

# MODUS VIVENDI

*A Way of Life*

**FACULTY PROFILE:  
LINDA GRAHAM**

**FAITH LIFE IN MIDDLE  
SCHOOL**

**SAN DIEGO VISUAL  
ARTS TRIP: ENHANCING  
THE LEARNING  
EXPERIENCE**

**THE BEAR  
CREEK  
SCHOOL  
MAGAZINE**

**WINTER 2019**





# MODUS VIVENDI

*Winter 2019*

*Modus Vivendi* is translated as a way of life or a manner of living. The Bear Creek School seeks to develop individuals for whom the classical ideals of excellence in all things, love of learning, spiritual commitment, and self-discipline have become a way of life.

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*The mission of The Bear Creek School is to provide a high-quality, Christian liberal arts education in a nurturing environment that will enable each student to become the individual God intends.*



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### ON THE COVER

Joshua Chong, senior, on cello, and Kenny Norris, English Department Chair, on guitar, play in the Upper School worship band during Grandparents Day Chapel. See more photos from Grandparents Day on page 30.

PHOTO BY SINI FERNANDEZ



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# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

By Patrick Carruth

At the midway point of our thirtieth year as a school, it is both gratifying and humbling to look back on the work the Lord has been doing here at The Bear Creek School and to look forward to the work to come. The phrase *invested in students* is not just a slogan; rather, those words represent the driving force of our mission. By investing our time, resources, energy, instruction, and passion, we carry out the mission to enable each student to become the individual God intends.



would not be changing my grade. Didn't he know he was ruining my future?

I am certain now that Dr. Daniels knew something my 19-year-old-self did not know. What he knew, that I now recognize, is the value of investing, even when it is difficult. What Dr. Daniels did in that moment was invest in me for the long-term, and even though it caused short-term pain, he knew that allowing me to experience the consequences of my actions

Over the years, I have shared a personal story from my college days to illustrate this point—investing in students—and the story is no less true the more often it is told, and so I would like to share it again here. On a cold, dull late-afternoon in my freshman year, I drove over to my professor's home. As he answered the door, he may well have predicted the reason for the visit. I had come to ask him to remove the F from my transcript. I was an English major and had just failed my first class, Creative Writing. As I steeled my nerves to plead my case, Dr. Daniels silently listened. Then for the next 15 minutes, we stood together on the porch discussing the merits of my request. Through tears, as the sun began to fade, Dr. Daniels graciously rendered his verdict—he

would be an investment that would benefit me in the long-term. Dr. Daniels taught much in that lesson: be truthful, show up, and work hard. He also demonstrated to me, in a very personal way, the value of investing in students, especially when it is not easy.

That was many years ago, but the lesson remains, and the story endures through the passing years. That story had such a strong impact on me as a young man and has informed me as a teacher, coach, mentor, and educational administrator.

Likewise, faculty at The Bear Creek School invest much of who they are and what they know into our students. This investing is a labor of love that



often yields short-term struggle for long-term gain. The investment each teacher makes requires much work, much preparation, much emotional energy, and occasionally, some hard lessons—lessons which reach far beyond the textbooks to speak powerfully into the lives of our students.

In this issue of *Modus Vivendi*, you will see a common theme, the theme of investment. You will read stories of teachers engaged in professional development, stories of faculty constructing curriculum, and stories of leadership preparation. All of these efforts aim at one thing—investing in students.

At The Bear Creek School, we believe that investing in students requires investing in the faculty and staff who teach and mentor them each day. To that end, Bear Creek provides significant funding for professional development and encourages faculty and staff to seek out training, conferences, and reading materials that support their efforts at school, but to also help them grow both personally and professionally. Adults who are lifelong learners model that mindset for students. The empathy gained from struggling to master a new concept or complete a project translates easily to genuine concern for students facing similar challenges. We encourage our teachers to bring to the classroom tested, practical applications of the latest research in child development and brain science and see this as a critical mission to teaching students how to engage an ever-more complex world.

With Bear Creek's financial support, many of our teachers achieve advanced degrees, deepening their knowledge of a subject or their skill in teaching. Through both internal and external trainings and workshops, Bear Creek faculty and staff learn better practices for connecting with students, innovative techniques for shaping the curriculum, and creative methods for advancing the school's mission.

Investment in professional development of our teachers and staff directly impacts the quality of education our students receive at The Bear Creek

School. We are committed to investing in our faculty to make continuing education accessible. The dividends, we believe, will pay off in both the short-term and long-term for the benefit of each student in their studies, relationships, and as they leave from here, prepared to engage their communities and the world with wisdom, compassion, and courage.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the 2017-2018 school year, The Bear Creek School invested \$236,000 in professional development. So far this year, five teachers are working towards advanced degrees, and fourteen faculty members have participated in the following classes, workshops, and conferences:

- Armchair Education: The Book Whisperer
- Computer Science Education Week Kick-off Workshop
- Conference on Faith and History
- Follett Institute – Building Success In and Beyond the Library
- Independent School Management Middle School Division Head Conference
- American Orff-Shulwerk Association Professional Development Conference (music education)
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- The Coaching Institute on the Teaching of Writing, Grades K-8
- Writing Institute at Teachers College, Columbia University

# Green & Gold Night

*Every year on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving,* Bear Creek kicks off basketball season with our annual Green & Gold Night. The whole school is invited to come out and support our basketball teams. Pep band and cheer squad perform, and the basketball teams scrimmage one another. Our mascot Titus always makes a spectacular entrance. These photos offer a glimpse of the 2018 celebration of this Bear Creek tradition. Go Grizzlies!











# FACULTY PROFILE:

## LINDA GRAHAM

STORY AND PHOTOS  
BY JANEEN SORENSEN





“

**BEING ABLE TO WORK IN  
A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL  
AND FREELY SHARE MY  
FAITH OR OUTLOOK ON  
THE BEAUTY AND ORDER I  
SEE IN CREATION—THAT’S  
A HUGE BLESSING.”**

**“RUNNING WATER** meant me running across the parking lot with a bucket of water to do science stuff.” Linda Graham laughs as she recounts her first year teaching at Bear Creek nearly

twenty years ago when permitting issues stalled construction on the Redmond Campus Main Building and classes took place in portables at First Baptist Church in Redmond. Linda embraced the challenge of creatively engaging and teaching high school students even in non-traditional conditions.

Linda was at the end of a ten-year break in teaching that had started with the birth of her son, Mackenzie (Mac) '07. “Nobody tells you that you’re going to fall in love with your baby like I did.” During those ten years, she worked through all the cycles of Bible Study Fellowship and ended up as a children’s leader with another mom whose children were at Bear Creek. Linda had previously taught for five years in public school in Spokane, and her kids were now old enough that she had started to apply for a teaching job at the local public schools.

“Out of the blue, I get a call from Nancy Price,” who was then the Head of School at Bear Creek. Nancy wanted to interview her for an open science position. “It was such a God thing.” Linda reminisces, “I would see that Bear Creek bus go by in my neighborhood from time to time, and I’d think, ‘That’d be cool one

day to teach in a private school.” She explains, “My life verse is Psalm 37:4—‘delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.’ God put that desire in my heart, and then it was fruitful; I was ready to say yes.”

At first she was skeptical about whether Bear Creek was all it claimed to be academically. But she quickly realized what a great education the students were receiving. The following year her son, Mac, started grade 6 at Bear Creek, and immediately discovered that the school was what he’d been waiting for all his life. Her daughter, Elizabeth '09, also started sixth grade a couple of years later, but was initially harder to convince to make the change. Linda recalls that her daughter came home from her tour so impressed. “Mom, they were reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*! That’s my favorite book! The teacher broke the class up into four small groups, and the kids actually discussed the questions!”

Linda continues to be not only impressed by the academic rigor of Bear Creek but also strongly influential in designing the science curriculum. She has taught a number of courses in the math and science departments including AP Physics

throughout her career at Bear Creek. A few years ago, she and Carol Wang, a former Middle School teacher, developed a full-year Engineering elective for Upper School students. Linda continues to expand the curriculum and to integrate project-based learning into eighth grade Earth Science and Engineering Design and ninth grade Conceptual Physics courses.

Linda is excited for students to understand that approaching problems and designing solutions like an engineer doesn't have stop at traditional engineering scenarios. "Once you start thinking like an engineer, it's hard to not think like an engineer in some of your problem solving because you have these tools." Students learn how to analyze the data they have gathered to come to a decision. "These kids are good writers when they leave [Bear Creek] because they have great humanities teachers. They understand philosophy and logic, so they can think critically." Understanding how to think like an engineer is "just another tool towards that critical thinking with good analytical skills."

Whether consciously or unconsciously, Linda has skillfully tested and analyzed the data throughout her own life. Linda had a pretty strong suspicion as early as seventh grade that she wanted to be a teacher. In high school, she had an awesome chemistry teacher who "dazzled us with cool demonstrations and the way nature works and just understanding the chemistry." He saw her passion for science and suggested that she "think about the other things you could do with chemistry or science in general." Encouraged to explore medicine, she volunteered at a hospital as a candy striper, but discovered it wasn't a good fit. She then took a job as a pharmacy tech, and that wasn't satisfying either.

While continuing to be open to direction, Linda decided to attend Whitworth University as the first person in her family to go to college, and with the vision of studying chemistry to become a high school chemistry teacher. At Whitworth, she had some physics professors that she loved, "so I just kept taking classes from them and in my junior year



Mrs. Graham explains a concept to her AP Physics students.

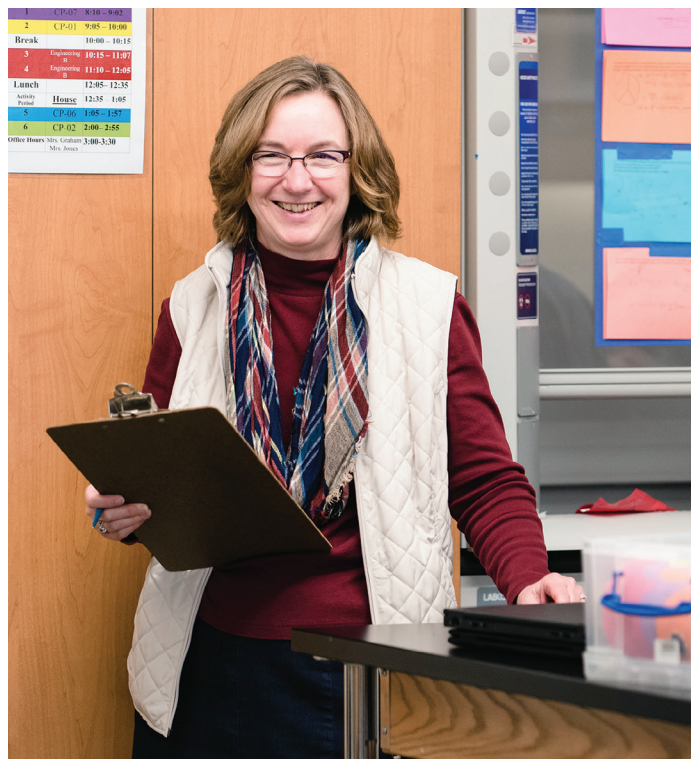


my advisor said, ‘you know, you only need this one more class in physics, and you’d have a major.’” So in addition to her Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Physics with a minor in math. That same advisor suggested that she continue her education and teach at the college level.

Linda ended up in a Ph.D. program at the University of Washington, but while in the program she married Paul, whom she’d met in her last year at Whitworth. He was working as a geologist in Spokane, so their plan was to live apart while she completed her degree in Seattle. Linda discovered that she wasn’t attracted to the research aspect of the Ph.D. program like her nearly all male colleagues. But she continued to be passionate about the teaching component of the program and was very popular as a teaching assistant, often finding herself helping students not in her group. “I was faithful to the teaching. I wanted to help those kids do better in the class.” She left the program after completing her Master of Science in Chemistry. “But when I look back and think about it,” she reflects, “God really allowed me to have the experience of teaching college kids because that’s what AP Physics is—it’s a college-level course. And so I got it all; I really did.”

Linda feels deeply blessed by the opportunities she has had at Bear Creek. “I’m proud of the work I’ve done at Bear Creek. I feel like I’ve been a faithful servant. I feel proud that we’ve built a really strong science program.” She counts herself fortunate to have people within the science department like Donna Dunn and Sherrie Brown who both have sons the same age as her son. “We’ve held hands through a lot of things together.” But more than that, “being able to work in a Christian school and freely share my faith or outlook on the beauty and order I see in creation—that’s a huge blessing. I would try to talk about those things as much as I dared in public school, but you have to be careful. I can teach the way I was taught at Whitworth, and that is huge.”

Linda Graham is the Math Department Chair, teaches AP Physics 1 and Engineering, and is an Innovation Coach in the Upper School.



This year, Linda developed a unique civil engineering project for the Upper School Engineering class: designing and creating Emergency Preparedness Kits. The kits have a real-life application and will be sold at The Bear Creek School’s auction in March.

Using a design process, students were challenged to collaboratively think through what different types of households (elderly, a family of four, homeless, etc.) might need in an emergency, and then they worked as teams to prototype, test, analyze, create, and refine the kits.

A project such as this teaches important skills, including how to create a weighted decision matrix to compare options, challenging students to determine which factors are most important, and consider how to incorporate non-empirical information into the process. By learning not just *how* to design and create a result, but in thinking through the *why*, students gain a broader prospective that will help them become wise leaders in whatever field they pursue.



# FAITH LIFE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

PHOTOS BY SINI FERNANDEZ



*Nathan Pettit teaches Christian Studies and is Dean of Student Life in the Middle School and orchestrates Middle School Chapel. Modus Vivendi recently spoke with Nathan about the Middle School Chapel experience. During our conversation, it became clear how students' faith, academic, and social/emotional lives are supported both in the classroom and during Chapel on Tuesday mornings.*

## **MV: HOW DO YOU APPROACH MIDDLE SCHOOL CHAPEL WITH INTENTIONALITY?**

NP: We prayerfully and collaboratively design a Middle School Chapel curriculum aimed to capture the students' imaginations with the beauty of Christ and his Kingdom. We also provide ebbs and flows in conjunction with what we find healthy for students, for example, we incorporate local pastors and people who are passionate about Middle School students in our speaking rotation; we highlight and celebrate important dates on the church calendar: Reformation Day, Advent, Lent, and Easter, for instance.

## **MV: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THEMES ADDRESSED IN MIDDLE SCHOOL CHAPEL?**

NP: Our curriculum largely follows a two-year rotation, relating the biblical story but then how students are a part of that story. Through Chapel, we hope to help the students find themselves in the biblical story of God's rescuing, restoring love in Christ. Middle School students want to know the reasons behind the admonishments they are given; they hear so often that we hope they become people of wisdom, compassion, and courage. Chapel helps them answer the question: Why should you become a person of wisdom, compassion, and courage?





Because as humans, we are commissioned to bear God's image in and for this world. We will bear His image and steward His world well as we become people of wisdom, compassion, and courage.

One theologian/philosopher I often read has said, "You can't first answer the question, 'Who am I?' until you've first answered the question, 'Of which story am I part?'" As God's story shapes our own, a rich soil is laid in which wisdom, compassion, and courage may grow and thrive. We're more moved by stories than we are convinced by arguments.

**MV: HOW DOES CHAPEL REINFORCE WHAT IS TAUGHT IN THE CLASSROOM?**

NP: In their Christian studies classes, students walk through the entire story of Scripture. Chapel then provides a platform to zoom in on key parts of the story that the students are already familiar with and

explore it from different angles and emphases.

**MV: WHAT SORT OF OPPORTUNITIES DO STUDENTS HAVE TO SHARE THEIR TALENTS AT CHAPEL?**

NP: We have a Chapel band, which practices each Friday as part of our Servant Leadership Clubs. Students with musical ability and a desire to serve participate by leading our student body in worship each week we have Chapel.

Another aspect of this bleeds into our Advisory program, which is connected with Chapel. Advisory is a place where students are regularly applying what we've learned in Chapel through discussion, activities, and service projects—each student is asked to bring his or her skills and passions into that realm as we continue to work out what we've heard and experienced in Chapel.

**MV: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WAYS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED TO SERVE IN THE SCHOOL AND BROADER COMMUNITY?**

NP: Service occurs as a regular theme in a couple different ways. As we explore the part we play in God's story, we find that we were made to steward and serve this world well. One way we recently unpacked that was by designing, packaging, and delivering Fall Treat Bags to the Hopelink Redmond location.

Additionally, service as it pertains to student life at Bear Creek is a weekly emphasis and it primarily plays out when our Servant Leadership Clubs meet each week. Students choose areas to serve in the school or broader community. Some options include visiting a retirement home, cleaning up trash at local parks, and assisting downstairs in the Lower School.

**MV: HOW DO YOU SEE STUDENTS' FAITH LIFE INTERSECT WITH REAL SCENARIOS THEY ENCOUNTER IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS?**

NP: Such a huge part of the Middle School years is the question of identity. Students regularly question how they fit in, how their interests and gifts match up with others, and so forth. We hope one of the ways their faith grows in their Middle School years at Bear Creek is by rooting their identity in Christ.

This fundamental area shapes the way students relate to one another, seeking to treat one another with dignity and respect. We hope it fuels a great work ethic academically, without making everything about their grades.

**MV: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SHIFTS YOU ARE SEEING AS TO THE CULTURAL CLIMATE FOR STUDENTS IN THIS AGE GROUP?**

NP: I see students trust and seek out their teachers more than ever. I sincerely believe that our students feel known and cared for in our hallways—they understand that their teachers care about their

academic endeavors, yes, but also so much more about their holistic formation, who they are becoming. When students trust and respect their teachers, the classroom becomes a vibrant learning environment as well as a place of social, spiritual, and emotional growth.

The way students socialize and relate is changing more and more with the rise of technology and the use of social media. Students collaborate for school via text and FaceTime. They organize study sessions on online forums. They Instagram, Tweet, Twitch, and Snap each day. With so many distractions and stimuli, we covet our hallways and classrooms as a phone-free place and provide numerous ways for students to participate in face-to-face interaction, discussion, and activity. We find that immensely valuable for their health and development.

**MV: HOW DO YOU TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE SOCIALIZATION AND BRAIN DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?**

NP: As students step into their Middle School years, in conjunction with the classical model, we certainly see a readiness to question, discuss, and dispute with their elders. Through their Lower School and Early Middle School years at Bear Creek these students have worked hard to memorize, recite, and regurgitate poems, songs, stories, and Scripture, and now they are eager to apply it. As a result, our Chapel speakers regularly seek to interact with the students as they present—I hope this models our faith well, that we are not merely passive spectators, but active participants in worship, prayer, and teaching.

This same approach is utilized in our Middle School classrooms—our teachers regularly employ Socratic discussion, interactive lectures, and project presentations as a means of drawing out the dialectic nature of our students at this stage of learning.

**MV: HOW DO STUDENTS SEE WISDOM, COMPASSION, AND COURAGE MODELED FOR THEM, AND HOW DO YOU SEE THAT LIVED OUT THROUGH OUR STUDENTS?**



NP: Chiefly, I hope that through Chapel, Advisory, and their classes, students see Jesus upheld as the ultimate model of wisdom, compassion, and courage; I hope their imaginations are captured with a vision of God's love in Christ for them and that this reality would permeate all else.

I also pray that our students see wisdom, compassion, and courage modeled for them by their teachers and many of their peers. As teachers, we work hard to prepare students by considering scenarios, events, and activities in advance, pre-teaching how we should engage certain situations. So much of teaching also involves coaching—encouraging students who demonstrate moments of wisdom, compassion, and courage, while also redirecting and reimagining situations that could have been handled differently. It's all day, every day—becoming a person of wisdom, compassion, and courage isn't limited to one class or student life

program—we are becoming the person we will be each day in class, in the hallway, in the lunch room, and so on.

**MV: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE THINGS YOU HOPE STUDENTS TAKE AWAY FROM CHAPEL?**

NP: I hope the students leave with an imagination enlivened with a vision of the restorative love of Christ so that their affections and actions move them to participate in the life of God's Kingdom.

In particular, I hope that in grateful recognition of Christ's work for them, our students would be quick to act with compassion in their communities. That kind of affection and action are not things that happen overnight, but are formed by the often slow and daily process of practicing their way to becoming compassionate people that seek to cultivate truth, goodness, and beauty in this world.



Drew Armstrong, Upper School humanities teacher, speaks as a special guest at Middle School Chapel.



**MV: WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT CHAPEL AND IN GENERAL, CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW INTEGRATION?**

NP: I've highlighted the role of the imagination throughout—doing so may sound elementary, but I find it absolutely crucial to people of all ages. It is not enough to merely equip our intellects to think rightly about the world; we need to recruit our imaginations. This idea is well reflected in a saying attributed to Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the author of *The Little Prince*: "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea."

Our teachers are the heart and soul of all our student life programs, including Chapel. Each week our teachers stand alongside our students in

worship, sit with them as we hear teaching, and are quick to jump in to any activity. In Advisory and Servant Leadership Clubs, they make every effort to ensure our students are cared for, supported, and encouraged spiritually, emotionally, and academically.

With regard to Christian worldview, I hope that after their Middle School years our students move beyond merely reflecting a certain perspective to find that they are being formed and shaped more and more to become the individual God intends. Each one comes to us in a different place in his or her faith and each brings unique gifts to offer others. The centrality and primacy of our formation is rooted, not in what we know, but in what we love; both in Chapel and in our classes, I hope we approach Christian education as a project of formation, rather than focusing on the dissemination of information.



Middle School Christian studies teacher Kyle Dresback and the Middle School worship band lead Chapel in praise.



# *Faith in Class: Learning Through a Christian Lens*

By Lili Kim '20

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Faith and education are usually thought of as two separate entities. But at Bear Creek, a great effort is made to bring them together so students can experience faith alongside learning in a small classroom environment. Faith in the classroom is evident starting all the way from preschool as young students learn songs about how God created the world and read colorful Bible stories to learning about ancient, medieval, and modern Christian thought in Upper School. As students grow and develop in their knowledge of God and their own personal journeys with Him, they become more aware of the diverse world around them and are able to view it through a faith-based perspective.

I had a conversation with Mariana Combariza, sophomore and ASB BASIC (Brothers and Sisters in Christ) Committee Head, about her experience of faith in class, and she was bubbling with love and passion on the subject. She mentioned that faith is not just something that has to be particular, but can be broader in the way students interact with classmates. “Even if they are not directly talking about God’s word and love, they are definitely showing it,” she exclaimed with a grin. That’s the incredible thing about faith—the term doesn’t always have to be in regards to faith in God specifically, but can also mean faith in others. Teachers are a great example of this, as they put great care into praying for students and always place their well-being before the subject matter. Mariana told me, “Teachers ask if there are any prayer requests at the start of class, which really shows they are concerned for the students. It’s Jesus before class and academics.”

Many times, it is easy to associate faith in class with only the Christian studies classes here at Bear Creek.

Although those classes are extremely insightful and vital to the curriculum, classes such as science and math incorporate faith as well, just in different ways. Speaking with Mrs. Crystal Jones, who teaches Upper School Conceptual Physics and Biomedicine, she told me without hesitation that, “Faith in the classroom is just *who we are*. It’s why we do everything that we do.” Faith is the backbone, the foundation, and the purpose behind everything students are taught. Just like the building blocks of an atom, or reliable scientific theories, we can rely on God to be reliable, and use this faith as a base upon which to build our other ideas and values.

Mrs. Jones also mentioned how faith brought her to Bear Creek, “I had to have faith in the path God has paved for me. It made me grow.” No one can truly plan out their path before them, thus faith in God that He will provide and lead you in the right direction is a necessary part of a complete relationship with Him. And this all has roots in what kind of education one receives. Her road to Bear Creek, as well as her thoughtful students challenge Mrs. Jones to keep in touch with God and her faith, in and out of the classroom.

As a student who has attended Bear Creek for nearly twelve years, I can’t imagine what class would be like without the integration of faith that I’ve shared with my peers. It was in my classes that I truly came to know who God is and how he is specifically working in my life. I was inspired by my teachers to dedicate my life to God many years ago. The teachers at Bear Creek, preschool – grade 12, value each student’s walk with God, and I am very grateful and indebted to them for walking with me and showing me what faith is all about in class.

# SAN DIEGO VISUAL ARTS TRIP: ENHANCING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

*By Sini Fernandez*

*Photos by Trinity Osborn, Fine Arts Department Chair*

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Sometimes big ideas take a few years to come to fruition but are worth the wait, especially when they greatly enhance the learning experience for our Bear Creek students. Back in March 2014, Upper School art teacher Trinity Osborn attended the National Art Education Association's National Conference in San Diego. While at the conference, she participated in a session with illustrator Terryl Whitlatch and was so impressed, she also signed up for an offsite workshop with the artist at the San Diego Zoo. She is a world-renowned creature designer who studied both paleontology and art and has designed creatures for Lucasfilm (including Jar Jar Binks from *Star Wars*), Pixar, Disney, and more. During the workshop, Trinity

was encouraged by the artist's comments regarding inspiration and how creativity stemmed from sound knowledge of one's topic and in-person observation. "Whitlatch's viewpoint on the art process, which is rooted in research and examination of life, really resonated with me and is ultimately what I desired for my students to realize as artists. It is about challenging oneself to fully understand one's subject matter in order to then be innovative in design and concept. It is about being present and continuing to make and immerse oneself in observation in order to understand something."

While taking the workshop, Trinity kept thinking how amazing it would be if her Bear Creek students could

participate in the same workshop experience, so she gathered the courage to ask Whitlatch if she would consider working with high school students. Whitlatch, who is on staff as a resident artist at Imagination International, Inc. and generally works only with educators and other professional artists, was open to the idea. Due to her schedule, including being on tour in Europe, it was two and a half years before the first group of Bear Creek students flew to San Diego to work with her in October 2016.

Trinity explained that Whitlatch gathers her inspiration from







studying animals at the San Diego Zoo, which has some of the most exotic and varied species in the U.S. Whitlatch frequents the zoo, sketching the animals onsite and in motion, while continually challenging herself to learn and understand more about God's creation. Trinity says, "As artists, we can be fixated and fret over trying to come up with the newest and most original idea to illustrate. What attracted me most about meeting Whitlatch and hearing her story, was her concept of how an artist is original and gains inspiration." The artist teaches that the key to

coming up with new ideas and creative creatures is not a mystery or an *aha* moment, but one that coincides with understanding your subject matter fully. It is when she fully understands an animal's genealogy, anatomical structures, and how that relates to its habitat, ecosystem, and even how it moves—she can then create a believable fictional creature.

This San Diego trip was an opportunity like none other for our art students to meet, converse with, then sketch, photograph, and learn from a creative innovator in a one-

on-one setting. Not only that, but the beautiful backdrop of Balboa Park and its thriving art and photography scene provide an environment of discovery and hands-on learning for our photography and drawing students. To date, Bear Creek is the only high school group with which Whitlatch works.

One of Trinity's goals for the trip was to intentionally open an avenue in which the students could experience an on-location, learning opportunity to grow in their artistry and learn hands-on with a career expert. She anticipated the students would



not only practice and grow in skill, but more importantly understand the process of creativity in a real-world setting and address the question, “How do we, as artists, gain inspiration and activate our innovative and imaginative thinking?”

During the most recent trip to San Diego in October 2018, the students began by meeting with Whitlatch for a creative session at the hotel. She shared her story as an artist, taught them about drawing with Copic markers,



Sophomore Kate M. sketching at the San Diego Zoo.

and explained how she found her inspiration and creativity in researching and studying what is true. She designs her imaginary creatures from the inside out, starting with the skeletal and musculature systems before imagining their exterior appearance. In so doing, she creates make-believe creatures that move in believable ways. Although Whitlatch has a 25-year career in the entertainment industry and even longer as an artist with a depth of life experience from which to draw inspiration for her art, she encouraged Bear Creek's students to believe in their own stories. Whatever they have experienced thus far in life are *their* stories, and those experiences can provide fodder for inspiring art. After their studio session with the artist, the students headed for the San Diego Zoo where

they photographed and sketched the animals with Whitlatch's guidance.

The following day, the students returned to beautiful Balboa Park, which Trinity describes as “eye candy for artists,” to practice observation skills and the art of slowing: to sit, be still, watch, smell, and listen. The students practiced *plein air* painting, sketching, and photographing the courtyards, architecture, and bustle of park life. The aim for this visit was to immerse the students in an environment in which they could practice their mark-making and observational skills—a huge part of the artistic process that Trinity feels is important for student growth. The students also visited the Timken Museum of Art, home of a collection of European old masters, 19th century American art, and Russian icons; as well as the Museum of Photographic Arts, one of only three museums in the nation dedicated solely to the lens-based medium. Finally, they wrapped up their visit to the park at the Spanish Village Art Center where they interacted with artists at work and got a sneak peek into pieces currently being created by San Diego-based artists.

As Trinity was preparing her art students for this trip, she required quiet journaling as well as group sharing. She asked each one to write down, and then share with the group, their



Giraffes at the San Diego Zoo, sketch by senior Alicia S.



goals for the trip. All students who participate in these trips receive an art journal which they use throughout the trip. Cat Kok '17 traveled with the school in October 2016 and reflected, "Seeing Terryl Whitlatch and her detailed concept art, especially from familiar movies such as *Star Wars*, was extremely inspiring, and my mindset shifted from 'what am I supposed to be drawing' to 'draw what your own eyes see.' Generously given new Copic markers and watercolor utensils to work with, I felt myself pinpointing certain objects or designs rather than becoming overwhelmed by my surroundings. Now that we're back, I try to draw out those feelings I had when we were in San Diego, of feeling peace but excitement, tranquility but adventure about the endless possibilities of art that one could create."

Michelle Tan '19 journaled after the October 2018 trip, "From the lecturer, I learned to add depth to my art using my own life as inspiration, and give my art a story. Traveling around, I practiced patience in precise observation, taking note and being appreciative of all the intricate beauty in the smallest things."

Another goal of the trip was relational, that the seniors would grow as leaders and that cross-class relationships would grow between the student-artists.

On the last day, the artists set aside their sketchbooks and cameras and enjoyed the thrill of rollercoasters at Knott's Berry Farm. Trinity was delighted to see them opt to stay in groups reflecting the newly-forged bonds between upper and lower classmen. This sentiment was echoed in a student's final reflection on the trip, "I loved all the new friends I have made and all the wonderfully exotic animals and architecture we got to see up close. I will definitely cherish this trip for not only the art but also the experiences I made with other people."

Although the San Diego visual arts trip took a couple of years to develop, our students, teachers, and administrators are of a single mind that it is meeting its goals and the broader goals for student travel learning. Karen Blankenbeckler, Vice President

for Academic Affairs, asserts, "It is important for students to apply their learning in real world situations outside the classroom. Traveling together as a group not only builds lasting memories and relational bonds but enhances the learning experience as students apply their knowledge and engage the world around them."

Learn more about all the Upper School travel learning opportunities at: [www.tbcs.org/community/student-life/upper-school/trips](http://www.tbcs.org/community/student-life/upper-school/trips).



Senior Haley J. sketching in Balboa Park.



Spanish Art Center at Balboa Park, sketch by junior Audrey W.

# BRUNI & PICCOLOMINI'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

BY MARK SCHULDT

## *As the modern classical Christian*

movement gains interest and momentum in the United States a key question rises to the top for educators and administrators of classical Christian schools: how is the classical Christian school to be authentically classical in the context of modern American education? The historical masters of classical education unanimously claim the end of education to be the attainment and expression of virtue. On the other hand, historically, the American colonies, followed by the United States, have slowly transitioned away from virtue-driven education towards education for the sake of political and economic independence. This has created a gap between the classical value of virtue and the modern American value of economic and political pragmatism. In light of this, our final question should be reframed to ask, to what extent can a modern competitive education be either Christian or classical? Our answer is that by making virtue the end of education, a Christ-centered, worldview-driven education, which is the essence of the Christian school, is ideally suited to both, offer excellence by modern standards, and be authentically classical.

To prove this thesis, we will examine three emphases within a virtue-focused education: virtue as personal formation, virtue as service to society, and virtue as fulfillment of human potential. For each of our topics we will first examine the precedent set by several acknowledged masters of the 15th century humanist

educational movement. Second, we will establish the American alternative shown by influential thought leaders and policies from the earliest years of the American colonies through the present day. And, finally, we will prescribe what the modern Christian classical school should attempt to do.

To the humanist educator the end of education is always virtue, and we may roughly break down the descriptions of virtue into three broad categories. First, there is virtue in its own right as personal formation. Second, there is virtue as expressed through service to others or a higher cause than one's self. Third, there is transcendent virtue as the fulfillment of being human.

## *Virtue as Personal Formation*

(This argument is featured in the full version of the paper on our website.)

## *Virtue as Service to Society*

The humanist masters never considered education or virtue to be purely internal or intellectual. Virtue was always intended to be externally expressed, and it was believed that the result of the expression would be a double benefit to the individual and their city-state. In this regard, the humanists are not so different from the writers of *A Nation at Risk*, whose chief concern was that students contribute to the competitive advantage of the country. Vergerio is our best source as he puts in concise and eloquent



terms the more fragmentary thoughts of the other masters. Study unapplied is worthless, “For someone who dedicates himself completely to theory and the delights of literature perchance becomes dear to himself, but whenever a prince or a private citizen, he is surely of little use to his city.”<sup>1</sup> But a liberal curriculum serves excellently as the foundation for public service, “For to the truly noble mind, and to those who are obligated to involve themselves in public affairs and human communities, knowledge of history and the study of moral philosophy are the more suitable subjects. The rest of the arts are called liberal because they benefit free men, but philosophy is liberal because its study makes men free.”<sup>2</sup> In the context of the humanist masters, civil service informed by a classical education was reserved for the elite. However, we may draw similar conclusions for our own society if we extend civil service to encompass rule—not by an aristocratic elite—but by an educated electorate.

The reliance of a democratic republic on an educated electorate is a constant focus in American educational writing. Beginning with the Founding Fathers, there is a consistent call for some kind of public education that equips students to contribute economically and politically to the health of the nation. Benjamin Franklin, foreseeing independence from England and advocating for English Common Schools, said, “Thus instructed, Youth, will come out of this School fitted for learning any Business, Calling or profession... [and] properly improv’d, may qualify them to pass thro’ and execute the several Offices of civil life, with Advantage and Reputation to themselves and Country.”<sup>3</sup> In a small agrarian republic, the need for thoughtful citizens to participate in juries, vote for representatives, and serve in public office was sufficient to bring some level of public education, at least through grammar school, to most corners of the United States. However, as the nation grew to be massive in territory, population, and economic power, its challenges, especially socially, grew massive as well. By the close of the 19th century, amid the inequality of the Gilded Age and the identity crisis brought

on by mass immigration from Europe, educational thought had begun to see the potential service of the student to society as one of social transformer, reclamer, and rescuer. John Dewey, a progressive educational thinker, declares in article five of his *Pedagogical Creed*, “I believe that education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform. I believe that education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in the social consciousness; and that the adjustment of individual activity on the basis of this social consciousness is the only sure method of social reconstruction.”<sup>4</sup> In the past century, progressivism has disappeared from the political landscape, but its vision for education as the vehicle of crafting society has not. The language and emphasis has shifted to focus on creating equity of education in all income brackets, ethnic groups, and regions, but this is a small shift from the progressive goals of elevating the lower class and the multitude of immigrants entering American society around the turn of the previous century. On the day the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) was passed by the Obama administration in 2015, the President’s executive summary made clear that *economic empowerment* for all children is the primary social good and end of education. Obama identifies the chief challenge the ESSA must overcome, “We have some of the best schools and best universities in the world—but too often our students are not prepared to compete in the global economy.”<sup>5</sup> In neither the act itself nor the executive summary is the word *virtue* mentioned, but the necessity of creating economic potential in schools is a consistent strain, and we may interpret this to be *virtue* as service to society, since it is all framed in a spirit of global competition.

Given the economic pragmatism present in all moments of American educational thought, the Christian school must be left asking, “How are we to have a modern education with an emphasis on expressing virtue through social service?” The answer is that the Christian worldview promotes selfless service in a way that is much more forceful than more generic appeals to the good of economic equality or a fear of falling behind in global

competition. The truth of this was very apparent to Benjamin Rush, a great innovator and thinker of the early United States, who put it most eloquently,

A Christian, I say again, cannot fail of being a republican, for every precept of the Gospel inculcates those degrees of humility, self-denial, and brotherly kindness, which are directly opposed to the pride of monarchy and the pageantry of a court. A Christian cannot fail of being useful to the republic, for his religion teacheth him, that no man 'liveth to himself.' And lastly, a Christian cannot fail of being wholly inoffensive, for his religion teacheth him, in all things to do to others what he would wish, in like circumstances, they should do to him.<sup>6</sup>

We may say that the modern Christian school is in a position to make a splash by combining Christ-like servant-leadership with the classical value of patriotism and civil service as expressions of the virtue attained in education. Our modern education is tooled to position our students to be leaders, innovators, and competitive employees, and therefore economically powerful. We may applaud this as well and good, but train the direction of these young economic engines in the direction of bettering communities and causes larger than themselves.

### *Virtue as Fulfilment of Human Potential*

(This argument is featured in the full version of the paper on our website.)

### *To Conclude*

We have just resolved a critical question facing Christian educators as they adopt and adapt the classical model to modern America. We have set the classical standard with the treatises of the humanist masters, and compared them to significant thinkers and policies throughout the history of American education. Our resolution of these questions has been that by adopting the ends of classical education, Christian schools are better able to achieve the ends desired by secular American educational culture

than if we adhered only to the prescriptions of secular educational thought. We have proposed that basing education in Christian virtue can yield personal formation, social service, and human fulfillment in unison with high economic potential and civic ability. The Christian educator ought to embrace classical virtue-driven education with vigor and intentionality in order to focus the students' budding skills in a direction that will best serve the world. Conversely, the secular educator must do the more difficult work of creating consensus among their constituency around secular virtues for the same reason. Very happily, the Christian classical educator will enjoy the common ground found in Christian virtue that acts as the catalytic core for the students' curiosity, learning, and action. They need only preserve the classical tradition by continually adapting and applying it to the world and educational culture at hand.

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#### Endnotes

- 1 Pier Paolo Vergerio, "The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-born Youth," in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. & trans. Craig Kallendorf (Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2002), 59.
- 2 Ibid, 49.
- 3 Benjamin Franklin, "Idea of the English School," an Appendix to Rev. Richard Peters January 7th, 1751 sermon A Sermon on Education, 8. Retrieved on 9/20/18 from [http://sceti.library.upenn.edu/sceti/printedbooksNew/index.cfm?TextID=sermon\\_education&PagePosition=57](http://sceti.library.upenn.edu/sceti/printedbooksNew/index.cfm?TextID=sermon_education&PagePosition=57)
- 4 John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed," (New York, E.L. Kellogg & Co. 1897), 16. Retrieved on 9/20/18 from <https://ia902701.us.archive.org/31/items/mypedagogiccre00dewegoog/mypedagogiccre00dewegoog.pdf>
- 5 Executive Office of the President, "Every Student Succeeds Act: A Progress Report on Elementary and Secondary Education," (Washington, White House, 2015), 2. Retrieved on 9/20/18 from [https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/ESSA\\_Progress\\_Report.pdf](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/ESSA_Progress_Report.pdf)
- 6 Benjamin Rush, "Of The Mode of Education Proper in a Republic," in *Essays, literary, moral & philosophical by Benjamin Rush, M.D. and professor of the institutes of medicine and clinical practice in the University of Pennsylvania*, 1786. Retrieved on 9/20/18 from <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?cc=evans;c=evans;idno=N25938.0001.001;view=text;rgn=div2;node=N25938.0001.001%3A5.2>



# Faculty Professional Development: Always Learning

The Lower School writing program's overarching goal is to develop students who love to write, focusing instruction on growing students as writers, not just producing written works. This past summer, Kristen Gephart, Lower School Division Head, and three Lower School teachers (pictured right): Margaret Harrison, grade 3 teacher, Kristen Gephart, Lisa Hysom, grade 2 teacher, and Renee Matson, grade 1 teacher, attended the Writing Institute at Columbia University's Teachers College which focused on its Reading and Writing Project and resulting Units of Study writing curriculum.

At the conference, writing instruction experts and grade level teachers from across the nation and around the world joined together as a team, spending hours debriefing and imagining how to deliver the best instructional practices possible to their students. As part of the experience, educators were also immersed in some of their own writing.

Bear Creek's Lower School writing curriculum began using Writing Units of Study in the 2017-2018 school year. Following that first year of using the curriculum, teachers felt it would be beneficial to attend this conference that specifically demonstrated and reinforced how to teach using the workshop model.

Kristen shares that, "As we were sitting in the airport on the way home, we developed a learning progression for our faculty team as a way to fully implement the structures and concepts within each classroom context." The collaboration efforts didn't stop there. Kristen further related, "I think we all had neck aches from the hours of passionate discussion between our rows of seats on the airplane about how to best support our fellow Lower School teachers upon our return."

As all teachers returned from the summer break in August to prepare for the 2018-2019 school year, the conference attendees shared what they had learned



with their colleagues during multiple faculty meetings and again at the annual teachers' in-service in October. The additional training brought back to campus from this conference has been implemented, and most Lower School teachers would say that teaching writing is now one of the highlights of the school day. And their passion has been contagious, as many Lower School students have expressed that writing has become one of their favorite times of day as well.

Renee said that she uses the training every day when she teaches writing, "It was so helpful attending the conference and seeing others teaching and using the curriculum." This was the second year Renee attended this conference, and she "felt it was just as valuable, and I learned more strategies to directly take back to my classroom as well as to our Lower School teachers."

We are excited about the writing instruction that is happening in our Lower School. Kristen expressed that the goal is "to support students in the best possible ways, to help them love writing, and to transfer their learning into each piece they work on moving forward." Karen Blankenbeckler, Vice President for Academic Affairs sums up the value of regular professional development for teachers by saying, "We are grateful for teachers who continue to learn and grow in their profession. Learning is a lifelong endeavor. Excellent teachers invest in the learning process and keep finding more and more ways to meet the needs of students."

In November, Bear Creek held its annual parenting conference, Tools for Success. This year, the school was privileged to have Cynthia Tobias, a nationally known expert on learning styles, as our keynote speaker. The following article by Tobias is reprinted with permission.

# ENCOURAGING SIBLINGS TO GET ALONG

*By Cynthia Tobias*

Our twins, born just two minutes apart, have looked like “Pete and Repeat” their whole lives. And yet in every other way—from preferences to personalities—they are opposites. Two children, born at the same time to the same parents, and they couldn’t be more different.

Mike liked books about the solar system and numbers; Rob loved learning about community helpers and holidays. When playing with friends, Rob made sure no one’s feelings were hurt, whereas Mike was overly competitive.

When the boys were toddlers, I remember driving home from church one evening and hearing Robert’s sweet little voice say, “Mommy, I want to be just like Jesus!” Before I could even respond, Mike disagreed with him. “Not me,” he said firmly. “I want to be like God.”

As parents, we’re faced with the task of helping each of our one-of-a-kind children accept and appreciate the differences in their brothers and sisters. So how can you help your children value the unique qualities of their siblings?

## *1. Consider your example*

Model the behavior you expect from your children. Your kids are watching how you handle the stress of living with those who don’t think like you or do things the same way you do.

If you’re like me, you chose a spouse who’s pretty close to the opposite of you. On a day-to-day basis—no matter how much you love that person—the differences can quickly become more annoying than refreshing. This fact gives us an opportunity to model

appreciation for how our differences complement one another and make our relationship stronger. For sibling relationships, foster amicable behavior in your children to help create a more harmonious atmosphere in your home.

## *2. Focus on strengths*

Call attention to unique qualities in each child, especially when those qualities represent a contrast to the strengths of a sibling. Point out the positives in front of other family members whenever you can. You might say, “Sara, you always seem to know when someone needs to hear a joke.” or “Sam, it’s so great to see how much energy you have!”

Help your children recognize and appreciate the positive side to being different. For example, a highly organized child who prefers a predictable schedule could be a big help when you’re deciding what kind of chart or calendar would work best for keeping track of family activities. A creative child who loves spontaneity could help come up with ideas for last-minute family entertainment.

When the boys were younger, we had a family tradition they both loved. At least once a week at bedtime, I’d take turns lying down next to each of them before tucking them in. I’d ask each one the same question: “Do you know what I like about you?” Then I’d go back over the past few days and remind each boy of what I’d observed. “I like how you shared that toy with your brother and how you opened the door for your grandma and . . .” It was a great time to connect with both boys and share with them how much I loved them, and I was able to affirm their good behavior.



### *3. Help resolve conflict*

When your children disagree, start your mediation efforts on a positive note: "I know you love keeping toys organized at all times, but your brother enjoys being able to put his toys away after he uses them." By telling your child how her strengths are different from her brother's, you are helping her move toward a resolution.

Conflicts often begin when a child feels she's been treated unfairly. She may find it difficult to understand why your expectations may be different for her than for her brother or sister. Let her know that you expect the same outcome of every child, but she and her sibling may have a completely different way of doing what they need to do. Define the outcome you're looking for, and hold the kids accountable. For example: "You and your brother both need to put your toys away when you're finished, but the way you store them doesn't have to be the same."

When you hear one child cry, "That's not fair!" you can discuss with your child whether the end result is the same. Our son Mike, for example, needed to sit at a desk or table in a quiet place to do his homework. It drove him crazy that his brother, Rob, got away with lying on top of the coffee table in the living room listening to music while he did his. But both boys had to prove their way worked for them by handing in their completed homework assignments on time. Mike came to realize that his brother's homework routine didn't work for him.

### *4. Teach problem-solving skills*

Few things are more annoying than dealing with children who meticulously keep track of each other's behavior and report it to their parents. Although it seems to be a normal part of growing up, being known as a "tattletale" doesn't make a child popular with anyone. In fact, constant tattling can drive a wedge in the sibling relationship. Reinforce to your children the value of overlooking minor faults and mistakes, encouraging them only to report urgent incidents.

Make sure your children know the definition of urgent. Questions they may ask themselves to determine if they need a parent's involvement could include: Is someone hurt? Is this dangerous? Is a rule being broken that may lead to harm? This can create an awareness of what's tattling and what's not.

If you want to make your children aware of just how much they're tattling on each other, you might want to use tickets as a tangible cue. Each child gets a specific number of tickets. (You can buy the standard roll of tickets at an office supply store or make your own.) Each time a child tattles on his or her sibling, one of the tickets must be surrendered. At the end of the week, offer a reward or special privilege for anyone who turns in unused tickets. This incentive encourages the child to resolve conflict without Mom's and Dad's intervention and to know the difference between minor infractions and unsafe behavior.

In the end, we want our children to have more memories of happy times than of conflict and strife. Although it won't be possible to avoid all conflict, it's worth the effort to foster an appreciation for each other's differences as a foundation for the future.

Our boys are 20-years-old now, and they've learned to appreciate how their differences complement each other. During their visits home from college, I love seeing them plan what they're going to do together. Mike coordinates the logistics of the trip, and Rob plans their social engagements. They've learned to appreciate what makes each of them unique and it's made their friendship stronger.

Cynthia Tobias is a best-selling author and the founder and CEO of Apple St. (Applied Learning Styles). If you enjoyed this article, read more like it in *Thriving Family*, a marriage and parenting magazine published by Focus on the Family. Get *Thriving Family* delivered to your home by subscribing to it for a gift of any amount.

This article first appeared in the December 2011 issue of *Thriving Family* magazine and was titled "Brothers, Sisters ... Friends." Copyright © 2011 by Cynthia Tobias. Reprinted with permission.

# CELEBRATING

On October 18, 2018, Bear Creek welcomed more than 350 grandparents to our campuses. The various activities they enjoyed during the day offered a glimpse into the life of Bear Creek students and celebrated the special bonds between a grandchild and grandparent.



Bernard Giner and granddaughter Audrey share a reading lesson book.



Jackson M. showed grandparents Stan and Cathy Mickels one of his favorite books.



Joy P. and her grandparents, April and Jeff Barrett, enjoyed a spirited game of foosball during lunch.



Mason F. and his grandmother Wendy Rohner constructed a tower under the watchful eye of grandfather Paul Rohner.



Yong K. loved reading with her granddaughter Noelle Koo and friend Keila Lee.



Aaron M. and his grandparents, Chawley and Becky Moore, posed together at lunch in the Upper School.



# GRANDPARENTS



Milly S. shared some of her grade 4 writing work with her grandparents, Bob and Pam Smith.



Elizabeth A. and her grandmother Sally Atwood examined a slide under the microscope in the Middle School biology lab.



Evan, Tyler, and Mia, are all smiles after spending the day with grandfathers Hak Kang and Tony Matu.



Irv J., Issabella and Dominic Dedominico's grandfather, shared some of his wisdom with Upper School students at Chapel.



Lili K. and her grandmother, Danuta Ulatowski, follow along with the lesson in French III class.



Olivia B. and her grandparents John and Donna Tobias enjoyed an activity together in Middle School Chapel.



# *The Shields Family Is All In*

BY DEBBIE MARCHIONE



For the Shields—Kevin, Kristine, Juliette, grade 12, and Nathan, grade 9—Bear Creek is more than where the kids go to school. Since they first enrolled Juliette in kindergarten in 2006, it has truly been a family endeavor.

Kristine has been active as a Parent Rep, Mentor Mom, and classroom volunteer for many years; while Kevin, who has volunteered for various field trips and other activities as his work schedule allowed, took on a bigger volunteer role responsible for membership in the Grizzlies Boosters Club this year. Juliette blogs for the Upper School News Team and mentors younger girls on Bear Creek's volleyball team. Nathan continues to grow into leadership roles through athletics, and his empathy leads him to seek out and include other students in a variety of ways.

When asked why they have chosen to focus their time, talent, and finances on Bear Creek, Kevin answers, "Our family and the

community both benefit from our involvement. We're already here—why wouldn't we want the full benefit?" He reflects further that, "At Bear Creek, something happens beyond the academics. The community here creates an environment that is so supportive and caring, it extends to our entire family and improves how we function as a unit. The values of Bear Creek parents and students align with ours, and instead of playing defense against negative outside influences, we can spend our time as a family moving forward. The culture here encourages and gives back to our family. That's invaluable."

Both Kevin and Kristine credit the outstanding teachers and athletics coaches, as well as other parent volunteers, for helping to create such a healthy environment. Says Kristine, "There are so many leadership opportunities for the kids: in athletics, in House—it makes it easier as a parent for us to encourage our kids to plug in when there are lots of ways for them to do so."

Kevin adds, "The fact that so many parents step up to be involved in different ways is what makes the difference. It allows the school to create many more opportunities for students to learn and grow."

In 2011, the Shields moved to Finland for Kevin's job. While they loved the experience overall, Juliette and Nathan longed to

return to Bear Creek. After much consideration and prayer, they returned to the U.S. and Bear Creek in 2013.

Their time in Finland affected them deeply. Kristine comments, "Our kids understand in a very real way what it means to not belong in a new place and to have to struggle and persevere before becoming part of a community. Because of that, they have so much empathy. They have both worked hard since we returned to reach out to other students and help each one feel included. When we came back, I got involved in the school in as a Parent Rep and a Mentor Mom because I realize in a much deeper way how important it is to embrace people, especially those who are new or haven't quite connected in the community yet. I've become much bolder about reaching out to other parents."

"I really feel like we're doing mission work here," Kristine continues. "We are investing in future leaders. And we are part of a legacy, too. We are inspired by the example of those parents who came before us and laid the groundwork for the school our kids now enjoy, and we want to contribute in our own ways to that legacy."

Kevin sums up their philosophy, "It's hard not to give back to Bear Creek. We want to do so, because we get so much value out of it as a family; it feels right to invest in the school. Giving of our time, talent, and treasure is our way to say thank you."



# AUCTION FUND-A-NEED ENRICHES THE SCIENCE PROGRAM

At the 2018 auction, guests generously donated nearly \$100,000 to the Fund-A-Need project to purchase new science equipment for the school. Students from preschool through grade 12 benefitted from this outpouring of support which enriched the science curriculum. Middle School science teacher Sherrie Brown voiced her gratitude this way, "I don't know how to express my thanks for the Fund-A-Need for science. We used our new microscopes today, and it added greatly to our students' ability to discover the amazing world which God has entrusted to us." We are indeed grateful for our auction-goers' generous investment in the science program at Bear Creek.

## HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF THE ITEMS PURCHASED.

- Wheelbarrows, a microscope, and a greenhouse for the Preschool DIG program.
- Thermometers, a rain gauge, compasses, anemometers, a sundial, and other equipment for the Kindergarten Outdoor Science Program's garden.
- Hexbug Nano mini-robots, a STEM Challenge kit, SAM Labs curriculum, Think Fun Robot Turtles, and other materials for the K-6 lab science and computer programming curricula.
- Imagination Playground Blue Blocks that encourage innovation, design thinking, and creative exploration for early learners.
- Kits with models of atoms for Early Middle School science.
- Microscopes with digital tablet displays for Middle School students and a new skeleton for their science lab.
- Wireless sensors, analytical balances, and Leica microscopes for Upper School science labs.
- Sophisticated anatomical models and a wireless sensor for respiration and EKG testing for the Upper School Biomedicine class.
- 3-D printers for the Middle School and Upper School Innovation Labs.
- Drones for Upper School Engineering, Middle School Life Science, and Middle School Earth Science and Engineering Design classes.



## A GIFT FOR THE AGES

Students leave Bear Creek ready to impact the world as leaders with wisdom, compassion, and courage. Planned gifts such as bequests or trusts are a meaningful way to leave a legacy while helping to educate future generations of Bear Creek students. If you have already made a provision for The Bear Creek School in your will or estate plan, please let us know so we may say thank you and recognize your generosity.

For more information contact Debbie Marchione, V.P. for Philanthropy and Community Engagement, at [dmarchione@tbcs.org](mailto:dmarchione@tbcs.org).

# ALUMNI NEWS AND CLASS NOTES

## Class of 2009

### Eli Sanger

In fall 2018, Eli began the first quarter in the Hybrid M.B.A. Program at the University of Washington Foster School of Business.

The Hybrid MBA Program is a new work-compatible, mostly online MBA option from the top-ranked, accredited University of Washington Foster School of Business. Taught by Foster's high-caliber MBA faculty, this two-year, interactive program is designed for working professionals who need flexibility not offered by traditional MBA programs.

## Class of 2013

### Makena Schoene

Makena is living in Rovaniemi, Finland and playing professional volleyball with WoVo Rovaniemi. Last year she played volleyball for a team in the Czech Republic and visited nine different countries. Makena is thankful to have another opportunity to pursue the sport she loves and continue traveling the world!



## Class of 2013

### Alyssa (Buchanan) Swartz

In May 2018, Alyssa graduated from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health along with a Master of Public Health. Following that, in June she was married in Houston, TX. She and her husband now live in downtown Houston where she will be attending Texas Woman's University to pursue a doctorate in physical therapy. They are thrilled to embrace what the future holds and appreciate the support and love from family and friends as they begin their journey in a Christ-centered marriage. Alyssa is ecstatic to begin physical therapy school and work with individuals through recovery treatment.

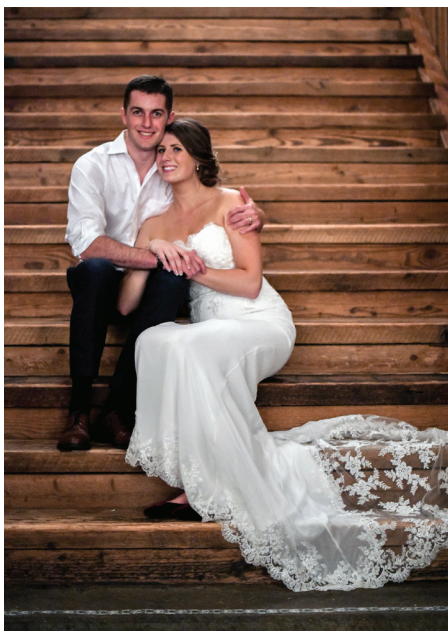




## Class of 2014

### Catherine (Fernandez) Feight

Catherine married **Collin Feight '14** on November 11, 2018 at Lord Hill Farms in Snohomish. She is working as a clinical research administrator for Seattle Allergy and Asthma Research Institute. Collin is developing embedded software for PACCAR in Kirkland. They both graduated from Montana State University last spring and now reside in Bellevue.



## Class of 2014

### Anthony Tzen

Anthony graduated from Rice University in May 2018 with a degree in computer science and math, as well as a minor in biochemistry. (Pictured with **Tim Van Baak '14**.) He is now working for Google in Seattle, and his family is very glad to have him nearby. Recently, he returned to Bear Creek to help with the Grizzlies Forensics Invitational.



## Class of 2015

### Lauren South

Lauren has signed on to work on-set as production assistant for award-winning writer/director Stephen Savage for his upcoming film *Ulysses Coyote*, starring Anne Archer (*Fatal Attraction* and *Patriot Games*) and Nia Peeples (*Pretty Little Liars*). The score is by Rodger Taylor, lead drummer of Queen. The film premieres in January 2020 with production beginning in spring of 2019. This will be her first professional IMDb credit.



Jesse traveled to France during Whitworth's Jan Term, 2018.

## CREATING THE CRYPTIC CUBE

*Jesse Domingo, Class of 2015*

When Jesse Domingo graduated from Bear Creek in 2015, he did not intend to become an entrepreneur. Indeed, he is now a senior pursuing a degree in bioinformatics at Whitworth University in Spokane, with a goal of someday working in the genomics field. But along the way, Jesse found himself as the founder of one of the hottest new entertainment activities—an escape room.

“My personality is such that I have to be doing something, and I was interested in starting a business. As a freshman in college, I went to an escape room with a friend, and thought, ‘I could do something like this.’”

After conducting extensive research and creating a business plan during his freshman year at

college, Jesse faced his first hurdle: funding. Between working, loans, and financial investment from his family, he was able to secure enough money to look for a location during the summer of his sophomore year. “It was a very frustrating experience. I didn’t know how commercial real estate works, and there were lots of issues about my age, credit rating, etc. I was finally able to rent a location at the end of August 2017 which gave me only one week to set up the business before I had to be back at school.”

Jesse’s good planning and family support paid off. He already had created all the puzzles and the props, so his family helped him set up The Cryptic Cube, and they agreed to operate it while he was at school.

The first escape room he created has a Pirate theme, inspired by the Whitworth University mascot. He has since added a second room with a Western theme. In an escape room, a group of people are locked in a space and must solve a series of puzzles in a set time period, in order to escape. Escape rooms are popular with corporate teams, groups of friends, and even families, as they build teamwork and cooperation, with everyone working together to effectively solve a series of problems.

Jesse loves creating and solving puzzles. When he gets an idea, he looks for an object around which he can build a puzzle or riddle. He is very careful about which objects he chooses for the rooms, as he wants them to have a purpose, not just be decorative, or worse yet, a red herring that distracts the guests from the real puzzles.

He notes that the process of creating an escape room is surprisingly not that different from writing



code for a computer program. You must determine the problem to solve, figure out what objects are required, and then decide how and in what order people will interact with those objects. Jesse and his family continually test the rooms' effectiveness by watching the groups, asking people how they approached the puzzles, where they got stuck, and noting when they needed a hint to move forward.

Jesse reflects that the most surprising part of creating the business has been what it has done for his family. "It has brought us closer together, as we continue supporting each other and the escape room. I couldn't have done it on my own." Starting and running a successful business has also given Jesse confidence in his skills and knowledge. Jesse credits Bear Creek for giving him the preparation for such an endeavor. "Bear Creek is hard, and I learned to work hard and persevere, which is what I had to do to create The Cryptic Cube."

The Domingo family is hopeful that the business will continue to grow, and Jesse is already thinking about possibly starting another company when he graduates. You can learn more about The Cryptic Cube in Bellevue at [www.thecrypticcube.com](http://www.thecrypticcube.com).



In August, Jesse's family, parents Marcia and Rudy, and brother Jordan '10 celebrated the completion of The Cryptic Cube's Western Room with Jesse.

## PARENTS OF ALUMNI: RENEWING CONNECTIONS

In September, more than 75 parents of alumni came together for a fun evening filled with great wine, tasty food, and good friends. If you missed it, see below for other ways to reconnect with your Bear Creek friends this year.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### BASKETBALL "TAILGATE"

**FEBRUARY 1**

**5:30 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.**

Join other Parents of Alumni at a casual reception to be held between the girls and boys basketball games against University Prep. Join Bear Creek students in wearing purple to show your support for Strong Against Cancer.

#### AUCTION

**MARCH 30**

**5:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.**

Gather a group of friends and come bid on some fabulous auction items. From sports tickets to mountain getaways to lavish dinners to beautiful quilts, there is something for everyone at the auction.

If you are interested in helping plan these activities or have ideas for other fun ways to connect, please contact Lori Lee, Alumni Relations Manager, at [lori.lee@tbcs.org](mailto:lori.lee@tbcs.org).

# TAKOYAKI AND MORE IN TOKYO

*Sam Rongve, Class of 2011*

The neon lights and cacophony of downtown Tokyo faded away as Sam Rongve walked down a stairway leading to a small door below street level. With just a modest sign, it is easy for passersby to miss Crash Bean, one of the best restaurants in that section of the city. Discovering these tiny restaurants, tucked away behind unassuming doors or stairs, was one of Sam's favorite activities during the year he spent living and teaching English in Japan. "It was so amazing to find these little restaurants—maybe just 10 or 15 seats total—serving such great food! I am a pretty adventurous eater, so I tried all sorts of new things and liked nearly all of it. I even enjoyed *takoyaki*, which are fried balls of chopped octopus and pickled ginger and are very popular in Japan."

In 2011, as a high school graduation gift, Sam went with his family and a close friend with Japanese heritage to Japan for ten days, a short trip that left him itching to go back. After completing a degree in history from Western Washington University and working at a sushi restaurant for a time, Sam decided to take the plunge and move to Japan for a year. He loved his experience—from the food, to the ease of getting around on public transportation, to the many new friends he made. He has fond memories as well of hiking in Hokkaido and spending time in reflection at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

One of the highlights of his time in Japan came in April when a group of his friends from Bear Creek's class of 2011 came to visit. Sam comments, "It took nearly six months of planning, but it was amazing how it all came together. I couldn't believe we got everyone's schedule to line up so they could all visit at the same time." The group spent ten days with Sam, sightseeing in Tokyo, eating in some of Sam's favorite little restaurants, and traveling around the country.



Classmates from 2011 visit Sam in Japan. Back row: Will Stansell, Sam Rongve, Andre Hagan, Jamie Clough, and Nick Hagan '14. Front row: Lucas Peterson, Tom Chittenden, and Nigel Saw.

They watched a Japanese baseball game; rode a bullet train; toured temples and a famous rock garden in Kyoto; enjoyed fabulous meals in Osaka, known as Japan's Kitchen; and visited the Ghibli Museum in Mitaka, a suburb of Tokyo.

"I have known this group of guys almost my entire life, and it was amazing to be able to share this experience together." Even as Sam relishes these long-time friendships, he noted with pleasure that his time in Japan affirmed his ability to create a life for himself in a completely different culture and make new friends along the way. Sam recalled a story of wearing a Seattle Mariners baseball hat in a casual restaurant in Tokyo and striking up a conversation with an older man who used to live in Kirkland, and who loved Hector's restaurant, one of Sam's regular hang-outs as well. "I am naturally pretty extraverted, and this experience showed me that I can connect with people anywhere."

Now back stateside, Sam is tending bar and trying to decide what comes next for him. He enjoys the opportunity to connect with customers but is also considering pursuing a career in radio, something he enjoyed as the morning host of KUGS-FM, the Western Washington University radio station. Wherever Sam goes next, it will likely involve great food, lively conversation, and fun times with friends old and new.



# REFLECTION FROM THE ALUMNI LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

BY HUGH FOSKETT '04

**AS I WRITE THIS**, it is less than a week until Thanksgiving, and the potential stressfulness of “the holiday season” is in full effect. Every day, it seems like there is a new item on my agenda that I need to deal with. Professionally and personally, my life feels full. Very full. But God never intended me to face life on my own. He wants me to engage in the relationships He has given me. It never ceases to amaze me how when life comes at me, all I need to do is reach out for help, and God provides it. For everything from physical needs to emotional support, God has put people in my life who can (and do) help me with my issues.

At times, I tell myself that I can handle whatever is going on in my life, without help. As my wife can attest though, this does not end well. Rather than handling the issues, I tend to get overwhelmed. Being overwhelmed usually turns into being stressed. Being stressed, well, that is when I stop being able to help people in my life. I am too focused on my own issues, when all I needed to do was speak up and say, “I cannot handle this on my own.”

Relationships are God’s cure for this problem. I live for relationship with others. I enjoy being involved with Bear Creek alumni because it gives me a chance to create new relationships by connecting with younger alumni or Upper School students, other men and women who are just a few years behind me in their lives. One of my favorite ways to volunteer at Bear Creek is on an alumni panel speaking with the senior class. I love being able to talk to the students openly and honestly as a Christian man who graduated from Bear Creek. Sharing my strength, experience, and hope is wonderful; I look forward to it every year.

The alumni panel is just one of several alumni events and volunteer opportunities every year during which I renew old bonds and build new ones. If you want to get involved with helping plan or volunteer for an alumni activity, please reach out to us! We would love to have your help and support. Contact Alumni Relations Manager Lori Lee at [lori.lee@tbcs.org](mailto:lori.lee@tbcs.org) or follow us on Facebook or Instagram to learn more and get involved.

## A NEW WAY TO STAY CONNECTED

We are excited to announce that the Alumni Relations Office is rolling out a new, private platform on our website designed just for alumni. This special section of the school’s website will allow you to opt in to a secure directory, so you can stay in touch with classmates; post or find jobs; stay ‘in the know’ about upcoming alumni and school events; and access the Bear Creek alumni network to ask questions about careers, housing in a new city, professional referrals, or whatever else is on your mind.

Go to [ALUMNI.TBCS.ORG](https://ALUMNI.TBCS.ORG) to set up your profile and get started today.



8905 208th Avenue NE  
Redmond, WA 98053

[www.tbcs.org](http://www.tbcs.org)

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| <br>FREE PARKING | M290<br>KENTUCKY AVENUE      | <br>CHANCE  | M290<br>INDIANA AVENUE | M240<br>ILLINOIS AVENUE | M200<br>B & O RAILROAD | M260<br>ATLANTIC AVENUE | M260<br>VENTNOR AVENUE | M150<br>WATER WORKS | M280<br>MARVIN GARDENS | <br>GOTO JAIL |
| M200<br>NEW YORK AVENUE   | M180<br>TENNESSEE AVENUE     | <div>The Westin Bellevue<br/>Saturday, March 30<br/>5:00 p.m.</div> <div><b>AUCTION</b></div> <div>Silent Auctions<br/>Gourmet Dinner<br/>Live Auction</div> |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M300<br>PACIFIC AVENUE   |
| M180<br>COMMUNITY CHEST   | M180<br>ST JAMES PLACE       |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M300<br>NORTH CAROLINA AVENUE  |
| M180<br>PENNYSYLVANIA RAILROAD  | M160<br>VIRGINIA AVENUE      |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M330<br>COMMUNITY CHEST  |
| M140<br>STATES AVENUE   | M150<br>ELECTRIC COMPANY     |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M330<br>PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE  |
| M140<br>ST CHARLES PLACE  | M140<br>BOARDWALK            |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M200<br>SHORT LINE   |
| M100<br>CHANCE  | M100<br>VERMONT AVENUE       |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M350<br>PARK PLACE   |
| M100<br>ORIENTAL AVENUE   | M100<br>READING RAILROAD     |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M100<br>LUXURY TAX   |
| M100<br>INCOME TAX  | M60<br>BALTIC AVENUE         |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M100<br>PAY M100   |
| M60<br>COMMUNITY CHEST  | M60<br>MEDITER-RANEAN AVENUE |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M400<br>GO   |
| M60<br>JUST VISITING  | M120<br>CONNECTICUT AVENUE   |  |                        |                         |                        |                         |                        |                     |                        | M400<br>COLLECT M200 SALARY AS YOU PASS  |