

A young woman with long blonde hair and pink safety glasses is smiling. She is in a workshop or lab setting, with various mechanical parts and wires visible in the background. The text 'Inspiring creativity and innovation' is overlaid on the image.

Inspiring
creativity
and
innovation

Endless opportunities

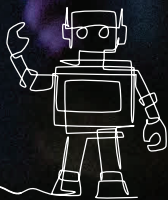




The Agnes Irwin School
prepares the students of
today for the
dynamic world
of tomorrow.

Hands-on art and technology opportunities at AIS provide girls with the experiences, intellectual curiosity, and self-confidence that will inspire the rest of their lives.

Agnes Irwin believes in student-centered learning. As girls grow and mature at AIS, they take on more open-ended and self-directed projects. A range of co-curricular opportunities and high-level electives encourage the pursuit of passions and deep dives into a variety of disciplines. By the time a student graduates from Agnes Irwin, she has a unique set of skills and competencies. With this educational foundation, there is no limit to what she can achieve.





Technology

We encourage our girls to create,
explore, and collaborate.
To think about problems
from a new angle.

Innovation encompasses much more than just the use of technology. Project-based learning, design thinking, and interdisciplinary instruction are key aspects of an AIS education, along with other tools for teaching in student-centered and meaningful ways.

Agnes Irwin introduces students early to the possibilities of computing. The iWonder Lab in the Lower School engages girls with programmable robots that they code to accomplish certain tasks. Classes tap into design thinking and “what if?” imagination to prototype fantastic and practical solutions.

This approach to problem-solving grows in our Middle School. Agnes Irwin also introduces girls to a variety of programming languages and outcomes from coding, such as robotics, app design, and web design. The Decades Project, for instance, asks eighth graders to bring their growing understanding of technology and coding into a history assignment, a collaboration of disciplines that elevates a traditional research paper into a comprehensive, interactive presentation.

During Middle School, students also start making use of the Innovation Center, and especially the STEAM Studio. This space is outfitted with high-

resolution fabrication tools, a green-screen recording studio, a robotics room, and small-group collaboration spaces that assist girls in bringing their concepts and ideas to life. Fifth graders, for instance, utilize apps and Glowforge laser cutters to design and create commonly traded goods from ancient Egypt.

The Upper School also calls upon the Innovation Center and the STEAM Studio for various classroom assignments. The division curriculum offers focused Computer Science courses, in which girls build web applications that tap into industry frameworks. Interdisciplinary courses are also available, such as Chaotic Dynamical Systems (combined with Math), Media Arts (combined with Arts), and Astrophysics (combined with Science).

Engineering electives, available starting in ninth grade, introduce Upper School students to engineering design principles, computer-assisted drafting, and smart-system technologies.



Technology in action



Robotics

Our students have robots on the brain. The fourth grade Robotics Club engineered mechanized K'Nex configurations to carry a ping pong ball four feet. "Participation in the Robotics Club is optional," said Lower School science teacher Julie Haines. "But this year, every fourth grade girl raised her hand to commit to robotics. That is pretty amazing." At the annual Kindergarten Invention Convention, the Class of 2034 seemed to be charting the course for the future with their dreamed-up robots that make beds, cut grass, clean up the kitchen, pick up toys, and even comfort babies.

Beyond the classroom, Agnes Irwin sponsors highly popular robotics clubs.

Upper School Femme Tech Fatale competes in the FIRST Robotics Competition, and the Middle School is part of a FIRST Lego League team. In these after-school activities, students construct their robots with tools in the Robotics Room and based on concepts they learned in class to fulfill tournament objectives. Every part of the robot — from electrical wiring to operating instructions — comes solely through the girls' initiative and collaboration.



STEAM Careers

The Lower School hosts an annual STEAM Showcase.

Guest speakers — all current parents and family members of AIS students — present their work in a variety of STEAM-related careers. “Hearing from women in the AIS community who work in these fields inspires students to identify and discover careers and leadership positions which they may consider for themselves,” said science teacher Julie Haines.



Arts

Our programs encourage girls to be creative, challenge their comfort zones, and to take the stage confidently.





In classes, performances, and clubs/organizations/boards, our students are developing the skills our 21st-century world — and workplaces — demand. Like creativity. Emotional intelligence. Innovation. Problem-solving. And critical thinking.

Led by a faculty of juried visual artists, published playwrights, and professional performance artists, students delve deep into the art of self-expression and discover the artist within.

FACILITIES

A plethora of dynamic visual and performing arts facilities centered on the Anne S. Lenox Arts Center inspires our students to soar to the highest levels. The first level encompasses studio art, Black Box theatre/dance studio space as well as a digital photography lab, a darkroom for teaching film photography, the Moran Gallery, and the West-Wike Theatre — a 300-fixed-seat proscenium theater. The new Class

of 2021 Piano Lab features nine workstations and allows for simultaneous group teaching. Adjacent is a Composition Room, another distinctive space where girls can rehearse and even create their own work.

Finally, AIS boasts a Recording Studio where girls can create, practice, arrange, and, yes, record original work. The new Sharon Rudnicki Writing Center is the home of two student publications, the newspaper *The Wick* and the yearbook *The Lamp*. It also serves as a central hub at AIS for creative writing, open to girls of all ages, while regularly hosts speakers on writing topics.



THEATER

Theater at AIS empowers students to explore all aspects of the art: acting technique, voice, script writing, directing, marketing and publicity, lighting and sound, stage crew, and set design. Theater opportunities start in Lower School, with our PreK students performing on the big stage in the West-Wike Theatre. Middle School students continue to grow their skills through theater classes, a fifth grade performance, and our Middle School musical. In Upper School, students can specialize in production direction, playwriting, or acting, and participate in the fall musical and spring production.



MUSIC

We pride ourselves on being a singing school! Lower and Middle School music classes are based on a sequential curriculum integrating the Kodály Method that instills the joy of singing. Upper School students can participate in our choir or audition to join the Bel Cantos, our a cappella ensemble. Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in various music activities, including the Middle School choir, called the Grace Notes, as well as the Middle School musical.

Starting in third grade, we offer elective group instrumental instruction, and our Upper School students can elect to specialize in music theory, composition, and arranging. In addition, music students can utilize our state-of-the-art piano lab and composition room to flex their creative muscles and experiment with writing original pieces of music.



DANCE

Dance at AIS focuses on both the artistic expression and physical benefits of this art form. An elective in choreography allows dancers to create their own works that are part of our annual Dance Motion recital.



PHOTOGRAPHY

In this program, students are exposed to fundamental photographic techniques, including traditional photography (darkroom), digital photographic technology and alternative processing techniques.



MEDIA ARTS

The Media Arts program at AIS introduces students to the elements and principles of design. Through the hands-on use of digital technologies and access to a state-of-the-art Mac Lab, students learn how techniques are applied to the world of digital design and communication.



STUDIO ART

Studio Art is a deep and varied program at AIS. The carefully sequenced classes focus on and explore the fundamentals of visual art, two-dimensional design, three dimensional design, ceramics, and drawing.

Arts in action



In Stitches

Over the winter months, students in the new Textile & Design class made their own quilts. “Quilts allow us to explore identity, culture, historical and modern patterns, color theory, and building confidence on a sewing machine,” said Studio and Media Art teacher Sophie Miller. “Plus, quilting requires lots of math! I hope they take their quilts to college and beyond so they feel at home when in a new place,” said Miller. Lily Botta '22 created a custom Agnes Irwin quilt (at far right) made of old uniforms, spirit tee shirts, and kilts.



Walking Into Digital Art

In April 2022, students in Media Arts III showcased the first Agnes Irwin augmented reality (AR) installation, which is an interactive digital art medium that combines elements of real and virtual worlds. “AR allows art to be brought outside of gallery and museum walls, so it is more accessible to engage with in all communities and spaces,” says Studio and Media Art teacher Sophie Miller. “We set up an iPad so viewers could scan codes on a wall that would then transport them into a 3D augmented portrait and infographic about their chosen artists’ work. It is like stepping into works of art or presentations and exploring them virtually – all you need is a phone.” The students conducted research on underrepresented artists who made significant contributions to art and design history.



Student Spotlight

Over the course of twelve weeks, Arielle Bennett '22 completed the High School Apprentice Training Program at The Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia.

Bennett learned all aspects of screen printing on fabric. She collaborated with other students and created her own artwork, which was inspired by her personal passion for architecture. The apprenticeship's final assignment was to create a repeat print yardage for which Bennett incorporated architectural and abstract design.

Meet the Faculty



MURRAY SAVAR

Lower School Music & Upper School Choral Ensembles, Department Chair

- Temple University College of Music
- Kodály Center of America Seminars
- International Music Seminars
- Zoltán Kodály Institute (Kecskemét, Hungary)
- Temple Emanuel, Cantorial Soloist/Accompanist

ELIZABETH WEIGLE

Middle School Music

- Eastman School of Music
- The Julliard School
- Opera Boston and Chautauqua Opera, Soprano Soloist
- Colorado Symphony, Rhode Island Philharmonic
- English Concert at Carnegie Hall, London and Paris
- New York Summer Music Festival, Faculty
- Saint Joseph's University, Adjunct Faculty
- Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, Soloist/Section Leader

KERI FARROW

Studio Art

- Moore College of Art and Design
- Young Artists Program, Art Instructor and Site Coordinator
- Fun2Know podcast, Executive Producer

SOPHIE MILLER

Studio Art & Media Art

- Maryland Institute College of Art
- Delaware Art Museum, Guest Teaching Artist
- Peace Paper Workshop
- Room For Change
- Elementary Elementals

TERRI SAULIN

Studio Art & Media Art

- University of the Arts
- Moore College of Art & Design
- Tiger Strikes Asteroid Gallery, Member and Press Coordinator
- Participation in: Philly Stewards, InLiquid Art, Clay Studio National, Woodmere 77th Annual

TRISH SIEMBORA

Lower School Art

- University of the Arts, Continuing Education and Fiber Programs, Past Instructor
- Caterpillar Fur, Screen-Printed Textile Design
- Cape May Arts League, Member

PAOLO MORALES

Photography

- Rhode Island School of Design
- The Art Institute of Boston
- Skowegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Participant

ANN RAMSEY

Theater

- University of Pennsylvania
- Players Club of Swarthmore, Performer, Running Crew, Assistant Director
- Community Arts Center, Wallingford, Two-Time Artist-In-Residence
- Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia
- Gilbert and Sullivan Players, Philadelphia
- Penn Singers, Quadramics, University of Pennsylvania

DANIEL SOLDERITSCH

Technical Theater

- Lehigh University
- King's College and The Haverford School, Technical Director
- The Eagle Theatre, Gaslight Theatre Co., and Pig Iron Theatre, Freelance Technical Direction and Design

SARAH DEKNIGHT

Theater

- DeSales University
- Darlington Arts Center and Delaware Theatre Company, Teaching Artist

MAGGIE POWERS

Director of Curriculum & Learning Innovation

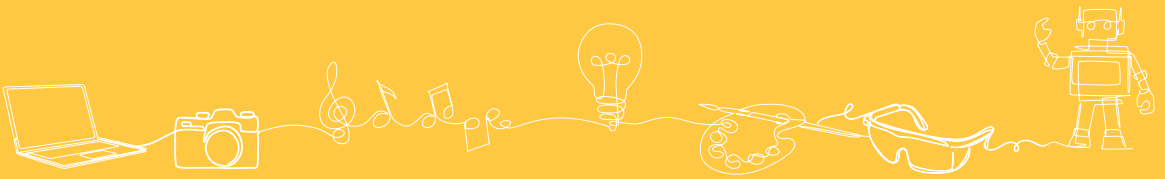
- Bryn Mawr College
- American University
- IDEO's Teachers Guild, Teacher Coach
- Google for Education Think Tank, Participant
- ICGS Global Mentoring Network for Aspiring Leaders
- Certified Google Innovator, Certified Raspberry Pi and Seesaw Educator

JAMES MATHISEN

US Physics, Engineering, and Math Instructor

- Purdue University
- Villanova University
- Robotics Coordinator (K-12)
- US Robotics Coach





The **Agnes Irwin** School

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