

## Easy as Pi

*Middle school student at Independent Day School-Corbett Campus sets new school record for reciting a whopping 419 digits of pi during Pi Day math celebration.*



*Middle school students at Independent Day School-Corbett Campus measure the circumference of a light post and a tree. Using pi, they calculated each object's diameter. The activity was part of a Pi Day scavenger hunt.*

**March 22, 2011 (TAMPA, Fla.)** – Independent Day School-Corbett Campus eighth grader Jordan Fuller likes key lime pie. She's also fond of blackberry pie.

Her favorite pie, however – the irrational, never-repeating number called pi – is better suited for determining the circumference of a circle than serving as dessert.

To bring joy to the study of mathematics, for more than a decade, middle school students at IDS have celebrated pi – 3.14159 – on 3/14, by participating in a variety of pi-related activities, including memorizing as many digits of pi as possible.

Breaking her previous record of 408 digits set two years ago, Fuller holds the school record for memorizing 419 digits of pi. From start to finish, it took her less than seven minutes. For math teachers who were observing and counting during those minutes, it was a roller coaster ride of quickly recited patterns and carefully paced one, two and three-digit numbers.

“It was absolutely mesmerizing to watch Jordan,” said math teacher Tom Bronson.

“To put that much effort into breaking her own record was amazing,” said Thelma Rosenberg, also a middle school math teacher.

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Motivated two years ago by a teacher's offer of a free McDonald's lunch, Fuller said that this year she wanted to see if she could top her previous record. "I'm a visual learner, so I grouped the numbers by increments of seven and looked for the patterns. I also did a lot of highlighting," she said, displaying her brightly colored list of numbers.

In addition to memorizing digits of pi on Pi Day, students created a variety of pi-related art such as paper pi-chains and pi bracelets. They wrote pi poetry. They traversed the school sports field on a scavenger hunt to determine the circumference of the flag pole and the diameter of the soccer goal, and they conducted an internet scavenger hunt to discover pi-related information such as who first calculated pi (Archimedes) and how many digits of pi have been discovered (more than a trillion).

Meanwhile on the east campus, technology teacher Matt Melnick helped fifth graders prepare for participation in the middle school pi memorization tradition next year. They practiced reciting digits of pi for several weeks via Skype with fellow students at The Children's Storefront, a school in Harlem, NY, and on Pi Day staged their own preliminary competition.

For the IDS middle schoolers, however, pie eating and pie throwing were among the day's favorite activities – and every year, Bronson volunteers to be on the receiving end of the throwing.

"I guess there's something about throwing a whipped cream pie at your math teacher that really drives home the significance of the number pi," he said.

In recognition of her accomplishment, Jordan Fuller had the honor of throwing the first pi at Bronson.



*For setting a new school record for reciting 419 digits of pi, eighth grader Jordan Fuller was the first to throw a pie at math teacher Tom Bronson to culminate Pi Day festivities.*

*Founded in 1968, Independent Day School-Corbett Campus is a fully accredited, nonsectarian private school located on Orange Grove Drive in northwest Hillsborough County with over 500 students from PreK3 through 8th grade. At IDS, all children experience the International Baccalaureate Programme in a highly academic and nurturing environment focused on excellence and excitement in learning. IDS-CC has become recognized as an exemplary school with over 6,500 visitors observing and learning from IDS-CC teachers. For more information, visit [www.idsyeyes.com](http://www.idsyeyes.com) or contact the Admissions Office at 813-961-3087 for a personal tour.*

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