

The Peak to Peak Alumni Magazine

# Piqued

**/ˈpēkt/** (verb) to excite interest or curiosity, to arouse an emotion or provoke to action



## BE WELL

Volume 3: Issue 2  
April 2020

Peak to Peak has long sought to provide students with the tools and ability to solve real-world problems. As we navigate this unprecedented time, our students remind us of what it takes to thrive in adversity, to support one another, and to persevere. In this our twentieth year, we are learning the importance of what we can endure and accomplish when we stand together.

### In this issue:

- Wellness. Balance. Happiness.
- Kindergarten students weigh in on our next 20 years
- Future Campus Plans
- Prieto wins an Impact Award & other newsworthy items

# Upcoming Events:

During this unprecedented time, Peak to Peak has moved to a distance learning model for all students, K-12. Normally, our Upcoming Events section of the alumni magazine would be full of events that mark the spring semester. However, many of our K-12 events and traditions have been, or will likely, be canceled. **Run for the Peak**, the **Annual Gala**, spring concerts, play performances, **Rough & Tough**, the **Prom**, the **K-12 tunnel**, and even **graduation** are all on the line as we wait to hear whether Colorado's social distancing strategies are working to combat the spread of the COVID-19.

Our Puma community is strong. We will stand together and support one another, come what may. We know that when the clouds clear away, we will return to our classrooms, return to our hallways, and return to our events and traditions with expanded appreciation.



In the meantime, if you would like to offer our staff members and current students, particularly our Class of 2020 seniors, your messages of encouragement, we will be posting these to the Peak to Peak's official Instagram account. Please send your messages, your name, and your graduation year to [Jen Dauzvardis](#).

**P2P** in **twenty years**

*"We will have a pool and a playhouse on the playground."*

- Olive, Class of 2032

On the cover: The Peak to Peak seniors find a way to be together on campus while still following social distancing guidelines.

At Right: First graders plant lettuce in the school garden.

Above Right: A winter sunrise on the campus quad.



**P2P** in **twenty years**

*"I want more trees on the campus in the next 20 years."*

- Hannah, Class of 2032





# Message from Ms. Reeser

Executive Director of Education

## Dear Peak to Peak alumni,

As you know better than most people, our school has long been known for having an outstanding academic program, excellent teachers, and a focus on preparing students for their best-fit colleges. Given our established vision and mission, these priorities will not change; however, what's become more and more a part of our fabric over the past few years is more emphasis on helping students develop "soft" skills needed to live life fully – a life full of positivity, opportunity, creativity, and service to others. Those skills include things like being able to work effectively in teams, solve complex problems, think critically, and speak effectively in front of small or large groups of people. Some of our newest high school courses, such as Innovation in Design, Engineering the Future, Kitchen Chemistry, and our soon-to-be-rolled out 9th Grade Innovation Seminar, specifically require these skills in equal proportion to the academic content. We are proud of these new offerings, and our students love them!

We recognize that our mission is not just to focus on academics, but also to inspire students, to create outside-the-box learning opportunities, and to cultivate a responsive school culture. We care about our students, and we recognize that being a well-rounded human being who is able to engage in authentic relationships and who has a healthy, balanced lifestyle is just as important as high levels of academic achievement. Importantly, while our vision and mission are the same as they have always been, the pathways that students use to achieve those ideals are expanding in exciting ways.

Please read on for more information about ways that Peak to Peak is enhancing programs to encourage a balanced and inquisitive approach to life in college and beyond. It's an exciting time to be a Puma – during your time as a Peak to Peak student, you were part of creating something truly special. We thank you for that. Drop us a line sometime and let us know how you're doing. We would love to stay connected with you!

Best wishes,

Kelly Reeser  
Executive Director of Education

# News & Noteworthy

## MS. PRIETO RECEIVES AN IMPACT ON EDUCATION AWARD

(Left) We were proud to honor Ms. Susan Prieto, Kindergarten teacher extraordinaire, as this year's Impact on Education Award winner from Peak to Peak. "This program recognizes individuals in the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) who have an extraordinary impact on student learning through exceptional collaboration, innovation, and dedication to students." The entire elementary school surprised Ms. Prieto during an assembly. She is a much-loved member of our Puma community!

**P2P** in *twenty* years

*"I'd like to have living dinosaurs on the playground."*

- Ollie, Class of 2032

## NEW SPORT IN 2020

Peak to Peak is proud to announce the addition of a new athletic team in the 2020-2021 school year: Boys Volleyball. This team, which will compete in the spring season, is an exciting new option for student athletes.



## 3-POINT RECORD SHATTERED

Garrett Shriver (12th grade) broke Peak to Peak's record for the number of three-point shots made in a single game. Garrett hit a whopping 9 three-point shots and scored a total of 27 points against Prospect Ridge Academy.

## WRESTLING CHAMPION

Vince Cornella (11th grade) won his third straight 5A individual wrestling title and was named BoCo Preps Wrestler of the Year.

## TEAM WINS \$10,000 AND ADVANCES TO NEXT ROUND OF LEXUS ECO-CHALLENGE

(Below) Students on the "ReHive" team in this year's innovation course have won the first round of the 2019-20 Lexus Eco-Challenge! Each student on the team earned \$1,000 in scholarship money, and the class earned \$3,000 to continue their push to develop creative projects that help the Earth and all of us on it. For their project, students are raising awareness about colony collapse disorder and ways to help bees. They also prototyped a beehive made out of trash.



## NCWIT RECOGNIZES NINE STUDENTS

(Above) The National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) announced their Aspirations Awards for 2020 and there are nine students from Peak to Peak who were recognized.

## TURNER WINS A COCA-COLA SCHOLARSHIP

(Below) Senior Makenna Turner has received a Coca-Cola Scholarship. This is an extremely competitive award that goes to only 150 high school seniors from across the nation. Students are recognized for leading positive change in their communities and around the world.

**P2P** in twenty years

*"I'll study bones and fossils in the future."*

- Cora, Class of 2032

## MS. LETTER SHARES THOUGHTS ON FAILURE

Kristie Letter, High School Teacher at Peak to Peak, was recently interviewed by Daniel Bauer on his Better Leaders, Better Schools podcast. Ms. Letter was selected for the interview because she is a ruckus-maker, which Mr. Bauer defines as "a leader who has found freedom from the status quo. A leader looking to escape the old routine. A leader who never, ever gives up." [Click here to listen to the interview.](#)

Makenna has also been awarded a Daniel's Fund Scholarship. "The Daniels Scholarship Program provides a four-year annually-renewable college scholarship for graduating high school seniors in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming who demonstrate exceptional character, leadership, and a commitment to serving their communities."





Above: Elementary Technology class is a highlight for many.

Below: Mr. Knox led a group of Peak to Peak science enthusiasts to design a payload and launch a weather balloon from campus.

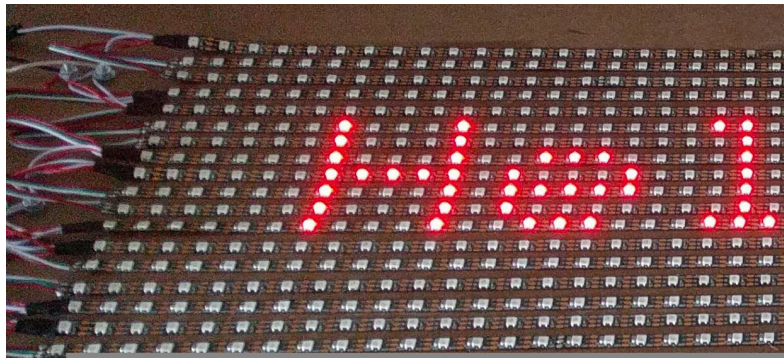
## P2P in twenty years

*"In the future, I think they will have less chicken and more cucumber sticks at hot lunch."*

- Linden, Class of 2032



# Faculty Spotlight:



### How long have you worked at Peak to Peak, and what led you to it?

I have been teaching at Peak to Peak since 2007 when I arrived as a substitute for the entry-level technology class. Since then, I have taught several computer science courses, including:

- Introduction to Computer Programming
- Webmastering (JavaScript programming)
- AP Computer Science A
- Advanced Web Programming (PHP)
- Advanced Computer Science: Data Structures
- Technology Capstone
- Science Research Seminar

One year, I also taught 2nd and 3rd grade advanced math! The school was still building out. Our graduating senior class was small, and the LMC building hadn't even been built. In the past, it was once the secondary library! We've grown so much in the last few years, and it's exciting to be part of adding new and relevant electives for our students.

### How is the school (and/or students) different from when you first started?

I arrived as the school was still building out. Our graduating senior class was small, and the LMC building hadn't even been built. In the past, it was once the secondary library! We've grown so much in the last few years, and it's exciting to be part of adding new and relevant electives for our students.

### What's the secret to a successful class?

I try as much as possible to give students meaningful projects that have practical value of in their daily lives - it helps if they are a lot of fun. I like to incorporate hands-on, project-based learning so that students can see the value that they have created when the project is over. Sometimes it could be a game, but other times it could be a 3-D printed item with practical use. I know that not every student will explore computer science as a career, but the skills are increasingly important in virtually all careers.

### Tell us about your recent successes/adventures?

My Technology Capstone class recently presented their projects at a "STEAM Event" on an early release day. These were fantastic! They created a digital Whack-A-Mole game, a laser-harp, and a hand-swipe controlled large-format LED display board. The elementary students loved it, and the students had an opportunity for their projects to be seen and appreciated.

### What message would you like to leave for our Alumni?

Technology has found its way into so many careers that any skills you develop now will be useful for you in college and in your future career. There is a huge shortage of qualified students entering the workforce with computer skills; anyone with these skills will be much better positioned to succeed in the workforce.

### What section of the bookstore would we find you in a bookstore?

Do-it-yourself! I've always loved to make things - physically and digitally. I love home renovations, researching backpacking locations, cooking, and learning a new programming language. I love a good print reference.

# Bob Hettmansperger

## What classes have you taught?

Started in January as a long-term substitute and taught many technology and computer classes back-to-back.

That was quite an adventure as I taught classes back-to-back.

## When you first worked here?

My senior class wasn't at full capacity. In fact, the room I now teach in was empty for the last 13 years and it's been great to have our students.

It's great that they can see the results of their work. It's fun, too! When I can, I like to have students have something tangible that they can see. That's a webpage or computer program or programmable LED lights. I realize that it's not a career pathway, but technology is a great pathway.

Students at an elementary school have done hands-on projects that included programming a controlled Snake game on a Raspberry Pi. They've been appreciated by the public.

What are your goals for the future?  
I want to see students use their programming skills you can get in the future jobs. We're already facing a shortage of people who can solve problems using technology. We want to be creators and not just consumers.

## Why did you leave?

I left to go home and do some things and virtually. Whether it's doing a new dish, or learning a new language, or learning a new skill.



# Alumni Spotlight: Jhamal Fanning *Class of 2021*

## **Where are you now and what are you up to?**

I am currently working in a restaurant as I study for the LSAT with the goal of attending law school starting in September 2021.

## **Do you think your time at Peak to Peak helped you pursue this? If yes, how?**

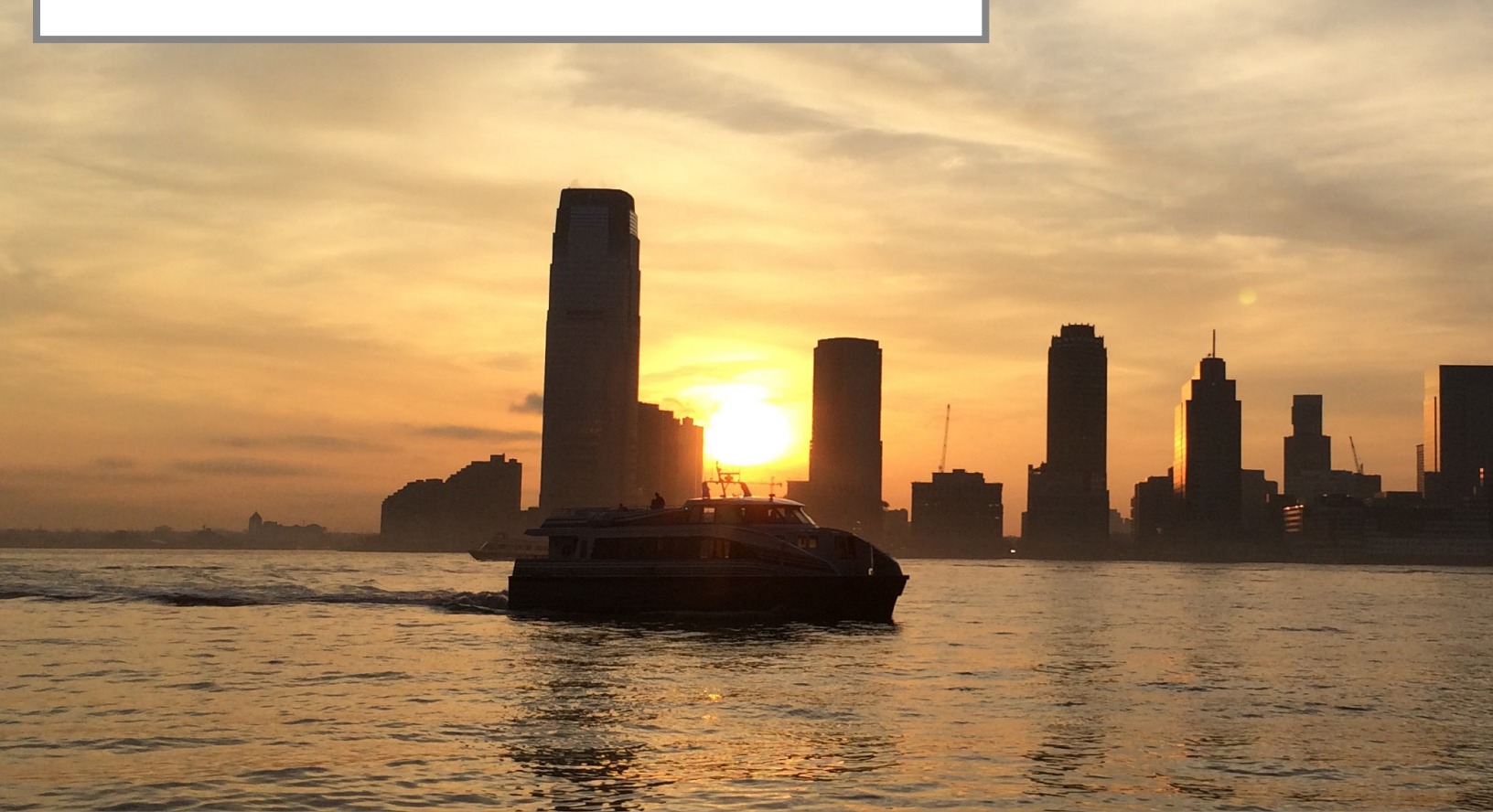
Peak to Peak definitely gave me the determination and work ethic to balance work and study. Peak to Peak also gave me the tools to succeed in my undergraduate program, which will give me many opportunities in my future job pursuits.

## **Did you ever imagine doing this while you were at Peak to Peak?**

Honestly, yes. I knew that I wanted to take time off after I completed my undergraduate degree to consider my options, and I had already considered the law school track by the time I was a junior in high school.

## **What education have you pursued since high school?**

I completed a B.S. in Chemistry at NYU Abu Dhabi with a minor in Legal Studies.



## **Who was your favorite teacher and why?**

This is seriously a tough one. I have to choose Mr. Hankla as an all-around amazing teacher because he made physics so relatable and explained everything in the Feynman way (If you can't explain it to a fifth grader, you don't really know what you're talking about).

I also have to choose Sr. Matthews though for being such a great person and for making me a functional Spanish speaker. I use my Spanish in everyday life now and it was an invaluable gift.

## **Are you still friends with anybody you met at Peak to Peak?**

While I am not close friends with many people any more, I occasionally get in touch with Eric Schirmer and I recently visited Kyle Seeberger in Seattle, Washington for Halloween weekend.

## **What's the most influential class you took in college?**

I think the most influential class I took was Legal Studies with Professor Goodrich. It was the first time I realized that I enjoy law significantly more than the chemistry research I was doing. This led to my plan culminating in a Legal Studies minor and law school.

## **What would you like to tell your fellow alumni?**

It is OK to not know what you want to do with your life. The most important thing is to be proud of the work you have done and to keep searching for the things that will make you and others happy. Focus on the little things in life.





**in college?**

ystem and Methods with Professor Peter  
ved legal practice and methodology  
as working on at the time. This formulated  
my current plans to attend law school.

**nni?**

our life sometimes. The most important  
at the end of the day and always be  
thers around you happy, especially if it is



# Wellness. Balance.

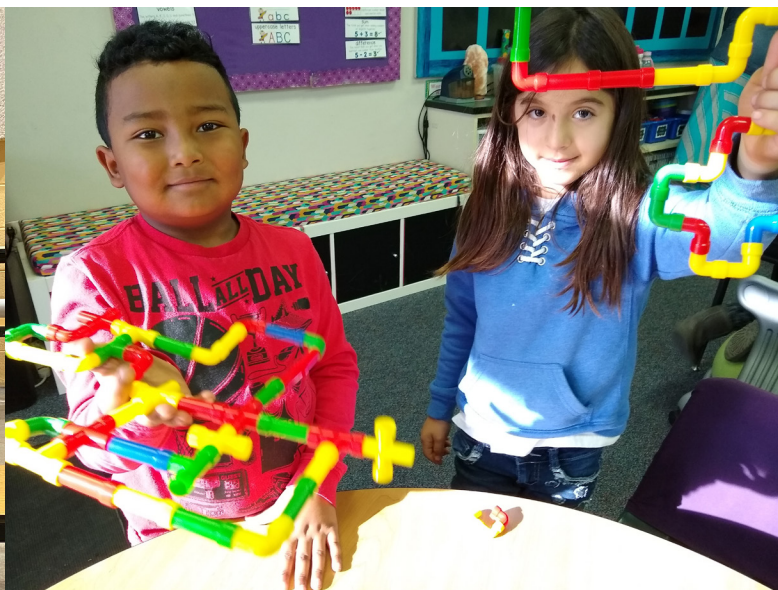
**Wellness. Balance. Happiness. These three words are what we, as a K-12 counseling office, encourage all members of our community to pursue in our competitive academic environment full of stressful situations.**

How many times have you thought, "If I just accomplish this one goal, everything in my life will be perfect!"? After you accomplished that goal, was your life perfect? Or did you learn something from the experience and realize that your journey was going to continue and there would be both accomplishments and failures along the way?

Every day, an abundance of mixed messages are shared within our society: if a student works really hard, they'll be recruited by the BEST colleges! If they open the big envelope containing an acceptance letter to the BEST college, then they'll be happy! Once said student arrives at the BEST college, everything will be perfect and they'll have the experiences they need to land the perfect job! Once they land the perfect job everything will be perfect. This narrative puts entirely too much pressure on students today. That's why the College Counseling Team is trying to provide students the tools necessary to mindfully approach each step of school and life and to work towards finding wellness, balance, and happiness.



# Happiness.

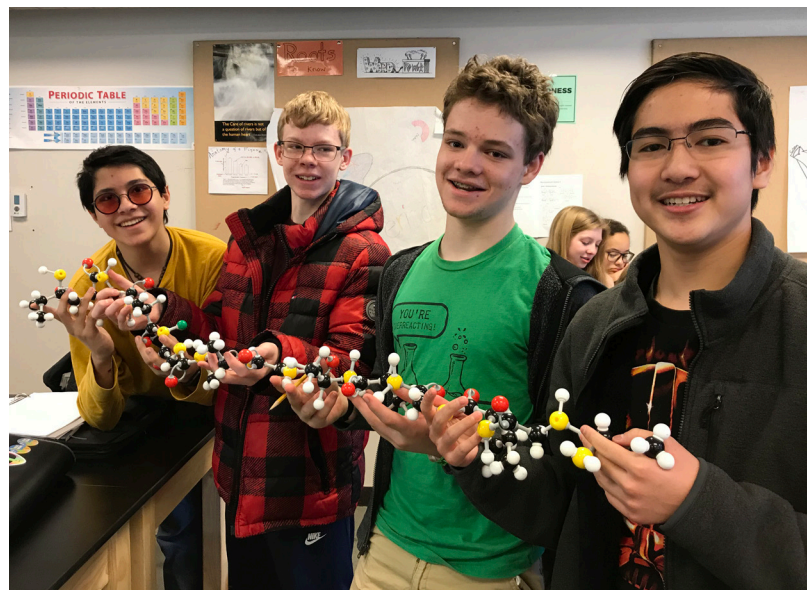


Rather than focusing on the “BEST” college, students are given the tools necessary to both determine and find the colleges that are the best personal fit for them.

From working individually with each junior and senior to help identify colleges that are a good fit for academics, social experience, and finances, to working with students to conduct informational interviews with someone in the student’s chosen area of career interest to having honest, frank conversations with students as courses are selected

for next year, wellness, balance, and happiness are our message of emphasis. Our goal is to graduate healthy, happy students who are ready for whatever happens next. After all, the road to college (and life) needs to be a healthy one. We recognize there are many valid options and paths towards wellness, balance, and happiness and no one college/job/decision is the mythical unicorn that will solve all of the world’s problems.

No matter where you are now and where you are heading next,



please don’t become completely disenchanted if not everything is perfect once you get there. That will simply be the next step in your journey; you will always be working towards accomplishing a new goal.

In this section of the next issue of Piqued, we plan to highlight non-traditional academic paths. If you would be willing to share your experiences if they didn’t immediately include attending a four-year college or university, please email [Macaela Holmes Fuller](mailto:Macaela.Holmes.Fuller).

*Above left: Peak to Peak’s Middle School Science Fair. Twelve students advanced to the regional event where ten students won awards.*

*Left bottom: Middle School students at the regional science fair awards ceremony.*

*Above center: Elementary students explore hands-on tools for understanding structure.*

*Above right: High school students use modeling in class to build and better understand molecular structures.*

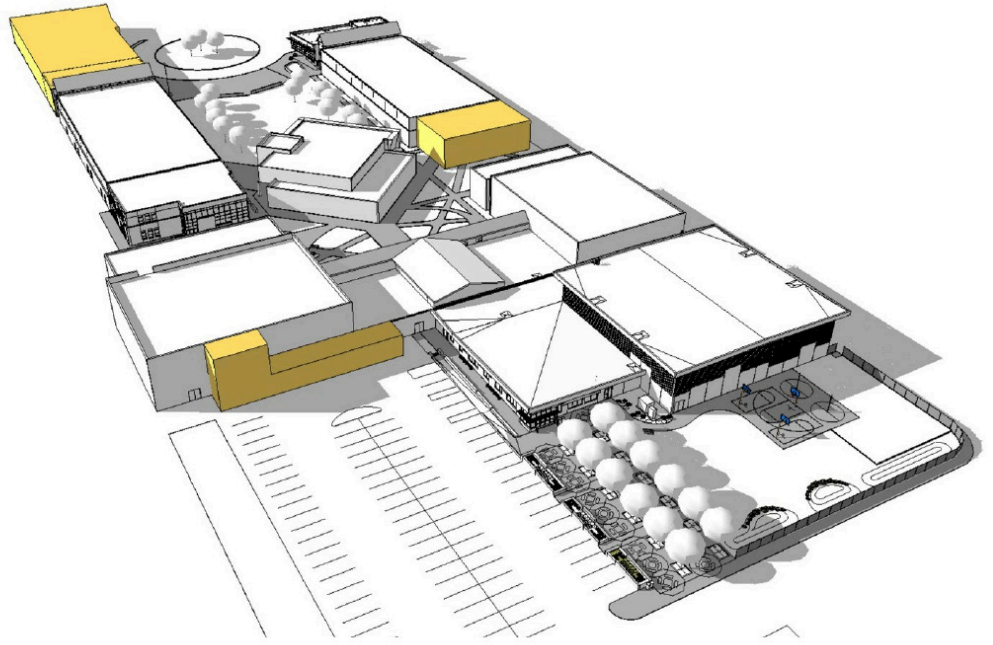
*At right: Elementary students learning how detectives use their observation skills in order to find which fingerprints belong to whom.*



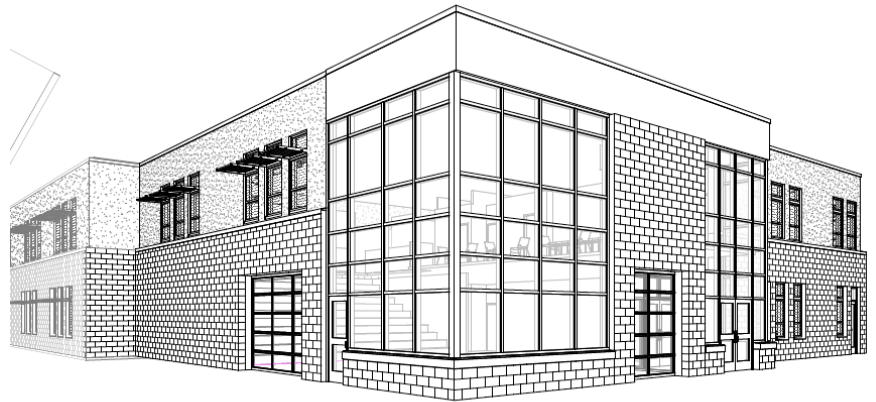
# Future Campus Plans

If there is one constant about Peak to Peak, it's that, as a school, we are always looking ahead and planning for the future. We are also dedicated to continuous improvement — it's who we are as a school. In that vein, and based on feedback received from staff, students, parents, guardians, and community members during last year's [Listening Campaign](#), Peak to Peak is planning for improvements to our campus that will help us create new spaces for learning that align with the innovative initiatives in our [strategic plan](#).

Priorities include adding space to our existing campus for additional classrooms, flexible learning spaces, an improved performing arts facility, and an innovation center. Our plans will impact every building on our current campus, and will improve the experience of all of our students in grades K-12. The drawings currently under consideration are included in [this presentation](#) developed by our architects from TreanorHL. We are looking for creative ways to raise \$15-20 million to pay for these improvements, so if you have ideas for us or if you win the lottery and want to make a generous donation to your alma mater, please let us know!

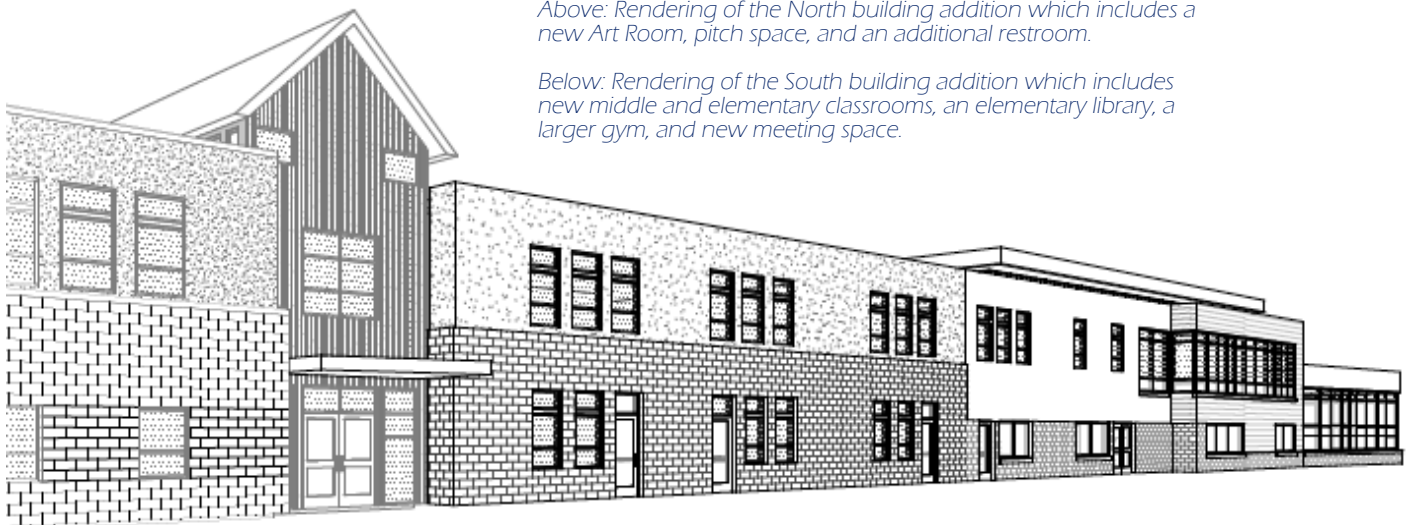


*Above: Plans include expansions on the North and South Buildings, plus major renovations of the LMC and theater space.*



*Above: Rendering of the North building addition which includes a new Art Room, pitch space, and an additional restroom.*

*Below: Rendering of the South building addition which includes new middle and elementary classrooms, an elementary library, a larger gym, and new meeting space.*





Above: Peak to Peak's Ethics Bowl Team took 1st place at the Colorado High School Ethics Bowl.

## P2P in twenty years

*"In the future cricket will be added as a sport at Peak to Peak."*

- Parnav, Class of 2032

# 20



Our **twentieth year** has certainly been a memorable one! While we weren't able to gather for our Annual Gala, we invite you to watch our video:

### [Looking Back at Our Past 20 Years.](#)

We still have numerous ways to celebrate this milestone in Peak to Peak's history. To support these celebrations, please visit our [Friends of Peak to Peak Giving](#) page. In the meantime, we will cling to the special memories of our time together such as our annual K-12 Spirit Night, K-12 Picnic, and Grandparents & Special Friends Day.

# Alumni Updates

**Miriam Grady, Class of 2018**, is a sophomore at Notre Dame and recently won [The Atlantic Coast Conference Individual Championship](#) in fencing (epee) for the second straight season. Her team swept the championships winning all available titles and captured their fifth conference title in six seasons. Miriam was also named Most Valuable Fencer in the women's division of the ACC Championships.



**Kristen McKibben, Class of 2010**, defended her thesis for her Ph.D. in Biophysics working on the role that the protein "Tau" plays in properly regulating brain function, specifically the impact on patients with dementia. She passed and earned her Ph.D. in February 2020. [You can read the abstract in the Journal of Biological Chemistry.](#)

## Class of 2006

### **Brianna (Breezy) Charles**

Current City: Seattle, WA  
Graduation: BA, International Relations, Cornell College, 2009  
Current Job: Nordstrom, Senior Marketing Specialist

## Class of 2010

### **Kaitlyn Reeser**

Current City: Lakewood, CO  
Graduation: BA International Studies and Psychology, University of Denver 2015  
Marriage: Keith Funk, 2019

## Class of 2011

### **Shannon Henry**

Graduation: BS/BA, Hospitality Management, University of Denver, 2015  
Current Job: Self Employed - Social Media Marketing

**P2P** in **twenty**  
years

*"In the future, the air will smell good and fresh."*

- Linden, Class of 2032

## Class of 2014

### **Erin Gardner**

Current City: Lakewood, CO  
Graduations: BA, Digital Art & Design, University of Colorado Boulder, 2018  
Current Job: Website Designer, Fareharbor

## Class of 2015

### **Devin Feigelson**

Graduations: BS, Health: Science, Society, & Policy; Psychology with Honors, Brandeis University, 2019  
Current Job: Project Manager, Children's Hospital Los Angeles and Operation Smile

## Class of 2016

### **Hannah Scherr**

Current City: Erie, CO  
Graduations: Interior Design/Architecture, Abilene Christian University, 2020

## Class of 2018

### **Kaylee Stone (Hall)**

Current City: Fort Irwin, CA  
Graduations: Elementary Special Education, Grand Canyon University, 2023  
Marriage: Jacob Stone, 2019

## Class of 2019

### **Cole Beasley**

Current City: Westminster, CO

### **Taighe Iacometti**

Current City: Longmont, CO  
Graduations: pursuing BS, Electrical Engineering, University of Colorado Boulder



Above: During an assembly on Halloween, Peak to Peak teachers surprised students and led a "Thriller" flash mob.

# Preference for Alumni Children Added to Open Enrollment Policy

Are you a parent or thinking of becoming one in the future? Do you want your own children to have the benefit of a Peak to Peak education? If so, we have some good news for you! The Board of Directors recently updated the school's open enrollment policy to include a preference for children of Peak to Peak graduates who live within the Boulder Valley School District. While this preference does not guarantee enrollment, it increases the chances that your children will be able to attend Peak to Peak. This preference will be effective for the 2021-22 school year and is explained in more detail [in this policy](#), which is posted on our website. We hope to see your little Pumas joining our special school community someday!






**P2P** in *twenty* years

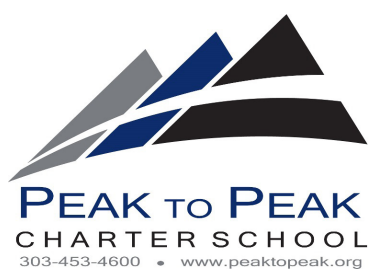
*"In the future we will travel in flying cars and wear jet-packs."*  
- Jackson, Class of 2032

**P2P** in *twenty* years

*"I think there will be a merry-go-round on the playground."*  
- Hannah, Class of 2032

**Artists on the Back Cover:**

-  **Ainsley Crist**  
10th grade
-  **Chloe Doubrava**  
12th grade
-  **Lucas Doherty**  
12th grade
-  **Dante Olaya**  
11th grade
-  **Chloe Doubrava**  
12th grade



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