

**AOIT Science Teachers Venture to Washington D.C.**



By Dahlia Kamel

This past summer Mr. Nagel and Mr. Derda spent two weeks at the historic Naval Shipyards in Washington D.C. They worked on the Naval Base at the soon-to-be-unveiled Cold War Museum. Teams of science, technology, math, and engineering teachers worked to analyze the technological advances that took place in the U.S. Navy during the Cold War. This fellowship of teachers learned about the Cold War, toured the submarine exhibits, and worked to develop online, interactive lesson plans that teachers can use in their classrooms and at the museum.

Mr. Derda really enjoyed the opportunity to work with other educators and contribute to the museum. Mr. Nagel agreed, also adding that the commitment of the U.S. Navy to keep our nation safe was a marvel and fascinating to appreciate. He continued, saying that the technological advances made as a

role in national defense. Submarines operate blind, feeling their way around underwater obstacles. They also operate continuously, generating their own oxygen, power, and purified water. They are basically self-sufficient small towns, carrying enough weaponry to contain an enemy attack solo. Mr. Nagel and Mr. Derda both



Mr. Nagel (2nd from left) with other educators in Washington D.C.

result of military needs are incredible. Both Mr. Derda and Mr. Nagel learned a lot about submarines and their

hope to return to the Naval Shipyards next year to participate again.

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## Microsoft IT Academy



By Tanya Qureshi

This year AOIT introduced a new course called Microsoft IT Academy (MSITA) and a new teacher, Anna Blancett. Mrs. Blancett filled Mrs. Cherry's position as she retired over the summer. In MSITA, students learn many advanced skills in the latest versions of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Publisher and Excel. They also have the opportunity to become certified in Word and PowerPoint by taking Microsoft certification exams. "In the MSITA class, we do an in-depth overview of the necessary requirements for the exam. Students will be more prepared for success on the exam than if they were studying on their own," says Mrs. Blancett, the MSITA instructor.

In addition to not paying exam fees, there are many benefits of taking the exam



through this course. For example, students can use the certification status on their résumés. "This enables students to distinguish themselves to employers and colleges," adds Mrs. Blancett. Skills taught in MSITA assists students in other classes as well. After taking this course, they will be able to create more professional looking digital assignments. As Mrs. Blancett explains, "It helps students with projects, presentations, papers, and business writing. In AOIT, we also do joint assignments with other classes to integrate the curriculum." MSITA will be very helpful in the working environment, where students are expected to type résumés, job applications, business letters, and presentations.

Halfway through the semester, students learn new Microsoft features, such as keyboard shortcuts and templates that can potentially shorten the amount of time taken to complete an assignment. All in all, MSITA is a great addition to the AOIT



**Mrs. Blancett**

curriculum, and it will help students in our ever-growing technological society.

AOIT students who took Computer Applications I will also be able to attempt certification during after school testing sessions. Mrs. Oster will send details soon.

*"This enables students to distinguish themselves to employers and colleges."*

## Teacher Spotlight: Mrs. Jumonville



By Carson Varney

Mrs. Jumonville teaches AOIT Multimedia and Webpage Design to sophomores at Apex High school. She has taught at our school for seventeen years, and she has been teaching for a total of thirty-five years. Mrs. Jumonville graduated from Louisiana State University with a degree in Health and Physical Education and an

additional degree in Business Education. Her second career choice would have been to pursue a career in law, but at that time there were not very many opportunities in the legal field for women.

Technology has greatly changed since Mrs. Jumonville started teaching; the first business education class she taught was with an electric typewriter. Mrs. Jumonville was motivated to teach because she always felt like she could explain things to others and help

her younger siblings with school work. "In order to be a teacher, you really have to want to be an educator; you have to want to pursue the career. If you're not called to this profession, it will be very hard for you to do," says Mrs. Jumonville when asked to give advice to students considering a teaching career. Mrs. Jumonville's favorite thing about teaching is being able to work with teens. "It's a very special age, and I enjoy what I do very much," she explains.



*"In order to be a teacher, you really have to want to be an educator."*

## Junior Transfer Student from Louisiana AOIT

AOIT junior, Zane Guidry, moved to Apex over the summer. Zane transferred from an AOIT program at Carencro High School in Lafayette, LA. Carencro's AOIT visited AHS for our Design Studio in 2008 and AHS attended theirs in 2010. Mrs. Oster participates in NAF's Internship Fellows with Kit Becnel, AOIT Director at Carencro HS.

**What brought you to Apex and did you choose Apex HS so you could finish AOIT?** I came here because my family was moving and yes, I chose it for the AOIT program. **Tell us about Carencro HS and their AOIT program.** Carencro's AOIT program was a big part of

the school. Most of the students in the AOIT with me were from out of district, where the school would provide busses for transportation over long distances (over 15 miles). Along with getting out of district students, they would also have Senior AOIT students recruit incoming freshman and talk about the program, along with having class projects for students to troubleshoot the school staff's technical problems.

**What do you remember most about Carencro's AOIT?** What I remember



most about Carencro's AOIT program is the friendliness of the people and the lack of pressure. You were not stressed about what you had to get done, because the staff's tone of deliverance was different than a normal high school teacher would have.

**What are the similarities and differences that you can see between the schools and programs?** Some similarities are of course, grouping AOIT students with other AOIT students and having similar classes. However, the

scheduling is different, in a sense of not having two branches of IT to go into, but instead having one general one for the entire Carencro AOIT student population.

**What are you looking forward to in the next two years?** I'm looking forward to getting to know more about technology, obviously. I also look forward to seeing what's unique about Apex High, and why it was recommended to me by Mrs. Becnel.

**What do you hope to do after high school graduation?** After graduation, I hope to find a job that's fun for me to do, perhaps in the same line of work as my dad, or even pursue my own interests, whichever may come to me that fancies my taste.

## AOIT Teachers Receive Borschardt Scholarship

Written by Cindy Francis and Susan Szep

After receiving a scholarship we attended four Saturday sessions at NC State to prepare for the experience. There were 24 of us participating in this study abroad opportunity: an interesting group of like-minded peers. Some were grad students, others were PhD candidates, and others were teachers like us, representing elementary schools, middle and high schools from around the state.

The experience changed our lives as educators in a variety of ways as we were challenged to become students. No longer were we

leading, but following. Good things come from being taken out of one's comfort zone and immersed in a different culture with a cohort of very smart teachers.

We were challenged to use a variety of writing modes, including expository, expressive and poetic. We were inspired by a variety of Web 2.0 tools to energize the writing process. And finally, we posted a portfolio of our work on the NC State Moodle site to be reviewed and graded!

"Ugh, you mean we are going to be graded? How can that be?"

The overachiever drive in us kicked in.

We alternated between days in the classroom and days when we took outings. We took several day trips by mini bus from Sussex to London, where we toured Charles Dickens' home and saw two plays, Portsmouth, Oxford, Chawton, where we toured Jane Austin's home, and Winchester, where we saw

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## Director's Update

by Julie Oster

It's been a great start to the 2011-2012 school year! We have 334 AOIT students in grades 9—12, a hardworking teacher team, supportive parents and both school and county administration, and an actively involved Advisory Board.

Over the summer Mrs. Farmer, Ms. Muse, Mrs. Smith and I attended the National Academy Foundation's (NAF) Summer Institute for Professional Development in San Francisco. We learned about updates to NAF curriculum, an upcoming NAF student certification, and gained ideas to improve our academy. Thanks to a nomination by John



DeFazio, our Advisory Board Chair, I was selected as one of three recipients of NAF's Janet Linton Leadership Award. You can hear more about it in this [WCPSS podcast](#).

Our freshmen have been busy with speakers, projects, and have job shadowing coming up Nov. 10. Our sophomores participated in the NCSU low ropes course/team building session in Oct. and the juniors

are busy getting ready for internships. We have 85 students in the junior class so please spread the word about our internship program. Our 69 seniors have all secured and some finished their internships and will be presenting them throughout the year.

Our Academy Support Team held a fundraiser at Scruffy Duck Car Wash in September and raised money that allows us to purchase equipment to be used by AOIT students and teachers. Thank you to everyone who volunteered!

As always, contact me with any questions—[joster@wcpss.net](mailto:joster@wcpss.net).

King Arthur's round table. After our day trips, we returned to the classroom and were given writing assignments based on what we had experienced. We then worked, often as long as 10 hours at a stretch, composing and trying new web 2.0 technologies to communicate our thoughts and feelings.

In the evenings we worked on our assignments. Some evenings, we cooked in the dormitory kitchen and shared a meal with our colleagues. Many evenings, we went out and experienced the town life in Guildford. We joined our classmates for dinner, walked to High Street to visit local pubs or do some shopping, and explored the town. We had the chance to attend church services in Surrey as well as Canterbury, the seat of the Church of England.

At the end of the two weeks, we decided to spend an extra two days in London. We saw another play, visited museums and the Tower of London, saw Buckingham Palace and the guards, as well as Westminster Abbey – which covers about 10 city blocks, Big Ben, walked through Hyde Park, and had dinner at a local pub that had "open mike" night, with the regulars leading the customers in song, accompanied by a gifted pianist in her 80's, who could play any tune by ear. We shopped the open markets in Piccadilly Circus, walked the Thames, took the Tube, buses and walked the soles off our shoes. It was great!

When we returned to the U.S., we met one more time as a class at NCSU to "de-brief" and receive our final



Mrs. Francis and Ms. Sze in London during the summer.

assignment. The freshman class just completed the unit we developed based on our experiences: *Learning About Other Cultures Through the Stories They Tell Their Children*. Students are using google docs for writing drafts and peer editing, and a variety of web 2.0 tools, including Toon-doos, Glogster, Prezi and Animoto to animate and deliver their original stories.

The trip turned out to be so much more than we expected. We saw so much, absorbed so much, learned so much. The biggest outcome is that we both learned that we are never too old to learn and try new things. We both feel energized and better informed about how to incorporate new technologies to meet the needs and expectations of our tech-savvy students.



Apex AOIT Alumni

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