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Photo above: PE teacher Marcy Ference used a Parents Association Summer Grant to travel to Peru. An avid photographer, Marcy is known in the St. Patrick's community for her beautiful pictures of Haiti and Haitian children. This gift served her well on her travels this summer. For more information on Parents Association summer travel and professional development grants, please see story on page 6.

On the Cover: PK student Sasha S. investigates the human body using a skeleton, a mirror, and a light table with "X-rays" on it. The Nursery School provides rich environments for children to question and investigate the world around them.

ST. PATRICK'S PRESS FALL 2012

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STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION: In accordance with applicable laws and in the interest of being an effective, equitable, just, and inclusive community, St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, family status, economic status, age, or physical disability in the administration of its admission policies, financial aid programs, educational policies and programs, or other School-sponsored programs and activities, or in the hiring and terms of employment of faculty and staff. As an Episcopal parish day school, St. Patrick's gives special consideration in the admission process to active members of St. Patrick's Episcopal Church.



Head of Nursery School Nancy White begins her essay on the Nursery and PK program with poet Muriel

Rukeyser's call for us to "nourish beginnings." But even as Nancy explores the centrality of play in that program and the habits of heart and mind that it develops—learning to question and investigate in order to reach conclusions informed by evidence; learning to recognize, reproduce, and create patterns; and learning to collaborate in ways enhanced by perspective-taking—she is also looking beyond those beginnings.

Peter A. Barrett
Head of School

Nourishing Essential Habits of Heart and Mind

And that is what this edition of the *St. Patrick's Press* invites you, our readers, to do: To recognize in those beginnings not only their value in the present for our youngest students but also their implications for the work that even our oldest students do here. Just as Rukeyser tells us that the "blessing is in the seed," Nancy wants us to recognize that blessing in the play of young children, a seed that will experience full flower in academic activity that, despite looking less and less like play as students get older, at its best calls forth and builds on those same habits of heart and mind.

Here at St. Patrick's, we frequently talk about the benefits of what we call a continuous educational experience for young people. What we have in mind is that, as a child moves from grade level to grade level and from division to division (Nursery School to Lower School to Upper School), that child's experience is free from abrupt changes in programmatic and instructional values and in academic and behavioral expectations. Even as we expect students to take increasing responsibility for the work that they do, to move from more concrete to more abstract ways of thinking as they approach and sustain work that becomes increasingly complex and, yes, to do more of it, we nourish that growth in ways that, at important moments of transition, balance the fresh and challenging with the familiar. While there are real differences in furnishings, technologies and texts, and instructional approaches between classes for Nursery and PK children and classes for students in, say, Grades 3, 6, and 8, there also remain an exceptional regard for the learner and a determination to engage that learner in substantive ways that promote meaningful growth.

Some observers assert that those differences should include significantly more rigor in classrooms for older students, the setting aside of this notion of play for the more serious work of learning. (Indeed, some would even argue for more rigorous Nursery and PK classrooms, essentially to the exclusion of play, a regrettable approach that ignores its critical role in the cognitive, social and emotional, moral and spiritual, and physical development of the child.) Meanwhile, others would claim that educational experiences for

older students should retain a greater spirit of playfulness—the thrill of the intellectual chase as one seizes fresh opportunities to explore a complex and fascinating world. In truth, that spirit of playfulness, that sense of discovery and adventure, is often absent in what has become of the education of young children in this country, let alone that of their older brothers and sisters. Eschewing the tendency to cast important educational considerations in terms of polar opposities, here at St. Patrick's we accept rigor as an essential feature of meaningful cognitive and academic activity, even as we recognize the role of imagination, creativity, and play in that same activity. A "whole" learner is able to bring all of those qualities to the work of the student.

Given our commitment to a *continuous*, rather than *discontinuous*, educational experience for young people at St. Patrick's, we wanted to capture for you how we think the intentional, deliberate, and provocative use of play in our Nursery School invites the young child to construct meaning in the present and orients that child to a future of intellectual and academic engagement and success. What are those habits of heart and mind—those seeds—that we are nourishing in our Nursery School students and where and how can we observe their flowering throughout a young person's career at St. Patrick's?

So it is that we find ourselves in a Grade 2 science classroom, in a Grade 6 math classroom, and in MacArthur Campus (Grades 7 and 8) humanities classrooms. How have those "soft edges" of the Nursery School's play-based program prepared our young people for the "harder edges" of science, math, and humanities?

Because we believe—because we have seen—that the Nursery School program prepares our students effectively for the increasingly challenging work that will shape their school experience as well as their broader lived experience, we are grateful for the opportunity to provide them with, and to share with them, such a beginning, such a blessing.

WOLFHOUND WATCH: FALL SPORTS WRAP-UP

This fall's soccer season—the first on our new regulation-size athletic field on the Foxhall Campus—was notable for improved play at the varsity level and outstanding performances by our girls junior varsity "A" team, which finished first in the Capital Athletic Conference (CAC) regular season and our boys junior varsity "A" team, which ended the season with a record of 6-2 and secured third place in the CAC regular-season standings.

The girls junior varsity "A" team went undefeated (7-0) in the regular season, winning hard-fought games against CAC teams Green Acres, National Presbyterian School, Immanuel Christian School, Norwood, and Westminster. They also won their first-round tournament game against Langley with a score of 5-0. Players Espeana G. and Chloe C., both of whom earned Wolfhound MVP Awards at the end of the season, contributed heavily to this shut-out, much as they have contributed to the team's success in other games throughout the season. Regrettably, the balance of the CAC tournament was canceled due to the approach of Hurricane Sandy—leaving the Wolfhounds unable to clinch the CAC tournament title. Their regular season exploits, however, did earn them a first-place ranking.

After a successful regular season in which they defeated Green Acres, National Presbyterian School, and Immanuel Christian School, the boys junior varsity "A" team was ultimately eliminated from the CAC tournament during a tense matchup against Langley in which the Wolfhounds led for the first half. The team's winning record during the regular season earned them a third-place ranking in the CAC.

As a result of increased demand for our rapidly improving athletic programs (this fall, more than 120 students participated in interscholastic sports sponsored by St. Patrick's) and the scheduling flexibility made possible by our new field, we were able to create two additional soccer teams





focused on skill development as well as interscholastic competition. The creation of these additional teams provided each individual player with more time on the field and eliminated the need for cuts at the junior varsity level. We are proud of these new junior varsity "B" teams, who played hard—sometimes against the "A" teams of other schools—though both girls and boys ended the season with losing records.

Twenty students participated in cross country this fall at the junior varsity (Grades 5 and 6) and varsity (Grades 7 and 8) levels. The junior varsity team competed in two meets and the varsity team in four, including the season-ending Maryland and D.C. Private School Champion-ships in Derwood, Maryland. All Wolfhound runners significantly improved their times over the course of the season. By the end of the season, a number of St. Patrick's athletes had distinguished themselves in competition, including Grade 8 student Isabelle J. and Grade 7 student Bryce B., who finished fourth and sixth respectively in the dual meet at Immanuel Christian School, and Grade 8 student Calvin H. and Grade 7 student



Parker B., who had strong performances at Derwood, finishing 25th and 32nd overall.

Top photo: Grade 6 student Chloe C. charges downfield, several strides ahead of her Norwood opponent. The girls junior varsity "A" team won this match-up by a score of 7-3. **Middle photo:** Grade 7 student Bryce B. (in green, center, foreground) gets off to a strong start at the cross country meet hosted by Potomac in September. Fellow Wolfhounds Cal H. and Parker B. are both to the left. **Bottom photo:** Grade 8 student Sebastien C. skillfully defends possession of the ball from his Westminster School opponent. Sadly, this game ended in a loss for the Wolfounds. 3-0.

DAY SCHOOL HOSTS RECEPTION FOR SAME-SEX PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES

In October, as part of its ongoing effort to be a welcoming community for all kinds of families, St. Patrick's held a reception—the first of its kind—for same-sex families who would consider applying their children to the Day School at the home of Michael DeSantis and Patrick Baugh (parents of two Kindergarten students). Led by Head of School Peter A. Barrett, the evening introduced our diverse and inclusive community to the seven same-sex prospective families in attendance.

The Day School has always made special efforts to encourage applications from families of varied backgrounds. We believe that these efforts are the natural extension of our identity as an Episcopal parish day school, part of a faith tradition that encourages and celebrates diversity of all kinds and takes as its starting point the inherent value of every person. Our Mission Statement echoes these values by charging us to create a diverse learning community that recognizes the "infinite value of every participant as a child of God." And our Mission Statement for Equity and Diversity commits us to "embracing, respecting, and honoring differences in religion, ethnicity, race, economic background, age, family configuration, sexual orientation, gender, physical ability, and learning style."

In addition to the seven prospective families represented, many current parents (including representatives from all current same-sex families at the Day School) came to show their support and to talk about their and their children's positive experiences. We are grateful to Michael and Patrick for hosting this very important event, and we are confident these efforts have laid the groundwork for welcoming more same-sex families into our community.



HORIZONS APPOINTS NEW SITE DIRECTOR, EXPANDS SATURDAY PROGRAMS

Even though the excitement of summer is still many months away, St. Patrick's is already preparing for its fourth summer as a host site for Horizons Greater Washington, most notably with the appointment of Grade 3 teacher Rachel Levin as the new St. Patrick's Site Director. Horizons is a summer-based intervention that helps low-income students continue learning at a time when they might otherwise experience a decline in their academic development.

Now in her second year at the Day School, and her ninth in the field, Rachel has eagerly taken on this new responsibility. This summer, the six-week Horizons program will host 75 students in Grades 1 to 5 from our District of Columbia Public Schools partner, Bancroft Elementary in Mount Pleasant. Horizons has flourished in recent summers at St. Patrick's, first under the leadership of then-Grade 4 teacher and current Head of Lower School Jen Congdon, and then under last summer's Interim Site Director, music teacher Laura Petersen. We have no doubt that it will continue to be an integral part of St. Patrick's mission-driven outreach under Rachel's guiding hand.

As part of our commitment to the students we serve, the Day School is also expanding the Horizons Saturday Program during the school year. Last year, the Day School hosted Horizons students and their parents on campus three times for enrichment programs designed to complement the work students are doing in their classrooms at their home school. This year, the number of Saturday meetings will double to six. These sessions are co-led by Rachel and Grade 1 teacher Annie Miller.

To become involved as a volunteer with Horizons at St. Patrick's, please contact St. Patrick's Horizons Advisory Committee Co-Chairs Noreen Paul at ncpaul8800@hotmail.com and Roxanne Little at roxlittle@pincusdc.com, or St. Patrick's Site Director Rachel Levin at LevinR@stpatsdc.org.

Photo above: Two rising Grade 3 Horizons students are pictured above during their time at St. Patrick's this summer. We are grateful to the many volunteers who help to make the Horizons Saturday Programs successful.

FEATURE: PARENTS ASSOCIATION SUMMER GRANT RECIPIENT ANGIE BLAKE-MOORE

This summer, N1 teacher Angie Blake-Moore took a ten-week poetry course through Gotham Writers' Workshop in New York City with a grant from the Parents Association. Each year, the Parents Association awards a number of faculty and staff members grants for travel or professional development over the summer months. The Parents Association also awarded grants to PE teacher Marcy Ference for travel to Peru, Assistant to the Head of Lower School Trissy McHenry for piano lessons, Development Associate Charisse Noche for travel to the Philippines, and Grade 5 teacher Jared Passmore for travel to Costa Rica.

Angie, who has been writing poetry since high school, has also studied writing in college and beyond. But she has found it difficult to pursue this interest with a full-time job and two young children. The online poetry course fit her summer schedule perfectly and provided her with what she describes as much-needed deadlines. Taught by poet Matthew Lippman, the class required students to read a lecture then post an assignment—such as "Write a poem with very long lines," or "Write an elegy"—to the class website, to be workshopped later by the teacher or by other students.

"I feel [this experience] brings a freshness to my teaching and engages the creative part of my spirit," says Angie. "As a teacher, it is rare to be able to experience what it's like to be a student again." One of the poems Angie wrote this summer is included here, entitled "That Mice Might Sing."

That Mice Might Sing

Angie Blake-Moore

"A scientist has discovered that high-pitched sounds made by the small rodents could actually be melodious songs."

—article in *Smithsonian* magazine

His front paws held aloft, his tail a stiff arrow—a suitor mouse presents his lady with a song of full moons and fields of grain, of nights

when not a single owl is awake.

Look through the mouse hole and see the mother there—look through the arch shaped doorway gnawed in the molding, look past the wee green and lighted Christmas tree placed on a spool of thread.

Yes, surely a mama mouse would sing.

I believe in the rodent lullaby, a song of stars and cheese.

There she is, tucking her mousling into his matchbox bed.
She covers him with a cocktail napkin then rocks in her dollhouse chair, setting her drink on a thimble table.
Sighs. Clears her throat.
Her lullaby is one of cotton balls and sunbeams, places to play far from oblivious cats, generous sized crumbs and old tennis shoes suitable for slumber.

Scientists recorded and slowed down the mouse sounds for study, likening them to whale song. They are on the edge of our hearing and we probably will never catch the tune.

It will have to be enough, then, to picture the notes squeaking out from behind the base boards and rising like bubbles, like tiny balloons.

STUDENTS MEET THREE AUTHORS DURING FALL BOOK FAIR

As part of St. Patrick's commitment to Exceptional Literacy, the Parents Association organizes two reading-centered events annually—the Fall Book Fair and the Spring Book Fair. The former was held at St. Patrick's in mid-November and, as is the case each year, included visits by notable authors. This year, we welcomed children's authors Natalie Standiford, Kwame Alexander, and Jim Weiss. Students in all three divisions were able to visit with one or more of these special quests.

In addition to learning about what inspired these professional authors, students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 had the opportunity to indulge their own literary interests at the Book Fair sale in the Great Hall. Co-chaired by Kit Ballenger (mother of Joshua 1B and Charlie PK1) and Noreen Paul (mother of Catherine 8D and Johnnie 6C), the sale benefits the Parents Association, which makes annual gifts to the Day School and supports faculty and staff summer travel and professional development grants. We thank the co-chairs and many volunteers who helped make this year's Fall Book Fair a success!

ERICA THOMPSON BECOMES DAY SCHOOL EQUITY COORDINATOR

Throughout our 57 years of history, the Day School has worked to honor the differences between and among members of our community as part of our mission-driven commitment to the infinite value of every participant as a child of God. For the past 17 years, primary responsibility for developing and nurturing this commitment to equity and diversity has resided with the Equity Committee (formerly the Diversity and Multicultural Committee), comprised of members of the faculty and staff, with support

from the Parents Association and the Board of Trustees. This school year, we underscored our commitment even further by appointing long-time faculty member and administrator Erica Thompson as St. Patrick's first-ever Equity and Diversity Coordinator, in addition to her ongoing duties as a Grade 3 resource teacher.

In her new role, Erica will coordinate a wide range of equity- and diversity-related initiatives that have variously involved faculty and staff (through the Equity Committee, which she chairs), the Board of Trustees (through its own Equity Committee), and the Parents Association (with the leadership of its Vice President for Equity). These initiatives will include, among other things, parent equity presentations and forums, ongoing gender and sexuality diversity professional development for faculty and staff, and the global citizenship work being undertaken as part of the Day School's Strategic Plan. As stated in our Mission Statement for Equity and Diversity, we believe that "it is within a diverse community that we are best able to educate ourselves and one another to live in a global society, to actively and effectively promote justice, and to oppose prejudice and bias." We are confident that Erica's new appointment will help us to organize, unify, and continue to advance the ongoing work of equity and diversity at St. Patrick's.

"Simply having an equity coordinator doesn't make a school equitable," says Erica. "However, I am honored to continue to help monitor and develop the purposeful work of our faculty and staff as they pursue the goal of ensuring all members of the community feel safe and welcome."

Erica has been a faculty member and administrator at St. Patrick's for a total of ten years in two "tours of duty." She has been an Assistant Head of School, Associate Director of Admission and, most recently, a Grade 3 resource teacher. Her attention to, and vision for, equity issues has been a central focus of her career. Along with Xiomara Hall, Director of Admission and Financial Aid, Erica is a co-creator and co-coordinator of C3 (Culture, Creed, Community), St. Patrick's





first black student affinity group. She has also been a director of the creative and performance aspects of the Kwanzaa Karamu Community Potluck since it first began in 2002. Erica and her husband, Ronny, have two children at St. Patrick's.

Top photo: A view of this year's Fall Book Fair sale in the Great Hall, complete with floating book decorations. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 enjoyed visits by several authors as well as choosing their own books to read for pleasure. **Bottom photo:** C3 (Culture, Creed, Community), the black student affinity group co-founded by new equity and diversity coordinator Erica Thompson, performed at the Day School's 11th annual Kwanzaa Karamu performance and potluck earlier this month.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

In each edition of the Press, we bring you sketches of current Day School faculty and staff. We are proud to share the stories of the many accomplished people who make St. Patrick's the outstanding institution it is.



Judy Barr

MacArthur Campus Office Manager, School Nurse

Judy Barr, though officially the MacArthur Campus Office Manager and School Nurse, is often referred to as the Grades 7 and 8 "house mom." She has been an integral part of the St. Patrick's community for the past 16 years. And she has also been integral to the life of the MacArthur Campus since its opening more than a decade ago—not only teaching health classes, serving as an advisor, and managing secondary school applications, but also making sure students are healthy, happy, and well-fed.

A nurse for the past 35 years, Judy holds a master's degree in nursing and health care education from George Mason University. She says that her nursing background led naturally to a career in education. "One of the main responsibilities of nursing," she said, "is to educate the whole person. St. Patrick's has given me the opportunity to blend my passion for health care education and my love of teaching."

Her goal in teaching health is to have her students acquire good habits and attitudes that will last a lifetime. She believes that health education is not limited to teaching about current health trends—it is about inspiring the students to connect with the material in ways that lead to more personal responsibility. Judy enjoys watching her students make connections between what they are learning in class and what is going on in their lives.

In her free time, Judy enjoys cooking, listening to music, and watching classic theater. She has one son, **John Serbin ex. '00**. She lives in Arlington and is currently in search of a rescue dog to add to the family.



Jonathan Fichter

Technology Coordinator

Technology Coordinator Jonathan Fichter was inspired to teach more than 15 years ago when, as a high school student, he spent a summer working in a program called the Breakthrough Collaborative, a program he describes as similar to Horizons at St. Patrick's. He says that he fell in love with teaching that summer, when he learned that school could put students at the center of learning (an idea he later learned was key to the philosophy of independent education). He began his professional teaching career nine years ago and is in his second year as a faculty member at St. Patrick's.

Jonathan earned a bachelor's degree in English literature at Yale, then studied at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where he received his teaching certification and master's degree in teaching and curriculum. In his current position, Jonathan works to connect the world of technology with the world of school. A computer programmer himself, Jonathan stays abreast of developments in technology by attending conferences and workshops, practicing his skills in online study groups, and swapping ideas with other technology coordinators from around the country. In February, he will host a workshop at St. Patrick's focused on teaching

with Scratch, a child-friendly programming language developed by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a program Jonathan utilizes frequently in the classroom

"My favorite part about teaching is helping students engage in hands-on activities," said Jonathan. "When an activity is appropriately challenging, a student stays interested. If the teacher provides just enough support to keep the challenge from becoming frustrating, a student can feel engaged, excited, and motivated to push his or her limits. That's when learning happens." Jonathan hopes to bring more collaborative efforts to St. Patrick's, engaging local college students, for example, to work side-by-side with Day School students.

Outside of school, Jonathan enjoys reading, running, biking, and practicing his computer programming skills. But he says that his biggest job outside of school is learning to be a dad. His 14-month-old son, Charlie, is in the Infant-Toddler Center at St. Patrick's. He and his wife, Molly, an intellectual property lawyer, live in Washington.

A Warm Welcome to the Faculty & Staff Class of 2012

Photo opposite, front row, left to right: Lisa White, Holli Matze, Adelaide Shafer Barrett ex. '85, Brooks Swett, Donnarae Wade, Anita Hockenberry. **Middle row, left to right:** Akane Shirata, Davina Chu, Eby Okonkwo, Tina White, Katherine Orlando, Patti Alexander. **Back row, left to right:** Ben Hoover, Damien Williams, Hank Lanphier. **Not pictured:** Charles Coates, Sara Dickson.

New PK1 head teacher **Patti Alexander** earned her bachelor's degree in children and family studies from New York University and a master's degree in early childhood general, special, and bilingual education from the Bank Street College of Education. In between work on her degrees, she taught for three years in Costa Rica and Ecuador. Most recently, she was an assistant PK teacher at Trevor Day School in New York City.

We welcome back **Adelaide Shafer Barrett ex.** '85 as the new Development Assistant. Adelaide spent four months in the Development Office in 2009 while Charisse Noche was on maternity leave. She brings with her much independent school experience—as an alumna, parent of three Day School students, leadership volunteer, and teacher at Convent of the Sacred Heart School in New York. Adelaide holds a bachelor's degree from Georgetown and a master's degree in public health from Boston University.

Davina Chu joined the St. Patrick's faculty as the 4C homeroom teacher. She graduated from Duke University with a bachelor's degree in psychology and from Harvard Graduate School of Education with a master's degree in education with a concentration in language and literacy. Prior to attending Harvard, Davina spent two years teaching Grades 1 and 3 at Beauvoir, where she also served on the math and science committees.

Charles Coates is the newest member of the maintenance team at St. Patrick's. Charles has spent the past seven years in the maintenance and groundskeeping industry, most recently here in Washington at the Rock Creek Park Golf Course. Charles was born and raised in Washington, D.C. and attended West Virginia State College. He has two children, Charles, Jr. (7) and Zysean (4).

The newest addition to the Office of Admission and Financial Aid, **Sara Dickson** joined the Day School this summer as the Admission and Financial Aid Associate. She holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and women's studies from the College of William & Mary and a master's degree in secondary education from George Washington University. Previously, Sara worked in corporate recruiting in Boston and as a history and social studies teacher at St. John's College High School in D.C. Her daughter, Zoe, is in the Infant–Toddler Center.

Anita Hockenberry recently graduated from the University of the District of Columbia with a bachelor's degree in human development and a concentration in early childhood education. She joined the Nursery School faculty as the PK3 assistant teacher. She has more than seven years of experience working with young children, including four years during which she taught preschool at the World Bank Children's Center, and last year, when she served as an intern in the St. Patrick's Nursery School.

Ben Hoover, another addition to the Grade 4 team, joined St. Patrick's as the 4B homeroom teacher. Ben holds a bachelor's degree from Lafayette College and a master's in elementary education from Lesley University. Most recently, Ben spent a year working at the Pike School in Andover, Massachusetts, as part of an internship collaborative working with Grades 3 and 5 students. He also taught science and technology at Horizons this summer.

Hank Lanphier spent last summer working as a blacksmith for the National Park Service and joined Amy Yount in 6B as an associate teacher this year. He graduated from Colby College with a bachelor's degree in history and classical civilizations and comes to the classroom with a deep love for bringing history to life. Over the course of the year, Amy will take on more responsibility as the Assistant Head of Upper School.

Holli Matze joined the Auxiliary Programs team as the Extended Day and Summer Program Coordinator. She is a graduate of James Madison University, where she earned her bachelor's degree in theatre and dance, with a concentration in performance and design. Most recently, Holli taught and directed camp at the Cornelia Connelly Center in New York City. She has also worked with Kanuga Conferences, Inc. in Hendersonville, North Carolina, and with Broadway Workshop, LLC in New York City.



Another familiar face, **Eby Okonkwo**, joined the Nursery School team as the N2 assistant teacher this year. Many students and parents know Eby from her previous experience as a member of the St. Patrick's Extended Day team. She also spent five years working as a head counselor for EverWonder camps and after-school enrichment programs. Eby is a recent graduate of the George Washington University, where she earned her bachelor of science degree in biology.

We welcome **Katherine Orlando** to St. Patrick's as a new Grade 1 resource teacher. Another Hoya, Katherine earned her undergraduate foreign service degree in culture and politics from Georgetown and a master's degree in childhood and special education from Manhattanville College. Katherine comes to us from the Brunswick School in Greenwich, Connecticut, where she taught Kindergarten. A D.C.-area native, she attended high school at Georgetown Visitation.

Akane Shirata, St. Patrick's new PK2 head teacher, comes to the Day School after teaching stints at Stevens Cooperative School in Hoboken, New Jersey, and the Lowell School. She holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from the Catholic University of America and a master's degree in early childhood special education from George Mason University. A native of

Japan, Akane also works with a Japanese heritage program that teaches Japanese language and culture to children of Japanese descent in America.

A native of Washington, Grade 7 humanities teacher **Brooks Swett** graduated from the National Cathedral School and earned her bachelor's degree at Yale, where she majored in history and completed an intensive humanities program. She received a fellowship to complete a master's in U.S. history at Oxford University, where she researched American and British 19th-century interactions. She worked for two years at the American School in London, is an avid runner, and enjoyed coaching Wolfhounds cross country this fall.

Donnarae Wade joined Karen Clement as the K2 co-head teacher this school year. She received her bachelor's degree in psychology from Harvard University and recently earned her master's degree in curriculum and instruction with a concentration in early childhood education from George Mason University. As part of Teach for America, Donnarae spent two years teaching Kindergarten at D.C. Bilingual Public Charter School. A native of Charlotte, Donnarae is excited to continue her career in Washington.

Coming to us from the Rowland Hall-St. Mark's School in Salt Lake City, **Tina White** joins the Kindergarten team as the K3 head teacher. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary and childhood education from Brigham Young University and a master's degree in education from the University of Utah. Tina, who grew up in Colorado, is excited to be living in D.C.

Current parent **Lisa White** joins the K3 class-room as assistant teacher. Lisa has volunteered extensively at St. Patrick's, including as the co-chair of the 2012 Auction to Benefit the Financial Aid Program. She graduated from Washington & Lee University with a bachelor's degree in politics and worked as a lobbyist at the firm of Sullivan & Baldick until 2002. She has three children who attend St. Patrick's.

Damien Williams joined the Department of Physical Education and Athletics this year as the Assistant Director of Athletics, PE teacher, and coach. He holds a bachelor's degree from Thiel College in management information systems and a master's degree in instructional leadership with a concentration in sports management from Robert Morris University. He brings extensive teaching and coaching experience from his work at Sewickley (Pa.) Academy and Catholic University. Damien will coach basketball and track and field.



Nancy White Head of Nursery School

The Vital Connection

Play-based early education and a lifetime of thoughtful, creative, and collaborative learning

"Let us nourish beginnings," advises poet Muriel Rukeyser. That is precisely what we do in the St. Patrick's Nursery School with our 3–, 4–, and 5–year–olds during this very special time of childhood. What does this nourishment look like? And what are our goals for these young children? Our Nursery School program is based on a developmentally–appropriate, play–based approach to learning through which we seek—to paraphrase from our Statement of Philosophy—to extend children's curiosity and their fascination with the world. We adhere to Swiss philosopher and developmental psychologist Jean Piaget's idea that "play is a child's work." We believe that play is the lens through which children make sense of their world and develop skills that are essential for lifelong learning.

An article in the February 2011 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled "A Case for Play" posed the following question: Is being smart a race to see who can memorize the most, or is it about developing capacities to deal with a complex world? Throughout my career as an educator of young children, I have concluded that there is not a simple answer to this question, my affection for that latter choice notwithstanding.

"It is paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a time for play without seeing the **vital connection** between them."

-Leo Buscaglia, author (1924–1998)

At St. Patrick's, we recognize the value of memorization. Our children quickly learn the songs, poems, and chants that accompany our daily explorations, and they master complex sets of vocabulary in their science classes and thematic classroom units. But we also believe that children—students—do not come to us as empty vessels, to be filled with rote knowledge. We place great value on the creation of an environment in which, through "play," children learn the critical and analytical skills that form the foundation of their development as thoughtful, creative, and collaborative learners.

Our talented and dedicated Nursery School faculty members thoughtfully design their classrooms and daily plans to promote these broad goals. Students, accordingly, absorb these efforts and develop important skill sets as they play and work in the rich environment that results. This activity lays the foundation for the work students will be asked to do through Grade 8 at St. Patrick's and beyond.

Learning to Question and Investigate in Order to Reach Conclusions Informed by Evidence

Play-based learning takes advantage of children's natural desire to move, to touch, to manipulate objects, and to explore new ideas—just as our PK students did this fall upon discovering gourds that had grown in the raised-bed planters on the Nursery School playground over the summer. After harvesting the abundant crop, students took the many gourds into their classrooms. Teachers guided an investigation in which the children explored the variations in size, shape, color, and texture. Using careful observation, students represented their findings in drawings and paintings. They tested each gourd to see if it would sink or float and cut open samples to estimate how many seeds were inside.

This same process of questioning and investigating happens regularly throughout the year, in unplanned moments and formal classwide activities. Teachers employ a thinking routine developed by researchers at Harvard University's Project Zero called *See, Think, Wonder* (see the Winter 2012 issue of the *St. Patrick's Press* for more information) to guide students through the process of observing, analyzing, and hypothesizing. Other opportunities to engage children in the process of indulging their own natural curiosity,







with a mind toward gaining knowledge about the world around them, abound—our annual spring duck hatch, science classes in which children race various liquids down an inclined plane, or an exploration of shadows that complements a Halloween project are but a few that occur throughout the year. Allowing a student to draw conclusions on his/her own after a hands-on investigation leads to an ownership of the new information discovered and enhances the desire for further exploration.

Lower School science teacher Will Cook examines how developing this innate curiosity and the ability to hypothesize and investigate supports an understanding of the scientific process on page 18.

Learning to Recognize, Reproduce, and Create Patterns

We—and early childhood researchers—identify the ability to recognize, reproduce, and create patterns as an important early math skill. It is also a skill critical to children's emerging literacy and is vital to other curriculum areas like science, music, and the visual arts. In the Nursery School, children are introduced to patterns in a variety of ways—when they commit a musical sequence to memory, clap their hands to a song, complete a patterned puzzle, or perform the simple ritual of sitting in a particular order at meeting time.

After seeing, hearing, and beginning to recognize patterns, children begin to reproduce them. They create original patterns when stringing beads, weaving, or completing a button board. A teacher might ask, "Can you 'read' your pattern to me?" We encourage children to look for patterns in their environment—whether on buildings, in nature, or even on their own clothing. In literature, children will predict a repeating verse or a rhyme before it appears. When listening to stories, dictating their own tales, or creating books—all favorite Nursery School occupations—they develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of patterned narrative structure that is fundamental to comprehension and composition.

Grade 6 math teacher Beth Cole writes in this issue about the value of strong patterning skills to an understanding of higher mathematics, including algebra (page 20).



Learning to Collaborate in Ways Enhanced by Perspective-Taking

In the Nursery School, play teaches more than academic fundamentals. When playing together, children learn to see one another's point of view and develop empathy and caring—critical social-emotional skills necessary throughout life. They begin to take other children's feelings and ideas into consideration as they engage in games and daily activities. A group working in the block corner might discuss what kind of structure they want to build *together*, negotiating what can be added and how it should function. On the playground, children organize their own activities and agree on rules, roles, and scenarios for group play.

In the dramatic play area, supported by props, children eagerly *become* the characters in familiar fairy tales like the *Three Billy Goats Gruff* and stay in character while acting out the story. Activities like these not only allow students to collaborate on the "rules," but also provide an opportunity to walk (literally and figuratively) in someone else's shoes. The ability to look

"...through 'play,' children learn the critical and analytical skills that form the foundation of their development as thoughtful, creative, and collaborative learners."

-Nancy White, Head of Nursery School

at circumstances from a variety of perspectives is clearly valuable as a life skill—but also relates directly to developing a nuanced understanding of history, literature, and ethics. This connection is explored in more detail in the article by Grades 7 and 8 humanities teachers Ann Adams and Brooks Swett on page 22.

In Nursery School, play teaches more than academic fundamentals . . . it teaches critical social-emotional skills necessary throughout life.

To develop these and other complex skills, St. Patrick's Nursery School teachers create rich environments for discovery, active interaction with materials and other children, and myriad opportunities to question and to wonder. Our curriculum promotes specific skills that children will need throughout their formal and informal education and, at the same time, cultivates joy and seeks to nourish the beginnings of our youngest students.

For more information on the value of a play-based Nursery School education, please see "The Case for Play" by Tom Bartlett in the *Chronicle of Higher Education; A Mandate for Playful Learning in Preschool: Presenting the Evidence* by Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, Laura E. Berk, and Dorothy Singer; "The Playtime's the Thing" by Emma Brown in *The Washington Post*, November 21, 2009.

Photo, page 12: PK students Adnan G. (left) and Ari M. work together to build an elaborate urban landscape in the block corner. **Top photo, page 14:** Nursery student David H. assists his classmates with the collection of gourds that grew on the Nursery School playground over the summer. Students in the Nursery School engaged in an extensive investigation of the abundant crop. **Bottom photo, page 14:** PK students Sarah R. (left) and Izzy A. use paper cutouts and a projector to explore light and shadow. **Photo, page 15:** Nursery student Teddy F. works with oversized dominoes to create patterns of color and number. **Photo, page 16:** Nursery students Graham S. (left), Jack D. (center), and Campbell M. take on the role of a rock band, giving a convincing performance to fellow classmates and teachers. **Top photo, this page:** Nursery School classrooms provide many opportunities for students to take on different perspectives. Here, PK student Julia L. dresses as a firefighter. **Bottom photo, this page:** PK students Lucy O. (left) and Lila P. develop their emerging patterning skills with button boards.







Photo opposite: Lower School science teacher Will Cook introduces the ideas of adhesion and cohesion to students in Grade 2. Later, a series of experiments allows students to observe, predict, and test the behavior of water.

From a scientist's perspective, questioning and investigating the world around us are fundamental to understanding our place in it. In order to remain active, growing, and changing—as St. Patrick's Statement of Philosophy challenges us to be—we must question and investigate throughout our lives.

Will Cook

Science Department

Students arrive in the Lower School Science Lab full of questions: What are we doing today? Have the crayfish eggs hatched? Is the snake going to shed its skin? Where's Ted the toad? These are all wonderful questions that I love to answer. They demonstrate students' fascination with the life and rhythm of the lab, the school, and the world outside.

These questions indicate that Lower School students continue to possess an intense curiosity about the world around them, a curiosity cultivated, in part, by their experiences with play-based investigation in the Nursery School. As Lower School teachers, we work to channel this enthusiasm in order to prepare our students for new challenges, without losing sight of the wonder of discovery that is inherent in play.

Fascination: It's that loose thread we just can't help but pull and pull.

In Grade 2 science, we begin a unit on engineering by reading a story about Leif, a young boy from Denmark, who is fascinated with wind and weather. Dana, his friend and cousin, is transfixed by fish. Students step into the shoes of these two characters as they learn that Dana is moving away from Leif. The two decide to stay in touch via email and share stories about their respective hobbies.

As students in Grade 2 delve deeper into the world of Leif and Dana, the characters and the students learn about wind turbines in Denmark. Leif and Dana are inspired to use wind energy to create a windmill and help solve a problem Dana is having with the fish in the pond outside her house.

As the story concludes, Grade 2 students buzz with excitement. Mirroring the engineering design process that Leif's mother, a mechanical engineer, guides him through, our students predict, design, test, and observe how different materials catch the wind in preparation for creating their own sails. Children

are patient and creative as they select some materials over others, offering reasoned and thoughtful justifications for their choices.

During the sail design and construction process, the lab percolates quietly as the class purposefully goes about the process of innovating. The moment of truth approaches as students step up to the test track and attach their sails to a foam raft that is suspended on a fishing line in a track along a wall in the lab. The fan blows and the wind picks up. Off it goes . . . sometimes.

Not every sail is successful. And while sails that fly far down the test track become living legend for the remainder of class, less-successful designs are carefully scrutinized. Students make improvements with dogged determination, integrating the properties of more successful sails into their own designs.

As the excitement begins to ebb, students start work on their next task—to create their own windmill and design blades to make it spin. Now self-proclaimed experts in sail design, students meet in the construction of windmill blades a whole new challenge. We ask students how they can use what we know about the properties of certain materials to create blades that will catch the wind most effectively. Working in pairs, students evaluate the options they have in front of them and base decisions on their shared experiences working with the sails.

Using skills they developed through play, students are able implement the engineering design process they learned in Leif's story. They *ask* questions about the problem, *imagine* different solutions, *plan* and *create* designs and, ultimately, *improve* on the results.



Photo opposite: Grade 6 students work in groups to measure the height of plastic cups as part of the experiment described in math teacher Beth Cole's article below. With their knowledge of patterns, students use the height of one cup, then two, to create an equation that predicts a stack of "x" cups.

A student's ability to recognize, reproduce, and create patterns—skills cultivated in students throughout the early grades at St. Patrick's—has a direct bearing on mathematical instruction at all grade levels and allows for a deep understanding of early algebra in Grade 6.

Dr. Beth Cole Math Department As an introduction to the algebraic process, students in my classroom conduct an experiment in which we ask, "How many of these plastic cups can

fit under a counter of a certain height?"

Students begin by looking at, and talking about, large plastic cups with a group of classmates. I ask students first to measure the height of one cup (15 cm) and then the height of a stack of two cups (17.5 cm). I then ask students to predict the height of a stack of four cups. Students build on their experience with patterns and ratios to make predictions. Thinking about our work with ratio relationships, some students suggest that the stack of four cups will be twice the height of two. Others, however, more readily recognize the additive pattern: They use the difference in height between one cup and two to extrapolate the incremental increase in a stack of four.

We then test our predictions. Each group of students measures the height of the stack of four cups. Conversation now turns to why the height of four cups (22.5cm) is not, in fact, twice the height of two cups. Students discuss the particular properties of cups—they nest!—and how these properties tell us, as a practical matter, that each additional cup only adds a small amount to the total height of the stack.

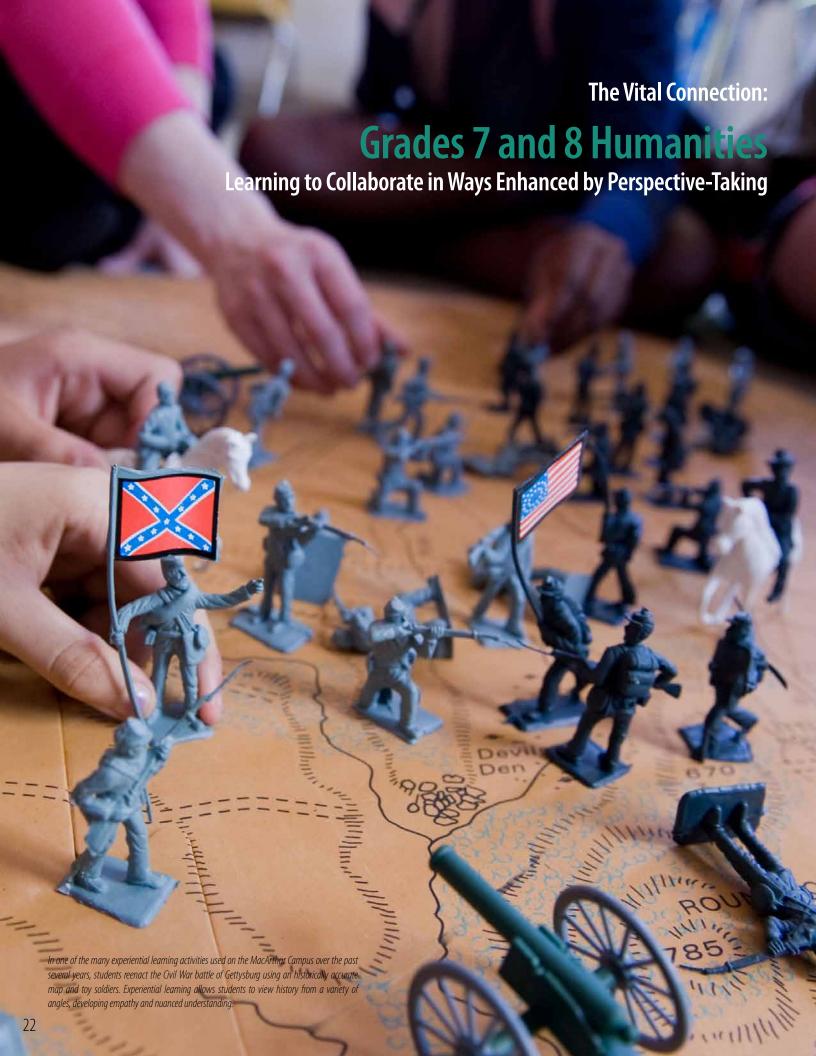
This new discovery allows students to make more accurate predictions about the height of larger and larger stacks of cups. We begin to create a mathematical representation—a formula—to predict the height of a stack of *any number* of cups. The formula students develop is composed of two parts, the first an unchanging quantity that represents the base, or the first cup, and the second a changing quantity representing the number of cups and the amount added by each cup. $Height=12.5+(Number\ of\ Cups)(2.5)$ or $Height=15+(Number\ of\ Cups-1)(2.5)$

The reader who remembers algebra might recognize these components as the *intercept* and *slope* of a linear equation. This exercise allows students This exercise allows students to apply their conception of an identifiable pattern to their emerging understanding of algebraic equations . . . [lt] provides them with a deep, even practical, understanding of the mathematical concept.

to apply their conception of an identifiable pattern to their emerging understanding of algebraic equations and their uses. This method provides students with a deep, even practical, understanding of the mathematical concept—an understanding that will serve them well throughout their school lives.

Once we have developed this formula, the exploration continues to see how we can modify the formula in order to determine the number of cups in a stack of a given height. Students are able to connect their understanding of the original pattern to reverse the operation—solving for the number of cups rather than solving for the height—while still having the real-world materials on hand to double-check their work. We conclude our investigation by using our formula to make a prediction about how many cups will fit in a stack under one of the classroom's tables and testing our prediction.

This lesson is one of a series in which students use their prior experience recognizing and reproducing patterns and then move to represent that understanding symbolically. By looking at a variety of situations in which there exists a starting value combined with an incremental increase, students become familiar with linear equations—the foundation of algebra. Taken together, these activities prepare students for work with higher-level math—work begun in their earliest years at St. Patrick's.



The vision that nurtures the play and exploration of the Nursery School and the hands-on applications of that vision in the Lower School and Upper School also inspired a hallmark of our Grades 7 and 8 curriculum, the integrated humanities program.

Ann Adams and Brooks Swett Grades 7 and 8 Humanities

How better to enlarge experience and empathy than to enrich our history with the personal voices of

literature and to illuminate our literature with historical perspective?

With such a mindset of integration, other opportunities for widening the lens appear. A joint Grade 8 humanities–studio art trip to the George Bellows exhibit at the National Gallery reveals how an artist constructs a message through the interplay of light and dark and the arrangement of objects in pictorial space, and that message reverberates in classroom lessons on industrialization and the themes of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Having studied the figurative language of this novel—which continually compares the immigrant children variously to sheep, churned butter, milled corn, and seeping or spraying water, trapped no longer by the agricultural seasons of the old country but now by industrial assembly lines—the students stand in front of images of those children finding equally trapped recreation in Bellows' "River Rats", which pictures a dock on the East River, swarming with children, a mountain of sludge dominating the background.

Other aspects of experiential learning—sometimes called project-based learning—infuse the humanities program. Reenactment, or role-play, runs through both years—the assumption of personas within Lincoln's Cabinet to debate wartime decisions in Grade 7 and, in Grade 8, World War I trench warfare reenacted with tinfoil artillery and, in a good year, authentic trenches in the snow. But the meat of middle-school experiential learning is perspective—finding answers by trying to see all sides of the question.

In fact, the Grade 7 humanities course centers around this theme of perspective. Throughout the year, the class considers the distinct points of view that historical participants as well as historians bring to bear. After reading Esther Forbes' time-honored novel *Johnny Tremain* over the summer, the students learn that Forbes began to write her book the day after the attack at Pearl Harbor. Through her work of historical fiction about a boy who rejected neutrality and joined the fight against the English, Forbes reminded her contemporaries of the preciousness of American liberties and issued a rallying cry for a new generation of patriots. She also intended her portrayal of Boston under an English occupation to set in stark relief Nazi atrocities across Europe. The class sees how an author's time period and purpose shape her historical interpretation.

The students also grapple with the subjectivity, challenges, and detective—work implicit in the writing of history as they try to piece together stories by examin—

ing primary source documents and artifacts from their classmates' lives. Given a few choice items or papers from a friend's or teacher's life, they try to construct a timeline of events. They see how their own prior knowledge and biases inform their historical understandings.

Over the year, students return repeatedly to thinking about the contexts and intentions behind voices they read. Whether studying Spanish explorers' dispatches to their King about encounters with the Pueblo people or reading an account of the Revolutionary War through the eyes of a young female slave, students pause to consider the myriad ways in which people experienced the events of U.S. history. This approach fosters students' historical empathy and reminds them of the complexity of historical interpretation—and re-interpretation.

By Grade 8, it soon becomes clear to students that we are living the result of all the dramatic turning points of the early 20th century: The breakneck rise of industrial cities, the decision to expand our territory into the Pacific, and the collective choice of millions of African-Americans to leave the known world of the South and move to the promised land of the North. To understand those turning points, we experience them—through the voices of Richard Wright and Teddy Roosevelt—and we wrestle with them. We create, in personal narratives, a fictional migrant struggling with all the pushes and pulls of migration. We reenact the debate in Congress that led to the acquisition of the Philippines. Andrew Carnegie and Mother Jones go head-to-head (last year on Facebook), as we probe the ideals—and, yes, perspectives!—of the prophet of capitalism and the angel of mercy of the working class. How can we do that? With primary documents.

The contemporary educational appreciation for primary documents has therefore flowed naturally from the widespread preference for experiential learning. To probe pivotal debates, students wrestle with Andrew Carnegie's *Wealth* and Mother Jones's account of the Homestead Strike rather than distilled textbook summaries of their arguments.

As technology continues to expand the frontier of available primary sources, students draw on their computer savvy to become historians with a few clicks of a mouse. At the same time, however, the study of primary documents and the unearthing of diverse perspectives reignite timeless lessons begun in our Nursery School in the value of empathy. Only through such empathy can historians begin to understand conflicting points of view and to unravel the complexities of the past.



Photo: Paralympic swimmer Roy Perkins W '02 was born without hands or feet. He is pictured here on the starting block during an event at the London 2012 Paralympic Games, where he took home four medals for the United States. Roy also medaled during the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games.

Day School Alum Wins Paralympic Gold

Alumni Profile: Roy Perkins W'02

Roy Perkins graduated from St. Patrick's in 2002, after which he attended the Bishop's School in La Jolla, California, before going on to Stanford University where he is majoring in earth systems. Just six years after leaving the Day School, he medaled in two swimming events at the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games, bringing home gold in the 50-meter butterfly and the 100-meter freestyle. More recently, Roy represented the United States at the 2012 London Paralympic Games, winning four medals there.

Roy was born without hands or feet, yet he has never seen that disability as a disadvantage. In fact, he says that the competition he faces in the swimming pool is "monumentally more challenging than living with a disability." Roy holds several American swimming records and, in 2006, was honored as the "Disabled Star of the Year" by the San Diego Hall of Champions.

We recently talked with Roy and asked him a few questions about his accomplishments, his motivation to achieve, and the advice he would provide to our current St. Patrick's community. While Roy is incredibly humble about his success both in and out of the swimming pool, the *Press* is inspired.

When did you become passionate about swimming and when did you realize your potential to compete at such a high level?

I found my current coach a year after learning how to swim and joined his team. He had several swimmers trying to make the Paralympic team and all of us went to the Paralympic trials in 2004. I didn't qualify then. I wasn't trying or expecting to make it, but I did pretty well and I've gone from there, getting a lot faster and more experienced.

We read that you used to be terrified of swimming and wouldn't put your face in the water until you were 12. What inspired you to change?

My parents.

You've obviously faced challenges in your life that are unknown to most people. How do you think your experience in overcoming those challenges factored into your preparedness for the challenges you would face when competing against some of the best athletes in the world?

Honestly, I don't think it did. Competing in the Paralympics is a completely different kind of challenge. I also haven't found my life to be that challenging to begin with. Going into these huge competitions and trying to beat the guys I'm there to race against has been monumentally more challenging than living with a disability. I think the fact that everybody swimming in Paralympics has to overcome something makes it less of a focal point, although it is certainly impressive to see what some of these people can do, particularly in the pool.

What was your favorite part about competing in Beijing and then again in London?

Beijing was kind of a blur, even as it was happening. I think the overall experience of being at my first Paralympic Games was what stuck with me the most. Plus winning a gold medal was not at all bad! In London, I was almost solely focused on the swimming part. Being at the Games again was just as great as Beijing, but I was not caught up in the fanfare of it. I most enjoyed being up on the podium four times. I learned in 2008 what an opportunity it is to win a Paralympic medal and how heartbreaking it is to miss out. I won two medals in

Beijing out of nine events, and several of them were close fourth-place finishes. In London, I made it onto the podium in four out of five events.

Why do you think sports competition is especially valuable?

Personally, I have grown a lot as a result of it. Having something to work toward all the time can give you a purpose and sense of responsibility. Traveling overseas and competing under pressure is the hardest thing I have had to do. It made coming to college much less of a shock, and after I graduate I expect that (hopefully) having a job will be less daunting than it would be had I not spent many years being responsible for training day-in and day-out.

What advice would you have for St. Patrick's students who are looking to pursue dreams that, at first glance, seem insurmountable?

You have to really want it, be willing to work for it and, most importantly, enjoy it.

1st Lt. Michael Haft '99 Addresses Students

Annual Veterans Day chapel features a special visit from Marine alum



Marine 1st Lt. Michael Haft '99 (far right) and his fellow marine and best friend Harrison Suarez (far left) presented Head of School Peter A. Barrett with an American flag flown over Michael's outpost in Afghanistan. They are pictured here with Michael's parents, Robert Haft (second from left) and Mary Haft (center).

The Day School was proud to welcome Marine 1st Lt. Michael Haft '99 and his fellow marine and best friend Harrison Suarez in November as the featured speakers at this year's annual Veterans Day Chapel for Upper School students. Each year, St. Patrick's recognizes the dedicated men and women who have served in the United States armed forces. After St. Patrick's, Michael attended Maret School and then Washington University in St. Louis. A strong desire to make a difference in the world led Michael to join the Ma-

rines. He served in Helmand Province in Afghanistan from May to December 2011, where he worked with Afghan soldiers and police, training them and fighting alongside them.

In his remarks to students, Michael said that the values he learned at St. Patrick's—and the emphasis St. Patrick's places on making a difference in the world—were an integral part of his desire to serve as member of the Marine

Corps. Michael and Harrison shared with chapel-goers their experiences in Afghanistan, how they came to understand the Afghan culture, and how they partnered with Afghans to come up with solutions to address issues of safety, stability, and freedom.

Reminiscing about his own time sitting in St. Patrick's chapels, Michael reminded students that they ". . . can make a difference. It seems far away now, but in a few short years, you are going to be the ones changing the world, and we know you are going to do great things!" Michael and Harrison then presented Head of School Peter A. Barrett with an American flag that was flown over Michael's outpost, Patrol Base Jaker, at the request of the Afghans. We appreciate Michael and Harrison for sharing their time and their story with us!

Annual Eco-Tour Takes Alumni to Costa Rica

Summer 2012 participants also spend three days exploring Nicaragua



Last summer, 16 St. Patrick's students—all Grade 6 graduates and several soon-to-be members of the MacArthur Campus community—traveled to Costa Rica and Nicaragua as part of an eco-tour that has been sponsored by St. Patrick's for the past seven summers. Over those years, nearly 100 St. Patrick's students have spent time in Central America, learning about the complex forest and coastal ecosystems there, participating in cultural exchanges through school visits and home stays, and working on conservation projects from sea turtle repopulation to reforestation. This experience provides many real-world applications for students' academic work, complementing what they have learned in the science, Spanish, and social studies classrooms in particular.

During their Grade 4 year, for example, students study the rainforest ecosystem in science class. Before the summer trip, Upper School science teacher Shelly Basile volunteers her time with the travelers to prepare them to appre-



ciate the rich biodiversity of Central America—Costa Rica, for example, constitutes only .25% of the world's land mass but contains at least 5% of the world's plant and animal species. This refresher of students' knowledge of the workings of the ecosystem, its fragility and richness, and what they can be on the lookout for when they visit is particularly valuable.

While itineraries vary from year to year, one constant feature of the trip is the time spent at the "turtle station," any one of several scientific outposts on the Caribbean coast where students work with biologists and local inhabitants to patrol the beaches at night, looking for sea turtles that have come ashore to lay their eggs. These turtle projects work to protect the endangered turtles' eggs from poachers who would dig them up and sell them on the black market. When a laying turtle is identified, students assist biologists in relocating the egg nest to a protected stretch of beach known as the "nursery." Since the turtle laying season is several months long, baby turtles are also hatching while new eggs are being laid. As a result, students also often have the opportunity to release these hatchlings into the ocean. During their time at the turtle station, students learn about the life cycle of the sea turtle, threats to its habitat, and what efforts are underway to protect the various species.

Aside from this and other science-based activities, students are able to learn about Costa Rican life through a series of cultural exchanges that include visits to local schools (where students have the opportunity to interact with children their own age—playing soccer, making crafts, or practicing their Spanish and English skills with each other); one or two days with a host family; and "Real Life Experiences," a hallmark of EcoTeach, the company with whom students travel. These impromptu occurrences—a trip to the grocery store, a conversation with a fruit or coffee farmer, or an invitation into a local's home—provide unique insight into the lives of the people in the places students visit. In these moments, students are afforded the opportunity to really *live* the differences between American and Costa Rican ways of life, ask questions of local people whose lives are often very different from their own, and gain a deeper respect for these differences. Such cultural exchange is critical to developing the sense of global citizenship that we strive for at St. Patrick's.



Photo opposite page, top: A view of the Ometepe volcano in the distance, from an island in Lake Nicaragua. Students went on a wildlife-watching boat tour on the lake. **Photo opposite page, bottom:** Nora K. W '12, M '14 is pictured here with a new Costa Rican friend. Travelers spent a half-day at El Jauuri school in La Fortuna, Costa Rica. Each St. Patrick's student was paired with a buddy from El Jauuri. At the end of the visit, they made cards by which to remember each other. **Photo right:** A spider monkey was but one of many exotic animals observed by travelers. Others included sloths, howler monkeys, iguanas, basilisks, toucans and other tropical birds and, of course, sea turtles.

Out and About: Alumni at Nationals Park



A number of St. Patrick's alumni of all ages came to cheer on the Washington Nationals this summer, with tickets sponsored by Development Office. Please keep your eye out this year for more alumni events, including additional local sports opportunities, cocktail parties, and invitations to Day School activities. For more information, address updates, or to submit a class note, please contact Katherine Lea, Director of Alumni and Parent Programs, at LeaK@stpatsdc.org.









Alumni Class Notes

1983

Alex Smith Wnek is a human resource generalist for a law firm that serves 400 employees in Wilmington, NC. Alex reports that her son **Mc-Cain Wnek ex. W '12** is in Grade 7, is academically solid, and made the middle school football team this fall. McCain's first love is lacrosse, and he plays on a travel team that often competes in the greater Washington area. Her son **Tenneyson Wnek ex. W '14** is in Grade 5, is on the honor roll, plays the piano, and participated in a national honors choral event in Winston-Salem in November.

1987

This summer, **Lorena Jordan** opened an online shop named Etsy Top Drawer Jewelry featuring all handmade items on the e-commerce website Etsy. Earlier this year, Lorena began designing and creating unique pieces of jewelry and, after receiving dozens of orders from friends and family, she realized that there was a market for her creations. She now runs her own home-based jewelry business and sells her pieces to customers from near and far. To learn more about Top Drawer Jewelry, please visit www.topdrawer-jewelry.com.

1992

Hite Geffert married Cara Clausing on August 18 at St. Clement's Episcopal Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Rev. Thomas D. Bowers, St. Patrick's Rector from 1962-1971, officiated the ceremony. Tom, Hite's uncle, also married his parents Paul and Elizabeth in 1973. Alec DeReitzes, a St. Patrick's "lifer," lives in San Francisco and commutes to Cupertino, California where he works as a quality assurance engineer for Apple. On May 26, he married his long-time love, Krista Maloney, in a seaside ceremony in San Francisco. They met ten years ago when Alec was a student at MIT and Krista was visiting Boston for



Alec DeReitzes '92, above, with his soon-to-be wife Krista Maloney at their wedding in San Francisco.

the summer. Krista, originally from Minnesota, is now a communications associate with the San Francisco SPCA.

1996

Jonathan Nobil was recently promoted to vice president at NYC-based Dowling Hales, an

investment banking firm specializing in insurance company and insurance agency mergers and acquisitions.

1997

Nani Smith ex. '97 married David Keylock on August 18. Her brothers Rhett Smith '98 and Parker Smith W '09, M '11 were both in the wedding. Nani and David live in San Diego. Christopher Joyce ex. '97 has been living in New Orleans since college. He is now the principal of an 885-student public elementary school serving low-income families. In April, he married his wife Leslie, a New Orleans native who is currently a Grade 2 teacher at an Episcopal school there.

1998

Richan Gaskin ex. '98 is a defensive backs coach at Gallaudet University and lives in Hyattsville, Maryland with his two young boys. Richan graduated from Duquesne University with a bachelor's degree in communication. **Helen Snodgrass** lives in Houston with her fiancée and teaches biology at the charter school YES! Prep



Nani Smith ex. '97 (right) was married this summer to David Keylock. She is pictured here with her brothers Rhett '98 (left) and Parker W'09, M'11.



Philip Castiel W '02 graduated from the Naval Academy this year with a degree in aeronautical engineering and was commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy. He is pictured here with his brother **William Castiel ex. W '04** (left), mother Cami, father David, and sister **Juliette Castiel '00**.

North Forest. She is also an instructional coach for other teachers. Her fiancée is in his third year of medical school. They plan to get married in June. **John Kester** is in his final year of study at Georgetown University Law School. He is spending his last semester at the Center for Transnational Legal Studies in London. **Joan MacDonald** recently completed her master's degree in archaeology and cultural heritage management at Koç University in Istanbul and is now living in the D.C. area. **Alex Halle**, a graduate of the University of Miami, is a systems engineer at MITRE corporation in Virginia.

1999

Alicia Andrews ex. '99 graduated from Emory University in 2009 with her bachelor's of business administration in marketing, consulting, and venture management. For the past few years, she has been working in the search marketing department for Hilton Worldwide based in McLean, VA. She recently moved to Dallas to pursue her master's of business administration at Southern Methodist University's Cox School of Business, where she will concentrate in marketing, strategy, and entrepreneurship. **Dunn Anderson-Sweet** graduated in 2011 from Acadia University in

Wolfville, Nova Scotia with a degree in economics and a minor in business. About a year ago, Dunn joined Hilton Worldwide and is currently the sales and events coordinator for their Embassy Suites downtown Washington, D.C. property.

2000

Jennifer Nobil was recently promoted to senior manager for member services at the Advisory Board Company, a health care and higher education research, technology, and consulting firm in Washington, D.C. She serves the Advisory Board's higher education members. **Juliette Castiel** is working in New York City after graduating from Vanderbilt University in 2010.

2001

Kate Fletcher W '01 is immersed in her second year at Georgetown University Law School. Next summer, she will join the summer associates program at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom in Chicago. After graduating with an economics degree from Boston College in 2011, **Ivie Adidi W '01** spent six months in her native



Verity Allen W '03 is shown here as Marie Antoinette in a Kenyon College theatre production.

Nigeria working as a junior economic consultant at the country's leading credit rating agency. She is currently in London pursuing a master's degree in international political economy at King's College. Upon completion of her degree, Ivie hopes to begin a career in development economics at an international organization in Europe or Africa. **Biana Thompson W '01, M '03** is in graduate school at Bowie State University, having recently graduated from Virginia State University.

2002

Stephanie Hoover W '02 lives in New York and works in publishing at a literary agency called Trident Media Group. Philip Castiel W '02 is continuing his naval aviation training in flight school in Corpus Christi, Texas, after graduating from the United States Naval Academy. Rob Stewart W '02 recently graduated from Duke University where he received a degree in psychology and a minor in Italian studies. However, an internship after his freshman year led him to consider starting his own business. His interest in photography led him to start Stewart Creative Imaging, a company specializing in 360-degree—or spherical-photographs. His work focuses on educational institutions, real estate, and restaurants, but he is always looking for new ways to apply this skill! The Day School commissioned two of these photos from Stewart Creative Imaging. You can view them on St. Patrick's website at www. stpatsdc.org. Click "Athletics" to view a panoramic photo of our new athletic field, or "Academics," then "Nursery School," to view the photo of our Nursery School Playground.

2003

Verity Allen W '03 was recently featured in the Kenyon Collegian for her work on spreading Shakespeare's language by creating the Billy Shakes Project at Kenyon College, where she is currently a senior. The Billy Shakes Project is a troupe of six actors that perform 30-minute abridged versions of Shakespeare's plays throughout the Mount Vernon and Gambier areas of Ohio. Elise Sidamon-Eristoff W '03 is a senior at Colgate University, where she is majoring in peace and conflicts. She is a member of the Sorella Society—an organization that works to promote women's issues and develop female leaders—and a co-captain of the ski team. Daniel Halle W '03, M '05 is a senior studying sports management at the University of Miami.

2004

William Castiel ex. W '04 is a sophomore at the University of Colorado studying finance.

2005

Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff W '05, M '07 is a freshman at Colorado College. He spent a gap year doing service work in Australia, Fiji, and New Zealand and studying art in Italy and Greece. He plans to major in art history.



Morgan Tyler ex. W '07 after receiving the Dartmouth College Book Award at Falls Church High School.

2007

Morgan T. ex. W '07 was recently chosen as a recipient of the Dartmouth College Book Award at Falls Church High School. The award is presented to a junior who demonstrates academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, and analytical skill and has made a positive impact on the life of the school community through his or her leadership.

2008

Susan S. W '08 is a junior at the Potomac School, where she is a member of the math team and the varsity field hockey team.



William Chartener W '11 won the Sakonnet Yacht Club championship in the Optimist racing class, pictured here.

2011

In August, **William C. W** '11 became the first junior sailor in the history of the Sakonnet Yacht Club in Little Compton, Rhode Island, to win the club championship in three racing classes—Optimist, Sunfish Singles, and Sunfish Doubles—in the same season. His crew in Sunfish Doubles was his brother, **Jasper C. ex. W** '14. **Eloise W. W** '11 is happily into her Grade 8 year at the National Cathedral School. She enjoys playing soccer and lacrosse still spends time with her St. Pat's classmates **Grace D. W** '11 and **Margaret T. W** '11.

2012

Axel B. ex. W '12 is now a Grade 7 student at the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago where he runs cross country—in fact, he is the fastest on the middle school team—enjoys history and English and, every now and then, plays the clarinet. He is also competing on a travel ice hockey team called the Chicago Jets.

2013/2014

Hans B. ex. W'13 is in Grade 6 at the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago. He runs cross country, plays the trombone, and adores science class. He is also playing tennis. Both he and his brother Axel B. ex. W '12 think back on their days at St. Patrick's with very fond memories and wonder if the fish in 2B are still swimming about. Jaye Rogovin, mother of Hattie R. ex. W'13 and Eva R. ex. W '14, reports that her girls are in Grade 6 and Grade 4, respectively, at the John Thomas Dye School in Los Angeles. They are enjoying the year-round good weather but continue to think of Washington, D.C. as home. The Rogovins recently reunited in Los Angeles with fellow St. Patrick's parent Steve Shafran (father of Reid S. W '09, M '11), and agreed that there's no other place as special as St. Patrick's.



Attention St. Patrick's Alumni!

Please join us for:

Alumni Parent Cocktail Reception (Thursday, May 2, 2013)

Alumni Admission Event (Thursday, May 16, 2013, 8:30 - 10:00 am)

Spring Alumni Cocktail Party (Classes of 1976-2002, Date TBD)

St. Patrick's at Nationals Park (Summer 2013)

And remember . . .

Submit class notes, photos, and address changes to Katherine Lea, Director of Alumni and Parent Programs at Leak@stpatsdc.org or 202.342.7006.



4700 Whitehaven Parkway, NW Washington, DC 20007 www.stpatsdc.org

Our Mission

St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School strives to create a diverse learning community of students, teachers, and parents who recognize the infinite value of every participant as a child of God. We are committed to developing character, advancing human understanding, and promoting academic excellence in our students in order to prepare them to live with integrity, compassion, and purpose.

SAVE THE DATE

Christmas Pageants

Wednesday, December 19 Nursery/PK/Kindergarten/Grade 8 - 9:30 am Grades 1 to 7 - 11:00 am

Christmas Holiday

Thursday, December 20 - Tuesday, January 1

Epiphany Chapel, Kindergarten – Grade 8 Monday, January 7, 8:30 am

Admission Open House

Wednesday, January 9, 9:00 - 11:00 am

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Chapel

Friday, January 18, 8:30 am

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday - No School Monday, January 21