



# Educate. Inspire. Empower.

## NEWSLETTER

Winter 2010

### Willamette Academy Welcomes Michele Gray as Executive Director



Michele has been involved in educating youth and adults in one way or another throughout her entire career. She has taught in vocational colleges, community colleges and has been a private mentor hoping to inspire others to go to college. "As the first in her extended family to graduate from

college, Michele brings strong passion, high energy and fresh ideas to Willamette Academy. Her previous service on the advisory board has given her the ability to hit the ground running and to quickly implement ideas we have previously discussed," said Board Chair Ron Kelemen.

*"I am so fortunate to get to work with such bright and talented students. Willamette Academy provides these kids with after school and weekend mentors, teachers and staff that assist them with their homework as well as provide SAT, college preparation and more... Our students have the potential and motivation to succeed — Willamette Academy provides a proven success system to ensure it."*—Michele Gray

### Joshua Bilbrew Promoted to Program Director



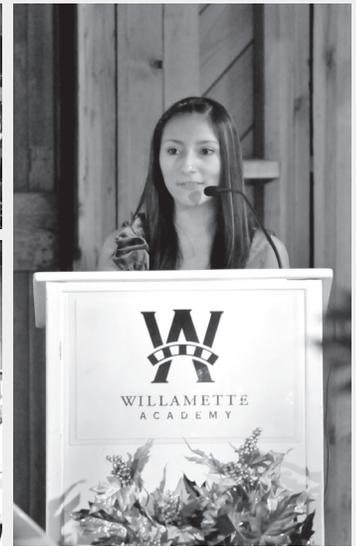
Joshua has worked with Willamette Academy since 2004, serving in varied capacities throughout his tenure. A Willamette University graduate, Joshua holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology. His academic and professional pursuits are strongly influenced by his own experience as a first-generation

college student of color from a large, low-income family. Since high school, Joshua has served disadvantaged youth, helping them overcome barriers on the path to realizing their potential. Through his personal and professional experiences, Joshua knows firsthand that educational achievement requires more than knowledge and intellect.

### David Rohde visits Willamette

Willamette Academy hosted a private reception for author David Rohde on November 2. Community members and supporters joined together for a tour of Willamette Academy, appetizers and wine before hearing Rohde tell his compelling story of his capture, detention and escape from the Taliban.

### Willamette Academy Celebrates Golden Leaf Event



The Golden Leaf Event, held October 30, was an incredible success, raising more than \$10,000 to directly support college access for the 140 students in the Willamette Academy program. Generous donors, event sponsors and the entertainment of Joe Stoddard created an unforgettable night at the historic Mission Mill.

Thank you to all the Golden Leaf supporters, donors, volunteers, guests and sponsors — you made this night incredibly special. On behalf of the students we mentor, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.



## Our Mission

Willamette Academy reaches out to historically underrepresented communities by empowering youth who have the desire and potential to advance to higher education.

This academic program is designed to address a number of factors that may discourage certain students from attending college or otherwise impede their academic progress. We are committed to helping our students achieve at a level that will enable them to attend the four-year college or university of their choice.



## Our Students

Willamette Academy admits students when they are enrolled in seventh grade in the Salem-Keizer area. The admissions committee considers several factors, including, but not limited to, income, family history, interview and recommendations. The students we admit must demonstrate academic potential and have an ambition to attend a four-year institution of higher education. A majority of our students will be the first in their family to attend college.



WILLAMETTE  
ACADEMY

## Our Programs

To carry out the mission and accomplish its goals, the Academy's support centers on three interrelated programs, considered to be its backbone or pillars. These are:

- Ongoing academic support and tracking, with particular attention paid to college-preparatory skills including those pertaining to writing, reading, math, science and technology;
- Family and school support that promotes the participation of parents, teachers and counselors in students' academic lives; and
- Support and assistance in the college application process and obtaining financial aid.



### Our Volunteers

Radu Bobirnac  
Irving Corzo  
Professor Emily Drew  
Jon Gates  
Genora Givens  
Rosie Glade  
Jared Green  
Nora Hart  
Rachel Krow-Boniske  
Stephanie Nixon  
Ian Petersen  
Dave Reid  
Luz Rodriguez  
Cassandra Ross  
Leandra Stanley  
Rebecca Taylor  
Ruth Ubaldo

### Our Staff

**Administrative Staff**  
Michele Gray  
Joshua Bilbrew  
Clarivel Moore

**Certified Instructional Staff**  
Rebecca Moore  
Larkin Smith

**Office Support**  
Shelby Bailey  
Colby Takeda  
Ellie Thomson  
Stephen Yamada

### Academic Support

Kali Boehle-Silva  
Maka Chee  
Annie Fidler  
Angela Fujii  
Margarita Gutierrez

#### Tutoring Staff

Octaviano Chavarin  
Lucille Kituku  
Tanor Morinaka  
Sarai Rivas  
Joslin Schultz  
Janni Sun  
Jillian Toda

### 2010 Advisory Board

Jeremiah Dodrill  
Robert Harrison  
Ron Kelemen, chair  
Eric Lindauer  
Don Negri  
Kris Nelson  
Linda Pearmine  
Alex Sanchez  
Danny Santos  
Ronnie Soto  
Sheryl Thomas

❖ Thank you for all you do! ❖

## Debate Teams

Eighteen students and three teachers from Bosnia and Herzegovina came to Salem in the fall of 2009 with the International Debate Education Association (IDEA) in partnership with Willamette Academy in order to promote cross-cultural communication, educational debate and community service. Our guests participated in IDEA's youth leadership program, an initiative to teach international students new ways of contributing to their community. Winning students from other competitions debated the assertion, "Democracies should limit speech that promotes violence." And due to a generous donation, the top three debaters from Willamette Academy experienced an all-expenses-paid week long trip to Bosnia in July.

Willamette Academy collaborated with Habitat for Humanity, Marion-Polk County Legal Aid, Union Gospel Mission and AC Gilbert Children's Museum to provide both local and international students with a variety of community service experiences. Blending Academy and IDEA students into service groups allowed for a meaningful cross-cultural learning experience and provided Academy students with a chance to play a leadership role in their own community. The Academy students, who generally come from low-income families and do not have many travel opportunities, were able to meet and befriend people from other countries. One Academy student, Stephanie, said, "It was really fun! The exchange students had a lot of different ideas and ways of doing things."



## Zena Forest Field Trips

Thanks to a generous donation from College Board, students were able to make several field trips to Willamette University's Zena Forest, that is just west of West Salem. Students learned about the forestland of Eola Hills and the habitats of the area. This was a great learning activity for the students.



## Mark Gonzales Workshop & Partnership with Chemawa



Mark Gonzales is a Def poet, educator and organizer who uses his art to spark dialogue among diverse audiences to examine what is real versus what is perceived in our sentiments about difference. Gonzales led a workshop with Willamette Academy students on spoken word and writing strategies. In January 2010, Gonzales collaborated with SKIM, a hip-hop artist who discusses issues of inequality. Willamette Academy partnered with Chemawa School for a workshop — students from both the Academy and Chemawa were able to grow together and benefit from the work of these inspirational artists.



**Save the Date for  
Cinco de Mayo  
Celebration!**

**May 5th at Mission Mill**

## WILLAMETTE ACADEMY

Willamette University  
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Salem, OR 97301

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### The Academy's Wish List . . .

Willamette Academy provides our students with access to vital resources to support them in their pursuit of higher education. Consider partnering with us by donating any of the items that we currently need:



#### **Career Exploration**

Job shadow  
Business tours  
Volunteer opportunities

#### **Supplies**

Copy paper  
Blue tape  
Graphing paper  
Loose-leaf paper  
Rechargeable batteries  
Whiteboard markers  
Art supplies  
Colored paper

#### **Technology**

Data projector  
Graphing calculators  
Updated versions of MS Office  
New laptop computers

#### **Other**

Napkins  
Paper towels  
Paper plates  
Plastic silverware

#### **Textbooks**

SAT/ACT study guides  
Dictionaries  
Algebra I and II  
Calculus  
Geometry  
Science

Think of Willamette Academy  
during the Holidays 

[willamette.edu/academy](http://willamette.edu/academy) | 503-370-6103