

Advancing Friends

SIDWELL FRIENDS PHILANTHROPY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2020

Dear Friends,

We are excited to share with you this latest issue of *Advancing Friends*, the philanthropy newsletter of Sidwell Friends School. It's always inspiring to read stories of how you are making a difference in the lives of Sidwell Friends students through your generosity—perhaps in ways you might not have imagined.

But this issue is special to us, because it features members of our community who are energizing the School's comprehensive campaign through their giving and volunteerism.

You may already know that the School is in the early stages of its comprehensive campaign, where we are raising funds for two main purposes: to illuminate a brighter tomorrow for our students, and to build enduring financial strength for Sidwell Friends.

As co-chairs of the Campaign Leadership Phase Steering Committee, we hear stories about how teachers are fostering student growth; how students are expressing their hearts, minds, and spirits with integrity; how alumni are letting their lives speak with values they first learned here.

And we hear stories about you: how through your generosity, you and other Sidwell Friends donors and volunteers are ensuring that the Quaker values that we see in practice every day in this community will endure well into the future.

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Creating Sparks

How Donor Funding is Igniting New Approaches to Teaching

Eve Eaton has been teaching for nearly 25 years, so classrooms of students are familiar territory for her. Still, she is more accustomed to a younger audience than the one she faced on January 28 during the All-Faculty Teacher Workshops. Instead of her third-graders, Eve was leading her Sidwell Friends colleagues in a workshop entitled, “Building Global Competency Through Art: Using Thinking Routines to Uncover Perspectives.”

“It was a chance for teachers to be students for a moment: to experience looking at and talking about a piece of art,” Eve said. “Then, they could think about their own contexts and how they could implement this in their own classrooms.”

Eve was one of 16 faculty members who led hands-on activities and discussions on topics ranging from coding to coaching, Quaker testimonies to Quicktime Video projects.

The content presented in these workshops began in faculty collaborations and research projects made possible by Sidwell Friends donors. By funding venture and strategic plan grants through endowment and annual gifts, members of the Sidwell Friends community empowered teachers to explore new techniques, improve their practice, and serve students more effectively.

Because faculty and staff gleaned insights from one another as they shared the fruits of their grant-funded projects, January's teacher workshops will exponentially magnify learning across divisions—and the impact of philanthropy on Sidwell Friends students. The donors who have funded faculty professional development—whether through endowed or Annual Fund gifts—will stimulate students' growth for as long as teachers, coaches, and staff members use these new techniques and approaches.

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3 QUESTIONS WITH

Charis Drant (P'25 & '27)



Charis Drant wears many hats at Sidwell Friends School: current parent, member of the Board of Trustees, and now, the Chair of the Parents and Grandparents Campaign Committee. Charis shared her motivations for serving Sidwell Friends in these capacities.

What inspired you to take on leadership role in the Upper School renovation?

When I see how my children currently benefit from the Middle School and Athletic Center facilities, I recognize the tremendous impact of investing in facilities where our children can grow into strong leaders guided by their values.

Renovating the Upton Street property is an exciting opportunity to serve future generations of Upper School students. It will house the type of educational spaces where they can grow and thrive, meeting the needs of modern day teaching and learning while providing the informal community gathering spaces that are important elements of school life.

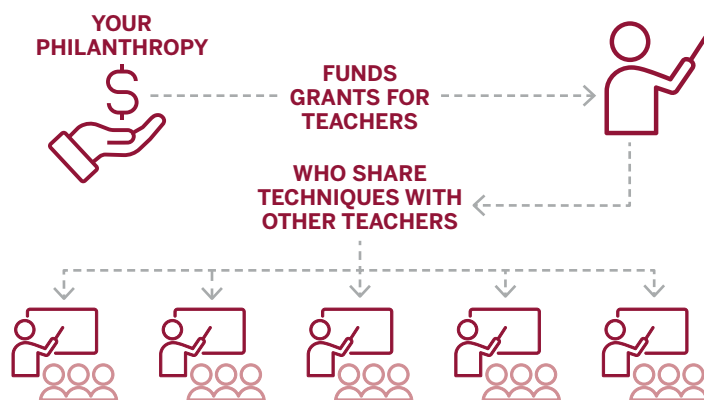
How are donors and campaign volunteers creating momentum for the renovation?

We have a growing group of dedicated, motivated donors and volunteers. Alumni have led the way in giving during the early part of the Campaign. We've also engaged fantastic parent volunteers who are spreading the word about this project. My favorite experiences involve parents of Upper School students and recent graduates reflecting on their families' time at Sidwell Friends, and Lower School parents sharing their own anticipation. There is a real atmosphere of excitement and true expressions of gratitude for this chance to better enable the School to fulfill its mission.

When you envision the renovations complete and the new Upper School full of students, what excites you most?

I envision a bright, peaceful space that fosters learning and community: ample room for the centers outlined in our Strategic Plan, community meeting spaces, a science center with dynamic laboratories, and a library that meets modern research needs. Students and faculty will be proud of the new Upper School, because it will further enhance the education that Sidwell Friends is able to offer.

Donors and campaign volunteers like Charis are generating excitement—and needed resources—for the new Upper School. Read more about the Upper School renovations in the Spring 2020 Issue of *Sidwell Friends Magazine*.



WHO STIMULATE STUDENTS' LEARNING YEAR AFTER YEAR

Likewise, those funding the real estate purchase and Upper School renovations are contributing to collaborations that elevate student learning between faculty members of different departments and divisions. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)—a hallmark feature of the new Upper School design—will be a dedicated space for all Sidwell Friends teachers to extend the work that begins in professional development sessions.

Eve envisions CTL as a type of laboratory for teachers, one where they can bring fresh perspectives from across divisions, plan and experiment together, and deploy new curriculum in classrooms. "It can be a creative space to fully imagine what you could be doing with kids," Eve said.



Conceptual rendering from the new Upper School building

Upper School Chinese teacher Xuan Wang sees the potential for inspiration in a dedicated space for workshops led by educators of different disciplines: "I'm so interested in learning from this school's experts and specialists—not just content, but how they present their materials. Learning isn't linear, and who knows what new lessons or ideas may be sparked by these exchanges?"

By investing in Upper School renovations that will lead to dynamic new spaces like the CTL, Sidwell Friends donors are facilitating new modes of engagement between faculty members. As teachers and coaches forge new connections in this space dedicated to their pedagogy, they will pass those "sparks" to their students.

The fires those sparks ignite in students, while at Sidwell Friends or as alumni, will enable them to assess and address real-world problems—to become the leaders of tomorrow. That is the true legacy that donors create by investing in new Upper School spaces like the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Poetic License

The Enduring Legacy of a Poetry Endowment

Sixth graders Ethan, Isaac, and Zach had one primary goal for selecting their piece for the Poetry Alive! Festival in December: It had to crack them up.

They settled on Darren Sardelli's "My Doggy Ate My Essay," a poetic riff on the old the dog ate my homework" theme. The trio mimicked the fictional pooch's actions as they recited the poem in front of their classmates, eliciting plenty of the anticipated laughs from their audience.

Luca '26 found that performing Maya Angelou's "Caged Bird" gave him new insights he otherwise might have missed. "When you're doing the acting, you have to sort of break down the poem. It helped us understand the poem a lot more because 'Caged Bird' is very figurative."

Because anonymous funding recently endowed a permanent poetry initiative for the Middle School, students like Ethan, Isaac, Zach, and Luca will always be poised to evoke delight, sorrow, and other deep emotions through poetry.

The Sidwell Friends Middle School Poetry Endowment Fund encourages the creation and appreciation of poetry among all Middle School students by promoting poetry writing activities, recitals, publications, and annual poetry competitions.

As an endowed fund, this gift will fund the Middle School poetry program in perpetuity. Yet its most powerful and enduring impact extends well beyond the financial.

By encouraging students to appreciate poetry and supporting their capacity to create it, the Fund imbues Middle Schoolers with new confidence in their ability to express themselves. By introducing visiting poets like the Poetry! Alive troupe and future poets-in-residence, it connects students with the artists and writing pro-



cesses themselves. In turn, students become more attuned to the intricacies of language and more adept at exploring how to create meaning. As they embody new points of view, they build new stores of empathy that will carry over to all their studies.

And if these students revel in the experience as much as they did while reading and performing "My Doggy Ate My Essay," they will find joy in poetry well beyond Middle School—hopefully, for the rest of their lives.

\$100K+

DID YOU KNOW?

AMOUNT DONORS GIVE TO
CREATE NAMED, RESTRICTED
ENDOWED FUNDS

EXCITING UPDATE

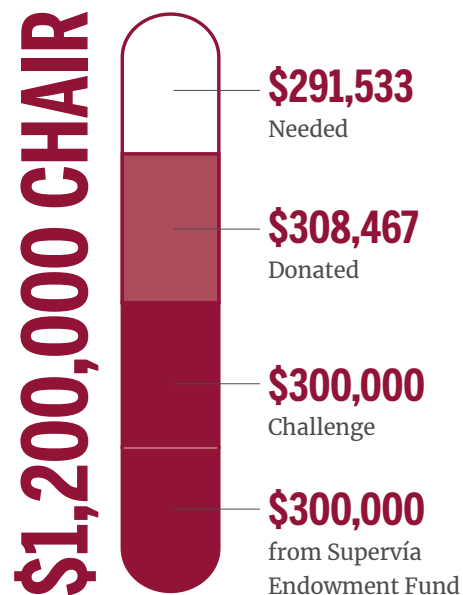
The Señora Supervía Chair

In the 2018-19 Annual Report, you may have read about an effort led by Alan Bernstein '59 to fund an endowed chair in honor of Señora Guillermina Medrano de Supervía. Señora Supervía, a beloved Spanish language teacher, represented the impact that remarkable and accomplished teachers can have.

Alan and other alumni have also made an indelible impact through their collective generosity. Together, these donors have created their own legacy of educational excellence, raising \$900,000 of the \$1.2M goal: generations of students who will be able to trace their passion for Spanish and Latin American studies to the teachers in this endowed position and the generous individuals who made it possible.



Those who still want to join Alan and others in honoring Señora Supervía and promoting Spanish and Latin American studies can contact Mary Carrasco (carrascom@sidwell.edu).



Why We Give

Steve Bralove '60 (P'89, '92; GP'23, '26, '29)

on celebrating Reunion with a gift

"As I reflected on our upcoming 60th reunion, I recalled the many wonderful teachers, coaches, and classmates in this supportive environment who allowed me to develop my character and beliefs. The impact Sidwell Friends can have on students today is no less meaningful than in 1960. I feel fortunate to be able to increase my support in this reunion year."



Mike Jing (P'20)

on being a being a leadership donor

"We give to maintain the excellence of a Sidwell education and to provide others with opportunities, so more students can afford to join the Sidwell Family, and more teachers can go to professional development programs."



Wendy McGrath (P '20, '22)

on contributing her time as a fundraising volunteer

"We feel overwhelmingly grateful for the exceptional experience our children are having in the Upper School: the thoughtfulness and care with which teachers celebrate effort and achievement, and the ways they encourage our children to reach for the next challenge. I am proud to be an Annual Fund volunteer for Sidwell Friends because I have confidence that the funds we raise are put to excellent use and significantly contribute to the school's financial health."



Belinda and Greg Nixon (P'17, '23)

on supporting the comprehensive campaign

"We support Sidwell Friends because we value the School's strong commitment to academic excellence, its endeavor to uphold Quaker values, and its attention to developing the whole child. That's why we decided to make a campaign gift, and to help others make gifts that are meaningful to them."



Now, we are sharing a few of these stories with you and highlighting just a few of the many members of this community who are making a difference. As engaged parents, alumni, and donors, you understand the true impact that your gifts have on the lives of students.

We hope that in reading this issue, you are as motivated as we are to provide the resources needed to achieve the strategic plan goals on behalf of students and alumni, present and future.

Thank you for every gift that you make, and for joining us in this journey to strengthen this remarkable institution.

In friendship,

Jason Carroll

Jason Carroll '96
Co-Chair, Campaign Leadership
Phase Steering Committee

Mark Jacobsen

Mark Jacobsen (P'27)
Co-Chair, Campaign Leadership
Phase Steering Committee

Campaign By the Numbers

currently in the quiet leadership phase

\$53M
RAISED TO DATE 
PAST CAMPAIGN RECORD: \$56M

\$7.25M & \$5M
2 LARGEST GIFTS IN
SCHOOL HISTORY  

40 
CAMPAIGN VOLUNTEERS
LEADING THE CHARGE

Sidwell Friends

3825 Wisconsin Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20016

Interested in making a gift?
Go to: sidwell.edu/give or contact
Mary Carrasco at carrascom@sidwell.edu.