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ICS Bids Goodbye to Founding Father, Dr. Bruce Saari

Dr. Bruce Saari, who helped found ICS with fellow teachers John Heil and Andrew Ivy, has decided to pursue a new career path, switching from teaching to administration. In June, Dr. Saari resigned from the Lake Washington school district and retired from the state public school system. He accepted a position at Kentwood High School in the Kent school district, minutes from his home, where he is currently completing a preschool-through-twelfth-grade administrative internship. He has taken this new position with great enthusiasm for the opportunities and challenges it offers.

When asked about his plans, Dr. Saari replied, "My goals will be to get that administrative credential and then work within a large district in order to improve instructional delivery, curriculum design, and student achievement. This might involve starting another International School within the district, or taking over an existing school and beginning the conversion process. I look forward to a challenge like that."

Dr. Saari began his career in 1971 at Lake Sammamish High School, where he spent 19 years teaching a variety of courses, including American literature, British literature, modern drama, and numerous electives. It was during his tenure there that he developed a two-year honors humanities program, which taught him the value of having the same students for two years in a row.

In 1983, Dr. Saari was the recipient of Stanford University's Frederick Emmons Terman Award for "Outstanding Contributions to Teaching." According to Dr. Saari, "This award was generated by the performances of students that I had sent to Stanford in previous years." In 1986, he received a National Endowment for the Humanities independent study grant. And in 1988, he was selected to participate in a yearlong Fulbright Exchange in Denmark, where he taught thirteenth-grade students who were preparing for the university. Dr. Saari

received his doctorate in humanistic anthropology from the Union Institute, Cincinnati in 1991. Dr. Saari helped found the Bellevue International School in 1990 along



with five other teachers who shared his interest in educational reform. After submitting a proposal for the new school to the board, Dr. Saari and his colleagues entered the Schools for the 21st Century competition.

When they won a \$300,000 grant, the Bellevue school district approved their plans and gave them a building to use. The Bellevue International School quickly bloomed into the top performer it is today, with over 90% of its graduates going on to college. The success of the school, with its diverse student population, was attributed to its "program and philosophy."

In 1997, after "graduating" with his first class, Dr. Saari left the Bellevue International School for the Lake Washington school district in order to help establish ICS, which is substantially based on the Bellevue model.

Throughout this last year, Dr. Saari's plans for the future were undetermined, due to questions regarding the state's school retirement policies. "Mr." Saari, as his students call him, kept his options open until the very end as he continued to explore career opportunities. As ICS principal Cindy Duenas pointed out, "Dr. Saari is one of the best instructors the profession has ever seen, so his marketability is off the charts, to say the least."

Though we are sad to see Dr. Saari go, his legacy lives on at ICS in the school's curriculum design and high standard of academic excellence. He has been a wonderful teacher and role model for students, faculty, and parents. We wish him the very best, and thank him for the five years he dedicated to our school.

September 11, 2001

The present generation of junior high and high school students will mark September 11, 2001 as a day their world was changed forever, just as previous generations did November 22, 1963 and December 7, 1941. ICS students responded to the news by taking time to reflect, reaching out to the victims and their families, and by asserting the good in a variety of ways.

"Our family put up a large American flag that used to fly over the White House. We looked at pictures of our trip to New York City in June 2001. I have a picture of my Mom and brother with the Twin Towers behind them while we were at the Statue of Liberty. I feel sorry for the children who lost relatives." —Lucas Bischofberger, 8th Grade

"I went to sing with choir at church several times during that initial week. At one of the prayer services, 1,100 people simultaneously lit candles in the dark cathedral. It was the most beautiful and heartfelt thing that I have ever seen." —Geneva Stein, 12th Grade

"To help deal with the national tragedy, I have done many things, such as donate money to the Red Cross. I've also had discussions with family and friends, including some who live near New York. Also, I've sung patriotic songs with my choir." —Christoph Rau, 11th Grade

"I donated \$70 (a month's income at the time) to the Red Cross. I would give blood if they let me." —Kristjan Petursson, 12th Grade

"My family and I went to an inter-faith service at our church and made a contribution to The Salvation Army. Now I feel that Americans aren't invincible. But, it's more important than ever that we follow the Constitution and keep America free where privacy is concerned. I also think that the nerve gas plants in Central Oregon should be more heavily guarded." —Catherine Hincliff, 8th Grade

"Early that Saturday my family went to the Seattle Center International Fountain to pay our respects. With so many there, it was astounding how quiet the city was. Just the resounding tune of a lone violin played. The slow, somber procession inched their way down to the bottom to proffer their colorful bouquets in memory and in honor of the victims. All ages began crying; some bawled loudly while even more pretended they weren't crying. A woman approached us, reached into her vest to pull out a package of Kleenex, gave my mother a



quick hug and left the tissues in my mother's hands. To follow her example, I got a package of Kleenex the Red Cross offered and shyly hugged another woman while pressing the tissues into her hands."

—Sydney Pertl, 9th Grade

"I first heard the news in the car when my Dad took me to school that morning but didn't get the full gist of it till Mr. Ivy turned on the TV before the start of school.

I was in shock and disbelief. My mother picked me up early from school that day, and my family attended a prayer service at our church the same evening.

That week we also lit candles, sent a check to the Red Cross (which my mother's company matched) and dressed in the flag colors at school one day.



I felt sad, scared and uneasy. I felt too secure before; my world was too perfect prior to this tragic catastrophe. Now I realized that some people can have extreme views and things are never reliable. Billy Graham's words in the televised

national prayer service at the Washington D.C. Cathedral helped resolve my fear and confusion."

—Yling Miller, 8th Grade

The ICS Community Shows Its True Colors

Two days after the tragedy on Sept. 11th, I was talking to a friend of mine from California regarding what her school was doing to help. She mentioned that her cheerleading squad was selling red, white, and blue ribbons at her school, and that all their profits would benefit the Red Cross.

Realizing it would be good for ICS to lend a helping hand, I got permission to borrow her idea and I called the ASB vice president, Kim Egan, and ASB treasurer, Neha Soi. They were very supportive of the idea and the next morning Kim Egan had the supplies needed to make the ribbons. Mr. Ivy then allowed our 3rd period class to make these ribbons during his lecture, so that they would be ready to sell by 1st lunch.



The ASB sold a lot of these ribbons, raising money for the Red Cross and, more important, showing our unified support for the victims and the families of those affected by the September 11th terrorist attacks."

—Mike Jasklowski, 12th Grade

ICS: Overflowing and Right on Track

According to ICS principal Cindy Duenas, we are “right on track” with the number of students at our school. Ms. Duenas added that the current enrollment is what ICS has been working toward for years. “We knew from the beginning that we would have to maximize a relatively small space. This is what we were given to work with and it’s working beautifully.”

The higher enrollment has posed a number of challenges that are being met in a variety of ways. ICS has a stage that doubles as a classroom and a science lab that serves both chemistry and biology classes. Although several teachers rotate from class to class and some do not have classrooms to use during their prep period, all have workspaces in the rooms behind the office. At this time next year we will probably have an additional challenge: a completely full parking lot. The school’s maximum capacity is 360 students. Our current enrollment is 350.

Class size represents yet another challenge. Currently, we have classes ranging from 12-37 students. Ms. Duenas emphasized that a number of factors determine class size, not the least of which is our commitment to academic excellence. Here are a few examples:

- We do not “combine” or “blend” classes that are similar, for instance Spanish III and Spanish IV. This was one of the original guarantees made to founding families when the school was still in its planning stages.
- We try not to combine AP (Advanced Placement) and Honors courses.
- We do not do “social promotion,” whereby students are advanced to the next grade level even if they don’t pass, in order to keep them with their peers. Rather, if a student doesn’t pass a class he or she must repeat it

The attrition rate also affects enrollment. So far, we are following in the steps of the Bellevue International School, in that a fairly high rate of students in the higher grades left during the school’s early years. This means that 10th, 11th, and 12th grade classes are now smaller than 7th, 8th, and 9th. Attrition in the higher grades should level out in the next year.

So the next time you see a teacher pushing a cart down the hallway, remind him or her that you appreciate their sacrifices and support ICS, filled to overflowing, as it is.

Welcome to ICS!

During the past five years, the International Community School has grown from the cherished idea of a handful of people to a thriving reality for 349 students, their families, and 17 faculty and staff. Once solely a junior high, ICS now boasts a six-year program and will award its first high school diplomas in the spring of 2002.

ICS has a number of strengths, the most important of which is that no one is here by default. Every member of our community considered the alternatives and chose ICS. This decision has meant more work, tougher challenges, less free time, and greater involvement in the school for all concerned, but the rewards are many. As WASL scores continue to attest, ICS is a community that values academic achievement. In addition, ICS is a community that celebrates cultural diversity and embraces the world that lies beyond the Eastside.

For those of you who have just joined the ICS community as student, parent, or faculty member, we would like to extend the warmest of welcomes and best wishes for a successful school year!



Victoria Castañeda: Born to Teach

Mrs. Castañeda knew she wanted to teach when she was in kindergarten, because she loved her teacher. (What an impact a teacher can make!) A Tacoma native, Mrs.

Castañeda attended Seattle University, majoring in English and history, followed by Western Washington University, where she attained a Master of Arts in teaching.



Mrs. Castañeda likes to run and participated in the recent "Taste Kirkland" and a

neuro fibrosis fund-raising event. Her husband is from Bogotá, Colombia, but she knows little Spanish. After she read Chaucer's wonderful medieval poem, *The Canterbury Tales*, she visited Canterbury in England.

Our new International Studies and Humanities teacher did her student teaching at both the Holy Family School in Kirkland and the Bellevue School District. Mrs. Castañeda turned down an offer to teach at the Bellevue School District and held out for the opportunity to teach at ICS. We are fortunate indeed!

Diana Di-Tolla: From Flamenco to Carnivorous Plants

Diana Di-Tolla, ICS Spanish teacher, brings a wealth of experience that belies her relatively young age. She was born in Seattle in 1970, and grew up in the Tri-Cities area of Eastern Washington. Ms. Di-Tolla attended high school there, but spent much of each summer in Seattle.

Ms. Di-Tolla's fascination with the Spanish language began in kindergarten because of a close friendship with a classmate from El Salvador. She found the language beautiful and decided to learn it—right then! This she accomplished mainly on her own, with some help from her mother. As a high school student she became concerned about environmental problems, and developed an interest in biology, zoology, and botany, while continuing her Spanish studies. She also found time to play basketball, volleyball, and softball.

Following graduation from high school Ms. Di-Tolla moved to Seattle to attend Shoreline Community College, where she earned an associate of arts degree. An interest in foreign travel led her to move to Spain. The first part of her stay was spent in Bilbao, a city on the northern coast in the heart of the Basque country, where she lived with a family who treated her as they would one of their own daughters. This was followed by a sojourn in Madrid, the Spanish capital, where she immersed herself in the local culture. This included learning flamenco, an interest she still actively pursues.

Upon returning to the United States Ms. Di-Tolla enrolled at the University of Washington (UW). She took a course in botany and fell in love with it, which motivated her to undertake a dual major in Spanish and botany and earn degrees in both. As an undergraduate, she became involved with research on Scotch broom, resulting in a published article on the subject. While still at UW she traveled to Australia for two months where she "camped with the kangaroos" and studied carnivorous plants. Back at the university she served as a teaching assistant (rare for an undergraduate) to pursue her interest in teaching. During this period of her life she

met her future husband, Alejandro, a Peruvian who was at UW to study English. They were married two years later and traveled to Peru, another in a long series of foreign adventures.



Although she was very attracted to pursuing a career in botany, she decided to become a teacher instead. She participated in the "Kid Reach" program, whereby college students are sent to inner-city schools with strong minority representation, and assisted in Spanish and biology classes at Rainier High School and Ballard High School. As a result of her career decision she enrolled in Western Washington University and earned a master of education degree. Her first "formal" teaching job was in Issaquah as a biology teacher, but she was drawn to ICS because of its goals and philosophy of education. She is very happy to be teaching here.

MEET
THE
STAFF

ICS WASL Scores (April, 2001)

Keep up the great work!

Grade 7	Reading	Math	Writing	Listening
State	40	27	49	83
District	59	47	68	93
ICS	85	87	92	100

Grade 10	Reading	Math	Writing	Listening
State	63	40	47	84
District	77	60	65	92
ICS	100	100	95	100

Keeping it together with ParentOrganizer

ICS parent Kathryn Skinner is a woman with a mission. Having already created and sold one successful Web site (FilmPix, now owned by Hollywood.com), Kathy is determined to use her Internet experience and business savvy to make the lives of parents easier with ParentOrganizer.

When asked what inspired her to start ParentOrganizer, she replied, "As parents, we're all so busy all the time with our kids' school and outside activities. It occurred to me that there's no reason why we can't bring the same efficiency you'd find in the business world to our personal lives. Why should I waste time filling out the same form over and over again, for example, when I could do it once on-line?" More than just an on-line information clearinghouse, ParentOrganizer allows parents to enter detailed profiles of their children, including their class schedules, teachers, and extracurricular activities. This information is then stored on the site's database, and when relevant school events, PTSA meetings, or extracurricular activities are about to occur, or fees or forms are due, parents receive e-mail notification. "They can come to our site and find out what's going on," added Kathy, "but with ParentOrganizer, they can also get daily e-mail reminders and weekly summaries." In addition, parents can complete

school forms and pay school fees on-line.

For those chairing ICS PTSA committees, ParentOrganizer provides an efficient way to keep committee members on schedule and "in the loop."

At ParentOrganizer, privacy is a high priority. "We have a strict privacy policy," stated Kathy. "We absolutely do not sell or lend our lists to anyone and we don't 'spam' them either. Ultimately, we may add marketing partners, but ICS parents will hear from them *only* if they first give their permission."

ParentOrganizer is currently free to users. The service will make money by selling its on-line communication capabilities to school districts and recreational organizations. Schools and organizations save money with ParentOrganizer by reducing mailing, printing, and distribution costs. While currently available only to ICS parents, ParentOrganizer is working with the Lake Washington School District on expanding to other LWSD schools in the future.

For close to a year, ICS parents have been using ParentOrganizer and, according to recent PTSA survey results, the response has been favorable. On a one-to-ten scale (ten being the most positive), more than 80% of ICS parents who responded rated the service between an eight and a ten. Most cited the weekly e-mail summaries and on-line forms especially helpful and 90% called it "a good communication tool."

As Kathy is quick to point out, ParentOrganizer is now a reality because of the efforts of many talented and supportive people. She describes her organization as "boot-strap, with high-level players." Her advisory board includes state-level educators, PTSA members, the Boys and Girls Club of King County, and assorted business leaders. She also credits Chip Kimball, Assistant Supervisor of Technology for the Lake Washington School District, for his help, as well as the ICS PTSA, especially Cindy Duenas, Shelley Cardiel, and Nina Florenz. "ParentOrganizer would not have been possible without them. They had great ideas."

In the future, Kathy hopes to add more functionality to the site. Parents will one day be able to get their children's school lunch balances and pay on-line, submit messages to a carpool bulletin board, and review a resource directory, for example. She also hopes to take the service national.

It's been a lot of hard work, but not without a great deal of personal satisfaction. "I know it sounds corny," Kathy summarized, "but I've always wanted to make a difference and make things better."

Report from the ICSA College Partnership Committee

How to Demystify the College Search

When your child reaches 10th or 11th grade, the task of selecting the right college has a way of moving from the back burner to the top of your list of priorities. Because the research and selection process can be confusing, even intimidating, the ICSA College Partnership Committee was formed to help you and your child get the resources you need to make the right choice.

We're happy to report that there is a lot of great information available. What's more, help can be found in many places. Here are a few things to consider as you start the selection process, followed by a list of resources we think you'll find helpful.

Things to determine before you make your short list

College provides the setting for a tremendous period of emotional, social and intellectual growth. In what kind of environment is your child most likely to thrive? A large university or small college? A major urban area or a rural village? Near home or far away?

Your child may not know what career choices he or she is likely to make in the future, but current interests can certainly provide an indication. Which courses of study might be most useful or intriguing, given your child's current interests? And which colleges are renowned in those areas?

Representatives of many colleges visit ICS to provide an overview of their school's offerings and answer the students' questions. Your child can begin to understand the range of choices he or she has by attending as many of these sessions as possible.

Your child should consider *all* the colleges he or she finds interesting, regardless of tuition costs, because many of the most expensive private colleges offer the greatest financial aid resources.

Visiting colleges is invaluable, even if you can only manage to visit nearby schools. Consider trying to visit small and

large schools, in small towns and in large cities, even if the schools themselves are not of current interest, so that your child can get a feel for what kind of campus and environment seems to be the best fit.

During the spring of your child's junior year, try to visit the colleges that interest you most. If at all possible, make arrangements with the admissions offices ahead of time and schedule your visit during a period when classes are in session. If your child has a specific interest, smaller colleges can often arrange a meeting with a faculty member and/or student in your child's area of interest. An overnight dorm stay is a great way to learn what life is like on a particular campus (although such visits are sometimes open only to seniors who have already been accepted).

During the summer between junior and senior year, your child should write the first draft of a college admissions essay. The ICS Counseling Center college notebooks (see below) have examples of such essays, and many books on how to complete a college application address the essay in depth; in fact, whole books are devoted entirely to the subject.

An annual event that can be fun and useful is the National College Fair at the Washington State Convention Center. (See www.nacac.com for schedules and participating colleges.) In addition, ICS counselor Kathy Comeau will be distributing college notebooks to all ICS juniors in January, and there will be a college night around the same time.

Resources for parents and their college-bound children

Books

Fiske, Edward B., *The Fiske Guide to Colleges*

Rugg, Frederick E., *Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges*

Pope, Loren, *Colleges That Change Lives and Looking Beyond the Ivy League*

Greene, Howard & Matthew, *The Hidden Ivies: Thirty Colleges of Excellence* (see also other *Greenes' Guides*)

Asher, Donald, *Cool Colleges: For the Hyper-Intelligent, Self-Directed, LateBlooming, and Just Plain Different*

Franek, Robert (The Princeton Review), *The Best 331 Colleges: 2002 Edition*

The College Board College Cost & Financial Aid Handbook 2002

Magazines

Time Magazine and *The Princeton Review*, “The Best College for You”

US News and World Report, “America’s Best Colleges”

The above are special Fall issues on colleges, with up-to-date information on application deadlines, average GPAs and SAT scores, etc. (Don’t get hung up on the rankings!) Both have good Web sites: www.usnews.com and www.time.com; follow the “Education” links.

Web sites

The Web is the best place to start your research in the college selection process. You can find lots of useful information about a college on its Web site, including video “tours,” schedules showing when a representative will be in your area, course descriptions, etc. Be sure to put your name on their mailing list if you are interested in the school. The following Web sites can help with college research, selection, application (including online application to many colleges), financial aid, and career planning:

- The College Board: www.collegeboard.com. Register online for the SAT I and II tests.
- Embark.com: www.embark.com
- wiredscholar: www.wiredscholar.com. Provided by Sallie Mae, Inc. (student loans).
- Hobsons CollegeView: www.collegeview.com. Includes online virtual college tours.
- Peterson’s: www.petersons.com. Peterson’s started as a publisher of college guidebooks and other books; it now also has extensive online resources.
- Campus Tours: www.campustours.com for online virtual campus tours.
- Mapping Your Future: www.mapping-your-future.org. A site sponsored by participants in the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP).
- US Department of Education: www.students.gov; www.ed.gov/thinkcollege; (www.ed.gov/studentaid: the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid.)
- The Common Application: www.commonapp.org. Apply to (currently) 209 selective, independent colleges and universities. (Many other sites have online application facilities.)
- FastWeb: www.fastweb.com. Financial aid information and lots of other stuff.
- FinAid: www.finaid.org. Comprehensive information on financial aid.
- Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education: www.wiche.edu. Through the Western Undergraduate Exchange program, students in western states may enroll in

fifteen two-year and four-year college programs at a reduced tuition level.

- Northwest Education Loan Association: www.nela.net
- EStudentLoan: www.estudentloan.com. Compares student loan programs; apply online.
- The Princeton Review: www.review.com. The leading provider of test prep courses, books and software.
- TestTakers.com: www.testtakers.com. Online test preparatory courses
- Triumph Learning: www.testprep.com. Home study test preparatory programs.
- Kaplan: kaptest.com. Test prep courses, books, etc.
- MaxTheTest: www.maxthetest.com. A small, inexpensive online test prep site. Long Q&A section with interesting information about the SAT and ACT.
- ACT, Inc.: www.act.org. The company that does the ACT and PLAN tests.

Software

The College Board program “ExPAN” is now installed on several student computers in the ICS library. ExPAN lets students do the following:

- Explore their interests and relate them to possible careers
- Understand college majors most appropriate for their interests
- Find colleges that are strong in these majors, and get up-to-date information on them
- Prepare and submit college applications online
- Understand the cost of college and how much families may be expected to contribute
- Search for scholarship and financial aid sources
- Keep personal profile records updated throughout their high school years
- Create disks for use at home so parents can participate in the planning process.



Got books? Donate them to our library!

The new ICS library is beginning to take shape. Thanks to the generosity of the ICS community, when you enter the library today, you will see books on shelves, instead of just blank walls. Shannon Rubin, our new Technology/Media instructor, is busily attending to the duties of managing a real library, and Ms. Rubin and our parent volunteers are now loaning books to students.

There are many works of fiction and nonfiction available, but there's still a long list (13 pages) of works the library hopes to acquire. Thanks to a grant from our parent group, Ms. Rubin will be ordering some new books from the list as well as some high-end reference books to benefit the students in their research. If you would like to donate some books to the ICS library, there are plenty on

the library's "wish" list. To see what books are needed, visit <http://www.ics.lkwash.wednet.edu/NewLib/Wishlist.htm>. Included are such works as *Tara Road* by Maeve Binchy, *Pickwick Papers* and *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, *Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller to name just a few. If you have a gently used book that you would like to donate, contact Ms. Rubin at srubin@lkwash.wednet.edu.

Got books? Now you know where to send them!

ICS COMPENDIUM

ICS Parent Association: 425.654.3450 ICS School Office: 425.889.6880

The ICS Compendium is published 3 times during the school year by the ICS Parent Association for the ICS community. Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photos or announcements for publication, please contact Martha Craig at 822.1625, mcraig@seattle.fcb.com, or Anchi Miller at 820.4450, anchi@atm-international.com. Deadline is two Fridays preceding the publication.

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