



**ARKANSAS
SCHOOL**

FOR MATH,
SCIENCES,
+ THE ARTS



SEPTEMBER 2021 QUARTERLY REPORT

COVID-19 UPDATES

ASMSA leads both Arkansas higher ed institutions and national peers in vaccination against COVID-19.

HOUSING EXPANSION

Work begins on the \$5.5 million renovation of the former Chapel and Convent buildings.

VISUAL ARTS CURRICULUM

Campus seeks affirmation of new Program of Distinction (P.O.D.) in Visual Arts and Design.



September 9, 2021

To the Members of ASMSA's Community of Learning:

When the campus leadership team held our first planning meeting for the 2025 Strategic Plan in January 2020, we were excited about taking the next steps in charting ASMSA's future. Little did we know how much the events of the next few months would upend so much of the ASMSA experience as well as the lives of our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.

Instead of setting aside this project against the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we believed it was important to carry forward with these discussions. In several respects, our campus' work on the strategic plan in spring 2020 was often a grounding influence by reminding us all about why ASMSA exists, how we contribute to the state, and where we wanted to see the institution grow over its fourth decade of excellence.

A strategic plan should always point to what is essential about an organization. Over the past year where so much about school in general and the residential experience had to be reimagined, returning to these core beliefs and our mission statement helped to provide clarity for our work. The Year One Progress Report, which is included in this Quarterly Report, represents dedication of individuals across the ASMSA experience to the goals of the 2025 Strategic Plan. Additional details are online at www.asmsa.org/strategicplan.

I am proud of both our students and colleagues for the sense of shared commitment and the resiliency they demonstrated every day. How we pulled together collectively to keep each other safe and to preserve as much of the residential experience as possible demonstrates the special pride we hold in this community of learning. Moreover, the novel and innovative approaches to digital learning necessitated by the pandemic opened new avenues of exploration for how ASMSA can contribute to this space in the future. We're embracing the "new normal" in the year ahead.

ASMSA is positioned to move beyond the pandemic even stronger than before. We had the opportunity to visit this spring with several of the individuals who helped to establish ASMSA in 1991 by moving from an idea to a dream to legislation to a reality. To see the fulfillment of that vision decades later is a constant reminder of the precious opportunity that we steward and the tremendous responsibility we shoulder.

Sincerely,



Corey Alderdice
ASMSA Director

Office of the Director
September 2021 Quarterly Report
Corey Alderdice, ASMSA Director

By the Numbers

- According to a report from the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE) and Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), ASMSA leads the state's institutions of higher learning in vaccination. The mid-August report notes 85.8% of students and 82.1% of employees have received at least one dose of the vaccine. These numbers vary from our internal reports, which have each group at just over 90%.
- \$500,000 in ESSERIII funds from the American Rescue Plan were awarded to ASMSA. Funds will be utilized for updating the HVAC systems on the housing expansion project, enhancing digital learning pathways, and to support year-round student mental health services.
- Enrollment for Academic Year 2020-21 is 215 students. While this figure is lower than a typical year, there were two reasons for limiting enrollment. First, the school had to maintain some amount of on-campus quarantine space. Second, the move allows the Office of Admissions to normalize each cohort size as the school prepares to increase enrollment to 260 beginning in Fall 2022.

Facilities and Campus Master Planning

Construction on the Chapel and Convent Renovation for expansion of student housing will begin later this month. As a result of the pandemic, the total cost for the project was higher than anticipated. While ASMSA filed a Memorandum of Financing for \$4.5 million, the project has been revised to \$5.5 million. ASMSA was able to absorb this increase through institutional carryover funds, federal ESSERIII dollars, and some anticipated private gifts. The housing component is expected to be complete in late July 2022 with the Chapel/Auditorium space finished in early fall 2022.

ASMSA is seeking proposals from architectural and design firms for a new 8,000 square foot administration building. The project is estimated at \$2.5 million and would be ready in late 2023 or early 2024. The facility will move administrative functions (Director, finance, HR, public affairs, development, and admissions) to a new space while allowing faculty to transition from the Pine Street Wing back to the campus' primary academic zone. Project approval and design selection will be brought to the Board of Trustees at their November 2021 meeting.

ASMSA staff are also working our on-call architect on updates to the 2008 Campus Master Plan. Due to many of the choices related to the Student Center and subsequent projects over the past decade, many elements of the 2008 plan are no longer valid. This "2030 Vision" plan will look ahead at how ASMSA moves beyond the hospital complex into a true campus of our own.

ASMSA also continues negotiations with property owners in the block adjacent to Pine Street, Little Pine Street, and Wahoo Street for future campus growth. The approval of purchase of a block at the corner of Pine and Little Pine is expected at the September Trustees meeting. We are gathering information to have a discussion with the City of Hot Springs about a sale/transfer of the land behind the Student Center parking lot.

COVID-19 Update

Ongoing updates are available at <https://www.asmsa.org/asmsa-covid-19-updates/>.

While the school experienced no cases of COVID-19 among students on campus last year, the Delta Variant serves a reminder than even with robust planning and response systems that COVID-19 is a constant companion for educational institutions. ASMSA experienced our first student cases of COVID-19.

With the injunction granted against Act 1002 of 2021 and support from the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees, ASMSA was able to return to a campus mask mandate for the fall semester. We believe this simple and effective strategy remains the bedrock of how to limit the transmission of the virus on campus. ASMSA also maintains more stringent expectations on quarantine beyond ADE's recommendations in order to limit spread. The school has only nominally eased some of the campus restrictions in order to prevent exposure.

Visual Arts and Design Program of Distinction

When the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts became a campus of the University of Arkansas System in 2003 as a result of the passage of Act 1305, the revised enabling legislation added "fine and performing arts" in addition to the school's original emphasis on mathematics and science.

Faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders visited with similar institutions prior to the passage of the bill and even drafted preliminary thoughts on what resources would be necessary to increase enrollment while adding faculty and programs in visual art, music, choir, and theater; however, the lack of specific funding from the General Assembly to support this new mandate resulted in limited progress for the next decade.

With a change in campus leadership in 2012, the Director led a renewed conversation regarding this important component of ASMSA's mission. In 2013, students were first offered the opportunity to pursue a Humanities Emphasis as part of their studies at ASMSA. In 2014, the school hired its first full-time art instructor and expanded the digital arts instructor role to full-time. In 2018, ASMSA hired additional instructors for music and visual arts (with an emphasis on 3-D art). The increase in faculty support brought the division to parity with the Math Department.

ASMSA's 2025 Strategic Plan, which was developed over the first half of 2020, underscores the critical role that visual and performing arts as well as creativity and design will play in ASMSA's fourth decade of educational excellence. While the past several years have seen growth in programs and student interest, much of the approach has been to graft the arts onto a core STEM curriculum. Though this is a novel approach for some students with varied or interdisciplinary interests, the two-year experience does not currently provide students with a deep passion for visual arts sufficient time to dedicate to this pursuit.

A working group of faculty and administrators was convened during the 2020-21 academic year to begin discussions on the creation of a new visual arts curriculum. The group studied graduation requirements at peer institutions in other states, discussed existing ASMSA

experiences, and sought to develop a cohesive set of experiences both in the classroom and beyond that develop students' talents within and passion for the visual arts and design. Future discussions will focus on expanded opportunities in music education as well as speech, debate, and theater.

The Visual Arts and Design Program of Distinction model will be presented to the ASMSA Board of Visitors in September and the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees later in the year. The full Case Study is included with this report.

Arkansas Out of School Network Grant Request

ASMSA has been invited to submit a proposal to the Arkansas Out of School Network for special ESSERIII funding to support after school and summer programming.

In order for students to be able to access higher-level courses such as Calculus or Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science A, students must complete preparatory course in middle/junior high school or even "double-up" on a subject early in high school. The opportunities available in a student's district, therefore, determine whether a student will have the ability to access higher-level coursework.

ASMSA's proposal is to develop a Summer Acceleration Academy. The Academy will provide online learning in STEM disciplines that work to eliminate opportunity gaps that exist for student in districts across the state that limit students' pathways to advanced science and math coursework. By offering rigorous and meaningful courses over the summer, students not only can accelerate their learning but also participate in intellectual opportunities that stave off learning loss.

Planned courses include Geometry, Trigonometry, Computer Science, and Economics. Due to the online nature of the experience, we believe that the program can effectively scale to match student interest, though we would anticipate approximately 30 learning at minimum per course.

ASMSA possesses more than two decades of experience in developing and implementing quality online learning programs for students across the state and nation. ASMSA's blended online learning programs and education development initiatives have been recognized nationally by Code.org, the National Consortium of Secondary STEM Schools, Study.com, and several other groups.

Governing Council and Constitutional Committees

Director Alderdice has requested that the constitutional committees, with support from the Governing Council, focus their attention on the following topics in the year ahead.

Governing Council

The Governing Council along with a special working group drafted a preliminary plan for faculty advancement that was approved by the ASMSA General Assembly last May. We have spent time this summer reviewing the draft and have provided the group with considerable administrative feedback. The group should now work collectively with campus leadership and HR to reach a consensus document that can be reaffirmed by the General Assembly and then

presented to the UA System for feedback and eventual approval. In order to potentially implement this structure for FY23, the group will need to act urgently on the matter throughout the year.

Teaching and Learning Committee

Dean Flynn led discussions with this committee last year on the evolving needs of the Capstone Program for student research, inquiry, and creative expression. Questions regarding the experience as a mandatory requirement as well as the sequencing of the course remain unresolved and need to be addressed this year.

In alignment with the 2025 Strategic Plan, the group will also return to its discussion on Project75, which would offer ongoing remote learning opportunities for students throughout the state. ASMSA has more than two decades of experience and leadership in distance education. One specific challenge that must be addressed is how the program would add value to ASMSA overall while not detracting from residential enrollment. Answers to this question will come from discussions on the emphasis of the program, the type of coursework (AP, concurrent, other), and assessing the ideal student who would benefit from this experience.

Student Affairs Committee

Our Student Life Staff began work this summer on preliminary research regarding what athletics at ASMSA might look like. The majority of our peer institutions offer these kinds of experiences, and Admissions acknowledges that the lack of such formal programming does have an impact on recruitment--especially with male students. It has been some time since ASMSA fielded teams thanks, in part, to the partnership with Hot Springs World Class High School. The discussion would focus on areas of student interest, staffing models, costs associated with sports, and long-term facilities needs.

Finance and Facilities Committee

ASMSA's first Campus Master Plan was completed in 2008. Many of the choices associated with the Student Center and later the CIC have negated future steps in the plan. With facilities growth a goal of the 2025 Strategic Plan as well as the school now taking more systemic approaches to funding future projects, the time is right to approach the discussion anew with ASMSA's on-call architectural firm. A revised document will help to set the stage for finally exiting the hospital complex and what comes next once the City completes the abatement and demolition.

Mission and Innovation Committee

Part of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's commitment to the Chapel and Convent renovation for expanding student housing includes discussion on the second phase of the sophomore pilot program. While our initial steps have focused on acceleration, ASMSA also benefits from exploring a pathway with an emphasis on equity for low-to-middle income and rural students who experience opportunity gaps. HELIX 2.0 is an evolution of Project HELIX (Helping Elevate Low-Income Students to Excellence) that refocused our efforts in this domain through summer programs, admissions support, and even the "upwARd Promise" program. The group will explore the types of program and support HELIX students would benefit from in a truly

preparatory sophomore year of high school at ASMSA that would better position these students for the traditional college-level experience of the junior year.

With this enrollment growth--as well as aspirations to increase residential enrollment to 300 students--the group will begin explorations of what additional faculty and support staff will be needed to achieve this growth while working to make the case for equivalent state funding.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 1 (2020-21) PROGRESS

TEACHING AND LEARNING <i>Cultivate a culture of dynamic teaching and learning that empowers young people to identify their passions for research, inquiry, and creative expression, develop the self-discipline necessary for success, as well as grow in their identity as emerging practitioners and professionals.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Next Steps
Strategy 1.1: Continue to build on ASMSA's faculty-supported model for student research, inquiry, and creative expression while seeking out expanded partnerships that engage talented young people with leading scholars, professionals, and organizations.	Preliminary discussions focused on assessing the current Capstone model, which was implemented three years ago. Capstone experiences in visual arts as well as computer science petitioned to move to an integrated three-semester model beginning in Fall 2021.	Questions remain on if research should be a mandatory component of the ASMSA experience. Additionally, the Teaching and Learning Committee will explore the appropriate starting point for the Capstone experience (first vs. second semester).
Strategy 1.2: Fully embrace ASMSA's arts mission by expanding an institutional culture of visual and performing arts through encouraging student talents, abilities, and creativity.	A working group of faculty and administrators developed a new academic framework that allows students to place a greater emphasis in visual arts and design by taking two arts courses each semester.	The revised framework will be presented to the Board of Trustees this fall and heavily marketed as a new experience during the 2021-22 admission cycle. Students beginning this fall will take advantage of this new path.
Strategy 1.3: Foster inclusive and diverse learning environments through ASMSA's hiring practices, instructional strategies, and student support systems that remove systemic barriers to equity within our community of learning.	Professional development sessions were offered by external presenters on the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), digital learning best practices, and emotional intelligence. New job boards for organizations aligned with underrepresented populations were utilized for hiring.	The Office of Student Success as well as the Strategies team will look for ways to implement a consistent and intentional approach to student invention regarding academic needs, 504 plans, and other curricular challenges.
Strategy 1.4: Focus on faculty growth and continuous improvement by offering expanded professional development, asserting leadership in instructional strategies, identifying contact points to interact with fellow educators, and sharing our best practices with national audiences.	The Governing Council completed preliminary work on an advancement plan that will reward faculty both financially and in increased rank who commit to the components beyond the classroom. A key component of this pathway will be how faculty excel in both the classroom as well as their engagement in ASMSA's expanded outreach mission.	The draft advancement plan will now move to administrative review. The goal is to reach a consensus draft that can be presented to the UA System Vice President for Academic Affairs and General Counsel for final review. The earliest the plan could be implemented is academic year 2022-23.
Strategy 1.5: Provide valuable and engaging learning opportunities to students, educators, and districts across the state through a diverse portfolio of outreach, enrichment, digital learning, and educator development programs that involve all members of the ASMSA community.	Admissions implemented a revised MASH-Up (math, arts, sciences, humanities) Saturday enrichment program. The STEM Pathways initiative has hired a Mathematics Specialist to add AP Statistics to the existing portfolio of CS and biology educator development programs.	Next year will focus on program development and recruiting a pilot cohort for the Statistics Plus experience. Individual faculty members have expressed interest in developing pre-enrollment "pathways" courses that prepare students for the residential experience. Admissions will expand opportunities for field trips both to campus as well as using an outbound model.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 1 (2020-21) PROGRESS

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT <i>Maximize the full potential of the on-campus experience by affirming the centrality of residential life in creating a living-learning community that connects students beyond the classroom, assists in developing them as a whole person, and prepares these future leaders for successful and fulfilling lives through building sustainable skills and mindsets.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Next Steps
Strategy 2.1: Implement a Student Development Curriculum that focuses on social-emotional learning, leadership development, digital citizenship, healthy relationships, and other topics that recognize students' needs as maturing young adults and engaged members of a community.	The broad framework for the Student Development Curriculum has been drafted and is ready for a pilot phase in academic year 2021-22.	The pilot phase of the Student Development Curriculum will be implemented this fall with a focus on wellness, leadership, and healthy relationships.
Strategy 2.2: Ensure that diversity, equity, inclusion, and mutual respect for all characterize our campus culture and climate.	A series of conversations were held with recent alumni, particularly BIPOC students, about their ASMSA experience and the campus culture surrounding DEI topics.	The DEI Workgroup will resume their discussions to better understand student concerns and needs. The group has recommended a campus climate survey. One option may be Challenge-Success.
Strategy 2.3: Emphasize healthy habits as important components of physical well-being through campus programming and activities that support play, physical development, and balanced nutrition.	The campus fitness center was closed for the majority of the year due to campus COVID protocols. In lieu of facilities, Student Life Staff focused on a variety of outdoor programming to fill that gap.	Student Life Staff are conducting a feasibility study on participating in AAA athletics. Staff will work with the food service provider for sessions on nutritional programming and enhancing vegetarian and vegan options.
Strategy 2.4: Create an atmosphere conducive to healthy conversations about mental and emotional well-being by providing student-centered services and programs that address the natural challenges of both adolescence and the rigors of the ASMSA experience.	Staff continued to expand services and group programming in order to reach additional students. In light of the pandemic and campus restrictions, robust mental health services were essential. More than half of all students accessed mental health services this year, helping to decrease perceived stigmas.	ASMSA will use federal ESSER funds to add a Licensed Social Worker to the staff beginning August 1, 2021. Not only will this position expand capacity for mental health services it will also provide a greater point of contact and resource for 504 testing and support for families needing access to services.
Strategy 2.5: Invest in staffing models and resources that reinforce the professionalism of and essential role played by Student Life Staff who employ best practices in fostering an inclusive and engaging residential community.	ASMSA completed a transition to the new Residential Experience Coordinator model. These Master's degree positions ensure the core team of six individuals across each wing have depth of knowledge and professional experience in student support.	RECs will lead the way on the Student Development Curriculum. A priority for the coming year will be for RECs to foster stronger relationships with families while serving as a more direct conduit to students' experience in the residential program.
Strategy 2.6: Continue to involve students as full stakeholders in discussions on institutional policy and campus planning so that decision making is student-centered.	Campus leadership and the SGA Executive Board met on a monthly basis to discuss concerns, goals, and needs.	SGA has requested a pathway for students to better engage in discussions regarding academic planning, program development, and student research.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 1 (2020-21) PROGRESS

ENROLLMENT GROWTH		
<i>Expand enrollment to serve more students statewide through targeted growth models that reflect our commitment to stewardship of the public investment in ASMSA.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Next Steps
Strategy 3.1: Work with members of the Arkansas General Assembly, University of Arkansas System, and other ASMSA stakeholders to develop and implement a sustainable funding formula that enables the school to increase enrollment.	Local legislators recommended pursuing a manual RSA adjustment due to the unique nature of the 93 rd General Assembly's meeting amid the pandemic. New funding was not obtained through this means.	Campus leadership hopes to pursue legislation during the 94 th General Assembly in 2023 as part of the school's formal 30 th anniversary.
Strategy 3.2: Strengthen curricular options, methods of engagement, and unique experiences for students in the arts while developing recruitment and admissions procedures directed toward students with specific arts interests.	The revised visual arts and design framework developed this year represents a more cohesive and intentional set of experiences that challenges students interested in the arts while preparing them for college. Students excelled in arts competitions this year.	Admissions will focus on how best to position these additional opportunities within the arts to prospective students and families.
Strategy 3.3: Explore alternative enrollment models such as commuter options and online programs that recognize students' and families' individual needs, thereby increasing access to ASMSA's quality programs.	The Teaching and Learning Committee explored a proposal for Project 75, a digital learning cohort. The group chose not to pursue the plan for academic year 2021-22 due to lack of consensus on an academic model (i.e., AP vs. concurrent credit).	ASMSA will monitor new programs developed by NCSSS peers as well as districts within Arkansas to see if interest in digital learning exists beyond the pandemic.
Strategy 3.4: Continue the sophomore early entrance pilot program to determine its overall effectiveness and potential for future expansion as a means of supporting students in need of academic acceleration and intellectual peers.	Student persistence and engagement in the Early Entrance program is strong, and interest from prospective students remains high. ASMSA has admitted its third cohort for the 2021-22 academic year.	Work will begin HELIX 2.0 an equity model for sophomores that focuses on preparation for students with opportunity gaps in addition to the existing acceleration model. This work is in partnership with the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.
Strategy 3.5: Continue to ensure equity in access for geographically, economically, and racially diverse students who face opportunity gaps and do not share the same level of preparatory experiences and support as some of their peers.	Students both enrolled in the fall semester and admitted in the spring semester were consistent with institutional goals of 1/3 or more students enrolling from low-income backgrounds. Admissions reviewed peer institution efforts on shifting to test-optional or test-blind policies to promote equity in access.	The newest iteration of Project HELIX (Helping Elevate Low-Income Students to eXcellence) will be implemented in the 2022-23 academic year.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 1 (2020-21) PROGRESS

ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS <i>Strengthen internal and external partnerships with local, state, and national stakeholders that create committed and vocal advocates for the essential leadership role that ASMSA plays within Arkansas education as well as economic and community development.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Next Steps
Strategy 4.1: Develop a framework for alumni to share perspective and experience that supports students' personal and professional development in addition to institutional advancement.	The Association for Alumni and Friends of ASMSA (AAFA) continued their monthly steering committee meetings. The group held two Alumni Q&A digital sessions.	A transition in staffing will result in a new institutional liaison for the AAFA. The school must explore if this role will continue to be a nominal component of a job responsibility or if it could play a greater role in an FTE.
Strategy 4.2: Reinforce to legislators and other leaders the value of the state's commitment to talented young people so that the decision-makers understand their return on investment in ASMSA.	Families were encouraged to write their legislators during the legislative session noting the importance of ASMSA. Campus leadership hosted local legislators for a presentation on the 2025 Strategic Plan.	ASMSA should update its economic impact report that highlights the specific value of the school in both Hot Springs and the state. New data from the National Student Clearinghouse will provide better insights into college outcomes for ASMSA graduates.
Strategy 4.3: Utilize the ASMSA Parents Association and Parents Advisory Council to promote direct communication, gain insights on family needs, and represent ASMSA daily in communities across the state.	The PAC met monthly in addition to quarterly forums for all parents and guardians. Engagement remained high through bi-weekly Possip surveys.	ASMSA will seek ways to ensure parents play an active role in student recruitment for future admissions cycles. As pandemic restrictions lift, we will also seek ways for parents to participate in additional activities on campus.
Strategy 4.4: Expand ASMSA's position in the Hot Springs community as a hub for educational discussions, cultural enhancement, intellectual debate, and economic development.	While the pandemic limited opportunities for groups to meet on campus, digitizing the Arts and Sciences Café series has allowed the program to reach a wider audience.	ASMSA will explore a Cultural Enhancement Series that partners the school with a variety of community non-profits to offer joint programs on campus.
Strategy 4.5: Prioritize fundraising efforts to reflect the ASMSA Foundation's commitment to direct student support, faculty innovation, programmatic development, and facilities needs.	The ASMSA foundation made significant progress in expanding the number of endowed awards and summer fellowships. The foundation conducted an online Day of Giving in lieu of the annual spring luncheon.	With completion of the student housing expansion slated for August 2022, the Foundation will seek naming and other opportunities related to the project in the year ahead.
Strategy 4.6: Explore methods to reach varied audiences by using traditional and evolving media to provide a snapshot of daily life and learning on campus, celebrate achievement, and articulate a full narrative of the unique opportunities and experiences available exclusively at ASMSA.	A greater emphasis was placed in personalized communication with prospective students as well as newer forms of digital marketing. In addition to Facebook and Instagram targeted marketing, ASMSA utilized ads on Hulu, Spotify, and other platforms.	While there was hesitation to create fresh content this year due to the pandemic (and visual signifiers such as masks that would eventually become outdated), nominal projects indicate a greater emphasis on video content and even podcasting will be priorities for the year ahead.

SPARKING INNOVATION, IGNITING GROWTH
ASMSA 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
YEAR 1 (2020-21) PROGRESS

FACILITIES EXPANSION		
<i>Grow facilities and implement long-range strategies to meet the needs of expanded enrollment, academic experiences, student life, recreation, and community engagement.</i>		
Goal	Progress	Next Steps
Strategy 5.1: Review and update the Campus Master Plan to redevelop a facilities growth pathway in accordance with institutional needs.	The Board of Trustees approved Harris Architects as the school's first on-call architect. Work began on cost estimates for the facilities needed to move beyond the hospital.	As projects come into focus, the school should complete a formal Campus Master Plan that not only completes the transition beyond the hospital but also sets the stage for projects through 2030.
Strategy 5.2: Initiate efforts to expand ASMSA's dedicated arts facilities in collaboration with community partners that lead to the full realization of the school's legislated arts mission.	Preliminary discussions began with a group of community arts advocates regarding the development of a Cultural Arts Center in the footprint of the hospital complex. The project is estimated at \$16-18 million and would require significant private philanthropy.	Campus leadership will continue to work with this group while exploring the viability of a capital campaign.
Strategy 5.3: Formalize steps that will lead to vacating the former hospital complex by creating a plan to transfer teacher offices, maintenance, and other programs to permanent locations using new or existing facilities.	ASMSA completed cost estimates on a new Administration Building that will move faculty from Pine Street to the current Academic/Admin Building. Cost estimates were also completed on a Maintenance Shop that would also include the wood shop.	With available funding in hand, both the Admin Building and Maintenance Shop projects will be brought to the Trustees for project approval in Fall 2021. The goal is now to complete the facilities and hospital exit in 2023.
Strategy 5.4: Expand and create student residences as well as shared and recreational spaces to fully support the emotional, social, physical, and academic needs of students.	The design phase of the Chapel and Convent renovation included mindfulness of these needs. The first floor of the building will serve as the new hub for campus mental health offices and programs. It includes a new Student Union, a community kitchen, and large conference meeting room for group sessions.	Renovations on the chapel and convent will begin later this summer. ASMSA will obtain cost opinions and preliminary designs on a 40-bed dormitory that also includes a 4,000 sq ft fitness center.
Strategy 5.5: Advocate for the creation of a Public Residential Schools Facilities Fund by the Arkansas General Assembly that brings ASMSA into parity with other public high schools.	No progress.	Campus leadership will discuss this goal with local legislators in hopes of proposing a bill for the 94 th General Assembly in 2023.



VISUAL ARTS AND DESIGN PROGRAM OF DISTINCTION



ARKANSAS SCHOOL
FOR MATH, SCIENCES, + THE ARTS



THE NEXT STEP IN FULFILLING ASMSA'S LEGISLATED ARTS MISSION

When the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts became a campus of the University of Arkansas System in 2003 as a result of the passage of Act 1305, the revised enabling legislation added “fine and performing arts” to the school’s mission in addition to the original emphasis on math and science.

Faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders visited with similar institutions prior to the passage of the bill and even drafted preliminary thoughts on what resources would be necessary to increase enrollment while adding faculty and programs in visual art, music, choir, and theater; however, the lack of specific funding from the General Assembly to support this new mandate resulted in limited progress for the next decade.

With a change in campus leadership in 2012, the Director led a renewed conversation regarding this important component of ASMSA’s mission. In 2013, students were first offered the opportunity to pursue a Humanities Emphasis as part of their studies at ASMSA. In 2014, the school hired its first full-time art instructor and expanded the digital arts instructor role to full-time. In 2018, ASMSA hired additional instructors for music and visual arts (with an emphasis on 3D art). The increase in faculty support brought the division to parity with the Math Department.

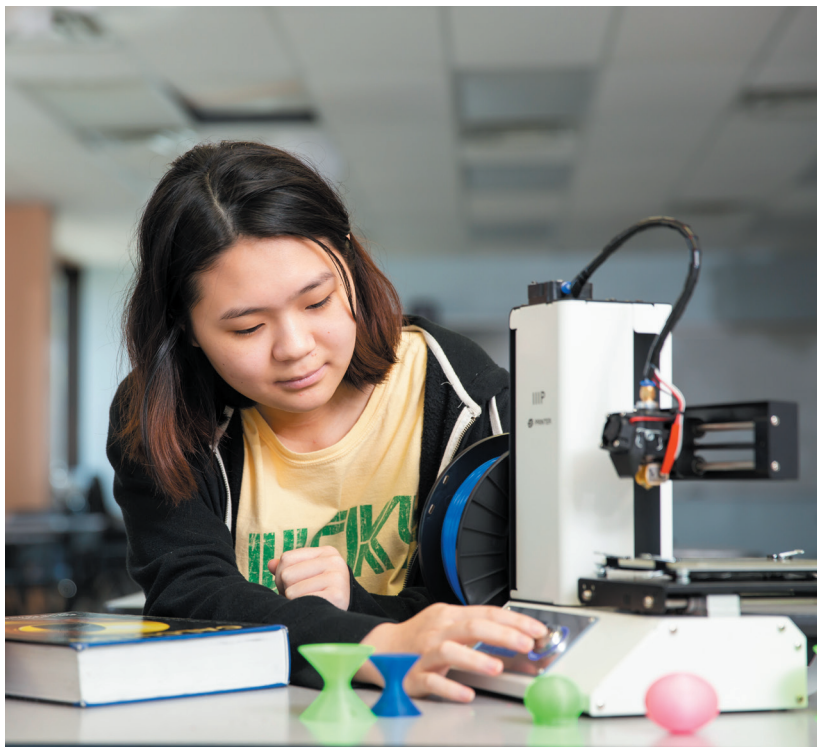
ASMSA’s 2025 Strategic Plan, which was developed over the first half of 2020, underscores the critical role that visual and performing arts as well as creativity and design will play in ASMSA’s fourth decade of educational excellence. While the past several years have seen growth in programs and student interest, much of the approach has been to graft the Arts onto a core STEM curriculum. Though this is a novel approach for some students with varied or interdisciplinary interests, the two-year experience does not currently provide students with a deep passion for visual arts sufficient time to dedicate to this pursuit.

A working group of faculty and administrators was convened during the 2020-21 academic year to begin discussions on the creation of a new visual arts curriculum. The group studied graduation requirements at peer institutions in other states, discussed existing ASMSA programs, and sought to develop a cohesive set of experiences both in the classroom and beyond that develop students’ talents within and passion for the visual arts and design. Future discussions will focus on expanded opportunities in music education as well as speech, debate, and theater.



WHAT IS A P.O.D.?

One of the more interesting thoughts to emerge from the working group's discussions was the development of campus Programs of Distinction, or P.O.D.s. So named for both their special emphasis as well as the school's dolphin mascot, P.O.D.s highlight areas of significant institutional interest and investment. While not a traditional "major," the P.O.D. does connect intellectual peers with a program of study that promotes greater depth of exploration inside the classroom, through the Capstone experience, and in community engagement.





PURPOSE

- **TO ENSURE** that the Arts component of ASMSA’s mission is as robust as the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics counterparts, with appropriate investments in faculty, courses, and materials to support advanced studies.
- **TO PROVIDE** access to students from geographically diverse backgrounds with dynamic opportunities to explore the arts within a community of learning. Many districts have limited resources to offer more than the basic courses required by the Arkansas Department of Education within visual arts. Those districts that do tend to be large suburban schools, charter programs with a specific emphasis, or independent schools.
- **TO CREATE** a talent pipeline that builds momentum from recent investments in arts education at colleges and universities throughout Arkansas. Generous private gifts to the Universities of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Fort Smith, and Little Rock ensure that talented young Arkansas artists can hone their skills and craft through immersive experiences after they graduate from ASMSA while remaining in the state.
- **TO PROVIDE** students with the time and priority to further their talents and explorations within the Arts. The curriculum not only ensures students have a foundational knowledge of visual arts and design but also guides them on a path to local, state, and national competitions that serve both an individual and institutional good.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Students in the Visual Arts and Design P.O.D. must still satisfy all Arkansas Department of Education graduation requirements, which ensures students remain eligible for the Academic Challenge and Governor's Distinguished Scholarships.

CONCURRENT CORE AT ASMSA

ASMSA's Concurrent Core ensures all students graduate from the school with at least 30 hours (one year) of college credit. Recent graduates have averaged 50 hours over their four semesters of study at ASMSA. We believe it is important that students commit to advanced study across the curriculum, including ASMSA's expectation that students complete at least two years of study within a global language.

FOUNDATIONS OF VISUAL ARTS SEQUENCE

Faculty have recommended a sequence of courses that align with most undergraduate majors and minors in visual arts: Drawing, 2D Design, and 3D Art. With the importance of digital tools for content creation, editing, and creating a meaningful online presence, one of three digital arts courses (Digital Photography, Graphic Design, or Digital Art) is also included within the foundational curriculum. The foundation sequence integrates the existing two-semester Capstone course previously required for juniors.

Faculty have also proposed a new course titled Humanities through the Arts as a replacement for the current literature requirement. In addition to serving as an introduction to music, painting, sculpture, architecture, and literature (drama and poetry), the concurrent credit course explores fundamental principles and ideas of artistic traditions and sensibilities of varied world groups over time. We believe there are opportunities to build the course as team-taught and collaborative, which aligns with ASMSA's commitment to interdisciplinary learning.

Finally, students will complete a Senior Studio course during the fall semester that focuses on portfolio building, arts as a profession, personal branding, college planning, and submitting to various competitions.

ART ELECTIVES

Students would complete three additional elective courses from ASMSA's offerings. Notable courses include Graphic Design, Modern Craft and Design, Ceramics, Digital Art, as well as further experiences in painting and drawing.



SAMPLE PROGRAM OF STUDY

JUNIOR YEAR - FALL SEMESTER

Composition I*

Bridge to College Algebra

Global Language (French, Spanish, or Japanese)

Humanities through the Arts*

2D Design*

Drawing

JUNIOR YEAR - SPRING SEMESTER

Composition II*

College Algebra*

Global Language

Science*

3D Art*

Art Elective

SENIOR YEAR - FALL SEMESTER

Trigonometry* or Statistics*

Global Language*

High School Requirement (Speech*, Civics, Economics, History*, etc.)

Science*

Digital Photography

Senior Studio

SENIOR YEAR - SPRING SEMESTER

Global Language*

Science*

High School Requirement

Open Elective

Art Elective

Art Elective

**Denotes courses available for concurrent credit that satisfy the Concurrent Core requirement*



ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SELECTION

ASMSA's current admissions paradigm remains focused on identifying, recruiting, and selecting both "transitional" and "transformational" learners. Transitional students come to ASMSA from supportive environments with a variety of preparatory experiences that ensure their readiness to transition to the next, advanced stage of their learning. Transformational students typically experience opportunity gaps due to socio-economic status, geographic location, or other factors. These students often have underdeveloped potential and benefit from a change to their trajectory afforded by attending ASMSA thanks to the school's residential experience and support programs. The goal for both groups is for these learners to experience significant growth during their time at ASMSA.

Faculty believe that standard admissions requirements should remain in place, which is important for concurrent enrollment eligibility. This includes a 19 composite ACT score as well as 19s in the four subcategories of English, mathematics, science, and reading. Average students admitted to ASMSA score above a 26 on the national standardized exam. Competitive applicants generally have at least

a 22 composite score. GPA remains important as a measure of work ethic with students earning above a 3.5 more likely to be admitted than those who meet the minimum 3.25 unweighted GPA requirement.

Submission of a competitive portfolio of previous

works does not appear to be a priority when evaluating admission for this P.O.D. pathway. Faculty believe that students should submit 3-5 works to help assess student interest and ability as well as to set a benchmark for their growth. With opportunity gaps in mind, the goal is not to be overly restrictive in who gains access to the program. Certainly, this step will help to identify promising candidates, but it must be combined with other measures of academic readiness, interest, and program commitment.

Students would be asked to commit to the Arts curriculum and graduation requirements. Due to the numerous requirements associated with this track, the only opportunity to

transition to the College Bridge pathway would be after the fall semester of junior year. This ensures sufficient time to complete the other institutional graduation requirements.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMPETITION AND SHOWCASE

Building a robust portfolio of student works as well as showcasing pieces at the annual Arts and Humanities Capstone Symposium each May are essential elements of the proposed experience. The department hosts a variety of smaller displays and gallery exhibitions throughout the year.

ASMSA has enjoyed success in recent years in state

competitions such as the Thea Foundation scholarship program, Governor's Young Artists Awards, and Congressional Art Competition. Faculty, Student Success Coordinators, and administrators should seek out additional state, regional, and national competitions such as YoungArts that bring further distinction to students and the school.



EXPANDED PARTNERSHIPS

As noted previously, ASMSA must strengthen relationships with collegiate art departments and programs across the state. Access to guest speakers, specialized studios, and enrollment pipelines are of great importance for framing ASMSA as an essential component of the arts education ecosystem in the state.

Hot Springs is known for its local arts community. Additional collaboration with the Hot Springs Area Cultural Alliance, Arts in the Park, and individual artists present the chance to better engage with the local community and strengthen relationships with community advocates.

ASMSA must continue to build on relationships with philanthropic individuals and organizations interested in arts education. Areas of recent discussion have

included an arts endowment, program support, as well as visiting artist programs. The visiting artist program should be explored in greater depth, offering semester, summer, or shorter-stay visiting opportunities. ASMSA may also wish to consider adjunct opportunities that draw on expertise outside of existing faculty until the program increases in size.

Much like ASMSA plays a sizable role in the National Consortium of Secondary STEM Schools (NCSSSS), the school must also seek opportunities for collaboration and leadership within the Arts Schools Network (ASN). In addition to community-building and professional development, ASN offers annual recognition programs in a variety of categories, though particularly through the Exemplary School Program.



ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON GROWTH

- At what point does the department reach a scale and identity that it should separate from the Humanities Department? The current department is the largest of three at ASMSA and includes the most diverse array of topics.
- With the creation of the Program of Distinction format as well as increased student interest, ASMSA will soon be in need of additional faculty in both art and music. Within visual arts, a specialist in representational painting and drawing will serve as a complement to existing faculty specializations. A music instructor with dual emphases in piano, guitar, or even choir/vocal music could build on the existing ensembles and music theory courses.
- An ideal cohort for each cycle would be in increments of 10 students. A robust program would serve at least 20 new students in each cycle. This format does not preclude students outside of the P.O.D. from taking art classes. Instead, the department must further explore pathways that promote engagement and opportunities in the Arts for all ASMSA students.
- Can ASMSA secure enrollment growth funding from the Arkansas General Assembly or the Arkansas Department of Education that increases the number of students attending for the Arts beyond the current scale? This discussion folds into broader aspirations about enrollment growth, program formats, and ASMSA's mission to serve students and educators throughout the state.
- Should opportunities for summer study be available to students? Is this a pathway to house students on campus and create apprenticeship opportunities with local artists?
- How can ASMSA better create art courses that draw in STEM students? Such courses could include user experience (UX), design, architecture, information design, and interdisciplinary topics the connect art to engineering, computer science, and other fields.
- Should ASMSA offer experiential courses within visual arts that are developed specifically as "point of entry" classes for students who wish to electively explore art but do not share the same focus or emphasis as those for whom it is their primary area of study?



**ARKANSAS
SCHOOL**

FOR MATH,
SCIENCES,
+ THE ARTS

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Academic Affairs
September 2021 Quarterly Report
Stuart Flynn, Dean of Academics

For the first time since the summer of 2019, ASMSA hosted CARC (College Algebra Readiness Camp) on campus from July 11-23 for incoming ASMSA students with demonstrated need for additional work in math. Student orientation followed soon after from August 9-13, and we began classes on August 16. As we committed to the residential experience for the 2021-22 school year, all students began the year on campus. Although we did not offer a dedicated remote learning option this school year, we have continued to use remote learning resources for any student whose attendance is compromised by health issues, and throughout the school year we will continue to discuss remote learning options.

By the Numbers

- Seven semifinalists in the 2022 National Merit Scholarship competition.
- Two additions to the Academic Team: Former SSC, Bret Vallun, has taken on a new position, Associate Dean of College Counseling, and Rachel Smith has joined the ASMSA staff as Head Librarian.
- One new Math Specialist, Tracy Watson, who teaches courses to ASMSA students and works in ASMSA's STEM Pathways program.
- 215 students to start the 2021-22 school year, including 106 seniors, 90 juniors, and 19 sophomores.

Academic Interventions

This year we have implemented a new academic support plan designed to intervene early in the semester when students fall behind on assignments or perform poorly on tests. Students who accumulate just two missing assignments, at any point in the semester, must attend a monitored study hall to complete those assignments and also attend study hours in the CIC Study Center where peer mentors are available. For those students with recurring late work issues who are struggling to keep up, SSCs will offer lessons on time management and prioritization.

At the first D or lower on a major test/paper/assignment, students must meet with the teacher to discuss the issues and must report back to the SSC. The SSC will follow up with the teacher and will contact the student's parent/guardian to discuss the issues and strategies for improvement. The student must also attend tutoring.

At the first progress report of each semester, any student with a D or lower in a course must meet with the teacher and the SSC (a mini staffing) to discuss the issues and strategies for improvement, and the student must attend tutoring with the teacher. This includes parent/guardian contact, which is an element of each step in the plan as we attempt to coordinate teachers, support staff, and families to address academic issues.

Capstone Programs

We continue to reassess our Capstone offerings and how those courses are organized. Recently, we restructured the Art Capstone to better reflect the organic art-making process. Instead of taking a 7th period Art Capstone course during Fall and Spring of the Junior year, art students work through a sequence of fundamental courses, beginning with Drawing and 2D Design, where they will produce art while working with different art instructors in different courses. In addition, going forward, the Computer Science Capstone will begin work during the Spring Semester instead of Fall, though students who plan to pursue the Computer Science Capstone must commit to that track when they schedule courses for the Fall Semester. Two groups are central to ongoing discussions and meet regularly: the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Capstone Working Group, which includes Capstone instructors and the Dean of Academics.

Remote Learning

During the 2020-21 school year we offered three different kinds of instructional delivery: in-person, hyflex (including both remote and on-campus students in the same course), and fully remote, and we maintain hyflex capability now to accommodate students who are at home for medical reasons or quarantined on campus. As we began planning for the 2021-22 school year, both the University of Arkansas system and ADE emphasized the importance of in-person instruction, and we committed to bring all students to campus for the full residential experience. However, we continue to evaluate the possibility of a fully remote instructional option for Spring, and those discussions are ongoing with our Covid Working Group, the Teaching and Learning Committee, and the entire faculty.

STEM Pathways

ASMSA's STEM Pathways program began in 2015 with the creation of the Coding Arkansas' Future initiative. That program offered high schools across the state the opportunity to expand computer science curricula while receiving guidance and professional development from ASMSA staff members. While ASMSA instructors taught some computer science courses for schools through digital learning, the main emphasis was preparing educators to become computer science teachers.

The program expanded in recent years to offer a middle school coding block and the Advanced Biology program. In the Advanced Biology program, instructors around the state receive professional development from ASMSA's life science instructors in the instruction of AP Biology. ASMSA's biology teachers guide camps prior to the beginning of the school year. They then help educators prepare their curriculum for the year and provide unique lab learning activities that the individual schools may not be able to offer otherwise.

The success of those programs led ASMSA to add AP Statistics to the STEM Pathways program, and that resulted in hiring Tracy Watson as a Math Specialist. Though she is teaching math courses for ASMSA students, her primary focus will be to prepare high school educators across the state to offer AP Statistics at their schools.

Japanese Language Program

ASMSA's commitment to Japanese language learning continues this year as we welcome to campus Miyu Sugimoto who will work closely with ASMSA's full-time Japanese instructor, Elizabeth Brown. The experience is part of J-LEAP. The Japanese Language Education Assistant Program (J-LEAP) brings native Japanese language Assistant Teachers (ATs) to U.S. K-12 educational institutions for up to two years. Team-teaching together with a Lead Teacher, the AT becomes a more confident and qualified Japanese language instructor while helping to strengthen their host school's program in the process. The program is offered at no cost through a partnership between The Japan Foundation and Laurasian Institution

Office of Student Life
September 2021 Quarterly Report
Rheo Morris, Ph.D., Dean of Students

The ASMSA Office of Residence Life welcomed our students to campus in August under the theme of “Back and Better than Ever.” Over the summer, we resumed camps and conferences after having a pause last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Student Life team expanded with the addition of Maddisyn Karn as the Licensed Social Worker. At present we are preparing for the homecoming celebrations, Fall break and Halloween.

By the Numbers

- One new camp chose ASMSA as their new home. 35 campers and staff attended the Transition Employment Program’s (TEP) camp.
- One new position was created in the Office of Student Life. By utilizing ESSER III funding, we were able to expand our mental health offerings with the addition of a Licensed Social Worker.
- ASMSA ranks first in vaccinated employees amongst 2- and 4-year institutions in the state (17 reported numbers).
- ASMSA ranks first in vaccinated students amongst 2- and 4-year institutions in the state (18 reported numbers).

TEP

TEP is a comprehensive program designed to assist high school students with disabilities that have completed the 11th grade in discovering their skills, abilities, interests, strengths, and career goals through extensive assessments, job readiness skills, and an introduction to the world of work. ASMSA’s employees participated as site managers for on the job training for the participants.

The addition of TEP as a summer camp offers ASMSA the opportunity to collaborate with the Arkansas Department of Commerce’s Division of Workforce Services.

Residential Curriculum

The Residential Life staff will focus programming, events, and interactions based on Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

The Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts Residence Life’s educational priority is to support students living in the residential communities by engaging residents through learning about (1) self-awareness, (2) self-management, (3) social awareness, (4) relationship skills, (5) responsible decision-making. The curriculum has been crafted using the Whole Child philosophy, with the understanding that teaching social-emotional learning and building social-emotional skills will lead to a more stable, successful young adult. By providing a premiere living and learning environment, ASMSA Residence Life hopes to holistically develop residents who are civically engaged scholars and leaders.

Seizure Training for School Personnel

The Residential Life staff completed seizure training from the Epilepsy Foundation. This program provides an overview of seizures and epilepsy, seizure first aid, seizure action plans, rescue therapies, seizure emergencies and how to support students in school settings.

The course is appropriate for school nurses, teachers, aides, coaches, administrators and anyone who works in a school setting.

Office of Admissions and Outreach
September 2021 Quarterly Report
Charlie Feick, Director of Admissions

After having to pause our summer programming last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ASMSA Office of Admissions and Outreach was able to successfully provide our free on campus summer camps for rising sophomores this year. Outreach Coordinator, Amy Brown-Westmoreland, also piloted our first “Field Trip to You” program for middle and junior high school students this past summer. The Admissions team expanded with the addition of Lisa Collins and Adrienne Conley as Recruiters. At present we are preparing for the launch of the next cycle including recruiting the first cohort of students for the H.E.L.I.X. Prep Academy.

By the Numbers

- Fifty-nine students attended our four on campus summer camps and ten students attended our two virtual summer camp workshops. 153 applications were received for our sixty available spots.
- “Field Trip to You” was piloted in two of our most underrepresented counties. Seven students attended our July 8th program in Dallas county and four attended our July 16th program in Cleveland County.
- Two recruiters joined the Admissions and Outreach team in August, one filling an open vacancy and the other added in preparation for enrollment growth as we add 24 additional beds through the renovation of the historic Chapel and Convent buildings and launch the H.E.L.I.X. Prep Academy
- We exhibited at two conferences: EAST Seminar in Fort Smith and the 2021 ArSCA & DESE Counselor's Conference in Hot Springs. We connected with 40 of the EAST Seminar attendees and 61 of the ArSCA & DESE Counselor's Conference attendees.

Summer Camps

ASMSA was able to resume our successful summer camp programming for rising sophomores this year under a reduced capacity model due to the ongoing pandemic. These camps not only serve the state by providing academic enrichment opportunities to students throughout the state, they also function as one of our strongest recruitment opportunities. After spending a week on campus engaging with academically motivated peers and current ASMSA students serving as camp counselors, many campers opt to apply to the residential program.

Four camps took place between June 27th and July 2nd: Studio Art Camp, Research in the Park, Computer Science Camp, and Biomedical Sciences Summer Institute. Biomedical SSI was made possible through an AEGIS grant from the Arkansas Department of Education. We received 153 applications for our sixty available spots. Because the interest far exceeded the available capacity we offered two virtual one day workshops during the third week of July, one in creative writing and one in biomedical sciences. Ten of the students who were not selected for an in person camp were able to participate in one of our virtual workshops. A camp reunion is scheduled for Saturday, September 11th.

Field Trip to You

As stated in our mission it is ASMSA's aim to serve as a "statewide center of academic equity and opportunity that ignites the full potential of Arkansas' students" of all backgrounds from throughout the state. In recognition that it is not feasible for every school in the state to come to the ASMSA campus for our traditional field trip program, the Office of Admissions and Outreach has begun to create fieldtrip kits that we can take directly to communities throughout the state. Over the summer a CSI themed kit was created and coordinated by both Amy Brown-Westmoreland, our Outreach Coordinator, and Deana Hughes, our Admissions Coordinator, who has many years of experience in informal science education including working as an Educator at the Mid-America Science Museum and as a naturalist and avian behaviors trainer.

For the initial rollout of our CSI themed kit we sought out groups of four to eight students to participate and provide feedback. There are four counties that have been consistently underrepresented in our residential program—Cleveland, Dallas, Lafayette, and Prairie. Each of these has less than 8,000 residents and fall within the ten least populated counties in the state. In order to strengthen connections with those areas of the state we opted to pilot the "Field Trip to You" program in those specific counties. Outreach Coordinator, Amy Brown-Westmoreland, reached out to the schools and public libraries in the four counties and successfully coordinated piloting the program in Dallas county at Fordyce High School and in Cleveland county at the Roy & Christine Sturgis Library of Cleveland County. The program was very positively received. Teachers at Fordyce High School requested us to come back to do additional programming; in particular, they would like us to develop an English Language Arts based field trip kit. The library in Cleveland county also invited us to return again next summer.

H.E.L.I.X. Prep Academy

The Early Entrance pilot program welcomed its third cohort to campus this August. The first cohort is now in the senior class. While we will have a more robust picture of the outcomes of this entrance pathway after the full five-year pilot phase, many positives have been observed thus far. As a next step in expansion to sophomore access to the residential campus we will begin recruiting our first cohort for the H.E.L.I.X. Prep Academy. H.E.L.I.X. Prep Academy builds upon the success of other programs targeted to assist low-income students and reduce "excellence gaps" including the original Project HELIX (Helping Elevate Low-Income Students to Excellence) and the upwARd Promise. The H.E.L.I.X. Prep Academy offers a transitional year at the school that better prepares students who have experienced opportunity gaps for readiness to succeed within the school's "college bridge" environment beginning in their junior year.

Office of Institutional Advancement
September 2021 Quarterly Report
Sara Brown, Ph.D., Director of Institutional Advancement

The ASMSA Office of Institutional Advancement ended the 2021 fiscal year on a positive note despite Covid-19 challenging in-person meetings and events. The ASMSA Foundation Fund increased by \$268,596 due to the generosity of our donors and investment strategies of the University of Arkansas Foundation, Inc. The Office of Institutional Advancement has connected with alumni, donors, and sponsors through our Day of Giving and Annual Golf Classic events. In addition, we continue to work with external stakeholders through grant opportunities that support ASMSA programs and students.

By the Numbers

- The University of Arkansas Foundation, Inc. Statement of Activities Report for fiscal year 2021 (7/1/20 through 6/30/21) includes total gifts received of \$124,618, total interest received of \$143,978, and a total fund balance of \$975,381.
- ASMSA Foundation's Day of Giving raises \$20,232.
- Annual report letters highlighting donor contributions and the 2025 Strategic Plan were sent to 415 donors from the ASMSA Foundation.
- 8th Annual Arkansas Fall Golf Classic currently has 30 sponsors and 24 teams.

Give with Porpoise

The annual Community of Learning Luncheon event was cancelled due to Covid-19. To replace this event, we hosted the *Give with Porpoise* Day of Giving on May 13. We shared ASMSA student spotlight videos, as well as messages from the Director and Advancement Office. With 129 in total pledges from our donors, we raised \$20,232 for our annual fund.

2021 Arkansas Fall Golf Classic

The 8th annual Arkansas Fall Golf Classic event will be hosted by the Greater Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce on Friday, October 1 at the Hot Springs Country Club. We are currently working on sponsorships and team commitments. The game of golf has been socially distancing for years but we have been mindful to make changes for our participants' health and safety.

ASMSA Association for Alumni and Friends

The ASMSA Association for Alumni & Friends (AAFA) members helped welcome students to campus during move-in weekends. They provided a hydration station for the students and their families. The AAFA is working on plans for the ASMSA Homecoming celebration on Saturday, October 9.

**Student Government Association
September 2021 Quarterly Report
Claire Green, SGA President**

We were excited to begin the new year, and in the first quarter the seven executive board members have been trying hard to keep up student morale and urge everyone to keep positive attitudes amid the increased restrictions and campus Covid cases. As an e-board, we made and sent care packages to students in on-campus isolation. Our request to add two student representatives to the Covid working group was granted. One immediate effect was our representatives advocating for adjustments in the way the time off-campus was allocated that will make the restrictions easier to live with from our student perspective without increasing risk. Going forward we feel as if having student voices influencing Covid-related decisions will be good for everyone. Before the first week of classes, we hosted our first school-wide event: pronoun pin making. We didn't take attendance, but we felt it was a good turnout. We decorated laminated index cards that students could attach to their backpacks to communicate their preferences nonverbally. At about the same time, I sent out my beginning of the year letter to student in which I identified goals for the year including increasing student involvement. We felt we were successful in recruiting students to run in elections. Elections took place Aug. 31/Sept. 1 using a new system called approval voting. Approval voting allows students to choose any number of candidates from the slate of candidates running. In our system, seniors vote for seniors, juniors vote by dorm side/floor and sophomores vote for sophomores. We felt it simplified the previous system we had been using. Our previous advisor left the school, and we recruited a new advisor, Adrian Tharpe, who is terrific. We previously had two advisors, so Assistant Dean Slomiany has been helping us when Adrian is off.

By the Numbers

- 178 responses to the Google form used for voting in student elections, 28 representatives elected including 12 juniors 12 seniors and 4 sophomores, 48.3% of votes were seniors, 41% were juniors, 10.7% were sophomores. All sophomores voted (19) 53.5% of votes were from Nichols, and 46.5% of votes were from Faris. We had one tie, but because it involved two roommates we gave them the option to work it out amongst themselves. They came to a mutually agreeable decision, and we avoided the need for a runoff.
- Seven members of the student executive board including one new position added last year: historian. The historian, Blake Smith, is starting to put together a history of SGA on campus and keeping records of students who serve, committee recommendations and initiatives passed. Other positions include president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, publicist, and parliamentarian.
- Seven care packages assembled by executive board members to distribute to students in on-campus isolation. Packages included snacks, candy and encouraging notes.

SGA Goals

The SGA constitution requires the president to write a letter at the beginning of the year outlining the goals for the year. In my letter, I wrote that I want SGA to focus on improving our communication, creating a positive tone where we can passionately discuss difficult topics

respectfully and increasing SGA's involvement in areas of the school governance where we haven't always had a presence. We also want to make sure we are using our budget fully and in the most meaningful way possible. Some of my specific plans include hosting town halls, posting to Instagram and sending newsletters to keep everyone updated and informed. My main focus is making sure students, even those who are not representatives, have opportunities to get involved and feel heard.

Approval Voting

We previously used instant runoff, also known as ranked choice voting, for student elections, before voting to switch last May to approval voting. Instant run-off has the advantage of eliminating more ties, but we liked that approval voting was easier to understand and involved fewer spoiled ballots from students not understanding the process. It was easy to adapt to at large elections which is what our floor and/or class representative system basically is. While a lot of people seem not to have heard of them, our research indicates they are two of the most popular alternative voting systems. We liked it better than plurality voting, where students only have a chance to vote for one person. With approval voting, student can show support for multiple candidates if they want. We don't have to worry about vote splitting.

ASMSA Parents Association
September 2021 Quarterly Report
Traci French, M.D., Parents Advisory Council Co-Chair

During the group's July 2021 meeting, Director Alderdice shared a preliminary look at a vaccination survey the school recently conducted. The response rate was 95 percent. An analysis of the data suggests that students will not reach 85 percent of students who are fully vaccinated until at least Labor Day. In light of that data, he said the Covid work group recommended the school return to the restrictions under version 1.2 of the DolphinReady Plan until after the Labor Day extended weekend. Those restrictions involved limits on student time away from campus. Once the 85 percent threshold is met, the school would lift the restrictions.

By the Numbers

- Director Alderdice then discussed five goals for the school year including focusing on enrollment growth, continuing to emphasize visual arts and design curriculum development, working with the selected architect to look beyond the hospital complex, and focus on college planning for senior students, increase experiential opportunities for underclassmen and delineate the role of athletics on campus.
- Director Alderdice discussed several layers of mental health support available to students on campus ranging from residence life staff, a licensed counselor, affinity groups and a licensed social worker to the student government wellness committee. He noted over half of students took advantage of the mental health programming offered last year, and he said the school urged students not to wait until a crisis situation to seek support.

Other Items from July 2021 Meeting

During our July meeting, Director Alderdice updated parents about the plans for the start of the semester. He mentioned the Arkansas General Assembly is considering adjustments to Act 1002 of 2021 which prohibits public entities from enforcing mask mandates. The campus COVID work group has expressed interest in returning to a mask mandate on the ASMSA campus modelled on the one in place in the 2020-21 school year if the adjustment allows them to do so. The school limited enrollment for 2021-22 to maintain a set of quarantine rooms for students to use, and faculty would work with students in quarantine or isolation so they would not fall behind.

He also said he would ask Dean Morris to revisit the policy around requiring security or residence life staff to check parent temperatures before entering campus buildings in response to parent concerns that the policy seemed to be a burden to the RLO and security staff. Parents were allowed to assist students with move-in, students will be rapid tested for COVID upon arrival to campus and not allowed to move into the residence halls if the test is positive. In response to parent questions, Director Alderdice said ASMSA would consider a temporary return to remote learning if they had a significant outbreak of COVID on campus. Parents will be allowed limited visitation time with students on the weekends.

Traci French said she would welcome parents becoming more involved in the Parent Advisory Committee. Opportunities include co-chairing the council with French, leading the social media

outreach efforts, participating in beginning a book club or taking on a teacher appreciation project. Contact French or Lorraine Munroe munroel@asmsa.org if interested.

In response to additional parent questions and comments, Director Alderdice noted plans for an in-person Family Connections Day are continuing but are subject to change depending on health concerns. He also said the Information Technology staff had added individual wireless access points to dorm rooms over the summer. The school had updated to ARE-ON, which provides a high-speed fiber optic network to higher education facilities. He expected students to experience improved Internet speed and reliability this year.

The next PAC meeting would be held September 23, 2021, unless circumstances warrant an earlier meeting.