

Dear Parent of Prospective Biology Honors Student,

As the 2008-2009 school year comes to a close and summer break quickly approaches, the WCA faculty is busy preparing for the upcoming school year. We have many exciting plans for next year and we hope they will serve to enrich your child's academic experience. In an effort to provide your student with a rigorous and fulfilling academic schedule, we are offering a new Honors Program for selected High School classes. This program will focus on developing higher-level critical thinking skills, offering research opportunities, and providing hands-on learning experiences. It will also serve as preparation for advanced course work in the future.

Only a select group of students will participate in the Honors classes. These students will be challenged to delve more deeply into the subject matter and earn a weighted grade in the process. Teacher recommendations are based on the Honors/AP Recommendation Policy that is attached to this letter. Based on my past experiences with your child, I recognize his or her academic abilities, motivation and desire to learn. It is for these reasons that I am recommending your student for the Honors Biology course.

In Honors Biology, we will explore life from both a "skin-in" perspective and a "skin-out" perspective. In the first semester, we will explore the world of the cell and genes. Projects will include creating a children's book that tours cell organelles and researching and debating the ethics of stem cell research, cloning, and genetic modification. In the second semester, we will explore both global and local ecology. We will research the multi-faceted environmental, economic, and political issues surrounding the conservation of the Chesapeake Bay, participate in mock stakeholder meetings, and develop a water management plan for the Bay. Near the end of the semester, we will explore anatomy and dissect a fetal pig!

Over the summer, students will read *More Than Meets the Eye* by Richard A. Swenson, M.D. This book is a wonderful overview of aspects of science that show glimpses of God's power and design in creation. Students will keep a journal with discussion questions for each chapter and write a reflective paper detailing their thoughts on the book. More information on this assignment will be available on the WCA website as of June 11, 2009.

As you and your child make decisions about the upcoming academic year, please prayerfully consider this academic opportunity. I hope your child will choose to join me on this journey of scientific inquiry and discovery. You may reach me at eltonr@williamsburgchristian.org if you have any questions.

Have a great summer!

Rebecca Elton