prepnotes sept'08

A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS OF JACKSON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

# head of school

Each year I ask myself what there is about the beginning of school that causes sleepless nights and a sense of anticipation and excitement as I watch students return to school. A new school year offers faculty and students the opportunity for new beginnings. It is encouraging to observe students reconnecting with teachers and others they perhaps have not seen throughout the summer. It is also interesting to watch the introduction of new students to the Prep community. During the first few weeks of school, students are adjusting to new teachers and new assignments, and orientation activities are planned to ensure the very best experience for students.

As we begin this school year, our mission statement has been revised to answer the question: "What drives our school and what makes Jackson Prep distinctive?" After a year of study, the Board of Trustees approved a new mission statement, which was first communicated to the parent body at "Back to School Night" in August. It is concise, easy to memorize and clearly defines what must be at the forefront of decisions made about programs and activities within the school. The new mission statement is as follows, and it can also be found on our website and in all new publications of the school:

> *Jackson Preparatory School inspires and challenges students toward academic, athletic and artistic excellence, instills personal integrity through biblical values and equips students to pursue lives of distinction in service to society.*

This mission statement:

- Reaffirms the school's commitment to excellence in every endeavor.
- Underscores the importance of biblical values and virtues in the education of our students.
- Clarifies the goal of a Prep education—to pursue a life of distinction in service to society.

**Excellence:** *High but achievable expectations are set for our students.* The faculty is committed to preparing all students for college and for success in life. Creating the culture where it is "cool to be smart" has been a defining characteristic of our school, and we cannot let the cynicism of some teenagers overshadow what is best for the school. We want to remain the state's standard bearer in secondary education, and achievement on national examinations affirms that position. Excellence does not mean entitlement—one is only entitled to things achieved through hard work. We will help our students see that humility and kindness are essential life skills, and these traits go hand-in-hand with perseverance and accomplishment.

**Personal integrity through biblical values**: *From the inception of the school, Prep has been grounded in Judeo-Christian principles.* Our founders wanted this to be a place where the historic religious foundation of Western civilization would nurture and support intellectual activity in the classrooms. Aristotle stated, "Education of the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." Prep is a moral community that has tremendous influence on students' lives. We are not a denominational school. Actually, the leadership within the school and on the Board is comprised of a mixture of denominational traditions. We welcome students of all faiths and those of no faith. Our aim is to be as ecumenical as possible while grounding the school's values in the biblical traditions—ones that resonate with the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Bible. We are vigorously planning and implementing a variety of initiatives with the end goal of instilling personal integrity and cultivating biblical values among our students.

**Pursuing a life of distinction in service to society**: *We do not learn just to become educated; we do not compete just to win. It is not all about us—we are here for others.* How do we lead students to understand this? How do we change the culture? Through education and strategic decisions, our immediate plans include helping students see a bigger world. One example is to provide community engagement among the constituents within the school, such as the environmentally-conscious Green Thumb Club, and to expose students to opportunities within the larger community. Additionally, the school is committed to development of a personal leadership program entitled "Prep for the World." The Global Leadership Institute directed by Cindy Townsend will focus on the inward look in junior high and engage students with support and a vision for their future through the high school experience. The school will be intentional in making the Prep experience more meaningful for students—we want our school to be a place where lifelong friendships are developed, where intellectual interests are piqued and where every student feels appreciated and needed.

How is this possible? All constituents of the school must be committed to the mission statement. The Jackson Prep faculty is a well-educated and talented group. Working with them, the parent body and supporters of the school, we can arm ourselves for the challenges of the culture in which we live. I am compelled to support the Prep community in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Susan Lindsay

Susan R. Lindsay
Head of School

Where is the calendar? Visit www.jacksonprep.net. From the front page, click on Calendar of Events.

# junior high news

*by Trudy Powers, Head of Junior High*

**Brown Bag Lunches for Parents:** All parents of students in junior high are invited to bring a lunch and join other parents in the HMC at noon for a "Brown Bag Lunch" on the following dates:

7th grade parents, September 9
8th grade parents, September 16
9th grade parents, September 10

The programs will be presented by the junior high administrative staff. Drinks and desserts will be provided.

**Welcome New Junior High Students:** Prep is happy to welcome 12 new students into the eighth and ninth grades this fall! New eighth graders are Carson Bailey, Ashley Beneke, Allie Hobby, Navneet Thind, Olivia Dulaney, Katie Coit, Milam Smith, and Christopher Lewis. New ninth graders at Prep are Emily Evans, Sarah Beth Rotolo, Keely Kennedy, and Anthony Keys.

# high school news

*by Luke Nealey, Head of Senior High*

The 2008-2009 school year has gotten off to a wonderful start. It's always great to have students and teachers back in the buildings doing all the things they do. The beginning of the school year (as you all know well) is filled with many gatherings, forums and meetings. I would like to share a couple of things from two of these meetings.

The first is some of my opening remarks at the "Welcome to the High School" meeting with the tenth grade parents. The most important points were: 1) In the high school, we would always like the student to initiate the problem resolution process when appropriate. Problem resolution flows from teacher to counselor to head of senior high. Parents follow the same steps if the student has been unable to resolve the problem. 2) The southeast corner of the high school is populated by a group of people that support the students and faculty and interface with parents. Please take advantage of these resources and encourage your children to use them as well. Academic, personal, and college questions are just some of the areas where we have expertise.

In a second group of meetings, we discussed discipline and our collective goals of our high school community for the year. The first topic of interest was school uniforms and dress. We are hoping that new penalties and closer attention to these issues will result in the greater compliance and habituation of correct dress that is reached fairly quickly and will not require continual discussion with some students in the high school. Secondly, we spoke about the new attendance policy (refer to student guidelines for more information). As you read in Prep Notes last spring (Go to www.jacksonprep.net, click on Parents, then Read PrepNotes Online), we are serious about the education we are trying to deliver to our students. Missing classes often or for trivial reasons will be discouraged. Please consider the impact of missing school on your child when you are making decisions about activities that occur when school is in session.

All of us in the high school are looking forward to a great year. We are also looking forward to seeing all of you at the many events that involve our talented students.

**Welcome New Senior High Students:** Prep is happy to welcome nine new students and one returning student in the senior high. New tenth graders are Salar Almakky, Jessica Mitchell, Patrick Salem, Leslie Smith, Taylor Townsend, and Winston Bell who is returning. Eleventh graders new to Prep are Marilyn Coit, Logan Dukes, Amir Khadivi and Grady Sinyard.

# counseling news

**A Note About Junior High Counseling:** This year Maret Watson will serve as the primary academic counselor for all of the junior high girls, and Lee Ozier will serve as the primary academic counselor for all of the junior high boys. Their responsibilities are to work as a liaison between parents, students and teachers to help address and find solutions to school-related problems and to encourage and counsel students as they make their way through the junior high years. Both counselors can be contacted by phone through the junior high office (601-939-9796) or by email at mwatson@jacksonprep.skytel.com or lozier@jacksonprep.net.

**College Fair:** Sophomores, juniors, and seniors and their parents are invited and encouraged to attend the Jackson Prep College Fair on Tuesday, September 9 at 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the gymnasium. Please adhere to the following arrival schedule, if possible: seniors: 6:30 p.m., juniors: 7:00 p.m., and sophomores: 7:30 p.m. Representatives from approximately 70 schools will be attending. A list of participating colleges can be accessed from the college counseling page of the Prep website.

**College Seminar:** "Perspectives from Prep Alums – Finding the Best College Fit" will be presented to juniors and seniors in the Lyceum at 11:20 a.m. on Friday, September 5. The panel will include Prep graduates John McVey ('07), Harvard University; Sarah Beth Tew ('06), University of Cincinnati Conservatory; Mary Rogers Sorey ('05), Millsaps College; and Sally Spears Black ('04),University of Mississippi. Parents are invited.

**College Admissions Rep Visits:** College Admissions representatives visit Prep throughout the year. Visit dates and times are posted on the website and announced weekly on the morning bulletin. Most visits are scheduled at 11:20 a.m. during the homeroom period. Interested juniors and seniors should attend. Parents are also invited.

**Conferences with College Admissions Counselor:** Families of seniors who have not scheduled conferences on college planning with Mrs. Peet should call for an appointment as soon as possible.

**College Financial Aid Program:** An informative program on scholarships and financial aid for college will be presented by Heather Roberts of the Education Services Foundation (ESF) on Thursday, November 20 at 7:00 p.m. in the Guyton Lyceum. Parents of juniors and seniors who would like to learn more about obtaining money for college are invited to attend.

**PSAT:** The PSAT will be administered to all Prep juniors and sophomores on Wednesday, October 15. Seniors do not have to attend school that day. All students (6-11) will be dismissed at 12:30. Teachers will have an in-service program after lunch.

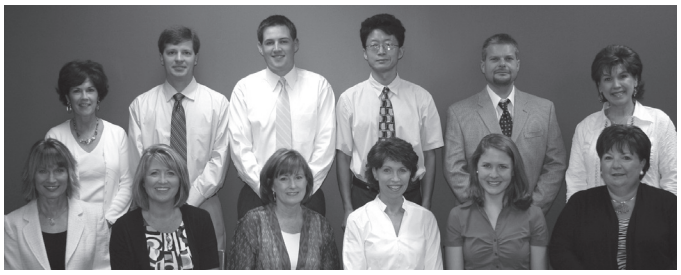
# community service

Jackson, how may we serve you? We're hoping this is a question students will want to ask! To find a volunteer spot to make a difference in the greater Jackson community, check the Prep website under Community Service. Additional opportunities occur weekly and are announced in class and online in the daily bulletins. There is a Community Service Office and Anne Duncan is there on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to help students with their volunteer placements and questions. Let us know how we may serve you and your students so they may serve others.

**Please Note The New Deadlines for Hours**

**Summer 2008 hours are due August 29, 2008**
**Fall 2008 hours are due January 16, 2008**
**Spring 2009 hours are due April 17, 2009**

# welcome new faculty & staff



Jackson Prep welcomed new faces to the both the junior and senior high faculty and staff. Pictured are the new teachers and staff members. Row 1 (l to r): Gail Derryberry, English; Lauri Byrd, chemistry; Anne Duncan, Director of Community Service; Sophie Randolph, support services; Anna Griffith, library assistant, math, cross country; and Dianne Holbert, Performing Arts Chair and Choral Music Director. Row 2 (l to r): Melissa Neyland, Director of Annual Giving; Hunter Upchurch, Spanish, social studies; Chris Moore, social studies, basketball; David Zhang, Mandarin Chinese; Shane Porter, Band Director; and Cindy Townsend, Director of Global Leadership Institute. Not pictured: Chad Biggs, football.

# faculty/staff activities

What did the Prep faculty/staff do this summer? Many in the community have the misconception that educators have so much free time during the summer. At Prep, the summer is one of the busiest times of the year! The following shows some of what the Prep faculty and staff did in their "time off":

- Trudy Powers and Luke Nealey, division heads, spent most of the summer in "boot camp" for principals. Not only were they in class for three weeks, they were working on extensive assignments and tests during their "time off." Of course their Prep responsibilities remained on their desks.
- English teachers Anna Freundt, Gayle Ford, Laura Flint and Gail Derryberry participated in the Welty Workshop.
- Science teachers attended classes to improve their classroom instructional skills: Marsha Hobbs (AP Physics Reader), Leah Heath (AP Chemistry Workshop), Nancy Jones (Environmental Education Workshop), Suzanne Eskrigge, Brian Jones and Jon Marcus Duncan (Biomedical Workshop at UMC).
- Sunnye McGraw, Visual Arts Department Chair, accompanied Vivian Paris and her family to New York City, where Vivian received the American Vision Award sponsored by Scholastic Arts.
- Carolyn Tatum and Jon Marcus Duncan took a group of 14 students and four parents on a scuba diving trip off the coast of Roatan, Honduras.
- David Horner and Malcolm Saxon took junior and senior basketball players on a mission trip to Guatemala where their basketball skills and faith ministered to many young people (asst. coach Chris Moore was at home taking the National Bar Exam).
- Many of our teachers took classes for recertification, taught summer school, and/or led summer camps, which this year involved 1,128 students throughout the community.

# pat news *by Anne Toy Gathings, PAT President*

Greetings from the PAT! Thank you for your generous response to the summer mailout regarding volunteer opportunities for all of our committees. Your support of these committees is vital in operating the PAT. If you have not yet responded and would still like to become involved, please see the PAT page on the Jackson Prep website for a listing of each committee. Feel free to contact a chairman about helping out.

PAT meetings will be held twice a semester at noon in the Hederman Media Center. Our first meeting will be held on Thursday, September 11**. Every parent is invited and encouraged to attend!** This is an important way to keep up with school affairs and PAT events. We usually hear from Susan Lindsay, our head of school, and Reta Haire, our student life faculty liaison. This month, in addition, we will hear from Dudley Wooley, Chairman of Long Range Planning for the Prep Board, and Cindy Townsend, Director of Global Leadership Institute. I hope to see you there.

Also, don't forget to check the PAT page on the school website for up-to-date information about meetings and events. I consider it a privilege to serve as your President and look forward to meeting and working with each of you this year.

# admission news

**TO SHARE WITH PROSPECTIVE PARENTS**

**Prep Preview:** Jackson Prep is opening our school to you! The following are the visitation dates for parents and students:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Evening Open House | September 26, 2008 | 5:00-7:00 p.m. |
| School Day Visit | October 27, 2008 | 9:30-11:15 a.m. |
| School Day Visit | November 18, 2008 | 9:30-11:15 a.m. |
| School Day Visit | January 14, 2009 | 9:30-11:15 a.m. |

*School Day visits* offer parents a view of the school during a typical school day. Students are welcome to attend with parents.

**Admission Test Dates:** The following dates are for students entering grades 6, 7, 8 and 9:

| | |
|---|---|
| Saturday, November 8, 2008 | 9:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. |
| Saturday, December 6, 2008 | 9:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. |

Admission priority will be given to students who complete admission steps by December 12, 2008. Acceptance packets will be mailed after December 17, 2008, with registration due February 1, 2009.

# directory updates

**Austin Berry, grade 12**
Ms. Holly Berry
1110 Quinn Street
Jackson, MS 39202
New phone: 601-949-7763

**Avery Burns, grade 8**
Joe and Whitney Burns
New phone: 601-981-8701

**Julia Putt, grade 7**
and **Harrison, grade 8**
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Putt
6 Crestview Cove
Jackson, MS 39211

NEW STUDENTS

**Catherine Burgess, grade 7**
Mr. and Mrs. Chris Burgess
202 Bellewether Pass
Ridgeland, MS 39157
601-605-1084

**Amir Khadivi, grade 11**
Ms. Maryam Bayat-Shahbazi
601 Muirwood Circle
Ridgeland, MS 39157
601-856-4181

**Conner Smith, grade 7**
and **Milam, grade 8**
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Smith
(Bill and Melissa)
103 Bellemeade Trace
Clinton, MS 39056
601-924-4856

# asbestos notice

As a part of an annual notification, we are informing all persons of their option of reviewing the Asbestos Management Plan, which would include documentation of any asbestos-containing materials at the school. To provide continuing management of the asbestos in our school, all asbestos-containing materials (ACM) are inspected every six months by an engineering firm from Jackson, MS. Any changes in the ACM are being recorded in a surveillance report as part of the Asbestos Management Plan. A copy of the surveillance report, along with a copy of the Asbestos Management Plan, is located in the Business Office. Any interested party should feel free to come to this office and review these reports.

# departmental spotlight

**PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT**

***by Dianne Holbert, Chair of Performing Arts, Choral Music Director***

*"On a Sunday afternoon 15 months ago, I stood along a highway and gazed across open pastures. Today in its place are people... pavement... and permanent buildings."* So began my 1971 award winning ninth grade essay. Today, 38 years later, it is good to be back "home" among Patriots with whom I attended Prep, went to football games, and yes... sang with in the Jackson Prep Choir. It was such a priviledge and honor to me to accept the Chair of Performing Arts and Choral Music Director position last spring.

The Choral Department will take on a new spirit this year as we expand the program. Not only will choirs be performing classical literature, auditioning for honor choirs, performing in the fall musical and performing for the community, but they will also be competing with junior and senior high showchoirs in three competitions. The fall musical, *Wizard of Oz*, will be performed in November. A Candlelight Christmas Concert is scheduled in December, and the junior high and high school showchoirs will have award-winning professional choreographers for their competition shows in February.

The Performing Arts Department will flourish this year with our talented faculty. Shane Porter is building an innovative band program and is looking for talented students who can help him prepare music for the football games this fall. Meredith Warf will be the Choral Music Assistant/Accompanist. Anna Freunt will be teaching the Drama classes again. She brings much knowledge to the department and will also assist with the fall musical with her major priority being the One-Act Play and the Spring Drama. Kenneth McDade will be the Drama Assistant and will be helping with the fall musical.

I encourage you to support Prep students in attending performances throughout the year. I also encourage you to visit the Choral Music Room, the Band Hall, and the Drama room and to introduce yourself to us and get involved. We have a lot of fun as we create music and stir the minds, bodies and souls of our students.

# new director of annual giving

The Department of External Affairs is pleased to announce that Melissa Neyland has joined the staff as Director of Annual Giving. Melissa has a longstanding connection with Prep. Her husband, Nash, is a member of the class of '75. Her son Parker graduated in '04, her daughter Swayze finished in '05, and her son Andrew is in the class of '11. Melissa brings with her great passion for Jackson Prep and a real desire to see the Annual Fund grow.

# homecoming weekend

**PREP VS. EAST RANKIN – OCTOBER 10, 7:00 P.M.**

- Alumni Reunion/Homecoming Weekend: All alumni and their families are invited to a pre-game picnic beginning at 5:30 p.m.
- Dedication of Dining Commons
- Senior High Dance: 10:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. at the Ag Museum
- Junior High Dance: (8-9 grades only) on campus immediately following the game.

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