

THE PAIDEIA SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

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March-April 2021

20 Paideia Students Win Regional Scholastic Awards

Twenty Paideia high school students recently were awarded gold and silver keys and honorable mentions by the regional 2021 Scholastic Arts and Writing program. Students received 12 gold key awards and 16 silver key awards for art and photography, and 20 honorable mentions. For the sixth year, Paideia students received the highest number of gold key awards in photography in Georgia.

The work of all gold key winners will be judged virtually, with national awards being announced in March.

The 2021 regional Scholastic Award recipients are:

GOLD KEY AWARD

Miguel Alvarez Gamez,
photography

Kendall Kamerschen,
digital art

Juliana Margolis,
photography (3)

Shelby Pullen,
photography (2)

Ella Valk,
photography

Noah Weimann,
photography

Heather Will,
digital art

Rainey Wise,
photography

Kenji Wu,
photography

SILVER KEY AWARD

Miguel Alvarez Gamez,
photography

Cassie Boulis,
photography (2)

Cole Cannon,
photography

Ryan Eiler,
photography

Ajanta Farrell,
photography

Kendall Kamerschen,
photography

Sophie Kim,
photography

Juliana Margolis,
photography

Anna Claire Shuman,
photography (3)

Ella Valk,
photography (2)

Rainey Wise,
photography (2)

HONORABLE MENTION

Asha Ahn,
photography

Cassie Boulis,
photography (2)

Cole Cannon,
photography

Maddux Critz,
printmaking

Ryan Eiler,
photography

Juliana Margolis,
photography (3)

Anna Miller,
photography (2)

Shelby Pullen,
photography (2)

Kolby Seefried,
photography (2)

Jack Tope,
photography

Heather Will,
photography (2)

Rainey Wise,
photography (2)



Isolation – Rainey Wise



Tattoo – Shelby Pullen



Self Pressure – Heather Will

Calling a Snow Day

*The recent spell of wintry weather reminded Massachusetts-bred head of school **Paul Bianchi** of the challenges of when to call off school when the school is located in the warmer climes of Atlanta.*

I have always liked my job, almost all parts of it. As head of Paideia School, I don't mind the long hours, the evening meetings, the carpool lines, or the clutter of a typical school day. I have learned to survive in a world where ambiguity abounds and where I have to fend off those armed with universal certainties. I am well suited for this line of work.

Mostly. The one aspect of my job that I don't like, and never have, and at which I never seem to get any better, is making the decision to call off school when snowflakes come our way. Never is it lonelier, or colder, at the top than on those mornings when wintry weather threatens our normal routine. Hours before sunrise, when most people are still in bed and should be, I am up trying to decide what to do with little or no dependable information.

If our school were in North Dakota or New Hampshire where snow and ice storms are weekly events, I would be experienced in calling off school and have lots of good, quantifiable data to rely on. In Atlanta, real wintry weather is rare and often poorly forecast. I try not to overreact to the overreactions and hold my Northern skepticism in check. It's not easy.

Nor is it easy to avoid being swayed by the decisions of other schools and school systems, the snowball effect, so to speak. The larger the school system, the more I

assume that someone there must have inside information on how much snow and ice are coming our way, when it will land, and how slippery it will be. Of course, they don't. Officials at those schools are tuned to the same television stations I am, looking apprehensively out their own dark kitchen windows, listening to

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the same uncertain experts. Besides, their problems with hundreds of miles of bus routes along winding suburban roads are not entirely relevant to an intown school with no buses.

Sometimes in the middle of my predawn indecision I jump in the car and head out looking for snowflakes or patches of ice. I hardly ever find any, but all that means is that the bad weather, or the alleged bad weather, has not yet arrived. What if it arrives, as tentatively forecast, between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m., right in the middle of carpool; parents would begin slip-sliding in front of the school, careening off the road, dropping off frightened children to classrooms where there might not be any teachers because they were unable to get to work?

But often, I would say usually, the ice and snow unseen on my predawn travels remain unseen. The result is that Atlanta experiences a Winter Non-event, and I become the wimp who called off school because of cloudy skies. That's hard on the self-image.

At Paideia I have a reputation for not calling off school. Some would say that I enjoy my reputation for not calling off school. Like many reputations, some of it is true, some of it is exaggeration. I admit my bias is to keep the place open. I believe in school, an appropriate position for a schoolmaster.

It is not, however, a popular position, even in one's own home. I remember years ago being booed at breakfast by my own children, Judas, Brutus, and Benedict Arnold Bianchi for not calling off school. "How could you?" they would wail. Do you know what our friends are going to say about you?" Winter weather, real and imagined, alternately makes martyrs or fools of school officials. It engenders feelings of persecution, and sometimes even the reality of persecution.

Rarely does it end well. Two years ago we had one of those unusual happy endings. The snow that amounted to little on a Wednesday began to accumulate before supertime that evening. Every dog training school and university in the area called off classes. The snow piled up with no hope of a warming trend. At 8 P.M., I took my ride. I had some trouble getting up my street, and the main roads were not much better. I returned home, knowing the right thing to do and determined to do it without delay. I called the special phone numbers principals and superintendents are given, provided the secret codes. It was all over in less than 10 minutes. And the snow never let up causing me to regret my decision. I didn't have to get up before dawn. No one called to persuade me to call off classes. I was a hero among the children and faculty, and unchallenged by parents.

For once, for just one shining, snowy moment, I had done both the right thing and popular thing. It will be years before that happens again.

Dear Paul, Why You Should Call a Snow Day

“School Is for School, Not for Snow” seems to be the majority rationale

In a recent Monday Morning Memo, I wrote that since we can all be easily at home on ZOOM, I could not think of any reason to call off school if it snowed. I also asked that anyone with a rationale for a different conclusion should let me know.

Adrienne Fisher decided to ask her fifth-sixth grade students as well as other students in the elementary to write me if they had any thoughts on the matter. She collected over 100 letters to share with me. It's fair to say that while different reasons were given, all 100-plus letters reflected the same point of view. It's possible that the few dissenters, feeling cancelled, did not write.

—Paul Bianchi, Head of School

From some Lower Elementary students:

WE should hAve A snow dAY becAuse I hAVe not hAd A snow dAY since I wAs TWO.

I think we should HAVe a snowe DAY because we CUD Mace A iGLOW

We should have a snow day becAuse you can imagine how fun the last snow day was. From the smiling to the laghfing the kids had a great time. Also who likes virtual? Lets be real here.

WE Should HAVE A sNoW dAY because SNOW does Not FALLOFten.

We Should have a snow day because Zoom School is very very tiring.

...And I'm sure that our teachers will catch us up. Plus, if we're in class while its snowing we will be distracted so there won't really be a point to be doing school if we're not going to learn anything

...and we'll be able to do math while we are in the snow because 15 snow Balls X 2 snow Balls =30 snow Balls to Throw at mY Twin sister

From Middle and Upper Elementary:

I have only seen a few snow falls in my life and most while I was young. One of those times my teachers gave us lots of assignments to finish. It was called severe weather learning.

Snow days are times for memory-making, and I believe these types of opportunities should remain intact. If we have no snow days kids will lose the excitement and surprise of their parents telling them that they have no school tomorrow, especially during Covid times. I believe kids need some excitement in their lives, don't you?

Fun fact: it only snowed 16 times in Georgia in the past 21 years. Snow flurries are like diamonds to us... Paul, use your imagination and think of when you were a kid in Massachusetts. Remember when it used to snow all the time? You probably wanted sunny days but you barely got them. Well that's how we feel, but it's the opposite.

Playing in the snow can make memories that last a lifetime...If you would like to discuss more on this topic, email me at xxx.xxxx@paideiaschool.org.

So why would you decide to keep us inside, on screens, away from something

that really doesn't happen very often? Yes, that would be one day of missed education. But when you think about it, would a day or two really matter in this year that has been so hard? If it does snow in February or even March please, call off school.

When kids enjoy a day off of school they will feel more energized and happy... Wouldn't you rather have kids learning better instead of telling them things that go in one ear and out the other? After you are done playing outside, kids might go inside and sit by the fire. What would they do by the fire? Read. According to every website, ever, reading is extremely helpful.

During Covid, we all have been spending a lot of time with our family. Some good, some bad but snow would be a fun family activity to go play in it...As a new student, I can really tell what this school is all about. I have come to the conclusion that teachers help you explore new things but also make them fun. The teacher isn't there to teach you everything on the planet earth but to help you become a better learner. The snow day could be an exploration day to see what we can explore...The snow day will be a test to see what we can learn through exploration. In conclusion, I think that it would be very helpful to Paideia if we had the snow day to explore the core meaning of Paideia.

We would be able to have a mental health day which I think is much needed for a lot of students at Paideia. We are under a lot of stress, such as homework, world problems, and maybe even friends, and we are only kids!

If you would like to talk more about this I will be in the science room at school.

continued on page 4 ►

Yes! Call a Snow Day

continued from page 3

I think it would be really just to treat it like a normal snow day we haven't had snow in about 4 years! These days the littlest things can make us happy!

If you make us stay virtual on a snow day, kids like me would get distracted by looking out at the snowflakes falling down. So if it snows on Friday, remember we want to play in the snow and save the zooms for another day. As Jon Ossoff would say, "Don't be a wuss." PS: Please don't expel me.

Also think about how many kids and teachers want this day off. It's basically you verse the entire school. I know it might be hard for you considering what has happened in the past but for our sake **JUST GIVE US A DAY OFF!!!**

You probably get it bc your mailbox is flooded with notes from mad children assuming but back to my point with Covid and stuff most kids have been using the screen like at least 5 times as often then before Covid and it makes my eyes and head hurt.

Grownups are always telling us to get off screens and go outside. Now is the one time we want to do that! Take advantage! If we do virtual school, we won't be able

to concentrate when it's...let's see... SNOWING!!! Don't you think we deserve a day off to spend time with our families? **DON'T YOU?!?!?**

Paul, I plead to you to not put on the sad and boring show that is virtual school when it comes time for the glory of a snow day and just let us enjoy the world of ice, cold, hot cocoa, snowmen, snow angels, snow, snowball fights, and the day off.

I am in the sixth grade, and today I want to talk about how you should not make kids go to virtual school on snow days. Studies have shown that along with snow days helping people everywhere get more sleep, it also provides less stress, helps people not get Alzheimer's, makes people happier, and helps boost immunity. Snow days can also be a great day to get exercise.

I hope you will consider my suggestions, and all of the kids will be so happy to have a break from school and will be forever grateful to you! Sincerely, SG, the snow lover.

Mr. Bianchi, if you allowed these children to enjoy their day in the snow, you would make so many souls happy. Fun in the snow rarely appears, and when it does we should treasure it.

If you are still not convinced just think of all the possible learning opportunities that snow provides. While having the snow day we could also be learning things in science and even math. There are plenty of outdoor activities that are educational and involve snow such as: measuring the circumference of a snowman, what causes snow, how to build a strong snow fort etc.

Everyone likes snow, whether you like to sit by the fire and have hot chocolate and read a book, or you like to go out in the snow and sled and have a snowball fight...everyone likes snow, it's just a fact. But people can't enjoy the snow if they're on Zoom. There have been a lot of surprises in the past year that I wouldn't call surprises because surprise is usually a word reserved for happiness, and the surprises I am thinking of, didn't bring much happiness to my family. It would be great to have this nice surprise of snow...

I know that you said that if we had a snow day, we would just zoom in to class, but I would love it if you could rethink that.

School is for School not for snow. Just because we can do school during snow days doesn't mean we should...also sitting all day watching a screen when there is snow outside is depressing and kids can't learn when depressed. I hope you will take this into consideration.

Paideia Students to Be Honored in National Haiku Contest

Paideia students will be honored on June 6 at a virtual awards ceremony by the United Nations International School Haiku Contest for the 2020 competition, which was put on hold due to COVID-19. Last year's entries had already been sent in during March 2020.

Honorable Mentions: Elementary Division: **Kenzie Leonard** and **Kaia Wiltsee**; prize winners: Middle School Division:

Catherine Dwyer, Emerson Edwards, and Kelsey Eiler; Honorable Mentions: Middle School Division: **Gus Critz, Kelsey Eiler, Emily Garrard, Sharif Kemp** (2). The prize winner in the teachers division is elementary teacher **Becca McCauley**.

The 2021 winners, who will be selected in late March, will also be honored at the June ceremony.

BPO Hosts Exciting Virtual Black History Program

The Black Parent Organization at Paideia School celebrated Black History Month with several virtual events. Featured activities included a virtual guided walking tour of outdoor murals along Edgewood Avenue in downtown Atlanta depicting notable Black Americans as well as a virtual guided walking tour of significant Black historical sites along “Sweet Auburn” Avenue.

Another event was a curated tour of

the SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film exhibit of Academy Award-winning costume designer Ruth E. Carter entitled “Ruth E. Carter: Afrofuturism in Costume Design.” Those attending the Zoom event got a behind-the-scenes tour of Carter’s work from films including “Do the Right Thing,” “Black Panther,” and “Selma.”

The series of events ended with a community viewing of the documentary “John Lewis: Good Trouble” and a panel dis-

cussion led by senior **Phebian Gray** on the importance of the late Congressman Lewis’s civil rights activism. On the panel were alumni parents former Atlanta mayor **Bill Campbell** and educator **Dr. Jabari Simama** and community activist Ruth Wall, all of whom knew and worked with the late congressman.

The event was organized by BPO chairs **Ursula Carter** and **Theia Smith**.

Climate Action Clubs Get Their Hands Dirty

During the pandemic, Paideia’s Climate Action Clubs in both the elementary (for 4th-6th graders) and high school have shifted towards being of direct service to the community to help combat climate change.

On Saturday, January 30 and Saturday, February 13, club members volunteered with Trees Atlanta planting trees in the East Atlanta and Greenbriar neighborhoods. Students, parents and sustainability coordinator **Korri Ellis** braved the cold and rain to plant trees that will leave a legacy of clean air and urban shade that will last most likely through their lifetimes. Volunteers learned that planting trees and maintaining the urban tree canopy is a great way to take direct action in the fight against climate change.

— Korri Ellis,
Sustainability Coordinator



SPOTLIGHT

Julie Rosenberg '98, Ariadne Labs Deputy Director

First, tell us a little bit about your background. What all have you been doing since you graduated Paideia, and where are you now?

I currently live in Decatur with my two children, Maddie and Henry. Since graduating, I've primarily been working on issues related to social justice and health care. I spent the year after high school in Peru with a community-based health organization, Partners in Health, and that shaped my trajectory. I worked with the organization throughout my time at Harvard College and studied anthropology, Spanish and did pre-med coursework. I had a host of experiences, including working in development for non-profits and working in clinical research, before getting my master's in public health at Emory. I then went back to work with colleagues from Partners in Health on a new academic endeavor they were starting at the time, the Global Health Delivery Project at Harvard. I've stuck with this team since that time, studying what works in health care delivery and developing curricula to train the next generation of global health leaders. I also run a program called Better Evidence—from Ariadne Labs, a joint center for health systems innovation at Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health—that aims to equip providers serving vulnerable populations with digital tools to improve care. Since the pandemic started, we have been thinking about how to ensure that investments and scientific discoveries lead to equitable, effective vaccination programs.



We have also been helping decision makers prepare for this moment of vaccine delivery that we are now in.

With regards to COVID-19, can you tell us about the vaccines that are starting to become available?

I will try to answer this but the science is changing so quickly that it's possible that between now and when this goes to print, the information will be out of date. What may be unique about COVID-19 vaccines is that this is the fastest we've ever had a vaccine approved and manufactured for use and the investments in COVID-19 vaccines have overshadowed investments in other vaccines.

Pfizer, working with BioNTech, and Moderna

have both gotten mRNA vaccines approved for emergency use in the U.S. Both of these vaccines are about 95 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 and require two doses and cold storage. Johnson and Johnson is awaiting emergency use approval from the U.S. FDA for a vaccine that will be single dose and require less stringent cold storage.

Studies show that even vaccines with modest efficacy can still result in large reductions in COVID infections and deaths if they are quickly delivered to a large percentage of a population. Speed may be even more important than efficacy in some ways, especially as we see new variants emerge.

A lot of things will impact how quickly a vaccine is rolled out in a population, including manufacturing capacity or supply,

the development of equitable distribution systems and infrastructure, and related logistical considerations as well as how willing people are to get the vaccine.

Is this going to be an annual vaccine like the flu, or a "one-time" or "every 12 years" kind of schedule, or do we not know?

We don't know yet how long the protective effect of these vaccines will last or whether they will prevent vaccinated individuals from transmitting the disease. There's a lot we don't know about the vaccines and coronavirus yet. It's likely we will need boosters of some type. We are learning as we go and trying to shape our response.

As different groups get vaccinated, when does the impact of the pandemic begin to lessen in a way that everyone begins to reap benefits?

I think we are all already beginning to reap the benefits of vaccines because we can see there is light at the end of the tunnel. One of the big lessons of this pandemic is that we are all connected. When those who are most at risk or most vulnerable to coronavirus are able to live without such extreme worry or isolation, we all begin to benefit. Our health care workers can do their jobs with greater confidence, and our grandparents do not have to live in such extreme isolation. We've seen some nursing homes start to offer communal meals again.

But, there is still a long way to go in ensuring the vaccines are allocated equitably in the U.S. and across the world, allocated in a way that will benefit all of us. Everyone will benefit from waiting their turn and supporting the systems that the public health community is putting in place.

continued on page 7 ►

- **Jason Thomas '96** writes: After two years living in Washington, D.C., I'm excited that my wife and our three sons (**Jonathan**, 12, **Joseph**, 11, **Judah**, 9) returned back home to Atlanta in September 2020. There's truly no place like home!"
- **Jessica Ashley '11** lives in New York City where she currently attends medical school at Mount Sinai. She will be starting her residency in pediatrics this year and she recently completed training to become a certified yoga instructor.
- **John Henry Ward '13** graduated from Elon University in 2017 with a BFA in Music Theater. Currently working as an actor in Atlanta, his next feature film, "Yes God Yes," premiered in the spring of 2020 on Netflix!
- **Grace Wheeler '14** After Paideia she attended Mount Holyoke College and misses the environment dearly! She took a year off after undergrad to train working dogs in Philadelphia and now attends Veterinary School at the University of Pennsylvania. She is currently president of the student government, and is hopeful social distancing will end soon.
- **Fetsum Tadesse '18** is currently a junior studying biomedical engineering at Boston University. She has been very active on campus, serving as outreach chair of the National Society of Black Engineers and secretary of Ethiopian Eritrean Student Association. She also had an opportunity to work in a BOAS biomedical engineering lab on campus, where she was able to contribute and become co-author of a paper that was recently published in November 2020. She will be graduating in May 2022 and is considering going to graduate school.

SPOTLIGHT: Julie Rosenberg '98

continued from page 6

It's important to remember that even once vaccinated, we will all need to wear masks because the vaccine is not 100 percent effective, and we don't know enough about how effective it is against the various variants now circulating or the new strains that will continue to emerge.

By this fall, in the U.S., I imagine the pandemic will not impact our daily lives as much as it currently does. The new administration is working hard to try to see that this is the case.

If you could go back in time and give the high school version of yourself advice, what would it be?

I think Paideia prepared me well to ask the right questions, take risks, explore, think big. That was really important. Other advice... There's not only one right choice. Follow your heart and passion. One step at a time.

Any favorite teachers you want to give a thank you or shout out to?

Paideia has so many wonderful teachers who nurture our minds, hearts, and souls

and I am grateful for this early launchpad! Many of my best early teachers are no longer teaching — **Missy Aue, Martha Roark, Martha Alexander, Bernie Schein, Susan Ehrhardt (RIP), Tom Pearce, Ginger Birdsey**. The next generation is lucky to continue to learn from greats such as **Paul Bianchi, Clark Cloyd, Joseph Cullen, Donna Ellwood, Rick Goldstein, David Millians, Catharine Tipton, and Stacey Winston**. Thank you all and so many others who helped shape my path.

Paideia Teams Place in GATA Winter Academic Bowl Tournament

The Paideia Academic Bowl A and B teams competed in the Georgia Academic Team Association Jan. 28-30 competition. Team A finished second and Team B finished in fifth place.

Team A members are **Rohan Leveille, Sophie Lyman, Khari Payne, Reese Harward, Thomas Grant, and Amit Kamma**.

Team B members are **Nikhel Krishna, Miles Kirsh, Sean Zheng, Marco DeStefano, Winston Stukes, and Rohan Chanani**.

Science Olympiad Team First in A/AA Division

The Paideia high school Science Olympiad team finished first in A/AA at the Brookwood Invitational Tournament. The Paideia team finished 13th overall. This was the team's third team win this school year.

Team members competing in the Brookwood event were: **Shelby Pullen, Sarah Schapiro, Sarah Espinosa, Ethan Castellino, Sean Zheng, Rakibul Chowdhury, Phillip Salzinger, Rohan Chanani, Cecilia Pardo, Shyam Tridandapani, Javier Pardo, Leo Sullivan and Catherine London**.

THE PAIDEIA SCHOOL

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THE PAIDEIA SCHOOL is nonsectarian, serving families with children ages three through 18. Paideia does not discriminate in employment or in admissions. It actively seeks racial, cultural, and economic diversity in its student body. The ancient Greek word *Paideia* conveys the concept of a child's total education: intellectual, artistic, and social.

The Paideia School Newsletter is published 10 times a year. The deadline for the newsletter is the 1st of the preceding month. Send all correspondence to Jennifer Hill, Editor, at Paideia School, 1509 Ponce de Leon Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30307. Phone number is 404/377-3491, ext. 339; e-mail address is hill.jennifer@paideiaschool.org. For information about sports schedules and upcoming events visit our web site at www.paideiaschool.org

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