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# AoC Times

## AoC Celebrates

### First Ever Unity Day

by: *Ivanna Gomez & Genesis Velez*

On October 24, the first ever Unity Day was celebrated at Academy of the City. It was a day of kindness and no bullying.

At an assembly, a few students announced the news of Unity Day with posters that had written letters of kindness. Students were told to wear orange on October 24th. To advertise the event, Ms. Orfelina Cisneros, AoC school counselor sent out an email informing students to wear orange and put posters all over the school.

About half the students wore orange shirts, bracelets, pants, and socks. At lunch, students took pictures at a photo booth with props. There was supposed to be a parade, but it was canceled because there was "only a little bit of time to decorate," according to Mr. Lee.



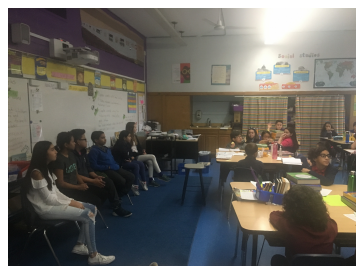
According to Ms. Leslie, assistant principal, staff members helped out with Unity Day. Ms. Leslie also helped with the photo booth. Ms. Cisneros thinks that "Kindness is people understanding each other and accepting people for who they are. "Let's hope that AoC has another Unity Day next year," 4th grader Sophia Giardina said. "My favorite part of Unity Day was that we all got to wear orange."

## This Season's News

### Alumni Give Middle School Advice to 5th Graders

by: *JonMarcus Diaz & Tenzin Tashi*

AoC invited former students to speak with current 5th graders about middle school on Election Day. The idea came from Mr. Noel Peguero, the school's parent coordinator and Mr. Lee to bring 6th-8th graders back to AoC. Mr. Peguero coordinated this event because according to him, "We wanted to see how they were doing in middle school and so they can be an inspiration to this year's 5th graders."



Current fifth graders were given the chance to think of questions to ask about the middle school experience. After the event was over, the current fifth graders seemed calmer about middle school, and less confused about what to expect from middle school.

Mr. Peguero chose Election Day because public schools were closed so it was a good day to bring the middle schoolers to AoC. Another reason Mr. Peguero brought the middle schoolers back is because he had done it in the past and saw that many current fifth grade students feared middle school and had a lot of questions. He thought to bring the alumni back because he thought it was a great idea for middle



schoolers to talk to 5th graders. This way, according to him, current fifth graders could get an idea of what middle school is like. Mr. Peguero added, "we did not pick the best students and the best behaved; we invited everybody, and all past generations of students."

The resources that Mr. Peguero used were phone calls to the families, as well as email.

### AoC Granted Expansion to Middle School by NYS

by: *Kharin Kozuru & Zhumsel Yoezer*

After much anticipation, AoC will have a middle school because AoC received a 5 year renewal of the charter and an extension for middle school by New York State ... but it won't be across the street as previously thought.

The two possible locations for the new AoC middle school are either in Astoria or Long Island City. "The middle school will most likely be in Astoria, as we are lease negotiations," said Mr. Lee, the Principal. Mr. Lee decided to expand to middle school because staff members thought it would be easier to enter a new middle school and parents desire it. Mr. Lee and Ms. Santacruz, Assistant Principal said "The AoC middle school is going to officially open

in 2020."

Some facts about the AoC middle school are that "It will cost about \$4 million or more" said Mr. Lee. "It will continue to be in District 30."

According to Mr. Lee, there will be free lunch service and possibly private lunch service. Recess may take place on a rooftop playspace with an option of other spaces as well.

Students will happy to know that there will be no uniforms, but there will be a dress code. This means students can choose what they wear as long as it's appropriate for school.

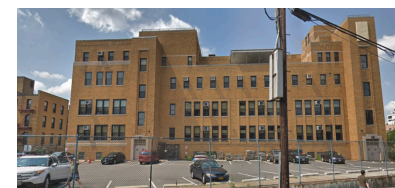
Unlike elementary school, there will be a student body president and a student government who will

speak up for the students.

There will be no bus service from 6-8th, therefore Metro Cards will be given out to students who live far away so they don't have to go through traffic every day.

Mr. Lee will not be the principal of the middle school as he will become the Director of both schools. Clubs will be twice a week and be similar to those currently at AoC.

Depending on which building selected, elevators will assist students who need it.



## Fall Trips

### ESL Students Become Authors

by Miriam Rosales-Hernandez



On October 31st, Ms. Purpi's 4th and 5th grade ESL students took a trip to the Brooklyn Superhero Supply Company to burst their creativity by writing and publishing their own fiction book.

The "store" was filled with all different kinds of superhero clothes, keychains and accessories. Mr. Nico, the instructor, introduced the students to his boss who was always grumpy and wanted to read an exciting story written by the students. Behind a secret door was a secret library. Mr. Nico took pictures

of all the students for the "About the Author" section of their book. He then brainstormed different parts of a story with the students (characters, setting and plot.) Students then gave examples of each element and voted for what to include in the story. Ms. Purpi helped by typing everything students chose.

Students then used their imagination to create a story about two characters; a loyal king and an evil piece of gum trying to rule Gum Land. While they created the story, a volunteer, Ms. Tati was drawing the books pictures. Students individually wrote their own endings and illustrated the cover.

With a special machine, Mr. Nico binded together the pages with the covers. Students left with their own published books. Ms. Purpi would love to go again "but wished I had to chance to edit the student's writing before publishing it."

### Students Enjoy Jazz at Lincoln Center

By Jordan Nieves

Academy of the City School 4th and 5th graders took a trip to Jazz at Lincoln Center in order to learn about Joe Williams and his music on Friday, November 2. Mr. Alan went as well because he is the music teacher and he organized the trip. The 4th and 5th graders heard a song with a piano, guitar, saxophones, trombones, clarinets and flutes.

Mr. Alan thought it was a good place to take 4th and 5th graders because "My father and I attended Jazz 25 years ago." Mr Alan knows a lot



about the musician because he met him almost ten years ago. He wanted to bring students there because "Jazz at Lincoln Center is the best place and students can have a great time." 4th grader, Jayden Naula said his favorite part was learning about Joe Williams. Third, fourth and fifth graders will be returning to Lincoln Center later this year for more music shows.

## Teacher News

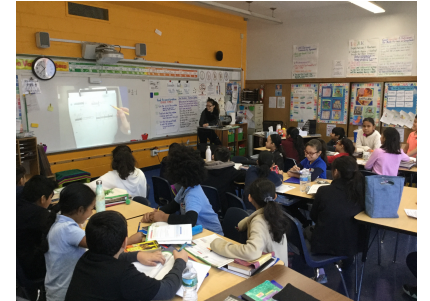
### Ms. Hu Returns

by Seydi Balderas & Aaliyah Hayes

After a 1-year absence, Ms. Hu returned to teach students at Academy of the City for the 2018-19 school year. She now teaches classes 5-208 and 5-207 in Math.

The reason Ms. Hu returned is because she "Missed teaching students at AoC" said Ms. Hu. "I got an opportunity to work somewhere else, so she left and was teaching adults. While she was teaching adults, she taught them how to teach kids how to read. She taught adults at 19 different schools.

While she was at her other job, she had to write a lot of emails, make phone calls,



and record all of things she did. She was very sad when she left AoC. Ms. Hu added that, "I prefer teaching kids rather than teaching adults."

Before Ms. Hu came back, she had second thoughts if she should come back or not. Ms. Hu is now very thrilled to be back at AoC as well as the students she teaches and staff.

### Mr. Alan Mentors Student Teacher

by Ashley Trivino

Mr. Alan has been mentoring a student from Ithaca College, located in upstate New York in his Music class. Mr. Morris is a student who has decided to go to school to become a teacher. He usually teaches classes, however sometimes Mr. Alan does. So far, Mr. Morris enjoys being a student teacher. "It feels exciting. I get to work with really awesome students," he said. When he teaches, he sometimes plays on the piano while teaching the lyrics to songs.

Other times, he just does what Mr. Alan usually does to teach Music class. Mr. Morris



began in October and finished up in December. Mr. Alan had only spoken with Mr. Morris through email before he came to the school. Mr. Alan feels good and a little scared since Mr. Morris is just beginning to learn to be a teacher and basing his teaching off him. "It feels both really good about what I do but, it's also a little scary," he said.

## AoC Hosts Mid-Term Elections



by Melina Simeonidis

On November 6, Academy of the City hosted the midterm elections in the AoC gymnasium with voters, volunteers and policemen.

In order to have a successful election, several things needed to be done, according to Crystal DeCarlo the Information Clerk. For example, the Information Clerk guides the voters to the correct table based on voters current address. Then they have to go to another table where volunteers give them the ballot. Someone else directs them to the voting booth where the ballots are scanned.

Ms. DeCarlo votes because “you are apart

of something special and important.” Also, according to a AoC teacher, Mr. Jessimy feels that “voting is important because it allows citizens to engage in a fair and Democratic process.”

Two policeman were in the gymnasium all day to keep teachers and students safe. There were about 400 people who came to vote before noon because it was such a important election, according to Ms. DeCarlo.

A voter, Jimmy thinks voting is important because “It gives you power.” According to Mr. Paul Ajon, AoC hosts voters from this district every year on Election Day.

## New Songs to Debut at Winter Concert

by William Kotsatfis  
and Songsten Lama

For this year's Winter Concert, students had a chance to work with student teacher Mr. Morris. The chosen songs span a variety of generations. He “Wants kids to be excited about what they are singing.”

Third grade will perform “I am the Earth,” and “Best Day of My Life,” by American Authors. Fourth grade will sing “Have it All, by Jason Mraz” “Fields of Gold, by Sting, (a student suggestion) and “All Star, by Smash Mouth.” The fifth grade will be performing “Count on Me,” by Bruno Mars, “Wake me up When September Ends” by Green Day and “You’re My Best Friend, by Queen.

AoC Times asked Mr. Alan a few

questions to get an inside scoop at what it's like to prepare for the concerts. “It's a process of asking other music teachers which song is perfect just for that specific age group,” he said. According to Mr. Alan, it takes 3-4 classes to learn a song, however, 5 classes would be needed to master a song. He likes including classic rock, like Green Day and the Beatles as well as traditional songs. He often asks other music teachers about what songs they suggest.

Students got a sneak peak at the December 14th assembly where the third grade previewed one of their songs.

## Fall Festival Raises \$2,000

by Luis Intriago and Ryan Khokon

This years Fall Festival, organized by the PCO, took place on October 27 and raised about \$2,000. Most likely, all the money will go to buying a new set of Chromebooks, according to Ms. Lopez, former PCO President. Since it rained, the location was changed to inside the gym.

The rides were set up by the PCO and parent volunteers. The rides came in all sizes and included bouncy houses, raffles, a potato sack race, and bowling. Some of the raffle prizes were dolls and a stationary set. The food included popcorn, cotton candy, and more.

It took about 2 months to prepare for the festival, according to Ms. Lopez. “There were costumes too!” said 4th grader, Abiel

Rodriguez. The PCO doesn't allow swords and guns; other than that, students could wear whatever costume they wanted.

The volunteers said “It was tiring because it took a lot of energy and work to set up the rides.” They were surprised that the gym was big enough to fit all the rides.

## Fortnite Takes AoC by Storm

by Tanzil Ahamed and Ronald Pacheco

Ever since its release in 2017, Fortnite has been a top hit. According to a survey of 28 students, 13 choose Fortnite as their favorite. The other games included in the survey were Pugg, Spider Man and Black Ops 4. An even number of boys and girls were surveyed.

## Ms. Bond's Secret Identity

by Zara Prasain



Have you ever heard of a teacher who has time to bake? Well, our own Ms. Bond is a baker and an ELA At-Risk Teacher. She balances her time and only takes cake orders for her customers and families on her website on the weekends.

(cosmopolitancaakedesign.com)

She first became interested in baking when she was 6 years old and has had her own business since 2013. Ms. Bond rents a kitchen, but does not have her own bakery. “I am a perfectionist and will re-do everything,” she says.

Ms. Bond likes making cakes to donate to organizations. She likes the fact that money from the cake sales goes directly to organizations for a good cause even though it can take up to a few weeks to make one cake.

Ms. Abdelal, K-2 ESL teacher purchased one of Ms. Bond's chocolate raspberry cakes for a baby shower. She said, “It was very good, I mostly liked the cookies because it was made from fresh ingredients.” “I love baking” said, Ms. Bond, “and will always love it.”

It's a very popular game at AoC. Mr Shawn Wyatt, when interviewed said “it's a pretty cool game.” He added “it's a kids version of Destiny.” However, Mr. Paul Ajon says “I think it's destroying families because people are spending too much time on it and not doing their homework.”

Fortnite is a battle royale game where 100 people battle to the death until only one remains. It is a game where you can buy cosmetics like dances and skins.

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**AoC Uses New Photo Company**

by Tenzin Tsering

On Friday, November 16, AoC students had their annual photos taken by a new company this year. Students of AoC did not have to wear uniforms and wore special clothing.

Over the past few years, AoC has been working with a company, Irvin Simon that requested money first to have a child's photo taken. But this year, AoC worked with a new company called Stomping Ground Photo who sent photo proofs through their website. (www.stompinggroundphoto.com) The reason for the change was that "we wanted different types of background photos," said Ms. Lopez, former PCO President.

The photographers set up their equipment early in the morning. At different times during the day, the students of AoC were sent to the gym/cafeteria to get their individual photos taken class. Afterwards the class photos were taken. Unfortunately, some children did not make it to school due to the snowstorm the day before.

Those students can get their pictures retaken on January 11.

Parent volunteers helped get the children of AoC ready for the photos and kept the photographers on schedule.

**"Behind the Scenes" at Picture Day**

One of the photographers, Nathalie S. spoke about what it's like to be a photographer. In order to get a photography job, "I had to take my best photos and show them to companies to get into my job." Nathalie enjoys her job as a photographer because "I get to interact with children."

After the students photos are taken, Nathalie explained, "All the memory cards with the photos are sent to the office. The office staff choose the photos that look best, and they email them to the your parents. Your parents go to the company's website and choose the pictures they like. Then your parents pay for the pictures online. After that, the photos will be mailed to your parents."

**AoC Cafeteria: Behind the Scenes**

by Livia Rosa

Have you ever wondered what the lunchroom workers think about their job? The cafeteria workers prepare and serve the breakfast and lunch meals that students eat everyday. It is part of their job to make sure that the food is prepared correctly everyday.

The chefs Luis Zhicay, Norma Tovar, and Rafael Devora have the inside scoop for you. They really like "seeing the kids enjoy the food," but "it is also really exhausting and fun." The reason it is exhausting is "because they have to prepare food for over 400 hungry students." It is fun because they get to



meet the students, and the students are really nice to them.

Many school cafeterias stay open for the Summer Meal Program. However, Academy of the City's cafeteria is only open throughout the summer for summer camp students.

Overall, upper grade students seemed to like the food they are served. Andrea Saenz, a fourth grader said that she likes the dumplings because they are crispy. One fifth grader, Aisha Kajosevic, stated, "I like the chicken because it's one of my favorite foods." Kendrick Arias, another fifth grader likes the broccoli because it's healthy for students.

In any case, students seem like they will continue to enjoy the cafeteria food for many years to come. Norma, Luis and Rafael look forward to continuing to serve the hungry students of AoC.

**Celebrating Our Many Cultures**

by Kalani Sanchez and Mariana Sarmiento



On November 16, families and friends gathered in the AoC gym to celebrate their different countries and cultures. Families gathered around tables enjoying food, clothing and flags from cultures around the world. The after school program performed

dances while students and parents socialized at the annual event that celebrates our differences.

Based on the crowds responses, it looked as if everyone loved it. Mr. Lisandro Santacruz said "he liked the food, but it was unfair that the kids could not eat any of the food." Some types of food were Tibetan dumplings, beef empanandas, huevo con cebolla (eggs with onions), and Dominican desserts.

Third grader Tristan Sanchez explained that "he liked the theme of all the Nigerian music."

The Boys and Girls Clubs of America at AoC performed a dance and each grade was assigned a country. The fourth graders danced traditional Indian and Colombian dances, while the third graders danced to Cuban and Nigerian music. Fifth grade performed dances from Tibet and the Dominican Republic.