

# MODUS VIVENDI

*A Way of Life*

**COMMENCEMENT 2019**

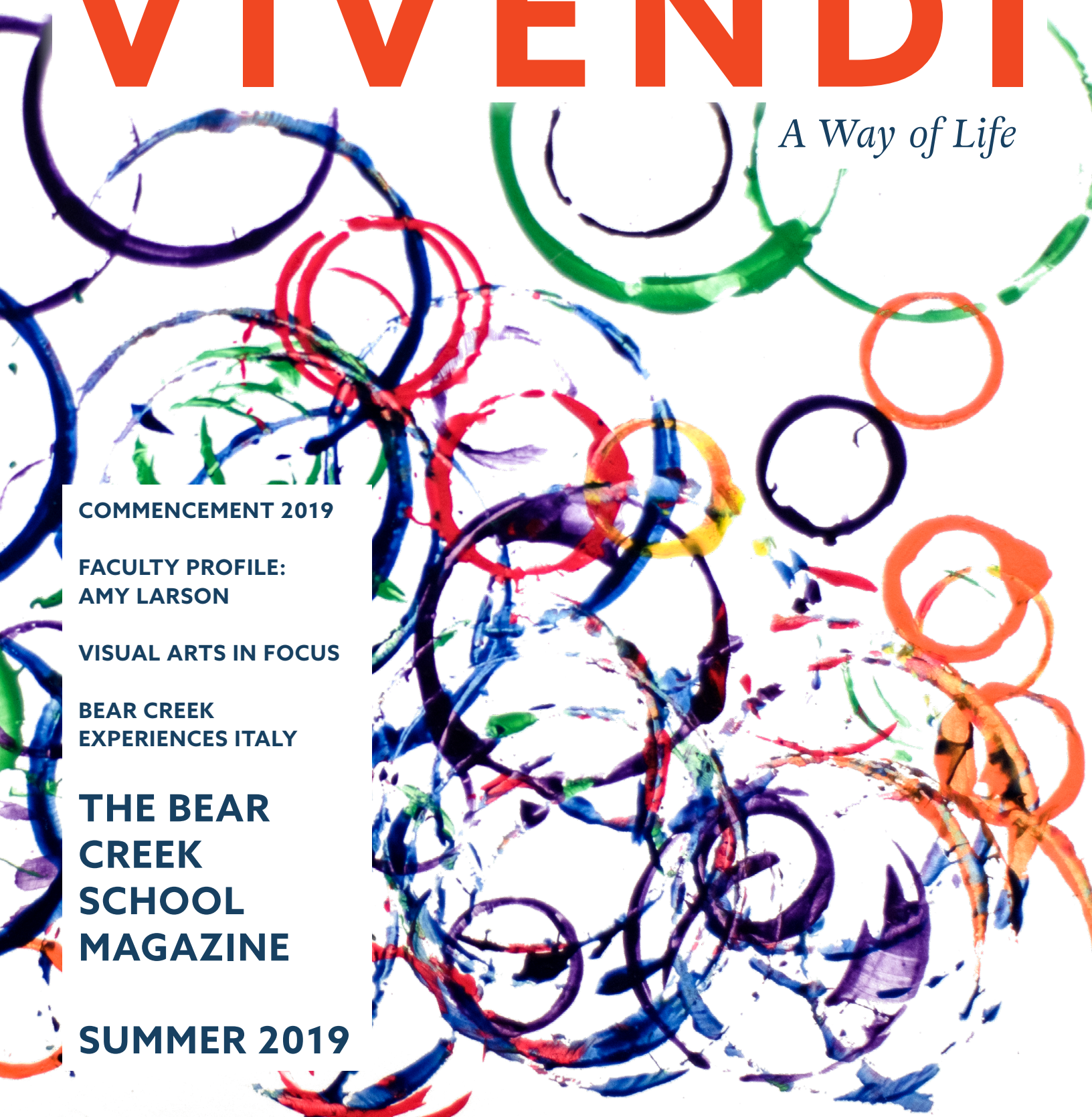
**FACULTY PROFILE:  
AMY LARSON**

**VISUAL ARTS IN FOCUS**

**BEAR CREEK  
EXPERIENCES ITALY**

**THE BEAR  
CREEK  
SCHOOL  
MAGAZINE**

**SUMMER 2019**





# MODUS VIVENDI

*Summer 2019*

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

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

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### THE BEAR FACTS

Each Friday during the school year, *The Bear Facts*, Bear Creek's weekly newsletter, is emailed to current parents, faculty, and staff. *The Bear Facts* contains news and announcements from each of the school's divisions and from the athletics department. Previous posts are archived and searchable on the school website at [tbc.org/bearfacts](http://tbc.org/bearfacts).

### MYBC

Students, parents, faculty and staff, and trustees can find the latest announcements, upcoming events, and a complete list of role-specific resources. See MyBC at the top of any page at [tbc.org](http://tbc.org), and log in.

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### ON THE COVER

Cover art created by P3 student Rachel Kim modeled after Wassily Kandinsky's "Circles in a Circle." Learn more about Bear Creek's visual arts program on page 18.

PHOTO BY JANEEN SORENSEN



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# COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS FROM THE HEADMASTER

By Patrick Carruth

**ON ANY GIVEN FALL WEEKEND AT THE CARRUTH HOUSEHOLD**, you will usually find us doing one of three things: 1. watching the SEC dominate all other conferences in football; 2. arguing with Jack about whether Emperor Palpatine was right; or 3. watching another Marvel movie. In our household, the Marvel Cinematic Universe is ever-present. And, like many folks, we eagerly anticipated the release of *Avengers: Endgame* and the hoped-for reversal of Thanos's eradication of half the universe with a snap of his fingers. Dr. Strange called it genocide, but for just a moment, I'd like you to consider this statement:

## **THANOS WAS RIGHT.**

Think about it for a minute. His argument is logical—finite resources and too many mouths to feed leading to human extinction. His solution is sound—reduce the size of the group utilizing the resources, and you balance the equation so human life may continue. Balance.

Interestingly, we live in a time frequently



embedded in this way of thinking. We implicitly assume that human beings are simply part of creation, material in their origin and destiny, and valued only in their relation to creation. No different than animals or the environment. Secular valuations abound: grades, beauty, wealth, power, prestige, fame.

If you think this seems silly or hyperbolic, consider the modern

examples of Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, and China's one-child policy. Or perhaps someone you studied here at Bear Creek, Friedrich Nietzsche: "To those human beings who are of any concern to me I wish suffering, desolation, sickness, ill-treatment, indignities—I wish that they should not remain unfamiliar with profound self-contempt, the torture of self-mistrust, the wretchedness of the vanquished: I have no pity for them, because I wish them the only thing that can prove today whether one is worth anything or not—that one endures." Or perhaps our ancient friend Plato from ninth grade, through the mouth of Socrates, who, when asked what was man, replied "a featherless bi-ped."

The way one thinks matters, and we increasingly define human worth in material terms.

If you follow that thinking, then Thanos is right.

But the Scriptures paint a different picture of human value. Psalm 8 reminds us we are made *imago dei*:

“Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory  
in the heavens.

Through the praise of children and infants  
you have established a stronghold against your  
enemies,  
to silence the foe and the avenger.

When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,  
what is mankind that you are mindful of them,  
human beings that you care for them?

You have made them a little lower than the  
angels  
and crowned them with glory and honor.  
You made them rulers over the works of your  
hands;  
you put everything under their feet:  
all flocks and herds,  
and the animals of the wild,  
the birds in the sky,  
and the fish in the sea,  
all that swim the paths of the seas.

Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!”

You are probably wondering what this has to do with your graduation today, so I’ll explain. Simply put, each of you will graduate today and all too soon will graduate from college as well. You will walk each of those aisles and process into this “real” world. And I believe the ethical challenge of your lifetimes will be the definition and value of humanity.

With continued advancements in technology, you will not only wrestle with philosophical queries about humanity, you will answer very practical questions of what it means to be human. You will have the ability to genetically predetermine much about your future children, will develop cures for diseases which have long plagued mankind, and will likely have the potential to expand human flourishing to people and parts of the world that have historically faced famine, war, poverty, and pain. All of these will require knowing what you are doing, but, most importantly, they will require wisdom, compassion, and courage. During your time here at The Bear Creek School, our curriculum has provided you with the goods of the mind with which to engage these challenges. But we hopefully instilled in you something greater—the wisdom to see what makes a human being human, what gives men and women value and dignity, and why to afford all people respect and compassion. You leave The Bear Creek School knowing the image of God exists in each of us, understanding that it is the abiding source of true human value, and recognizing the truth that Christ is the only hope to restore our fallen image to glory.

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”  
2 Corinthians 3:18

“It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified:

*What is mankind that you are mindful of them,  
a son of man that you care for him?  
You made them a little lower than the angels;  
you crowned them with glory and honor  
and put everything under their feet.*

In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them. But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.” Hebrews 2:5-10

Lewis echoes this truth in *Mere Christianity*:

The command *Be ye perfect* is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command. He said (in the Bible) that we were ‘gods’ and He is going to make good His words. If we let Him—for we can prevent Him, if we choose—He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course, on a smaller scale) His own boundless power and delight and goodness. The process will be long and in parts very painful, but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what He said.

We also pray that the paradox of the end of the Bear Creek mission statement is taking root in you: in helping you to become the individual God intends, you begin to see the individual God intends in others as well.

As the devil in C.S. Lewis’s *Screwtape Letters* teaches:

The Enemy wants him [mankind], in the end, to be so free from any bias in his own favor that he can rejoice in his own talents as frankly and gratefully as in his neighbor’s talents—or in a sunrise, an elephant, or a waterfall. He wants each man, in the long run, to be able to recognize all creatures (even himself) as glorious and excellent things.

Each class that graduates from The Bear Creek School has a personality. As in the culture at large, over time, separate individual acts develop a zeitgeist that personifies the class as a whole, personas like—the nerdy class, the athletic class, the rowdy class, the cool class, and so on. Whether through your fun-loving playfulness, your care and concern for the juniors when they experienced tragedy, the silent kindness of helping our facilities crew cleanup after lunch, the focused determination of volleyball team leaders to nurture community in the face of limited wins, and, yes, even through someone’s (Alex Finan’s) relentless drive to save male students at Bear Creek from the pain of DENNIS uniform pants, you have developed a persona that is appropriate for the challenge of your time. You are a humane class.

And so my charge to you is this: be humane; and show the world the majestic root and glorious redemption of its humanity. Remind us that Thanos was wrong.

Congratulations, graduates of the class of 2019.



# Congratulations to the Class of 2019

George Leland Anderson, II ‡\*\*  
*Bellevue College*

Samuel Frederick Boelitz\*  
*Purdue University*

Eleanor Joanna Bonner\*\*  
*LeTourneau University*

Steven James Broaddus\*  
*Baylor University*

Lucy Ina Daisy Caile\*\*\*  
*University of Missouri Columbia*

Abigail Lee Campbell ‡\*\*\*  
*Northeastern University*

Jonathan Ross Campbell ‡  
*Wentworth Institute of Technology*

Melanie Dawn Carlson ‡\*\*\*  
*Drexel University*

John Andrew Carruth  
*Western Washington University*

Dylan Chang ‡  
*Bellevue College*

Joshua Chih-Hua Chong ‡\*\*\*  
*University of Washington*

Cody Theodore Clayhold\*\*\*  
*Rice University*

Tiffany Alyse Cowman ‡\*\*\*  
*University of San Diego*

Siena Rose Cysewski ‡  
*The University of Montana, Missoula*

Kim Hoang Thien Do\*\*  
*Santa Clara University*

Nikolas Michael Elizarov  
*Purdue University*

Vladislav Michael Elizarov\*  
*University of Pennsylvania*

Brittany Nicole Ellington\*  
*Colorado School of Mines*

Kaitlyn Ashley Ersek ‡\*\*  
*Biola University*

Alexander Augustine Finan\*\*\*  
*Stanford University*

Eleanor Christine Foster\*\*  
*Loyola Marymount University*

Zihan Hao  
*Boston University*

Mingao He\*  
*University of Washington*

Jacob Scott Heimberger  
*Gonzaga University*

Kathryn Amaris Horvath ‡\*\*  
*Pepperdine University*

Jason D Hunt ‡  
*DigiPen Institute of Technology*

Haley Mai Jones ‡\*  
*The University of Arizona*

Joshua Michael Kelleran\*  
*Santa Clara University*

Daniel Johnston Klimisch  
*San Diego State University*

Katie Nicole Kraft ‡  
*Arizona State University*

Haohong Li\*  
*Lafayette College*

William Grant Lutz  
*Montana State University, Bozeman*

Andrea Joy Markezich\*  
*University of Washington*

Olivia Grace Markezich\*  
*University of Notre Dame*

Peter Jerome McDonough ‡  
*Calvin College*

Trevor Lee McRae ‡  
*California Lutheran University*

Helen Rose Meissner ‡\*\*  
*Seattle University*

Stephen Henry Mistele ‡\*\*  
*Santa Clara University*

Meagan Mary Mulligan  
*Washington State University*

Oliver Sean Nordberg ‡  
*Whitworth University*

Camryn Elizabeth Poling ‡\*  
*Chapman University*

Daniel Rasmussen\*  
*DigiPen Institute of Technology*

Zara Alexandra Natasha Robinson\*\*  
*University of San Francisco*

Sandy Anqi Shao  
*Case Western Reserve University*

Juliette Linda Shields\*\*  
*Pepperdine University*

Alicia Stepin\*\*\*  
*University of Washington*

Michelle Alice Tan\*\*\*  
*Georgia Institute of Technology*

Ting-Ying Tsou\*  
*Northeastern University*

Brandon Niann-Dar Tzou\*  
*Boston University*

Yasmin Helene Wadhvani ‡\*\*  
*University of California, Davis*

Victoria Ann Wallingford ‡\*\*  
*Washington State University*

Jacob Andrew Ward\*  
*Whitman College*

Yutian Yang\*  
*University of Washington*

Daniel Dong Hyun Yoo\*\*  
*San Francisco Conservatory of Music*

Yichen Zhang\*\*\*  
*University of California, Santa Barbara*

\*\*\*SUMMA CUM LAUDE (3.9 - 4.0 GPA)

\*\* MAGNA CUM LAUDE (3.75 - 3.89 GPA)

\*CUM LAUDE (3.5 - 3.749 GPA)

‡LEGACY HONORS (BEAR CREEK STUDENT FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12)

# Reflections from the Class of 2019



## ELLE FOSTER

Throughout my years of studying, learning, and leading in that brick building on 208th Avenue, I have become an individual who boldly seeks wisdom in my life. As Bear Creek students, we have become accustomed to wrestling with information and being challenged in our classes, sports, and arts pursuits.

Yet in this place of challenge, we have established a true sense of community, one of the aspects of Bear Creek for which I will be eternally grateful. The friends and peers I met at this school are some of the smartest, most compassionate, genuine people I know, and I'm so thankful to have embarked on this high school journey with each of them.

## JOSHUA CHONG



Having been a good Bear Creek high schooler for the past four years, I've finally decided to be a little rebellious and blame all my problems on the system. And since I've been at Bear Creek since kindergarten, the system is you—Bear Creek's teachers, faculty, my classmates, and everyone here that contributes to supporting the machine that is "The Bear Creek School." Congratulations! This is all your fault.

The first problem I'm going to blame on you is teaching us critical thinking skills. In elementary school, you condition us to absorb information—to take books and articles and distill them into summaries. In middle school, you make us dice and synthesize information into themes and patterns. And in high school, we are taught to analyze things in light of what we believe and think, forcing us to form our own opinions and beliefs.

Another problem Bear Creek has given me is possessing a solid worldview. Instead of letting us adopt the thinking of whoever's around us, Bear Creek constantly has us assess what we believe and why, exposing us to a large range of ideas and thoughts we're not asked to agree with.

And so I'd like to say thank you—to this system, these surroundings, to you, who comprised Bear Creek's amazing teachers, hardworking faculty, my mostly wonderful classmates, and the rest of you all—who are here because, for some reason or another, you're connected to the school and community that has blessed me with all these great problems. Congratulations. This is all your fault.

## SANDY SHAO

---

I was constantly engulfed in a cloud of confusion when I first came to America, part of it was the language barrier, the other part the cultural shock. I felt frustrated, alone, and sad. Yes, I was only twelve years old. You might say that I was too young to feel the full brunt of troubles that come with adjusting to a new country or too young to remember the feeling of complete hopelessness whenever someone tried talking to me. But believe me, I felt them and I remembered them. I, however, pushed on. In small chunks, the confusion around me withered away, and, even now, I am still grateful that I made the embarrassing little mistakes earlier in elementary school.

And oftentimes, like me, who felt like my own words got lost in translation, we can feel lost in the transition between high school and college. But, however unpredictable the future might be, I feel ready. Bear Creek has prepared us in embracing challenges, pushing boundaries, and to never be startled by blank canvases when we begin our journey. The stage where we stand was built by those who loved and sacrificed for us. Friends, teachers, families, they supported and fought and shaped us into the individuals that we are today. So be thankful, have faith, don't forget to take pride in surviving the Bear Creek curriculum, and be confident in the new chapter which awaits to be written.

## ALEX FINAN

---

Every teacher I have encountered in my eight years at Bear Creek has a secret identity. They have passions, imaginations, and dreams. In the right conversation, the child inside is set free. It's contagious. The constant excitement is a fuel for the engine of curiosity. I couldn't have wished to be surrounded by better role models than the superheroes sitting in front of me.

I challenge you to... free the child inside. Don't be realistic. Shoot for the stars. Because if I have learned anything from my Bear Creek experience, it is that nothing is impossible. For I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

## ELEANOR BONNER

---

This is a love story. I didn't find my one true love, or even go on a single date, but this is nevertheless a love story. This is a story of God's love in my life, and how He taught me to love deeply. He taught me to cherish and treasure relationships, and He used The Bear Creek School as a means. But it didn't all start out that way. Shuffling in on my first day at a new school, clutching my map close to my chest, I was absolutely sure I would hate it. Going in as a skeptical, silently judgmental sophomore—a typical teenager—I thought that Bear Creek was just going to be another one of those rich, upper Eastside schools I'd heard so much about.... I was not prepared at all to be right. At least kind of right for I am rich with the love, memories, and lessons of my short three years here.





## FACULTY ADDRESS: DREW ARMSTRONG

I'd like to thank my wonderful colleagues, the administration, and especially the class of 2019 for this wonderful opportunity. When I was asked to give the 2019 Commencement faculty address for The Bear Creek School, I began to search the Internet for ideas. I saw video after video of speakers reading sections of or even whole books in their speeches. Some waxed philosophical on the wonder of boundless potential after reading Dr. Seuss's *Oh the Places You Will Go*; some gave impassioned calls to selflessness after an emotional reading of Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree*; while still others created beautiful wordscapes through the quotation of poetry from Angelou, Wordsworth, or Dickinson. I thought to myself, "Self, you should

try that." And, like most things, I thought about it for a good six and a half minutes and then totally forgot about it. And when I say totally forgot about it, I mean totally forgot about it! As in, I just remembered (needing a speech) while I was in the bathroom fifteen minutes ago before getting in line for the processional. So, I suppose [pulls out can of air freshener] I missed a thank you at the beginning of my speech—thank you to Bellevue Presbyterian Church and its custodial staff for the wonderful olfactory inspiration that is Febreze AIR deodorizer (aka the only thing in the bathroom that had writing on it and also wasn't nailed down). So, seeing as how reading the fine literary works of others has worked so well for countless

commencement speeches in time immemorial, let's see if it can work for me.

Where to begin.... [searches can] "Ingredients: Dialkyl Sulfosuccinates, Polyacrylate, sodium citrate, fragrance" (how is that an ingredient)? Now some of you fine students of Ms. Bell may know what some of those things are and perhaps even what they do, but for the purposes of this speech, I want to commend you to always imagine the good. Chemists never cease asking the question why.

Why are we making what we are making? Never lose the sense of wonder and imagination at the fact that, on the smallest of scales, the building blocks of life work together in powerful ways. Never stop imagining the good. Engineers, imagine what it will look like to design and produce things that will serve humankind. Find goodness in the work you will do, and the work you will do will always be rewarding. Never stop imagining the good. We, the faculty and staff at The Bear Creek School, imagine the good that you will do. It is the mission that we have poured our careers into, to be a part of forming what you imagine to be good. Because if we form your imagining of the good, then we are part of the good that you will do. Always imagine the good.

Next on the can... "Eliminates tough lingering odors, AIR (trademark, how do you trademark AIR?), Linen and Sky." Apparently the Febreze company figured out how to trademark AIR, so if you take nothing else away from this speech remember, you're breathing Febreze air. This brings me to my second point. I want to encourage you, to charge you, to always value beauty. Sometimes in valuing beauty we must eliminate what is odorous in our own

surroundings. The way in which this air freshener seems to work is it creates beautiful aromas first and foremost by removing bad ones. I want to flip that just a bit and encourage you that if you find



the beauty in the other, often times it will downplay and sometimes eliminate that which might not be so beautiful in yourselves. Two biblical examples come to mind, that of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. One of my favorite quotes from Scripture is John the Baptist's description of his own ministry. He

says about himself that he must decrease so that Christ might increase. He recognized and celebrated the essence of beauty, Christ himself. John did so in such a way that it made what was less than beautiful in his own life fade into the background. I want to preface the second point about Christ by saying that you are amazing. You are loved and special and one-in-a-million and every other singling signifier in the book. We love you and affirm how special you are. That being said...hundreds of thousands of seniors across the world have graduated in the space of the past few weeks and have probably been told much the same thing—that they are special and one of a kind, etc. This doesn't make you any less special, but it does mean that your task is to recognize how special they are as you go off to college and meet many of them. Perhaps this will require you thinking of them first, recognizing the beauty in them first, and serving them first. This is what makes me think of Christ. Paul describes the incarnation in Philippians 2 as self-emptying. He says that we should have this mind in us which is also in Christ Jesus, who being in the very form of God did not view equality with God as something to be used

for His advantage. Rather, in service He emptied Himself, taking on the form of a servant becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. This is what it means to selflessly value the beauty in the other. To empty yourself to not only recognize the beauty in others but to truly make the other even more beautiful. Always value beauty. Industrial designers, marry form and function in such a way that people will not be able to help but take notice, even when you are designing things as inconsequential as a can of air freshener. Poets, help those around you see and feel that which is beautiful, to yearn for it with all their being.

Back to the can... “Do not spray in face.” This doesn’t have a deeper meaning, I think it’s just good life advice, along with the warning not to puncture or incinerate this can. Just don’t do it. It’s not worth it.

“As with other air care products, not for use around birds.” Huh? Oh, you know that old proverb from your mother, “A stitch in time saves nine and NEVER USE AIR CARE PRODUCTS AROUND BIRDS!” I think this commends us to always love truth. I choose my words carefully here, I do not say “know truth,” you know so much to be true. I want you to fall in love with the truth. Fall in love with coming to know. Fall in love with learning. Fall in love with the truth. You know what it feels like to come to know something as true. Risk being wrong in order to come into a real relationship with truth. Love is risky. In your interactions with all of those



beautiful people that you will serve and find the beauty in, you will come into conflict with some of them regarding what they know and what you know. If you love the truth, it means you will seek it no matter how painful it might be to admit you are wrong. If you love the truth, you will have the humility to admit to all those beautiful people that they might be right. The one who loves to come to know will never cease to be a student and will always be comfortable as a learner. Always love the truth. This will serve you well whether you become a physicist, a plumber, a philosopher, or a philosopher plumber. Always remember to love the truth.

Finally, “In case of emergencies related to ingestion, call poison control at 1-800-222-1222.” We love you, I love you. If you find yourself in an emergency, whether you need an ear to listen

or a shoulder to cry on, I don’t care if it’s three in the afternoon or three in the morning, please call. Come see me after and I will give you my number. I love you, we at The Bear Creek School love you. We imagine the good that you will do, we value the beauty that is in you, and we love the truth that you are image bearers of God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you once again for the blessing and honor of being your 2019 Commencement speaker.

Drew Armstrong is a member of the Humanities Department at The Bear Creek School, teaching Upper School classes in Christian studies and history. Drew holds a Th.M. in Academic Ministry from Dallas Theological Seminary and also earned a Th.M in Systematic Theology from Princeton Theological Seminary.



FACULTY  
PROFILE:  
**AMY  
LARSON**

BY AMANDA CHRISTOPHER

# “EVEN MY KINDERGARTEN TEACHER TOLD MY MOM IN OUR CONFERENCE, ‘AMY’S GOING TO BE A TEACHER...’”

**“I MUST LOVE IT HERE—I COMMUTE ACROSS THE 520 BRIDGE EVERY DAY,”** jokes Amy Larson in her warm-hearted nature about fighting traffic in order to get to her grade 1 classroom each morning.

Traffic, however, is one of the smaller obstacles Amy overcame in order to find her God-given purpose of teaching. There were so many little things along the way that should have kept Amy from becoming a teacher. An eight-year period during which she pursued an entirely different career, a bad student-teaching

experience while in grad school, and her own lack of desire to teach as a young woman, make it hard for her to believe that this fall she is heading into her fourteenth year teaching first grade at Bear Creek.

“Even my kindergarten teacher told my mom in a conference, ‘Amy’s going to be a teacher because she always gets up and helps everyone! But, she doesn’t do her own work.’” Amy laughs as she tells me this story. “I’m still like that. I’d much rather do someone else’s dishes than my own.” It is clear that Amy loves to help and serve others, which

is part of what makes her an exceptional teacher. Her humble nature also contributes to her success, but Amy will be the first one to tell you that she doesn’t rely on her own strength.

“I have to go to God in order to do this job well. I have to be willing to be changed by Him so that I can do my best in the classroom. I could do it Amy’s way, but if I want to be who God created me to be, then I need to be connected to Him.”

Amy graduated from the University of Washington where she received a Bachelor of Arts in both history and sociology. “God works through all things,” Amy says. After graduating, Amy turned down her acceptance into a Master in Teaching program at Pacific Lutheran University, and instead followed her passion for law. She took a job as a legal receptionist but learned that it wasn’t the best fit for her. “While I had no desire to be a teacher,” she tells me, “after my time in the legal world, I took a job as a kindergarten tutor in Seattle.” Towards the end of the school year, Amy had to take over the classroom one afternoon unexpectedly because the teacher she was assisting had a family emergency. After the teacher left, Amy began to call the students to attention for a lesson, and “in that moment, it felt as natural as breathing. In my gut, I knew, ‘I’m a teacher.’”

She spoke about how we don’t always see the clouds part and the heavens open when we’re



Miss Larson in Cuzco, Peru

Previous page: Miss Larson approaching 13,800 feet on the Inca Trail





Miss Larson's 2018-2019 grade 1 class on a field trip to Oxbow Farm

seeking God's will and looking for guidance with our callings. Sometimes, it comes out of nowhere and just works, and we know that we can do what He is asking of us. After that school year, she applied to Seattle Pacific University where she completed her teaching certificate.

Outside the classroom, Amy is an avid hiker and has had seasons where she's hiked over 100 miles of trails, totaling over 25,000 feet of gain. Adventurous and daring, she pushes herself to new heights whenever an opportunity presents itself. During summer 2018, Amy took the trip of a lifetime to South America. She spent two weeks exploring the Amazon and hiking Machu Picchu, which is why I was surprised when Amy said she is prone to being fearful. Twenty-six miles, thousands of feet in elevation gain, a new country, and large spiders? Fearful would

be the last word I would use to describe Amy. She explained that teaching at Bear Creek has become a safe and comfortable environment for her, where she can be herself and know that she is supported and cared for by the community. Amy highlighted the team-like mentality she shares with other teachers, the guidance and support she gets from her mentors, and the graciousness of the parents. But the idea of traveling so far to South America, with its unknowns, potential dangers, and high altitude hiking, really scared her.

As we scroll through photos of spiders and rodents of the Amazon, beautiful views of Machu Picchu, and adorable photos of her holding small animals, she tells me about how she's learning to say yes to things that scare her. She calls this her "year of conquering fear," and her life is a testament to the joy that

awaits us when we lay aside our fears and choose to follow God wholeheartedly. She is certain the positive and loving environment that Bear Creek encompasses has allowed her to step outside her comfort zone in other areas of life. Whether it is public speaking or a fear of heights, Amy has learned to follow the Lord and be obedient to Him in order to experience the abundant life He promises us in Scripture.

"There's not just one thing that makes my job here so special, it's everything, all of the everyday moments that add up to one incredible life here." The overall positivity and joy she finds in teaching and challenging her students, teaming with faculty and the administration, and partnering with parents, has given her a sense of purpose and belonging that she knows is a gift from God.

# VISUAL ARTS IN FOCUS

BY JANEEN SORENSEN

PHOTOS BY SINI FERNANDEZ AND HOWARD CAMPBELL



Visual arts are an integral component of a Christian liberal arts education at Bear Creek. The annual Authors & Artists show on May 30, 2019, was a robust visual sample of the artistic work students created throughout the school year. There is always an impressive and inspiring display of art, from a preschooler's interpretation of Wassily Kandinsky's geometric art to a collaboratively created, 3D-printed game board by Upper School students.

In Preschool, art is a wonderful

way for an emergent reader to express his or her thoughts and ideas. Students fundamentally engage in the curriculum through various artistic mediums including paint, markers, crayons, glue, and clay. For Authors & Artists, preschoolers display the work they create through Bear Creek's volunteer Art Docent program. The pieces connect concepts like lines, angles, and shapes to both foundational artistic techniques and curricular elements in geometry.

Lower School students focus

on learning the grammar and vocabulary of art in addition to learning artistic techniques. Students discover how to use the tools of art including how to hold a brush, how to clean a brush, and how to peel the paper off an oil pastel. Lower School Division Head Kristen Gephart describes art class as an art workshop where students begin to understand the flow of learning and working together as artists.

The focus is on the process and meaning of creating art and not on the finished product. As

*“Art is elemental. Reason alone as it’s expressed in the sciences can’t be man’s complete answer to reality, and it can’t express everything that man can, wants to, and has to express. I think God built this into man. Art along with science is the highest gift God has given him.” ~ Pope Benedict XVI*



Kristen explains, “We’re shaping desires, so we want students to be able to look to the beautiful, and art is beautiful, and to be able to see things in a new perspective.” She expands, “The more we can build into our culture that this is what we do, then students see themselves as artists who can try new techniques and value the process and struggle necessary for success.”

For example, students in grade 1 build on what they’ve learned in science about the body parts of insects and work through the

process of creating their own bugs. They are looking at the beauty and intricacy of creation and facing the challenge of how to fit all six legs onto a tiny thorax. Through this process, they learn how to creatively work through the problem. Jennifer Sinclair teaches students in kindergarten through grade 2, and says, “I love seeing them struggle with a problem, come up with a solution, and then see the success in the end because it gives them such satisfaction.”

Maxine Tu instructs students

in grades 3 – 8, so she is in the unique position of being able to observe students as they progress from the grammar stage of learning through imitation into the logic stage of thinking and creating independently. She explains that students in the younger grades get excited about mimicking the work they view as successful, while in Middle School, the students “want to find their voices and be original, so they can get stuck in the process because they don’t have skills mastery yet.” She sees art as a fun and engaging way to



problem-solve at all ages, “whether it’s breaking apart a really hard concept into smaller pieces or going abstract and starting really large and then zooming in on a particular detail.”

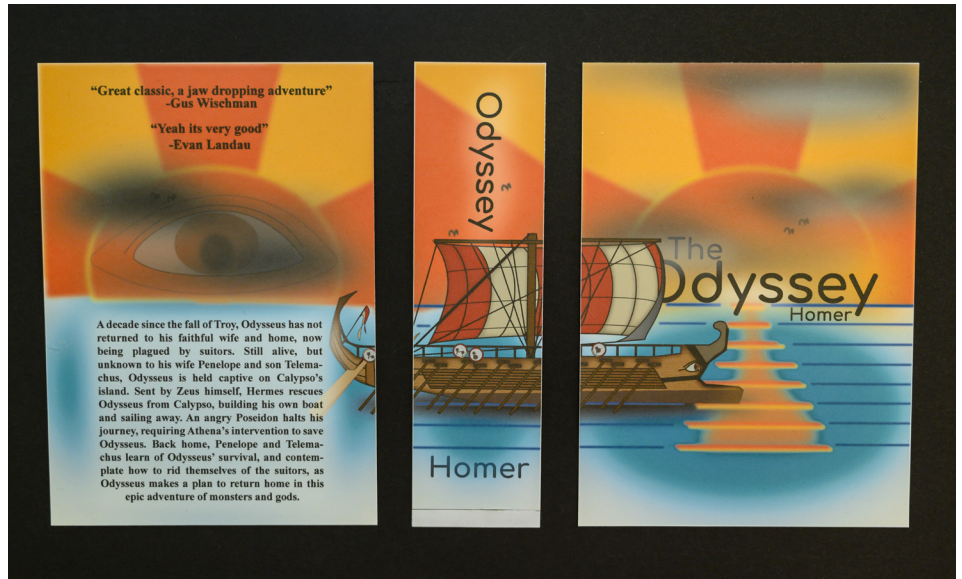
Upper School visual arts students select their favorite pieces from their classes in studio arts, photography, and graphic design for display at Authors & Artists. Art electives are accessible to students at any point in their artistic journeys. As Fine Arts Department Chair Trinity Osborn

explains, “Our guests view work from a student just learning how to draw or pick up a paintbrush, to critically observing form and shape, to more advanced student-artists challenging their art-making skills by attempting to communicate an idea, concept, or theme.” She adds with excitement, “You get to see a beginning artist to a more developed artist all in one night and on one wall.”

Students in Upper School are in the rhetoric phase of learning and are working to effectively

communicate their reasoned ideas by applying the skills they have learned. An excellent example comes in the book cover project in Brittany Plourde’s graphic design course. Students often turn to the books they have read in other classes and quickly realize they know how to visually communicate the ideas of the book based on the detailed study they have completed in their humanities courses.

Brittany has observed that students who are more comfortable



approaching art logically and analytically gravitate towards her photography and graphic design classes. She compares her classes to Trinity's studio arts courses. "The elements and principles of art are the same, but how we talk about them and how we use them is different because the students approach art differently." She loves exposing students to the overlap of science and math in art, from finding a visual representation of the golden ratio in photography to using the mathematical tools

within editing programs to realize their creative vision. At all levels, the consistent narrative of the visual arts involves approaching the struggle of creativity with a problem-solving mindset. The tools involved in creating art start in preschool with learning about lines and shapes and build on those fundamentals to gradually communicate larger and more involved artistic visions. Much like how a liberal arts education

develops a whole person, Bear Creek's visual arts curriculum intentionally mirrors that growth and development into deeply insightful artistic pieces created by whole, uniquely creative individuals. As Trinity explains, "We wouldn't be whole if we didn't have exposure to or knowledge of great music or a tone or a beat, to theatrical aspiration, to painting, and art. Art is a critical piece, or it wouldn't be a true liberal arts education."

# IMMERSE THYSELF

By Debbie Marchione

*“Ay me! for aught that ever I could read,  
could ever hear by tale or history,  
the course of true love never did run smooth.”*

~ William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Most of us studied Shakespeare at some point in our educational journey. Perhaps you read *Julius Caesar* or went to see a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. Or maybe you even performed Shakespeare onstage in high school or college. Here at Bear Creek, the study of Shakespeare is woven into our curriculum from kindergarten all the way through grade 12, with particular emphasis in grades 4 and 6 and in Upper School where our drama students traditionally perform a Shakespeare play each year in either the fall or spring.

In grade 4, students receive a broad exposure to Elizabethan culture through English history, history of drama in England, issues of gender and class structure, the life of William Shakespeare, and the historical significance of *The Merchant of Venice*, the play they currently perform.

As they delve into the world of medieval England, they begin to make connections with modern words and sayings and come to better understand syntax, rhythm, and grammatical concepts, as well as how language shapes our thoughts and feelings.

Our grade 6 students go even further, becoming fully immersed in the world of Shakespearean England for two weeks as they prepare for their performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Building on their grade 4 experience learning medieval history and performing *The Merchant of Venice*, students dive deeper into

the context in which Shakespeare lived and wrote. For two weeks, the curriculum revolves around a combination of intensive rehearsals and special classes ranging from the study of other Shakespeare writings, including his sonnets, to the architecture of the Globe Theater and the realities of life during the early 1600s. During these immersion weeks, students rotate through classes with a mix of different classmates, giving them a taste of their upcoming Middle School experience. Noted one of the students, “I grew in self-control by being independent and going to my (different) classes.”

At the end of the immersion experience, in addition to the performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, students also complete an art or writing project that brings to life one of the topics in a creative way. Projects are then displayed in the Early Middle School hallway to inform passersby. The goal of

the student project is for students to synthesize and share their learning in written or visual form. Writing options included creating a play within a play, a sonnet or a monologue, a contemporary version of a scene from the play, an informational brochure about one of the topics, or a playbill. Students who choose to demonstrate their knowledge visually could either create a medieval wardrobe using cloth, paper, or paint; draw the Globe Theater; or illustrate a scene from the play.

Grade 6 teacher Hannah Lash reflected that, “Immersion was truly a special time that provided a break from routine and allowed students to explore something new. The students were able to grow in leadership, confidence, self-awareness, and gain a deeper appreciation for the arts. What I loved about the two-week period was how much the students were truly immersed in it. Everything they did during that time was Shakespeare, every conversation I heard in the hallway was Shakespeare,



Mr. Hollis' grade 4 students perform *The Merchant of Venice*.

and for weeks after I was still hearing about sonnets, the plague, Julius Caesar, quotes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Globe Theater, stage directions, and compliments to their classmates.”

While students had been assigned roles and memorized their lines before the immersion weeks, intensive rehearsals were an important focus of the weeks. Each class produced its own version of the play, but rehearsals conducted by scene allowed the same characters from each cast to practice together, learning from one another and building friendships based on shared experience. Rehearsals by classroom gave the class a common goal and an intrinsic motivation to succeed, for themselves and their classmates. The frequency and intensity provided students with a unique opportunity to experience the excitement and camaraderie of drama. Thanks to our new Performing Arts Center, every student had a chance to experience a professional-level theater both onstage and from a backstage or technical aspect.

Says Amy Fowler, grade 6 teacher, “With the prompting of their drama director, Pete McDonough, the students really owned the production. The teachers were backstage but we didn’t need to direct them. They managed the whole thing themselves, which gave them such a great sense of confidence and accomplishment.”

This type of immersive learning gives students an opportunity to combine all of the aspects of a classical education in one experience. For the grammar stage, they learned facts about Elizabethan times, architecture, playwriting, and Shakespeare himself. They used that information to make connections between the play and its historical context through their classes and project, and then finally culminating in the rhetoric stage, bringing the Shakespearean characters to life.

The experience goes beyond academic and artistic achievement, however. Students learned important lessons from the play and study of the era about how aspects of character, cultural context, power, and social status affect and potentially alter life outcomes. They also learned from one another, growing in confidence and virtue.

Janet Jacobson, another grade 6 teacher, observes, “My class became closer during those weeks and learned to rely on one another in a totally new way! The chemistry they had on stage by having fun and bringing their characters to life was genuine and special to watch. They learned so much, but the biggest thing I saw was a growth in self-confidence. I saw amazing personal growth in each student.”

As students progress into Middle School and Upper School, they will carry with them the confidence,



Ms. Lash’s grade 6 students perform *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

creativity, knowledge, and excitement for learning encapsulated during the Shakespeare Immersion Weeks, preparing them for more in-depth study of history and drama. This intentional sequence of Shakespearean immersion and performance built into The Bear Creek School curriculum teaches students many important things: memorization, linguistic appreciation, expansion of vocabulary and root meaning, stage presence, creativity, and exposure to human

beings’ inherent fallen nature. At all grade levels, the simulation of life while on stage and the connection to other curricular experiences serve as powerful tools for examining with students the impact of life choices.

One of our grade 6 students summed up his experience by exclaiming, “If there was anything I could have changed, I would probably choose to do another performance just because it was so awesome!”

# BEAR CREEK EXPERIENCES ITALY

BY JANEEN SORENSEN

PHOTOS BY TRINITY OSBORN



Languages Department Chair Dr. Earl Nelson has led Latin students on a trip to Rome every three years throughout his eighteen-year tenure at Bear Creek. The trip in February 2019 during Mid-Winter Break was different from previous Roman adventures in that it intentionally combined Latin and visual arts students and experiences for the first time. As Fine Arts Department Chair Trinity Osborn observes, “It was a natural fit with the mix of historical locations and art on the itinerary.” Twenty students and three chaperones traveled around Rome and Florence on this memorable trip full of unique opportunities and special moments.

When asked why students of Latin should travel to Rome, Earl pragmatically explains, “For centuries well-educated people have done this. It’s just a part of what you do to be educated; you go and see these things.” A trip to Rome allows students to tangibly engage with history and “make real what has been

abstract. Seeing things in person helps students realize that the past really existed.” Nelson Sun ’20 researched the Arch of Titus on the Via Sacra in preparation for the trip. He laughs a little at the cliché, but describes the arch as “a lot bigger in real life...there is just something about seeing it in person” that you cannot realize through research or looking at pictures.

Understanding history develops the context of the original works students read in Latin class. Dr. Nelson believes that studying Latin leads you to Rome because, “the Roman Forum was the starting point of much of who we in the Western world are, both culturally and politically.” In Latin II, students explore Roman literature including the works of Quintus Horatius Flaccus. Earl describes Horace as “the son of a former slave...a nobody from nowhere but someone so skilled and talented” that he draws notice and becomes a well-respected poet. While in Rome, the students visited Palatine Hill and





the Forum. They walked along the Via Sacra and glimpsed the Rome that Horace saw while crafting his poetry.

As both a teacher and a parent of Bear Creek students, Trinity was in the unique position to “witness students’ Bear Creek education in action and come full circle.” Their knowledge had grown from “the books they read in Lower School, to the history they continued to learn through Early Middle School and Middle School, to the essay



topics they write about in Upper School.” Tour guides frequently commented “how impressed they were with our students’ knowledge of history and events—of their Latin and art.” This understanding allowed tour guides to “go deeper in discussion because the students already had a great foundation.” Trinity highlights that seniors who had taken Dr. Rob Sorensen’s art history class were able to make connections and have in-depth conversations. “I found it refreshing and amazing to see that our students were able to really engage with their knowledge out in the world, not just within the four walls of a classroom.”

One of the expected highlights on a trip to Rome is braving the mobs to visit the Sistine Chapel,

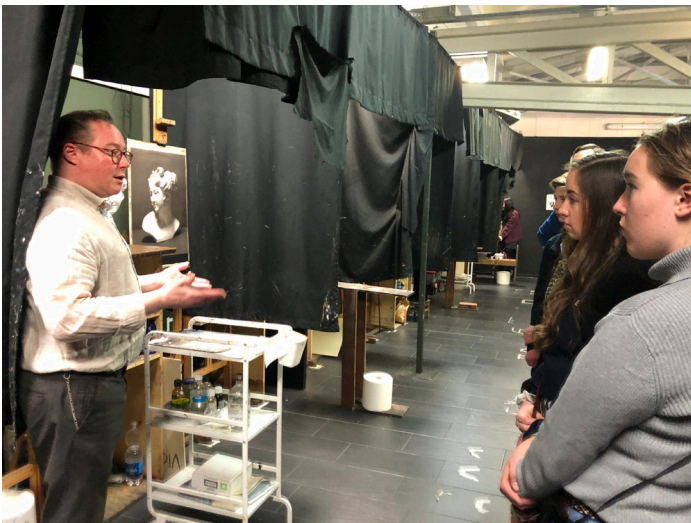


St. Peter’s Basilica, and other museums in Vatican City. On this trip, Bear Creek students were able to experience the church and museums under very special circumstances. Richard and Randy Altig, uncles of Parker Jani ’21, are deeply involved with an organization called Patrons of the Arts, which is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of art within the Vatican Museums. Their connections paved the way for a Bear Creek group to have an exclusive tour of the Vatican Museums with Elizabeth Lev, an art historian who is a world renowned expert on all things related to the Vatican and the treasures of Rome. The group toured the museums an hour before opening, without the overwhelming crowds. Lily Parker ’21 cites this tour as her favorite memory from the trip. “I really loved the Vatican and going into St. Peter’s Basilica. [Mrs. Lev] walked us through the whole story, and it



was so cool to see the story that Michelangelo tells on the ceiling.” Dr. Nelson recounts that without the crowds, this special arrangement enabled him to enjoy Vatican City as a truly incredible piece of history. “You could see the Vatican the way the Pope sees it. It’s the Pope’s house, and he just happened to have Michelangelo and Raphael come in and paint some walls for him.”

Mrs. Osborn had her own connection that provided another one-of-a-kind opportunity for the art students. A couple of years ago, Trinity attended a professional development workshop at



Gage Academy of Art in Seattle, and through the workshop’s instructor, made a connection with the director at an atelier art school in Florence.

The visit to Angel Academy of Art presented a unique experience for the art students. “It was not traditional of what we see here in the States, but

very traditional of what they have in Florence.” An *atelier* is a classical art studio or workshop where students work together under the supervision of a master artist to produce fine art under the master’s name. Trinity explains that atelier students “are standing with their easels, and as you look down the row of easels, you are taken back to a time when an artist might apprentice under an artisan.” The projects are developed over extended periods of intense focus, and Bear Creek students were able to more fully appreciate “what time and stillness can give to something.” The atelier tour was extraordinarily meaningful and exposed students to a historical form of artistic culture in Florence.



An international trip understandably involves a lot of walking and viewing of art and architecture. For a change of pace, one afternoon in Florence, students took a cooking class and learned how to make a traditional Tuscan pizza from scratch.





The class allowed the students to relax and engage with each other. Trinity notes, “It was a hands-on experience and a community fellowship experience.” Earl expands, “you feel like you’re meeting some Italians.”

Food plays an important role in any visit to Italy. The local connections Earl has developed over the years helped him guide the group to authentic restaurants frequented by Italians. The exposure to local cuisine, both in the cooking class as well as the various restaurants they visited, allowed students to more deeply engage in Italian culture. And for some students, the food was a highlight of the trip. Malcolm Weaver '20 cites, “the 1.1

kilograms of meat at the steak restaurant in Florence” as his favorite memory.

Whether walking in Horace’s footsteps along the Via Sacra, taking a private tour of the Sistine Chapel with a world renowned art historian, visiting an *atelier* art school, or learning to make authentic Tuscan pizza in Florence, this trip enriched the lives of each participant. Trinity summed it up well, “It revealed to me the value of intentionality in creating these opportunities for our students. Travel-learning trips not only broaden their understanding, but assist them in connecting what they are learning in our classrooms to the outside world.”



# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY WITH WISDOM, COMPASSION, AND COURAGE

*One of the important foundations of a Bear Creek education is helping our students experience the joy that comes from serving others. Upper School students must complete at least 100 hours of community service to graduate. The following stories about rising junior Bella Hayton and rising senior Bouke Spoelstra are examples of how our students are learning to engage the community with wisdom, compassion, and courage.*

## BOUKE SPOELSTRA: YOUTH COURT

By Debbie Marchione

Bouke Spoelstra '20 has long been passionate about the law and legal issues. Inspired by Michael Connelly books given to him by his grandfather, Bouke has found a way to turn his passion into leadership, even while still in high school.

After becoming involved with a youth court program in Bothell, Bouke was determined to start one in Redmond as well. Operating throughout the nation, youth court programs serve to give young drivers (under age 18) an alternative to adult municipal court for first-time traffic offenders. The objective is to hold drivers accountable, while helping them better understand the implications of their actions, using a peer-led, restorative justice model. The court operates as a learning opportunity for both the offenders and the student participants. Peer mentorship plays an important role in the positive outcomes arising from youth court programs.

Bouke explains that the program begins when a police officer stops a young driver for a first-degree traffic infraction such as speeding or failing to yield. The officer gives the driver a card with information about how to access or request a hearing in the Youth Court. Michael Finkle, King County District

Court Judge, who oversees the program in Redmond, determines if the driver is eligible for Youth Court and signs off on all actions.

A group of students from local schools, including four from The Bear Creek School (Bouke, Emma Firminger '21 and James Kung '21, and Josie Walsh '20) serves as the jury, recommending what consequence the driver should face. With an emphasis on learning, they may suggest that their

peer write a report on a police officer, participate in community service, or join a future Youth Court jury. The final disposition of the case is decided by the judge.

Bouke worked for 14 months with various local officials and the courts to establish the program in Redmond this past April. He sees an important value in that, "Youth

Court gives teens a chance to rebuild trust in the community and make up for mistakes they've made. It's something they may not have a chance to do if they're simply paying a fine."

He sums up his experience by stating, "I feel like the skills I've learned at Bear Creek greatly influenced me in forming the court. From learning about the different theories of morality in Modern Christian Thought with Mr. Davison, to the valuable skills on running meetings and organization that Dr. Gephart taught us in ASB, Bear Creek cultivated in me a



desire to play an active role in my community and to take an active role in improving it. My faith was also an important part of this journey. There have been many times when I felt like I wanted to give up or that it was too much work, and I found that prayer and faith gave me the strength I needed to persevere. God always answered my prayer through influential people who helped me along the way. I was empowered through Christ to be a servant in my community.”

## BELLA HAYTON: GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND

By Amanda Christopher

“The hardest part is telling people, ‘No, I’m sorry, you can’t pet my dog.’”

Bella Hayton '21, a volunteer puppy starter with Guide Dogs for the Blind, began raising her first puppy when she was only eight years old. “I really, really wanted a dog,” she remembers, but her family wasn’t quite ready for the commitment, so they compromised on raising guide dogs instead. Bella fell in love with the dedicated process of raising puppies. When she first began, her family thought they would just raise one, but now as she finishes her sophomore year, she has raised a total of three puppies. Bella is able to combine her love of dogs and her compassionate nature to make a difference in people’s lives and the community.

Bella is one of over 2,000 puppy-raising volunteers working with Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) throughout the Western states and Texas. GDB currently has over 2,200 active guide dog teams in the field. One of those dogs is none other than Bella’s very own, Mishka.

Mishka graduated this year and was placed with a woman in Tennessee. “That makes it all worth it!” Bella explained how emotional it was to see one of

the puppies she raised be paired with a person in need. The raisers, trainers, and new owners all attend a graduation ceremony before the dogs are adopted into their new families. “Everyone cries,” she said, “but the whole experience is rewarding.” Bella is still in touch with Mishka’s new owner. “Sometimes she sends pictures of Mishka, like one where she said, ‘Mishka did so well today; we took the bus together for the first time!’” This is what makes all the hard work and dedication worth it for Bella. She loves knowing one of her puppies is helping someone and making a difference.

Bella talked about the patience and commitment needed for raising guide dogs. Puppies need a lot of attention, and in order to train them effectively the raiser must be proactive and consistent. “There are a lot of rules and protocols,” Bella says, “We actually have a 400-page manual which we follow.” Along with observing the training guidelines, she

also writes up monthly reports which include where they have gone together and how the puppy is performing.

For Bella, raising puppies has become more than just seeing them grow and mature. “The community has also been so incredible. None of my grandparents or extended family live in the country. At my very first guide dog meeting, I met an elderly couple who have become like my surrogate grandparents. They even came to Grandparents Day at Bear Creek, and

we have dinner with them often. I wouldn’t have met them were it not for raising guide dogs.” She credits this tight-knit community and her love of dogs for her dedication to raising three dogs so far, as well as her desire to continue to raise more guide dogs in the future. “Giving them up is a really hard part, but you go into it knowing that they’re guide dogs and they’re not yours.” Bella hopes to raise two more puppies before she graduates from Bear Creek and wants to continue to be a raiser for many years to come.



# YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

*The Bear Creek School is so grateful to everyone who invested in Bear Creek by making a donation this past year. You helped provide our students with another year of extraordinary education!*

## ANNUAL FUND

Your generosity to the Annual Fund helped our students go on more than 60 field trips, showcase their creativity through outstanding drama and musical performances, and welcome more than 300 grandparents to campus for Grandparents Day. You made it possible for teachers to integrate the latest technology tools and curriculum innovations into their classrooms. And, you provided financial aid to families who would otherwise be unable to receive the benefits of a Bear Creek education. Employer matching gifts for donations and volunteer hours from companies such as Boeing, Google, Microsoft, T-Mobile, and others helped to magnify the impact of gifts from our community.



## A GIFT FOR THE AGES

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

For more information contact Debbie Marchione, V.P. for Philanthropy and Community Engagement, at [dmarchione@tbc.org](mailto:dmarchione@tbc.org) or by calling 425-898-1720 ext. 339.

## AUCTION

The outpouring of support by item donors, sponsors, and guests at our 2019 auction resulted in more than \$336,000 raised to benefit our students. Thanks to those who gave to the Fund-A-Need, both before and during the event. Our students in every division will benefit from new physical education equipment and bleachers, visual art tools, and many new musical instruments.

Themed after the popular board game

Monopoly, the evening was full of bright primary colors, music from Bear Creek's very own jazz band, and plenty of familiar faces. The generosity and support from the community was evident. There were over thirty live items sold to the highest bidder by the auctioneer, ranging from a child-sized Tesla toy car to tropical vacations. Thank you to everyone who attended, donated, and procured items for this year's auction. Bear Creek is blessed with some of the best supporters, parents, and patrons who make events like this possible.



# Volunteer Service

**VOLUNTEERS ARE THE LIFEBLOOD** of The Bear Creek School. Our programs simply would not be possible without the many parents, grandparents, alumni, and parents of alumni who unselfishly give of their labor, influence, expertise, and time to Bear Creek and our students. Collectively, volunteers gave more than 7,500 hours of service to Bear Creek last year. At our annual Volunteer Appreciation breakfast, guests shared some of the reasons they volunteer.

All of our volunteers are following Christ's example of service to others when He told His disciples,

“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

John 13:14-15



“By volunteering, I've made new friends.”



“It takes me out of my comfort zone, and I can model that for my kids. They see me learning as well!”







“I love meeting my child’s friends, and also getting to know the other parents. It’s helped me to navigate some of the challenges of raising kids when I have other parents I know at the school to turn to for support.”



“I enjoy staying connected to Bear Creek and to other parents, even though my children have graduated. It is such a great community.”



# The McCahill Family Is Invested in Bear Creek

By Debbie Marchione

**GOOD FRIENDS ARE OFTEN THE MOST RELIABLE** source of referrals for families who join The Bear Creek School, and Ed and Cindy McCahill are no exception. Having been set up on a long-distance blind date years earlier by their good friends, Bill and Jean Morgan (parents of Bobby '05 and Conner '11), when the McCahills were looking for a great school for their own children, they naturally turned to the Morgans for their insights. Bill and Jean were quick to encourage them to consider The Bear Creek School. “We heard such remarkable things about Bear Creek from the Morgans that we knew without a doubt that we wanted Bear Creek for our own kids,” Ed and Cindy agreed. In 1997 they enrolled their oldest son Will '09 and built a new home near the then-Woodinville Campus. They were “all-in” from the start! In subsequent years, their other three children, Gannon '11, Bridget '14, and Meghan '16 all became students at Bear Creek as well. Will and Gannon each married their Bear Creek sweethearts, Brittanie VanderWeide '09, and Nichole Crews '11. Suffice it to say, the McCahill family has been—and will always be—deeply enmeshed in the life and legacy of The Bear Creek School.

As new Bear Creek parents, Ed and Cindy both jumped in as volunteers right away, and they never looked back. They volunteered in many roles including working in the classrooms, chaperoning

field trips, participating in parent prayer groups, leading Girl Scout troops and the Cub Scout pack, coaching sports teams, raising money for the capital campaigns and athletics programs, and serving as long-time board members of the Grizzlies Booster Club. Cindy chuckles, “I volunteered to be Room Mom for all four of my kids’ Lower School classes because that allowed me to organize their activities in a way that worked with my schedule. That’s not

an easy thing to do with four kids!” On a more serious note, she comments, “I loved being involved at Bear Creek, meeting new families, making friends, and getting to know the other children. I consider our kids’ classmates *mine*—part of my chosen family, and I am still in touch with many of them today, even as they have become adults.”



The McCahill family together in 2016 for Meghan's graduation

Ed reflects on the satisfaction he felt not just volunteering with the kids directly, but in helping lay the foundation for the future of the school by working on the school's two successful capital campaigns: first to build the Main building, which opened in 2000, and more recently, to construct the Upper School building, which opened in 2015. “My high school experience at a private classically-oriented school that had existed since 1863 taught me the importance of legacy. Generations before I was born, many people had invested in the mission and vision of my high school's founders, and the school endures today. I was blessed to be a beneficiary of their sacrifices and commitment, which powerfully influenced

my thinking about legacy through education. I also experienced how an excellent education can inspire students to dream big dreams and work hard through the examples of many alumni role models. They were always quick to give credit to their high school education and experiences as the pivotal era in their lives. Cindy and I believe deeply in the power of the mission and vision of Bear Creek, and we have always wanted to see the school expand so more students and families could benefit from that.”

“Since we first arrived at Bear Creek, the school has continually exceeded our expectations—and we had very high expectations,” they both agreed. When Ed and Cindy see how well their children are thriving, they attribute that largely to Bear Creek’s classical Christian education and the wonderful teachers, coaches, and staff who made it come to life for their children. “Our kids graduated from Bear Creek not just college-ready, but life-ready. That’s what we always prayed for.” They acknowledge that putting four kids through Bear Creek was not always easy, but state emphatically that they would do it again the same way. “We always saw Bear Creek as an investment, not an expense. We wanted to put our resources towards helping our kids get the most out of their educational potential so they would be best-equipped to launch and sustain successful lives.” Ed adds, “We always trusted the school, and we knew that the teachers loved our kids, loved Jesus, and were giving them the best education possible.” He believes that the quality and depth of academic, social, and character development his children received continue to serve them well in both college and their chosen careers. “I really see that the classical Christian Trivium that Bear Creek teachers use, weaves knowledge into students’ minds and hearts in a way that results in wisdom, truth, and understanding, not just knowing a bunch of information.”

The McCahill family’s involvement did not end when their youngest child graduated. The values Ed and Cindy modeled for their children have been lessons deeply learned. Gannon serves on the Alumni

Leadership Committee, Will and Brittanie have volunteered in various ways as alumni, and it is not unusual to see Bridget and Meghan helping Cindy with photography or other projects at Bear Creek when they are in town.

Ed and Cindy are still actively involved as well. Ed jokes, “We’re still here. The kids got a diploma, but we didn’t!” Cindy is one of the school’s photographers, serves on the Parents of Alumni Committee, and teaches a JanTerm class each year. Ed helps with the JanTerm class, shares his expertise in financial planning, assists with fundraising, and is a champion for the school in the community, encouraging other families to consider Bear Creek for their children. They frequently attend athletics games and performing arts events, enthusiastically supporting current students. Cindy comments, “It was a little hard at first to come back after Meghan graduated. I was worried that maybe I wouldn’t belong anymore, but that fear went away the moment I stepped back through the front door. These are my people, this is my home. I feel welcomed every time I am at the school, and this is where my heart is.” Both treasure the connections and deep relationships they have developed with faculty and alumni families as well as current parents and students.

The McCahills also continue to invest philanthropically in Bear Creek. Ed says, “I’ve never *given* Bear Creek a dime in my life. We view our tuition payments and our financial gifts as *investments* in our family’s legacy here, much like those investors who have funded my high school since 1863. And investors love nothing more than to see a great return on their investments! The school continues to be faithful to its mission, and we can feel the Lord at work here on every level. It is such a blessing for our family to be both recipients of that, through our four children and two daughters-in-law, and to be an active part of continuing to build an enduring legacy through Bear Creek for current and future students and families, some of whom may eventually even include future generations of our own family!”

# ALUMNI NEWS AND CLASS NOTES

## Class of 2006

### Victor Kim

Victor is employed as a litigator at McCarthy Tétrault LLP in Toronto, Ontario, specializing in labour and employment litigation.

## Class of 2009

### Brianna (Firminger) Eickmeyer



Brianna celebrated two milestones in June 2019. On June 21, she married Scott Eickmeyer in Woodinville. Two days later, she graduated from Bastyr University with a Doctorate of Naturopathic Medicine. Brianna and Scott reside in Seattle.

## Class of 2012

### Morgan Rial



In May 2019, Morgan graduated with a Master of Science in the Physician Assistant Program from South University in Tampa, FL. She is now a practicing PA at Joseph Spine Institute in the Tampa/St. Petersburg area, working in their clinics and assisting with surgery.

## Class of 2013

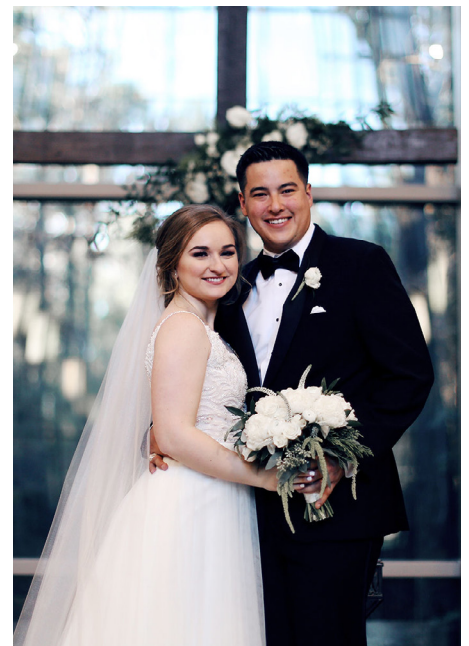
### Michele Brown

Last year Michele studied abroad at Durham University in England completing coursework toward an M.S. in marketing which she expects to finish in January 2020. During the 2018 - 2019 school year, she also played volleyball for Durham, helping the team win the



British University College Sports Championship as well as the professional National Volleyball League Cup Championship. Michele is currently working with a Seattle-area sports team as she completes her dissertation.

### Katie (Matthews) Gomez



Katie married Ian Gomez at a small ceremony in January 2019 in The Woodlands, TX. She and Ian both graduated from Baylor and are now residents of Houston, TX with their sweet pup, Molly. Katie works for Baylor University, and Ian is an accountant at a firm in Houston.

## Class of 2014

### Caleb Alleva



Caleb graduated with distinction from Naval Officer Candidate School in Newport, RI on May 24, 2019. He was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy with designator Naval Flight Officer. For the next two years, Caleb will be stationed at Pensacola Naval Air

Station as a Student Naval Flight Officer as he begins pre-flight indoctrination training.

### Jacob Benson



Jacob completed an M.B.A. at Gonzaga University in May 2019. He began working at Northwest Bank in January 2019 and continues as a commercial credit analyst in the Small Business Administration division at the bank's Coeur d'Alene, ID location.

## Class of 2015

### AJ Rial

In May 2019, AJ graduated from University of Colorado with a B.S. in finance. He also completed the ROTC program and was commissioned as second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps. He will report to The Basic School in Quantico, VA in September.



# AN INTENTIONALLY CHRISTIAN LIFE

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIVE AN AUTHENTICALLY CHRISTIAN LIFE?** This is the animating question for Hugh Foskett '04. For Hugh, as for many people, the answer is an ongoing journey to allow God's spirit to animate his actions.

Hugh started at The Bear Creek School in sixth grade, growing with the school as it moved from portables in a church parking lot and into the newly-built Main building at Redmond Campus. After graduation, Hugh received a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Washington and later a master's degree in teaching from Northwest University. Currently a security engineer with Amazon, Hugh has poured many hours into giving back to The Bear Creek School through service on the Alumni Leadership Committee and as a regular volunteer with alumni activities involving Bear Creek's senior class.

One of the alumni initiatives that Hugh helped to establish and now passionately supports, is a series of three annual panel discussions between alumni and soon-to-graduate seniors in their Worldview Capstone class. The panels occur in the spring and are an opportunity for students to hear from and ask questions of alumni about the challenges and



joys of navigating life beyond Bear Creek, particularly as a Christian.

"I love it when I see in a student's eye that an idea or thought just clicked with him or her," he reflects. "I really think it is valuable for teenagers, and especially boys, to have an adult Christian role model whom they can relate to in a different way than with their parents or teachers. That's part of the value of these panels. I am a

little further down the path than these students, but still close enough that they see the shared experience. So perhaps hearing things from me might plant a seed in a different way."

Hugh's enthusiasm for this project grows out of his own experience. In reflecting on his journey, he notes that for quite some time, he fell away from active participation in his faith. "I understood my faith intellectually, but gave very little thought as to how that translated into the ways I chose to live. I was in many ways coasting, not actively thinking about how I was living my life, let alone whether I was truly living as a *practicing* Christian. Then when I was faced with challenges, I made decisions that in hindsight were not good for me." A year out of college, Hugh experienced what he calls his *Jonah moment*. "I woke up one morning and realized that the way I was living was not healthy, and I needed

## AN EXCLUSIVE PLATFORM JUST FOR ALUMNI

Have you checked out the new private alumni platform on our website yet? This special section of the school's website allows alumni to opt in to a secure directory so you can stay in touch with classmates; post or find jobs; stay "in the know" about upcoming alumni and school events; and access the Bear Creek alumni network to ask questions about careers, housing in a new city, professional referrals, or whatever else is on your mind.

Go to [alumni.tbcs.org](http://alumni.tbcs.org) to set up your profile and get started today.

help to get back on a good path and become an active participant in all aspects of my life.”

He reached out to Overlake Church, and with guidance and support from a variety of sources, slowly began to live a more intentional life, actively taking responsibility for his actions and his faith. “God began seeping back into my life,” he remembers. Now, Hugh makes the time to intentionally find ways to live a Christian life. In addition to reading Scripture daily, Hugh and his wife, Joy, lead a small group through Timberlake Church, he participates in a men’s Bible study group, and he volunteers with Bear Creek.

He sees the power of a Bear Creek education as multi-faceted. “I got a wonderful education. Being exposed to great concepts and great thinkers and great stories has given me a foundation for relating to others who come from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. I feel like the broad knowledge I have often leads to really wonderful conversations and opportunities to engage and relate to other people.”

Hugh also credits the meaningful relationships that faculty develop with their students. “I knew that teachers like Donna Dunn, Rob Sorensen, Kevin Davison, Ron Lynch, and Linda Graham were invested in my life. I think at some level, I understood that they were praying for me and truly cared about me as a person, not just a student in their classes.” He notes that, “This kind of investment and caring doesn’t just happen in a community, it is intentionally created and nurtured by the school. I value the relationships that I still have with those individuals today.”

By continuing to volunteer with Bear Creek, Hugh hopes that he can offer inspiration or a Christian model of the power of God’s grace, combined with personal action, to students as they move into the next chapters of their lives. He sums up his journey so far by saying, “I am grateful that God continues to put me in a position to share my faith with others in my life, including at Bear Creek, and to be persistent in seeking ways and taking actions to live as a Christian in a society where that can sometimes be difficult.”

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU** join us at one of the upcoming Alumni and Parents of Alumni events. Watch your email or check out our website at [tbcs.org/alumni](http://tbcs.org/alumni) for more details. If you are interested in helping create an event for alumni or parents of alumni, contact Lori Lee, Alumni Relations Manager, at [lori.lee@tbcs.org](mailto:lori.lee@tbcs.org).

## **SEPTEMBER 27, 6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.**

Fall Gathering and Wine Tasting for Parents of Alumni and Alumni (over age 21)

*In a new location this year: Two Vintners, Woodinville*

## **OCTOBER 11, 4:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.**

Dig Pink Volleyball Games

## **NOVEMBER 26, 5:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.**

Green & Gold Night

## **DECEMBER 20, 4:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.**

Homecoming Basketball Games

## **JANUARY 2, 7:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.**

Alumni Basketball Co-ed Open Gym

## **JANUARY 31, 5:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.**

Parents of Alumni Basketball Tailgate

## **APRIL 25**

Alumni and Parents of Alumni Service Project

## **JUNE 20, 10:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.**

Alumni Soccer Game

## **JULY**

Alumni outing to the Everett Aqua Sox

# Fall Tailgate



**Saturday, September 20, 2019**