The Six Million Dollar Kids as nicknamed by local legend Mr. Alvin Brooks at graduation are on their way, ready to spread their wings and broaden their horizons beyond the walls of University Academy. Who are these Six Million Dollar Kids? They are the 38 seniors who graduated from UA as our Class of 2016—who together earned more than $6 million in total scholarships.

In addition to their collective scholarship amount record, they boast the highest average ACT score of any UA graduating class, a record 53 percent admitted into Top 150 Universities and Liberal Arts Colleges, and the school’s first Ivy League acceptance. And all but one of these graduates have been learning and growing at UA since sixth grade.

This impressive group of students celebrated their graduation on May 20 in the UA gymnasium. With family and friends looking on, the Class of 2016 was recognized for its achievements and given diplomas having successfully completed the requirements for graduation. Class valedictorian Jazmyne Smith, who will be attending the Ivy League University of Pennsylvania this fall, gave some remarks, and salutatorian Malon Lee was also honored.

Former Kansas City councilman Alvin Brooks was this year’s guest speaker. Brooks, the 2016 recipient of the Harry S. Truman Public Service Award, entertained the crowd with stories and departed wisdom upon the graduates.

This fall the Six Million Dollar Kids will be spread out in 23 different universities across the country, with one entering the U.S. Air Force. The UA community looks forward to seeing these students live out our mission by succeeding in institutions of higher education and becoming leaders in society. And as they do this, the Class of 2016 will undoubtedly show their value can be measured in much more than just dollars.
Families and Friends,

The 2015-16 school year was historic in so many ways for University Academy. We saw excellent student achievement, excellent teaching, excellent student activities and excellent parent support.

Starting with the Upper School, I want to celebrate our Class of 2016, which graduated 38 seniors. Those students earned a record $6 million in total scholarships! Among those seniors, Jazmyne Smith was accepted to the University of Pennsylvania, making her the first UA graduate to be accepted to an Ivy League school. We anticipate more to follow. Finally, early results from this spring’s end-of-course exams show UA among the very best in the state.

The Middle School had a truly excellent year in extracurricular programs. The boys and girls basketball and track teams were among the elite in the metro area. The debate team ended a wonderful year after being ranked as high as 8th in the nation! A number of middle school students also participated in our robotics team, which had a strong fifth place showing out of more than 35 teams at the regional event. On top of that, there were no retentions in sixth or eighth grade this year.

The Lower School welcomed in a new era under the leadership of Ms. Meyer. We saw outstanding student achievement across the board on internal benchmark exams and state tests, as shown by early results. The Lower School also held a number of fun family nights, which were special because it provided an opportunity for staff and families to come together as a community and just celebrate each other’s company and achievements.

Also, going on throughout the past year was a potential preschool feasibility study that the board of directors asked me to complete. We learned that approximately 70 percent of UA kindergarteners have historically attended preschool prior to enrolling in kindergarten, and those who have preschool experience tend to perform better on entrance exams and during the actual school year. We studied whether it would make sense to expand to preschool to service more students coming into kindergarten at UA. Recent legislation helped clear some hurdles regarding the way the lottery would work, however there is still no universal funding mechanism for ongoing preschool costs. We decided to move forward by doing targeted intervention with students in need of additional help during the summer prior to kindergarten, and we are strongly considering a pilot preschool class of no more than 20 students during the 2017-18 school year. We will measure the results of these two efforts and build a plan for the future.

In athletic news, the rumors of a new athletic field are true. See Mr. Gresham’s story on page 15 for the exciting details. We will have some construction challenges in July and early fall, but we are very excited for the final result, which will be a state-of-the-art field for our students to use and enjoy.

Finally, there are two major points of emphasis regarding student behavior that we want to further address in 2016-17. First, we must enforce behavior expectations on the bus rides to and from school. Second, we must continue to stress the importance of arriving at school on time in the mornings. Despite major improvements seen from many families this year, it is important that we continue to address chronic tardiness. The new policies are on page 12-13 of this newsletter and will be included in the 2016-17 Student-Parent Handbook.

Sincerely,

Tony Kline
Superintendent
Staff Highlight

MR. LEONARD

Brad Leonard has been an assistant principal for grade 3-5 of UA for two years. While his eye is on the prize, that UA students graduate ready for college, his approach with students shows how much he truly cares about them. Mr. Leonard often stops in the office before leaving, trying to connect and get to the root of the behavior that’s inhibiting their learning.

One of Mr. Leonard’s favorite quotes, by Olof Ludwig, fits him to a T: “The mark of an immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of the mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one.” Accordingly, the common thread through Mr. Leonard’s background, education and experience is his dedication to urban education and his desire to make a difference in the lives of all of his students and their families without public recognition.

After growing up in the rural mountains of Virginia, Mr. Leonard searched for an urban area in which educational reform was a top priority. This research quickly led him to Boston, where school and community leaders work together to determine the best methods of reaching all students, regardless of the size of their urban population. After working as a student teacher in Boston, he moved to the Kansas City area and continued to prioritize working with students from diverse backgrounds.

While working in the Lee’s Summit School District, Mr. Leonard integrated previous learning experiences into a supportive academic community. He was able to learn and grow from an experienced and caring community while working toward his master’s degree at the University of Kansas.

In 2012, Mr. Leonard joined the UA staff as a teacher, and two years later he took on his current role as assistant principal. He will soon earn a new title of Dr. Leonard, as he is currently working toward his doctorate in educational policy.

Outside of work, Mr. Leonard is an avid Chicago Cubs fan, thanks to his father. However, he did cheer for the Royals during their recent World Series runs. He also enjoys running, reading and spending time in the sun.

Outside of work, Mr. Leonard is an avid Chicago Cubs fan, thanks to his father. However, he did cheer for the Royals during their recent World Series runs. He also enjoys running, reading and spending time in the sun.

JEAN MEYER

Lower School

a note from the principal

The Lower School has experienced a great year of growth. Achievement levels for kindergarten through second grade were phenomenal in both math and ELA. The first benchmark assessment data for math showed kindergarten, first and second grades with average scores of 93, 88, and 90 percent respectively.

This is the first year we have had a subject specialist model in fifth grade, which included a science teacher. Mrs. Albright, dedicated solely to fifth grade, is happy to share that the fifth graders had an overall increase of 14 percent compared to last year’s science scores. We look forward to even greater increases in the years to come as we move toward subject specialist models in third and fourth grades next year, as well.

We hosted a variety of grade level showcases and parent/community events that have been well received throughout this past school year. Our first ever Poetry Café was a tremendous hit, with more than 300 people in attendance. Teachers are planning to integrate poetry units into their classrooms to coincide with this event next year.

WELCOME ABOARD!

Please help us welcome aboard our new teachers for next year:

KAITLIN MAYER, RYLIE HANSON and EMILY COOK.

STACY GRAFF

Middle School

a note from the principal

Discipline referral numbers stayed steady from last year, maintaining the big drop from 2014-15. Students are taking more responsibility for their actions. We implemented the BIST philosophy last year and we will continue to develop a stronger accountability system that focuses on protecting and educating students rather than punishing them. Our data shows a 60 percent drop in suspensions from the 2014-15 school year. This is a direct reflection of the relationships we are focusing on building with students and how dedicated our IAMS staff is to ensuring students learn socially as well as academically. This type of growth will help our students become leaders in society.

Looking ahead to the 2016-17 school year, we encourage all parents to sign into PowerSchool at least once a week to check grades and verify attendance records for their students. Next year we are moving to standards-based grading, which is similar to what you see on an early elementary report card. We will provide more information about this for parents toward the end of the summer. We hope to host some parent nights to highlight the standards-based grading and different content areas. This will give parents a better understanding of what their child is learning and allow them to see student work. Together we can make a big difference.

In conclusion, students at IAMS had an outstanding year, and we are already planning for another excellent year ahead. Our expectations will only go up since we know our students’ capabilities. We want to guide them to be the best they can possibly be and provide the necessary skills for them to continue their success in college and beyond.

DOMINIC GREENLEE

My name is Dominic Greenlee. I’m from St. Louis, Missouri, where I attended Papinau High School. I recently graduated from Truman State University with my Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise Science, along with a minor in Health Studies. I enjoy football at Truman State University as a defensive end and defensive back. I look forward to teaching middle school mathematics at University Academy.
percent of graduates were admitted into such schools! Arts Colleges as rated by U. S. News & World Report. Ultimately, 53 graduates gaining admission into Top 150 Universities and Liberal The Class of 2016 surpassed the board goal of 50 percent of prestigious school—Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. Of course, the Upper School is very proud of Jazmyne Smith, average composite ACT score of 21.34. The Upper School was recognized by U. S. News & World Report as a high achieving school for our students’ achievements. The Class of 2016, which had 38 students, earned more than $6 million in scholarships, with 11 out of 21 senior athletes receiving offers to play at the college level. This breaks the high bar of $3.02 million previously set by the 37 students in the Class of 2015. Additionally, the Class of 2016 achieved an average composite ACT score of 21.34. Of course, the Upper School is very proud of Jazmyne Smith, a native of southern California. Mr. Persley earned his bachelor’s degree in statistics at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He then was selected as a Teach For America corps member and joined the Upper School to teach mathematics. In addition to Geometry, Mr. Persley has taught Algebra I, College Algebra, Precalculus and Coding. Beginning this fall, his teaching load will expand to include Advanced Placement Statistics. Last spring Mr. Persley won a grant, in a competition organized by Teach for America, which made it possible for him to take his coding students to a Hack-A-Thon event held at North Carolina State University. While his students did well—many won prizes including drones, tablets, and other gadgets—Mr. Persley felt they could do even better and has already started planning how to make that happen.

The Upper School is proud to recognize Mr. Persley as a staff member to be celebrated. Mya Dixon recently performed well at the Business Plan Competition sponsored by Youth Entrepreneurs (YE). YE is a nonprofit organization that teaches business and entrepreneurial education to 41 high schools across Kansas and Missouri. The organization’s mission is to provide students with business and entrepreneurial education and experiences to help them prosper and become contributing members of society. The capstone of the YE program is the Business Plan Competition, where students share their business ideas, practice presentation skills and win scholarships and capital grants. Mya won third place in this competition, which earned her a $500 prize. She also had the “best pitch” in the trade board competition, which was a $50 award. Congratulations to Mya, who did an outstanding job representing UA to the Kansas City community.
Middle and Upper School students at University Academy showcased their musical talents at spring concerts in May. The choir and band/orchestra concerts were held in the Helzberg Theater for the Performing Arts. Three UA teachers worked together to present these shows for the UA community.

The band and orchestra concert was held on May 10. Mrs. Kate Miller directed the Middle School beginning band, which was comprised entirely of students learning to play instruments for the very first time. Mrs. Miller, who teaches Lower School music in addition to beginning band, was pleased with their progress. “From not being able to play an instrument at the beginning of the year to playing sheet music on their instruments, it showed a big commitment to their individual learning and growth,” she said.

All other band and orchestra ensembles were directed by Mr. Evan Schroeder. His students played familiar songs such as “Lean on Me,” “Amazing Grace,” and “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough.” Soloists included Jamil Johnson, Jayden Johnson, Aniah Kemp, Kyresha Haggins, Christen Hill and Jordan Sanders.

On May 12, the theater hosted a vocal music concert under the direction of Ms. Amanda Adreani. Ms. Adreani, in her first year at UA, directed all Middle and Upper School choir groups. A highlight from this concert was the opening number, “Seasons of Love” from the popular Broadway musical “Rent.” All of the choirs joined together to perform this song.

Middle and Upper School choral soloists included Nakylah Bailey, Ta’Lea Wilson, Vyan Willard, Kiara Bilberry, Tyra Collier, Tyoni Williams, Briana Woodard, Jordan Herbin and Timiah Ford.

Another feature was the “mash-up” performances high school students presented after “mashing” together two different songs. Ms. Adreani had challenged her students to come up with mash-up songs and choreography, and the results were showcased at the concert. “They brought the house down,” said Ms. Adreani. “Their energy was infectious.”

One mash-up combined the music of Justin Bieber and Ellie Goulding, and the other brought together songs from Whitney Houston and Walk the Moon. Ms. Adreani added “It is such a joy when it is the day of the concert, and I get to see my students perform on stage after all of the hard work and rehearsing we put in during class.” She said she was especially pleased with the degree of professionalism she saw on stage.

In the 2016-17 school year, Ms. Adreani plans to have her choir students compete in district festivals, which will be a new venture for them.

All three music teachers expressed their gratitude to students, families and the entire UA community for their continued support of the music program.
As a first-generation and low-income student, I had no idea how I would make it to and through college. Many of the University Academy faculty and teachers were very helpful in encouraging me to do my best work in school and inspired me to further my education. This May, I will earn my B.A. in Medical Anthropology with a double minor in Sociology and Criminal Justice Policy. I currently work as an office staff assistant and tutor coordinator for the Creighton University TRIO Upward Bound Programs, and I am a Behavioral Health Specialist Intern for the Children’s Respite Care Center (CRCC) in Omaha, NE. Following graduation and through the summer, I will continue my work as a full-time behavioral health specialist for CRCC.

The past years in undergrad have been eventful. My involvement at UA encouraged me to stay involved in college. I have served as the treasurer and president of the Creighton University African American Student Association, the parliamentarian and president of the university Association of Multicultural Greek Organization, and the student representative of the Black Studies Department. I was initiated in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. in April 2013, where I have served as the treasurer, vice-president, and now, the current president of the local Omaha Collegiate chapter – Gamma Xi.

UA always taught me to be a leader in my life, whether in class or in the community, and I have carried that with me throughout my undergrad experience. Because of that consistent desire to be a great leader, I was nominee and recipient of the Class of 2016 Rev. N. Thomas Schloemer, S.J. Outstanding Leadership Award, as well as the 2016 recipient of Creighton University’s Office of Multicultural Affairs Volunteer of the Year award.

In the fall, I will begin my Masters of Social Work Program at Barry University located in Miami Shores, Florida. My ultimate goal is to be a federal probation officer, while establishing a rehabilitation and second chance foundation for felons re-entering society after incarceration.
NEW POLICIES

UA Introduces New Policies in Effect 2016-2017

EACH YEAR, UA REVIEWS PERFORMANCE DATA AND ITS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN AN EFFORT TO CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE. THE 2016-17 SCHOOL YEAR WILL FEATURE TWO SIGNIFICANT RULES CHANGES AND WE WANT TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE HAS A CHANCE TO REVIEW THESE POLICIES BEFORE THE SCHOOL YEAR STARTS.

1. We are adding a residency check into our Excessive Tardies policy. We have found over the past few years that often when a student is repeatedly late to school, it is because they are being driven in from out of district.

TARDY/LATE ARRIVAL POLICY
Students who arrive to school after 7:30 a.m. will be marked tardy. Students who accumulate ten (10) tardy infractions within a quarter will not be allowed to participate in various school functions including, but not limited to, class celebrations, assemblies, field trips, Gryphon time, etc. This will continue for every two (2) accumulated tardy infractions after the initial ten (10).

University Academy will adhere to the following steps with regard to excessive student late arrivals:

TARDIES/LATE ARRIVALS AND/OR EARLY PICKUPS within a semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>CONSEQUENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three (3)</td>
<td>Phone call to parent/guardians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five (5)</td>
<td>Letter sent via email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven (7)</td>
<td>Conference with school administration and possible referral to the Department of Social Services. (Does not apply to medically-documented tardies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten (10)</td>
<td>Student referred to school social worker who will contact the parent/guardian via phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelve (12)</td>
<td>Referred to SART (Student Attendance Response Team). Examination of these absences occurs on a case-by-case basis. Residence will be reviewed at this time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteen (15)</td>
<td>Citation from the Kansas City Police Department* will be issued per the Compulsory School Attendance Ordinance (505-243) and/or possible referral to the Department of Social Services. (Does not apply to medically-documented tardies)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Citations can also be issued for accumulated tardies to different class periods (Middle and Upper Schools).

2. In an effort to curb chronic misbehavior on the bus to and from school, we are revising both our policies and procedures. From a procedures standpoint, we are going to put the elementary students on the bus last at the end of the day, reducing their seat time by about 20 minutes. We feel this may help with some of the restlessness that comes from waiting on the bus too long at a younger age.

From a policy standpoint, we are going to be much more strict with repeat violators of our behavior expectations on the bus. Every student deserves to ride the bus in peace if he or she chooses to do so. Therefore, students who are acting inappropriately will have more severe consequences than in years past.

CLASS I BUS OFFENSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>OFFENSE #</th>
<th>K-1</th>
<th>2-5</th>
<th>MIDDLE SCHOOL</th>
<th>UPPER SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Offense</td>
<td>Warning</td>
<td>Warning</td>
<td>Warning</td>
<td>Warning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Offense</td>
<td>5 day bus suspension</td>
<td>10 day bus suspension</td>
<td>30 day bus suspension</td>
<td>30 day bus suspension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Offense</td>
<td>10 day bus suspension</td>
<td>Remainder of year bus suspension</td>
<td>Remainder of year bus suspension</td>
<td>Remainder of year bus suspension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Offense</td>
<td>30 day bus suspension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Offense</td>
<td>Remainder of year bus suspension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLASS II BUS OFFENSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>OFFENSE #</th>
<th>K-1</th>
<th>2-5</th>
<th>MIDDLE SCHOOL</th>
<th>UPPER SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Offense</td>
<td>5 day bus suspension</td>
<td>10 day bus suspension</td>
<td>30 day bus suspension</td>
<td>Reminder of year bus suspension, including Summer School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Offense</td>
<td>10 day bus suspension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reminder of year bus suspension, including Summer School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Offense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reminder of year bus suspension, including Summer School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Disobeying bus driver rules
• Not staying in seat while bus is in motion: failure to listen to bus driver warning
• Cursing or being excessively loud: failure to listen to driver warning
• Being rude to bus driver or other students
• Listening on the bus
• Fighting/horseplay while on the bus
• Throwing object on the bus or out of the windows
• Possessing weapons, dangerous materials, drugs
• Inappropriate use of personal technology
• Bullying/threatening other students
• Stealing
• Vandalism
• Sexual misconduct
• Dangerous behavior
GRYPHON ATHLETIC HONORS

TRACK TEAM STRONG SHOWING AT STATE
The girls track 4x200 team of Malon Lee, Aliyah Hunter, Charisma Davis, and Jurnie Scott took 2nd Place at the State Track Meet in Jefferson City this season. Jurnie Scott took 5th and Malon Lee took 7th in the open 100 meter. The boys 4x100 and the girls 4x100 also qualified for state finals.

ALL-DISTRICT
Congratulations to Will Powell, Mike Davis, Che Williams, and Frenklyn Piggie for being named All-District!

ACADEMIC ALL-STATE
Congratulations to Frenklyn Piggie, Che Williams and William Powell for being named Academic All-State!

CROSSROADS ALL CONFERENCE
Congratulations to Mike Davis, Will Powell, and Frenklyn Piggie for being named Crossroads All Conference Baseball. Mike was 1st team, Will was 2nd team and Frenklyn was named Honorable Mention. Great day to be a Gryphon!!!

A Note from Mr. Gresham

University Academy is in the beginning stages of building a sports complex that will be located just to the east of the school campus. This complex will allow the Gryphons to host home football contests rather than using Center High School’s stadium for home games. The complex will be used for numerous athletic events and activities throughout the year, as well as serving as a resource for general P.E. classes. The field will be a synthetic turf, so it will be usable regardless of the weather.

Head football coach Ryan Heffley said, “I can’t state how excited I am for our players and our school. We will have the nicest facilities in the KC metro area. Being able to play games at home in a brand new facility is going to build real school spirit!”

Construction on the field will begin in June, and we are hoping for an October completion date. The two images shown highlight the field surface and the stadium that will surround the field. It’s a great day to be a Gryphon!

1. David Robinson signed a letter of intent to play football at Missouri Valley.
2. Mike Davis signed to play baseball at Pratt Community College.
3. Monta Porter signed a letter of intent to play football at Missouri Valley.
4. Ashli Hunter signed with Illinois Wesleyan to play basketball.
5. Charisma Davis signed with Avila to run track.
6. Malon Lee signed with Missouri Valley to run track.

Signing Day!
We Did It!

1,000!

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US SURPASS 1,000 LIKES ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE! VISIT US AT WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/UNIVERSITYACADEMY2014 TO READ ABOUT GREAT THINGS OCCURRING AT OUR SCHOOL!