

journalismprogram

ST. MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS ■ 10600 PRESTON ROAD ■ DALLAS, TEXAS 75230 ■ 214.346.8482 ■ WESTBROOKR@SMTEXAS.ORG

Memo to: Parents of Students Attending the Columbia Scholastic Press
Association annual convention in New York City, March 15-20, 2010

From: Ray Westbrook

Regarding: Details of the trip

Date: Jan. 27, 2010

Thank you so much for making it possible for your son to attend the annual convention of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association in New York City, the nation's premiere scholastic press organization for student journalists. This will be our ninth consecutive trip to this convention and, each year, students come home brimming with ideas for next year's publications.

On the attached sheet, I'm providing you with the pertinent trip details. As you will note, the cost for the trip is \$XXXXX, which includes airfare, five nights hotel, ground transportation to and from the hotel in New York, convention registration and a Broadway show. I've itemized trip expenses, so if your son is not participating in one component (flying up and back on his own, for example), simply deduct that portion from the overall cost of the trip.

As in past years, I am putting all expenses (airfare, hotel, Broadway show, and ground transportation charges) on my American Express card. The Broadway tickets and airfare charges will appear on my next statement, so I'd appreciate it if you could send payment to me on or before February 17, 2010. I have found this to be the easiest, most efficient way of taking care of the myriad of charges that this trip incurs.

If you have any questions, feel free to call me at any time. Please know that I'll treat your son as "my own" on this trip—and, a big "thank you" again for letting him take part in this great convention!

Attachment: Trip Details
Permission Slip

Trip Details

Columbia Scholastic Press Association Annual Convention

New York, March 15-20, 2010

Airline information

- We will be flying on American Airlines flight 732, departing at 1:05 p.m. on Monday, March 15. We will arrive at the LaGuardia Airport in New York.
- We will return on American Airlines flight 733, arriving in Dallas at 3:40 p.m. on Saturday, March 20.
- For our flight out on March 15, students should meet at the inside gate of American Airlines (call to get exact gate information). We will take “inventory,” check baggage as needed, get boarding passes, and go through security as a group. Everyone should be there no later than 11:30 a.m.
- Cost for ticket is \$XXXXXX.

Hotel information

- We will be staying at the Wingate by Wyndham Hotel, 235 W. 35th. Telephone is 212.209.6230
- Students will be placed in either groups of four students per room.
- Students will have curfew each evening. While I expect no problems, I must inform you that violating curfew is grounds for an immediate trip home.
- Each student’s cost for hotel for the trip \$XXXXXX.

Broadway show

- We will either one of the current musicals or plays on Broadway this season (we’ll decide in early February).
- Cost of each ticket is \$XXXXX (orchestra-level seating, plus shipping and processing charges).

Ground transportation

- We use a car service to get us from the airport to the hotel, rather than cabs. This is both for security and logistical purposes. We do the same on Saturday for the trip from the hotel to the airport for the return home.
- During the week, we use the subways to get around in Manhattan. Students should plan to purchase a five-day Metro card for their use (approximately \$25).
- Each student’s portion (two legs) of ground transportation cost (excluding subways) is \$XXXXX.

Clothing for convention

- The main concern is to dress for the weather. Manhattan in March is usually cold. And, it can be brutally cold at times. This means a heavy coat, scarf, gloves, warm slacks, warm—but comfortable shoes (we do a lot of walking)—and maybe an umbrella. “Layering” is the way to go!
- Dress for the convention is casual: nice jeans, khaki or corduroy slacks, cotton, button-down shirts. Students will not need to dress in jacket or tie.
- The Broadway crowd has gotten much more casual in recent years, so for the Broadway show just nice slacks and shirt, sweater, etc. will be fine.
- **Please: no letter jackets, sweats, school insignia clothing!** We want to blend in to the city crowd, not stand out. And, this is not just for vanity; it’s for students’ safety, as well.

Activities, daily schedule

- As we did last year, we will be arriving one day earlier than past years - to offset potential weather delays (like we experienced in 2008). That gives us a free day (Tuesday) to take advantage of some great educational and cultural activities of the city. While I don’t have exact plans set yet, I am looking into a tour of the New York Federal Reserve and Ground Zero as possibilities. Other possible places might be the Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Museum of Natural History.
- Students will be at the convention — held at Columbia University — Wednesday through Friday (from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.). During this time, they will attend sessions given by professional writers, photographers, print designers, investigative reporters, and other media professionals, along with leading journalism educators and advisors from school and universities across the U.S.

Trip Details

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Activities, daily schedule *(cont'd)*

- Breakfast is usually “on the run” (muffin, bagel, juice, etc.). Please tell your son to let me know if he has to have a full breakfast, and we’ll figure a way to make that happen.
- Students will be on their own for lunch Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. There’s a “drag” across from Columbia University that has a variety of sandwich, burger and pizza places.
- We’ll have about two hours free time (4 p.m. until 6 p.m. daily). I allow students this time to enjoy the Times Square/Midtown area of Manhattan on their own – with some rules attached. These rules include: Students may not go out on their own (they must be with at least one other St. Mark’s student); students must carry their cell phones at all times (and have them on); and students are given strict geographic parameters in which to stay (usually from 23rd Street to 60th Street and from Avenue of the Americas to 8th Avenue, which gives them plenty of areas to explore, but still remain relatively close to the hotel).
- In the evenings, we do things as a group:
 - > Tuesday night is “Roaming Times Square Night” including dinner in the Midtown area of Manhattan and perhaps spending some time in ESPN Zone or other Times Square venues that can attract the interest of teenage boys.
 - > On Wednesday night, we do what has become known as our traditional “Little Italy Night.” We take the subway to Little Italy and roam this charming area. When hunger hits, we find a little “Mom and Pop” Italian restaurant and have a great Italian feast.
 - > On Thursday night we’ll see the Broadway show. Students will be on their own for dinner. After the show, I treat them (as my personal thank-you) to mile-high cheesecake at Roxy Deli, which is known for its sumptuous desserts.
 - > Friday night is our “Celebration Night.” With both the newspaper and yearbook again being up for the top awards from CSPA, alums who worked on the 2009 publications will be coming in for the awards ceremony. All of us (the alums and current students) enjoy a special celebration at either Becco’s, a wonderful restaurant in the theatre district or Carmine’s, a family-style Italian restaurant, on Friday evening. While these are nice restaurants, costs are not expensive (by NYC standards). A solid meal will run between \$35 and \$45.
 - > A quick note about food in general: I’ve been to NYC many, many times in the past and know many inexpensive (but filling) spots. I know teenage boys eat tons, so I’ll make sure they get their full caloric-intake without busting their budgets!
- Please do not request that your son be allowed to visit friends or family members who live in the city while on this trip. While your son is with me, he is my responsibility and school policy does not allow students leaving the group for personal visits such as this.

Other information

- School policy requires that parents sign the enclosed permission form.
- I will have copies of each boys’ medical forms (provided by the Upper School office) in the event of an emergency.
- Assuming he has one, each student should bring his cell phone with him and keep it on at all times.
- My cell phone number is 214.XXXXXXX. I’ll have it with me at all times. If you should need anything while your son is with me, feel free to call me at any time.

Cost itemization

▪ Hotel	\$	XXXX
Airfare		XXXX
Convention registration		XXXX
Ground transportation		XXXX
Broadway show (includes handling fees and taxes)		XXXX
Total	\$	XXXX

> Please make check payable to “Ray Westbrook” and send to me on or before Wednesday, February 17, 2010.

Thank you again for making it possible for your son to accompany us on this trip!

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Memo to: Scott Gonzalez
Dr. John Perryman

From: Ray Westbrook

Re: Columbia Scholastic Press Association Convention / parent communication

Date: Jan. 25, 2010

Scott and John:

Attached is a copy of the communication I will send to parents of students who will be accompanying me to New York in March for Columbia Scholastic Press Association's annual convention.

These forms and letters are essentially the same as in past years. Dates, obviously, have changed and I still have to fill in final costs for the airfare and ground transportation while in New York. I expect to have those done by tomorrow.

Here are the 16 students who will be going with me on the trip:

Juniors

Reece Cannady
Andrew Dorsaneo
Jeffrey Eichenholz
Spencer Heim
Dean Itani
Aidan Kirksey
Will McNamara
Robert Pruser
Robert Toto
Hayden Wolf
Jordan Young

Sophomores

Nick Mahowald
Max Marshall
Jairo Nevarez
Lee Perkins

Freshman

Parker Matthews

These letters will be ready to go out to parents on Wednesday, Jan. 27. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Many thanks!

Authorization for Student Participation

Columbia Scholastic Press Association Annual Convention

New York City ■ March 15 - 20, 2010

I hereby give authorization for _____ to attend the Columbia Scholastic
NAME OF STUDENT
Press Association's Annual Convention in New York City, March 15-20, 2010. Students will be accompanied
by Ray Westbrook, publications adviser.

I understand that students will be expected to adhere to all school policies and regulations while on the trip
and will be expected to participate fully in all convention and group activities. Any violation of expectations set
by the adviser (convention attendance, curfew, or failure to follow school policies and regulations while on the
trip) could result in the student being sent home at the time of infraction at parental expense.

DATE

SIGNATURE, PARENT/GUARDIAN

PERMISSION FORM RET'D CHECK RECEIVED, AMOUNT

JUNIORS

Reece Cannady

Andrew Dorsaneo

Jeff Eichenholz

Spencer Heim

Dean Itani

Aidan Kirksey

Will McNamara

Robert Pruser

Robert Toto

Hayden Wolf

Jordan Young

SOPHOMORES

Nick Mahowald

Max Marshall

Jairo Nevarez

Lee Perkins

FRESHMAN

Parker Mathews

	PERMISSION FORM RET'D	CHECK RECEIVED, AMOUNT
Reece Cannady		
Andrew Dorsaneo		
Jeff Eichenholz		
Spencer Heim		
Dean Itani		
Aidan Kirksey		
Will McNamara		
Robert Pruser		
Robert Toto		
Hayden Wolf		
Jordan Young		
Nick Mahowald		
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