Paw-sitively Connected
Great Path Academy at MCC

Student Council

Great Path Academy,

Since the fall of 2012, Great Path Academy has experienced the transformation from a broken, disordered high school to a place of excellence. This transformation has taken place through the efforts of faculty and staff at Great Path who have demonstrated a deep affection for the students they interact with, and through the efforts of the students themselves.

The academic year of 2012-2013 was a momentous and challenging experience for everyone here at Great Path, with new teachers and staff, new uniform policies, and various other changes. Many of us had to adjust to the new environment and experienced some level of difficulty doing so. Through conflict and struggle, we eventually came to understand that the new Great Path had potential far beyond anything we had previously imagined. After overcoming numerous milestones, those of us returning for the school year of 2013-2014 experienced a new life flowing through the halls and classrooms of Great Path: a life which we knew could only mark the birth of a new age for our school.

The warmth within the current family of Great Path has had quite an impact on all of our lives, and students who have acknowledged this warmth have found a place of emotional rest through the stresses of academia. Our teachers and faculty set an admirable example of intellectual and ethical awareness that is truly humbling for all of us. Those whose job is to enforce rules enforce them to their fullest, and those whose job is to unleash the potential of students pour their hearts into our education.

As a member of the class of 2014, the last group of students to have experienced the old Great Path, I am honored to have lived through this transformative process and hope to set an example of leadership for future generations. Great Path Academy has undoubtedly been changed for the better, and my hope is that this school year is marked as one of the worst in our history: not because it will be a bad year, but because every year after this will be better than the one before.

Luke M. Powers,
Student Body President

GPA’s student council for 2013-14!

What a wonderful election process! The campaigning was rigorous and candidate speeches were eloquent!

Student Spotlight!

Our first students of the month were chosen by staff using the criteria of our GPA attributes of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety. GPA’s 2013-2014 experienced a new life flowing through the halls and classrooms of Great Path: a life which we knew could only mark the birth of a new age for our school.

Yvonne Hurtado. You all are "Paw-some"!!! Rufino Medina is “excited about making new friends and getting into college classes to earn college credits!” We are very proud of our students! Stay focused and keep it up!

Freshman News
Sophomore News
Junior News
Senior News
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Staff Spotlight
Common Core State Standards—Math

Special points of interest:
- GPA is marching in the Thomas Hooker Day Parade on October 19th! For more information, please visit our website!
- Our first "2nd Cup of Coffee" parent event is scheduled for October 9th, from 8-9 am. If you can’t join us then, Tuesday, November 12th, from 5-6 pm is the next one! Check the website for other dates and a flyer is going home.
Freshman News

* The music appreciation classes have been working on reading music and performing a drum line cadence! In addition to drum line they are learning elements of instrumentation found in the orchestra in preparation for the October field trip to the Hartford Symphony.
* We have two freshmen finalists in the Student Voices Art Competition, Jenna Emond and Alyssa Duffey! You can vote at www.foodshare.org. All of the entries are on display at the State Capitol. During this project with an authentic audience, students worked to create a visual representation of “Hunger May Be Sitting Right Next to You”, along with working on audience awareness and the marketing or advertising skills of creating a slogan that is relevant to a project.
* The freshmen are participating in cross-disciplinary instruction and lessons designed by their instructors. In Civics, they are examining Locke and Hobbes. “Locke and Hobbes are both famed political philosophers whose writings have been greatly influential in the development of modern political thought. In addition, the two are similar in that both refer to a “state of nature” in which man exists without government, and both speak of risks in this state.” In English I, students are reading “The Lottery” and working on analyzing the short story in relation to the State of Nature and Social Contract. To further this connection across classes, as they read “Night” and “Lord of the Flies”, students will be connecting the novels to studying sustainability and human impact in the Science classes. This will result in them drawing connections between what they are reading in ELA and content worked on in Science.

Sophomore News

* This month in Biology, students worked in small groups to address the sustainability issues associated with the contamination of a lake ecosystem and the human stakeholders connected to that ecosystem. They had to gather evidence and debate the trade-offs of various plans for improving the lake. Then they created a timeline for a plan of action to improve the lake while also taking into account the wants and needs of stakeholder.
* In World History we are finishing up World Religions and will be traveling on to modern day Africa. Many students have been submitting current event projects and relating class discussions to modern day events.
* Culinary I is learning about equipment and measuring— one day they split into small groups and had to analyze the use of and present on various types of equipment in the kitchen.

Junior News

* In Culinary II, students made mac ‘n cheese from scratch for our Open House, and they are starting a unit on grains. One day, students spent some time examining types of grains. They compared and contrasted Basmati Rice, Sushi Rice, Jasmine Rice, Quinoa, Forbidden rice (Chinese black rice), Cous cous, Grits, Brown Rice, and Risotto. See photos to the left.
* This is the first year that GPA is offering a piano course! Students enrolled will be able to read music notation, improvise in a variety of styles, and develop a familiarity with great pianists through history. The course is held in the MCC piano lab.
* We have one junior finalist in the Student Voices Art Competition, Javante Danvers! You can vote at www.foodshare.org. All of the entries are on display at the State Capitol.

Please visit the GPA Unified Arts website at: www.gpaunifiedarts.weebly.com!
Senior News

* We have two students who have been selected to participate in the American Choral Directors Fall Conference Honor Choir this year. Luke Powers and Olga Rivera will be performing under the baton of internationally renowned conductor Edward Bolkavac in late October on the campus of Manchester Community College.

* We have one senior finalist in the Student Voices Art Competition, Carlett Simpson! You can vote at www.foodshare.org. All of the entries are on display at the State Capitol.

* In Anatomy and Physiology with Ms. Kliman, students completed a lab in which they performed a pickle autopsy, in order to practice the use of anatomical terminology. They are now in the process of preparing for a lab entitled “McMush”. During this lab, students will be testing the food in a McDonald’s Happy Meal for the presence of organic molecules.

* In Criminal Justice, one of our Articulated Courses that students can take in order to earn college credits, seniors completed research on individual categories of crime. They examined the history of their chosen categories, their individual impacts on contemporary criminal justice and why they are each considered a separate category of crime.

* We have two students who have been selected to participate in the GPA Mishi-maya-Gat Monthly Staff Award.

Fall 2013 Open House/Clubs and Activities

* At our first Parent Open House of the year on September 25th, we had a wonderful turnout! Thank you to all who came out to connect with us and we look forward to seeing you again!

* Clubs and Activities:
In order to have the opportunity available to all of our students, we are offering clubs and activities during school every Wednesday, second block. The following is a list of the clubs offered and the advisors for each club. Students have chosen which they would like to take part in already and we are excited to have so many involved in the school activities!


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Staff Spotlight

Whitney Thurrott is our first Staff Member recipient of the GPA Mishi-maya-Gat Monthly Staff Award.

Whitney was the recipient of the most Staff Gotcha Paws in the month of September for exemplifying the attributes of GPA to her fellow staff. Whitney teaches Biology and Middle College Experience and is also the advisor for the Sustainability/Garden Club. Whitney grew up in South Windsor and completed her undergraduate work in Molecular Biology at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. She is currently completing her Masters of Science in Chemistry at Saint Joseph’s. She is most excited about our awesome new students and creating a new legacy here at GPA this year! Her favorite thing to teach is real world problems, where the kids have to fight their way through it, that are still current problems, with no set answer. Whitney is also a member of the School Governance Council this year.

Did You Know?

Mishi-maya-gat means “Great Path” and is our namesake. Manchester Community College and, therefore, Great Path Academy was built on a portion of what was known by the Algonquin Tribe as the “Great War Path”. Our school name derives from this piece of history and connection.

Students have taken the initiative to start fundraising for all of the fun events planned this year!
Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Houchens race students to the top at MCC’s 50th birthday party. On the line? A free homework pass. Mr. Mitchell was determined not to lose – it’s too important that his students have their practice at home!

**Shift to Common Core State Standards:**

**Mathematics**

In high school, students will develop a deep understanding of mathematical concepts and use mathematical ways of thinking to solve real-world problems. High school learning objectives are organized by concepts—such as algebra, functions, or geometry—that students will learn and master in various mathematics courses. These concepts build on what students learned in grade eight and move toward greater depth of knowledge and skills throughout high school. In grade eight, students solved real-world problems involving rates and discount, focusing on the computation needed to determine the final price. In high school, the emphasis is not about merely computing the final price, but rather using the structure of the answer to make a general argument.

- Your child will work more deeply in fewer topics, which will ensure full understanding. (less is more!)
- Your child will keep building on learning year after year, starting with a strong foundation.
- Your child will spend time practicing and memorizing math facts.
- Your child will understand why the math works and be asked to talk about and prove their understanding.
- Your child will now be asked to use math in real-world situations.

What can you do? Know what concepts are important for your child based on their grade level and spend time working on those concepts. Help your child know and memorize basic math facts. Ask your child to “do the math” that pops up in daily life. Provide time every day for your child to work on math at home.