

Middle School News...

By: Mr. Tom Beuscher, Head of Middle School

Each year, seventh graders participate in the Duke Talent Identification Program (TIPS) and it is a pleasure to report that a full thirty-four percent of the students in the current seventh grade qualified for the program. To be qualified these students scored at 95% or better in one of the major categories of the CTP IV tests that we administer each spring in the secondary. It must be noted that this group includes numerous students who are non-native English speakers. This is a wonderful testament not only to their talent and hard work, but also to the thorough and effective teaching of our faculty. The prize for these clever students is to take the SAT tests along side the college bound high schoolers. Based on their scores, students can earn state and possibly national recognition and be invited to ceremonies in Washington DC. In addition, Duke University will make a host of educational materials and opportunities available to these wonderful students. Once again congratulations to these students, their parents and their caring teachers for this stellar achievement.

We often talk about the spirit of youth, and in a recent adventure we pitted this boundless spirit against actual spirits . . . you know . . . ghosts! Casper fans be pleased. A group of lucky middle schoolers signed on with friends, family and a few adventurous teachers to take the ghost tour of Houston . . . at night! Our trip was cleverly organized as a sociable for the Advancement Department by Mrs. Brown-Franklin. We met at the legendary Spaghetti Warehouse, itself a well known haunt where our guide entertained us with stories about mysterious piles of furniture, and a pretty woman in a white dress who has driven out more than one waiter with her surprise visits to the upper dining area. Then we received electromagnetic sensors and armed with flashlights boarded a bus to not one but two grave yards. Our cameras captured numerous otherworldlies! One picture of Ms. Lagrone and Ms. De Vries is full of colorful spirits swirling about their heads in the midst of Downtown. Don't take one of their classes without some caution!

Back at school we recently announced the winners of the annual Spooky Story contest. All of the winners received gift cards at Borders. The winners by grade were Santiago Botto in the sixth, Anna Stables in the seventh and Mark Conner in the eighth and the Grand Prize award went to Albin John, a sixth grader. These were wonderful pieces and we thank the English teachers for supporting the kids with their entries.