

WASC Evaluation Commends AHS for Improvement

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In 2012, WASC renewed AHS' accreditation for six years in addition to one day of re-visitation. After visiting and evaluating AHS again in March, the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC) commended the school for increasing student achievement and improving on critical areas identified in the last evaluation.

"I'm very proud of being a Moor. Our teachers have worked hard to address the WASC goals to continually address the need of all students. Our students have been wonderful in being a part of this process that helps us move forward as a school and community," WASC Chair Nancy Padilla said.

To evaluate the school's progress, the WASC representatives talked to administrators and met with a diverse group of students, selected from every grade level and from different groups on campus, including academic teams, student government, athletics, performing arts and more, according to ASB President Kristie Sham.

In their report, WASC noted the continued professional training for Common Core Standards and for new teaching strategies that involve deeper levels of thinking.

"[The WASC leader] commended faculty for utilizing improved instructional strategies, and more specifically, for decreasing the amount of lecture and for increasing the amount of higher order thinking activities where students are more engaged in their learning," AUSD Assistant Superintendent

Gary Gonzales said.

The visiting committee also concluded that AHS has made efforts to close the achievement gap among subgroups and remains committed to meeting instructional needs for all students. Over the last three years, students who are Hispanic and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged have made consistent gains in CAHSEE scores. In order to aid

AHS has also worked hard to improve the representation of subgroups in school programs. Students who are English Language Learners, Hispanic and/or in Special Education have been encouraged to play a greater part in school-wide activities, such as joining various clubs and participating in school events. Through Honors/AP Night and the freshman AP Human Geography course, AHS has exposed more students to higher level curriculum. ASB has also expanded schoolwide representation in student government by opening up more ASB officer positions and holding monthly legislative meetings with home-room representatives.

"Although AHS does as much as it can to motivate us, I think having a student's perspective on things will help. Having meritable upperclassmen should help put into perspective how crucial it is to maintain good grades," AP Ambassadors member Samantha Han said. "Another issue is that students are not informed about all that AHS has to offer. It should be absolutely mandatory for bulletins to be read during fourth period."

Though WASC has commended AHS for improving on areas identified in the last evaluation, WASC recommends that AHS continue to work on reaching out to underrepresented groups on campus.

"We have made strong progress since the last WASC evaluation in trying to increase outreach and access to opportunities. We have a long way to go, but with the help of faculty, we can work to have students truly engaged with what our school has to offer. What's important is that our students [should] have a genuine motivation for what they're interested in," Sham said.

MOOR graphic by SAMMIE CHEN

AHS IMPROVEMENTS

- Graduation goals have been met for the past three years
- AHS is ranked #150 in California
- Hispanics have taken a larger number of AP exams over the last three years
- AHS has made progress on the number of students taking AP and Honors classes

at-risk students for college preparation, AHS has included the Moor College Prep program on campus.

AHS implemented various strategies to meet these goals, including after-school CAHSEE preparation for struggling students, peer modeling through the student-led AP Ambassador program and A-G coaching presentations.

"I feel proud. [The commendations] are reflective of how amazing our students and community are," Principal Duane Russell said.

Pre-MESA Day: Students Prepare for Final Competition

SHELLEY LIN
Staff Writer

On March 7, 30 students in AHS Mathematics, Engineering, Science, Achievement (MESA) brought home medals from Pre-Mesa Day. Pre-Mesa Day is a project-based competition day held at the University of Southern California (USC) with students competing in a variety of competitions.

"[My goal this year] as an adviser of MESA, is [for] my students [to] enter an event that they will be interested in. [I try to] supply them with useful materials and run a Pre-MESA day competition amongst our own club," math teacher Steven Mira said.

In the "Speak Out" group activity, each group, consisting of three members, needs to give a five minute speech featuring one of the three given topics. Sophomores Stella Lin, Tracy Duong and Cyndia Zhou placed first in the event.



MOORS WIN BIG AHS MESA club members brought home their winning medals after a Pre-MESA Day competition held at USC.

MOOR photo by SHANNON KHA

"I feel like my interest in science and technology increased since joining MESA. I've become more responsible because I was co-captain of Technology Student Association (TSA) Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science (TEAMS), which is another competition that MESA [participates in]," Lin said.

Sophomores Tiffany Tran, Shirlynn Li and Kristi Mai placed second and Bryan Kwong, Iric Hong and Richard Hu placed third in Speak Out as well.

"MESA helped me with putting my knowledge into practical application. I tend to learn a lot more about a topic when I am competing. [It has also] help me realize what I want to do [in the future]," Kwong said.

Juniors Cody Khuu, Zi Feng Zeng, Winnie Vong won the championship in building the Prosthetic Arm.

"My favorite part of being in MESA is that I get to go to USC with friends to compete with other schools. [I enjoy] the feeling of anxiousness; it is exciting to [reveal] how [the] months of planning and work will [turn out] against [my competitors]," Khuu said.

AHS Canned Food Drive: Ending Hunger One Can at a Time

REBECCA ZENG
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With the sun shining strongly and highlighted maps in hand, members of various service clubs proceeded to walk from street to street and house to house, inquiring for excess nonperishable goods. The annual AHS Canned Food Drive is hosted by Holiday Committee, a club advised by English

teacher Lori Naylor. Food Drive was held on March 14 and the clubs that participated consisted of Holiday Committee, Campus, Kaibigan, Pequenitas, Interact and Junior Civitan. Together, the volunteers collected 300 cans, which were donated to the God Provides Food Bank.

"Although it sounds boring, I learned that canned food drives mean a lot for those in need and [collecting cans] makes us feel

good about ourselves for what we have and [aware of] what we take for granted," sophomore Interact member Andrew Pham said.

The area covered this year included the areas around AHS including the northeastern part of Alhambra.

"Overall, I hope that this event continues annually and eventually becomes the big event it formerly was," Holiday Committee president Candice Romero said.

Teen Girl Vaccinated Without Parental Consent

JADE LIEU
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On March 9, a 16-year-old girl in Chicago was secretly vaccinated by Wells High School without consent, according to Education News.

The teen, Noelle Miller, wound up receiving multiple immunization shots including one for Hepatitis A, chicken pox, meningitis and Human Papillomavirus Infection. According to Education Views, only one of these vaccinations was given parental consent.

"When I looked at [my daughter's immunization records] I flipped out," parent Michelle Miller said, according to Education Views.

According to CBS Chicago, Noelle Miller's mother did sign a consent form, but only to allow her daughter to receive a sports physical and immunizations required by the state, of which only chicken pox fell under the category.

"I feel like the school should not have vaccinated her daughter without parental consent. Although the mother did sign a form, it wasn't for all those immunization shots; it was only for a sports physical," junior Jenna Pan said.

Miller's mother has further taken her concerns to the school board.

MOOR graphic by LESLIE HWANG

Zaytuna Institute First Accredited Muslim College in U.S.

JOSEPH NEY-JUN
Staff Writer

On March 4, 2015, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) made Zaytuna College the first accredited Muslim college in the U.S. Accreditation from WASC, or one of the other five organizations authorized by the government to evaluate colleges.

The college began as the Zaytuna Institute, located in Berkeley, CA in 1996, but did not receive accreditation until recently.

According to USA Today, Nadia Chouch, a student at Zaytuna, believes that the college and its graduates will help to fight Islamophobia, or the fear of Islam, in the U.S.

"I believe that building a Muslim College in America is amazing because this country is so diverse. I think this college will open up many peoples' eyes to see the real knowledge behind Islam and Muslim people," said junior Ezza Munir.

According to Zaytuna's website, co-founder of Zaytuna, Hatem Bazian also feels that this is an important step forward for dispelling fears of Islam in America as well and helping more people understand their religion.

Vice president of Academic Affairs at Zaytuna Dr. Colleen Keyes hopes for the college to be one of the top 100 liberal arts schools in the U.S. The founders of the college as well as its students hope that Zaytuna is the first of many more Muslim colleges to receive accreditation.

MOOR graphic by SAMMIE CHEN