



THE UPPER SCHOOL

THE MONTCLAIR KIMBERLEY ACADEMY



OUR DISTINCTIVE STRENGTHS

THE UPPER SCHOOL AT MKA WELCOMES STUDENTS INTO A CLOSE COMMUNITY, SUPPORTING EACH IN REALIZING HIS OR HER FULL PERSONAL POTENTIAL. MKA OFFERS A UNIVERSE OF OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN, TO GROW, AND TO EXPLORE.

ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

With more than 54 Honors and AP classes, as well as options for research and independent study, an MKA education tests the strengths of even the most able students. With small classes and caring faculty, it also provides the support students need to meet these high expectations and thrive.

A BALANCE OF ACADEMICS, ATHLETICS, AND THE ARTS

MKA offers the chance to shine not just in the classroom but also on stage, on the playing field, and through many clubs, activities, and service options. Our community celebrates students who not only excel in one endeavor, but explore many.

EXCELLENT COLLEGE PREPARATION AND GUIDANCE

Students receive an exceptional level of personal attention as they progress through the college search and application process, and MKA graduates consistently describe their preparation for the challenges of college as outstanding.

AN ATMOSPHERE OF FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT

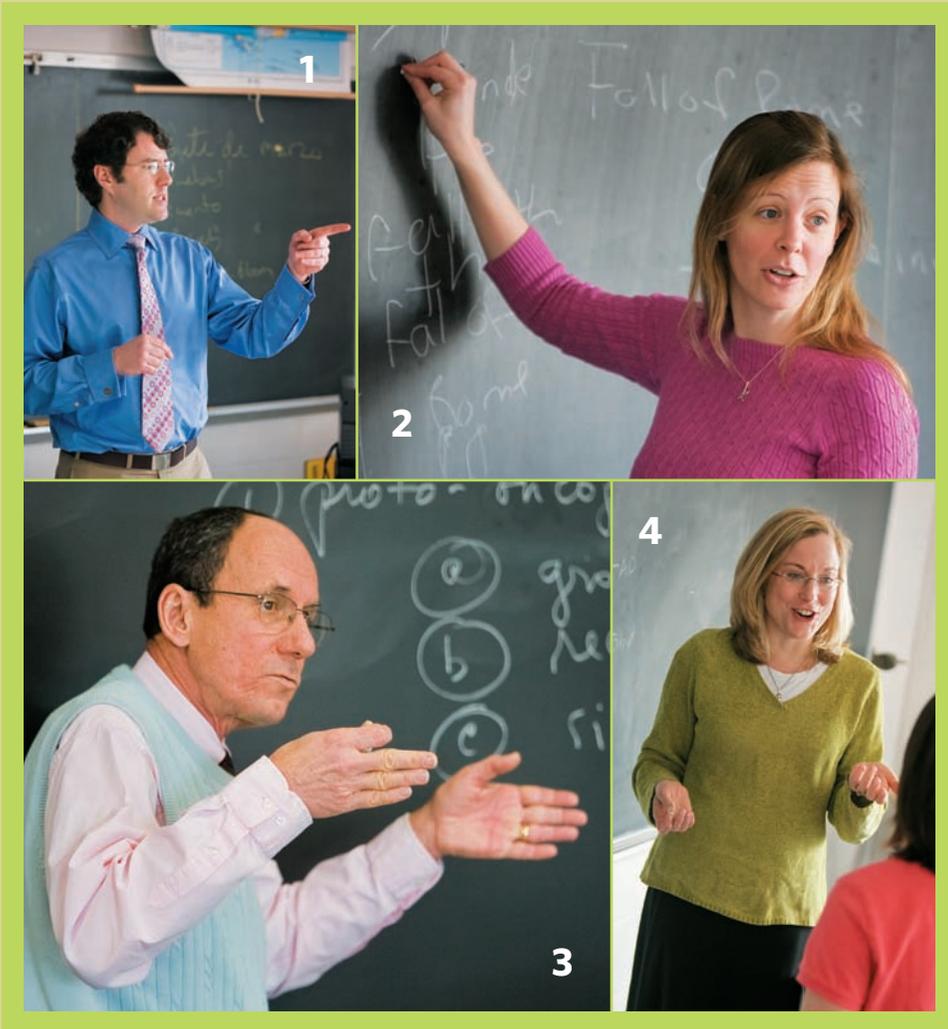
The Upper School is a warm and open community, welcoming to new members. The interaction between teachers and students is close and supportive, and each student finds trusted faculty mentors to turn to for guidance.

“What I value most is my relationship with teachers. Most of my classes have 12 or 13 students. One has six. That’s something I would have missed at most other schools.”

Stacy Burns, 12th grade student

OUR FACULTY

CAPABLE AND CARING TEACHERS ARE AT THE HEART OF AN MKA EDUCATION—AS OUR STUDENTS CAN ATTEST.



- 1 "Mr. Jeremiah is a caring individual who really wants to help. What makes him so successful as an advisor is the sense of trust he has with his students. We know we can talk to him about anything we need to." [Brandon Bost, 11th grade student, describing his advisor, Robert Jeremiah](#)
- 2 "In Civilizations, we get excited by the topics we cover, because she gets so excited. When we get to her favorite unit, which is Ancient Rome, Ms. Verrone starts grinning, and it's pretty much contagious." [Rebecca Bauer, 10th grade student, describing Kerry Verrone and her course, Civilizations](#)
- 3 "I have Mr. Hrab for Biology 2 Honors, and I've also worked with him on several plays that he's designed the sets for. He's a multitalented, multifaceted person. Whatever he does he does well—and always with the same friendly, funny personal style." [Andrew Culbreth, 12th grade student, describing George Hrab and the class Biology 2 Honors Class](#)
- 4 "Dr. Maxwell used to be a college professor, and her class has that feel to it. We cover very challenging material. At the same time, she is extremely supportive. If you need help, her door is always open." [Regan Shepard, 12th grade student, describing her Economics Class](#)



MEANINGFUL CHALLENGE

FROM AP PHYSICS TO THE ART AND HISTORY OF AMERICAN FILM, THE UPPER SCHOOL CURRICULUM EXPLORES FASCINATING MATERIAL IN REAL DEPTH.



CONDUCTING INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

In the ninth and tenth grade, MKA's choice of science courses includes two distinctive options: Chemistry Science Research Honors and Biology Science Research Honors, classes in which students carry out extensive independent research projects. Eleventh and twelfth graders can continue with Science Research Honors 2, 3 and 4, pursuing projects of individual interest, from *Lichens as Bioindicators* to *The Effect of Electrical Fields on the Excitation of Nematocysts*.

EXPLORING ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

After completing courses such as Modern European History and Modern U.S. History, students can choose fascinating electives, ranging from Japanese History and Irish Studies, to South Africa: Apartheid and Beyond. Offerings such as Honors Economics and Honors Political Theory cover true college-level content, pursuing topics in greater depth than typical advanced placement history surveys.

VENTURING BEYOND CALCULUS

The mathematics program offers courses to satisfy students at every level of ability. More than 95 percent of students take four years of math, and 85 percent complete calculus. Four distinct courses in calculus help ensure a choice that is right for every student. For those ready to explore even more advanced topics, electives such as Multivariable Calculus, Differential Equations, and Senior Seminar in Mathematics are frequently offered.

CONNECTING LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND LIFE

In addition to mastering grammar and vocabulary, modern foreign language students read newspapers, discuss films, explore websites, and conduct classroom conversations in the language they're learning. In advanced classes, they may write original poetry or make films adapting French or Spanish short stories. Spring break travel opportunities to destinations such as Quebec, Mexico, and Puerto Rico further enrich the experience.

ENGAGING TIMELESS MASTERWORKS

The quality of an MKA education is reflected in the excellence of the works at the heart of the curriculum. These include MKA's Core Works, a set of diverse achievements in literature and the arts encountered by every MKA student. Core Works range from the politics and philosophy of Confucius, Machiavelli, and Martin Luther King Jr. to the literary creations of Christopher Marlowe and Toni Morrison, Dante and Dostoyevsky. Selections from art and music include the sculpture of Michelangelo, a symphony of Beethoven, and the choreography of Lester Horton.



GROWING IN CHARACTER

MKA'S FOCUS ON ETHICS—ONE OF THE SCHOOL'S SIGNATURE PROGRAMS—SHAPES EVERY ASPECT OF LEARNING AND LIFE HERE.

KNOWLEDGE, VISION, INTEGRITY

In articulating these three ideals, the School's motto makes clear that MKA aspires to nurture growth not only in intellect, but also in character—to help students develop a lifelong sense of honor and integrity. Members of the MKA community aspire to eight standards of character—to be Respectful, Friendly, Responsible, Confident, Temperate, Fair, Informed, and Honest. Ethics and Leadership 1 and 2, a pair of ninth- and tenth-grade courses, explore these qualities and the challenges of ethical decision-making. A student-written Code of Honor governs behavior at the School, providing a foundation for an environment of trust.

LEADERSHIP

The Upper School is a small community with a large range of opportunities for students to take on leadership roles. Students help shape important decisions through groups such as the Honor Council and the Executive Committee. They lead clubs, publications, and community service programs—and often launch new ones. They take part in opportunities such as the Peer Leader program, which prepares juniors and seniors to serve as mentors to new freshmen.

SERVICE

MKA students have tutored public school children in Newark, assisted in an after-school art program for at-risk children, served with ARC of Essex County, helping mentally challenged individuals, and volunteered with Amigos de las Americas, focusing on needs within local Latin American communities. During recent school breaks, MKA teams have traveled to rural areas in North Carolina and Mexico to work on Habitat for Humanity projects.

FOCUSING ON WRITING

EXCELLENT AND EXTENSIVE INSTRUCTION IN WRITING STANDS OUT AMONG THE STRENGTHS OF AN MKA EDUCATION.

THE WRITING CHALLENGE

Early in the junior year, MKA students take part in the Writing Challenge, an opportunity to receive valuable, objective feedback on their skills. Each student completes an essay on an assigned topic, which is then evaluated by multiple faculty members using a set of shared standards. In follow-up, students meet one-on-one with their teachers to discuss the strengths and weaknesses revealed in the Challenge and to set clear goals for improvement.

PRACTICE IN PROCESS

In Upper School English courses, teachers focus on the step-by-step process writers follow to create strong work. Students continue to plan, draft, revise, and edit. Their first priorities are clarity and sound organization; later they move on to explorations of style and voice. At every stage, extensive practice and detailed, thoughtful feedback are key. In addition, to help students prepare for success on the essay section of the SAT, MKA participates in the College Board's ScoreWrite program, which enables the School to administer and score accurate practice versions of the essay test.

JUNIOR HISTORY THESIS

Each year, each MKA 11th grader faces a major challenge and a fascinating opportunity: to write a substantial thesis on a topic of his or her choice, drawing on primary historical sources and scholarly journal articles. The project has led students to the National Archives, to articles in 19th century newspapers, and to speeches of past world leaders. Recent papers, published in an annual MKA journal, have ranged from the Camp David Peace Accords, to the impact of the Erie Canal, to judicial review and the United States Supreme Court.



EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

UPPER SCHOOLERS TAKE PART IN A VARIETY OF INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT GO BEYOND THE EXPECTED.

MAY TERM

The senior year at MKA culminates as each student chooses an independent project, community service activity, or internship that takes them beyond the classroom to explore wide-ranging personal interests. Recent examples:

- Cucina di Nonna: Exploring Italian Cooking
- Development of a Lawnmower Robot
- “Duckworth,” An Original Children’s Story
- Financial Services Internship, International Investment Group
- Foreign Aid Internship, International Center for Asset Recovery
- Independent Photography Project: Graffiti Art
- Artificial Intelligence Internship, Columbia University Computer Science Department
- Music Publicity Internship, Stunt Company Media
- The Turks in Germany: A Trip and Documentary
- Veterinary Internship, Verona Animal Hospital

FOREIGN STUDIES

Options for international experiences range from foreign-language trips in Spanish and French-speaking nations to the Irish Studies Program, which combines a semester-long course in Irish history and culture with a two-week visit to significant sites in Ireland. Recent destinations:

- The Aegean—ancient sites in Greece and Turkey
- France—Paris, Cote d’Azur, Provence
- Ireland—Galway, Omagh, Dublin, and more
- Italy—Venice, Florence, Assisi, Rome
- Mexico—Mexico City, ancient ruins, and Habitat for Humanity sites
- Spain—Barcelona

INDEPENDENT STUDIES

Students wishing to pursue a branch of learning not reflected in MKA’s curriculum can often do so, working with a faculty adviser to develop an original, independent course of study. Recent examples:

- Advanced Photography
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Ancient Greek
- Architectural Modeling
- Children’s Literature
- Marine Biology
- Psychology
- Understanding Hinduism



COLLEGE PREPARATION



- **Personal Attention** With four staff members, each typically serving just 25 to 29 students, the College Counseling Office knows and meets the individual needs of each student. In addition, faculty members in the arts and in athletics serve as specialist advisors to students preparing portfolios to submit to art schools or seeking to compete in intercollegiate athletics.

- **Excellent Programs and Events** A half-day program for students and parents kicks off the college search process. Most recently, representatives from eight selective institutions, ranging from Columbia and Haverford, to Hobart and William Smith, joined juniors to review admissions case studies and take part in role-playing. A later event features mock interview sessions.

- **College 101** This mini-course for all juniors covers the basics of the college search, application process, and campus visit, complementing the extensive individual support students receive from their counselors.

- **Technology and Information** MKA was among the first schools in the region to adopt the Naviance database. This system stores information anonymously on the academic profiles of past MKA students who have gained admission to a wide range of colleges and universities, helping students judge their fit for various institutions.

“The staff members in the College Counseling Office were incredibly knowledgeable about college admission and the landscape of higher education. They helped us keep perspective throughout the process, and they were always there if we needed to call.” **Abigail Metzger, MKA parent**

“The counselors in our office have worked in college admissions themselves and understand what an applicant looks like from a college’s perspective. In that sense, we offer an ‘insider’s view’ on the admissions process.” **Roz Estrada, counselor with the College Counseling Office**

“My MKA education prepared me exceptionally well for the challenges I’ve faced at Princeton—especially the outstanding focus on writing and research.” **Will Wagner, international relations major at Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School, and winner of the Shapiro Prize for undergraduate academic excellence**

THE ARTS

AT MKA EVERY STUDENT EXPLORES THE ARTS. THE SCHOOL SUPPORTS THOSE WITH A SERIOUS INTEREST IN DEVELOPING THEIR TALENTS TO THE FULLEST.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAM

- Each Upper School student takes at least nine fine and performing arts credits (typically three semesters of coursework). More than 85 percent of students choose to continue beyond this requirement.
- Students find ample opportunities in the arts starting in the first term of freshman year—from art courses to parts in school plays, to membership in musical groups.

Fine arts

- Courses range from Fundamentals of Art to multiple offerings in sculpture and photography, to Digital Studio, and Honors and Advanced Placement Studio Art.
- Completed in 2006, the \$3 million Peter R. Greer Arts Wing houses light-filled painting and sculpture studios, band and rehearsal rooms, and both traditional and digital photography labs.
- The Weiss Gallery maintains an ambitious program of exhibits featuring works of students and faculty and of professional independent artists, who often meet with students.
- A designated faculty advisor works closely with the College Counseling Office to guide students interested in art schools as they prepare their admissions portfolios.
- MKA graduates have gained admission to top art programs nationally and earned highly prestigious merit scholarships from institutions including the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Washington University in St. Louis.

Performing Arts

- Courses include drama offerings such as Acting and Honors Performance Workshop; communication classes such as Myth and American Film; dance electives such as Dance 1 and 2 and Choreography Workshop; and music offerings such as Concert Band and String Orchestra.
- A robust calendar of annual productions includes a fall play, a winter musical, a spring dance concert, and either a spring play or production of an original film, the spring movie.
- MKA's original films, made with student casts and crews, introduce every aspect of independent film making and have garnered innumerable professional honors.
- Performing arts facilities include the 550-seat Weiss auditorium, the smaller Deetjen Theater (an outstanding black box venue), as well as a dance studio and chorale room. Digital labs support all media production classes.
- Instrumental groups include the Concert Band, the Jazz Band, which earns consistently glowing reviews in annual competitions, and the String Orchestra, which ends each season with a performance at Carnegie Hall.
- The MKA Chorale and smaller Mastersingers ensemble are known for their inspiring performances of works ranging from Mozart's *Requiem* to Orff's *Carmina Burana*, often with the accompaniment of a professional orchestra.





UPPER SCHOOL SPORTS

Fall

- Football
- Field Hockey
- Cross Country
- Soccer
- Tennis (girls)
- Volleyball (girls)

Winter

- Basketball
- Ice Hockey
- Fencing
- Swimming
- Track
- Wrestling

Spring

- Baseball
- Lacrosse
- Tennis (boys)
- Softball
- Track and Field

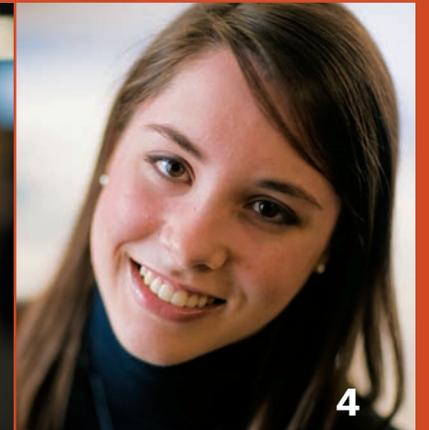
ATHLETICS

- A roster of 26 varsity and 15 junior varsity teams and a no-cut policy in most sports insure opportunities for athletes at every level of ability.
- In the past eight years, MKA teams have won more than 80 league, county and state titles.
- In a typical year, more than 40 MKA graduates are active in NCAA Division I and III programs across the country—from Syracuse, Michigan, and U.Va. to Amherst, Williams, and Penn. These include a number of student-athletes actively recruited each year.
- Superb coaching, a school-wide emphasis on ethics, and team-based community service work inspire growth in character, sportsmanship, and teamwork.
- Outstanding facilities include the Fairleigh S. Dickinson Jr. Gymnasium, Van Brunt Field with its synthetic turf surface, natural grass fields, a well-equipped weight and conditioning room, an indoor swimming pool, tennis courts, and outdoor track, as well as use of an ice rink.



A WELL-ROUNDED EXPERIENCE

AT MKA IT'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR ONE STUDENT TO PURSUE MANY INTERESTS. IN FACT, IT MAY BE MORE UNUSUAL NOT TO.



- 1** **Breanna Jones** is a co-captain of the Step team, manager of the volleyball team, a Peer Leader, and vice president of Shades of Color, a student diversity group. "You need to take risks and try new things," she explains. "At MKA, there is always someone to support you when you take that chance."
- 2** **Chris Thomson** is a captain of the swim team, plays tuba in the concert band, writes for the literary magazine, and volunteers with Kids Helping Kids, serving seriously ill children. "The idea of trying a lot of activities is that you can see what you are most interested in," he says. "It's a great chance to explore."
- 3** **John MacGregor** is a pitcher on the varsity baseball team, a captain of Bradley House, and a Peer Leader—a volunteer trained as a mentor to new freshmen. He co-founded the Cougar Bookmobile, a service group that brings free books to needy kids. "All my activities have definitely taught me time management," says John, "a great skill to have as I move on to college."
- 4** **Danielle Rode** is a co-editor of the yearbook, co-captain of the swim team, a Peer Leader, and a member of Honor Council, the group that reviews cases related to the school's Honor Code. "What I love about getting involved," she says, "is that it gives you the chance to really get to know people in a way that's different from just being in class."



A CLOSE COMMUNITY

OUR FOUR HOUSES

At MKA, each student is a member of one of four Upper School houses, which he or she will belong to for all four years here. Over the course of the school year, the houses engage in various competitions, some meaningful (raising money for charity), some extremely silly (making sculptures out of spam). The houses provide a great way to make friends, bringing students from different grades together. At MKA, there's nothing uncommon about freshmen and sophomores having friends who are juniors and seniors.

"I have the chance to interview students applying to MKA. The thing they always tell me that impresses them about the school is the relationship between our teachers and students. When they visit classes, they immediately sense the respect, the openness, and the friendliness of the atmosphere." Dr. Michael Houston, Foreign Language Department Chair

"What makes this community great is the freedom and opportunity to be who you want to be. You can be a lineman on the football team or take the lead in the musical or do both. You won't be pigeonholed." Dr. David Flocco, Head of Upper School

"After I graduate, what I'll miss most about MKA is the strong bond with my friends and with our teachers. This is my other family, my other home." Cara Placentra, 12th grade student

AN INNOVATIVE SCHEDULE

Based on extensive educational research, MKA's schedule features 75-minute class sessions. These longer classes have been found to increase depth of learning, to provide more opportunities for students and teachers to meet individually between classes, and to offer a more realistic preparation for college life.

A Typical Ninth Grade Schedule

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
8:05	English	French	Arts	Algebra 2	World Civilization	Study	PE/Health	Chemistry
9:15	Advisor	Assembly	Common Work Period	Common Work Period	Clubs	Class Meeting	Common Work Period	Common Work Period
9:45	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
9:55	Arts	Chemistry	World Civilization	Study	PE/Health	Algebra 2	English	French
11:10	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Arts	Lunch	World Civilization	Lunch
11:40	Arts	Algebra 2	English	French		Chemistry		Study
12:35					Lunch		Lunch	
1:05	World Civilization	Study	PE/Health	Chemistry	English	French	Arts	Algebra 2
2:25	Common Work Period	Common Work Period		Advisor	Common Work Period	Common Work Period	Assembly	Clubs
2:55	Campus open for academic support, athletics, drama rehearsal, community service and clubs							

GETTING INVOLVED

The Upper School offers a great variety of clubs and activities, offering the chance to explore your interests, build leadership skills, and have fun. The list of clubs changes in response to student interests. Those recently offered have included the following:

ABC Club (service organization)	Cheerleading	Mock Trial	Sports Club
<i>Academy News</i> (student newspaper)	Chess Club	Model UN Club	Step Team
AIDS Awareness	Environmental Action	Peer Leaders (mentors for freshmen)	Stock Market Club
<i>Alliance Française</i> (French club)	Film Club	Pep Band	Student Government
Amnesty International	Gay/Straight Alliance	Prom Committee	<i>Stylus</i> (literary magazine)
Architecture Club	Habitat for Humanity	REBEL (tobacco education)	Veritas Forum (current issues/service)
Artistic Expressions (creative explorations)	Healing Spaces (serving sick children)	S.A.D.D.	Women's Issues Group
Asian Cultural Society	International Club	Shades of Color (diversity organization)	Yearbook
Brookside Interns (primary school assistants)	Jazz Band	Ski Club	
	Jewish Cultural Society	Speech and Debate Team	
	Kids Helping Kids		
	Math Team		
	Men's Issues Club		



ADMISSIONS OFFICE

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