

PACKER



Portraits of members of the
Packer community, plus essential
information about Brooklyn's
oldest independent school



Who we are.

A brief introduction to
The Packer Collegiate Institute

It's hard to convey who we are in a few words, but here's an attempt: We believe that the head and the heart make each other stronger. We balance the value of scholarship with the importance of relationships. We make space for new voices and new ideas, we hold the door for each other, we sing silly songs. We believe that great minds—and great schools—embrace difference and admit complexity. We think deeply, speak confidently, and act with purpose and heart.

The result is a learning community that is smart and serious and motivated—and warm and supportive and joyful. That's an unusual combination. But it works. And it allows our graduates to go into the world and do good work.

Perhaps the best way to understand who we are is to spend time with us. On the pages that follow, you'll meet a few of the people who make Packer Packer.



“Packer hinges on an amazing combination of serious scholarship, authentic curiosity, unbridled enthusiasm, and genuine care for the community.”





“It’s so great to have independence and responsibility. I love being able to spend free time with my friends—the people who make me who I am.”





“We embrace the ‘work hard, play hard’ philosophy. We can be rigorous one moment and silly the next.”



“You’re exposed to so much here, so much diversity of thought. You feel nurtured and confident, able to pursue things. There’s a kind of emotional maturity that you get from that experience. I was a finished product after Packer.”





“We try to give students as many different experiences as possible. It’s about exposing them to new things, pushing them to be uncomfortable. It helps them figure out who they are.”





What it's like to be here.

The experience of Packer

Packer's campus is the embodiment of its history. All around us, there are innovative spaces within traditional structures—a five-story Middle School space built inside a converted church, state-of-the-art laboratories in a building that Packer first dedicated to science education back in 1887, a digital video lab in a skylit art studio.

And always, everywhere, there are the voices of students—laughter in the Atrium, debates (and the occasional pop-up dance party) in the Commons, joyful hollering in the Garden. Student voices take visual shape on the walls—fliers for club meetings and performances, handwritten Emerson quotes illustrated by 10th Grade English students: “Insist on yourself; never imitate.” And on the doors to faculty offices, students’ sticky notes to teachers: “Thank you for embodying learning.” “Thank you for 100% loving what you do.”

To experience life at Packer is to be inspired by the work happening all around you, to be surrounded by people who know you as yourself, and to be uplifted by educators who 100% love what they do.



Pre and Lower School

Pre-Kindergarten through 4th Grade

A child-centered, community-supported, and integrated approach to each student's academic, social, and emotional growth.

Academic Program Our Pre and Lower School program is experiential, exploratory, and integrated. Our dynamic curriculum in literacy, math, social studies, and science incorporates academic skills, critical thinking, and student-driven inquiry. Much of our work together spans several disciplines, so students take an interconnected approach to an interconnected world. Our Reggio Emilia-inspired Preschool program (Pre-K3, Pre-K4, and Kindergarten) creates the space for children to collectively choose areas of interest to explore in depth. Starting in September 2018, the Preschool will be housed in the Packer Early Learning Center, a brand-new facility one block from our main campus. Throughout the division, our goal is to give students the capacity and the confidence to discover their world.



Community We believe that the best learning happens in a strong, joyful community. In everything we do, we ask students to care for each other, listen to each other, and be active, responsible, spirited members of their school community. In and out of the classroom, we cultivate empathy, inclusion, and kindness. We consider our families to be partners; we welcome them into the life of the school. We organize annual community-wide events, such as May Day, seasonal Sings, and the Immigration Celebration, which become formative experiences and treasured memories. The Hart Library represents the true heart (pun intended) of our division. It's a place where families gather at the beginning or end of the school day, where we bond over our love of reading, and where every child is known and welcomed.

Opportunities We offer a range of opportunities for students to “act with purpose and heart,” in the words of Packer’s mission. We want students to have authentic, immersive experiences connecting to their world. Our Pre and Lower School teachers lead more than 150 field trips each year. We want students to find their voices and discover the impact they can have on their community—and so we participate in new and ongoing service projects at neighborhood organizations such as the First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry and the Arab-American Family Support Center. And we look for ways to make our students’ learning visible, through presentations and publishing parties, skits and celebrations.



Middle School

5th Grade through 8th Grade

An education that meets students where they are—and helps them develop the skills and habits that will allow them to become thoughtful, independent, responsible young adults.

Academic Program Our curriculum is intentionally structured to introduce students to more nuanced ways of understanding the world and themselves—while developing and refining their academic skills. In 5th and 6th Grade, English and history are taught as an interdisciplinary humanities class. In math and science, our inquiry-based approach is rooted in collaboration, experimentation, and reflection. We offer a language exploration program in 5th Grade, leading to focused study in a specific language (Spanish, French, Chinese, or Latin) in 6th Grade. Students explore all of our programs in the arts, from dance to digital video, theater to visual arts, chorus to instrumental music. Computing and design classes offer essential experience in information literacy, creative thinking, and digital citizenship. Health classes engage students in conversations about adolescence, decision-making, and social-emotional well-being.



Taken together, the academic program allows students to discover that hard work can be joyful and fulfilling, to better understand who they are, and to experience and imagine the work they might do in the world.

Community The spirit of Packer's Middle School community is the spirit of an impromptu 300-person sing-along, an intense final round of a geography bee, or a somewhat less intense faculty joke contest. It's the spirit of students and teachers sharing Chapel Stories, planning an event during Community Time, coming together for a regular meeting of an advisor group. It's Field Day, when mixed-grade teams—led by 8th Graders—compete in athletic, academic, and spirit challenges, from capture the flag to Trivial Pursuit. At our best, we're fearless and funny, awkward and ambitious, joyful and engaged, and happy just being together.



Opportunities We want our students to feel connected and inspired. So we offer a nearly endless number of opportunities for them to explore their interests and participate in the larger community. They can take WinterSession courses based on their interests (meditation, architecture, woodworking, the stock market), participate in language programs in Quebec and Puerto Rico, and explore programs in leadership, diversity, and inclusion. They can join theatrical productions, musical ensembles, and a long list of clubs, including Model UN, Student Diversity Council, and the Middle School newspaper. Every grade engages in service projects throughout the year, identifying the causes and concerns that mean the most to them, and finding ways to get involved. Our athletics program introduces intramural and interschool competition, challenging students to stretch themselves while emphasizing teamwork, mutual support, and fun.



Upper School

9th Grade through 12th Grade

Bright and bold, reflective and engaged—this is high school as a fully participatory experience, education as collective and individual growth.

Academic Program Close relationships between students and teachers—as well as advisors and deans who “travel” with each student through the Upper School—build a trust that allows us to push students beyond what they believe they can do. Our academic sequence is rooted in foundational studies, then expands to meet the ambitions of our students. Coursework emphasizes collaboration and often includes experience beyond the walls of the classroom. Our “physics-first” science program and our math courses are often student driven; our 10th Grade American Experience sequence brings together English and history. Our Advanced Topics (AT) program is Packer’s intensive and intentional alternative to Advanced Placement; the 19 AT courses cover a wide range of topics, including computer science, Chinese conversation and culture, and original research at the Brooklyn Historical Society, where Packer’s archives are housed. Our 44 additional upper-level electives allow students to pursue specialized interests, from astronomy to choreography, from journalism to mobile app programming. In our



two-week Symposium program, each grade embarks on an intellectual or international journey. We also offer opportunities for independent work, including the Independent Study Program, the Senior Thesis Program, and the Independent Science Research Program, in which students design and conduct a three-year project under the guidance of mentor-professors in college and university research labs across the city.

Community We come together for a wide range of activities, including talks by renowned visitors such as Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy and *Slate* analyst Josh Keating '03. We cultivate leadership through our Student Leadership Council—an incubator for students who want to help their peers succeed. At our weekly meetings in the non-denominational Chapel, students and teachers share news, stories, and inspiration: an update from the student-run Feminist Alliance, a report of student victories in the Latin Awards, appeals to join the Kids Walk for Kids with Cancer or buy tickets for the almost-sold-out production of *My Fair Lady*. We’re here for each other.



Opportunities We view extracurricular activities as a valuable extension of our students’ learning. Dozens of student-led clubs organize events and service projects. Students and faculty attend the National Association of Independent Schools’ Student Diversity Leadership and People of Color conferences. Our short-term, faculty-led global travel programs offer service-learning experiences in Cambodia, South Africa, and elsewhere. Our programs in the arts are a major force on campus, with theater, music, and dance performances, the senior art show, the Dance Concert, and the Packer Film Festival. Our athletics program develops young people who understand the value of character, discipline, teamwork, and leadership. In recent years, our student-athletes have been season or tournament champions in eight different sports.

After Packer

Broad-minded, open-hearted graduates with the skills and the will to make their own way in the world.

College Our graduates go to college, yes—often colleges with prestigious reputations. But the priority of our college counselors isn’t finding the biggest names—it’s choosing the right college for the right reasons. They form deep relationships with our students. Their approach focuses on sanity, not stress, and on the importance of building an inspired, sustainable life. When our graduates arrive at college, they are prepared for its rigors and challenges in and out of the classroom. They often pursue multiple disciplines and majors, deepening their exposure to beloved fields as well as exploring new realms of study.

Alumni Our graduates tend to be—not to put too fine a point on it—good people. They’re unpretentious, empathetic, and curious about everything. They wear their accomplishments lightly. They’re comfortable with uncertainty. They move easily between disciplines and cultures. They have wit. They’re ready for the unknown, they’re prepared for the unexpected, they’re distinctively well-rounded. In a broad range of fields, in communities around the world, they know how to turn the possible into the real.

They’re the kind of people who make a documentary about a girls’ school in rural India, or lead an initiative at the New York City Department of Education that improves college-readiness for Black and Latino men, or direct the program in Latin American studies at Johns Hopkins, or found a real estate development firm while also serving as chair of the local business improvement district in their hometown of Brooklyn.

And graduation isn’t the end, but rather the commencement of a new relationship with Packer. Our alumni are an important part of our community and enhance our school in many ways. They are active

volunteers, serving as Trustees and Alumni Board members, class agents and correspondents. They engage directly with the school as guest presenters in classes and clubs, as Founder’s Day speakers, and as professional resources and mentors to our students. They attend a variety of alumni events, both at Packer and in cities near and far, deepening lifelong friendships and supporting their alma mater.

COLLEGES TO WHICH 5 OR MORE PACKER GRADUATES WERE ADMITTED IN THE PAST 5 YEARS

Amherst College
Bard College
Barnard College
Bates College
Boston College
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Carnegie Mellon University
Colby College
Colgate University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Hamilton College
Johns Hopkins University
Kenyon College

Lehigh University
New York University
Northwestern University
Oberlin College
Princeton University
Skidmore College
Syracuse University
Tufts University
Tulane University
University of Chicago
University of Michigan
University of Pennsylvania
University of Rochester
Vassar College
Washington University in St. Louis
Wesleyan University
Williams College
Yale University



Independent
co-educational
college preparatory
school, founded in
1845 on Joralemon
Street in historic
Brooklyn Heights



6 interconnected buildings on Joralemon Street,
including 65 classrooms, 2 gymnasiums, 2 libraries,
the Pratt Theater, and the Packer Garden



6000
class pets in Kindergarten
(composting worms!)

1,000+
students in Pre-K3
through 12th Grade

Fall **2018**:
Packer Early Learning
Center opens at
100 Clinton Street

\$8
million in financial
aid given to students
every year

\$2.5
million raised by
Kids Walk for Kids
with Cancer, founded
by Packer 8th Graders

15
varsity sports teams, with
17 league championships
in the past 5 years



150
faculty

84%
of faculty hold an
advanced degree

8:1
student-to-teacher
ratio

19
college-level
Advanced Topics courses

33%
of our students identify as African-American,
Latino/Hispanic, Asian American,
Middle Eastern American, or multiracial.

Families from all **5** boroughs,
plus Long Island and New Jersey

100%
of sophomore class has international
experience at no additional cost





We would love to hear from you.

Applying to Packer

Admission to Packer is selective, with traditional entry points in Pre-K Threes, Kindergarten, and 9th Grade, and limited space possibly available in other grades. We offer open houses in the fall and Kindergarten small group tours in the spring. See our website below for information about our application process and updated space availability, and contact us to schedule a visit.

We're deeply committed to ensuring that Packer is accessible to families from all walks of life. Our financial aid program offers more than \$8 million in tuition grants every year, a percentage of operating budget greater than those of nearly all our New York City peers. One quarter of our students receive financial aid benefits.

www.packer.edu/admissions

PRE AND LOWER SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

(718) 250-0254

MIDDLE AND UPPER SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

(718) 250-0385

The quotations in this book were taken from interviews with members of the Packer community, including a recent alumnus, a Lower School teacher, and an Upper School teacher.

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Grounded in rich traditions while embracing the future, The Packer Collegiate Institute is a diverse community that balances the value of scholarship and the intellect with the importance of meaningful and sustained relationships. Guided by dedicated adults, Packer students are challenged to develop talents, pursue aspirations, and become empathetic, responsible, globally-minded individuals.

We educate students to

think deeply,
speak confidently,
and act with purpose and heart.

THE
PACKER
COLLEGIATE
INSTITUTE

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