

PIQUED

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

THE PEAK TO PEAK ALUMNI MAGAZINE

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1 | DECEMBER 2023



COMMUNITY

As we near our 25th year of Peak to Peak, we focus on what makes our intentional community incredible: the traditions, the activities, and the humans who make it all possible.

In This Issue:

- Past, Present and Future
- Peak Athletics
- Images from Across Campus

A MESSAGE FROM

Jennifer Douglas

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

HELLO PEAK TO PEAK ALUMNI!

I love that this issue of Piqued is focusing on community, because honestly, it is what I have enjoyed most so far in the four months I've been at Peak to Peak.

I have appreciated the community I see when high school students are having fun in the quad during lunch, middle school students are bonding together through ropes course challenges, elementary students are learning about leadership from the high school students in Ms. Flanhofer's leadership class, and K-12 students and families are celebrating at a Homecoming block party. In addition, I see our operations team building community every day behind the scenes with their work in finance, human resources, facilities, food service, fundraising, transportation, and more - all the systems that keep the wheels of this special community turning every day. I'm grateful for their work and

honored to be part of the school's operations team.

A significant part of my work these past four months, in partnerships with Facilities Director, John Wilcox, has been two major facility initiatives:

- **BVSD Bond Spending Plan:** Peak to Peak received a \$10.7M allocation in the district bond that passed last November. This funding is for "critical needs" - updating facility infrastructure and renovating aging facilities. We are planning to renovate the "auditeria" into a proper K-12 auditorium and performing arts center, as well as some other more minor renovations and facility upgrades.
- **Updating our Facility Master Plan:** At the same time, we have needs for expansion beyond what we can do with the BVSD bond. For this reason, we'll be updating the Facility Master Plan that was created during the 2019-20 school year. We'll then start work towards implementation of that plan in 2024-25. **We would love to have an alumni perspective on our Facility Master Planning Task Force; if you are interested, please email me at jennifer.douglas@bvsd.org.**



Last, one of our [strategic priorities](#) is to support and nurture a rich alumni network. When we talk about our Peak to Peak community, YOU are an important part of that. We are working to create more opportunities for alumni to come to campus and learn about exciting developments at the school. And if you would like to support the students who are coming behind you, **we want to offer you diverse ways to engage in the school's community.**

Thank you for being a part of this vibrant community and for actualizing the school's vision by being responsible citizens of an interdependent world. We love hearing from you and learning about the work you are doing in the world.

Best Regards,
Jennifer Douglas
Executive Director of Operations

NEWS & NOTEWORTHY

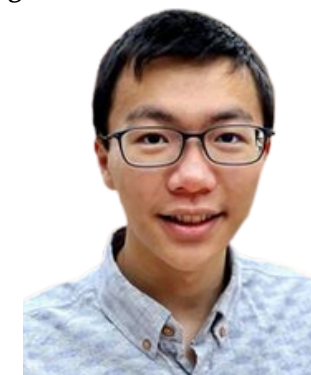


Above: Emory Vazquez, Class of 2025, was selected as a recipient of the 2023 Youth Impact Award in the Masters Division for his work helping the elderly become technologically literate. His student-led nonprofit, [Connect Digital Inclusion Labs](#), hosts free tech help days at the public library, gives computer lessons at local senior living facilities, and volunteers to increase digital literacy and inclusion while leveraging their tech skills to help close the digital divide.

Top Left: Emma Casini, Class of 2025, served as a delegate at the Global Peace Summit 2023. There they discussed worldwide challenges and issues, sought viable solutions, listened to leaders from various countries with different perspectives and ideas, and built connections and friendships with peers from around the globe.

Above, center: Shaan Karande, Class of 2027, was accepted into this year's 2024 Colorado Small School All-State Jazz Band on piano. Shaan also plays tenor saxophone in the Advanced Jazz Band.

Top right: Emmett Gmeinder, Class of 2035, won Artist of the Week on Artsonia.



Above: Warren Chen, Class of 2024, performed in the National American Invitational Math Competition for upper high school students last month. He will now be competing in the international competition, in February 2024.

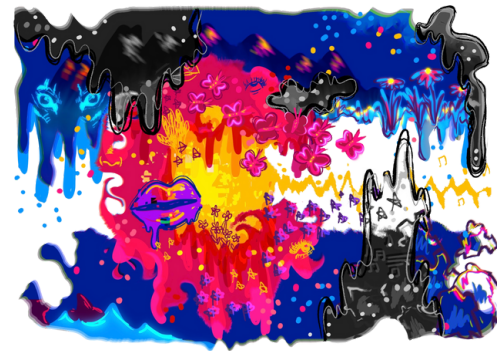


Above: Ziba Ahamad, Class of 2024, was awarded the [Princeton Prize in Race Relations](#) based on her advocacy starting in middle school when she founded the Racial Student Ally Club. Ziba continued her work combatting racism at the district level.



Left: Arrin Petkar, Class of 2032, was recognized in the 4th Annual Juried Youth Art Show at the Erie Community Library for her artwork. Her piece won the People's Choice Award for the 9-11 age category.

NEWS & NOTEWORTHY



Above: High School Math Teacher and Head Girls' Basketball Coach, Joe Howard was selected as Colorado's 2023 Most Valuable Coach/Teacher according to Dairy Max and the Colorado Rapids!

Top left: Sydney Cusack, Class of 2025, was recognized at the Colorado Art Education Association conference for her submission in the Youth Art Month State Flag competition. Sydney's work was selected as the first runner-up out of hundreds of student applicants across the state and will be made into a flag for display at the Youth Art Month Museum.

Top Right: High School English Teacher Karen Amidon hosted Author Le Ly Hayslip and Brian DeToy on a panel after seniors read Le Ly's novel, *When Heaven and Earth Change Places*, and learned about her humanitarian work.



Above: Jacquie Steven, Class of 2026, auditioned for and has been accepted into the 2023 CSU High School Honor Band Festival. Jacquie was selected from hundreds of applicants throughout the western region. This is the first time that a Peak to Peak band member has made this ensemble.

School News:

Peak to Peak won the ReSource Central Renew Our School SPARK! Competition. Innovation class assistants (with the help of ninth graders) measured our energy usage (lights, electricity, heat, etc.), analyzed what these results meant, and devised plans to improve.

Peak to Peak was also one of 16 Colorado schools to receive Governor Polis' Science Bright Spot Awards for high achievement in Science. Peak to Peak will receive a \$50,000 award that can be used to purchase educational technology, offer professional development, and other opportunities that will benefit students' learning experiences. Governor Polis said, "By highlighting the top sixteen schools in the state for science achievement, we are shining a light on what works. We look forward to finding out what works at these schools and helping more students excel in science. Improving science education will help students and our state."

Peak to Peak within BVSD



Peak to Peak is grounded in excellence while continuing to grow greatness! In this edition of our alumni magazine, we celebrate the enduring legacy of our school community—a beacon of academic prowess dedicated to our mission of college preparation for all. Peak to Peak has been, and continues to be, a sought-after option in Boulder County.

Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) recently held its first-ever "BVSD is the Place to Be Showcase" at the CU Arena. Parents and students from around the district had the opportunity to meet educators and explore programs at all 56 BVSD schools.

The district's leadership believes in providing students with opportunities that meet their unique interests and needs. Peak to Peak staff and community members were excited to be invited to take part in this one-of-a-kind event. Our booth was packed all evening with families who hoped to learn what makes Peak to Peak so special.

The BVSD 2024-25 Open Enrollment period has now begun and families with K-12 students may apply to the school of their choice. In past enrollment cycles, Peak to Peak has filled every available seat. Students who have not been accepted are placed on our waitlist. It is not unusual to have over 1,000 students on our waitlist. Based on this year's showcase and the ongoing interest in our school, we believe this trend will continue many years into the future.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

CASEY JUDSON | CLASS OF 2010



Where are you living now and what are you up to? I live in Denver, where I'm enjoying the dreamy stage of life where I make adult money but have very few of the adult responsibilities. During the day, I spend my time working at a few companies: in project finance at a community solar company called Pivot Energy (shameless plug #1: You too can sign up for community solar!) and as the CFO at Both& Apparel (shameless plug #2: Check us out online!).

Do you think your time at Peak to Peak helped you pursue this? If yes, how? Absolutely. My experience at Peak to Peak was one of immense creativity and empowerment, which taught me the importance of thinking outside the box and taking ownership over who I am as a person. Teachers at Peak always had high expectations of

everyone, but in comparing my high school experience to friends who went to other schools, we were always doing super interesting things like making Ginuwine/Shakespeare crossover songs. I think all my experiences at Peak helped me realize just how lateral and interesting the world can be with a sense of creativity and self-determination.

Did you ever imagine doing this while you were at Peak to Peak? I really didn't, partially because neither of my jobs existed at the time, but mainly because I was in high school and my brain could hardly conceptualize college, much less anything after college. I knew I wanted to do "something good for the world" but I couldn't have possibly imagined where I'd end up. I think my unsolicited advice to any high schooler is: the world is changing more rapidly today than ever before, so focus less on specific outcomes and more on learning how to learn, adaptability, and developing a moral compass. The rest of the pieces end up falling into place.

What education have you pursued since high school? I got my bachelor's degree right after high school and I went through the CFA program. Outside of that, I feel like I'm constantly

learning and reading, if not in an official capacity. Information is just absurdly available these days.

Reflecting on your time at Peak to Peak, what communities were you part of? How did you experience shape your overall school experience, and do you feel they influenced your personal and academic growth?

While at Peak to Peak, I was part of the track team during junior and senior year and I served as a LINK leader, but I think one of my favorite things about Peak to Peak was that I never felt like there was any cliquiness:

I felt like everyone in my class was a friend and part of a broader community. Everyone was doing interesting and different things, but there was an underlying level of interest and respect that everyone had for each other. I think this environment encouraged me to just be my weird high school self, which helped me grow into the person I am today.



You were recently back at Peak to Peak as a featured speaker for the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Club. What was it like to come back to campus and speak to high school students? I've been coming back to Peak to Peak for the last few years to talk to Mrs. Letter's classes about innovation and entrepreneurship. It's always so cool to see how students these days are thinking about issues on a global scale. When I was in high school, I certainly learned a lot, but I wasn't engaging with global issues or entrepreneurship in any way, shape, or form. Seeing how thoughtful and inspired students are at Peak to Peak is an awesome experience.

How would you recommend other alumni get involved with the current students and faculty? For myself, it was a pretty serendipitous happening: I ran across Mrs. Letter in Lafayette and she asked me to come in to do a presentation. For other alumni, you might not randomly run across a teacher, so I would recommend reaching out to a favorite teacher and seeing if there are any opportunities (hint: there always are).

What do you think of the physical changes to our campus community? It feels like Peak to Peak has grown up into a real school. I have a nostalgic love for the roughness of the campus when I was there (for example, having a construction pit where the library now is was fun), but it's cool to see how many facilities students now have.

Who was your favorite teacher and why? There were so many amazing teachers, which makes it hard to answer this question. If I had to pick a very favorite teacher, it would be Mrs. Letter. As a high schooler (and this is not unique at all), I was incredibly weird and often inappropriate. Mrs. Letter (bless her soul) understood that this was all just an expression of creativity; so, instead of punishing/shutting our creativity down, Mrs. Letter did an incredible job in giving us the freedom to express ourselves while helping shape our moral framework.



What was the most influential class you took in college? It was a capstone finance class, and it was my favorite because of an amazing mentor/professor who taught it.

Are you still friends with anyone you met at Peak to Peak? I am! Several of my closest friends went to Peak to Peak, although I met them before going to high school there.

What would you like to tell your fellow alumni? Hope everyone's doing well! And also: TMB.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

LORI DOUGLASS



to Peak, and what classes have you taught?

This is my 40th year of teaching. The last 24 of those have been at Peak to Peak, mostly teaching second grade.

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

The school has changed in many ways as it has grown over the years. The campus is beautiful, and we just keep getting better in our dedication to excellence in serving our students.

What's the secret to a successful class?

The secret to a successful class is to get to know the students, and have FUN together. We celebrate hard work, and strive to be a team. A few years ago, a student said, "We're kind of like a family." It doesn't get better than that!

Tell us about your recent successes/adventures?

Today we had our Hoedown which is a second grade favorite! I love making school memories for my students.

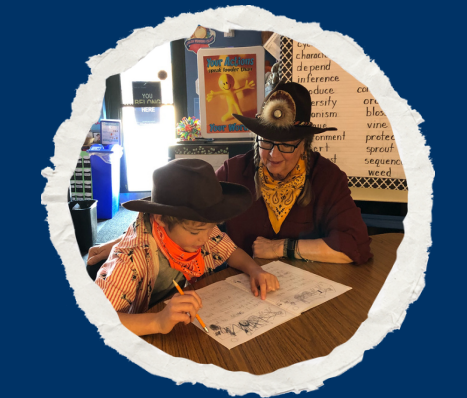
You have been a part of this community for nearly 25 years, can you tell us what has kept you here and what you think makes Peak to Peak special?

I love this school, and the opportunity I've had to work with incredible kids, their parents, and great staff. Peak to Peak is a very special place because our dreams created the school, and our dreams will continue to bring us into a bright future.

What message would you like to leave for our Alumni? My message to Alumni is to, " Be Kind and Work Hard". These are my two classroom rules. In life, these two rules should be the compass to guide you to the next step in your journey.

What section of the bookstore would we find you in and why?

I can easily get lost in a bookstore because reading is powerful and magical. Books inspire, teach, and take us on adventures. When we connect with a good book, it becomes a treasure. Children's books often have life lessons for all of us.



According to the Class of 2024

The best part of the Peak to Peak Community is...



My amazing friends.
Having people I can count on.

Teachers!
The strong relationships I've built with the adults at school.

Small Community Feel.

FRIDAY CINNAMON ROLLS

BEING PART OF A MORE ACADEMICALLY DRIVEN AND NONJUDGMENTAL ENVIRONMENT.

The People.

Beyond Peak to Peak, seniors are excited for...



Sunshine, A COMMUNITY FULL OF AMBITIOUS AND CURIOUS LEARNERS.

I want to collaborate with people who want to be change-makers, like me.

Adventure

A bigger school that is still close knit and spirited.



Several hundred Peak to Peak fans and families enjoyed a festive afternoon at our annual Homecoming Tailgate Party! Our boys soccer, girls softball, and middle school volleyball teams were on point with exciting games, and several high school clubs hosted activities for our younger Pumas. Pete celebrated his 24th birthday with his Peak to Peak family and friends!



Launch of Alumni Association

As the Peak to Peak community prepares to celebrate our 25th year, we are excited to launch our Alumni Association. This group will serve as a vital link between past, present, and future members of our community.

Networking Opportunities: We recognize Peak to Peak alumni pursue many and various paths after graduation. Having an active alumni association provides a platform for graduates to connect with each other, fostering a network to support professionals in various fields. With your active participation, this network can offer career advice, mentorship, and even potential job opportunities.

Community Engagement: We value our alumni as part of our community. We hope that you are able to maintain a sense of community among alumni whether that be in the form of reunions and events, attending the annual gala, or other activities.

Mentorship Program: Sharing your experiences, offering guidance on college choice and career paths, and providing insights into the world beyond high school can be immensely valuable to our K-12 students as they navigate their educational and professional journeys.

Preserving Peak to Peak History and Tradition: As Peak to Peak continues to evolve, the alumni association plays a crucial role in preserving and celebrating the rich history and traditions of our school.

Participating in the Alumni Association fosters a sense of belonging. Once a Puma, Always a Puma.

Are you interested in shaping the future of our Alumni Association? Join an interest meeting to help shape the future of the Peak to Peak Alumni Association.

We will be meeting virtually on February 8, 2024 at 4 p.m. Mountain Time

Complete this [form](#) to indicate your interest in participating.



PUMA ATHLETIC UPDATES

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS GOLF

The High School Boys golf team had a fantastic season sweeping the top 3 places in the region and capping it off with a second place team finish at the 3A state tournament. Om Mathur (Class of 2025) overcame a late season injury to win first place in the state and was also named Player of the Year!



Coach Spotlight: Michael Ventimiglia



Michael Ventimiglia has been coaching the girls and boys golf teams at Peak to Peak for the past five years. He has taken each team to the state finals several times and most recently his girls and boys teams have earned second place finishes! Coach V has been named Coach of the Year for 3A golf in the state of Colorado for both boys and girls. In his free time he plays competitive golf and enjoys the outdoors with his wife and two sons.



HIGH SCHOOL BOYS SOCCER

Following last year's postseason success, the high school boys soccer team again competed in the state tournament making it to the quarter final game. Seniors Jordan Gyaltzen (midfield) and Eddie Castilleja (defense) made the All-State First Team. Also receiving All-State honors were senior Ethan Wang (Second Team) and senior Matthew Wolsko (Honorable Mention.)

Middle School Clubs & Athletics

HIGH SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY

The High School Girls and Boys cross country teams both experienced postseason success placing second and seventh respectively at the state meet! Special congratulations are in order for Girls All-State Team Honorable Mentions Harper Riss (Class of 2024) and Skye Williams (Class of 2025) as well as Boys All-State Team Honorable Mention Jack Cerullo (Class of 2025).



HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

The Girls Volleyball team had their most successful season in recent years, finishing 14-11, and knocking off two big rivals, Forge Christian and Prospect Ridge Academy. The Pumas were one match away from making the State tournament and played a tough match against the defending state champs. The program said farewell to an amazing senior class, and had three players receive all conference honors.



HIGH SCHOOL BOYS TENNIS

Peak to Peak's High School Boys tennis team qualified for state both as a team as well as individually in first singles, second singles, third singles, first doubles, second doubles, and third doubles. Congratulations on an outstanding season across the board, Pumas!



"I loved being able to tour around people for the Cherry Creek art festival, especially this one kindergartener and her mom since they were my best tour. I think that being able to teach kids and even parents about professional art and getting them inspired by diverse artists has really put the icing on the cake for me. They especially liked being able to look at the more physical art pieces like the ladder and what it meant as a deeper meaning towards climbing the corporate ladder. I hope this returns next year- it was incredible!"

-Luke Mueller, Class of 2024



"It was an amazing experience having the Cherry Arts Mobile Gallery visit Peak to Peak! We all really appreciate Ms. Bertarelli writing a grant to bring this art event here. I loved getting trained as a docent with other NAHS (National Art Honor Society) members, and sharing about each artwork with the Peak to Peak community"

-Micaela Kerrane, Class of 2024

Cherry Arts Mobile Art Gallery Comes to our Community



A Peak to Peak Innovation Fund Grant written by Heather Bertarelli, Creative and Visual Arts Teacher, brought a pop-up art gallery to the halls of Peak to Peak. This project, which allowed collaboration across the K-12 Creative Arts teaching team and 50 students who were trained as docents, allowed our community to enjoy the original artworks in early November. Hailey Power and Harper Riss (Class of 2024) also have their artwork featured on the Cherry Arts Mobile Van. Please view our [Innovation Fund website](#) to see updates of past projects and contribute towards future Innovation.



Alumni Updates

Amanda Heywood

Current City: Westminster, CO
 Graduations: B.A. International Studies, University of Wyoming, 2022; M.H.R.M. Human Resource Management, Colorado State University Global, 2024
 Current Job: Human Resources Specialist, Ball Aerospace

Class of 2007

Benjamin (Johnson) Roggensack

Current City: Aurora, CO
 Graduations: B.A. Elementary Education, University of Northern Colorado, 2017
 Current Job: Supervisor Virtual Health, UCHealth
 Marriage: Marisa Roggensack, 2020

Scott Beckman

Graduations: B.I. Computer Science, University of Colorado Colorado Springs, 2018

Class of 2008

Katrina (Jannsen) Nieser

Current City: Thornton, CO
 Graduations: B.S. Nursing, 2017
 Current Job: Wound Care RN, Innovage PACE
 Marriage: William Nieser, 2022
 Stepchildren: Arielle, Billy, and Penney

Class of 2014

Eli Rogers

Graduations: B.S. Molecular Genetics & B.A. French, University of Rochester, 2018; M.D. Medicine, University of Rochester, 2023
 Current Job: Resident Physician, NewYork-Presbyterian Columbia & Cornell University Hospital

Class of 2011

Nathan Lawrence

Current City: Sunnyvale, CA
 Graduations: B.A. Media Studies
 Current Job: Senior Software Engineer, Apple

Class of 2017

Emma Anderson

Current City: St. Louis, MO
 Graduations: B.S. Biomedical Engineering, Saint Louis University, 2021
 Current Job: Systems Engineer, Bausch + Lomb

Class of 2012

Cordis Hall

Current City: Flagstaff, AZ
 Graduations: B.S. Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Colorado Boulder
 Current Job: Sales Engineering Manager, Splunk;
 Professional Trail Runner, Adidas
 Marriage: Abby Hall, 2019

Class of 2018

Bailey Perczak

Current City: Westminster, CO
 Graduations: B.S. Neuroscience and Behavior, University of Notre Dame, 2022
 Current Job: Medical Student at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine

Class of 2013

Chase (Robbins) Bersano

Current City: Austin, TX
 Graduations: B.S. Interior Design, Colorado State University, 2017
 Current Job: Architectural Designer, Fuse Architects inv
 Marriage: Matt Bersano, 2022

Jackie Boian

Current City: Denver, CO
 Graduation: B.S. Public Health, Santa Clara University, 2022; MPAS, Physician Assistant Studied, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, 2026

Class of 2019

Aspen Bradley

Current City: Tacoma, WA
 Graduations: B.A. Communications, University of Puget Sound, 2023
 Current Job: Line Cook, Wildfin American Grill, Eldercare, Gardener and Landscaper

Stay connected!

Fill out this [form](#), join our LinkedIn Community, or follow us on Facebook.

Boomerang Pumas: Alumni on Staff



Mai Canales, Class of 2019
Kindergarten Teacher



Noah Starbuck, Class of 2014,
High School Science Teacher

Do you want to be a
Boomerang?
View [Current Openings](#).



UPCOMING EVENTS

Inspiring all students to reach their peak potential

Looking for a meaningful and impactful way to recognize your time at Peak to Peak and/or honor a teacher, counselor, or coach who had a significant positive impact on you?

Consider a gift in their honor to the Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund. This is an easy way to thank someone who has made a difference in your life while leaving a legacy to support future Pumas.

Please [click HERE to make your gift](#) and honorary designation. The honoree will be notified of your contribution to support the Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund which each year benefits four Peak to Peak seniors who need additional funding to continue their education.

Thank you.

for more information please visit
GIVE.PEAKTOPEAK.ORG

We are thrilled to invite all community members to the annual Peak Gala!

This year we invite guests to "Apres Ski with P2P" at our festive gala held at the Omni Hotel on Friday, March 15th.

We are excited to offer our special discounted alumni ticket prices again this year which can be [purchased here](#).

An online auction is also available. To donate an item, please contact [Friends of Peak to Peak](#).

We would love to see you there!

January 2024

- 1/10: Board of Directors Meeting
- 1/16: Elementary Spelling Bee
- 1/23: Community Town Hall
- 1/25: Middle School Spelling Bee

February 2024

- 2/7: Board of Directors Meeting
- 2/8-2/10: Middle School Theatre Production
- 2/14-2/15: K-12 Conferences
- 2/21: Gala Concert
- 2/26 & 2/27: Board Candidate Virtual Information Session

March 2024

- 3/6: Board of Directors Meeting
- 3/13: Community Town Hall
- 3/15: [Peak Gala & Auction](#)
- 3/18-3/22: Peak Week

April 2024

- 4/3: Board of Directors Meeting
- 4/18: Elementary Open House Middle School One Act Play
- 4/20: Prom
- 4/22: Incoming 6th Grade Picnic Choir Concert
- 4/25-4/27: High School Theatre Production
- 4/30: Orchestra Concert

View [full events calendar](#) and [athletics calendar](#).

Pics from the Peak

