



## Middle School Students and Teachers are Marvelous!

TAA's middle child-hood teachers are Mrs. Allie Faber, fifth and sixth grades and Mrs. Ruthie Vargas, seventh and eighth grades.

**Mrs. Faber** graduated from Southern Adventist University in 2014 and started her career as a private teacher for traveling family with three daughters ages 5-10. Last year was her first year to have her own classroom.

She taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in a Title 1 public school in Orlando, Florida, in an impoverished, crime-ridden area of town. This is her first year at TAA and she has decided "middle school is for me!"

Mrs. Faber says helps students thrive at TAA in several ways:

1. I am intentional about paying attention to my students' interests. I try to incorporate their current interests into lessons so they connect the material to their lives.

2. I teach my students the importance of being a good friend. We have had several in-class workshops on how to be uplifting and conscious of others who are in need of kind words. We focus on the positive rather than the negative.

3. We enjoy creativity in our class! I want to teach my students not to be afraid of expressing their

little kids anymore, but they aren't quite preteens. I try my best to be a good role model. I want my students to see that living a Christian life can be fun and is full of happiness, excitement, and joy." She emphasizes having fun while learning, teaching students to laugh at their mistakes and work cooperatively with others. Mrs.

Faber is also passionate about reading: her students have "Book Walks, introducing new reading material about relevant topics. It's like a movie trailer, but for books! I also share which

books I am reading." Mrs. Faber's favorite scripture is Psalm 34:5, "Those who look to Him are radiant. Their faces are never covered in shame."

(Cont. on next page.)



Mrs. Faber's fifth and sixth grade students are learning how to be good friends.

creativity, but to just play with it!

4. We talk about Jesus!  
The fifth and sixth grades can be a difficult age to gauge - and that is part of what makes them a fun age to teach! "They are going through a change in their interests. They aren't

## Middle School, cont.



Her motto is "Life is what you make it" a refrain she shares with her students on a daily basis.

**Mrs. Vargas** graduated from Southwestern Adventist University in 2010 with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and has taught seventh and eighth grades at TAA for seven years. This year, she has the largest number of students of any TAA classroom.

"I love the work that God is doing here at TAA, and am so glad that He has given me the opportunity to be a part of the ministry that goes on here!"

Mrs. Vargas applies TAA's "Thrive!" motto: "Thriving means there is security in the environment. A student must feel safe physically and emotionally in order to thrive. The seventh and eighth grade classroom is a place where security in learning is promoted," she

explains. To her, thriving also means positive cooperation with others. "At the beginning of the year, I take my class on a trip to the ropes course where they maneuver through a series of challenges and activities to learn how to work together as a team to help everyone feel successful at the end of the day. Each day we learn to support and encourage each other as a classroom family."



Mrs. Vargas practices "inviting Jesus into our classroom each morning and experiencing His love throughout the day. We begin each day with prayer. We spend time acknowledging the things He has done and the prayers that

have been answered." Her students take responsibility for their own work by monitoring their own grades and she gives them strategies for improving their grades. "I also promote time



management skills. For example, if we finish a class with a few minutes to spare, I encourage my students to work on any other homework that they have so that they have more time after school for other things!"

Mrs. Vargas' favorite scripture is Proverbs 4:13: "Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life." Both Mrs. Faber and Mrs. Vargas are guided by the Elementary Vice Principal, Mrs. Kim Bokovoy. As a team, they work together to make sure TAA middle students are well-prepared for heaven and earth!



## Korean Student Program

Twelve brave Korean children in grades 3-8 joined TAA on January 1, 2017. The students come from several private schools in South Korea and stay for two months to improve their English speaking skills. Brit and Jennifer Whittington have hosted 1-2 students each year for the five years TAA has hosted the program.



All of the Korean students spend one week in Florida visiting DisneyWorld, Universal Studios, Sea World, and of course, the white sugar sands and emerald ocean. The Whittingtons enjoy taking their student guests to many local Tulsa attractions such as the Gilcrease Museum to learn about Oklahoma history; Purple Glaze to paint pottery; scavenger hunts, and sometimes the trampoline park for those wiggly days! "There is a very formal hierarchy in Korean culture that does not exist here," says Jennifer, "so that is an adjustment for them."

She lets "her" girls cook meals ~ quesadillas are a favorite ~ and bake lots of cookies! Amelia Whittington has noticed that most of the girls who stay with them really enjoy eating a "bird in a nest" which is an egg fried in a piece of bread. The Whittingtons have kept in touch with many of their Korean guests and one has stayed with them twice. "It's nice when families send siblings back to us," says Jennifer. The TAA bus drove the students to Dallas for their departure the last week of February. Time to get ready for the next student exchange!

## TAA IN TOUCH



### NOTES

Teachers send notes home with students; please ask your student daily if s/he brought home a note! Notes, "Remind" and "OneCall" are TAA's OFFICIAL methods of communication.

### REMINDE

**RECOMMENDED:** Sign up with "Remind" for TAA alerts and messages about school closing, alerts and reminders. These texts are often grade specific and enhance your student's learning experience.

### FACEBOOK

**OPTIONAL:** Our Facebook page contains all of TAA's school activities and is a place for families to share how their students are thriving.

### ONECALL

**REQUIRED:** OneCall is used for global school events and emergencies and is sent to your cell phone. You are automatically signed up when you give TAA your telephone number at registration.

TAA has an online calendar on its website and a printed calendar in the main office.

Please call our office during school hours to leave a message for a teacher or if you have a question about school events. Personal texts to teachers should be reserved for emergencies only.

## TAA Volunteers & Staff: The Heart of the School

TAA is blessed to have over-the-top volunteers, support staff, board members and faculty. You learned about some of them last month, and this month we are introducing you to some more wonderful helpers.

**Jane Brazell** was the TAA Librarian for 22 years, then took a hiatus and returned in autumn of 2016. "I love books!" she laughs. She has an accounting degree and background, but always loved libraries. In fact, the TAA library is named after her. She credits the McGehee family for building the library; Joada McGehee was the first librarian, and it was she who purchased the books. As librarian, Mrs. Brazell taught each class how to use the library so they could easily find books using the card catalog, a job she truly enjoyed. "I love hugs from kids," she says, and enjoys helping students with reading when they ask. One of her favorite scriptures is Isaiah 40:3: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

**Lana McGehee** has volunteered at TAA for more than 20 years as a school board member, secretary, after school care and historian. For many years she worked at Mid-Continent Casualty in claims. Her husband, Marvin, attended TAA and her children Holly and Dan also attended. They have continued the TAA tradition with grandchildren Sadi, Attaly and Piper. Lana's motto is, "This too shall pass." She is fond of

Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

**Seth Marquette** has assisted with TAA's food service since August 2016 and became food manager in January 2017. He attended TAA in kindergarten and first grade. His motto is "never forget who you are or where you come from" and his favorite scripture is Isaiah 58:13-14: "If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

**Jamie Ruiz** teaches Spanish to our 11th-12th graders. Mrs. Ruiz graduated with her Spanish Language and Literature degree from a sister Adventist school, the University of Montemorelos in Montemorelos, Mexico. She has her certification in Teaching English as a Second Language and taught English at Cambridge University's satellite program at the Language Institute in Montemorelos. Mrs. Ruiz appreciates her students' politeness and their honesty. "I don't have to worry if they cheat!" Working with the TAA faculty is a blessing, she says, because they are "very organized and dedicated." Her teaching goal is that students "see Jesus in me" whether learning a language or just discussing lessons.

# Spring 2017

## Notable Events

Registration activities will start soon!

Mar. 3: TAA Elementary school visitation day

Mar. 6: TAA high school visitation day

Mar. 13-17: SPRING BREAK

Mar. 25: SWAU/TAA Gymnastics Show

Mar. 26-Apr. 11: Africa Mission Trip w/ Ozark Adventist Academy

Mar. 27: NO SCHOOL/ P-T CONF.

Mar. 28: 1/2 day school/P-T CONF

**Mar. 30: Registration/ Science Fair from 4-7 p.m.**

## PRINCIPAL'S PRINCIPLES!

Please welcome our new principal, Shaun Lazarus, to TAA. He and his wife, Marilyn, have been blessed with three wonderful children, Sharné, Michaela and Sean-Michael. Here is his story!

I am from the beautiful country of South Africa where I grew up in an active church with many opportunities for children and youth to witness. Pathfinding and Youth Ministry was emphasized and almost every child in the church was engaged in ministry. It was then I knew God would allow me to serve as a missionary abroad. I later served as a missionary in Taiwan, teaching English and Bible. This experience was incredibly eye opening: the world was thirsty for the gospel. Children and youth were the most impressionable and they came week after week to learn more.

I returned to South Africa and I married my dear wife and about a year and half later we were called to serve in Seoul, South Korea as missionary teachers. During this time, the Lord placed on me the burden to study further in the field of Youth Ministries. I was accepted into Southern Adventist University's graduate program. I pursued my studies in Religious Studies/Religious Education with emphasis in Counseling and Youth Ministries. I was led to serve in several youth programs in the US as well as Chaplain and Religion Teacher



at Weimar Academy. After serving in the US, we returned to Seoul, South Korea where I served at Sahmyook University as the Associate Professor in the Counseling and English Department. I returned to the US serving in a school in Tennessee as the Assistant Director, Principal and Counselor. I also worked as the Program Coordinator for a Mental Health Program in Tennessee.

God knows my work with children and youth is not over. My prayer is that God will allow me to exercise my leadership skills and experience at Tulsa Adventist Academy. With an amazing team of board members, school staff, parents and our church support we can lead our students to have a meaningful relationship with Christ and help them reach new academic heights. My desire is to help young people realize their full potential, to soar as eagles, to rise above the rest, to push through adversity and to emerge victorious in the Lord!

## TAA 2017-2018

RETURNING/NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION: March 30, 2017

RETURNING STUDENT FINANCIAL AID DEADLINE: March 31, 2017 (available on TAA website)

**TULSA ADVENTIST ACADEMY**  
**920 S. NEW HAVEN**  
**TULSA, OK 74112**  
**TELEPHONE: 918.834.1107**  
**[WWW.TULSAACADEMY.ORG](http://WWW.TULSAACADEMY.ORG)**

*TAA is fully accredited by the Oklahoma Private School Accreditation Commission and the State of Oklahoma Department of Education.*

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