

ROOTS

THE POST OAK SCHOOL MAGAZINE





The Post Oak School Magazine is distributed to current families, employees, alumni, and friends.

Please send change of address and all other correspondence to The Post Oak School, 4600 Bissonnet St., Bellaire, TX, 77401 or email info@postoakschool.org.

Our Mission

The Post Oak School is a diverse and welcoming Montessori community that honors and guides lifelong learners as they create their own bold pathways in leading purposeful lives.

The Magazine, *Roots*, is produced in-house by the Development and Communications Office at Post Oak.

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Special Note

P after a name indicates a person is a Post Oak parent and indicates their child's graduation year.

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The
POST OAK
SCHOOL

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Cover photo: A Middle School student at Blackwood Land Institute (see page 6)

Left: A lesson in Landon Bagby's Primary classroom

Welcome to the first issue of *Roots*,
the magazine of The Post Oak School.

Post Oak students and their families belong to a group of individuals who come together on their learning journeys for the good of others. Dive into their stories, and if you have one to share about your time at Post Oak or your child's experience, we'd love to hear it. Please email us at development@postoakschool.org.

—*The Post Oak School Development & Communications Team*

What the World Needs Now

by Maura Joyce, Head of School

In the midst of the last school year, I was inspired by a talk that referenced a book by the philosopher, Roman Krznaric.

In the book, *The Good Ancestor*, Krznaric invites us to reorient our sense of time and think about a future, not to benefit us now, but to think about the future of our children's children, and beyond. He asks us to consider what we can do to be good ancestors. When the future of humanity looks back, will they say thanks for all we did to help them?

In the spring, I shared Krznaric's book and his short TED video with employees and the Board of Trustees. After two years of managing the urgency and immediacy of a pandemic, it was a welcome pause to slow down enough to think differently about our work right now and how it will affect the humans who come after us. This idea is not new and there are cultures around the world that think this way and practice living to benefit their future community. One example is the Seventh Generation Principle of the native American Haudenosaunee, which maintains that decisions made today should result in a sustainable

world seven generations into the future.

Post Oak students are taught the concept of community when they first enter the Montessori environment. The simple concepts of sharing, using something and then leaving it restored and ready for the next person, and respecting the needs of others, are infused into the design of our learning environments. Most lessons begin with the big picture, the historical context, or the origin of the terminology, and include a sense of gratitude for the contribution of those who came before us and paved the way for our life now. These lessons inspire students to think about their contribution to the world and thus a future history lesson. Community meetings, run by and for the students, address the needs of both individuals and the collective group, and give them voice to offer solutions and discuss respectful ways to honor everyone today and in the future.

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Post Oak students think beyond themselves and the immediate moment.

Post Oak students think beyond themselves and the immediate moment. Our program emphasizes learning through experiences in the classroom, the city, and the world, interacting with other communities, cultures, and eco-systems. There are so many examples of this work and activity throughout each school year, at every level, some of which are included in this magazine.

One of my favorite examples of Post Oak students being good ancestors happened this year when sixth grade students wrote me a letter to advocate for fixing the problem with our back field at the Bissonnet Campus. They talked about the constant mud and drainage issues. They also advocated for the discomfort of the students and the burden on the cleaning crew to deal with mud tracked through the school. They requested a meeting to discuss

possibly putting turf on the field. We met, and I told them their observations were in line with the school's attempt to manage flooding. I pointed out that by the time the project was completed, the four of them would be in Middle School on the other campus, and said, "You won't be over here to enjoy it." They replied, "We aren't doing this for us; we are doing it for the students who will be here when we are gone."

If we teach our children anything, it has to be gratitude, compassion, and generosity of spirit. They have to know that we have to do what we can for each other, our planet, our future selves and all those that will come after us. It is what Montessori children at Post Oak have been doing for decades and it is what the world needs now—good ancestors. ☘

Post Oak students are taught the concept of community when they first enter the Montessori environment. The simple concepts of sharing, using something, and then leaving it restored and ready for the next person, and respecting the needs of others, are infused into the design of our learning environments.



Above: These sixth grade students led the charge to turf the Bissonnet Campus backfield: Miles D. '28, Gray M. '28, Cecilia V. '28, Madeleine G. '28.



Scan to watch Roman Krznaric's TED video on how to be a good ancestor.

A Fresh Take on Our Mission

by Greg Han, P '18 & '20, High School Faculty,
Strategic Planning Committee, Former Trustee

Over the past year, Post Oak has been in a process of reviewing and revising its mission statement.

This revision has been part of the larger strategic planning process. While all organizations thrive best with a strong mission and purpose, our communal experience through the disruption of the pandemic has demonstrated that taking the time to clarify who we are and what we seek to be and do in the world is crucial. When there's change all around us, having a clear sense of identity and purpose makes navigating unpredictable waters easier.

A writing group, in consultation with the Strategic Planning Committee and the Board of Trustees, worked over the final few months of 2021 and the first few months of 2022 to revise our mission statement. The goal was not a new mission statement; the overall mission of Post Oak has not changed, but there are times when schools need to “refresh” or “renew” a mission statement.

Mission statements are designed to be both descriptive and prescriptive. Post Oak's mission statement describes what

we want our students to experience. It is, in a way, a summary of what happens in a Post Oak classroom. But it is also prescriptive in that the statement reminds us of who we want to be. When there are times Post Oak has decisions to make, or times we need a way of measuring if we are living up to our principles, the mission statement, our declaration of who we are and who we aspire to be, is there as our guide.

Mission statements also need additional detail, and you'll find that the statement will have supplemental documents that describe how the mission statement manifests itself in the day-to-day experiences at Post Oak.

Please take the time to review the refreshed statement; it captures our



values and goals as a community of learners that seeks to do good things in the world. And finally, we challenge you to find ways to help this statement “come to life” in the lives of our students. We hope you will find inspiration in the pages of this magazine and beyond. ☛

OUR MISSION

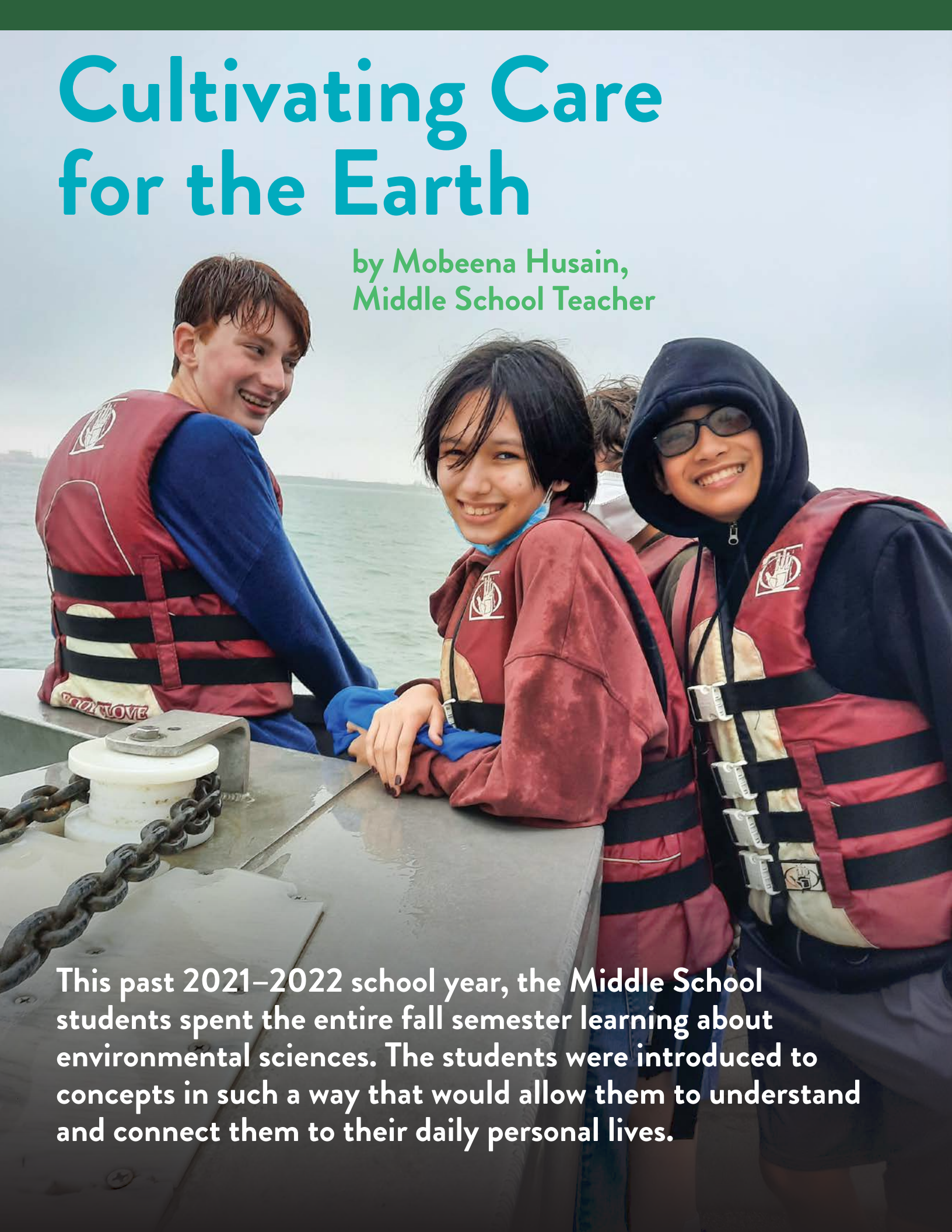
The Post Oak School is a diverse and welcoming Montessori community that honors and guides lifelong learners as they create their own bold pathways in leading purposeful lives.



Sandra De Leon's Upper Elementary class hosted a toy drive for the Houston Fire Department's Operation Stocking Stuffer. HFD brought a fire truck to collect Post Oak's donations.

Cultivating Care for the Earth

by Mobeena Husain,
Middle School Teacher

A photograph of three middle school students on a boat. They are all wearing red and black life jackets. The student on the left is a boy with brown hair, smiling and looking back over his shoulder. The student in the middle is a girl with dark hair, smiling at the camera. The student on the right is a girl wearing a dark hooded jacket and sunglasses, also smiling. They are on a boat with a grey metal railing and a white puley block with a chain. The background shows a body of water and a hazy sky.

This past 2021–2022 school year, the Middle School students spent the entire fall semester learning about environmental sciences. The students were introduced to concepts in such a way that would allow them to understand and connect them to their daily personal lives.

Connection with the environment is such a fundamental aspect of Montessori.

Diving into studies

In learning about environmental science, students started by reading *How to Change Everything* by Naomi Klein. The book encompasses realistic optimism about how to navigate and learn about our progressing climate crisis. We familiarized ourselves with four distinct areas that drive environmental change and how these areas relate to everything around them.

The students picked a topic to study more deeply, one they felt best sparked their interest to focus on in their project route. The four project areas were health, mass agriculture, fast fashion/mass consumerism, and RUC (recycling, upcycling, composting). Collectively, students learned about air quality, water quality, and cycles (carbon, water, and nitrogen), and they



Left: Middle School students traveled to Florida in late May 2022 to study at Nature's Classroom Institute in Palm Harbor. Above: Students experience flora and fauna at Hope Farms in Houston.

did various activities and experiments that modeled trapped greenhouse gases and much more.

To conclude this unit of study, students conducted individual research and presented their research in groups. Presentations ranged from podcasts to mini-documentaries to TedTalk-style lectures. Students beautifully demonstrated their creativity and research skills through this project.

Dr. Montessori and the environment

While environmental science encompasses various disciplines, it is directly related to humanity and human solidarity. Students also learned about ethics while studying the four project areas.

In *The Discovery of the Child*, Dr. Montessori said, "Children have an anxious concern for living beings, and therefore the satisfaction of this instinct fills them with delight. It is therefore easy to interest them in taking care of plants and especially of animals."

We see how Montessori prepared environments are intentionally and carefully composed of indoor and outdoor elements that extend the appreciation and consciousness of modeling environmental stewardship.

Dr. Montessori wrote in *From Childhood to Adolescence*, "Therefore work on the land is an introduction both to nature and to civilization and gives a limitless field for scientific and historic studies.... This means that there is an opportunity to learn both academically and through actual experience what are the elements of social life. We have called these children the 'Erdkinder' because they are learning about civilization through its origin in agriculture. They are the 'land-children.'"

This quote makes me think a lot about the position of the adolescent campus, located in the heart of the Museum District. The campus' urban setting does not limit agrarian or environmental strides for the adolescents. I think about week-long experiential land-based trips, partnering with Hope Farms for service learning, landscaping and conservation at Buffalo Bayou Park, to education about environmental injustices and the importance of our fundamental needs through a Montessori lens that my team members and I help cultivate for our students.

Connecting with the land

The Middle School community is fortunate to have meaningful excursions into their local community. Blackwood Land Institute in Hempstead, TX, is an amazing resource in supporting our adolescents to work with their hands. The students see the importance of care, conservation, and all the labor that goes into environmental solidarity.

At Blackwood, there are many opportunities for students and guides to work collectively in support of nature. While there last year, I rotated through composting, planting, yaupon harvesting, and cooking with a small group of students. These areas of work truly allowed us to immerse ourselves in the present.

In composting, students shoveled compost into wheelbarrows and laid down layers on long strips of land. This process continued until aisles were leveled with compost from one end to the next. A greater appreciation and care for the environment surfaces by seeing all the labor, teamwork, and problem-solving it takes to go into the land to help support and sustain others.

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Another impactful takeaway from Blackwood was students learning about yaupon holly from an expert. Learning and harvesting yaupon was a very hands-on experience from beginning to end. As part of the process, students were educated about the rich history yaupon has to offer.

As we know, especially in Montessori, historical importance should be part of everything introduced and taught. The origins of present-day matters help us with more context and understanding.



This page: Students working with yaupon at Blackwood Land Institute in Hempstead and in the gardens at Plant It Forward in Houston.

“Children should be made to realize that all great achievements in culture and in the arts, all sciences and industries that have brought benefit to humanity, are due to the work of [those] who often struggled in obscurity and under conditions of great hardship; [those] driven by a profound passion, by an inner fire, to create with their research, with their work, new benefits not only for the people who lived in their times, but also for those of the future. We must convey to the children the nobility of this altruism.” —Maria Montessori, *Citizen of the World*

Yaupon and Indigenous communities

Yaupon is a caffeinated plant that is domestic in South East to Central Texas. Since its roots are native to Texas, this plant has been useful to the Indigenous communities within these regions. The students and I learned that for thousands of years, Indigenous peoples would steep the plant to make tea. Spanish colonists noticed this common tea-drinking habit and soon started drinking yaupon tea as well.

We learned that many years later, yaupon started to get a negative

reputation from settlers. During religious ceremonies, yaupon was gulped in large amounts by Native community members, which would sometimes lead to vomiting. It was not the plant causing this; gulping any beverage in large amounts can lead to vomiting. In overlooking this analysis and observation, a British botanist decided to name the plant *Ilex vomitoria*, a name deceptive to the actual benefits of the plant. The image of yaupon quickly turned into something undesirable.

Despite this, yaupon also became a tea for Americans who could not afford imported tea as the plant could be harvested for free.

Environmental benefits

According to a *Texas Monthly*'s article¹ on yaupon tea, Indigenous communities helped with land conservation and progression by using “controlled burns to clear out brush—including yaupon—[to] attract huntable wildlife.” It is important to clear out brush because the dryness can cause extreme wildfires. “Thinning

out yaupon also allows native grasses to flourish, which helps species such as the endangered Houston toad. The grasses attract insects, and the insects attract toads.”

It is an honor to learn about this historical practice of wisdom that Indigenous peoples started with care, protection, and sustainability for present and future generations. This highlights the interdependence that Montessori educates us about. She wrote in *The Absorbent Mind*, “To have a vision of the cosmic plan, in which every form of life depends on directed movements which have effects beyond their conscious aim, is to understand the child’s work and be able to guide it better.”

Learning from yaupon harvesting

The students were able to see if the leaves were able to harvest for steeping based on the branches. Our guide informed us about “yo-pon” or “no-pon” to see if we had the appropriate branch to use. We spent a good while observing, learning about the

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antioxidants the leaves have to offer, and how the caffeine intake is much more gentle on you than coffee (i.e., feeling jittery or hyper).

After harvesting, we made a pot of tea to try our unique blend of Post Oak Middle School yaupon tea, adding mint, lavender, and a few other herbs to enhance the taste. Questions arose from students about:

- ♦ What is the future of yaupon going to look like?
- ♦ Do people still clear out yaupon and not use the leaves?
- ♦ Do people know the value of yaupon?
- ♦ Could the popularity of yaupon coming back become a threat to the land itself?

Great questions. Ethical questions. Environmentally responsible and conscious questions.



Above: Middle School coastal trip with Texas A&M University at Galveston, which focused on the ecology of the Gulf Coast.

“It is not enough to see that the child gets good food, good physical care, and enough sleep, because development needs activity too.

Experience in the environment is necessary because everyone must be adapted to the environment.” — Maria Montessori, *The 1946 London Lectures*

Experience happens when you allow students to explore a classroom beyond its four walls through preparation and integrating humanities into subject areas like math and science, where people tend to be outcome-based.

Observing our surroundings

These land-based experiential trips help foster inquiry, responsibility, and attentiveness to one’s environment and beyond. One thing I am working on getting better at is helping promote a sense of intentional observation with the students, an observation that makes one look outside one’s comfort, ability, and familiarity to see if there is a problem that can be solved.

Is there accessibility that can be achieved? Is there justice and equity that can come about this? With the Museum District Campus located between the iconic Highway 59 light bridges, I took the students out to observe for 15 minutes. What could they notice about their immediate surroundings in 15 minutes? The heat, the cracked sidewalks, the noise pollution, construction, litter, etc. All these concerns exist outside of the four walls. What can we change right now, what is out of our control, what can we learn about, and what led to the sidewalks being uprooted and cracked? I would like to work on finding solutions for these questions through student-led initiatives.

Uniting with communities

In addition to land-based experiences, the students also partner with Wesley Community Center for service learning organized by my team member Jenna Pel. Wesley Community Center has a food pantry where the students help organize, sort, discard, and prepare goods for the Near Northside neighborhood community members.

Students see the importance of combating food insecurity and how much food, unfortunately, goes to waste. Wesley’s food pantry service has shown and taught our students much about food deserts. The Houston community is all of our community. We need to be united and aware of what is happening beyond our own lives to achieve human solidarity. In doing so, we can also achieve an ethical balance with our environment.

“Our civilization has reached a deadlock. Never before have

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Middle School students at Blackwood Land Institute



GET TO KNOW MOBEENA

I grew up in a heavy oil and gas town. Texas is a state where we all know that the economy largely runs off of this industry. I pursued a degree in chemical engineering, and throughout my studies, I developed an interest in educating people about the effects of this field on our health and overall environment. I started to become passionate about discussing issues related to achieving environmental justice by overcoming environmental racism. Upon my university graduation in 2020, I wanted to utilize my degree in a way that felt meaningful, purposeful, and motivational. While weighing my options of what career field I wanted to go into, I posted an advertisement for tutoring services, which ended up being mostly for adolescents. I also considered Montessori training, as I received a Montessori education in my formative years and my mother has been serving as a primary Montessori teacher for as long as I can remember. I applied to Post Oak for the Middle School science guide position, and I am grateful every day to be part of the Post Oak community. I value and appreciate the Montessori approach to educating inquisitive minds, and I feel grateful to share my passion for teaching science through a humanities framework. ☛

(Above: Mobeena (far right) holds a hands-on demonstration with students in front of the MDC tinker building.)

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[people] depended on one another as they do today; no one could live alone or be sufficient unto [themselves]. This knowledge should be conveyed to the children, the young humans, raising their consciousness and above all arousing their enthusiasm, imbuing them with admiration for the great discoveries made by [humans]; awe for their sacrifices in the cause of civilisation and progress.” —Maria Montessori, *Citizen of the World*

Post Oak students are privileged to have access and knowledge through their experiences, meeting with experts, and having an integrated interdisciplinary, dynamically fluid curriculum. How the students share and help with their new knowledge is beautiful to see. It is exciting for them to take ownership of their learning experiences, and help promote understanding and transfer that knowledge to the parent community and their own Middle School community.

“The universe is an imposing reality, and an answer to all questions. We shall walk together on the path of life, for all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity.” —Maria Montessori, *To Educate the Human Potential*

In my one-and-a-half years of working at the school during peak pandemic, variants pandemic, and then “post-ish” pandemic, I am excited to see what more the students can do for our environment and our immediate local Houston community. What can the students establish that is sustainable

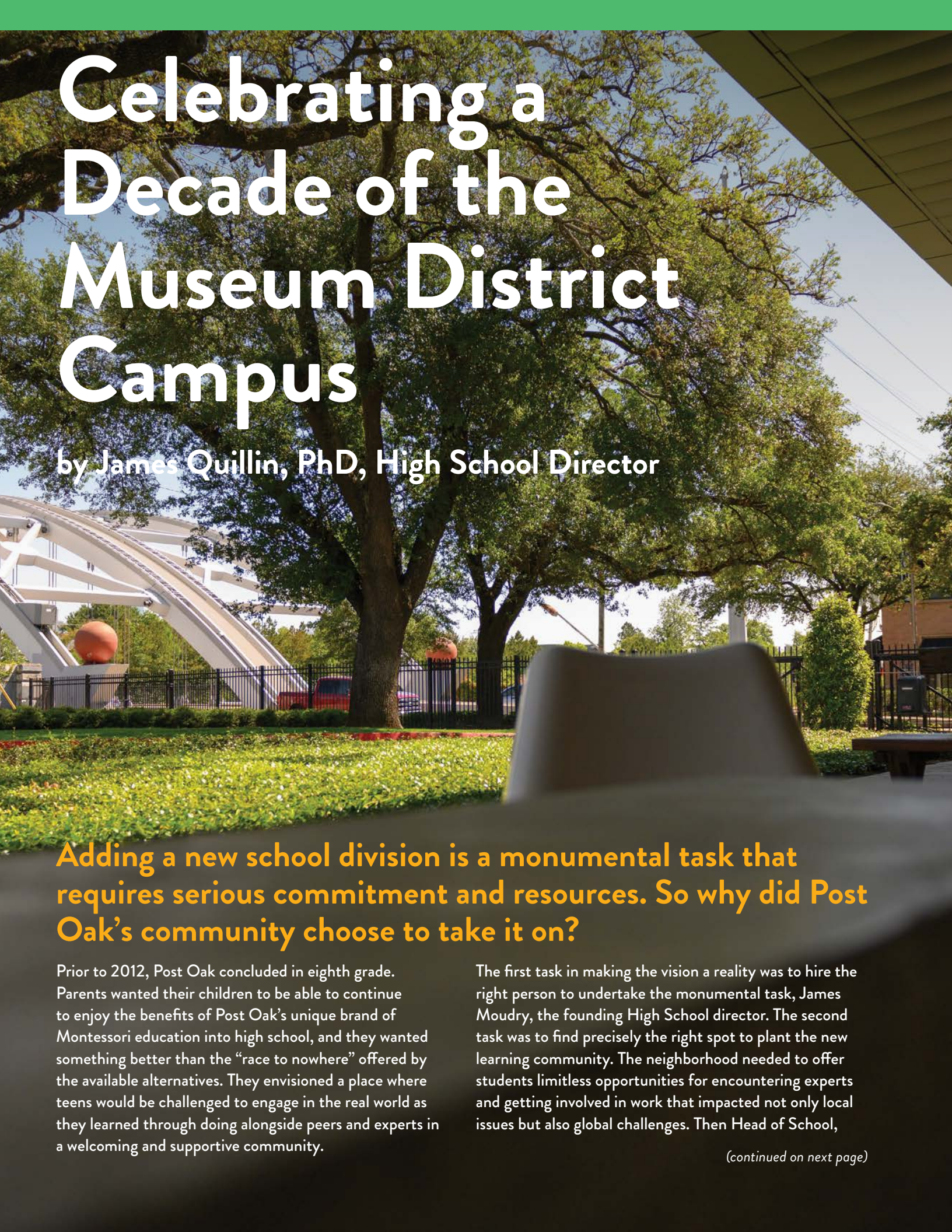
that remains as a legacy program for future generations of students that helps us find solutions?

Stewardship for the future

This is also a time where I have to remind myself and the students to give ourselves grace when we feel compassion fatigue or burn-out for “caring too much.” It is not our own individual efforts to make the Earth a sustainable and healthy place for all, but a collective and communal effort highlighting that many struggles in the world (at home or abroad) are all interconnected through environmentalism. Just like the way the students had a meaningful lesson about the yaupon plant and how Indigenous peoples interacted with it, we can learn about all the many ways people of the global majority have historically been great environmental stewards for centuries through traditional practices.

“The children of today will make all the discoveries of tomorrow. All the discoveries of [humankind] will be known to them and they will improve what has been done and make fresh discoveries. They must make all the improvements in houses, cities, communication, methods of production, etc. that are to be made. The future generation must not only know how to do what we can teach them, they must be able to go a step further.” —Maria Montessori, *The 1946 London Lectures* ☛

1. “Though New to Some Tea Drinkers, Yaupon Is Steeped in History,” texasmonthly.com/food/yaupon-tea-steeped-history/ (April 2022) by Rose Cahalan



Celebrating a Decade of the Museum District Campus

by James Quillin, PhD, High School Director

Adding a new school division is a monumental task that requires serious commitment and resources. So why did Post Oak's community choose to take it on?

Prior to 2012, Post Oak concluded in eighth grade. Parents wanted their children to be able to continue to enjoy the benefits of Post Oak's unique brand of Montessori education into high school, and they wanted something better than the "race to nowhere" offered by the available alternatives. They envisioned a place where teens would be challenged to engage in the real world as they learned through doing alongside peers and experts in a welcoming and supportive community.

The first task in making the vision a reality was to hire the right person to undertake the monumental task, James Moudry, the founding High School director. The second task was to find precisely the right spot to plant the new learning community. The neighborhood needed to offer students limitless opportunities for encountering experts and getting involved in work that impacted not only local issues but also global challenges. Then Head of School,

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John Long, spotted the ideal location in the former linen rental building on Autrey Street in the Museum District. The location provided easy access to the cultural and scientific institutions of the Museum District, the Texas Medical Center, Rice University, and the University of St. Thomas. The building was fully renovated in the spring of 2012 to allow students to move freely and stay connected with peers and teachers throughout the day, while the floor-to-ceiling windows on two sides invited their eyes and imaginations to roam beyond the school walls.

Pioneers arrive

The next step was to fill out a key component of the topography of the new teen learning environment—the adults! There has never been a simple template for what makes a great Montessori high school teacher. Subject expertise was a given, but other attributes were equally critical—commitment to following students in their own intrinsic direction, willingness to break with traditional pedagogy in the pursuit of that aim, and a fundamental respect for the dignity of human beings making the transition to adulthood. These professionals were also going to need to be entrepreneurs in their own right, asking not “what does this new school expect of me?” but “how far will the school let me go in pursuing the mission?”

With the initial faculty of three hired by summer 2012, the most critical builders were yet to be brought on board. Of all the people who took risks to found the new High School, the people who risked the most were the students, because they entrusted their critical years leading to college to a novel and untested program that

aimed to break the mold for what the teen experience could look like.

Campus meets world

Post Oak’s relationship to Museum District partner institutions highlights another crucial step in the process of building the new program. Montessori education is guided by the developmental needs of students at each age. Older teens are ready to venture into a learning environment beyond the walls of the school encompassing the local community with all its resources and needs.

Thus, Post Oak students have been able to make significant contributions and even launch their careers through their internships with community partners.

For example, by the time Emily Randall graduated in the Class of 2016, she could write about her four years of work in the Houston Museum of Natural Science Paleontology Lab and in the field excavating under the direction of HMNS faculty. Emily is just one of the many students whose work built Post Oak’s current network of vibrant community partnerships.

In January 2014, our mini-course intensive (aka J-Term) would see the extension of the community partner network to the international level with the first session of the Falmouth Field School, a collaboration with Jamaican partners in support of Jamaican history, heritage, and international friendship. This experimental foray was quickly followed by similar international field schools in Nicaragua, China, and Costa Rica.

And so it grows

2016 was the year of Post Oak’s first graduating class. Those students watched out the east facing windows as a new high school building was constructed, thanks to the generosity of donors to the Big Work Capital Campaign. The new William O. Perkins III High School building made it possible for that division to reach its current capacity of approximately 24 students per grade. It also allowed the Middle School to move from the Bissonnet Campus to occupy the former high school facilities, extending the benefits of the Museum District location to these younger adolescents.

In the years since then, the generosity and resilience of the Post Oak community has not flagged, and, in spite of floods, winter storms, and pandemics, new land acquisition and building has improved the school’s facilities for design technology (La Tinkería) and athletics (South Annex Pavilion), as well as expanding classroom and office space. Most recently, the lot connecting the South Annex to Banks Street was acquired. But the point has never been expansion for its own sake. Rather, this property will be used to deepen our ability to guide our students in creating their own “bold pathways in leading purposeful lives.” What is taken from the community must be given back through further integration of our program and responsiveness to local needs. The Banks Street lot opens an exciting opportunity for the adolescent program (7th–12th grades) to be transformed in a way that will fundamentally improve the quality of the student experience.

Stay tuned for exciting developments as the High School embarks on its second decade! 📖

See timeline on next page >

MUSEUM DISTRICT CAMPUS:
A 10-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE



Above: Students watched as an existing structure was demolished at the corner of Autrey and Montrose where the future High School building was built.



Below: The renovated open layout of the former linen building (now home to the Middle School) allowed for more student collaboration.

Right: Lower school students show off their Post Oak spirit at the MDC Grand Opening of the new High School building.



2012

2014

2015

2016

2017



Post Oak became an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, offering the IB Diploma program for grades 11 and 12.

Below: The exterior of the renovated linen facility in the Museum District where the High School began.



Above: Kind of a big deal—the first commencement ceremony of Post Oak’s High School held at Rice University’s Hamman Hall.

Ten Years at the MDC

Below: A typical seminar-style discussion in one of the new High School classrooms.



Left: A new free-standing makerspace, La Tinkería, was completed between the existing buildings.

Top: After the pandemic lock-down was lifted, students enjoyed spending time outdoors for study and socializing.



2018

2019

2020

2021

2022



Above: Spirit week at the High School

Right: Once the new High School building was completed, the Middle School moved from the Bissonnet Campus into the existing building, creating a campus focused entirely on adolescent development.



Above: A pavilion was constructed on the South Annex across the street from the Middle and High School, providing an area for sports and more classroom space.

Fun in the Sun (and Shade) at the BC

by Elaine Schweizer,
Senior Communications Specialist



*This page, top: The new pavilion; Right: The backfield turf upgrade in the works.
Next page, left: Duct work being replaced throughout the building. Right: Our
newest YCC class working outdoors*

The Bissonnet Campus (BC) was constructed in 1985. Built specifically for the developmental needs of children as young as 14 months through early adolescence, it has seen a number of improvements, including a renovation in 2016.

In the past few years, though, new needs have popped up, some due to wear and tear, some thanks to opportunities brought by the pandemic.

BC pavilion provides shade on backfield

Students returned from winter break in 2022 to a new pavilion covering the BC's backfield basketball court. The new structure is a welcome addition that provides shade and protection while classes play on the court or have lunch outdoors. Families got their first glimpse at our Parents Association End-of-Year Community Party in May.

We extend our gratitude to the donors who made the pavilion possible, including the Seff family and those who gave to Post Oak's Annual Fund! Special thanks to our facilities team for managing and overseeing the project.

Mud pit to seeing green

The BC backfield has seen a lot of activity over the years, from Family

Fun Days to After-School Enrichment Program (ASEP) sports and daily recess. In that time, it's been a headache for our facilities team to maintain, requiring closures to give it a break and encourage the grass to grow back. Since the pandemic and even more outdoor activities for students, the field slowly devolved into areas of scorched earth and a mud pit during rain. Four Upper Elementary students led the charge to do something about it (see the message from Maura Joyce on page 2). The result: time to turf! Not only will turf give us an even, clean field for recess and sports, instead of the standard six-inch base, there will be a two-foot crushed concrete bed to help with flood mitigation.

The four students are moving on to Middle School at the Museum District Campus for 22–23, but that didn't stop them from leaving behind a green future for their peers and future students to enjoy.

We hope you'll come check it out at the next Family Fun Day in the fall.

Fourth YCC class opened

In spring 2022, Post Oak officially opened a fourth Young Children's Community (YCC) class (14 months–3 years). The class, led by Elizabeth Dickson, welcomed nine toddlers to the community.

With their first semester complete, we are delighted to see how they enjoyed the classroom. We hope that the lasting impact is that more children get the benefit of Montessori at an earlier age and that we continue to grow our Post Oak community.

HVAC: All systems go—almost!

Air conditioning systems work non-stop to keep our buildings cool during warm months. The massive air handlers have been in service for 35 years and need to be replaced before they give out. That work started this summer with the replacement of all foil-tubed ductwork with more efficient (and sculpturally interesting) metal ductwork sections. The BC building became a full construction zone to dismantle ceilings and replace the ductwork. The two room-sized air handlers will be replaced later this fall through a process of disassembling and removing the old and reassembling the new unit in place.

Again our thanks to all contributors to the 2022 Biennial Gala and Post Oak Fund who helped offset part of the cost of the turf and the new HVAC system. ☺



Giving as a Community

by Christina Kopanidis-Cantu,
Development Director



“It started as a text chat and grew into an organized campaign,” explained Elementary students Anya K. ’28 and Quinton W. ’28. The students initiated an art and bake sale fundraiser in January 2022 in support of Houston Cares Animal Rescue, an organization dear to the hearts of these sixth graders.

Organizing support and raising awareness for a cause is typical work for Post Oak students who have been learning about the importance of community service their whole lives.

Service begins in Early Childhood

Post Oak children as young as 14 months through Primary learn how to live in community and support those around them. They set the table for a group meal, prepare snacks for classmates, care for class pets, and clean up their environment to leave it ready for the next person, all with the goal of understanding their role in a group and how to show respect for each other—a first step in being a global citizen.

The desire to help others and respond to the needs around them flourishes

during elementary years. Elementary students are passionate about helping their fellow humans (or animals or whatever cause catches their attention). This year, their passion was on full display once Covid-19 restrictions lifted and they were able to organize service activities. Students initiated and hosted fundraisers with homemade baked goods, student-created artwork and jewelry, and book sales from their own collections. In addition to Houston Cares Animal Rescue, the classes’ efforts raised support for Kids Against Hunger, Rescued Pets Movement, Braes Interfaith Ministries, and Houston Fire Department’s Stocking Stuffer program (see page 5).

Adolescent years

In Middle School, service work is structured into the curriculum. Weekly outings throughout the school year to various types of service organizations give seventh- and eighth-grade adolescents a wide-angle perspective

on the many ways their work directly benefits the community. Students rotate time working with the elderly, in food pantries, at homeless shelters, in urban gardens, and more.

This work continues into High School as Post Oak students take on service-related internships and complete major community service projects. Part of this is required curriculum work from the school’s International Baccalaureate (IB) program and groups such as Post Oak’s chapter of the National Honor Society. This year, individual students shared their passion for a number of causes by hosting drives to collect coats for the homeless, toys and games for children, and food supplies for Afghani refugees.

Families take part

It’s not just students giving back to the community. Each year, Post Oak families and employees engage in group service activities. This year, families with children of all ages gathered to decorate and color lunch bags to bring a smile to Kids Meals recipients; they made warm blankets to donate to Santa Maria Hostel; and, they worked in assembly lines to fill food packs for Houston Food Bank recipients.

Post Oak values service work as an important part of learning at all levels, and there were plenty of opportunities this year to get together and give back to the broader Houston community. ☛



Left: A family decorates bags for Kids Meals; Above: Families worked at Houston Food Bank

The Return to Student Travel

By Alex Abel, Middle School Director

In the wake of living through a pandemic, we have been invited to slow down and reconsider what is truly meaningful and important as we work in support of our adolescents, especially as they recover and reestablish their connection to their community. Throughout this past school year, we observed that community living is something that adolescents are hungry for and need.

As we eased our way back into providing our students with this quintessential element of the Post Oak Middle School experience, this observation was affirmed and reaffirmed through various extended day trips. These included: kicking off the year with team-building activities at Camp Allen; working on the land in partnership with the Blackwood Educational Land Institute, Hope Farms, and Plant It Forward; learning about our coastal region in partnership with Texas A&M University at Galveston; our annual Middle School A-Term week; and finally, our return to full overnight travel through our spring trip to Nature's Classroom Institute in Palm Harbor, Florida.

Our Middle School students partake in five travel opportunities in a typical school year. Each of these is intentionally linked to the Humanities and Science/Occupations curriculum and provides the students with all the aspects associated with living in a community. Social organization, a term used by Maria Montessori to describe the psychological and social landscape that allows adolescents to experience all that it means to be a

part of an interdependent society—collaboration, conflict resolution, natural consequences, responsibility in a group and to a group, stewardship, and group decision making to name a few—is always at the center of these experiences.

When students collaborate with each other, engage in partnership with the adults to plan and coordinate the social and practical aspects of each travel experience, and are encouraged to take ownership of thinking creatively in solving problems, social organization comes alive and feeds the students' sense of self as an individual contributing to a group. This is arguably the cornerstone of being an adult who is a part of an interdependent society.

As we move into the 2022–2023 school year, we plan to fully return to travel. We start the year with our team-building experience at Camp Allen. This trip focuses on bringing together our new community of students and adults. We learn more about ourselves and how we work together and start forming our group identity.

In conjunction with our Law and Government course of study in Humanities, we head to Washington DC in October. As well as the rich educational experiences provided through the plethora of sites and museums to be found in this amazing city, students work in collaboration with the adults to plan and coordinate our lunches and dinners and, while on the trip, learn how to navigate city living by walking and using public transit.

In November and February, a group heads out to Blackwood for our residential land experience. Dr. Maria Montessori said, "The land is where our roots are. The children must be taught to feel and live in harmony with the Earth." This amazing experience allows us to get out of the hustle and bustle of the Houston Museum District for a little while so we can connect with and learn from the land on which we live. Students work with the farm managers on projects like building new fencing, harvesting and planting crops, taking care of the chickens and livestock, and working with the chef to plan and prepare all the meals.

This is an opportunity that we do not take for granted. Nature, which happens to be the most perfectly prepared environment for our students, casts its spell on us all as we explore and observe what the Post Oak Middle School community looks like outside the boundaries of the MDC. ☞



Above: Middle School Coastal Trip

Students from Elementary through High School enjoyed a return to travel throughout the state, country, and world.



This page from top left: Elementary MMUN students in NYC, 3rd grade at Camp Allen, Upper Elementary at NCI, 6th grade in Williamsburg, VA, High School Costa Rica Field School A-Term, HS Big Bend J-Term

High School Internship Program

By *Shonali Agrawal P '31, Internship Coordinator*

Post Oak's internship program provides our High School students the opportunity to explore interests while developing workplace skills. Internships often shape what students choose to study in college and play an impactful role in shaping the development of our adolescents.

The program has been thriving, with students interning at organizations such as the Asia Society, Bellaire Nature Center, Rice University, and Bee2Bee Honey Collective, just to name a few. The ties between Post Oak's Bissonnet and Museum District Campuses continue to grow, with High Schoolers matched as interns in the Library, Upper Elementary classrooms, the Houston Montessori Institute, and Montessori Model United Nations.

I have been thrilled to hear our students' experiences and reflections as we drive them back from fieldwork, from news about the Komodo dragon at the Bellaire Nature Center (who is sick and refuses to eat), bees who are hard at work making honey at this time of the year, slides that one of our High Schoolers is making for a Rice University undergraduate class, or a student interning at Asia Society helping to paint a mural that is part of a new art exhibit.

Though not a requirement, internships are an important part of the experiential learning that Post Oak provides. To learn more about internships or get involved, reach out to me at shonaliagrawal@postoakschool.org, and let's continue to provide our students with experiences that develop and deepen their interests. ☞

Meet the Interns. Here's a handful of students and their work.



Leon H. '23 started interning with the Asia Society in the fall of 2021. Leon was interested in working in a professional work environment and learning more about the cultures of Asia as he is a student of Mandarin at the High School. Leon was placed in the Education and Outreach department, where he researched various topics and learned to organize events such as the Lunar New Year and Ramadan celebrations at the Asia Society. This helped Leon develop his skills as a manager and leader and build his interpersonal skills.



Vee A. '23 started interning at The Post Oak School Bissonnet Campus library in the fall of 2021. One of Vee's interests is library sciences, and it seemed befitting to match her with the library at the school's lower school campus. She learned about shelving books, the Dewey System, scanning books, managing the library, organizing a book fair, and growing her organizational and management skills. She even got an opportunity to serenade the Primary students with sing-alongs and dancing.



Everest L. '24 started interning with the Asia Society in October 2021. Everest is a student of the Japanese language, an artist, and part Chinese, so he wanted to get closer to his Chinese roots. Everest was matched in the Education and Outreach department, where he researched activities and worked on skills in communicating effectively with others. In addition, Everest got to work alongside an Asian artist on a mural displayed at the Asia Society.

POST OAK



Gabe A. '22, communications intern; (not pictured) **Kenzie F.** '22, social media and photography intern; **Evan G.** '24, social media and photography intern; **Shyla J.** '25, communications intern | **Alexandra W.** '26 and **Allie D.** '26, Middle School reporters

Throughout the school year, six Museum District Campus students provided glimpses of life at Post Oak as student interns and reporters. Our Middle and High School student team highlighted the school's community and culture, from school traditions, campus celebrations, and travel to highlighting our graduating class through Senior Spotlights.



Sabrina G. '24 was a natural fit for the Bellaire Nature Center and the Bee2Bee Honey Collective, as she loves animals and aspires to be a veterinarian. At the Bellaire Nature Center, she worked as an animal care intern and got hands-on experience with various species. Observing and caring for the animals gave Sabrina insight into animal behavior and preferences. At Bee2Bee, Sabrina was matched to learn more about beekeeping and the business aspect of bee husbandry and honey production.



Gloria M. '25 started interning in a Post Oak Upper Elementary classroom in the spring of 2022. Her interest in learning about the Montessori system and being with young students made her the perfect match for the class. Gloria helped students with one-on-one projects, sharing her knowledge and learning interpersonal skills in a classroom environment different from what she experienced as an elementary student in a traditional educational setting.



Noor Q. '25 started interning at the St. Paul's Methodist Church in fall 2021. A lifelong Montessori student, she expressed a desire to be involved with students from different backgrounds and school systems. She was matched at the after-school program where students are offered a safe space after school to do homework and develop their interests. Noor learned skills such as implementing activities for these students and looking at the world from a different perspective.

Student Spotlights

In addition to academics, our students take on a variety of activities both at school and across Houston. Here are just a few of the stories from the 2021–2022 school year. Parents, if you have a story to share, please email the Development Office at development@postoakschool.org. Thank you!





1. **Baylin B.** '35 performed for the first time at Warehouse Live in January. He sang and played the guitar for "Another One Bites the Dust."
2. **Noah D.** '32 competed in Houston Sword Sport's Fall 2021 School Championship in December 2021. Noah placed sixth out of 20.
3. **Josey Gregg** '22 was the overall female winner at the Bolivar Live Triathlon at Historic Fort Travis Park in October 2021, in the sprint division. Josey posted first overall for women and fifth overall, including men.
- 4 & 5. Congratulations to Coach Tucker Heart Award recipients **Anthony H.** '26 (Middle School) and **Luke Kirchner** '22 (High School) for dedication to Post Oak's Bearkats teams with unfailing camaraderie and integrity.
6. **Henry Quillin** '22 received the distinguished designation of National Merit Finalist in February of 2022.
7. At Post Oak's annual Elementary spelling bee, **Gracie C.** '28, **Oliver L.** '29, and **Madeleine D.** '30 each spelled at least 36 words ranging from *sleet* to *lachrymose* before Gracie completed the championship word: *crisis*.
8. **Ashwini P.** '29 debuted her book, *Lifetime*. She plans to donate 50% of net proceeds from sales of her book to causes dear to her heart—charities supporting education and climate change.
9. Post Oak's National Honor Society chapter held elections for the board for 22–23. **Kilali L.** '23 (president), **Sofi S.** '23 (secretary), **Ariela K.** '23 (treasurer), **Alex G.** '23 (historian), **Andy W.** '23 (vice president)

Alumni Spotlights: Movers & Shakers

Each summer we put out a call to alumni to see what they've been up to. Here are some of our early responses. Alums, email development@postoakschool.org with your news.

2016

Grace Armstrong

I am about to graduate from my Master's program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and have passed the national examination, meaning I am eligible for licensure in the state of Illinois as a licensed professional counselor and to obtain my certification of National Certified Counselor. I had the opportunity to present at a national conference while seeing students at a high school crisis center. This fall, I will start my doctoral studies in Clinical Psychology, but this summer, I'm going to try to take it easy for a little bit!

Rains Browning

I graduated from Southwestern University in 2020 with a degree in political science and history, subsequently working at the International Journal of Solids and Structures in 20–21. I currently attend the University of Chicago, pursuing my MA in social sciences with a concentration in political theory. My research centers on 20th century Marxist and Critical French Social Thought, reconciling Michel de Certeau's work on the everyday with Theodor Adorno's writing on the culture industry. My hope is to continue this research as a part of a PhD program.

Despite dwindling NBA hopes, I am a two-time Men's, one-time Co-Ed, and one-time 3v3 Basketball Intramural champion at Southwestern University, soon to be competing for the grad-

league championship at the University of Chicago.

Alex Donnenberg

I graduated from USC after taking time off to farm oats and alfalfa for rescue horses during the pandemic. This novel perspective allowed me to explore a variety of professional avenues, leading me to Webv3 investment banking in the Bay Area, and now to financial services in Los Angeles. I am also a new member of the Economics Leadership Council at USC Dornsife, and managing member of a small farm in New Mexico. I live with my girlfriend, Julia, in Little Tokyo.

2018

Garrett Shaw

This May, I graduated from Rice University with a BA in Philosophy.



Alex Donnenberg



Rains Browning



Claire Thompson

This August, I will be moving to Washington, DC, to pursue my JD at Georgetown Law. In the meantime, I will be spending five weeks off the grid to complete the Trans America Trail, crossing the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific by 4x4 on exclusively dirt roads.

2019

Claire Thompson

I am a rising senior with a major in politics and a minor in anthropology, with plans to get my license in social work. This academic year, I served as secretary and co-chair of performances of Ithaca College's largest and longest running dance company, IC Unbound. We put on three amazing shows, where I choreographed and danced in several pieces across a variety of styles. In the coming year, I will serve as president of IC Unbound, which I could not be more excited for (follow us on Instagram @icunbound). I also got a job substitute teaching at a local dance studio. Whenever I can, I travel. This year, I've made a number of trips to NYC, drove cross country from Houston to Ithaca and watched **Jordan Barger '18** graduate from UCLA in June.



Jadyn Cleary



Sydney Ying

2020

Jadyn Cleary

A rising junior at Duke University with a self-designed major in Program II (AB) – Digital Platform Design: Accessible User Experience, I am currently on the Dean's List with Distinction for this past academic year, having achieved this honor with a perfect GPA and ranking in the top 10th of the Trinity Arts and Sciences College. As a freshman, the committee

(continued on next page)



Screenshots from Alumni Voices in January 2022

Continued from page 27

selected me for the Baldwin Scholars Program, a Women’s Leadership Development program, which allows me to be a mentor.

For over a year, I interned at Durham’s Pitch Story Lab as the Art Director of UX and Graphic Design and am currently interning with The Pauli-Murry Center as a Firebrand intern.

Also, I was one of a hundred college students across the globe chosen to participate in this year’s Business Today Design Nation conference in NYC.

Sydney Ying

I am a full-time student and an upcoming junior at Rice University officially double majoring in Sport Management and Business. This past year was a big year of change for me work-wise, as I also got my first real job as an NBA dancer for the Houston Rockets! This is my first year as a Clutch City Dancer, and I have learned

so much about dance, basketball, professionalism, and the entertainment industry throughout the season. I am currently training in hopes of making the team again next year and being able to represent my city even more. By the time this is published, I will have also been featured on my first television show! NBC’s “Dancing With Myself” is Shakira’s new dance show on which I am a contestant. I could not be more excited to share this opportunity with everyone and spread my love for dance.

2021

River (Anna) Theriot

I started a job in January at a doggy daycare and was promoted to manager. I’m attending classes at Houston Community College and planning to transfer to a four year college.

I have plans this summer to go on a camping trip that will take me through state parks in Dallas, Austin, and Houston. Should be an adventure! 🐾



IN MEMORIAM

Joseph “Joe” Orr ’19

We lovingly and fondly pay tribute to Joseph Orr, who passed in September 2021. Joseph graduated from Post Oak in 2019, after attending from the age of three through twelfth grade. He was 20 years old, a student at the University of Denver, and admired and loved by those who knew him.

Joseph had a brilliant mind and always kept his teachers on their toes with his incredible wealth of knowledge and his skills in discussion. He was an asset to the Post Oak community, as are his parents, Katie and Robert Orr.

A celebration of Joseph’s life was held in June 2022. The family humbly invited those wishing to make a memorial donation to consider supporting organizations important to Joseph such as Montessori Model United Nations, Aurora Picture Show, or Writers in the Schools. 🐾



Spotted in the fall of 2021—Post Oak alums reuniting at Texas Christian University Pictured from left: Cole Barger ’20, Xander Bergeron ’20, Brooks Farish ’21, Francesco Argentina ’20, and Nicholas Kapusta (attended through Elementary).

Class of 2022 Commencement

Where are they headed next?

- ◆ Baylor University
- ◆ Berry College
- ◆ Case Western Reserve University
- ◆ Emerson College
- ◆ Emory University
- ◆ Guilford College
- ◆ Haverford College
- ◆ Missouri University of Science and Technology
- ◆ Rice University
- ◆ Southwestern University
- ◆ Texas A & M University
- ◆ Trinity University
- ◆ Tulane University of Louisiana
- ◆ University of Colorado, Boulder
- ◆ University of Connecticut
- ◆ University of Houston
- ◆ The University of Texas at Austin

Meet Post Oak's newest alumni, the Class of 2022! After two years of distanced outdoor ceremonies, Commencement returned to the Rice University campus in Hamman Hall.

Senior musicians Josey Gregg (bass), Luke Kirchner (acoustic guitar), Leila Lopez Marks (bongos), Frederika Luk (keyboard), and Cidette Rice (vocals) entertained the crowd with a performance of *Upside Down* by Jack Johnson, joined by Andy W. '23 on acoustic guitar.

Former faculty member Dr. Jamie Lee gave the commencement address,

joining other speakers Head Maura Joyce, High School Director James Quillin, and Board President and alumna Alison Wong. Each year students choose a class representative to deliver a speech, with this year's honor going to Andreas Cantu, who received enthusiastic applause.

Our alums are off on their college journeys. The 21 seniors in the class of 2022 received merit scholarship offers totaling \$4,641,244.

To watch the recording of the ceremony, visit postoakschool.org/commencement.



Mirani Smith's New Adventures

by Maura Joyce, Head of School

With great respect, we share news of long-time Post Oak School employee Mirani Smith having moved on to new Montessori adventures. Many who entered the doors of Post Oak had the opportunity to work with Mirani as she served in the roles of Primary teacher, parent educator, division director, and later executive director of our training center, the Houston Montessori Institute. For half of the school's 60 years, our friend and colleague played a key role in growing our Montessori roots, defining our culture, and guiding countless students and faculty members through the wisdom of Montessori.

In her role as a Primary teacher, Mirani did more than show up each day with enthusiasm and grace for her students. She helped make Post Oak a better place by initiating activities such as the Primary Olympics, a grand day of fun for Primary families for many years. She was also responsible for cultivating and maintaining our butterfly garden and bringing butterfly releases to many events. As the Early Childhood director, Mirani continued to support Primary faculty and strengthen that program for Post Oak. In 2012, The Post Oak School realized the opportunity and importance of starting the Houston Montessori Institute, an Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) affiliated training center for adults. Mirani was the clear choice to become the administrator.

Mirani's passion for working with children and parents to bring Montessori into their lives continues to
(continued on next page)



be her north star. Her next phase takes her to the Bezos Academy’s startup enterprise with the mission of building a network of tuition-free, Montessori-inspired preschools in underserved communities. Her work will directly impact the lives of students and families.

Mirani shared the following:

I am thankful for the many opportunities given in the roles I had at this school. I am deeply appreciative of my colleagues and those in the

entire community who have given of themselves with their kindness and support.

It was a privilege to be with dedicated practitioners and staff who have a zest for life and acknowledge the energy and zest in the child.

Mirani’s departure was sad news for our community, but the work she will do for the Bezos Academy as it grows will make a difference in the life of Houstonians and beyond. ☪

Artwork Selected for Venice Biennale

Post Oak art specialist **Saida Fagala** will have artwork on virtual display at the 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. The annual exhibition runs from April 23 to November 27, 2022, and is curated by Cecilia Alemani. The art composition will be featured on YouTube alongside other international artists’ work.

Saida’s work, “Peace and Love on Earth,” is a response to international events. She shared, “Events in Ukraine deeply stressed and saddened me, and I thought about reflecting it in my art. I made a few series dedicated to peace on Earth.” ☪



EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES

Each May, we celebrate milestone anniversaries at our end-of-year employee luncheon. This year saw two reach the 30-year mark! Congrats, all!

5 YEARS

Dana Bowman
Lucía Cerritos
Casie Cobos
Sally Kruse
Murad Mahmood
Andrea Restrepo

10 YEARS

Anthony Cisneros
Elizabeth Dickson
Rebecca Duran
Jeremy Grisbee
Monica Moreno
Beth Olitzki
James Quillin
Elaine Schweizer
Tamara Townsend
James Winslow

25 YEARS

Mirna Andrade-Salgado
Debbie Henderson
Diana Onofre
Miriam Winton

30 YEARS

Patricia Onofre
Mirani Smith

POPA Welcomes New Chairs

by **Christina Kopanidis-Cantu**,
Development Director

At the close of the 2021–2022 school year, the Post Oak community gathered for the Post Oak Parents Association (POPA) End-of-Year Celebration under the new outdoor Bissonnet Campus pavilion. Parents and faculty members came out to enjoy tasty treats, listen to a live jazz duo, raise a glass to the end of the school year, and say thanks to a few folks.

Maura Joyce, Head of School, acknowledged and thanked parent volunteer groups, including room parents and Post Oak Fund class captains, and gave special appreciation to this year’s annual fund chairs, **Rob Johnson and Ariella Perlman P ’33 & ’35**.

To conclude her remarks, Maura welcomed to the stage our 2019–2022 POPA chairs: **Laura De Vera P ’32 & ’34**, **Carlin Putman P ’29 & ’30**, and **Daniela Sanchez P ’24, ’26, & ’28**, who have gone above and beyond in their extended three-year term through the pandemic. These three women have kept our community connected, informed, and in good spirits, even during difficult times.

Carlin and Laura both talked about their experience of being POPA chairs, working on events, and how wonderful it is to work with Post Oak parent volunteers. Laura shared, “These memories and events wouldn’t have been possible without the commitment from members of our community. Whether you showed up for one hour of a POPA Workday, sold raffle tickets in the parking lot, chaired a Gala subcommittee, or came in to set up for

Gala, each one of your contributions matters to the success of this school year.”

The POPA chairs thanked all of this year’s event leadership and volunteers. They were delighted to announce our new POPA chairs for 2022–2024: **Vareen Cunningham P ’24 & ’26**, **Rhian McKinney P ’19 & ’30**, and **Sabina Walia P ’31, ’33, & ’38!**

We thank all of the 2021–22 event chairs and leadership volunteers for their service in support of The Post Oak School:

- ◆ POPA Chairs: **Laura De Vera**, **Carlin Putman**, **Daniela Sanchez**
- ◆ Dads Club Chairs: **Darryll De Vera P ’32 and ’34**, **Lloyd Kirchner P ’22**, **Bobby Matos P ’30 & ’32**
- ◆ Family Fun Day Chairs: **Sara and Gabriel Massey P ’32 & ’34**
- ◆ 2022 Biennial Gala Chairs: **Amy Kirchner P ’22 & Jessica Matos P ’30 and ’32**
- ◆ Community Service Chairs: **Sheryl Abrahams P ’26 & ’28**, **Johnna Gluth P ’34**, **Pragnya Patel P ’26**

- ◆ Post Oak Fund Chairs: **Ariella Perlman** and **Robert Johnson**
- ◆ Teacher Appreciation Coordinators: **Shonali Agrawal P ’31 (BC)**, **Karen Brisch P ’24**, and **Denisha Sotomayor P ’22 (MDC)** ☞

2022–23 Event Chairs

FAMILY FUN DAY
**Angela Ebrahimi P ’38 and
Jelena Zhang P ’35**

2022–23 GOLF
TOURNAMENT
**Susanna and Clay Kartye
P ’31 (see back cover)**

2022–23 POST OAK FUND
**Laura and Darryll De Vera
P ’32 & ’34**

DADS CLUB
**Darryll De Vera and
Mike Purcell P ’31, ’33, & ’35**



Incoming and Outgoing POPA Chairs: Vareen Cunningham, Sabina Walia, Rhian McKinney, Carlin Putman, Laura De Vera, and Daniela Sanchez

Three years in the making, our Biennial Gala: Peace, Love, and Montessori on March 5, 2022, was a rocking record-breaker!

Led by co-chairs Amy Kirchner and Jessica Matos (right), Post Oakers, from toddlers to parents to faculty and staff, all got involved in some way to set the stage for a groovy gala and fabulous fundraiser.

Our hippest and happiest thanks to all those who participated, whether through underwriting, donating, or the silent and live auctions. The Gala raised \$885,500 for The Post Oak School. 🎉







The Post Oak School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or nationality or ethnic origin with regard to hiring, admissions, or in the administration of any of its programs.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Sebha Ali
- Rob Bruce
- Raj Chelapurath
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- TJ Farnsworth
- Maura Joyce, *President*
- Susanna Kartye
- Judy Le
- Gabriel Loperena
- Mark Martin
- Oscar Parada
- Rona Sonabend
- Rochelle Tafolla
- Troy Thacker
- Whitney Walsh
- Alison Wong, *Chair*
- Jordan Zweig

EMERITUS MEMBERS

- Melissa Coleman
- Adam Forman
- Melanie Gray
- Vean Gregg
- Bob Harvey
- Lloyd Kirchner
- Pat Mitchell
- Manolo Sanchez
- Alan Ying

About The Post Oak School

The Post Oak School is an educational leader—both among Houston’s top private schools and among the more than 5,000 Montessori schools across the country. Post Oak has operated continuously since 1963 and is a non-profit corporation. With a faculty and staff of over 100, we serve a culturally diverse student population of 500 and provide a comprehensive education founded on AMI Montessori principles from early childhood starting at 14 months through high school.

Post Oak has two campuses to serve our four academic communities from early childhood through high school. The Bissonnet Campus (BC) is home to the Young Children’s Community (starting at 14 months) through Elementary (grades 1 to 6). The school occupies a 3.44-acre lot on the corner of Bissonnet Street and Avenue B in Bellaire, a suburb of Houston, Texas.

The Museum District Campus (MDC) is home to our Middle and High School and is located at the corner of Montrose and Autrey Street in Houston’s Museum District. The Museum District is the perfect launching point for the interdisciplinary partnerships, internships, service learning, and travel experiences central to this school’s mission. The High School program culminates in two years of the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program. »

Above left: the community celebrates students moving up at the All-School Assembly in May.

Right: a dinosaur themed Family Fun Day in 2021

Printed using 100% post-consumer recycled paper

September 2022,
Houston, Texas

www.postoakschool.org

See you soon!

Join us for one, some, or all of these events during the 2022–23 school year. Visit postoakschool.org/calendar to see event times and details.

For Families

YCC & PRI Family Social	Sat., Sept. 10
Elementary Family Social	Fri., Sept. 16
Family Fun Day	Sat., Nov. 5
Community Service in the Gym	Mon., Jan. 16
Book Fair	Sat., March 25

For Adults

Community Coffee for parents	Fri., Aug. 26
POPA Welcome Cocktails	Tues., Sept. 13
MDC Parent Social	Thurs., Oct. 13
Golf Tournament	Tues., April 4
End-of-Year Community Party	Thurs., May 4



The
POST OAK
SCHOOL

4600 BISSONNET ST.
BELLAIRE, TX 77401



Putting for Post Oak

Post Oak's golf tournament and fundraiser returns Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at Houston Oaks Golf Club. Sponsorships and teams available. Sign up for notifications at www.postoakschool.org/golf.