

Hello Washington! Volume 4 / Special Edition: Gaitas



Washington Academy Makes History with Inaugural Gaitas Group!



2024 marked a historic milestone for Washington Academy (WA) as a dedicated group of parents and high school students embarked on an exciting, challenging journey: the creation of our school's first-ever Gaitas group! For those unfamiliar with this vibrant Venezuelan tradition, inter-school Gaitas festivals are a highly anticipated cultural phenomenon in Caracas. These energetic musical competitions, featuring high school students, have become a beloved part of youth culture in the city.



The story of school gaitas began over three decades ago as a simple Christmas activity. Students showcased their musical talents through performances of traditional Venezuelan songs, primarily gaitas and aguinaldos (Christmas carols). However, what began as humble school performances has evolved into a high-octane, professionalized spectacle. Imagine a blend of "Glee" and a Latin American musical tradition, infused with intense, friendly rivalry!



From homemade costumes to designer outfits, amateur strumming to meticulously choreographed routines, and simple school halls to televised spectacles, the transformation has been remarkable. Schools now invest in professional musicians, choreographers, and costume designers months in advance. The music itself has also evolved, blending traditional gaita rhythms with modern beats like reggaeton, hip-hop, and musical classics creating electrifying performances that have attracted major sponsors and TV cameras.

This year, WA joined this vibrant tradition! A courageous group of parents and students organized auditions open to students from 9th Grade and up. To ensure top-notch quality, they also hired professional coaches specializing in dance, percussion, singing, and harmony. The 32 talented high school students who joined the team were divided into the following groups:

Dance: Astrid Chen (11th Grade), Ana Lorena Peuchert (12th), Camila Fernández (11th), Valentina Cases (10th), Ariadna Gómez (11th), Aranza Akinin (10th), Sofía Palomanes (10th), Mariángel Gómez (11th), Alessa Van Woerkom (11th), Valentina Lander (10th), Alejandra Abilahoud (10th)

Percussion: Alejandro Peuchert (10th) and Lara Abdul-Hadi (tambora) (10th), Fabiana Matos (drums) (11th), Sofía Abdul-Hadi (charrasca) (11th), Rebeca Chavero (congas) (11th), Carlota Ledezma (bongo, bell, harp) (11th), Isabela Abilahoud (timbal) (10th), Nikoletta Bacopulos (furrucos) (12th)

Singing: Julio Daoud (12th), María Valentina Rojas (12th), Valeria López (11th), Aranssa Araque (8th), Sophia Scanzoni (11th), Nathalia Serra (11th), Clementina Espinoza (10th)

Harmony: José Mendoza (11th) and Ámbar Alfaro (cuatro), Sofía Ferreira (keyboard) (10th), Aiskel Salazar (piano) (10th), Ana Sofía Romero (guitar) (11th), Rafael Moscatel (bass) (11th)

Our dedicated coaching team consisted of Franco Bellomo (Director and Producer), Fernando Valladares and Nelson Echandia (Harmony Coaches), Humberto Casanova and Efrén Jasai (Percussion Coaches), Mauricio Marín (Singing Coach), and Gio Espinoza (Choreographer).

A huge thank you to our supporting parents, including committee director Pedro Rojas and committee members: Viviana Gibelli, Yonah Hassan, Katherine Lara, María Elba Barreat, María Eugenia Abad, and Ana Gabriela Díaz. We also extend our gratitude to the sponsors: Barunu: Aloe Vera Center, Palladio, Yolo, Café Della Nonna, Galletas Caledonia, and Sedal.



Rehearsals began in February 2024, and the team worked tirelessly with lessons and training. Their dedication culminated in a spectacular debut on October 22nd at our covered court and stage. The performance, while lacking the full costumes and stage design, showcased incredible organization, wonderful songs, impressive instrument playing, and infectious enthusiasm. That same afternoon, they performed for WA parents. The show brilliantly combined Venezuelan gaitas with the music of "Grease," creating a captivating 18-minute performance.



The excitement continued on October 23rd with a live performance in Empresas Polar's "El Último Ensayo," a televised event showcasing all the schools participating in the gaitas season. The four judges provided overwhelmingly positive feedback, noting that WA's debut performance looked like that of veteran competitors.



This event marked the official start of Caracas' inter-school Gaitas Festival period. Throughout the season, Gaitas Washington not only impressed with their musical talent but also demonstrated a generous spirit, donating toys to the Alcaldía de Baruta's Operación Juguete program.



Their catchy jingle and dance went viral on social media, with everyone singing "*La Washington tiene sabor, la Washi se queda en tu mente, pues la Washi anima a la gente... La Washington tiene flow!*" This viral success led to invitations to two popular radio programs.



Gaitas Season 2024

Our Gaitas Washington group took the stage by storm at multiple Intercollegiate Gaitas Festivals throughout the season!

From October to December, our Gaitas group was hitting up to four festivals per weekend. They faced some challenges in their first presentations, since being the newcomers isn't easy, but their enthusiasm and charisma slowly gained them new fans in each school they attended. By the end of the period, everyone knew the moves and cheered loudly when Washington Academy went on stage!

Their commitment proved worth it when they took home an impressive 41 awards during the entire season! Here's a recap of their impressive achievements:



Awards

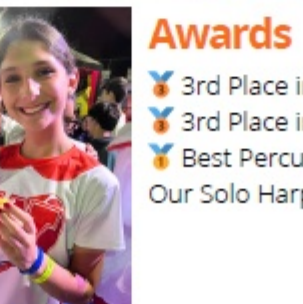
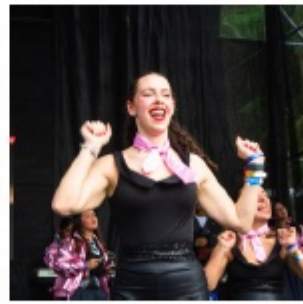
- 🏆 3rd Place in Music
- 🏆 Best Agrupación Fogatera



Don Bosco



Los Campitos

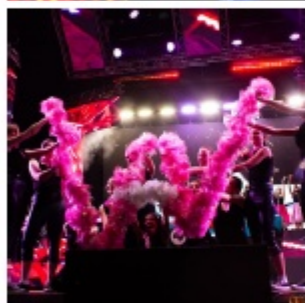


Awards

- 🏆 3rd Place in Music
- 🏆 3rd Place in Dance
- 🏆 Best Percussion Group
- Our Solo Harpist: 🏆 Best Artist



Los Arcos

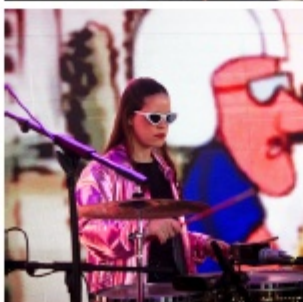
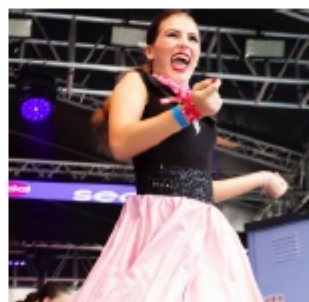
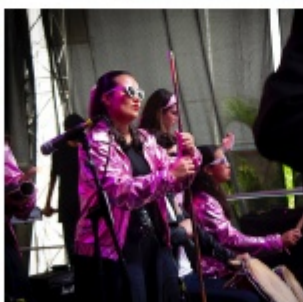
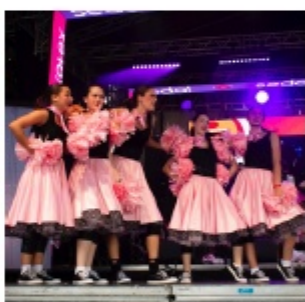
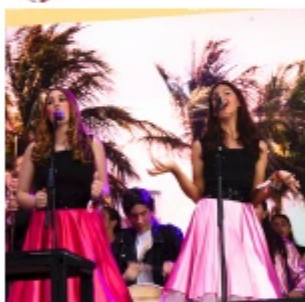


Awards

- 🏆 1st Place in Music
- 🏆 1st Place in Dance
- 🏆 Recognition for our Harpist
- 🏆 Harmony
- 🏆 Voices
- 🏆 Musical Group



Cristo Rey



Awards

- 🏆 Male Vocalist
- 🏆 Recognition for our Harpist



El Andes



Awards

- 🏆 Best Male Vocalist
- 🏆 Best Female Vocalist



San Ignacio



Awards

- 🏆 Best Cuatro



Santiago de León



Awards

🏆 Best Original Gaita



Santa Rosa de Lima

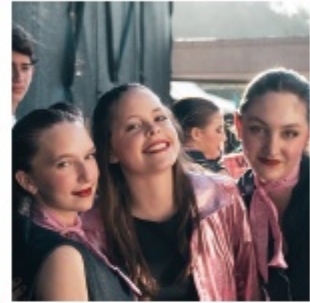


Awards

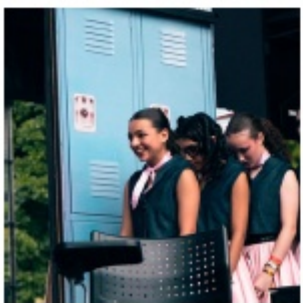
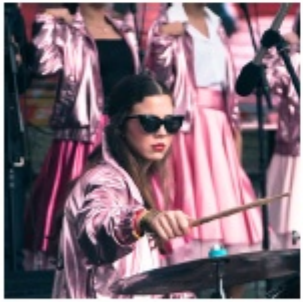
🏆 Best Original Gaita

🥈 2nd Place in Dance

🏆 Best Guitarist

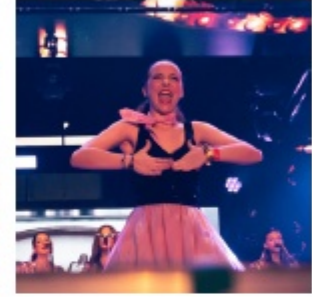


La Salle La Colina
La Colina
Caracas

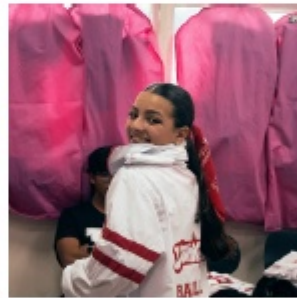




María Auxiliadora



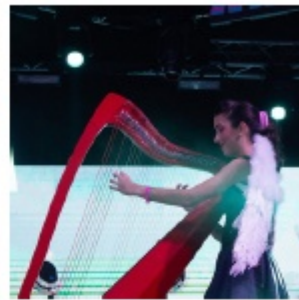
Integral El Ávila



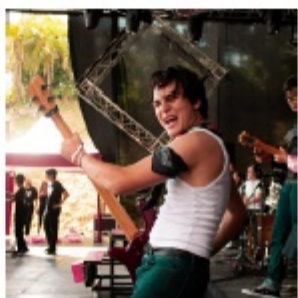
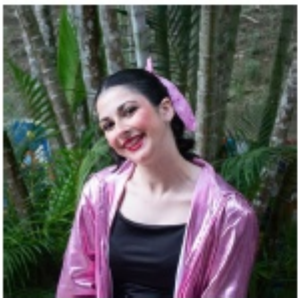
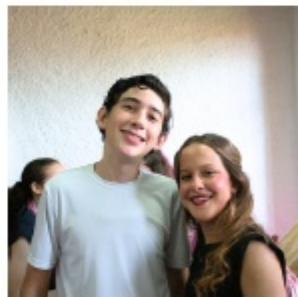
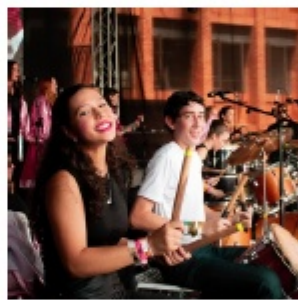
Awards

🏆 Best Gaitas Group

🏆 1st Place in Music



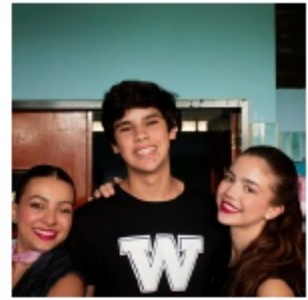
Awards
 🏆 1st Place in Music
 🏆 Best Male Vocalist



Awards
 🏆 2nd Place in Music
 🏆 2nd Place in Dance



Madre Matilde

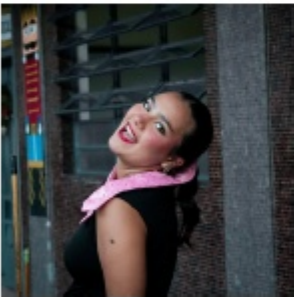


Awards

🏆 Best Breakthrough Group



San Agustín del Paraíso



Awards

🏆 2nd Place in Dance



Champagnat

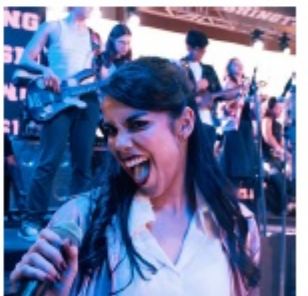
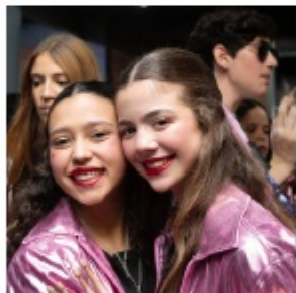


Awards

🏆 Best Male Vocalist



Simón Bolívar



Awards

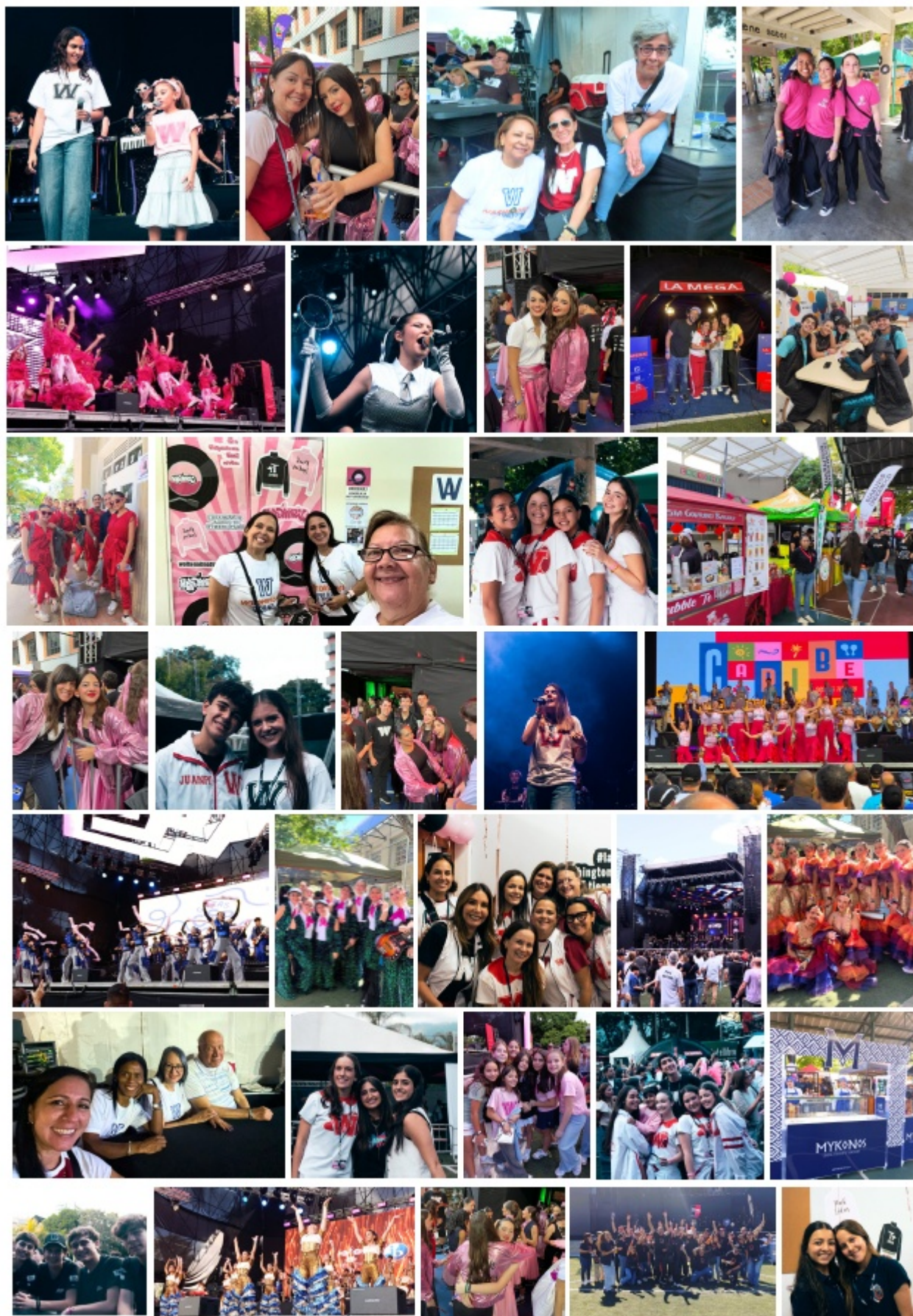
🏆 Voices
🥈 2nd place in Music



PRIMER FESTIVAL DE GAITAS WASHINGTON

Our school's inter-school festival, held on December 7th, was a resounding success, drawing thousands of attendees. 16 schools participated and students and parents alike cheered for their favorites. The entire event was broadcasted on YouTube by local radio station LaMega. The radio station also coached some of our students so they could present each act on stage. Over 20 food stands made sure the fuel never run out, offering a wide range of options, from arepas to sushi. All our school community participated as WA's faculty and staff helped the Gaitas team with the organization and supervision of the event.







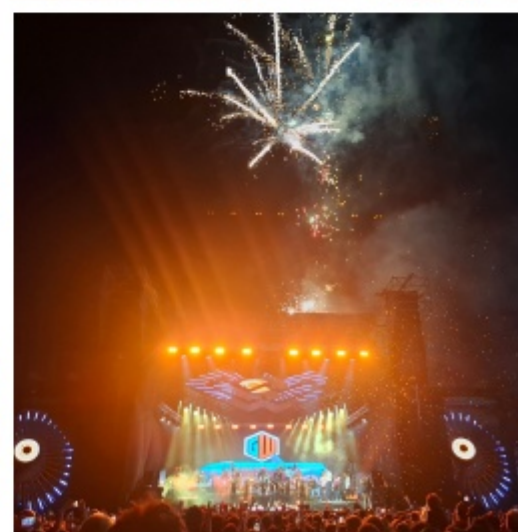
The grand finale featured Gaitas Washington with all their costumes, props, and special effects, including fire, explosions, glitter baths, and fireworks.

The dancers had multiple costume changes, and elaborate props, including a harp, small cars, lockers, and even a bed, were seamlessly integrated into the show.



Adding to their impressive list of accomplishments, Gaitas Washington was also recorded by Venevision and their performance was broadcast on national television on New Year's Eve!

This first experience was an overwhelming triumph, impressing everyone with the excellence, creativity, entertainment value, and professionalism of the performances. The entire WA community is incredibly proud of our Gaitas group and their remarkable achievements!



**Hello Washington! Volume 4 /
Issue # 2 / October**



A Tapestry of Experiences: October at Washington Academy

Parents Attend Open Houses

Throughout the month of October, WA hosted a series of Open House events, inviting parents to explore the diverse academic environment offered at each grade level.

High School Open House (Oct 7-8)

Parents of 8th through 10th graders had the opportunity to experience firsthand the rigorous academic programs and dynamic learning spaces that define WA's high school. They met with teachers, toured classrooms, and gained insights into the curriculum.

Parents of 11th and 12th graders were welcomed to a comprehensive overview of the advanced coursework and college preparatory programs. They engaged with teachers and explored the classrooms that nurture intellectual growth and prepare students for future success.



Elementary School Open House (Oct 10)

Parents of Elementary School students (2nd - 7th Grade) were invited to review subject syllabi with specialist teachers, ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum. They were able to envision their children's academic journey and the supportive learning environment provided by our dedicated educators and counselors.

Preschool Open House (Oct 14)

Preschool parents had a special Open House, where they had the chance to experience Centers work. Parents rotated through activities, met their children's teachers, and learned about the play-based curriculum that fosters early childhood development. They also explored the vibrant spaces dedicated to computer science, art, library, robotics, physical education, music, reading, counseling, and homeroom. Homeroom teachers prepared a video for parents and later on another for their students. Check them out!

These events are a testament to WA's commitment to building strong partnerships between families and faculty. By providing opportunities for parents to engage with teachers and learn about the curriculum, WA aims to foster a deeper understanding of the educational journey and support student success.



Preschoolers Embark on a Robotics and Programming Adventure!

On October 2nd, our youngest learners took their first exciting steps into the world of robotics and programming! As part of our commitment to providing cutting-edge education, we've incorporated the innovative Kurios Preschool Curriculum into our PK through 1st Grade program.

What is Kurios Education Platform?

Kurios Education Platform is a leading provider of STEM-based educational programs and resources (STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). They specialize in robotics education and have expanded to include other technological tools to enhance learning experiences. Their platform is designed to foster curiosity, critical thinking, and innovation among learners of all ages. Kurios empowers students to become active participants in their own learning journeys.

How is Kurios Transforming Learning at WA?

Our preschool students (PK through 1st Grade) are now attending weekly 30-minute computer lab sessions, guided by our Computers / Design teacher and supported by their individual grade's teacher assistant. These sessions, aligned with the Kurios curriculum, introduce our young learners to the fundamentals of robotics and programming.

To ensure our teachers are well-equipped, Kurios provided comprehensive professional development training for our Computers / Design teacher at the Caracas Campus. Additionally, we have a dedicated Kurios coach who is available to support our teachers and students throughout the year. The Kurios platform offers a wealth of digital resources, including planning tools, assessment criteria, and a chatbox for questions and comments.

During their first class, our preschoolers explored the exciting world of Knex kits and booklets. They engaged in activities that fostered visual association and fine motor skills, laying the foundation for future robotics and programming explorations.

A Note on Extracurricular Programs

It's important to note that this new curricular program is distinct from the extracurricular robotics and programming programs also offered by Kurios to our elementary students. While both programs share the goal of fostering STEM skills, they differ in their scope and intensity.

We are thrilled to embark on this new educational journey with Kurios. By integrating robotics and programming into our early childhood curriculum, we are empowering our youngest learners to become innovative thinkers and problem-solvers.





Room Mothers: The Heart of Our School Community



This year, as in years past, we've had the privilege of welcoming a dedicated group of Room Mothers from both our Preschool and Elementary levels. These amazing women have been instrumental in fostering a warm and supportive environment for our students.

Our Room Mothers have met with their respective level coordinators to discuss the year's plans, ensuring a smooth and enjoyable

experience for everyone. Their commitment to our school is truly inspiring, as they volunteer their time and energy to help coordinate and support a variety of activities.

From organizing festive celebrations to planning exciting field trips, our Room Mothers go above and beyond to make our students' school experience truly special. They've created beautiful decorations, engaging activities, and thoughtful gifts for our school coordinators and teachers.

We are incredibly grateful for the dedication and hard work of our Room Mothers. Their contributions make a significant impact on our school community, and we are fortunate to have them as part of our WA family.

A Special Thank You to Our 2024-2025 Room Mothers

Preschool Room Mothers:

Coordinator:

Joselyn Baladi (PK)

Food Coordinator:

Adriana Rehling (1)

Decoration Coordinator:

Korinna Peña (K)

Logistics:

Corina Contreras (K)

Treasury:

Bettina Kovar (PK/1)

Entertainment:

Sonia Moser (K)

Food Team:

Francisca Buvat (1)

Silvia Hernández (1)

Verónica Giardina (K)

Maitane Chollett (PK)

María Silvia Moser (1)

Elena Monecke (PK)

Gabriella López (PK)

Michelle Korody (K)

Decoration Team:

Isabel Daantje (K)

Ari Benítez (PK/1)

María Georgina Jebian (K)

Gabriella López (PK)

Melissa Rodríguez (K/1)

Ximena Sosa (K)

Gabriela Navarro (1)

Lower Elementary Room Mothers:

Ana Lorena Rodríguez

Marjorie Novoa

María Fernanda Ossott

María Gabriela Grisanti

Carolina Larenas

Anna Elisa Vertullo

Yelitza De Ornelas

Mariana Alonso

Maitane Rotaache

Verónica Gómez

Sara Rizzi

Claudia Franco

Emmy Da Silva

Isabel Hernández

Verónica Giardina

Gabriela Mariani

Andrea Cifuentes

Nancy Briceño

Corina Maciá

Antonella Di Palma

Yessika Barroso

Karina Bethencourt

Lourdes de Díaz

Mariana Mazzeo

Noris Rodríguez

Upper Elementary Room Mothers:

María Gabriela Grisanti

Ninoska Cobarrubia

Dorena Casinelli

Carolina Díaz

Daniela Jaimes

Mariana Contreras

Carolina Morgado

Indira Páez

Laura Vieira

Margie Rosales

Natacha Trebucq

Patricia Santini

Linda Kung

Verónica García

Photography Moms

This school year, we're excited to continue a special initiative, thanks to the creative vision of mom Natacha Trebucq (mom of 3rd and 7th graders). A talented group of moms, including professional and amateur photographers, have teamed up with our Communications Department to capture the heart and soul of our school.

Imagine a gallery of stunning, high-resolution photos showcasing everything from academic triumphs to thrilling sports matches and heartwarming celebrations. These images will adorn our newsletters, yearbooks, and other school materials, preserving our precious memories for years to come.

We extend our sincere gratitude to these dedicated volunteers for sharing their time and expertise:

- Natacha Trebucq (3rd and 7th grades mom)
- Jeinny Depablos (1st grade mom)
- Mariana Mazzeo (3rd grade mom)
- Pitu Ceballo (Kinder mom)
- Gabriela Mariani (3rd grade mom)

By working together, we can create a beautiful visual record of our school community. We encourage all parents to get involved in school events and activities, and help us make WA an even more vibrant and memorable place.

WA Smiles Its Way into October

WA kicked off the month of October with a big, bright smile! On October 4th, we celebrated International Smile Day, a global event dedicated to promoting positivity and happiness.

From our youngest preschoolers to our oldest Upper Elementary students, and everyone in between, our school community embraced the spirit of the day. Students and staff alike donned cheerful smiley-face t-shirts and flashed their most radiant grins.

This joyful occasion wasn't just about fun. Our dedicated counselors took the opportunity to explain the remarkable benefits of smiling, both physically and mentally. They emphasized how a simple smile can boost our mood, reduce stress, and even strengthen our immune system.

By highlighting the importance of mental health and a positive outlook, we aim to equip our students with valuable tools to navigate life's challenges with resilience and a cheerful spirit. Our Orientation Department is committed to fostering a supportive and nurturing environment where our students can thrive.

A special thank you to our counselors for their insightful morning announcements and to all our students and staff for their enthusiastic participation in International Smile Day. We look forward to many more opportunities to spread joy and kindness throughout the year!



WA and Alcaldía de Baruta Partner to Enhance Early Childhood Education in Public Schools

We're excited to share that another public preschool playground has been completed, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Alcaldía de Baruta and our dedicated Parents' Association, SPRAW. This month, the General José Antonio Páez Municipal School in Santa Cruz del Este was the lucky recipient of this brand-new playground, designed to inspire joy and learning in over 150 preschoolers.

SPRAW's President, Luis Gómez, joined Baruta's Mayor to officially open the playground and celebrate this milestone. This project is a testament to our commitment to supporting public education in our community.

By providing a safe and stimulating outdoor space, we aim to foster physical activity, social interaction, and overall well-being among young learners. We're proud to be part of this initiative that will positively impact the lives of countless children for years to come.

A heartfelt thank you to SPRAW and the Alcaldía de Baruta for making this dream a reality!



New Families Toast!

On October 10th, WA hosted its annual New Families Toast, a cherished tradition that marks the beginning of a new chapter for our incoming families. Held on our picturesque campus, the event was a delightful blend of warmth, excitement, and community.

Our esteemed WA Foundation Board of Directors, SPRAW Board of Directors, and dedicated faculty and staff extended a heartfelt welcome to our newest members. We understand that transitioning to a new school can be both thrilling and daunting, and we're committed to making this journey as smooth as possible.

During the event, our Principal, Preschool Coordinator, SPRAW President, and returning alumni parents shared inspiring words and offered reassurance to our new families. They emphasized the importance of community and the invaluable support system that WA provides.



By attending this event, new families had the opportunity to:

- Connect with fellow parents: Network with other families and build lasting friendships.
- Learn about WA's culture and traditions: Gain insights into our school's unique identity and values.
- Meet key faculty and staff: Establish relationships with the individuals who will support your child's academic and social growth.
- Ask questions and seek advice: Get answers to any questions you may have about the school year ahead.

We are thrilled to see alumni choosing WA for their children. It's a testament to the positive impact our school has on students and a source of pride for our entire community.

We look forward to a wonderful year ahead, filled with learning, growth, and countless opportunities. Welcome once again to the WA family!

WA's Rising Star Shines on the International Stage

Last October 10th, WA made waves on the international stage as our talented junior, José Nicolás Mendoza, represented Venezuela at the Easy Kart Grand Finals in Castrezzato, Italy. This prestigious go-kart competition brought together 40 of the world's most skilled young drivers.

José Nicolás not only held his own but truly excelled. He secured an impressive 4th place in the pole position classification, showcasing his exceptional talent and determination. Despite being the sole foreign competitor among the top contenders, he finished the race within the top 10, further solidifying his position as a rising star in the world of karting.

Karting has been a lifelong passion for José Nicolás. Last year, he even seamlessly integrated his love for racing with his academic pursuits, focusing his Middle Years Programme Personal Project on Formula 1 and probability theory.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to José Nicolás for his outstanding achievement and unwavering dedication. We are immensely proud of his representation of Venezuela and Washington Academy on the international stage. We eagerly anticipate his future endeavors and look forward to cheering him on as he continues to inspire us all.



A Vinotinto Day!

On October 10th, WA joined the nation in cheering on La Vinotinto, Venezuela's national soccer team, as they faced Argentina in a crucial World Cup qualifier. To show our support, students were encouraged to wear their favorite soccer jerseys to school, transforming our hallways into a vibrant sea of colors and national pride.

This event was more than just a fun way to show school spirit; it was an opportunity to connect our students with the world beyond the classroom. By engaging with current events like this, we foster a sense of global citizenship and encourage our students to be informed and engaged individuals.

We believe that keeping up with current events is essential for a well-rounded education. It helps students develop critical thinking skills, broaden their perspectives, and understand the complexities of the world around them.

By participating in events like this, WA students learn the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, and national pride.

We are proud to have created a space where our students can celebrate their passions and connect with their cultural heritage. We look forward to more exciting events like this in the future!

Columbus Day

On Friday, October 11th, WA celebrated Columbus Day with a variety of activities. Our halls were adorned with decorations that paid homage to the historical significance of this day. Preschool students, filled with excitement, crafted their own miniature ships and native headbands, immersing themselves in the spirit of exploration and discovery.

While Columbus Day is a holiday that sparks diverse perspectives and historical debates, it remains a significant cultural observance in both Venezuela and the United States. For years, WA has commemorated this day as an opportunity to reflect on the rich history of exploration and the cultural exchange that followed.

By remembering Columbus Day, we acknowledge the pivotal role of exploration in shaping our world. It allows us to:

- Appreciate cultural diversity and explore the traditions that have emerged from historical interactions.
- Understand the complexities of historical events and their lasting impact on society.
- Encourage students to delve deeper into history, geography, and other related fields.

While it's important to acknowledge the controversies surrounding Columbus Day, we can still use this occasion to promote understanding, critical thinking, and a global perspective. By celebrating this day thoughtfully, we can foster a deeper appreciation for the past and its influence on the present.



A Powerful Statement for Breast Cancer Awareness

October at WA was a month filled with pink and purpose. As part of our commitment to community health and well-being, we joined the global effort to raise awareness about breast cancer.

Breast cancer is a serious health concern affecting millions of women worldwide. To emphasize the importance of early detection and prevention, our students created informative posters that adorned our school walls. These efforts aimed to educate not only our students, but also their families, encouraging them to prioritize regular check-ups and screenings.

On October 17th, our school was awash in a sea of pink as students, faculty, and staff united in a powerful show of support. Our very own Dr. Victor Acosta, a renowned mastologist and WA Dad, delivered a compelling message during morning announcements, highlighting the significance of breast cancer awareness and the life-saving impact of early action.

By participating in these initiatives, we hope to inspire our community to take proactive steps towards a healthier future. Let's continue to spread awareness and support those affected by this disease. Together, we can make a difference!



Our Delegation Prepares for Global Stage at HMUN 2025



WA is proud to announce that our talented delegation is once again gearing up to compete at the prestigious Harvard Model United Nations (HMUN) 2025 conference in Boston, Massachusetts.

Our dedicated team, comprised of the following students, has been working tirelessly to prepare for this exciting challenge:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| • Aiskel Salazar | • Clementina Haydon | • Juan Diego Peña |
| • Alejandro Vásquez | • Daniela Youssef | • Paula Spuches |
| • Almudena López | • Diego Ramírez | • Sofia Archila |
| • Ana Elisa Haydon | • Elías Abilahoud | • Sofia Cases |
| • Camila Hernández | • Fernando De Ornelas | • Valeska Hannawi |

Our Head of the English Department, Ana María Applewhite, continues to serve as the Faculty Advisor, providing invaluable guidance and support. Additionally, we've enlisted the expertise of a team of experienced university students/ graduates to coach our delegation:

- Alejandro Rivas
- Enrique Leizaola
- María Antonieta Fernández
- Tomás Parra

Building Experience at MOVENU

To further enhance their skills and confidence, our HMUN team participated from October 10th - 13th in the *Modelo Venezolano de Naciones Unidas* (MOVENU) at Universidad Metropolitana (UNIMET). This prestigious event brings together high school and college delegations from across the region to practice for international competitions like HMUN.

We're thrilled to share that Sofia Cartolano (though no longer part of our delegation) and Fernando De Ornelas were honored with the Peer Award, a testament to their exceptional performance and dedication. This award, chosen by fellow delegates, highlights the impact of our students on the international stage.

As we approach HMUN, we remain optimistic about our delegation's potential to excel. We wish them the best of luck and look forward to sharing their achievements with the entire WA community.



WAMUN 2024: A Triumph of Diplomacy and Knowledge

The seeds of the 2024 WAMUN (Washington Academy Model United Nations) conference were sown back in May, and since then, our dedicated students have been diligently cultivating this annual tradition.

WAMUN is an immersive educational experience that mirrors the United Nations. Students from diverse schools come together to represent different countries, engaging in lively debates, strategic negotiations, and tackling pressing global issues. By stepping into the shoes of diplomats, they gain a profound understanding of international relations and hone essential skills like persuasion, negotiation, and public speaking.

Since 2006, WAMUN has been a cornerstone of WA's co-curriculars, entirely student-led. This year's conference, held from October 18th to 20th, was no exception. Under the exceptional leadership of Secretary Generals Isabella and Clementina Márquez, the event was elevated to new heights, featuring a wide range of engaging topics and a dedicated team of organizers.

The WAMUN team worked tirelessly to ensure a seamless and memorable experience for all participants. From crafting thought-provoking committee topics to designing captivating promotional materials, every detail was meticulously planned. Their commitment to excellence was evident in every aspect of the conference, from the structured agendas to the vibrant social events.

The 19th annual WAMUN conference was a resounding success, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our students and the generous support of our sponsors. Renowned entrepreneur Lorenzo Mendoza inspired attendees with his keynote speech, setting the stage for a weekend of intellectual discourse and cultural exchange. Students from 6th Grade and beyond actively participated, showcasing their knowledge, diplomacy, and public speaking skills.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our sponsors: Chocochitas, Empresas Polar, Duncan, Ovejita, Minalba, Holy Chicken, D'Empaire, and Churroteca. Their invaluable support contributed significantly to the success of the event.

Congratulations to Instituto Cumbres de Caracas for winning the Best Delegation award!



We are immensely proud of all our students who participated in WAMUN 2024. Their passion, dedication, and hard work have made this event a true highlight of our academic year:

Chairs

Mariangel Gómez
Rafael Moscatel
Caridad Guerrero
Clementina Haydon
Alessia Pinto
Valeska Hannawi
Sofia Abdul-Hadi
Alejandra Abilahoud
Sofia Cartolano
Ana Elisa Haydon
Fabiana Gallo
Daniela Youseff
Ana Lorena Peuchert
Julio Daoud
Fabiana Berroterán
Emiliana Reinoso
Juan Diego Peña
Nikoletta Bacopulos
Alessa Van Woerkom
Diego Linares
Ariadna Gómez
María Valentina Rojas
Antonella de Santolo
Sofia Cases
Rodrigo Gonzales
Carlota Ledezma
Martina Ubieta
Fabiana Matos
Sofia Archila
Sophia Meneses
Aiskel Salazar

Press

Federica Machado
Isabela Abilahoud
Anarella de Santolo
Aranza Akinin
Mariangeles Adrianza
Paula Soriano
Oriana Marco
Alejandro Freites
Sophia Scanzoni
Adriana Sanchez
Emilia Anzola
Sebastián Araujo
Santiago Ramírez

Admins

María Soler
Jimena Renda
Fabiana Bramanti
Samantha Abecasis
Mia Rojas
Gabriela San Llorente
Alessia Hernández
Alessia Delfino
Gabriel Díaz
Constanza Martins
Lucca Amador
Deborah Correa
Carolina De Zabala
Victoria Bacopulos
Matías Soleman
Elías Abilahoud
Juan Vásquez
Alejandro Vásquez
Aaron Rangel
Javier Jiménez
Lucas López
Sebastián Akinin
Michelle Volpe
Carlos Simon
Alberto Espinoza
Diego Ferreira
Eduardo Meneses
Roberto Martínez
Juan Pablo Prat
Héctor González
Juan Diego Muñoz
Daniela Gallo
Sabrina Copland
Alejandra Abilahoud
Valeria López
Colomba Cáceres
Ana Sofia Romero
Santiago Silen
Andrés Silen
José Salvuchi
Fernando de Ornelas
Diego Linares

WAMUN Jr Delegates

Andrew Chen
Luis Sue
Martina Oliveros
Alonso Valladares
Matías Ortiz
Michelle Buvat
Moisés Vieira
Leticia Bravo
Samuel Vieira
Lauren Jiménez
Matteo de Prisco
Daniel Yehia
Luis Elías Ramírez
Roberto Thiago Pestana
Fernando Tavares
Sofia Vieira
Aitana Tobio
Sophia Páez
Gerard Servat
Ricardo Vieira

WAMUN Delegates (High School)

Alesia Magdaleno
Paula Spuches
Almudena López
Clarissa García
Matías Leoni
Aranssa Araque
Guillermo Issa
Antonio Tannous
Isabella Acosta
Clarisa Sogbi
Salim Frangie
Luis Augusto Gómez
Ema Ramírez





Ancient Traditions, Modern Connections

This trimester, our 9th Grade World History students have been exploring the fascinating world of ancient civilizations, particularly those that emerged along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. To bring this historical study to life, our dedicated teachers have devised a unique approach.

With the invaluable assistance of fellow 9th-grader Sebastián Akinin, a member of the Jewish community, students were given a firsthand look at ancient traditions that continue to shape Jewish culture today. Sebastián graciously shared several significant religious artifacts, including:

- Shofar: A ram's horn used during Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.
- Challah Bread: A braided loaf of bread traditionally eaten on Shabbat and Jewish holidays.
- Challah Board and Cover: Used for cutting and covering the challah bread.
- Kippah: A small, round cap worn by many Jewish men and boys during prayer.
- Tallit: A prayer shawl often worn during morning prayers.
- Tefillin: Small leather boxes containing scrolls of Scripture, worn by observant Jewish men during morning prayers.

Sebastián expertly explained the significance and usage of each item, providing historical context and personal insights. This immersive experience not only enriched the students' understanding of ancient history, but also fostered a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity.

By embracing this opportunity to learn about different cultures, our students are developing the essential qualities of a global citizen. They are becoming more open-minded, empathetic, and equipped to address the challenges of an interconnected world.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Sebastián Akinin for sharing his cultural heritage with the class. His generosity and willingness to educate his peers are truly commendable.



Boost Your Brainpower with Chess

On October 10th and 11th, our school teamed up with the Academia Nacional de Ajedrez to bring the exciting world of chess to our students! This dynamic partnership aims to offer a wide range of extracurricular activities right here on our campus, after school hours.

During these special days, experienced chess coaches from Academia Nacional de Ajedrez set up giant chessboards and pieces on our Big Park and playground. Our students had the opportunity to learn the basics, practice their moves, and even challenge each other to friendly matches. It was a fantastic way to introduce chess to our Preschool, Elementary, and High School students, sparking their interest and curiosity.

We're thrilled to have Academia Nacional de Ajedrez as our partner, and we can't wait to see the positive impact their chess classes will have on our students!



WA's Historic Gaitas Debut

For many years, our students had watched from the sidelines and cheered on other schools during the traditional Interschool Gaitas Competition held every Christmas season. But this year, 32 of our high school students, from 8th to 12th Grade, took it upon themselves to be the first Gaitas Group in Washington Academy's history.

Open to all our students, the auditions began in March. The objective was to form 4 defined groups: Dance, Singing, Percussion and Melody. Some students had natural talent or previous knowledge, but for the grand majority this was their first time holding an instrument. Contrary to being a setback, our dedicated students rose to the challenge and decided they would master their parts in time for the Gaitas Seasons.

After nine months of lessons, training and rehearsing, the very first Washington Academy Gaitas Group was ready for their debut. And none other than their esteemed community had the pleasure of seeing them perform for the first time.

On October 22, our Covert Court transformed into the perfect scenario for the WA Gaitas' debut. Our school grounds were graced with two presentations, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, to fit all the student's schedules. The moment the group entered the stage they were welcomed by a roar of cheer and applause. With an incredible mix of traditional *gaitas zulianas* and the beloved Grease soundtrack, the Gaitas group marveled the audience. With a set of 18 minutes they performed classics like *Amparito*, *Amor del Bueno*, *María La Bollera* and the movie's most memorable songs like *Summer Nights* and *Hopelessly Devoted to You*.



First Public Presentation

At last, the time to show the rest of the world the fruits of nine months of hard work arrived. On October 23, the school was invited to participate in Empresas' Polar *El Último Ensayo* event, a gathering for all the schools participating in the Gaitas Interschool. Although it doesn't involve the complete set of costumes and props, this two day event serves as a glimpse into the rest of the Gaitas Season. 4 judges gave their opinion on every school's performance with Washington receiving extremely positive feedback, even mentioning it didn't look like a newcomer's debut but an experienced competitor.

School Festivals Begin

After such a fantastic first step into the realm of Gaitas Competition, our students tackled their first weekend full of festivals. In just two days they performed at the Don Bosco, El Peñon and Los Campitos Festivals, wowing the audience with their unique take and receiving multiple awards:

El Peñón:

- 3rd Place in Music
- Best Agrupación Fogatera

Los Campitos:

- 3rd Place in Music
- 3rd Place in Dance
- Best Percussion Group
- Best Artist: Solo Harpist

Support That Made it Possible

Our students work hard and dedication wouldn't have amounted to anything without their support system, their parents. They woke up just as early to take them to rehearsals, probably heard the same tune a thousand times while their children practiced in the living room and made sure their costumes and props were perfect when it was time for their presentations. Thank you parents for your infinite support, love and commitment, without you, Gaitas Washington wouldn't have been possible.



Our 7th College Fair

On Wednesday, October 23rd, our traditional College Fair took place. This event, done at WA since 2017, reunites several colleges, universities and counseling organizations to guide our students through their upper education path.

In this edition more than 25 organizations participated, with representation from top universities from the United States, Europe and even Asia. Students were able to get important information such as career offers, requisites, admissions and scholarships. The wide variety of stands assures that every student can find an option that fits their desires and possibilities.

However, Washington Academy wasn't the only one that benefited from this event. Schools from all over the city were invited to attend and we had guests from seven other schools. Juniors and Seniors from Colegio Valle Abierto, Colegio Mater Salvatoris, Colegio Yale, Colegio Las Cumbres II, Colegio Los Arcos, Instituto Educacional Henry Clay, and Colegio Madison visited us and had the opportunity to chat with the college representatives.

To kick it up a notch, the event also included a free *chicha* stand, where students, teachers and even college representatives could enjoy a delicious and refreshing beverage.

All in all, our 7th edition of the College Fair was a rotund success and we hope to see more students and more universities on our 8th edition next year!



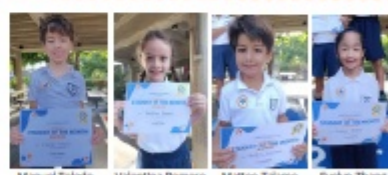
Lower Elementary's Student of the Month

This school year's first Student of the Month is here! Every first Friday of the month, during the morning announcement, our Lower Elementary students see their past month's achievements recognized in front of all their classmates, as they get to be called Student of the Month.

But these achievements go beyond grades. Earning this diploma means improvement in different areas, such as behavior or even socializing and getting out of their shell. We celebrate growth, dedication and perseverance, not just academic excellence.

Each month our LE teachers meet and nominate students that comply with these requirements, based on their observations of the day to the day. At the end of the month, one or two students per classroom are selected.

We congratulate this first batch of students and remind the rest to always strive to improve themselves, not just for the awards but to be the best version of themselves.



Manuel Toledo, Valentina Romero, Matteo Talamo, Evelyn Zhang



Daniel Contreras, Ana Isabel Blumck, Leticia Romero



Ela Rivero, Andrea Costa, Manuel Ravega

October 2024

Field trips

A Day of Discovery and Growth at Topotepuy Gardens

On October 9th, our 10th graders embarked on an enriching field trip to Topotepuy Gardens, an initiative organized by our Science Department. Accompanied by their Biology teacher, counselor, and high school coordinator, students immersed themselves in a day of learning, reflection, and team-building.

A Sustainable Journey

The trip was designed to extend our sustainability curriculum, offering students a firsthand look at sustainable practices in action. They were guided through the gardens, witnessing the wonders of hydroponics, composting, and vermiculture. These experiences sparked curiosity and ignited a passion for environmental stewardship.



Beyond the Garden: A Focus on Personal Growth

In addition to the scientific exploration, the field trip incorporated activities aimed at fostering personal and social development. Students engaged in a variety of exercises designed to enhance:

- Self-awareness: Understanding one's emotions and how they impact behavior.
- Emotional intelligence: Recognizing and managing emotions effectively.
- Social skills: Building strong relationships and communicating effectively.
- Teamwork: Collaborating with others to achieve common goals.
- Environmental consciousness: Appreciating and protecting the natural world.
- Decision-making abilities: Making informed choices and solving problems.

A Rally of 7 Stations

To achieve these objectives, students participated in a series of engaging activities, including:

- The Wheel of Emotions: Exploring and expressing emotions.
- Balance Walk: Practicing self-control and focus.
- The Environment Map: Identifying environmental concerns and solutions.
- Broken Telephone: Enhancing communication and trust.
- The Maze: Collaborating and problem-solving as a team.
- The Mirror: Expressing emotions non-verbally.
- Positive Messages: Creating messages of hope and positivity.

Through these experiences, our 10th graders gained valuable insights into themselves and the world around them. We are grateful to Topotepuy Gardens for hosting us and providing such a wonderful learning opportunity.



Students visit UCAB's Labs

On October 24th, our Juniors and Seniors, along with their chemistry, math and physics teachers, had the opportunity to explore the science labs at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB).

Guided by university faculties, the students were able to experience first row many incredible experiments in the biology, robotics, chemistry and physics field, all directly related to their IBDP curriculum. The students were pleased to learn they had already done many of the experiments during their IB subjects, highlighting the demanding level of their courses.

In addition, this field trip allowed them to check out not only the labs, but also many interesting places in the campus, like their art galleries and even their recycling room! With their high school graduation fast approaching, this is a great chance to explore their options to choose the right university for them.

Talks

A Glimpse into Venezuela's Reality

WA students were fortunate to hear from a distinguished guest speaker, Gonzalo Himiob, a representative from Foro Penal. This prominent Venezuelan NGO is dedicated to defending human rights and providing free legal aid to those facing unjust imprisonment and persecution.

Mr. Himiob offered a poignant and eye-opening presentation that shed light on the dire human rights situation in Venezuela. He explored the complex issue of political prisoners, highlighting the challenges and risks faced by activists, journalists, and opposition leaders who dare to speak out against the government.

By sharing firsthand accounts and statistics, Mr. Himiob provided our students with a sobering reality check. This invaluable experience not only broadened their understanding of global issues, but also inspired empathy and a sense of social responsibility.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Mr. Himiob and Foro Penal for their commitment to human rights and for sharing their expertise with our community.



Value of the Month Patience and Prudence



*"One minute of patience,
ten years of peace"*

-Greek Proverb



This month, Washington Academy (WA) worked on two interconnected virtues: Patience and Prudence. Our Counseling Department, committed to fostering well-rounded individuals, recognized the importance of cultivating these qualities in our students.

Patience: A Virtue Worth Developing

Patience, a cornerstone of character, helps us navigate life's challenges with grace and resilience. By teaching our children to be patient, we empower them to:

- **Manage Frustration:** Cope with setbacks and disappointments calmly.
- **Build Stronger Relationships:** Develop deeper connections with others.
- **Achieve Long-Term Goals:** Persist in the face of obstacles.

Practical Tips for Parents:

- **Lead by Example:** Demonstrate patience in your own life.
- **Explain Clearly:** Use simple language to explain the concept.
- **Establish Routines:** Create a predictable environment.
- **Celebrate Achievements:** Acknowledge their efforts, no matter how small.
- **Use Fun Tools:** Incorporate stories, games, and videos into learning.

Prudence: Making Wise Choices

Closely tied to patience, prudence involves making thoughtful decisions. By teaching our children to be prudent, we equip them to:

- **Think Before Acting:** Consider the consequences of their choices.
- **Make Informed Decisions:** Gather information and weigh options.
- **Avoid Impulsive Behavior:** Pause and reflect before acting.

Practical Guide for Parents

To help parents instill prudence in their children, the Counseling Department has provided a comprehensive guide. This resource offers practical tips, such as:

- **Modeling Prudent Behavior:** Demonstrate wise choices in your own life.
- **Setting Clear Expectations:** Establish rules and guidelines.
- **Encouraging Reflection:** Ask questions to stimulate critical thinking.
- **Rewarding Prudent Behavior:** Reinforce positive choices.

By embracing patience and prudence, our students will develop the skills and mindset needed to succeed in school, in their relationships, and in life. Let's continue to nurture these values together.

Empowering Parents

A Look Back at Our Meetings with Parents

WA is committed to fostering a strong partnership between our school and our parents. To this end, we hosted two informative parent meetings in October.

8th Grade Parents: A Smooth Transition to High School

On Thursday, October 3rd, our 8th Grade parents gathered to learn more about the exciting transition to high school. Our experienced High School Coordinators led a comprehensive session, plunging into specific guidelines, dynamics, and expectations. This meeting provided invaluable insights and alleviated concerns, ensuring a smooth transition for our students.

While our annual Open House offers a general overview of our school, these targeted parent meetings provide a deeper dive into specific grade levels and programs. By addressing specific questions and concerns, we empower parents to actively support their child's academic journey.



MYP Parents: Unraveling the IB Assessment Process

On October 22nd, our IB MYP Coordinator hosted a dedicated session for parents of 6th and 7th Grade students. This meeting focused on the intricacies of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) assessment process. Our Coordinator clarified details about the MYP report card that parents receive each term. She also highlighted the importance of Academic Integrity and our policies in this regard. Parents had the opportunity to gain a clear understanding of the IB assessment criteria and how they are applied to their child's work.

Professional Development

IT and IB Design Team Enhance Technological Pedagogy

On Saturday, October 26th, from 8 to 11 AM, our dedicated Information Technology staff and IB Design (Technology, Computers) Head of Department and teachers attended a valuable Professional Development Workshop at Colegio Emil Friedman. This event, organized by the Venezuelan Chamber of Private Education (CAVEP), brought together educators from various schools across the country to explore innovative technological resources for teaching and learning.

One of the key topics discussed at the workshop was Global Map. This powerful tool offers a dynamic and interactive platform for students to visualize and analyze global data. By utilizing Global Map, our students can:

- Engage in real-world problem-solving: Explore current events and global challenges through data-driven insights.
- Develop critical thinking skills: Analyze complex information and draw informed conclusions.
- Collaborate effectively: Work together on projects and share findings with peers from around the world.
- Enhance their digital literacy: Become proficient in using technology to access, evaluate, and create information.

By investing in professional development opportunities like this workshop, WA reaffirms its commitment to providing our students with a cutting-edge education. Our faculty and staff are continually expanding their knowledge and skills to deliver innovative and engaging learning experiences. This workshop allowed our team to connect with other educators, share best practices, and stay ahead of the curve in educational technology.

Infrastructure Updates

New Furniture Brightens Up the Teachers' Lounge!

We're excited to share that our teachers' lounge has received a much-needed makeover this month! New, comfortable furniture has been installed to create a more inviting and relaxing space for our dedicated faculty.

A well-appointed teachers' lounge plays a crucial role in fostering a positive school environment. It provides a place for educators to recharge, collaborate, and share ideas. Comfortable seating, ample natural light, and modern amenities can significantly boost morale and productivity.

We believe that investing in our teachers is investing in our students' future. By providing a welcoming and supportive space for our faculty, we're empowering them to deliver their best work every day.

We hope our teachers enjoy their new space and continue to inspire our students to learn and grow!



Still Available: Exciting After-School Activities at WA!

At WA, we believe learning doesn't stop at the classroom door. We partner with individuals and organizations to offer a wide range of extracurricular activities, sparking your child's passions and fostering holistic growth.

Academic Enrichment:

After School Program (ASP): Need a little extra help with homework or want to dive deeper into your studies? Join our ASP, led by our talented 1st Grade Teacher María Teresa Canzanese. This program is perfect for students in Grades 1-7 and offers a supportive environment for learning and skill-building.

Phone: María Teresa Canzanese: 0412-0594779 **Email:** awafterschoolprogram@gmail.com

Book Clubs: Our Lower and Upper Elementary Book Clubs are the perfect way to spark a love of reading. Join us in the Library from 2:15 - 3:00pm on Tuesdays (Lower Elementary) and Wednesdays (Upper Elementary) for engaging discussions and fun activities.

Email: walibrary@aw.edu.ve

Athletic Prowess:

Valor y Deporte: Get ready to score big with Renato Renauro's exciting sports programs! From soccer and gymnastics to track and field and basketball, there's something for everyone. This year, we're even adding Jiu-Jitsu to the mix! And that's not all - parents and guardians can now join the fun and form their own amateur teams.

Phones: Renato Renauro: 0424-2662648 Jeniffer Pérez: 0412-5732030

Email: renauroriusrenato@gmail.com

Creative and Cognitive Challenges:

Kurios Academy: Unleash your inner tech wizard with programming and robotics classes. From building robots to coding games, the possibilities are endless!

Phone: Claudia Maurette Blasini: 0414-027 94 63 **Email:** claudia.maurette@kuriosedu.com

Academia Nacional de Ajedrez: Sharpen your mind and strategic thinking skills with chess classes.

Phone: José Javier Cuello 0412-605 56 71 Jesús Gordillo 0424-205 43 28 **Email:** jcuello@anaj.org.ve

Grupo Fábula: Discover the magic of theater and storytelling with bilingual acting classes. This year one of our brilliant alumnus is one of our Fábula coaches: Let's welcome Norberto Pérez back to our campus!

Phone: Josie Idrogo +57 (319) 753 62 55 Mila Casanova: 0412-859 0649

Email: GrupoFabulainfo@grupofabula.com grupo.pc.fabula@gmail.com

Don't miss out on these incredible opportunities to learn, grow, and have fun! Contact the organizations directly for more information and be sure to inform your School Coordinator of your child's participation. Remember, extracurricular activities offer numerous benefits, including improved academic performance, social skills, and overall well-being.

