

# Southwest Academy

NOVEMBER 2017



**THE MENTA GROUP®**

4018 N. 67<sup>TH</sup> Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85033  
(623) 849-8511

## **A word from the Principal:**

Southwest Academy is so proud to announce that we completed a state visit this month and passed with flying colors! It was so nice to be able to share the Menta philosophy.

We continue to focus on our Optimal Learning Environment which includes well-structured, instructional, safe, engaging and responsive. Recently we honored our perfect attendance and honor roll students for elementary and middle school first quarter progress. Soon we will begin second quarter benchmark assessments.

Our team is also working to ensure our students have community experiences. We were fortunate to have Don Mellon, franchise owner of McDonalds speak to students about motivation and achievement. Don met our students last year as they delivered flowers they grew to the elderly at a local nursing facility. We also treated families and staff to a Diamondbacks game this month as part of our team building focus.

We hope you will join us for our upcoming Culture Fair on the Eastern Hemisphere on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Sharon Makhoul, Principal**  
**Sharon.makhoul@menta.com**

# Providing dynamic, hands-on programming

## Elementary School:



Our middle and high school students gave out candy to our elementary school students so they could experience a safe trick or treat while displaying their amazing costumes. The best part was watching our elementary staff form a word wall with their created costumes. If you know anything about Menta, you should know that every classroom has a word wall in order to build our vocabulary and excellent word choice!

## Middle School:

Middle school went to St. Mary's Food Bank, the world's first food bank. The students learned that over 5,000 kids receive a meal daily from the Kids Cafe. Over 10,000 holiday boxes are provided, and over 500 food boxes are given daily from the one location. The students assisted in sorting out various foods that will be added to food boxes.





### High School:

Our high school students have been taking some great field trips.

This past month they visited the Post Office, AZ Automotive Institute, and 983KKFR Radio.

One recent trip was to Spectrum Video Film. Students made their own five-minute talk show as part of their experience. The students were able to learn about the film and video industry and each of them

took a role, as camera man, audio engineer, talk show host, writer and director. These field trip experiences help our students to explore their career paths.

**"No Refusal,  
No Suspension,  
No Expulsion"**

### Offsite Classrooms:

#### Tolleson Student Highlight:

Domingo is currently attending his home school of Sierra Linda, where he is successful in all mainstream classes. He checks in once a week with our Sierra Linda program teacher Tom Riley and instructional assistant Jamaul Armstrong.

We are really proud of Domingo and his accomplishments!

"I remember when I first came to Southwest Academy; I had a lot of behavioral problems. Since then, I accomplished many successful goals. My biggest key to success was learning to deal with the rules. I learned that these rules at Southwest were there to help me and prepare me for the real world. My success was caused by me being professional and taking action. When you are professional and take action, it will give you positive attention from good people and it will motivate you to accomplish the next step to success. By doing this it made me successful in Southwest Academy."





## **In the CCB Classrooms:**

Throughout the fall, Copper Canyon CCB focused on community experiences aimed at helping students prepare for the transition into life after High School. Students participated in 3 field trips designed around introducing the students to new careers and life on a college campus. The first outing was to Twisted Manez Beauty Salon where the students learned about Cosmetology, Nail Technology, Barbering, and Salon Management. The second trip was to Estrella Mountain Community College. Students who participated got to explore the campus and ask questions about the differences between college and high school. The last outing was to the 2017 Arizona Construction Career Days. Students who participate in this event had hands-on experiences in many different construction-related occupations. All three trips allowed the students opportunities to network with community members who are looking to mentor and employ young talent from diverse backgrounds.

## **Pendergast Program:**

Our fun event this month was making slime for science. We experimented with how to make the slime have different textures (rubbery vs sticky) and we experimented with the best ways to make different colors. We included the K-3 classroom and I allowed my students to teach the younger kids the correct measurements to get the "best" slime.

## **Life Skills:**



Life skill students have been working hard and earning money through Menta's point level system.

Each month students take a trip to the bank to cash their school paychecks and head to Walmart to buy items they have earned with their money. This month the students bought the following items with their money: a set of small arm weights to continue their healthy lifestyle at home, a new blanket for winter nights, a football, new sunglasses, a water bottle, a new card game, and a new video game.

All the students had a great time estimating the total cost of their items and paying with money at the cashier.

## Honors Assembly:

We honored the following elementary and middle school students for their great success.

Perfect Attendance: Arnulfo, Harry, Marcus

Honor Roll: Alyssa, Connor, Isaiah, Harry, Westen

Straight A's: Isaiah



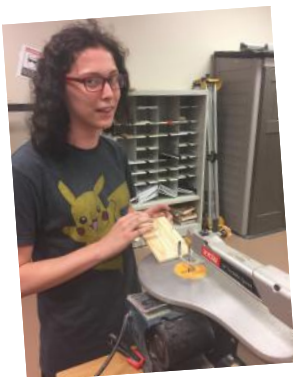
## Staff High Light:



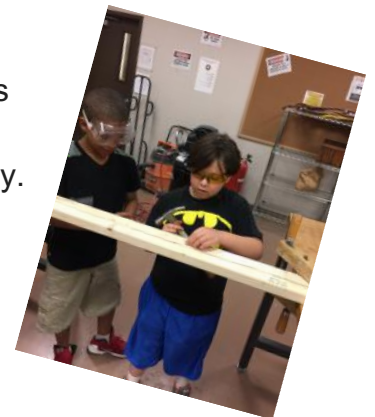
Mr. Luis Toledo has been a Menta employee since 1997. He started with Menta in Illinois and moved to Arizona with Menta in 2004.

Mr. Toledo grew up in Puerto Rico. After Hurricane Maria devastated his home territory, Mr. Toledo traveled back to find his mother. He had to hike 83 miles to find her. In order to accomplish this, he had to sleep on the ground and help others in the community to get water and basic necessities. He was fortunate to make it out of the country and to help his mother come back with him to the mainland for medical

attention and care.



He still reflects on the devastation he witnessed and hopes there will be relief for so many that are still left behind. We are so fortunate to have Mr. Toledo at Southwest Academy. His commitment to students as both our systems transportation coordinator and construction teacher are imperative to supporting students. Our students learn life lessons and hands on experiences through his daily lessons and interactions.



## Occupational Therapy Corner

Is your child a picky eater? Recent studies have demonstrated that nutrition affects “thinking skills,” behavior and health, all factors that impact academic performance. Nutritional deficiencies can also affect cognitive development.



Occupational Therapy tips to assist with eating new foods:

- Create a mealtime schedule and do not allow children to graze throughout the day
- For all snacks and meals offer 1 protein, 1 fruit, 1 vegetable and 1 whole grain
- Create a nurturing safe environment to explore new foods (never force a child to taste new foods, let him make the decision)
- Allow the child to spit out foods if he does not like it, have a “no thank you” plate next to him when tasting new foods
- Make meals and snacks with your child
- Try playing with food first, paint with vegetables, stack celery or practice math problems or handwriting in yogurt
- If your child eats less than 20 foods, please consult with your doctor to ensure proper nutrition for brain growth and development

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## Upcoming Events

- **November 22: No School for Students**
- **November 23-24: Thanksgiving Break**
- **December 7: Culture Fair**
- **December 22: Early Release**
- **December 25 - January 5: Winter Break**



This month's PBIS Focus is Professional Language.  
Students will focus on reduced inappropriate language and swearing.