



Dr. Amanda Jones named leader of Barton Academy “Explorers”

Innovation has always been on the mind of Dr. Amanda Jones, the newly appointed principal of Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies. The nationally recognized educator is taking the innovation she’s fostered in classrooms as a teacher and principal to the next level as she builds the academic program at Barton.

“Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies is going to be a school like no other,” Dr. Jones said. “You are going to see hands-on, project-based learning happening throughout the school. You are also going to see entrepreneurship, problem-solving, 21st Century skills integration, and an emphasis on foreign languages.”

Dr. Jones has been an educator for 19 years, working in Mobile County Public Schools her entire career. Prior to her appointment at Barton, Dr. Jones has served as a teacher, achievement specialist, administrative intern, assistant principal, principal, and district coordinator.

While Dr. Jones was principal at Mary B. Austin Elementary, the school earned recognition as one of America's Entrepreneurial Schools. Austin remains the only school in Alabama to have received that designation.

Dr. Jones earned the Alabama Department of Education's Marbury Innovation Award for School Administrator (2017) and the Excellence in Entrepreneurship Award by EntreEd

(2018), and she was named one of Mobile's 40 under 40 by *Mobile Bay Magazine*. Her name has been added to The Giving Tree at Mobile County Public Schools' Central Office for being one of the district's top educators.

In addition, Dr. Jones serves as an adjunct instructor at the University of South Alabama and previously Spring Hill College. She serves on the Board of Directors for the National Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education.

Dr. Jones is excited about the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to start a new school. Through an innovative curriculum, as well as community interest and partnerships, **Barton Academy, she said, has the potential to become the best middle school in the state.**

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– Dr. Amanda Jones, principal



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potential to build amazing community and business partnerships and to become a showcase of Mobile's strong public education system. As Alabama's first public school, Barton is a most appropriate location.” Jones said. “Students will gain a wealth of experiences, including world

languages, leadership clubs, entrepreneurship, fine arts, and athletics. Students will also become proficient in emerging technologies, which include virtual and augmented reality, 3D design and printing, robotics, and blended learning. The school will be bustling with student collaborative and hands-on learning experiences designed to engage and motivate students to own their learning and be active positive contributors to their community and world.”



CONSTRUCTION UPDATES



Above: When removing ceilings, contractors discovered the original east and west façades, covered over since a 1895 addition. **Right:** They also discovered architectural columns that lined the original hallways. The architect is working to find a way the leave these elements exposed so current and future generations will be able to enjoy them, if funding can be found.

Construction tour reveals historic finds inside Barton!

In early September, a small group of Barton Academy Foundation Board members and MCPSS staff were given a hard-hat tour of the interior of Barton Academy by Paul Frenkel, vice president of Ben Radcliff Construction. While many rooms were draped in plastic sheeting, quite a few rooms that have been stripped down to the studs and/or framed up with new walls were toured.

Mr. Frenkel promised at least two wonderful discoveries and did not let the Board down. Most significantly, perhaps, portions of the original exterior walls on the building's east and west sides, which had been covered over during the 1895 expansion of the building, were revealed in two of the classrooms. Original exterior windows now stand between the newer (1895) classrooms and the halls outside them. In addition, several interior wood columns, which had been encased in sheetrock during the 1970s renovations, are still standing and may be saved if funding can be found.

The classrooms, library and offices promise to be truly outstanding, featuring high ceilings; multiple, large exterior windows; and generous space.

"After working on this project for more than a decade and giving dozens of tours of Barton Academy, it was overwhelming to walk through and finally see Alabama's first public school building being framed up for classrooms, labs, an art studio, and a state-of-the-art library. As an architecture buff, I was fascinated to see some of the original structural features of the building exposed once again, and I'm pleased to hear that many of them will be maintained in the final design. Barton Academy truly exemplifies the best of the past, present, and future."

– Jaime Betbeze, past board president

Report from Paul Frenkel

project manager and vice president,
Ben M. Radcliff Contractor, Inc.

Renovations to Barton Academy are well underway. The demolition phase is near completion and the new plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and walls are being installed now. During this early phase we discovered interesting details from the original Barton Academy. When removing ceilings, we uncovered the original east and west façades (pre-1895 addition). We have also discovered architectural columns intact that lined the original hallways. The architect is working on a revised design to allow a way to leave these elements exposed so current and future generations will be able to enjoy them.

On the bad side, we uncovered much more asbestos than was anticipated, causing us to stop operations, revise our abatement plan and begin removing the additional asbestos. Although we are currently halfway finished with this work, other trades have been unable to work in those areas while this work is ongoing. In the coming weeks we look forward to installing some of the architectural features.

The Foundation, MCPSS representatives, and the architect are working together to fine tune the design and make sure that the final needs of this state-of-the-art school are met and Barton Academy is a place we all can be proud of.

Donors of \$1,000 or more will be listed on a permanent donor board inside Barton Academy.

Please consider increasing your gift to \$1,000. For information about your current total, email info@bartonacademy.org.

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A list of all donors can be found at www.bartonacademy.org

We are thankful!

To all the very generous donors who made the creation of Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies possible, we say “thank you” again! There is simply no way to express our gratitude to those 500 or so donors who “voted” with their pocketbooks to provide an excellent education for some of Mobile County’s most competitive students while also saving one of our city’s most iconic structures. The road has been long, but the excitement we feel has made the effort now seem like a pleasure!

We sincerely appreciate the gifts that continue to come in, as more and more people want to be part of this magnificent project. **It’s not too late to help.** Although the original goal has been reached, there will continue to be needs to make the school even better. And, if you have made a pledge and want to pay it off in 2020, we will gladly accept this generosity.

– Barton Academy Foundation Board of Directors

In support of the *Restoring the Past – Building the Future Campaign*, I/we make the following commitment:

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☐ Please contact me about including the Barton Academy Foundation in my will or trust.

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Barton Academy Foundation board members at construction groundbreaking, June 11, 2020, left to right: Allan Gustin, Jaime Betbeze, Karen Outlaw Atchison, Stephen Carter, Elizabeth P. Stevens, Chresal D. Threadgill, Dr. Carolyn Lee Taylor, Schley Rutherford, Jr., Denise Browning, John Peebles, and Geri Moulton.



Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies will reopen in August 2021, serving students in grades 6-9. The school now has a logo (see front page) and website:

bartonexplorers.com

Students can apply for admission

Nov. 2 - Dec. 4, 2020 at

mcpss.com/magnetschools

Students will engage in project-based and advanced curricula that prepares students to be productive contributors to the 21st century global community by gaining an international perspective through the study of languages, global studies, advanced fine arts and entrepreneurship.



Barton Academy Foundation

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www.bartonacademy.org