



Juntos together

Winter/Spring 2011

The quarterly newsletter
of KIPP Academy Lynn

From Executive Director Josh Zoia

Dear Friends:

A **new** year often means a **new** beginning, and **new** resolutions, but for KIPP Academy Lynn, it simply means to renew the same resolution we make every year – we resolve to do what it takes to help our kids get to and through college. We do not make this commitment alone – we do it together with our families, our KIPPsters, our donors, our community partners, and our staff.

When I first walked into KIPP NY 12 years ago, what I loved was that everyone was dedicated to doing *whatever it takes* to serve our kids – beyond what our teachers do in our classrooms every day. For some that means giving an electric blanket, for some it means reading with one of our kids, for some it means donating food and providing gifts for our families and for some it means financial support. Our students have proven that they can accomplish great things when they are given what they need and deserve. There are amazing stories each and every day at KAL, and we have decided to dedicate this issue of *Juntos* to just some of the people who resolve with us to never give up, and give whatever they can, however they can, whenever they can - for our kids and families.

Old acquaintances will never be forgotten at KAL, and we hope to make many new ones in the exciting year ahead. On behalf of our staff, our KIPPsters, and our Board, we wish you all a Healthy and Happy New Year! Thank you for ALL you do.

With respect and appreciation,

Josh



Zoia at KAL's groundbreaking ceremony



Upcoming Events

Fridays, 1:30pm—2:30pm: Songfest
Open to everyone, no appointment necessary—come join us for song, dance, and inspiration!

January 13—15th: KIPP National Science Retreat, Palo Alto, CA
Representatives from KIPP schools around the country gather to share science curriculum ideas and best practices.

January 17th : Adult Education Programming Resumes
Including classes in English, Computer Literacy, Spanish, and Parent workshops.

January 19th: Celtics Game
A generous donor gave 26 tickets to the January 19th game against the Detroit Pistons. KIPPsters will have the chance to earn one of these tickets by *working hard & being nice*.

January 27th: Snow Tubing
An all-school snow tubing field trip is planned for January. KIPPsters who achieve a qualified average on their paycheck will earn participation in the trip.

February 19th—27th: Winter Break



Phone: 781.592.1937

Email: wgrace@kipplynn.org

Address:
25 Bessom Street, Lynn MA 01902

Website: www.kipplynn.org

Feature Article: *It Takes A Village*

It Takes a Village...

Many people may consider the phrase “It takes a village to raise a child” to be overused, but if so, it is most likely because it is true. The phrase, which originated as a proverb in the Nigerian Igbo culture many centuries ago, is equally as relevant in the 21st century, especially at KAL. The Igbo refer to their children as “Nwa ora” which means “child of the community.” Our KIPPsters, like the Igbo children, are also children of the community, being raised by their families, teachers, and community members. At KAL, our “village” is overflowing with people who contribute to raising our kids in so many unique ways. Our teachers are relentless in their commitment to our kids, both inside and outside the classroom. Our staff members do whatever it takes to keep KAL running behind the scenes, from keeping our finances in order to making sure the kids have medical attention and emotional support when they need it. Our families, donors and friends give of themselves in whatever ways they are able, and our committed leaders never say no when any child or adult needs them. KAL’s community is strong, and our kids are even stronger because of it. Here are just a few of the people in *our* village who are helping to raise *our* kids:

Spreading Holiday Cheer

Many people in the community rally together to give KAL families both the necessities and the “extras” they might not otherwise have around the holidays. The group of women led by Mary Abramson who call themselves the “**Basket Babes**” has, for four years and counting, assembled and delivered over 100 colorfully wrapped baskets for KAL families. The baskets, filled with everything from perfume to electric shavers to stuffed animals, bring smiles to many KIPPsters’ faces. Also a yearly presence at KAL during the holiday season is **Old Neighborhood Foods** of Lynn, owned and operated by Swampscott resident Tom Demakes. Old Neighborhood Foods donates a 10-pound box of meat for every family at KAL, to ensure they have a holiday dinner (and more) on their tables. Many returning KIPPsters who received the meat last year were looking forward to receiving the gift again this year from the person to whom they affectionately refer as “the meat man.” There is the generosity of friends such as **Elizabeth Harvey**, who, as a resident of Maine, understands the importance of a warm winter hats and scarves. When you come to KAL, you will see many KIPPsters adorned with colorful hats and scarves that have been beautifully hand knitted by Elizabeth. **John Wilder**, who leads **Community of Friends**, another Marblehead based nonprofit, also pitches in and donates over 100 stockings filled with gifts for our KIPPsters. Together, these community members ensure that every family receives something to brighten their holiday. We are truly grateful for these dear friends, who give of their hearts not only in December, but throughout the year.



KAL kids happily display their holiday baskets from the “Basket Babes”

Walking the Walk

When our community members make generous and much needed financial donations, they do so because they are truly committed to our kids and our mission. As part of their unwavering commitment to education and to KIPP, donors such as the **Lynch Foundation**, the **Van Otterloo Family Foundation**, the **Amelia Peabody Foundation**, and many individual donors continue to make unprecedented gifts to fund KAL’s expansion efforts that will enable KAL to serve more children & families. Our donors give so much more than money; they give commitment, optimism, and enthusiasm. They offer professional services in-kind, as did **Dede Grace**, mother of a KAL staff member, who was so inspired by watching *Waiting for Superman* that she donated hours of professional design services to KAL to create our annual holiday appeal, which will inspire other community members to give to KAL.

This list only scratches the surface of the rich network of people for whom we are grateful, people who do whatever it takes so that our kids have what they need to successfully *climb the mountain to and through college*.

Student Shout Out

Twelve year old Abigail Mariano is a quiet leader, full of compassion for others, and already bitten by the entrepreneurial bug. She knows she wants to help people when she grows up (as either a teacher or a neonatal doctor), and in the meantime she has been a strong leader at KAL. Abby has organized various fundraisers for charity, and she also founded the SAVVY ladies (which stands for Smart And Very Valuable Young ladies). She is vibrant, intelligent, and warm, and she truly exemplifies the values embraced by KIPP.

What do you like most about KIPP? I like that everyone helps each other out; sometimes people don't even know they are helping, but they are. When people do simple things like give someone a pencil in class, it might seem small but it really helps in the long run.

What do you want to be when you grow up? I am torn because I want to be a teacher but I also want to be in neo-natal care. So I have decided I will go to medical school and practice neo-natal medicine, and then eventually teach neo-natal care later in life. I think life is a very precious thing and I want to be part of something that matters. I want to be able to make a difference, and I would love the satisfaction of knowing that I could save a baby's life and seeing the smile on their parents' faces to know their baby is still alive.

How did the SAVVY Ladies start? I started SAVVY Ladies when I realized that there are needs in our community that girls could help out with. I wanted to give girls a way to see that they can actually help someone else. We meet every Thursday. We've been reading stories together and relating them to our lives. We also did a used cell phone drive and a yard sale, and we're giving the money we raised to breast cancer awareness and to HAWC because we want to help women.

Is there a teacher who has made a difference for you at KIPP? Ms. Macari taught me it was OK to stand up for what I believe in. In my case it was leadership. In 5th grade, I wasn't a great leader. When I was in 6th grade, I started helping a friend get her stuff done after she was out a lot. Some people teased me, so I began to second guess myself. Then Ms. Macari talked to me about helping people and I realized that I can help people in whatever ways I want and it works—it doesn't matter what other people think. I was always told that by my mom but in this case, I was able to actually do it.

Abigail Mariano

NAME & GRADE

Abigail Mariano,
7th Grade

HOMEROOM

Virginia Tech

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Honor Roll or Principal's List every semester since she started at KAL

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

SAVVY Ladies, Drama, Irish Step Dancing, Floetry, Elves of Change, Swimming.

FAMILY

Parents Angelo and Amy, and two brothers—AJ (age 10, will come to KAL in 2011), and Adam (age 8). Also has a family Schnauzer named Bella, and a parrot Zorba.



Event Recap

Groundbreaking Ceremony: On November 15, more than 200 friends, donors, board members, KIPPsters, and teachers gathered at 90 High Rock Street for an official groundbreaking ceremony for the new Middle and High School campus, set to open in fall 2012. Speakers included Mayor Judith Kennedy, Executive Director Josh Zoia, KAL parent Rose Egbuiwe, and student Amie Mendoza.

5th Grade Field Trip: On December 14, KAL 5th graders visited the Museum of Science. They represented KAL with pride, and received high praise from the museum staff: "Seldom have we experienced a group as disciplined, well-behaved, and respectful as yours. Please share my big *THANK YOU* to the students, teachers & chaperones for setting such a positive example."



KAL Board Chair Thomas Fredell, Josh Zoia, Lynn Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy, and Lynn Police Chief Kevin Koppinger officially break ground.

Jennifer Startek



Ms. Startek with some of her Recorder students

NAME: Jennifer Startek

TITLE: 7th Grade Science Teacher

HOMETOWN: Toronto

YEARS AT KAL: 4

ELECTIVES SHE LEADS: Recorder, Karaoke

Teacher Shout Out

Jennifer Startek has been teaching at KAL since 2006. You can tell that she is herself a lifetime learner of science, and her genuine interest in using science to explain the world around us is contagious. She shares this enthusiasm with her students, with literally a world of experience to draw upon. Before coming to teach at KAL, Startek spent seven years studying and teaching in Puerto Rico, first as part of her graduate Biology program, and later as a middle school teacher at the Southwestern Educational Society. She sees an opportunity to infuse science into the classroom, and she seizes it. In 2005, she was part of a small group of teachers who founded a group called WeatherRATS (Weather Research and Tracking Systems), funded by the National Science Foundation and designed to promote the study of meteorology in classrooms from Puerto Rico to Oklahoma (the weather station at KAL was funded by this program.) She is also a leader within KIPP, having started the 7th grade science fair at KAL, which has sent two finalists to the regional and state competitions in the past two years. She envisions opening up the science fair to other public schools in Lynn in the future. Equal parts no-nonsense and dry wit, Startek uses her own enthusiasm for science to push the boundaries of how it is taught in schools and beyond.

What do you like about teaching science?

I love that it helps kids explain the world around them. If you ask my seventh graders why you're cold when you get out of the shower (evaporation) or why frost forms on the window instead of dew (deposition), or why oil floats on water (differences in solubility and density), they can explain all these things to you. I love seeing that "aha" moment, when they realize the scientific reason behind what happens in their everyday environment.

What do you like about KIPP? What has inspired you to stay here?

When I first came here, I was blown away by the fact that we spend 58 minutes out of every class hour actually *teaching*. That is pretty rare, in any school environment. As soon as I saw the effect that had on the kids' ability to learn, and saw the variety of ways in which we connect with our kids, I was hooked; I knew this was where I belonged.

How do you reach the kids who think they're not good at science?

I try to set them up for success from day one. The first six weeks of the year are spent entirely on teaching the kids to use every tool in the lab. That way, they become so comfortable and fluent in the lab that it becomes like second nature to them. There are always going to be the kids who really "light up" when they learn about science, like one of my students who memorized the periodic table ahead of time because she heard me say they'd have to do it eventually. With the kids who are unsure of themselves, I try to take a "wait and see" attitude. It's fun to watch them come around and realize they have both the vocabulary and the tools to have an informed scientific discussion, and that they can actually enjoy it.

Event Recap (*continued*)

7th Grade Field Trip: On December 3rd, the 7th grade visited the Turboshaft/Turboprop Division of General Electric in Lynn, which builds both military and civilian helicopter engines. KAL donor and volunteer Ron Hutter of GE gave a presentation on how engines work, and students learned about GE's relationships with the military and with local universities such as Northeastern. Students also met with military officials, had the opportunity to ask questions, and enjoyed a tour of the aviation museum.

International Economic Summit: On December 20, a small group of KIPPsters were part of a group of nearly 400 high school students who participated in a day-long economic policy simulation hosted by Harvard University. As part of the simulation, students received hands-on experience at negotiating trade alliances, presenting economic proposals, and developing economic policy. KAL's participation in the event was spearheaded by KAL volunteers John Kane and Kelly Rigby, who also teach an economics elective at KAL. Volunteer Gerry Michaud also helped with the event.

Donor Shout Out

Max Pastan has a gentle poise about him, and a maturity well beyond his thirteen years. He doesn't know what he wants to be when he grows up, but he knows he wants to teach his own kids to think of others before themselves, something he says his parents have taught him. In an act of generosity that shows he truly "walks the walk," Max, a 7th grader at Cohen Hillel Academy in Marblehead, donated all of the proceeds from his Bar Mitzvah (more than twelve thousand dollars) to KIPP. On this occasion of his Bar Mitzvah, a rite of passage into adulthood, Max thought about what kind of adult he wants to become. Already he has affected the lives of so many kids his age (in addition to his donation, he also leads an elective teaching KIPPsters how to yo-yo). If this act of kindness is any indication, Max will go far. And he has only just begun.

What does becoming a Bar Mitzvah mean to you? The word "Mitzvah" means "good deed" in Hebrew, so giving back was really important to me. The portion I read out loud during my ceremony was about the Tower of Babel, and how people became selfish in their quest to build a tower that reached the heavens. My interpretation of the story is that those who choose to put others before themselves can truly reach God and make him proud. I can relate to the message in this story because my parents have taught me to always give back and think about others before myself. It's about doing something good for others because you *want* to, not because you *have* to.

What made you decide to give away all of the money you received? I have everything I need. I am fortunate and blessed to have the family I have, and a school that gives me a solid education. Those are truly the best gifts of all. Although every person is equal in value to everyone else, the world isn't fair; God didn't create a world where we all have the same advantages as others. I want every kid to have these gifts that I have. Plus, I thought, "what is a 13-year old kid going to do with all that money?" If you don't have a legitimate use for it, then give it to someone who really needs it.

Why did you pick KIPP? I just feel it is so important that every kid should get a shot in life. Even before I decided to donate my Bar Mitzvah gift money, I picked KIPP as my Mitzvah community service project. I came to KIPP every other week for the spring term and taught a yo-yo elective to 5th graders. I loved it—even though my official Bar Mitzvah project is complete, I plan on coming back to do it again this spring.

It's pretty unusual for a 13-year-old to donate this much money. How did people react? What did your friends think? Usually in Temple, people don't clap because it's disrespectful. But when I gave my speech about KIPP, everyone clapped because they respected what I was doing so much. Some of them didn't even know about KIPP at all, so it was an opportunity to educate people about why it's so important to me. My friends thought it was impressive that I decided to donate all of my Bar Mitzvah money. No one else I know has done this, but a lot of my friends haven't completed their Bar Mitzvahs yet. Maybe someone will see what I did and decide to do something similar.

Max Pastan



NAME: Max Pastan

HOMETOWN: Marblehead, MA

AGE: 13

GRADE:
7th grade at Cohen Hillel Academy

FAMILY
Parents Phil and Christina, younger sister Madeline, and dog Manny (after Manny Ramirez)

HOBBIES
Yo-yo-ing, football, baseball, tennis, golf, and sailing

Inspired by Max's decision to go above and beyond to help our KIPPsters? To donate in Max's name, or in honor of someone you know who goes above and beyond to help kids, visit www.kipplynn.org/donate.



KIPP Academy Lynn
25 Bessom Street
Lynn, MA 01902



KIPP Academy Lynn • 25 Bessom Street • Lynn, MA 01902 • www.kipplynn.org



NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
MAILED FROM ZIP 01902
PERMIT NO. 89