

bws

BRENTWOOD SCHOOL MAGAZINE SPRING 2021



To say the least, this year has been unlike any other. More than anything this was a year in which we experienced, first-hand, how to stay resilient, flexible, and optimistic, with a fair amount of creativity thrown into the mix as well. Starting in the classroom, every student and teacher quickly became facile with new technologies and new ways of connecting with one another. (It also allowed for a significant loosening of our dress code.) While the virtual classrooms shortened all of our commutes, they also left us wanting for in-person time with one another. We were able to make this happen in March, much to the delight of everyone!

As you read this magazine, one constant will stand out: despite COVID-19, this was not a holding year. We moved forward on a number of issues, all while maintaining the integrity of our programs. For example, our arts and performances, which all occurred virtually, and our truncated athletic season, were successes in terms of participation and victories. During this year the Belldegrin Center for Innovative Leadership's presence deepened throughout our K-12 community and extended its influence way beyond Brentwood and the greater Los Angeles area. Our DEI/Anti-Racist work deepened as our DEI office grew, and we worked in partnership with Dr. Damon Williams and his team to map out a strategy for the future based on data. Our relationship with the VA continues to be robust, even as we shifted from services on campus (due to COVID) to providing more resources directly to Veterans, especially in terms of meals. Finally, we completed construction on the Saltair Building on the West Campus, and moved into it during the last couple of months of the school year.

Please enjoy the magazine and thank you for your support throughout this most unusual year.

Dr. Mike Riera

HEAD OF SCHOOL

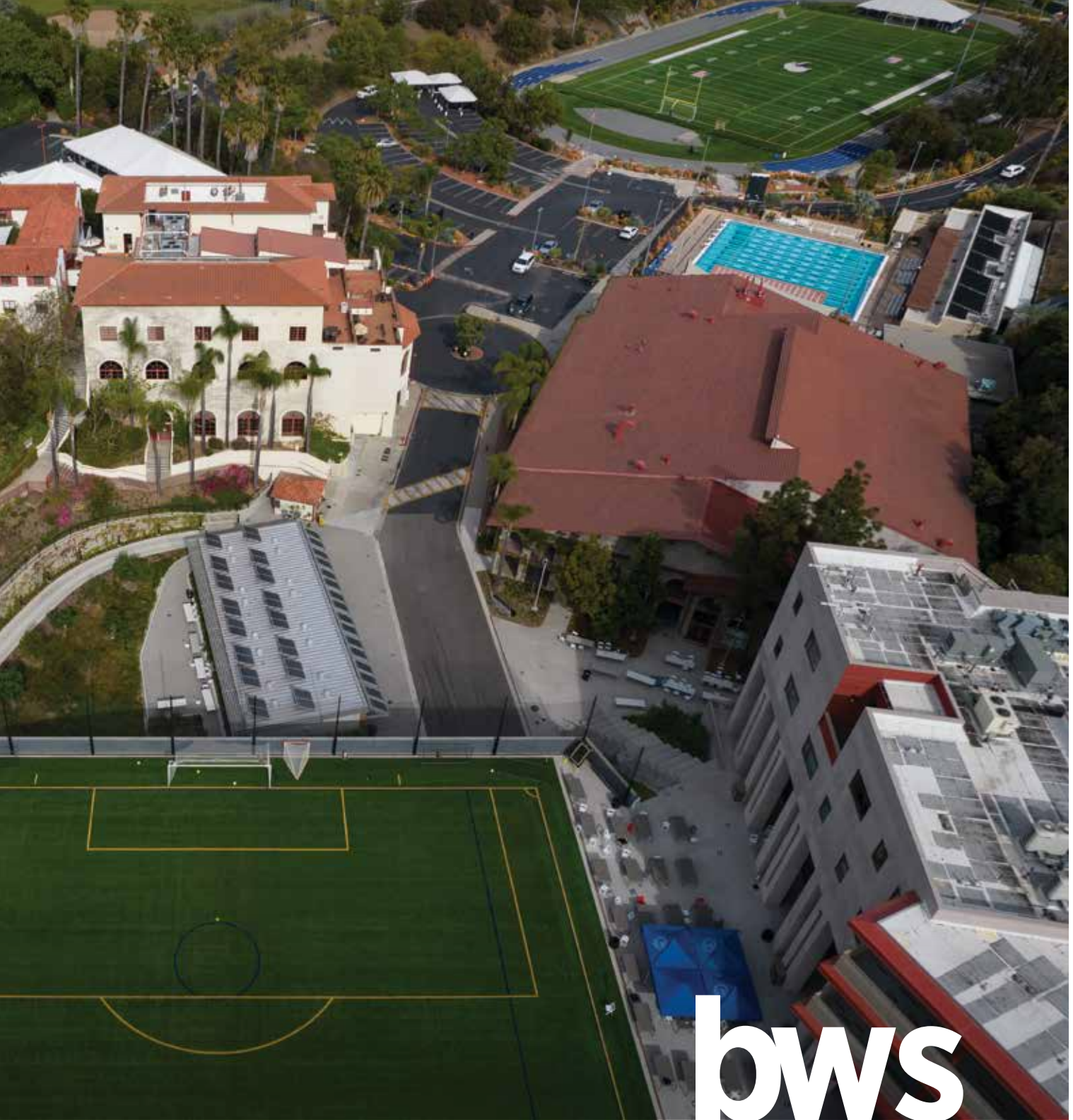


March 2020
What is a school without students and teachers? Our campuses were quiet last spring, but school was still in session and the entire community learned new ways to learn and connect with each other in a virtual, quarantined world. While we were all "safer at home," our campuses were kept alive by the many dedicated and steadfast employees in our facilities departments—custodial, maintenance, landscaping, and public safety—preparing for the day we could, once again, fill these beautiful spaces with lessons, laughter, and life.



ON THE COVER

The term "drive-through" became part of our vernacular this year, and provided opportunities for families to come to campus for special events and supply pick-ups through the year, following COVID-19 protocols. They also provided a way for students to safely say "hi" to their teachers whom they missed so much, and to show their appreciation in colorful ways.



FEATURES

10 REINVENTING OURSELVES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Four articles explore community ties during quarantine, DEI initiatives and personal stories, Brentwood School support for the VA, and BCIL global outreach.

DEPARTMENTS

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Art in the Time of COVID

Making art from home during the 2020–2021 school year offered unique opportunities for introspection. Whether it was a favorite project reinvented or something entirely new, themes of identity and place continued to surface in our students' artwork. Many of these projects created space for students to explore their experience of the pandemic as well as reflect on their own identity and adaptation.

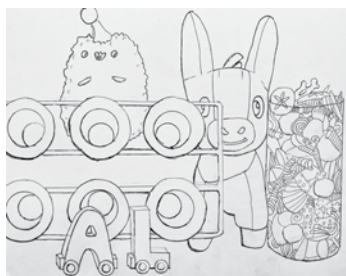


ABOVE: The Middle School plastic people is a favorite project that decorates our campus every fall. Students work in groups to wrap one of their classmates in a fun and interesting pose which they showcase throughout our campus. This year, students explored their own spaces to find the perfect environment for either a human or object sculpture. This one is by Ryan D. '25.



ABOVE: Second graders spent many class sessions exploring color, pattern, texture, and line with different media before embarking on a Self-Portrait unit. While learning how to represent themselves with various media (including a digital media app) they came up with awesome self-portraits like Eliana A.'s that includes a speech bubble. The abstract expressions coming out of the mouths of their singing self-portraits represent the auditory expression of their names.

BELOW: This 4th Grade project highlighted Faith Ringgold's quilts. After discussing the personal and historical stories portrayed in her work, students drew themselves flying over real and imagined places, inspired by the images from Ringgold's book, *Tar Beach*.



ABOVE: For a self portrait in objects, students found six objects that represented their identity—who they are and what they hope for. Alesi H. '24 explores line, form, and space in this collection of childhood toys, shells, and a popover pan she uses for a family baking tradition.

BELOW: Inspired by the work of California-based artist Greg Segal, students created personal portraits where they surrounded themselves with their most treasured items during the pandemic. While the project specifically focused on the ups and downs of quarantine life, it was also an opportunity for self-reflection and hope. In creating this piece, Maddie A. '26 says, "I feel that [the pandemic] is a blessing in disguise and something great is going to come out of this, but we just don't know it yet."



RIGHT: Students in stained glass were challenged to create a 6-word memoir through a series of writing and sketching prompts. Artist Bri F. '22 explains: "This phrase really is most meaningful to my childhood. I grew up surrounded by trees and around the forest before I moved to LA when I was 10 years old. I've always loved the outdoors... Everyone who knows me, knows that I love going to places where nature is vibrant. I don't know why, but trees give me a sense of calm and peace."

FOR MORE STUDENT ARTWORK AND PERFORMANCES, VISIT:
BWSCAMPUS.COM/ONLINEARTGALLERY



The New Saltair Building

We are thrilled that the opening of the beautiful Saltair Building—the final project in the first phase of our 30-year Education Master Plan and the Brentwood, Even Better capital campaign—allowed us the opportunity to bring all of our youngest students back to one campus in May. The rooms are light-filled and airy, and include top-notch teaching spaces for science, visual art, and music. Kindergarten and 5th Grade enjoy new homerooms (kudos to our fabulous teachers who created their new teaching spaces in just two days!) and soon we will enjoy the spacious great room, a new community space with magnificent tall ceilings built to gather everyone on campus. Finally, 5th graders even have a beautiful balcony with a view of the ocean on clear days to call their own.

“Finally, 5th graders even have a beautiful balcony with a view of the ocean on clear days to call their own.”

Nurse Heroes

Jennifer Bard

WEST CAMPUS NURSE

What led you to nursing as a profession? When I was a very young child, I wanted to be a “baby” Nurse. I always knew that nursing was my calling. As an adult, I learned that my Great-Great-Grandmother was one of the first Registered Nurse Midwives in the New York area; I finally learned where this intrinsic draw originated from.

What was your first job? When I first graduated from Nursing School, I was a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Mother-Baby Nurse at New York University.

What part of the pandemic required the biggest pivot? This year seems like a continuing series of mini-pivots, but two stand out to me the most. The first pivot really started right when the first Safer at Home orders went into place. I suddenly felt like a Public Health Nurse with no formal training in completely uncharted waters. The second major pivot was over the summer when we learned from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health that we would not be able to return to in-person learning in the fall. The entire COVID Committee had really worked tirelessly through the summer to create a great return-to-campus plan. Learning that we could not follow through with those plans yet was really tough ... heartbreaking, frustrating, scary.

What is the funniest thing that a student did or said during their first weeks back on campus? “Nurse Bard, your mask makes you look like a duck.” (anonymous 1st grader)

What mask brand has been your personal favorite? I love Paper Wings Masks—the prints are so fun, and they are unbelievably soft and comfy. Even my toddlers love wearing the kids masks, and that’s a WIN in my book!

What pandemic practice did you begin that you hope to continue? Slowing down ... before the pandemic it seemed like we were always rushing from one place, social event, or activity to another. I have really enjoyed spending a lot of slow, quality time with my kids—finding things to do together at home.

What are you most proud of from the past year? I am REALLY proud of the Lower School students. Their transition back from a really challenging year has been truly remarkable. They are so resilient and really WANT to be at school.

Where are you dying to go once it’s safe to do so? In general, I am a true mountain girl ... but after this year, I really think I need a vacation to a remote tropical island!

Favorite Brentwood color—blue, red, or gray? Brentwood Blue

“This year seems like a continuing series of mini-pivots.”

—JENNIFER BARD



Jennifer Bard (ABOVE) and Esther Ssenyange (BELOW) take care of students' on-campus health concerns with patience, tenderness, and humor.



“When it’s safe again, I can’t wait to go anywhere I can throw my hands up in a crowd with loud music and dance like nobody is watching!”

—ESTHER SSENYANGE

Esther Ssenyange

EAST CAMPUS NURSE

What led you to nursing as a profession? The summer before my last year of anthropology in University, I tore a piece of paper from one of those fliers on a job board. I got a job working with mostly elderly people. I’d go into their homes and sit with them, help with daily activities. At night I would stay with confused elderly people, to give families some respite and allow them to sleep. One night, I sat with a lady in a hospital. The nurse came in the morning and was surprised that the lady had slept the whole night. She told me that the woman had been there for months, had not slept, had no visitors, would not get accepted at any nursing homes because of her combativeness, was constantly medicated to calm her with no success. She asked me what I had done to keep her calm, and I said, “Nothing, I just sat and talked to her when she was restless.” She told me that I had a gift and that I should become a nurse. I went to University that same morning and changed my major.

What was your first job? I worked at Burger King for \$5.40 an hour throughout high school. Fast food was the place to work! I can’t eat Burger King to this day.

What part of the pandemic required the biggest pivot? Virtual homeschooling. Yikes!

What is the funniest thing that a student did or said during their first weeks back on campus? “Nurse Esther, I don’t have COVID and my throat doesn’t hurt, but can I have a cough drop because I really like them?”

What mask brand has been your personal favorite? HALOmask

What pandemic practice did you begin that you hope to continue? Meditation.

What are you most proud of from the past year? People’s resilience.

Where are you dying to go once it’s safe to do so? Anywhere I can throw my hands up in a crowd with loud music and dance like nobody is watching!

Favorite Brentwood color—blue, red, or gray? Red

ATHLETICS

The Spirit of Athletics

by **AMANDA KELSON**, Athletic Director

Flashback to March 13, 2019. We had just started our spring season of competition—Boys Soccer had competed in the State Regional Soccer Championship, and then everything came to a sudden halt. Two weeks, they said. Two weeks to “flatten the curve” and we would be back. The campus was still, the gym, pool, fields, courts all empty and dark. It was eerie and unfamiliar and, sadly, there was no end in sight. Over the course of the next few months to end the school year, the spring season coaches met with students via Zoom to keep their spirits up. They encouraged them to do team workouts, talked X’s and O’s, all in anticipation of getting back to competition. But that wouldn’t be the case. The 2019–2020 school year ended with everyone unable to complete what they’d started.

We were presented with challenges we couldn’t imagine. As a department, we met with our coaches regularly into the summer and continued to design and adapt our program to whatever was allowable by the LA County Department of Public Health. At first we developed a symptom-checking protocol, which allowed us to bring student-athletes to campus in stable groups of ten to workout in a single stationary spot, six feet away from the next person. Then that evolved into having a piece of equipment to manipulate on their own and then blast it with sanitizer before the next group checked in. None of this resembled sports. None of this felt normal. What it did do, though, was get our student-athletes out of their houses and onto campus with a group of their peers and coaches. We believed that this had infinite value for everyone’s mental health, physical well-being, and sense of connection to their school. Finally in February, after almost a full year of adapted practices, we were cleared to compete in just about every sport that we offer. Seeing students in their Brentwood uniforms, competing and having fun with their friends was worth all of the reinventing, rescheduling, and struggle.

“None of this resembled sports. None of this felt normal. What it did do, though, was get our student-athletes out of their houses, onto campus, and with a group of their peers and coaches.”



Safety protocols were put in place to allow practices to resume this spring.



The 2019–2020 Boys Soccer Team had a historic run.

The Gold Coast League Champion Eagles headed into the CIF Southern Section semifinals undefeated, sporting a school best record of 20-0-2. Dunn School of Los Olivos proved to be the opponent that we could not defeat. The season looked to be over, but we were given the opportunity to participate in the State Regional Tournament! We hosted two regional games, defeating Bravo Medical Magnet and Foothill Tech to reach the Regional Finals. A week before the COVID-19 shutdown, we headed out to Pomona on March 7 to face Ganesha HS. Our team didn't have their best performance that day and ended up losing that match. We are so proud of the leadership of our 12 seniors who lead us to a final record of 22-2-2.

If you've been to the East Campus since Spring Break, there's no doubt that you've noticed the beautiful new track. It's new color scheme of gray lanes with blue relay exchange zones modernizes the look of the stadium facility. Our track athletes are loving the surface and are setting new personal records each week as they run faster and jump higher and farther than ever before.



2020 and 2021 Collegiate Athletes

While our seniors had to endure a NCAA dead period that lasted over a year, which meant no in-person recruiting, we still have 9 student athletes in the **Class of 2021** that are making their dreams come true and competing at the collegiate level. Congratulations to:

- **Erin Williams:** Track and Field, Xavier University Louisiana
- **Joel Sanchez:** Soccer, Knox College
- **Cole Lourd:** Football, University of Texas
- **Gage Dado:** Lacrosse, Wesleyan University
- **Max Winkler:** Tennis, Grinnell College
- **Brianna Furch:** Basketball, Cal State Fullerton
- **Sam Castro:** Soccer, North Carolina State
- **CiCi Parker:** Water Polo, Wagner College
- **Kyle Zeitlian:** Sprint Football, University of Pennsylvania

And we don't want to forget our **Class of 2020** student athletes that also had a very interesting first year of college athletics:

- **Cam Woods:** football, Cal Poly San Louis Obispo
- **Connor O'Brien:** Soccer, Washington University St. Louis
- **Eve Jackson:** Gymnastics, Utah State
- **Jack Dyett:** Football, Dartmouth
- **Jamai Brown:** Football, University of Chicago
- **Lucian Broady:** Football, University of Chicago
- **Michael Valtierra:** Football, Occidental College

Ezra F. '23 practices his long jump on the Brentwood field in preparation for his appearance at the Tokyo Paralympic Games this summer as the youngest member of the U.S. team.



The Road to Tokyo

Ezra F. '23 has been training almost every day of the week in preparation for the Tokyo Paralympic Games (August 24–September 5). The global pandemic definitely made this more challenging and, for a while, he was training in the backyard, at the park, and at the beach. Since winter quarter, he's been back on the Brentwood School track and, on June 12, he came in 2nd place in the High Jump at CIF Southern Section Finals. Then, on June 24, after performing well at the U.S. Paralympic Trials in Minneapolis, he was officially selected to the U.S. Paralympic Track and Field Team that is going to the Tokyo Paralympic Games this summer. Ezra will head to Japan with the team the second week of August for training camp and then shift over to the Athletes Village before the Games. He is the youngest athlete on the U.S. team going to Tokyo, and we anticipate that he will be one of the youngest athletes in the world at the games. Best of luck, Ezra!

Follow Ezra's journey at [@TeamEzra05](#), and check out [@angelcitysports](#) or sign-up for emails at www.angelcitysports.org.



PARENTS ASSOCIATION



Brentwood parents Kevin Nealon and Susan Yeagley-Nealon guest star in a series of videos encouraging the community give to the Parents Association during the BTV Auction.

Unable to gather in person for Parent University, we developed a free, four-part, virtual series that covered topics concerning our children, families, school community, and society. This series, called “Community Conversations with Dr. Mike,” featured the following speakers:

- Part 1: Exploring the Effects of Social Media on Our Children and Society with Tristan Harris
- Part 2: Surviving a Pandemic—What Does it Mean Today and For Future Generations with RP Eddy
- Part 3: Exploring and Celebrating Multiculturalism—The Impact on Our Children with Dr. Brenda Stevenson.
- Part 4: How to Talk to Your Children About Race with Elizabeth Denevei and Dr. Howard Stevenson.

We finished the school year with our biggest community builder—“BTV”—an online auction that featured weekly auction flash sales and short, fun, music-themed videos that celebrated our school. This year, we were excited to announce that the year-end gift by the Parents Association to the school will be exclusively earmarked for financial support through “The Mr. V Endowment for Financial Aid.”

We are appreciative of our parent and guardian volunteers, the administration, the faculty and staff, and the entire Brentwood School Community for embodying the true spirit of our community and reminding us every day that we are better together. ■



Parents Association 2020-2021 Year in Review

by **JILL OLOFSON** and **KELLY GRIFFIN**
Parents Association Co-Chairs

The Parents Association would like to thank the Brentwood community of parents and guardians for your continued support, positivity, and flexibility during this unexpected year.

Through some creativity and the hard work of many volunteers, we were able to reinvent many of our traditional events and initiate a few new ones.

We started the school year with our first fundraiser of the year, an online Eagle Wear sale, which continued throughout the year. We virtually welcomed new families in Kindergarten and in all Middle School and Upper School grades, and we held virtual fall potlucks and virtual spring happy hours in grades 6, 7, and 9.

“Our biggest community builder—‘BTV’—featured weekly online auction flash sales and short, fun, music-themed videos that celebrated our school.”



2021 BTV AUCTION AND UNDERWRITING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

(AS OF JUNE 11, 2021)

DIRECT DONATIONS:

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A Tribute to a True Leader Laura Dudley, PA Chair

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." —Maya Angelou

It is impossible to adequately thank Laura Dudley for her THREE YEARS of volunteer service and dedication as Chair of the Parents Association and for the time, effort, and love she has put into Brentwood School. Just recounting the positive impact Laura has had on our community is stunning.

Laura's constant smiling face and optimistic personality charmed everyone in her path. Laura effortlessly enlisted the assistance of hundreds of volunteers, efficiently organizing and supervising PA events during all hours of the day to support our Brentwood School community. Laura made every parent and guardian feel welcome and included in the PA so that all voices had a place to be heard. Under Laura's expert guidance, the PA achieved incredible milestones, including the:

- Largest number of PA Committees and Chairs
- Highest number of PA events
- Highest grossing Party Books and Benefits/Auctions
- Largest volume of Eagle Wear sold

But perhaps Laura's greatest achievement is a more profound feat: Laura's leadership made our Brentwood School community a more connected and nurturing place. Parents, guardians, faculty, staff, administration, students, and siblings all benefited from her guidance and our community became more of a family.

Laura, the Brentwood School family is eternally grateful for you!



COMMUNITY DURING QUARANTINE

Community: a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.

COMMUNITY IS ONE OF OUR CORE VALUES THAT CAN BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED WHEN LIFE IS EASY, WHEN THE SMOOTH FLOW OF DAILY LIFE LULLS US INTO COMPLACENCY. HOWEVER, FEELING THE FELLOWSHIP OF A COMMUNITY CAN BE REALIZED MORE FULLY WHEN WE ARE MOST CHALLENGED.



Coming to campus to pick up books and supplies offered students a chance to get out of the house safely and see their teachers during our quarantine year.

by **SHIRLEY BLAKE**
Director of Communications

During this unprecedented school year, we learned that we grow stronger as a school community because of our connection to each other during the most difficult times. When our campuses closed in March 2020, and we all sheltered at home with fear and uncertainty, never imagining it would be a full year before we returned, the biggest challenge of all faced us: how do we stay connected when we are forced to be apart? How do we stay curious and go anywhere when we can go nowhere?

As you will read in the next few pages, the faculty, staff, and administrators at Brentwood were committed to looking at every aspect of school life with a different perspective, focusing on learning new ways to teach and learn and connect, and then, finally, emerging from our homes to return to “normal” life with a renewed sense of connectedness and a pocket full of silver linings. Our community is not only intact, but stronger and wiser for having endured it all together, while we were apart.

CELEBRATIONS THEN AND NOW

On May 30, 2020, keeping our community together meant driving an hour east to the Rubidoux Drive-In in Riverside, California, to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2020, with their immediate families safely watching from their cars. To say it was an unprecedented Commencement Ceremony is an understatement.

Throughout the evening at the drive-in, all COVID-19 guidelines that were so new to us at the time—masks, gloves, and physical distancing—were all followed meticulously so that our graduates could walk across the stage, pick up their diploma off of a table, and watch the giant screen where personal video messages from family members were displayed. Rather than asking a guest speaker to deliver a thought-provoking Commencement address, as Dr. Mike explained, “our individual families, in essence, served as the keynote speaker.” Car horns honking, headlights flashing, it was all a fitting tribute to our seniors and the important roles they played in one another’s lives.

Just over one year later, the immediate families of the Class of 2021 were able to assemble on the East Campus Middle School Field to experience our first in-person celebration—the 47th Commencement Ceremony—still masked and distanced, but together. There was a palpable feeling of joyous community in the air as the sun receded over Sunset Boulevard. We were not only celebrating the accomplishments of this resilient class of graduates, but also collectively returning to normal life, where we can be hopeful about restoring our community traditions and celebrations to their fullest extent in the coming year.



L-R: Faculty members cheer for 8th Grade students at the Promotion Drive-Through event in June of 2020; the 47th Commencement Ceremony took place on the new Middle School Field for the first time; graduates at the last year's Commencement at the Rubidoux Drive-In were projected on the giant movie screen as guests in their cars honked and cheered.



AN INTERVIEW WITH

SCOTT PERLOFF, Director of Educational Technology

BOB KAHN, Educational Technology Specialist, Middle School

PAM HORROCKS, Educational Technology Specialist, Lower School

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, VIRTUAL LEARNING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Without the support of our Information Technology Department creating the infrastructure, and our Educational Technology team finding the tools, virtual learning would not have been possible for our community of learners—students and faculty alike.

What was your first reaction when you learned that we were “going remote” last March and our faculty would be teaching from home? What was the first thing you did?

Scott Perloff: I thought “it’s going to get very busy for Ed Tech and the Information Technology Departments,” and I welcomed the opportunity to quickly move the faculty forward with their use of technology.

Pam Horrocks: I scoured social media and joined global groups to hear from others around the world who had already been out due to the pandemic. They shared experiences, ideas, stories, and survival tips.

Bob Kahn: I’ve been encouraging faculty to adopt new educational technologies for years, but it took a pandemic to make it happen on a larger scale.

Explain the ways in which our faculty took advantage of professional development opportunities during the summer to learn new technologies for the classroom.

SP: A number of K-12 faculty participated in formal online workshops and conferences, such as ISTE’s Summer Learning Academy; TWTcon, the Teaching with Technology online conference, which was an entirely online professional development experience for K-12 educators using technology in their classrooms; Google’s





Scott Perloff, Bob Kahn, and Pam Horrocks supported faculty and students in their virtual classrooms.



“The Anywhere School;” and Zoom’s Summer Academy. These events and others put the faculty into the online/ virtual learner role, which I believe helped them better understand how their students would experience virtual learning in the fall.

How did virtual learning improve in the fall?

PH: The best part of the fall for me was watching teachers teaching other teachers what they learned. In the spring, they honestly relied on Ed Tech for everything. After many professional development opportunities, they began sharing and learning from each other! As teachers became more comfortable with technology, they took even more risks to learn and try new interactive digital tools to engage their students during their lessons.

How do you see this year affecting educational technology? What did we learn from this year and how will we carry it forward?

BK: With Zoom and Google Meet, it is so easy to bring in inspiring people knowledgeable and experienced in a field. This is extremely powerful, because now students can easily see how what they are learning has practical applications and is exciting. And, teachers have now learned that they CAN try new things to enliven their curriculum and model learning for their students. What better to teach our students than to model learning ourselves.



L-R: Kindergartners landed on campus for the first time in November 2020 for social emotional learning and were greeted by Dr. Mike; COVID-19 protocols such as on-campus testing and temperature screenings became the norm; Students were thrilled to get back to campus for full academic learning, even though masking was still required.

THE BIG RETURN

Social Emotional Learning

In late 2020, County Health policies dictated that we could bring students back to campus in Grades K-6 with safety protocols in place to provide “social emotional learning,” but no academics. Students would continue to “do school” on their screens at home for the foreseeable future. The divisional leadership and the COVID-19 Planning Committee got to work and tirelessly coordinated with the facilities and public safety teams to find a way.

At the Lower School, our youngest Eagles participated in lots of fun activities that encouraged class participation, “distanced” collaboration with their classmates and teachers, and opportunities to run and play outdoors on the campus they hadn’t seen in so long...or ever, like our Kindergarten class of 2034. Students in 6th Grade got their first glimpse of the Middle School Building when they landed on campus for sessions with their peers and advisors to get to know each other through bonding activities and outdoor games. Athletics team practices and PE classes were also in action, getting students away from their devices and onto the fields and courts for some coaching and exercise.

Academics Resume on Campus

When it was finally approved by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health for everyone to return to campus for actual academic learning, distancing requirements meant that our facilities teams and divisional leadership got very

creative with safe learning spaces and community areas where students could eat together. For the most part, it was school as usual except for the masks and outdoor tented areas, as well as regular COVID-19 testing on-campus.

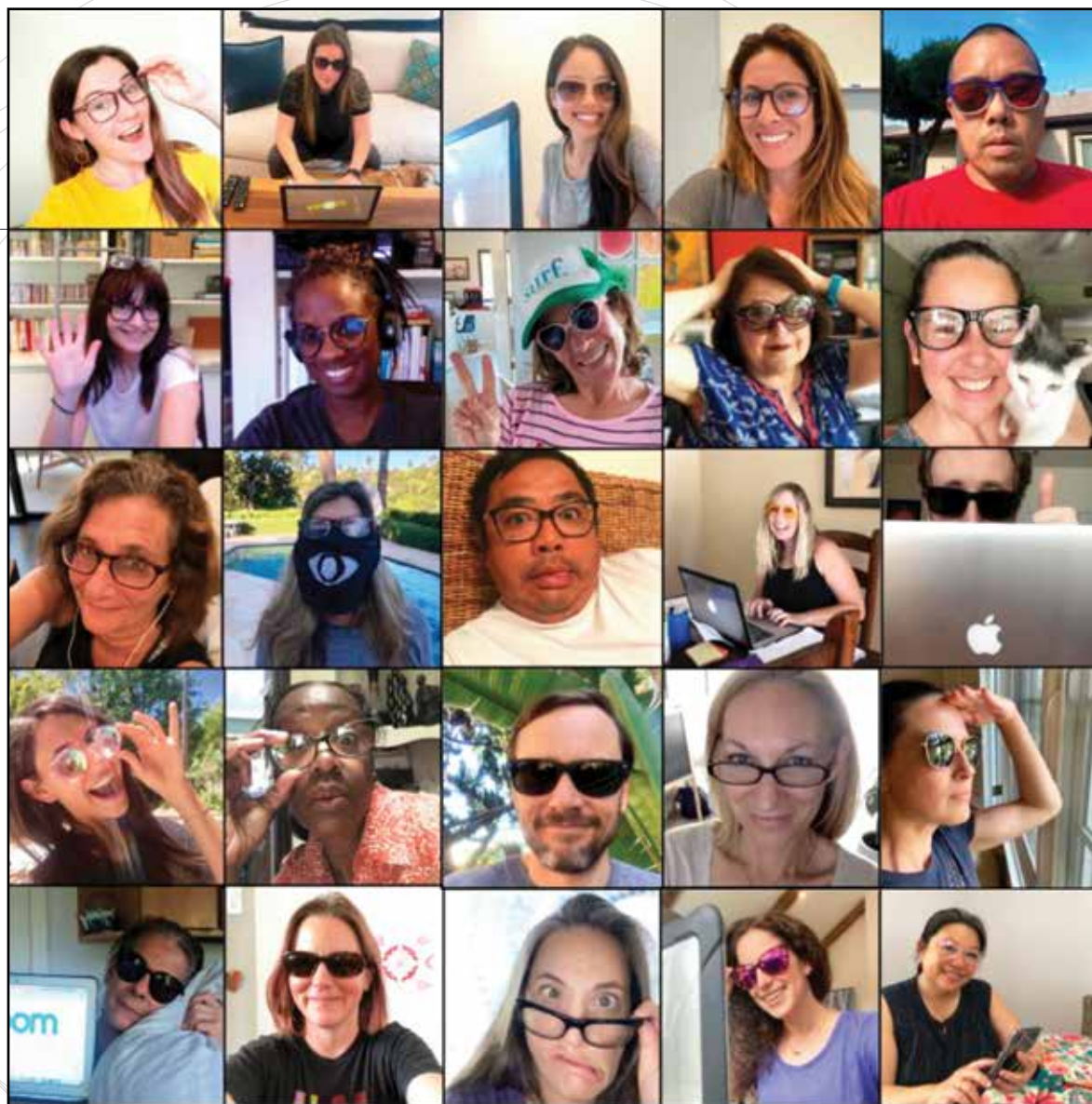
Testing and Vaccines

After establishing on-campus COVID-19 testing protocols, we then became the location for a Pfizer vaccine clinic to serve local area employees of independent schools. Approximately 250 vaccines were administered on both the first dose and the second dose days of the clinic, and approximately 30 schools from around West Los Angeles and the Valley had members of their faculty and staff participate. Twenty-five volunteers, including Brentwood School administrators and nurses, worked at the events.

Then, when the CDC approved vaccines for children 12 years and above, another drive through vaccine clinic schedule was set up and over 300 families signed up. School nurses from JTD and Brentwood helped the younger vaccine recipients with receiving the somewhat scary shots. Nurse Esther Ssenyange even provided one student with extra support and encouragement, sitting in their car for close to 2 hours before the child finally acquiesced to receive the vaccine. To all who helped with the logistics of these events, and especially to our nurses for their expertise and support throughout the pandemic, our community thanks you.



Faculty had fun on Zoom Glasses Day while teaching remotely. Quotes are not necessarily those of pictured faculty.



LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

What have we learned this year? What will we carry with us? What did we appreciate more than ever before? Our faculty and staff respond to the question,

“What was your greatest silver lining from this year that you will carry with you into next year and beyond?”

The birth of my first child :)

Watching math-phobic introverts participating constantly in the Zoom chat, when they rarely did in person.

More time with my kids who are growing up so fast. I will always treasure the time I had with them this year...no matter how difficult it was at times!

This year has taught me that change can be for my greater good. The quality time spent with family at home sealed bonds, brought us closer, and made us stronger, especially as we endured the loss of a loved one due to COVID.

Drive-by appearances by my pup while on Zoom in my living room!

Getting so much life back by not sitting in so much traffic led to more quality time with my kids and time to dedicate to school.

Physical and mental health of me and my family and friends above all else. If something makes you unhappy or uncomfortable, do something about it now because you don't know what tomorrow holds.

Seeing my kids in all of their fullness: watching their bright eyes, hearing their laughter, learning their likes and dislikes, feeling the warmth of community within the walls of the classroom...I missed all of those things during the year we learned at home. I love a LOUD and full classroom and I am so happy that we got the opportunity to finish strong in person.

Spending more time in nature...is the best medicine. I will definitely make time for that in all the years to come.

I was so lucky to have had 35 phenomenal students who made Zoom class an unexpected delight. They lit up the screen with their energy, excitement, creativity, and insights. Taking walks in my neighborhood and getting to know my neighbors.

I got to spend a lot of time with my little baby/toddler/tyrant/princess.

We got a new puppy—she is the best!

Learning to teach PE from my kitchen via Zoom without getting complaints from my husband, daughter, and the “neighbors.” ■

COVID-19 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Dr. Mike Riera, Head of School

Dr. Dawn Cunnion, Associate Head of School
Gennifer Yoshimaru, Assistant Head of School
Steve Tolbert, Chief Financial and Operations Officer

Bernardo Arabalo, Director of Public Safety

Nicole Arndt, Middle School Director

Jennifer Bard, West Campus School Nurse

Shirley Blake, Director of Communications

Ryan Boccuzzi, Upper School Director

Amanda Kelson, Athletic Director

Maggie Lara, Director of Summer Programs

Debby McLean, Lower School Director

Trina Moore-Southall, Director of Equity and Inclusion

Scott Perloff, Director of Educational Technology

Victor Pesiri, Director of Operations

Esther Ssenyange, East Campus School Nurse

Elizabeth Stocks, Transportation Manager

Nick Thompson, Director of Information Technology, Application Support

Johnny Velasquez, Director of Information Technology, Network Administration

Digging Deep



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

Without a doubt, this has been the most challenging year of my professional life. Faced with an unprecedented pandemic, we had to plan, re-plan, make adjustments, plan again, and then implement. This process was repeated numerous times throughout the year. While this challenge was great, it was also strangely straightforward in that we had to follow all of the County guidelines; while there was room for some creativity, it was a tight space. For me, though, this was the second largest challenge of this year.

The greatest challenge, of this year and years to come, began with the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020. His death, videotaped in its entirety, opened the doors to a racial reckoning that was long overdue. While this work has been ongoing at Brentwood, his murder elevated its importance to all of us, not just our

marginalized groups. Any change that comes from his tragic death and the deaths of others, will be measured in how, as a society, we sustain our efforts to become more equitable, inclusive, and just for all. The same is true for Brentwood.

Over the course of this past year, I made my own missteps. The most significant occurred over the summer when I moved much too quickly to “fix” the situation by hiring a consultant and proposing a task force. I did this without first listening deeply to the pain in our students, faculty, staff, parents, guardians, and alumni of color. Even more importantly, my hesitancy to do so limited what I learned from their experiences, both in breadth and depth. In hindsight, I think I was afraid of the weight of emotions and challenges facing the school. I was, however, called to task on this, as I should have been.

THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION JOURNEY AT BRENTWOOD SCHOOL

“Throughout this year, I’ve also taken to heart something I heard from Dr. Moore-Southall: Listen as if I may be wrong. When I’ve been able to hold onto this perspective, I have learned a great deal.”

Along the way, I have also learned a great deal from my colleagues. What comes immediately to mind, is a Tuesday Insight written by Middle School teacher Bryce Brady, in which he shared the idea of a curriculum that is metaphorically composed of mirrors and windows—he writes about this in this magazine as well. Specifically, around diversity, this means books written by people representative of the composition of our school and the Los Angeles community; history viewed from multiple and different perspectives; and mathematical and scientific discoveries that also highlight the diverse people who achieved these accomplishments. It further means the infusion of multiple perspectives throughout the curriculum.

Throughout this year, I’ve also taken to heart something I heard from Dr. Moore-Southall: Listen as if I may be wrong. When I’ve been able to hold onto this perspective, I have learned a great deal from the conversation. Just as important, at the conclusion of the interchange, I feel that the relationship has gotten stronger, which is essential to deepening our community.

Since the summer, we have been more thoughtful and dug deep. First, in hiring Dr. Damon Williams and his team to take a comprehensive look at the practices and culture of Brentwood around topics of equity, inclusion, and racism. This will result in a strategic plan focused on equity, inclusion, and anti-racism that will be ready in November. This is a plan we will share transparently as we work toward its implementation. The execution of the plan is the

responsibility of all members of our school, especially the school leadership. Second, we expanded the school’s Office of Equity and Inclusion to include DEI Specialists, who are our own faculty and staff experts in all three divisions. Deeper still, as you will see represented in this section by the variety of writers that extend far beyond our immediate DEI personnel, our efforts are wide and inclusive.

As you read this section of the magazine, I encourage you to appreciate the breadth of our various contributors as well as the depth of what they have to say. There is strength in the team because of their backgrounds and experiences. They are all committed to advocate, serve, and uplift the members of our community. I know you will be impressed by the thoughtfulness and care that goes into our DEI efforts along with the rigor it requires to do this work well. ■



Equity and Inclusion Leaders in Focus

Members of the Office of Equity and Inclusion Team
Reflect on the Importance of DEI Work



Trina Moore-Southall, Ed.D.

DIRECTOR OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION

“Being a diversity professional is personal. Yes, my education, skillset, knowledge and ongoing training and development contribute to my ability to navigate in this role. And it is my lived experience that drives me.”

—DR. TRINA MOORE-SOUTHALL

I told my high-school college counselor that I was thinking of going to college. He replied, “You won’t be able to compete with the White kids.” I had just turned 17 years old. I returned to my high school as a college graduate to substitute teach. A teacher told me, “Don’t get your hopes up with these kids.” I was one of “those” kids.

I have been passionate about students my entire career. I certainly did not have the opportunities and promises of a college prep independent school experience. Shouldn’t we all believe that every student has the right to receive quality education, pursue their dreams, and be valued for who they are? Shouldn’t every educational institution do everything in their power to make this happen?

Being a diversity professional is personal. Yes, my education, skillset, knowledge and ongoing training and development contribute to my ability to navigate in this role. And ... it is my lived experience that drives me. I am the mother of two Black men. Like any parent, I want my children to have the world. Unlike many parents, I recognize the dangers, compromises, responses, and treatment from others may be jeopardized because of the skin they are in. In the words of Dr. Bettina Love, I want them to do more than survive. I want for them to be physically and psychologically safe ... at the bare minimum.

When people ask about DEI work, I am invested. This is my life. In any role I have, DEI has been and always will be a priority. I not only want the best for my children, I want the best for all children. I work with my mind and heart. We are often the blame and complain department. As people look for a place and or person to charge for incidents of harm and pain, the DEI department is often the place. The psychological and emotional toll is almost unbearable. Yet, our commitment is unyielding. We see the impact of breaking down inequities and challenging systems. We are behind-the-scenes. We feel the hope in our students. Our students are much more than “those kids.” They are impressive. They are the future. They are enough.



Mychal Johnson

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION, UPPER SCHOOL BLACK STUDENT ASSOCIATION ADVISOR

While in a grocery store, I ran into my former high school teacher. She said I looked exactly the same as I did when I was in high school (that was almost 20 years ago), and I chuckled. I explained that I was currently working in the education field and pursuing a doctoral degree. I paused, because I believed that she would be utterly surprised that I was an educator. You see, in my youth, I was not the best student. While I had an appetite for learning, my grades did not always reflect my academic aptitude. To my surprise, I received the opposite reaction. She said she always knew that I would be a great educator because of my ability to connect with people. I thought about this, and tried to understand why in my middle and high school days, I struggled academically. I truly believe that while I was able to make connections with others, I still felt disconnected from my school because of the lack of guidance and investment. This unexpected conversation reminded me of ‘The Why’ behind my professional choice. The opportunity to connect and be a part of a young person’s growth and school journey drew me in; thus, I am committed to being a lifelong educator.

As a DEI practitioner, an aspect of my job is to ensure that every student feels connected, included, and has a sense of belonging to the school community. This work is deeply personal to me because I know the power of feeling like you belong to a community. More importantly, I understand that the sense of belonging leads to positive academic outcomes which is best for all the students.



Bryce Brady

MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER, EQUITY AND INCLUSION SPECIALIST, MIDDLE SCHOOL BSA ADVISOR

When I was getting my credential to become a teacher—and later, when I was training to become a SEED facilitator—I was introduced to the concept of Windows and Mirrors. Windows and Mirrors show up in my curriculum primarily through literature. A story can be a window into a new world for a student, or it can be a mirror, reflecting a world with which they are already familiar. It is integral, in my opinion, that all students have a balance of windows and mirrors in their academic journey. As one of my SEED mentors told me, “To see only mirrors is vanity. To see only windows is voyeurism.”

If you visit my desk in the Middle School Faculty Office, you will find a wall of pictures. Accompanying these pictures are notes addressed to me. Will Smith tells me to “Stay jiggy” and “Keep it fresh.” Spike Lee reminds me to “Always Do the Right Thing.” Chadwick Boseman is there, like Wakanda, forever.

As a student, I spent most of my time in a classroom looking through windows. The people on my wall were my mirrors. They showed me how to be my authentic self. They taught me how to love myself. And, they remind me why I became an educator.

I became an educator because it wasn’t until college that I saw a Black man in front of a classroom. I became an educator because I wanted my Black students to feel seen, and heard, and valued in a class led by someone who looked like them. I became an educator because I wanted my White and other non-Black students to look up to, and learn from, and be challenged by someone who did not look like them.

I aspire to create a class where there is a proper balance of windows and mirrors, a harmony of equity and inclusion. Students must read stories that challenge them to empathize with those who experience the world differently than they experience it. Students must also develop the tools to think about their own experience in the world and understand how their story fits into a larger narrative. I have been doing this work since 2017 when I first became an educator, and I don’t plan on stopping any time soon.

**Dana Gonzalez**

UPPER SCHOOL ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

“When you’re accustomed to privilege, equality feels like oppression.”

—Leonard Franklin

This is the quote that often roots and grounds me in the work of equity, inclusion, and justice. In moments of experiencing my own fragility, defensiveness, or blind spots, I return to this phrase. It allows me to identify the “why” of any personal discomfort and then move forward in the goal of making the world a just place for all. It also reminds me that Brentwood School colleagues, students, and families, who have membership(s) in dominant identities, may have strong reactions to sharing voice, space, and time with others, and that these reactions are often counter to their espoused personal values.

The definition of privilege and power can be closely intertwined with a sense of belonging. As a White, cisgender, able-bodied woman, I belong in many spaces. That sense of belonging gives me power and access. This quote reminds me that any variation in balance and inclusion may be perceived and felt, by those who belong, as a shift in power and, as such, as a danger or as a challenge to one’s self worth and value.

Equality can feel like oppression. But it’s not. What is being felt is just the discomfort of sharing a little bit of power and belonging. It is akin to the feeling an only child has when a little sibling is born and they wonder why all eyes are no longer on them, why they aren’t the only one that commands their parent’s attention. Equality is the antithesis of oppression. Real equality oppresses no one.

**Asako Kurosaka-Jost, Ed.D.**

UPPER SCHOOL JOURNALISM AND IDENTITY & SOCIETY TEACHER, CO-EQUITY AND INCLUSION SPECIALIST, UPPER SCHOOL PRIDE ADVISOR

To many of us in the Black, Indigenous, or a person of color (BIPOC) community, it is important to honor and acknowledge those who came before us. And in this case, there are many.

As the school begins to make definitive changes towards implementing equity initiatives across campus, I can’t help but pause and reflect on all the past students and colleagues who championed the work of equity, antiracism, and social justice in previous years. I think of the staff of color or the few faculty or administrators of color and realize that our moment today falls upon the shoulders of their endeavors. With this, I specifically (and with permission) acknowledge the work of Elena Cardenas, Carrie James, Lolli Lucas Clark, and Glenetta Turner. You have served as role models and helped me find my own authentic voice in the community. You helped me more than you will ever know. As well, it is important to honor the work of Dave Velasquez, as you have led the way long before “diversity” became part of independent school consciousness. I also honor the countless individuals, BIPOC and non-BIPOC, who have endeavored towards creating a healthy and whole sense of inclusivity at our schools.

I also think of the many BIPOC students, too many to name but each so significant, with whom I have

shared heartfelt, at times tearful, conversations. You have now graduated from Brentwood and I am so proud of who you have become. I continue to hold you deep in my heart, as you have touched my life and have forever changed who I am as an educator. You shared your stories to teachers and administrators with courage and authenticity, urged us to open our perspectives, know our blind spots, and do better in this world. Your voice resonates with me still, and I am forever committed towards the work we began all those years ago.

To this list belongs our newest alumni group, the founders of the Student Anti-Racist Curriculum Think Tank group. Your work, and the heart that you put into it, will stay with me always. Thank you Paola, Lisbeth, Alex, Julia, and Willy.

We have been here, we have voiced our perspectives throughout the years... and in this, I recognize that we have not always been heard in the fullness that we deserve. No more.

The school is perhaps now at a crossroads and seems to have begun to take steps in the right direction. To students and adults who championed this work before this moment: deep gratitude for everything that you did, and as well, I am sorry change happens so slowly. Will there actually be sustainable and palpable change? I am unable to answer this with full conviction yet, but this DEI team gives me hope.

“As educators, we must move forward with empathy, humility, and a desire to be challenged.”

—JEN QUIJAS



Blair Spearn

LOWER SCHOOL ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

I'm encouraged and excited about Brentwood's commitment to become an anti-racist institution, and there are several things I'm working on to help move this forward. First, I continue to do my own identity work to better understand the privilege I walk in and the impact my multiple identities have on those around me, and I know this work is never done. Next, I am always working on building relationships and trust with every community member so I can truly be an ally and an advocate for all. Last, I know I won't always get it right. When I have a misstep, I will take responsibility, I will ask for feedback, and I will learn through the process. True anti-racist action means showing up all the time, not just when it's convenient or prescribed. I'm here, I'm focused, and I'm intentional about equity and inclusion. I look forward to this journey to ensure Brentwood is a caring, respectful, and inclusive community.



Claudia Teager

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
TO THE EQUITY AND INCLUSION OFFICE

This past year has been hard with everything that has happened—pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, the BLM—because it has shown how POC are treated and how vulnerable they are in a systemically racist society that has proven over time the unfair treatment all POC receive. Personally, all of this has made my own vulnerability become more visible because I don't have any right answers to make sense of all that has happened. But it has been rewarding and hopeful to see POC persevere through these hard times, and change has started in the right direction. I feel the way Brentwood has responded has been very impactful because we have been able to work in community discussing literature about DEI and anti-racist topics as well, which have allowed me to be part of conversations with other people that I otherwise would have not had the opportunity to do in the past.



Jen Quijas

UPPER SCHOOL ENGLISH
INSTRUCTOR, CO-EQUITY AND
INCLUSION SPECIALIST,
CO-LSA FACULTY ADVISOR

I don't want to enter a room where I am the only person who looks like me. I don't want to speak for all Latinx people. I don't want to do the mental gymnastics of figuring out whether I experienced a microaggression. I don't want to make myself small because I'm worried about activating someone else's fragility. I don't want to feel obligated to share my trauma so that someone else can have a radical awakening. Most importantly, I don't want students at Brentwood to experience (or continue experiencing) any of this pain. As educators, we must move forward with empathy, humility, and a desire to be challenged. The work of DEI and anti-racism is challenging because it requires deep self-reflection of the ways in which we are the givers and receivers of harm. And in that reflection, we will learn, grow, and be in closer community with one another so that we can heal and be whole. And, I am hopeful that as an institution we can make this happen.



Tina B. Evans, Ed.D.

4TH GRADE LEAD TEACHER,
EQUITY AND INCLUSION SPECIALIST,
PASA FACULTY ADVISOR, BSA FACULTY ADVISOR

Ten years ago, I accepted a position as a 4th Grade Lead Teacher at the Lower School. During teacher inservice week, I was invited to attend a “Meet the Teacher” day to be held in the K Yard for incoming families to meet the new 4th Grade teaching team. I was excited for the opportunity to meet members of my new community. Aside from the occasional, “Where did you attend school?” the experience was pretty normal: the students gave shy hellos and rushed off excitedly to play with friends they hadn’t seen all summer; the parents congregated in what little shade was available and repeatedly retrieved cold beverages from the bucket of ice; the teachers mingled as best as we could and took a stab to remember as many names as possible. Toward the end of the event, as the parents and students trickled out while saying their goodbyes, one parent hung around to talk with me. She came up to me and said, “I hate to tell you this, but my daughter burst into tears when she found out that you would be her teacher. In the picture you sent home, you were not smiling. She’s nervous that you will be mean. My advice: give the kids candy to help them ‘warm up’ to you.” I felt ... dismayed by this interaction, but I recovered and said something to reassure the parent that I was actually a very loving and caring teacher and moved on.

Back in those days, teachers would send home a welcome letter to all incoming students which usually included a picture of the teaching team. Since two out of the three teachers in 4th Grade were new that year, we created a beach-themed handout that included all three of our pictures. My family had relocated from the Midwest less than a week before this event, so the only picture I had where I was on a beach was from an anniversary trip with my husband from two years prior.

“I have had to face many hard truths during my tenure at Brentwood. These truths led me to find my niche through the creation of PASA—an affinity group for parents of Black students, to get involved in the community through various school-wide events, and to help create safe and inclusive spaces for Black students and faculty and other non-Black students and faculty of color.”

—TINA EVANS

Of course, I was looking into the sun and sure enough, I was not smiling; but I wasn't scowling either. I'd like to say it was more of a Tyra Banks' smize a la *America's Next Top Model*. I didn't think much of that parent's "advice" until I looked at the picture of my other two teammates; they weren't smiling either. In fact, the other lead teacher actually had a hard look on his face as his photo was taken right after a tough surfing event. Was he described as mean, as well? Did any of the parents tell him something similar? The answer to both questions was no.

So, why did that parent decide to call me out? Why would her child burst into tears at the thought of having me as a teacher? It wasn't until the meetings during inservice week when I quickly found out my answer: I was the only Black lead teacher in the building and I would be this child's and the other children's first Black homeroom teacher. Could this be the reason for her fear? Certainly, it could not, right? Would I have to deal with other instances of bias and microaggressions? Of course I did. Bias and microaggressions are beyond harmful to individuals, and more importantly, it impacts the community of truth being built.

I have had to face many hard truths during my tenure at Brentwood. These truths led me to find my niche through the creation of PASA—an affinity group for parents of Black students, to get involved in the community through various school-wide events, and to help create safe and inclusive spaces for Black students and faculty and other non-Black students and faculty of color. I have continued this work with the Equity and Inclusion team whether it be by serving on the hiring committee for new educators to join our community, helping to enhance the 5th Grade curriculum as students navigate through the topics of race and stereotypes, holding space for courageous conversations with faculty, or helping guide 1st Grade students through an exploration of the science of skin color. The truth is no one can do this work alone. It takes an entire community to put forth a concerted effort toward eradicating the inequities, the bias, and to disrupt the systems that allow for inequitable conditions to exist. As a school, we are working hard to do these things and more, and I am excited to be part of this journey. ■

Keynote Speaker
Clint Smith and Guest
Speakers Schuyler
Bailor and Carlos
Andrés Gómez led
discussions on Zoom.



Celebrating Diversity: The Power of Personal Stories

Making Virtual Space to Listen, Reflect, and Connect

On Thursday, March 4, our faculty, staff, and students were able to focus on a day that the students helped to design and facilitate. It was created for celebrating and honoring diversity through presentations by guest speakers and opportunities for peer discussion. We were honored to welcome Clint Smith, Schuyler Bailor, and Carlos Andrés Gómez to the "Celebrating Diversity: The Power of Personal Stories" virtual stage.

Keynote Speaker **Clint Smith** was an inspiration to many students. Paola Santos '21 shared that she purchased Smith's book, *Descent*, as an 8th Grade graduation gift and has carried it with her around the country. His work prompted her to "pursue a further education in writing, in ethnicity, race and migration, and in equity work throughout my life." Dr. Smith spoke to ways he was denied diverse perspectives and how he ultimately learned the truth in his own educational experience. Through his incredible poetry, he shared stories on the truth of learning.

Schuyler Bailor's story of becoming a successful NCAA swimmer in the midst of transitioning was one of courage and inspiration. Our students posed thoughtful questions to Schuyler about how those around him accepted or didn't accept, supported or didn't support him at such a critical part in his life. He encouraged students to be authentic in who they are.

Middle School students engaged with **Carlos Andrés Gómez** on the "Power of Identity" and Upper School students on "What Anti Racism is Not." Carlos then shared a closing address on concrete ways we can make change for the better.

Many students commented that Zoom was actually an opportunity to focus in a different way. There were fewer distractions, and they were able to fully be present each part of the day. ■

The Wide Angle Lens of Diversity Work

The responsibility of creating more equitable experiences for the members of our community is shared beyond the Office of Equity and Inclusion. This is evidenced in all facets of our school, including curriculum, service learning, admissions, counseling, student life, college counseling, BCIL and more. Excerpts from these Newsworthy articles written by members of our faculty and staff are captured here as a sampling of the DEI work happening across divisions, departments and disciplines. Please visit bwscampus.com/DEI_Newsworthy to learn more.

“The drive for equity and inclusion for those historically marginalized, as evidenced by such uplifting movements as Black Lives Matter, has clearly raised consciousness around the world; the importance of free speech and assembly was never more brilliantly on display. But I am uncertain about where the line now lies between protected and unprotected speech. If Abolitionists could gain support, much to the benefit of equity and inclusion, because their free speech rights were denied, then what about other unpopular ideas in the 21st century that could seriously harm our democratic institutions? My hope is that by raising these questions now, in our classrooms, the generation to come will be better equipped to respond when they are faced with these issues and don’t have the cushion of their parents and teachers for support.”


—**Hank Koransky**,
Upper School History Teacher

“We take a close look at the social construction of race and historically why people were put into racial groups. We have ongoing discussions about identifying and confronting institutionalized racism and what we can do when racism shows up in our class.”
—the **Middle School Human Development Team**

“By definition, service learning is a learning method that integrates service projects with academic education. This structure and process allow students to reflect and learn from experiences teaching compassion, civic engagement, life skills, etc. Equity and inclusion are inevitable aspects of service learning because of this unique philosophy and format.”
—**Jhamasa Lewis-Adams '08**, Upper School Service Learning Director

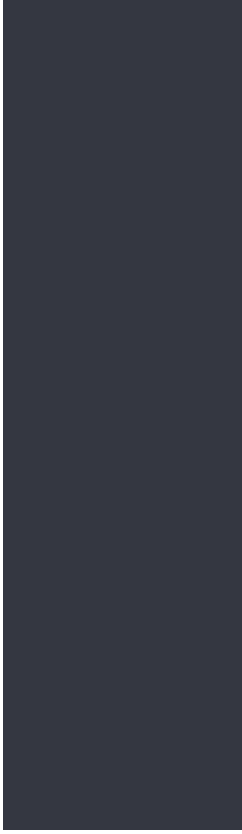
“In a world where no one challenge is alike, it is important to be cognizant of the power of what it means to bring awareness, uplift the voices as well as experiences of groups, and analyze potential solutions that can bring about transformative change. In doing so, we can bring consciousness to the complexities, and intersectionality that exists within every challenge, and appreciate that the impact and innovation needed to bring about solutions does not operate in isolation, but rather in relation to one another.”

—**David Hernandez**,
Upper School History Teacher and BCIL Innovator and Collaborator



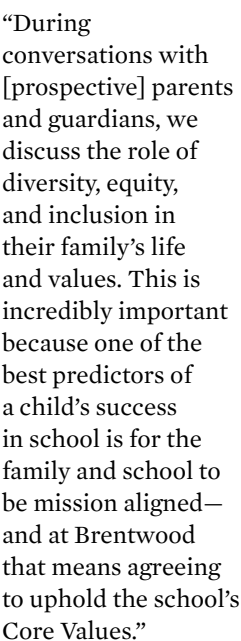
“These [cultural] stories, alongside others, allowed students to practice talking about other cultures and develop an inclusive vocabulary for how to approach unfamiliar traditions and customs. Many students also saw themselves in these stories and found connections to their own cultures. In the process, the students developed a strong understanding of the many multifaceted elements that go into culture, from art, to celebrations, to language, to clothing, to religion and storytelling, jokes and sports, manners, homes, and so much more.”

—the **3rd Grade Teaching Team**




“Our students should see themselves within each subject, relate to the topic, and know their possibilities are endless...In my classroom, I highlight the hidden figures behind the science phenomena and lift them to honor. We also talk about the injustices that prevented scientists and engineers from living their truths because of the fear of losing opportunities (i.e. Astronaut Sally Ride). Lastly, we explore the injustices done by scientists for the sake of science and discovery (i.e. the story of Henrietta Lacks and her immortal cells).”

—**Dr. Aidyl Gonzalez-Serrichio**, Upper School Science Teacher, BCIL Innovator and Collaborator



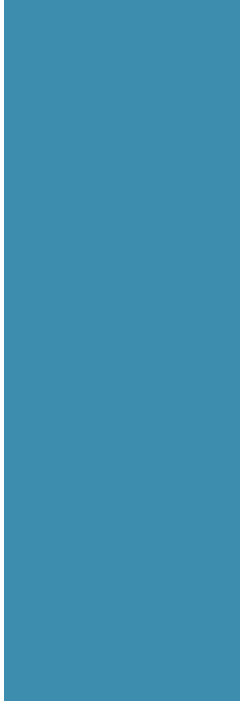
“During conversations with [prospective] parents and guardians, we discuss the role of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their family’s life and values. This is incredibly important because one of the best predictors of a child’s success in school is for the family and school to be mission aligned—and at Brentwood that means agreeing to uphold the school’s Core Values.”

—the **K-12 Admissions team**




“It is hard to overstate the enormous responsibility we have as educators to teach a diverse curriculum in order to adequately and effectively prepare our students, all our students, and ourselves to become well informed, socially aware members of a global community. It is not something we can do alone or without being willing to listen and learn. We must all engage actively and unceasingly in this demanding work. Otherwise, our national values and dreams will remain aspirational at best and indefinitely deferred at worst.”

—**Dr. Amara Graf**, Upper School English Teacher



“What is most fulfilling about working with the student SEED group is helping to provide the students with a space to connect across cultures and across grade levels, while finding the ways in which they relate to one another. They can’t help but deepen their own knowledge and understanding of themselves in the world. Besides the pizza and wings, the students share that what they most enjoy about SEED is having a supportive space where they get to be themselves, as the rigorous pace of high school pauses for a moment and they get to just “be,” without expectation or assessment.”

—**Amy Hollis**, SEED Facilitator and Administrative Assistant to the Head of School



“In a community like Brentwood where Jewish people are a plurality, it can be easy to forget how rampant anti-Semitism is today, how recent the genocide really was. The Jewish Student Association strives to uphold both the legacy of survivors and that of over six million who perished, while continuing to combat prejudice, even beyond Barrington.”

—**Lila Ross '21**, Jewish Student Association Co-President



“For me, the [People of Color] conference reaffirmed my purpose. I have always worked in public and nonprofit institutions serving those most in need. Joining this team has at times led me to wonder what I can actually do to help this community grow positively. POCC demonstrated and discussed several communities within our greater school community that are in need of support and understanding.”

—**Christopher Brown**, Middle School Human Development Teacher

On March 11, 2020, Brentwood School was getting ready for a Veteran Movie Night in our new Middle School Theater. A screening of *Knives Out* had been arranged, complete with veteran transportation to our school, bags of popcorn, and treats. We were all set to welcome veterans and their families for this fun event when the coronavirus was declared a pandemic and suddenly day-to-day life on our vibrant campus was brought to a halt.

VETERAN SUPPORT

IN THE TIME OF THE PANDEMIC

by **DR. SUSIE LYONS**, Coordinator of Veteran Education Programs and Activities
and **GENNIFER YOSHIMARU**, Assistant Head of School



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Brentwood School faculty and community members collected their personal favorite cooking recipes, and created a 45-page bound cookbook. On April 29, 2020, Lucy Y. '21 delivered the cookbooks with groceries to Veterans in the 54 housing units at Building 209.



hat seemed at first to be a temporary stay-at-home order and just a small postponement of our evening at the movies, quickly turned into the harsh reality that a primarily home-based existence would become the new norm. The West Los Angeles VA Campus immediately went into lock down, focusing on the safety of Veterans and imposing strict restrictions on activities and visitors to the campus. People around the world were facing challenges and uncertainties about their own situation as related to employment, health, the safety of loved ones, business shutdowns, school closures, supply shortages, and more. It was hard to know exactly what our Veteran neighbors might be experiencing. The pandemic put unprecedented strain on the mental health of people everywhere, and we knew this would be particularly challenging and detrimental for Veterans, many of whom were already suffering from PTSD. While isolation can be a natural tendency for those dealing with PTSD, it may also pose a challenge for effective long-term recovery. Veterans' isolation and physical and mental well-being became a significant concern. We realized that we needed to think creatively in order to continue to help and support our Veterans, so we quickly shifted gears. Brentwood School and other VA Community Partner Collective member organizations decided to mobilize efforts in order to help our most vulnerable Veteran populations with food services and support, shelter, outreach, and drives.

FOOD SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Prior to the pandemic, Brentwood School had launched a series of cooking classes at Building 209 and the Domiciliary on the West Los Angeles VA Campus. It was a wonderful opportunity for our faculty and staff to connect with Veterans and provide a culinary lesson and demonstration of an easy recipe, which then culminated in enjoying a meal together. Our faculty and volunteers soon realized that the best part of the cooking class was the connection and conversation with Veterans while sharing a meal together. When the cooking classes stopped due to COVID-19, Brentwood School wanted to continue its longstanding mission and support of the residents at Building 209. Providing food-based care packages to all of its residents and weekday meal service was quickly at the top of our list. We started by reaching out to our BWS faculty and community members to collect their personal favorite cooking recipes, creating a 45-page bound cookbook. Recipes consisted of simple dinners, lunches, snacks, and desserts; some faculty favorites and "secret" family recipes; and "meals for a budget." Then, on April 29, 2020, Brentwood School delivered the cookbooks with groceries to Veterans in the 54 housing units at Building 209. Each cookbook was placed in a reusable bag filled with items to make two of the recipes: curried lentils and "Spamaroni." The residents at 209 were delighted. If we couldn't provide cooking classes, we could at least bring the recipes and supplies to Veterans so they could make meals in their unit kitchens.

Brentwood School Executive Chef David Mendez, and Jennifer Minichiello, CEC Director of Dining Services, prepare sandwiches in the Brentwood School kitchen for homeless Veterans. Since April 2020, Brentwood School has cooked and donated hot meals five days per week to Veterans residing at the West LA VA.

Our food support continued and expanded from there, and early in 2020, Brentwood School helped the Safe Parking LA meals program by cooking and donating hot dinners four nights per week to the homeless Veterans residing in Lot 1, and Village for Vets fed them dinner on the other three nights. Then on June 12, 2020, Village for Vets began delivering produce boxes to food insecure Veterans and their families in Project-Based Voucher Housing in the LA metro area, in partnership with Food Forward and Westside Food Bank. Brentwood School joined the same group to manifest monthly drive-through food banks that began in July and continue today. Each event serves 150 food insecure Veterans (1,650 total as of the end of May) by providing boxes of fresh produce, eggs, dairy products, and shelf-stable items.

When VA launched the CTRS program (Care, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Services)—a safe camping shelter with wrap-around services for chronically homeless Veterans—on the West LA campus in the spring of 2020, Brentwood School stepped up to provide tents, sleeping bags, pads, storage bins, canopies, blankets and a number of other supplies as requested by VA. Since the program's inception, the school has also delivered lunch and dinner five days a week to all CTRS residents



for a total of 24,089 meals and counting. Additionally, in partnership with Meals on Wheels West Los Angeles and Village for Vets, weekday meal donations of lunch and dinner from Brentwood's East Campus Kitchen for Veterans in Building 209 and lunches for those in the Welcome Center and HUD/VASH (Housing and Urban Development/VA Supportive Housing) began in March 2020 and continued through January 2021 and totaled 16,412 meals. Spearheaded by BWS Food Services Director Jennifer Minichiello, she and her staff have worked tirelessly during the pandemic to ensure the weekly meals were, and continue to be, healthy, tasty, and delivered safely to Veterans—all of whom have expressed sincere gratitude and appreciation for the delicious meals!

Even through this challenging time, BWS recognized the importance of celebrating special holidays. Therefore, for Building 209's July 4th celebration, we surprised Veterans with individual red, white, and blue cupcakes dropped off at each resident's door. Then for the holidays, individual Thanksgiving and Christmas meals were packaged and delivered along with holiday gift bags, which included a handwritten card from a Brentwood student, twinkle lights, a mug, packets of hot cocoa and marshmallows, and a Target Gift card. And who can forget Valentine's Day? We wanted to spread the love and care to our Veterans, so we launched a Valentine's Day Card Campaign. Beautiful handmade cards by our students expressing care and concern poured into campus, and we delivered them along with 200 decorated Valentine's bags filled with toothbrush kits, tissues, hand sanitizer, chocolates, and Vitamin C packs to Voluntary Services for Veterans on the VA Campus.

Community Engagement Manager Carolyn Healy at Step Up on Second and Building 209 said: "Brentwood School has been a stellar partner since Step Up's Building 209 at the West LA VA Campus opened its doors in 2018 as permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless Veterans. BWS started by helping to lovingly set up each veteran's room and provide Welcome Home kits for move in.

“IN NOVEMBER, OVER 100 OUTREACH EXPERTS FROM THE WEST LOS ANGELES VA VISITED HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH VETERANS AND CONNECT THEM TO SERVICES. AS PART OF THIS EFFORT, CALLED ‘THE STAND OUT,’ BRENTWOOD SCHOOL WORKED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VILLAGE FOR VETS, UCLA, AND FOUND ANIMALS TO DISTRIBUTE 200 BACKPACKS, 50 PET CARE PACKS, AND INDIVIDUAL LUNCHES TO HOMELESS VETERANS.”

Since that time, their staff and student volunteers have collaborated with Step Up Veterans programs at 209 to offer wonderful dinners, music and cooking classes to help reduce the Veterans’ social isolation. Even during the height of the pandemic, Brentwood continued to support our vets with deliveries and gifts all while maintaining COVID protocols. They are truly amazing.”

SHELTER, DRIVES, AND OUTREACH

In addition to food support, Brentwood School also focused on shelter, outreach, and drives throughout the pandemic to help Veterans in need. In the spring and summer of 2020, BWS donated 300 masks, 600 pairs of new socks, a large selection of travel-size toiletries, and hundreds of gallons of water.

Then in the fall, as part of our Service Learning Program and VA partnership, Brentwood School launched a K-12 Veteran letter writing campaign. Our purpose was for Veterans to receive an original, meaningful, and heartfelt letter from our students. Our community definitely rose to the occasion and letters and drawings poured into both campuses. Veterans at Building 209 were thrilled to know we were thinking of them when we dropped off 58 gift bags for Veterans Day. Each bag included one hand-written student letter, an activity jigsaw puzzle, and



Even through this challenging time, Brentwood School recognized the importance of celebrating special holidays. Therefore, for Building 209’s July 4th celebration, we surprised Veterans with individual red, white, and blue cupcakes dropped off at each resident’s door.

a finger touch padlock invented and donated to the VA by one of our students.

Around the same time in November, over 100 outreach experts from the West Los Angeles VA visited homeless encampments to engage with Veterans and connect them to services. As part of this effort, called “The Stand Out,” Brentwood School worked in partnership with Village for Vets, UCLA, and Found Animals to distribute 200 backpacks, 50 pet care packs, and individual lunches to homeless Veterans. The 200 backpacks were filled with essential items for those living on the streets and in need, including blankets, hygiene kits, socks, and rain ponchos. Also in each backpack, each Veteran received a personal, handwritten letter from a Brentwood student, expressing thanks and gratitude for their sacrifice and service. In addition to a letter being placed in each of the backpacks, we distributed over 450 student letters, bundled, wrapped with ribbon, and hand-delivered to facilities at the West Los Angeles VA Campus, including Home for Heroes, CalVet, New Directions, Building 209, and The Domiciliary.

Veteran Rudy Schwartz phoned Brentwood School on November 11, 2020 after receiving one of our backpacks. He was so moved by the letter in it that he drove to Brentwood School from Pasadena that same day in hopes of extending his thanks to the student writer. Rudy, a 25-year retired Veteran and Police Officer, shared that he felt truly respected and thanked for his service. Rudy said, “I’ve already framed and hung up the letter on my wall,

it was out of this world and meant everything to me. This is why I served—for kids like Madison.”

With COVID-19 restrictions and our partner organizations and Veterans unable to receive tangible items for Thanksgiving, we knew we could not hold our traditional Turkey and Food Drive, so instead we launched a virtual Thanksgiving Collection. Quite frankly, we weren't sure how it would turn out. Would we be able to fund as many turkeys as we had typically collected in the past? Would some of our Veterans have to go without assistance this year? But we not only received market gift cards and donations to help those in need with their Thanksgiving meal, but also enough funds to carry over and help through the winter holiday season! Because of our community's collective generosity, we are able to bring food, gifts, cheer, and joy to Veterans and their families in need for Thanksgiving and the winter holidays.

We ended our spring semester with our annual K-12 VA Toiletries Drive where each division collects travel-size toiletry items and socks to make easy-to-carry kits for homeless Veterans. Due to the outpouring of personal hygiene items, we were able to make over 400 kits that will be dispersed in encampments and distributed to Voluntary Services.

With all the adjustments happening due to the

We launched a Valentine's Day Card Campaign. Beautiful handmade cards by our students expressing care and concern poured into campus, and we delivered them along with 200 decorated Valentine's bags filled with toothbrush kits, tissues, hand sanitizer, chocolates, and Vitamin C packs to Voluntary Services for Veterans on the VA Campus.



“WE ENDED OUR SPRING SEMESTER WITH OUR ANNUAL K-12 VA TOILETRIES DRIVE WHERE EACH DIVISION COLLECTS TRAVEL-SIZE TOILETRY ITEMS AND SOCKS TO MAKE EASY-TO-CARRY KITS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS. DUE TO THE OUTPOURING OF PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS, WE WERE ABLE TO MAKE OVER 400 KITS THAT WILL BE DISPERSED IN ENCAMPMENTS AND DISTRIBUTED TO VOLUNTARY SERVICES.”

pandemic, we still wanted to find ways to connect with Veterans. However, trying to connect virtually and on Zoom during COVID was quite challenging. The VA computer lab that had been set up by our BWS Tech Department was closed for months, and many Veterans didn't have the technology to effectively connect via Zoom. So we asked the VA what we could do on our end. The staff and supervisors at Building 257 on the VA Campus suggested that if Brentwood School could help them with some virtual staff training, they in turn could help individual Veterans on campus. So, we set to work. Our Digital Media Manager, Tony Reyes conducted two training sessions on Zoom for 13 staff members at Building 257. He provided a session on LinkedIn and another on Advanced Resume Web Training. Tony provided clear steps and outlined ways Veterans can effectively market themselves on LinkedIn and how to navigate the site and their profile in order to promote their skills and job search. He also broke down resume building into a specific structure intended to help Veterans target their strengths and focus on the job they want. Our next training session is set for August 2021 on effective job interview skills.



On April 4, 2020, VA personnel receive Brentwood School donations of tents and other supplies for homeless Vets living on the VA campus.

Then in late January 2021 after months of being away from Brentwood's campus, the VA agreed to allow access to very small groups of supervised Veterans at our Veterans Center for Recreation and Education (VCRE). Paul Radenberg, our VCRE Fitness Facilitator and Coach, facilitated the groups, and Veterans once again started using the workout tent, stadium field, and Pavilion. Veterans in these groups are residents of the Domiciliary, a residential program on the VA campus and are accompanied by a recreational therapist from the program. The Domiciliary is overseen by a medical director and all residents are tested weekly for COVID-19 and screened daily for symptoms. Thrilled to be able to start using the facilities again during their access time, they even started playing softball on the back field Friday mornings. Veterans in the group said, "The Brentwood Gym and Coach Paul motivate me to push myself to get stronger and feel good"; "Paul's meticulous attention to detail and patience has given me back the confidence in myself that I thought I lost upon discharge from the Coast Guard"; and "I have always been good at working out, but Coach has made me great at 50!"

STUDENT OUTREACH

Prior to COVID-19, some students in the Upper School Veteran Support Group would play live music at resident dinners and various outdoor events at the VA.

Sierra Hougeban '21 said, "I started performing regularly for the Veterans after my friend approached me with the idea. I had no idea how much of an impact it would have on me. I have loved getting to connect with Veterans through music. It truly breaks through generational and ideological differences. My favorite memory is when we began playing "Best Part" and one of the Veterans knew the words and began singing and dancing along. It was always such a welcoming atmosphere (at the VA), and it's definitely one of the things I'm going to miss the most next year." During the pandemic, and before a few of them graduated, these students worked together to combine video recordings of each of them performing from home in an effort to virtually connect with Veterans and reach out to those Vets who would watch their performances every week.

Some Upper School students also spearheaded individual outreach projects for Veterans, including Ellie F.'s '22 personal project and independent study for which she interviewed numerous individuals, including Veterans at CalVet Home, with Dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and memory loss. After interviewing them, their loved ones, or their caretakers, she created personalized playlists for them based on their answers. The reason for her project: music triggers memory. In addition, Ryan J. '22 made it his mission to help Veterans stay connected during this time and started a "Tech to Vets" initiative, working to fundraise and collect electronic donations in order to help supply Veterans with much needed technology. His diligent efforts supplied nine iPhones; ten Amazon tablets; two computers; several chargers and headphones; and two iPads to Veterans at Building 209. Moreover, Ted G. '22 and Ellie F. '22 are currently involved in creating entertainment gift baskets for Veterans at Building 209 with the hope to provide some fun and enjoyment through classic films, music, and some popcorn and treats.

Over the course of this unprecedented year, we made multiple shifts in order to support our most vulnerable Veterans. As society slowly makes its way back, we look forward to when the West Los Angeles VA Campus fully reopens for volunteers and visitors. We are hopeful all restrictions will be lifted by this fall and we can once again resume our in-person interaction with our Veterans, providing programming, education, music, activities, and most importantly, connection. If there is one positive consequence of COVID-19, it is an increased awareness of the importance of social interaction and connection. We can't wait to be with our neighbors at the West Los Angeles VA Campus in person. ■

Going virtual during much of this school year created a unique environment for K–12 students to explore real world challenges through our **BELLDEGRUN CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP** (BCIL). They 3D printed ventilators, pursued BCIL independent studies, and enrolled in new course offerings including, Biological Engineering, Aerospace and Drone Technology, Advocacy, Activism, and Social Justice, and Los Angeles During the Time of a Pandemic—all in a virtual space. They participated in national challenges and interacted with a broad range of national and international guest speakers. While each new BCIL offering added to a growing body of innovative work, projects this year expanded far beyond Brentwood in a way that might not have happened without the virtual environment in which we found ourselves.



Student Innovation in a Virtual World

by **DR. JOSH BERGER**

Director of the Belldegrün Center
for Innovative Leadership

and **KATIE MCKELLAR**

Assistant Director of the Belldegrün Center
for Innovative Leadership



Finalists in the Vaccine Impact Challenge participate in a Zoom discussion about their ideas with Former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Bob McDonald (giving the thumbs up in the bottom right corner).

Impact Challenges Inspire Students Across the Country

Increased online connections helped facilitate the launch of our inaugural BCiL Impact Challenge, which focused on the ethical and efficient distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine. We quickly received submissions from every region of the country, with ideas including mobile clinics to increase access in underserved communities, partnerships with ticket agencies to more efficiently schedule vaccine appointments, and use of machine learning and epidemiological modeling to increase accountability in distribution, among others. A pool of winning teams, including three from Brentwood School, gathered together virtually to collaborate on their ideas and prepare final presentations for Secretary Bob McDonald, Former Secretary of Veterans Affairs under President Obama, and a member of the Biden-Harris Transition Advisory Board. During the Zoom meeting, Secretary McDonald gave individualized feedback to each group. Said Secretary McDonald about the BCiL Impact Challenge, “What a powerful way to raise the creative thinking of so many young and vibrant voices!” He was so impressed by the ideas

“Students identified challenges related to mental health, cyberbullying, hate speech, media bias, and technology addiction. Their proposed solutions ranged from expanding regulation to prevent personalized ad tracking, to using artificial intelligence to scan photos and alert users to extreme photo editing, to apps that track users’ experiences on social media and provide personalized recommendations to improve their mental health.”

TOP: Riya A. '23 and Leyla P. '24 won first prize in the International World Series of Innovation for their MicroHydro Home which addressed Global Goal #7, affordable and clean energy.



BELOW: Sienna N. '23 won second prize for Global Goal #16 with her app CityPoll to promote peace, justice, and strong institutions.



that he ultimately forwarded them along to the Head of the Presidential COVID-19 Task Force who, in turn, reviewed the submissions with his team.

During the spring Impact Challenge, the BCIL partnered with the Center for Humane Technology. In addition to entries from across the United States, this Challenge also drew international interest from students in Ghana, Taiwan, and Ukraine. Those with exceptional submissions connected with tech leaders, including Tristan Harris and Randima Fernando, Co-Founders of the Center for Humane Technology, and both profiled in the Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma*, and Susan Reynolds, Co-Founder and Board Chair at LookUp.live. Students identified challenges related to mental health, cyberbullying, hate speech, media bias, and technology addiction. Their proposed solutions ranged from expanding regulation to prevent personalized ad tracking, to using artificial intelligence to

scan photos and alert users to extreme photo editing, to apps that track users’ experiences on social media and provide personalized recommendations to improve their mental health.

A final international challenge was co-sponsored by the BCIL and PoSSUM 13, a team of 13 female scientist-astronaut candidates that includes Brentwood Upper School Chemistry Teacher and BCIL Curriculum Innovator and Collaborator, Dr. Aidyl Gonzalez. (PoSSUM 13 is an outreach program of Project PoSSUM—Polar Suborbital Science in the Upper Mesosphere.) Student teams submitted proposals for an experimental design that addressed scientific challenges related to microgravity and space exploration. Team Colombia’s Magnetic Force won the Microgravity Challenge after presenting their experiment testing whether the Lorentz Force stabilizes a device’s position in the presence of microgravity.

learn more about the BCIL Impact Challenge at:
bwscampus.com/our-program/belldegrun-center-for-innovative-leadership/impact-challenge

learn more about the student projects at:
bwscampus.com/our-program/belldegrun-center-for-innovative-leadership/symposium-2021

“An important component of BCIL projects and courses is the opportunity to share ideas with authentic audiences and receive feedback from experts.”

Students Excel in the Virtual World Series of Innovation

An important component of BCIL projects and courses is the opportunity to share ideas with authentic audiences and receive feedback from experts. One highlight came from our annual Innovation Challenge where we welcomed a panel of international entrepreneurs from France, Colombia, Spain and the United States, in addition to one United Nations representative to evaluate student proposals on Global Goals. A large number of 6th through 12th Grade students participated in this year's event, and finalist submissions included innovative ways to save water, aid small businesses, and provide equitable access to STEM education.

Building upon this work, Brentwood students revised their entries for the virtual International World Series of Innovation. Out of thousands of participants from more than 50 countries, four Brentwood teams were selected as finalists and two teams placed in the top two for their respective categories. Riya A. '23 and Leyla P. '24 won first prize for their MicroHydro Home which addressed Global Goal #7, affordable and clean energy. Their solution is a system of small hydroelectric generators that can harness energy from water pipes and faucets in homes and school buildings. Sienna N. '23 won second prize for Global Goal #16 to promote peace, justice, and strong institutions. Her app, CityPoll, seeks to increase access for residents to view, discuss, and vote on local issues.



Sample Projects

MicroHydro Home

Riya A. '23, Leyla P. '24, and Lauren Gold '21

a small hydropower system that can be installed in homes, schools, and other buildings harnessing the energy of water flowing through the main line to create electricity

CityPoll

Sienna N. '23

an app which seeks to increase equitable access for residents to view, discuss, and vote on local issues

Circuit Shower

Eric G. '26 and Jolie F. '26

an eco-friendly shower that cleans and recycles water

The STEM Truck

Michelle S. '23

a mobile STEM classroom that provides students in underserved communities consistent access to quality STEM education

Examining Mixed-Race Identity in America

Rahul Y. '23

an independent study that focused on the sociological, chronological, and geographical perspectives of multiracial people in America

Digipass

Eitan P. '22 and Joshua D. '22

an app which allows students to access their Eaglecards on their smartphones, creating a more efficient cafeteria line and a more secure method of payment

Students Reflect on the Innovation Challenge

“Besides learning to work with a partner, I also learned a lot about sustainability. Overall, competing in the BCIL innovation challenge has been one of the best things I ever did!” —Eric G. '26

“I loved working collaboratively with my teammates to develop an idea that we are passionate about and believe can truly make an impact on the environment and on our community. I learned a lot about the process of developing an idea, and the BCIL really helped my team expand our idea beyond the classroom.” —Riya A. '23

“I thought the program was a great way to help students get involved with real world issues, and find innovative, entrepreneurial ways to create positive change!” —John B. '22

“Refining my idea with the BCIL Collaborative and then pitching my idea to an international panel of judges taught me a lot about entrepreneurship and gave me a unique skillset that will allow me to approach similar opportunities in the future.” —Rahul Y. '23

Third Grade Students Inspired by Guest Speaker Liam Flockhart Ford '19

"It sparked my idea for the B49-52 which is an invention to bring water and plastic in and only let water out." —**Ethan S.**

"I really was interested in helping the ocean and I was inspired by Liam." —**Jack Z.**

"I learned a lot from Liam and he inspired me to help the ocean anyway I can, especially cleaning up trash because that is what is polluting our oceans." —**Ellington Z.**

"I learned that there are ghost nets inside of the oceans that capture animals." —**London H.**

"I learned how to start and invent and I learned that the fish will be happy if we invent a solution." —**Tate S.**

"I invented a place called 'Innovation Trash' where trash can be invented into something new and better." —**Isabella G.**

"In 3rd Grade, students loved hearing from alumnus Liam Flockhart Ford '19 who talked about Global Goal #14: Life Below Water. He challenged students to think about what they might do to better protect and preserve marine life."

Virtual Guest Speakers Encourage Student Action

The widespread use of virtual communications tools enhanced the accessibility of experts from around the world, and many joined BCIL classes and events to share their personal stories and present challenges from their respective industries.

In the Fall, alumnus Noel Herd '02 zoomed in for our East Campus Speaker Series and challenged students to think about how they could help increase voter participation in the upcoming election. Nikka M. '22, Eitan P. '22, and Hannah T. '22 created the Ballot Project, an extraordinary non-partisan organization dedicated to expanding voter registration. The students quickly developed their own website and QR code registration posters they distributed locally and nationally. They eventually enrolled in a BCIL independent study to continue this work and are now uniting with other student

leaders across Los Angeles to launch student-led pre-registration drives this upcoming school year.

In 3rd Grade, as part of the BCIL Speaker Series, students loved hearing from alumnus Liam Flockhart Ford '19 who talked about Global Goal #14: Life Below Water. He challenged students to think about what they might do to better protect and preserve marine life. Diving into research, third graders also learned the design thinking process and eventually prototyped potential solutions. Receiving feedback from our AP Environmental Science class along with some Middle School advisory groups was a highlight for both our older and younger students. The passion and creativity of our third graders was extremely impressive, and much of their motivation connected directly to Liam's virtual presentation.

These same sparks for innovation and collaboration

came from our welcoming infectious disease expert, Dr. Anne Rimoin, who challenged students to think about the upcoming vaccine distribution, and from the Chief Business Officer at Magic Leap, Walter Delph, whose augmented reality presentation ultimately led to our Humane Technology Impact Challenge.

In our spring BCIL Speaker Series, all students in grades 6-12 heard from Dr. Shawna Pandya, who is currently the Director of Medical Research at Orbital Assembly Corporation and is a scientist-astronaut candidate. During the event, Dr. Pandya posed a live challenge revolving around the hazards of space and asked students to design a product or technology that could help humans survive on Mars. The excitement and creativity we heard from students during this live challenge led us to begin planning our fall Impact Challenge around this theme. We feel fortunate to have had so many wonderful speakers share their time with the BCIL during the global transition to the virtual environment. As we return to campus, the next challenge for BCIL and fellow educators is to build upon lessons learned from our collective virtual experiences and integrate them into our daily in-person offerings for students at Brentwood and throughout the world. ■

“Dr. Pandya posed a live challenge revolving around the hazards of space and asked students to design a product or technology that could help humans survive on Mars.”



Sampling of Guest Speakers

Mr. Steven Almazán

K12 Program Analyst at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Dr. Benjamin LaBrot

Founder of Floating Doctors, CNN Hero, and Professor at Keck School of Medicine of USC

Ms. Carmen Ibarra

CEO of The Achievable Foundation, a Community Health Center.

Ms. Kelly McCarthy '08

Vice President, Investment Banking, Global Healthcare Group/ Biotechnology

Mr. Marquez Gray

Director of Community Leadership HOPE SF, Mayor's Office SF

Ms. Monica Medellin '11

Video producer and director whose films have premiered at the Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival, International Ocean Film Festival, Save the Waves Film Festival, and Patagonia Film Festival.

Mr. Walter Delph

Chief Business Officer at Magic Leap

Ms. Noel Heard '02

Contract manager at MACRO, a multi-platform media company that represents the voice and perspectives of persons of color

Secretary Bob McDonald

Former Secretary of Veterans Affairs under President Obama and a member of the Biden-Harris Transition Advisory Board

Mr. Liam Flockhart Ford '19

currently a sophomore at Amherst College, specializing in Environmental Science

Dr. Shawna Pandya

Director of Medical Research at Orbital Assembly Corporation and a scientist-astronaut candidate with Project PoSSUM

Dr. Anne Rimoin

Professor of Epidemiology at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and Infectious Disease Division of the Geffen School of Medicine and the Director of the Center for Global and Immigrant Health

Mr. Casey Katofsky

President & Director of Future Legends Sports Complex

Mr. Alan Yap

Financial Analyst at Lyft

Ms. Mireia Juan Novell

International Partnerships at Nike

Mr. Nick Johnson

Entrepreneurship Doctoral Candidate

Mr. Morgan Slain

Director of Santa Clara University's Bronco Venture Accelerator

Ms. Lisa Ames

Operating Executive at Norwest Venture Partners

Dr. Farhad Rostamian

UCLA Anderson School of Management, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation



OFFICE OF ALUMNI
ENGAGEMENT

Emily Manning Ellis '94
Director of Alumni
Engagement

Flor M. Cruz
Assistant Director
of Alumni Engagement

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
2020-2021

*A huge thank you to the
following Alumni Association
Executive Committee
members and volunteers
for their incredible help
throughout the 2020-2021
school year!*

Scott Sandler '92
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Bryan Hudson '09
Vice President

Wendy Marantz Levine '91
Past President

Jared Cohen '94
Secretary

Shakira Gagnier '97
Co-Chair, Alumni Committee
for Diversity

Nigel Lifsey '02
Co-Chair, Alumni Committee
for Diversity

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Jeff Ehrenpreis '95

Elliott Nassib '97

Matin Roshan '08

Allison Abell Schwartz '97

Nikki Tabibian '13





Faculty applaud the Class of 2021 as they process into the 47th Annual Commencement.



Hello Alumni and Parent of Alumni Community!

As the world re-opens, we are reinvigorated and ready to start our next chapter. While we've enjoyed zooming with our alums around the world, we really can't wait to connect face to face and give everyone a big hug. August 2021 is an exciting month as we look to host 11 class reunions in person. And we are thrilled that we finally get to celebrate and honor Mr. V's 40-year retirement in December!

As I begin my 17th year working in the alumni office, I am so grateful for the many relationships I have made as part of the Brentwood community. The challenges of the past year have allowed us to connect on a deeper level, and I am thankful for all of you who reached out, provided meaningful feedback, and offered support.

I am honored to share the leadership of our program with our new Assistant Director of Alumni Engagement, **Flor M. Cruz**. Flor has jumped in with full energy and an open heart. Please check out our new Alumni Spotlight series. It is filled with stories about our alumni making a real difference. We also hope you enjoy reading our beloved Class Notes section. Although social media provides updates by the second, we love that many of you continue to send us your notes every single year. Tradition is tradition!

A huge thank you is due to our 2020–2021 alumni volunteers. You all kept our office busy and thriving throughout the pandemic. As we welcome longtime volunteer Bryan Hudson '09 as our next Alumni President, we'd like to acknowledge outgoing President **Scott Sandler '92** and Past President **Wendy Marantz Levine '91**, who have provided incredible leadership over many years. And we'd also like to thank **Shakira Gagnier '97** and **Nigel Lifsey '02**, the co-chairs of our new Alumni Association Diversity Committee, who have put many hours into brainstorming programming to help us increase student mentorship connections and create a wider range of alumni networking opportunities. Go Eagles!

Emily Manning Ellis '94

DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

A Letter from the Outgoing Alumni Association President

As I reflect on the past two years as President of the Brentwood School Alumni Association, I am filled with immense feelings of gratitude for this tremendous opportunity. I vividly remember my first day as a Brentwood student as a 7th grader in September of 1986 sitting on the floor of the gym for my first all school assembly. I could not have appreciated the tremendous role Brentwood School would play in my life for the next 35 years and counting. Some of my greatest memories are from my time as a student at Brentwood, and I remain so appreciative of the nurturing environment Brentwood provided me, and am grateful that my children have the same opportunity today as members of Brentwood's Classes of 2028 and 2030. Being able to represent the over 4,000 Brentwood School alums around the world has been an honor, and while these two years presented many unprecedented challenges that no one could have predicted, I am proud of how the School has responded and know that Brentwood's best days are still ahead of us.

I could not be happier to have Bryan Hudson '09 leading the Alumni Association for the next two years. Bryan is the first Alumni Association President to have graduated in the 2000s (or for that matter after 1996), and I know he will be a great leader for all of us as well as a terrific mentor to the next generation of Brentwood School Alumni Association leaders. Go Eagles!

Scott Sandler '92

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT 2019-2021



Scott Sandler '92 addresses our alumni community at the Middle School building opening in 2019.

“One of my main goals as President is to ensure that we can reach a larger demographic of alumni and that all alums feel comfortable and proud to stay connected to their alma mater.”

—Bryan Hudson '09

Bryan Hudson '09 represents the Alumni Association while visiting the Seven Magic Mountains in Nevada.



A Letter from the Incoming Alumni Association President, Bryan Hudson '09

As a proud member of the Class of 2009 and Vice-President of the Alumni Association for the past two years, I'm so excited to embark on this new chapter as the 2021–2023 President of the Brentwood School Alumni Association.

I started Brentwood in the 6th Grade and I really enjoyed my time over the years; my fondest memories coming from Latin class with Ms. Bali, singing at Carnegie Hall with the Concert Singers and winning two CIF Tennis titles.

And wow...what a year it has been! I told myself I wouldn't use any cheesy one liners, but alas, here we are. The past fifteen months or so have been nothing short of challenging. From the uncertainty of the pandemic, Black lives lost to police brutality, a rise in Asian hate crimes, and the ongoing struggle in the Middle East, we've all struggled to keep our sanity and make sense of the barrage of catastrophes.

I've leaned heavily on my Brentwood family during this tough time. Those friendships I established about two decades ago are just as strong today. From the zoom birthday celebrations, to the socially distanced hikes, and paddle tennis at Venice Beach, I always felt the love and support from my Brentwood crew.

One of my main goals as President is to ensure that we can reach a larger demographic of alumni and that all alums feel comfortable and proud to stay connected to their alma mater. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the coming years and growing our overall presence.

Thank you to Past President Scott Sandler '92, and to the rest of our Alumni Association volunteers and Executive Committee for laying the foundation for our work ahead. I'm ready to get started!

ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Channeling My Inner Ms. Dunn

At the Young Women's Conference, my message was "You Go Girl!"

by **TARA SCHUSTER '04**

I remember it like it was yesterday: I am sitting in Ms. Gelfand's French class, just off the South Quad, tucked into a small desk by the door. I am thinking about how difficult I find 'le subjonctif' (did the French create it specifically to torture me?!) when the class is suddenly interrupted by a clatter of knocking at the door. Ms. Gelfand opens it and in pops Ms. Dunn, the 10th Grade Honors English teacher, full of energy, clad in her usual (awesome) burgundy leather pants. "Sorry to interrupt!" she almost shouts with her Southern cheer as she hands me a white note folded into four quarters. Just as soon as she has entered our class, she exits. I open up the paper, baffled as to what her message could possibly be. I am not in the habit of passing notes with anyone, much less teachers. I open it to read in giant, pink highlighter letters: "100% You Go Girl!" I feel the tingles of accomplishment break out across my skin as a huge smile flashes across my face. It is one of the proudest moments of my life to this day.

You see, three months prior to that, I was not doing so hot in English class. Not only was Ms. Dunn's course notoriously hard, but also, I was up against Brentwood's cruel obsession with the rules of grammar. In my day it wasn't enough to be "good" at grammar, you had to be a flipping master of parallel structure, avoid tautology at all costs, and be able to spot a split infinitive the moment one dared to sneak into your presence. I felt hopeless about improving my grammar skills to a Brentwood level; it seemed like the rest of the class, many who had been at Brentwood since the 8th Grade (unlike me), was already so much further ahead than I was. I wasn't sure what to do.

Ms. Dunn, in her office hours, explained, "I don't think you're practicing enough, you need to buckle down and practice, girl." Until that talk, it hadn't actually occurred to me that the problem might be that I needed more practice. Instead, I thought that there was intrinsically something wrong with me, that I wasn't good

enough, and that maybe I would always be "bad" at grammar. I passed a judgement on myself that I was not capable of improvement. After Ms. Dunn's encouragement, I decided to fully commit myself to practice. Maybe I wouldn't get better, but at least I could try.

I found the quietest place where I could really concentrate, not in the library (sorry, Ms. Abarbanel), but in a little alcove in the

"...my soul was lit on fire with how inspiring the students were. At their age I spent more time thinking about sandwiches from Belwood Bakery than I did concepts like 'empowerment'... I wanted to tell them explicitly what Ms. Dunn had told me implicitly: we must take ourselves seriously."

administrative lobby that was rarely used. I found this calm, safe spot and glued myself to a round wooden table for months drilling myself on the rules of syntax.

Ms. Dunn had faith in me and gave me the honest talk I needed so that I could develop

faith in myself. She taught me an important lesson I have taken with me into my career as a TV executive and author: I am capable of accomplishing my dreams but it's going to take rigor and practice. It's going to take me figuring out a structure that works (go find the quietest place possible) and putting in the hours (skip the snack bar and drill yourself) in order to accomplish what I desire. It's not a whole lot more mysterious than that. There is also luck involved, but that's not my concern. My job is to have faith in myself and put that faith into practice.

In January of 2020, I had the pleasure of being invited back to Brentwood to speak at the Young Women's Conference and my soul was lit on fire with how inspiring the students were. At their age I spent more time thinking about sandwiches from Belwood Bakery than I did concepts like "empowerment." We discussed the need to find and honor our self-worth. I channeled Ms. Dunn as I told them, "You are worthy, you are capable, and whatever dreams you have, you can accomplish them, but you're going to need to do the work." I hoped that I could be to them, what Ms. Dunn had been to me, someone who saw these young women for what they were: smart, eager, and full of potential. I wanted to tell them explicitly what Ms. Dunn had told me implicitly: we must take ourselves seriously. If we want to become the people we were born to be, we need to let go of negative self-chatter and focus on taking baby-steps towards accomplishing our goals. We build resilience not by judging ourselves or berating ourselves for how unworthy and bad we already are, but by trusting ourselves and putting that trust into practice.

My only regret is that I didn't wear burgundy leather pants like Ms. Dunn. That, I think, would have made a stronger impression. ■



TARA SCHUSTER IS A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR, PLAYWRIGHT, AND ACCOMPLISHED ENTERTAINMENT EXECUTIVE. SHE SERVED AS VICE PRESIDENT OF TALENT AND DEVELOPMENT AT COMEDY CENTRAL WHERE SHE WAS THE EXECUTIVE IN CHARGE OF THE EMMY® AND PEABODY AWARD-WINNING *KEY & PEELE*, THE EMMY® AWARD WINNING *@MIDNIGHT*, AND *LIGHTS OUT WITH DAVID SPADE*. HER BOOK, *BUY YOURSELF THE F*CKING LILIES*, DEBUTED AS THE #1 NEW RELEASE IN HUMOR ESSAYS AND SELF-HELP ON BOTH AUDIBLE AND KINDLE AND WAS A FINALIST FOR GOODREAD'S BEST NONFICTION BOOK OF 2020. *INSTYLE*, *PEOPLE MAGAZINE*, *BUZZFEED*, *GOOP*, AND MANY OTHERS HAVE CHOSEN *BUY YOURSELF THE F*CKING LILIES* AS ONE OF THE BEST NEW BOOKS OF 2020. THE BOOK ALSO HAS OVER 100,000 COPIES IN PRINT AND HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO 4 LANGUAGES TO DATE.

ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Combining My Passion for Social Justice with the World of Gaming

by **FRANCESCA PALAMARA '14**

My singular journey from being an avid student of cultural studies, to learning computer science, to exploring the world of human psyche in the field of entertainment has always made perfect sense to me, and I hope my path can inspire someone who's fighting for their own path.

After my first year in college studying American studies, History and Economics, I interned with a US congressman in Washington D.C. My passion for cultural studies led me to want to explore how economic factors were harming communities of color and how reform could better empower systems of change. It was my first time working professionally away from home, and it was a culture shock. I had never been surrounded by so many different political views, and I began to see the world outside of the LA bubble. Eager to learn more, I sought out mentors who had over 30-plus years of experience in the political field. What I discovered was shocking and universal. Throughout all their accounts, I saw a common thread: I would end up making a lot more compromises than meaningful changes. It was a powerful insight and one that made me seriously evaluate how I wanted to pursue my goal.

As a first-generation Latinx, I was under a lot of pressure to be practical. I had to get a job, support my family, and jump through the wealth divide that was being thrown in my face—or at least I felt I did. There wasn't a lot of time to explore; I had one shot and I had to make it count. In order to pursue social justice the way I wanted to I would need to pivot towards a field that had little to no restrictions and was still emerging—a field that had massive potential and the power to uplift the social well-being of people without legal or political restrictions. This led me to technology.

I dove into computer science head-on because I believed it could fulfill the needs of people through innovative change. In entering the field of technology with a background in social studies

Francesca Palamara '14 has worked on two games that aim to increase social awareness. *Cats Your Vote* engaged users in activities that showed consequences of voting and not voting. *Alma* allows users to take a personal look at the burdens on health care workers.



and history, I thought I would be at a disadvantage. I found the opposite to be true. When I spent a summer conducting graduate research at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Aerospace Engineering department, I got to work on a project that encapsulated people, arts and sciences in a way I could have never envisioned. I absolutely loved it.

Up until that point I was having my doubts about computer science. In class, I brought a holistic view to my studies. Why weren't we discussing the ethical implications of our code? How were these designs going to impact different groups of people and how could our creations be more user-centric? What was the potential of our creations and how could we encourage human connection? My summer in the cornfields opened my eyes because it was the first time I got to engage with the arts and sciences in a way that put people's experiences first. I wanted to pursue the intersection of entertainment and technology because it meant giving a narrative to people.

After that summer, I self-designed my major: Computational Media (the intersection

“I was not lost, I was determined. I dug for a potential within me I didn’t know existed and was willing to experiment in multiple industries to see what worked and what didn’t.”

of arts, sciences and human interaction) and applied to graduate school.

I was no longer explicitly pursuing technology and instead chose to explore how to design user-experiences for interactive media and game design. It was a medium that centered around crafting emotional experiences and allowing users to have their own lived takeaways. Rather than preaching why social change was important, players could experience it for themselves.

I went from wanting to do policy work to building machines to going to the forefront of a player’s mind and creating an interactive dialogue of why they should strive for behavioral change.

I was accepted into USC’s School of Cinematic Arts MFA program for Interactive Media and Game Design. During my time at USC, I still pursued systems for change. Two projects I worked on that had a huge impact were *Cats Your Vote* and *Alma*.

Cats Your Vote is a free-to-play social mobile game that aimed to increase voter awareness of the 2020 U.S. election. It was a game made by professors and students working together who were passionate about the importance of civic duty. It’s a billiards-style game that exhibits the real-time frustration and consequences of what’s at stake if players don’t participate in democracy ... using cats. Initially, the project was an IndieCade festival installation that we transformed into a mobile game. We received positive

feedback and learned a lot about the challenges of civic participation and entertainment by teaming up with organizations like HeadCount and UT Austin’s TX Votes.

Alma is a case study that examines the unseen emotional burden of healthcare workers in our modern-day care system, culturally, politically, and psychologically. Players take on the role of Alma, a caring mother, pediatric nurse, and Cuban immigrant. While she’s tending to other people’s children at work, she must also tend to her own child at home. I began the project a few months before the global pandemic and was conducting interviews with pediatric nurses about their experiences with professional burnout and self-care. I was interested in investigating the side of the healthcare industry we take for granted and what the repercussions are on overall well beingness. The game illustrates the precarious nature of work-life balance. It asks players to try not to please every character in the world or “out-game” the narrative, but to act selflessly and treat Alma’s desires as a criterion worth succeeding in.

My path could be seen as one taken by someone who is indecisive or doesn’t know what to do but I humbly disagree; I was not lost, I was determined. I dug for a potential within me I didn’t know existed and was willing to experiment in multiple industries to see what worked and what didn’t. In order to know what worked for me, I needed to explore the range of possibilities and “what ifs” so that I could improve my craft. I came into this life wanting to do something for social change and ended up finding a version that made the most sense to me—one that didn’t compromise my skills, but heightened them. ■

FRANCESCA PALAMARA '14 EARNED HER MFA AT USC'S SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS PROGRAM FOR INTERACTIVE MEDIA AND GAME DESIGN. SHE IS A GEORGE LUCAS SCHOLAR, A GENERATION GOOGLE SCHOLAR FOR WOMEN IN GAMING, AND ACADEMY OF INTERACTIVE ARTS AND SCIENCES (AIAS) WOMEN IN SCHOLAR SPONSORED BY INTEL. SHE HAS WORKED ON AN UNANNOUNCED *WALKING DEAD* PROJECT, DISNEY MOBILE GAMES, AND FORTNITE. SHE HAS BEEN FEATURED ON THE HOME PAGE OF TWITCH MULTIPLE TIMES, AND HAS HELPED MODERATE VARIOUS WOMEN IN GAMES PANELS THUS MAKING LIFELONG CONNECTIONS. *CATS YOUR VOTE* IS AVAILABLE AT THE APPLE APP STORE, GOOGLE PLAY, AND ITCH.IO. *ALMA* IS AVAILABLE AT ITCH.IO AND STEAM.

ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Alumni Spotlight Stories Now Available Online @bwsalumni

One of the silver linings in the work of Alumni Engagement this past year has been getting the opportunity to readily meet many of you virtually. Our alumni community is one of the school's strongest assets—brimming with talent, brilliance, and expertise in a multitude of career paths.

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

With the **Alumni Spotlights page**, we seek to highlight our vibrant community in the many ways you innovate, inspire, and impact meaningful change in the world. Thus far, we have featured stories about alumni frontline workers who have worked tirelessly through the pandemic, creatives who challenge traditional narratives and seek to amplify voices not commonly represented in the media, civil servants who seek to build better communities, and leading thinkers who advance social norms.

Our alumni community is a true force of knowledge and inspiration. We invite you to learn more about where our alumni are now and what they have been up to. New spotlights will be added throughout the year.

Your journey just like the Spotlights online and Alumni Profiles found in this magazine, may inspire and make a difference to our readers. Are you engaged in an interesting service project at home or abroad? Does your job help those in need? How are you sharing your creativity with others? Has your path since Brentwood taken some interesting turns along the way?

We want to hear your story. **Please reach out to us and be sure to follow our BWS Alumni Facebook and IG account @bwsalumni for more interactive features.** We look forward to hearing from you!

“Our alumni community is a true force of knowledge and inspiration.”





SPOTLIGHT STORIES

FIRST ROW

Angela Reddock-Wright, Esq. '87
Employment Mediator, Arbitrator, Investigator
Reddock Law Group/Judicate West

Bryce Caster '10
Recent MBA Graduate,
IESE Business School in Barcelona, Spain

Diamond Goodwin '06
OBGYN Resident

SECOND ROW

Holly Sidell '95

Jason Rogers '01
Writer, Olympian, Advocate for Conscious
Masculinity

Joanna Measer Kanow '91
Author and Founder of Seas of Trees

THIRD ROW

Kirsten Yamaguchi '99
Animator of film, VR, video games, and
commercials

Jonah Wieder '06
Director of Merchandising, Ann Inc
President, WayOUT Foundation, New York
Chapter

Max Friedman '18
Co-founder and Co-CEO of Inked Sports

FOURTH ROW

Mia Hutcherson '06
Airline Pilot

Michael Goldfarb '03
Founder of BHANTI

Monica Medellin '11
Founder & CEO of The Gnar Gnar Honeys

FIFTH ROW

Noel Heard '02
October Alum Guest Speaker
Belldegrun Center for Innovative Leadership

Sam Yebri '99
Co-founder of Merino Yebri LLP

Tyler Shooshani '18
Co-founder and Co-CEO of Inked Sports

GET CONNECTED...



EVENTS

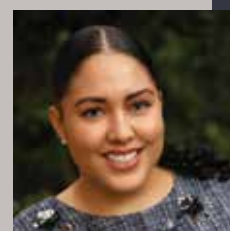
2020-2021 ALUMNI WEBINARS

The Alumni Office fully embraced the virtual world of Zoom, not being able to host reunions or events in person this past year. This shift to an online format presented learning opportunities for alumni across the country and around the world to network, connect, and escape from the everyday.

SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

Hacking Workplace Culture

This event featured Fortune 500 keynote speaker **Robert Richman '94**, who is the former Culture Strategist for Zappos.com (now part of Amazon) and Author of *The Culture Blueprint: The Step-by-Step Guide to the High Performance Workplace*. Robert was interviewed by **Shakira Gagnier '97**, the Vice-President of Diversity and Inclusion at Paradigm Talent Agency. Together they tackled culture questions such as "What makes an exceptional and high performing work culture?" and "How can anyone impact culture, regardless of title?" Alumni asked questions as part of a Q&A session at the conclusion of the event and it was a fascinating discussion about the modern workplace.



NOVEMBER 17, 2020

The Future of Entertainment in the Post-COVID Market

This panel of alumni [PICTURED ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT], was moderated by **Noah Pollack '95**, Media Consultant and Founder of MAP Media, and comprised of **Michael Marshall '83**, President of Motion Picture Business Affairs for Sony Pictures, **Cara Dellaverson '96**, Executive Vice President of Drama Programming for NBC Entertainment, **Teddy Riley '05**, Co-Creator/Writer/Executive Producer of Fairfax and **Larissa Bell '05**, Development Executive for Amazon Studios. They discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the entertainment industry, spanning everything from the distribution of content to the consumer experience to the creatives seeking to sell their works. Alumni had the opportunity to ask questions, among them, "How can young alumni break into the industry?" and "How does one seek out mentors?" We all learned so much, and we certainly expect to host another entertainment networking event in the near future!

MARCH 4, 2021

Alumni Women's Forum

The Alumni Women's Forum, a longstanding event featured five remarkable alumni who shared how they have built successful careers in diverse industries. [PICTURED BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT] Moderator, Current Trustee, and alum **Morgan Mallory '01**, Panelists **Melissa Dishell '92**, an expert in Strategic/Experiential Marketing and Branding for her company DMG

Events, **Georgia Messinger '18**, Co-Founder Girls Get IT and Trill Project, **Mariko Yamazaki-Sanchez '03**, Head of Occupational Therapy and Interdisciplinary Feeding Programs at Professional Child Development Associates, and **Julie Uhrman '92**, Founder, CEO, and President of Angel City Football Club, the newest professional women's soccer team launching in Los Angeles 2022.

WE EXTEND OUR GRATITUDE TO ALL THE PANELISTS, MODERATORS, ALUMNI, AND FRIENDS WHO ORGANIZED AND ATTENDED THESE EVENTS.

IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A FUTURE PANEL OR WEBINAR, PLEASE REACH OUT TO US IN THE ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT OFFICE!



UPCOMING EVENT

THE BRENTWOOD SCHOOL
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

HEART AND SOUL A CELEBRATION OF MR. V

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
FOR MORE DETAILS, please visit bwscampus.com/mr-v.

Questions?

PLEASE CONTACT:

Emily Ellis '94, Director of Alumni Engagement
at alumni@bwscampus.com

OR

Mary Sidell, Campaign/Event Coordinator,
at mr.v_legacy@bwscampus.com



EMERITUS

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



1

Former Latin teacher **Nicole Bali** has spent this past year sharing her time between the mountains of the Yosemite area and the beautiful shores of Lake Chapala in the state of Jalisco, central Mexico. Plenty of seclusion and plenty of time to read, knit, garden, and go for solitary walks.

Mary Beth Barry writes, "My COVID inspiration—I volunteered to teach a pod of 1st graders that my son in Oakland set up for my granddaughter, three other 1st graders, and a pre-K. We started in March 2020 and are still going strong. Here I am in my 7th decade, back in the classroom. Well, not really in the classroom—it's all been by Zoom. I discovered once again why I love teaching. The kids taught me how to use the Zoom platform. Teaching the pod was the highlight of my Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Seeing those faces on the screen inspired me. We were all in this together and I was so lucky to do my small part!"



2

Jeff Porter ("Mr. P., Coach P., CP, CoPo") is now wrapping up year number 5 since retiring from Brentwood. Notably, although he says frequently, "I highly recommend retirement," he realized very soon that he truly missed teaching, in some form, be it biology or volleyball. So Coach P. has gotten back into coaching, with a local club program. Along with coaching, Mr. P. has been on many fly-fishing excursions and has traveled a bit. Best of all, CoPo (now "GrandPo") has been enjoying lots of time spent with his two grandkids. Life is good!



3



4

Recently retired and fearing that she might become very nostalgic about the opening of school, Ms. **Lynn Gelfand** or "Ms. G," decided to take a road trip with her husband through France in early September 2019. They began their adventure in the northern city of Rouen and winded their way south to spend time in the Dordogne where her brother lives. To say that Ms. G was in seventh heaven is an understatement. With one more adventure abroad (to Israel) in January 2020 followed by a visit to Portland to see the grandchildren, she was feeling as free as a bird, but then the lockdown occurred. Now rather than pursuing her routine of swimming three times a week

CLASS NOTES

and Pilates, the only exercise she would have for months would be long walks followed by time spent gardening, cooking, reading (she is over 1,000 pages into Marcel Proust's masterpiece *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*), and attending literature courses via UCLA Extension on Zoom. It goes without saying that she is enjoying retirement but misses her former colleagues and wonderful students and hopes that current faculty and students will be back in the classroom soon so that they can enjoy the delights of seeing friends and learning in the warm and supportive environment of Brentwood School.

After 27 years of teaching Spanish at Brentwood School, "Profe" **Daniel Gannon** resigned in 2018 and moved to Palm Springs where he purchased a 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo in a complex of 44 acres where he enjoys leisurely hikes, fresh air, and starlit evening skies.

He worked a short stint as a substitute teacher in the local school district helping out as needed for the middle and high schools of Palm Springs Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, and Desert Hot Springs.

He currently tutors via zoom and admits that as challenging as one-on-one teaching can be, he has gained immense respect for his former colleagues who continue to teach full class loads via the Internet! He is well aware of the many stresses that these recent COVID months have laid upon parents, students, and teachers. He is in awe of the resilience of students and teachers everywhere! He hopes to be able to connect with many of you at a possible future on-campus graduation. Go Eagles!

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: After Profe Gannon submitted this note, we recently learned that he has been diagnosed with an extremely challenging form of brain cancer. To send him your love and support, please visit caringbridge.org, search for Daniel Gannon, and request permission to enter.

Within a few days, his sister will see your request and admit you into the site so you are able to read his daily posts, observe some videos or photos, and make comments that are viewable to the public. He would love to hear from any and all former students, teachers, parents, and administrators!

1978

Elena Karina Byrne

(Jepson) thanks former teacher and friend

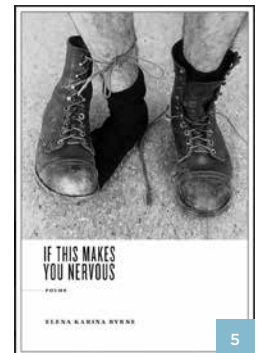
Judith O'Hanlon for the beginning inspiration.

Elena is celebrating last year's chapbook *No, Don't* (What Books Press) and the forthcoming fourth full-length book, *If This Makes You Nervous* (Omnidawn 2021). Her recent interdisciplinary adventures include a reading series for the Craft Contemporary Museum, interviews with LARB, *Adroit Journal*, *Plume*, and elsewhere while attending AUSB's MFA program in Writing and Contemporary Media. She is excited to visit Europe again (pandemic-willing!) with a friend this late autumn!

1979

Liz Hiestand reports,

"Currently I'm blessed to be a new grandmother! My oldest son and his wife welcomed a little girl in April. All 3 of my sons serve in various branches of the military. My Marine is working hard on perfecting his Japanese. He was able to act as an interpreter on his last deployment and very much wants his next duty station to be in Japan. My daughter is working on her degree to become



1 | **Lynn Gelfand in Rouen, France** 2 | **Jeff Porter on a fly-fishing excursion** 3 | **Daniel Gannon** 4 | **Nicole Bali** 5 | **the fourth full-length book by Elena Karina Byrne '78 due out in 2021**



Class of 1981 Zoom Reunion

Organized by their fearless leader, **Mel Powell**, the Class of '81 also held a virtual zoom reunion on May 23, 2021 to celebrate their 40-year reunion with classmates around the globe. **FIRST ROW: Manning Mann**, in Colorado; **Mel Powell**, in Sherman Oaks; **Jeff Sheldon**, in Newport Beach; **SECOND ROW: Tracy Sanders Yort**, in Greenwich, CT; **James Broude**, in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY; **Brian Nairn**, in Park City, UT; **THIRD ROW: Larry Galizio**, in Sacramento, CA; **Debbie Stogel**, in Westwood; **Rachel Campbell**, in L.A.; **FOURTH ROW: Lesley Martin Ford**, in London, England; **Katherine Lane Crouse**, in Darien, CT; and **JoAnne Patman Pogue**, in Redondo Beach, CA. According to Mel, "Everyone agreed that an in-person will be better; everyone agreed that today had the advantage of gathering folks in far-flung places; and everyone agreed that this Zoom check-in, as a supplement and not a substitute, was 100% worth it and we're very happy we did it."

a special education teacher. I moved to Hawaii about three years ago and love the culture, the people, and the beauty of these islands."

1981

A NOTE FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 1981: We celebrate the lives and mourn the passing of our classmates and friends **Vini Boyce** and **Ted Kahl** in the past year, and we look forward to sharing happy stories when reunions arrive. We asked classmates to share good news for this edition of class notes to honor their memories and enjoy the good instead of dwelling on the losses.

Keith Lubell reports, "Like everyone else, Serena, Sam, Adeline, and I have been surviving the year working at home in New Rochelle (yes the first epicenter on the East Coast). Since we can't really travel, we have been exploring the local areas we have overlooked, liked the NY Finger Lakes, North Fork of Long Island, Misquamicut RI, the Adirondacks, and our backyard. Our daughter, Adeline, is a fish, so we put in an above-ground pool (which became the new thing to do here in New Rochelle [in-ground are rare]), and we got a pandemic pup, Golden Doodle, from the Amish in PA. We have lots of good

stories and look forward to how others have been doing and hear their stories."

After a few years in Hollywood Production and a few more in Hollywood Event Planning & Catering, **JoAnne Patman Pogue** segued into teaching in the Torrance area of the South Bay. Almost 20 years later, she still loves working at the middle school in her area from which both her kids graduated. The best part is catching up with past students at the beach and in the neighborhood. When not working, JoAnne reports "I love being with family and friends, enjoy being in or on the ocean, or biking next to it. We are proud of our two kids... my son a LA County Lifeguard and Athletic Trainer and my daughter a Middle School Science Teacher who just had her first child with her awesome husband. Everyone lives close by so we are super fortunate. My husband is still in the food business but finds plenty of time for all kinds of ocean adventures. We settled in Redondo Beach 28 years ago and have no plans to leave our awesome home."

Mel Powell used pandemic stay-at-home times to think about sourdough but instead act on years of procrastination to compile the Jewish

humor stories (for our synagogue) written from the mid-70s to 1991 by his father and from 1991 on by himself, and turn them into a book of Jewish humor accessible to non-Jews as well. He's working on getting the collection of 126 (!) stories published now.

Dr. Larry Galizio is in his sixth year as President & CEO of the Community College League of California, the statewide membership association for all 116 California community colleges. He's recently co-authored the book: *A College for All Californians: A History of the California Community Colleges* to be published this fall by Teachers College Press, Columbia University. He lives with his wife, Janice, who is a lobbyist, and their three children: Carmella, Matteo, and Giovanni, in the Sacramento region. He sincerely apologizes to all of his Brentwood teachers for being such a lousy student in high school.

1983

Marc Camras launched a new Online Coaching business for Franchisors and Franchisees called the Franchise CEO Mindset.



1

1 | **JoAnne Patman Pogue '81** 2 | **Marc Camras '83's new online coaching business** 3 | **Larry Galizio '81 with children Carmella, Matteo, Giovanni and wife Janice**



2



3

1 | Fellow classmates from the class of 1984 reunite via Zoom: TOP ROW, L TO R: David Taub, Jeff Kabot, Adam Resnick. MIDDLE ROW: Peter Corrigan, Paul Haddad, Andrew Levey. BOTTOM ROW: David Fink 2 | Ken Mariash '94 with his partner Nick 3 | Holly Sidell '95 4 | Joana Measer Kanow '91 5 | Brennan Spiegel '90 6 | Kiyoshi Yamazaki '95 with his two sons and wife



28-day rehabs) (www.awakeningrecovery.org). The LA-based structured sober living home was opened with support from the Mariash, Daly, Resnick, and Semel families. He also recently jumped to a medical device startup to lead marketing and is glad he made the leap. Lastly, Ken celebrated 10 years with his loving partner, Nick, who works at Google on the Assistant, and serves on the boards of LA Opera and the Japanese Art Society of America. They are based in Westwood and frequently bounce between NYC and Japan. Ken sends love to his Bwood family!

1984

Adam Resnick writes, "Normally we meet in person over winter break, but this year it was Zoom. David Taub organized a remote gift exchange, which was great fun, and we opened our gifts live during the call. We reminisced, including sharing pics and videos from our Bwood days."

1990

Brennan Spiegel published a new book in 2020 titled *VRx: How Virtual Therapeutics Will Revolutionize Medicine*. The book was named by WIRED magazine as one of its top 8 science books of 2020. *VRx* describes a new field of medicine,

which Brennan has helped to develop, using virtual reality (VR) to manage pain, anxiety, depression, PTSD, dementia, eating disorders, stroke rehab, and many other conditions. Brennan is currently Director of Health Services Research for Cedars-Sinai, is a Professor of Medicine and Public Health at UCLA, and is an Assistant Dean at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. His lab is now one of the largest focused on using digital technologies, such as VR, smartphone apps, and wearable biosensors in healthcare.

1991

Joanna Measer Kanow has released her first YA novel *EcoQueen* about a female, teenage, bi-racial superhero who has the powers to reverse climate change.

Holly Agajanjan writes, "In November of 2020, I left my private law practice for a position as Chief General Counsel to New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham."

1994

Ken Mariash's addiction recovery nonprofit, *Awakening Recovery*, is celebrating five years by announcing landmark 83% success rates (~10x better than

1995

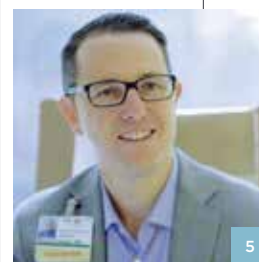
Holly Sidell wrote and performed an autobiographical solo play, *Deconstructing Holly*, that premiered as an official selection of Solofest 2020 in March of last year, only to be closed the next day due to COVID-19. Thanks to the critical acclaim it received, Holly is excited to share that the show, which explores how going through breast cancer and having the BRCA1 gene mutation helped her deconstruct what it means to be and become a woman, will be a part of the Hollywood Fringe Festival in August.

Over the past decade, **Kiyoshi Yamazaki** has

served as a sideline physician for multiple professional, collegiate, high school, and Olympic-level athletes. He continues to help weekend warriors, industrial workers, outdoor enthusiasts, and athletes return to their active lifestyles. Dr. Kiyoshi Yamazaki currently works in the Greater Denver Area as a Non-Operative Sports Medicine Physician with specialized training and experience in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of musculoskeletal ailments and injuries. He helps patients maximize function as well as minimize disability and time away from sports, work, school, and activities. He performs and directs non-surgical treatment (including ultrasound-guided injections, orthobiologics, and minimally-invasive Tendon procedures), guides appropriate detailed referrals to PT/OT/Kinesiology, and expedites referrals to specialty orthopedic surgeons when needed. In addition to his professional life, Dr. Yamazaki is passionate about maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle through sports, outdoor activities, cooking, and spending time with his wife, two boys & their dog.

1996

After raising over 8MM in games on Kickstarter, **Javon**





- 1 | Javon Frazier '96
- 2 | Blake Kobashigawa '03 and wife Kristen welcomed twins Dani and Gaby
- 3 | Peter Goldwyn '97 with his daughter, Vivi '30, and son, Teddy '27
- 4 | Gabé Hirschowitz '04
- 5 | Allyson Ostrowski '96
- 6 | *Challenger The Final Flight*, created, produced, and co-directed by Steven Leckart '98

Frazier announced the launch of his new company, Maestro Media. Maestro Media is designed to help companies and influencers create fun and novel consumer products to increase their revenue streams and grow their brands. With expertise in product development, launch marketing, and multi-channel distribution, Maestro gives clients an easy way to build loyal long-term customers and specializes in bringing them fun and delight. Find more information at MaestroMedia.com.

After a wonderful and rewarding 15-year career as Deputy District Attorney, **Allyson (Rinella) Ostrowski** has moved into the civil sector. Still wanting to help people whose bodies have been hurt through little to no fault of their own, she chose personal injury law. Making this jump just as the pandemic started has been surreal, but she is enjoying both this new area of law and the law firm she landed at (Natanian & Yaghoubi in Century City www.lainjurylawgroup.com.) In addition, Allyson is continuing to represent victims of crime and the family members of murder victims on a pro bono basis to ensure that their rights are respected during the criminal prosecution process.

1997

Peter Goldwyn has spent the quarantine monitoring his children's homeschooling, camping, and working as President of Samuel Goldwyn Films. His children are both attending Brentwood. Teddy is in 6th grade and Vivi is in 3rd. This year his company released 30 movies and has received three academy award nominations. He also adopted a dog and learned to bake bread.

1998

Steven Leckart created, produced, and co-directed a four-part documentary on Netflix about the Challenger space shuttle. The series, which premiered in September 2020, was executive produced by J.J. Abrams and Bad Robot.

2000

Cameron Wald sold his LA-based vertically integrated cannabis company, Project Cannabis to Columbia Care, a publicly-traded multi-state operator. The Project Cannabis portfolio includes four dispensaries, a 36,000 square foot state-of-the-art cultivation facility in Downtown LA, and established brands, Triple Seven, Classix, and the Plug.

2003

On February 12, 2021, Uncle **Andrew Herzog**, Uncle **Dave Ryan**, Auntie **Jaclyn Ryan**, and

Aunt Erin Kobashigawa

'04 welcomed into the world their new nieces: Dani and Gaby Kobashigawa (just like her Tia Gabi Rocha!) The proud aunt and uncles are already teaching the little Eaglets important life skills like how many dots it costs to get warm chocolate chip cookies at the cafeteria, all of the words to the alma mater (in harmony, clearly), and many others. In preparation for the Kobashigawa (Eagles) Nest growing +2, Blake Kobashigawa and his wife Kristen moved to North Hollywood, to ensure they complied with the "4-mile maximum dwelling distance from uncles" mandate that was instituted in 2014. Andrew and Blake are also proud to share that the New York Roommate Association has asked them (4-time gold medalists) to host this year's Roommate Awards ceremony, which like many events, has gone entirely virtual. With Andrew now in Philadelphia and Blake in Los Angeles, they are ecstatic that they will be able to participate. Dani and Gaby are actually up for two 2021 awards: Best Wombmates and Best New Roommates.

2004

Alex Haskell joined the Biden Administration in January after spending the last three years as a

Counsel on the Senate Judiciary Committee under Senator Feinstein. He's working in the White House, where he focuses on vetting and confirmations of presidential appointees. He's forever chasing the amount of power he had as a Prefect, and though he knows he'll never get there, he's determined to try.

From fashion to fine arts and art consulting, the throughline for **Gabé Hirschowitz** has been that art should be accessible and deeply intertwined with daily life. The founder of UNICEF's groundbreaking Next Generation Art Party and former Acquisitions Committees manager at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), she has a long history of supporting new and emerging artists, merging the same instincts into her art advising and philanthropic efforts. Whether she's discovering up-and-coming artists or volunteering with youth programs at her long-time supported, non-profit organization, Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services in Los Angeles, one thing remains constant: she stands as a strong advocate for keeping the arts alive in everyday life. Among the many ways she donates her time and expertise, for instance,

she especially enjoys organizing educational museum visits and art-focused activities for Los Angeles-area children. Other stand-out endeavors for her include traveling to Indonesia with UNICEF Next Generation to assist in administering polio vaccinations to children and visiting women's shelters in Morocco with Women's Voices Now to document residents' experiences. In addition to these trips and stateside volunteer work, she has curated numerous art exhibits benefitting worthy causes such as Stand Up To Cancer at Soho House West Hollywood and UNICEF's Tap Project—a nationwide campaign that provides children in impoverished nations access to safe, clean water. "This past decade has been incredibly eye-opening for me," Gabé says. "I discovered my purpose through my passion." Now, in the same spirit, Gabé's recently launched online platform, GaleriePerrie.com, is an extension of her lifelong love of art. With it, she is broadening her scope to make professionally curated décor available to the general public and longtime collectors alike with a simple click. The site features fresh, contemporary work from established and emerging artists around the globe, presenting

it for direct sale online. "My goal with Galerie Perrie, is to provide a platform for art I believe in," writes Gabé. Galerie Perrie's aim is to expand the world of art collecting in an exciting new way that gives everyone access to collecting some of the most cutting-edge work today. You can learn more at www.GaleriePerrie.com and on social media @GaleriePerrie.

2005

Rabbi **Andrew Oberstein** recently received ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. This summer, he is proud to be starting his role as Assistant Rabbi at Temple Israel of Boston.

Rochelle Bailis and her husband Chris recently welcomed their first baby boy, Finn Bailis Waller. Rochelle is still working in the tech industry and is currently the VP of Marketing at LeaseLock.

On October 13, 2019, **Teddy Kim** finished the Chicago Marathon in 2:59:11, fulfilling his goal of breaking 3 hours. He thanks David Foote for inculcating a love of running, and he challenges Peter Birney '03 and Sean McKean '00 for alumni marathoning supremacy.

2006

Brian Roizen and his wife Rachel celebrated the birth of their baby girl (possible future class of '38!) last year. His company Feedonomics recently grew to a team of over 250 people. Brian loves getting to work with his fellow "Feedos," which includes brother and co-founder Robert Roizen '09, sister Sara Roizen '14 and his dad, to help online retailers sell more products.

Elvis Ha was recently recognized by Okta, Inc. and Business Insider as one of twelve 2021 Tech Up-and-Comers! This list features people who are thinking differently, leading with passion, and pushing the traditional narratives while building some of the most successful enterprise cloud services in 2021. Their aim is to move the needle within their organizations, and beyond.

Elvis' advice for the next generation of up-and-coming tech leaders: "Reflect on the specific set of skills you bring to the collaborative table and then cultivate how those skills can help deliver on, exceed, and even subvert customer expectations. Align goals across the organization and limit the number of goals team members focus on at one time."

Scarlet Masius utilized the last year to establish themselves at the intersection of mental health, immersive experience design, art, and psychedelics. They created Safety Net Fund, which raised \$650k to support artists who lost their livelihood due to COVID, and an immersive experience design lab and consultancy called Liminalia. They established the framework for online peer support programs to engage in mutual mental aid. They have worked with Burning Man, MAPS, Consciousness Hacking, Esalen, and created programming for families in the throes of homeschooling. They are now working with the School of Consciousness Medicine to establish psychedelic-assisted therapies and guiding as a critical tool for healing from the global collective trauma of the pandemic, as well as acting as a consultant for Spatial Activations (run by the founder of Meow Wolf), board member for North Star (creating ethical codes for businesses in psychedelics), and advisor for Inaura (platform for trauma healing). If any of this sparks interest in connecting, they can be reached at scarletmasius@gmail.com.

Sam (Berry) McMillan's rodeo queen career is temporarily on hold so that she can raise her son Wizard of Oz McMillan, who was born September 6, 2020.

2008

After a successful career in Ivy League Admissions and receiving a Masters Degree in Education, **Jayson Weingarten** is helping students and families navigate the highly selective admissions process as Senior Admissions Director at Ivy Coach.

When the pandemic hit, **Logan Kinsey** learned how to sew from another Brentwood alum so that she could donate face masks to anyone that needed/wanted them. After donating over 450 masks, demand started to grow and by teaching herself new sewing techniques, Logan branched out beyond face masks and opened up her online shop, greatScott LA, where she makes and sells custom/made-to-order denim jackets, tote bags, accessories, and more! (Matching dog jackets are in the near future so keep your eye out!) The jackets are really fun because they are one-of-a-kind, bold, and uniquely quirky." She has a large selection of denim jackets, tote bags, face masks, and accessories—all



1



2



3



4



5



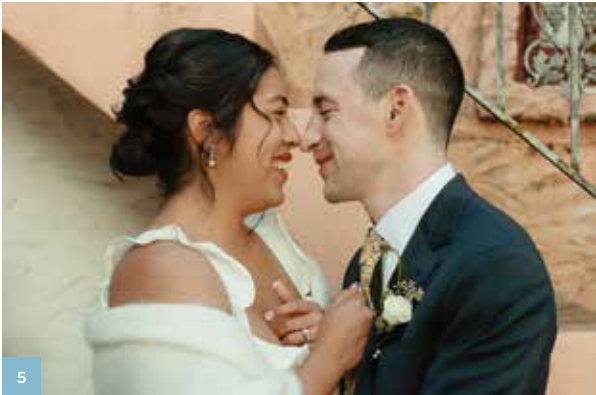
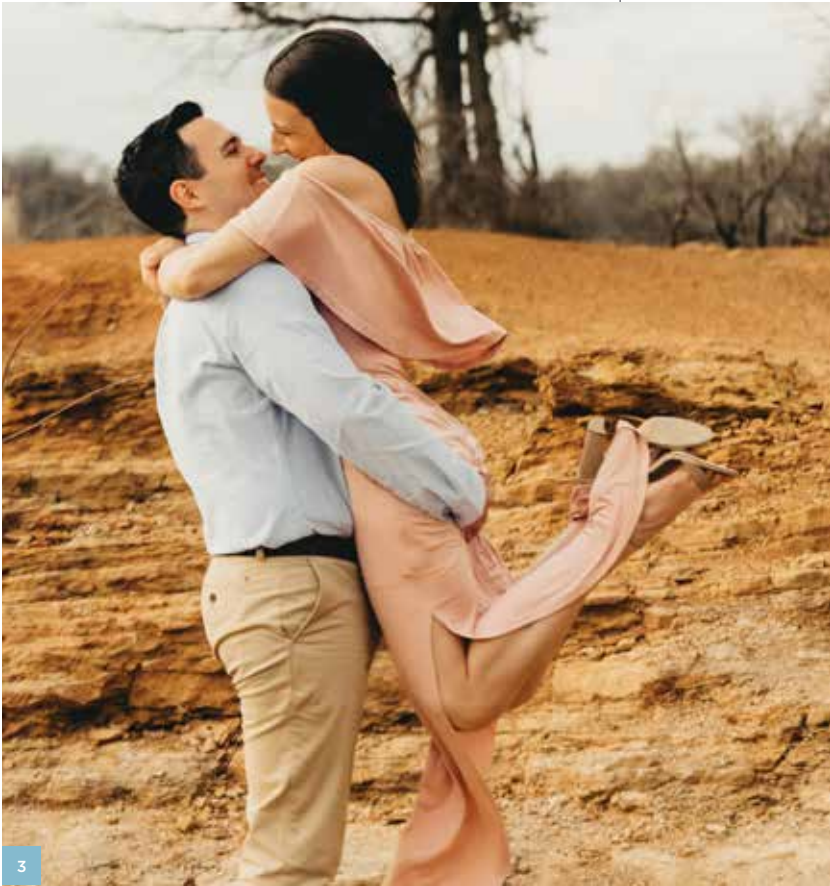
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7

- 1 | Elvis Ha '06
- 2 | "Wizardof" Oz McMillan, son of Sam (Berry) McMillan '06
- 3 | Teddy Kim '05 at the Chicago Marathon
- 4 | Brian Roizen '06 with wife Rachel and newborn daughter enjoying a hike!
- 5 | Finn Bailis Waller, son of Rochelle Bailis '05
- 6 | Logan Kinsey '08
- 7 | Andrew Oberstein '05

1 | Andrew Glantz '13
2 | Talia Daneshrad '19
3 | Mitch Gruenthal '12
4 | Rachel (Twersky) Tischauer '08 with husband Alex, and newborn child Adam
5 | Xochitl Castro '09 and Chris Harkins tie the knot



handmade, plus she works directly with customers if they want custom jackets or bags. Starting her own business has been exceptionally rewarding, but that didn't go without the hard work to get it there. And because her business started as donation-based, it's been her mission to continue just that by donating a percentage of proceeds to a different charity each month. As a new business, completely female-owned and run Logan has high hopes for her brand. "Right now, it's just about getting it out there and growing brand awareness. I know that by growing my brand I'll be able to do a lot of good by touching a lot of different charities." And as greatScott LA's tagline reads, "Be Bold. Be Different. Shop greatScott." Be sure to check it out at www.greatScottLA.com and follow her company on Instagram: @greatScott_LosAngeles. Thank you for supporting small female-owned and run businesses!"

Rachel (Twersky) Tichauer and her husband Alex welcomed their son, Adam Randy Tichauer, into the world on July 12, 2020.

2009

Xochitl Castro married her partner of eight years, Chris Harkins, in the fall of 2020. Xochitl and Chris

met while they were undergraduates at Tufts University studying abroad in Madrid, Spain in 2012. They were married in an intimate ceremony with close family and friends.

Adan Acevedo and his college sweetheart, Louisa Carman, were married on June 12, 2021. His sister, Brenda Acevedo '24 (who was born during their freshman year), wrapped up her own freshman year at Brentwood in June 2021. Adan will be starting at Harvard Business School this August.

In May 2021, **Eva Gurfein** graduated with her MBA from the University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business. Passionate about the sustainable future of the food movement, she has focused her career on promoting resource-efficient innovation. During her time at Haas, Eva worked as the Sustainable Food Initiative Student Lead with the Center for Responsible Business and joined Alice Waters' teaching team for the "Edible Education 101" course. Post-MBA Eva will join ZX Ventures, the global growth incubator, innovation arm, and venture capital fund of Anheuser-Busch InBev, where she will work on transformational innovation seed ventures.

2012

2020 was a big year for **Mitch Gruenthal**. He started a new job as a Sr. Financial Analyst with American Airlines in Dallas, TX. In addition, he started pursuing an MBA in Finance & Strategy at the SMU Cox School of Business. While juggling a new job and intensive school schedule, Mitch proposed to his college sweetheart, Morgan, whom he met as an undergrad studying at TCU. The happy couple has set a wedding date for June 2022.

2013

Andrew Glantz was named to the "Top 100 St. Louisans to Know to Succeed in Business" in St. Louis Small Business Monthly. GiftAMeal, a startup he founded, now has 250 partner restaurants and has provided over 600,000 meals to those in need.

2019

Talia Daneshrad started her own food Instagram that focuses on creating a fun and easy lifestyle with food. Her account @thatgirdiet is a no-stress, no-guilt guide to eating what you want, when you want. Follow and join the #thatgirdiet community! Feel free to send her a message with questions, comments, or just to say hello. ■

IN MEMORIAM



Vinson Boyce '81



Edward "Ted" Kahl '81



Cay Enns '87



Matthew Rapore '05



Jack Aronson '17

2020

**Coach Pat Brown**

(41 years)
Associate Athletic
Director, Upper
School Physical
Education Chair,
Varsity Football
Coach

BY DAVID FOOTE, DEAN
OF STUDENTS

Dignity and integrity. If you were to ask me from my 27 years at Brentwood, who best embodies these noble characteristics, Pat Brown is the obvious choice. Whether it was on the sidelines coaching his players, introducing 9th Grade students to the weight room and daily workouts, or cajoling anyone who would listen with a story about Leon and Wyoming football, the early days of Brentwood, or his beloved Kentucky Wildcats, Pat simply exudes quality of character in everything he did on and around campus. I recall an assembly in my early days at school when Pat asked the prefects if he could make an announcement—a rare

thing to begin with (this was in the days of the aircraft carrier haircut that he had so he just looked intimidating, even more so than Ms. Creasy or I could ever be). It was silent as he walked up and quietly scolded the entire student body on their behavior not at a sporting event, but during lunch and break each day, leaving trash all over campus; the gym was even more silent as he reminded everyone what their jobs and duties were as citizens of the campus. In that moment (and many others), one can see that Pat was always teaching everyone he encountered what it meant to be a decent human being; his football players can probably tell you many, many stories about the life lessons they gained during a half-time speech out in Boron, or a moment in a huddle in which he convinced them that they were truly capable of excellence, and then executed it on the next play. Certainly, as a

young coach working with him as an Athletic Director, I could not ask for a more helpful and thoughtful mentor. I recall, when the girls won the banner soccer match in 2001 to reach the final, that it was Pat who was the first to congratulate me as a coach; I remember thinking I was just happy to be able to have a single banner alongside his many. Watching him in the fitness tent now with kids (and faculty!) just beginning to discover “training,” his supportive words of encouragement could probably convince anyone that they too might someday become an “Iron Eagle” with the right amount of work. When Kurt Vonnegut was asked a question about life, he replied, “What made being alive almost worthwhile for me, besides music, was all the saints I met, who could be anywhere. By saints I meant people who behaved decently in a strikingly indecent society.” I think most all of us who have been coached by and worked alongside Pat all these years would agree that while we appreciate his love of country music, it is the remarkably decent human being that we will miss the most and hold dear in our memories. ■

**Mike Grasso**

(27 years)
Upper School Science
Teacher

BY SABRINA ERICKSON,
CHAIR, SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT

Grasso is a beloved teacher by all—students and faculty. He understands teens and loves working with them. He invested in getting to know his students and this strong student-teacher relationship helped him reach his students in the classroom. His lessons were designed to engage and excite everyone about science, developing life-long learners. Mike was versatile and taught biology, chemistry, and physics. He always had a strong lab-based curriculum, which he generously shared with his colleagues. He not only excited students about science, but also his colleagues. Mike is the teacher you would bounce ideas off of—have you ever done this lab? or this demonstration? The answer was always yes, especially if it involved fire. He would not simply show you how to do the demonstration, he would stand next to you as we did it for support.

“...while we appreciate his love of country music, it is the remarkably decent human being that we will miss the most and hold dear in our memories.”

LAURA FEUCHT, UPPER SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER, REMEMBERS: One time, out of the blue, Mike came by the science office with two frames. He gave me one with a giant moth in it and said that it was from his personal collection. Mike has always been generous with his time and energy and I will miss his famously explosive demonstrations and big heart.

FROM DAVID POPE, UPPER SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER

I only worked with Mike for a year and a half. I feel fortunate that I had that amount of time with him. He supported me in the classroom, by encouraging me to do chemical demonstrations that stirred the student's emotions and learning. He was always there with answers helping me navigate the potholes in coming to a new school after working in the same one for 17 years. He was willing to take a class when I needed help, and I returned the favor when I could. I saw firsthand that he was a great teacher, but mostly I witnessed a great educator. He always had an incredibly diverse group of graduates that came back to see "Grasso."

"Mike invested in getting to know his students and this strong student / teacher relationship helped him reach his students in the classroom."

His students past and present knew that he loved them for who they were. I saw him recently riding his bike on the strand and we pedaled along just chatting. I told him that I am happy that he is retiring but sad that he will not be working together anymore. He was a role model for me and for his students. Cheers Grasso! ■



Denise Mahdesian
(20 years)
Upper School Counselor
BY DR. JOSH BERGER,
DIRECTOR OF THE
BELLDEGRUN CENTER
FOR INNOVATIVE
LEADERSHIP

Denise Mahdesian is one of the most empathetic, caring, and committed people I have ever met. For 20 years, Denise gave selflessly of herself to the Brentwood community teaching Human Development, Psychology, and Peer Leadership. She was a fantastic counselor for students and colleagues alike, and consistently supported our kids at their arts performances, athletics events, affinity group gatherings, and Young Women's Conferences. Denise opened up many division wide mental health conversations on campus with topics such as wellness, anxiety, depression, body image, and substance abuse. She was a primary resource for families and partnered Brentwood with organizations such as Teen Line and The Rape Treatment Center.

With a boundless laugh and unmatched listening skills, Denise earned the trust of our student body, and she was frequently one of

the most important people in students' lives during times of crisis. Said one of our seniors, "Ms. Mahdesian is the kindest teacher I have ever met and cares about every single student at the school." Another added, "Ms. Mahdesian never forgot a birthday and always congratulated everyone on their extracurricular accomplishments. The love she has for teaching is evident, and we want her to know how much we love

and respect her. When students think of tight-knit teacher-student relationships, they think of their relationship with Ms. Mahdesian." Working closely with Denise as co-advisors and founders of our Peer Leadership program has been one of the highlights of my professional life. Denise is a close friend and mentor to many on campus, and our community misses her dearly. ■

"Working closely with Denise as co-advisors and founders of our Peer Leadership program has been one of the highlights of my professional life. Denise is a close friend and mentor, and our community will miss her dearly next year."

2020

**Diane Oliveira**

Former Middle School Director

BY DR. DAWN CUNNION,
ASSOCIATE HEAD OF
SCHOOL

It was 5 years ago and Brentwood School was in the midst of a search for a Middle School Director. We were in the finalist stage of the process and Mike and I were meeting with Diane in Mike's office. As I sit here today I find myself reflecting back on that conversation. Sure, there were things Diane shared about her experience with curriculum, ERB interpretation, technology, and her penchant for professional growth and development that are memorable. What really stands out, however, is the fact that after hiring her and watching her in action for the past four years as the Middle School Director, I am struck by how authentic Diane was in that meeting. She was the person we met and the skills she brought to Brentwood, along with her deeply collaborative leadership style, has her leaving a strong program and an even stronger sense of community amongst the faculty and staff.

Diane is a teacher at heart, and all teachers are leaders. She knows

when to listen, when to ask questions, and when to take the lead to develop a new initiative or grow those with whom she works. Diane was masterful at researching various conferences and workshops. Mention an interest and Diane was on it. And that interest in growing included her as well...again in a collaborative manner. Diane believed in learning with and from others, meaning that when she attended a conference or workshop she often did so with members of the faculty to insure that what they were learning would be brought back to the rest of the team.

This mindset of "being in the work together" enabled Diane to work with the faculty and staff to implement a number of changes in the Middle School. From curricular changes in a variety of subjects, to adding new electives, moving to a block schedule, creating time for community, revising the exam schedule, finding common assembly and lunch times with the Upper School during each week to enhance community on the East Campus, and developing subject coordinators to insure clear curricular articulation, Diane

was always thinking to question the status quo and ask how to make a program or event better.

She was the perfect person to lead the Middle School as it expanded to add the 6th Grade and moved into a new building. Her work ethic, attention to detail, willingness to engage everyone in the process, creativity, flexibility, and patience provided faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and students with the support and encouragement they needed to undertake such a transformational process. She led, she cheered people on, and she worked hard!

When Diane shared that she would be moving out of the area at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, we were all saddened because not only has she been a respected leader, she was a beloved leader as well. Diane, we wish you all the best as you continue on your journey personally and professionally. We thank you for sharing your many talents with us and we miss you. ■

**Nicole Arndt**

New Middle School Director

Prior to Nicole's appointment to Brentwood School as Middle School Director, Nicole developed her career as an educator and school leader in both independent and public schools in California and New York. She served most recently as the Head of the PreKindergarten-8th Grade program at Williamsburg Northside School, an independent school in Brooklyn, NY. During her tenure, she facilitated the opening of the new middle school division, a project that involved hiring, program and curriculum design, and community development, while overseeing the whole PK-8 program.

Prior to her time at Williamsburg Northside School, Nicole spent six years serving the Mandell School, a PreKindergarten-8th Grade program in a variety of capacities, ranging from Director of Literacy and Learning,

to Assistant Head of School. She has also been a classroom teacher, providing instruction in all grade levels, PK-5 as well as a six-year tenure as a college instructor at Long Island University.

Nicole earned a Master's Degree in School Leadership from Penn State University, a Master's Degree in Special Education from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from San Francisco State University. She considers herself a lifelong learner, always eager to find ways to stay in tune with best education practices.

Nicole grew up in California, but after spending the last 18 years living in New York, she is excited to return to California and resume her outdoor lifestyle, enjoying such activities as backpacking, cycling, hiking, and her newest adventure: learning to sail. She is thrilled to join the Brentwood community! ■



Kristen Letchworth

Former Director of Summer Programs, Middle School Spanish Teacher, and BCIL Curriculum Collaborator

BY DIANE OLIVEIRA, FORMER MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

In her six years at Brentwood, Kristen has excelled in the roles of classroom teacher, advisor, 7th Grade Dean, Middle School Director of Service Learning, Director of Summer Programs, and as a member of the Brentwood Leadership Team. Embracing each position fully, Kristen worked tirelessly to improve the experience for everyone involved.

She immediately came to the minds of senior leadership in late May 2018 when a sudden need arose for a Director of Summer Programs. Not only did Kristen facilitate the summer program, but she quickly grew the program enrollment to a remarkable level despite the construction of the new Middle School building and the renovation of the Eagles Center. She independently reached out to teachers and administrators from all three divisions for input as to what they would like to see offered, then made several key changes in her second summer. Adding students, faculty, and new innovative courses resulted in a wonderful experience for campers. She was determined to continue growing a quality summer program when yet another challenge bubbled up as in-person summer school was no longer an option. Without missing a beat, she managed to retain several classes in an online format, recruited faculty, and spearheaded another successful summer.

Faculty happily volunteers to assist Kristen because her activities are well-organized and those assisting her always know the expectations in advance. She builds relationships with others based on mutual respect and models servant leadership, stepping in when she sees something needing to be done and asking what she can do to help. Kristen is exceptional in so many ways. Her friendly attitude, creativity, can-do spirit, tremendous problem-solving skills, commitment to professional growth, energetic work ethic, and progressive vision contributed positively to the Brentwood School community. Kristen is continuing her professional journey at the Thaden School in Arkansas. We wish her the best of luck! ■



Maggie Lara

Director of Summer Programs

Maggie Lara celebrates her 10th year at Brentwood School. Prior to assuming her new role as Director of Summer Programs, Maggie had been working in the Upper School Library where she was responsible for cataloging, supervising the circulation desk, and managing the library's Instagram account. She happily learned to explore her crafty side, with maker break activities and the Cricut machine, which helped her to build positive connections to students and faculty during her tenure. She has been involved in many activities such as co-moderating Diversity Day panels, volunteering at the It's Our Turn: Young Women's Conference, advising Upper School students, and as an affinity group advisor

to the Latinx Student Association. Over the past three summers, Maggie has worked as the Administrative Assistant for Summer at Brentwood, which allowed her to gain the experience and knowledge needed to transition now to the Summer Programs Director position.

Maggie received her undergraduate degree from UC Santa Barbara with a double major in Spanish and Latin American and Iberian Studies. She then received her MBA from University of La Verne, and her Master's of Library Studies from San Jose State University. She is the daughter of two Mexican immigrants and is the first in her family to graduate from college. Born and raised in East Los Angeles, Maggie is a huge Dodgers fan and loves watching games with her family. ■

“Born and raised in East Los Angeles, Maggie is a huge Dodgers fan and loves watching games with her family.”

2020

TRUSTEES

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



David Nathanson '94
Board of Trustees
Chair, 20016-2018

All trustees should look to David as a model of how much one can help accomplish while on the board. During his tenure, he chaired the Advancement, Governance, and Capital committees in addition to chairing the board. David was also a member of the VA, Admissions, Strategic Agenda and MPI task forces and a member of the Finance Committee. He played an instrumental role in securing our CUP approval, which paved the way for implementation of the 30-Year Education Master Plan, starting with the new Middle School and Saltair buildings. He was equally critical to the success of the Brentwood, even better capital campaign, both as a committee member and co-chair. David has lived and breathed Brentwood School since he was a student here. It is because of that unrelenting spirit that he always pulls out all the stops to give back to the school in any way he can.



Laura Dudley
(ex-officio)

After serving an unprecedented three years as Parents Association chair (see her tribute on page 9), Laura continued to do excellent work on both the Advancement and Capital Campaign committees during a one-year hiatus from board service. She will begin a new term as a trustee this fall, and the school is most fortunate to benefit from her loyal devotion, boundless energy, and considerable talents.



Calista Flockhart Ford

The parent of a "lifer," Calista's perspective as a trustee was well-informed by her family's firsthand experience of all three divisions of the school. During her two terms on the board, Calista consistently modeled a constructive, thoughtful, inclusive approach to collaboration and problem solving. She listened carefully and contributed meaningfully at both board and committee meetings. As a six-year member of the Advancement committee, Calista was a champion for the value of supporting the school through annual giving. She also brought insight and perspective to the Education and Community committee, serving during its transformation to become the Institutional Goals committee.



Sarah Milken '93

Sarah's background in educational psychology, combined with her own experience as an alum of Brentwood, meant that she could be approach her work as a trustee from a very well-informed place. In her six years on the board, Sarah served on the Capital Campaign, Education and Community, and Advancement committees. As chair of the Advancement committee, she successfully urged the board to lead by example in terms of making Brentwood School a philanthropic priority. Sarah brought her signature sparkle to everything she did, always encouraging creative problem solving, and approaching even difficult conversations with tact and diplomacy.



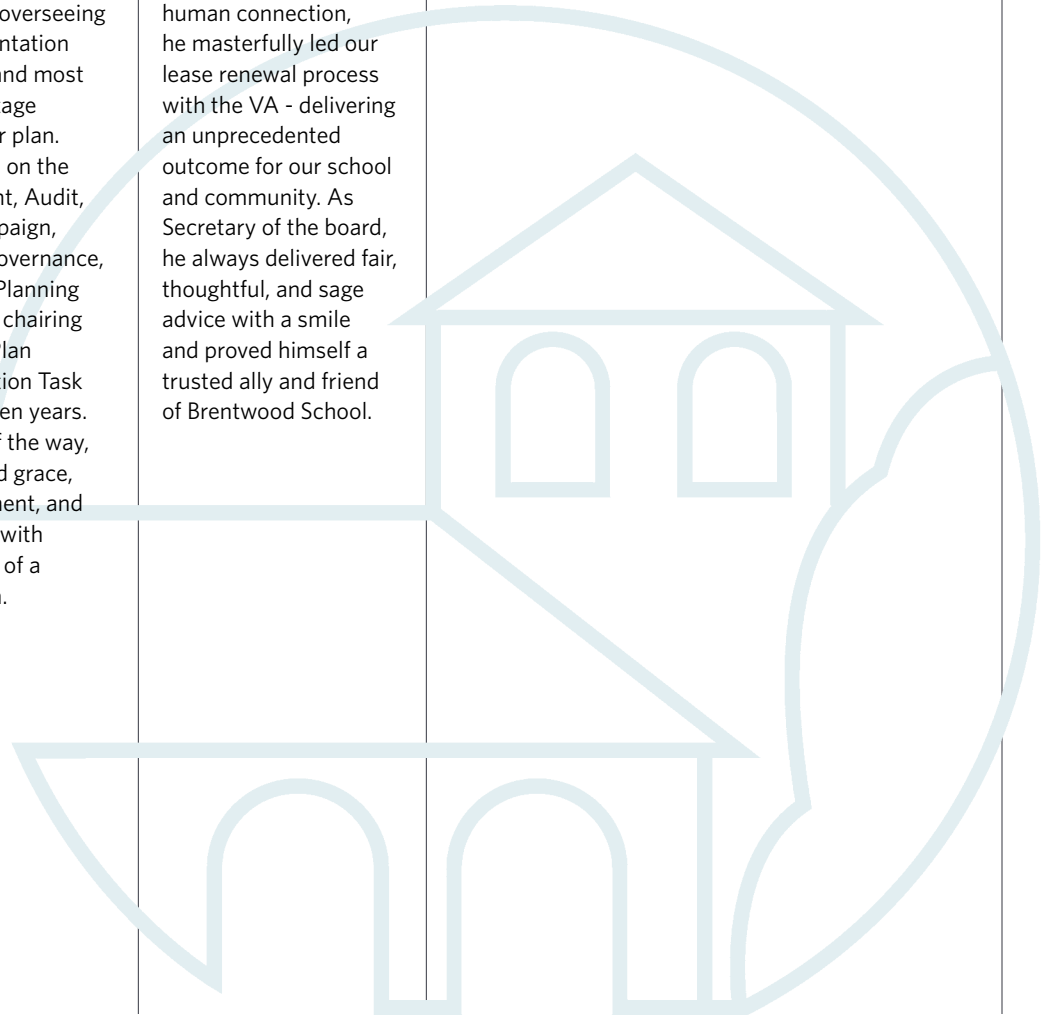
Loren Montgomery '87

An active alum, it was clear that Loren's expertise in real estate development, land use, and the associated rigorous public and environmental review would be of great benefit as we launched our 30-Year Education Master Plan. Luckily, Loren joined the board and spent nine years guiding the complicated CUP process and overseeing the implementation of the first (and most impactful) stage of the master plan. Loren served on the Advancement, Audit, Capital Campaign, Executive, Governance, Long Range Planning committees, chairing the Master Plan Implementation Task Force for seven years. Every step of the way, she exercised grace, good judgement, and fair dealings with the manners of a statesperson.



John Tipton

Every student who sets foot on our athletic facilities should know John Tipton's name. As chair of the VA Task Force during his six years as a trustee (and continuing after stepping off the board), John modeled a balanced approach to negotiation. By finding common ground between parties and establishing a human connection, he masterfully led our lease renewal process with the VA - delivering an unprecedented outcome for our school and community. As Secretary of the board, he always delivered fair, thoughtful, and sage advice with a smile and proved himself a trusted ally and friend of Brentwood School.



2021

“In each role Betsy strong interpersonal skills shone through. She inspired students in service and excited them in the pursuit of various activities. As the Dean she held high expectations and always acted in a thoughtful and caring manner. No matter what role she took on, Betsy remained authentic whether interacting with students, colleagues, or parents and guardians.”



Betsy Hall

(26 years)

Middle School Service Learning and Humanities,
Lower School Lead Teacher

BY DR. DAWN CUNNION, ASSOCIATE HEAD OF SCHOOL

When Betsy Hall arrived at Brentwood School the Lower School was like a new journal. The cover was there, however, the pages were blank. It was a time filled with anticipation and a lot of unknowns as the faculty, staff, and administration came together to create a program to serve students in grades K-6, virtually overnight.

Betsy was a 3rd Grade teacher and she embraced this opportunity to create something new. In fact, her enthusiasm for growing and creating was a constant during her 26 years at Brentwood School along with her dedication to serving the school. In addition, Betsy was one of the first teachers to embrace working with Lisa Glick in the development of a service learning program. It was her openness to a challenge and love of teaching students to give of themselves that led her to move to 4th Grade when an opening arose. And Betsy did more than just change grades; she went into 4th Grade with a plan for developing the curriculum around a new theme, Social Justice. Once again, she built something from scratch and that foundation provided a groundwork for a theme that has become an integral part of the Lower School program.

But she wasn't finished. Betsy moved to the Middle School where she served in a number of roles including the Dean of Students, Director of Activities, and Service Learning Coordinator. In each role Betsy strong interpersonal skills shone through. She inspired students in service and excited them in the pursuit of various activities. As the Dean she held high expectations and always acted in a thoughtful and caring manner. No matter what role she took on, Betsy remained authentic whether interacting with students, colleagues, or parents and guardians.

It was that authenticity that led her back to the classroom to round out her career at Brentwood School. In her heart, Betsy has always been a teacher so when she asked to return to being a full-time humanities teacher in the Middle School we knew the students would once again be in for a treat.

When Betsy came to Brentwood School she came knowing that as the Lower School program was built it was going to change and grow. During her 26 years here, she found herself doing the same as she sought out new experiences and shared her knowledge and passions. Betsy has made a difference in so many ways and we cannot thank her enough for her many contributions that helped to make Brentwood the school it is today. ■



Lisa Glick '85

(24 years)

Lower School Service Learning

BY DR. DAWN CUNNION,
ASSOCIATE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Leadership
Inspiring
Spirited
Aspirational

Generous
Loyal
Indomitable
Caring
Kind

Lisa Glick, '85, returned to Brentwood School in the fall of 1997, shortly after the Lower School had just opened. It was a time when many of the programs and structures that people today see as the philosophical and programmatic foundation of the school were conceptual hopes, and that included the Service Learning Program. And while many other schools were providing robust Community Service experiences for their students, Lisa wanted Brentwood to do more than drives and collections. Lisa also wanted students to learn about others and societal structures, to give of themselves, and to embrace service to others as an integral part of who they are as Brentwood

students and more importantly as people inspired to “Shape a Future with Meaning.” This was before our current Statement of Purpose, which goes to demonstrate an important facet of who Lisa is....a visionary who used her knowledge, experiences, and varied skills to create a service learning program second to none. She also drew upon two of her most significant qualities—persuasion and determination. To begin, Lisa had to find organizations that were open to having younger students visit and work at their sites. She created partnerships with the VA, other schools, and various service providers, showing them that elementary students could in fact participate in a range of activities. At the same time Lisa had to create partnerships with the teachers, which meant working with them individually as well as obtaining time to meet with their classes, before an activity and after along with the actual service trips. And as the Lower School developed over those early years to move to thematic learning, Lisa artfully paired service activities with the various themes at each grade

level. For example, having 4th graders bring their Dream Speeches to action, was initiated by Lisa. Developing a student-initiated project in 6th Grade as a capstone experience after years of Lower School service activities, Lisa again. She knows that the best way for students to embrace service as a part of their lives is to engage them in looking at the world around them and then supporting them in the creation of the project. She loved her work and gave generously of herself...and she taught her students to do the same. Lisa, as you reflect on the years you shared with our community we hope you know that you leave a legacy of service and how grateful we are to you! ■



Sarah Bishop
(15 years)
BCIL Extracurricular Innovator & Collaborator, Former Assistant to the Head of School and Registrar

BY DR. JOSH BERGER,
DIRECTOR OF THE
BELLDEGRUN CENTER
FOR INNOVATIVE
LEADERSHIP

Sarah Bishop’s committed, compassionate, and detailed approach positively impacted the Brentwood community for fifteen years. As the school’s long-standing Registrar, Sarah’s kindness and her ability to connect made her a favorite with students who would frequently seek her out for support beyond anything having to do with their schedules. Dedicated to BWS gender equity initiatives, Sarah became the original faculty advisor for our Girl Impact affinity group and a co-creator/teacher of Gender Studies. She also helped launch Brentwood School’s Young Women’s Conference, an event she co-led five times with over 1000 attendees from up to 100 different schools and organizations.

Another area of passion for Sarah related to student and community wellness.

Sarah taught yoga and led mindfulness activities for students and colleagues alike. This work continued in her role as Extracurricular Innovator and Collaborator role for the Belldegrun Center for Innovative Leadership (BCIL) where she created a Science of Well Being Course and helped students launch B-Well, a peer-led wellness group for students.

Through BCIL Sarah also collaboratively designed innovative extracurricular programming including speaker series that engaged with real world challenges, social entrepreneurial competitions, and additional peer support programs. Sarah helped craft the original vision for the BCIL co-chairing one of the organizing committees, and students frequently turned to her whenever they had new ideas to explore.

Sarah will be greatly missed by our community next year. ■

2021

**Don Smith**

Middle School Assistant Director

BY NICOLE ARNDT, MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

I am honored to write about a dear colleague, beloved member of the Brentwood community, and all-around amazing human being, Don Smith. Don served the Brentwood community as Middle School English teacher and then as the Middle School Assistant Director. His passion as an educator is demonstrated in many ways - through his commitment towards diversity, equity, and inclusion, in the ways he unselfishly provides his time, wisdom, and support for faculty, staff, students, and parents, and through the myriad of ways his creativity comes through in student life programming.

Don led our Student Council meetings, providing students with voice and choice, hosted weekly assemblies that celebrated students and faculty, created an advisory program that embraced Brentwood Core Values while establishing a strong sense of community and multicultural competence. Don's signature call, "hey, hey, hey," his Loom's and amazing musical talents will forever be cherished by the Middle School community.

Faculty and students appreciate Don for his warmth, kindness and approachability. As one student shared, "Mr. Smith's effective communication and organizational skills in Student Council encourage leadership and action. I appreciated his positivity and open-mindedness, which made him very approachable" while another student shared, "I think I can speak for all students when I say he is very approachable and brings enthusiasm to each assembly. My fondest memories include him singing out of nowhere and waving to us in the halls." Don's ability to connect and uplift others has fostered a Middle School community that is connected and caring.

Don, thank you for your service, inspiration, and most importantly, for being my support as I navigated the transition from New York City to Los Angeles, to start as the new Middle School Director. This year was unlike any other. My success is undoubtedly tied to your unwavering commitment to seeing me through this year. I appreciate you, all that you represent. I wish you all the best as you take on the Middle School Directorship at Buckley. ■

**Brandon Guidry**

New Middle School Assistant Director

Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Brandon Guidry is a proud graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, holding a dual Bachelor's degree in Political Science and African Diaspora Studies. He has held many hats in the field of education, beginning his experience as a research analyst during his graduate studies at Stanford University and Teachers College, Columbia University, and formally at an education research hub out of New York University before moving into the classroom full-time. He has taught multiple grade levels in New York City independent schools across lower

and middle divisions and found his calling in middle school.

Brandon is energized by collaborative environments and has discovered a true passion for middle grades education. He is determined to aid in the necessary conversation about the need to dismantle the stereotypes around the experiences of students during middle school. This time period is the most pivotal in individual development and he is a firm believer that children at this age are much more capable than we adults allow.

Brandon looks forward to joining the Brentwood School community and engaging with everyone to ensure the continued evolution of the Middle School. ■

"Brandon is energized by collaborative environments and has discovered a true passion for middle grades education."

2020 FACULTY/STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

5

5 YEARS

Emily Aparicio
Bernardo Arabalo
Ryan Boccuzzi
Rob Bowie
Alyssa Brakey
Becky Dame-Seidler
Alma Diaz
Susan Dickinson
Suyapa Gonzalez-Guerrero
Rachel Gosine-Smith
Lauren Hall
Alexis Iglesias
Susan Katz
Michelle Krolikowski
Bob Kundrat
Osmin Lopez
Raul Martinez-Hernandez
Tomas Matias-Curiel
Brian Meiseles
Isaias Perez
Victor Pesiri
Harold Pleitez-Guerra
Missy Polson
Yetunde Rubinstein
Cortney Talan
Francisco Velasco-Cruz
Jose Villanueva-Mendoza

10

10 YEARS

Brittney Adams
Jonathan Arriaran
Tracy Easley
Helen Li
Krissy Chang
Susie Lyons
Susanne McNeil Eng
Meredith Storrs

15

15 YEARS

Nicole Asbee
Emily Ellis
Lee Herzog
Lauren Windom

20

20 YEARS

Shirley Blake
Abby Green
Edy Levin
Denise Mahdesian
Yvonne Taylor

25

25 YEARS

Betsy Hall
Olga Nevin

40

40 YEARS

Dave Velasquez

45

45 YEARS

Bob Ingram

2021 FACULTY/STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

5

5 YEARS

Adrienne Agena
Carlos Amaya
Francisco Becerra
Albert Benton
Elaine Chao
Miriam Del Cid
Stephanie Diaz
Andrea Drobnick
Lesley Gouger
Carrie James
Ronit Kumar
Trina Moore-Southall
Caitlin Pilla
Tony Reyes
Dawn Roje
Robert Teager

10

10 YEARS

Whitney Abramo
Tina Evans
Maggie Lara
Christina Makdisi
Andrew Park
Scott Perloff
Mike Riera
Kala Savage
Riki-Ann Serrins
Gennifer Yoshimaru
Cindy Zecena
Cat Zusky

15

15 YEARS

Judy Adler
Carol Bailey
Josh Berger
Sabrina Erickson
JK Hilbert
Michele Ogilvie
Fred Rible
Arturo Santos

20

20 YEARS

Salomon Andres
Erick Becker
Bob Kahn
Amanda Kelson
Jaime Moran
Vee Nguon
Celia Pinon
Nicole Ryan
Tracy Stangel

25

25 YEARS

Yapha Mason

30

30 YEARS

Susan Deeley-Wells

45

45 YEARS

Judith O'Hanlon

2021

TRUSTEES

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



Lance Milken '94
Board of Trustees
Chair, 2016-2020

Lance's tenure on the board is a hit list of incredible accomplishments and leadership across multiple areas. He literally did it all and made an impact every step of the way by sitting on a remarkable nine committees and task forces much to the betterment of the board and our community. Then, Lance raised his hand to serve as Chair of the Finance, Capital Campaign, and Governance committees and the Debt Financing task force. He was also Treasurer of the Board and of course, Board Chair. Lance is a unique breed in that he is driven, meticulous, and hardworking, yet also reliable and thoughtful. He has never forgotten the impact Brentwood had on shaping the person he is today by filling his life with mentors and lifelong friends. His devotion to the school and his hard work on its behalf secured a stronger, more prosperous future for Brentwood.



Antonieta Arango

In six years as a trustee, Antonieta has graced us with her wisdom, equanimity, and resilience. A true renaissance woman, she sat on six of ten board committees, and served two years as Vice Chair. As Institutional Goals committee chair, though, she shone. Shepherding its evolution from the Education and Community committee, Antonieta remained a thoughtful leader, gently offering her skill and her sound instincts to reimagine the committee to better serve our school. It makes perfect sense that Antonieta would have led this charge given one of her biggest passions, at and outside of Brentwood, has been promoting education.



Todd Lemkin

Todd combines a patient, level demeanor with an uncanny ability to multi-task, proving true the saying, "If you want to get something done, ask a busy person." From the moment his family joined the school community, they have modeled generosity of time, talent, and resources, leading by example in all areas. Relocating to Texas after just one year on the board, Todd will be missed. He has been a valuable addition as a trustee and as a member of the Advancement and Finance committees.



Erica Lockhart '93

An invaluable addition to the Advancement, Audit, 403B, and Governance committees in her three years as a trustee, Erica brought a unique, insightful perspective with her strong background in marketing. She is effective at the art of negotiating, pays strong attention to detail, and exhibits a solid work ethic. Erica is excellent at building relationships with others, even those with a contrasting point of view, which made her the perfect person to co-chair the DEI committee in its first year. She worked to create a path to success by modeling strength of passion, mindfulness of other's perspectives, and dedicated professionalism.



Scott Sandler '92
(ex-officio)

In his two years on the board, Scott consistently demonstrated that he is a person of great integrity, with equal parts intelligence, common sense, and kind instincts. At a time when our school needed to bring everyone together, Scott Sandler did just that as head of our alumni association. As a trustee, Scott quickly earned a reputation for his ability to get along with everyone without compromising his principles and was greatly admired for it. Our mascot, the Brentwood Eagle, was named "Sandler" during Scott's time as a student and he brings that same incredible school spirit to Brentwood today.



A LETTER FROM

Brian Lee

Board of Trustees Chair, 2020-2022

It is hard to believe that this school year is finished. At some points, it felt like the year would never end and we would live in a world of Zooms, masks, and social distancing forever. But through resilience, determination, and working together, we made the best of a challenging year.

I had the great fortune of collaborating with a truly talented and committed Board of Trustees, alongside an equally caring and purposeful Administration. As a community, we accomplished great things in a year full of uncertainties. We saw the completion of the new lower school building. We established a permanent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee on the Board. We closed out the largest capital campaign in the history of the school. We saw the Belldegrün Center for Innovative Leadership establish itself on a national level. And so much more.

We accomplished these goals through the grit and vision of undeterred trustees who gave so much to Brentwood School. We will be forever grateful to our departing trustees. A very special thank you to former board chairs David Nathanson '94 and Lance Milken '94.

On behalf of our Board of Trustees, I offer my sincerest gratitude to the Brentwood School community for sticking together and encouraging all of us to do better together. I am looking forward to next year—a year hopefully filled with more social gatherings and less Zooms.

Warmly,
Brian Lee
Board Chair

Thank you to our incredible **Brentwood Fund Volunteers** for leading the charge in the 2020–2021 school year. The annual fund is our school's top philanthropic priority and integral to the health of our school because it directly supports up to 10% of operating expenses each year. This year's budget has stretched to accommodate the many unforeseen costs of translating the quintessential Brentwood experience into the virtual environment, as well as fully transitioning students back to campus. None of this would have happened without the dedication of our volunteers. Your enthusiasm and hard work has been the catalyst that has allowed us to meet our ambitious goal. We appreciate you!

ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

Eden Romick, Committee Chair
Kimberly Agam, LS Division Captain
Nathan Agam, LS Division Captain
Lara Beebower
Pamela Coleman
Laura Dudley, 8th/11th Grade Level Co-Captain & Captain
Kelly Griffin, PA Co-Chair, WC
Ryan Gutierrez
Kyle Hoshide, 8th Grade Level Captain
Maya Jones, MS Division Captain/6th Grade Level Captain
Todd Lemkin
Erica Lockhart
Allison Mellon, Upper School Division Captain/12th Grade Level Captain
Sabina Nathanson, 2nd/4th Grade Level Captain
Jill Olofson, PA Co-Chair, EC

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Erika Aronson
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David Kohl, 8th Grade Level Captain
Morgan Mallory
Lance Milken
Scott Sandler
Daniel Stern
Cecilia Victor
Sam Yadegar

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Jon and Ashley Cassir, 1st Grade
Damon and Brooke McLaren, 2nd Grade
Allison Hill, 3rd Grade
Allison Schwartz, 3rd Grade & 5th Grade
Gary Rosen, 7th Grade
Pia Rosen, 7th Grade
Sean Mitchell, 9th Grade
Terry Mitchell, 9th Grade
Rod Bickerstaff, 10th Grade
Lori Popovich Swift, 12th Grade
David Swift, 12th Grade

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Brinah Bank
Roy Bank
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Francesca Bodie
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Darin Frank
Nicole Frank
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Maggie Tabibian
Nancie Tripodi
Julie Weiss
Lauren Winnick
Leah Yari
Liang Yang
Chunbo Zhang





PHILANTHROPY AT BRENTWOOD SCHOOL

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

BRENTWOOD FUND

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

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

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

MAJOR GIFTS

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



11/12/20



Improvisation was the name of the game in athletics this year. The Athletic Department found creative ways to use every available open space to bring teams to campus for practices last summer and fall, which meant fencers met with their coach, Carla Corbit, on the tennis courts. The opportunity to train with your teammates in person brought some normalcy to a year when all sports seasons were truncated, relocated, or canceled altogether. Read more on page 6 from Athletic Director Amanda Kelson.

bws

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and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color,
creed, sex, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin.

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

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



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