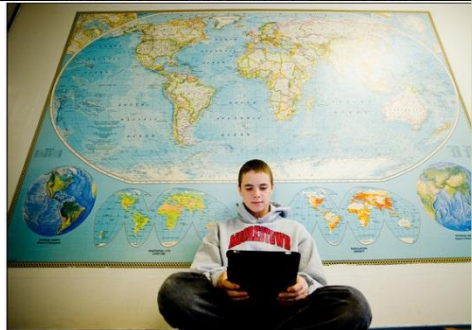




## Academic Dean/ Assistant Head

Leadership Opportunity  
July 2012

# Moorestown Friends School



Carney, Sandoe  Associates

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Moorestown, New Jersey  
713 students  
Preschool – Grade 12  
[www.mfriends.org](http://www.mfriends.org)

## THE POSITION

Moorestown Friends School (MFS) in Moorestown, New Jersey seeks an Academic Dean/Associate Head to lead a community of 88 faculty and over 700 students from Preschool to Grade 12, representing over 60 school districts within a 50-mile radius of Moorestown. A township in Burlington County, Moorestown is also an affluent suburb of Philadelphia, just 10 miles from Center City. Moorestown was named in 2005 as the Best Place to Live in the U.S. by *Money* magazine. Founded in 1785 by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), MFS is an independent, coeducational college-preparatory day school rooted in the Quaker principles of nonviolence, service, and respect for the individual. A renewed excitement surrounds the school with the convergence of the 225th anniversary of the founding of MFS and the development of a new Strategic Plan. On the one hand, the school can look back at its traditions and achievements and on the other look forward to the challenges of a new century in which an increasingly “flat world” is transforming the society into which these children will graduate.

The Academic Dean/Assistant Head will report directly to the Head of School and is a member of the Head’s senior administrative team. Bridging many aspects of intellectual life on campus, he or she will oversee curriculum and classroom instruction in all three school divisions, coordinate faculty hiring and ensure that the academic goals of the 2011 MFS Strategic Plan are being met. This is an exciting opportunity to play a lead role in MFS’s future success, preparing “great faculty” to teach effectively and “great students” to learn for the future.

## THE SCHOOL

Moorestown Friends School serves 289 Upper School students (grades 9-12), 204 Middle School students (grades 5-8) and 220 Lower School students (preschool – 4<sup>th</sup> grade). MFS is committed to fostering an environment that is both diverse and inclusive. Thirty-three percent of the student body is students of color and a wide variety of religious faiths are represented as well. In keeping with the Quaker philosophy of honoring each



individual, students representing different ethnic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds are challenged daily to respect and learn from one another. The Camden Scholars program has a 35-year tradition of helping to foster a diverse student body at MFS. Although some students commute from Atlantic and Ocean counties and Philadelphia, about 90% of the student body lives within a 12-mile

### *The Mission*

*Moorestown Friends School is a community rooted in Quaker values and dedicated to the pursuit of educational excellence for a diverse student body within an academically rigorous and balanced program emphasizing personal, ethical and spiritual growth.*

*-updated May 2011*



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radius of the School in Burlington and Camden counties.

The educational program is academically rigorous, with an emphasis on critical thinking and creative expression. A capable, committed, and well-educated faculty and staff excel at identifying individual students' strengths and challenges and by focusing on the whole child so that each student receives individual attention with particular focus on skills development. MFS students have the highest SAT scores of any school in South Jersey and earn admission into many of the most selective colleges and universities in the United States and abroad.

MFS graduates are compassionate problem solvers and leaders who are able to draw on the power of their intellect, informed by spiritual and ethical discernment. The school's history and the stories of graduates are vibrant examples of Quakerism in action. A holistic approach to learning recognizes athletic, artistic, and academic achievement while the pervading school culture is one of respect for individual strengths/talents/differences. The Quaker values and testimonies – especially equality, integrity, community and peace – are clear and present in the everyday life and operation of MFS.



Laurence (Larry) Van Meter, MFS class of 1968, became Head of School in 2001. During his tenure at MFS, Mr. Van Meter has spearheaded the Strategic Planning process in collaboration with the entire MFS community. A native of Moorestown, he is a life-long member of Moorestown Friends (Quaker) Meeting and attended MFS from Prekindergarten through senior year. Mr. Van Meter has an M.B.A. from Dartmouth (Amos Tuck School), a B.A. in history from Hamilton College, and an A.A.S. in Woodworking and Furniture Design from Rochester Institute of Technology's School for American Crafts. Earlier in his career, he served as a state forest ranger in Vermont, as a forest research technician for the U.S. Forest Service, as Executive Director of the Appalachian Trail Conference in Harpers Ferry, WV and as Headmaster of Darrow School in New Lebanon, NY. He has penned columns that have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Boston Globe*, and *Friends Journal*.



MFS has been accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools for decades, and in 1999 Middle States encouraged MFS to utilize the relatively new Accreditation for Growth (AFG) protocol for the school's reaccreditation process.



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### **Moorestown Friends School**

*Preschool – Grade 12*

*Total enrollment: 713*

*Faculty: 88*

*Student-teacher ratio: 9:1*

*Faculty w/ advanced degrees: 67%*

*Diversity of students: 33%*

*Diversity of faculty: 14%*

*Operating budget: \$14.3M*

*Endowment: \$ \$7.9M*

*Annual giving, 2010-2011: \$612,000*

*Parent giving participation: 57%*

*Indebtedness: \$10M*

*Financial Aid budget: \$2.4M*

*Students receiving aid: 27%*

The AFG process features an evaluation of the school based on measurable student growth and performance. MFS is now in the second AFG cycle.

### **QUAKER VALUES**

The educational program at Moorestown Friends School is built upon Quaker values. MFS is committed to developing students who have learned how to live an “examined life” characterized by a dedication to critical thought, openness to the spirit, ethical development and resilience. Quakers believe that a spiritually-centered life will be characterized by integrity, sincerity and simplicity. The entire school community participates in weekly Meeting for Worship and in separate Meetings for each school division. Friends believe that each person has within him/herself, the ability to discern truth. Participants use this time to pray, or worship, or simply reflect deeply on the world around them, according to their own faith traditions. This constant interplay of meditation and action is integral to all school activities and challenges individuals to seek truth continuously through non-violent means and to

make a personal commitment to improving themselves, their society and their environment. The school welcomes students of all faiths.

### **CAMPUS, SETTING AND LOCATION**

On a beautiful 48-acre campus in South Jersey, contiguous classroom buildings house students from Prekindergarten to Grade 12, with two preschool classrooms next to the Lower School building. The campus includes seven all-purpose playing fields, two baseball diamonds and five tennis courts. Facilities include four gymnasiums, a fitness center, a 450-seat air-conditioned auditorium, a Music Computing Center, an art studio and wood shop.

As enrollment and the academic program grew over the last two decades, the school converted unused spaces and conference rooms into classrooms. Many teachers have had to share classrooms and several departments have been physically separated. In 2008, the school purchased the former Greenleaf Friends Home retirement facility, a



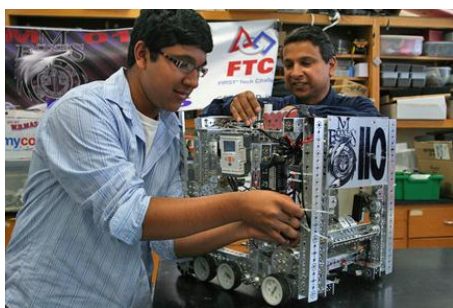
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property contiguous to the MFS campus. Two buildings are located on the four-acre property: the Main Building, which looks out on Main Street and the South Annex. Voith & Mactavish Architects developed plans to transform the 15,000-square-foot South Annex into the first new classroom building since the 1960s. Along with eight new math classrooms in the new building, a large, specifically-designed suite will provide rehearsal space for the choral music program. The building will be air-conditioned, utilizing a geothermal heating and cooling system, and will earn LEED Silver certification through the Green Building Council. The scheduled opening is April 2012. One of the most significant consequences of this project will be that all full-time teachers will have their own classrooms. With the Math Department moving to the new building, the school has been able to expand the science labs. A new chemistry lab opened in 2009 and a new chemistry/environmental science lab and a new robotics/physics lab are scheduled to open in September 2012.



### THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Academics at MFS are based on the twin pillars of academic rigor and spiritual & ethical education. Faculty members are broadly educated and accessible to students and small class sizes create a dynamic educational experience in which students are challenged to think and apply what they are learning. Teachers encourage cross-curricular connections and cultivate critical thinking in classroom discussions and independent projects. Students participate at every step in the educational process – including hands-on projects and an extensive program of field trips, building a lifelong passion for learning. Through a coordinated curriculum and strong faculty support, students have the opportunity for exploration and self-discovery. Community service, spiritual exploration and experiential learning are integral parts of the curriculum.

Student progress is gauged with a combination of reporting, conferences, and communication between administrators-teachers-students-parents in which parents are frequently informed of their child's progress. Among teachers and administrators, grade level meetings and weekly advisor meetings help the school to keep tabs on students' overall achievement and challenges.



Comprehensive Curriculum Guides for each division are available for every grade level on the school's Web site, [www.mfriends.org](http://www.mfriends.org).



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### THE LOWER SCHOOL

The Lower School strives to help students develop tough minds and tender hearts. In small classes students participate in an integrated program of reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, social studies and science organized around diverse themes and student-initiated investigations. Learning is hands-on; subjects come alive as students read, write, ask questions, interview experts, conduct experiments, take field trips and share their learning. Students are taught to think critically: to gather complete information, be precise, develop a plan when solving a problem, and shift strategies when needed. Engagement in visual arts, music, physical education, computers, library use, and Spanish complement the academic program.

The Quaker testimonies of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship are an integral part of every grade and every classroom in the Lower School. Teachers support students in the use of peaceful conflict resolution and peer mediation. Service learning projects take place throughout the year and are both student- and school-initiated.



### THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle School students take courses in major subjects of English, Math, History, Science, and World Languages as well as in non-major courses such as Woodshop, Art, Drama, Music, Physical Education, and Health. They learn to use technology, to prepare for tests and papers, to organize themselves, and to participate in creating a strong Middle School community. Responsible for monitoring the academic and social progress of advisees, faculty advisors meet with Middle School advisees daily to help them develop effective study skills and to assist them in becoming responsible members of the community. Advisors and advisees work as a team to address concerns and issues that



may come up during the course of the year. Many other activities round out the Middle School experience. Students may sing in the choir, play an instrument in the ensemble, or contribute articles to the Middle School newspaper. Beginning in grade 6, boys and girls can compete on several interscholastic athletic teams in soccer, field hockey, basketball, lacrosse, tennis, and baseball.



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## THE UPPER SCHOOL

The MFS Upper School provides a challenging, varied program of study for every student. Emphasizing critical thinking, strong writing and quantitative reasoning skills, the curriculum offers students a broad array of honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses supplemented by minor electives. Expectations for rigor and success are high and well known. With the introduction of Mandarin Chinese, robotics, and new Honors and AP Courses, the program is engaging and challenging. In keeping with the School's Quaker tradition, the moral and ethical underpinnings of intellectual inquiry and social action are stressed at every grade level. Within the parameters of the graduation requirements, students have significant latitude to design their own course of study. The MFS Honors Program, for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders, emphasizes rigor, creativity, independence, and action through student-designed capstone projects.

Upper School programs blend traditional classroom learning with action-oriented experiential activities. All students must complete 50 hours of community service, and many participate in service trips to New Orleans, the Florida Everglades, Mexico, Nicaragua and Tanzania. Teachers make effective use of area resources, often bringing classes to museums, exhibits and special events. All students also participate annually in Intensive Learning, a weeklong off-campus collaborative educational experience. The result is students who head off to college prepared to "do well and do good."

## 2011 STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2011 Strategic Plan grew out of the collective efforts of hundreds of MFS community members. With over 1,000 people responding to surveys, over 100 participating in various working groups, and 20 members of the Strategic Planning Committee, the new plan addresses this mission: to educate young people who are grounded in Quaker values and ready to succeed in a challenging, rapidly changing environment. The Plan also recognizes that the economic events of the past three years have a limiting effect. As the school explores and implements new programs and strengthens those already in place, it must be attentive to the importance of maintaining a solid financial footing.



The challenges facing the school mirror the challenges facing today's students. They are growing up in a world that demands flexibility and creativity as well as moral and ethical courage – and one in which economic realities may be a limiting factor. This Plan proposes to address these challenges by infusing the curriculum with the development of 21st Century skills while keeping Quaker principles alive in the school. One of those

principles, simplicity, suggests a way to address current financial limitations - doing the best job possible with the resources available – using creativity, collaboration and entrepreneurship.

The twelve goals of the 2011 Strategic Plan are:

- Highlight and advance the teaching of 21st Century skills throughout the curriculum, focusing especially on initiative and creativity; collaboration and student leadership; effective oral, written and visual communication; and accessing and analyzing information
- Seek to serve as a beacon for Quaker education, to thrive as a vibrant Quaker educational community, and to be a resource to help members of our community understand Quakerism and Quaker values.
- Enhance the articulation of the Examined Life Program and graduate students who have developed leadership skills based on the principles of The Religious Society of Friends, and experiences offered through the Examined Life Program and leadership in the service of others.
- Prepare students to be successful and productive citizens of a global community.
- Increase the diversity of the faculty, staff and School Committee so that it reflects the diversity of the student body.
- Promote a physically and emotionally safe community.
- Build and support a diverse, vibrant and inclusive school community.
- Develop a web portal for MFS students, parents, faculty, staff and alumni that provides an effective platform for school business, academic and operational functions; is consistent in appearance and navigation with the school's public website; and offers a streamlined user experience.
- Utilize new media and technology resources to enhance school communication and collaboration and to foster a more connected Moorestown Friends community.
- Create a school culture that supports, facilitates and encourages technology and communication exploration, collaboration, research and innovation.
- Ensure the fiscal integrity of Moorestown Friends School.
- Explore opportunities to build innovative programs that are compatible with the school's mission.

The new Academic Dean/Assistant Head will work closely with the Head of School and School Committee on implementing the Plan. They will establish monitoring and evaluation systems and mechanisms, as well as expectations for documenting evidence of progress, especially for less quantifiable goals. These measures will



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provide the foundation from which school leadership can assess and measure progress on Plan goals and strategies.

### **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

*Great Classrooms for Great Kids: the Math and Science Campaign* is the largest capital campaign to be launched in over a decade and will dramatically increase the number of classrooms and labs and ease the current overcrowding in the Middle and Upper School. The campaign will fund the renovation of the former South Annex as well as classroom and lab improvements on the main campus. The campaign goal is \$6 million, and \$5 million has been raised during the campaign's quiet phase. The Committee hopes to secure the remaining \$1 million by June 30, 2012.

### **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ACADEMIC DEAN/ASSISTANT HEAD**

- Among the many exciting opportunities that this position holds is ensuring the timely implementation of the School's Strategic Plan, as it pertains to the academic life of the School.
- Closely related is leading and promoting the full adoption of Tony Wagner's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, a key prong of the Strategic Plan. This will include reviewing the existing curriculum, preparing new curriculum that supports the teaching of these skills, developing scope and sequence models to identify these skills, and working with Division Directors and Department Chairs to oversee actual changes in teaching practices.
- Ensuring that Quaker principles are highlighted through The Examined Life Program so that students and families receive a direct and intentional education about Quakerism.
- As the position is central to the quality of teaching and learning at the School, leading and supporting the continuing care and professional development of the faculty through thoughtful and compassionate hiring, evaluation and support is a key part of the job.
- Similarly, the Academic Dean/Assistant Head will be expected to lead an examination of the craft of teaching through discussions with divisional heads, department chairs and individual faculty members.
- Another area of responsibility for the new Academic Dean/Assistant Head will be to expand the dialogue between and among divisions to promote a K-12 continuum and perspective within the School.
- Like all school leaders, the Academic Dean/Assistant Head will be expected to endorse and support the School's commitment to diversity and social justice.
- The Academic Dean/Assistant Head will endorse fully integrating technology into the life of the School, ensuring that technology is current and woven into the academic program. He or she will promote optimum communication to all constituents, internally and externally.

- Finally, it is expected that the new Academic Dean/Assistant Head will serve as a sounding board, advisor and support for the Head of School; he or she will act for the Head when he is off campus.

#### **EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The School seeks a highly qualified individual who:

- Has proven success as classroom teacher and academic leader in a rigorous academic setting
- Holds a graduate degree in a relevant discipline
- Embraces Quaker principles and its commitment to social justice and diversity
- Has deep knowledge and understanding of curriculum development and pedagogy across three divisions
- Values the life of the mind and has intellectual heft
- Has outstanding written and communication skills
- Respects, supports, leads, and collaborates with colleagues
- Is eager to participate in the leadership of the entire institution in partnership with the division directors and administrative colleagues
- Is task-oriented, with excellent time management skills
- Is trustworthy, kind, fair, and accessible

#### **COMPENSATION**

Compensation package will be very competitive and commensurate with experience and the regional independent school market.

Interested and qualified candidates should submit electronically and as separate documents the following materials:

- *cover letter expressing interest in Moorestown Friends School position*
- *current résumé*
- *statement of educational philosophy and practice*
- *list of 5 references with name, phone number, and email address of each to:*

Jacob A. Dresden and John Clark  
Senior Search Consultants  
**CARNEY SANDOE & ASSOCIATES**  
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