



Leadership Opportunity
July 2012

UPPER SCHOOL
DIRECTOR

Winchester Thurston School



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
645 students, Pre-K-12
www.winchesterthurston.org

Carney, Sandoe  Associates

800-225-7986 ▼ www.carneysandoe.com

THE POSITION

Winchester Thurston School (WT), in Pittsburgh, seeks an Upper School Director to lead this division of approximately 240 students in grades 9-12 and 31 faculty. Situated on the school's City Campus in the heart of Pittsburgh's educational, cultural, research, and medical center, WT's Upper School prides itself on the rigor and depth of its academic program, the innovation of its talented faculty, its collegial and intellectual environment, strength in the arts and athletics, and recent strides in enrollment growth and competitiveness. Nationally recognized for innovative programs for gifted and talented students, WT is a school in which students achieve at the highest levels. The next Upper School Director will find an exciting, engaging professional atmosphere and a compelling sense of community among faculty, staff, parents and the student body.

Mission

Mission: Winchester Thurston School actively engages each student in a challenging and inspiring learning process that develops the mind, motivates the passion to achieve, and cultivates the character to serve.

WT is eager for a skilled and inspiring leader who will ensure the continuing excellence of all aspects of the division's operation within the context of the school's mission. It is essential that the school engage an Upper School Director who will embrace the school's values and embody the spirit of the institution moving forward. The Upper School Director reports directly to the Head of School and is a member of the Head's senior administrative team.

The school seeks a leader who can build upon recent programmatic advances and ensure the S.T.E.M., global citizenship, technology, and *City as Our Campus* aspects of the school's strategic plan continue their momentum, while working with peers across the institution to strengthen a culture of curricular improvement and professional development.



Currently engaged in conversations about 21st century learning, the faculty is taking a school-wide look at opportunities to enhance its comprehensive college-prep program, finding ways to create more active and engaging learning programs that reflect the school's intention to foster deep levels of student curiosity and creativity. Strong

interpersonal skills will be critical in leading thoughtful conversations about pedagogy, differentiated instruction, and innovation. The new Director will also need to exhibit an ability to partner closely with parents in a day school environment.



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THE SCHOOL

Currently celebrating its 125th anniversary, Winchester Thurston School serves a socio-economically diverse PreK-12 student body of 645 from 65 zip codes and 41 school districts throughout the greater Pittsburgh area. WT is the product of a 1935 merger of two girls' schools, Winchester (founded 1904) and Thurston (founded 1887). The school opened a second Lower School campus in 1988 in the northern suburbs of Pittsburgh and became coeducational in 1991. One is immediately struck by two things at the school: 1) the feel of the culture as supportive, friendly, welcoming, and encouraging; 2) the thoughtful, innovative and forward thinking way in which the faculty view their practice of teaching and the development of learning opportunities for students.

WT and its Upper School have garnered significant national recognition in recent years, in particular through two prestigious accolades. In 2007, WT was one of only four schools nationwide selected for a Malone Scholars Grant from the Malone Family Foundation, and in 2009 WT was one of only four schools nationwide selected to receive the Edward E. Ford Foundation's highly competitive Educational Leadership Grant. WT is the only school in the nation to have received both of these awards. The former, a



\$2 million endowment grant, recognized WT's excellence in serving the needs of gifted and talented students along with its remarkable commitment to socioeconomic diversity through financial aid; the latter, a \$250,000 matching grant, was given for expansion and enhancement of WT's dynamic *City as Our Campus* program, which connects curriculum, faculty, and students to the considerable resources in the city to provide students with opportunities to apply learning to real world situations and expand both their intellectual and civic engagement.

Head of School Gary J. Niels joined WT in 2002 and led a galvanizing initiative to raise \$15 million, to both build a new Upper School building for the school's flagship division and to increase enrollment in grades 9-12. The capital campaign concluded successfully in 2006 and the school next embarked on a strategic plan focused on Great Teaching, Programmatic Innovation, Enrollment Growth, Alternative Revenue, Competitive Facilities, and Generative Thinking. The impact of this strategy has emerged in meaningful new programs, higher student

WT Numbers

Grades: Pre-K – 12

Enrollment: 645

Faculty: 93

Student-teacher ratio: 7:1

Students of color: 24%

Faculty of color: 9%

Operating budget: \$13.2M

Endowment: \$9.7M (6-30-11)

Indebtedness: \$8M

Annual Giving: \$830,000

Capital Giving, most recent year: \$2.6M

Parent participation in giving: 71%

Alumni participation in giving: 21%

Financial Aid: \$2.1M

Students Receiving Aid: 31%

Campus size: 8 acres

157,000 square feet under cover



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achievement, more purposeful professional development for faculty, and a pervasive and positive school spirit. Over the last five years the Upper School has experienced a significant increase in applicants and is currently enrolled at capacity with waitlists at the grade nine entry level. The school is now in the quiet phase of its next campaign, which will be focused primarily on building its endowment.

THE FACULTY

The Upper School has 31 faculty who work together in a collegial, collaborative setting. An emerging formative development program, part of the school's strategic plan, is overseen by a K-12 Dean of Faculty. She, in concert with the other academic leaders of the school, plans and executes a goal setting program and a professional development program focused on 21st century learning and habits of mind, and curriculum enhancement. Each full time faculty member in the Upper School serves as an academic advisor, and faculty are integrated in the life of the school as coaches, and/or as advisors to student government, organizations, and publications. Teachers describe WT unanimously as a "great place to work" and a "caring community." They are grateful for the tight working relationships with students where the "classroom is just the beginning" of the teaching opportunities. Those who relocated to the area appreciate that not only does Pittsburgh rank in the top 50 cities of the world, but that living there is very affordable – and as many commented, "there is an abundance of things to do" and "more tickets to cultural and arts events are sold each year than all the sports tickets combined." Impressive for a town also dedicated to its Steelers, Pirates, and Penguins.

Core Values
Critical thinking
Integrity
Empathy
Community
Diversity

THE CURRICULUM

WT Upper School students fully embrace the academic opportunities presented to them in a rigorous college preparatory program. Requirements include four years of English and one trimester of speech; three years of the same foreign language; three years of social studies, including European History and U.S. History; completion of second-year algebra and a computer science course in math; three lab science courses; a minimum of 10 credits in at least two of the four fine arts departments of art, music, drama, and dance; six trimesters of physical education; and one trimester of health. The languages offered at Winchester Thurston include French, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and Latin. All students must take one *City as Our Campus* course;



this requirement may be met through a properly designated science or social studies course culminating in a rigorous independent or team research project. Students are self-possessed, friendly, engaging, and passionate.



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AP AND POST-AP COURSES & CITY AS OUR CAMPUS

All courses at WT are rigorous and college preparatory. An array of Advanced Placement courses is offered including, in 2010-2011, art history, biology, calculus AB, calculus BC, chemistry, computer science A, English language and composition, English literature and composition, European history, French language, physics B, Spanish language, statistics, U.S. history, and Latin Vergil. Winchester Thurston recognizes that Advanced Placement is one way in which students may challenge themselves; but as students mature intellectually, it is important to provide opportunities for applying knowledge and developing vital 21st century skills. Therefore, the Upper School offers, and is working on developing additional, Post-AP courses. One of the courses, Advanced Topics in Mathematics, has been designed for students who have completed both levels of calculus prior to their senior year. The course has been designed in partnership with faculty at Carnegie Mellon University, with an eye toward shaping it to best prepare the advanced math student for deeper study in college. The other two courses are designated *City as Our Campus* courses. WT's Pre-K-12 *City as Our Campus* initiative utilizes Pittsburgh's organizations, museums, businesses, universities, and neighborhoods to create inventive and captivating learning experiences for students. The school seeks to balance traditional classroom instruction with dynamic real-world learning that allows students to develop into active citizens ready to navigate an environment of constant change and complex problems. Students master relevant content and gain important skills in areas such as leadership, collaboration, and innovative thinking. Simultaneously, they tackle real world problems, contribute solutions to Pittsburgh's revitalization, and explore how these solutions can be scaled to meet global needs.



In addition to course units, extracurricular programs, and internships, *City as Our Campus* in the Upper School challenges students through dedicated courses that involve collaborative, rigorous research to apply skills and knowledge: Urban Research and Design, a year-long social studies course for seniors, focuses on urban problems through academic learning, field research in the community, and presentations of findings and solutions. Research Science, a year-long course, emphasizes scientific research and the process of developing scientific knowledge. Students design and conduct independent research projects and are responsible for sharing their findings with the broader scientific community through local symposia, print media, or other suitable communication modes. The overall campus atmosphere is egalitarian and informal, responsive to initiative and thoughtful about process. The high level of mutual trust seems to permit – and promote – an environment for enthusiastic intellectual inquiry.



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PITTSBURGH

WT's City Campus is located in the residential neighborhood of Shadyside, on the border of Oakland, which is home to some of the country's leading centers of innovation, including Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Pittsburgh, and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and nationally renowned cultural centers, including the Carnegie Museums and WQED Multimedia. To the east of the school, a new corridor of innovation and development is emerging, bounded by Google and Children's Hospital. Having survived a significant economic decline as a result of deindustrialization through



the 1980's, the Pittsburgh region has diversified its economy and focused it on sectors and industries that have enabled it to outperform other cities and to experience a less intense impact from a recession. According to the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, Pittsburgh is "hailed by U.S. President Barack Obama as a 'model for turning the page to a 21st century economy' and by the worldwide media as America's great comeback story." In addition, visitors find the region home to "a variety of

natural and cultural assets creating an exceptional quality of life and revealing Pittsburgh as a city with a rich past and a bright future." A portion of the WT parent body comes from the Pitt, CMU and UP Medical Center communities so they are very pedagogically oriented; professionals for whom education is a priority. WT parents are in general very down to earth according to faculty.

As a matter of interest, recent notable rankings for the Pittsburgh region include being named one of the top 50 cities worldwide for quality of life in the "2011 Mercer Quality of Life Ranking," as well as:

- America's Most Livable City, *The Economist* and *Forbes.com*
- Best Commercial Real Estate Market, Moody's Investors Service
- North American City of the Future, fDi
- Economically Strongest U.S. Metros, The Brookings Institution
- Top 10 City for Job Growth, *Forbes.com*
- America's Best Housing Market, *Forbes.com*
- America's Best Places to Raise a Family, *Forbes.com*
- Best Cities for Recent Graduates, *Huffington Post*
- Safe Havens in Real Estate, *Kiplinger Magazine*
- Top 25 U.S. Arts Destinations, *American Style*

* Source: Pittsburgh Regional Alliance



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MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Upper School Director reports to the Head of School and serves on the school's leadership team, which one administrator referred to as, "smart, quick, and fun to be with." S/he will serve as the educational leader and chief ambassador for the Upper School and will work the Department Chairs and K-12 Dean of Faculty to direct the curriculum and to develop, observe, supervise the faculty, and carry out the formative development process (WT's novel faculty evaluation program). In addition the Upper School Director will be expected to:

- Insure congruency between the School's Mission and Upper School activities
- Hire and assign faculty, in concert with the Head and Dean of Faculty
- Collaborate with the Director of *City as Our Campus* in implementing this authentic learning program as central to the student experience
- Work with the Dean of Students to oversee Upper School student life
- Effectively communicate with parents on issues of school life
- Coordinate the Upper School schedule with the master schedule
- Assist in the admission process
- Collaborate with the Director of Athletics on programming and schedule
- Oversee the College Counseling program
- Foster unity, harmony, and cooperation in a diverse environment

The position offers some meaningful challenges in the areas of language instruction, schedule enhancement, and technology integration; there is less of a need for significant change than to guide the positive momentum which the school has started. The Upper School has appreciated the style in which they have been led by Mick Gee for the last dozen years, a combination of energy, approachability, humor and firmness. Mick leaves to assume the headship at Allendale Columbia School in Rochester.

QUALIFICATIONS:

WT is seeking an Upper School Director with strong educational leadership experience, and perspective, S/he should be a teacher at heart, and familiar with issues facing Upper School students and faculty in independent schools. WT could be described as having "big school challenges in a small school," so they need a leader who thinks creatively, broadly, and engaged other in a process characterized by momentum and accountability.

- Advanced degree
- Educational philosophy consistent with WT's mission
- Energetic, hard-working, committed
- Exceptional communication skills
- Efficient and organized
- Confident, involved
- Leadership style which perpetuates collegiality and collaboration



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Salary and benefits will be competitive.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates submit these materials confidentially as separate PDF attachments:

- cover letter expressing interest in the Winchester Thurston School position
- current résumé
- statement of educational philosophy and practice
- list of 5 references with name, phone number, and email address of each
(*references will be contacted only with the candidate's permission*)

Benjamin L. Bolté and Dr. Sherry T. Coleman

Senior Search Associates

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~ Winchester Thurston School is an Equal Opportunity Employer ~

Winchester Thurston School students from the Classes of 2008 - 2011 have been admitted to or are enrolled in the following colleges and universities.

Allegheny College
American University
Bard College
Bennington College
Berklee College of Music
Boston College
Boston University
Boston University, College of Fine Arts
Bowdoin College
Bowling Green State University
Brandeis University
Brown University
Bucknell University
California University of Pennsylvania
Capital University
Carleton College
Carnegie Mellon University
Carnegie Mellon University School of Computer Science
Case Western Reserve University
Chatham University
Clark University
Colby College
Colgate University
College of Charleston
College of William and Mary
Columbia University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Davidson College
Denison University
Dickinson College
Drexel University
Duke University
Duquesne University
Earlham College
Eckerd College
Emerson College
Emory University
Fordham University
Franklin and Marshall College
Gettysburg College
Goucher College
Grinnell College
Gulford College
Harvard University
Haverford College
High Point University

Hiram College
Indiana University at Bloomington
Ithaca College
John Carroll University
Johns Hopkins University
Juniata College
Kent State University
Kenyon College
Lafayette College
Lehigh University
Lewis and Clark College
Macalester College
Marietta College
McGill University
Miami University (Ohio)
Middlebury College
New York University
Northwestern University
Oberlin College
Occidental College
Ohio University
Otterbein College
Pennsylvania State University
Pennsylvania State University, University Park
Philadelphia University
Point Park University
Pomona College
Princeton University
Quinnipiac University
Reed College
Rensselaer Polytechnic University
Rhode Island School of Design
Roanoke College
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rollins College
Saint Mary's College
Sarah Lawrence College
School of Public Communications
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
School of the Museum of Fine Arts
Sewanee: The University of the South
Shepherd University
Skidmore College
St. Mary's College of Maryland
Stanford University
Stetson University
Stonehill College
Swarthmore College
Syracuse University
Temple University
The College of Wooster
The George Washington University

The George Washington University (School of International Affairs)
The Ohio State University
The University of Arizona
The University of Iowa
Tufts University
Tulane University
University of Arizona
University of California at Berkeley
University of California at Los Angeles
University of California at Santa Barbara
University of California at Santa Cruz
University of Chicago
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Dayton
University of Delaware
University of Hartford
University of Maryland
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
University of Missouri, Kansas City
University of New Hampshire
University of North Carolina
University of North Carolina (School of the Arts)
University of North Carolina at Wilmington
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Pittsburgh (University Honors College)
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
University of Rochester
University of San Diego
University of Southern California
University of Toronto
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College
Washington and Jefferson College
Washington College
Washington University in St. Louis
Westminster Choir College of Rider University
Whitman College
Williams College
Xavier University
Yale University
Youngstown State University



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