

SPRING 2023

GEORGETOWN **DAYS**



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JASON PUTSCHE

OUR MISSION DRIVES ALL THAT WE DO

GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL honors the integrity and worth of each individual within a diverse school community. GDS is dedicated to providing a supportive educational atmosphere in which teachers challenge the intellectual, creative, and physical abilities of our students and foster strength of character and concern for others. From the earliest grades, we encourage our students to wonder, to inquire, and to be self-reliant, laying the foundation for a lifelong love of learning.



JASON PUTSCHE

We welcome submissions from all Georgetown Day School community members.

Please contact dina@gds.org to learn more. Alumni are encouraged to send their news with photos to alumni@gds.org for inclusion in the *Georgetown Days* magazine.



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FROM WHERE I STAND



JASON PUTSCHÉ

ON THE FRIDAY BEFORE WINTER BREAK, hundreds of Lower School families gathered in the LMS gymnasium for the Christmas Assembly, one of GDS's oldest traditions. The assembly dates to our School's opening in 1945, when our founders decided that one way to build an intentionally inclusive school was to allow for "participation in each other's days of joy." And so Christmas and Passover were both celebrated in that first year, with many other celebrations added in the 77 years since. This old tradition was made new, however, as it was the first time that we were able to celebrate it on our unified campus, and it marked the first in-person Lower School assembly to include families since 2019.

As the PK and Kindergarten angels came a-wassailing into the gym, one could feel a magical fairy dust coursing through the campus. That magic extended into that morning's Middle School celebration and across the street to the High School, where layered a cappella harmonies wafted down from the balcony and the Morris Dancers executed intricate choreography with precision and joy.

This issue of *Georgetown Days* celebrates journeys. Learning journeys can transform, whether through overseas study, the forging of global connections with penpals, or learning about immigration by mapping the journeys to the United States undertaken by GDS community members. Some journeys give our students the opportunity to explore in the District and beyond, and you'll read about those as well.

Sometimes the impact of a journey is felt most powerfully in coming home. Like the rest of the world, GDS traveled a challenging, circuitous, and multiyear journey as we navigated a global pandemic. Our journey separated us from classrooms (Zoom school), from human connection (remember social distancing?), from smiles that were

LS CHRISTMAS ASSEMBLY



hidden behind masks, and from the rituals and traditions that have been foundational to how we build culture. In the wake of these separations, this year's homecoming has been that much sweeter. In early December at our first Choral Extravaganza in three years, when singers in grades four through twelve joined together to perform the "Traveler's Blessing," we were collectively moved by the beauty of the moment, and by a recognition of what had been lost and what was regained.

Journeys are valuable, even if we didn't take them by choice. We emerge from this COVID journey not just with a deeper appreciation for our old rituals, but with some new treasures that we found along the way. Our thriving buddy program, which connects more than 300 older buddies with younger buddies across all three divisions, was born in the early days of the pandemic, when Hoppers were isolated at home and looking for connections on Zoom. This program has blossomed into an avenue for mentorship and deep connections, a powerful manifestation of the possibilities of our unified campus. This is but one example of a valuable keepsake from our unplanned journey.

And as we reconnect with our old rituals, from the Senior Run-In to First Friday, from Hill Day to the Author's Brunch, we are reminded that, as Dorothy discovered in this fall's Middle School musical, *The Wiz*, "there's no place like home."

Russell

Editor's Note

Georgetown Days welcomes its new designer, Sarah Flood-Baumann, who brings a fresh perspective on the joyful learning that takes place at GDS's new unified campus. Sarah added an "easter egg" for readers, and it hops along the bottom of each page, a nod to this edition's theme of "Journeys."

THE WIZ



KAIDEN YU '23

FIRST FRIDAY

LEARNING IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

WASHINGTON, DC offers a wealth of resources and learning experiences for GDS students—everything from natural spaces and the seat of government to cultural institutions and places to play. Take a look at some of the opportunities GDS took advantage of during the first semester.

- 1. Second graders visited a Jacob Lawrence exhibit at the **Phillips Collection**, known for its focus on modern and contemporary art.
- 2. 2A. As part of the dynamic communities and change curriculum in 9th grade history, students visited **Ft. Reno**, a Civil War post built on the highest ground of the city, and **Mount Pleasant**, a neighborhood with a robust Latin community.
- 3. Tenth graders studying the Renaissance and Dutch “Golden Age” visited the **National Gallery of Art**.
- 4. A High School genetics and evolutionary biology class visited the Smithsonian’s **National Museum of Natural History**, where they sorted microfossils to recreate ecosystems.
- 5. GDS Corps, the Middle School community engagement and experiential learning (CEEL) program, connects students to sites all across the city. Eighth graders studying environmental justice, for example, visited the Southeast riverside neighborhood of **Anacostia**. Sixth graders are on a quest to visit every ward in the city with CEEL.
- 6. During a back-to-school scavenger hunt, 8th graders explored the **National Mall**.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SORTING MICROFOSSILS AT THE SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



8TH-GRADE SCAVENGER HUNT



10TH GRADERS AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

STUDENTS PLAY DETECTIVE IN FORENSICS



HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT CHAIR NINA BUTLER-ROBERTS DISCUSSES BLOOD STAINS ON CLOTH.



MALCOLM GRIFFITH '24 (RIGHT) AND GDS STORYTELLER DANNY STOCK MEASURE BLOOD IMPACT ANGLES.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ANALYZED blood-spatter patterns, reconstructed crime scenes, and learned data-gathering techniques in a forensics course that's not for the faint of heart.

Students in forensics are eager to try techniques they have watched on television, said High School science department chair Nina Butler-Roberts. Part of her work is to teach them how to analyze carefully, drawing upon the scientific approaches from the course as well as what they have learned throughout their STEM education.

The culminating activity in the forensic serology unit, which involves the study of blood detection and identification, was a “wonderful intermingling of disciplines,” Nina said. She challenged students to reconstruct a crime scene reflecting a logical and plausible sequence of events based on the evidence they were assigned. They dove into topics covered in biology, chemistry, physics, and trigonometry as they worked to replicate blood-spatter patterns they had studied throughout the unit.

“It was unlike any other lab I’ve done,” Ally Brangham '23 said. Ally’s group worked to create the high-pressured, intermittent jet pattern characteristic of an arterial squirt, the result of a ruptured artery. Their first attempt at using a pin-pricked balloon to propel the fake blood didn’t give them a direct enough spurt, so they switched to pumping it with a syringe to mimic the pulsing of an artery.

Jackson Scarrow '24 described the problem-solving approach that he, Xander Grunwaldt '24, and Isa Martorana '24 applied to the angles of impact as they worked to create a spatter and wall-drip effect. Their several attempts at pounding dye-soaked sponges with hammers did indeed splatter fake blood, perhaps too well. “Some of it ended up on the floor and walls of the science lab,” he said, sounding delighted by the messy evidence of learning.

“The excitement and creativity that students brought to the recreation of the crime scenes were a lot of fun for me as a teacher to observe,” Nina said. “Because forensics is multidisciplinary, it requires students to analyze and apply their knowledge of the course topics in ways that were unexpected, but ultimately enjoyable, for them.”

(L-R) TENAYA LIN '23, SHANWAI LIN '25, AND SOFIA SEVAK '23 WRAP DUMPLINGS.



CHINESE LANGUAGE STUDENTS DISCUSSED THE PEN PAL PROJECT WHILE MAKING DUMPLINGS IN THE HS KITCHEN.



Here are snippets from email exchanges between Izzy Auerswald '23 (Chinese name Wu Yingzi) and her Chinese pen pal. Izzy's comments have been translated from Chinese to English for this publication.

IZZY AUERSWALD '23:

Hello, Li Yujie! My name is Wu Yingzi, and I am your pen pal....

YUJIE:

Hello, Izzy Auerswald! Now that I know there is a lovely pen pal far across the Pacific Ocean writing to me, I'm really looking forward to having more talks with you!

IZZY:

My Chinese is not very good, but I want to practice so I can improve. What are you studying now? I am currently studying mathematics, English, Chinese, and neuroscience...

YUJIE:

Since I heard that you are learning Neurology, are you gonna be a doctor in neurological fields? By the way, a little mistake can be pointed out in your letter. Although in English it is 'after entering the college', we adjust the sequence into "上大学后" instead of "后上大学". But you have already done such a good job! I'm so proud of your achievement in Chinese learning.

LEARNING CHINESE

Pen Pals Personalize the Process

IN SEPTEMBER 2022, High School Chinese teacher Min Wang launched a new pen pal project between her students and undergraduate students at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, a public research institution in Shanghai, China, where Min earned her doctorate degree in linguistics.

Min worked with her former university colleague, Professor Zhixin Pan, to match the 50 GDS students with pen pals who shared their interests. Min sought to personalize the study of the Chinese language for her students, and both educators aimed to foster cross-cultural communication while helping everyone gain a better grasp of the target language. On all fronts, the program appears to be a success.

The students began by exchanging emails, though many have since switched to Zoom conversations to get to know each other better.

Over Zoom, junior Jordan Quint introduced his classmates to his pen pal, Huanyu Li, who was excited to discuss NBA star LeBron James. Sophie Wohlstader '23 and her pen pal have discussed artificial intelligence, while Zhang Chi, pen pal to Nura Idriss '26, reflected on their shared appreciation for Dickens's novels, sci-fi films, and the delicacy of the Chinese language. "No matter what country you come from or what cultural background you have," Zhang wrote to Nura in an email, "there is still something beautiful that is commonly appreciated by us."

Min does not grade the exchanges, but she requires her students to correspond with their pen pals at least once a week, and she proofreads the students' emails to offer guidance. The Chinese undergrads have also politely pointed out errors on occasion and modeled more colloquial Chinese expressions. "They are trying to make us sound as native as possible," Jordan said, even as he admitted to spending large portions of video chats just laughing at his pen pal's jokes.



(L-R) WILLIAM EDWARDS '23, IZZY AUERSWALD '23, DREW COWAN '23, JORDAN QUINT '24, AND DELANEY MCDERMOTT '24

“STUDENT FEEDBACK HAS BEEN VERY POSITIVE SO FAR... WE JUST WANT TO BUILD COMMUNITY AROUND USING THIS MODEL.” BETH STAFFORD

NEW APPROACH TO DOING MATH

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS ADOPT THE “THINKING CLASSROOMS” MATH MODEL.

HIGH SCHOOL MATH TEACHERS Beth Stafford and Tom Spilsbury have adopted a model that encourages students to actively think about how to solve a math problem instead of passively mimicking the steps demonstrated by teachers.

This “Thinking Classrooms” model is the brainchild of Peter Liljedahl, a math professor at Canada’s Simon Fraser University who developed 14 practices to help students better engage with math. For more than a decade, Liljedahl observed roughly 400 reputable math teachers in traditional K-12 classrooms and concluded that institutional norms and habits often enable “non-thinking” student behaviors. His model aims to disrupt those norms and encourage research-based practices that show the greatest increase in student thinking.

Beth, who teaches geometry extended and linear algebra, said she started integrating some of those principles into her classrooms in 2017. Tom began doing the same in the spring of 2021 in his calculus, multivariable calculus, and differential equations classes.

“We’ve been collaborating and really thinking through how to structure these lessons in a way that enables students to discover problem-solving concepts for themselves instead of having us deliver the concepts to them,” Beth said.

In keeping with two of Liljedahl’s methods, Beth and Tom have their students work on “vertical non-permanent surfaces” (specifically whiteboards) in “visibly random groups” of three peers. These concepts may sound simple, but Liljedahl’s work shows they yield impressive gains in terms of student enthusiasm for and engagement in mathematical concepts.

For starters, it’s important for students to know—and actually witness for themselves—that they are grouped with others daily in a way that is not socially-engineered or based on preconceived notions about their abilities, instilling the idea that each student is capable, Beth said.

ASHA ADIGA-BIRO '23, LUKE COHEN '23, AND KEVIN XIA '25 TACKLE A MATH PROBLEM.



JASON PUTSCHÉ

Standing at a whiteboard enables students to easily erase mistakes and try again. It also keeps them actively engaged and encourages on-task talk within and between groups. “They are not siloed and sedentary,” said Tom, adding that each group gets one marker to encourage collaboration. “The groups are also exposed to each other in that setting, so that when one group is stuck, they can look around and borrow ideas from other groups and move forward.”

Beth said she’s witnessed students share more knowledge more quickly than they would seated at their desks, a concept that Liljedahl calls “knowledge mobility.” In effect, students are relying less on their teachers and more on each other to solve problems, which enhances their thinking skills. “Student feedback has been very positive so far,” Beth said.

Beth and Tom have been sharing Liljedahl’s 14-point method with other math educators. At GDS, they’ve formed a book club of seven High School and Middle School teachers that meets roughly once a month to discuss various chapters in Liljedahl’s book, *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics*. (“Word is spreading,” Tom said.) In December, they drew a crowd at a conference for the National Council of Teachers and Mathematics, where they presented a paper on how to apply Liljedahl’s methods in calculus classes.

“Sharing what we’ve been working so hard on was pretty great,” Beth said. “We just want to build community around using this model.”



JASON PUTSCHÉ

KATELYN OLIWA '23 AND HERCULES ZHANG '24 COLLABORATE AT THE BOARD.

GROW YOUR OWN

A revamped curriculum builds the debate team from the youngest students up.

THE GDS DEBATE PROGRAM has boosted its staff and spruced up its offerings under the leadership of debate coach Gabe Koo, who is working to align the debate activities underway in the Lower/Middle School with those taking place at the High School.

“With a new unified campus, there’s the opportunity to integrate all these disparate activities and develop a cohesive curriculum,” said Gabe, who is also an HS science teacher. “We can cultivate our talent and seamlessly funnel Lower/Middle School students into the High School debate team.”

This school year, GDS has three new debate instructors at the LMS, where nearly all debate activities take place after school as part of GDS 360’s enrichment programs. At the High School, Sim Low recently joined as assistant debate coach. With the new instructors on board, students now have ample support to join debate at various entry points.

In 3rd and 4th grade, students can enroll in after-school debate, where they learn to construct arguments and support their opinions on light-hearted topics, such as whether dogs or cats make for the best pets. They play games to enhance their critical thinking skills, and once a month, they debate one another, said Mernine Ameris, who started overseeing LMS debate students in fall 2022 along with Tayland Ratliff and Kailyn Price.

Middle School students in grades 5 through 8 can also take part in after-school debate, enroll in the new “Introduction to Debate” class, and progress to the new “Continuing Debate” class, which caters to 7th and 8th graders.

The most advanced 8th graders now have the opportunity to practice with the High School team and participate in the team’s travel tournaments under a pilot program launched this year. The program enables students to engage in the “policy debate” format (see sidebar, right), which is more technical, research driven, and time intensive than the “public forum” format offered in the Middle School.

“The program is really an extension of High School debate,” Gabe said. “We hope it will help 8th graders make a well-informed decision about which type of debate they’re interested in pursuing once they get to the High School.”

In the High School, debate team is an extracurricular activity, and its members compete at tournaments in the “varsity,” “JV,” or “novice” divisions based on their level of experience. Under the pilot program, the 8th graders have been competing as novices. They can progress to JV as freshmen. “Not too long ago, we didn’t have enough players to field a JV team,” said Gabe, adding that roughly 130 GDS students now participate in debate activities. “Now we have the numbers. We’ve seen explosive growth in the popularity of debate across grade levels.”



MARK ORR '24 (LEFT) AND IKE SONG '24 PREPARE FOR A COMPETITION.



YOUNGER GDS DEBATERS CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE.

HOW THEY DIFFER: PUBLIC FORUM V. POLICY DEBATE

For the uninitiated, Debate Coach Gabe Koo offered a synopsis of the differences between the “public forum” debate that’s taught in the Middle School versus the “policy” format that students are exposed to in High School. In both formats, students compete in teams of two and hone their analytical skills. But there are a few differences:

TOPICS

Public Forum topics change every month, and they’re broad. The National Speech and Debate Association decides the topic for all tournaments in a given month. February’s pick: the pros and cons of right-to-work laws.

Policy debate focuses on one technical policy-oriented topic for the entire academic year. This year’s topic: “Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its security cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in one or more of the following areas: artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cybersecurity.”

TIME

Public Forum debaters have a total of 13 minutes throughout a debate to make their points.

Policy debaters get twice as long because they must spend more time presenting evidence.

RESEARCH

Public Forum is usually lenient when it comes to presenting evidence and allows for paraphrasing and indirect mentions of citations.

Policy debate is more strict. Judges can reject evidence that is not properly cited and presented with full text excerpts of relevant materials.

QUESTIONING

Public Forum debaters engage in “crossfires” in which opponents can go back and forth asking questions about each other’s cases.

Policy debaters have “cross-examinations” that allow only one team to ask questions, similar to the way lawyers cross examine witnesses in a trial.

WHY WORDS MATTER

IF ONLY THIS AGE-OLD REFRAIN WERE TRUE: Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. Third-grade students were asked to assess the validity of this saying at the start of an expanded literacy unit that exposed them to the power of words.

A key component of the project was an activity in which students wrote words on river stones to describe themselves. They talked through multiple ways to explore their identity with prompting from their teachers, who asked them: Who are you? What would you like classmates to know about you? What words do you use to describe yourself and others? The words that came pouring out were captured in portraits of each student, their word stones framing their heads.

"I can use these words to be powerful," Luke Nussdorf '32 said of his chosen word stones. "I feel them with my whole heart." The project, inspired by an installation of artist Jessica Beel at a local exhibit, was so much more than a basic lesson in nouns and adjectives. It taught students how to choose words precisely, especially in telling their own stories.



FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:
NIAM KINRA
RUBY SQUIRE
MONARC BATTLE
ATTICUS DEARMOND (ALL '32)



"I CAN USE THESE WORDS TO BE POWERFUL. I FEEL THEM WITH MY WHOLE HEART."



TALKING TRASH

Two students took a deep dive into GDS trash cans for the good of the School.

AFTER LUNCH ONE DECEMBER DAY, seniors Deepa Bhargava and Luke Cohen grabbed trash from High School classrooms, the Forum, the Internet Cafe, the bathrooms, the library, and staff offices—a sample size that they used to extrapolate how much waste GDS generates.

The exercise was part of a broader effort by Deepa and Luke to secure environmental certification for GDS through the National Wildlife Federation's Eco-Schools USA program. The program requires participating students to conduct audits in at least three environmental focus areas (or "pathways") at their schools and come up with action plans to address them.

For Deepa and Luke, the trash audit was the last of four. The duo had already assessed the School's water, transportation, and energy pathways as part of an independent study class earlier in the school year. As of February, they were working on their action plans and preparing to submit their application so they could gain the first certification in a three-tiered process.

"I hope we'll get an answer on the certification before we graduate," Luke said. "It's cool to leave a lasting legacy, something that can be continued and give us a baseline for progress."

Deepa and Luke are co-heads of the School's student-led Environmental Task Force, which has wanted to pursue Eco-Schools certification for years. "But the task force never had enough dedicated time to get it done," Deepa said. "Luke and I realized we had to have an independent study class in order for this to really happen."

Some of the data collection was easy, such as gathering information from the School's water bills for the water audit. Other tasks were more time-consuming, such as rummaging through the garbage and sorting the trash.

"The amount of garbage was not surprising," said Chris Oster, GDS transportation marketing associate and faculty advisor for the project. "What shocked us was the amount of stuff that was wrongfully dumped into recycling bins."



"I DID NOT LEAVE MY COUNTRY BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE FAR AWAY, BUT I FELL IN LOVE WITH THIS BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY." NANCY SIERRA

TEACHERS SHARE PERSONAL JOURNEYS

MORE THAN A DOZEN GDS TEACHERS AND STAFF MEMBERS shared their personal journeys as first-generation immigrants with the third grade class, an assignment designed to remind students that immigrants are part of nearly every community, including their own.

The project is part of a year-long study of immigration and migration that starts with modern times before introducing historical milestones, such as the founding of Jamestown and Plymouth, immigrant arrivals at Ellis Island and Angel Island, and the Great Migration.

"We start the year this way because we want students to realize that immigration is a current and ongoing issue," said Todd Carter, a third grade teacher.

Small groups of students interviewed individual teachers and staffers, who have since gained celebrity status among the kids. "The students really bonded with their interviewees," said third grade teacher Foun Tang. Each group presented displays about their respective subjects at a grade-wide celebration and contributed to an international feast. Among the made-from-scratch specialties: "torn underwear."

YI-NA CHUNG

LMS Chinese Teacher

BIRTHPLACE: KINMEN, TAIWAN (A TINY ISLET NEAR FUJIAN, CHINA)

Yi-Na comes from a big family that lives in the small township of Jinning, where most people tend to walk, bike, or ride motor scooters to get around. Yi-Na moved to South Carolina when she was 28 to pursue a masters degree at Clemson University. She continues to celebrate Taiwanese holidays, such as the Dragon Boat Festival.

YI-NA WITH ELLIE WAGNER (BACK) AND HAZEL SAELINGER



LEFT TO RIGHT: GEMMA SCHWARTZ, LUKE NUSSDORF, AND GABY GROSSMAN WITH FELIPE

FELIPE OYARZUN MOLTEDO

8th Grade Dean & LMS School Dance Teacher

BIRTHPLACE: SANTIAGO, CHILE

One student surprised Felipe by making his favorite Chilean fried pastry, Calzones Rotos, which translates into "torn underwear." The sweet winter treat "tasted like home," said Felipe, who came to DC at age 25 to join the Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company. "Dance is a community-building art," he said. "I told students that it's a primal form of communication that breaks language barriers."



LEFT TO RIGHT: BRIAN LIU AND TYLER FALL INTERVIEWED CHARLES



NANCY SIERRA

LMS Spanish Teacher

BIRTHPLACE: COLOMBIA

In Colombia, Nancy loved exploring the Colombian Andes, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, and Cartagena's beaches and landscapes. She left for the U.S. after completing her postgraduate studies in human rights, when she grew concerned about the safety of human rights activists. Conditions have since improved. "I did not leave my country because I wanted to be far away," she said. "But I fell in love with this beautiful country."

CHARLES EDWARDS

Third Grade Teacher, Lower School Curriculum Coordinator

BIRTHPLACE: REGENSBURG, GERMANY

Charles felt upset, scared, and homesick when he left Germany as a five-year-old. He told students about leaving the pastures and farms of his hometown for the industrial Midwest. "My family settled in Cleveland, Ohio," Charles said. "It was all concrete and grayness, a totally different world from the rural setting and small towns I was used to."

HEALTHY PLANET, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Students learn about sustainable farming, food, and green spaces.



A CATERPILLAR VISITS THE GDS GREENHOUSE.

IN LATE FALL 2022, 5th graders planted lettuce in hydroponic gardens, which use water-based solutions, instead of soil, to grow plants. The exercise was part of a science unit on sustainable farming in local and urban settings. Students researched the upsides of hydroponic gardens, which use 90% less water than traditional growing methods and can grow anywhere, anytime because they do not need soil. As students learned, the downsides are higher start-up costs, more electricity use, and the need for nutrient additives as compared to traditional or industrial farming.

“In a city, there is usually no room for a garden,” Nayada Pavli-Stock said in a presentation to her class. “That means that the food in cities comes from places far away, and that can cost more money.”

Growing food locally, either in hydroponic or community gardens, can help alleviate the inequities caused by “food deserts”—geographical areas where access to affordable, healthful food options is limited due to physical and social factors.

“In food deserts, unhealthy foods or junk foods can mean people don’t live as long,” Kellan Priestap explained. “Hydroponic gardens can grow healthy foods right in the city.”

Middle School science teacher Gary Cutler used this unit to explore water shortages, such as the Colorado River drought, caused in part by climate change and overuse of the river’s water to grow crops.

In parallel with their classroom study, students visited a local farm to learn about sustainable practices and did service work around campus as part of Green Corps, the 5th-grade track for community engagement and experiential learning. They weeded the elevated GDS garden beds, painted planters for the school greenhouse, and helped beautify the Kamal Nashid Terrace, an outdoor learning space at the Lower/Middle School building in memory of a GDS student who lost his life nearly four years ago.

Looking ahead to late spring, students will grow strawberries in their hydroponic gardens and watch GDS senior artists put the final touches on a new mural at the Terrace.



FIFTH GRADE HISTORY TEACHER JUDY BROWN FEEDS A DONKEY AT MILLER FARMS.



FIFTH GRADERS PAINTED STONES IN VIVID COLORS TO BRIGHTEN UP THE TERRACE.

FIFTH GRADERS WEEDED THE GDS COMMUNITY GARDENS.



DISPATCHES FROM SCHOOL YEAR ABROAD

THROUGH THE SCHOOL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOL YEAR ABROAD (SYA), GDS students can apply to spend their junior year—or a semester of it—in France, Italy, or Spain. The program places students with a host family and runs its own school, where students study with a cohort of 30–36 peers from other U.S. schools. Except for English and math, all classes are taught in the host country's language. Seventeen GDS students have studied abroad since GDS joined SYA in 2018, returning with their horizons expanded and a zeal for international connectedness. Here are three recent stories:



ZARAGOZA, SPAIN
TEDDY BHATIA '20

TEDDY'S TAKEAWAYS: Teddy's time with his host brother's friend group changed his perspective on his American identity and raised his awareness of prejudices he didn't even realize he had regarding non-English speakers. "Be ready to push yourself outside your comfort zone for the best experiences," Teddy said. "There's so much learning that goes on outside of the classroom."

BEST MOMENT: Teddy and five SYA classmates registered for the town basketball tournament in Zaragoza. For uniforms, they wrote their names on their SYA t-shirts, and about 30 classmates showed up to cheer them on. The Americans took the Spanish players to school.

After SYA, Teddy took a gap year in 2020 before starting at Princeton University. He taught English in Quepos, Costa Rica and Antigua, Guatemala. After a volunteer stint with Polish Humanitarian Action on the Ukrainian border, Teddy met up with an SYA buddy in Spain on his return journey. At Princeton, Teddy is studying Public and International Affairs.

RENNES, FRANCE
KEEVAN KEARNS '23

KEEVAN'S TAKEAWAYS: Keevan learned how to attend to many "adult" tasks that her parents used to handle for her. She also found that life in Rennes is much slower-paced and more focused on pleasure than work. Keevan's host family was shocked at how many work/family commitments her parents juggle. "There are a lot of cultural differences," Keevan said. "But that was the thing I appreciated most—the chance to live through a new perspective."

BEST MOMENT: Keevan played on a local women's soccer team in Rennes. It helped improve her language (and soccer) skills immensely, as she was the only American on the team. As the team wrapped up the season, the players gathered for an all-day cookout in the park and played games with local neighborhood kids. That was when she felt most at home in France.



VITERBO, ITALY
NELL COX '23 AND SOFIA SEVAK '23

TOP TAKEAWAYS: Days off were spent at a host grandma's vineyard, a church older than any building in North America, and even a 10-day trip to Sicily. Nell and Sofia agree that the bonds and friendships formed are precious. Nell calls her host family every other day for chats (exclusively in Italian), and Sofia visited her host family during a recent school break.

BEST MOMENTS: For Sofia, it was the three-hour luncheon by the beach in Salerno with her host cousins and other extended family members. Nell loved dashing down a coastal trail from the hilltop town of Taormina to catch a train in Sicily.

HOSTING FRIENDS FOR DINNERS MOST NIGHTS IS A COMMON OCCURRENCE IN ITALY.



SOFIA SEVAK '23 (LEFT) AND NELL COX '23 IN TAORMINA, SICILY



KEEVAN KEARNS '23 (IN BLACK) WITH HER SOCCER TEAM IN RENNES, FRANCE

STUDENTS CURRENTLY ABROAD



HUDSON BROWN '24, STUDYING IN SPAIN THIS SPRING, RESTS AGAINST ANCIENT MARBLE COLUMNS IN BARCELONA.



JUANITA IRVING-PETTYJOHN JR. '24 (CENTER), PICTURED WITH HER HOST SISTERS, IS STUDYING IN ITALY.



NICO DAVID-FOX '24, PICTURED AT THE CHÂTEAU DE FOUGÈRES, IS STUDYING IN FRANCE.

"SYA OFFERS A LOT OF INDEPENDENCE."

"STUDYING ABROAD CAN BE TOUGH AT TIMES."

COUNTRY MARKET DAY RETURNS



OLIVIA BROWN '24

THIS YEAR'S COUNTRY MARKET DAY was full of firsts: the first since 2019 and the first on the School's unified campus.

"We planned for an event that would bring families together in a fun and meaningful way, holding onto tradition and adding new components to the day," said Joyce DePass, GDS director of community relations. "Following the global pandemic, the priority was to help build community."

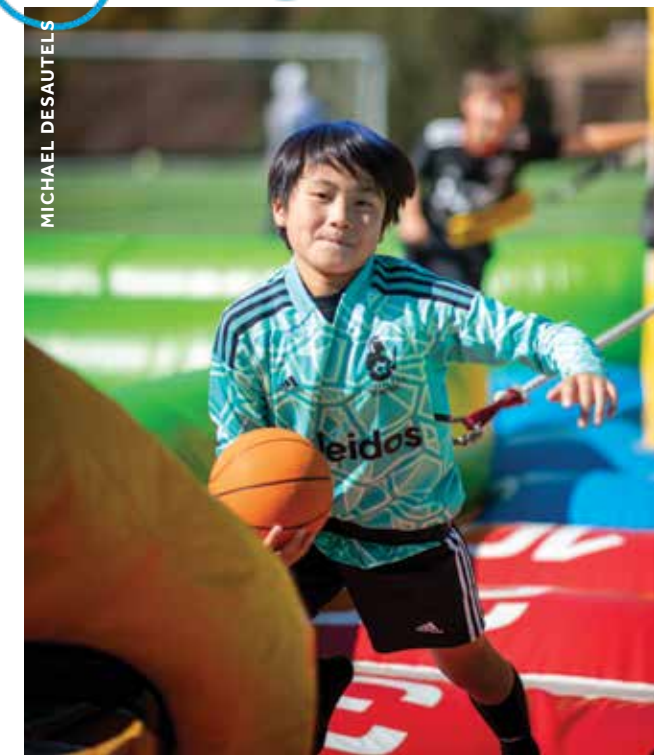
Joyce estimates that more than 1,200 people attended the fall festival, previously held at the former LMS campus on MacArthur Boulevard. Having High School students take part in the fun helped boost the numbers, she said, as did heavy promotion of the event in the Tenleytown area.

"The turnout exceeded expectations," said Nicole Tyson, who co-chaired Country Market Day with her husband Derrick Tyson. Derrick added that the unified campus presented an opportunity to reinvent some aspects of the festival and attract more volunteers.

"There's no way this type of community festival would exist without volunteers," Derrick said. "The volunteers stepped up, and that made the work so much easier."



DIAMOND PIPER



MICHAEL DESAUTELS



CORY ROYSTER PHOTOGRAPHY

FACULTY FLASH MOB UNLEASHES UNFETTERED JOY

GDS FACULTY AND STAFF erupted in dance on the LMS field in September, pulling off a flash mob extravaganza that delighted and surprised students at the second annual All-School Assembly.

Director of student life and wellness Bobby Asher orchestrated the clandestine operation, recreating the flash mob that he helped manage a decade ago when three seniors choreographed a dance for their Senior Quest project to Carly Jepsen's "Call Me Maybe."

In a "top secret" email to his colleagues, Bobby urged them to participate and arranged for video training and in-person rehearsals led by HS Performing Arts Teacher Maria Watson. "While participation is completely optional," Bobby wrote, "so, too, is talent."



SCAN THIS QR CODE TO WATCH THE FLASH MOB!



KAIDEN YU '23

WE WILL WIN

ON THE FIRST FRIDAY of the school year, the grades battled each other for High School preeminence. The spirited competitions included donut eating, racewalking, and cup stacking.

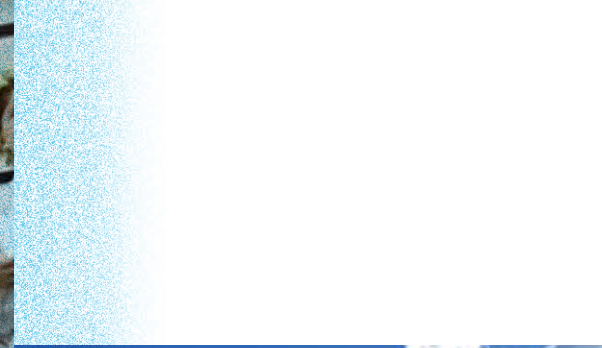
Seniors, the perennial favorites, carried the day. The faculty, which had its own team, followed just a hair behind. Results aside, the fun was a win for GDS.



KAIDEN YU '23



PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN ANGELS PERFORM "MARY HAD A BABY" DURING THE LOWER SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PEACE ASSEMBLY.



FIFTH GRADERS VISITED MILLER FARMS TO LEARN ABOUT LOCAL SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES.



ASHLEY ORTIZ

OUT THERE TOGETHER

STUDENTS IN 5TH-12TH GRADES

ventured out on a variety of trips this fall to build community and class identity.



WAVING CELLPHONE LANTERNS HONOR THE UPPER LEVEL BAND, SOGGY CLOSET, AS THE BAND PLAYED "LAST CHRISTMAS" DURING THE HIGH SCHOOL ASSEMBLY.

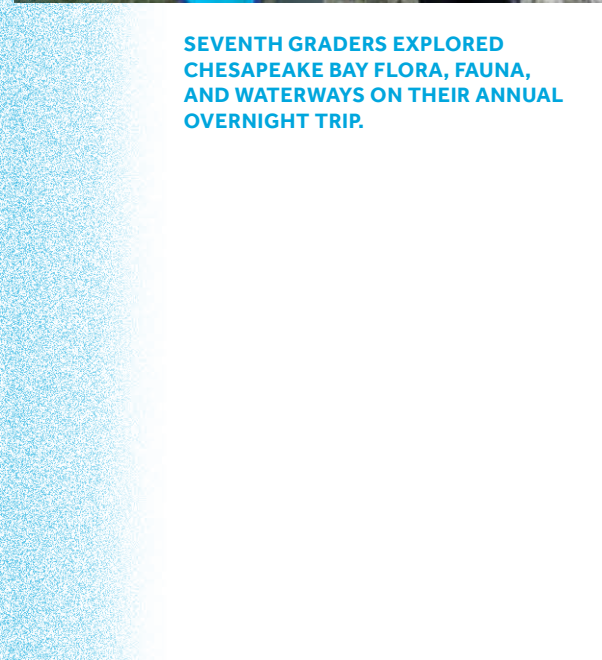
CHRISTMAS ASSEMBLIES AT GDS

IN 1945, IN A SEGREGATED WASHINGTON DC, seven families founded a racially and religiously inclusive school in which students could rejoice in each other's traditions. At Christmastime, we would learn about Jesus and peace; in spring, we would learn the Passover story of exodus and the meaning of freedom. Each division returned to Christmas traditions this year, from our scripted Lower School assembly to the High School's variety show.



KAIDEN YU '23

HS STUDENTS WAIT IN THE WINGS BEFORE PERFORMING THE MORRIS DANCE, AN ENGLISH FOLK DANCE THAT WAS INTRODUCED TO GDS IN THE LATE 1970S BY FORMER ASSOCIATE HEAD OF SCHOOL KEVIN BARR FOR THE HS VARIETY SHOW.



SEVENTH GRADERS EXPLORED CHESAPEAKE BAY FLORA, FAUNA, AND WATERWAYS ON THEIR ANNUAL OVERNIGHT TRIP.



NINTH GRADERS SPENT A MAGICAL EVENING AROUND CALLEVA'S FARM CAMPFIRE IN DICKERSON, MARYLAND.



KAIDEN YU '23

SENIORS ZIPPED THROUGH THE TREETOPS.



FRONT-LINE WORKERS
RYLAND JU '31 (LEFT) AND PRINCETON PARDNER '36

FEW WILL EVER "KETCHUP" TO THIS LEVEL OF 5TH-GRADE COSTUME GREATNESS

ALEX MEISLER '30 (LEFT) AND MAX MARAGH '30



THESE 7TH-GRADE M&MS ARE "ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR FUN."



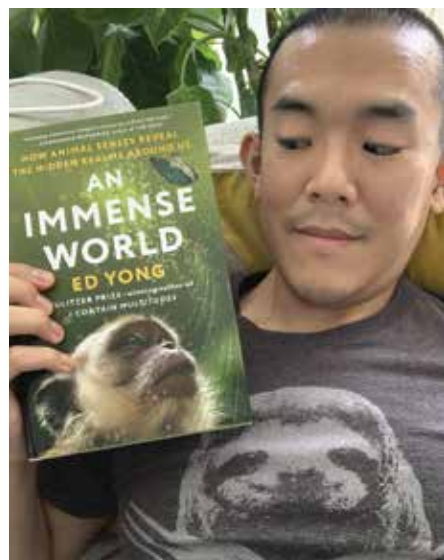
TWO OF THE NINE 6TH-GRADE SUPERHERO ADVISORS, ZOE WARNER AND KEITH HUDSPETH

HALLOWEEN 2022

FINALLY AT DAVENPORT STREET! The Lower/Middle School Halloween parade circled the field in October 2022 as parents cheered and laughed; it was their first time attending the parade since our School's campus unification. Fourth graders walked hand-in-hand with their PK/K buddies. Themed costumes were everywhere in the Middle School; at the High School, students held their own costume parade in the Forum.



THE "MUSICIANS" OF THE HIGH SCHOOL, LEFT TO RIGHT: KEVIN (GREG WONG), NICKI (ANIKE OLIVER), BEYONCÉ (YOM FOX), AND TAYLOR (MACKENZIE TERRITO)



AN IMMENSE WORLD

ED YONG, a science journalist at *The Atlantic*, delivered the 25th Annual Benjamin Cooper Memorial Lecture at GDS on November 21. Ed, whose COVID-19 coverage earned him a Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting, spoke about his latest book, *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us*.

His talks—first at the High School Assembly and then at a GDS community event—addressed the gulf between how humans and animals perceive their surroundings. Ed offered fascinating descriptions of the sensory lives of dozens of different species and how they are affected by mankind. These animals are impacted by electromagnetic, tetrachromatic, and ultrasonic forces that our senses cannot detect, yet are vulnerable to human interference. Put simply: Most of the time, we don't understand the mess we're making.

The Benjamin Cooper Memorial Lecture, established in memory of Ben Cooper by his close friends and endowed by the Cooper-Areen family, enables GDS to bring a renowned guest lecturer to the School each year to stimulate the kind of dialogue in which Ben loved to participate. Ed's talks were followed by lively question and answer sessions with the GDS audiences—epitomizing the kind of discussion our annual lecture encourages.



THE GLADYS STERN SOCIETY

The Gladys Stern Society recognizes individuals who have included Georgetown Day School in their estate plans.

- Anonymous
- Laura Dickinson and Paul Schiff Berman
- Andrea* and James Hamos
- W. Dulany Hill '52
- Linda Jackson
- Betsy McIsaac*
- Jackie and David Marlin
- Susan Schaffer and Michael Rogan
- Laura Stone and Ezra Levine
- Susan Tannenbaum and David Osterhout*

There are several methods to make a legacy gift, including bequest designations, charitable trusts, and gifts that will provide you, or others you name, an income for life.

By making a legacy gift, you help ensure the financial future of Georgetown Day School.

*deceased



GET IN TOUCH WITH US

We can help you find the best way to support the next generation of GDS students, and perhaps help you make a larger gift than you ever thought possible. Please visit legacyplanning.gds.org to learn more!

If GDS is already in your estate plans, please let us know so we can, with your permission, recognize your intentions.



JEFFREY DELOZIER
 Director of Development
jdelozier@gds.org
 202-295-6239

ALL-LEAGUE ATHLETES

The Independent School League (ISL) and Mid-Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAC) announced their all-league award winners for the fall 2022 season.

Congratulations to the following GDS student athletes:



NATE
BAZEMORE
'23



DIONNE
HARRIS '23



ELLIE KESSLER '24



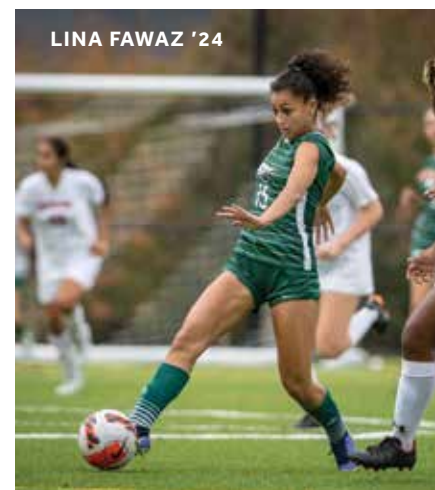
(L) SADIE BOYLE '25
(R) AUDREY LEFF '25



JORDAN
QUINT '24



CORINA BELLERMANN '26



LINA FAWAZ '24



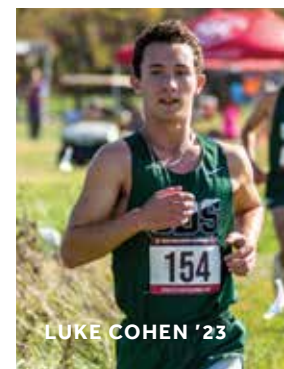
NAOMI
BOREK '25



MARA GRACE '25



OLLIE
ALFONSO-FRANK '24



LUKE COHEN '23



PETER HARRIS '23



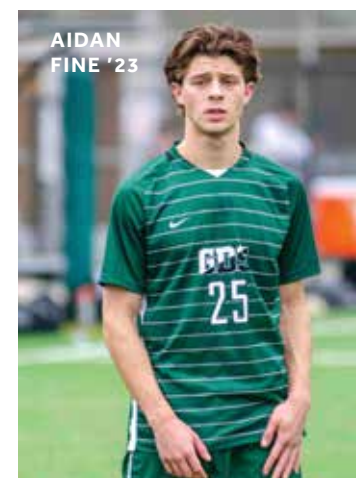
NICO GREENE '24



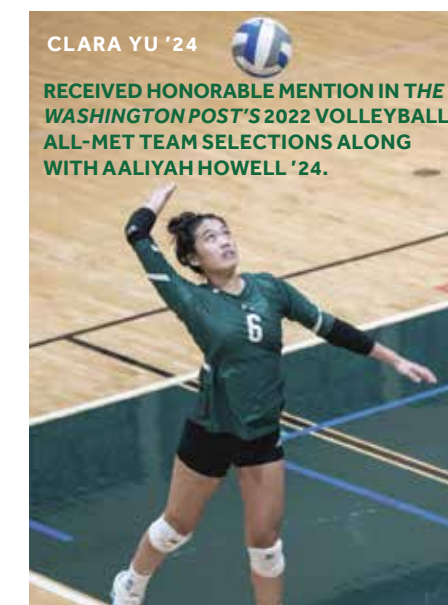
JADA AKSU '25



ETHAN
WOLIN '23



AIDAN
FINE '23



CLARA YU '24
RECEIVED HONORABLE MENTION IN THE
WASHINGTON POST'S 2022 VOLLEYBALL
ALL-MET TEAM SELECTIONS ALONG
WITH AALIYAH HOWELL '24.



JULIA
YOUNG
'25

OUR TIME



GDS Women's Sports Win Big on the 50th Anniversary of Title IX

GDS ATHLETICS set participation records in women's sports with more than half of all female-identifying students playing on a team this fall, a testament to the School's mission and to the decades of determined efforts by school leaders, coaches, and student athletes to fight for gender equity.

The impressive turnout by GDS athletes coincided with the 50th anniversary of Title IX, a landmark law that bars discrimination on the basis of sex in educational institutions that receive federal funds. GDS does not receive federal dollars, but to Karen Epstein's delight, the School was in full compliance with the law when she joined as a physical education teacher in 1983.

"There is still a lot to be done in gender equity, but GDS has always left the door open for that," Karen said. "That's why GDS sports are so successful now. People want to come to a place where they are supported."

In commemoration of Title IX's milestone anniversary, we offer the story of how that law affected women's sports advocates within GDS and the how their hard work through the decades impacted student athletes.



2022 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL LEAGUE DIVISION A CHAMPIONS WOMEN'S VARSITY SOCCER TEAM



2022 DC STATE CHAMPIONS VARSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM

In 1973, New Jersey 10th grader Karen Epstein was itching to play softball at school, but there was no women's team for her to join. When she read about the recently enacted Title IX law in *Women's Sports magazine*, she "went to bat." The threat of a lawsuit won her a softball team at school. The sport—and the fight for gender equity—would become lifelong passions.

Ten years later, Head of School Gladys Stern hired Karen as a Middle School physical education teacher at GDS. Outside of school, Karen led lobbying efforts as a founding task force coordinator with the DC Chapter of the National Organization for Women for what eventually became the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987. At school, she was starting a GDS Middle School softball team. She led that team to four championships in a row, and later, worked with dozens of dedicated GDS coaches to lead generations of High School multisport female players to athletic and academic success before her retirement as assistant High School principal in 2014.

"I wasn't trying to be an activist at GDS," said Karen. "I just made sure that I put everything I had into any sport I coached, boys or girls."

By the fall of 1998, the GDS Women's Soccer Team won the just-formed Independent School League (ISL) Championships with an overtime goal. High School athletic director Kathy Hudson continued stewarding GDS women's teams into the female-led ISL, a two-tiered, competitive league that would improve levels of participation for beginning teams while pushing the limits of athletic excellence even for future Division I players.

"For me, [the work at GDS] was all about being sure student athletes had what they needed: strong schedules and great coaches," said Kathy, who retired in 2019. "It was about making sure that there was equity in everything about men's and women's sports, from leagues to uniforms. And whenever I could hire great female coaches, I would."

In the fall of 2015, the Women's Varsity Cross Country Team won the ISL Championships for the first time and in fall 2019, the GDS Women's Varsity Soccer won the ISL Upper Division title for the first time with a dominant 2-0 win over National Cathedral School.

Which brings us to this school year, fall 2022, when three GDS women's varsity teams captured championship banners after the 50th anniversary of Title IX:

The volleyball team's first-ever DC State Championship victory, just one year after falling to Wilson High School (now Jackson-Reed) in the 2021 nail-biter, five-set finals, came with nearly a dozen additional accolades. In his sixth year coaching, head coach Brandon Wiest was named All-Met Coach of the Year—"putting GDS on the map as a volleyball powerhouse,"

according to *The Washington Post*. He and Clara Yu '24 were named District of Columbia State Athletic Association (DCSAA) Coach and Player of the Year, respectively, with teammates Izzy Evers '23, Jada Aksu '25, Aaliyah Howell '24, and Zoe Ryu '25 named to DCSAA's all-state first team. All-Met distinctions went to Jada (second team) as well as Clara and Aaliyah (honorable mention).

The Soccer team took the lead for the first time in the final two minutes of the ISL championship match, holding off Episcopal High School for a 5-4 victory. Following their disheartening demotion to the lower division in 2021 and a year of post-pandemic rebuilding, the team stormed back, recovering confidence after beating several upper division teams en route to winning both the regular season banner—with an undefeated season—and the tournament championship.

"Multiple players played amazingly—not a single star, and I couldn't have asked for a better team effort," said head coach Katie Redmond in her 18th year with GDS women's soccer. (Katie's own collegiate career on the inaugural Purdue University team 24 years prior was made possible by the university's efforts to comply with Title IX.)

The Cross Country team ran a perfectly executed race—all with personal records—to win the Independent School League (ISL) Championships for the second time in school history. In cross country, where the lowest score wins, a team's score is the sum of the rankings of the top five finishers on a seven-person team. GDS's top three finishers—Ellie Kessler '24, Audrey Leff '25, and Sadie Boyle '25—had excellent results; and yet, the team appeared on track for a second-place result. Sophomores Julia Young and Naomi Borek were able to reduce the deficit, but ultimately it came down to GDS's final two finishers—Sadie Foer '23 and Nora Sachse '25—to dip the team's score just a fraction more. With a pair of late-race passes, they both finished ahead of rival Visitation's final scoring runner, forcing two additional points onto Visi's score. GDS won 82-84.

LS P.E. teacher Peg Schultz, who has played and coached at both the high school and collegiate levels, has watched and helped nurture a meaningful culture shift in women's athletics at GDS. "Women and girls in the past two generations have grown up with the expectation that they will be able to compete," she said. "That level of confidence along with hard work, great coaching, and schools—like GDS—that honor equity is making a huge difference in the success women can have in sports. Even in a recess game at GDS, you can't say you can't play. Anyone can play."

2022 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL LEAGUE CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONS



JV SOCCER



WOMEN'S JV SOCCER—FIRED UP FOR THEIR GAME!

MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS' A SOCCER



2022: A WINNING DAY

September 22
Seven games on the schedule
Seven wins secured



Men's Varsity and JV Soccer defeated Sidwell 2-1 and 6-0, respectively.



Women's Varsity and JV Soccer defeated Episcopal 3-1 and 2-0, respectively.



Varsity and JV Volleyball defeated St. Andrew's 3-0 and 2-1, respectively.



MS Boys A Soccer defeated DCI 2-1.

JV VOLLEYBALL TEAM



MEN'S VARSITY SOCCER CELEBRATES A GOAL.



WOMEN'S VARSITY VOLLEYBALL



LINA FAWAZ '24 DRIVES PAST A DEFENDER.



NEW SPORTS MANAGEMENT CLASS OFFERS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

THROUGH THE NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS MANAGEMENT CLASS, students explore the worlds of broadcasting, sports writing, team management, and event hosting. They learn photography and videography; scorekeeping and bookkeeping; and how to represent an organization responsibly.

The program emerged from a GDS summer curriculum innovation collaboration between physical education and health teachers Donna Stallworth, Orwin Shortt, and Marquis Bell with auxiliary programs team member Elorm Abiew and assistant director of athletics Pam Stanfield.

“I like that they made a program that you can go into sports and work not on the sport but the technical aspect of it, including scoring, photography, and setup,” said Marley Pitts ’28.

“I’m learning to take pictures and write short articles about players and games,” Rachel Hellman ’28 added. “It’s a good way to be connected to sports even when you aren’t playing.” Pam noted the students’ recent success in hosting an MS basketball tournament, handling everything from signage and equipment to schedules for officials and water for athletes.

In the future, Donna, who received her degree in broadcast communications, hopes to connect students with local media outlets and members of the parent community who work in sports journalism and broadcasting.



PAUL HIGDAY

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT WORK

Over at the High School, student managers are central to the success of our teams and student photographers, like Kaiden Yu ’23, have bolstered the exposure of our programs.

Drew Cowan ’23 (on right in green) has worked with the Varsity Volleyball athletes and coaches for two and a half years.



CORY ROYSTER

GDS Communications and the Georgetown Days magazine team would like to extend our gratitude to Kaiden Yu ’23 for giving so generously of his time and expertise as a photographer. You will see Kaiden’s work throughout this issue.



KAIDEN YU '23

Mackenzie Williams ’23 (pictured on Fall Sports Saturday with Pierson Cooper ’23) was excited to move into a management role and helped lift the Women’s Varsity Soccer team to victory in the ISL Division A championships.



LMS P.E. TEACHER WILLIAM MIEZAN TAKES KINDERGARTENERS ON A SLEIGH RIDE.

WHY DO YOU GIVE TO THE HOPPER FUND?

EVERYONE HAS A DIFFERENT REASON FOR MAKING GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL A PHILANTHROPIC PRIORITY.

"I LOVE THE CONFIDENCE TEACHERS REINFORCE AND BUILD IN STUDENTS."
JUAN ACOSTA, P '30

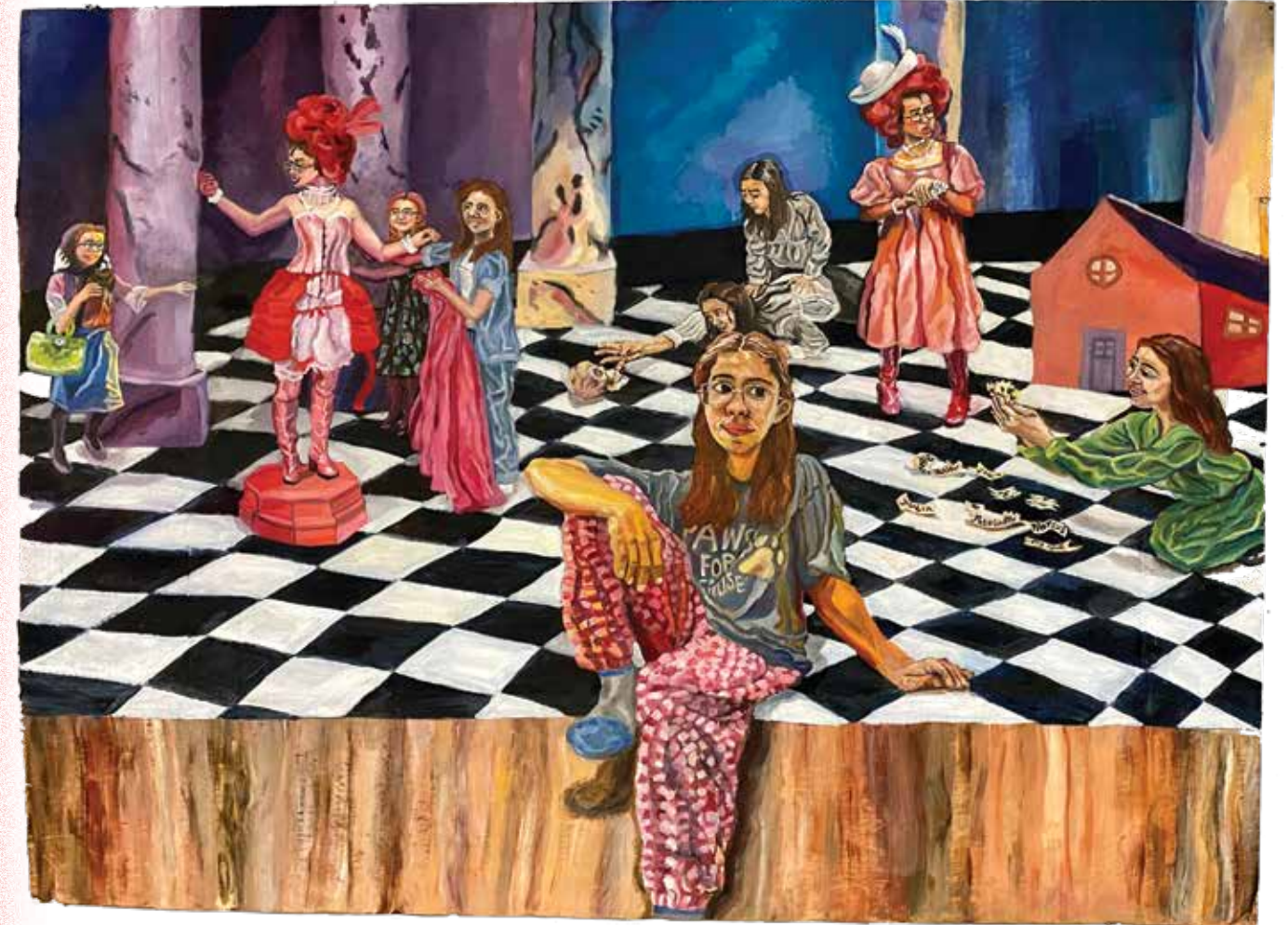
"THE TEACHERS AND STAFF AT GDS ARE AMONG THE MOST CARING AND COMMITTED EDUCATORS I'VE EVER MET."
JULIET EILPERIN '88, P '29

"STUDENTS CAN BE WHO THEY ARE WITHOUT FEAR."
AMY AND ERIC HEIST, P '19, '24

"GDS IS THE GREATEST PLACE ON EARTH."
ARI, 4TH GRADE

WHAT WILL BE YOUR REASON?

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY
AT [GDS.ORG/GIVING](https://gds.org/giving)



*Ava Blum '23



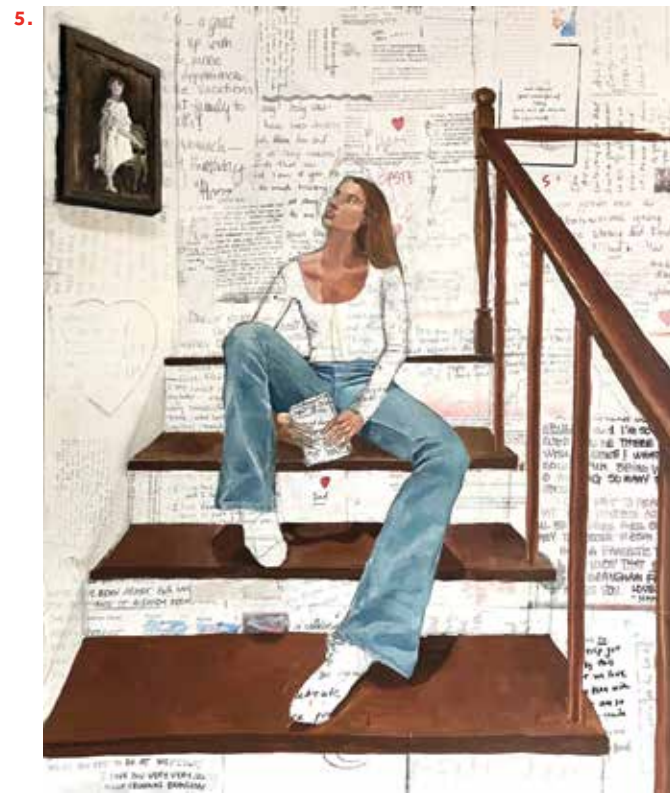
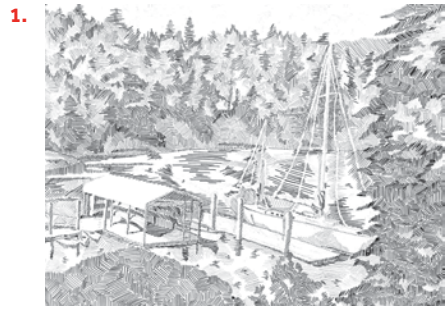
READ THE STORIES BEHIND THE ART

POP-UP ART GALLERY

UPPER-LEVEL MASTER STUDIO art students displayed some of their pieces in an impromptu pop-up art show in the High School's third-floor gallery just before Thanksgiving. Michelle Cobb, HS studio arts chair, said she gave the students a lot of freedom to experiment with the themes of "self-portraiture" or "invisibility."

Once Michelle saw the results, she made a decision to display the pieces. "I felt the work was so outstanding that I wanted to share it with the School," she said.

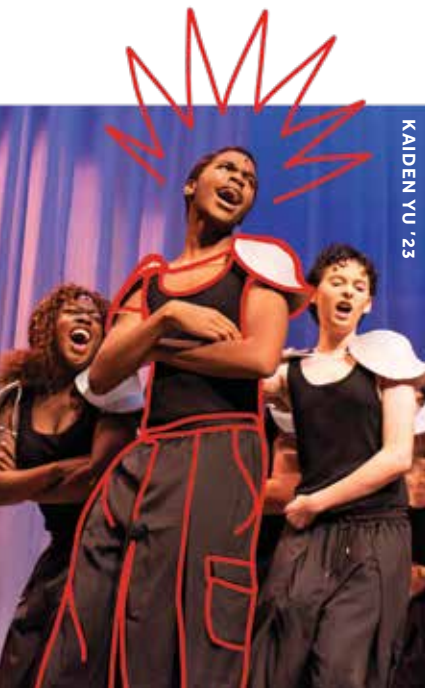
- 1. Avery Ludlow '24
- 2. Edie Carey '23
- 3. Mia Chévere '23
- 4. Maya Raman '23
- 5. Ally Brangham '23
- 6. Robert Koukios '24
- 7. Emery Jackson '23
- 8. Nava Mach '23
- 9. Anna Ford '24
- 10. Gabi Swamy '23
- 11. Sophie Wohlstadter '23
- 12. Zaira Chowdhury '23





KAIDEN YU '23

THE SIRENS (LEFT TO RIGHT): JACQUELINE METZGER '23, OLIVIA BROWN '24, CHARLOTTE GREEN '25, RACHEL SCHNEIDER '24, POSY BROWN '24

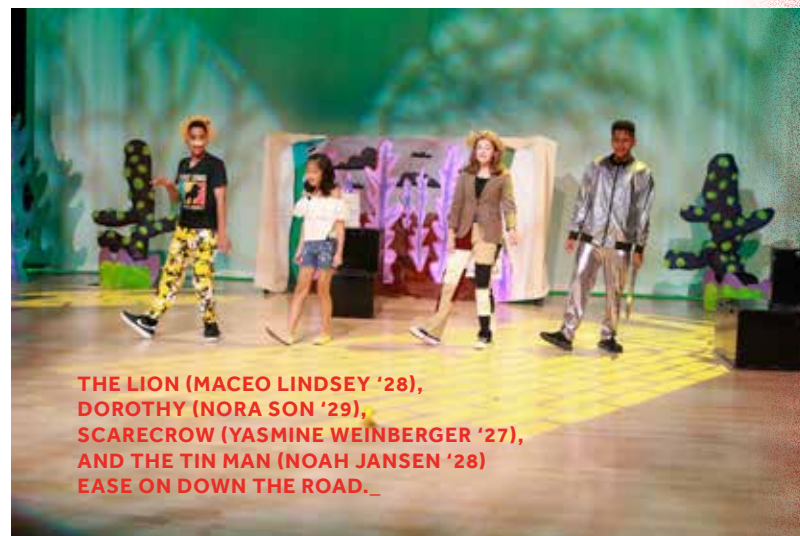


KAIDEN YU '23

THE SUITORS (LEFT TO RIGHT) JACQUELINE METZGER '23, JOSH REYNOLDS '24, CALEB MURPHY '25



GLINDA (NATALIE OGDEN '27) SINGS TO DOROTHY (NORA SON '29) ABOUT FINDING HOME



THE LION (MACEO LINDSEY '28), DOROTHY (NORA SON '29), SCARECROW (YASMINE WEINBERGER '27), AND THE TIN MAN (NOAH JANSEN '28) EASE ON DOWN THE ROAD.



CITIZENS OF THE EMERALD CITY PERFORM

A JOURNEY AND A HOMECOMING

AFTER A PERILOUS JOURNEY, long-suffering Odysseus found his way home. Dropped unceremoniously in Munchkinland, Dorothy, too, traveled—or rather “eased on down”—the Yellow Brick Road and learned there’s no place like home. With this fall’s productions of *The Odyssey* at the High School and *The Wiz* at the Middle School, GDS theater enjoyed its own homecoming after a few difficult years due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The High School fall show made a return to the Blackbox Theater, showcasing the talents of sets, props, makeup, and costumes teams; technical theater, music, and management teams; and the actors, many of whom played multiple roles. Though not wounded in Trojan battle, an injury kept theater woman-at-arms and technical director, Christal Boyd, on the sidelines. New but familiar alumni players Becca Balton '10 and Jake Korde '22 stepped in to support the technical crews.

Actors splashed from Calypso’s island to Ithaka, past perils at Polyphemus’s and Circe’s hands, and even down into the underworld. Backstage was just as busy as crews helped actors make rapid, complex costume changes. Mary Zimmerman’s *The Odyssey* left room for humor—Athena (Morgana Brand '24) was particularly witty—even as Penelope’s suitors were murderous and, later, murdered. Avram Shapiro '24, who was painfully good as the sometimes self-pitying Odysseus, said, “Where shall a man find sweetness to surpass his own home and his parents? ...I shall not see on earth a place more dear.” Being back home in a full GDS theater was indeed wonderful.

Returning after three years, the Middle School Musical *The Wiz* was a delightful, brightly colored show—the first ever in our new LMS Flexible Performing Arts Space. There were company dance numbers, heart-melting solos, and joke after joke. A large storybook set piece, made by students, carried the audience to Emerald City or Munchkinland, and ultimately home. “Home is a place we all must find, child,” said Glinda (Natalie Ogden '27). “It’s not just a place where you eat or sleep. Home is knowing. Knowing your mind, knowing your heart, knowing your courage. If we know ourselves, we’re always home, anywhere.”

As more than 300 audience members laughed and applauded the fantastic show, it was clear the magic of Middle School theater was back.



ODYSSEUS AND CIRCE, AVRAM SHAPIRO '24 AND JACQUELINE METZGER '23

GDS THEATER LAB: INCLUSIVITY IN THEATER

At the end of the 2021-22 school year, the High School Performing Arts Department announced the creation of its second stage, the GDS Theater Lab. The Lab builds on GDS’s commitment to embrace diverse stories and bring new “ideas, perspectives, and points of view” to the stage, said Maria Watson, the Lab’s founding director.



The Lab opened in June 2022 with a limited run of *Liza and Barbra and Bette! Oh My! A Gay Man’s Journey Through the 1970s*. The one-person show featured former GDS acting teacher, Jim Mahady (pictured). In Fall 2022, the Lab featured a production of Stephen Karam’s *Speech & Debate*, starring Aymaan Enayetullah '25, Henry Cohen '25, and Olivia Brown '24.

“The Theater Lab allows for a more intimate performing arts experience,” Aymaan said. “It was a great opportunity to be a part of a smaller cast and an emotionally deeper play.”



THE DANCERS OF FATA MORGANA, THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT DANCE COMPANY, PERFORMED THEIR SELF-CHOREOGRAPHED PIECES IN NOVEMBER 2022. HIGH SCHOOL DANCE AND ACTING TEACHER MARIA WATSON IS THEIR FACULTY ADVISOR.

HOME IS WHERE WE DANCE

CREATIVE MOVEMENT and expression are deeply rooted in the GDS journey, whether students are taking their first dance steps in the Lower School dance studio or leaping across the High School Blackbox stage in a student-choreographed production.

Daniel Thimm '16, who is currently making his national tour debut with *Jagged Little Pill*, credits former GDS dance teacher Jan Tievsky with giving him space to explore himself as a young dancer. At his first grade parent-teacher conference, Jan called him “the next Baryshnikov.” The support continued throughout his GDS years.

“Those early years at the GDS Lower/Middle School set the foundation for me as an aspiring dancer and artist,” Daniel said. “When I got to High School, [dance and acting teacher] Maria Watson allowed me to take charge and build a community of dancers through Fata Morgana, which was the highlight of my entire school experience.”

The tradition continues, giving rise to a host of new talent under the direction of dance teachers who bring their own professional experience to GDS—including Felipe Oyarzun Moltedo, Joan Ayap, and Aleny Serna, who dance with the critically acclaimed Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company. Daniel’s former GDS dance teacher, Jan, is the dance company’s director of educational programming.



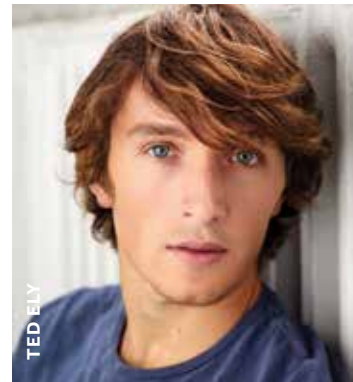
FELIPE OYARZUN MOLTEDO'S HIGH SCHOOL CONTEMPORARY DANCE CLASS WELCOMED VISITORS TO THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDIO AS THEY SHOWCASED A NEW COLLABORATION PIECE LAST FALL.



JOAN AYAP TEACHES TINIKLING, A TRADITIONAL FILIPINO BAMBOO POLE-SKIPPING DANCE, TO 4TH GRADERS.

WOLFGANG GALLIMORE (RIGHT) HOLDS THE POLES AS ANDREW KORNS SKIPS OVER.

DANIEL THIMM '16 (BELOW) IS CURRENTLY MAKING HIS NATIONAL TOUR DEBUT WITH *JAGGED LITTLE PILL*, WHICH WILL BE IN DC IN MID-MARCH.



THE 2023 WINTER DANCE SHOWCASE FEATURED STUDENTS IN 5TH–10TH GRADES PERFORMING THEIR FIRST-SEMESTER DANCES AND DEMONSTRATING THEIR CLASSWORK.

EVERY STUDENT SINGER JOINED VOICES TO END THE EVENING WITH A GDS TRADITION, THE "PARTING BLESSING," THAT BEGINS: "MAY THE ROAD RISE TO MEET YOU."



KAIDEN YU '23

GDS SINGERS WARM HEARTS IN WINTER EXTRAVAGANZA

OUR FIRST WINTER EXTRAVAGANZA in the new(ish) LMS gymnasium brought all the warm fuzzies for the GDS community, with hundreds coming out to support our singers from grades 4 through 12.

LMS arts department chair Keith Hudspeth opened the evening talking about the School's accreditation process, which takes place every 10 years. GDS faculty and staff are currently analyzing the all-school curriculum and skill building across grade levels before inviting educators from other independent schools to review their work next year. "I wish we could invite our peer reviewers to this evening's event," Keith said. "This concert demonstrates our spiral curriculum, from the youngest choral singers in 4th grade, learning basic melody, all the way to the eldest in 12th, who demonstrate true singing sophistication."

The two-hour spectacular featured the 4th grade chorus; the 5th and 6th grade chorus; and the 7th and 8th grade chorus, along with the High School's chamber singers, the TOLV group (12-voice mixed ensemble), and several a cappella groups. The audience was treated to a moving duet from Keith and HS arts department chair Jason Strunk of "O Holy Night." And in keeping with tradition, an all-student performance closed out the evening with the "Parting Blessing," after a rousing rendition of "Sleigh Ride."



MEMBERS OF TOLV WOWED THE AUDIENCE WITH "LULLY, LULLA, LULLAY," BY PHILIP STOPFORD.

GDS SECURITY GUARD TONY HARRIS RECEIVES HONOR, MAKES MEDICAL HISTORY

(LEFT TO RIGHT) DR. BABAK SARANI, TONY HARRIS, AND ANTONIA HARRIS (TONY'S DAUGHTER)



TONY HARRIS, a GDS security guard who survived life-threatening gunshot injuries last year, was honored in November at George Washington University Hospital's annual Trauma Survivors Day, which recognizes some of the hospital's most complex trauma cases.

Tony was shot in the back on April 22 when a gunman fired at DC's Edmund Burke School, where Tony was directing afternoon carpool traffic. At the ceremony, GW Hospital's Dr. Babak Sarani said Tony's injuries were the worst he'd seen in his career. Sarani credited a special medical device for helping save Tony's life.

The device, called a REBOA catheter, is a tube with an inflatable balloon at its end. The doctors threaded the catheter through Tony's body and inflated the balloon in his aorta to slow the blood flow, giving them time to repair damage to Tony's liver, kidney, and intestines. In the process, they broke a record.

"We kept the balloon partly inflated in him for 20 hours, ten times longer than recorded use in medical history," Sarani told the crowd. "I am convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that without a REBOA catheter, Officer Harris would have died that night."

Tony was visibly emotional when he took to the podium and thanked the medical team and first responders for their efforts that day. As a retired DC police officer who spent four years in the U.S. Marine Corps, Tony said he thought the risk of sustaining these types of injuries was behind him only to find that a part-time security job would upend his life.

"Prayers were sent up from so many people, and God was listening and watching over me along the way," said Tony, who had to learn to walk again. "I truly did not get to this day by myself."

Tony said his goal is to return to GDS on April 22, which marks a year after the shooting.



TONY HARRIS AT GW HOSPITAL CEREMONY



TONY HARRIS (LEFT) WITH DR. BABAWK SARANI

SUE'S

ALUMNI CONNECTION



HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY TEACHER SUE

IKENBERRY was an early adopter of Facebook, which helped her stay in touch with many GDS alumni during her 39 years at the School.

The relationships Sue has forged through the decades make her a natural liaison between former and current students, and she's taken great pleasure in connecting them. At Sue's request, alumni regularly visit her classes to share their professional and personal stories.

"I think some of them view it as an honor to be asked to speak at their old school; others do it to give back to GDS, even though it probably involves a great deal of inconvenience," Sue said. "As for the students, they get a sense of what the future can hold when they hear alumni speak. They are always proud to have gone to the school of the speaker."

While Sue could fill a book with the names of the many alumni who have spoken to her students, we're spotlighting just a few repeat visitors who spoke recently.

ELLIOT ACKERMAN '98

Author, journalist, U.S. Marine Corps veteran and intelligence officer

Elliott has served five tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, where he received the Silver Star, the Bronze Star for Valor, and the Purple Heart. "He's shared his opinions with my students about the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq," Sue said. Elliott has written six novels and three nonfiction books, most recently *The Fifth Act: American's End in Afghanistan*. "I think it's nice for the students to meet someone who lived through that history," Elliott said. "I guess this is poetic because Sue herself is a living piece of GDS's history, having been such a pillar at the school through the decades."

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN '79

Maryland Democrat, 8th district

The congressman was not one of Sue's students, but she taught his younger brother, Noah '85, and his children, Hannah '10 and Tabitha '15 (now a GDS teacher). Jamie was a law professor back then, and he'd visit Sue's classes to discuss various landmark cases.

As a congressman, he's addressed Sue's students via Zoom and most recently in person. "His office opened up its doors to my summer class in 2022," Sue said. "We had a great tour of the Capitol led by GDS alumna, Anoushka Chander ['21], who was a summer intern in his office. We met some of the staff and talked about their jobs. At the end of our trip, Jamie came back from a committee meeting and briefly spoke to us about what he had been doing."

FRANKLIN FOER '92

National correspondent for The Atlantic, former editor of The New Republic, Author

Sue and Frank worked together closely the summer after his senior year, when she sponsored a paper he wrote for the National Endowment for the Humanities about the emancipation of the slaves in Washington, DC. Later, as a student at Columbia University, Frank returned to GDS and spoke to the High School about that project. He now comes to GDS about once a year, most recently in February 2023, when he spoke to Sue's international relations classes about Ukraine and his last trip there in the early months of the war. "I come back because I owe so much of my intellectual development to Sue," he said. "It's a form of debt repayment. And from my own daughters, who are currently in the High School, I know how much a speaker from outside the school can register with students."



(LEFT TO RIGHT) ANNABEL HILZENRATH '24,
JESSICA DAVIS BA, SALA HIGGINS '24

JESSICA DAVIS BA '89

U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

Jessica was a first-time visitor, but Sue would love to lure her to GDS more often. She spoke to Sue's International Relations class in January 2023, shortly after she was confirmed as U.S. ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Given that Jessica is a career diplomat with extensive experience in Africa, Sue asked her to talk to the students about the State Department, the role of diplomacy, and the responsibilities of an ambassador. "She explained it so well and was utterly charming while doing so. A true ambassador," Sue said.

BEN NUSSDORF '00

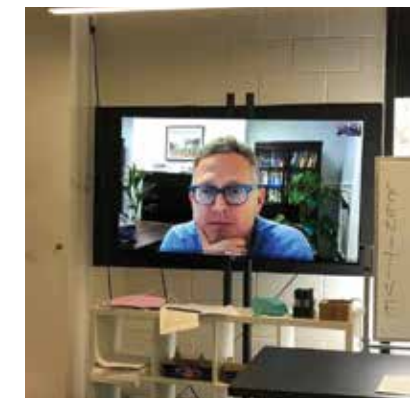
Attorney, Energy Policy Expert

Ben credits Sue with inspiring his decisions to major in history and write his college thesis about the economic impact of General Sherman's March to the Sea through the Carolinas during the Civil War. "I considered [the thesis] an outgrowth of Sue's class in AP U.S. History," said Ben, who has spoken to Sue's students about energy policy and law, his area of expertise for the past 15 years. Sue says Ben always puts a great deal of effort into his presentations and offers a balanced perspective on complex issues. Ben is currently vice president for regulatory and industry affairs and general counsel at the National Propane Gas Association. He is also an adjunct professor at three local law schools. "So teaching is in his blood," Sue says.

MITCH MALASKY '04

Political Media Videographer

Mitch recently spoke to Sue's students about the 2022 elections and the making of political videos. He offered his views on how Democrats successfully courted young voters by engaging in social media and working with influencers. Mitch also discussed with students the research they did in Sue's class on certain races during the last election cycle. He said he enjoys



PETER GRIES VIA ZOOM FROM THE UK

giving students an on-the-ground perspective about what they're studying. "I'm happy to do whatever I can to help the younger generation have an even better experience than I had," said Mitch, a former GDS alumni board member.

ALEXANDER "SANDY" KOENIG '17

Special Assistant for U.S. Sen. Edward Markey (D-Mass.)

Sandy took AP U.S. History with Sue when he was a junior. "Back in 11th grade, Sue's rotating cadre of interesting guests was always a highlight," Sandy said. "Even after I had moved on to 12th grade, I remember taking the occasional free period to visit [Sue's class] for a particularly good guest." Sandy was a substitute teacher in various GDS history classes (including Sue's) during fall 2021 and returned as a guest speaker in Sue's class shortly after he was hired in the Senate in 2022. He spoke to students about the 2022 elections and the legislative process. "Every time I visit I can tell that the spirit of GDS is still alive and well."

PETER GRIES '85

Author, Lee Kai Hung Chair and founding Director of the Manchester China Institute at the University of Manchester, where he is also professor of Chinese politics

Peter was in the first U.S. history class that Sue taught at GDS. When he published his first book in 2004, *China's New Nationalism*, Sue and Peter reconnected after she reached out to congratulate him. Peter remembers that Sue did not use a standard textbook. Instead, she assigned an edited volume that paired alternative histories of big events. She would have students debate the different perspectives in class. "This impressed upon me the difference between the past in all its infinite complexity, and the histories about that past that we tell today," said Peter, who credited Sue in the acknowledgments section of that first book.

Peter has spoken to Sue's students via Zoom about Chinese nationalism, U.S.-China relations, and studying Chinese.

"... I LOVE BEING ABLE TO DISCOVER NEW THINGS WITH STUDENTS TOGETHER."

LISA RAUSCHART WINS 2022 DC HISTORY TEACHER OF THE YEAR



JASON PUTSCHE

The GDS veteran also made the list of national finalists.

GDS HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY TEACHER Lisa Rauschart was named 2022 DC History Teacher of the Year by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and chosen as one of 10 finalists for the institute's national award.

Gilder Lehrman is a nonprofit group with a renowned collection of historical documents and a mission to promote knowledge and understanding of American history. Each year since 2004, the institute has recognized exceptional history teachers from kindergarten through 12th grade—one from each state, the District, Department of Defense schools, and U.S. territories.

Lisa was nominated for the DC award by her colleague Judy Brown, GDS fifth grade dean and humanities teacher. She was one of more than 6,000 nominees nationwide. "I couldn't think of anyone who deserved it more than Lisa," Judy told *The Augur Bit*, GDS's student newspaper.

Lisa initially hesitated to follow through on the nomination because of the time-consuming application process, but Judy urged her to do it, and the judges honored Lisa with the DC title before she went on to finish as one of the few national finalists.

"One of the things that makes history so interesting is that there is always something new to learn, some new piece of information or interpretation that turns your old understanding on its head," Lisa said. "And I love being able to discover new things with students together."

Championing Student-Led Initiatives

"Lisa has been a part of my history career since freshman year, whether it was pulling out helpful newspaper clips after overhearing a conversation in the history department, or meeting me every Saturday for an entire year my junior year to talk about history, recommend books, or help me with papers," said Avani Ahuja '22, who qualified three times for the prestigious National History Day competition.

Greer Gladney '99 recalled the time that Lisa took her class on an archaeological dig at a student's home after he discovered a Civil War-era tin soldier in his backyard. "It was fantastic, and spearheaded by the efforts of an outstanding educator," Greer said.

Lisa has taught history for more than three decades at GDS, first at the

Middle School and then the High School, where she previously served as chair of the history department.

During her chairmanship, Lisa expanded the course offerings to include American Studies with a focus on Gender and Immigration, Latin American Studies, Asian History, African History, and a Contemporary Issues class that was proposed and developed by GDS students.

Lisa continues to champion student-led initiatives by overseeing the GDS History Speaker Series, which invites DC-area history and political science experts to discuss issues of race, socioeconomic, and gender. One of Lisa's standout efforts last year included her work with four seniors on a research project that enabled them to explore the intersection of race and place through the lives and experiences of four Black families—their own.

"I COULDN'T THINK OF ANYONE WHO DESERVED IT MORE THAN LISA." JUDY BROWN

"I COULDN'T THINK OF ANYONE WHO DESERVED IT MORE THAN LISA." JUDY BROWN



THEY SNUGGLE WITH BABIES!
MS math teacher Lauren Thompson returned to GDS in January after the birth of her son, James.



THEY GO TO RUNNING EVENTS WITH BROWN DOGS! (IT'S A VIBE).
HS counselor Gabrielle Holder (left) and fourth grade teacher Liz Spratley were spotted laced up and ready to run.



TEACHERS & FACULTY,

THEY'RE JUST LIKE US



THEY FALL ASLEEP IN PUBLIC PLACES.
College counselor and 11th grade dean Greg Wong catches some Zs at Earth Treks/Movement Climbing Gym.

THEY MAKE COSTCO RUNS
MS English Teacher and seventh grade dean Kyle Money piles it high at Costco.



THEY HAVE CLINGY PETS!
LMS music teacher Regina LaValley's cat, Mobi, has feelings about her getting any work done.



THEY DO THEIR OWN LAUNDRY!
First grade teacher Andrew Berman washes *and* folds.

THEY PICK PUMPKINS!
MS Math teacher Bryan Williams took his daughters Morgan '15 and Mackenzie '23 to the pumpkin patch.



THEY DECORATE FOR THE HOLIDAYS!
Luna prepares to make mischief as Lower School Principal Cami Okubo hangs her Christmas tree lights.



THEY ATTEND SORORITY EVENTS!
Fifth grade history teacher and fifth grade dean Judy Brown reunited with Alyssa Patterson '14 at Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.'s North Atlantic Regional Conference in Baltimore.

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF
GRAPHIC NOVELS
 MAKES THEM A GDS MAINSTAY

THE ALLURE OF GRAPHIC NOVELS



AS MICHAEL WENTHE SEES IT, THE BEST GRAPHIC NOVELS—MORE BROADLY KNOWN AS COMICS—DEMAND ATTENTIVE READING SKILLS JUST LIKE ANY OTHER WORK OF COMPLEX LITERATURE, WHICH IS WHY THEY ARE PART OF THE GDS CURRICULA.

“Some cartoonists’ work is a pleasure to look at just as some writers’ voices are a pleasure to read,” said Michael, a published cartoonist who has been teaching English at the High School for more than a decade. “But good graphic novels are not just to be looked at and admired; they are also to be read and thought about.”

A growing body of research suggests that graphic novels enhance students’ interpretive and decoding skills by challenging them to synthesize information from text and images. A widely cited study from the University of Oregon found that comics even help build vocabulary, averaging 53.5 rare words per 1,000—more than adult books. In other words, graphic novels are not lightweight reads. The format has grown in sophistication and acclaim, gaining standing as a literary tool that offers rich storylines and complex characters, especially after Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992.

Maus made its way into GDS High School English classes at least a decade ago along with other award-winning works, such as Marjane Satrapi’s *Persepolis* and Gene Luen Yang’s *American Born Chinese*. More recently, the Middle School launched a graphic novels unit for its 6th graders. This school year, 7th graders will be reading the graphic adaptation of *Anne Frank’s Diary*. Laura Loftus, head of the MS English Department, said comics help students develop competencies critical to deciphering the visual stimuli that they’re exposed to on screens.

“We were deliberate about which books we chose and how we have kids work with them,” Laura said. “We hope that these books will help students become better writers and well-rounded readers who use a critical lens to frame questions about what they’re reading and looking at, such as: Why does this image look this way? What is the goal of the creator?”

THE "POWER DUO"

During the graphic novels unit, each sixth grader chooses one of four books to read, each with a social justice theme. After doing some background research on their theme, students learn about the structure, terminology, and basic elements of comics and then regularly write journal entries about their chosen graphic novel, with an eye toward how the images and words convey information.

Rafa Westelius '28 said that reading John Lewis's civil rights memoir *March* last year was one of his best experiences in an English class so far. The illustrations by Nate Powell helped him deeply connect with Lewis's character, he said. Rafa spoke of an image in the book (co-written by Andrew Aydin) that captures the darkened profile of five-year-old Lewis sitting on a porch reading from the Bible to the chickens on his family farm. The words of the scripture were written on Lewis's body, Rafa said, signifying how deeply Lewis meditated on those words.

"With text and images, it's like a power duo," Rafa said. "Every time you reread a book, you can always learn something new, but that's especially true with graphic novels because there are so many details. ... It's a lot to process."

That's an understatement given the cognitive work graphic novels demand of readers.

In his book *Understanding Media*, communication theorist Marshall McLuhan described old-school comic strips and comic books as "cool media" that provide less sensory information than films, for instance. They therefore compel the reader to participate in "completing and interpreting the few hints provided by the bounding lines," McLuhan wrote. His analysis took place before the umbrella terms "comics" came to encompass graphic novels or the comic techniques from France (la bande dessinée) and Japan (manga), according to the McLuhan Galaxy blog.



THE GOLDEN AGE TO THE MODERN AGE

Scott McCloud, a cartoonist best known for his seminal book *Understanding Comics*, built on McLuhan's work by asserting that the heavy lift for readers takes place in the empty spaces, or "gutters," between panels. That's where readers intuit what's happening in a sequence even though they only see the before and after images. In essence, readers have to fill in the blanks, a phenomenon McCloud calls "closure." In his book, McCloud offers two panels—one of a man about to be attacked by an ax-wielding assailant and the next of the scream "EEYAA!!" over a darkened city landscape. The reader is forced to actively participate by drawing conclusions.

Emotions are conveyed between or within panels of images as well, drawing from the parts of the brain involved in behavioral and emotional responses. Comics can capture internal monologues, offering a contrast between what characters are thinking versus what they're saying. Illustrators can draw in a realistic style to evoke a reaction or an abstract style that amplifies a particular detail for effect. And due to space constraints, effective comic writers strip text to its essence to elicit a powerful emotional punch—if words are used at all.

"The potency of the picture is not a matter of modern theory but of anciently established truth," William Moulton Marston, a Harvard-trained psychologist and creator of Wonder Woman wrote. "Before man thought in words, he felt in pictures."

Seventh grader Maceo Lindsey intuitively understood that concept last school year when he read *They Called Us Enemy*, Star Trek actor George Takei's first-hand account of his family's incarceration at a Japanese internment camp. Maceo said he knew very little about that period in history, and the graphic novel riveted him, particularly the detailed images by artist Harmony Becker of where the inmates ate and how they slept.

"If it was a normal book, they could have given all the description in the world and I wouldn't get the same emotional feeling," Maceo said. "The drawing was very direct."



LAURA LOFTUS, HEAD OF THE MS ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, INTRODUCES THE GRAPHIC NOVELS UNIT TO SIXTH GRADERS.

"THE WORLD IS NOT ALWAYS WRITTEN DOWN FOR US."

KATHERINE DUNBAR, HEAD OF THE HS ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

The "Golden Age" of comics took off with the debut of Superman in 1938 and then Batman a year later, creating a mass medium read by 70 million Americans of all ages, or roughly half of the U.S. population, according to estimates cited in a 1945 article by *Yank Weekly*. Their popularity spanned the Depression and World War II, offering cheap entertainment in the form of idealistic and patriotic superheroes.

But as comics sales soared, some companies began publishing stories of gore and violence, giving rise to vocal critics who claimed that comics corrupted youth and incited juvenile delinquency. The theory gained ground in 1954 with the release of psychiatrist Frederic Wertham's now widely discredited book, *Seduction of the Innocent*. A U.S. Senate subcommittee added fuel to the fire by holding televised hearings that prominently featured Wertham and his views. Soon after, the comics industry tanked.

It took decades for the industry to regain its footing. After the hearings, the surviving publishers adopted a Comics Code that imposed strict rules on storylines, reducing comics to an "infantile state" populated by "dopey superheroes, tame romances, funny animals, and half-baked extensions of popular TV and movie brands," according to the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund. An underground comics culture developed. Only when comic book shops started opening in the 1970s did comics start to flourish again. Publishers could then sell directly to retailers and bypass the middleman distributors, who insisted on carrying only Code-approved comics.

As the Code became less important for publishers and retailers, longer comic books with serious ambitions or intended for more mature audiences began to be marketed as "graphic novels," though that term is used loosely and (unlike prose novels) can include nonfiction. Graphic novels have boomed in popularity. The most recent figures from NPD BookScan show that graphic novel sales jumped in 2021, up 65% from the previous year.

READING LEADS TO MORE READING

LMS librarians Lisa Fall and Jenny Perinovic have witnessed first hand the surge in popularity. They note that fifth graders recently added a graphic novels category to the Hopper Awards that they grant to their favorite books. In the past three years, four of the top five fiction titles checked out of the LMS library were graphic novels (see sidebar, right). None of them were assigned readings, which suggests that students checked them out for pleasure.

“Promoting a lifelong love of reading is part of the library’s mission statement,” said Lisa, chair of the LMS library department. “When we see kids make a beeline for the graphic novels section, we know we’re fulfilling our mission. Enjoying a book makes the reading habit stick.”

An added benefit: Racial, ethnic, and religious identities are much more visible in a comic than they are in writing, where references can be subtle. “Students, especially those who feel marginalized, get so excited to see themselves represented,” Lisa said.

Parents often worry that their kids will fall behind or miss out on “real” books if they read only comics or repeatedly bring home the same ones, Jenny said. But research shows that adolescents are more motivated to read when they choose reading materials that interest them, including comics. They then gain confidence and read even more.

“There’s a long tradition of dismissing graphic novels as something you should grow out of instead of recognizing that these types of stories are meeting kids where they are and speaking to them about the world around them in ways they can understand,” Jenny said. “Even if they’re reading the same book 100 times, there’s a memory that’s being built and associations being made that are really comforting.”

At the High School, HS librarian Rhona Campbell has noticed a sizable overlap between kids who read comics and those who read in general. “The two are not mutually exclusive,” said Rhona, who co-hosts a GDS minimester class on graphic novels with HS English teacher Michael Wenthe.

“For the most part, book lovers are book lovers.” Rhona increased the library’s budget for graphic novel purchases this year. She said some HS students are exploring the possibility of creating a graphic novels book group.



TOP 5 FICTION
LMS LIBRARY CHECKOUTS

PAST 3 YEARS

1

SMILE

BY RAINA TELGEMEIER

2

MEANWHILE

BY JASON SHIGA

3

SISTERS

BY RAINA TELGEMEIER

4

I AM INVITED TO A PARTY!

BY MO WILLEMS

5

STORMBREAKER

BY ANTHONY JOHNSTON

GRAPHIC NOVELS; THEY'RE NOT JUST FOR KIDS

Graphic novels align nicely with the High School’s emphasis on “close reading,” a method of teasing deeper meaning out of facets of a story in order to better understand the whole, said Katherine Dunbar, head of the HS English Department.

“Instead of taking a landscape view of a story, close reading requires English students to keep a tight lens on the page in front of them,” Katherine said. “By keeping their eyes trained on the details, they make thematic discoveries. They read from the page out instead of bringing preconceived ideas from the outside in, and graphic novels are a beautiful way to do that work.”

Consider *American Born Chinese*, Katherine said. A page can show a character breaking out from a panel. What does that mean? What does it mean when a character falls off the edge of a page? Why does one page have speech bubbles and another no text at all? Why has a character become smaller, or why does one character block the view of another behind him? “The point is, the non-written content tells crucial stories too,” Katherine said. “The world is not always written down for us.”

Nora Schrag ’25, a self-described voracious reader, said she loves graphic novels but has to “actively work harder” to read them. The art styles can be complicated, she said. At the HS library, she picks up a few comics and flips them open to make her point. In one book, a panel fills an entire page. In another, the reader must flip the page around to read it, an interactive element that adds to the storytelling.

“Pictures don’t really work with my brain,” Nora added. “So there are moments when I’ve stopped reading [a graphic novel] and said: ‘I’m going to sit with this for a moment and take it all in.’”

These stop-and-think moments can be the most rewarding for students and teachers alike. Michael, GDS’s in-house comic writer and illustrator, said he remembers a student a few years back who picked up on a visual element in the graphic adaptation of Paul Auster’s *City of Glass*: a figure standing on a precipice casting a shadow that partly spelled the word “shadow.”

“I was so astonished when I read it in the student’s paper because I had never seen it before, and now I can’t unsee it,” Michael said. “It was one of the greatest gifts I got from a close reading assignment because that’s exactly what we ask students to do, to dwell on the material with focus and attention.”

GRAPHIC NOVELS

“GOOD GRAPHIC NOVELS ARE NOT JUST TO BE LOOKED AT AND ADMIRER; THEY ARE ALSO TO BE READ AND THOUGHT ABOUT.”

MICHAEL WENTHE



SIXTH-GRADE STUDENTS MET WITH U.S. REP. JOHN LEWIS IN 2017 TO DISCUSS HIS MEMOIR, MARCH.



NORA SCHRAG '25



ANDREW WEINER '90

ON WRITING WITH ALICIA KEYS

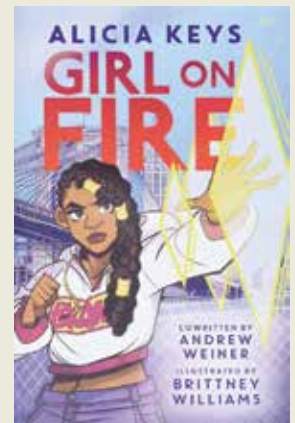
"I WANT THE READERS TO FEEL AS IF THEY'RE LIVING IN THE CHARACTER'S WORLD"



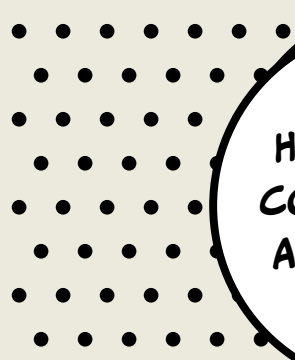
ANDREW WEINER '90 rediscovered comics when his bosses at MGM Studios asked him to help assess the viability of adapting the graphic novel, *Ghost World*, into a movie.

"Reading it was a bit of an epiphany," Andrew said about the coming-of-age comic by Daniel Clowes, which became an Academy Award-nominated cult classic after the movie was released in 2001. "I had relegated graphic novels to stuff I read as a kid. But that story blew me away."

Today, Andrew runs his own multimedia company in New York City after spending a portion of his early career working for film studios and production companies. He now focuses on creating graphic novels that can be translated into feature film and TV properties.

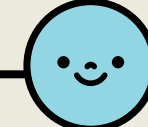


HERE'S WHAT ANDREW HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE GRAPHIC NOVEL HE CO-WROTE IN 2022 WITH ALICIA KEYS, *GIRL ON FIRE*, NAMED AFTER THE TITLE TRACK OF THE GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING ARTIST'S FIFTH STUDIO ALBUM.



HOW DID YOU CONNECT WITH ALICIA KEYS?

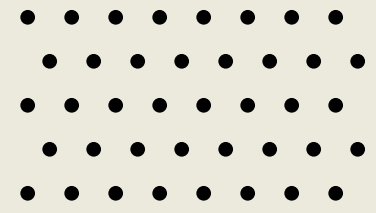
I met her producing partner at the time, Susan Lewis, at a party in New York. She thought it would be cool for me and Alicia to do a project together. From the inception, it was going to be a graphic novel. Eventually, we discussed what a collaboration might look like. "I learned that Alicia is a very cause-driven person who is particularly interested in stories that empower people of color and young women and girls." But it took a while to land on an idea. I came up with one that resonated with Alicia on paper. That's when I was finally introduced to her, and then we started speaking directly about the idea. Flash forward five years, and we did it.



Early on, Susan would send me a lot of reading material—essays, articles, and books—to help make sure that the characters felt right and that the perspective was female. Alicia grew up in NYC, I live in Brooklyn, as did Susan. But none of us grew up in public housing. So I wasn't relying on our understanding of that piece of the story. I interviewed four 15-year-old girls who live in New York City public housing to learn about their lives. They were college-track kids, like the central character, Lola, and they were extraordinary.

I leaned on Alicia too. She was a great writing partner, who labored over the details and made sure the voices resonated with her. Also, the team was almost entirely female, including Brittney Williams, an amazing young illustrator who has made it in an industry that's been heavily dominated by white guys. It took months to find an illustrator that Alicia wanted and that we all felt was a good choice creatively for the book.

AS A WHITE MAN WRITING ABOUT A YOUNG BLACK GIRL, HOW DID YOU APPROACH THE PROJECT?



A writer has to put a tremendous amount of care into dialogue and trim as much fat as possible for the most impact. The goal with the writing and the art is to pull in readers and make it as entertaining as possible. I want the readers to feel as if they're living in the character's world.

A GRAPHIC NOVEL IS LIMITED IN SPACE, SO HOW DOES THAT AFFECT THE WRITTEN DIALOGUE?

DID YOU ALWAYS KNOW YOU WANTED TO BE A WRITER?

I wrote a story in first grade at GDS about two roads that get tired of being roads and take off for their own adventures. Cars started crashing into each other, and the roads returned to being roads. I've been interested in creative writing ever since. [Former MS Teacher] Clay Roberson and [HS English teacher] John Burghardt really nourished that interest. GDS makes a cameo in a series I'm working on right now involving a field trip from the School to New York City.



In Jazz,

playing (or going) “outside” refers to when an improvising musician leaves the harmonic progression or tonal center of a song, creating dissonance, new textures, or shifting tonalities. The soloist temporarily leaves the confines and expectations of the familiar structure and searches to express something new and unpredictable.

The improviser can explore this territory for as long as they wish, returning to the “inside” as a resolution—harmonically, melodically, or formally. In the process, the musician has stretched their ears and played something new and in-the-moment; the listener has experienced something deviant and unexpected. Every participant is changed by this brief experiment.

For the GDS Jazz and Creative Music program, the concept of going outside captures our approach to how we play *and* where we play. Since 2015, I have invited students to reach out to their peers in the program and form small groups to participate in jazz festivals and performances around the country. In doing so, I have asked them to leave the comfort zone of School to interact with new environments and new people in about half a dozen cities a year—most recently Orlando, where we attended the Jazz Education Network (JEN) conference.

When I say “we,” I’m referring to the contingent of musicians in the program who choose to travel. The program consists of five curricular ensembles with a total of 70 students: two lab bands, a chamber ensemble, a large ensemble, and an Upper Level band (currently called Soggy Closet) for seniors. I cannot require these students to go out of town for all our trips, which is why I let them arrange their own smaller groups for travel purposes. I register them for the events, and watch them perform. I want them to have ownership of the performance and engagement with the judges and audiences.

Brad Linde

PLAYING OUTSIDE

BY BRAD LINDE



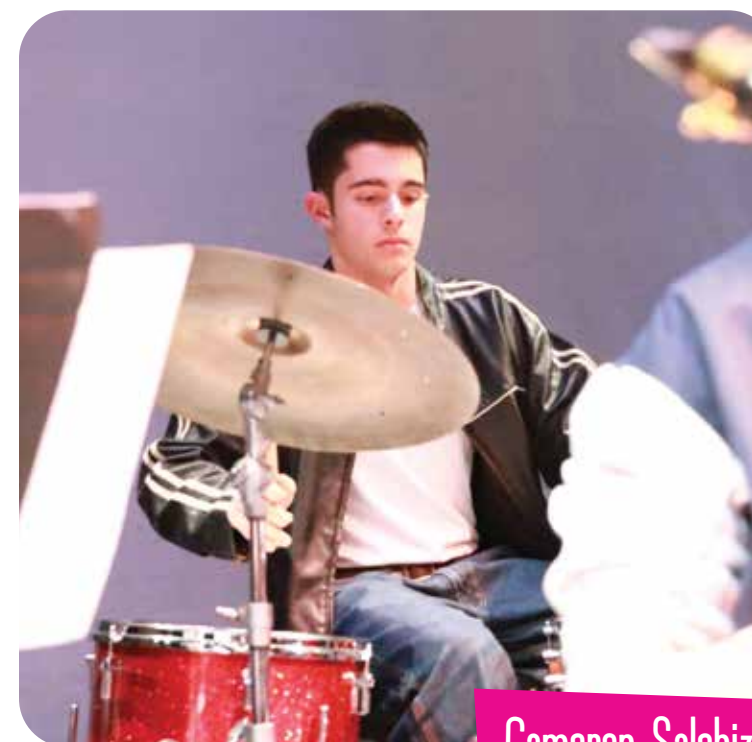
Don't get me wrong. The classroom is a safe space to learn, create, take chances, and fail. The bandstand is no different. But attending rehearsals two to three times a week and performing for friends and family creates an insular environment. It is important for students to leave the confines of home and evaluate themselves on a large scale, holding themselves to standards set by their heroes on the records and finding out where they fit in the big picture and the global community.

By going outside, students learn to apply skills learned in the classroom to their own, self-guided ensembles. They choose like-minded bandmates, select a repertoire that reflects their approach and taste, and create arrangements that display their understanding of jazz practices while highlighting their personal style. They learn to live life on the road, room with their peers, and appropriately pack for themselves and their performances—bringing music, instruments, spare reeds, strings, and other necessities. They attend masterclasses with professional musicians, hear local high school and college bands play, and place themselves in the spotlight by leading their own bands in public and adjudicated performances.

Feedback from outside the GDS community can be an exciting and affirming event, or it can be soul-crushing when the performances do not go as planned. And that's how students learn some hard truths about being a musician.

A certain investment and energy is needed to traverse long distances and play for people who don't know who you are. They don't know that you have driven 12 hours the day before and couldn't rehearse. They don't care that you play three instruments and crush it in class. So young musicians have to grapple with key issues: Do I know what I'm doing? Can I succeed in an unfamiliar place? Can I capture the energy from the audience and express my artistic vision in real time?

As with music, going "outside" to perform takes confidence, preparation, and conviction. The student must be unafraid of failure and commit to the journey. The beauty of this music and life as an improviser is that nothing is permanent. You get another opportunity to create.



Cameron Salehizadeh '23
Soggy Closet, Upper Level Band

*
Drums

FEEDBACK from the OUTSIDE

As a freshman in 2020, our student-led ensemble had been playing together for only a few months before we went to the Elon Jazz Festival [at Elon University]. I remember we were in a big theater—me, a saxophonist, a pianist, a bassist, and a vibraphonist. We played three songs, and afterwards, the judges gave us feedback for about 30 minutes and a number score. We were beginners, and the professional musicians gave us an earful.

They weren't mean; they were just honest. I was one measure late on my entrance to the song "Tenderly," and I assumed they wouldn't pick up on it. But they knew immediately and called me out on it during the feedback session. Obviously, it wasn't a pleasant experience. It hurt in the moment. Back then, I felt dispirited and almost dejected.

Now, I'm more thick-skinned to some extent, but I'm also more eager to get feedback. When we went to Orlando in January, we had the same format and we'd obviously improved a lot in the past few years. But I was happy to hear from the judges and really want to incorporate their feedback into my playing.

Having that kind of critique no doubt has helped me grow. Continuing to stay where I am as a person or a musician means I'm not evolving. Now, I understand that there's nothing that compares to the general thrill I get when I compete and play at the utmost edge of my ability.



VIBRAPHONE * CELLO * FLUTE

LIFE on the ROAD

Jaia Wilensky '23

Soggy Closet, Upper Level Band

In Orlando, the 15 members of our band [Soggy Closet, named after the band's old, tiny practice space] were split between apartment-style villas, and we couldn't find anywhere to practice because all the practice rooms were being used for clinics. We went to one of the villas and practiced there. We had no drum set with us, so we pulled out pots and pans. Two of our managers held them and our drummer played on them. It was definitely a team-building experience.

Last year, during one of our class performances, we messed up on a song, and one of our players took over the ending and did this really beautiful solo on the piano for a minute straight. One of the things that's really helped us is that we know each other well now. In Orlando, a judge wanted us to make a riff based off of the melody that some of us were playing. Other members were asked to latch on to that riff. We knew instinctively who to listen to and who to latch onto. We know how to pick up for each other.

It shows that we are able to lean on each other and figure things out for ourselves.



*
Guitar

WHERE they FIT

Max Mendelsohn '22

Majoring in Music Business
at New York University

I was torn about whether to pursue music in college. It's one thing to play music and learn about it in school, and it's another to make it work in real life. I'm guessing it's hard to find someone who isn't at least a little nervous about fully committing themselves to music because it's such a challenging career. But part of what made me want to commit is how much I loved the experience of being on these trips to different cities and immersing myself in that world.

One memory that stands out is watching Wynton Marsalis rehearse with his big band [The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra] in New York City. It really made me think about how my own band practiced back home. They had a band leader, and they were attacking different sections systematically. Everyone came prepared. It was a blueprint of how rehearsals should go. What I enjoyed about that experience is that I felt like I was getting a behind-the-scenes look at what it's really like to be a musician.

The other fascinating element was watching the music network. Brad has so many friends in the jazz community, and watching him has taught me that you have to put yourself out there, meet other people, and learn from them. I'm trying to do that now that I'm doing gigs in real life and meeting so many other artists.

My big takeaway from all these trips is that the key to making it work in this business is to love the music. That's what keeps you engaged and interested. That's at the heart of everything.



SPRING 2023

GDS JAZZ AND CREATIVE MUSIC SCHEDULE

FLORIDA

14th Annual Jazz Education Network Conference (Orlando)
January 4-7, 2023

NORTH CAROLINA

46th Carolina Jazz Festival
(University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)
February 16-18

NORTH CAROLINA

2023 Elon Jazz Festival
(Elon University in Elon, NC)
February 17, 2023

OHIO

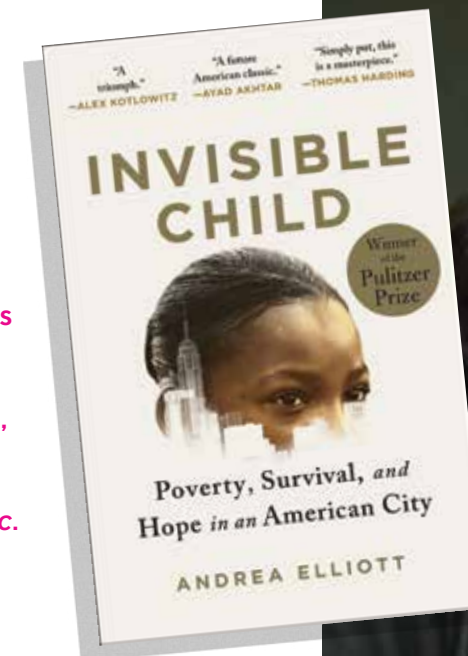
Minimester Tour (Columbus and Cincinnati)
February 22-24

NEW YORK

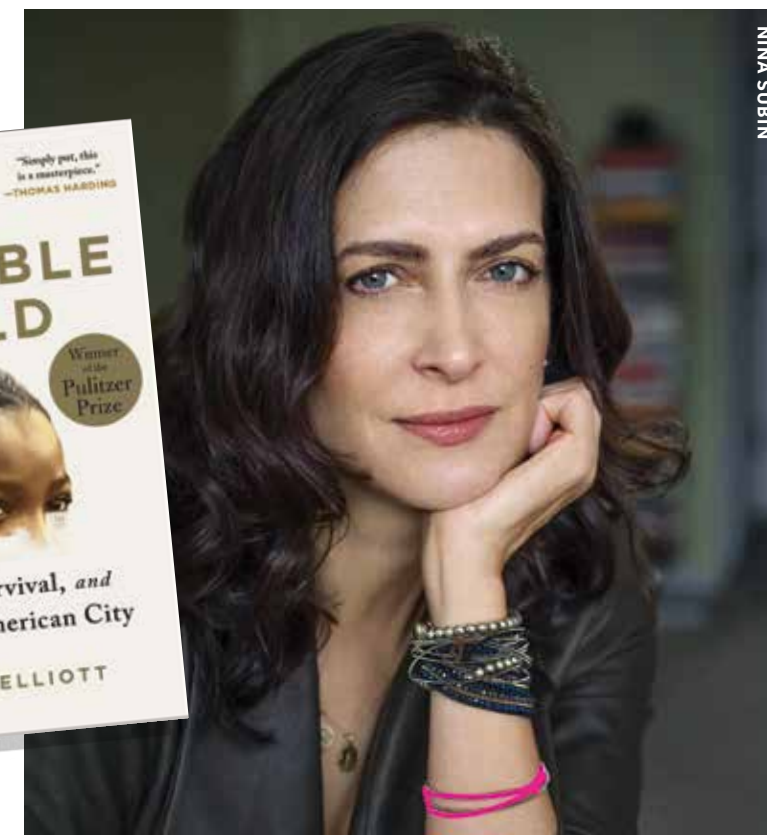
Attend Wynton Marsalis JALC orchestra rehearsal with Toshiko Akiyoshi and Lew Tabackin
March 8, 2023

PENNSYLVANIA

2023 National Jazz Festival (Philadelphia)
April 21-22, 2023



ANDREA ELLIOTT'S *INVISIBLE CHILD* MADE THE "BEST-OF" LISTS COMPILED BY NPR, TIME, PRESIDENT OBAMA, THE NEW YORK TIMES, AND THE ATLANTIC.



THE WORLDS OF OTHER PEOPLE

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Andrea Elliott '91 steps herself in the lives of the people she covers.

ANDREA ELLIOTT '91 is a deeply curious person.

Her immersive reporting is intimate and intensely empathetic, drawing on months and even years embedded with those at the center of her stories. She spent more than six months with Egyptian immigrant Sheik Reda Shata for her 2006 *New York Times* series, "An Imam in America," which documented post-9/11 life in Brooklyn's Muslim community, earning her the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing. In 2022, she won a second Pulitzer Prize, this time in General Nonfiction for her book, *Invisible Child: Poverty, Survival & Hope in an American City*. She is the first woman in history to win individual prizes in both of the major categories, "Journalism" and "Books, Drama & Music." *Invisible Child* covers the homeless crisis in New York City, where she followed young Dasani Coates and her family for nearly a decade.

"It is riveting for me to enter into the worlds of other people," Andrea said over the phone from New York City after a Pulitzer Prize-supercharged international press tour. "The stories I write take possession of me and become my life for a while." Andrea had tucked herself out of the way in her boyfriend's house for the call and, not knowing how to operate the light switch in that particular corner, gave

the interview standing in darkness. The *New York Times* reporter is hardly a stranger to interviews conducted in less-than-ideal conditions. She reported on Dasani's story while riding trains, standing in welfare lines, and sleeping on park benches.

"Maybe the thing I enjoy most about the work I do is departing from my own life and stepping into a new life," she said. "Getting a very good feeling experientially for what it is like to be in that life is always an exercise that leads to revelation and growth. I'm always learning new things. And I find that exciting and humbling."

Like the act of empathy itself, Andrea's work is about crossing boundaries. She has called it "standing in the midst of" a life. GDS classmate and *Politico* editor Mike Schaffer '91 (parent of Ellie '25) described Andrea's immersive work as "excruciatingly difficult" to pull off without affecting outcomes. "It's pretty amazing what she does," said Mike, who worked with Andrea on *The Augur Bit*, the GDS High School newspaper, and went on to serve as editor-in-chief of both *Washington City Paper* and *Washingtonian Magazine*.



THIS PROFILE OF MAINTENANCE STAFF MEMBER GUILLERMO VALERIN IS THE *AUGUR BIT* PIECE ANDREA TREASURES MOST.

Asked where he saw inklings of her journalistic inclinations as a student, Mike explained, "Living—seeping—into the life of somebody who is very different from her, going forth with curiosity and empathy, is something you don't have that much opportunity to do as a kid." In a city "full of kids who are interested in politics, writing their *Augur Bit* articles as if they're covering Congress," he said, Andrea went in "a more personal and curious direction."

She wrote food and film reviews as well as some hard-hitting investigative pieces and profiles of community members. In March 1991, her story exploring gender discrimination in STEM at GDS dominated the entire front page. Classmate Thomas Graham '91 recalled a story she wrote about maintenance staff member Guillermo Valerin (parent of Kathy '99 and Rebecca '99), who Andrea called GDS's unsung hero.

"She interviewed this person that all of us saw every day but that we didn't have so much occasion to get to know," Thomas said. "In thinking about who [Andrea] is, who she has always been, and what she's been interested in, that story [about Guillermo] comes to mind." Even then, she was captivated by the lives of other people. She believed that everyone has an important story to tell, Thomas explained, and she set about telling it.

Andrea said, "That 'GDS' Unsung Hero' is my first attempt at the kind of work I'd go on to chase for the rest of my life."

THAT WRENCHING PERIOD OF ADOLESCENCE

Andrea had come to GDS in 9th grade as a transplant from a British boarding school during a moment of great strain for her family. Her parents were both taking on new responsibilities: Dad (a lawyer and entrepreneur) was opening a restaurant as mom began graduate school, studying around the clock. "They are my heroes, but they were the opposite of helicopter parents," Andrea said. "I don't remember ever discussing my school work with them." In the scramble to relocate, each of the three children ended up at a different DC-area independent school.

The transition was abrupt. Andrea had left a stable school environment where she thrived, making the honor roll, to find

herself at GDS—a space that felt unfamiliar, high-pressured, and so tight-knit as a community that an outsider like her could have a hard time making their way socially.

"I both sank and swam," she said. "I think I floundered at first, but where I found huge excitement and anchoring was on the newspaper. From the moment I joined it, I felt, 'This is where I belong.'"

She described her years at GDS as among the most formative four years of her life. She had the chance to test out the person she'd become—considered a life in theater, for example, and performed in various plays. Features editor Chelsea Hadley '89 recruited her in 9th grade and, with *Augur Bit* faculty advisor Cleve Bryant, sparked her passion for journalism. Ultimately, Andrea determined that was where she thrived. "People often ask me, 'When did you know you wanted to be a journalist?' And I always say it was in high school."

Then, there was "the amazing Barabara Lockwood" (history) and "Bio" Bill George (science and theater) who also helped guide her through what Andrea called that "wrenching period of adolescence" that is high school.

"Barbara taught me so much and believed in me," she said. "In her presence, I felt I could do anything. There are certain teachers who do that for you. And I loved Bill George, but let's just say I had less love for botany. I think I still have the classic nightmare where you wake up and you're like, 'Wait, did I not graduate?'"

CAPTAIN OF MY SHIP

Now a parent, Andrea has gained perspective on the collection of pleasing and painful memories. She can even laugh about some of them. She recalls her college counselor, Kevin Barr, thinking 'sky's the limit!' while reading her senior essay and 'Yikes!' when he then saw her transcript pockmarked with "incredible peaks and valleys." Through everything, she learned self-reliance—to "be the captain of my ship"—and gained a lifelong love of learning.

"I went into the world prepared, as much as I might have cursed it at the time," Andrea said.



ANDREA ELLIOTT '91 IN THE GDS HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK



JOSE LOPEZ/THE PULITZER PRIZES

ANDREA ELLIOTT ACCEPTS THE 2022 PULITZER PRIZE FOR GENERAL NONFICTION FROM COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT LEE BOLLINGER.

Perhaps most of all about GDS, she remembers the clear commitment to ideas among students and faculty. “There was an energy around debate, around new ideas, around challenging old ideas, and around the importance of intellectual exchanges,” she remembers.

Her former editor at the *New York Times*, Joe Sexton, surmised that GDS “must empower people to dream big,” based on the qualities he has come to know in Andrea. “Courage, persistence, humility, faith,” he listed. “A pretty unbeatable cocktail of qualities for a reporter.”

Andrea is a devoted student of whatever topic she’s working on, a mindset Joe described as “a godsend” for an editor. “[Editors] need to trust their reporters have been comprehensive, learned, skeptical, [and] committed,” he said.

Andrea went west after GDS to Occidental College, where she headed to the school newspaper office with her *Augur Bit* clippings in hand. She studied comparative literature and, after graduation, crisscrossed South America on assignment for Chilean television (her mother is Chilean). She produced and co-directed a late 1990s feature-length documentary on aggressive inline skating subcultures in Los Angeles and New York City called “It’s All Good,” before transitioning back to print journalism. As a reporter with the *Miami Herald*, she covered the 2000 Florida recount as

well as crime, immigration, and Latin American politics. She graduated as valedictorian from Columbia Graduate School of Journalism in 1999, and in May 2015, the university awarded her its Medal for Excellence, which is awarded to one graduate under 45 every year.

“WHERE I FEEL MOST ALIVE”

Andrea describes her research in the way others might describe an epic treasure hunt: Through the voluminous trove of records, she follows each facet of the mystery—absorbing everything, but at the same time not getting lost in the morass of information.

“Each document carries the promise of revelation,” she said. “The most mundane handwritten note, jotted on a bureaucratic record, becomes a clue that furthers the narrative.”

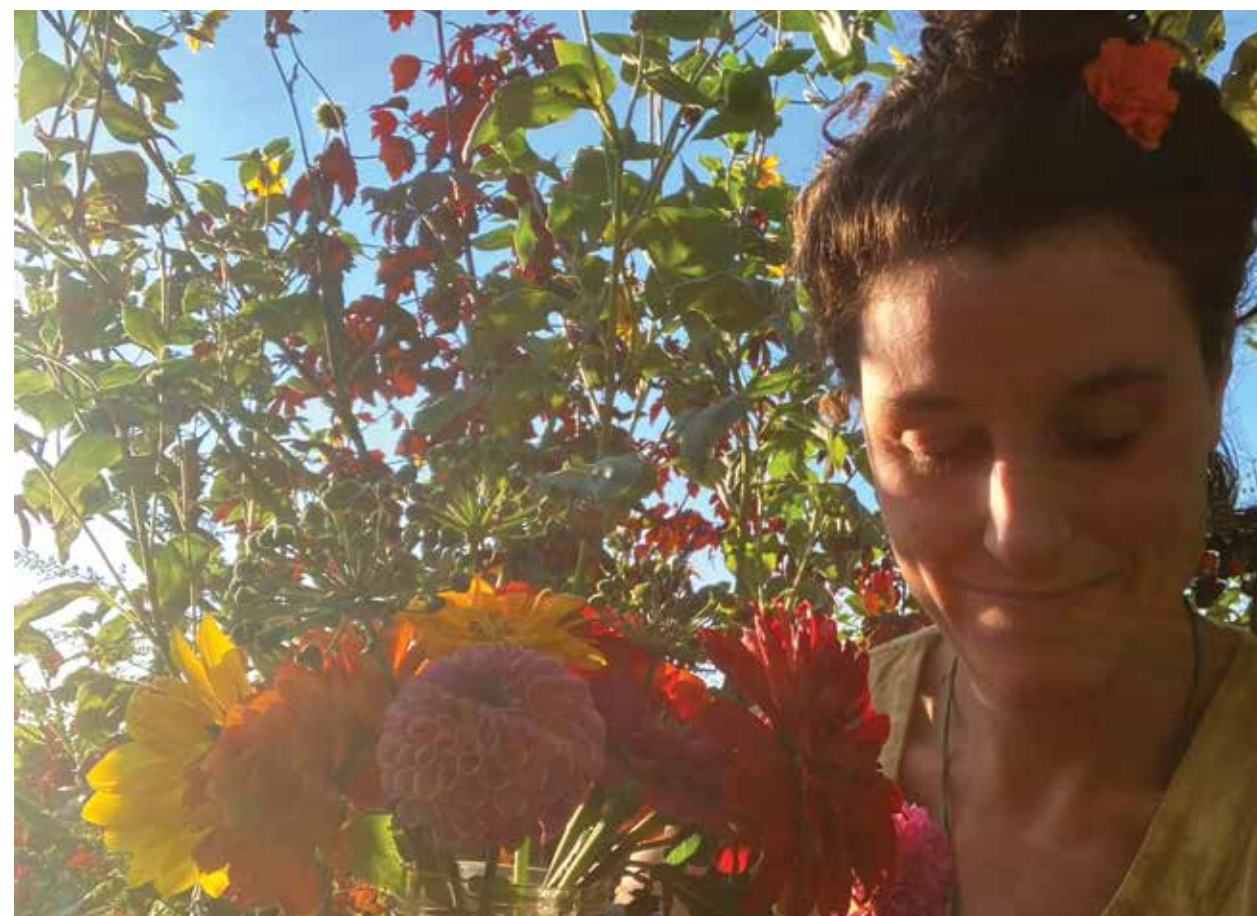


ANDREA'S EXTENSIVE REFERENCED NOTES FOR HER BOOK INVISIBLE CHILD: POVERTY, SURVIVAL & HOPE IN AN AMERICAN CITY.

trying to figure out what those worlds are about. Where I feel most alive is in reporting. You look for everything you can as a journalist. You look for every piece of truth. You live for every fact you can get.”

Andrea’s research for *Invisible Child* contained more than 14,000 records, hand-counted for the sources and methods explanation contained in the book. Though she prefers being with people to papers, she’s captivated nearly as much by the deep dive into documents.

“It makes me jump out of bed every morning,” said Andrea, who joined Princeton’s faculty as a professor of creative nonfiction this spring. “I get so excited about the people I’m following, the worlds they represent, and



SAVING NICK'S FARM A BATTLE AND A BLESSING

Sophia Maravell '06: The fight to save the farm shaped her life and career.

SOPHIA MARAVELL '06 grew up on a farm surrounded by mansions in Potomac. Inside her home, every wall was painted a primary color by her mother, a contemporary artist. A dozen fish sculptures dangled from the family room ceiling. GDS friends remember the waft of a home-cooked-something every time they walked through the door, the kind of smell that made Sophia’s house feel like home.

And then there was that 20-acre spread beyond her backyard—known to locals as Nick’s Organic Farm, named after her father. Nick Maravell grew organic food-grade corn and soybean seeds at the time. He and his wife, Tory, did not allow Sophia to watch television, so she roamed free on the farm, uninhibited. Her parents were not the type to hover. She’d play on the zip lines her older brother built, forage for wild raspberries on the field’s edge, and climb to the tops of 50-foot-high pine trees.

On occasion, Sophia would jump into the hopper of her father’s bean picker. The freshly harvested soybeans were fuzzy. She’d nestle into the pile and gaze at the sky.

“It was a moment of bliss,” Sophia said. “It’s a privilege to have that kind of land connection.”

FROM “NERDY JOCK” TO POLITICAL ACTIVIST

That connection turned Sophia into a fierce political advocate when local officials threatened to raze her family’s farm more than a decade ago. Nick had been renting the land for more than 30 years from the Montgomery County school system when he got notice that the county wanted to convert the plot into private, pay-for-play soccer fields. The protracted legal battle that followed shaped Sophia into who she is today: a farm-based educator committed to sustainable eating, rural living, and community-building.

“My life’s journey and my life’s focus changed because of that situation,” said Sophia, who currently co-runs an outdoor gardening program for preschool kids at Potomac Vegetable Farms near Purcellville, Virginia.

At GDS, Sophia was a four-year varsity runner and basketball player, a self-described “nerdy jock,” who enjoyed extracurricular activities more than school work. Her friends most closely associated her with the farm in Potomac, her athleticism, and her devotion to the GDS Environmental Club. She was known to join a few save-the-earth type protests or host field trips at her father’s larger farm in Buckeystown, Maryland.

Still, Matt Simonson ’04 did not think of Sophia as particularly political in her adult years, which is why he was initially surprised at how she immersed herself in school board politics when the Potomac farm was at risk. “But then I thought, this totally makes sense, it harkens back to her GDS days,” said Matt, who bonded with Sophia on the running team, when he was a junior and she was the new freshman girl breaking records for the team—the one who inspired other girls to run. Matt said her exposure to GDS’s change-the-world dogma mixed with her farming background readied her for battle. “The political activism really showed her GDS roots. She has her values, and she creates a model for people to follow,” Matt said. “I think that’s why she was willing to take her know-how and get involved in the muck of politics for the right cause.”

Sophia credits her many mentors at GDS for nurturing her passions, including Bobby Asher (her basketball coach at the time), Elsa Newmeyer (her advisor), and C.A. Pilling (one of her favorite teachers.) She still leans on many of those mentors today, among them Anthony Belber, head coach of the GDS High School varsity cross country team.

As Sophia’s coach, Anthony knew not to mistake her sunny disposition for lack of determination. “She was a very well-rounded athlete with a joyful and free spirit, the kind of kid who would be smiling while she raced,” said Anthony. “But she was also fiercely competitive.”

**SOPHIA MARAVEL
HARVESTING OLIVES IN SARDINIA****GETTING “SUCKED INTO THE DRAMA”**

As a freshman at Colorado College, Sophia hadn’t considered a career in farming. She joined the school’s farming club at the urging of some classmates when they learned that she grew up on an organic farm. She then started managing the student farm, enrolled in food system courses, and developed an interest in vegetable gardening and cooking.

In no time, Sophia fell in with an “environmental, crunchy, hippy” crowd that revered the eco-friendly farming culture in which she was raised. Her pride in her family’s farm swelled, and she gained a newfound appreciation for her father’s regenerative farming practices, which she had taken for granted as a kid.

“I went home and worked for my dad that summer,” Sophia said. “I asked him why he hadn’t taught me this and that about the farm, and he said: ‘You never asked.’ That’s when he started teaching me to operate his John Deere tractors and forklifts.”

Going forward, Sophia lived off campus in a co-op where students cooked collectively, shared food costs, and tended a garden together. She spent a semester in Nepal learning about subsistence agriculture and the Nepali language. During college breaks, she was on the western slopes of Colorado, working on a goat milking farm and a vegetable farm, a peach orchard and a vineyard. The pay was dismal, the hours long, and the work physically demanding.

“I loved it,” said Sophia, who earned a degree in Sociology and a minor in Asian Studies. “Being outside, growing food, eating well, and learning to sustain a community on the food we produced brought me joy.”

After college, she was toying with the idea of becoming a full-time farmer and enrolled for a one-year program at the

Farm School in Athol, Massachusetts. With about a dozen other adult students, she lived on a sustainable organic farm managing farm animals, growing crops, learning about soil, and thriving in an ad hoc community.

But just as her Farm School days neared an end, the Maravells got word that their lease would not be renewed. In March 2011, the Montgomery County Board of Education announced it would vote to rent the land to the county for development as private soccer fields to benefit local families.

After farm school, Sophia returned home to help. “I got sucked into the drama,” she said.

BLOCKING BULLDOZERS AND OTHER TACTICS

By then, a coalition of local residents, civic groups, and family friends were rallying behind the Maravell family. They accused the county of cutting land development deals without community input and questioned whether public land could be used for public-private partnerships, all of which led to high-profile legal disputes that generated ample media attention. *The Washington Post* reported that a series of petitions to protect the farm gathered 50,000 signatures, some from as far as Germany.

Sophia did her part. During one nail-biter of a night, when the farm lease had technically expired and the Maravells were waiting for a temporary extension, she slept in a tent at the farm gate on Brickyard Road, ready to block any bulldozers. “I had read call-to-action type papers on how to resist arrest,” she said.

Sophia also developed more practical tactics. In January 2012, she launched the Brickyard Education Farm on part of her father’s leased land, a space that attracted hundreds of DC-area school kids who learned about harvesting vegetables, planting seeds, collecting farm eggs, and layering compost piles.

Seven months later, she pitched a plan to then-Gov. Martin O’Malley (D-MD) about creating an agricultural education hub at the farm. With her father by her side, Sophia told the governor that she wanted to expand her school field trips program; train would-be farmers and deliver their organic produce to local schools; provide farming apprenticeships to ten high school graduates; and set aside seven acres for an heirloom seed-saving program that would preserve genetic biodiversity.

Sophia even wrote to her hero, Wendell Berry, the prolific author known for his support of small family farms and stewardship of the land. In a letter to him, Sophia explained her family’s predicament, prompting Berry to write a letter of

support on her behalf to the school board. It didn’t hurt that the governor was also a Berry fan.

In August 2012, O’Malley wrote a letter urging county officials not to evict the family because it would be a “big mistake” to destroy productive organic farmland, a “priceless asset to the education, health, and well-being of generations of Montgomery students.”

Nick Maravell was impressed with his daughter’s powers of persuasion. “She was completely up to the task,” said Nick, who worked on federal education policy before becoming a farmer and expert on organic food standards. “Eventually, she could write a grant, effectively fundraise, and forcefully take a position.”

Sarah Choyke ’06, who lived in North Carolina when the farm debacle unraveled, remembers slapping a “Save Nick’s Farm” bumper sticker on her car in a show of solidarity with Sophia. “Sophia had people volunteering for her, setting up local meetings, and getting the word out,” said Sarah, who has been friends with Sophia since they joined GDS in ninth grade. “She would talk to me about meeting the governor, a local representative, or some high-ranking Montgomery County official, and she was totally unfazed. Her attitude was: I’m going to this meeting. I’m making valid points. And I’m going to convince them to preserve this land.”

A LIFE AND CAREER “DRIVEN BY PURPOSE”

The two-year campaign to save Nick’s Farm came to an abrupt end in early 2013, when then-Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett announced, without elaborating, that he was



SOPHIA MARAVELL TALKS TO
C.A. PILLING'S AP ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCE STUDENTS AT THE POTOMAC
VEGETABLE FARM IN OCTOBER 2018



dropping the plan to convert the farm into soccer fields. All these years later, Sophia hasn't fully processed the outcome.

On the one hand, it was a victory. "We celebrated because we kept the bulldozers away," she said. On the other hand, the school board did not renew Nick's lease, nor did it announce any plans for the plot, which still sits fallow behind the Maravell home.

"It's not my fight anymore," said Sophia, who still hopes the land will some day be used for farming education purposes.

The lessons learned from that fight stayed with Sophia, and she did not give up on her vision for a local farm education hub. In 2014, she enrolled in a self-guided, remote masters program at Vermont's Goddard College, initially exploring local school initiatives that connect students to nature's food systems before traveling to farms in Bali, Greece, and Guatemala and earning a masters in education.

For the past five years, Sophia has worked at Potomac Vegetable Farms, a 180-acre spread in western Loudoun County and one of the oldest farms in Northern Virginia.

It's there that she settled into the lifestyle she's always wanted, a tight-knit community in a rural setting where she grows a portion of the food she eats and tries to make time for weaving, metal smithing, cheese making, and whatever else captures her imagination.

On the farm, she's created a half-acre community garden and runs the "Garden Sprouts" program, which connects preschool-aged kids to food and nature in an outdoor setting. On the garden's fringes, locals and area farmers congregate at the relatively new outdoor kitchen and pizza oven for various events. High School science teacher C.A. Piling often takes her classes to visit Sophia on the farm.

"In students' end-of-year reflections on my course, [the farm visit] usually ranks at the top of their' experiences," C.A. said. "Sophia has played a pivotal role in getting my students to understand how one's life and career can be driven by purpose."

As Sophia strolls through her garden one frigid November day, she picks a few figs off a bush she planted, clearly a cold-resistant variety, and pops one in her mouth. She also grows persimmons and pomegranates. There are berries and medicinal plants too.

A few of her Garden Sprout kids are there, and she hands them cotton seed pods that have popped open. "Pick the seeds out of the fluffy part," she tells them, eager to keep their cold fingers busy. She talks about seeds a lot. Her father grew the "open pollinated" kind, known to reproduce the same plant as the parent.

"These seeds have a memory," Sophia said. "They adapt and survive."



DAVID SHALLECK-KLEIN '06 WINS PRESTIGIOUS DAVID PRIZE

Former public defender forms nonprofit organization that aims to prevent unlawful separation of children from their parents.

IN OCTOBER, DAVID SHALLECK-KLEIN '06 was named a winner of the \$1 million David Prize, a philanthropic award evenly split between five New Yorkers who have "the grit and larger-than-life ideas to improve New York City," as its website says.

Never heard of this prize? Neither had David until a community activist called him up and said: David, you should apply for the David Prize. "I thought she was messing with me by encouraging me to create a prize for myself," he said. "I was confused."

But within the hour, he had tossed his hat in the ring for the award, named after billionaire real estate developer David C. Walentas and run by The Walentas Family Foundation since its launch in 2019.

When David applied for the prize in late 2021, he was a lawyer at The Bronx Defenders eager to create a civil rights organization dedicated to suing government agencies that illegally separate children from their parents. He pitched the idea in his application, founded the Family Justice Law Center in April 2022, and won his \$200,000 share of the prize six months later. The money will be distributed over two years, no strings attached.

David, 35, discussed his career path and his new nonprofit group with *Georgetown Days*. The interview has been edited for clarity and length.

"I REALLY THINK MY COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE, THE LOVE OF LEARNING ABOUT NEW TOPICS, AND THE CONFIDENCE TO PURSUE MY PASSIONS CAME FROM GDS."

HOW WILL YOU USE YOUR SHARE OF THE PRIZE MONEY?

This money is going directly into hiring civil rights litigators. I envision bringing lawsuits, mostly in federal court, that will make transformative changes in government practices that result in unnecessary family separation and surveillance—one of the most important yet misunderstood civil rights issues of our time. The constitutional violations occurring in this area are some of the worst in our country. We therefore need the best of the best to address them.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CREATE THE FAMILY JUSTICE LAW CENTER?

During my second year at NYU Law, I was in a family defense clinic. For an initial assignment, we went to Brooklyn family court to observe the proceedings.

I was expecting to hear horrific cases of abuse and abandonment, like the ones that make the news. But instead, most of the allegations were about inadequate food, dirty clothing, being late to school, mental health issues, housing that was not up to code even though it was public housing. The overwhelming majority of cases were not about parents who didn't love or care about their children, but rather about poverty-generated problems.

I was shocked that the government's solution was to separate children from their parents and place them with strangers in foster care instead of providing services and resources needed by the families to address their underlying problems. I knew that family separation and surveillance were issues that I wanted to pursue.

YOU WERE ALREADY DOING FAMILY DEFENSE WORK AS A PUBLIC DEFENDER. WHY START A NEW ORGANIZATION?

Families need both defense and offense. Many vibrant organizations challenge various civil rights injustices in court, such as the ACLU and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. But no

organization in the city or the country did that kind of high impact affirmative litigation to protect families' rights in the child welfare system. That void in advocacy led me to launch the Family Justice Law Center.

DID THE PUBLICITY SURROUNDING THE GOVERNMENT SEPARATING CHILDREN FROM THEIR PARENTS AT THE U.S. BORDER AFFECT YOUR GROUP'S MISSION?

That is one of two recent significant moments in the development of our organization. Those heart-wrenching screams of children being seized from their parents' arms were nothing new to families affected by the child welfare system here in the United States. Community activists started campaigns to highlight that family separation happens in our own states, counties, and cities too—in neighborhoods with the highest percentages of Black and Brown residents and child poverty rates. The events at the U.S.-Mexico border ignited a national awakening. Human Rights Watch and the ACLU just released a report on the family separation crisis in the U.S. child welfare system, calling it a "national crisis warranting immediate attention and action."

The murder of George Floyd also stimulated advocacy for families. The uprising in Black communities was not just that Black Lives Matter, but Black Families Matter, too.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM?

Across the country, 53 percent of Black children will be subjected to an investigation by government officials. These investigations, even if they don't result in a removal, are harmful in and of themselves. They can lead to strip searches of children, invasive interrogations, government agents reading labels in medicine cabinets, rifling through drawers, opening refrigerators, and forcing these families to be subservient to their every demand. Many of these warrantless searches by



RESIDENCE:
New York City

EDUCATION:
B.A., magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, Political Science, Bates College, 2010
J.D., magna cum laude, Order of the Coif, New York University School Law School, 2016

OCCUPATION:
Founder and Executive Director, Family Justice Law Center

A FAVORITE GDS MEMORY:
"[Former] GDS basketball coach Brian Bobo used to say: 'To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late, and to be late is not to be.' If one of us was not to be, it meant all of us were running. We ran a lot."

BIG LIFE EVENT:
Birth of first child Francesca Alexy Klein on December 12, 2022 with wife Sophie.

government officials violate the Constitution's Fourth Amendment.

There are also due process violations in family court, including horrendous delays in removal hearings.

DID YOUR EXPERIENCE AT GDS IMPACT YOUR CAREER CHOICES?

A major influence on my commitment to social justice, my love for learning and exploring, and my confidence to pursue my passions were my experiences at GDS. These ideals – woven into the ethos of the school – inspired me.

I came to GDS in the 9th grade, and it transformed my approach to thinking about education. By my senior year, school was no longer an obligation but a place of enjoyment, exploration, and expectation to harness and use my imagination for social good. I was most interested in the humanities and English—my time with [English teacher] Nina Prytula was especially transformative. But I also found joy in areas I knew I wouldn't pursue, such as Bill Wallace's biology class and Andy Lipps's math class.

Of course, the magic of GDS extends beyond the classroom. It's no surprise that I have remained life-long friends with my cohort at GDS and my professional career has been shaped by people who are alumni or closely-connected to the school.

WHO WITHIN THE GDS COMMUNITY MOST INFLUENCED YOUR CAREER PATH?

One of my close mentors is Congressman Jamie Raskin [79]. He is a dear family friend. During my junior and senior years, I was intimately involved in his first campaign for Maryland State Senate. I knocked on doors with him after classes, handled emails and phone-banking, attended events, and visited every corner of the district with him. Congressman Raskin taught me about justice-focused campaigns that are committed to organizing, connecting with individuals, mobilizing, marching, and demanding change.

He's not only one of the smartest people I know, but also one of the most caring.

I majored in political science at Bates College, which was a natural outgrowth of my interest in the campaign, the humanities, and social justice. After graduating, I worked in public affairs in DC for three years, and found myself gravitating toward policy issues that had a legal component. I initially attended law school thinking I would return to politics, policy, or government work.

ARE YOU THE ORGANIZATION'S SOLE EMPLOYEE SO FAR?

Yes. But the organization was selected to be part of the Urban Justice Center's accelerator program, which helps nonprofits get off the ground. The program has provided substantial support, including office space, back office support, IT support, and mentorship and training.

I also receive support from the Family Justice Law Center's academic and community advisory boards. Right now, I'm largely focused on building relationships, forming partnerships, setting our priorities, and establishing the foundations for our lawsuits.

CAN YOU OFFER A SENSE OF IF/HOW THE DAVID PRIZE WILL HELP YOU SCALE?

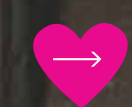
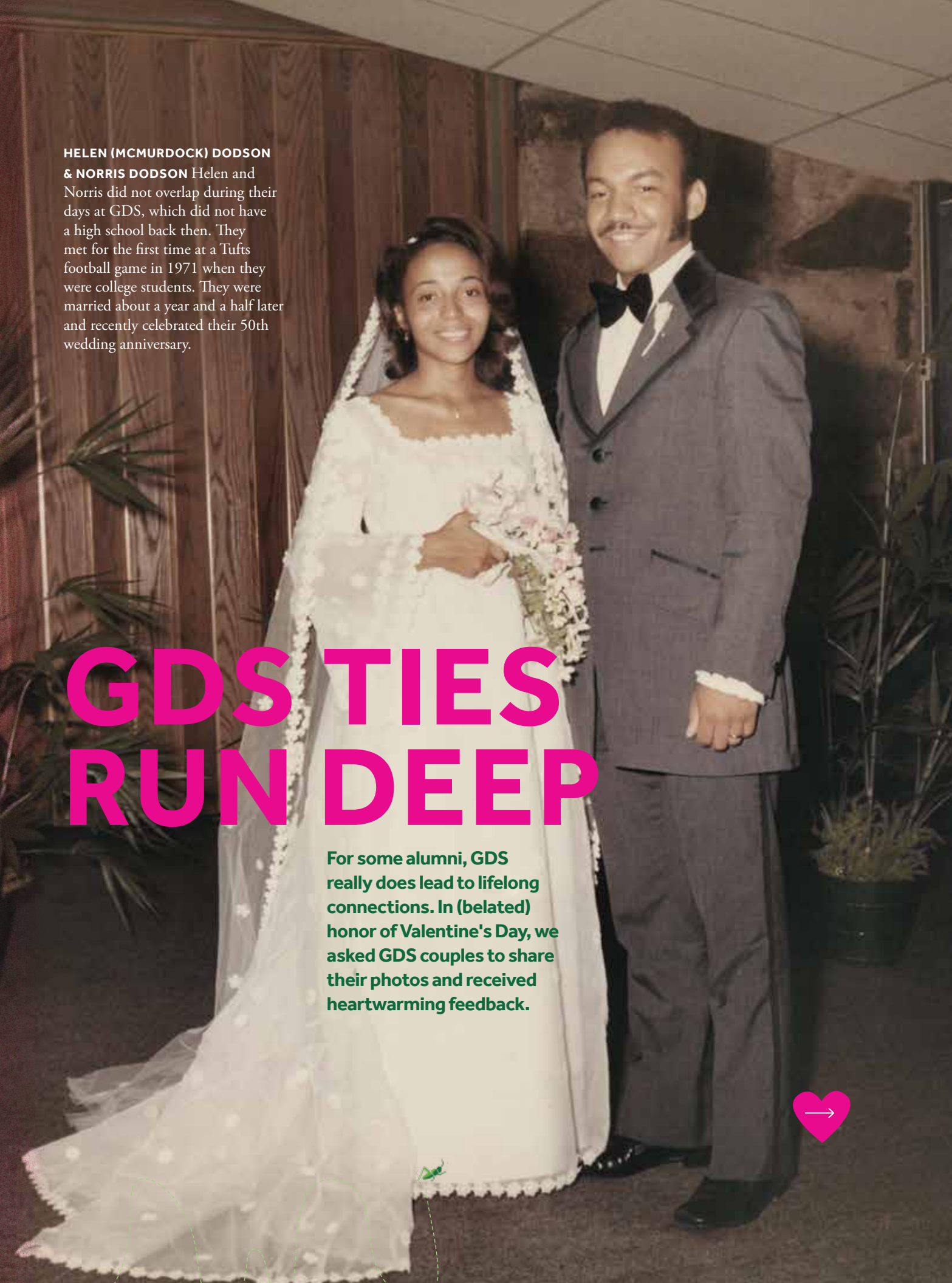
We launched in April, before winning the David Prize, because the Urban Justice Center helps overcome many barriers to entry.

But the David Prize is a huge boost, not just because of the money. It serves as an imprimatur—a real stamp of credibility. I hope and expect that it is going to have a catalytic effect so that more foundations, corporations, law firms, individuals, and hopefully the GDS community will support us.

HELEN (MCMURDOCK) DODSON & NORRIS DODSON Helen and Norris did not overlap during their days at GDS, which did not have a high school back then. They met for the first time at a Tufts football game in 1971 when they were college students. They were married about a year and a half later and recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

GDS TIES RUN DEEP

For some alumni, GDS really does lead to lifelong connections. In (belated) honor of Valentine's Day, we asked GDS couples to share their photos and received heartwarming feedback.

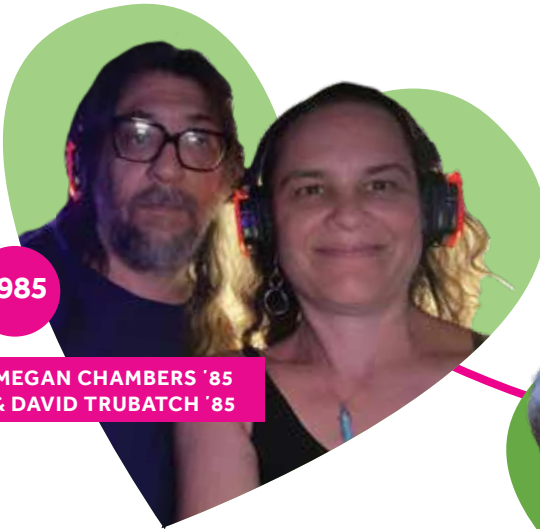




HELEN (MCMURDOCK) DODSON & NORRIS DODSON

1985

MEGAN CHAMBERS '85 & DAVID TRUBATCH '85

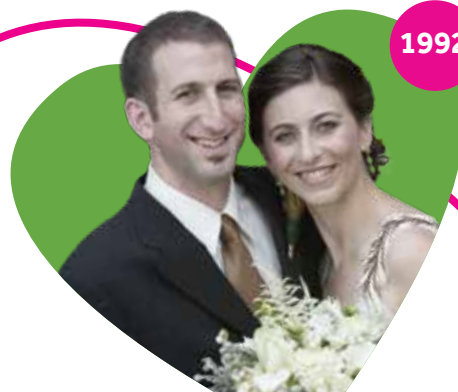


1988

ZACHARY SCHRAG '88 & REBECCA TUSHNET '91



1991



SARAH GREENBERGER '92 & MATTHEW ENGEL '92

1992

1997



ANNIE VINIK '97 & JAMIE LAWRENCE '97



2000

MEGAN (STOHNER) CONWAY '00 & JACK CONWAY '00

2000

2001



MARK BERENSON '00 & JESS GILBURNE '01

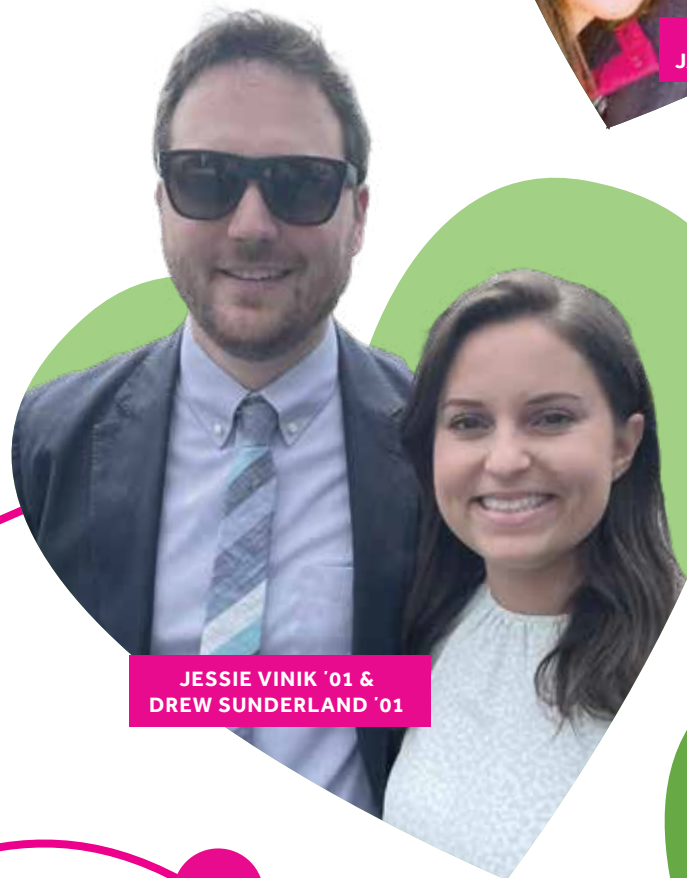
2001

2002



ARTHUR DELANEY '01 & LAURA DELANEY '02

2001



JESSIE VINIK '01 & DREW SUNDERLAND '01



WILL SUTER '02 & OLIVIA (PESKOWITZ) SUTER '05

2005



ADRIENNE (GATI) BIEL '01 & STU BIEL '01

2001



EDEN RASKIN JENKINS '04 & BRANDON JENKINS '04

2004

2006

2007

SARAH SCHRAG '07 & WILL ADLER '06



2007

2006

MORGAN (HELLER) KANAREK '07 & DAVID KANAREK '06



2008

TIMOTHY PATCH '08 & TESSA VELAZQUEZ '08



RECENTLY ENGAGED!

2010

ETHAN SLATER '10 & LILLY JAY '10



ALUMNI GATHERINGS AND VISITS

THEY POPPED IN... THEY POPPED IN... THEY POPPED IN...

THEY POPPED IN during Thanksgiving break just to say "hi."



Virginia Heinsen '20 (left) and Ana-Sophia Mostashari '20 with Head of School Russell Shaw



(LEFT TO RIGHT) Meredith Chase-Mitchell, Malachi Cheeks '22, Bearden Sanderson '22 (on camera)

(LEFT TO RIGHT) Assistant Athletic Director Pam Stanfield and Sofia Greenfield '22



(left to right) Isa Cymrot '21, Oakley Winters '22, Harold Oppenheim '22



THEY PLAYED... THEY PLAYED... THEY PLAYED...

THEY PLAYED games with their old high school friends and past teammates during the holiday season.



THEY PARTIED... THEY PARTIED... THEY PARTIED... THEY PARTIED... THEY PARTIED... THEY PARTIED...

THEY PARTIED at the bowling alley for Halloween, at Hawthorne in DC after Thanksgiving, and at Arts District Brewing in Los Angeles in December for the first West Coast reception in three years. They also partied at the Black Alumni Holiday Party.



SAVE THE DATE



Georgetown Day School's

MIXTAPE REUNION

All Alumni Reunion Weekend

MAY 5-7, 2023

Send your song requests to alumni@gds.org



GRANDPARENTS' AND SPECIAL FRIENDS' DAY

Friday, May 12, 2023

Georgetown Day School - LMS
4200 Davenport Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016

Lower School - 8:30 - 11:30 am

Middle School - 11:30 am - 2:30 pm

FINAL THOUGHTS

GDS HIGHLIGHTS

WE'RE SO PROUD OF OUR GDS COMMUNITY

ALUMNI

Aidan Kohn-Murphy '22 was recognized on the *Forbes* 30 under 30 list in the social media category for his work as a political organizer and founder of Gen-Z for Change, a coalition of social media creators who support progressive causes.

Ethan Slater '10 has been cast as Boq, opposite Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo, in the big-screen adaptation of "Wicked." **Noah Robbins '09** joined the cast of Apple's *Project Artemis*, starring Scarlett Johansson and Channing Tatum.

In August 2022, the U.S. Senate confirmed **Nina Morrison '88** as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York. Morrison is the second openly LGBTQ+ judge in the Eastern District.

Ziyah Holman '20 was one of five college athletes who signed onto Naomi Osaka's "Glow Outside" campaign, launched by the tennis star's skincare brand to educate communities of color about the benefits of regular sunscreen use.

Andrew Sean Greer '88, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Less*, has debuted on the *New York Times* bestseller list with his sequel, *Less Is Lost*. After more than a decade in the making, *Morgenthau*, by author **Andrew Meier '81**, is now out from Random House.

Siblings **Lucy Dana '09** and **Andrew Dana '04** launched One Trick Pony, a peanut butter company that uses peanuts from Cordoba, Argentina, the hometown of Andrew's wife, Dani.

Isaac Stanley-Becker '12 is now covering national politics for *The Washington Post*. NBC News has hired **Laura Wides-Munoz '91** as Senior Tech Investigations Editor.

Dancer/choreographer **Sophie Sotsky '07** has joined the faculty of George Mason University's Dance Department as Production Manager for Visual and Performing Arts.



ART

Two *Augur Bit* artists were recognized by the National Scholastic Press Association. **Julius Boxer-Cooper '22** won third place in the Cartoon of the Year category for *Chadwick the Cheerio Applies to College*. **Nava Mach '23** received an honorable mention for Artist of the Year, placing her among the top ten of High School journalism artists.



Zaira Chowdhury '23 was one of 50 artistic scholars whose portfolio was showcased in the 2022 AP Art and Design Digital Exhibit, marking the first time a GDS art student has won this distinction. Zaira's portfolio, selected from

thousands of entries, featured powerful images documenting the end of her grandmother's life.

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS!

PLEASE SEND INFORMATION FOR THE MAGAZINE TO DINA@GDS.ORG

GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL

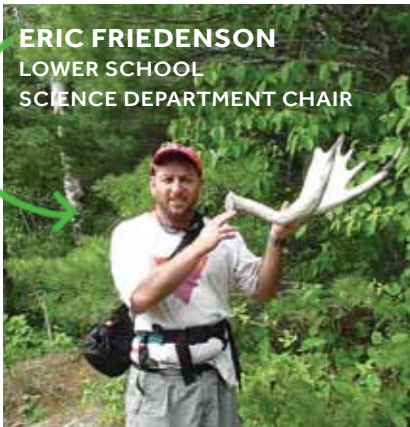
4200 Davenport Street, NW

Washington, DC 20016

Address Service Requested

ASK A TEACHER

ERIC FRIEDENSON
LOWER SCHOOL
SCIENCE DEPARTMENT CHAIR



WHAT IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR TEACHING TOOLS IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

Flat Eric! When I'm not in the classroom, I'm usually exploring. I bring my adventures to school via videos. My on-screen image is what my students call Flat Eric.

Flat Eric first appeared in 2010, capturing my time at Isle Royale National Park, an island in Lake Superior. I was taking a class at the park's research station, where scientists have been studying the predator-prey relationship between wolves and moose for decades. I helped collect moose bones, took videos of wildlife, and photographed hundreds of moose bones collected by the scientists.

In the classroom, I used the photos and videos to introduce the scientific method and ecology. Students watched short video clips of moose and hypothesized which moose the wolves would choose to hunt—the ones swimming, walking through fields or forests, or standing solo, in pairs, or with their young. They then saw examples of tooth decay, arthritis, and osteoporosis in the moose bone photos. With the new knowledge, they formed even stronger hypotheses, such as how tooth decay can affect a moose's ability to get energy from food or how hip arthritis and osteoporosis may inhibit its ability to run. Years later, Flat Eric has shared many new adventures, and 4th graders still enjoy joining him on Isle Royale.