



**Septima P. Clark Academy removes the obstacles and distractions that often prevent students from being academically successful in order to prepare students for post-secondary education, the military, and the world of work.**

**Newsletter #10  
Summer, 2011**

# Building on Our Success!

## Message from Program Director

Our theme for the 2011-2012 is "Building on our Success", but it might be more accurate to say "Building on our Successes" because there have been so many over the last few years.

We take the most pride in our graduates. Over the past two years, more than 110 Clark students have received their high school diplomas.



**Andrew HaLevi**  
Program Director

This past June, our graduating class was 56, the most in the history of our program. Whether our students are going to two or four year colleges, the military, or directly to

work, we are proud that Clark Academy has helped them on their way.

Our students' success is not possible without our incredible faculty and staff. Not only do four people on staff have national board certification, the highest certification available to teachers in the United States, but Meike McDonald was one of the top

five teachers in the CCSD for 2009-2010.

In the last school year, we also greatly expanded the activities available to students. Once a week, teachers and students participate in activities ranging from ceramics and drama to weightlifting and outdoor sports. This weekly activity period will expand this school year with increased opportunities to use the facilities at James Island County Park (JICP). The picture above shows a trip to the JICP climbing wall.



At Clark, we are not content to rest on our successes. We are planning an even better year full of academic achievements and activities that will challenge our students to be the best they can be. Get ready for a great year!

**-Andrew HaLevi,**  
Program Director

## Starting the Year

We want to emphasize the importance of starting the school year the right way. The most important first step for success is to come to school the first day. While some students and parents might think that the first few days of school are not important, we want to be clear that the first few days are VERY important. Tuesday, August 16

is not only the first day of school, but it is the first day instruction starts. There will even be homework assigned. It is also important to know that students who do not show up on the first day risk being dropped from our program and returned to his/her home school. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are not able to attend the first day. We look forward to seeing all of our students on August 16.

## Welcome Back Event

We will host a *Welcome Back* event on Thursday, August 11 from 5-7 PM. During this event, we will distribute student schedules, collect student activity fees, take pictures, introduce faculty and staff, and offer tours of the campus.

The \$35 student activity is particularly



important as this money allows us to fund our weekly activity periods. In addition, it pays for student field trips, student recognition events like honor roll programs, outside speakers, and other student celebrations. Students who receive free or reduced lunch are not required to pay this fee.

**Main Office** (843) 762-2774  
**Guidance Office** (843) 762-6215  
**Fax** (843) 762-6218  
**website:** [www.spclark.org](http://www.spclark.org)

1929 Grimball Road, Charleston, SC 29412

## Events

One of the distinctive programs at Clark Academy is the weekly activity period, a 70 minute period of time in which students have the chance to participate in a fun activity outside of their regular classes. Last year, students could choose activities ranging from (watching) documentray films to playing fantasy baseball. The only changes this year are that the activity period will be held after 2nd block (before lunch) and will take place on Thursday instead of Friday. Get ready for more fun!

In addition to weekly activities, the following monthly activities are planned

### September

James Island County Park

### October

Field Day

### November

Turkey Shoot+Dodgeball  
Tournament

### December

Family Dinner

### January

Community Service

### February

Black History Month Program

### March

March Madness Basketball

### April

Field Day #2

### May

Riverdog Game

### June

Graduation!

## Looking Ahead

\*Open House on August 11

\*First Day of School on  
August 16

\*Open House #1 on  
September 15

\*Early Release on October 26

*School is more than a physical place. It is also the relationships that students have with teachers and friends, the feelings that students have about learning, and the desire to learn more about the world.*



**The first day of school is  
Tuesday, August 16**

## Other Thoughts...

### Cell Phones

Clark follows the CCSD cell phone policy, which states:

*"No student may use a cell phone or portable communication device on school property during the school day. During school hours cell phones or communication devices must be turned off (not on vibrate mode) and stored out of sight."*

*"Students using or having cell phones visible during the school day shall have their cell phones confiscated. The device shall be returned to the student at the end of the school year or earlier to a parent or guardian."*

It is important that every student and parent understand that this policy is in place so our classrooms and can be free of distractions.



We know that students sometimes need to use the phone, so we make a phone available in the data clerk's office when students need to call home or work. We also know that parents sometimes need to contact students during the day, and we pledge that any messages left for students in the main office will be delivered promptly to the student.

Unfortunately, some students decide to use their phones in defiance of school and district rules. Refusal to turn over a phone to a faculty and staff member will result in out of school suspensions (OSS) and loss of other privileges. Lets work together to make sure this doesn't happen!

### Communities In Schools

Most people agree that a program like Clark to accelerate high school students towards graduation is a great idea. But not everyone knows that the original idea came from an organization called Cities In Schools, now known as Communities in Schools (CIS). CIS helped found Clark in 1990 and has been involved ever since. CIS helps recruit mentors and volunteers, coordinate programs, and most importantly, contributes two CIS Student Support Specialists: Miriam Bond and Derek Toth.

Ms. Bond is entering her fifth year at Clark. Her job is to support the female students' academic goals by helping them work through emotional, social, and health issues. Ms. Bond provides individual counseling, organizes groups that help students work through conflict resolution and decision-making, and distributes information that helps girls make healthy choices. If that isn't enough, Ms. Bond also organizes community service projects like working on a habitat for humanity house, beach clean ups, and even a group that walked the Cooper River Bridge.



Derek Toth is entering his second year of working with male students at St. Johns High School and Clark. He is an incredible resource or students, particularly students who need support balancing their academics, sports, work, and family obligations.