



# The Lion's Roar

March 2010

Dear Families and Friends,

What kind of educational program does a new decade call for? Last week, as one of 4,179 participants in the NAIS Annual Meeting, I learned from the pros. Tony Wagner, co-director of the Change Leadership Group (CLG) at the Harvard Graduate School of Education since its inception, put it this way.

1. All students need new skills that we neither currently teach nor are assessing.
2. This generation of learners will be differently motivated to learn than others before them.
3. We must *re-invent* the curriculum, not *reform* it.

Wagner, as well as others at this conference defined core competencies, beyond important qualities like perseverance and moral character. Our students will need these abilities in order to be active and informed citizens in the world. Although there were lists aplenty over the course of the conference, these are the skills I believe will help our students thrive in their next schools and their work lives beyond.

### ***Curiosity and imagination***

*With a focus on teaching right brain thinking, Advent teachers ask children to identify patterns and look for connections within thematic studies and across disciplines.*

### ***Problem solving and critical thinking***

*Problems that require students to generate and test out strategies and verify their thinking are a central and ongoing feature of our program.*

### ***The capacity to think analytically and learn from one's mistakes***

*When faced with a problem, we expect students to break it apart into manageable pieces, notice similarities, and apply known skills to new scenarios, regardless of content material. Children become comfortable asking questions so that they can make each challenge meaningful and to learn from their mistakes.*

### ***Effective oral and written communication***

*In our classrooms students engage in active dialogue and routinely make oral presentations before an audience. They reflect on and write about their thinking and are responsible for independent and group research from the earliest grades. At many grade levels they maintain portfolios to represent their understanding and work they are proud of.*

### ***Initiative, entrepreneurialism, and innovation***

*Above all, we expect our teachers to be innovators and entrepreneurs in their classrooms. They design original curricula and expect original thinking from the students they teach. More often than not, students work collaboratively on long term projects, which link learning across the curriculum in the context of a theme.*

These key competencies have long been at the heart of our program at The Advent School. From Arianna Huffington (*Huffington Post*), Tina Seelig (*Stanford University*), Pat Basset (*President of NAIS*) and others we heard that

## IMPORTANT DATES

### March 2010

#### **Monday-Friday, March 8-12**

Spanish Week

#### **Wednesday, March 9**

Diversity Committee Meeting 4:30 p.m.  
"The Faces of Our Families"

#### **Friday, March 12**

Diversity Dinner and Spanish Presentations  
5:30 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, March 17**

Parent Conference Day, NO SCHOOL/  
ADVENTures available

#### **Friday, March 19**

Parent Conferences 1:00-4:00 p.m.

#### **Monday, March 22**

World Water Day

Diversity Committee Meeting 4:30 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, March 24**

Parents Committee Meeting, 8:30 a.m.

#### **Thursday, March 25**

Welcome Event for Accepted Families,  
8:30 a.m.

Development Committee Meeting 5:30 p.m.

#### **Saturday, March 27**

Spring Benefit, The Franklin Institute  
6:00-10:00 p.m.

### April 2010

#### **Monday, April 5**

Diversity Committee Meeting 4:30 p.m.

#### **Wednesday, April 7**

Marketing Committee Meeting 8:30 a.m.

#### **Thursday, April 8**

Board of Trustees Meeting 5:30 p.m.

#### **Thursday, April 15**

Grade 6 Spring Play

#### **Friday, April 16**

Grandfriends' Day/Spring Break Begins

#### **Tuesday, April 20-Friday, April 23**

April ADVENTures

#### **Wednesday, April 28**

Parents' Committee Meeting, 8:30 a.m.

#### **Thursday, April 29**

Development Committee Meeting 5:30 p.m.

schools *for the future* need to move away from defined content areas into integrated teaching, hands on learning, learning with and from peers, and dialogic instruction. Educating for the future means reorganizing programs, using content as a vehicle to teach our children. Competencies and skills trump content. Recognizing that problems posed typically have multiple solutions, today's student will work collaboratively to ask good questions, strategize, gather data, and weigh the evidence.

I can think of no better example of learning across disciplines than this year's school wide water study. In one class - Fourth Grade teachers posed a mathematical challenge. They asked students to compute their family's "water footprint." This project grew from an assignment into a large data collection project, with written observations and the opportunity to classify and synthesize information. Ultimately, the class made a plan to gather data from a larger audience. With their teachers' help they created language for a new website, [www.waterworksworld.org](http://www.waterworksworld.org), to raise the consciousness beyond The Advent School walls. They wrote:

*Our Fourth Grade class has been learning about water and how it is a growing problem. We are trying to find a way to save water and the environment. We created this website so that other people could learn about the developing water crisis, and we hope that someday this will become a well-known website for water savers.*

Every member of The Advent School community will be participating in the United Nations' **World Water Day, on Monday, March 22, 2010**. Children will share their findings with the greater community, demonstrate what they have learned and how they learned it, and inform people about ways they might save our valuable resource, water.

If at first this kind of learning seems frivolous, take a closer look. Children who find meaning in their studies are committed and focused. Because they've been taught to look for patterns, they retain knowledge and can tap into it, applying their skills in other contexts. Will these skills serve Advent students as they move to larger learning institutions? Not far down the road, admission to the finest institutions will be based far less on quantitative test scores (< 50%) than on a student's ability to *solve problems, take multiple perspectives, collaborate as a team member, and make connections*. These are the skills we teach as we strive toward the greatest single challenge – educating children for the decades to come.



Nancy Harris Frohlich  
Head of School

## News From Administrators

### Director of Education/Arati Pandit

At Advent, teachers are continuously striving to integrate curriculum, deepen understanding, and foster connections. We are at the beginning stages of highlighting connections between Math in the classroom and Math in specialties like Art, Science, Music and PE. Skills like measuring, data analysis, and representation naturally occur within these specialties. It is the perfect opportunity for students to apply and practice all that they have learned in the classroom.

On a different note, if you would like to sign up for the any or both of the summer programs we offer here at Advent, Learning Boston and ADVENTures in Learning, please e-mail Natalie Brubaker at [nbrubaker@adventschool.org](mailto:nbrubaker@adventschool.org). This year, the children enrolled in Learning Boston will create one or more large scale collaborative works of art that will eventually be contributed to the city.

ADVENTures in Learning is an opportunity for students to continue their learning through the summer months. Students will participate in grade-appropriate Reading, Writing, and Math projects. If you have any questions about these, don't hesitate to contact me.

### Director of Development and Communications/

Suzanna Schell

Wow, time flies. It is just 3 weeks until the Spring Benefit 2010, on March 27, 2010. I do hope you are planning to join us for *An Evening on the Piazza*, our version of a Venetian Carnevale, an evening of community, comedy and Italian food, in support of Financial Aid and special projects.

Our very own Tony V. will be our auctioneer and host extraordinaire. Co-chairs Abby Johnson (First Grade Brimmer) and Susan Klein (Fourth Grade) and many volunteers are planning a memorable event. We have received many great donations for our Silent and Live Auctions, including tickets to all of our Boston teams, vacation houses, class baskets, special evenings on the town and of course, the Class Art Projects.

So, get those sitters lined up, purchase your tickets, and get ready for *An Evening on the Piazza* to benefit The Advent School. R.S.V.P. by March 19th to Steve Lampert [slampert@adventschool.org](mailto:slampert@adventschool.org). You can also order your tickets online at our website [www.adventschool.org](http://www.adventschool.org).

### Director of Admission/ Liz Parfit

We are coming to the end of our Admission season and are in the midst of making our final decisions. All admission letters will be sent out March 10 and we are excited at the prospect of welcoming our accepted families. There will be an event for all accepted families March 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. It is always wonderful to have some current families attend this event, so if you are interested, please contact me in the Admission Office.

## News from the Specialists

**Science/**Tooey Rogers, Susan Coolidge, and Brienne Studer

**Grade 1:** First Graders are moving from the global view or planet Earth and how our seasons occur to rainforest animals and their many useful adaptations. Prehensile tails, camouflage, night vision and pheromones will be the order of the day as we look into how animals thrive and survive in the rainforests of our Earth. During March we will also be experimenting with water in anticipation of World Water Day on March 22.

**Grade 2:** After a refresher on the traits of mammals, we have been going through mammal bones, teeth, skulls, and movement. We will be taking a break from mammals in March to explore water for World Water Day.

**Grade 3:** Having successfully created their mineral posters Third Graders will be diving into water - its chemistry, cycles and properties in anticipation of World Water Day. The students will investigate where our water comes from and how many ways we use it. They will also experiment with water properties to see how water provides life and sustenance to all of our planet's living organisms.

**Grade 4:** Having completed the introduction to invertebrates and finishing "A Day in the Life" of an invertebrate, the 4th Graders will be revisiting the properties and use of water to prepare for World Water Day. We will talk as well about the role marine invertebrates play in water filtration.

**Grade 5:** Fifth Graders will take a detour from Simple Machines, Mechanical Advantage and the Laws of Motion to explore the characteristics and uses of Water. World Water Day is coming up on March 22<sup>nd</sup> and the students will charge up the learning curve by experimenting with water chemistry and natural properties as well as developing their own home water use assessment. Get ready to get wet!

**Grade 6:** The Sixth Graders are finishing up their study of the history of the Earth which, among other things, has taken them through fire, toxic rain, ice, and traveling continents. It has been quite a journey! The students are working on projects that represent any five stages in the life of the Earth. These projects range from dioramas to realistic enactments to model Earths to a story told from the perspective of an archeologist. These creative projects are as varied as the stages in the Earth's history!

**Espanol/Maria Acuña**

Hola! Here it is:

¡Hola! ¡Feliz Marzo! We have been busy finishing all the projects for the Spanish student presentations on March 12:

KB: Un ABC del Caribe

KC: La canción del ABC

1B: Una familia de Coquis

1C: La canción del Coqui

2: Viajando al Caribe

3: Poemas muy personales

4: Pronósticos del tiempo

5: Máscaras de Vejigantes

6: Frutas Tropicales

We have also been learning about Puerto Rico and the Caribbean area.

Hasta muy pronto!

**Physical Education/** Lori Towle and Carl Geneus

NCAA March Madness takes place at all age levels in the gym with dribbling, passing and shooting skills...along with gymnastics and combination stunts with basketballs and jump ropes.

Be sure to check out the stellar PE projects in the hallway on the library level. Fifth and Sixth Graders researched athletes in honor of The Winter Olympics, National Girls & Women in Sports Day, and Black History Month. Fabulous work!

## News from Committees

**The Diversity Committee/**Mercedes Ridao, Hannah Kilson, and Carmen Pineda.

February was an active month of events around town, celebrating the Chinese New Year and Presidents' Day. We presented the film, "Labeled Disabled" on February 25th and enjoyed a lively discussion over pizza and desserts. Moving into March, we look forward to giving shape and focus to a new endeavor, a family collage project, "The Faces of Our Families". Come to next Monday's meeting 3/ at 4:30 p.m. to learn more about this school-wide project.

We are excited to be sponsoring the Caribbean Dinner and Spanish presentations on Friday, March 12th at 5:30 p.m. We look forward to *esta fiesta alegre* with everyone's contributions.

On Saturday, March 13th at 10:30 a.m., please join us for a family event, The Immigration Story, at the JFK Library. Seats have been reserved for Advent families. We hope to see many of you there.



# April 2010

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat./Sun.
			1	2	3
					4
5 Diversity Committee Meeting 4:30 p.m.	6	7 Marketing Committee Meeting 8:30 a.m.	8 Board of Trustees Meeting 5:30 p.m.	9	10
					11
12	13	14	15	16 Grandfriends' Day Spring Break Begins at 12:30 p.m.	17
					18
19 Spring Break	20 Spring Break ADVENTures	21 Spring Break ADVENTures	22 Spring Break ADVENTures	23 Spring Break ADVENTures	24
					25
26 School Resumes Diversity Committee Meeting 4:30 p.m.	27	28 Parents' Committee Meeting 8:30 a.m.	29 Development Committee Meeting 5:30 p.m.	30	



The Advent School's Physical Education classes make a SPLASH in March with K-6 Swimming and ECC Exploration!

**UPDATED!**

# ¡La Fiesta del Español!

¡Hola! We will be celebrating a week of special Spanish activities during our "Semana del Español" or Spanish Week. This year Spanish Week will take place on the week of March 8-12. We are learning about the beautiful area of the Caribbean with a focus on Puerto Rico. During Spanish week, we will make and eat dishes from the Caribbean and do fun crafts.

This year Spanish Week has united to the Diversity Concert, so we will be having a delicious Caribbean Dinner followed by Spanish Student Presentations instead of the Diversity Concert. Here is detailed information of the event:

Day: Friday March 12

Time: 5:30PM

Spanish Student Presentations: ECC (Audience), K, 1, & 2

Place: Moseley Hall (Advent church)

Caribbean Dinner: 3, 4, 5 & 6

Place: Earth Lab & vicinity

Time: 6:30PM

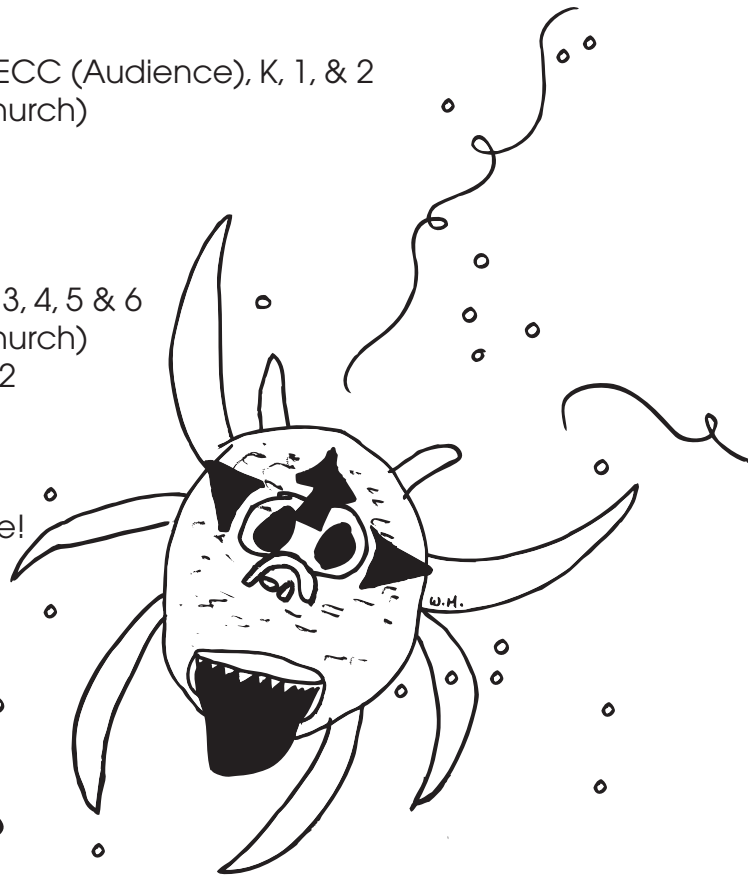
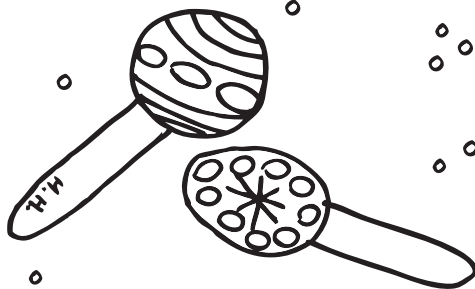
Spanish Student Presentations: 3, 4, 5 & 6

Place: Moseley Hall (Advent church)

Caribbean Dinner: ECC, K, 1 & 2

Place: Earth Lab & vicinity

We hope you are able to come!





*Evening on the Piazza*  
*The Advent School Spring Benefit 2010*

Join us for a night of Venetian Carnevale to  
support our Financial Aid Program  
and Special Projects

Saturday March 27, 2010  
The Benjamin Franklin Institute  
41 Berkeley Street  
South End, Boston

Wine Bar & Silent Auction - 6:00  
Dinner & Live Auction - 7:30  
Checkout will begin at 9:45

R.S.V.P. by March 19, 2010

Consider becoming a Spring Benefit Underwriter. Underwriters are acknowledged in the program.

This year's levels are:

Marco Polo \$5,000 (8 tickets and reserved table)

Titian \$2,500 (6 tickets)

Vivaldi \$1,000 (4 tickets)

Palladio \$500 (2 tickets)

Cabotto \$250

Underwriting is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please contact Suzanna at [sschell@adventschool.org](mailto:sschell@adventschool.org) for more information about becoming a Spring Benefit Underwriter.



# Celebrate World Water Day

March 22, 2010

The entire Advent School will be celebrating World Water Day on Monday, March 22 as part of our year-long study of Water.

During the weeks leading up to World Water Day, Advent Science teachers will be leading an in-depth study of the properties of water. In the Art Studio, students are experimenting with water color, designing water posters and writing water poems. Next time you are in School, check out the beautiful underwater scenes that are covering the walls surrounding the Art Studio.

**Our Fourth Graders have created a website: [www.waterworksweb.org](http://www.waterworksweb.org)** and invite all families to explore the site and calculate their water footprints. We are making plans to lead a public event on World Water Day and will be sending out more information next week. If you would like to volunteer to help on World Water Day, please contact Stephanie Ellington.

## RESOURCES ABOUT WORLD WATER DAY 2010:

- [www.worldwaterday2010.info/](http://www.worldwaterday2010.info/)
- [www.waterday.org/](http://www.waterday.org/)
- [www.h2oforliveschools.org/index.html](http://www.h2oforliveschools.org/index.html)

## Alumni Profile: Annie Osborn '04

### Education

- The Advent School, '04
- Boston Latin School, '10 (anticipated)

### Interests

- Classical violin, Chinese, marine biology

### ***“Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.” - Chinese proverb***

While many of her peers at Boston Latin spent their junior year dividing their time between school and the Red Sox, Annie embarked on a yearlong program in the People's Republic of China. Through *School Year Abroad*, Annie lived with Chinese families, attended Chinese schools, and traveled throughout the country. It was the learning experience of a lifetime that allowed Annie to “dig beneath the surface,” and develop an intimate knowledge of a nation poised to become the driving force in our global economy.

While living with a middle-class family in Beijing and spending “home stays” in rural villages, Annie witnessed life in “two very different Chinas” firsthand. The poverty she experienced in the provinces was in stark contrast to the booming growth of China's modern cities. Yet Annie was inspired by the hope and optimism of the Chinese people. “I was amazed to see how hopeful everybody was...because for many people, life had gotten so much better.” This reality, Annie says, dispelled the myth that China is a “gray, depressing place.”

The learning experience went both ways, says Annie. “People really liked talking to us. They wanted to know what Americans thought about China, what music we liked, and about general aspects of American culture.” Annie laughs, admitting that as a six-foot tall young woman, many Chinese simply found her “interesting to look at.” For Annie, the experience of living abroad expanded her worldview. “I learned to be much more open and to reserve my judgments.”

Meeting people from an entirely new culture who were “so excited about the world and other countries” instilled in Annie a global mindset. The experience broadened her horizons, and deepened her interest in Chinese culture.

Upon returning home, Annie wrote an editorial for the Boston Globe, in which she recounted her educational experience in China. Her insights into the differences between the two countries' approaches to education were profound. In China, Annie observed that “students lack the opportunity to discuss and digest what they learn.” A self-proclaimed “product of an American independent elementary school and public high school,” Annie recognized the following: “Chinese schools have many strengths, but they do not foster many broadly philosophical thinkers.” Focused on preparing students for rigorous entrance exams, Chinese teachers must “cram as much information into their students as possible.” Annie explained that with an exam-based system, students in China “work under pressure greater than the majority of U.S. students could imagine.”

When discussing her own future, Annie hopes to pursue her studies in Chinese and marine biology, with aspirations of working as a marine biologist in China. Already an accomplished and impressive young woman, Annie believes that “Advent raised the standards that I hold myself to, and without Advent, I never could have done what I have done.”

- Stephen Lampert