individual

AVID
Year in Review 2004

Christian Garcia, AVID student
Advancement
Via
Individual
Determination

determination
From Japan to Iraq
AVID students from Yokosuka, Japan, woke up extra early every morning to sell hot chocolate and tasty breakfast snacks for a fundraiser. But they weren’t working for a field trip or AVID activity — instead, they were raising money for school supplies for children in Iraq. With the help of several military liaisons stationed in Iraq, the AVID students worked extremely hard to help others learn.

How I Became a Dell Scholar
by Jose Alvarado
When I first began high school I knew I wanted to attend UCLA. AVID helped me succeed with academics and manage time between athletics, clubs, and a job. Thanks to AVID, I maintained a high GPA and steadily increased my test scores. The day came when my dream came true and I was accepted to UCLA (as well as eight other schools). Then there was the matter of financing my education. I had to come up with about $10,000 for school. I applied for a number of scholarships. Luckily, I applied for the Dell Foundation Scholarship (thanks to AVID), but didn’t expect to get anything. One day, out of the blue, I received a letter from the Dell Foundation telling me that I had procured an award in the amount of $20,000!
**AVID Seoul**

Seoul American High School AVID students will be sponsoring their own College Fair in February 2005 as well as a Leadership Conference in Pusan, Korea this spring. The students have also developed their first edition of the “AVID Media Presentation” that will act as a quarterly newsletter to AVID parents, the SAHS student body and community.

**Going the Extra Period**

When Wilson, North Carolina’s expanding AVID programs found themselves short elective teachers, two dedicated instructors selflessly stepped forward to help out. Dana Crocker of Forest Hills Middle School and Crystal Hardison of Springfield Middle School volunteered to teach AVID during their planning periods, depriving them of ninety minutes each day of prep time for their other classes. They say they don’t regret the loss, however, because they can see firsthand the good it’s doing for students.

**Whirlwind Test-Fest**

The Peach County High School AVID program in Fort Valley, Georgia once again excelled on the Georgia High School Graduation Tests. The preparation “Whirlwind Test-Fest” included focus sessions with subject area teachers from across the curriculum, AVID teachers, and AVID tutors. AVID students also participated in intense, but relaxed, collaborative student study groups that highlighted review notes and test-taking techniques. These collective strategies resulted in a 100-percent passage rate of eleventh-grade AVID students in the areas of writing, English-Language Arts and math.

**New Mexico Shines**

All—yes, 100%—of the AVID eighth graders at Tse Bit Ai Middle School in New Mexico were enrolled in and passed Algebra I for the 2003-04 academic year. This compares with slightly more than 40 percent of the entire school’s eighth graders taking the course. For this, and many other achievements in the first year of AVID at the school, AVID Coordinator, Tara Kuehn (above left, with student Brian Wood) won the New Mexico School Boards Association 2004 Excellence for Student Achievement Award.

**AVID Angels**

AVID students at Brawley, California’s Barbara Worth Junior High have been sending “heavenly” gifts to local children in need. For the past seven years, they have participated in the Salvation Army’s Little Angels program, which provides low-income children with Christmas gifts. Teams of three or four AVID students earned and saved money, and shopped for an age-appropriate present. Though the students enjoyed the shopping and, later, gift-wrapping, the program is about more than fun. It prepares them for the community service requirement they will face in high school. This jump start in junior high gets them focused on the community and teaches them the value of helping others who are less fortunate.
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Inside Cover
A LETTER from THE FOU
Dear Colleagues:

In this 2004 Year in Review, we try, but utterly fail, to condense a wonderfully productive and exciting year down to a matter of pages. We share highlights and crunch numbers. We meet students and teachers who overcame enormous odds. We celebrate and reflect.

Begun in 1980, today AVID is a force in more than 1,900 middle and high schools across 30 states and 15 countries, and has established a 95 percent college-going rate for program graduates, 77 percent of whom go on to four-year colleges. Being truly data-driven continues to differentiate AVID, and in this publication you will find an entire section devoted to AVID’s evidence base.

During the past year, rampant growth led AVID Center to introduce a Western and Central Division. And we made considerable progress with our initiatives to take AVID schoolwide and districtwide. Through AVID’s partnership with the College Board and its work with leading superintendents, we are creating a comprehensive delivery system to raise achievement for all students.

With tightening state budgets, the need to cultivate business and foundation support has become apparent, and we express gratitude to all of our funders, sponsors, partners, and vendors, without whose support AVID could not make the difference it has.

We point to AVID’s evolving relationship with the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, which awarded a total of $1.8 million in multi-year scholarships to almost 100 AVID students. What’s more, we’ve been able to serve more students in Texas and establish our Central Division thanks to the support of the Foundation.

AVID now touches more than 105,000 students. On behalf of each of them, I thank you for supporting their college dreams.

Sincerely,

Mary Catherine Swanson
AVID Founder and Executive Director
By the time I hit high school I was a menace, constantly being kicked out of classes and getting suspended from school. Luckily I was fortunate enough to be placed in the AVID program where I met individuals who were proud of their achievements and were determined to do as well as they possibly could. The first year in high school was very rocky, but by the end I realized my AVID teacher and fellow AVID students were not there to judge me; on the contrary, they were there to encourage me to accomplish any goal I could imagine.

The following year my grades shot up from something near a 2.0 to nearly a 4.0. I began joining activities and associating with a whole new group of people. From then on things just went by so quickly since I was having so much fun. I was enjoying all the activities I was in, my grades were close to perfect, even though my classes became much more difficult than the previous year. By the time I finished high school I had passed 11 of 12 Advanced Placement exams, 10 of which I received a four or better on; I was in the top 2% of my class, and I had been accepted to schools such as UCSD, UCLA, UC Berkeley, and MIT.

I am in my third year at MIT where I am majoring in Mathematics, and I feel great about it. I am extremely thankful to the AVID program for helping me along the way.

See these students and many more AVID All-Stars at www.avidonline.org

From AVID Student

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From AVID Student

The Paradise Fire of October 26, 2003, changed my life forever. It all happened so fast; my mom had to stop cooking breakfast; I had to get up from bed and try to pack some things, but it was useless; the fire was moving too quickly. Outside my window I could see the radiant red sky and ashes sprinkling down like white snowflakes. People were screaming outside trying to save their lives from the ferocious wildfire. I was told to pack some blankets and some of my personal belongings but I stood in my doorway looking at everything I had: my awards, my computer, my Tweety collection and my backpack. For some reason, I knew that this was going to be the last day that I would see them. The only thing that I grabbed was my backpack. It might sound silly, but this bag travels with me everywhere I go. I treasure it like a living soul. My backpack means a lot to me because it contains my schoolwork, notes, and most important, my AVID binder. I feel that my backpack has become more than just the bag that I carry to school every day; it is a part of me like the lungs in my body that help me stay alive. It has become my most valued possession because education is my life.

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profiles
Quoting Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Less Traveled,” I wrote about my AVID experience in my college admissions essay eight years ago. My life now, more than my admissions essay, is the testimony to AVID’s uplifting power. As an AVID student and tutor later in college, I discovered my passion for education; I am now Santiago High School’s AVID Coordinator. Most of my AVID classmates had grown up together, survived the same violent neighborhood, and many of our parents worked in the same packing factories. While our school was a zone for racial riots at times, our AVID class was a tight family, empowered by aspirations for college. My mother would say “Gracias a Dios por AVID.” Thank God for AVID. My family emigrated from Michoacan, Mexico, when I was six. My parents only had elementary educations. They left their beloved Zacapu with the hopes of offering their kids the opportunities that they never had. They cherished AVID and reminded me of the magnitude of opportunities it offered. AVID reached out to our families, letting them know that their school believed in their kids. I was the first in my family to join AVID. Eventually, my brothers and three cousins would follow in this process, which transformed my entire family. In college, I saw how effectively AVID had prepared me to face my challenges—I became the first college graduate in my family. Everyday I see my own story reflected in my students’ lives. My experience as an AVID student is now serving a greater purpose: Each day my hope is that a parent is saying “Gracias a Dios por AVID.”
**California High School Exit Exam**
Elk Grove USD, Class of 2005
English and Math Passing Rates

- African-American (AVID n=50): 64%
- Hispanic (AVID n=33): 34%
- Total (AVID n=126): 72%


**Percent of Students Completing Four-Year College Entrance Requirements**

- AVID Texas: 97%
- AVID California: 81%
- National: 36%

The AVID program began here in 2002 in six high schools. By 2008, every high school in Baltimore County will have AVID. Already, the teachers, staff, and administrators hail the program and comment regularly about its significantly positive impact. But most important, AVID is not just a program intended to address the needs of students selected for an AVID class. Rather, it is a schoolwide reform effort that is intended to reach all students by providing additional support and revising the ways in which professional staff address the needs of students. With our planned expansion of the project, Baltimore County Public Schools is on the way to becoming the flagship system for AVID in Maryland.

**Dr. Joe A. Hairston**
*Baltimore County Schools, Maryland*

AVID has increased from one high school to two with other schools beginning the awareness phase of orientation. We have quadrupled in student numbers from 30 students to 120 students. We have administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers at both schools “AVIDized” and supportive of the AVID philosophy and methodologies. All of our AVID students are enrolled in a college/university preparation program of study and each of the seniors is enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement class. Other students are picking up on the success of AVID participants in their classes and are asking, “Should I be in AVID, too?” Our AVID students carry their binders with pride. Our class motto is “Learners today, leaders tomorrow.”

**Dr. Ann Hart**
*Catawba County Schools, North Carolina*
**Professional Development**
As sites implement the AVID program, ongoing professional development is critical to supporting student and teacher success. AVID Center offers multiple professional development opportunities to develop AVID educators’ skills so they can lead their colleagues to improve teaching and learning across their campuses.

**AVID Certification**
The AVID Certification Process consists of a site self-study and validation to determine the areas of strength, and to identify the site’s next steps in a continuing effort to fulfill the mission of AVID. An AVID regional or district director works with the site team to review the site’s implementation of all Eleven AVID Essentials. To be certified, the site has fully implemented all Eleven AVID Essentials and has completed all of the necessary AVID data collection documentation. The certification process identifies indicators of success with evidence to describe the state of the school's implementation status, from Level One (“Early Use”) to Level Two (“Routine Use”) to Level Three (“Institutionalization”). The whole process strengthens and supports schoolwide efforts to improve student learning, to maintain high accountability systems, and to institutionalize AVID strategies and effective teaching methodologies. Visit www.avidonline.org to view a list of AVID certified schools.

**AVID District Leadership (ADL) Training (formerly RDC)**
AVID Center advocates for and supports a district and/or regional structure to support AVID implementation for all AVID sites. With a goal of developing AVID leadership skills, the ADL offers experiential training and demonstration school observations to its national and international regional directors and district directors who are overseeing the implementation of AVID in their areas. ADL site visits generate coaching conversations which focus on the demo site’s modeling of WIC-R strategies, use of inquiry in tutorials, application of curriculum strategies, and effectiveness of site team collaboration. Through the ADL training, directors increase their capacity to implement, sustain, and improve the quality of the AVID programs for which they are responsible. Visit www.avidonline.org to view ADL modules on the Essentials and the Tutorial.

**AVID Summer Institutes**
Every summer AVID hosts its Summer Institutes (SI) to provide quality professional development for AVID educators across the nation. Teachers new to AVID are introduced to AVID philosophy and pedagogy through the AVID Implementation strands and Level One subject area content strands. More experienced AVID educators choose from a variety of Level Two strands that help refine their understanding of AVID methodologies and help them use AVID for effective schoolwide change. In addition, AVID colleagues convene throughout the week with their site teams to analyze school, district, state, and national data, set goals, and write a planning document to guide their AVID work. Visit www.avidonline.org to view information on SI strand registration.
Growth Spurts

AVID Center added 235 sites for Fall 2004. Growth has been so rampant that AVID Center introduced a Western and Central Division. Much of the growth in the central U.S. has been fueled by the rapid expansion in Texas (now totaling 183 sites for the state and 229 in the division).

The need for the Western Division stemmed largely from the tremendous growth in Clark County, Nevada and the state of Washington. AVID continues to grow in California despite severe cuts in the state budget. There are now more than 1,100 California schools involved in AVID.

Outside of California, the Eastern Division remains most prominent with 352 sites in 15 states. In North Carolina alone, AVID currently serves 94 sites.

Where is AVID?

AVID serves 1,902 AVID sites in 30 states and 15 countries through the Department of Defense Dependent Schools and Canada, reaching more than 105,000 students. AVID states are shown on a map on pages 8-9.

Schoolwide/Districtwide

AVID’s schoolwide and districtwide initiatives are taking off. They call for schools and districts to expand their AVID elective offerings, train vast numbers of faculty and administrators in AVID methodologies, and make college-prep the expectation for all students. These ideals are being advanced through a variety of means. AVID’s partnership with The College Board and the development of the Collaborative for School System Leadership and College by Design are creating systems for promoting and implementing schoolwide and districtwide AVID.

AVID/College Board Partnership

As the AVID/College Board partnership deepens and grows, its various initiatives are getting more and more exciting. The Summer Institute Vertical Team Training gives Advanced Placement teachers the tools they need to help their students succeed by teaching them proven AVID techniques. The Collaborative for School System Leadership is being established to support district and site leaders as they seek to prepare all students to be college ready. It will provide superintendents and other district leaders with forums and trainings to address the achievement gap on a large scale. College by Design is a jointly developed, districtwide, multiyear approach to increasing rigor, and will integrate the best curriculum, instruction, and support structures AVID and The College Board have to offer. Finally, the Advanced Placement Incentive Program is in its second year, and schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Long Beach, San Antonio, Wichita, and Mesa, are using AVID’s and The College Board’s expertise to move great numbers of low-income students into AP courses.
During June through August, almost 9,000 teachers, administrators, and counselors participated in professional development at one of four AVID Summer Institutes offered in Atlanta, Austin, Sacramento and San Diego. The overall evaluations were outstanding with more than 90% of participants responding that they “know and understand the mission of AVID and the role they play in supporting student achievement,” and how AVID can be a “catalyst for schoolwide change/improvement.”

Almost one hundred AVID students will be able to live their dream of a college education, thanks in part to the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation’s Dell Scholars Program. A total of $1.8 million was awarded to the 2004 Dell Scholars in multiyear scholarships to attend the college of their choice.

Unlike most scholarship opportunities that focus solely on academic records, the 2004 Dell Scholars Program is need-based and evaluates college-ready high school students on their demonstrated ability to overcome obstacles and determination to succeed. This year, The Michael & Susan Dell Foundation recognized almost twice as many Dell Scholars as originally planned, based on the number of students who qualified.

The program targets underserved youth and lower income students from high schools offering the AVID program in communities across the country.

In February, California Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell praised AVID in his State of Education Address, then embarked on a statewide media tour in which he highlighted AVID programs in four cities.

In his speech O’Connell said: “The first and most critical goal is to raise expectations for all students and provide support for students to reach them. It is no longer acceptable to focus high expectations only on college-bound students.”

He called on high schools “to expand successful programs like Advanced Placement and AVID,” and for all students to meet the minimum course load required for admission to four-year universities.

O’Connell also called for a “refocusing of the culture of high schools,” citing former AVID student Jesus Medrano as proof that “high expectations make all the difference.”

Summer Institute Recap

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Foundation Support Critical

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Kentucky Mentors

The AVID class at Boyd County High School in Kentucky, and the Early Childhood Learning Center, have been awarded a grant of over $40,000 this year to promote literacy. The AVID students serve as student teachers to the children at the Center.

AVID Leaves No Child Behind

Schools in Cumberland, Kentucky are realizing great successes as a result of their AVID programs. Eighth-graders are enrolled in algebra for the first time ever, and the AVID tutorial model has been implemented widely. Most excitingly, No Child Left Behind test scores are rising.
Interviewing for AVID

Eighth grade AVID students at Aki Kurose Middle School in Seattle, Washington, were asked to interview the incoming AVID candidates in 2004 from the sixth- and seventh-grade classes. The eighth-graders took their jobs seriously, creating a list of desirable characteristics, formulating appropriate questions, and conducting the interviews according to the standards of professionalism that they identified for themselves. The results: a great new group of college-bound students who arrived with the confidence of peer recognition.

Gifted and “Glamorous”

UC Irvine junior Jacqueline Chattopadhyay is getting noticed — and from very different sources! Last March, the straight-A student earned the prestigious Truman Scholarship, which is awarded to college juniors who have demonstrated exceptional leadership potential and who are committed to careers in public service. In May, she also received the Donald Strauss Scholarship at UCI. In October, she was named by Glamour Magazine one of America’s Top Ten College Women. All three awards noted Chattopadhyay’s passion for educational equity, and her creation of Students Mentoring Students, an organization that helps AVID students in Costa Mesa become more attractive college applicants.

Taking Tutors Seriously

AVID students in Alhambra Unified School District (California) are getting the finest education possible through a new tutor recruiting and placement system. The district-centralized system, which takes advantage of work-study students at the California State University at Los Angeles, saves sites a lot of headaches. They’ve also developed new job classifications for tutors that are based on completion of college units, making sure students get tutors with the skills they need.

Fallbrook Students Stand Out

Two of San Diego County’s five recipients of the $10,000 Nordstrom Scholarship were Fallbrook High School in California. Adrina Hinton won the sizeable award based on a challenging written application. AVID program has produced other achievements, as well: Angela Woods was named in the top fifth of African-American PSAT, and Karina Martinez was recognized by the College Board’s National Hispanic Recognition.

Schoolwide AVID

Roseland University Prep located in an impoverished neighborhood of Santa Rosa, California, opened in the fall of 2004 with a founding class of eighty ninth graders taught by four teachers. The four teachers and their principal attended the AVID Summer Institute in San Diego with the intention of creating one section of AVID. After spending the week talking to enthusiastic teachers and staff developers, they decided to take AVID schoolwide. Each of the four teachers is now an AVID teacher and the school opened with four sections of AVID. All students are seen as AVID students because they applied to the school, interviewed and signed contracts stating that it is their intention to go to college. Sonoma State University has formed a special partnership with the school by promising to guarantee admittance to all students who graduate from Roseland University Prep and complete all CSU entrance requirements.
Fallbrook Students Stand Out
Two of San Diego County's five recipients of the $10,000 Nordstrom Scholarship were AVID students at Fallbrook High School in California. Alicia Lopez and Adrina Hinton won the sizable awards, which were based on a challenging written application. Fallbrook's notable achievements recognized for being students taking the PSAT, African-American students in the top fifth, and Karina Martinez recognized by the College Board's National Hispanic Recognition Program for her exceptional academic record.

Students Helping Students
After John Marshall High School's first year of AVID, the San Antonio, Texas site team decided to make sure future students would have an easy time transitioning into the program. They formed a freshman-welcoming committee, and now each incoming ninth-grader is paired with one of the original students, and a group of AVID sophomores comes to school an hour early each day to provide tutoring or other help.

These Students Hold the Purse Strings
As part of a yearly service project, Chesapeake, Virginia, AVID students were empowered to give away $1,000 to a non-profit organization in their area—but only after lots of hard work. The Indian River Middle School students did research, wrote letters, interviewed organizations, and gave presentations on their proposed recipients. They selected Chesapeake Service Systems, which helps disabled adults find work.

The Principal is our Pal
New AVID principal Gail Awakuni is clearly on the right track: The Hawaiian educator was recently named Principal of the Year by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Members of her Campbell High School faculty call her tireless and caring. NASSP said the award recognized her reform efforts at Campbell, which included a new schedule, more opportunities for increased staff development, and—of course—AVID.

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Disaster Relief the AVID Way
On September 16, Hurricane Ivan hit the gulf coast of Florida, damaging many homes and businesses. The AVID class of 2006 from Choctawhatchee High School in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, graciously volunteered a Saturday morning to help an elderly couple in the community whose house was damaged by the hurricane. Not only did the AVID juniors help a family in need, but they also gained a rewarding experience.

Students as Teachers, Parents as Students
AVID students at Phillipsburg High School in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, held their first Family Workshop of the year in October. Through a variety of skits and hands-on activities they turned the tables on their parents, asking them to be the students for the night, so that they could feel firsthand what a typical day is like in an AVID classroom. The parents took part in a binder activity, learned to take Cornell Notes, explored Costa's levels of questioning through a tutorial session, and used an online program to practice for that all-important SAT test.
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