

Mid-Peninsula High School

CONNECTIONS

M A G A Z I N E :: S U M M E R 2 0 1 8



ASL Teacher Francis Phiri: A Life of Gratitude, Page 7

RESPECT :: KINDNESS :: ACCEPTANCE :: RESPONSIBILITY



LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

It's hard to fathom that this school year is coming to a close. I can still recall being in high school and feeling that the school year would never end. Now, the years seem to flash by, with students growing physically, intellectually, and emotionally right before our eyes.

This past year, my first as a Head of School, marks the only year in my 23-year career in education when I haven't been in the classroom teaching English. It's a bit disconcerting knowing that I haven't read or discussed great works of literature with high school students. I realize that the demands of the job of Head of School would make teaching a full class complicated. I would love, however, to stay connected to the classroom and to our students, so one of my goals is to teach at least part of an English class next year.



A certain amount of idealism propels people into education. My talented colleagues could have chosen any number of careers as they graduated from college, and many of those careers are no doubt higher paying than teaching jobs. Teaching is a vocation, and my Mid-Pen colleagues heard a calling to make a difference in young people's lives. As teachers, we have a certain

double vision when looking at our students; we see students both as they are today and as they can be in the future. It is this faith in students' ability to dream big and work hard, plus a growth mindset and a creative approach to pedagogy, that characterize the Mid-Pen faculty.

Where the rubber hits the road for all teachers is the shared classroom space with students. I spent a thoroughly enjoyable day in the fall shadowing a 9th grader. The day was a dynamic one: I did the wrong problem in the worksheet in geometry, I looked at (but didn't take) a history test, and I aced the grammar lesson in English. I learned a ton about what it means to be a Mid-Pen student, but the most gratifying takeaway that I had was that Mid-Pen students are in excellent hands. Our teachers know their subjects, they know how to teach those subjects, and they care deeply about every student in our building.

It's been an honor and a pleasure to serve Mid-Pen. I look forward to the years to come. 🐉

Phil Gutierrez
Phil Gutierrez



CONNECTIONS

Naomi Orta '19 reviews an assignment with math teacher Nicola Willits.

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The views expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors.

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Student investors Hannah Lee and Rebecca Newman, above, and Tom Hagenah and Nathan Cooper check on their portfolios.

Playing the Market for Fun, Profit, and Academic Credit

The old investor adage to “buy low and sell high” is easier said than done, as students in David Oliver’s consumer math class learned this past year after playing “The Stock Market Game,” an online simulation of global capital markets that engages students in the world of economics, investing, and personal finance.

Teams of students began the simulation in the fall with \$100,000 in imaginary funds they used to “buy” stocks, mutual funds, and bonds on the NYSE and NASDAQ. Over the course of six months they researched and analyzed real companies. They decided what to buy, placed orders in real time, paid brokers’ fees, and kept track of their portfolios.

The students competed with peers across the state to build the biggest portfolio by the game’s end in April.

“The game’s value is that it introduces students to real-world economics, risk management, and how to research companies,” David said. “At the same time they are learning teamwork and valuable math skills. Plus, it’s just fun.”

Junior Nathan Cooper used an app on his iPhone to trade and check the value of the portfolio he managed with Tom Hagenah ‘19. Over the course of the game, the pair achieved a return of about 7%, compared with the Dow’s

return of less than 4.5%. Their investing acumen allowed them to finish 58th out of 314 teams in the region.

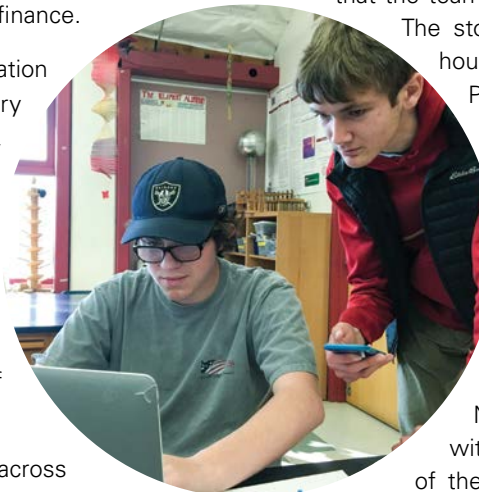
How did Nathan and Tom beat the market? “We were actually pretty conservative,” Nathan said, explaining that the team kept about half its money in cash.

The stocks the students bought included household names like Starbucks and Pepsi, tech giants Google and Apple, and retailers Amazon and Costco. They were particularly bullish on Costco, but sold half their holdings at the beginning of March to invest in steel, following the announcement from Washington of new tariffs.

Juniors Hannah Lee and Rebecca Newman were even more careful with their money, putting only \$8,000 of their portfolio into stocks and leaving the rest in cash – but still coming out ahead at the end of the game.

“I think we were overly conservative,” Rebecca acknowledged, “and we needed to take more risk with how much we invested. I learned that if there is a bull market, you have to be willing to take some risk.”

Having seen the market’s volatility, however, the students know that the market can go down as easily as it can go up. Nathan’s advice to prospective investors? “Do your homework, invest smart, and don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” 🐉



Mid-Pen Competes at Facebook's Battle of the Bands



From left, Quinn Maloney '18, Alfredo Moran '20, Jeannessa Lurie '19, Ryan Burton '18, and Emma Marek '20

The students in Mid-Pen's Studio Ensemble music class took their act on the road this past spring – specifically a quarter mile down Willow Road to the Facebook campus, where on May 12 they competed in a Battle of the High School Bands as part of Facebook's Bay Area Brew and Fan Fest.

One of six bands to compete, the five students took to the stage to unleash a tight set that included both diversity and intricacy, running the gamut from the prog-punk of Queens of the Stone Age to the sophisticated blues of the Beatles. The outdoor festival was the first of five community events Facebook hosts each summer to showcase local farmers, artisans, and musicians – and

also the first to feature student musicians from the area.

Though the Mid-Pen group did not take home any of the top three prizes, the students demonstrated a real love of the craft by supporting other performers, moshing in front of the stage during another band's set, and eagerly chatting with the other musicians between sets.

"It was thrilling to hear the group supported by a professional sound-system, and all the students performed beautifully," said music teacher Jameson Swanagon. "To perform with other student musicians in front of a crowd like this really represents a high water mark for Mid-Pen music." 🎸

Awards Ceremony Celebrates Student Achievement

Presented annually at Graduation, this year's **Founder's Award** was presented to Aidan Lloyd-Tucker '18. The school's highest honor, the Founder's Award is given to the senior who best exemplifies the founding principles of Mid-Peninsula High School, including growth and change, achievement, determination, and character.

Additional awards were presented at an all-school ceremony the week before graduation. Ben Aguiar '18 received the **Douglas C. Thompson Award for Inspired Growth**, given to a senior who has achieved the greatest personal and/or academic growth during his or her time at Mid-Pen.

The **Leonard W. Ely Community Award**, presented to a senior who has made the greatest contribution to the well-being of the school and/or outside community, was given to Ryan Burton '18.

The **Harvard Book Award** for excellence in scholarship and high character with achievement in other fields was presented to Andrew Dollente '19. Beau Andre '20 and Natalie Nunez '20 received the Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto's **Andy Anderson Award** for the most improved GPA between freshman and sophomore years.

Grade Level Awards are given to one or more students in each grade for high achievement in academics. This year's winners were Bridget Cruz '21, Emma Marek '20, Davey Feng '19, Chloe Lawler '18, and Schuyler Zandbergen '18.

Two sports awards were also presented. This year's **Student-Athletes** were Schuyler Zandbergen '18 and Allyson Huelsenkamp '18, while Valerie Rendon '20, Ryan Burton '18, and Nate Smith '18 were named **Athletes of the Year**. 🏆



Students and Teachers Explore Diversity and Inclusion

With guest speakers, staff trainings, and student-led initiatives, the Mid-Pen community spent much of the 2017-2018 school year focusing on diversity and inclusion as a theme for the year.

Led by Director of Diversity Andrea Henderson, the school created a diversity council, comprised of members of the student Diversity Club as well as teachers and staff, to help promote equity, justice, and, of course, diversity on campus.

In late November, a group of Mid-Pen students and adults traveled to the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) and the People of Color Conference (PoCC) in Anaheim, CA. The two conferences, with almost 6,000 attendees total this year, run concurrently and are organized by the National Association of Independent Schools.

Accompanied by Andrea and Biology teacher Julia Longnecker, the four students spent five days attending workshops and sessions featuring nationally prominent speakers. Alynna Vilchez '19 and Ryan Burton '18 had attended the SDLC previously, so they took on a leadership role with the two students who were attending the conference for the first time, Keaton Berkes '19 and Naomi Orta '19.

Among the speakers at the conference was Kimberlé Crenshaw, professor at UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School. Professor Crenshaw specializes in race and gender issues and spoke on intersectionality, which is the study of how intersecting minority identities relate to systems and structures of oppression, domination, and discrimination. Another keynote speaker was Ta-Nehisi Coates, a national correspondent for *The Atlantic* and author of the New York Times bestseller *Between the World and Me*, who participated in a moderated conversation focused on his writings on race and racism in the United States.

The students spent their days workshopping with students from all around the country – 1,600 of them, to be exact. They returned to Mid-Pen with new knowledge and insight that they shared with the Mid-Pen community during a variety of activities and events they helped organize during the winter and spring.

For example, in April the school recognized Celebrate Diversity Month, a nationwide program started in 2004 to honor and recognize the diversity that impacts all aspects



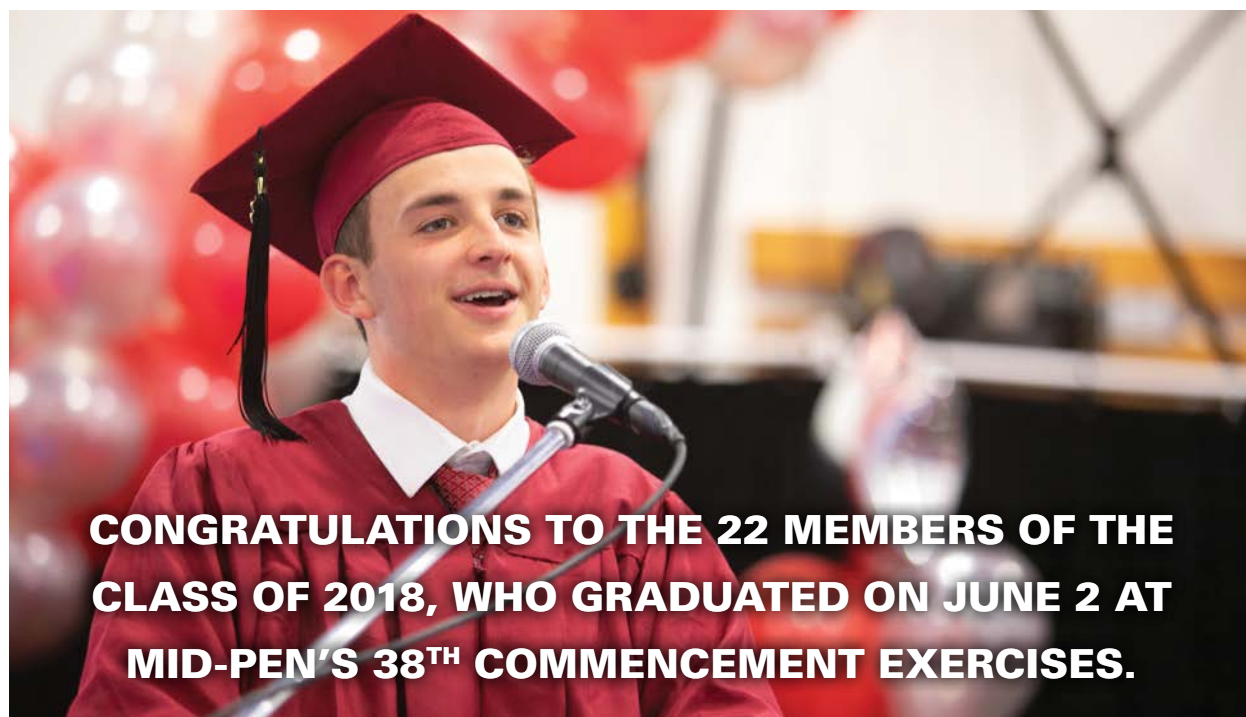
From left, Mid-Pen students Keaton Berkes, Ryan Burton, Naomi Orta, and Alynna Vilchez at the SDLC.

of our lives. Students participated in Friday morning seminars led by teachers on issues such as adoption, white privilege, LGBTQ issues, radical Jewish culture and liberal Christianity, and lesser known factors pushing Latin American migrants to the U.S.

The program was designed to acknowledge and celebrate differences in race, gender, language, socio-economic status, ethnicity, nationality, and abilities. "By understanding that we are all different and that we each bring incredible talents, abilities and skills to our shared world, we can gain a deeper understanding of one another," explained Andrea.

For its part, the faculty participated in a number of professional development activities on the topic, including several in-service workshops presented by facilitators from Our Family Coalition, who spoke about the issues facing LGBTQ students and integrating LGBTQ topics and awareness into the curriculum. Students from the diversity club also helped the staff explore cultural identifiers such as race, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and ability/disability.

"I am proud of the enthusiasm with which the staff and students have embraced the work of diversity/equity and inclusion," said Andrea. "It can be a difficult thing to take a look at yourself and those around you and maybe see yourself or others in a way that you hadn't before. Leaning in to the discomfort can also be extremely rewarding. Change and growth are always a positive thing, and trying to live in a world that is just and equitable and inclusive should be what we all strive for." 🌸



Instead of selecting student speakers, it is a school tradition to welcome any student to speak who wants to. This year, four students took the microphone to share very different stories about their Mid-Pen experiences.

Referring to his love of cooking, **Ryan Burton '18**, above, drew a parallel between success in the kitchen and success in school. Just as not every recipe turns out a masterpiece, not every assignment results in an A. "High school has prepared me, and hopefully all my fellow graduates," he said, "not to be deterred by these perfect failures and to keep looking ahead to the next masterpiece."

Aidan Lloyd-Tucker '18 spoke about community. "Your community is like a climbing rope; everyone attached has a different background, but everyone is tied together by the rope," he said. "If you slip or fall, remember that you are still connected to this rope, and

your community will pull you back up, and help you adapt and continue. With a strong community behind you, you can face the unknown. Looking forward, as we go into the world, I hope that all of us can find that special community that allows us to try, fail, and learn."

Having come from China two years ago as a sophomore, **Jiaxan Li '18** said she aspired to speak at graduation after watching *High School: The Musical* and thinking that giving a graduation speech "looked cool." She described the challenge of learning English and her reluctance to speak in public, until finding her voice in Laurie Miller's Socratic Seminar senior year. "With Laurie's help, I no longer felt nervous," she recalled. "Socratic Seminar gave me the courage to give a speech in front of all of you here.... My home is not here, but Mid-Pen makes me feel comfortable and safe."





Schuyler Zandbergen '18 recalled the many times he has eaten lunch in one of the hammocks under the willow tree behind the school. Even on the quietest days, there is always a little bit of movement. "Whether it be from the wind or the motion of my breath, I can never lie perfectly still," he reflected. "To turn this hammock into a metaphor, you can't go to school and remain entirely unchanged. Little by little, I'm moved.... There was not great movement that changed me into older me, just a steady inclination towards maturity. Now that I look back, I can see how far those movements have taken me."



This year's alumni speaker was **Jeff Gielow '98**, who for the past six years has been a middle school counselor with the Palo Alto Unified School District. A few days before graduation, he attended the traditional Senior Dinner, where he was touched by the reflections and expressions of thanks the students shared with their teachers.

"I want you to know that these students shared their thoughtful feelings with their teachers about their deep appreciation for being seen for who they are, believed in, encouraged, and accepted by the Mid-Pen community," he said in his speech. "These are big-ticket items for any of us, but I would say especially for teens, particularly for ones who may not have received recognition and validation at their previous schools. As I heard these stories, I realized Mid-Pen gave us all something special. It gave us a place to be heard. A place to be seen as we are. A place to be real, as well as held to real expectations for success." 🐉

NEXT STEPS FOR THE CLASS OF 2018

Members of the Class of 2018 were accepted to the following post-secondary programs. Programs in bold are those that students will be attending in the fall.

Bates College
 Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
College of San Mateo
Colorado State University
 CSU Channel Islands
CSU Chico
 CSU East Bay
 CSU Monterey Bay
 CSU Sacramento
 CSU San Marcos
 De Anza College
Dynamy Internship Year
Foothill College
Front Range Community College
 Grand View University
 Grinnell College
 Lindenwood University
 McKendree University
 Montana State University
 Oberlin College
Ohlone College
Oregon State University
 Otis College of Art & Design
 Pacific Northwest College of the Arts
 Parsons School of Design
Pratt Institute
Purdue University
 Robert Morris University
San Diego City College
San Jose State University
 Savannah College of Art & Design
 School of the Art Institute of Chicago
 School of Visual Arts
 Seattle University
Santa Monica College
 Sonoma State University
South Puget Sound Community College
 St. Mary's College
 UC Davis
 UC Merced
 UC Riverside
 UC Santa Barbara
UC Santa Cruz
 University of Colorado, Boulder
 University of Oregon
 University of Puget Sound
 University of Redlands
University of Washington
 Wesleyan University
Williams College



FRANCIS PHIRI

Teaching ASL

With a Dose of Gratitude

Francis Phiri, Mid-Pen's teacher of American Sign Language (ASL), has a way of making people smile. If you aren't smiling when you enter his class, you will be by the time you leave 50 minutes later.

You will be smiling because of Francis's unmatched warmth and energy. You will be smiling because learning a new language and culture with Francis is pure fun. You will be smiling because while you learn, Francis will devote himself to learning about you. Mostly, though, you will be smiling because you have realized how grateful you are for what you have in life.

Francis himself is almost always smiling – out of gratitude, he says – though it's safe to say that most people would struggle to maintain such positive energy after living through what he has experienced. Born and raised in the African country of Zambia, at the age of 12 Francis contracted malaria, complications of which led to the gradual loss of his hearing, so that by the age of 18 he was entirely deaf. After both his parents became ill and died, he went to live with his aunt, who passed away when he was in 10th grade. Francis dropped out of school and moved in with his brother. In a final cruel twist of fate, his brother also died, leaving him homeless and alone.

Losing his family as well as his hearing, Francis found his opportunities in life rapidly narrowing. Determined to succeed and to get an education, he asked for help from

the International Labor Organization, which provided him with a scholarship to a boarding school for the deaf in Lusaka, Zambia's capital, so that he could finish high school. There he met Frank Lester, an American teacher working as a Peace Corps volunteer.

"Francis was an outspoken, outstanding, and active participant and always very helpful. When I encountered language or cultural barriers, Francis was there to mediate," recalled Frank, who is also deaf. "I saw that he loved to learn and had a love for people. That was when I decided to bring him to America."



**I BELIEVE
THAT, HAD I NOT
LOST MY HEARING,
I WOULD NEVER
HAVE COME
TO AMERICA."**



After graduating from high school in 2008, Francis returned with Frank to California. He lived with Frank and his family while learning English and ASL and attending Ohlone College in Fremont, then moved to upstate New York to pursue a degree at Rochester Institute of Technology's National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

"Everything happens for a reason," said Francis, explaining that if not for his misfortunes as a teen, he would not be where he is today. "I believe that, had I not lost my hearing, I would never have met Frank Lester and come to America."

Along with his aunt, Frank has been Francis' greatest inspiration. "Frank saw something special in me," Francis explained. "He saw that I was motivated and wanted to learn. He showed me that being deaf does not mean limiting my goals and dreams."

Given his relationship with Frank, Francis knows intimately the power of a teacher who can truly see, know, and connect with students. The students in his

immersive and energetic ASL classes achieve fluency remarkably fast, in large part because of the close relationships he builds with them. His students love ASL, to be sure, but they are also driven to work hard for Francis. They know his story, admire his resiliency, feel his gratitude, and recognize that they, too, can overcome whatever obstacles they may face. It's no wonder that ASL has become one of Mid-Pen's most popular classes.

Francis lives in San Francisco with his wife Kaci and spends most of his free time growing the non-profit organization he recently started, Give Back to Community-Zambia, which works to advance the opportunities for deaf children and their families in Zambia.

If you're interested in perpetuating Francis' boundless gratitude and making a difference in the lives of children from his home country, as he is making difference in the lives of students here at Mid-Pen, visit www.gbzcambia.org and learn more about what gratitude, compassion, and dedicated teachers can achieve in our world. 🐉



Francis teaches Emma Marek '20 the sign for "me too."

Planning Begins for School's 40th Anniversary

For every school, there exists an ever-present need to learn and evolve. As Mid-Peninsula High School looks forward to its 40th anniversary in 2019-2020, the Board of Trustees and Head of School Phil Gutierrez have undertaken several projects as part of a broad initiative to address the school's needs of today as well as its dreams for the future.

Parent Survey

In April, the school surveyed parents to get feedback on a variety of issues, from homework and classroom teaching to parent communication and school culture. Over 70% of parents responded, offering a comprehensive picture of what the school is doing well and where it needs to improve.



CLASSROOM TEACHING

81% are satisfied with classroom resources such as technology and textbooks.

7 out of 10 expressed satisfaction with projects, trips, and hands-on learning opportunities.

3/4 say teachers are sensitive to their child's learning style.

78% say the school gives a reasonable amount of homework.

43% believe teachers help students develop effective work habits.

Half say teachers give helpful comments on work.

I really appreciate the support my student receives from all her teachers. They are what make her excited to go to school every day!



COMMUNICATIONS

I love the parent/student/teacher conference set-up.

9 out of 10 say they are well informed about what's going on at school and are satisfied with communication with the school.

Fewer than **4 in 10** said they check the teacher pages on the school's website regularly.

87% praised Core teachers' communications with parents.

4/5 believe there is a wide variety of opportunity for parents to be involved with the school.

I like the diversity of the school, and the students respect one another regardless of their differences.



There is great sensitivity to most kinds of difference, but I'm not sure it's always put into practice regarding learning differences.

The positive, supportive, non-stressful culture at Mid-Pen has been great for my daughter (and, hence, for us too).

SCHOOL CULTURE

97% say their child feels safe at Mid-Pen.

94% believe the school environment is caring and supports learning.

93% agree that the school is sensitive to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and abilities.

9 out of 10 say their child feels respected at school.

4/5 believe students treat one another with respect and that their child has a close relationship with at least one adult at school.



***“Dedicated to the belief
that all students belong with
expert and compassionate
teachers, Mid-Peninsula High
School empowers students
with the knowledge and
purpose to impact a
complex world.”***

**Mid-Peninsula High School Mission Statement
Approved by the Board of Trustees, May 2018**

Updated Mission

Throughout the spring, an *ad hoc* task force of trustees, faculty, and parents set about refining Mid-Pen’s mission statement. Co-chaired by trustee Mary Hayes and Director of Admissions Randy Johnson, the committee’s goal was to create a concise, memorable statement that would serve as a starting point for conversations with prospective parents and others interested in Mid-Pen. The group solicited feedback from students and alumni, studied dozens of school mission statements, wrote countless drafts, debated form and language, and ultimately crafted a statement that the Board of Trustees approved in May.

Strategic Planning

The school has enlisted Carla Silver of Leadership+Design to help craft a strategic plan starting in the fall. Mid-Pen last engaged in the strategic planning process more than ten years ago. The new strategic plan is expected to provide a road-map for adaptive change. With the head of school transition completed, admissions on the upswing, and the school’s finances in good order, Mid-Pen is in a position of strength to start charting its future. The goal is to develop a set of priorities for a long-term vision of the school grounded in the school’s mission, values, and culture.

The strategic planning process will need the entire school community’s collective participation, so look for an invitation in the next few months to share your thoughts about Mid-Pen’s future.

New Website

The school will be rolling out a new website in the fall. Assistant Head of School Heidi Schiessler has been working with website developer Finalsight to create a dynamic new site that will be more user-friendly and will improve communication with parents by integrating missing work reports and teacher gradebooks into a parent portal. We also hope to create an interactive alumni page that will allow alums to better stay in touch with the school and with one another. We expect that work on the new site will be completed for a full launch when school resumes in September. 🐉



From left, Kiarra Plaza '20, Greg Prieto '20, Raina Iarocci '21, and Heath Myers '21 share a lighthearted moment before the start of school.

By Kurt Lange, Athletic Director

Loss of Five Players Dampens Varsity Basketball Season

The 2017-2018 basketball season for Mid-Pen was a roller coaster ride. In early November it looked as though we were going to have about 20 players in the boys program, easily enough to field both a varsity and JV team.

That changed quickly as we lost senior Ben Aguiar to a torn ACL in our first scrimmage against Pinewood. It was a huge loss, as Ben was a returning starter and second team all-league player from a team that went to the CCS tournament last year. Shortly thereafter we lost four more seniors, all projected starters or major contributors, for a variety of reasons.

Nevertheless, the team had a decent pre-season, winning three and losing five. Our biggest win came against Pacific Collegiate in Santa Cruz, a game that was close the entire way, but we were able to pull away in the final minute and win by a score of 66-61. We also defeated a tough North Valley Baptist team at home in early December after losing to Crystal Springs Uplands a few days earlier by just one point.

Although the team was competitive in most of its league games, our lack of depth often hurt us in the closing minutes of our games. We beat San Francisco Christian



twice and third place finisher Shasta once to finish a disappointing 3-9 in league play and 6-14 overall.

Senior Ryan Burton, our leading scorer, was voted second team all-league. Fellow senior Nate Smith and junior Miguel Najar both missed making honorable mention by one vote. Freshman Andries Catellano started every game this season and was our best rebounder and inside defender. Junior Ben Chen also provided strong rebounding from the center position. Ernesto Valencia '19 had to overcome some hand and back injuries, but when healthy gave us a lightning quick point guard who got to the hoop very effectively. Tyler Peery '19 joined us later in the season and gave us some much-needed depth and toughness inside. We'll miss Ryan and Nate next year, but we have a strong group returning.

Although our JV team eventually had to merge with the varsity team due to low numbers, they actually played five games, winning their final contest 37-36 in overtime against Waldorf School of the Peninsula. The team was led by freshmen Sebi Strachan and Josh King, who also played in most of our varsity games. Sophomores Ryan Shee and Val Rendon, freshman Aaron Posternack, and senior Matt Davidson were also solid players for Coach Troy Henderson. Dawson Kinnamon '20 joined late in the season and made his presence felt in the win against Waldorf.

Although we were not able to field a girls' team this year, I have a solid commitment from at least seven girls for next season. Lady Dragons Hoops will be back next year! 🐉



Andries Castellano '21 goes up for a rebound.



Popularity of Tennis Continues to Soar With Winning Season

Tennis once again was the sport of choice at Mid-Pen this past spring. With a roster that held steady at 12, this team didn't miss a beat from last year's talented group. Led once again by senior Ryan Burton, our number one singles player, there were some new faces on the courts that should keep our program strong for years to come.

Freshmen Sebi Strachan and Taylor Young played second and third singles, respectively. Emis Chen '21 usually played fourth singles and/or second doubles along with sophomore Ryan Shee, who sometimes filled in at fourth singles. Sophomore Beau Andre often played doubles with a variety of partners. Ernesto Valencia '19 and Alfredo Moran '20 often represented our third doubles team, with Dequan Cai '19 also in competition for our top three doubles teams. Senior Allyson Hulsenkamp and sophomore Emma Marek rounded out our doubles teams, along with Aidan Briggs '21, who usually played

doubles but had an impressive singles win against Jewish Community in May.

Of the five matches in the season, two with Pinewood were very competitive. Though we lost both times, we had a strong showing, especially from our top singles players. We beat Jewish Community of San Francisco convincingly both at home and away, as well as Kehillah twice. The team ended the season with a strong 4-2 record.

We have applied to compete in the WBAL (Pinewood's League) next year as a supplemental member in tennis. If our application is accepted, our schedule will double to 12 to 14 matches. That would be a great accomplishment for coaches Bryan Jeong '06 and Raul Salazar, who have done an outstanding job developing Mid-Pen's tennis program from scratch over the past four years. 🐉

LYDELL CARDWELL '11**Basketball Was His Passport to the World**

"Basketball really changed my life. It is why I have a passport. It has allowed me to travel all over the world."

That's no overstatement from Lydell Cardwell '11, who, as a player for the Division II Azusa Pacific University Cougars, visited Central America, Asia, and Europe. In 2014, he participated in a service trip with APU's basketball team to Costa Rica, and in 2015 he traveled to Thailand, where he visited orphanages and led basketball clinics for kids.

"When I came back from Thailand, I just viewed everything totally differently," Lydell recalled. "And I thought, 'I just want to change people's lives, man. I just want to make the world a better place.'"

Of his many accomplishments as a player at both Mid-Pen and APU, where as a senior he made it to the Sweet 16 round of the Division II NCAA tournament, Lydell is most proud of the spot he earned as a member of the 2016 Allstate NABC Good Works Team. He was one of 10 men's college players selected for the honor, given annually to student-athletes who have made outstanding contributions in the areas of volunteerism and civic involvement, as determined by panels of former coaches, student-athletes, and the media.

In addition to his service trips abroad, Lydell was recognized for his commitment to bettering the lives of others through his work as a mentor at the Live in Peace program in East Palo Alto, where he grew up. The winners were celebrated at a halftime ceremony at the NCAA men's semifinals that year.

Growing up with a single mom and two younger sisters,



Lydell recalls a childhood filled with moves and new schools. The two constants in his life were his family and basketball.

Though he was passionate about basketball, his mother, Lameshu Augmon, was focused on academic success, which, Lydell says, is why she enrolled him, and later his sister Lynisha '14, at Mid-Pen when he was in 9th grade. "Initially, I didn't want to attend Mid-Pen," he recalled. "I felt that it was too small for me, I didn't know anyone, and, with no friends there, it would be a replay of my childhood – moving to a new school again and not knowing anyone."

Looking back, Lydell believes the many schools he attended before Mid-Pen actually provided him with an advantage in life. "It allowed me to meet different people, as well as learn new things in life that I wouldn't have learned if I'd hung around the same people all the time," he said. "My friend group was diversified and I was able to meet new families and experience a different side of life. It put a new motivation in me. I wanted to be different and break a cycle that young African American men go through in my city."

At Mid-Pen, coach Curtis Haggins saw his potential and took him under his wing, helping him find success not only on the basketball court, but also in the classroom and in life. To this day Lydell remains in touch with his old mentor, whom he calls Pops because "during that time in my life he played the role of a second father to me... and looked after me like I was one of his own children."

Always with the ball in his hands, Lydell quickly distinguished

Sarah Esquivel '03 married Josh Hanson on May 20, 2017, at the Seascape Beach Resort in Aptos. The couple met in 2001, instantly had a connection, and became the best of friends. She says that for over a decade after high school they remained in touch, calling to wish each other happy birthday or getting together for a random night on the town. After 12+ years of friendship, Josh finally told Sarah how he had had feelings for her since the first time they met. She was completely shocked, but looking back, she realized that the perfect man had been right in front of her the whole time. Both are extremely glad that they were able to build such a strong and loving foundation of friendship before entering into a more serious relationship.

Nolan Schoichet '08 is currently a senior paralegal at Quinn Emanuel in Redwood City, where he works on intellectual property cases. Quinn Emanuel is one of the premier business litigation law firms in the world, with 21 offices and more than

720 attorneys around the globe. He graduated from UC Santa Cruz with a degree in political science and philosophy.

Ander Shultis '08 emailed from Cambridge, MA, where he is currently finishing up his bachelor's degree at Harvard through the Harvard Extension School. He writes that he had the chance to meet famed theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking shortly before his death last year and that he hopes to pursue a graduate degree in Astrophysics and Cosmology. After Mid-Pen, Ander attended the University of the Pacific to study computer science but left after the fall of his junior year to work as a software designer. He initially worked for Levante Inc., which provides cloud-based supplier management software, then for the federal government on "a tool that runs simulations like, 'what





himself as a high school star throughout the Bay Area and even statewide. He averaged 36 points a game, was named all-state, and was heavily recruited by college teams. When he got to Azusa Pacific, however, he was “hit in the face with a reality check.”

Much of his freshman year was spent sitting on the bench. After so much playing time in high school, it was a massive come-down. “I later realized that it wasn’t that I wasn’t good, but that I still had lots of room for improvement,” he recalls. “That experience humbled me and made me a better player. It was a tough time, and I debated transferring to a school where I could get more playing time sooner, but I stuck it out.”

Lydell attributes his success to his mother. “She was always more concerned with academics than with basketball, and she told me I should focus on completing my degree and not on playing ball. She kept me going.”

On his vacations from college he would often volunteer with the two programs in East Palo Alto that had steered him on the path to college, Live in Peace and the Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula. To a large degree, both programs helped shape who he is, he says.

“I kind of grew up in the Boys and Girls Club,” he recalled. “I was always there after school, doing homework and meeting with my tutor. It was a safe place. It kept me off the streets and kept me straight.”

This past February he served as emcee at the Boys’ and Girls’ Club of the Peninsula Youth of the Year Award Ceremony honoring the remarkable achievements of four local high school students. Perseverance – a quality that Lydell surely embodies – was the theme of the evening, which drew an audience of several hundred Bay Area luminaries, from tech titans to sports stars.

More than anything, Lydell wants to give back to his community and to work with young people. Following a trip to Europe in the summer of 2016, he was offered a contract to play pro ball in Germany but, his mother’s voice echoing

in his head, returned to the U.S. to pursue his teaching credential and his goal of becoming a middle school physical education teacher.

Ultimately, he hopes to start a nonprofit that teaches kids concepts like financial literacy, mortgages, and interest rates—things that aren’t taught in school. He wants to incorporate sports and mentorship into the program.

“Yeah, I played college basketball,” he mused. “I graduated. But what did I do for other people? That’s kind of the goal. When I pass away, I want stories about how I impacted other people’s lives.” 🐉



happens if the Ninth Ward levee breaks in New Orleans again?’ then predicts where people will go for things like food, shelter, first aid. This allows first responders to develop plans for terrible disasters so that in the event a natural disaster happens, they already have a plan in place and can, therefore, respond just that much more quickly.”

Shea Foley NG '10 stopped by the school before heading up to Alaska, where he is enrolled at the University of Alaska. He plans to study child development and hopes to become a teacher. “I was a bit of a brat when I was younger,” he recalled. “Though I was only at Mid-Pen for a semester, in the spring of my sophomore year, I appreciate what it did for me.” He can be reached at sfoley062092@msn.com and is interested in getting in touch with classmates as the 10th reunion approaches.

Hunter Flynn '15 stopped by the school in May to visit his old teachers. After graduation, he worked for Square Peg Ranch’s

therapeutic riding program, where he had often volunteered as a student at Mid-Pen. He just completed his first year at Skyline College, where he is studying for a degree in Automotive Technology.

Peter Lenicheck '15 visited the school over his winter break. He is a junior at OSU Cascades, where he is majoring in business and marketing.

Rosemary Reynolds '16 visited on Pajama Day, just before the Mid-Pen winter break. She has completed her sophomore year at Seattle University, where she is majoring in criminal justice and psychology.

Gabiele Rinehart '14 dropped by to visit math teacher Nicola Willits. She just finished up her first year at Landmark College in Vermont.

REPORT ON GIVING

This past year was one of incredible achievement, made possible only because of the collective hard work, dedication, and support of our Mid-Pen community. Thanks to the generosity of more than 250 donors, including 100% of the Board of Trustees and the faculty and staff, Mid-Peninsula High School raised \$537,500 in restricted and unrestricted donations during the 2017-2018 school year.

The cornerstone of the school's fundraising efforts, the Annual Fund, brought in \$282,000, including contributions from approximately 75% of current Mid-Pen families. Many thanks to Annual Fund co-chairs Shandon Lloyd P'18 and John Briggs P'21 and the half dozen parents who volunteered during our fall and spring phonathons.

The pictures on the following pages provide a glimpse of the excitement of this year's DragonFest, held in February at The Great Highway in San Carlos, home

to a collection of over 75 classic cars and memorabilia from the 1950s and 60s. The event netted \$134,000, but just as important was the great time had by the 160 guests who turned out in support of Mid-Pen's students and teachers.

On the following pages we gratefully acknowledge our donors' loyalty and support. Your generosity is tangible evidence of your commitment to Mid-Peninsula High School and makes a world of difference in the lives of our students.

Touching every aspect of life at Mid-Pen, your gifts support everything from need-based financial assistance to our thriving music, theatre, and art programs to professional development for our talented teachers. Your efforts ensure that Mid-Pen is able to provide an exceptionally supportive environment in which students can explore, discover and grow. Thank you.





ANNUAL FUND GIFTS

INDIVIDUALS

Anonymous (5)
Daniel & Terry Aguiar
Liana Ahloy Dallaire
Jacqueline Anderson &
Frank Meerkamp
Kendall Anderson '12
Bart Andre
Jill Andre
Marcus Anson '15
Mark Anson & Mary Hayes ⑤
Jon Austin
Joe & Julie Belarde
Tomas Bello & Angeles Cordoba
Chris & Elizabeth Bennett
Kim Bennicas
Susan & Wade Benton
Daniel Beringer
Caitlin Berka
Jeffrey Berkes & Meg Lacy
Megan Biglow '13
Tim & Carolyn Biglow ⑤
Michelle Boire
Steve & Gabriella Bowling ⑤
David Braun '12
Lisa & Detlef Braun ⑩
Allison Lattouf Brenneise '88
John Briggs & Katherine Parsons
Susan Briggs
Gordon E. Brown Jr. ⑤
Thomas & Harriet Burnett
Alan Cameron ⑤
Erik & Lisa Carlson
Yu-Tse & Jui-Ping Chen
Kris Chiongbian & Justin Strachan
Gillian & C. Wesley Christensen
Dean & Wilma Chu
Craig & Georgina Cooper
Michelle Crabb
Christopher & Deborah Crouse
Don & Zoe Danielson

Jamie Das
Sunjay Dasu '17
Joe De Primo
Andrea De Wit &
Armando Castellano
H. Mark Delman
Mariatte & Todd Denman
Jim & Susanne Dern ⑤
John DeTreville &
Laurie Shaw-DeTreville
Thomas & Maureen Dollente
Richard & Jean Duda
Timothy & Julie Dyson
Maureen & Phil Ekedahl
Shirley Ely ⑤
Jackson & Saranne Foley
Russell Fong & Sarah Caplan
Cathleen & Michael Foster
Mike & KT Foust ⑤
Janice & Jason Fraser
Max Freiburger '13
Paul Freiburger &
Jeanne Loveland Freiburger ⑤
Ken & Kia Friedman ⑤
Andrew & Patricia Galligan ⑩
Quin Garcia '99
Frances & Ted Geballe ⑩
Ernesto Godinez & Fedra Romero
Teresa Gomez
Lorena Green & Carlos Nunez
Jonathan & Natsuko Greenberg
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Maruk Khambatta
David King & Marian Lenz
Yolande King
Barbara & Scott Knaster
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Alfred & Maureen Lane
Kurt Lange ⑤
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Angela & Charles Lax
MiJi Lee
Leslie Leland
Colder Li
Aidan Lloyd-Tucker '18
Julia & Matt Longnecker
Veronica Louie & Tamm Lee
Cooper Loundy '17
Lisa Maloney
Niall Maloney
Anthony Marek
Kathleen Marek
J.R. & Jennifer Matthews
Cynthia McKinley
Kevin McKinley
Mary Lou & Steven Meeks
Stephanie Steele Messina ⑤
The Mid-Peninsula High School
Student Body
Laurie Miller & Van Whitis ⑩
Elizabeth Moore ⑩
Ryan Moriguchi '91 ⑩
Tracy Morris & Chris DeCardy
Gary Mulleneaux &
Amy Christen ⑤
Gladye Myers & Stacy Fox-Myers

Bonnie Nattrass '88
Steve & Rosita Newman
Martha, P.J., & Connor Nora
J.D. Northway ⑩
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Heidi Schiessler ⑩
Jamie Schiessler '99 ⑤
Jackie Schmidt-Posner &
Barry Posner
Lisa & Ellis Schoichet
Mira Sears '17
Robert & Ruby Seidl
Harrison Sell '17
Lisa Sharp
Patrick & Janet Shinn
David Smith & Sheri Simmons
Greg & Anna Maria Smitherman
Juliana Sonneveld &
Kevin Salvadori



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Christina Stankovich
Ed Sterbenc & Cathy Fitzgerald
Richard & JoAnne Stultz
Jameson Swanagon ⑤
Tara Theobald-Anderson ⑤
Andrea & Charles Thurber
Sandra Trembley
Henry Trevor
Andrew Tucker & Shandon Lloyd
Candice Uytensu-Hamilton
Cammie & Tim Vail ⑤
William Valencia
Debbie Vielbaum
Henry & Maria Vogel
Philip & Ann Vogel
Randall & Alexandra Von Feldt
James Walbridge &
Beverly Epstein
Jana & Phil Weaver
Ethan Weker
Wendi Wells
James Whitlock
Keith & Shelley Willig
Malcolm Willig '17
Nicola & Richard Willits
Theresa & Timothy Wilson
Roni & Andrew Wolfe
Charlotte Woo & Scott Posternack
Amy Wright
Jim Yamas
Bob & Elizabeth Yapp ⑩
Morgan Yee '17
Emily York
Kirstin & Linton Young
Stan & Donna Young
Russ Zandbergen

CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS, AND MATCHING GIFTS

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Foundation
Benevity Community Impact Fund
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Foundation
David and Lucille Packard
Foundation
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The Eucalyptus Foundation ⑩
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Genentech
The Goldman Sachs
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Honey Bear Trees
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Trusts ⑩
I-Give
The Lone Pine Foundation
Schwab Charitable
Seva Nonprofit, Inc.
Silicon Valley Community
Foundation ⑤
The Tom and Harriet Burnett
Family Foundation
Vanguard Charitable

⑤ 5 or more years consecutive
Annual Fund gifts
⑩ 10 or more years consecutive
Annual Fund gifts

DESIGNATED GIFTS

The following donors requested
that a portion of their gifts be
designated for specific purposes.

Faculty Room Supplies

The Board of Trustees

Music Program

Malcolm Willig '17

Science Department

Andrew Tucker & Shandon Lloyd

Class Trips

Bonnie Natrass '88

Theatre Program

Christopher & Deborah Crouse
Kenneth & Anne Lawler
Anthony Marek
Cynthia McKinley
Mary Lou & Steven Meeks
The Mid-Pen Student Body
Steve & Rosita Newman
Giovanni & Eden Rodriguez
Gabriele & Stephen Scheid

RESTRICTED GIFTS

The following donors requested
that their gifts be restricted for
specific purposes.

Class Trips

Lisa & Detlef Braun

The Douglas C. Thompson

Fund for Class Trips
The Baker Shultis Family
Gary & Jacquie Bechtel
Joan & Jeffrey Cleary
Jim & Susanne Dern
Robert Dvorak &
Maurisa Sommerfield

The Foothills Foundation

Frances & Ted Geballe
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Andrew Tucker & Shandon Lloyd

Faculty Professional Development

Kristin & Linton Young

Financial Aid

The Eucalyptus Foundation
The Hurlbut-Johnson Charitable
Trusts
Thomas & Shirley Lyons
Krish & Padma Ramakrishnan
Courtney & Suzanne Suppes

Music Program

Anonymous

GIFTS IN KIND

Daniel & Terry Aguiar
Gillian & C. Wesley Christensen
Mindy Cohen & Jim Faulkner

HONOR AND MEMORIAL GIFTS

Nancy Brown

Gordon Brown

Tim and Lorinda Reichert

Jackson & Saranne Foley
Thomas & Harriet Burnett

Nicholas Stankovich '05

Christina Stankovich

Douglas C. Thompson

Jane & Daryl Hatano

Madison Trembley '19

Sandra Trembley

The list of donors includes gifts received between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018. We have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of this report. We sincerely apologize for any inadvertent errors or omissions. Please contact the Development Office at 650-321-1991 with any corrections.





THE LARRY JOHNSTON SOCIETY

A beloved teacher, colleague, friend, and mentor, Larry dedicated more than 35 years to assisting in Mid-Pen's growth and development, joining the school in the fall of 1981 and teaching almost right up until his death in 2015. Over the years, he inspired hundreds of Mid-Pen students, who enjoyed imitating his distinctive teaching style, especially the way he rocked back and forth from his heels to his toes, sometimes holding an empty pipe while speaking.

Larry loved his Mid-Pen students and he loved to travel. He visited every country in Europe and traveled throughout Africa, South and Central America, and the United States. He took his time and never rushed, often traveling by train, sometimes by foot, always stopping to spend time with local people. When he died, he left a gift to Mid-Pen that combined his two loves: a bequest to ensure that all students, regardless of financial need, are able to participate in the Mid-Pen travel program, which takes students to places as far afield as Ecuador to learn Spanish or Great Britain to study British history.

At the time, Larry's was the first bequest that Mid-Pen had ever received. In his memory the school established the Larry Johnston Society to recognize those donors who make provisions for Mid-Pen in their estate plans as members of the Lawrence P. Johnston Society.

Membership in the Lawrence P. Johnston Society involves no dues, obligations, or solicitations, but allows us to thank donors for the plans they have made and to recognize them publicly. Of course, donors may remain anonymous if they prefer. Benefits include invitations to special school events and activities, but the most important benefit of joining the Lawrence P. Johnston Society is the satisfaction derived from making a lasting contribution to Mid-Peninsula High School's long-term prosperity.

Johnston Society Members

Lawrence P. Johnston ♦

Dolly Patterson

Anne Marie Schar

♦ deceased



Mid-Peninsula
High School

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Parents of Alumni: If your son or daughter no longer maintains a permanent residence at your home, please notify the Development Office at 650-321-1991 or alums@mid-pen.org. Thank you for helping us keep our alumni records current.



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STAY CONNECTED!

Look for Mid-Pen's First-Ever Alumni Directory Coming in 2019



After a formal portrait, the Class of 2018 mugs for the camera.