

# MENTORING ACADEMY



## Fourth Year Begins

As Mentoring Academy enters its fourth year, there is much to report about the Community member's activities, institutional growth and developing plans. This summer's progress includes:

- Development of high interest modular courses much more aligned with our mission and needs;
- Installation of a new phone system
- Improved electrical service in the Julia Morgan room, the New Room and the Conference Room
- Organization of the central office
- Initial development of the WASC self-study
- Completion of the California non-profit status
- Submission of the federal 501(c)3 application
- Staff development and
- Modifications to the physical plant.

### Newsletter Topics

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4. **Summer Activities of Members**
5. **The new year's activities**
6. **Curriculum Development**

### **START OF SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

**27 August, Thursday 7PM-8:30PM**

#### **Initial Parent Meeting**

"State of the School"

Staff and Parent Introductions

Overview of Semester

Details of Fall Retreat

**MAPS (Mentoring Academy Parents)**

**28 August Friday 1PM to 4PM**

#### **Student Start of School Meeting**

Student Introductions

Discussion of Course Needs

Details of Fall Retreat

**31 August Monday 9AM**

#### **Beginning of Fall Retreat**

Pack Vans

Leave for Fall Retreat at Venture

**3 September Thursday 5PM**

#### **End of Fall Retreat**

Return from Venture

Put equipment away

Clean Vans and Cars

**4 September Friday to 7 September Monday**

#### **Labor Day Celebration**

No Classes

**8 September Tuesday 9AM**

#### **Beginning of First Semester**

Classes Begin

**11 September Friday 9AM to 3:30 PM**  
**Early Dismissal**

**13 September All Day**

#### **Solano Stroll**

**14 September Monday**

#### **Rosh Hashhanah**

Classes optional for students

celebrating religious holiday

**16 September Wednesday 7PM-9PM**

#### **MAPS Initial Fall Meeting**

**18 September Friday 9am to 3:30PM**

#### **Early Dismissal**

## **Fall Retreat on Coast at Venture Center Near Pescadero, Includes Whale Experience on Monterey Bay, Academic and Social Skill Development**

Following the initial meetings on August 27th and 28th, the whole school will be off on the annual Fall Retreat. This year, Mentoring is headed to Venture Retreat Center near Pescadero on Monday, August 31 at 9 AM. Students and

staff will spend four days getting to know each other, exploring effective study skills, picking strawberries, solving puzzles, completing assessments, planning for classes, swimming, preparing meals, photographing whales and

dolphins from a boat on the Monterey Bay and hiking coastal hills. Although the Retreat is a big part of starting the academic year, it is also great fun.



## **Mentoring Academy Installs New Full Featured Phone Systems**

This summer, we installed a new phone system, which makes staying in contact with the Mentoring staff simpler and convenient. Our new phone number is **510.400.7696**. The old number, 510.916.1133 is still active, however it will no longer be used as our main phone number. The major benefit of our new phone system is accessibility; each of our staff members now has a personal extension and voicemail. Therefore, you can now call that particular staff member directly. If we are on a domestic trip, you will still be able to call our main number, dial the main office, Debora or John, and then be directed to our Mentoring Academy cell phone, which we carry on all trips. You can find a list of staff extensions and email addresses on page 5.

## **State Non-Profit Registration and Federal 501(c)3 Application Completed**

Mentoring Academy was founded as a non-profit, public good corporation. The school is fully licensed by the State of California and has full tax exempt status. This summer the full documentation to obtain the 501(c)3 federal non-profit tax exempt status was completed.

Although we have been able to accept tax deductible donations, it is now easier for us to file tax deductible gifts. A series of fundraising efforts will be launched this year, including our PayPal account where you can make a donation. The [link](#) is posted on our website, [www.MentoringAcademy.org](http://www.MentoringAcademy.org).

## **Full Self-Study and Report Underway for Accreditation Review by WASC**

Mentoring Academy completed its initial Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) application in 2013 and after the review and visit was granted full Candidate accreditation status. The next step is to complete a full self-study and visitation by WASC personnel this year. The report needs to be filed in February and the visit will be scheduled for March or April. One major component is the identification of goals and review of our mission by all “stakeholders” including parents. We will be developing a survey and a process for collecting data. If you are interested in volunteering as a parent participant, please contact us.

## Kabirdas Henry

Some of you may remember Kabirdas Henry from last year, when he briefly stopped in to assist students in math and to chaperone school trips. He has officially joined the Mentoring team, teaching/mentoring students in math courses ranging from Algebra, to Topology. Kabirdas is currently a student at Utrecht University in The Netherlands, studying mathematics. Right now, he is writing a thesis on Logic, and will go to deliver it in January.

## Jan Lewis

Another mentor who briefly graced our halls last semester was Jan Lewis, who worked with a few students on English and Literature. This year, she will teach a series of English courses, from Composition to Advanced Lit. Jan has well over 20 years of teaching experience, serving as an English and Spanish teacher. She has designed programs for transitional and homeless youth, worked with students with special needs, and has served as a head of school. Jan holds a Masters in Teaching from Harvard University, a BA in English and a minor in Spanish from Vanderbilt University.

## Steve Pisani

A new and wonderful face to our team, Steve Pisani joined us for the Summer Session, where he helped students in English and History. His one-on-one, hands on approach to learning is a result of the 12 years he's spent teaching and tutoring students, who've ranged from graduate to middle school. He has taught Social Studies, Social Science and English. At Mentoring, he will teach/mentor students in English and History. Steve holds a BA from California State University, East Bay in European and US History.

## Ralph Werner

Another familiar face, Ralph Werner, will official join us this year as our Digital Arts teacher. Ralph has over 20 years of experience working with digital arts and graphic design. He has a wealth of hands on experience having spent the majority of his career as an advertising designer for nationwide newspapers and magazines. Over the last four years, he has worked as an educator, teaching both adults and children in graphic design, drawing and illustration. Ralph completed his BS in Graphic Design & Illustration at San Jose State University.

## New Staff Members 2015



## Upcoming Annual Trips and Outings

### ***Astronomical Observing at Mount Wilson in Mountains above Pasadena***

In the 20th century, Mount Wilson Observatory was the site of most of the major discoveries about our Universe. It houses the 60 inch and 100 inch diameter telescopes which were used to research the nature of nebula, revealing that there are galaxies like our own located throughout the universe. Additionally the observatory has been the center for studying the sun, its magnetic fields, energy generation and composition as well as sun spots. We have secured one night on the 60 inch and one night on the 100 inch in mid November. Mentoring Academy's founder worked at Mount Wilson as a graduate student in Astronomy and will take the school on a behind the scenes tour of the installation. More information will be sent out as the date approaches.



### ***Extra-Ordinary Program***

This year, Mentoring Academy is exploring the changing relationship between the United States and Cuba by visiting...you guessed right: Cuba! Before Cuba changes, we want our students and staff to experience Cuba as it has been since the 1960's, while exploring Cuba's rich history and culture. We expect our trip to take place from Thursday, March 31st to Thursday, April 14th.

### ***Berkeley Rep***

We will continue our visits to the Berkeley Repertory Theater in Downtown, Berkeley. This season's lineup features some wonderful plays, which you can see by following the [link](#). So far, we have decided to attend *Macbeth*, which will be directed by Tony and Obie award winning director Daniel Sullivan, *Amélie*, *A New Musical* directed by Tony Award winner Pam MacKinnon and *The Hypocrites' Pirates of Penzance*, directed and adapted Sean Graney.



## Mentoring Academy

(510) 400-7696

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### Email List

Please note that all mentoring email addresses end in  
*mentoringacademy.org*

#### Administration

academic.registrar@  
accounting@  
admin@  
attendance@  
college.counseling@  
nonprofit.donations@

#### Information and Resources

alumni@  
headmaster@  
mapspresident@  
media@

#### Staff

deboravaneckhardt@  
dkeithmaher@  
garretmayer@  
janlewis@  
jeankaravidas@  
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