

ALL AMERICAN Newsletter



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James Ascenzo Named Illinois State Scholar

The American School is proud to announce that current student **James Ascenzo** has been named a 2012-13 Illinois State Scholar by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. James, a native of Glen Ellyn, earned the award largely because he has performed well as an American School student in courses such as American Literature and Algebra 2, both of which he counts among his favorites. He also enjoys the flexibility afforded by studying at home.

"The American School gives me the time to pursue social activities and to have a job at a local bagel shop," he explained. "My best advice for any American School student is to study in a quiet place and give yourself a change of scenery if that will help you succeed."

James is the fourth member of his family to attend the American School. Older sisters **Laura** and **Margaret** and older brother **Joseph** earned their diplomas within the past five years. After he joins them as American School alumni, James plans on studying mechanical engineering in college, likely at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. or Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas.

The entire American School staff congratulates James on his outstanding achievement and wishes him success in college and beyond!



2009 Scholarship Winner Kristen Russell in Her Own Words

When the *All American* last reported on **Kristen Russell**, she had just been chosen to receive the 2009 Henry Buresh Award. Kristen followed through on her plan to use that award to further her education at Kettering University, but she didn't limit her education and life experiences to her school's campus in Flint, Michigan. In the paragraphs that follow, Kristen describes, in her own words, what her life has been like since receiving her diploma and scholarship from the American School.

Following the completion of my education with the American School, I traveled to Belgium as a Rotary Exchange Student. I spent one year there, living with a Belgian family and attending a Belgian high school where my courses were all in French.

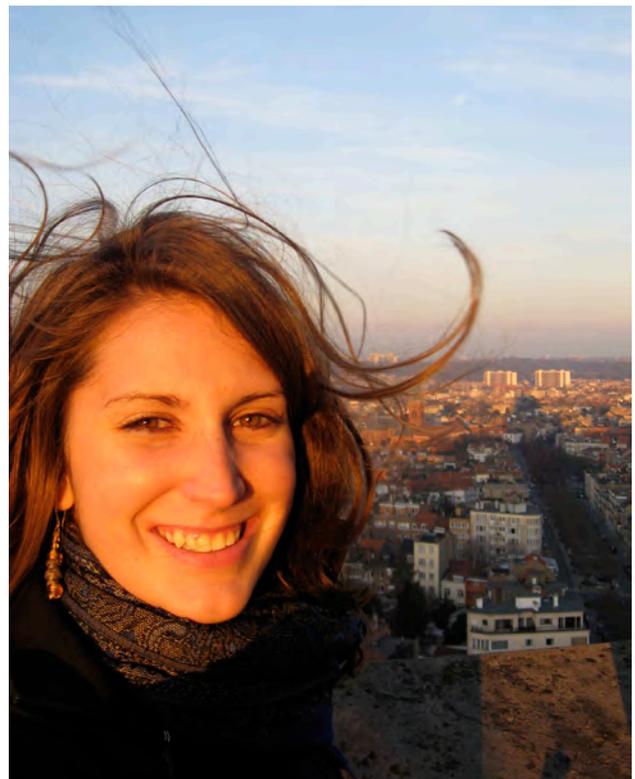
After returning to the United States, I moved to Flint, Michigan, where I began attending Kettering University with a major in Mechanical Engineering and a minor in Biochemistry. Kettering has a unique program where students go to school for three months and then work for a co-op employer for three months, followed by three months of school, followed by 3 months of work, etc. My first co-op term, I did not find the "typical co-op job". Instead, I had the incredible opportunity to travel to Cameroon West Africa where I worked at a mission's hospital for two months.

Following my time in Africa, I returned to school and found a co-op position with Zimmer Inc., an orthopedic company in Warsaw, Indiana. During the summer and winter, I work in Zimmer's hip development group where I help to design hip replacements. Then, in the fall and spring, I return to Michigan for school. There, I have been very active in Pre-Med Club, Student Government, Academic Council,

Campus Crusade for Christ and an Elementary Afterschool Program. I am also an RA in the dorms.

The American School was a great choice for me. I loved the flexibility I had through homeschooling and the care I received from the instructors at the American School. I learned to challenge and teach myself—two traits which are important both at work and at college! I would highly recommend American School to anyone else considering a high school home education program.

We are proud of Kristen and grateful for her kind words. This summer we will announce the winners of this year's Henry Buresh Award and our other scholarships. You will be able to read their biographies in an upcoming *All American*.



Chicago Sun-Times Reports Dire Dropout Statistics

Recently the *Chicago Sun-Times* ran an editorial with this brutally honest headline: *If you drop out of school, prepare for miserable life*. If you don't believe that statement, consider these statistics, which resulted from a study of 2009 and 2010 United States Census data and refer to people living in Illinois.

High school dropouts are less likely to have a job. Nearly 50% of high school dropouts didn't work at all in 2010. Just slightly more than 10% of those with a bachelor's degree or higher had the same fate.

High school dropouts are less likely to own a home. Less than half of them owned their own place, while more than 60% of high school graduates and more than 70% of people with associate's degrees owned their residences.

Finally, high school dropouts earn far less money over the course of their lifetimes. The average lifetime earnings for a high school dropout is \$595,000. For high school graduates, it's \$1,066,000. For those with associate's degrees, it's \$1,509,000.

When you became an American School student, you took the first step in ensuring you will not have a miserable life. You made education a top priority, and, as you grow older, you will continue to reap the rewards of your American School education.



Students, Hold Onto Your Books!

The American School is proud to include books, study guides, examination books and (for some courses) supplemental materials, in the cost of tuition. These books, study guides and other materials are yours and only yours to use throughout the course and are often good reference items to keep after you have completed the course. **Even if you decide not to keep the course materials after you complete the course, it is very important to**



keep all books, study guides and other course materials until you have received confirmation from us that you have passed all unit examinations. The easiest way to know if you have completed all the unit examinations in a course is by checking the Online Student Center. If you have completed a course, your final grade will appear in **bold** with the word Final beneath it. You will also see (Complete) beneath the name of the course. If you do not see both of these designations, you have not completed the course, and you will need your books and other study materials to help you successfully pass the course. **When you have successfully completed the course, you may keep or discard your books and study materials as you see fit, but please do not send them back to the American School.** Thank you for your cooperation and for allowing us to help you earn your high school diploma.

Staff Anniversaries/Retirements

The *All American*, like the American School itself, has a rich heritage. In the nearly eight decades since the first *All American* was published in 1933, countless American School students and staff members have been recognized in these pages. With this issue, we are reviving a tradition of honoring employees who are celebrating milestone anniversaries. Although you might be most familiar with the Instruction and Student Service departments, there are several other departments whose employees are critical to your success and the success of the American School as a whole. The five employees listed below celebrated milestone anniversaries in March and April of this year.

Janet Bielawski	30 years
Arlene Bilenda	10 years
Dru Driscoll	10 years
Dominique Newman	5 years
Annette Sullivan	5 years

Also deserving of recognition are two longtime American School employees who recently retired. **Minnie Koske**, who led the Admissions department for many years, and **Ann Holcomb**, who most recently served as Assistant Advertising Director, were honored at all-staff luncheons.

We thank them for their dedicated service and wish them happy and healthy retirements.



Minnie Koske with members of her department



Ann Holcomb with members of the School's Executive Committee

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