

Advancing Friends

Sidwell Friends Philanthropy Newsletter

February 2019

Greetings,

As we began our research for this edition of *Advancing Friends*—a newsletter highlighting some of the many members of our community who make and benefit from generous contributions to Sidwell Friends—we recognized unexpected parallels between our stories.

In two of the profiles, you will meet families with children at each end of the Sidwell Friends educational experience. One features parents new to the School who are excited by the many ways their children are engaging with social and ethical issues. Another features the parent of a recent alumna who is watching his daughter put her values-based education to work during her first year in college.

Another set of stories illustrate how both current students and an alumnus turn their talents towards the broader community through their life science research—specifically, on a path that begins in Melanie Fields' Biology 1A classes and leads to projects with significant social impacts.

We hope that you enjoy these stories and leave with an appreciation of how philanthropic support lifts the emerging leaders within the Sidwell Friends community.



New Sidwell Friends Family: parents Daphne (l) and Joe (r) with IV, Beau, and Desi

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

Parents Joe Amprey III and Daphne Dufresne explain what inspires their Annual Fund giving

If you are a voracious reader who also loves rap music, you will probably enjoy *The Notorious RBC* as much as 6th grader Joseph “IV” Amprey IV did. Throughout the summer leading into sixth grade—their first year at Sidwell Friends—IV and his twin sister, Desi, were drawn to the diverse characters populating the pages of the books on Sidwell Friends School’s summer reading list: Cuban families, aspiring track stars, interracial friends navigating school segregation in the 1970s, and refugees from around the globe.

As Desi and IV dove into each new book, their parents, Joe Amprey III and Daphne Dufresne, were wowed by the provocative content on the list. Despite their familiarity with Quaker philosophies—Daphne, through her own education—Joe explains that “it was profound to see social issues so directly confronted in these books. They led to great discussions within our family before school even began.” Even Beau, their youngest child and a student at Feynman School, participated by reading the prescribed list for Sidwell Friends’ 3rd graders.

In many ways, the summer reading experience was the Amprey-Dufresne family’s introduction to Sidwell Friends, occurring in the lull between admission and the start of the school year. As the diversity of protagonists and setting evoked

continued on back

492

current parents who have
donated in 2018/19

\$1.24M

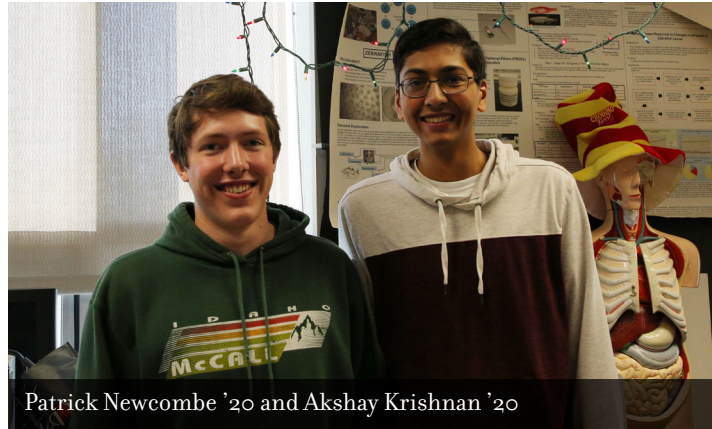
current parent
2018/19 total

\$1.8M

amount raised by
parents in 2017/18

LABORATORY LEARNING, NOW AND THEN

BEGINNING IN BIOLOGY 1A, SIDWELL FRIENDS STUDENTS PURSUE EXTRAORDINARY SCIENTIFIC ENDEAVORS.



Patrick Newcombe '20 and Akshay Krishnan '20

Akshay Krishnan '20 and Patrick Newcombe '20 have already made significant strides with their scientific careers. Patrick collaborates with a post-doctoral fellow at Cornell University on research into bird migration patterns, while Akshay completed an internship at the renowned National Center for Microscopy and Imaging Research (NCMIR). Both have presented research at scientific conferences, and together with Christin Clyburn '20, Akshay and Patrick recently published their findings on the morphological effects of the pesticide imidacloprid on zebrafish development.

Not bad for 11th graders.

Their imidacloprid research began in Biology 1A, an accelerated survey course in which students complete independent research projects (IRP). As they worked on their IRP, Patrick, Akshay, and Christin became fixtures in Sidwell Friends' zebrafish laboratory, taking thousands of measurements of developing specimens over the course of their project. "We were the joke of the class for how much effort we spent of this," Akshay remembers with a grin. "I was at school 28 days consecutively, even weekends."

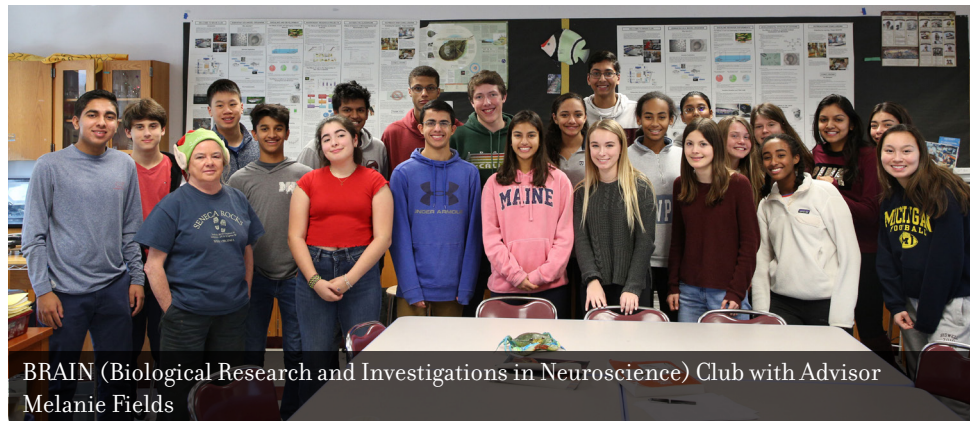
Faculty member Melanie Fields worked closely with the trio to help shape their project and connected them with outside scientists who could provide specialized advice.

While Akshay and Patrick haven't yet gone through the full rigor of the peer-review process, they have presented and published their findings and better understand what to expect as professionals in the life science fields. "We've learned that we had the right sample size, but also that many researchers could spend 10 years on a project like ours," says Patrick.

They also faced an obstacle that most researchers face in their careers: securing resources. While they have access to Sidwell Friends' zebrafish laboratory and advanced equipment, they learned to identify creative work-arounds to costly, specialized microscopes—like using the NIH's image processing program.

When researching which genes allow zebrafish to regenerate their lateral line hair cells, Anika Schipma '19 likewise discovered that she would need specialized equipment to move her project forward. Her solution? Collaborating with researchers at the NIH and Georgetown University, who donated transgenic zebrafish embryos and provided Anika access to an epifluorescence microscope.

For students like Akshay, Patrick, Christin, and Anika, the scientific inquiries that begin in their Biology 1A laboratory provide them the early experience to help them navigate their future scientific endeavors. And if their eager explanations of future projects are any indication, they will continue to challenge any limits to their enormous potential.



BRAIN (Biological Research and Investigations in Neuroscience) Club with Advisor Melanie Fields

For more information about how students pursue their passion for life sciences, go to sidwell.edu/BRAINClub to read about BRAIN Club's adventures.

BRUCE ALTEVOGT '94 CONSIDERS HIS SIDWELL FRIENDS EDUCATION AND THE IMPACT OF FINANCIAL AID



Bruce Altevogt '94 and mother Mary Altevogt

When Bruce Altevogt '94 reflects on the ways Sidwell Friends prepared him to let his life speak, a few key aspects stand out.

A junior year internship at the National Institute of Health that Melanie Fields helped him to secure, which first sparked his passion for the sciences.

A values-based education, which today enables him to unite diverse perspectives on complex public health issues.

A welcoming community: "My brother and I would not be in the positions we are in today without the generosity of the Sidwell Friends community, who make financial aid possible for those in need."

After earning his PhD in Neuroscience from Harvard, Bruce decided to transition from the laboratory to public health policy so that he could serve the greater social good. Among other projects, he has been part of developing a research agenda for gun violence research and creating ethical frameworks to strengthen responses to natural and human-generated disasters. While working with a broad range of stakeholders, he relies on the Quaker tenant of consensus, which he first developed at Sidwell Friends. "Even now, it helps me find areas of commonality to overcome obstacles and advance progress."

Now a parent of two Sidwell Friends students, Chaitan '28 and Sahana '30, Bruce is gratified to see that students are grounded in the same values that shaped him. "When I look at my

classmates—politicians, artists, medical innovators, farmers—I can now recognize that the school's resources go towards shaping the next generation of leaders." Those resources promote diversity in the student body, create learning opportunities for faculty, and open doors for students to access a Sidwell Friends education—all of which Bruce appreciates.

When Bruce's mother Mary retired from public school teaching, she began to volunteer and now regularly substitutes at the Lower School as a way to give back to the educational community that welcomed her sons. "I am simply giving back to Sidwell Friends what Sidwell Friends gave to Bruce and Andrew and am enjoying doing it."

"However you give," Bruce explains, "whether through mentorship, volunteering, or financial donations, you can be part of making sure that Sidwell Friends positions our future leaders to share our same values that you do."

\$28,300

average financial aid award

23%

student receive financial aid

\$7M+

financial aid awarded in 2017/18

Beginning the Journey continued

thoughtful conversations within the family, Daphne realized that **“we were in for the journey we had hoped for, because school hadn’t even started and we were already seeing the benefits.”** From *Armstrong and Charlie*, Desi discerned that prejudice can impede wonderful friendships, while IV learned lessons of perseverance from *The Last Day on Mars*.

Desi and IV continue to demonstrate great social awareness, as the 6th grade curriculum weaves contemporary events and issues into daily discussions. “The open dialogues are refreshing because they help parents to deal with tough topics,” says Daphne. She looks forward to more events like the Oxfam Hunger Banquet, where the twins experienced and internalized how class inequities impact communities. She also loves that Sidwell Friends offers lunch time affinity group gatherings.

And when Joe received a picture of Desi carrying signs urging people to vote on Election Day, he was floored. “There they were in the rain, holding their signs with such enthusiasm. They won’t be able to vote for another six years, but they were able to get involved.”

“We feel like the school is nurturing their whole beings, helping them to be well-rounded, critical thinkers who are aware of the environment and people around them,” adds Daphne, which is why she and Joe decided to make a leadership gift to the Annual Fund this year. The sense of belonging they’ve felt through the Jumpstart orientation and Parents of Black Students Committee inspired them to step forward with their own contribution. **“We were embraced even before the school year started, and we feel like we are in a welcoming environment focused on the things we value.”**

CONNECTING THE DOTS

Annual Fund Volunteer Greg Cork (P’18) describes his new perspective as a “Parent of Alumna”

Like many students last autumn, Anna Cork ’18 found herself adjusting to the academic rigors of college and the novelties of a new city. And like many parents, Greg Cork experienced the bittersweet satisfaction of watching from afar as his daughter began to explore her independence.



Greg Cork and daughters Lily (l) and Anna ’18 (r)

While he may not have anticipated the degree to which he would miss Anna, Greg was confident that Anna’s experiences at Sidwell Friends School prepared her to engage with complex issues in lecture halls and adapt to her new social landscape. “In ways Anna doesn’t recognize day to day,” Greg notes, “she was ready for this transition.”

Greg is likewise appreciative of the many ways that Sidwell Friends prepared him to let his own life speak. During Anna’s years at Sidwell Friends, Greg volunteered to connect other parents with Annual Fund giving opportunities—even acting as co-chair of the parent Annual Fund volunteer committee.

Volunteering allowed him to lift the entire Sidwell Friends community, raising the visibility of the Annual Fund’s impact to encourage broader support of student financial aid and faculty professional development. Motivated by the urgency of the moment, Greg could see the ripple effect of his efforts:

“It’s important not only for the kids who benefit from the Sidwell Friends education, but their families, the broader community, and all the people they will meet in their lives to come.”

It wasn’t always easy to make time for these efforts, but Greg could measure the value of every minute he spent reaching out to other parents. “It’s a demand on your time, but the return on investment of your time literally can be life-changing.”

Life is certainly different now that Anna has embarked on her new adventure. Regular phone calls to Chicago have replaced Greg’s legendary lunch notes for Anna—his epic observations on the world in which his daughters are growing up. But Greg is still part of the Sidwell Friends community, and as a parent of an alumna, he’s prepared to offer his new perspective to Annual Fund efforts. “Parents of alumni—especially those who have given or work to raise funds for the school—uniquely understand the benefits of a Sidwell Friends education, because we see our kids putting it in action.”

140

parent fundraising
volunteers in 2018/19

1,400

parent fundraising volunteer hours
pledged or completed in 2018/19

If you’d like to volunteer your time towards the Annual Fund, please contact Dia Karakantas Ruocco at karakantasd@sidwell.edu.