

bws

BRENTWOOD SCHOOL MAGAZINE SPRING 2019





ON THE COVER

Though a few raindrops fell at the 45th Commencement Ceremony held on June 1, 2019, there were many moments of sunshine, laughter, tap dancing, and confetti for the graduates of the Class of 2019. Inspired by alum Angela Reddock Wright '87 who delivered this year's Commencement address, the newest members of the Alumni Association walked out of the tent, diplomas in hand, ready to leave the Brentwood nest and make a difference in the world.

SPRING 2019

bws

FEATURES

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Director Josh Berger and student leaders outline and celebrate the myriad accomplishments of the Belldegrin Center for Innovative Leadership.

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Words From the Head of School

DR. MIKE RIERA

“Nicole Bali is an example of the quintessential Brentwood teacher—dynamic, brilliant, and revered—who inspires us all. She was here when Brentwood School opened its doors in 1972, and is marking this year as her last, as she heads into a well-deserved retirement.”

Anyone who has recently driven down Sunset Boulevard past the East Campus can't help but recognize that change is afoot at Brentwood School. Quite clearly, our new Middle School Building makes a powerful statement about our ongoing commitment to what is best for our students—in this case, the best possible learning environment, as both students and evolving human beings. And, of course, as you have heard me say in the past, this growth is not about the buildings and renovated spaces, it is about what can and will happen in these spaces.

The content of this magazine is akin to a series of snapshots about all that is already happening at Brentwood and, with a bit of imagination, offers glimpses into what is around the corner. Most notably, you will see the impact that the Belldegrün Center for Innovative Leadership is already having on our community of students, faculty, and staff. And we have just begun!

As you enjoy reading these pages, I encourage you to pay attention to how our past informs and inspires both our present and our future. From traditions held near and dear to fresh observances, Brentwood honors the past as we forge ahead toward an exciting future.

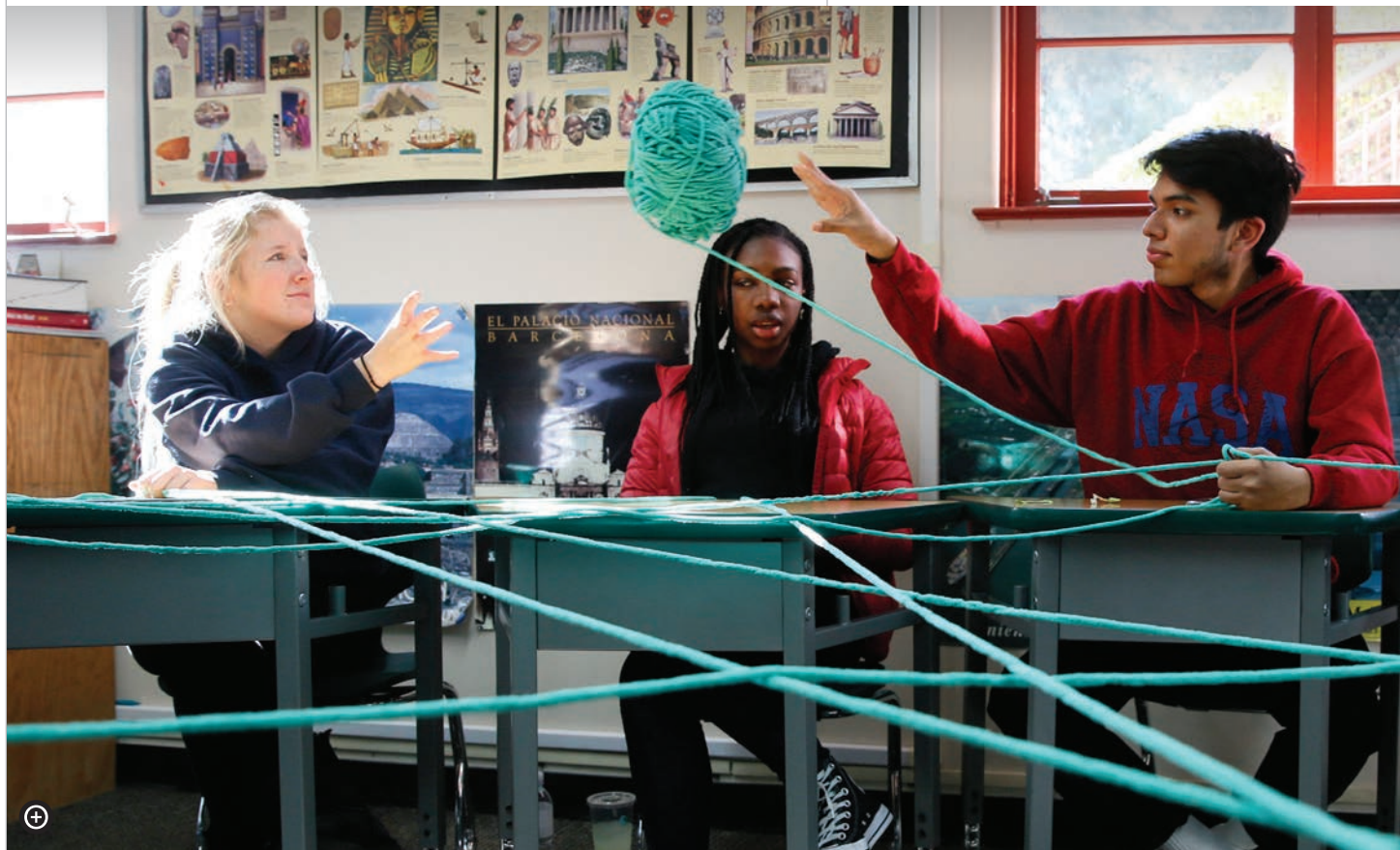
Nicole Bali, (on the adjacent page) is an example of the quintessential Brentwood teacher—dynamic, brilliant, and revered—who inspires us all. She was here when Brentwood School opened its doors in 1972, and is marking this year as her last, as she heads into a well-deserved retirement. Her legacy will live on and, moving forward, her classroom will remain a testament to her 47-year career, renamed in her honor: Magistra Bali Aula.

As Dave Velasquez often reminds me the heart of the school remains, and always will be the student-teacher connection. There is no better example of this connection than Ms. Bali. In this regard, the past carries us forward to a confident and enthusiastic future.



OPENING SHOT

On Sunday, June 2, friends and colleagues gathered to celebrate three retiring faculty members at the annual Emeritus Reception. At this year's event, founding faculty member Nicole Bali was honored for 47 years of inspired teaching and was presented with a bouquet of flowers from her daughter, Marie-Elaine, who was flown in from Paris for the occasion as a surprise. It was a precious moment for a teacher who has given so much to her students and to the school.



A Web of Reflection

by **DR. TRINA MOORE-SOUTHALL**
Director of Equity and Inclusion

In addition to the many activities and special assemblies that take place throughout the school year with themes of diversity and inclusion, every other year an entire day is set aside to come together as a school community to discuss these important issues.

The stated goal of Celebrating Diversity Day: The Power of Personal Stories is to provide a forum for all members of the Brentwood School community to discuss and grapple with issues related to diversity (as defined in terms of race, class, cultural identity, religion, family structure, gender, sexual orientation, learning styles, life experiences, and physical and

mental differences). And the hope is that this day serves as a catalyst for ongoing dialogue in and out of the classroom and at home about the diverse topics and issues discussed and brought to life by our presenters as they share their very moving personal stories.

Our Student Diversity Council members had some excellent suggestions on how to improve the schedule of the day

To create the Web of Reflection, participants held a ball of yarn and shared a story. After speaking, each person held onto a piece of the yarn before tossing the ball to another person thus forming a physical web of stories and reflections.

and recommendations for the topics of some of the break-out sessions. The students also wanted time to meet in small groups to discuss and share their reactions to the speakers and to the issues presented.

To culminate a day of many voices and perspectives with a moment of reflection, the Council added a new activity called the “Web of Reflection,” which they took part in at last year’s ADL (Anti-Defamation League) training. Elena Cardenas, Student Life Assistant, helped with putting together leaders on campus to represent each grade level while Cat Zusky, Student Life Director and 12th Grade Dean, and I met with the students to prepare and practice before the day. The activity was executed in the students’ Advisory groups.

Holding a ball of yarn, a student shared a reflection or responded to a prompt

“As the conversation continued, a web was formed across the groups, symbolizing togetherness, community, and diversity. The yarn web created as a result was a symbol of each person’s valued participation in the day...”

provided by the student leader. Once the response was shared, the student then held on to a piece of the yarn while passing the ball to a classmate. This activity allowed for participation from everyone.

Questions such as, “Whose story did you learn more about today, and what did you learn? (student, faculty, guest speaker)” and “If you were to share a story on Diversity Day, what of your own or your family’s experience could you share?” As the conversation continued, a web was formed across the groups, symbolizing togetherness, community, and diversity.

The yarn web created as a result was a symbol of each person’s valued participation in the day, but also of what we can create when we work together toward greater understanding and compassion. It was the perfect way to end an inspiring day. ■

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- **dynamic area for news and photo galleries**
- **expanded microsite for our VA partnership**

For everything else parents and faculty/staff need—**calendars, directory, forms, and downloads**—enjoy the **newly revamped Eagle Eye**.



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Crayon Club lunch events are moments of joy and learning, like this past spring when the Behr Family shared their experiences in Japan.

Crayon Club Thrives on the West Campus

by **TARA KAY HAROUTUNIAN**

Assistant Director of Admissions, Lower School

It was with great pleasure that I was able to continue Brentwood School's tradition of Crayon Club this year. Crayon Club was created as an opportunity for parents/guardians and their children to share their unique family story, heritage, and traditions with our Lower School community. Students are given the opportunity to celebrate what makes their families special. This year we took a trip to Japan with the Behr family, learned about the Levine family's Beauty Bus Foundation, and traced the Spanos family's roots to ancient Greece.

First grader, Ivy and her father, Matthew Behr, shared experiences from their one-month trip to Japan including Ivy's immersion into a Japanese summer school. Third grader, Alexis and her mother, Wendy Levine, presented their Beauty Bus Foundation and its goal of "bringing beauty home" and "providing beauty services to enhance quality of life to seriously ill individuals and their caregivers." First grader, Ethan and his father, George Spanos, dove into the rich history of ancient Greece, the birthplace of democracy. George discussed his experiences growing up in Greece, and Ethan shared his present-day connections to his father's ethnicity. They concluded their presentation with upbeat traditional Greek music and dancing.

Crayon Club embraces all the diverse traits and experiences that make each and every one of us unique individuals. We thank all of our families who have helped and supported us. If you are interested in volunteering in this culture to culture exchange or would just like to chat and exchange ideas about future events, please feel free to reach out to me at tharoutunian@bwscampus.com. ■



The Annual All-School Art Show filled half of the East Campus Pavilion for one week during April with stunning student artwork from across the divisions. Also on view were pieces created by our very own art teachers, each professional artists outside of school, and an interactive doodle board where visitors could contribute their art to a collaborative piece. If you were not able to stop by, enjoy the gallery of images online.

LOWER SCHOOL SCIENCE NEWS



First graders show off their "body suits" in a colorful display for their friends and teachers.



GRANDPARENT PROGRAMS

Grandparent Opportunities Continue to Expand

Thank you to our grandparents for being an integral part of the BWS community! The 2018–2019 school year brought many exciting opportunities for grandparents to deepen their connection to Brentwood School.

The opportunities ranged from events rooted in tradition to new programs that were great successes. Currently, our grandparent program includes: Grandparents and Special Friends Day, Grandparent Council Luncheons, A Grandparent Education Evening with Dr. Mike, and the Grandparent Social hosted by Deborah and Steven Lebowitz.

This year provided our grandparents with the opportunity to connect with the school in myriad ways. Dr. Mike painted a picture of a day in the life of Brentwood School students from each division at our **Grandparent Education Evening** by sharing examples of student projects. Our grandparents learned about the power of words partnership program between Upper School and Lower School students, and heard Dr. Mike's explanation of "what is privilege" that the Director of Inclusivity and Equity discussed with Middle School students. They also learned about the incredible exchange program with students who visited from Seoul, South Korea, which taught our students about emotional intelligence and cultural sensitivity, along with much more.

During our **Grandparent Council Luncheons**, grandparents mingled with each other and learned through an interactive presentation about the new Belldregun Center for Innovative Leadership led by Dr. Josh Berger, the Director of BCIL. In addition, they heard student stories about the leadership opportunities Brentwood provides beginning in the Lower School.

At the **Grandparent Social**, Deborah and Steven Lebowitz opened up their home to more than 50 Brentwood School grandparents for an evening of musical entertainment, conversation, and delight.

As we expand our grandparent program, we will start a **new Grandparent Committee** in the fall. This program will provide grandparents with the ability to deepen their connection with the community through volunteerism and other efforts.

We hope all of you stay connected to your grandchildren's journey at Brentwood School. ■



First Graders Build Bodies

The Lower School Science team, once again, conducted the awesome "body building" lesson in the 1st Grade Human Body Unit. Students learned about many of the body systems including skeletal, circulatory, respiratory, nervous, and digestive by creating "body bags," complete with working lungs, esophagus, and stomach. They used straws, cardboard, and paper towel rolls with brain hats and other detailing to show their organs on the outside.

Exploring Modernism with the Help of Faculty Lecturers

by **SHIRLEY BLAKE**
Director of Communications

Upper School English teacher **Jessica Chaintreuil** introduced an in-house guest lecture series in her senior Modernism elective this year, drawing upon the expertise of our Upper School faculty to share their perspectives on aspects of this vast philosophical movement. As stated in the course description, Modernism, spanning roughly 1910 to 1940, is defined as “a period of experimentation, ambition, rejection, and manipulation. Systems that previously imparted meaning in the world became meaningless. Our goal of the semester is to understand the ways in which writers, artists, and thinkers rejected the past—both what they reject and how they reject it—in favor of finding new meaning in a world nearly subsumed with chaos.” Clearly, a study of this era lends itself to collaboration with other subject areas. Upper School faculty were excited to dive in.

“I really want students to walk away understanding that because Modernism was this huge range of trends and movements. It touched all aspects of society,” said Chaintreuil. “It is inherently

interdisciplinary, and my goal is to show students that when an author writes about, say, the anxiety they feel about having to leave home, that the root of that anxiety finds itself in physics, in history, in psychology, etc.”

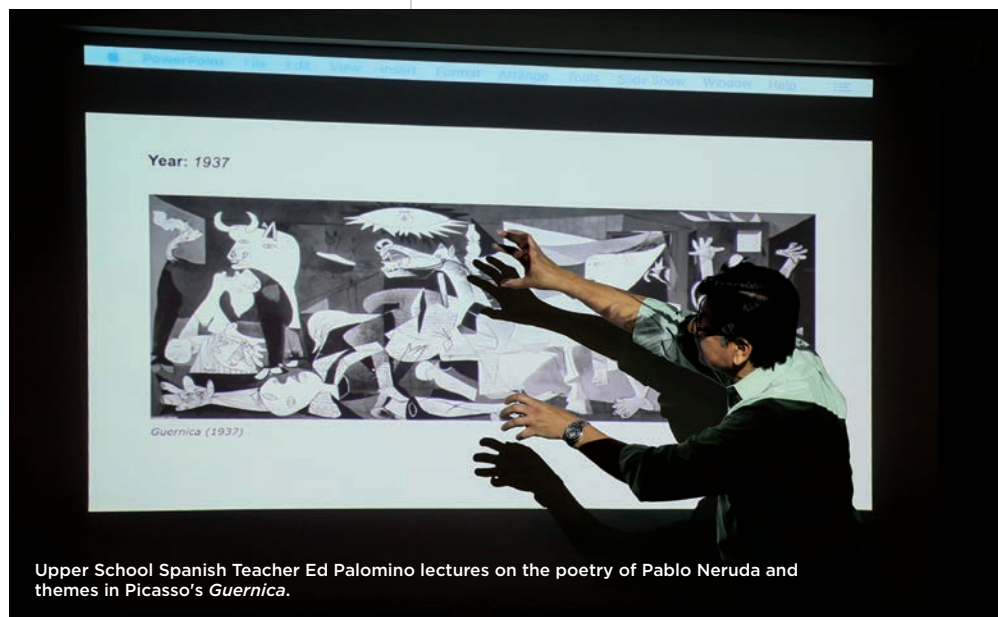
As part of the course, Chaintreuil invited faculty from various Upper School departments to speak about a topic that pertained to or influenced the Modernist movement. Science teacher Laura Feucht spoke about Darwin’s theory of Natural Selection; Upper School Director Ryan Boccuzzi spoke about Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle; and visual art teacher Alyssa Champagne presented Cubism to the class. See other lectures below...

While students explored the core texts assigned during the class, including works by Eliot, Joyce, Pound, Hemingway, and Faulkner,

they broadened their understanding of the period by looking at artistic movements, musical compositions, poetry, psychology, and beyond. Guest lecturers spent 20 minutes presenting; the rest of the class period was spent relating the information to the literature at hand.

“It’s important to me as a teacher that students understand that their interpretation of the literature is no more right or wrong than mine. I want them to see that reading and studying and analyzing literature with a multiplicity of perspectives is something that began with T.S. Eliot.

We rely on the other voices in the room to help us make sense of the work and together, we figure out its central meaning. It’s my hope



OTHER FACULTY LECTURES

Susan Katz, English: “T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*”

Denise Mahdesian, School Counselor: “Sigmund Freud and Anxiety”

Tim Haehn, English: “Fyodor Dostoyevsky and the Paradox of Free Will”

Ed Palomino, Spanish: “The poetry of Garcia Lorca and Neruda” (PICTURED ABOVE)

Deborah Stokol, English: “Experimentation in Music, 1910–1930”

that students see that reading these tough texts isn't about mastering a single perspective, but rather, it's about challenging their notion of what it means to read and analyze with a sense of bravery and curiosity," said Chaintreuil.

Next year, Chaintreuil hopes to include more guest speakers so that she can cover additional topics, including the Ballet Russe, German Expressionist film, and Surrealism, for example.

This successful experiment is a great example of the collaborative spirit and collegiality of our faculty. While it was certainly a beneficial experience for our students, I would guess that the faculty lecturers loved being invited to share their expert knowledge on a topic likely beyond the purview of their classes. And students finally get to see what their teachers have been stressing all along: that the disciplines are linked together, and what they are learning in one class will invariably have an impact on their understanding of the content in another. ■



School Calendar 2019-2020

August 27 // K-12 First Day of School

September 2 // School Holiday: Labor Day

September 30 // School Holiday: Rosh Hashanah

October 9 // School Holiday: Yom Kippur

November 27-29 // Thanksgiving Break

December 20 // Last day of school before Winter Break

January 6 // Classes resume after Winter Break

January 20 // School Holiday: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

February 1 // School Holiday: Presidents' Day

March 27 // Last day of school before Spring Break

April 13 // Classes resume after Spring Break

May 25 // School Holiday: Memorial Day

May 30 // 46th Commencement Ceremony

June 4 // LS/MS Last Day of School

June 5 // US Last Day of School


June 5 // 5th and 8th Grade Promotion



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

bws MAGAZINE online!



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Athletic Accolades

FALL

CROSS COUNTRY

- **Wyatt Sarkisian '19**, 1st Team Gold Coast League, 10th in State Division 5, All-State CIF Team
- **Olivia Ingram '19**, 1st Team Gold Coast League

FOOTBALL

- **Jack Tobey '19**, Gold Coast League Defensive MVP, 1st Team All-CIF Division 10
- **Jack D. '20**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Devin Aglubat '19**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Cole L. '21**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Jamai B. '20**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League
- **Brice Lourd '19**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League
- **Michael V. '20**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League

GIRLS TENNIS

- **Sydney L. '21**, Gold Coast League Singles Runner-Up
- **Sammy W. '21**, Gold Coast League Singles 3rd Place

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

- **Mandi Mikasa '19**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Chase B. '20**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League

BOYS WATER POLO

- **Zach H. '20**, Prep League MVP, 1st Team All-CIF Division 5
- **Elton S. '20**, 1st Team Prep League, 1st Team All-CIF Division 5
- **Jack D. '20**, 2nd Team Prep League
- **Ben Schiff '19**, 2nd Team Prep League, 3rd Team All-CIF Division 5
- **Kole N. '21**, All-CIF Division 5

WINTER

GIRLS BASKETBALL

- **Destiny McAllister '19**, 1st Team Gold Coast League, 1st Team All-CIF Division 3AA
- **Brianna F. '21**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Sammy W. '21**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League
- **Erica H. '21**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League

BOYS BASKETBALL

- **Braelee Albert '19**, 1st Team Gold Coast League, 2nd Team All-CIF Division 1
- **Brett Polson '19**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League
- **JR Olofson '19**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League

BOYS SOCCER

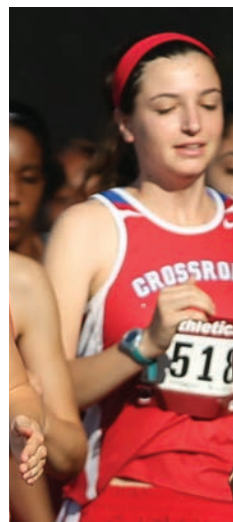
- **Andres Arango '19**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Sebastian K. '20**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Joel S. '21**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League
- **Max G. '20**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League

GIRLS SOCCER

- **Carly M. '21**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Sadie S. '21**, 1st Team Gold Coast League
- **Mia Berman '19**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League
- **Grace S. '22**, 2nd Team Gold Coast League



SPORTS ALBUM





Destiny McAllister '19 joined the Brentwood community as a sophomore in 2017. Since then, she's left her mark on the girls' basketball program through her leadership and some very impressive statistics. In 2018, Destiny was named State Division IV Player of the Year, John Wooden Award Winner HS Division 4 Player of the Year, and CIF-SS Division IV Player of the Year. This year, she was named 1st Team All Gold Coast League and 1st Team ALL CIF Division 3AA. Destiny averaged 20 points and 10 rebounds per game, which represents the highest points per game in the last decade for any Brentwood player. She earned 650 points and 325 rebounds during the 2018-2019 season, and made 71 three-pointers. Let's learn a little bit more about Destiny beyond her accolades and stats as she prepares to play basketball at Pepperdine University next year.

Started playing basketball: at age 4

Favorite food: tacos

Biggest fans: my parents

Basketball hero: Kobe Bryant

Favorite WNBA team: Sparks

Favorite NBA team: Lakers

Long-term career goal: to be a team doctor for a professional basketball team

Personal motto: "Progression over perfection"

Three reasons to love basketball: 1) it's a stress reliever, 2) it's fun, and 3) it provides an opportunity to make lifelong memories and relationships



1 Wyatt Sarkisian '19 leaves other runners far behind
2 Braelee Albert '19 takes a shot
3 Olivia Ingram '19 leads a tight pack.

Banners Raised

Water Polo

Coach Rob Bowie and his Varsity water polo team raised their first CIF Runner-Up banner after an awesome season in the pool. This was their second banner in school history. Their final record was 22-8, which took them into the playoffs where they beat 12th seed Cabrillo-Lompoc 11-5, 3rd seed El Dorado 6-5, and 2nd seed Kennedy 12-9 before falling to the number one seed, California High 9-10. The last time the team hung a banner in the gym was after the 2012 season when they were honored as Runner-Up in Division 7. Junior Zach H. was the Prep League MVP and led our team in scoring throughout the season. He was also selected to the All CIF-SS Division 5 team. Graduating seniors (each of whom played all four years of high school) include Cole Beeks, Liam Flockhart Ford, Connor Kenefick, Teddy Klausner, Ben Schiff, and Austin Schwartz.

Lacrosse

When 28 players and four coaches stood in the gym and watched the very first lacrosse banner in school history take its rightful place high on the wall, each of those teammates truly appreciated that lacrosse is not a team of a few—lacrosse is a team of many. They walked onto the field on the first day of practice as individuals, but they quickly came together and played as a family. In the end, they earned the top seed for Division 2 playoffs, beating Royal 12-2 in the first round, and Peninsula 12-8 in the semifinals. Under the leadership of Head Coach Shawn Zordani, this team is now celebrated as the Division 2 Runner-Up with "play hard and play physical" as their motto. Team captains, playing all four years, are Brice Lourd, Johnny Bond, Luke Steinfeld, and Taj Pinkner. They were joined by fellow seniors Ben Takowsky, Sammy Victor, Dusty Rhodes, Jack Tobey, Brett Polson, and Devin Aglubat. ■



Upper School Students Win National Awards



Danielle W. '20

American Legion Oratorical Contest Winner

Danielle “Dani” W. ’20 first heard about the American Legion Oratorical Contest from her debate coach when she was a sophomore. He encouraged her to enter even though she didn’t know anything about the American Legion. Even though that first attempt wasn’t award-winning, she entered again this year and went all the way to the National quarterfinals.

As explained on the American Legion website, “the Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students.” The theme of this year’s contest was “compromise,” in that our Constitution was borne out of compromise and requires it in order for our system of government to work. “It was so exciting to have conversations with and listen to other high school students tell me about their states and their feelings about our country. While we are from different parts of the country and our experiences in life are so varied, we can still sit down and talk

to each other without anger and hatred,” said Dani.

In total, Dani participated in five competitions over the course of about a month and a half, on her own time and outside of her regular Brentwood workload. Dani will compete again next year as a senior and, with so much experience under her belt, we can anticipate another successful run.

Alaman Diadhon '19

U.S. Presidential Scholar Winner

Congratulations to Alaman Diadhon '19 for being named a U.S. Presidential Scholar by the U.S. Department of Education. This year’s winners—161 high school seniors—will receive \$2,500 in scholarship money from one of the most prestigious academic awards for high school graduates and will receive a Presidential Scholar Medallion at a June 23 reception sponsored by the White House.

This is the 55th class of Presidential Scholars, selected by the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars from about 3.6 million high school seniors on the basis of outstanding academic performance, artistic achievements, technical excellence, essays, community service, leadership, and commitment to high ideals. In addition, 55 other scholars are chosen: 20 in the arts, 20 in career and technical education, and 15 selected at-large. California led the list with 10 scholars, followed by New Jersey with eight, and Florida with seven. ■

“It was so exciting to have conversations with and listen to other high school students tell me about their states and their feelings about our country. While we are from different parts of the country and our experiences in life are so varied, we can still sit down and talk to each other without anger and hatred.”

—Danielle W. '20



A talented tap dancer, Alaman Diadhon performed before his classmates for the first time as a surprise at this year’s Commencement Ceremony.

BY THE NUMBERS

VA Engagement

(2018/2019 SCHOOL YEAR)

312

Shuttle trips to and from Westwood Village for residents of Building 2091 **Wedding** of 2 **Veterans** with 1 **public safety officer** as witness

140

VA Scholarships to Summer at Brentwood 2019 (506 to date!)

8.5

Average hours per day of Veteran access to VCRE, **7** days a week7 **Veterans** currently employed by Brentwood School

2,244

Student service hours spent on Veteran-centric service activities

Donation Drives

(2018/2019 SCHOOL YEAR)

294

Hygiene kits for homeless Veterans

1,582

Pairs of new socks

1,200

Meals at GLA VA Stand Down, Homeless to Housed 2018

Veterans chat with Amor Towles at the Author's Circle Reception which followed Towles' lecture on March 10, 2019.

Veterans Attend Annual Hutson Guest Lecture Series at Brentwood School Featuring Amor Towles

The John Hutson Memorial Guest Lecture Series is just one of many events welcoming Veterans to Brentwood School to grow, learn, and expand their horizons through the Veterans Center for Recreation and Education. This year's featured speaker, best-selling author Amor Towles, engaged the audience in a lively discussion about his bestselling novel *A Gentleman in Moscow* followed by an on-stage interview with long-time Brentwood faculty members Judith O'Hanlon and Hank Koransky. Veterans were offered free tickets to this popular event and attended in reserved seating. Several joined the author after the lecture to get a book signed at the Author's Circle Reception.

Other events open to Veterans at no charge include a broad calendar of performing arts events happening on the East Campus, along with a full slate of athletic contests throughout the year. For more information about the VCRE and free tickets for Veterans, please visit bwscampus.com/veteran_partnership.

This March, Upper School English teacher **Deborah Stokol** spoke at the education side of South by Southwest (SXSW), a prestigious film and arts festival in Austin, Texas, that began more than 30 years ago.

Her talk, titled “Teaching the Bardic Tradition as a Bard,” focused on using the tools of a bard, how that helps students, and why that, in turn, matters. Throughout the talk, Stokol accompanied herself with a small harp and sang songs she wrote to words springing from such works as the *Odyssey* and *Beowulf*.

Teaching the Bardic Tradition As a Bard

by **DEBORAH STOKOL**, Upper School English

When we talk about the bardic—or oral—tradition, we mean works bards (singing poet-historians) would transmit from memory to an audience. A bard, generally accompanying himself with a portable instrument like the harp and sang of heroic feats from history or his day.

Works like Homer’s the *Odyssey* and our old English *Beowulf* comprise some of the most well-known examples of this tradition.

At SXSW, I began my talk with words from Robert Fagles’ translation of the *Odyssey*, in a pivotal moment in which Odysseus introduces himself to those who could help him get home after 20 years. In his speech, he says, “I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, known to the world as master of every craft. My fame has reached the skies, sunny Ithaka is my home...” These words lead to a series of discussions on names, the yearning for fame, the longing for home, and a desire for a legacy beyond death.

History hasn’t been too kind to Odysseus, though. Given his plundering ways and total megalomania, we sometimes think of him as more of a sociopath than hero, but this particular passage never really struck much of a chord—pun intended—with my students until I set it to music, and they could sing along, and they started to understand the power of a name. Because when it comes to Odysseus and literature in general,

maybe even to Life, when we ask, “what’s in a name?” The answer may actually be...everything...maybe even your immortality.

The *Odyssey*’s length, language, and poetic form can initially seem daunting to students so used to digital immediacy. But most people respond to music and to stories. And what’s the *Odyssey* if not a very long song performed by an old man with a harp?

I found a new level of engagement teaching the *Odyssey* when I set the words to music. And it just made contextual sense. **Homer was a bard, so that means the *Odyssey* was originally sung with a lyre and meant to be transmitted orally.**

If there’s one thing the Ancient Greeks valued, it was heroism and the glory that followed it, a glory called “kleos.” When we call a work the “song of...” it’s a literal call-back to a bard’s holding a hero’s life through song.

I want students to feel this on a visceral level as they listen to a song performed on the original medium

these works would have employed, using simple modes and the limited capabilities of the instrument to get at a primal feeling. **I hope I channel some of my own passion for music and literature into making these texts feel more present for my kids.** Many folks yearn for a sense of home just like Odysseus, and reading and hearing him talk about his desire to see his “home at last” is something we can all grasp.

Perhaps suddenly literature comes alive for students.

We want them to connect to these works because the works have endured for a reason. They get at some of the central preoccupation we all share: we are going to die.

If the *Odyssey's* characters were to have existed, it would have been 2,500 years ago. And we're pretty sure these peoples never existed. Yet we still feel something when we read about their losses and loves. We empathize with their grief and joy because we are human beings.

That's one of the major reasons these stories have lasted. We preserve them because they instruct and entertain, because they show us a mirror and encapsulate some of what it means to be Human.

Students have asked me, “Why is everything we read about death?” And my answer is twofold: “It's not about death; it's about life,” and “Death shows us how to better live in the time we have.”



Deborah Stokol accompanies her talk with original harp compositions at South by Southwest (SXSW) in Austin, Texas.

You stay alive in word and deed—but only if you forge relationships with those around you, continue your line, or do something worthy of remembrance and someone's singing about you. Songs are a way to stay alive, and literature shows us this.

I guess my point here is that the music makes the literature literally resonate with students. It was meant to be sung, and it feels physical. The literature reminds them both of their existential urgency and agency.

By latching onto what catches their ears, students learn the words and remember them, and that can also help them take ownership of these words in an interdisciplinary manner. For example, one of my 9th graders remixed the Odysseus song and created a whole new, great piece with it.

Because bards comprehended the value of a song for ensuring immortality, often, the bardic tradition contains works that praise bards themselves. Understanding that bards insert themselves into their own stories so as to be sung (rather than “unsung”) heroes themselves awakens students to the idea that the person who tells the story has Power—and that how we experience the same story can change depending on the narrator.

So teaching the bardic tradition as a bard can be one of the many ways educators employ to make these works feel relevant and accessible. It's a combination of lifelong learning for everyone involved, teacher innovation, and an ultimately empowered, student-centered classroom. ■

Deborah Stokol has taught English and journalism for the past ten years. Stokol has formal educational and professional backgrounds in music composition and performance in addition to English and journalism.

YOU CAN LISTEN TO STOKOL'S ENTIRE SXSW EDU TALK AT:
soundcloud.com/officialsxsw/sxsw-2019-teaching-the-bardic-tradition-as-a-bard

CARNIVAL

LIGHTS UP THE NIGHT!

PARENTS ASSOCIATION BENEFIT 2019

by **LAURA DUDLEY**, Parents Association Chair

There are many traditions at Brentwood School, yet few are specifically for the adults in our community. Our annual All-School Benefit is just such an occasion, and an incredibly fun one at that! For one night only, parents and guardians from each division come together with faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees to celebrate the school we love.

This year, the Parents Association created “Brentwood Carnival, Light Up the Night,” a carnival-themed celebration held at the Museum of Flying on March 2, 2019.

Our amazing Benefit team went all the way this year. Among other things, guests enjoyed playing carnival games and making personalized flip books. Pink’s Hot Dogs, wood-fired pizza, poke bowls, a candy bar, ice cream, popcorn, churro carts, and crepes added to the carnival theme, as did the assorted libations that were available throughout the night. To top it off, this year’s PA Benefit featured a great DJ and a rocking performance from Earth, Wind, and Fire! It was wonderful to see so many in our school community come together to build existing bonds and create new ones.

The PA is grateful to the parents and guardians who chose to help underwrite the cost of the Benefit. With gifts ranging from \$50 to \$15,000, their support as well as the generosity of donors and bidders of our Weekly Flash Sales, Mystery Boxes, and Teacher Outings, made Brentwood Carnival not only a social success, but a financial success as well.

Remember, the Parents Association exists to support our school. With funds raised from Brentwood Carnival, as well as Eagle Wear and Party Book, the PA hosts events and activities throughout the year that strengthen our bonds to each other and to Brentwood. We are thrilled that the generosity of our parents and guardians enables the PA to give back to Brentwood in the form of an annual contribution to support the school’s endowment, which helps ensure the ongoing strength of this remarkable institution. **Thank you for being part of a wonderful evening and year!** ■





Guests enjoyed playing carnival games and making personalized flip books. Pink's Hot Dogs, wood-fired pizza, poke bowls, a candy bar, ice cream, popcorn, churro carts, and crepes added to the carnival theme.



Brentwood Carnival at the Museum of Flying provided an evening of music, dancing, food, and games—fun for every member of the Brentwood School community.

CARNIVAL

Parents Association Benefit Underwriters

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

FORTUNE TELLER (\$15,000 AND ABOVE)

The Adi and Jerry
Greenberg Foundation
Bui and Herb Simon

Regina and Gregory
Annenberg Weingarten,
GRoW @ Annenberg

MAGICIAN (\$10,000-14,999.99)

Jon and Joya Favreau
David and Meredith Kaplan

STREET PERFORMER (\$5,000-9,999.99)

Bari Milken-Bernstein '99
and Fred Bernstein
Elliot Broidy and Robin
Rosenzweig

Laura Fox and Ben Van de
Bunt
Tom and Edna Gordon
Jason and Alison Halbert

Lance and Hillary Milken
Foundation
Shannon and Michael
Rotenberg
Chad and Nikki Tons

MUSICIAN (\$2,500-4,999.99)

The Arango Family
Albert and Holly Baril
Jessica Capshaw Gavigan
and Christopher Gavigan
Marina and Adam Cohn '89
Rob and Shari Friedman
Scott and Melissa Klein
Brian and Mira Lee
Susan Lombardi
Blaine and Crystal Lourd

Jeremy Milken '93 and Sarah
Firestone Milken '93
Sabina and David
Nathanson '94
Hedy and Benjamin
Nazarian
Ron Radziner and Robin
Cottle
Eden and Steve Romick

Stephanie and Nicholas
Sandler '99
Joshua Trachtenberg and
Audrey Prins
AJ and Stacy Wilder
Jackie and Adam Winnick
'93
Dave and Dominique
Wirtschafter
Steven and Leah Yari

JUGGLER (\$1,000-2,499.99)

Lauren Gordon Axelrod '98
and Zachary Axelrod
Todd and Michelle Bailey
Carter Bravmann and Jack
Koll
Tara Bunch and Susan
Pfeuffer
Tim and Alexis Byk
Trisha Cardoso
Laura and Randy Dudley
Patricia Elias
Harrison and Calista Ford
MaryAnn and Irwin Gold
Eugene and Nora Golling
Dana Guerin
Shannon and Halsey Minor

Michael and Sheri Hopkins
John and Evan Iino
Joshua and Melanie Kaplan
Shelley Davis
Brian and Lisa Klingenberg
Abby and David Kohl
Charitable Foundation
Chen and Ming Kou
Gary and Rachel Levin
Wendy Marantz Levine '91
and Eric Levine
Stacey Rosenfelt Lubliner
'95 and David Lubliner
Diana and Steve Maiman
Melanie and Michael
Neumann

Shrikrishna Vyas and
Mallory Reznik
David and Michelle
Rosenberg
Carolyn and John Tipton
Rae and Bruce Tobey
Scott Sandler '92 and Betsy
Sandler
Meg and Steve Smith
Gloria and Benjamin
Soleimani
Erika Aronson and Adam
Stern
Nadine Watt '86 and
Andrew Jameson
Hila and Jeremy Wenokur
The Yoshimaru Family

CARICATURE ARTIST (\$500-999.99)

Anonymous
Steven and Kristen
Abraham
Glenn and Sandy Barger
Craig and Arda Berberian
Krisena and Scott
Borenstein '96
Andy Cohen and Lisa
Breckenridge
Christopher Brooks '93 and
Amanda Sung '93 Brooks
Nav and Jay Chakravarti
Paul and Shannon Derby
Suzy '93 and Steve Gilison
David Ginsberg and Wendy
Hoffman

Rob and Gabrielle
Greenberg
Philip and Yasmin Harvey
Allison and Rusty Hill
Nathan Hochman and
Vivienne Vella Hochman
Cece and Mike Karz
Carla and Rodney Liber
Erica Spearman Lockhart '93
and Robert Lockhart
Steve and Christine Lowe
Michael Mandelbaum and
Carlyn Henry
Andrew and Deborah
Marcus

Damon and Colleen Mintzer
Loren Montgomery Clark '87
and Dylan Clark
Eric and Jill Olofson
Jeff and Maya Pinkner
Jonathan '99 and Darcy
Praw
Mike and Megan Riera
Kirk and Allison Schenck
Cheryl Karz Spound '87
and Corey Spound
Lauren (Sherman) Winnick
'97 and Alexander
Winnick '96
Kenny and Natalie Wolfe
Sam and Tracy Yadegar

Festive mystery boxes were part of the great fundraising effort at this year's Benefit; attendees spent much of the evening reconnecting with old friends, enjoying the atmosphere together, and listening to great music.



MIME (UP TO \$499.99)

Judd Abrams and Nicole Sassaman
Darin and Lara Beebower
Gilles and Sherri Chiasson
Shadi and Paul Daneshrad
Elizabeth Elson-Birnback '92 and Michael Birnback
Alex and Karin Evans
Scott Friedman and Catherine Gopaulsingh
Michael and Amy Geibelson
Leonard Green
Martin and Terri Gruenthal
Josh and Ryan Gutierrez
Benjamin Ho and Christine Rho
Jen and Andy Howard '94
Beryle Jackson
Lara Kaplan
Punita Khanna and John Yates
Nancy and Todd Kurtin
Karen West Levine '88 and Benjamin Levine
James and Margaret Meenaghan
Allison and Bruce Mellon
Jordan and Sahara Pynes
Norman and Jennifer Reiss
Kenneth and Jamie Rosenblood
Richard Rubin and Elisha Galaif-Rubin
Allison Abell Schwartz '97 and Matthew Schwartz
Tasnim and Munaf Shamji
Evelyn Shooshani
Alberto and Stacy Valner
Kent Weed and Alexandra Rojas-Weed
Lauren Abell Windom '01 and Robert Windom





Each school year, a team of incredibly dedicated volunteers from the Parents Association organizes a series of parties to give Brentwood School families an opportunity to connect with one another in a fun and relaxed party atmosphere. We are so grateful to the hosts of these parties, as well as to all who purchased tickets to attend. Proceeds of ticket sales become part of the Parents Association's annual gift to the Brentwood School Endowment.

Dinner with Dr. Mike

HOSTED BY: The Milken and Riera Families

Oktoberfest

HOSTED BY: Sabina and David Nathanson and Jackie and Adam Winnick

Trust Me

HOSTED BY: Adi and Jerry Greenberg

Wine Challenge Tasting and Dinner

HOSTED BY: The Cohn, Milken, Nazarian, and Neumann Families

Beach, Booze, and Bocce

HOSTED BY: The Garrett, Montgomery-Clark, Sharer-Mullen, and Tranen-Leyrer Families

7th Grade Boys Poker Party

HOSTED BY: Holly Baril, Laura Dudley, Brenda Hamid, Cece Karz, Crystal Lourd, Monique Lhuillier, and Loren Montgomery

Lower School Movie Night Under the Stars

HOSTED BY: The Schaffer and Vazales Families

Work it on Out!

HOSTED BY: Carter Bravmann and Jack Koll, May and Leonard Chung, Meritt Elliott and John Rankin, Natasha and Torey Favarote, Meredith and David Kaplan, and Arezoo and Ali Tarkian

Kindergarten Mom's Night

HOSTED BY: Sunny Barach, Eliza Kawamura, Rachel Levin, Christina Rosenberg, Anya Sarre, Leanne Thrasher-Chang, and Michelle Weiner

Seventh Grade Mom's Night

HOSTED BY: Jenny Foley, Shari Friedman, Jennifer Howard, Lisa Humiston, Cathy Kagan, Rachel Lichtenstein, Cheryl Spound, Susan Unger, and Kevyn Wynn

Burgers, Bourbon, and Beer

HOSTED BY: Krisena and Scott Borenstein, Dana and Scott Kaufman, Brett and Jake Smith, and Tracy and Sam Yadegar

Lower School Movie Night Under the Stars

HOSTED BY: Jerry and Adi Greenberg

4th Grade Campfire

HOSTED BY: Allyson and Eric Bunting, Jana and Ken Firtel, Mira and Brian Lee, Kathryn and Joseph Pretlow, Kimberly and Scott Shane, and Allison and Matt Sherman

Jon & Vinny in the Palisades

HOSTED BY: Cassandra and Glenn Bloore, Heather Mnuchin, Tammy and Richard Ratner, Michelle and David Rosenberg, Suze and Marc Schwartz, Darcy and Jeff Sockwell, and Benton and Darren Weinstock

Halloween VIP Access to the Carlsons' Famous Backyard Blowout Party

HOSTED BY: Katrina and Ken Carlson

7th Grade Girls Scavenger Hunt

HOSTED BY: The Hanna, Low, Meenaghan, Rabiner/Pennette, Spound, Weinstock, and Wirtschafter Families

Dads' Night Out at Wally's Santa Monica

HOSTED BY: Howard Altman, John Dyett, Marc Gurvitz, Brian Klingenberg, Neal Moritz, and Michael Rotenberg

Lunch with Dr. Dawn Cunnion

HOSTED BY: Robin Blau, Cece Karz, Missy Polson, Tracey Steinfeld, and Michele Steiner

Sip Sip Hooray

HOSTED BY: The Goldstein and Howe Families

Karaoke Party at Blind Dragon

HOSTED BY: Mindy and Doug Freedman, Suzy and Steve Gillson, Jackie and Adam Sandler, and Kirsten and Keith Sarkisian

10th Grade Boys Poker Party

HOSTED BY: The Daneshrad, Karz, Maiman, Minor/Gurvitz, Polson, Schwimmer, and Spound Families

6th Grade Bowling Party

HOSTED BY: Rosie and Marc DiLorenzo, Kerry and Andrew Grossman, Dana and Scott Kaufman, Carla and Rodney Liber, and Tracy and Sam Yadegar

Game Night

HOSTED BY: Lara and Darin Beebower, Laura and Randy Dudley, Deena and David Gussman, Chona and Doug Hirsch, Lara Kaplan, Tasnim and Munaf Shamji, Pauline and Pelle Sjoenell, and Julie and Rusty Weiss

Manis and Martinis at Cote

HOSTED BY: Sandy Daneshrad, Katie Sharer, and Leah Yari

Ninth Grade Soul Squad!

HOSTED BY: Jennifer Foley, Shiva Golshani, Emi Makani, Colleen Mintzer, and Cindy Teitelbaum

Cooking Class and Dinner with Renowned Chef Pamela Salzman for Lower School Moms

HOSTED BY: Marina Cohn, Dana Kaufman, Carla Liber, Natalie Wolfe, and Tracy Yadegar

Wine, Two, Three! (aka Helen's Wine Tasting)

HOSTED BY: Andrea Lublin, Allison Statter, Elizabeth Sugarman, and Norah Weinstein

Year of the Pig!

HOSTED BY: Jennifer and Larry Bond, Susanna Felleman and Erik Feig, and Liza and Conan O'Brien

Cooking Class and Lunch with Renowned Chef Pamela Salzman for Middle and Upper School Moms

HOSTED BY: Sara Dyett, Caroline Wittcoff Fuchs, Risa Green, Amy Hanning, Colleen Mintzer, Jenny Reiss, and Jennifer Schiff

Valentine's Baking Party

HOSTED BY: The Laibow and Prinze Families

The Freezing Point

HOSTED BY: The Koh, Laibow, and Tons Families

K-3 Girls Groovy 60s-Themed Sweetheart Dance

HOSTED BY: Maya and Pavithra Dharwarkar, Kelly and Justin Griffin, Lauren and Todd Heyse, Jamie and Peter Koh, Wendy and Eric and Levine, Lauren and Adam Nathanson, Jackie and Jeff Schaffer, Meg and Steven Smith, and Lora and Mike Wynholds

White Elephant Party

HOSTED BY: Cece Karz, Deanne Nii, Maya Pinkner, Missy Polson, and Patty Elias Rosenfeld

5th Grade Trampoline Party

HOSTED BY: Kimm Agam, Hege Fossum Eriksen, Ryan Gutierrez, Jennifer Howard, Emmy Kondo, and Julie Teich

2nd Grade Ice Skating Party

HOSTED BY: The Axelrod, Berberian, Gardner, Halbert, and Wenokur Families

Let It Roll!

HOSTED BY: Dominique and Dave Wirtschaftner

Mystics, Mediums, and Moms!

HOSTED BY: Susanna Felleman, Shannon Rotenberg, and Allison Statter

8th Grade Boys Poker Party

HOSTED BY: Maggie Drake, Danelle Geller, Carlyn Henry, Lisa Kao, Karen Levine, Ali Myers, Jill Olofson, Karen Roberts, and Karen Sun

K-3 Parent and Son Night of Fun!

HOSTED BY: Lauren Axelrod, Jennifer Gardner, Sarah Prinze, Anya Sarre, Brett Smith, Melinda Spigel, Elizabeth Sugarman, and Natalie Wolfe

1st Grade Campfire

HOSTED BY: The Grossman, Howard, Sherman, Tons, Winnick and Zucker Families

Equinox Detox

HOSTED BY: Michelle Good, Vivienne Hochman, Abby Kohl, and Jamie Rosenblood

Steak Night!

HOSTED BY: Adi and Jerry Greenberg and Shannon and Michael Rotenberg

Kindergarten Campfire

HOSTED BY: The Dietenhofer, Minkoff, Prinze, Weiner, and Wynhold Families

3rd Grade Campfire

HOSTED BY: The Feig/Felleman, Kinberg, and Romick Families

Rosie® All Day

HOSTED BY: Anamaria and Walter Delph, Ashley and Andy Lebowitz, Shannon and Halsey Minor, Alison and Sasha Palevsky, and Leah and Steven Yari

Ford's Fried Chicken

HOSTED BY: Emily and Ben Ford and Nadine Watt and Andrew Jameson

Beverly Hills Adult Scavenger Hunt

HOSTED BY: The Chaves, Iino, Kahn, and Vanjani Families

Pizza e Vino

HOSTED BY: The Bender and Hirsch Families

80s Party

HOSTED BY: Bari Milken-Bernstein and Fred Bernstein, Elishia and David Bolour, Krisena and Scott Borenstein, Jennifer and Michael Gardner, Brooke and Ken Lande, and Stephanie and Nick Sandler



BCIL IN ACTION

A Look Back at the Inaugural Year

Summer at Brentwood offered a BCIL design thinking workshop, teaming up with GoBabyGo! and a local hospital, to customize battery-powered ride-on cars for children with limited mobility. Building collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills, Middle Schoolers studied engineering and worked together to design, build, and tailor vehicles for the specific needs of each child. At the end of the week, the children received their customized cars in a special activity with their parents and new friends.



by **DR. JOSH BERGER**
Director of the Belldegrun Center
for Innovative Leadership

It was an extremely exciting first year for our Belldegrun Center for Innovative Leadership (BCIL) whose mission is to “prepare community members to engage with real world challenges and explore solutions within and beyond the classroom.” Through our BCIL programming, students followed their curiosity beyond the textbook, grappled with questions for which there are no prescribed answers, and developed lifelong leadership skills.

Some of our extracurricular highlights included our participating as the only high school in **UCLA’s “Impactathon,”** an Anderson School of Business event that unites students and professionals to drive social and environmental change. Two of our juniors helped their team win a \$1,000 for their work developing an efficient home cooling system that saves energy and costs one tenth the amount of a whole house fan.

The Impactathon inspired the development of our own inaugural **Middle School Entrepreneurship Pitch Challenge** revolving around the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The contests were evaluated

by professional entrepreneurs and connected to innovative leadership curricular projects such as our **7th Grade Global Studies Human Rights’ Day** and endangered species “Shark Tank” pitches in science classes.

This year our BCIL also sponsored the **LA Teen Hackathon** where students use technology, marketing, and design thinking to solve real world challenges. Brentwood had more 6th through 12th Grade students participate than any other Los Angeles school, and our Upper School participants swept virtually every award.

Keeping with the theme of exploring solutions to real world challenges, we also launched

“...each division had **BCIL projects** woven into their curriculum.”

our first **BCIL Speaker Series** on both campuses, welcoming distinguished alumni from government and businesses focused on topics ranging from Innovative Leadership in Green Tech to Social Equity through Urban Development. Our alumni speakers subsequently sponsored our first **Challenge of the Month** contests revolving around current challenges facing their organizations. This year's contest winners traveled to

Fremont to tour the Tesla factory and meet with their Head of Automotive, and to San Francisco pitching ideas to Mayoral staff and visiting surrounding HOPE SF Affordable Housing areas.

On the curricular side, each division had BCIL projects woven into their curriculum such as the **Lower School Innovative Design Project** through which students created new products from reusable waste materials. In the



Alumni Raven Morgan '14 and Theodore Riley '95 engage students in a brainstorm about urban development at the second BCIL Speaker Series event on March 14, 2019.

BCIL-Designated Course Offerings

The below courses align with the BCIL mission to “prepare community members to engage with real world challenges and explore solutions within and beyond the classroom.” Additionally, they include instruction, assessments and self-reflection on the BCIL Core Leadership Skills along with opportunities for student choice and connections with related stakeholders.

- **Applied Psychology**
- **Civic Leadership and Current Events**
- **Documentary Filmmaking for Social Change**
- **Entrepreneurship I**
- **Entrepreneurship II**
- **Fabrication and Design**
- **Global Health (Summer)**
- **Introduction to Robotics**
- **Latinx in Los Angeles**
- **Refugees and Resettlement (Summer)**
- **Science of Well-Being**
- **Sustainable Earth Engineering**

Upper School a new set of BCIL-designated courses are launching next year such as Advanced Entrepreneurship, Documentary Filmmaking for Social Change, Fabrication & Design, Latinx in Los Angeles, Science of Well-Being, and Sustainable Earth Engineering.

Summer at Brentwood also offers unique BCIL opportunities in every division with a few highlights including Global Health, an Upper School elective co-taught by a USC Medical Professor that includes a Panama trip to deliver health services, a Middle School Entrepreneurship Institute, and a Design with Purpose course through which students will redesign toy cars so children with disabilities can drive them.

Lastly, our Belldegrun Center for Innovative Leadership offered exceptional **professional**



Belledegrun Center faculty and staff Katie McKellar, Kristen Letchworth, and Sarah Bishop attended a design thinking workshop at Stanford's d.School in February.

Professional Development

"Harnessing faculty input, creativity, and expertise through professional development has been a central goal of the BCIL. The K-12 Curriculum Resource Committee met monthly to brainstorm ways to integrate the BCIL mission and Core Leadership Skills into the curriculum and also provide peer-to-peer professional development. Faculty have also been active traveling to peer schools to gather best practices and inspiration. Members of our Science Department traveled to Menlo School to observe their Whitaker Lab and meet with teachers and students of classes such as Sustainable Earth Engineering, Architecture and Design, and Biotech. Several faculty participated in a 3-day design thinking workshop at Stanford's d. School in order to bring this problem-solving approach back to Brentwood's campus. Lastly, our BCIL Extracurricular Innovator and Collaborator traveled to Cleveland to visit several entrepreneurship programs, which led to the Director of the Young Entrepreneur Institute at the University School coming to Brentwood's campus to consult with our ongoing K-12 Entrepreneurship Committee. All of these efforts have led to new cross-disciplinary and cross-division collaboration, course and project redesigns, and new initiatives across campus."

—Katie McKellar, BCIL Curriculum Innovator and Collaborator

development opportunities for our K-12 faculty. One of this year's highlights included colleagues participating in Stanford's Design Thinking workshop and then leading a similar program for our entire faculty and staff during in-service.

A huge thank you to our BCIL Collaborative staff, and our student, faculty, and administrative leaders who helped bring the BCIL to life in such a short period of time this year. On the following pages students write briefly about their BCIL experiences. ■



Participants ask questions and dive into their challenge at the LA Teen Hackathon event on March 16, 2019.



Student Reflections on Projects from the Inaugural Year of the BCIL

LA Teen Hackathon

“We had a tremendous experience at the Hackathon because we learned new useful skills and helped conceptualize apps that would help bring increased societal awareness to real world challenges. In order to have a successful outcome, we knew that we needed to manage our time well and communicate with our teams effectively in a safe, group learning environment. By going into the Hackathon with little coding experience, we were given the opportunity to become risk takers and learn from our mistakes. It was a positive learning experience, and we can’t wait to attend next year’s Hackathon!” —Rahul Y. '23 and Sydney M. '22

Innovative Design Project in the Lower School

“Through our 6th Grade innovative design projects, we were tasked with creating useful products made from items that would normally get thrown away. We learned design thinking and became innovative problem solvers, thinking outside the box to make something that people might actually want. We created prototypes of our projects and had to be flexible about our ideas. A few of our classmates even totally changed the direction of their project as they acquired new information and explored creative solutions.”

—Shelby R. '25 and John V. '25

Peer Mentoring Power of Words

“As Peer Leaders, we were invited to a special collaboration with the Lower School, ‘The Power of Words,’ in which we role-played different conflict resolutions and scenarios for K-6 students. We modeled that words have meaning and that we need to be cognizant that language should be inclusive and in alignment with our core values. As a Peer Leader, I have had the privilege to serve as a mentor for a wide range of ages. These opportunities were some of the most

heart-warming experiences in my Brentwood School career.” —Genessey Agena '19

Giving Through Dance

“This year, the Upper School Brentwood Dance Company teamed with the BCIL to teach a dance class to PUC Excel Charter Academy’s middle schoolers whose dance program had been cut three years ago due to lack of funding for the arts. Through this experience, our company learned invaluable leadership skills while teaching. In order to best serve our students, we had to be flexible and, in the spur of the moment, deviate from our plan to rethink how we approached teaching our students. Our company had to collaborate to become one entity, embracing our pivot, and as a result, we seized the opportunity to grow with our students.”

—Bianca S. '20

Civic Leadership & Current Events

“In Civic Leadership & Current Events class, I worked in collaboration with my classmate, Zach A., to create civic change. Our project, ‘Planting a Better Classroom,’ focused on how the inclusion of green spaces into classrooms positively impacts the academic and emotional well-being of students. As we conducted our research and interviewed experts in the field, BCIL core leadership skills were at the heart of our work. We were innovative problem solvers as we thought critically about how to implement our project, and we were effective managers of our time as we brought our project to life at Kenter Canyon Elementary School.”

—Cameron W. '20

Challenge of the Month

“Winning the first BCIL Challenge of the Month was incredibly exciting for all of us. It was really interesting to collaborate on solving the challenge related to electric charging infrastructure in densely populated areas and



“In order to have a successful outcome, we knew that we needed to manage our time well and communicate with our teams effectively in a safe, group learning environment.” —Rahul Y. '23 and Sydney M. '22

then to tour the Tesla factory in Fremont, where we met the Head of Automotive. He had reviewed our proposal, and it was the perfect way to celebrate our hard work. We were able to see the inner workings of how Tesla manufactures and designs their cars in an efficient and productive way. The tour was fascinating and inspired all four of us to continue to work hard towards our goals in related tech fields.”

—Sadie Bernstein '19, Ben Schiff '19, Alex Schiff '19, and Teddy Klausner '19

Impactathon

“The social entrepreneurship Impactathon at UCLA was a very unique experience that both of us were lucky to be a part of. It not only gave us an insight into creating a business, but also a deeper understanding for the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. We joined a team that had a prototype for a more efficient whole house fan that was one-tenth the cost of a regular cooling system. This allowed for a wider sector of our population to reduce their carbon footprint in and help save our planet from climate change. It was exciting that our team won \$1,000 for best addressing one of the sustainable development goals.”

—Emma M. '20 and Zach H. '20

Middle School Entrepreneurship Pitch Challenge

“The Pitch Challenge was a great opportunity to work innovatively with my classmates to create a solution to real world problems addressed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. My group worked really well together and had a great time brainstorming solutions to the problems that we believed were the most critical in the world today. We turned our diverse ideas into a product pitch that could capture carbon emissions and turn them into natural energy sources that power vehicles and homes, enhancing air quality around the world.” —Riya A. '23

Speaker Series:

Social Equity through Urban Development

“I was honored to help introduce Brentwood alumni Raven Morgan and Theodore Miller in the last Speaker Series on Social Equity through Urban Development. Through our discussion on gentrification and the importance of investing and having pride in communities, we as students had the chance to consider realities of the Californian experience many of us are not confronted with. Ms. Morgan and Mr. Miller were inspiring and genuine examples of the power of brave thinking and societal awareness, both of which are values exemplified by the BCIL.” —Paola S. '21

Middle School Human Rights Day

“In my Global Studies class I had the opportunity to research the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and I focused on SDG #6, providing clean water and sanitation for everyone. Water is such a huge issue all around the world. More than 800 children every day die from a lack of clean water and 2.4 billion people do not have access to clean water and sanitation. I specifically researched China because even though China is a highly developed country, they continue to struggle with having access to clean water and sanitation. In Shanghai 85% of the water is undrinkable and in Tianjin, only 4.9% of the water is safe for drinking. I decided to further my exploration in this topic by presenting this issue along with the solutions at Human Rights Day. I was able to spread awareness for the issue as well as present ways we can help, along with larger corporations. I was also able to contact Water Aid, and brainstorm ideas to address this issue. Doing this project was really meaningful to educate myself and others about important global issues.” —Ryan L. '24 ■

A group of students in Roman-style costumes are performing on stage. In the background, a large statue of a man in a white toga and laurel wreath stands with his right arm raised. In the foreground, several students in green and gold tunics with swords at their waists are cheering with their arms raised. A large white cloth is draped across the middle of the group. The background features a mural of a landscape with a large rock formation.

ONE

IT WAS ONE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS AS THIS 20-YEAR TRADITION CAME TO AN END IN ANTICIPATION OF THE 6TH GRADE MOVE TO THE MIDDLE SCHOOL THIS FALL.



LAST ODYSSEY

by **DAWN CUNNION**

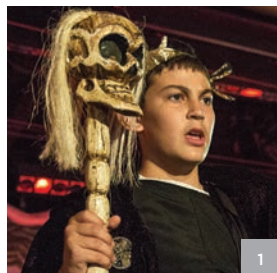
Associate Head of School and Former Lower School Director

Having served as the Director of the Lower School for 13 years, I am often asked how many times I have seen the *Odyssey*. My response is well over 60 times...and yet, each performance is unique in a way that only Olga Nevin can magically make happen!

For those who don't know, Olga writes and creates these magnificent productions by weaving together Greek mythology, classical music, and humor with choreography and staging that takes students on a journey that is second to none.

Over the years, while younger students have eagerly anticipated a certain role in the play, it is not unusual to find older students and alumni in the audience singing along with the characters. I am continually amazed at her ability to find the talent of each student and cast them in such a way that everyone shines. **Who else, but the legendary Ms. Nevin, can take two complete homerooms, find a significant role for each student, and even double cast in some cases, while putting on a stellar performance that reinforces what they are learning in social studies, literature, and music classes?**

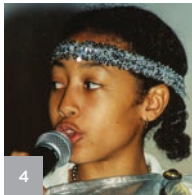
The *Odyssey* has had a special place in the history of the Lower School and the experience has touched many over the years. Thank you Ms. Nevin, for sharing your talents with us and for bringing out the talents of so many others along the way! ■





"KIDS TAKE THE MEMORIES OF THIS SHOW WITH THEM, AND THEY STAY WITH THEM FOR THEIR WHOLE LIVES."

—OLGA NEVIN



NUMBERED PICTURES: 1 Max Karz '19 as Hades | 2 The "Suitors" introduce themselves | 3 Odysseus tries to avoid the six-headed monster, Scylla | 4 Tani Brown '06 | 5 The three brothers in the Underworld—Odysseus, Poseidon, and Zeus | 6 The palm trees dancing on Calypso's Island | 7 The sheep of Polythemos, the Cyclops | 8 Persephone and Hades, in the first-ever production of *The Odyssey* in 2001

CUT-OUTS, CLOCKWISE FROM LOWER LEFT: Emily Blau '19 as Persephone; Isaiah Lewis as Hermes; Angelina L. '25 as Terpsichore





an interview with OLGA NEVIN

by **SHIRLEY BLAKE**
Director of Communications

As the stage went dark and the curtains closed on the final staging of the *Odyssey*, Olga Nevin, Lower School music teacher, yelled her traditional “Bravo!” to her students as they emerged from the curtains for their final bows. I recently sat down with Olga to learn when it all began, how it evolved, and what the journey has meant to her and the many students she has directed in this magical show.

How did you come up with the idea to do the *Odyssey* in the 6th Grade and what was your creative process?

The *Odyssey* came about around 20 years ago. I developed it over time and thought that the material was really a perfect fit for the 6th Grade, not just because they were already studying Classical Literature, but because the story is so rich. It lends itself to musical theater and gives opportunities for all students to participate, whether they are natural performers or not. I’ve really found that Greek mythology is that material which gives wings to all kinds of students because they can all find something in the stories that they can relate to. The *Odyssey* in particular has just enough humor and sadness and drama to grab them. Some really engage with the comedy aspects of it, others with the dramatic moments, but each are encouraged to explore the story and find their place in it. The *Odyssey* has always been a huge endeavor and very long, but it has never ceased to be exciting to the kids.

How do you choose parts for the students?

Consistent with casting all musical theater, my students all read the play first and then write down five characters they want to show me plus one role they don’t want to play. What I ask is, “Where do you think your class needs you?” and “Where do you see yourself strengthening the play?” not just what role do you *want* to play. I make time for all the kids to meet with me and they show me the five characters, then I make the decisions. I promise them I will not touch their “no,” meaning I won’t cast them in the one role they don’t want...unless there is no one else who can play that role better than that student. That happened once in the past and the student ended up being thrilled that I pushed him in that direction.

How has the *Odyssey* evolved over the years?

It’s stayed pretty much the same all these years, but every year it was fresh. Every production is different, although the music, text, and choreography remain essentially the same. There have been some improvisations, especially when I have witnessed the kids coming up with interesting lines or choreography on their own. I changed the ending at one point, from a classical piece to James Brown’s “I Feel Good” at the ending. But for the most part, the musical has stood the test of time because, while it hasn’t changed tremendously, each new

"ALL KINDS OF STUDENTS
... CAN FIND SOMETHING
IN THE [GREEK
MYTHOLOGY] STORIES
THAT THEY CAN
RELATE TO."

—OLGA NEVIN

6th Grade class brings its own flavor and uniqueness to the stage. This is what has kept it such a rewarding and compelling process for me.

What do you think the *Odyssey* has meant to the students?

Kids take the memories of this show with them and they stay with them for their whole lives. I get emails and calls all the time from alums who hear music out and about in the world and remember that they learned it from the *Odyssey*. They tell me that they want to come back and have a reunion with all of the students who played their role. They learn how to be leaders

from this experience, how to improvise when things go wrong, how to work together as a team. So I think it has had a profound impact on my students over the years and my heart is warmed by the words of gratitude I hear from them years later.

What will you miss most about the *Odyssey* now that it will be retired since the 6th Grade is moving to the Middle School?

The story of Odysseus is a very deep story; it touches me too, just as it has meant something to hundreds of 6th graders. I am so moved when I see 12-year-olds connect with it in such a deep way. I will miss that. It is an enormously gratifying story to see staged. It has been a part of growing up here and I will definitely miss it. But I think the 5th Grade musical, *Achilles' Heel*, will be just as meaningful for the students...and certainly for me too. ■



Olga Nevin congratulates the final cast of 6th Grade *Odyssey*.

I will never forget the moment in 2012 when, after much debate, Board Chair Laura Fox called for a vote, and the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve the building of and fundraising for Phase 1 of the Educational Master Plan: The new Middle School Building on the East Campus and a new building on the West Campus. On that night, every Trustee committed themselves to the vision of a Brentwood, even better. Today, that long-awaited moment in the history of Brentwood School is suddenly upon us. The Middle School Building is but weeks from completion, construction has begun on the Lower School campus, and the former middle school building—now known as the Eagles Center—is under renovation.

As an educator, a project like this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, as seldom does one have the opportunity to work on anything of this magnitude in a school setting. After all, the completion of this campaign will have an impact on every single student on both campuses.

In June 2017, the community gathered to celebrate the groundbreaking for the new Middle School Building. Donors and special guests got a look at the ground floor during the celebration.



BETWEEN Two

For me, just as important as the student experience, has been the joy I have experienced in two other areas. The first is in how the Brentwood faculty and staff have embraced the inevitable changes and growth that have and will continue to occur, and the new opportunities that have been presented. The level of commitment, creativity, and excitement is palpable and contagious. The second has been the enthusiastic embrace of this vision by the greater Brentwood School community. From Trustees to parents/guardians to alumni to grandparents, your support and understanding have inspired us all, me in particular.

We have built on the legacy of our first 47 years and enhanced Brentwood in expected, and even some unexpected, ways. Indeed, the slogan of this campaign, "Brentwood, even better," is spot on. ■

by **DR. MIKE RIERA**, Head of School



Lower School students had the honor of "decorating" the Saltair parking lot during their end-of-year celebration.

ol building; at the groundbreaking, Dr. Mike Reira delivered a big thank you to all the Brentwood School community; 5th and 6th Grade students went on several construction process; and in June 2019, with less than two months to go before completion, the building really took shape.



Groundbreakings



year Field Day as part of the Lower School building groundbreaking ceremony on June 5, 2019.



For 39 years now I have begun the work day by parking my car (in 1980 a VW Bug Convertible and today a VW Tiguan) in the faculty parking lot, entering the school through the cafeteria and walking to one of the three offices I have occupied. Yet lately, once at my desk, my thoughts have often turned to warm recollections of countless members of our school community who have touched and enriched my life in so

many ways. I feel so blessed and fortunate to have so many special friendships, memories, and experiences to brighten my every day.

And now, as I gaze out of my office window, I see our new Middle School building nearing completion and say to myself: “Wow, the campus has sure changed a great deal since I arrived in 1980 so what is it about the school that has continuously attracted such great students, families, teachers, and staff members to our school, even back when we had no gym, no real library, no theater and all of our 7th and 8th grade classes were held in trailers?” It is you, our alums, who provide me with the best answers to this question as you share with me how well prepared you were for college, bring up a special teacher who ignited a love of learning and genuinely cared for you while pushing you to accomplish more than you ever imagined possible, tell me about a coach who taught you way more than the sport you were playing and how many of your best friends to this day are those you met during your two to thirteen years at Brentwood.

This is certainly a very exciting chapter in the life of our school as both our physical plant is expanding as is our student body (next year we will have 74 sixth graders, 138 seventh graders and 155 ninth graders enrolled). Yet, I remember years ago, during a similar period of growth, meeting with an alum who shared with me: “Mr. V., buildings are great, but please don’t let Brentwood change!” Of course I knew that he was referring to what is at the heart of our school—a true community which is like a close family whose members share a common bond and a true Eagle spirit. Dr. Mike often says: “We are constructing an amazing building but it is what that building will afford us in terms of expanded programs and new classes that are of utmost importance.” Please be assured that we are all very cognizant of what makes Brentwood the very special place it is and will do our utmost to preserve our school culture and traditions.

I do hope you will enjoy reading the entire alumni section and class notes and that you will find your own way to stay connected to your alma mater and to “give back” whenever possible. Your continuing involvement remains at the heart of why, “Once an Eagle, always an Eagle!”

Dave Velasquez (Mr. V.)

Director of Alumni and Parent of Alumni Engagement





Alumni mingle at Brentwood Connect 2019, the Alumni Association's annual networking event held on April 25.



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Amy Colvin '91

Gregg Colvin '90

Bryan Hudson '09

Scott Sandler '92

Allison Abell Schwartz '97



You Can't Go Home Again Unless It's to Your Brentwood School Family

BY **BILLY KAPLAN '04**

"I knew I could trust that the model that had inspired me as a student for six years at Brentwood would inspire the type of teacher I hoped to become."

When people ask me, often skeptically, why I'd want to teach at my alma mater, the only honest answer I can give is that Brentwood is the only place I ever really envisioned myself teaching.

Sure, for some, the mere thought of returning to the site of in-class essays, teenage angst, a less than stellar complexion, not to mention embarrassing fashion choices, could be enough to induce panic so severe you'd think you'd been transported back to your Billy Budd presentation.

Truth be told, though, I had a hunch I would be back at Brentwood one day. Once it dawned on me sometime in college that the reason I could never decide what I wanted to do with my life beyond school was that, for me, there was no "beyond school," I realized I needed to find my way back to a high school setting.

I moved to Washington, DC after graduation and joined a yearlong service program that would place me in a charter high school. There I got my first look at schools from the "other side," seeing just how much went into shaping the student experience. I spent my first year planning afterschool programs and facilitating tutoring sessions for the students, and I became a full-time math teacher once my volunteer year ended.

With no real formal training, believing fully in the half-truth that the best way to learn is to throw yourself headfirst into the mud, I relied heavily on my own experiences in high school math classes to guide me through that first year. WWTD? (What would Ms. Torre do?) How would Mr. Svec explain this? Am I baking enough cookie cakes? Did I do the quotient rule dance right?

In some ways, I was faking it until I made it, but in others, I knew I could trust that the model that had inspired me as a student for six years at Brentwood would inspire the type of teacher I hoped to become.

As I navigated my first few years of teaching in DC, I often relied quite literally on my Brentwood teachers,

keeping in good touch with Ms. Torre. She'd give me advice about how to communicate different nuances in the classroom and, especially as I began teaching some high-level geometry classes, would even send over some of the materials she'd created in her forty-plus years of teaching.

When I found myself sick of DC weather and spending all of my spring breaks in LA, I decided it was time to come home. Of course, Brentwood was the preferred destination, but until a job opened up, I'd need to take a detour.

In my third year back in LA, teaching at Milken, I got an email from Ms. Torre asking if we could talk by phone. She told me that she was thinking of retiring and wanted to know if I'd be interested in taking over for her when she did. Trying to hide my true excitement, I faked some professional reply about "how I'd be interested in exploring further the possibility," deep down knowing that I'd start the next day if I could.

After a few interviews and a model lesson, I was offered the job and, if I

recall correctly, accepted it the same day. I would not only be teaching Honors Geometry, my favorite class I took at Brentwood, but would also become a ninth-grade dean. I so distinctly remember how the deans shaped student experiences and I was so excited to add that to my role at Brentwood.

Having now been back for almost a full school year (which seems crazy as I write this), I can confirm that you really can't go home again. Now while this adage might connote negatively, I do not mean

it so. Rather, while being a teacher at Brentwood is vastly different from being a student (no more sleeping in on late days, no more dots at the snack bar, etc.), it has been a remarkable experience.

I've gotten to work with my own former teachers, to see how the school has grown and will continue to do so, and to add my own flair to the place that inspired me to do what I do. Besides, it is awesome to pass daily the fields where I once dominated (a little revisionist history never hurt anyone). ■

"I relied heavily on my own experiences in high school math classes to guide me through that first year. WWTD? (What would Ms. Torre do?) How would Mr. Svec explain this? Am I baking enough cookie cakes? Did I do the quotient rule dance right?"



ABOVE: Billy Kaplan is back in the Brentwood classroom—this time as an Upper School math teacher.
OPPOSITE PAGE: Brentwood School yearbook photos from 2004 and 2019 reflect Kaplan's sunny nature.

From Barbie to Fangirl, Forging a Life Around Female-focused Content

BY **TRACY SANDLER '96**

My career path has been varied. It started in sports, and it's back there now, but there have been a number of great twists along the way.

Currently, I am the Founder and CEO of Fangirl Sports Network, the first ever female-focused sports platform where fans get a knowledgeable, passionate, and humorous look at their favorite professional sports teams. We are creating a community around female sports fans and delivering content targeted for female fans.

FGSN was born in 2015 when I started 49ers Fangirl. As a lifelong 49ers and sports fan, I wanted to marry my love of all facets of the game, from analysis to stats to lifestyle. I am now a credentialed beat writer covering the Niners. My journalistic career began at Brentwood, where I was co-sports editor of the *Eagle*.

In 2016, we became Fangirl Sports Network and now have a Fangirl for every NFL and NBA team. We are on several platforms, including Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube and our website *fgsn.com*. We create social content, video content, and have a podcast (and will be launching a second one this fall). And we have merchandise.

Brentwood not only gave me invaluable writing and editing tools, but it also taught me how to manage various projects and activities at the same time.

Out of college, I worked at FOX Sports, gathering footage for features and working on set on game days. I absolutely loved it but knew production was not my calling, so after a couple of years, I moved on.

I started a personal shopping company called Little Lady Red, which specialized in finding the perfect gifts. At the same time, I did voiceover work and was the voice of Barbie for *Barbie.com* and *barbiegirls.com*. To this day, the Barbie voice is one of my best party tricks.

In 2007, I moved to Washington, D.C. to pursue a career in politics and ended up working for then-Mayor Adrian M. Fenty. I started on his communications team and moved up to Special Assistant before holding two Cabinet positions—Director of the Office of Boards and Commissions and Executive Director of Serve



“I did voiceover work and was the voice of Barbie for *Barbie.com* and *barbiegirls.com*. To this day, the Barbie voice is one of my best party tricks.”



Tracy stands on the sidelines at Lambeau Field in Green Bay before Monday Night Football in October.

DC: The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism. During this time, I attended the 2008 Democratic Convention and the Inauguration. It was an exciting time to be in DC and I had experiences of a lifetime. I also learned a ton about managing people and budgets, which has served me well at FGSN.

I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to have worked in a variety of industries. My advice to anyone would be that it's never too late. If you want to change careers, think of the things you love to do and how you can turn those things into a career. ■

Share Your Story

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

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

Get connected...



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JANUARY 8, 2019

29th Annual Young Alumni Luncheon

EAST CAMPUS POOL PATIO



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

1 Drew Park and Zak Takowsky '17
 2 Judith O'Hanlon and M.E. Cunningham '17
 3 Alums and seniors eagerly wait in line for In-N-Out Burgers | 4 Tara Nikkhoo '15 and David Foote | 5 Eli Brooks '18 and Jake Ford | 6 Lindsay Timmerman '17 and Greg Valtierra '17 | 7 Sam Serber '17 and Dave Velasquez



MARCH 6, 2019
Alumni Women's Forum
 AT THE HOME OF DAVID AND
 ANGELLA NAZARIAN, PARENTS
 OF ALUMNI PHILLIP '10 AND ELI '13



1 Alumni Women's Forum attendees gathered for an evening to network and exchange advice. **2** Host Angella Nazarian with Dave Velasquez **3** Featured Panelists Nadine Watt '86, Jenna Grigsby Jackson '00, Sheridan Pierce '12, Moderator Tracy Sandler '96, and Morgan Mallory '01



FEBRUARY 1, 2019
Bay Area Alumni
Cocktail Party
 AT THE HOME OF
 BRIAN '95 AND JOSIE FRECKMANN

1 Alumni from classes spanning 1982 to 2018 gathered at the Freckmann's home in San Francisco.

APRIL 13, 2019

New York Alumni
Cocktail PartyAT THE HOME OF
JILL BORUT FOLEY '96 AND JOHN FOLEY

1 Tom Marlitt, Emily Ellis '94, Dave Velasquez,
Jill Foley '96 and John Foley



SAVE THE DATE!
APRIL 25, 2020
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SPONSORED
RETIREMENT GALA
IN HONOR OF **MR. V**
CELEBRATING **40 YEARS**
AT BRENTWOOD SCHOOL

SEE MORE DETAILS ON PAGE 67



APRIL 25, 2019
Brentwood Connect
 An Evening with
 the Brentwood School
 Alumni Network
 WESTSIDE TAVERN, LOS ANGELES

1 Adam Blau '14, Colin Pak '11 and Nick Germain | 2 Adam Schwartz, Sara Roizen '14, Saskia Cohen, and Lucia Riera '14
 | 3 Ashley Owens '05, Natalia Jenkins, Tanya Tsikanovsky '05, Kathy Dezfoli, Alana Talbert '05 and Samahndi Cunningham
 | 4 Jessica Lee '97, Matt Hunt '94, and Devin Sidell '98 | 5 Lauren Feder '07 and Nicole Glantz '11 | 6 Kevin Yamazaki '06 and Jeff Ehrenpreis '95 | 7 Greg Liberman '90, Amy Uhrman Longhi '92 and Gregg Colvin '90





EMERITUS

Keep up with faculty and staff who served for 15 years or more at Brentwood



Sally Wallace reports that she and her husband Bill took a Viking cruise around Scandinavia last May, ending in Stockholm, where they were met by alum **Andrew Reisner '93**. They had a wonderful time in Stockholm and Uppsala where Andrew is Professor of Philosophy. After that, she had knee-replacement surgery and now can boogie once again!

Instead of finding **Jill Henderson** roaming the halls of Brentwood School bright and early, she can now be found at the gym for her daily workouts. There was never the time to pursue her passions, and she is now available to take three classes: piano, ceramics, and classical oil painting. Her days are so packed, but there is always time for her grandchildren. She has already attended numerous school performances, and by the end of May, she will have gone to four "Grandparents' Days." Jill relishes the fact that she has the time to pamper and care for her 15-year-old dog, Maggie, who means the world to her. The many friendships made at Brentwood are a daily part of her life. She talks to her friends on a regular basis, and meets them

frequently for lunch or dinner. Jill bumps into many of her ex-students around town, and it is always fun to hear of their adventures. She was excited to help coordinate the relationship between Brentwood School and Floating Doctors, and is continuing her relationship with Floating Doctors as well. Jill says, "The best part of retirement is having the FREEDOM to decide how to spend my time, and sometimes that just means cuddling up with Maggie and reading a good book."

1978

Sung Kim has served as U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines since December 2016. He previously served as U.S. Ambassador to Korea.

Elena Karina Byrne

(formally Jepson) is the author of three books of poetry, most recently, *Squander* (Omnidawn 2016), is looking forward to two forthcoming publications: a chapbook in 2020 with What Books entitled, *No, Don't* and her fourth full-length poetry collection *Phantom Limbs* with Omnidawn Publishing in 2021. This year Elena was nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

A former 12-year Regional Director of the Poetry Society of America, Elena still works as a freelance professor, lecturer, and editor. She is the annual Poetry Consultant & Moderator for *The Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books, and Literary Programs Director for The Ruskin Art Club. In 2018 she completed her three years as one of the final judges for the Kate & Kingsley Tufts Awards in Poetry. This April, as one of three appointed writers, Elena completes the second leg of her lecture and reading tour

for eleven universities in the Georgia Circuit. Her recent publications include the *Pushcart Prize XXXIII*, *Best American Poetry*, *Poetry*, *The Paris Review*, *American Poetry Review*, *TriQuarterly*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Academy of American Poets Poem-A-Day*, *Yale Review*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Diode*, *Vox Populi*, *Poetry International*, *BOMB*, and forthcoming in *VOLT*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Massachusetts Review*, *The Kyoto Journal*, and *Persea Books: The Eloquent Poem*, among others. She is applying for fellowships in order to complete her book of essays: *Voyeur Hour: Meditations on Poetry, Art & Desire*. You can find her at elenakarinabyrne.com.

1979

Denise Hedley reports, "I relocated to Reno, NV (more like ran like hell) and reinvented myself over the past year. I'm writing constantly and have become a somewhat outspoken advocate of the chronic pain community. I had an article published by *National Pain Report* on the opiate crisis on March 27, 2019." Denise spent a few days at



3



4

1 Sally Wallace with alum Andrew Reisner '93 in Stockholm
2 Jill Henderson with husband Richard Taw and grandchildren Elise, Mia, Levi '28, and Charlie '30 | **3 Sung Kim '78**
4 Elena Karina Byrne '78

the Stanford University Rheumatology clinic which allowed her to visit with **Colleen Corrigan** and **Buzz Brown**.

1980

Joe McMahon is a Realtor with Keller-Williams Beach Cities and is enjoying his Manhattan Beach "Empty Nest Life" with his wife of 30 years, Cindy, as their two sons have graduated from college and moved into their professional careers.

1983

Mara Berke is now an empty nester since her only son Dante is off to college at the University of Chicago. Over Winter Break, they enjoyed adventurous repelling and canyoneering in Arches National Park. Mara is practicing family law at Berke Family Mediation. She is a Board Member of the Los Angeles Collaborative Family Law Association. She gave a pro bono presentation at the LAUSD College Palooza on "College Financial Aid: Tips for Divorced, Separated and Unmarried Parents." She has recently seen

Tracy Siegel '84, and **Laura Matsunaga**, and reminisced about the good old softball team days.

1986

Dmitry Portnoy wrote the original screenplay for the feature film *Saint Judy*. The film was released in February of 2019 and stars Michelle Monaghan, Alfred Molina, Alfred Woodward, Common, and others. The film is based on a historic Ninth Circuit asylum case tried by Los Angeles attorney Judith Wood that changed how the law treats refugees who fought for women's rights.

1987

Angela Reddock-Wright, a leading authority on employment and labor law and workplace issues, has once again been named among the *Los Angeles Daily Journal's* prestigious list of "Top Women Lawyers," published on May 8, 2019. This list is made up of 100 women lawyers practicing and barred in California. Brentwood was thrilled to have Angela as our featured 2019 Commencement

Speaker. Her topic was "Privilege Without Purpose is Mere Vanity: To Whom Much is Given Much is Required."

1989

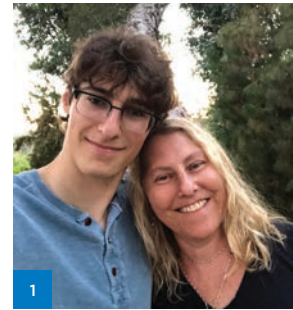
Deborah Glickman reports that "After nearly 16 years of working in and running the public art department for the City of Palm Desert, I have transitioned into the position of Business Advocate doing business retention and expansion for the City. I love seeing old Brentwood friends, so make sure to let me know if you are in the Palm Springs area."

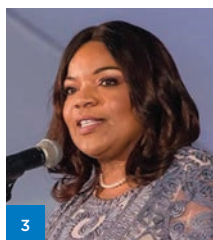
1991

Randy Balik and his wife, Noelle, and two sons, Braden and Drew, are still enjoying the beach life in Hermosa Beach and skiing together whenever they can. In June of 2018, Randy returned to his entrepreneurial roots by investing in an environmental contracting company that specializes in the cleanup of contaminated industrial properties.

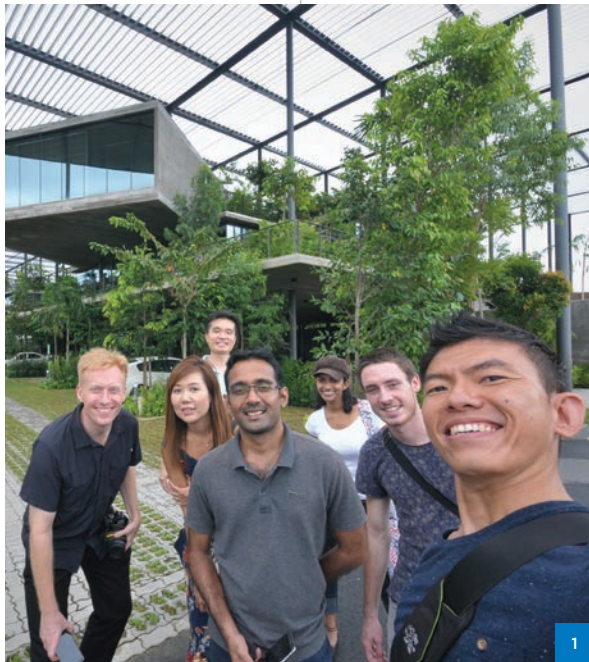
1992

After finishing her seven year run as host of Pop Secret on 89.9fm





- 1** Mara Berke '83 at her childhood home in Brentwood before her son Dante's departure for college
- 2** Randy Balik '91 and family
- 3** Angela J. Reddock-Wright '87
- 4** Cathy (Tamkin) Rozansky '92



KCRW, **Cathy (Tamkin) Rozansky** stopped DJ-ing to get married and raise a family. Two years ago, she decided to get back into the DJ scene and has since been the DJ for such events as Andy Cohen's baby shower at the Palm in Beverly Hills, multiple luxury open houses for Million Dollar Listing Los Angeles on Bravo, and Mattel's most recent company party.

1993

Josh Stephens

competed on the quiz show *Jeopardy!* in early March. He tried to do Brentwood proud but came up short in the final on a question that he probably learned in Mr. Hutson's class. The answer: Jimmy Hoffa.

Gregers Reimann is doing energy efficient and green buildings in Malaysia.

1994

Beth Caldwell

is a professor at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles. She just published a book titled *Deported Americans: Life After Deportation to Mexico*. The book draws on over 100 interviews she conducted with people

who have been deported to Mexico, examining the consequences of deportation on individuals and families.

Stephanie Greene Rogal, Emily Manning Ellis, Natalie Novom Bennett, Jennifer Lugash Tyler, and Katrina Horacek Juda

have reunited over numerous dinners around the LA Area. Even 25 years after high school, there are still many laughs to be had together.

1995

Christopher Malcolm

hasn't had much rest as of late. In the last six months, the commercial photographer/director has shot six campaigns for Nike, one large campaign for ASICS (which required closing off a small section of Downtown LA), shot a book cover for a celebrity author for Penguin Random House, and then shot back-to-back editorials for *Men's Journal* to run in the April and May issues. But those have been the least surreal events in the last couple months which also included acting opposite an Academy



Award winning actress (he is not an actor) and dancing in front of about 500 people in a live studio audience (he is not a dancer). Yet the biggest highlight came on April 18, 2019 when the lifelong film buff had the honor of appearing on Turner Classic Movies with host Ben Mankiewicz to introduce *The Graduate* and discuss his love of cinema. Life is truly strange and truly beautiful from time to time.

1996

Alli (Neiman)

DiVincenzo recently launched a smart-toy for young kids



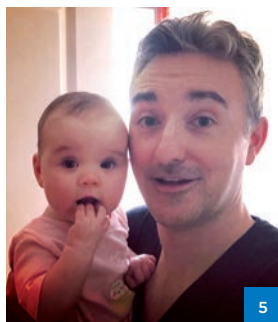
that comes to life in a learning app called FlairFriends. Inspired by the New England summer lifestyle, she recently co-authored and self-published an adult parody called *Hip Hip Rosé!* Look for both items online and in stores. Alli lives in Westport, Connecticut with her family.

Benno Ashrafi recently embarked on a lengthy trial on behalf of his client suffering from the terminal cancer, testicular mesothelioma. Opening statements were held in Los Angeles on February 20, 2019, with the jury returning a verdict in favor of

1 Gregers Reimann '93 with his colleagues (IEN Consultants) and wife (2ND ON LEFT) at award winning Paramit factory building with measured 40% energy savings | **2** Josh Stephens '93 with Alex Trebek on *Jeopardy* | **3** Christopher Malcolm '95 on a photoshoot | **4** Beth Caldwell '94's book, *Deported Americans: Life After Deportation to Mexico* | **5** FROM THE CLASS OF '94: Jennifer Lugash Tyler, Stephanie Greene Rogal, Natalie Novom Bennett, Emily Manning Ellis and Katrina Horacek Juda catching up over dinner in LA | **6** In Big Bear PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Justin Murakawa '96, his daughter Sloane Murakawa, wife Robyn Murakawa, Tiffany Ashrafi (wife of Benno), Maya Ashrafi (daughter of Bobby Ashrafi '95), Tamlyn Murakawa (daughter), Elisa Ashrafi (daughter of Bobby), Via Ashrafi (daughter of Benno), Elena Ashrafi (wife of Bobby), Bobby Ashrafi '95, and Benno Ashrafi '96



1 Jenna Grigsby Jackson '00
with husband Charley and
sons Everett and Keller | **2** Meg
Swertlow '00 and her bridal party
| **3** Devin Sidell '98 | **4** Isla Kate
O'Hanlon, daughter of Matthew
O'Hanlon '00 and Lauren Paull
| **5** Mark Tuohy '98 with daughter
Caroline | **6** Milo William Roth, son
of Chris '98 and Amber Roth



Plaintiff on March 14, 2019 in the amount of \$25,000,000. Before moving to Los Angeles in 1981 with his wife of over 50 years, the Plaintiff had worked in various oil refineries in Iran from 1960 to 1979. The Defendant was a large refinery construction company based in Southern California. Prior to embarking on such a lengthy trial, Benno and his family joined some other Brentwood alums for the President's Day weekend of snowy fun in Big Bear, CA.

1998

Chris Roth and his wife Amber welcomed Milo William Roth to the brood on October 1, 2018.

Mark Tuohy is pleased to announce that he is now the proud papa of Caroline Elizabeth Tuohy! She is a happy, healthy, hilarious baby. He and his wife Dani couldn't be happier.

Devin Sidell is producing and starring in the dark comedy feature film *Lady Parts* about her recent experience of undergoing a preventative double

mastectomy and hysterectomy/oophorectomy due to testing positive for the BRCA1 gene mutation. Joanna Kerns, mother of fellow Brentwood alumna **Ashley Kerns '96**, is Executive Producing. For more information about the film, visit www.LadyPartsTheFilm.com.

1999

After multiple spinal surgeries to replace vertebrae resulting from a car ramming the back of hers at 75 mph+ while she was stopped on the 60 freeway, **Ashley Shaw** had to re-learn how to sit, stand, and walk. Prior to the tragic car accident, Ashley loved all forms of athletic activity, from running to biking to boxing. Her doctors told her that she would never be able to resume her previous level of activity. She understood that she could either give up and wallow in depression or commit to doing the impossible. While recovering from her second spinal surgery, Ashley promised herself that, if her body ever started to cooperate, she would take her body to the maximum level. Despite not being able to sit upright for

almost five years without excruciating pain, Ashley pushed through the pain to become a two-time nationally qualified competitor in Bodybuilding in 2017 and 2018. She also decided to use her MBA education to start AshFit Solutions, a company that offers practical tools and resources to people around the globe who desire to better themselves and reach higher levels in their lives. She specializes in motivating and coaching others to transform their lives through total mind, body, and spiritual fitness. To find out more about her podcast, best-selling book, online courses and speaking engagements, you can visit www.fitashley.com or say hi at ash@ashfitsolutions.com.

2000

Meg Swertlow married Brett Cummings in a magical wedding at the Houdini Estate in Laurel Canyon on October 6, 2018. **Eve Peters, Nicole Tourtelot, Laura Mann '01** and **Chelsea Coleman** were glittering bridesmaids. **Leslie Jamison** and **Amalia McGibbon** served as ushers. Her maid of honor and bestie since

the first week of Bwood was **Caitlin Pilla**. Several other Brentwood alums were in attendance at the wedding (and on the dance floor).

Jenna Grigsby Jackson

lives in Los Angeles with her two sons, Keller (6) and Everett (3). Keller is going into 1st grade at St. Matthew's and Everett will start preschool there in the fall. Jenna is a Managing Director at Imperial Capital in LA focused on growth equity and M&A for consumer brands. She loved catching up with so many women alumni at the recent Brentwood Alumni Women's Forum.

Matthew O'Hanlon

reports that Isla Kate O'Hanlon was born on August 30, 2018. Her current hobbies include crawling, noise making, guitar, and frittatas. Her Nana (long time faculty member Judith O'Hanlon) is very excited to be a grandmother!

2001

Rob Montz recently co-founded Good Kid Productions, an online video creation and distribution firm. His online documentary work has attracted

millions of views and coverage in *The Economist*, *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and The Adam Carolla Podcast. He lives in Washington, DC with his wife, two children, and an authoritarian corgi named Bronson.

2002

Alessandra Torre and Zach Pollack welcomed their first daughter, Beatrice Celia, on October 1, 2018.

Madison Miller is happily living back in her beloved West LA with her son, Ozzie. She is working part-time for The Eisner Foundation, where she is putting her Master's degree in non-profit administration to good use. She spends her afternoons exploring LA and finding new adventures with Ozzie.

2003

Jamie Elson and husband Bennett Wolin have welcomed their second child, Jackson, to their family. He joins big sister Brooklyn. He has been fortunate to have Uncle **Steve Elson '05** and Aunt **Samantha Wolin '93** to shower him with love!

Tyler Ellis, the daughter of revered fashion designer Perry Ellis, channels her fascination for traveling into an endless current of inspiration. Her eponymous handbag line is defined by an array of luxe materials and intricate details that embody her worldly palette. Brought to life in a father/son owned and operated atelier outside of Florence, Italy, Tyler Ellis handbags represent an ardent commitment to couture and quality craftsmanship that has earned a cult following. The designs look equally at home on the red carpet as well as in everyday life and are carried by influential women worldwide.

Mariko Yamazaki-Sanchez recently returned to LA, after living in Okinawa for 2.5 years. She was contracting with the U.S. Naval Hospital to provide occupational therapy services for children of U.S. Military and Civilians working in Okinawa, Japan. She also continues to co-coordinate USC occupational therapy students' annual trip to Ghana, to work with a

special needs boarding school, partner with local universities, and provide guest lectures on pediatric occupational therapy at the University of Ghana.

2004

Spencer Kallick and his wife Rachael welcomed their first child, Sloane Himovitz Kallick. Born on March 20th, Sloane is already a phenomenal addition to the Kallick family.

Alex Haskell is living in Washington D.C., working under Senator Dianne Feinstein as a Counsel on the Senate Judiciary Committee. If you watch enough CSPAN, you just might catch him! Alex still sees far more of his '04 classmates than he would wish upon anyone. So, life is good.

Ian Ross launched an Opportunity Zone fund focused on commercial real estate. His investment firm, dubbed "Somera Road" after the street he grew up on, focuses on revitalizing and developing properties, largely in America's urban cores. Somera Road's reach expands from coast

to coast, investing in secondary and tertiary cities across the country. Since inception, Somera has grown to 15 investment professionals, acquired over \$1 billion in real estate assets and currently manages a portfolio of approximately 8.3 million square feet, spread across 29 cities. Somera closed on its 50th acquisition this Spring. Ian lives in Brooklyn with his wife Virginia and his puppy Mila.

Lindsay Safran and **Adam Harwood '03** got married in beautiful Park City, Utah, surrounded by family and lots of Brentwood friends.

Clancy McCarty directed/produced the documentary film *Giving Birth in America: California* which premiered at SFFILM's Doc Stories and CNN last fall. The film focuses on immigration and access to maternal health care. Clancy is leaving her tenure at Every Mother Counts to begin an accelerated bachelor's in science nursing program at Mount St. Mary's here in LA as the first step to becoming a nurse-midwife.



1 Alessandra Torre '01 with daughter Beatrice Celia | **2** Tyler Ellis '03 | **3** Lindsay Safran '04 and Adam Harwood '03 surrounded by fellow alums and family at their wedding | **4** Madison Miller '02 and her son Ozzie





2005

Amanda Harwood has spent the last five years living and working in Malawi. She is the Research Manager for a prominent NGO, the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust. She develops and runs various research projects on Malawi's wildlife, notably its primate and elephant populations. She releases rescued and rehabilitated animals back into the wild and has spent the majority of her time in Malawi living and working in national parks.

2008

Eli Beller has been living and working in El Paso, Texas for the past year and a half, connecting migrants with their loved ones across the country. Through his efforts with Annunciation House, Eli realized his passion for working directly with asylum seekers. To this extent he will be starting a Master in Social Work program this summer at Loyola University, Chicago.

Kelly McCarthy lives in New York City and was recently promoted to Vice President within the Healthcare



1 Amanda Harwood '05 working for the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust | **2** Kelly McCarthy '08 | **3** Andrew Glantz '13 | **4** Michelle Meebos '09 and Iman Nanji '09

Investment Banking group at Barclays. In April, Kelly was named the 2019 Rising Star by the Women's Bond Club of New York for her leadership at Barclays. Kelly reports that alum **Leslie Edwards '05** also won this award for Wells Fargo on the same evening.

2009

Michelle Meepos and **Iman Nanji** started UCLA Anderson together.

2011

Andrew Kallick recently launched an art and charity company called A Good Print. A Good Print releases limited edition, modern art prints in collaboration with influential people—musicians, athletes, and cultural icons—and each print raises money for a cause that the influential

person is passionate about. He welcomes you to check it out online (agoodprint.com) and send him a note to let him know what you think!

2013

Andrew Glantz led his startup, GiftAMeal, to close a \$165,000 funding round, win a \$50,000 Arch Grant, and win 1st Place at the PitchForce pitch competition. GiftAMeal has now provided 230,000 meals to those in need and was named among the Top 25 Startup of the Year at SXSW where Andrew presented this year in Austin.

2018

Alexander Liebeskind was recently published in *USA Today!* <https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.usatoday.com/amp/2471494002> ■

IN MEMORIAM



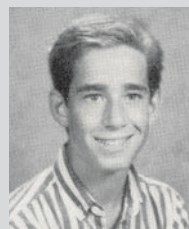
Shadi Askari-Farhat '94



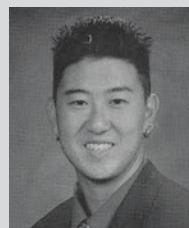
Paul Brock '95



Erin O'Brien Harper '85



Russell Grossman '87



Philip Hyun '99



GOODBYES TO TRUSTEES...

Many thanks to the following trustees who have served the school with passion, purpose, and pride.


Irwin Gold

During his three terms on the Board of Trustees, Irwin has been an invaluable steward and sage advisor. When Irwin speaks, everyone in the room pays attention to his thoughtful observations. The Board and the school have benefitted tremendously from Irwin's exceptional talent in finance and investment banking. He served all nine years on the Finance Committee, chaired it for three years, and also spent three years as Treasurer. Under his leadership, the Finance committee created a comprehensive long-range financial model to guide budgeting and decision making in both the short and long term. His work with the Investment Committee helped grow the value of our school's endowment significantly, laid the foundation for the school's long-term security, and inspired our goal of reaching a \$30 million endowment by our 50th anniversary. ■


Jerry Greenberg

Jerry helped shape the future of Brentwood School in his nine years as trustee, serving for two years as Vice Chair, two years as Secretary, several years on the Governance Committee, and participating in the security task force. When Jerry joined the Board of Trustees, he was the parent of one Lower School student. That child has now been a student in all three divisions of the school and has two siblings who are also BWS students! Needless to say, Jerry offered a well-informed perspective as a result of his years as a parent. The Board and the school benefitted greatly from his substantial business acumen and real gift for strategic planning. In fact, Jerry led the process that resulted in our updated statement of purpose—vision 2020—and strategic agenda finished this spring under his leadership. ■


Wendy Marantz Levine '91

Wendy is committed to working towards the best version of whatever she's a part of, whether it's her work as a lawyer, as founder of the non-profit Beauty Bus, or for the last two years, as a member of Brentwood School's board of trustees. During her tenure, she's served on Advancement, Finance, and Long Range Planning. Wendy's work with Beauty Bus, the non-profit she created, reveals her kind heart and sincere devotion to the greater community. For three years in a row, Beauty Bus, Blushington, and Brentwood School have partnered to create the very popular Day of Beauty for female Veterans. Everything Wendy does, she does with resolve, integrity, and purpose. While Wendy is completing her term as president of the Alumni Association, she has served on the Board of the Alumni Association for the past seven years. Among her many achievements is the very popular Alumni Women's Forum, which is still going strong after four successful events. ■


Nadine Watt '86

An alumna of Brentwood School, Nadine has been a thoughtful advocate for balancing tradition and innovation as our school moves forward with its 30-Year Education Master Plan. Her impressive experience in real estate development and management was an asset to her leadership of the Long Range Planning Committee and Master Plan Implementation task force during critical years. In addition to her work on Advancement and Finance, Nadine served several years on the Governance Committee. During her tenure as chair over these past three years, the Board of Trustees has achieved impressive balance in terms of gender, expertise, and relationship to Brentwood School as well as becoming an increasingly more diverse leadership group. As fellow trustee, Eden Romick, said, "Nadine stands up and she shows up. Her tenacity, forthrightness, and grace has served her well—and us well—in her nine years on this board." ■

GOODBYES AND HELLOS

GOODBYE TO...



Dr. Susie Lyons
Outgoing Lower School Director

Susie Lyons has served in a variety of roles as a 6th Grade Lead Teacher, the Assistant Director and most recently as Director of the Lower School. The positions varied, however, there was one constant—her never ending enthusiasm for and dedication to the students. Over the years Susie has been a true ambassador for Brentwood working closely with the team from Kyonggi School to make their annual visit an extraordinary experience for everyone involved. This past year she also partnered with Pam Horrocks to infuse a Discovery Zone program into the educational technology curriculum. Susie's desire to always give her best and her warm and caring ways make her the perfect person to take on the new position of Speech, Middle School; Coordinator of Veteran Programs and Activities.

And her effervescent personality and theater background will definitely engage our Middle School students who are fortunate to have her as their teacher in Public Speaking. We look forward to seeing all that she has to contribute in her new positions next year. ■



Debby McLean
Incoming Lower School Director

Debby McLean will join the Brentwood School community as Director of Lower School. Prior to her appointment, Debby built a career in school leadership in both independent and public schools in New York State. She served most recently as Principal of Lower School at Friends Academy, a Quaker EC-12 independent school in Locust Valley. There she spearheaded revision of both the math and social studies curriculum ensuring the learning was developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and engaging. She also focused on building community and valuing every voice, through parent book clubs and professional learning groups.

Before her time at Friends Academy, Debby

HELLO TO...

enjoyed six years as Head of Lower School and Assistant Head of School at Poughkeepsie Day School, also an independent Early Childhood-12 school. She has also been an Assistant Principal and teacher of all elementary grade levels in public school on Long Island.

Debby was awarded her School District Leadership certificate from SUNY Stony Brook and her MEd from Sarah Lawrence College. Debby is from a long line of Cornellians and completed her BA in English at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. It was during those years that she first discovered the glory of Southern California while visiting relatives in Orange County as frequently as possible to escape the harsh winters.

Debby will be joined in Los Angeles by her husband, Allaster.

Her son, David, lives in Brooklyn and is currently working as a post-production assistant. He graduated from SUNY Purchase Film Conservatory in May 2018. Her daughter, Alison, will begin her freshman year at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, PA in August. Debby and Allaster will also be joined by their four-year old Golden Retriever, Winnie (officially Wingate), named after her beloved overnight camp on Cape Cod. In her free time, Debby loves to travel and is a voracious reader. She is thrilled to join the Brentwood community and finally call Southern California home. ■

GOODBYE TO...



Nicole Bali
Upper School
Foreign Language
Teacher and
Founding Faculty
Member

BY JUDITH BEERMAN
O'HANLON
ENGLISH AND
FOREIGN LANGUAGE
TEACHER

“Nicole has been a loving guide to what is right, whether in grammar or in how to treat others.”

Arete, Dike, Time, the Greek motto of the Cum Laude Society, means “Excellence, Justice, Honor.” No one better embodies those three ideals than my longtime colleague and dear friend, Nicole Bali, who is retiring this year after 47 years at Brentwood School. Nicole Bali is about to become Emerita, but to two generations of students, she will always be Magistra, another Latin term of respect. Since 1972, Nicole has taught foreign language, serving as a longtime chair of the department. She has also inspired her students and her colleagues to

find joy in words, in the structure of language, in history and culture, to protect the natural world, to value something greater than the here and now. Always maintaining her high standards and expectations, Nicole has been a loving guide to what is right, whether in grammar or in how to treat others. Veteran colleague Robert Ingram, describes Nicole as “a model of elegance, a moral compass for our community, and an individual sempiternally beloved by her students.” According to Michael Knight, Chair of the Visual Arts Department, she has been “an architect of what a Brentwood education means.”

Retired Spanish teacher Paula Radomile recalls that Nicole has taken on many roles during her time at Brentwood, teaching “in the classroom, in

activities, on retreats, in assemblies and special outings and events, not only Latin, Greek and French, but also aviation, knitting, French cooking, gardening, and nature studies.” Of course, the classics are Nicole’s greatest passion. She has spoken of the numinous experience as a young girl of hearing Latin in her grandmother’s church in France: “Although I could not comprehend much of it...I became familiar with its sounds, its rhythms and its intonation. To me, this language was beautiful, solemn, holy.” She has conveyed to countless Brentwood students her expertise in both Greek and Latin as well as her love of their inherent rigor, logic, precision, and elegance. David Zimmerman ’13 expressed immense gratitude, stating that Nicole’s

erudition, generosity, humor, industry, and pietas...set for us an example non (solae) scholae sed vitae (not only for school, but for life.)” Kira Chow ’91 remembered that “Ms. Bali always encouraged us to follow anything that struck our interest. She knew I was interested in medicine, and she always believed I would become a doctor. She would purposefully point out Latin words that had a medical or anatomic derivative. Even now, I reference Ms. Bali almost every day when I teach my residents about anatomy...the way she believed we could do anything made us believe everything was possible.” Taylor Lallas ’17 recalls that “Simply by being herself, she...instilled a love of scholarship in me. She is truly a goddess among us mere mortals.”

Former English Department Chair and Dean of Faculty Patricia Dunn, writes that “In *Canterbury Tales*, Geoffrey Chaucer describes one of the characters with warm affection and highest praise when he says, ‘Gladly would he learn and gladly teach.’ As soon as I got to know Nicole, I realized he was describing her, too.” Nicole remembers how her parents in postwar France were exhorted by her teacher to allow her to continue in school past the age of 12: “I loved to learn... and I was blessed with excellent teachers who opened a wonderful world to me, a world that went far beyond that of my parents.” Full of gratitude, she “wondered with one of my teachers how I could ever repay them all for all they had done.” The teacher responded, “that’s easy: you, too, must teach!”

That is exactly what she has done in her career at Brentwood, where she has, as Voltaire put it, “cultivated her garden.” Nicole has evoked this same imagery in an explanation of how she views her role: “First and foremost, I am a gardener. I have a passion for planting seeds and growing things... This is the work of a teacher: daily care, watering, feeding and nurturing young plants; repotting them...so they grow stronger and stronger roots, until they can be transplanted in full soil and be allowed to grow completely on their own.... Of course, it does have its frustrations, disappointments, and dashed hopes sometimes, but watching the harvest—mirabile dictu!—is the promise of a future that will live on.” On a larger scale, Nicole has taught students how to live, how to

give, how to be in the world, that what success really means is doing something which allows you to express your passion and to find fulfillment. I think she would agree with Cicero that “non nobis solum nati sumus ortusque nostri partem patria vindicat, partem amici” (Not for us alone are we born; our country, our friends, have a share in us.)

There is no adequate way to process the tremendous loss to Brentwood School that her departure entails. We know that

while this farewell is bittersweet, it also signifies a new chapter in Nicole’s life. As Ovid declared, “Omnia mutantur, nihil interit” (Everything changes, nothing perishes.) Like so many, I am grateful for the years I have known Nicole Bali; we all are the fortunate beneficiaries of her wisdom, forthrightness, and generous heart.

Perhaps these words of the poet Stanley Kunitz can capture a sense of how all of us at Brentwood imagine her as she leaves us:

*When I look behind,
as I am compelled to look
before I can gather strength
to proceed on my journey,
I see the milestones dwindling
toward the horizon...I turn, I turn,
exulting somewhat,
with my will intact to go
wherever I need to go,
and every stone on the road
precious to me. ■*

“There is no adequate way to process the tremendous loss to Brentwood School that her departure entails. We know that while this farewell is bittersweet, it also signifies a new chapter in Nicole’s life.”



Lynn Gelfand
Upper School
Foreign Language
Teacher

BY DANIEL GANNON,
FORMER SPANISH
TEACHER

“Lynn single-handedly brought into being a highly successful yearly exchange program with a school in Alès, France.”

Lynn and I remember the exact moment we first “hit it off” as colleagues—it was the very day she interviewed me for a teaching position in the fall of 1991 when she was less than two years into her almost 30-year tenure as department chair. We realized immediately that we had the same goals and aspirations for what the Foreign Language Department could become. We became best of colleagues and friends for the next 27 years, into my retirement in 2018 and beyond. I have to wonder if her department-chair service is a record for any chair in Brentwood’s 47-year history; she has indeed served in

that capacity as our moral leader for over half of the life of the school. Now it is Lynn’s turn to take a well-deserved bow! Lynn never wasted a moment of her time—always creating new worksheets, redacting “old” quizzes and tests, and grading countless compositions with the addition of copious margin notes to help her students literally learn from their mistakes. She was my mentor on the importance of making every student-centered learning activity more meaningful by inserting ideas and vocabulary that were topical to teens. Lynn taught me the importance of having students read at every level of language learning, even in the very first semester. I put it into practice and saw improvement not only in my students’ reading

level but also by transference to their increased writing and speaking skills. Merci, Lynn. My dear friend and colleague is a strong woman of high energy, high expectations, and high ethics. That’s a good thing because after being hired in August of 1990 she had only a couple of weeks to put together five classes ranging from French I to AP and abruptly became Brentwood’s one-woman French program! She later added Spanish I and II and even spent a decade lecturing in a now-defunct course called Senior Seminar which was basically a required Philosophy 101 course for our soon-to-be graduates. She single-handedly brought into being a highly successful yearly exchange program with a school in Alès, France, where during two weeks in the spring of the year, several

French students would arrive in Los Angeles to live with Brentwood hosts. The following spring, Brentwood students would leave for France to meet up with the families of those same French students from the past year for their own immersion time. Lynn truly lived out her educational creed by continually looking for ways to help her students obtain real experiences in the target language. Bon travail, Lynn! In closing, I must mention a fun way in which Lynn deeply and completely “lives out her credo” — she and her husband have a tiny dog of French pedigree as their home companion — a frisky Bichon Frise named “Louie XIV” who will be so happy to have Lynn home 24/7; well, that is, until Lynn fills her days with any or all of her passions: visits

to her grandchildren in Portland, Oregon, daily morning swims at a local pool, or reading French and Spanish novels all while pursuing studies in philosophy at UCLA Extension. Ever the student for life! ■

“...after being hired in August of 1990 **Lynn** had only a couple of weeks to put together five classes ranging from French I to AP and **abruptly became Brentwood’s one-woman French program!**”



Rob Jost

Upper School Foundations Teacher and Counselor

BY LEE HERZOG, MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELOR

AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TEACHER

The “space” in-between the words we speak or write allows meaning to coagulate. Please accept this tribute poem as my attempt to capture your impact over the many years we have shared together at Brentwood School:

*A Man of integrity, thoughtfulness, and soul
Friend and colleague, one to share and to hold
In mind, our Human Development experiences
Conceived a friendship of debating existences.*

*Who is “Jostie” I ask—one who contemplates introspection
Intellectually talented—longing for strong connection
Through ideas, music, spirituality, and psychotherapy
And ultimate goodness, while searching for clarity.*

*He’s one of a kind—Respecting differences—
While struggling with his own affinity for distances
Dedicating 17 years to Brentwood students and families
Valuing one’s space to think—he’s an anomaly.*

*We celebrate you “Jostie” for all that you are
Your mindful presence raises the bar
Appreciated by those who experienced your gifts
Wisdom from experience—a phenomenon that exists.*

*Thank you from us—we who know your character and attributes
A breath of fresh air—respectful, witty, and heartfelt to your roots
Don’t be a stranger—check in once and again
“For the times they are a-changin” said Bob Dylan.*

Best of luck in your new endeavors. ■

GOODBYES TO...

“Over the years Jan has treated cuts, bruises, headaches, bumps on head, broken bones, fevers, coughs, and has helped with more lost teeth than one could count. One might think that she and the Tooth Fairy are BFFs!”

**Jan Perlo**

Lower School Nurse

BY DR. DAWN CUNNION, ASSOCIATE HEAD OF SCHOOL

It was 1997 and the Lower School had only been open a couple of years... without a full time nurse. Today we could not fathom such a scenario, but at the time our Lower School was young and we were figuring out the program and staffing. I arrived at Brentwood that year and had the good fortune to meet Jan Perlo because her daughter Jessie was a Lower School student. We hired her in the fall of 1998, and our school was immediately better with her on the team. Jan set up the nurse's office and brought a strong sense of professionalism to the job. Over the years she has treated cuts, bruises, headaches, bumps on head, broken

bones, fevers, coughs, and has helped with more lost teeth than one could count. One might think that she and the Tooth Fairy are BFFs! But it is her “emotional ice” and understanding manner that makes her office a destination for students when they are feeling the need for a little extra TLC. In addition, many may not know that she not only created the schedule for our fire and earthquake drills but she developed our Full Scale Emergency Plan and trained us all in appropriate emergency procedures. Jan has been a thoughtful and dedicated member of the Lower School community for over 20 years. We are grateful to her for all she has done and hope she knows how much we all value her contributions and the legacy she leaves behind. ■

**Terry Fate**

Database Administrator

BY MARY SIDELL, FORMER DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT

It is my pleasure to pay tribute to a true behind-the-scenes hero at Brentwood School. Although you may not often see her face, you no doubt know her name because of the many ways she takes care of you. Terry Fate is the incredibly responsible, caring, and humble woman who goes out of her way to make sure your name is the way you want it in the roster, that you get all the correct mailings, and that any new contact information for you is quickly updated. That is just the short list of important details she so expertly juggles and coordinates. Without Terry, our school would not hum along nearly so efficiently.

I met Terry in 1995 when she came to Brentwood as our first official Database Administrator. It didn't take long to realize how desperately we needed not only her strong organizational talents, but also her warmth and intelligence. In addition to being a truly creative problem solver, she is a respectful, collaborative colleague and a loyal friend to all who have worked with her over the years.

Terry, it has been my honor to share so many of life's passages with you—both professionally and personally—from brainstorming data conundrums to sharing family ups and downs. The school, and I, will miss your wisdom, your kindness, and your dedication to a job well done. ■



Zita Hernandez

Operations
and Financial
Assistance
Coordinator

BY ELENA CARDENAS,
ADMINISTRATOR
ASSISTANT TO
STUDENT LIFE

It gives me great pleasure to write about my good friend Zita Hernandez. Zita started Brentwood in 2001, and our friendship has been strong ever since. She has been one of my main supporters, assisting me with many Student Life events—distributing spirit T-shirts and smoothies, serving food, selling doughnuts, and in countless other ways. I am most grateful for Zita's support of our families on financial assistance—anytime I approached her with a question regarding financial aid, she was always

professional, knowledgeable, and extremely helpful to me as I strove to understand the process more fully in order to better serve our families.

Zita is extremely honest and hard-working, and was a dedicated employee at Brentwood for many years. I truly miss sharing stories about our families, laughing at the silly things, and having those heart to heart conversations. Zita has moved on to another adventure, and I wish her nothing but good things ahead—today, tomorrow, and always. ■

Faculty/Staff Anniversaries

5

5 YEARS

Anne Carr
Michael Cottone
Jake Ford
Tiffanie Gilder
Teri Goldman
Melissa Gruenthal
Shawn Hausmann
Kristen Letchworth
Katie McKellar
Jardon Quarterman
Sixto Sandiero
Deborah Stokol
Andrew Weiner

10

10 YEARS

Nora Francis
Ignacio Gonzalez
Karen Laudadio
Azu Mayorga
Nick Thompson

15

15 YEARS

Nasrin Farahmand
Marco Mendez

20

20 YEARS

Andrea Demarest
Ginny Leon
Laura Taylor
Johnny Velasquez

25

25 YEARS

John Lynch
Rob Michelson

30

30 YEARS

Elena Cardenas
Robin Shapiro

40

40 YEARS

Pat Brown

45

45 YEARS

Michael Knight



PHILANTHROPY AT BRENTWOOD SCHOOL

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

WHERE AND WHEN TO GIVE BEYOND TUITION?

BRENTWOOD FUND

The Brentwood Fund is our school's top philanthropic priority because it provides 10% of this year's total budget. Every student benefits directly from your generosity. Dollars raised are spent the same year in which they are given, so your gift goes to work immediately. By making a donation to the Brentwood Fund, you directly support key aspects of the school, such as financial aid, academic, and extracurricular programs for our students, professional development opportunities for our teachers, and care and maintenance of our facilities.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

The Parents Association enriches our school by supporting programs and events to deepen the connection of our community. The PA's major fundraising efforts are The Party Book and Spring Benefit. PA proceeds support the school's endowment.

BENEFIT AND AUCTION

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

PARTY BOOK

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

MAJOR GIFTS

The Capital Campaign is an exciting part of our 30-year Education Master Plan. A capital pledge, typically paid over several years, is an addition to your annual giving and completes your investment in the exceptional educational experience that is Brentwood School.

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020

THE BRENTWOOD SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
INVITES YOU TO

HEART AND SOUL A CELEBRATION OF Mr. V

For the past 40 years, **DAVE VELASQUEZ**
HAS DEDICATED HIMSELF, HEART AND SOUL,
to the students, families, and alumni of Brentwood School.

MR. V'S REMARKABLE IMPACT INCLUDES
admissions, college counseling, coaching, student life,
summer internships, and "Celebrating Diversity:
The Power of Personal Stories."

**His passion for Brentwood has been an inspiration
to our school community and beyond.**

SABAN THEATER, BEVERLY HILLS
6:00 PM — 10:00 PM

You won't want to miss this!

MORE DETAILS TO COME LATER THIS SUMMER AND EARLY FALL





POWER IN POETRY

by **SHIRLEY BLAKE**
Director of Communications

Selected by President Clinton as the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. History, **Richard Blanco** is the youngest and the first Latino, immigrant, and gay person to serve in such a role.

As Presidential Inaugural Poet, public speaker, educator, and advocate, he has crisscrossed the nation inviting audiences to contemplate these universal questions: Where am I from? Where do I belong? Who am I?

Born in Madrid to Cuban exile parents and raised in Miami, the negotiation of identity characterizes much of his work. Blanco shares stories and poems that speak to his diverse experience as a gay Latinx and immigrant in the context of our fundamental human longing to find home and a sense of place with regard to family, community, and especially nationhood.

Blanco's work questions the American narrative and the inherent contradiction of our nation's motto: *e pluribus unum* (out of many, one). Charged with the utopian idea that no single narrative is more important than another, his work asserts that America could and ought someday to be a country where all our stories matter, a country which we can all be proud to love and where we can all truly thrive.

We were honored to welcome Mr. Blanco to Brentwood School for the 2019 Celebrating Diversity Day. He delivered the poem featured at right to an enthralled audience of students, faculty, staff, and administrators, setting the tone for a day of discussion and discovery. ■

Looking for The Gulf Motel Marco Island, Florida

There should be nothing here I don't remember . . .

The Gulf Motel with mermaid lampposts and ship's wheel in the lobby should still be rising out of the sand like a cake decoration. My brother and I should still be pretending we don't know our parents, embarrassing us as they roll the luggage cart past the front desk loaded with our scruffy suitcases, two-dozen loaves of Cuban bread, brown bags bulging with enough mangos to last the entire week, our espresso pot, the pressure cooker—and a pork roast reeking garlic through the lobby. All because we can't afford to eat out, not even on vacation, only two hours from our home in Miami, but far enough away to be thrilled by whiter sands on the west coast of Florida, where I should still be for the first time watching the sun set instead of rise over the ocean.

There should be nothing here I don't remember . . .

My mother should still be in the kitchenette of The Gulf Motel, her daisy sandals from Kmart squeaking across the linoleum, still gorgeous in her teal swimsuit and amber earrings stirring a pot of arroz-con-pollo, adding sprinkles of onion powder and dollops of tomato sauce. My father should still be in a terrycloth jacket smoking, clinking a glass of amber whiskey in the sunset at the Gulf Motel, watching us dive into the pool, two boys he'll never see grow into men who will be proud of him.

There should be nothing here I don't remember . . .

My brother and I should still be playing Parcheesi,
my father should still be alive, slow dancing
with my mother on the sliding-glass balcony
of The Gulf Motel. No music, only the waves
keeping time, a song only their minds hear
ten-thousand nights back to their life in Cuba.
My mother's face should still be resting against
his bare chest like the moon resting on the sea,
the stars should still be turning around them.

There should be nothing here I don't remember . . .

My brother should still be thirteen, sneaking
rum in the bathroom, sculpting naked women
from sand. I should still be eight years old
dazzled by seashells and how many seconds
I hold my breath underwater—but I'm not.
I am thirty-eight, driving up Collier Boulevard,
looking for The Gulf Motel, for everything
that should still be, but isn't. I want to blame
the condos, their shadows for ruining the beach
and my past, I want to chase the snowbirds away
with their tacky mansions and yachts, I want
to turn the golf courses back into mangroves,
I want to find The Gulf Motel exactly as it was
and pretend for a moment, nothing lost is lost.

RICHARD BLANCO
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Brentwood School inspires every student to:
Think critically and creatively.
Act ethically.
Shape a future with meaning.

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

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PARTING SHOT

Adding to the traditional excitement and energy of Lower School Field Day was the groundbreaking ceremony for the Saltair Building Construction project set to begin this summer. Students, faculty, and administrators decorated the Saltair parking lot with sidewalk chalk and created a mural on the outer walls of the art building, in the midst of heated competition between the Red and Blue teams. It was a day to remember as everyone looks forward to watching the new building rise on the West Campus.