



San Pasqual Academy

Home of the Mighty Dragons!

Bulletin

February 2011

Facts-At-A-Glance

As of this writing...

- 134 youth are living at the Academy.
- Just over 40 youth participated in on- and off-campus paid internships and employment over the summer.
- 25 houseparents are part of the Academy's residential program.
- 9 grandparents are part of the San Pasqual Academy Neighbors Program.

Inside this issue:

<i>In the Principal's Office</i>	2
<i>Dragons Sports Center</i>	2
<i>Spooky Homecoming</i>	2
<i>On Your Mark, Get Set, Go...</i>	2
<i>The Work Readiness Front</i>	3
<i>Academy Idol</i>	3
<i>Dragon Organics Branches Out Again!</i>	3
<i>Academy Youth Pay It Forward</i>	3
<i>2010 Holiday Season</i>	4
<i>Referrals . . .</i>	4
<i>Easy as 1 -2 - 3</i>	4
<i>Academy Road Show</i>	4
<i>New Academy Team Members</i>	4
<i>Middle School Youth</i>	4

Visit the Academy website at:
www.sanpasqualacademy.org

Life at San Pasqual Academy

For youth, ages 12 - 18 years old, who would be appropriate for San Pasqual Academy but unsure if the program is the right fit for them, pre-placement visits are now an option. These overnight visits provide the youth an opportunity to experience a bit of campus life!

The pre-placement visits began in December 2010. Of the four youth who attended the December visit, three are now official Dragons. In January, one youth attended and he was placed at the Academy on January 27th.

What does the pre-placement visit involve? Each youth attending the pre-placement visit is paired with an Academy buddy. This individual has the responsibility to welcome the potential youth to the program, introduce him or her to program staff, grandparents and other Academy youth, provide a campus tour and answer questions about Academy life.

High school age youth visiting the campus arrive on Thursday evening for a presentation by a Peer Leader Panel and then settle in to attend Academy classes on Friday morning with their buddy. Middle school age youth arrive early Friday afternoon to tour San Pasqual Union Middle School with Principal Gary Wilson. Friday night activities might

include cheering on the Dragons basketball teams if the games are at home in the campus gym!

On Saturday, the potential youth have an opportunity to visit with the grandparents who make up the San Pasqual Academy Neighbors (SPAN) Program and participate in regularly scheduled activities with the youth in their assigned home for the weekend. Sunday morning, the youth return to their current detention/placement with more knowledge about what life is like at San Pasqual Academy.

For a youth to participate in a pre-placement visit, he or she must be referred to the Academy by their social worker via the San Pasqual Academy Assessment form (CWS Template 04-304) and demonstrate behaviors appropriate for potential placement at the campus. It is not necessary for the youth to be "accepted" by the residential provider, New Alternatives, Inc., to attend the pre-placement visit.

For more information about upcoming pre-placement opportunities, please contact [Karen Johnson](#), HHSA Academy Protective Services Supervisor, at (760) 233-6288.

And, the Award goes to...

Academy students' received recognition for their hard work and dedication to improving themselves and their campus community at the Second Quarter Achievement Awards Ceremony held in the Auditorium on January 21st. In addition to naming two Students of the Quarter, the high school recognized 19 students earning 3.0-3.4 GPA, seven students earning 3.5-3.9 GPA and two students earning a 4.0 for the quarter. Individual teachers also awarded certificates for progress made in specific academic areas.

The Academy's residential program joined the school in acknowledging the students' success in the classroom, while the Day Rehab Clinic recognizing the youth's personal growth in their therapeutic treatment. The Youth Empowerment Services (YES) Program acknowledged youth's participation in work readiness activities and financial fitness training. HHSA Academy staff also presented awards to students demonstrating a positive attitude on campus, excelling in academics, athletics and extra-curricular activities, and being a leader on campus.

To celebrate these wonderful accomplishments, a lunch reception was hosted by UROK for the students receiving awards!

In the Principal's Office

Suzanne Miyasaki moved into the Principal's office at the Academy on November 16th. She has stepped right in and gotten acquainted with staff and students to continue building on the program's academic foundation. Ms. Miyasaki quickly organized Parent-Teacher conferences for December 1st to review five-week progress reports and develop plans to assist students needing to boost their grades. She also coordinated an all-day Leadership Transition Workshop on December 8th for her staff to prioritize next steps to strengthen the academic program.

Ms. Miyasaki previously served as the East Region Principal for San Diego County Office of Education's Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS). The JCCS East Region offers a variety of alternative education opportunities for grades 6-12, and serves approximately 375 students on a daily basis. She also has 15 years working with San Diego Unified Schools as a teacher and administrator in grades K-12.

Welcome, Ms. Miyasaki!

A Spooky Homecoming Game and Dance

The Dragons' Homecoming Game took place on October 29th at Wilson Field in Ramona. After the Homecoming King and Queen were crowned, the Dragons defeated Oceanview Christian, 26-12.

The Homecoming Dance followed on October 30th with a "haunted" Halloween theme.



Dragons Sports Center



The Fall Sports Banquet, hosted by the Friends of San Pasqual Academy, took place on January 26th in the campus auditorium to celebrate the Academy's athletes team work and individual accomplishments. Fall sports wrapped up in November 2010. While neither the Lady Dragons' volleyball team nor the Dragons' 11-man football team had their best season to date, both teams made strides in improving their game and building the fundamentals for a stronger season next year. The Academy's 11-man football team wrapped up the season with an overall record of 3-6 and looks forward to having a home field advantage next year when they can host their opponents on campus.

A new football field is made possible by a \$200K grant from the San Diego Chargers through the National Football League Grassroots Program along with other generous donations. A dedication ceremony for the multi-purpose field was held on October 28th. San Diego Chargers Quentin Jammer and Philip Rivers were present for the event, as well as County Supervisors Greg Cox and Ron Roberts. Visit [Field of Dreams](#) for Fox News' exclusive coverage of the event.

Basketball season is now upon us, and the Dragons and Lady Dragons have hit the court in official league play. Games are scheduled through mid-February. Take a look at the [Dragons](#) and [Lady Dragons](#) schedule and come out to cheer them on!

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go...

Academy high school students have begun their third quarter of the school year, and seniors are preparing for graduation. Seniors have completed their college and financial aid applications, and continue to apply for available scholarship opportunities. College acceptance letters from California State Universities (CSU) are beginning to trickle in...youth have heard from CSU San Marcos, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Fullerton and Humboldt State University. Two athletes have also been offered partial scholarships to Mayville State University in North Dakota.

Senior meetings to ensure the youth are on track to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), graduate, secure housing, and employment have already taken place and these subjects will be re-visited often to support the youth in their transition to independent living. To explore post-secondary education options and the support services available, 14 youth toured City College on November 30th and 15 youth toured Cuyamaca College on December 2nd. Additional opportunities to learn about local community colleges will take place over the next three months, as seniors visit Mira Costa, Mesa, Grossmont and Palomar Colleges.

On the housing front, Academy Independent Living Skills (ILS) staff are working closely to help graduating seniors research and develop transitional housing plans. Several "field trips" have been scheduled for February to tour the available housing programs in San Diego and attend orientation sessions.

And, because it is never too early to start planning for the future, juniors have also met with campus staff to identify their academic status and discuss their future plans. Sophomores and freshman will begin these meetings as 2011 gets underway to set their goals and learn about resources available to them upon exiting foster care.

The Work Readiness Front

Despite the state of our economy, Academy youth continue to receive daily exposure to work readiness skills through the Youth Empowerment Services (YES) Program on campus. Utilizing the Jobs for American Graduates (JAG) curriculum, the YES Program prepares youth for the world of work by assisting them with résumé writing, interviewing skills, workplace ethics, customer service skills, career exploration and more! The YES Program provides Academy youth with internship opportunities on- and off-campus, as well as assistance to secure employer paid positions off-campus.

In developing the youth's work readiness skills, the YES Program has implemented five Career Academies in Multi-Media, Health, Agriculture, Entrepreneurship, and Tourism/Hospitality. Over 40 youth are enrolled in the Career Academies, and were assessed in regards to their skill level and career aptitudes in December. The purpose of the Career Academies is not only to provide youth hands-on work readiness experience, but exposure to a variety of career options. In doing so, the YES Program collaborates with a host of local businesses and institutions to bring the world of work alive and expand the youth's employment outlook.

Recently, the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) presented to 25 youth about career opportunities in the fashion industry, while Balboa Travel in Kearney Mesa offered a four-week course regarding the tourism industry. In-house multi-media expert and instructor, Kyle Conwell, has had his students design a logo for each Career Academy, as well as design new menus for the student-run Dragons Lounge café on campus.

New opportunities continue to develop as the YES Program reaches out to the community for participation in this exciting new program.

Academy Idol

On December 14th, Academy youth showcased their dancing and musical abilities in a talent show on campus. The event featured several multi-cultural performances, including a mariachi band, belly dancing, hip hop dancers and country-western singing.

The student performers rocked the house with their energetic performances! Campus staff and students were treated to several dance groups, individual vocal performances, and bands. In all, 31 youth participated in the talent show.

Dragon Organics Branches Out Again!

Since 2004, the Academy's Agriculture Program has been developing at a steady pace. It has provided opportunities for Academy youth to learn about farming, participate in hands-on internships in the field, and sell the campus produce at local farmers markets. The Academy produce is used in the campus cafeteria and in the youth's homes. It is also sold to local restaurants and markets.

This past year, the Dragon Organics Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program was created, allowing individuals in the community to own a part of the farm. Individuals subscribe to receive a box of produce once, twice or four times a month for a three-month period to support farm operations. This program has branched out to include HHSA offices as delivery sites for County staff. Originally piloted at the CWS office in Linda Vista and the Family Resource Center in Escondido, the CSA Program has branched out to the Family Resource Center in Mission Valley and the HHSA Executive Office in San Diego. County staff are excited to have fresh, organic produce delivered to their workplace, and look forward to opening their CSA boxes to see what is included. In January, the boxes included a variety of green leafy vegetables, green onions, cilantro, white radishes, carrots and tangerines. Coming soon: Academy strawberries, a refreshing complement to a Dragon salad.



In November, local media covered the delivery of the CSA produce boxes at the Linda Vista office. County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price, HHSA Director Nick Macchione, CWS staff and Academy youth were on hand to talk about this mutually beneficial arrangement that supports both foster youth's preparation for independent living and the County's 3-4-50 Health Strategy. This strategy addresses three behaviors (poor nutrition, lack of physical activity and tobacco use) that contribute to four diseases (heart disease/stroke, cancer, Type 2 diabetes, and respiratory conditions) resulting in over 50% of the deaths in San Diego. To view County Television Network's coverage of the event, click [here](#).

Academy Youth Pay It Forward

While youth at the Academy are often recipients of the generous donations and time of the community, they also know the value of "paying it forward." Volunteering, particularly with Big Animals for Little Kids, is not uncommon activity for campus youth who log many hours of community service per month.

2010 Holiday Season

San Diego Charger Quentin Jammer and his wife, Alicia, hosted Academy youth to a catered Thanksgiving dinner at the Hall of Champions in Balboa Park. The Jammer Family Thanksgiving dinner has become a tradition with the youth, and an event they look forward to as the holiday season kicks off.

The youth had an opportunity to catch the holiday spirit during December in various events happening on and off campus.

- Academy youth joined other foster youth at Winter Blast, a semi-formal dance hosted by County of San Diego Independent Living Skills contractors. Academy youth earned top honors in the Winter Blast's dance competition!
- The Friends of San Pasqual Academy hosted their annual holiday event on campus. Youth received an iPod nano, Academy hooded sweatshirt and personalized stockings, while enjoying cookie decorating and a photo booth.
- Quentin Jammer, his family and fellow Chargers shared the holidays with youth at the Hall of Champions, enjoying craft activities and a cartoonist who created one-of-a-kind caricatures. The youth enjoyed a wonderful evening of dinner and gifts!

Referrals...Easy as 1 - 2 - 3

Do you have a youth, 12 - 18 years old, on your caseload who is:

- not likely to return to his/her birth family,
- not likely to find legal/emotional permanency with a specific family,
- experiencing a Change of Placement,
- being considered for an FFA placement OR
- stepping-down from a level 12 group home placement?

Then consider referring the youth to San Pasqual Academy, which offers a stable, long-term placement, an individualized academic plan and intensive independent living skills training. The referral process is easy—just three simple steps:

1. The Child Welfare Services (CWS) social worker submits a completed San Pasqual Academy Assessment Form (04-304; CWS/CMS Template) via **FAX** to Tim Farley, New Alternatives, Inc. (NAI) Academy Screener, at (619) 543-9401 **and** Michael Haloran, HHSA Academy Office Assistant, at (760) 233-6280. *Be sure to provide detailed information on the Assessment Form, and if the youth has an IEP, please submit it along with the Assessment Form to expedite the review process.*
2. Once the referral is reviewed by NAI, an interview with the Academy Director and a campus tour are coordinated for the youth.
3. Following the youth's interview and tour, the CWS social worker is notified of the referral status.

The Academy has a licensed capacity for 184 youth, and spots are currently available for appropriate youth.

For more information on the referral process, please contact your Regional Academy Liaison or the HHSA Academy Screener at (760) 233-6283.

Academy Road Show

Your office could be next in line for an Academy Road Show presentation! HHSA Academy Protective Services Supervisor, Karen Johnson, and New Alternatives' residential staff are traveling to each of the regional Child Welfare Services offices to share information about San Pasqual Academy and the many services available to support foster teens in this unique residential education setting. Occasionally, a current or former Academy youth may join the road show to provide insight on what the Academy means to youth placed there.

Thus far, presentations have taken place in Residential Services, North Inland, East, and Central Mid-City offices. Future presentations are currently being scheduled.

Additional Road Show stops include Voices for Children's Court Appointed Special Advocates and the County's Foster Youth Mentor Program.

New Academy Team Members

Cathi Palatella, Assistant Deputy Director (ADD) of Polinsky Children's Center and the CARE (Critical Assessment and Release Early) Unit, joined the Academy Team on January 14th as part of the Child Welfare Services restructuring strategy. Ms. Palatella brings a wealth of Child Welfare Services experience and knowledge to this unique residential education program.

Also new to the Team is Raymond Keitel, Protective Services Worker from South Region. Mr. Keitel joined the group in November. He has quickly eased into his role on campus, building rapport with the teens as he provides case management services.

Middle School Youth

While the majority of youth referred and placed at San Pasqual Academy are high school age, approximately 9% of the youth living at the Academy are in middle school.

To focus on the specific needs and interests of middle school youth considering the Academy as a placement option, a tour for 11- and 12-year olds took place on January 26th. Five youth attended; they had an opportunity to visit San Pasqual Union Middle School and meet some of the school staff.

In addition to touring the middle school, the youth learned about the Academy and the support services offered by the campus partners.