Faculty Member to Lead New Westminster Initiative

December 18, 2017—Westminster School will begin a new initiative next summer called Horizons at Westminster. Headmaster Bill Philip has announced that Assistant Head of School Kathleen Devaney has been named executive director of the program effective July 1.

Horizons National (https://www.horizonsnational.org) offers summer educational programs to underserved youngsters at independent schools and colleges around the United States. Horizons at Westminster School will be among the first Horizons programs to be hosted by a boarding school.

Todd Eckerson, director of the Westminster Crossroads Learning Program in Hartford (WCLP), and Mary Eckerson, assistant director of WCLP, initiated the idea of creating a relationship with Horizons National. “The Eckersons believe that the transition from WCLP to Horizons at Westminster will provide a more stable foundation for Westminster’s civic engagement and partnership work in and around Hartford,” said Headmaster Philip. “Effective immediately, WCLP folds itself into the new organization, Horizons at Westminster. Kathleen’s active involvement with WCLP led to her accepting the appointment as executive director of Horizons at Westminster. Please join me in congratulating Kathleen and thanking her for embracing this exciting opportunity for our school community.”

In her new role, Kathleen will continue to teach, coach and advise Westminster students and step away from her role as assistant head of school at the end of the current academic year, in order to focus on leading the new initiative. Nancy Spencer, associate head of school, will assume some of Kathleen’s responsibilities, and the balance will be assigned to various faculty colleagues.

“I am excited to combine the important work of WCLP with the mission of Horizons,” said Kathleen. “Horizons at Westminster seeks to provide academic support as well as enrichment opportunities for those Hartford students who will join us on the Westminster campus. The ultimate goal is to combat ‘summer achievement slide’ by providing a joy-filled educational experience.”

Kathleen joined the faculty at Westminster in 1998 as a dean of students, history teacher, coach, corridor supervisor and advisor. She served as a dean for the Classes of 2002, 2006, 2011 and 2015. She also chaired the school’s 2005 NEASC Decennial Evaluation, worked as the director of student life for five years and has served as assistant head of school for the past seven years. In 2002, she won the O’Brien Award and also became an honorary member of the Class of 2002.

Prior to Westminster, Kathleen served on the faculty at Deerfield Academy as a German teacher and admissions officer. She worked in corporate banking for two years in New York City and was awarded a one-year Fulbright grant to teach English and history in former East Germany. She holds a B.A. from Bowdoin College and an M.A.L.S. from Dartmouth College. She is married to Westminster graduate and fellow faculty member Mark de Kanter ’91, and they are the parents of a son, Emmett ’19, and a daughter, Samantha.

“Civic engagement and partnership work begun by WCLP will continue to be advanced by Horizons at Westminster, thus providing support to underserved populations, while also offering countless opportunities for Westminster students, faculty, alumni, parents and friends,” said Headmaster Philip in making the announcement. “These opportunities for mutual enrichment make an extraordinary difference for everyone involved.”