

The Colorado Springs School  
21 Broadmoor Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
(719)475-9747



## NEWS

**DATE: March 5, 2008**  
**For Release: Upon Receipt**

**Contact:** Jessica L. James  
Director of Communications  
(719)434-3506, [jjames@css.org](mailto:jjames@css.org)

### **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT THE COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL FOCUS ON A 16-DAY TERM WITH EXPERIENCE CENTERED SEMINARS**

Ninth – 12<sup>th</sup> graders at The Colorado Springs School are immersed in a 16-day term focused on one intensive course of study. Faculty has designed a diverse and broad range of courses spanning from such topics as **finance and investment, to evolutionary biology and immigration**. Other topics slated for student course selection include **food, puppets, teaching, rock art, or journalism**. Experience Centered Seminars (ECS) constitute the largest and most apparent single part of the Experiential Education Program at CSS. ECSes are the flagship element of CSS's Experiential Education Program and have long been a hallmark of the Upper School program since 1976. The goal of the program is to immerse high school students in academic inquiry-based experiences that involve discovery, primary source research, immersion, and synthesis.

"Seminars cannot be replicated in a traditional educational setting or with traditional classroom approaches and time constraints," stated Linda Harris, Head of the Upper School at CSS.

The ECS program at CSS is the most extensive and academically powerful program of its kind in American high schools. For more than thirty years CSS has provided students with a link between traditional intellectual endeavors and life experiences.

CSS alumni regularly comment that ECSes represented the most defining part of their high school experience. Alumni tout that they were better prepared for college and field experiences in their jobs because of these Seminars. Many high school seniors at CSS find themselves writing and talking about ECSes during the college admissions process; it allows them to display responsibility and maturity and in some cases has fostered a budding interest in a career path.

**The Colorado Springs School**  
21 Broadmoor Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
(719)475-9747



## **NEWS**

In 2000, Ben Behimer participated in the Food! ECS as a sophomore in high school. Inspired by his ECS, Behimer graduated from CSS in 2002 and went on to receive a culinary degree from Johnson & Wales in Denver. Ben is working as a chef at the Garden of the Gods Club in Colorado Springs, but has also worked in several high-end restaurants. Over the next few weeks Ben is serving as a visiting expert and general advisor to the Food! ECS.

This year CSS students in Food! will read about the food landscape in the New York Times bestseller, "The Omnivore's Dilemma," while also considering viewpoints from a member of Slow Foods International, a food system that is based on the principles of high quality and taste, environmental sustainability, and social justice. Shopping activities to local Whole Foods, King Soopers and Walmart will challenge students to shop with nutritional minded goals, while also being broken into teams representing varying socioeconomic grocery budgets. Visits with farmers, food distributors, restaurant owners and entrepreneurs will further allow students to delve into the topic of Food! Students are also learning food prep techniques, while they volunteer time at Colorado College's soup kitchen on Sundays.

The uniqueness of each year's offerings is dependent on proposals submitted by CSS faculty. Ultimately, the passion and talents of CSS' teaching faculty is highlighted through the implementation and rigors of the ECS. Many of the ECSes are concentrated locally or regionally, while others will require rather extensive travel. Each year, at least one ECS is focused internationally and this year a group of students is studying Evolutionary Biology in the Galapagos Islands. In addition to their field study in the Galapagos Islands, CSS students will distribute clothing collected by CSS families as part of a community service and outreach effort. Another group of students will "run" (...snowshoe, bike, and canoe) the Rio Grande River through three states and across 1,500 miles assessing geologic, historical, and sociological features of the valley.

The ECS term is completed on March 19, 2008.

### **A complete listing of ECS offerings this year:**

#### **ROCK ART OF THE REGION**

Immersed in the magical and surreal surroundings of well-known petroglyph and pictograph sites in the southwest, students learn to appreciate and recreate an art form of people before them. Students spend the first few days reading and learning about the history of the people who left the petroglyphs and pictographs, the various types and styles, how the drawings are dated, why they should be preserved, and how they should treat the sites. The first site visit is to the Petroglyph National Monument in Albuquerque, NM. Here the challenge of the future of the

**The Colorado Springs School**  
21 Broadmoor Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
(719)475-9747



## NEWS

site is investigated as urban development continues to encroach upon it. Then they travel to Hueco Tanks near El Paso, TX. Hueco Tanks is a beautiful setting, with formal tours as well as time to sit and sketch unique painted mask images. Students spend the last portion of the trip at Three Rivers State Petroglyph Site near Alamogordo, NM. Students explore many areas here as they interpret drawings and continue work on their own sketches. They are able to enjoy and gain an appreciation for the art through the learning of the history of, and connection to, a people's past as they camp near the sites. The students also keep a written journal to include site findings and summaries of readings or lectures. Their final project is a collage of revised sketches or a single large sketch accompanied by a description.

**Faculty:** Jen Hedden, *Upper School Math*, B.A., Math & Spanish, University of Wisconsin

### **EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY (Galapagos Islands)**

Charles Darwin formulated his famous theory of evolution after visiting the Galapagos Islands. Darwin sailed to the Galapagos aboard the HMS Beagle in the 1830's, noticing that many animals varied in their morphological features from island to island. Darwin was particularly intrigued by the finches on the islands, which are located approximately 500 miles from the mainland of South America. These finches, although unique to these islands, were clearly related to mainland species. There were fourteen different species or genera of Galapagos Finch, and their bills were adapted for particular diets. Students sail aboard our own chartered boat for 8 days in the Galapagos, visiting many of the same sites that Darwin visited. Discussions and assigned readings concentrate on the history of the earth, mechanisms of evolution, episodes of extinction, and the social ramifications of Darwin's theory. In addition, students spend two days exploring the environs in and near Quito and three days working on a community service project in Otavalo, Ecuador.

**Faculty:** Jennifer Gaskin, *Upper School Science*, B.S., Botany and M.S., Botany University of Oklahoma. Greg Johnson, *Science Department Chair, Mathematics*, B.S. Biology, University of Nebraska.

### **FINANCE AND INVESTMENT (Chicago, Illinois)**

The Finance and Investment seminar introduces students to a variety of financial instruments, investment strategies, macroeconomic variables that impact the market, and the benefits of diversification. Exposure to career opportunities throughout the banking and financial services industry is extensive. Among the academic topics that will be emphasized are U.S. Treasury Bonds, futures, options, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, municipal and state bonds, pension fund management, and the management of an individual portfolio. In addition to these topics, the economics and finance of non-profits and government agencies will be studied. Students spend one week in Chicago meeting with specialists, visiting the trading floors, and visiting such sites as the Chicago Federal Reserve, City Hall, and the Mercantile Exchange.

**Faculty:** Paul Young, *Mathematics*, B.S., Secondary Mathematics Education, University of Wisconsin, M.A., Ph. D. Economics, Univ. of Colorado-Boulder.

The Colorado Springs School  
21 Broadmoor Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
(719)475-9747



## NEWS

### **JOURNALISM: Building a Newspaper**

What is “journalism?” How old is it? Where does it come from? What is its future? These are some of the questions students explore in this ECS while learning the art and craft of getting and reporting a story, crafting news articles, documenting and photographing stories, fact checking, and writing editorials. We also talk with professional journalists to explore how news organizations like newspapers and television news outlets work, and we examine the explosion of new forms of reporting and disseminating news made possible by the technologies of the cell-phone, e-mail, and blogs. The course will culminate in the creation of our own ECS newspaper/blog in which students will report on CSS during the seminar period.

**Faculty:** John Longo, *Upper School English*, B.A., English, Colgate University, M.A., Ph. D. English, Princeton University.

### **CULTURE SHOCK (San Francisco, California)**

Few regions in the nation are as culturally diverse as the San Francisco Bay Area. This seminar explores the historical roots of the region's residents, from the original Native Americans, to the wide array of people from all over the globe who today claim the Bay Area as their home. Moving from the historic to the contemporary, we examine the benefits and strengths of multi-culturalism, as well as the challenges and points of tension inherent in such a heterogeneous society. Literature compliments history as we examine the avant-garde poets of the Beat Generation, the poetry of Chinese immigrants quarantined at Angel Island, as well as other local authors. In addition to studying the historical and cultural diversity of the area, we explore the immense geographical diversity in the immediate area—from the towering coastal redwoods to the chilly waves lapping the shores of Point Reyes. Students participate in service projects as a part of their experience. Possible projects include a coastal clean-up, working at a community garden, and/or volunteering with children in a bilingual school.

Follow Culture Shock's Blog at <http://cssscalculture.wordpress.com/>

**Faculty:** Anne Taylor, *Upper School English*, B.A., American Studies, Stanford University, M.A., English, University of California - Berkeley.

### **TEACHING HAPPENS!: Teaching Internships in the Community**

Teaching Happens! is a seminar for students who enjoy working with children, who want to make a difference in the lives of younger people, who may be interested in a career in education, or who simply want to be better informed about education in America and the values that drive the operations of schools. Students learn about the development of American education, and about the application of practical theories. Then they put theory to practice by working daily in a school in our community, helping teachers in their classrooms. This work includes one-on-one assistance with children. Students learn to appreciate the vital need for enthusiastic, caring educators in the development of healthy, happy members of our society. Students will participate in teaching internships with area schools including District 2, 11, 12 and 49 as well as several parochial and independent schools.

**Faculty:** Amy Johnson Smith, *English Department Chair*, B.A., English, Colorado College

**The Colorado Springs School**  
21 Broadmoor Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
(719)475-9747



## NEWS

### **RUNNING THE RIO GRANDE**

Before the building of roads and railroads, rivers were the main routes of transportation in the New World. Whether trading beaver pelts or exploring new territory, early immigrants used rivers as easements into harsh and forbidding terrain. Beginning near Creede, Colorado, in the snowbanks of the headwaters of the Rio Grande, students follow this historically important river its entire length, through three states and across 1500 miles. From snowshoes to bicycles to vans to canoes, students experience the most important geologic, historical, and sociological features of the valley, reading important literature and history as they go. On the Texas/Mexico border, the group rents a fleet of canoes and spends six days on the Lower Rio Grande, proceeding to the mouth near Brownsville. Students should be prepared to “rough it,” do a good deal of camping, weather permitting, and get their feet wet!

**Faculty:** David Benson, *Upper School History*, B.A., Non-Western History & French, University of Pennsylvania, M.A., African History, University of Wisconsin at Madison

### **THE WORLD OF PUPPETRY**

Puppetry has been a mainstay of cultural expression worldwide for thousands of years. Dating back to cave paintings and the earliest ceremonies involving masks of deities and animals, puppetry has allowed people to express sensitive and controversial material indirectly, invoking fantasy and fairy tale, epic and legend, criticism and heroism. Puppets were used in ancient China and Rome, invoking wonder and mystery. Modern puppeteers include advertisers, psychologists, political activists, entertainers, performance artists, and practitioners of many religions. Whether puppets are made for the hand, wires, strings, full bodies, sticks, stilts, or shadows, they stimulate wonder in the viewer, and bring cartoons to life. Why is this form of expression so enduring and captivating? As students research the history and psychology of puppetry, they blend the arts of puppet making with theatre in the creation of their own productions. They invent plays, write scripts, and create stages and props for shows that can be taken to local schools. Students should be prepared for hard work, an explosion of imagination, and conversations with cereal boxes and fingers.

**Faculty:** Hans Wolfe, *Middle and Upper School Art*, B.F.A and M.F.A., Art and Technology, School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Matt Cleaver, *Middle School and Upper School Drama*, L.B.A., Theatre, The New School University, New York, NY

### **FOOD!**

We are bombarded with messages every day about the food we eat, the food we should eat, and the food we shouldn't eat, and that is usually just before breakfast! Food is a subject that ties us all together through one of our most fundamental drives. This seminar approaches this beloved and substantial subject from a wide range of perspectives. We look at where our food comes from, whether from the soil, a stockyard, or a laboratory. The class explores the pressing issues of the supply and distribution of food and fresh water for the world's expanding population. Some other dilemmas we wrestle with include vegetarianism versus omnivorous diets, modern factory farming versus the organic local 'slow food' movement, and the role of nutrition in our health. Field visits to a wide variety of food producers, manufacturers, distributors

**The Colorado Springs School**  
21 Broadmoor Avenue  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
(719)475-9747



## NEWS

and sellers give us an overview of our modern food production industry. From small family-run farms and slaughterhouses to industrial-scale production or distribution facilities, we see it all. Of course, simply learning where our food comes from is only half the picture. Preparing, serving, and appreciating food is also a focus of this ECS. Students will apprentice in the kitchens of some of the most distinguished restaurants in Colorado Springs. Students will also prepare food in soup kitchens or other service organizations to better understand those in the position of not having enough food. The role of food in numerous world-wide cultures is also examined through a diverse selection of readings and films -- can the arts capture the experience of food in our lives? How can art and culture enhance the meaning and experience of eating? The final project is, of course, a feast, prepared by the class members.

**Faculty:** Miller Adam, *Photography, Yearbook, Video – Art Department Chair*, B.F.A., Art/Photography, University of Arizona.

### Upcoming ECS Presentations and Performances

- Students in **The World of Puppetry** will conduct a performance showcasing a student written play with handmade puppets on **Tuesday, March 18 at 7:00 p.m. in the Louisa Performing Arts Center at CSS**. Puppets will be built under the tutelage of local artists and puppeteers, Ryan S. Ballard of Razzamataz, Inc. and Patti Smithsonian, an Artist-in-Residence at the Colorado Cancer Center. Other area schools will also have the opportunity to watch the CSS students perform their puppet show.
- Students will present a capstone of their experiences to the community on **Thursday, April 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the Louisa Performing Arts Center at CSS**.
- Several students participating in **Running the Rio Grande** will present a panel discussion on illegal immigration on **Saturday, April 19 from 9:00 a.m. – noon in the Louisa Performing Arts Center at CSS**. This presentation is a class offered in partnership with PILLAR, the institute for lifelong learning. To sign-up for the class visit <http://www.visitpillar.org/>.

For more information on The Colorado Springs School and the Experience Centered Seminars, please contact, Director of Communications, Jessica L. James at [jjames@css.org](mailto:jjames@css.org) or (719)434-3506 or visit [www.css.org](http://www.css.org).

### **About the Colorado Springs School (CSS)**

CSS offers an experiential educational curriculum for PreKindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> graders. Through superior academics and mentoring, The Colorado Springs School prepares students to think independently and to meet the needs of a dynamic world with leadership, ingenuity, problem-solving skills, and personal integrity.

###