

October 2, 2009

Dear Heathwood Hall Community:

Given all that I have heard about Columbia in the near fall, I have to admit to each and every one of you that I did not expect such beautiful weather for another month. However, between the cool, crisp days, the sustained momentum of a wonderful start to the school year, and numerous stories of success from athletics (no, I am not going to curse our Varsity Football squad by mentioning anything about them), one could not ask for a more ideal backdrop for our Homecoming.

The tradition of Homecoming began in our culture as a way to invite back alumni and build a stronger sense of school pride. As we take inventory here at the beginning of our second full month of school, we find a long list of activities and achievements about which we can all feel proud and excited.

We recently learned that **30 students from the Classes of 2009 and 2010 have been named AP Scholars** as a result of their performances on the latest round of AP Exams. Our Class of 2009 included **two Advanced Placement (AP) National Scholars**, Pierce Jones and Caroline Plowden. These honors add to the many accomplishments of our recent graduates, who are featured in a commemorative issue of *The Highlander*, which will hit your mailbox soon.

Speaking of newsletters, we are taking a closer look at all the ways in which our school communicates, taking into consideration our commitment to continuous improvement and to becoming even more responsible stewards for our environment. This means you likely will see more electronic newsletters published with more frequency. When we do print, our publications will endeavor to earn the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Elemental Chlorine Free (ECF) seals. A new electronic publication, *Share the Story*, has been launched to swiftly and effectively get the word out about accomplishments and “bragging rights.” The first issue is attached.

Heathwood Hall has pioneered educational initiatives throughout our state and region, and I fully expect that we will continue to do so going forward. In that vein, we have engaged in a dialog with USC professor Joe Johnson about a new “response-evaluation,” web-based educational software system (see www.qrect.com, as in “correct”), which has led to a pilot software implementation program within our Upper School science classes to enhance

personal response systems now in use. We will expand the trial this spring. The **QRECT software** will eventually allow our teachers to ask multiple questions in class, have the students respond immediately (thus providing instant feedback of understanding), while “predicting” the answer (so preparation time by faculty may be spent elsewhere). We are quite honored that Dr. Johnson finds Heathwood Hall to be the right place to work on the K-12 version of this software, and we are excited to help shape what could be a technology that changes learning for the better. You will continue to hear more about QRECT in future communication.

Another alliance with USC involves sustainability. A visit by members of the **Sustainability Committee** of our Board of Trustees to the university’s Green Quad has stimulated rich conversation about our own school’s next steps in our environmental stewardship.

In our Lower School, teacher leaders have taken part in training for the **Benchmark Assessment System**, a comprehensive reading assessment program, and grade-level teams are now training for this system. Along with the Lower School, kindergarten teachers in our ECLC are implementing a new math program which uses **National Council for the Teachers of Mathematics** standards.

Our faculty continues to shine. Upper School chemistry teacher Sondra Wieland has added a second honor to the Governor’s Award she received this past spring. She is the recipient of the **Southeastern Region Award for Excellence in High School Teaching from the American Chemical Society Division of Chemical Education**. Intermediate/Middle School environmental science teacher and **Richland County Conservation Teacher of the Year** Todd Beasley successfully has written two grants totaling \$5,500. These funds will help improve our butterfly and hummingbird garden, enhance signs for our new nature trail and purchase additional plants for the native garden in front of our I/MS building.

The long list of accomplishments stemming from our science program will be the topic of our **Oct. 28 Ambassadors’ Luncheon at The Palmetto Club**. Held twice each year, this event is open to our full community. Bring a guest and hear the program, “Our Excellence in Science and Why it Matters.” To reserve your place, call Julie Horton at 765-2309.

Another exciting event will take place on our campus Saturday, November 7. Nationally-recognized author and speaker Ann Kulze, M.D., better known as

“Dr. Ann,” will be here to share how to “Feed Your Kids Right.” Register online through our website or call our Admission office at 231-7718.

Speaking of Admission, our **recruitment and enrollment season for the 2010-2011 academic year is at its peak.** Despite challenges from the economy, we are continuing to maintain our high standards for acceptance into our school. The more applicants we have, the more selective we can be. If you know of a family or student who would make a great addition to our community, please Share the Story and let our Admission Office know.

The resources needed to continue building on our tradition of excellence and leadership come in part from our Annual Fund. When our brochure and pledge envelope find you, I hope you will reflect on the gift that Heathwood Hall is to all of us.

We hope you received your car magnet touting “The Hall” this morning. A generous group of parent donors made it possible for us to present one to each car. If you missed yours, please get one at tonight’s game.

We hope you will always feel as though you are “coming home” when you enter the gates of Heathwood Hall. See you in the football stands!

Respectfully,

Chuck