

THE PAIDEIA SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

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Joy in Small Things

The Lasting Legacy of Paideia's Half Day



"I was sitting with some of the development team from upstairs at Grandparents' Day, and they said, 'oh, the afternoon class — you have a lot of fun. We generally hear kid laughter, but we also hear a lot of adult laughter,'" Half Day teacher **Andrew Haworth '01** chuckles. Matching a child's sense of play and wonder doesn't come naturally to everyone, but for Andrew and his teaching partner, David, it's in their blood. Although this is their first year teaching afternoon Half Day together, their history with Paideia, the Half Day and each other goes back much further.

"Mom was my teacher," says **David Walbert '97**. "She didn't want to show favoritism, so she didn't teach me anything," he jokes. "So I started in the Half Day, but I had a little catch-up to do."

Charlotte Walbert started teaching Half Day in 1983 and dedicated nearly 30 years of her life to the growth of Paideia's smallest humans. "I must've started in-utero then," Andrew follows, speaking of his mother, **Dorothy Craft Evans**, who started as a Half Day teacher at Paideia in 1978 before moving up to the Elementary School and then to administration, assisting **Paul Bianchi**. Although David and Andrew have known each other since childhood, neither of them could have predicted they would teach Half Day, let alone work together, but now the duo writes a new chapter in the continued legacy of their beloved mothers.

As early teachers and parents, Charlotte and Dorothy helped mold Paideia in its sec-

ond decade and set a precedent for future teachers. The impact they share goes beyond the traditions they have left behind, such as singing "Gilly Gilly Good Morning" or acting out "Going on a Bear Hunt." It goes beyond the bench on the Half Day playground that bears Charlotte's name, or the picture frame gifted to Dorothy by a four-year-old student who, now in her 40s, still fondly remembers her teacher. The most valuable legacy they leave, and one that their sons continue, is the way they made people feel.

When David agreed to sub Charlotte's Half Day class for two weeks shortly after he graduated college, the advice she gave him was, "Just have fun; if you're not having fun, you're doing it wrong." He has carried that advice with him through great days and hard days, through multiple jobs throughout the years. "I think what I've gained from Mom," says David, "is to find joy in such small things, such small victories. Having someone understand why the small victories are so exciting and to take joy in them has helped me realize and see their importance."

Reflecting on their own experiences at Paideia, Andrew and David acknowledge what a privilege it is to enjoy school. It is part of the reason they became teachers: to advocate for their students and "to meet them where they are." Andrew attributes his individualized, student-focused approach to his mom. When he was worried about his own daughter reaching milestones, Dorothy told him, "Meet them where they are. Does she enjoy school? Does she enjoy talking to

you about the alphabet? Then that's a win." He applies that mentality to his work now in the Half Day, "If we're having fun and they're having fun, it's all going to happen. They're going to learn how to read. They're going to reach these milestones."

Though Paideia may physically change, and people come and go, the spirit remains. "Buildings have changed, classrooms aren't where they used to be," Andrew says, "but my daughter, now in second grade, learns in the same classroom that I did at her age. I see the kids waiting on the wood chips for car-pool and I am transported back to that time in my life." He laughs, "Cars have gotten a bit nicer though. Not as many beat-up Volvos." Leading Half Day, David and Andrew carry on the lessons and memories of their mothers, as well as Paideia's early years.

David gets to see his mother's impact in a special way this year, through one of his students — a child of one of Charlotte's former students. He says, "Just knowing that she is so excited that we're her child's teachers because of her memories of Charlotte Walbert, it sets a big expectation. And we're doing our best, but it just reminds you of the impact you could have for 30 to 40 years."

Both feel fortunate to teach at Paideia and seek to bring joy and appreciation to everything they do. Rather than contemplate the future, David and Andrew focus on the day-to-day because, as Andrew observes, "it's not a bad way to spend your day. And for Charlotte and my mom, it was a great way to spend a lot of their lives."

McMerit and Painting Published

Last semester, Junior High English teacher **Tom Painting**, in collaboration with his 8th-grade student **Kya McMerit**, composed a prose/haiku piece titled “Cover Story.” It was recently published in the February 2023 issue of *Drifting Sands*, a journal of Haibun and Tanka prose.

The editor wrote that “Kya’s prose is remarkably nuanced and engaging, and Tom’s haiku enhances the thought-provoking aspect of the prose.” You can read McMerit and Painting’s piece below or visit scan the QR code to visit the *Drifting Sands* website for the full February issue.



Cover Story

A tree lives in my backyard. It is a giant oak that towers above me with wide, green leaves that swish in the wind. I will lie face up to the clouds on the deck outside my room and blink at the sun filtering through my oak. Whenever I have a bad day, I come out and sit staring at this tree. Even though it has been there my entire life, I will often wake up surprised that a living thing can be so old and tall. I wonder about the people that resided in my house before me. Did they also value my tree? Did they even give it a second glance and miss it when they moved on?

opening day
self-awareness
comes to light

Dwyer’s Fight for Food Equity

This past semester — amid Mock Trial practices, her daily hour of Scottish Highland dance practice, rigorous schoolwork and time with friends — somehow 11th-grader **Catherine Dwyer** still found time to pour herself into her greatest passion: working with her community to address food insecurity.

Catherine, who first visited the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) as a seven-year-old Girl Scout, has spent much of her teen years trying to understand the issue of food insecurity. Despite her initial dismay realizing how many families struggle, her involvement with ACFB has shown her that although “so much food insecurity exists, there is also so much food that can be given to people, but it can’t be done without volunteers.” In 2019 and 2022, she attended the Youth Service Summit, a program sponsored by ACFB for rising 8th-12th graders that encourages learning through hands-on service experiences focused on tackling food insecurity.

“Food insecurity is a top priority for me because it’s something that could impact anyone. It’s everywhere. Food is something you need every day, every week. It’s not a temporary need,” Catherine explains. Working with the Clarkston Community Center and supporting young children whose families do not have access to healthy food cemented her goal to combat food insecurity. “Paideia provided me with connections and opportunities that made me feel like I could do more than give canned food to address food insecurity. I felt like I could take it a step up.”

“I wanted to do something with fresh food, and Tania got that started,” Catherine notes. Former Paideia urban agriculture coordinator and personal mentor, **Tania Herbert**, connected her with another local organization, Concrete Jungle. Catherine foraged apples from a churchyard with Concrete Jungle, as well as gathered pounds of chestnuts from a private residence in her neighborhood. Aware of the lack of fresh, organic food accessible to people experiencing food insecurity, she wanted to figure out a way to preserve and share this fresh food with her community.

After applying for and receiving a Paideia Sustainability Grant to cover the costs associated with this initiative, Catherine organized chefs **Karen Luschner** and **Mari Vega** to teach in-school cooking classes for Elementary and High School students to provide large quantities of shelf-stable food — pounds of dried apples, roasted chestnuts and baked goods using chestnut flour, pints of strawberry apple sauce and salsa verde — to food-insecure people in her community. “It was fun to involve some chefs who could really teach us about the process, how to can stuff properly. I wanted the volunteers to leave the class with new skills like “I can make my own salsa now.”

Atlanta Intown and Reporter Newspapers recently recognized Catherine as one of their 20 Under 20 honorees for her work to educate her community about food insecurity and paths to food access. Congratulations, Catherine, and thank you for inspiring sustainable service within our community. Scan the QR code to read the entire 20 Under 20 article.

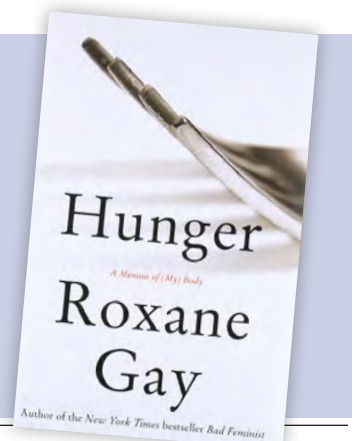


Booked on Campus

The Book: *Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body* by Roxane Gay

Who’s reading it: Faculty and staff in the Diversity Reads book group

About the book: In “Hunger,” the author writes of her experience being fat in a world that is not fat-friendly. Weight gain was 12-year-old Gay’s response to a sexual assault; the bigger her body, the stronger and safer she felt. In considering society’s, and her own, judgment of her body size, Gay questions how we dare to judge others at all. In March, the Diversity Reads discussion will pair “Hunger” (a decidedly adult book) with Lisa Fipps’ “Starfish,” a novel-in-verse exploring body-size diversity for middle-grade readers.



Georgia Tech Model United Nations Conference



During the fall semester, more than 40 students attended the Georgia Tech Model United Nations conference. We had many brand-new delegates participate and are proud of everyone's hard work. Six delegates won top awards:

Kaiya Cihó — Best Delegate in GA2

Bahiyyih Grant — Best Delegate in ILO

Madelynn Huff — Outstanding Delegate in UNHCR

Michael Aaron — Outstanding Delegate in GA6

Cassie Boulis — Outstanding Delegate for Press Corps

William Stone — Outstanding Delegate in GA2

ALUMNI NEWS

Paul Smith '95 writes, "After teaching and serving as dean of students in NYC high schools for a decade, I transitioned to private tutoring nine years ago, specializing in math and SAT/ACT prep for students with learning differences. I am now working fully online and am so excited to finally be able to offer services to students worldwide. Please feel free to reach out (atlpaul76@gmail.com) if you or someone you know is seeking academic support for a student. Also, definitely contact me if you are passing through NYC, as I love catching up with fellow Paideians!"

Alumni Spotlight

We were busy this December celebrating all things Paideia! A big shout-out to our alums who came out to Manuel's Tavern and to the Class of 2012, which won the award for most attendance. To the Class of 2020, thank you for making this year so special during your celebration during the holidays #gopythons.



Launching the 2023 Alumni Fund

Chaired by Katie Clark '04, the mission of the Alumni Fund is to support financial aid at Paideia in the here-and-now. What matters most is that every Alumni Fund gift gives someone the opportunity to become a Paideia kid. Help us reach 100% alumni participation with YOUR gift today! The 2023 Alumni Fund will run until June 15, 2023.



High School House

During the holiday break, the pipes in the High School House burst due to freezing temperatures. Faculty, students and staff with classrooms, lockers and offices in this building lost many of their planning materials, books and notes as well as personal and sentimental belongings. Right now, the administration and faculty are working to get people resettled. We will continue to update the community as plans progress and as needs become known. Until then, if you've ever written a note to show your appreciation to any of the following faculty members, please send them your encouragement and support. For letters, please address them to the faculty/staff member below and mail to 1509 Ponce de Leon Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30307. Email addresses are listed below.

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The Black Alumni Organization Presents

The "Come Up: Black Alumni Gallery" is on view in the Art Lobby for the month of February. Join us for the Link Up: Black Alumni Networking Mixer on February 26 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the Art Lobby. In collaboration with the Black Parents Organization (BPO), all alumni are also welcome to attend their event on February 26 from 3-5 p.m. in the Theater Lobby.

THE PAIDEIA SCHOOL

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THE PAIDEIA SCHOOL is nonsectarian, serving families with children ages three through 18. Paideia does not discriminate in employment or in admissions. It actively seeks racial, cultural, and economic diversity in its student body. The ancient Greek word *Paideia* conveys the concept of a child's total education: intellectual, artistic, and social. The Paideia School Newsletter is published 10 times a year. The deadline for the newsletter is the 1st of the preceding month. Send all correspondence to Caroline Driebe, Editor, at Paideia School, 1509 Ponce de Leon Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30307. Phone number is 404/377-3491, ext. 339; e-mail address is driebe.caroline@paideiaschool.org. For information about sports schedules and upcoming events visit our web site at www.paideiaschool.org

Paideia Auction

**Saturday, March 11, 2023, 6-11 p.m. |
TICKETS ON SALE NOW**

Dust off your favorite pair of sneakers, heels, loafers or flip-flops and mark your calendar for the 2023 Paideia School Auction.

For more than 50 years, the Paideia Auction has ensured that we remain a socioeconomically diverse community by allocating 100% of funds raised from the auction for student financial aid. Paideia is ready to embark on a new era that continues to prioritize our commitment to inclusivity, community and belonging by putting our Best Foot Forward.

Join us on March 11 for dinner, drinks and merriment back at the Stave Room at American Spirit Works.

Join the party – buy your ticket to the event today. Live auction hosted by Tiwana Kenny. Get your dance on with radio personality DJ Yvonne Monet.

Online bidding opens Saturday, March 4, 2023.

Scan the QR code for more information and to buy tickets



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Camp Dates: June 12- July 15, 2023
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Aftercare offered daily from 4 - 5 p.m.