to SEMO for their continuing support and sponsorship of Lift For Life Academy!

High-5 for Straight-A

Lift For Life Academy is very proud of our eight 9th and 10th grade students, who were nominated and recognized by the St. Louis Post Dispatch "A" Student Program: Martez Adams, Clintrice Frazier, Sydney Green, Keith Harris, Janicia Mitchell, Kymonie Nelson, Atiyah Reed, Lucas Yarrbrough.