

bws

BRENTWOOD SCHOOL MAGAZINE

SPRING 2017





ON THE COVER

The Class of 2018 was treated to a surprise Drum Circle during their final Community Time assembly of the school year in May. As the students sauntered into the Gym and saw the chairs set up in concentric circles, and the percussion instruments arranged throughout the aisles, their eyes lit up and smiles emerged. It was the culmination of their Junior year—widely known to be the most challenging yet—and the collective sigh of relief in the room was drowned out by the beat of the drums, laughter, and a renewed sense of anticipation for the year ahead. Read more about the addition of Community Time to the Upper School schedule in this issue.

SPRING 2017

bws

FEATURES

20 **CREATING UPPER SCHOOL COMMUNITY TIME**

The Upper School introduces a new element to the weekly schedule to encourage the sharing of students' perspectives and experiences in safe conversation spaces.

26 **VOLUNTEER VOICES**

In their own words, Brentwood School volunteers share their stories about why volunteering is meaningful to them, valuable to their families, and important to our sense of community as a school.

DEPARTMENTS

2 WORDS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

3 OPENING SHOT

4 BWS DIGEST

30 THE ASSIGNMENT

32 ALUMNI

41 IN MEMORIAM

54 GOODBYES AND HELLOS

65 FACULTY / STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

66 GIVING

68 FINAL THOUGHTS

70 PARTING SHOT



That “Look”

Words From the Head of School

DR. MIKE RIERA

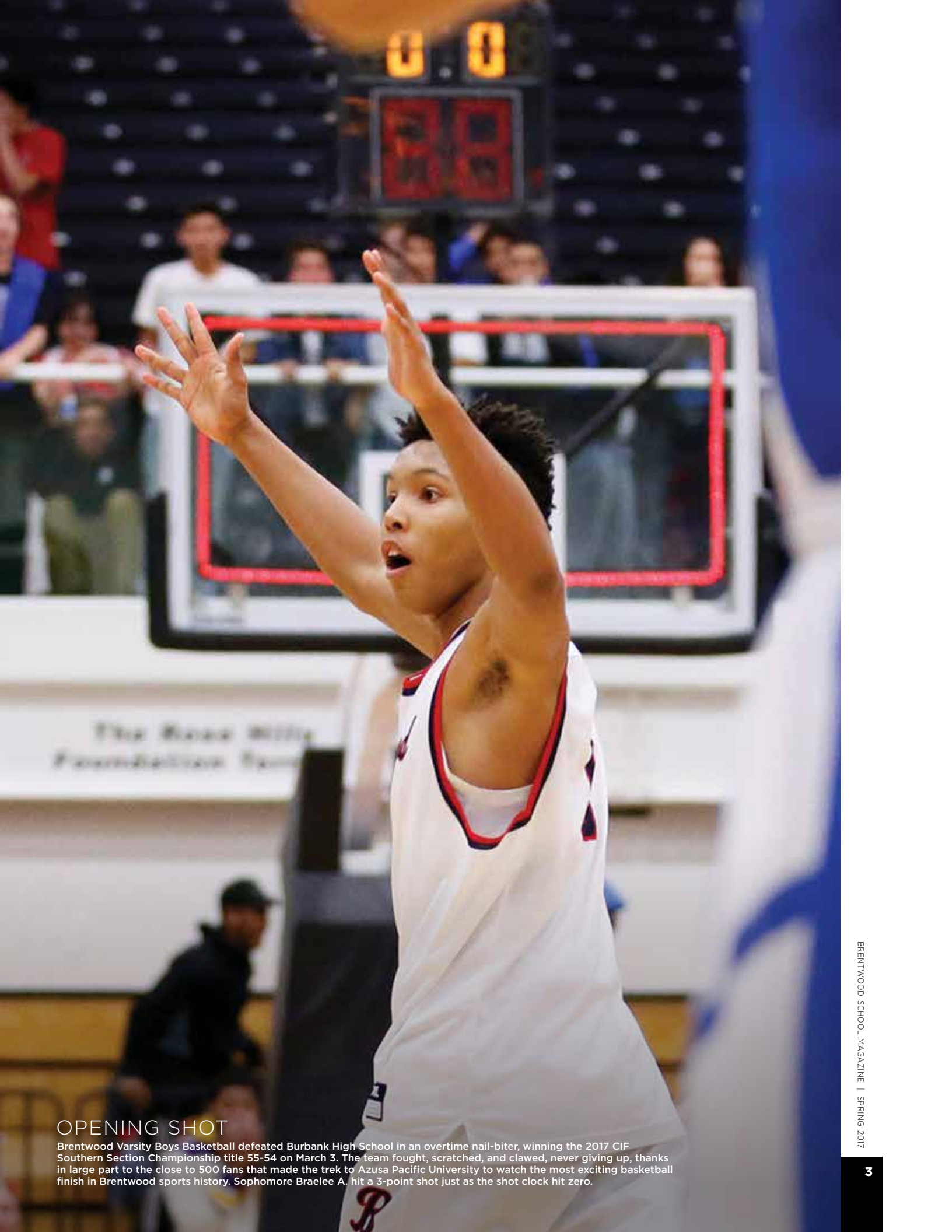
Take a look at Braelee’s face on the opposite page.

His look screams, “I can’t believe I did it!” And it’s that look, more than any other, that sums up another year at Brentwood. It’s the look I see daily as a student lights up with understanding of a problem with which they have struggled. It’s the look of a student listening and learning from a peer in a conversation about diverse perspectives. It’s the look of a singer just after she nailed her solo. And it’s the look of a teacher beaming with pride as a student surprises himself with an insight that just surfaced.

That look also captures how we feel as an institution looking forward to our continual improvement. Our big three institutional accomplishments for the year—long-term lease with the VA, approved Conditional Use Permit, and sufficient fundraising to break ground on our new Middle School—guarantee a Brentwood even better, for generations to come. So yes, that look that comes with making the game-winning, buzzer-beating shot at the last second is one that we all have felt one way or another this year. This issue of *BWS Magazine* captures some of those moments, but just know that every student and adult on campus has had that “I can’t believe I did it!” look more than a few times this year.

Enjoy!

“That look also captures how we feel as **an institution looking forward to our continual improvement.** Our big three institutional accomplishments for the year ... **guarantee a Brentwood, even better, for generations to come.**”



OPENING SHOT

Brentwood Varsity Boys Basketball defeated Burbank High School in an overtime nail-biter, winning the 2017 CIF Southern Section Championship title 55-54 on March 3. The team fought, scratched, and clawed, never giving up, thanks in large part to the close to 500 fans that made the trek to Azusa Pacific University to watch the most exciting basketball finish in Brentwood sports history. Sophomore Braelee A. hit a 3-point shot just as the shot clock hit zero.



Lessons in STEAM

STEAM Day is a day of doing—so says the event’s tagline, and on April 22 there certainly was a lot of fun to be done. At this fair-style event, we offer a range of activities in the subjects of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math to engage and inspire Kindergarten through 8th Grade students.

Each activity at STEAM Day is organized and run by faculty members, community guests, and even our own Upper School students. While the event drew the likes of Tesla drones, Survios virtual reality experience, Dandilion small batch chocolate, and Scubahaus, Brentwood School students shined among these professionals in their own activity booths.

One of the activities, organized by 11th graders Sam H. and Claudia R., was Soap Propelled Boats. In this activity, students could build and decorate their own styrofoam boats, then let them loose in a kiddie pool where the right balance of soap and water would propel the boats forward. Sam H. explains, “The soap is a surfactant, so it takes away the surface tension of the water and propels the boat forward.” Meaning also,

“While the event drew the likes of Tesla drones, Survios virtual reality experience, Dandilion small batch chocolate, and Scubahaus, Brentwood School students shined among these professionals in their own activity booths.”



L-R: Making “Blinky the Robot” pins gave students their first experience with soldering and circuitry; the slime activity made for some messy fun on the Pool Patio; Elephant’s Toothpaste was a fun, kid-friendly demonstration where participants combined substances to create foamy explosions.

once the waters gets too soapy, the experiment no longer works. About midway through the morning, Sam and Claudia noticed that the water to soap ratio had become imbalanced, but un-phased, they dumped it out, refilled, and continued with the activity. Students were even able to take their boats home with instructions on how to recreate the experiment in a bathtub or sink.

“The reason we liked this experiment so much was that we had just learned about surface tension in class, and so we could really understand the biology behind it,” shared Sam. “We enjoyed watching the little kids put their boat in the water. When it went, they were just mesmerized. It was really satisfying for us to see their reactions.” ■



GRANDPARENT PROGRAMS

More Opportunities Emerge for Grandparents to Get Involved

The 2016-2017 school year brought many exciting opportunities for grandparents to deepen their connection to Brentwood School, form relationships with other grandparents, and learn new ways to be involved in the lives of their grandchildren. In past years the only opportunity for grandparents to visit Brentwood was at the annual **Grandparents and Special Friends Days** at the Lower School. Those days are over!

Brentwood School grandparents are automatic members of our **Grandparent Council**, which meets twice per year. At these meetings, grandparents help to shape programs and resources directly related to their own unique partnership with the school. Through this valuable feedback, we've created a grandparent program that is custom tailored to our community.


Just for grandparents is the highly anticipated **Grandparent Education Evening** hosted by Dr. Mike, now in its second year. On January 10, grandparents gathered in the Student Life Center on the East Campus for a screening of a film made just for them. "Your Grandchildren: In Their Own Words" gave grandparents a glimpse into the minds of Brentwood School students and their thoughts on their relationships with their grandparents. Our students were excited to be a part of this special production, and their anecdotes were funny, sweet, and very insightful. A theme emerged: grandparents are loved, respected, and time spent together is treasured.

What would a "program" be without a **let-your-hair-down social event**? Marc and Jane Nathanson (Henry '29 and Nina '29) opened their home to grandparents for a spectacular evening of music, art, and great company at the end of the school year. Over 50 grandparents gathered and celebrated the connection we all share and value: our Brentwood School community. ■

For more information about these and other opportunities for Brentwood School grandparents, please contact Candace Johnson, Director of Annual Fund, at cjohnson@bwscampus.com.

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is NOW
online!



Not only can you access and share your favorite stories from **BWS Magazine** in our new online format, but as you read through our digital magazine, you will also find **links to additional galleries, stories, and more**. Throughout this issue, **keep your eyes peeled for online extras icons**  that indicate additional online content.

bwscampus.com/BWSMagazine

Finding Yourself in a Book

by **YAPHA MASON**, West Campus Librarian

“Never being represented in a book—can be completely demoralizing to a child and make him or her feel that they do not belong.”

There is a certain feeling of validation when we see ourselves in a book, when we are reading a story and realize that we have something in common with the main character.

It might be religion, skin color, hairstyle, family structure, or cultural background, but this connection lets us know that we are not alone in the world. The opposite of this—never being represented in a book—can be completely demoralizing to a child and make him or her feel that they do not belong, that no one like them

exists in this vast universe of literature. As such, it is exceptionally important to me as the Lower School Librarian to make sure that every student can find him or herself in a book in our library.

In April 2014, the organization We Need Diverse Books was launched in response to another all-white, all-male panel of children’s authors

assembled for a publishing convention. Lower School students took part in the Twitter campaign calling for more diverse children’s books.

We were fortunate to have students from the Pride Project come to a faculty meeting to speak to Lower School teachers about their elementary experience. One of the students simply said, “I wish I had known that there were other people like me.” Around this same time, we had a visit from author Grace Lin, who spoke about her own childhood and never seeing Chinese-Americans in the books she read. The combination of these experiences made me vow that no one would walk through the Lower School Library without being represented.

While in my training as a SEED Leader, we talked a lot about children needing books that are both windows and mirrors—windows to see out into the world and mirrors that reflect themselves. If books are either all windows or all mirrors, the students will develop a warped sense of the world around them. It has been shown that reading books that accurately portray diverse characters builds empathy as well as cultural understanding. “Stories help children understand how society perceives their culture as well as the cultures of their classmates, teachers, caregivers, and others, thereby influencing their social and identity development.” (from

Yapha Mason has worked at Brentwood as the Lower School Librarian since 1995 and has served on the 1999 and 2015 Newbery Medal Committees. She has her own book review blog at <http://bookapalooza.bwscampus.net/>



“Children need books that are both windows and mirrors—windows to see out into the world and mirrors that reflect themselves. If books are either **all windows or all mirrors**, the students will develop a warped sense of the world around them.”

The Importance of Diversity in Library Programs and Material Collections for Children.)

In my daily work, I strive to make sure that the Lower School Library contains a multitude of both windows and mirrors for all of our students. By reading reviews from like-minded librarians as well as from sites such as “Reading While White” and “American Indians in Children’s Literature,” I work to provide books where diverse cultures are not just represented but are represented well. Inaccurate representation can often do more harm than good. Stories are powerful tools and books allow students to experience many lives outside their own. ■



YAPHA MASON'S LINKS AVAILABLE FOR:

- Grace Lin's Ted Talk
- We Need Diverse Books
- The Importance of Diversity in Library Programs and Material Collections for Children
- American Indians in Children's Literature
- Reading While White



Students and faculty experienced the power of personal stories during breakout sessions at this year's Celebration of Diversity Day.



DIVERSITY DAY: FEBRUARY 9, 2017

Personal Stories of Immigration

by Panel Moderators **MARGARITA LARA**, Library Assistant, and **ROB JOST**, Upper School Counselor and Foundations Teacher

As faculty and staff, our interactions with students usually come from an elevated position of authority—often simply because we have accumulated more life experience and perspective. Yet, when we share a common experience, human connection blurs the boundary of authority and allows for something truly special. A glimpse of this occurred in the Immigration Panel breakout session during this year's Celebrating Diversity event. **Two adults joined eleven students to share their experiences of growing up in America as first generation immigrants.** With an appreciative and supportive audience on hand, the panel members offered intimate stories of the triumph and challenge of “fitting into” and helping define American culture. Along the way, there were tears, smiles, and stories of overcoming challenges that helped define each individual's progress in their journey. And, as a group, **an unspoken bond of having lived through a common experience grew, despite the uniqueness of each story.** Essentially, the theme of the day—the Power of Personal Stories—was on display throughout the session, as each person shared their feelings and perspectives. And, while there were many takeaways, the one major theme that emerged from the room was a sense of gratitude towards family members that left behind their homelands in search of a better life. The respect and honor paid to them was palpable, and permeated throughout the room.

Middle School Writers Learn from a Master

by **MEREDITH STORRS**, Assistant Director of Communications

On the Middle School Pool Patio, parents, alumni, and community members queued in lines for our **John Hutson Memorial Guest Lecture Series**. Anticipating the interview of nonfiction writer **Erik Larson** by **Conan O'Brien**, some milled among the succulents while others hurried into the Gym to find the best seats.

They spoke about the artful suspense of *Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* and the captivating darkness of *The Devil in the White City*, two of Larson's more recent works. This year's annual guest lecture event drew history buffs, engineers, and voracious readers alike.

Meanwhile, leaning forward on modular furniture in the SLC, Brentwood School students engaged in a quieter, more thought-provoking discussion. This intimate, pre-lecture conversation with Erik Larson offered tips from a true professional about how to write well.

It's no wonder that Larson's narrative nonfiction books have earned him a longstanding place on the *New York Times* Best Seller list, an Edgar Award for nonfiction crime writing, and a nomination for the National Book Award. Erik Larson takes a historical event, and through thoughtful, careful research, develops a masterpiece that reads like fiction.

Getting to meet with a successful author is a wonderful experience for any student, especially when he's someone that

they admire, but faculty moderator, Alexander Trivas, challenged the conversation to go deeper: "Kids often want to hear what it's like working with an editor or if there is going to be a movie, but my goal was to direct the discussion toward the things that relate to them in this moment—things applicable to their experience now, such as getting the most out of the research phase and establishing ritual."

Larson certainly did not disappoint. He challenged the students to use precise, electric verbs and find images and nouns that can carry the sentence more powerfully than superfluous modifiers. Citing the beautiful sparseness of Hemingway, Larson shared that making conscious choices in the editing process leads to stronger writing.

English teachers, of course, charge their students to be specific and to be selective. Yet, even though many of our teachers are master wordsmiths in their own right, there is something about hearing the same idea reinforced by a published author that can massage it into an adolescent brain in a new way.



The student session held before the Guest Lecture provided a special moment for students to spend one-on-one time with this year's speaker, bestselling author Erik Larson.

"And there was this weird little spark that ran through me. Like, wow, as strange as it sounds, this is real. I need contact with artifacts because it restores the emotional power of the story I'm working on." —Erik Larson

Perhaps the most poignant revelation offered by Larson was how he finds delight in the research process. Because our students do so much research at school, an area of study typically considered dry or overwhelming, they were fascinated to hear how research draws Erik Larson to engaging, exhilarating places. The right research, in the right location, can tell you more about a topic than you might learn from the safety of your computer screen. To stand before the painting itself or to hold an original letter in your hand has profound power.



Larson told the students that he spends at least two years researching and often only one year writing a book. During the mainstage interview he explained, “I do all my research myself because, frankly, why share the fun? I love the research. I love the travel associated with the research, and I get very excited whenever I’m in an archive because you just don’t know what will come up next.”

He described going through Martha Dodd’s personal correspondence during the research for *In the Garden of Beasts* at the Library of Congress and stumbling upon piles of calling cards:

“All of a sudden here is a calling card from Hermann Goering. And I pick up this card...and it’s like, oh my, this card was given to her by one of the all-time war criminals of history, Hermann Goering, and this is in her file now! And there was this weird little spark that ran through me. Like, wow, as strange as it sounds, this is real. I need contact with artifacts because it restores the emotional power of the story I’m working on.” ■

Middle Eastern Narratives

Brentwood 7th graders, whether they know it or not, are already students of Erik Larson’s style. About eight years ago, our Middle School humanities teachers shifted the structure of their Middle Eastern research project to culminate in a narrative rather than a simple report or persuasive essay. After studying a particular country, each student weaves together details of the culture, politics, and daily life to create a convincing character and compelling story. The final work of fiction is complete with a works-cited page and footnotes to show how they incorporate specific, authentic details into the narrative arc.

Alexander Trivas, who teaches Middle School English and Social Studies, says, “I always tell my students that to write big, we need to write small. Meaning if we really want to talk about big issues, we need to write the small details. For instance, using words like ‘abyss in my soul’ to describe your depression really says nothing. But if you tell me that your depression looks like two tubs of Chunky Monkey and endless reruns of *Friends*, then you’ve really created a specific picture. That’s why *Devil in the White City* is so compelling—because Larson talks about Cracker Jacks, the Ferris Wheel, and Wrigley’s, the bits of historical detail that make the story feel real.”

“I always tell my students that to write big, we need to write small. Meaning if we really want to talk about big issues, we need to write the small details.”

—Alexander Trivas



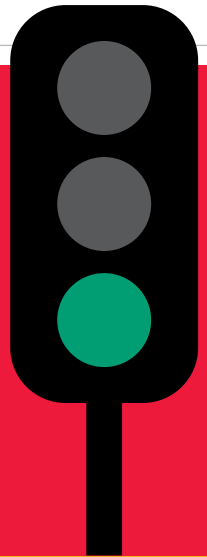
School Calendar 2017– 2018

- August 29** // K-12 First Day of School
- September 4** // School Holiday: Labor Day
- September 21** // School Holiday: Rosh Hashanah
- November 22–24** // Thanksgiving Break
- December 15** // Last day of school before Winter Break
- January 3** // Classes resume after Winter Break
- January 15** // School Holiday: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
- February 19** // School Holiday: Presidents' Day
- March 23** // Last day of school before Spring Break
- April 9** // Classes resume after Spring Break
- May 28** // School Holiday: Memorial Day
- June 2** // 44th Commencement Ceremony
- June 7** // LS/MS Last Day of School
- June 8** // US Last Day of School
- June 8** // 6th and 8th Grade Promotion



THE FULL ALL-SCHOOL CALENDAR IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
www.bwscampus.com/calendar

Changes Ahead... Increased Carpools and Bus Riders Will Make an Impact



As soon as our new **Conditional Use Permit** was passed at the **LA City Council meeting** in April, the intensive work surrounding transportation and Brentwood School's commitment to reducing traffic on the Sunset Corridor began in earnest. Parents and student drivers adjusted to changes early on this year, including increasing the number of carpool riders from two to three, among other new provisions. However, as we look ahead to the day when our East Campus will be fully enrolled at 960 students by 2022, we as a community need to start now to reduce the number of cars entering and exiting our campus, and increase the number of bus riders. The statistics represented on the opposite page reflect our transportation requirements today as well as what we can expect in the years to come. And while we anticipate a period of transition as our parent and student drivers adjust to new policies and enforcement, we also expect the usual resiliency of our community, always willing to accept a challenge—even one as big as reducing traffic in Los Angeles—and go above and beyond to make a difference.



BUSING REQUIREMENT

BY 2022/23 **40%** of students must ride bus

KEY

% decrease in daily trips from 2016/17

school year

MAXIMUM DAILY TRIPS



EAST CAMPUS ENROLLMENT



THE TRANSPORTATION REVOLUTION TODAY AND TOMORROW

2016/17

1527



700



12.5%

17/18

1405



735



25%

20/21

1205



859



35%

22/23

1045



960



40%

27/28

964



960



AVERAGE VEHICLE RIDERSHIP (AVR)

When we achieve maximum enrollment on the **East Campus** in 2022/23 (960 students), **an average of 3 people per vehicle will be required**

AND

2.2 people on the West Campus.



VA Engagement Update

The enduring partnership between Brentwood School, Veterans Affairs (VA), and the West Los Angeles VA Campus (WLA VA) continued this past semester with great success since several programs and opportunities for engagement were further solidified.

Through the establishment of the Veterans' Center for Recreation and Education at Brentwood School (VCRE), the school has offered expanded recreational, vocational, educational, and wellness services to the Veteran population of the WLA VA. In this past year alone, hundreds of Veterans have participated in regular sports clinics, utilized the athletic complex, attended events and musical performances, and benefitted from thousands of hours of student community service. **And this summer, Brentwood School will, once again, provide 120 full scholarship spaces to children of Veteran families for Summer at Brentwood.**

Please visit our website at bwscampus.com/about-us/va-engagement to watch videos and see images of past events and activities. The statistics at right paint a picture of what we are all able to accomplish as a community to assist Veterans in the most meaningful ways. But the smiles on the faces of Veterans and students alike bring these numbers to life. ■



SEE VIDEOS & IMAGES OF VA EVENTS ONLINE AT bwscampus.com/about-us/va-engagement

Middle School students distribute the socks they collected during the Sock Drive to Veterans at West LA VA.



BY THE NUMBERS

VA Engagement

(SINCE NOVEMBER 2016)

647

Veterans' Center for Recreation and Education (VCRE) participants

800

VCRE Access Hours

111

Veterans who attended events at Brentwood School

2,854

Student hours spent on Veteran-centric service activities

Donation Drives

(SINCE NOVEMBER 2016)

200

Toys

566

Pairs of socks from Middle School Sock Drive

54

Move-in Kits with bed and bath items

Full grocery bags of toiletries

285

Thanksgiving Meals

55

You can check out a plethora of content only available online. Here's a small sampling of what we posted during the 2016–2017 school year. To see more, simply visit bwscampus.com/BWSMagazine and click each icon below.

⊕ Hackathon Winners

APRIL 21, 2017

Four of our 11th Grade students won the grand prize at the “LA Hacks Hackathon” held at UCLA’s Pauley Pavilion. They competed against over 170 teams of mostly undergraduate and graduate students from across the country. The goal of the contest was to produce a piece of complex technology that has a strong idea, one that benefits society in some way, and is executable within the set timeframe of the hackathon; in this case, 36 hours. Our students created “Tap.”

⊕ All-School Art Show Highlights

APRIL 28, 2017

Throughout the year, student artists in all grades worked to produce artwork that is inspiring and engaging, culminating in the annual All-School Art Show which showcases both student and faculty work.

⊕ MS Coffeehouse Packed with Creativity and Fun

MAY 11, 2017

From laughing about “An Ode to Onions,” to singing along with an Alicia Keys song, the Middle School

Coffeehouse had it all! On May 5, nearly 80 people showed up to support the performers. Some students articulated their thoughts as teenagers through slam poetry. Others sang duets and solos as the audience clapped their hands and cheered whenever a high note was hit. Many played instruments including the ukulele, piano, and guitar. In addition, a little comedy was thrown in to make the crowd smile even more.

⊕ The World of Opera in the 3rd Grade

MAY 12, 2017

The 3rd Grade Spring Performance opened with a song called, “Who Wants to Go to the Opera?” to the music of

Rossini, during which the students on stage were divided into two groups: those who love opera and those who hate it. Lower School music teacher Olga Nevin developed the opera curriculum more than 20 years ago and says, “I find that the 3rd graders are simply fascinated with the study of opera. For some of them, it’s the stories full of drama and high emotion; for others, it’s the music and unbelievable voices.” Ms. Nevin and the 3rd Grade teachers agree that the performances were incredible...and hilarious.

⊕ BTC Presents *The Laramie Project*

MAY 29, 2017

On May 25 and 26, the Brentwood Theater Company offered an opportunity for our school community to engage in topics relevant to the LGBT community with their performance of *The Laramie Project*. This thought-provoking and emotional production raised questions that challenged the audience. The play tells the story of Matthew Shepard, an openly gay student who was murdered in Laramie, WY in 1998. Shepard’s death was a definitive moment for the LGBT community and its allies, inspired an act of Congress to expand American hate-crime law.

⊕ A crowd favorite at the All-School Art Show was this octopus collage by Middle School Art teacher Ignacio Gonzalez.



Athletic Accolades

FALL

CROSS COUNTRY

- **Olivia I. '19**, 1st Team All League
- **James K. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **Jack L. '18**, 1st Team All League
- **Alistair N. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **Wyatt S. '19**, 2nd Team All League
- **Bianca P. '18**, Cross Country Gold Coast MVP; CIFSS D5 Champion; CIF State D5 9th place

GIRLS TENNIS

- **Grace D. '17** and **Taylor L. '17**, Doubles Gold Coast MVPs

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

- **Kate B. '17**, 2nd Team All League
- **Emery B. '18**, 1st Team All League
- **Sydney M. '17**, 2nd Team All League
- **Lindsay T. '17**, 2nd Team All League

FOOTBALL

- **Eli B. '18**, 1st Team All League
- **Matt N. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **Dallas M. '17**, 2nd Team All League
- **Cole S. '17**, 2nd Team All League

BOYS WATER POLO

- **Ryan B. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **Matt H. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **Levi K. '17**, 2nd Team All League
- **Shane P. '18**, 1st Team and 2nd Team All-CIF
- **Jared R. '17**, 2nd Team All League

WINTER

BOYS BASKETBALL

CIFSS D3AA Champions

- **Braelee A. '19**, 1st Team All League; CIFSS D3AA Player of the Year and Wooden Award
- **Charley W. '18**, 2nd Team All League
- **Ryan Bailey**, CIF D3AA Coach of the Year award

BOYS SOCCER

- **Scott C. '18**, 2nd Team All League
- **Steven K. '18**, 1st Team All League
- **Alex L. '18**, 2nd Team All League
- **Noah M. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **Matt N. '17**, 1st Team All League and All CIF

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- **Talia G. '20**, 2nd Team All League
- **Imani S. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **AJ S. '17**, 2nd Team All League

GIRLS SOCCER

CIFSS D4 Runner Up and CIF State D4 Runner Up

- **Lily D. '17**, 1st Team All League
- **Jessie L. '17**, 1st Team All League and All CIF
- **Samantha M. '17**, 2nd Team All League
- **Leah R. '19**, 1st Team All League
- **Aidan R. '18**, 1st Team All League and All CIF
- **Taylor S. '17**, 2nd Team All League
- **Gaby S. '17**, 2nd Team All League



SPORTS ALBUM



2



James Kahn '17 leads the pack on the track
Simmons '17 dribbles through defenders



1



3

1 Girls Soccer team defeated San Dieguito Academy 2-1 to advance to the final possible game in the state of California. The girls and Coach Foote made program history by advancing to the CIF State Finals and ended as the CIF State Division 4 Runner Up. | **2** James K. '17 leads the pack on the cross-country course. | **3** Ajallon S. '17 dribbles through defenders on the court.

cross-country course; Ajallon S. '17 leads the pack on the court

CIF CHAMPIONS



Bianca P. '17 stands under her CIF Individual Cross Country Champion banner. She is the fastest Cross Country runner in the school's history with a time of 17:38.

Four CIF Banners Raised in the Eagledome

The Upper School Assembly in April was dominated by a ceremony that hasn't taken place since 2014. We raised four banners in the gym on Thursday, honoring one individual athlete and two teams for their outstanding accomplishments in CIF Southern Section and State competitions this year. **Bianca Pourmussa '17** received praise from her Varsity Cross Country coach, David Foote, and then watched the State Individual Championship banner unfurl with her name on it. As a Junior, she is the fastest Cross Country runner in school history. Coach Ryan "Moose" Bailey acknowledged his **Varsity Boys Basketball team**. Coach Moose describes this group of players as having a "we not me" attitude. That attitude was a key contributor in winning the 2017 CIF Southern Section Championship. The team gathered underneath their banner to great applause, almost as loud as when Braelee A. '19 hit that 3-pointer at the buzzer in overtime at the championship game. Coach Foote returned to the mic to honor the most successful **Varsity Girls Soccer team** in school history. The 19-5-1 Eagles team gathered to show off their **two banners**, one for winning the CIF SS Division 4 Runner Up title and a CIF State Runner Up title. ■





CIRQUE DU BRENTWOOD

by **KYLE KOZLOFF**, Parents Association Chair

There are many traditions at Brentwood School, but one of the most fun for parents is our annual all-school **Benefit**. For one night only, parents and guardians from the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools come together with faculty, staff, administrators, and Trustees to celebrate each other and the school we love. This year, the Parents Association honored that tradition with Cirque du Brentwood, a carnival-themed celebration held at the Skirball Cultural Center on March 10, 2017.

Stilt walkers, unicyclists, and fire dancers from Dream World Cirque greeted arriving guests. Once inside the Guerin Pavilion, Brentwood's incredible house band, Midnight Ball, got the crowd dancing with two sets of upbeat music. With no assigned seating for the second straight year, guests mingled throughout the evening, making new friends and strengthening existing bonds (while acrobats twirled overhead!). It was wonderful to see so many in our school community joining in on a night of entertainment and fun.

The PA is grateful to the parents and guardians that chose to help underwrite the cost of the Benefit with gifts ranging from \$50 to \$15,000. Their support, combined with the generosity of donors and bidders for our Weekly Flash Sales and Mystery Boxes, made Cirque du Brentwood not only a social success but a financial success as well.

Remember, the Parents Association exists to support our school. With funds raised from Cirque du Brentwood as well as Eagle Wear and the Party Book series, the PA hosts events and activities throughout the year that strengthen our bonds to each other and to Brentwood. We are thrilled to give back with our annual gift to the Brentwood School Endowment Fund, helping to ensure the ongoing strength of this institution.

Thank you for being part of a wonderful evening!



Cirque du Brentwood at the Skirball Cultural Center provided an evening of acrobatics, great entertainment, made-to-order donuts—fun for every member of the Brentwood community.





Thank You, Parents Association Chair Kyle Kozloff

by **CANDACE JOHNSON**
Director of Annual Fund
and Parents Association Liaison



Guests mingled throughout the evening, making new friends and strengthening existing bonds (as acrobats twirled overhead).



On behalf of everyone at Brentwood School, it is my privilege to express profound gratitude to Kyle Kozloff for the many ways he served the school during his term as Parents Association Chair.

Kyle worked tirelessly on every aspect of the Parents Association, from the small details to the big event that we as a community anticipate each year. The All-School Benefits during Kyle's term have been celebratory and memorable. Both Studio 44 and Cirque du Brentwood set new records for underwriting support while welcoming all families to inclusive blow-out parties featuring fabulous entertainment and festive décor.

Kyle's dedication to the three main goals of the PA guided his decisions as Chair and inspired all volunteers to be supportive and mission-focused. Kyle clearly and consistently reminded us that the role of the PA is to support the faculty and administration, to communicate information to parents and guardians, and to develop and support programming that strengthens the bonds of the parent community while raising money for the Brentwood School Endowment Fund.

As PA Chair, Kyle served on the Board of Trustees and actively participated on the Advancement and Education Committees. Beyond that, Kyle volunteered as a tour guide and attended affinity groups, focus groups, and always was a tireless advocate for Brentwood School during the Conditional Use Permit process.

It is with a heart full of gratitude that I wish Kyle a fond farewell. Working alongside him for two years, I learned a thing or two about what it means to work hard, dig deep, and have fun. Kyle has been an outstanding leader, and we are fortunate to add his name to the list of incredibly dedicated people who have served as PA Chair. ■



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We extend a special thank you to the following families for underwriting this year's Benefit:

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Parent volunteers greet Cirque du Brentwood guests arriving at the Skirball.



UPPER SCHOOL
COMMUNITY TIME

Making Space

BY **RYAN BOCCUZZI**
DIRECTOR OF THE UPPER SCHOOL

Part Three in our series of features about character and emotional development brings into focus **Community Time**, the newest addition to the Upper School schedule, where critical thinking, ethical action, and empathic discussion are given meaningful time in every student's weekly experience.

A new space for conversations added a wrinkle to the Upper School schedule this year.

As students and faculty returned from summer break last fall, they noticed a new one-hour time slot had crept into their weekly schedules on Tuesdays—and it definitely raised some eyebrows and generated questions. What was this “Community Time?” What would happen during these blocks of time? What conversations would we have? How would our community respond to these discussions? All valid questions and yet, as I began the year, I was not entirely sure I could answer them all definitively. Sometimes a calculated leap of faith is needed.



Students attentively listen to one another during Community Time; Director of the Upper School Ryan Boccuzzi helped shape the Community Time program.

Catalysts

The strategy for creating this space originated at the intersection of several different ideas. Like the Lower and Middle Schools, the Upper School focuses on integrating academic excellence, emotional intelligence, and character development. Two years ago, we began working closely as a school with the Director of Yale’s Center for Emotional Intelligence, Marc Brackett. He spoke with the faculty about the merits of developing emotional intelligence as both adults and students. He helped us understand that a student who can recognize and label his or her emotions will be better prepared to manage those emotions and to be his or her best self in a wider array of situations. We invited Brackett back to work with a group of teachers over the summer, and in the fall of 2016, he presented his ideas to a group of parents packed in the East Campus Theater. While our counterparts in the Lower and Middle Schools utilized Brackett’s work in home rooms and human development classes, we had a harder time finding a home for the programming in the Upper School, where the complex, rotating schedule makes it challenging to consistently gather as one group.

Concurrently, it became clear that one of the greatest skills we could impart on our students is the ability to talk more openly and become more practiced at sharing each other’s perspectives. Story after story in the media portrayed a negative model for engagement—being loud and adamant about one’s own beliefs while shunning anyone else’s opinion. Midway through last year, a senior delivered a timely speech at an all-school assembly calling on our community to talk more openly with one another and to intentionally step away from the fast-paced, high-stress world our students often find themselves in. The standing ovation he received from students and faculty alike showed that his words struck a chord with the audience. Then, a catalyst event fast-tracked our plan. A video surfaced at the end of the 2016–2017 school year, highlighting the actions of a small group of Brentwood students, that allowed us to have candid conversations about sensitive subjects on campus related to race and identity. Part of the community’s healing process was “Listen + Shift,” where students and faculty were placed in groups of 15 and, after listening to panel discussions, they were led by a facilitator in a conversation about what

“QUALITY CONVERSATION TAKES TIME TO UNFOLD AND COMMUNITY TIME WAS CREATED TO AFFORD OUR STUDENTS THIS LUXURY.”

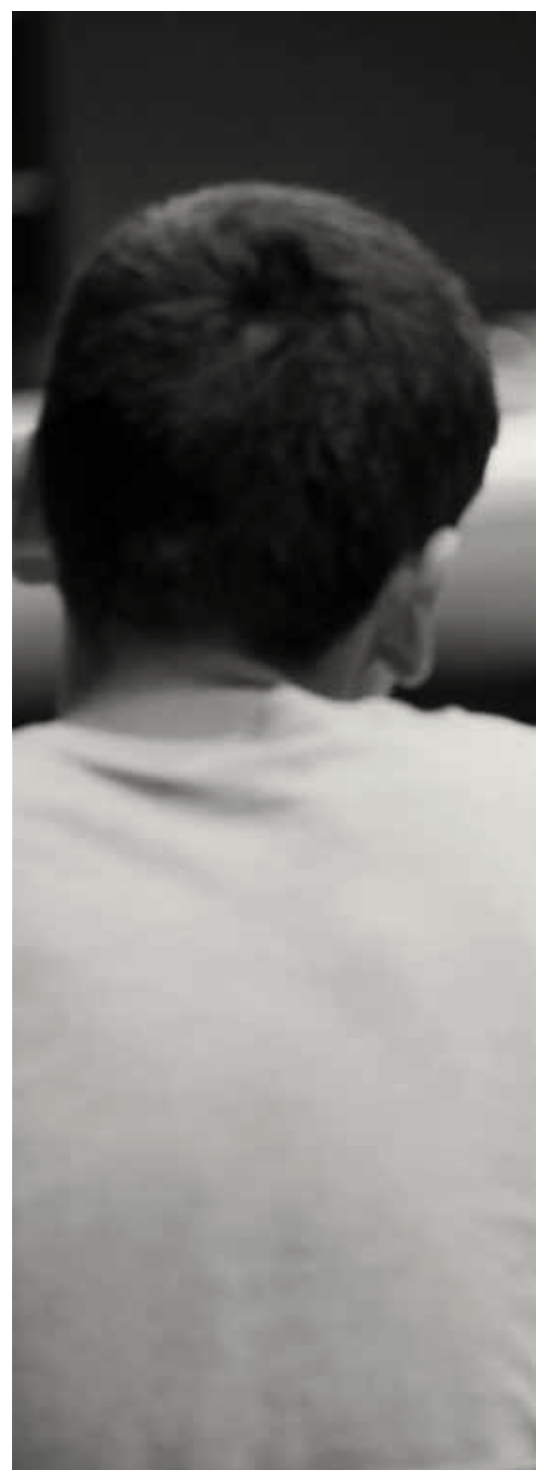
they heard and their reactions. At the end of the day, the feedback brought our path for the coming year into focus: we need more time to talk and understand each other. Only then could we make the kind of vital progress that comes from working hard to understand another perspective, even when you might not agree with it.

Program Development

As the 2015–2016 school year came to a close, we started the initial planning of Community Time. We knew that social emotional learning and character education needed to be integrated throughout our academic classes, peer programs, arts, and athletics, yet we were looking for a venue to showcase these conversations. Our advisory program already allowed for discussing topics rooted in core values, and it has done an outstanding job allowing students to connect with an adult in small groups for many years. These conversations are often meaningful, and the relationships created are strong since students are in the same group with the same advisor for all four years in the Upper School. However, advisory groups only meet for 20 minutes each week. Factor in the time that it takes to put cream cheese on a bagel, and there is not much time left to have meaningful conversations. Quality conversation takes time to unfold

and Community Time was created to afford our students this luxury. We arranged the schedule to create a block long enough that we could gather as a group and still have time to discuss what we saw before rushing off to take a quiz or a test. However, we knew that it would take more than just creating time in the schedule for this to be a success.

While effective student participation in Community Time was our primary focus, we also needed to provide professional development for Upper School faculty members to lead Community Time discussions. Over the summer, Anna Yeakley, the Director of UCLA’s Intergroup Relations Program, facilitated a workshop with the faculty about communication skills for engaging with diversity. She highlighted the differences between dialogue, debate, and discussion and helped to prepare the faculty to lead these conversations with students. We also practiced active listening in our August meetings in an effort to remove our teaching hats and instead be present with the students as they share information with us. The training continued throughout the year, and in February, facilitators from the Stanley King Counseling Institute worked with the faculty during an inservice day and reminded us that we do not always need to be problem solvers when trying to meet the needs of our students.





Conversations begun during Community Time often continue outside the classroom.

Community Time Discussions

Trina Moore-Southall
DIRECTORY OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION

"Members of Pride Project made a keen decision to select a thoughtful, brilliant, confident student to share his identity journey. Students actively listened as their classmate told a personal, thought-provoking story from elementary school to middle school to his senior year of how he questioned who he was and how those in his life supported him. It was a lesson in both gender and sexuality. His testimony included the process of sharing with his parents, his friends, and eventually the entire senior class that he was both gay and gender nonconforming. Students remarked that he was 'brave,' 'courageous,' and 'insightful' as they welcomed his very personal speech. Community Time continued in small groups with questions of terminology and experience. Students want to know how to best support their classmates of all lifestyles. This Community Time was a testament to many of Brentwood's core values, but two in particular: diversity and community. The strength this classmate had to share and the favorable response he received are indicative of who Brentwood is."



Tamara Miller
ACADEMIC DEAN

"In March, we celebrated Women's History Month. I had the opportunity to work with Girl Impact, as well as with Sarah Bishop, my co-teacher in the Gender Studies elective, to organize a Community Time assembly and discussion to celebrate Intersectional Feminism and Identity. We organized a diverse panel of women from the Upper School and Middle School to speak about their gendered experience. The panelists explored the role of intersectionality in the Women's Movement and how they incorporate their religion, culture, sexual orientation, and race into their feminist views. In my senior Community Time group following the assembly, the students were excited about our conversation topic: feminism. We discussed whether all women experience sexism in the same way, and whether feminism should focus on all issues that impact women including environmental justice and immigrants' rights. Community Time has been a great way to connect the students to one another in order to discuss real societal issues."



A Sampling of Community Time Topics

- **Ethics:** How to Live Wisely
- **International Day of the Girl**
- **Dia de los Muertos**—a community art project in preparation for building of altars in honor of the Day of the Dead
- **Politics United**—election presentation on the local propositions followed by an active listening exercise in which students described the issues most important to them in the upcoming election
- **Changing the world through social activism and entrepreneurship**, with special guest David Batstone of the Not for Sale organization
- **Wellness Days**—mindfulness activities, exercise, board games, movies, community bonding events
- Guest speaker on **foster youth and self-empowerment**
- **MLK Assembly: At the Table with Dr. King**—a multimedia, musical presentation
- **Where You Go is Not Who You'll Be**—a discussion of Frank Bruni's book detailing the negative impact "college admissions mania" has on today's youth.
- **Social media and digital citizenship**
- **BSA Assembly** and the **African-American innovators panel**
- **Pride Assembly**—a personal story about one student's gender identity exploration
- **Media Consumption, Title IX, and Sexual Assault**
- **Intersectional feminism and identity** portraying the lives of diverse women at Brentwood School
- **Holocaust Remembrance** and Brentwood World Watch
- **Student Diversity Leadership Conference**—reflections and discussions

During Community Time, a simple lesson in folding cranes sparks conversations about cross-cultural traditions and beliefs.



Maintaining Focus

Social emotional learning is no less important during a student's Upper School years than at any other point in his or her educational journey. However, Upper School students are more eager than ever to know exactly how the lessons being discussed connect to their daily lives. Community Time creates a space for the students and faculty to have conversations and discuss issues that do not always fall neatly into the academic curriculum. Because our Upper School students—as do most teenagers—question not only the lessons being discussed but also why the discussions are even taking place, the content of Community Time and every other aspect of its structure and format have been under the microscope by our most critical and discerning students right from the start...as predicted.



“COMMUNITY TIME CAME INTO BEING BECAUSE OF THE STUDENTS’ INTEREST IN SHARING THEIR STORIES WITH EACH OTHER IN A CONSTRUCTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE SPACE; IT WILL CONTINUE TO THRIVE IF STUDENTS ARE AT THE HEART OF ITS GROWTH.”

Letting the Program Grow

As with any new program, students and faculty have experimented to see exactly how to best utilize Community Time this year. With 32 different group conversations happening in the Upper School during a given Community Time, there is no expectation that each conversation will be the same. Each group has its own style and the personalities and interests of the people in the room take the conversation in different directions. After a year of discussions that showcased many different topics (see sidebar on opposite page), we now have enough data to adjust and refine the program as it enters its second year.

At its core, Community Time will continue to be an adaptable space. As students reflect on the most meaningful aspects of Community Time, affinity group

leaders, student government elected officials, and club presidents are eager to help plan discussions that matter for their peers. We are excited to see what ideas come forward, and we know that a program led by students will be more impactful than anything we would produce independently as adults. Community Time came into being because of the students’ interest in sharing their stories with each other in a constructive and supportive space; it will continue to thrive if students are at the heart of its growth.

A group of students spoke with the faculty at the end of the year about the importance of engaging in conversations around diversity. They emphasized that although these conversations can be challenging and sometimes awkward, we end up in a better place after having them. To this

end, Community Time has pushed many students and faculty out of their comfort zones to go beyond superficial conversation on a wide variety of topics, and we will continue to focus on creating space for this as Community Time evolves. We will continue to focus on creating a space where we have fun with each other, listen to each other, and grow from a shared understanding of where we come from. Through Community Time, we hope to create an environment where students feel more connected to each other, where faculty feel they better understand the students, and where we all are more connected and invested in the well-being of our school. ■



The first two articles in this series dealt with the **Lower School Community of Caring program** and the **Middle School Human Development program**. These articles can be accessed online in the Spring 2016 and Fall 2016 issues of *BWS Magazine*.



1



2, 3



4, 5



VOLUNTEER VOICES



6

- 1 Andy Howard '94
- 2 Erika Lockhart '93
- 3 Adrienne Avena
- 4 Dom Bautista
- 5 Sherri Chiasson
- 6 Dana and Scott '95 Kaufman

“NO ONE CAN DO EVERYTHING, BUT EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING.”

—UNKNOWN

Parents, alumni, faculty, staff, alumni who are parents, parents of alumni, parents who are faculty or staff—**no matter who you are in the Brentwood School community or how many hats you wear, you can also be a volunteer.** Because so many give the gift of time to every aspect of Brentwood School life each year, volunteerism is truly the outward expression of our core values, Caring and Community. Therefore, we thought it was time to hear from a randomly-selected group of volunteers who love the work they do for the school, to begin an ongoing series that shines a light on what it means to be a volunteer at Brentwood. We hope you will be inspired to join in the fun of volunteering in whatever ways feel right for you.

Andy Howard '94

ALUMNI PARENT

Co-President, West Campus Eagles, pancake-flipper, and ice cream scooper

“Brentwood School has been a major part of my life for almost 30 years, since I started here as a 7th grader. During the past six years, I have been lucky to experience the school through the eyes and experiences of our children (Josh '24, Ryan '26, and Brooke '30). My closest friends to this day are from my years as a student, and now, I watch my kids developing similar, ever-lasting bonds with their friends. Volunteering at Brentwood School is the perfect way to say ‘thank you’ for everything the school has done for me, and now, for my family.”

Erika Lockhart '93

ALUMNI PARENT

Admissions Tour Guide and Host Family; 7th Grade Grade Captain for the Phonathon; Parent Affinity Group Representative for the African American Family Association

“One of the reasons I volunteer is to set an example for my daughter, Arielle '22. I believe there is a strong correlation between parent involvement and a student's academic success. My engagement and consistent presence on campus, my enthusiasm and constant smile when I'm on campus, and my willingness as a working mom to volunteer my time shows not only my dedication, but also shows my daughter how much I value her education. I also volunteer because my years as a Brentwood School student shaped the person I am today; and it's one of the many ways that I can demonstrate my appreciation and gratitude for a school that has provided with me so much. I encourage parents who are reluctant or apprehensive about volunteering to test the waters and just volunteer an hour of time. I promise you will leave the campus happier than when you arrived and with a stronger sense of purpose.”

Adrienne Agena

FACULTY/STAFF PARENT

Director of Admissions, West Campus

“I feel strongly that volunteering at school enhances everyone's experience—the parent, the school, and the child. I fell in love with Brentwood as a parent (Genesey '19 and Karynna-Leigh '21) due in large part to my volunteering at the school before I became an employee here. The community at Brentwood is vibrant and special, and volunteering gives parents special access to see not only the inner workings and heart of the community, but also to watch the students thrive. It's easy to be a volunteer at Brentwood—there is truly something for everyone.”

“I LEARNED THAT IT DOESN’T MATTER WHAT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION YOU COME FROM OR WHAT ETHNICITY YOU ARE AT BRENTWOOD; THE PEOPLE YOU MEET VOLUNTEERING ARE ALL PARENTS WHO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN AND WHO WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN THEIR EDUCATION.”

—DOM BAUTISTA



L-R: Parents welcome attendees at this year's Parent University; Pancake Days are a great time for parents to connect with each other as they serve the students in each division; Parents served the international lunch options at this year's Celebration of Diversity Day.

Dom Bautista

PARENT

El Nido Founding Member,
PA Executive Board Member,
Phonathon/Thankathon volunteer,
pancake-flipper, and Eagle Wear
seller

“When Raymond '18 came to Brentwood in 9th Grade, it was a new experience for the both of us. At first I was a bit intimidated to be in a new school in a new situation. I didn't know how I would be received at the school, but was pleasantly surprised when all of the parent volunteers I worked with were here for the same reasons I was. I learned that it doesn't matter what socio-economic situation you come from or what ethnicity you are at Brentwood; the people you meet volunteering are all parents who love their children and who want to be involved in their education. Volunteering at Brentwood really made me feel like a part of the community there. It is not only rewarding—it makes you feel like you belong.”

Sherri Chiasson

PARENT

Former Lower School PA President
and Head Grade Representative

“I love Brentwood School. That's one of the many reasons I volunteer so much, in the classroom, on class trips, backstage and in various committees. The fact that I'm allowed to be there, participating, helping the students, supporting the teachers, not to mention spending time with my boys (Beau '26 and Hugo '28), is what makes the school such a magical place for me and my family. I really believe that the culture of service that exists at Brentwood is unique and paramount to the success of the school. It's the foundation of the tight-knit, supportive BWS community that I have come to love and rely on these past 6 years. To be honest, I am pretty sure that I get more out of volunteering than I could ever give, and that is the gift that keeps me signing up.”





Scott '95 and Dana Kaufman ALUMNI PARENTS

"There is no single reason why we volunteer at Brentwood School. We do it for many reasons—to be with our kids and know what is going on in their daily lives; to spend time with friends who also volunteer; to meet new people, whether they are parents in other grades, teachers on different campuses, or alumni who graduated long after we did; to contribute to a cause we greatly believe in; and even to feel better about ourselves. Scott started volunteering when he graduated from Brentwood to stay connected to the school, to friends, and to faculty. Over the years, after we had children, our reasons for volunteering shifted, focusing on our kids and how to better their experiences at Brentwood. Volunteering at Brentwood over the years has enriched our lives in ways we couldn't have imagined. We are closer to our children because of it. We have met people and developed strong friendships that wouldn't otherwise exist. We have created strong relationships with the educators who impact our children's lives every day. Volunteering is an easy decision. Even if the way in which we volunteer and our reasons for doing it change over time, the rewards are always greater than what we give." ■



```

@TeleOp(name="Mecanum Drive Mode", group="Iterative Opmode") // @
Autonomous(...) is the other common choice
@Disabled
public class MecanumDriveMode extends OpMode
{
    /* Declare OpMode members. */
    private ElapsedTime runtime = new ElapsedTime();

    private DcMotor leftMotor = null;
    private DcMotor rightMotor = null;
    private DcMotor pews = null;
    private DcMotor feedy = null;

    double powerLevel;

    private Servo rightProbe = null;
    private Servo leftProbe = null;

    /*
     * Code to run ONCE when the driver hits INIT
     */
    @Override
    public void init() {
        telemetry.addData("Status", "Initialized");

        /* eg: Initialize the hardware variables. Note that the
        strings used here as parameters
        * to 'get' must correspond to the names assigned during the
        robot configuration
        * step (using the FTC Robot Controller app on the phone).
        */
        leftMotor = hardwareMap.dcMotor.get("left motor");
        rightMotor = hardwareMap.dcMotor.get("right motor");

        pews = hardwareMap.dcMotor.get("pews");
        feedy = hardwareMap.dcMotor.get("feedy");

        leftProbe = hardwareMap.servo.get("left probe");
        rightProbe = hardwareMap.servo.get("right probe");

        // eg: Set the drive motor directions. Set reversed direction directly to the battery
        leftMotor.setDirection(DcMotor.Direction.FORWARD); // Set to
        REVERSE if using AndyMark motors
        rightMotor.setDirection(DcMotor.Direction.REVERSE); // Set to
        FORWARD if using AndyMark motors
        telemetry.addData("Status", "Initialized");
    }

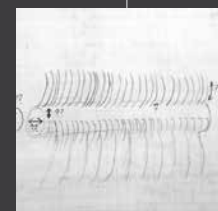
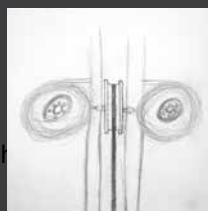
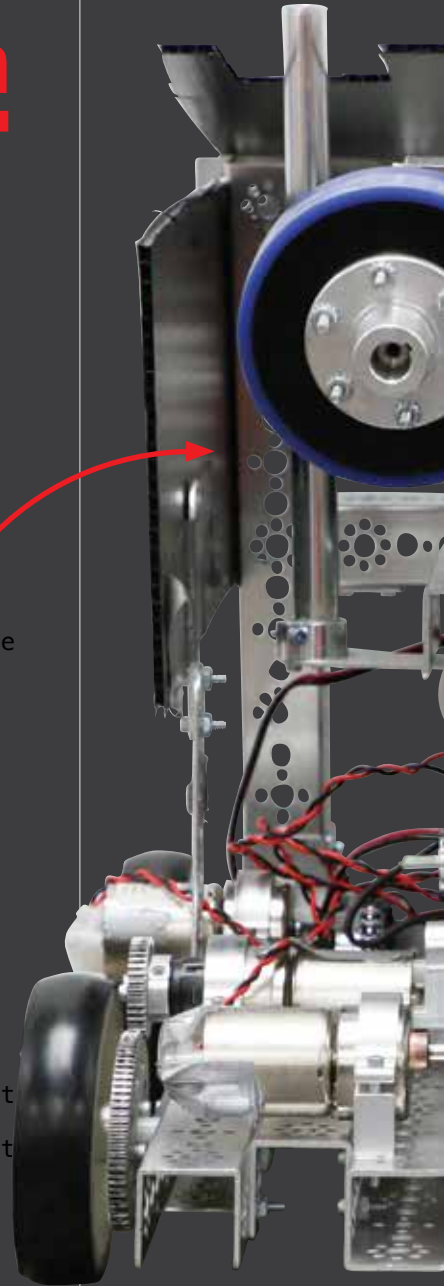
    /*
     * Code to run REPEATEDLY after the driver hits INIT, but before
     they hit PLAY
     */
    @Override
    public void init_loop() {
    }

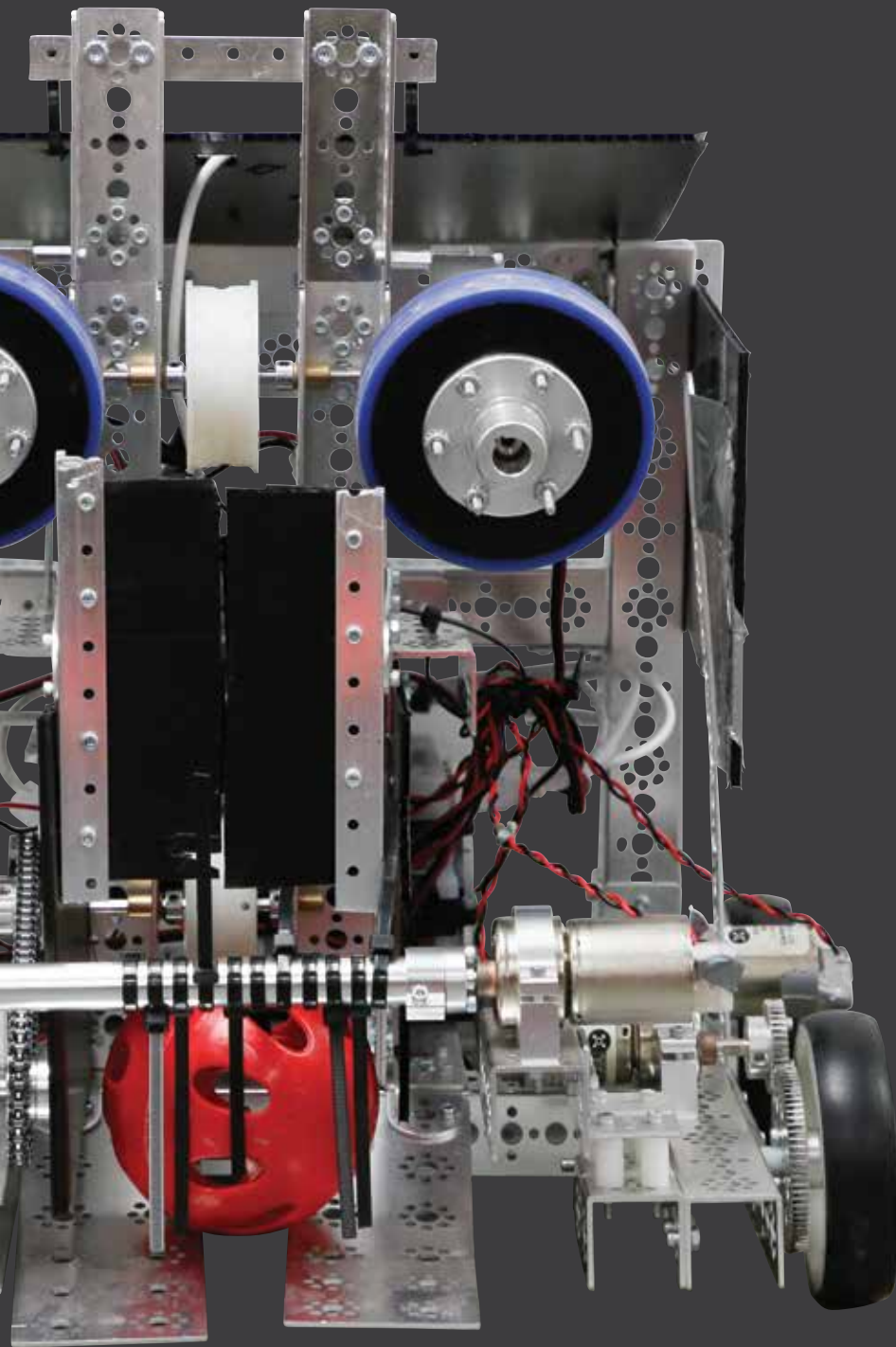
    /*
     * Code to run ONCE when the driver hits PLAY
     */
    @Override
    public void start() {
        runtime.reset();
    }

```

How to Build a ROBOT

The challenge was to build and program a robot, from scratch, that would wheel itself to a wiffle ball, pick up the ball, travel to a target area, stop, and pitch the ball into the target area. The robot's actions would be controlled from an android cellphone.





From sketch to hardware, the robot comes to life section by section. LEFT TO RIGHT: The launching mechanism that shoots the ball through and out of the machine into a basketball hoop; the feeding mechanism for the ball as it is collected and fed through the machine with the help of plastic zip ties; the chassis of the robot, from initial overall design to finished product.

THE PROJECT

Led by their coach Ronit Kumar, approximately 25 students on the Robotics Teams worked collaboratively for most of the school year to construct some rather sophisticated robots in preparation for FIRST Tech Challenge competitions in the Southern California region. Their efforts paid off—"The Eaglets" (Grades 7-9) came in 5th place, while "The Eagles" (Grades 10-12) came in 3rd, out of 21 teams. This was by far the most successful year of Robotics at Brentwood and launches the program on a trajectory for success in future years as interest in robotics builds.

THE PROCESS

Starting with sketches and gathering materials, the robots came together through teamwork, creativity, improvisation, and plenty of trial and error. The brains of the robots are Android cell phones. Paige B. '20 was responsible for coding, and Natalie C. '21 sketched the many pencil renderings that guided the construction process. The contributions of both girls—there are only about five on the team—were extremely important for the Eaglet's robot. And senior Grace D. made great contributions as a leader and programmer, and her dedication inspired the younger Middle School team members throughout the season. Both teams learned to work as a unit, each contributing skills that benefitted the whole.

WHAT THE TEACHER SAYS

Mr. Kumar notes that the trial and error process is really where students learn the most. "I believe in letting the students fail and make mistakes before I step in to offer a solution. And often they surprise me with solutions I would have never dreamed could work."

THE AFTERMATH

The teams have been meeting post-season twice a week after school to think up new ideas for next year and to finetune the processes they learned this year. They are also excitedly working on "Eagle 1"—their autonomous quadcopter drone. Stay tuned!



As much as I look forward to my final three years at Brentwood,

I cannot help but pause to reflect on the school's past 44 years, especially on those special educators, now Brentwood legends, who touched the hearts and minds of decades of students—Nicole Bali, John Hutson, Pat Dunn, Joanne Huchel, Paula Radomile, Sally Wallace, Mike Knight, Bob Ingram, Marla Torre, Jeff

Porter, Pat Brown, Lynette Creasy, Judith Lyons, Martha Kermott, Gail Coombs, Des Cannon, Dennis Castanares and so many others. I think about Mr. Krause's science trailer, assemblies in the North Quad, graduation at the church in Westwood, memorable and not so memorable "senior pranks," 7th and 8th Grade ski trips to Mammoth and 9th–12th Grade ski trips to Utah, the annual grade retreats, and the dogs of Brentwood—Mollie, Cookie, Vegas and Mogul.

This has been a very busy school year and a wonderful prelude to a very exciting new chapter in the life of our school, as we work to bring to fruition our new partnership with the VA and as we begin the first phase of our 30-year Master Plan. Our new 72,000 sq. ft. Middle School will be an amazing addition to our campus, but its true importance lies in the new and expanded programs that both this building and the reconfiguration of the present Middle School to Upper School use will allow us to offer our students.

All of us at the school recognize that growth is essential, but we also remain very cognizant of what many of you have shared with me over the years—"Mr. V., don't let Brentwood change!" Not to worry, as we will all do our utmost to preserve that very special sense of community and family which is a hallmark of your alma mater.

I do hope you enjoy reading the entire alumni section and class notes, and I invite you to stay connected to the school in whatever ways you can and to "give back" whenever possible. Your involvement serves to make our school community even stronger and reaffirms the adage: Once an Eagle, always an Eagle!

Dave Velasquez (Mr. V.)

Assistant Head of School for Alumni Relations





Alumni mingle at the Beach Club Party in Fall 2016



CONTENTS

- 32 ALUMNI NEWS
 - 34 PROFILES
 - 37 EVENTS
 - 42 CLASS NOTES
-

OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

Dave Velasquez

Assistant Head of School
for Alumni Relations

Emily Manning Ellis '94

Director of Alumni Relations

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2016/2017

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Vice-President

Wendy Marantz Levine '91

Secretary

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STEVEN LECKART '98

How to Tell a Story

by JUDITH BEERMAN O'HANLON, Upper School English Teacher

Recently, Steven Leckart '98 spoke to Brentwood Upper School students about his work as a journalist and filmmaker. Steven's engaging presentation included a forthright recounting of the ten years it took from college graduation to the success he is enjoying today, which he attributes to "a combination of being very lucky and very stubborn."

He admitted that earlier in his career, he had debated quitting, but, due to his talent and tenacity, "eventually I got better and doors opened." After a period of time working in the music industry, he honed his writing skills at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism and at an early stint at *Wired* Magazine, ultimately becoming a freelance writer for publications as wide ranging as the *New York Times*, *Esquire*, *GQ*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Popular Science*, *Maxim*, and *Epic*. More recently, he has also written, directed and produced documentary films.

Steven has traveled worldwide to report on such topics as biotech, controversial treatments for military veterans with PTSD, 500 reviews of wondrous doodads for a website called Cool Tools, people competing in the Google Lunar X-Prize, a \$30 million competition for someone to land a rover on the Moon (for executive producer JJ Abrams), and Tower Records, the record chain that went out of business. Although he couldn't yet divulge the details, he indicated that he is writing a

two-part documentary for HBO about Muhammad Ali.

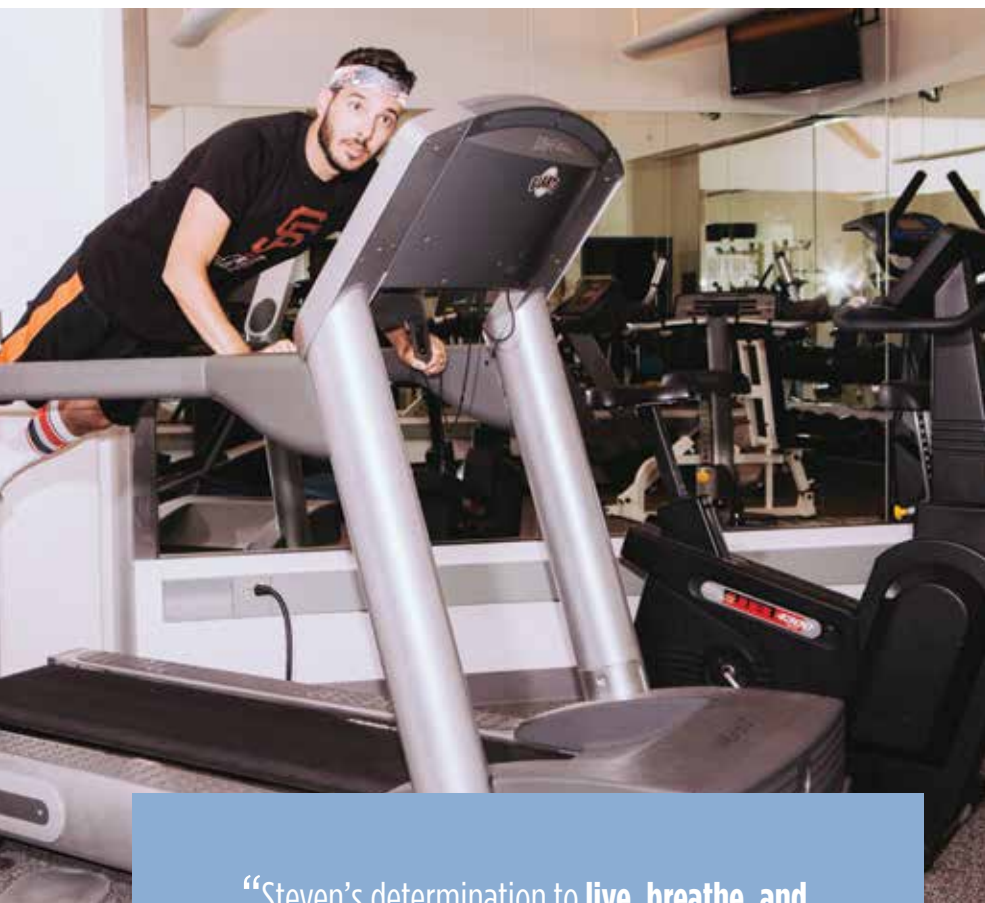
Steven's determination to live, breathe, and even eat what he writes about emerged in his entertaining descriptions. He recounted how, in researching the daily life of a pro mascot for the Giants, he himself learned the moves, donned a costume and performed at a game; when he investigated changes in the US Army's training program for recruits, he signed up for a brief stint, training in advance before subjecting himself to the tough program and then suffering from exposure to tear gas. Another challenge came when he wrote a story about the world's hottest pepper. He met a man who grew them and who overcame serious addictions, finding religion in the process. As Steven puts it, "Because I was willing to eat the pepper, the guy told me about the angel," making for a memorable story. The students watching the agonizing video of Steven eating that pepper were squirming in their seats.

I proudly listened to Steven share the evolution of his career, in



the process encouraging the students to work hard and never give up, and I was especially gratified as he mentioned more than once that the vital skills he learned in his Brentwood English classes, such as character analysis, clear written expression, looking for connections, or, as he put it, "finding out what is someone's story" are the very ones he uses today. After his presentation, Steven answered audience questions.

From listening to your presentation at Brentwood on April 18, it was clear that getting to the point of being established and successful doing what you love was not a smooth journey. You commented that "being very lucky and very stubborn" were key factors. What other qualities or experiences had an impact on you? What were some of the key turning points in the evolution of your career?



“Steven’s determination to live, breathe, and even eat what he writes about emerged in his entertaining descriptions.”

The first time a magazine bought me an airline ticket so I could report a story was a big turning point. In that case, they sent me to an Army base in rural Missouri. The idea was for me to participate in four days of basic training alongside actual recruits. My itinerary included tear gas exposure training and a night infiltration course where we were expected to crawl 100 yards while machine guns fired live rounds over our heads. The night before I arrived on base, I couldn’t sleep. But I figured that if I returned home with a half-decent story, the magazine would keep sending me places. And they did.

You have described how you have lived, breathed and even eaten

what you write about. Could you talk about some of your most memorable experiences working on your articles or films?

I was a producer on a documentary called Moon Shot where we spent nine months traveling the world interviewing people who are building robots to send to the Moon. During filming, we wound up climbing pyramids in Mexico, touching both the Berlin Wall and Wailing Wall, walking through abandoned neighborhoods in Fukushima, Japan, and watching the moonrise from a mountain village in rural India. Along the way, everyone on the crew became quite close. When I wrote for magazines, all of my travels were solo. Now I get to see the world with friends.

When Steven Leckart wrote an article about the daily life of the San Francisco Giants’ mascot, his research included learning dance moves and following the mascot’s training routine.

When you are coming up with subject matter, what kinds of stories inspire and energize you the most?

Characters who find themselves in over their heads, either by choice or by accident, are always fascinating.

In what ways, if any, did your education at Brentwood lead you to and prepare you for the work you do now?

My job is to gather all the disparate pieces of a true story, look for themes, symbolism, and patterns, and then unpack what it’s all really about on a deeper level. At Brentwood, we did the same thing when we read novels and wrote papers. I also worked on the newspaper for four years, which forced me to start trying to learn how to interview people.

What advice would you offer our current students, especially those who are intrigued by the idea of a career in journalism or film?

Be prepared to fail. Some projects don’t pan out at all; others require overcoming setback after setback. Either way, I always try to figure out why something went wrong and learn from it. ■



“The brain I cultivated in a world where knowledge is power took its first bloom at the East Campus on Barrington Place.”

Emmanuel “Manny” Benton ‘08 joined Brentwood as a sophomore from the LAUSD system. He spoke to our students at assembly along with the non-profit, A Sense of Home, sharing his moving story of the many caring teachers and coaches at Brentwood School who helped transform his life from an abused, delinquent foster youth, to a stellar student-athlete, artist, and now successful entrepreneur, PricewaterhouseCoopers accountant, and community spokesperson for Success In Degrees, the organization that helped place and mentor him throughout his high school and college years.

Where My Strength Comes From

MANNY BENTON '08

My experience at Brentwood is not something you can so easily put into words. How could I say that it changed my life or that it made me who I am?

If only I could somehow bundle words like “enormous” and “tremendous,” “transformation” and “metamorphosis,” “altruism” and “gratitude.” If only I could send a hug through words or have someone feel my tears of gratitude through a paragraph. Or maybe in 500 words or less tell someone thank you in a way that touches their heart and moves their soul. If I found these words so

easily, then I’d give them freely. So instead I say that I walked through Brentwood’s doors with the weight of the world on my shoulders and no clue of how to navigate its terrains. With no benchmark to gauge the worth of the diploma I held, I approached college with that same weight

only to find that with every step I took those chains fell off.

The brain I cultivated in a world where knowledge is power took its first bloom at the East Campus on Barrington Place, and it continues to flourish in my current state. With every morning I rise and ask myself, “How Powerful Could I Be?” only to be greeted by the man in the mirror who believes there is someone better I can become. “Bring that person outside of you today,” says the face staring back at me.

As I turn around to rise to the occasion and understand the new person I’ve become, I’m reminded of the foundation I’ve been given. Whether listening to the cheer of the crowd with a piece of rubber in my hand while passing the bronze eagle on my way to the field or putting charcoal to canvas in the south quad, my strength has come in my foundation.

With every path to greatness, hard work is inevitable, so the hard work we seek is hidden between the smiles of the faculty and staff who take a relentless approach to providing students with a delicate balance of real world experiences and with the answers

Thank you, Alumni Association President

GREGG COLVIN '90



to face them. Tie up the minds of these hardworkers and pour them into students like concrete in the foundation of a building. There you will find a stronghold that can withstand the tests of time. Those are the alumni who now face the world with their chins up high and feet cemented into their foundation. With such a foundation I'm challenged to ask, "How Powerful Could We Be?" I'm sure I could speak for all alumni when describing the enormous gratitude we feel. I wish I could articulate our appreciation for the altruism conveyed as we are propelled into metamorphosis. If only I could say thank you for the tremendous appreciation we have for the transformations you've made in our lives. If only I could share all this with you in only 500 words or less. If it were possible, I would. So instead I simply say, thank you! ■

Gregg Colvin '90 served as a Trustee and as the President of the BWS Alumni Association from 2015-2017.

He served on the alumni board for over five years before his presidency, and has been instrumental in collectively making Brentwood one of the strongest and most innovative alumni associations in California. Currently, Gregg acts as strategic advisor to large media companies and emerging startups after having served as the Chief Operating Officer of Universal McCann, one of the largest media / advertising companies in the world. He earned his J.D. from the UCLA School of Law and is also a graduate of the UCLA School of Film and Television. ■

EVENTS

FEBRUARY 22, 2017

Alumni Women's Forum

at the home of Angella Nazarian, mother of Phillip '10 and Eli '13



1 Event panelists Allison Abner '83, Danielle Sherman '01, Kira Chow '91, and Nicki Maron '05 with moderator Julie Uhrman '92 | **2** Negeen Roshan Ben-Cohen '97, Lesley Worton '97 and Shakira Gagnier '97 | **3** Mark Maron, Susan Maron, and Angella Nazarian | **4** Cheryl Karz Spound '87, Amy Cohen Epstein '94, and Jana Posalski '93 | **5** Guests truly enjoyed hearing the panelist's stories and great advice



SEE MORE PHOTOS ONLINE www.bwscampus.com/alumni

MARCH 16, 2017

Alumni Cocktail Party

AT THE BUNGALOW



1

1 Elizabeth Gamsin '07, Morgan Schwartz '07 and Dave Velasquez | 2 Alumni mingle at The Bungalow | 3 Marielle Stern '12, Jackie Bowman '13, Jared Hanson-Ashkar '13, and Madelyne Salo '13 | 4 Morgan Schwartz '07, Corey Burnett '07, Evan Glenn '08 and Alex Miller '08 | 5 Scott Kaufman '95, Kevin Bral '11 and David Foote '10 | 6 Daniel James '10, Tyler Coleman '10, Connor Walden '10 and David Pack '10 | 7 Jordan Sholem '11 and Sabrina Bral '11 | 8 Brett Hanson-Ashkar '06, Arianna Hanson-Ashkar '08, Alexandra Danzer '08 and Tamara Miller



2



3



4



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7

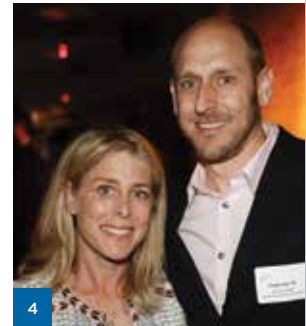


APRIL 26, 2017

Brentwood Connect

FEATURING BOARD CHAIR DAVID NATHANSON '94
AT SKYLIGHT GARDENS

1 Emily Ellis '94, David Nathanson '94 and Dave Velasquez | **2** Andrew Riley '08, Bryce Caster '10, and Patrick O'Donnell '10 | **3** Jeff Ehrenprets '95 and Wendy Levine '91 | **4** Amy Colvin Kaz '91 and Gregg Colvin '90



SEE MORE PHOTOS ONLINE www.bwscampus.com/alumni

FEBRUARY 3, 2017
Bay Area Alumni
Gathering

AT THE HOME OF BRIAN '95
AND JOSIE FRECKMANN

Alumni gathered in the San Francisco home of Brian '95 and Josie Freckmann and had a great evening catching up!



APRIL 21, 2017
Washington D.C.
Alumni Gathering

ROOT CELLAR AT
THE W HOTEL

College-age alumni enjoyed mingling with older alums in the DC Area.



APRIL 22, 2017
New York Alumni
Gathering

AINSWORTH PARK

Alumni of all ages attended this popular yearly event.







Share Your Story

Brentwood School alumni do some pretty amazing things once they leave the nest. Climb the world's highest peaks, teach underserved populations at home and abroad, work at the largest Fortune 500 companies, start their own non-profits, invent, create, perform, and so much more. **The reach of our growing alumni population and the breadth of activities in which they are engaged is showing the world that Brentwood alumni make a difference in all kinds of meaningful ways.**

Just like the two Alumni Profiles found in this magazine, **your journey may inspire and make a difference to our readers.** Are you engaged in an interesting service project at home or abroad? Does your job help those in need? How are you sharing your creativity with others? Has your path since Brentwood taken some interesting turns along the way? **We'd love to learn more.** Please contact the Alumni Relations Office at alumni@bwscampus.com and **share your story** today.

Get connected...

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-  [Brentwood School Alumni Network](#)
-  [@bwsalumni](#)
-  [@bwsalumni](#)
- [#bwsalumni](#)

In Memoriam



Kyle Barrett '07



Christopher Cabeen '03



David Givner '90



Rodney Park '88



Bruce Keast '76

GOODBYES TO TRUSTEES...

“As Ron wraps up his board service, there is no more fitting tribute than the fact that **we are breaking ground on the vision that he helped to manifest.**”

Ron Radziner has just completed his ninth year as a Brentwood School trustee, and it's been an amazing treat to have the talents of a world-class architect on the board. Throughout his tenure, Ron has chaired either Long Range Planning or Master Plan Implementation (MPI) Task Force; his leadership and practical skills have been a major asset in that work. Ron's judgment, perspective, and common sense have also been invaluable. Beyond his expertise as an architect, his contributions to the Head of School Search (that resulted in hiring Dr. Mike) and to Executive Committee discussions also made a significant difference.

According to BWS alumna and fellow trustee, Loren Montgomery '87, Ron possesses the three Ds: detail-orientation, determination and dedication. She says, “I am constantly impressed by how, despite his busy work and travel schedule, Ron is always ready to dig into every detail, come to every meeting and get his hands dirty.”



Dr. Mike's fondest visual of him comes from STEAM Day when Ron brought in a bunch of wood blocks and proceeded to create elegant designs with them, totally lost in the moment and in his natural element... the artistic process. Ron likes to describe himself as the hippie on the board, which is a good thing given the ample contributions have come from his humble, thoughtful way of approaching things.

As Ron wraps up his board service, there is no more fitting tribute than the fact that we are breaking ground on the vision that he helped to manifest. Many times, as questions swirled around us about timelines, budgets, and contingency plans, Ron remained calm in the center of the discussion and gave us all confidence that we could undertake this ambitious project. There is no doubt that Ron, through his tremendous contributions, has played a pivotal role in defining the future of Brentwood School. ■



Lorne Buchman

It is not often that an independent school, even an exceptional one like Brentwood, is fortunate enough to count a college president among its trustees. BWS has been lucky, indeed, to have had the service and expertise of Lorne Buchman for the past six years.

When Dr. Mike speaks of Lorne, he says that Lorne has “been with me every step of the way from Oakland to Los Angeles, from Redwood Day School to Brentwood School.” You see, Lorne joined the Art Center in Pasadena as its leader at the same time that Dr. Mike came to Brentwood, but the two had previously worked together at Redwood Day School, where Lorne was a trustee and Dr. Mike was the head of school. Both Lorne and Dr. Mike share a strongly-held belief that nurturing curiosity is critical to education, innovation, and leadership. It is no surprise, then, that Dr. Mike worked quickly to encourage Lorne's participation at Brentwood School.

Lorne brought his impressive talents to many committees: Education, Long Range Planning, Distance Learning, and Advancement. In each, he generously shared his considerable strengths, drawing from a breadth of experience in education. With knowledge in curriculum design, master planning, academic facilities, and non-profit fund development, Lorne has a knack for making the best inquiries at precisely the right time. While Lorne fulfilled the obligations of a trustee in every way, “it is what was not asked that has made (him) an exceptional board member,” according to Dr. Mike. Lorne offers alternate viewpoints to keep the conversation fresh and has a way of posing thought-provoking, philosophical questions so as to re-direct a discussion back to its essential theme. Lorne’s transition off the board leaves us stronger because of the benefit his service, wisdom, and perspective. ■



Baram Jalali has just completed his second term on the board. In his six years as a trustee, Bahram has participated in a range of committees including Education, Finance, Advancement, and Investment. He also served as chair of the Distance Learning Technology Task Force in 2011-2012, his first year as a trustee. His background in electrical engineering and technology meant that he was very well-suited to lead this group. A father of three Brentwood students, Bahram had the honor of presenting his eldest daughter with her diploma at this year’s commencement ceremony. Bahram’s intelligence, scientific curiosity, and thoughtful reasoning benefitted our board. He has also been an important asset to STEAM Day over the years by leading fascinating workshops, including one how to build your own cell phone. We are most appreciative of his service to the school and will miss his calm, always kind demeanor. ■



Eric Schiffer, in his time as a trustee, six years in total, served on many committees—audit, education, investment, advancement, and finance among them. It was Eric who led the effort to develop updated the “Guiding Financial Principles” for Brentwood that are still used as an important frame for future planning. In addition to being intelligent, Eric has great common sense and that means he can be counted on to ask the practical questions so essential to thoughtful dialogue. In addition, Eric is “that trustee” who always prepares in advance of meetings by reading every single attachment sent. A former chair of the board at UES, Eric brought his impressive breadth of experience to his work as a BWS trustee. Our school has benefitted greatly from his principled perspective and reasoned thinking. With two older graduates, Eric walked across the stage for the last time this year at Commencement this year when he gave a diploma to his youngest son. We are very thankful for Eric’s devotion to Brentwood School. ■

“Eric has great common sense and that means he can be counted on to ask the practical questions so essential to thoughtful dialogue. In addition, Eric is ‘that trustee’ who always prepares in advance of meetings by reading every single attachment sent.”

GOODBYES TO...

Keith Sarkisian

Lower School Director

BY DR. SUZANNE LYONS,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF
THE LOWER SCHOOL

I am honored to write on behalf of my colleague, mentor, and friend Keith Sarkisian as he transitions back to the East Campus next year. With over two decades of work and dedication at Brentwood School, Keith has had a profound impact on our community. Keith began his career at Brentwood Upper School in 1993 teaching mathematics and coaching Varsity tennis. He then moved into Admissions for a number of successful years before becoming the Lower School Director in 2012. As Lower School Director, Keith dedicated himself to upholding Brentwood's mission and values, fostering openness and acceptance on a daily basis, and he was deeply committed to promoting excellence and leading a vibrant learning community. He believes passionately and strongly in Brentwood's

philosophy of weaving emotional intelligence and character education into our academic structure, and he continually supported teachers in their quest to enhance curriculum by incorporating any ideas, technology, and literature that would increase community awareness of these important skills. His value of family, community, and personal growth underlined his leadership, and he put in great effort to ensure that teachers and students felt supported under his guidance. His mindfulness and trust in his colleagues also fostered independence and allowed teachers to explore and create inventive ways to educate their students. The faculty and staff always appreciated his genuine care and concern when it came to their professional and personal goals as well as their family needs.

In addition, his affable personality was a magnet for our K-6 students. His door was always open for any

community member, and it was not uncommon to see students playing in his office before Flag, creating artistic designs with Bendaroos, or engaging in casual conversations. Students will certainly miss seeking him out during recess, lunch, and Extended Day with their ideas, conflicts, or even with a request for him to play in their games. Outside on the yard, he would often challenge our younger students to use their creativity and imagination during free play, and they would eagerly embark on any fun task proposed by their principal.

Keith has a heart of gold and truly epitomizes Brentwood's core values in all that he does. When a student may not have made the best choice, Keith had the perception and empathy to look into each child's individual situation. With his compassion and understanding, he viewed mistakes as teachable moments aimed at educating the whole child, encouraging

students to accept responsibility and learn from the experience. Additionally, whether it be with students, faculty, or parents, he would listen to all sides of an issue before imposing his thoughts and recommendations in order to ameliorate the situation, and he never judged prematurely.

True to Keith's caring nature, he is now answering a call to action to help extended family in need of support. Keith comes full circle back to his roots in the classroom and as 9th Grade Class Dean where students will benefit from his mathematical mind as well as his mentorship and guidance. Keith, you have been an altruistic and understanding leader who will be deeply missed. Thank you for creating and supporting an environment where faculty, students, and parents could thrive and succeed. You have blazed a trail through the Lower School and through our hearts and minds. ■





Dr. Jawaan Wallace
Director of College
Counseling

BY YETUNDE RUBINSTEIN,
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF
COLLEGE COUNSELING

When I visited Brentwood, it was not with the intention of potentially transitioning across the country, but it was Jawaan's warmth, good humor, ease of self, and absolute professionalism, that enticed me to consider the bold move of coming to Brentwood. Now after two years, I can confidently state that I have not regretted that decision. I will miss so much about Jawaan, but what I most appreciate is her ability to bring joy and laughter to our space. College Counseling needs humor!

There are so many intangibles that Jawaan brought to her role as Director of College Counseling, a position in which she was charged with shouldering the dreams and collegiate hopes of parents, students, and community. She continually found ways to balance the demands of her role

while continuing to grow within her professional communities. I have witnessed her unwavering commitment to the Brentwood community on numerous projects, but most memorably, as I worked alongside her and fellow organizers of the Listen + Shift community day of reflection, fearlessly tackling issues of equity and inclusion that could have been easily overlooked. I suspect that she honed these skills during her time as an Admission Officer at Johns Hopkins University, where she was tasked with reviewing applications from some of our nations' poorest and brightest. Armed with these insights, coupled with the work of her Doctoral research, Jawaan moved on to the Galloway School in Atlanta, where she continued to mentor and champion those in her charge. Dr. Wallace's influence reaches far beyond Brentwood. As a long time reader of the Gates Millennium Scholarship Program, she has been at the forefront of providing opportunities for the brightest and most

underserved students. We are incredibly fortunate as a community to have had a talented professional such as Dr. Wallace, at the helm of our College Counseling program.

But there is so much more to her. Her hidden talents include Karaoke and crafting. You may have seen some of her handiwork hanging in the Senior Quad this year as part of the Die de Los Muertos Community Time celebration. Play the introductory chords to "For Good," from the award-winning musical *Wicked*, then step aside and prepare to witness a dynamic duet with Mr. Eric Sherman take flight. In the off-chance the original soundtrack of *Annie* touches her ear drums, she might just take off singing and dancing, momentarily forgetting her space in reality. And we can't forget how she has showcased her talents with her inventive Halloween costumes over the years.

As she leaves us to start a new chapter of her spectacular journey at The Marlborough School for Girls, we remain blessed

by her legacy. Everyone who has worked with Jawaan, whether for a week-long stint on a scholarship committee or toiling through a Doctoral program together, all testify to being changed "For Good," for having shared the space with her. I join the camp in wishing her much success and look forward to continuing to collaborate as we empower our students to greatness. ■

**"...she has been
at the forefront
of providing
opportunities
for the
brightest
and most
underserved
students."**

“Her relationship with **the kids**, like Rachel herself, is easy-going and open, so they **feel very comfortable talking with her**, even about the most challenging subjects.”

Rachel Clouser

Upper School English Teacher, Dean of the Class of 2019, and Summer at Brentwood Director

BY DAVID FOOTE,
DEAN OF STUDENTS

Rachel Clouser came to Brentwood in the fall of 2007, having attended a school similar to Brentwood—Blair Academy in Pennsylvania—and then coming west for college at the University of San Diego. After getting her Master’s of Education at Lehigh University, Rachel landed at Brentwood with a last name that was easy to pronounce but challenging to spell (Danjczek). Rachel moved into the 10th Grade English classrooms alongside department Chair Gail Coombs, teaching sophomores the complicated history and importance of British literature. When interviewed by *The Flyer* before the start of school her first year, Rachel told them, “I have a unique and unusual personality and I love to bring that into the classroom.” Ms. Coombs reflected on teaching with Rachel, “We were a good balance,



I think. My experience and her enthusiasm, my reserve and her lack of it...I loved sharing ideas with her about Henry V, the World War I poets, and George Orwell. She is one of the people I miss most from my time at Brentwood.”

The next ten years would bear that out, as Rachel brought a “light hearted attitude,” to Andrew Colbert’s ’10 sophomore class. Rachel later added a number of different senior English electives to her teaching load that highlighted her own travels around the world as well as her deep connection with Veterans. Over the last few years, Rachel has been instrumental in connecting Brentwood students with Veterans through her senior English elective Literature of War and Conflict. Former English Department Chair James Hughes said of Rachel, “In developing her elective, she ambitiously and enthusiastically collaborated with Kate Savage and me to develop the Veteran Portrait and Biography Project, which brought two sections of students during the last three years to interview

Veterans and produce a biography and creative story based on the Veterans’ lives. These were presented to the Veterans along with their portraits, and had a profoundly positive experience for all involved.”

Current English Department Chair Catherine Zusky said of working with Rachel, “She has always gone out of her way to support others in the department by sharing materials and ideas. I remember when I first started working at Brentwood, she came over to my house with a binder organized according to text, with each lesson planned to the day. I was absolutely intimidated by her organizational skills, but also absolutely grateful for her guidance. While Rachel has a rich sense of the history of this department, she has also innovated to create courses that match her own passions and experiences. She has set the standard for a model to prove that the study of literature can be enhanced and strengthened by way of civic engagement.”

In 2009, she undertook the four-year journey of guiding the Class of 2013 through

the Upper School as their Class Dean. Ian Schiffer, one of those students who was both in her literature class and in the Class of 2013 said, “Since 10th Grade when I had her as an English teacher, ‘Mama D’ has been more than a dean to me. She has been there for me as a teacher, as a mentor, and as a friend.” Other students echoed that sentiment; “On the East Coast College Trip, ‘Ms. D’ saved our lives by jumping in front of a car that almost hit us,” said Jordan Bostick. And Tristan Barbanel added, “We didn’t always make it easy, but ‘Ms. D’ stuck with us. We all know that she will always be a positive light for us no matter what.”

Rachel has watched the Class of 2019 with a careful eye. She always knows what is going on and what is complicating their lives, even when they have no clue she is there; it’s not “showy,” but it is heartfelt and sincere. Her relationship with the kids, like Rachel herself, is easy-going and open, so they feel very comfortable talking with her, even about the most

challenging subjects.”

Seeking other challenges outside of school life, Rachel at one time teamed up with beloved English teacher Lynette Creasy to train for a half marathon. As Rachel ramped up her training in preparation for her first marathon, they talked about literature and life. As they would leave the parking lot a couple of afternoons a week for their jaunt down San Vicente, Lynette would be endlessly talking and gesticulating, and Rachel would be questioning each step. Aside from Lynette’s wit and wisdom, it was at that marathon that Rachel met her future husband, Marty Clouser (thus gaining a much easier last name to spell).

As Rachel departs for a new school, she takes with her not only ten years of Brentwood experiences, but the connection that she helped bridge between the long time teachers of Brentwood’s past (in Lynette Creasy and Gail Coombs), and the new generation that teach alongside her now. ■

“If anyone can **master the ability to be in two places at one time** it is our beloved Dr. Cunnion. When you see her next year—on either campus—**see if you can spot her Time Turner necklace.**”

ADDED JOB...



Dawn Cunnion

Associate Head of School
and Interim Lower School Director

BY DR. MIKE RIERA

Remember Hermione Granger’s Time Turner from the Harry Potter series? (It was a necklace that allowed her to go back in time and essentially be in two places at the same time.) Well, we currently have one on order for next year, when Dawn Cunnion, in addition to her duties as Associate Head of School, takes on the additional role of Interim Director of the Lower School. If anyone can master the ability to be in two places at one time it is our beloved Dr. Cunnion. When you see her next year—on either campus—see if you can spot her Time Turner necklace. ■

GOODBYES TO...

Mary Beth Barry

Lower School Director
of Admissions and
Assistant Director

BY DAWN CUNNION,
ASSOCIATE HEAD OF
SCHOOL AND INTERIM
LOWER SCHOOL DIRECTOR

How does one even begin to describe Mary Beth Barry and her numerous contributions to Brentwood School in 600 words or less? When I accepted the privilege of writing about Mary Beth I was excited and honored, daunted and humbled because Mary Beth has given so much to the Brentwood community during her 22 years of service.

Mary Beth Barry came to Brentwood School as a Kindergarten teacher when the Lower School first opened. For those of you who may not know, the Lower School opened “virtually overnight” in the fall of 1995 with 300 students in grades K-6 and a full complement of faculty and staff. It was an exciting time in the history of Brentwood School, and Mary Beth served as a leader from the very start.

Mary Beth’s

Brentwood career began in Kindergarten, which we all know is a particularly special time. Mary Beth and her teaching partner, Kristen Marsico, worked together as a team to design a program for our youngest learners that fostered a sense of curiosity, was filled with creativity, and at the same time provided a strong academic foundation that students would build upon during their Kindergarten through 6th Grade journey. They were the first team to teach thematically through the use of six different units! In addition to the thought that went into developing an academic program, they made certain that each child was appropriately challenged, and nurtured. Not an easy task when we had 44 students who came from a wide variety of pre-school experiences. The Kindergarten program set the foundation for the whole Lower School as more and more grades moved to a team-taught thematic approach in the years that followed.

Mary Beth’s opportunity to influence

the Lower School community grew when, in 2001, she became the Lower School Director of Admissions and Assistant Director. Her wisdom combined with her love and enthusiasm for all things Brentwood, made her the perfect person to take families through the admissions process. She became the face of the Lower School, and in this role she not only molded the culture of the Lower School, she also changed lives.

As significant as this was, it was not all she did. You see, Mary Beth was not only face of the Lower School, she also brought spirit and energy to the community. At events throughout the year we would find her in a costume (Who else do you know that has a garage just for costumes and wigs?), whether it was leading the Halloween celebration, “wrestling” with the Masked Marauder, celebrating the 100th day of school, or sharing the magic of leprechauns with the Kindergartners. Her playful enthusiasm was contagious and other faculty and staff followed her lead.



She also served as mentor to many faculty over the years and as a trusted and respected advisor to parents. Mary Beth is an amazing listener, and when she offers advice it is done with kindness and respect...and a touch of firmness when needed.

But Mary Beth’s contributions were not limited to Brentwood School. She serves on the boards of both Determined to Succeed and The Alliance where she was also the board chair. Mary Beth’s dedication to diversifying independent schools and providing opportunities to a wide range of students and their families is inspiring and has touched many lives throughout Los Angeles. It is no surprise that The Alliance chose her as one of the recipients of this year’s Impact Award.

In closing, Mary Beth’s license plate sums up the reason for her drive (I know this is a really bad pun) to do all she has accomplished over her years at Brentwood School and beyond: MBB♥KIDS.

Mary Beth, thank you for being an inspiration to us all! ■



Jeff Schwartzman
Upper School
Mathematics teacher

BY THE UPPER SCHOOL
MATH DEPARTMENT,
PREPARED BY FRED RIBLE

Jeff Schwartzman has been a fixture in the Brentwood mathematics department for three decades, which still doesn't account for his entire teaching career. At this point, there's only one other math teacher who has experienced what the department was like without him, and the office will have a very different feel next year without our "Big Redhead" back in the corner. In fact, entertainingly, Jeff was scoring AP Calculus exams in the mid-90s when some of his colleagues in the math department were still in high school taking their AP Calculus exams. There are a lot of little things we'll miss: the spontaneous outbursts of laughter as he checks Twitter during free periods, the witty asides delivered under his breath, how he enthusiastically waves his hand in the air when one of us asks a student a

question, and his frequent pronouncement that "It's a great day for teaching mathematics!"

During his many years of tenure at Brentwood, Jeff has inspired and entertained both students and fellow faculty with his formidable intellect and irreverent humor. He appreciates the challenge and the beauty of mathematics for their own sake, and he enjoys opportunities to share with and learn from those around him. In this regard, he chose the perfect career.

In the classroom, Jeff seeks to build a sense of wonder for the aesthetics inherent in mathematics as well as an appreciation for the rigor and logical detail involved in expressing mathematical ideas. Outside the classroom, Jeff is always on hand to recognize and celebrate students' work and accomplishments at the gallery displays, the performances, the sporting events, and just about everything else. Notably, he has served as the "Voice of Brentwood Baseball" for years, a role in which he took the initiative to make public

service announcements in between innings for other events in the community ("This weekend, don't miss the Brentwood Theater Company's performance of *The Laramie Project*!").

We in the math department often turn to Jeff as the "math teachers' math teacher." His expertise and experience have been invaluable resources, and Jeff is always willing to offer insights and guidance, propose and review problems, and discuss ideas. He frequently passes along intriguing data sets or interesting scenarios for us to use in our classes. (You might not be aware, for instance, that Barrington Ave, Barrington Place, and Chayote Street form a perfect scalene triangle. Thanks, Jeff!) He's humble enough that I don't know to what extent he sees himself as a mentor, but all of us in the department have benefitted enormously from his presence and influence. We're better teachers because of him.

The administration took great advantage of Jeff's logical problem-solving capability by

assigning him as the East Campus Master Scheduler. Jeff took on the daunting annual task of sorting (and resorting, and resorting, and resorting...) the Upper School's 480-or-so students into their classes. This is no easy feat, considering the array of interests, conflicts, restrictions, and requests involved. Jeff once described it as trying to put together a four-dimensional puzzle, and that's not far off from the truth. He got this job because—no kidding—he was better at it than the school's scheduling software program.

Not many members of the community outside the math department and Jeff's students are aware that he wrote his own textbook for Brentwood's Honors Precalculus course. Like compiling the master schedule, this is a considerable and undervalued accomplishment. Jeff's broad knowledge base (he can give the location of any area code in the United States!) and appreciation for precision and detail served him well in devising clever problem scenarios for

GOODBYES TO...

JEFF SCHWARZMAN CONTINUED

his textbook. He amuses the department (himself included) by including his colleagues as characters in his problems. For instance, there's one problem that involves Mrs. Torre flying around on a broomstick. What were you trying to say here, Jeff?

What many of us will remember about Jeff at least as much as his professional contributions are his quick wit and clever sense of humor. If you were ever in a room when Jeff entered, then you probably remember him heartily announcing, "Remain seated, please!" That never gets old (or so he tells us). On assessments, Jeff always tried to help his students relax with a laugh beforehand. For starters, every assessment featured a comic strip on the front page (there's a lot of good math humor in Bill Amend's *Foxtrot*). During finals, Jeff enjoyed (along with his students, which was the entire point) writing a punny name on an extra copy of the exam and then slipping it into the middle of the stack. Hilarity (and stress relief) ensued when

the proctor called for "Anita Bath" or "Brock Lee."

How many students have declared, "I hope I do well on this test!" only to have been reminded by Jeff that "hope is not a strategy," or asked, "When will I ever use this in real life?" to be advised that "if you don't learn it, then you'll never use it." No doubt it'll be these often-repeated responses we've gotten so used to hearing from Jeff over the years that we end up adopting ourselves.

Jeff is so deeply rooted in the Brentwood community that it's hard to consider all the ways we'll feel his absence. Mostly, though, I'm sad to have to say goodbye to a friend and colleague who is so wholly dedicated to the success and well-being of his students, his fellow teachers, and the community at large. Jeff, I'm especially grateful for having had the opportunity to work so closely with you for the past 11 years, and I've valued your mentorship and friendship immensely. On behalf of the department, I wish you all the best in your new role as "mathematics teacher emeritus." ■



John Reimers
Upper School History teacher

BY THE HISTORY

DEPARTMENT FACULTY:

KATHERINE MCKELLAR,
HANK KORANSKY, COREE
NEWMAN, MARC SCHUHL,
DAVID SMITH, AND ROBERT
MICHELSON

The History Department at Brentwood School, of which we are very proud members, has a long-standing culture of collegiality, integrity, and the highest scholastic standards. Our colleague John Reimers embodies these attributes and he has played an indispensable part in shaping our collective identity. We hold our students to higher standards of achievement in part because that's what John did in his teaching of what is acknowledged by everyone to be the most academically challenging course in our curriculum, the AP United States History class. He unflinchingly holds the line, telling all sides of the American story, extolling the virtues of our heroes and taking them to task

when they fall short. We implore our students to think of what is virtuous and noble because that's what John did. He reminded us through his own interactions with students that we are teachers not just of history, but of life lessons, and that we help mold young people's characters as well as their minds. We treat each other with mutual respect and a delightful willingness to listen to, learn from, and laugh with each other in part because that's what John has done throughout his entire Brentwood career.

John has engaged us intellectually, with both passion and humility, "with malice toward none, with charity for all" (to quote his favorite American hero). His contributions on campus were not just limited to the classroom. He was the voice of Brentwood football, announcing home games for many years. In addition, he coached the Brentwood golf team for 15 years, leading them to two CIF championships.



Alexander Trivas
Middle School English teacher

BY LEONARD MAGIER,
MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGLISH
TEACHER

One of John's favorite assignments at Brentwood has been refereeing the Dodgeball game at September Splash. This assignment required John to make split-second decisions that inevitably sent half of the student body into a screaming, angered frenzy over the grave injustice of the call. It is a task from which most teachers shy away. Yet, John thrives in these situations that demand a swift and confident execution of justice.

Carl Schurz wrote, "Ideals are like the stars: we never reach them, but like the mariners of the sea, we chart our course by them." For all of us in the history office, John Reimers has been our North Star at Brentwood. John is celebrated for his brilliant mind, unwavering integrity, and sonorous and captivating lectures. He is one of the most honest, fair, wise, and kind-hearted humans we know. We are better teachers and we have been better to each other for this man's presence on our team. ■

If Edward Bulwer-Lytton is right the "the pen is mightier than the sword," then my friend Alex Trivas is far and away one of the most powerful individuals I have ever met! Walking into the Trivas classroom immediately acquaints one with this man's love for language and words. The "Wacky Word" posters made by students and plastered all over the walls celebrate the joy and richness of language, the possibilities in expression, and the fun side of words. One does not want to be "hornswoggled" by a dishonest salesman, and you sure don't want to make too big a "foofaraw" about the little annoyances in life, right? Any student, parent, alumnus, or staffer who has ever read a Mr. T report card, article, or announcement has marveled at his incredible facility with language, stylish phrasings, luscious and vivid descriptive abilities, and the way

he can pack so much meaning into such economical writing; the elegance and precision of this sophisticated wordsmith is undeniable. But the ultimate magic of Trivas rests in his ability to get others excited about and inspired by the possibility of words, the cathartic and freeing power of declaring and releasing one's deepest and most heartfelt emotions through the written word. Every year, we marvel at the Middle School Coffeehouse (a Trivas creation) at how the students find their "voice" through storytelling, poetry, and music. He also moderates the website "One Billion Poets," an incredible venue where kids from all over the world can share their poetry and find common ground in the expression of the triumphs and tragedies that make up their lives. What a striking lesson it is, indeed, to realize one's own experience is mirrored, understood, and shared by people of all cultures, genders, religions, and beliefs; the message of unity, of one human world of which we all are an important

and valued part, cannot be underestimated. Or, consider that Alex is on the board of "Get Lit," a Los Angeles based spoken word organization, lauded by our mayor and other dignitaries, that connects our city's youth with the great masters of literature (like Neruda or Bukowski) as models for their own personal expression. Bringing classic poetry to the streets has helped to unearth the creative potential of these students, giving this generation an outlet through which they can describe their unique experiences and advocate for change and a more enlightened world. To see the "Get Lit" players, including some of our own Brentwood students, who grace our school at a spirited assembly each year is to witness the power of words to change lives, to allow teenagers to give expression to the angst and drama that stir hearts and fire souls. Alex has always understood that the most valuable education allows us to explore our identities through shared experience and genuine communication.

GOODBYES TO...

ALEXANDER TRIVAS CONTINUED

After all, every year, by far one of the most compelling and invigorating classes in 7th Grade English happens on the day Mr. T comes to help the students create their “Sense of Place” poems for the Poetry Notebook project. A student will mention a setting, and before two minutes have passed and right off the top of his head, Trivas has brainstormed with the student a bunch of directions the student could follow in describing this place. Mention a baseball dugout, and Trivas has you describing the clackety-clack of cleats, the pop of the bubble gum, the missile-like trajectory of the spit-out sunflower seed shell, the rhythm of the banter between players, the emerald green of the turf, the utter abandonment and courage of the head-first slide, and so much more. And, how often have I seen Mr. T, with that sparkle of creation in his eye, at lunch or break sitting with a student helping her/him to refine

a poem or find that just right word or phrase the student is searching for to make the poem “perfect.” And, every year, without exception, the most poignant, personal, and impactful poems in the Poetry Notebook arise from this lesson, from this interaction with the amazing Mr. T. Such passion, combined with this kind of effort and patience, define Alex as a true educator and mentor.

Somehow, in the midst of all this activity, Alex still manages to be a devoted husband and the loving father of two incredible young ladies, two little eaglets (so, luckily, we will still have Alex around as a B-wood parent). Fact is that he and his amazing wife Tracy not only share the parenting responsibilities, but also collaborate on writing projects, a testament to their deep love, shared vision, and complete partnership. Boy, talk about a household exploding with creativity!! And, Alex is the healthiest eater I know, reminding us over and over that what we

put in our bodies counts. Yes, sometimes, I resent that Alex has made it so I cannot gorge on Krispy Kremes or down a pint of Ben and Jerry’s guilt-free; he has become my dietary guru and conscience... and I know I am better for it. One can see how thoughtful this fellow is about every aspect of life, a man of pure intentions and a lifestyle to match.

The best teachers inspire us to reach for our best, to question, to inquire, to challenge, to care, and to feel. Alex Trivas has been a master of his profession for 15 years at Brentwood School, and we are a richer, more creative, more compassionate community because of his efforts and spirit. We want to celebrate and honor Alex’s deep and everlasting contributions to the intellectual striving and journey of self-realization that is the essence of the Brentwood School. And now, it is time for Alex to take the leap and share his brilliance with the larger community as an author, screenwriter, and

“The best teachers inspire us to reach for our best, to question, to inquire, to challenge, to care, and to feel. Alex Trivas has been a master of his profession for 15 years at Brentwood School.”

Lord knows what else. I look forward to the day when a Trivas script is immortalized on screen, and I can say I knew him when.

Alex, you will be missed by the myriad of folks whose lives you have impacted positively while a part of Brentwood’s faculty; please know that our gratitude for what you have given us will never wane, and we will always remember, cherish and be grateful for having known you. ■

HELLO TO...



Rose Roman

We are delighted to welcome Rose Roman back to Brentwood School as our new Summer at Brentwood Director and Advisor for the Aerie Yearbook. Rose worked on the West Campus for ten years as both a classroom teacher and in the Technology Department before leaving for a short while to pursue other endeavors, working in business and entertainment. After several years in the digital entertainment industry, she is back with us. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education from the University of Pittsburgh and a Master's Degree in Administration/Supervision from McDaniel College (formerly Western Maryland College). ■

Faculty/Staff Anniversaries

5

5 YEARS

Ryan Bailey
Jonah Blumstein
Jessica Boardman
Jose Castro Funes
Laura Feucht
Pam Horrocks
Jessica James
Teri Kebby
Rad Khandelwal
Hayley Kritzer
John McInerney
Josh Melnick

10

10 YEARS

Sarah Bishop
Rachel Clouser
Cameron Coleman
Sarinah De La Cruz
Rana Hakhamimi
Amelia Hollis
Crystal Joslin-Mikels
Cristina Macaraeg
Marc Schuhl
Michael Workman
Farah Yaqubi

15

15 YEARS

Cassy Clarke
Kelly Heard
Rob Jost
Michael Kalan
Alex Trivas
Concepción Valeriano
Rossana Whitmore

20

20 YEARS

Elisabeth Abarbanel
Jamie Chow
Michele Costa
Dawn Cunnion
Cay Enns
Lisa Glick
Hank Koransky
Asako Kurosaka-Jost
David Svec

25

25 YEARS

Carlos Godinez
Ellie Novaes

30

30 YEARS

Jeff Schwartzman

35

35 YEARS

Marla Torre

45

45 YEARS

Nicole Bali



PHILANTHROPY AT BRENTWOOD SCHOOL

The vibrant and inspiring Brentwood School experience that we value is dependent upon more than tuition dollars alone. The dedication of our school community through volunteerism and philanthropy helps sustain the Brentwood School we all love. We count on each and every family to embrace the spirit of generosity by participating in the following ways:

BRENTWOOD FUND

Brentwood Fund dollars are spent the same year in which they are given, so your gift goes immediately to work in the operating budget. By making a donation to the Brentwood Fund, you directly support key aspects of the school, such as financial aid, academic and extracurricular programs for our students, professional development opportunities for our teachers, and care and maintenance of our facilities.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

The Parents Association offers activities and volunteer opportunities that enhance our sense of community at Brentwood School. All funds raised become part of the Parents Association's year-end gift to the school's endowment fund.

THE BENEFIT AND AUCTION

Your participation by becoming an event underwriter, buying tickets to the event, and/or donating or purchasing auction items makes a difference every year.

THE PARTY BOOK

When you host or co-host a party and/or purchase admission to parties, you have fun, meet new people, and benefit Brentwood School all at the same time.

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Major gift efforts target improvements to our facilities for better teaching and learning, as well as enhancements to our endowment for a more secure future. When asked to be a part of such efforts, including capital campaigns, your contribution leaves a lasting legacy. Major gifts are separate from, and in addition to, donations made to the Brentwood Fund.

WAYS TO GIVE

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More than 700 people watched Dr. Mike bring down the Middle School Field wall with a backhoe amid a shower of confetti, launching the beginning of a new era in the history of Brentwood School.

Brentwood, Even Better: The Groundbreaking

by **GENNIFER YOSHIMARU**, Assistant Head of School for Advancement

This time of year is filled with goodbyes. The first big one is Commencement. Long after the seats are vacant and the stage is empty, the memory of fond reminiscences, poignant music, words of wisdom, and heartfelt congratulations lingers. Sixth graders also bid farewell to their years at the Lower School as they look forward to moving east. Following suit are the eighth graders with their anticipation of climbing the hill and the associated range of emotions.

This year, hundreds packed the Gym to celebrate the service of four long-term and treasured faculty members—Jeff Schwartzman, Mary Beth Barry, John Reimers, and Alex Trivas—as they prepared to leave our “Eagles” nest. Did you know that they have 85 years of service between them? That is almost twice as long as there has been a Brentwood School!

On June 11, there was one final goodbye added to the list, and it was **huge**. It was a defining moment in school history as we bade farewell to the field (the Middle School Field) as we’ve known it since 1972. We spread the word that everyone who loves Brentwood School was invited to join in, and the response was staggering. Close to 700 came to

“Everyone present enjoyed their last romp on the grass that has hosted memories from athletic events to Harvest Festivals to Candlelighting. At the end of the day, the crowd literally buzzed with positive energy, school pride, and the kind of connection that comes from a real sense of community.”

celebrate with us; I am confident that there have never been more Brentwood fans in one place at the same time!

It was a crowd of all ages, yet there was something for everyone as the entire field was covered with fun things to do and delicious food to enjoy. For those who couldn't attend, think Harvest Festival meets Homecoming with an added opportunity to practice graffiti art on the grass, run a shovel and wheelbarrow race, shoot a giant slingshot, gorge on In-N-Out fare, and jam along to tunes spun by our own student DJ, Nick B. '19.

The **big moment** came when Head of School Dr. Mike climbed into a giant backhoe, turned it to the wall bordering Sunset Boulevard with “Brentwood Eagles” proudly painted on it, and toppled the wall with a few powerful strikes of the machine's claw. At that very instant, hundreds of confetti wands spewed colorful paper through the air, and the crowd cheered. It was a very fond farewell for the space that has served as a reminder of school pride for decades.

Everyone present enjoyed their last romp on the grass that has hosted memories from athletic events to Harvest Festivals to Candlelighting. At the end of the day, the crowd literally buzzed with positive energy, school pride, and the kind of connection that comes from a real sense of community. The advancement team created this raucous groundbreaking celebration that united generations of Eagles; they better rest up and start percolating creative ideas now because in two short years we will say hello to our new Middle School Building and Field. And, this will be a tough act to follow! ■

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Brentwood School was founded in 1972
and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color,
creed, sex, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin.

Brentwood School inspires every student to:

Think critically and creatively.

Act ethically.

Shape a future with meaning.

Core Values: Trust, Respect, Responsibility,
Honesty, Caring, Community, Diversity



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Los Angeles, CA 90049

Address Service Requested



PARENTS OF ALUMNI:
Please forward this publication to your alum(s) and keep Brentwood School informed of updated addresses.

PARTING SHOT

Before Spring Break, we asked all Brentwood families to share some of their **favorite, free activities** during the break. Photos were **posted on Instagram with the hashtag: #bwsfreetime**. The community definitely had some fun sharing all the ways you can have a great time in L.A. without spending a dime. The incentive was for the winning image to be featured on the back cover of *BWS Magazine*. **And the winner is: TONY JOHNSON**, East Campus Theater Production Manager, and parent of Augie '28, who photographed an afternoon stroll with his family in Santa Monica.