

The Peak to Peak Alumni Magazine

Piqued

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



ENCOUNTER

Volume 6: Issue 2
May 2023

As we launch the renewed strategic plan, we refocus our energy to inspire learning through an immersive approach; to create opportunities by presenting students with real-world applications of their classroom learning; and to cultivate a responsive school culture by engaging with one another, nurturing relationships, and investing in community-building activities. In this issue, we share how students encounter learning through experiences.

In this issue:

- Peak Week Adventures
- Strategic Plan Renewal
- Winter & Spring Athletics
- Cruising the Gala
- Images from Across Campus
- College Visits During Peak Week

A Message from Mr. Todd

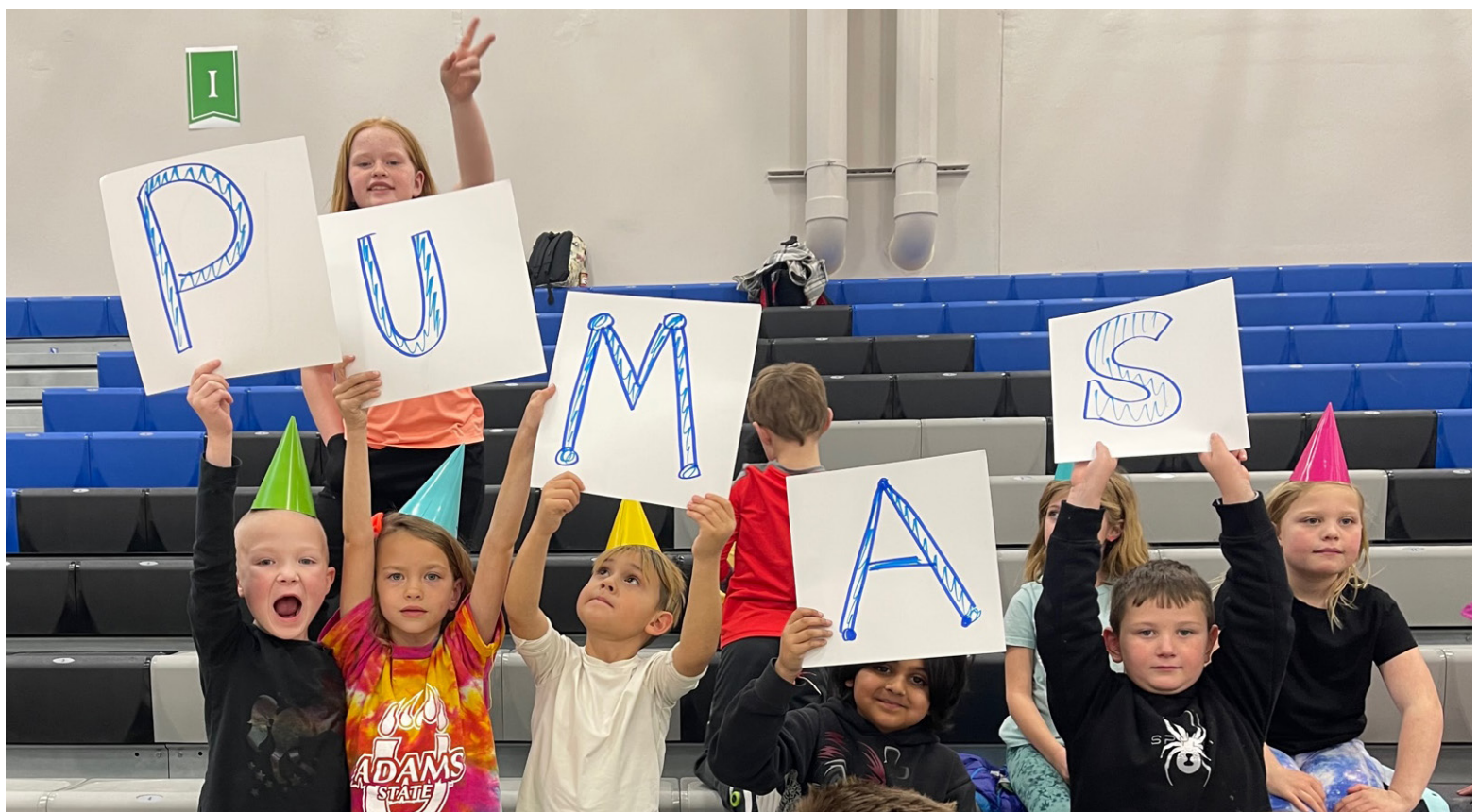
Executive Director of Operations



Dear Peak to Peak alumni,

After 16 years of service to Peak to Peak Charter School, I will be retiring this summer. It has been an honor and a pleasure to work with the amazing staff, parents, and students of this outstanding school community. During my tenure, we have seen many changes that have transformed the campus and the culture at our school:

- The budget has more than doubled from \$12 million to over \$25 million.
- The Library Media Center was built.
- Land at the corner of Emma and Merlin was purchased from BVSD, which allowed for the construction of the ball fields and adjacent parking.
- Two contracts with BVSD were negotiated and ratified, which brought much more autonomy and funding to the school.
- Major landscaping was completed across campus with hundreds of trees planted, including a total renovation of the elementary playground.
- The food services program added a new commercial cooking kitchen and became certified as a School Food Authority.
- The synthetic turf field was resurfaced, along with the track.
- New tennis courts were constructed.
- \$10.2 million was negotiated and awarded to Peak to Peak from the 2014 BVSD bond, which allowed for the construction of the college counseling center, the high school gymnasium, the cafeteria, and several additional classrooms in the elementary school and middle school.
- The employee compensation system has been greatly improved to more equitably and fairly compensate our employees, making Peak to Peak one of the highest paying charter schools in the state.
- Peak to Peak has received the “BBB+” credit rating from Standard and Poor’s for 15 consecutive years, which places the school in an elite group of only four charter schools across the country to achieve the highest possible rating for a charter school.
- Land at the corner of Emma Street and Canterbury Drive was purchased in 2018, and additional land directly east of campus was purchased in 2023 - both of these purchases will allow for future growth of the school.
- A new transportation system was brought in-house at Peak



to Peak in 2022 with the leasing of four new electric buses and the construction of the electric charging infrastructure, which has allowed the school to continue field trips and athletic trips after BVSD could no longer provide transportation for Peak to Peak.

- \$10.7 million was negotiated and awarded to Peak to Peak from the 2022 BVSD bond, and plans are currently being developed for the usage of this money.

The time has passed quickly during my time at Peak to Peak, but it has been most gratifying to work with such an awesome group of people. It has been incredible to watch the growth of the school and encouraging to see all of the students who have prospered as a result of their time at Peak to Peak. I am pleased to hand over the responsibilities of the Executive Director of Operations position to Jen Douglas, who brings a wealth of experience and skill. I fully expect to see even greater things happen at our wonderful school in the coming years!

Warm regards,

Sam Todd, Executive Director of Operations

On the cover: Students on the Peak Week course on the Big Island of Hawai'i flip over the beautiful sunset.

Above: Students across the K-12 gathered for Spirit Night to cheer on the basketball teams.

Below left: Students in the after school care program hold up signs to cheer on the Pumas!

Below right: When the Puma shows up in the middle of the day, its a great time for a photo.



W

We are excited to announce the launch of our updated strategic plan, grounded in our vision and mission statements, as well as our core values.

The plan was developed in collaboration with multiple stakeholders across our community. It builds on previous areas of focus and identifies the needs of our current student body. This work is grounded in data, aligns to our current context and articulates a path towards our ongoing success. In addition, this strategic plan ensures Peak to Peak is well positioned to shift with today's ever changing landscape while remaining true to our core mission and vision.

This renewed plan serves as a guide to provide a responsive and challenging learning environment for all students. We are committed to providing educational experiences that prepare all students for postsecondary success. Innovation and excellence remain at the core of our practice and these paint a comprehensive picture of what sets Peak to Peak apart from other schools.

OUR FOCUSED WORK

The synergy of these five focus areas provides a powerful strategy for injecting new energy and life into the growth of our school.

OUR GOALS

of our goals focusing these five to build and enhance purpose Human commu open n and de Innovate Excell future organ syner goals purpose more stud our s conf futu

OUR VISION

For over a decade, three primary goals have comprised the core of our work and have driven our vision to remain relevant, creative and innovative in our educational strategies. We strive to inspire learning, and cultivate a responsive school culture as our critical path to success. Peak to Peak is committed to an entrepreneurial approach to the K-12 educational experience. Peak apart in our vision to serve students, their families,

The Peak to Peak community will inspire students to fulfill their academic dreams for college, to develop their athletic

OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Students are asked to meet or exceed college preparatory high school requirements by taking a prescribed number of required courses. This ensures that students will meet or exceed the minimum requirements to attend the college of their choice. Students demonstrating mastery of the knowledge and skills of a particular course will be encouraged to enroll in a more advanced course.

Peak to Peak is small enough to ensure that each student is known and valued but large enough to provide a variety of academic, athletic, and extracurricular activities. The school's size provides opportunities to work with students as they participate in and assume leadership roles in extracurricular activities and our community.

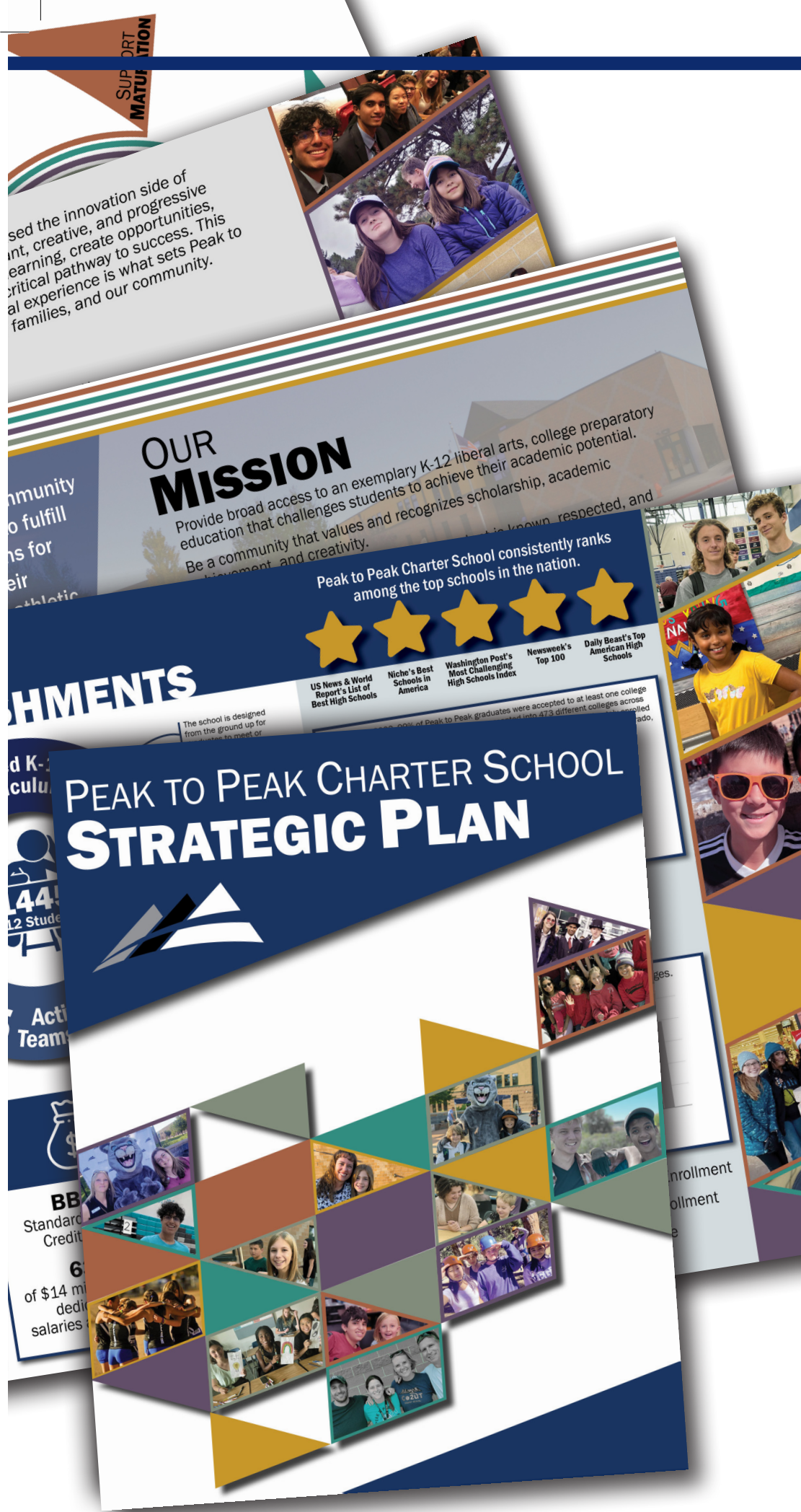


Top Performance
State Accreditation

97%
of students participate in the AP Program

BE
Standard
Cred
of \$14
de
salari

[Click this link](#) to watch and introductory video.
[Click this link](#) to read the new strategic plan.



For almost 23 years, Peak to Peak has focused on developing strong innovative academic programs that result in high levels of achievement for our students. Our staff and our community are dedicated partners in this work and we know the coming years will continue to bring much success.

Guided by this plan, our key areas of focus will be:

- Nurture Humans**
- Collaborate and Engage**
- Expand Innovation**
- Maintain Excellence**
- Support Maturation**

Now more than ever, strong educational institutions are critical to the needs of our ever changing world. Aligned in a common vision and a shared strategy, Peak to Peak is well-positioned to deliver.

As we move forward, we will need your support. Our community is filled with talented, committed people from diverse backgrounds. We strive to develop deep partnerships with those who share our vision to inspire students to fulfill their academic dreams for college.

News & Noteworthy

Imagine

O'NEILL SYMPOSIUM AT BLUE ORIGIN

Three Peak to Peak students have been invited to participate in the [O'Neill Symposium](#) at Blue Origin to talk about their idea "Cosmic Collectors." Ranye Ezenekwe's, Vai Jasti's and Tanishka Tagare's (all 10th graders) idea to use space dust to create eco-friendly fertilizer impressed judges so much that they are flying the students to Cocoa Beach, FL later this month to help them develop their ideas as they meet with astronauts and engineers.



CLIMATE INNOVATION COMPETITION

Tenth grader Sydney Cusack's short film about cow manure (really!) has won accolades from the Climate Innovation Competition which nominated the film for the 2023 Colorado Environmental Film Festival next month. She's the first Peak to Peak filmmaker to have a piece featured at this annual event.

DIAMOND CHALLENGE ENTREPRENEURS

Three Peak to Peak ninth-grade teams have advanced in the Diamond Challenge, the largest high school entrepreneurship competition in the country. Skye Williams, Emily Fu, and Luke Martin created Coral Capture, an artificial coral made from repurposed limestone that traps microplastics. Gia Sagrillo, Eva Temple-Weed, and Paxton Sayer made TasteTap, a combination of essential oils to stimulate the olfactory glands and help people on airplanes or those with taste disorders enjoy food more. Josephine Gaarder, Gissel Garcia, and Kylie Silvera ideated the Purifiers, remote-controlled toy submarines that purify water as they swim. All three teams will now prepare virtual pitch videos showcasing their ideas and prototypes for the judges. [Click here to read more.](#)

CORTEVA AGRISCIENCE PEOPLE, PURPOSE PLANET CHALLENGE

A Peak to Peak Innovation team won the Grand Prize in the Corteva Agriscience People, Purpose Planet Challenge! Along with student teams from across the country, these Pumas grew their skills as social entrepreneurs by designing and pitching (via Zoom) their ideas to create healthier school communities through sustainability and agriculture to a panel of industry leaders. Their ideas to use hydroponics impressed the judges (as did their corny vegetable puns) and the prize included grant funding and a trip to Corteva Agriscience headquarters in Indianapolis for mentoring by environmentalists and scientists.

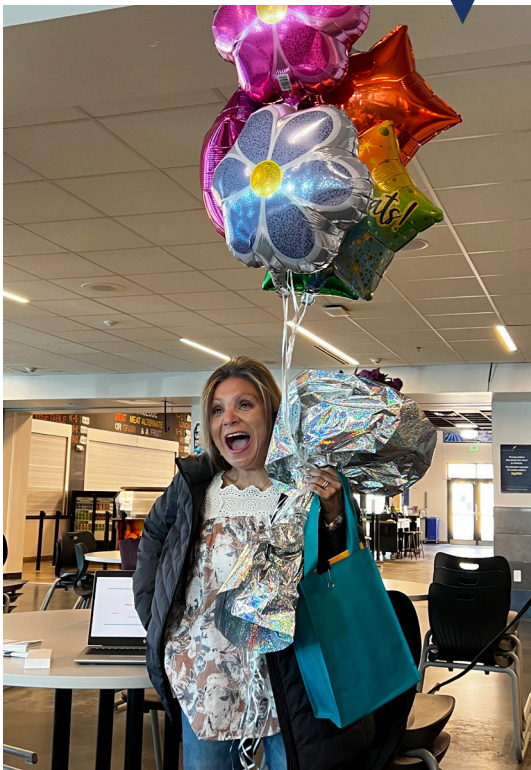
SAMSUNG SOLVE FOR TOMORROW

A team of high school students working with our Innovation teacher, Ms. Letter, is the state winner in the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow competition! Led by Alex Zou (11th grade) the team includes: Shreya Senthilkumar (11th grade), Tanishka Tagare (10th grade), Josephine Gaarder (9th grade), Amanda Zou (9th grade), and Penelope Letter (9th grade). The students have been diligently developing a water-testing device using light. After reading about how fire damage can impact pipes and cause benzene to leak into the water supplies as it did after the Paradise fire in California, this team of students wanted to use technology to create an instant test for benzene in water. Current lab testing takes time and can be prohibitively expensive, so these students are trying to prototype an equitable and economic way to test the water. Peak to Peak science teachers have offered their support making this a truly collaborative project. Mr. Schaefer helped them understand the chemical structure of benzene, Ms. Shedd helped them plan safe prototyping by substituting salicylic acid for safer prototyping, and Mr. Hankla demonstrated how to use a phone spectrometer. The team is one of 50 to advance to the next round. [Click here to read more.](#)



PETERSON WINS IMPACT ON EDUCATION

Peak to Peak's 2023 Impact on Education award winner is Ileana Peterson. Ms. Peterson works in the main office as our Latino Cohort Coordinator providing support and translation services to our families. As a long-standing and beloved member of our community, Ms. Peterson's contributions go above and beyond to make Peak to Peak a special place. She leads with her heart and approaches everyone with love and care. With this award, we celebrate her immeasurable value, her generous spirit, and her warm kindness.



COMPUTER SCIENCE FEMALE DIVERSITY AWARD

Peak To Peak Charter School, has earned the College Board's AP® Computer Science Female Diversity Award for expanding access to AP Computer Science A (CSA). This award acknowledges 1,105 schools for

their work toward equal gender representation during the 2021-22 school year. Peak to Peak is one of only 209 schools to be recognized for achieving this important result in AP CSA. This honor recognizes the outstanding work schools are doing to engage more female-identifying students in computer science.

BURNS IS NATIONAL NCWIT WINNER

The [National Aspirations in Computing Award](#) (NCWIT) recipients were announced this spring and two Peak to Peak students received national recognition. Quinn Burns (11th) received a National Winner in addition to being an Affiliate Winner for the local chapter. Shriya Biddala (12th) received a National Honorable Mention and was also an Affiliate Winner

The following individuals also received recognition at the affiliate level:

- Reema Patadia (11th grade): Affiliate Winner
- Ava Sommer (11th grade): Affiliate Winner
- Amrita Saini (11th grade): Affiliate Winner
- Adithi Ramaswamy (11th grade): Affiliate Honorable Mention

Each year, U.S. high school students in grades 9 through 12 who are women, genderqueer, or non-binary are eligible to receive recognition for their aptitude and aspirations in technology and computing, as demonstrated by their computing experience, computing-related activities, leadership experience, tenacity in the face of barriers to access, and plans for post-secondary education. This year, 40 winners and 360 honorable mentions were selected from more than 3,300 amazing, talented young applicants.



Empower

DENVER CENTER'S YOUNG PLAYWRITING COMPETITION

Ninth grader Penelope Letter's play was selected as a high school winner in this year's Denver Center's Young Playwriting Competition. Thanks to inspiration from theater teacher, Ms. Mylott, Penelope crafted a play about teens putting on a gone-wrong performance of Shakespeare. Penelope's *Players, Staged* will be featured at the New Play Summit with a professional reading on stage at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts.



NAREDDY ATTENDS BILL SIGNING

Siddharth Nareddy (11th grade) was invited to attend a bill signing ceremony in the Governor's Office for two bills he has created and advocated for over the past year and a half through the Colorado Youth Advisory Council (COYAC). These two bills, SB23-008 (Youth Involvement in Educational Standards Revision) and HB23-1009 (Secondary School Substance Use), are aimed to solve problems that youth in Colorado face. Both bills were signed into law by the Governor.

STUDENT COUNCIL WINS NATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

- For its exemplary record of leadership, service, and activities that improve the school and community, Peak to Peak's High School Student Council has been recognized as a 2023 National Gold Council of Excellence by the National Student Council (NatStuCo). This is a testament to the highest standards of quality that the council consistently demonstrates in its operation, and its projects, and activities. A student council must meet a variety of criteria to earn the National Council of Excellence Award. In addition to basic requirements such as a written constitution, regular meetings, and a democratic election process, the councils must have demonstrated successful sponsorship and participation in activities such as leadership development and service to the school and community.

Grow



MOCK TRIAL IS A CONTENDER

The Peak to Peak Mock Trial Team did a fantastic job competing in the Colorado Bar Association's Boulder County Regional Tournament in February, winning several awards! The lawyers and witnesses were all highly talented and posted one of Peak to Peak's best performances ever.

News & Noteworthy

SAMUEL SPOTTS BOETTCHER SCHOLAR

Samuel Spotts (12th grade) was awarded a 2023 Boettcher Scholarship and will be attending the University of Colorado Boulder to study Chemistry.

"Since 1952, the Boettcher Foundation has awarded more than \$110 million in undergraduate scholarships to some of Colorado's most dynamic young minds, doers, and difference makers. This translates to more than 2,700 current and Alumni Boettcher Scholars. Annually, more than 1,500 students apply to be named one of the 42 Boettcher Scholars. Beginning with the class of 2022, the number of Boettcher Scholars will increase to 50 per year.

Boettcher Scholars go on to achieve amazing things in their careers and as leaders who give back to their communities. In recent years, Boettcher Scholars were chosen as both Marshall and Rhodes scholars. Our Scholars start businesses, publish research, create new technologies, and excel at the most prestigious graduate schools. Among our army of accomplished Alumni, we have the former speaker of the House for the State of Colorado, a Nobel laureate, several nationally renowned doctors, and a famous voice actor."



2023 SCHOLASTIC WRITING AWARDS

Ranye Ezenekwe (10th grade) received a Silver Key 2023 Scholastic Art & Writing Award for the West Region. Her piece is titled "The Girl Who Can't Speak Igbo" and the award is for the Personal Essay and Memoir category. In addition, Hailey Rasmussen (9th grade) won an Honorable Mention for her poem "Marine Me." The Scholastic program is the nation's longest-running, most prestigious recognition program for creative teens.

2023 SCHOLASTIC ART AWARDS

[Click here to view a slideshow](#) of this year's Scholastic Art Award winning pieces.

- Tom Alexander (11th grade), Gold Key
- Morgan Brasier (12th grade), Silver Key
- Kaden Brooks (11th grade), Silver Key
- Hayden Connors (11th grade), American Vision Award Nominee & Gold Key
- Ivani Davies (9th grade), Gold Key
- Izzy Entin (12th grade), Gold Key
- Emily Fu (9th grade), Silver Key
- Yosha Gautam (11th grade), Gold Key
- Hope Han (11th grade), Gold Key
- Gabrielle Hinrichs (11th grade), Gold Key
- Kayla Kerrane (11th grade), Gold Key
- Leah Legeer (12th grade), Silver Key
- Lina Pangilinan (10th grade), Gold Key, Silver Key, & Honorable Mention
- Zoe Trierweiler (12th grade), Silver Key
- Jackson Whipple (12th grade), Honorable Mention

FLINT AND SAINI ADVANCE TO INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FAIR

Alex Flint (12th grade) and Amrita Saini (11th grade) both placed second in their category at the Colorado State Science Fair. Alex's project investigated the Effect of Different Rover Wheel Materials on Triboelectric Charge of Lunar Simulant Dust Particles and Amrita's project involved Investigating Natural Hydrogels to Sustain Bioluminescent Algae for Sustainable Lighting and CO2 Removal. Both projects will now advance to the International Science Fair in Dallas this May. [Click here to see the press release.](#)

GAUTAM EARNS GOLD

- Yosha Gautam (11th grade) was awarded a Gold Metal Scholastic Art Award at the National Level for her artwork titled "Cotton Picker." Yosha created this artwork last year in AP Studio Art: Drawing as a part of her sustained investigation series. She focused on creating a dynamic and evocative series of drawings that dabbled in themes of migration and identity. Yosha will be given her award at Carnegie Hall in NYC.

WIND SYMPHONY IS SUPERIOR

- The Peak to Peak Wind Symphony received a Superior rating on their musical performance in front of three judges at the Colorado West Music Festival held in Grand Junction. A Superior rating is the highest rating an ensemble can receive based on 14 different musical criteria. After the band returned home, we learned that they also won the Outstanding 3A Band award.



Shine

Alumni Spotlight: Jon

Where are you now, and what are you up to?

I am currently living abroad in London for the entirety of the summer and traveling all of Europe! This is something I have always wanted to do. After summer ends, I will be back in California pursuing my masters degree and preparing for law school.

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

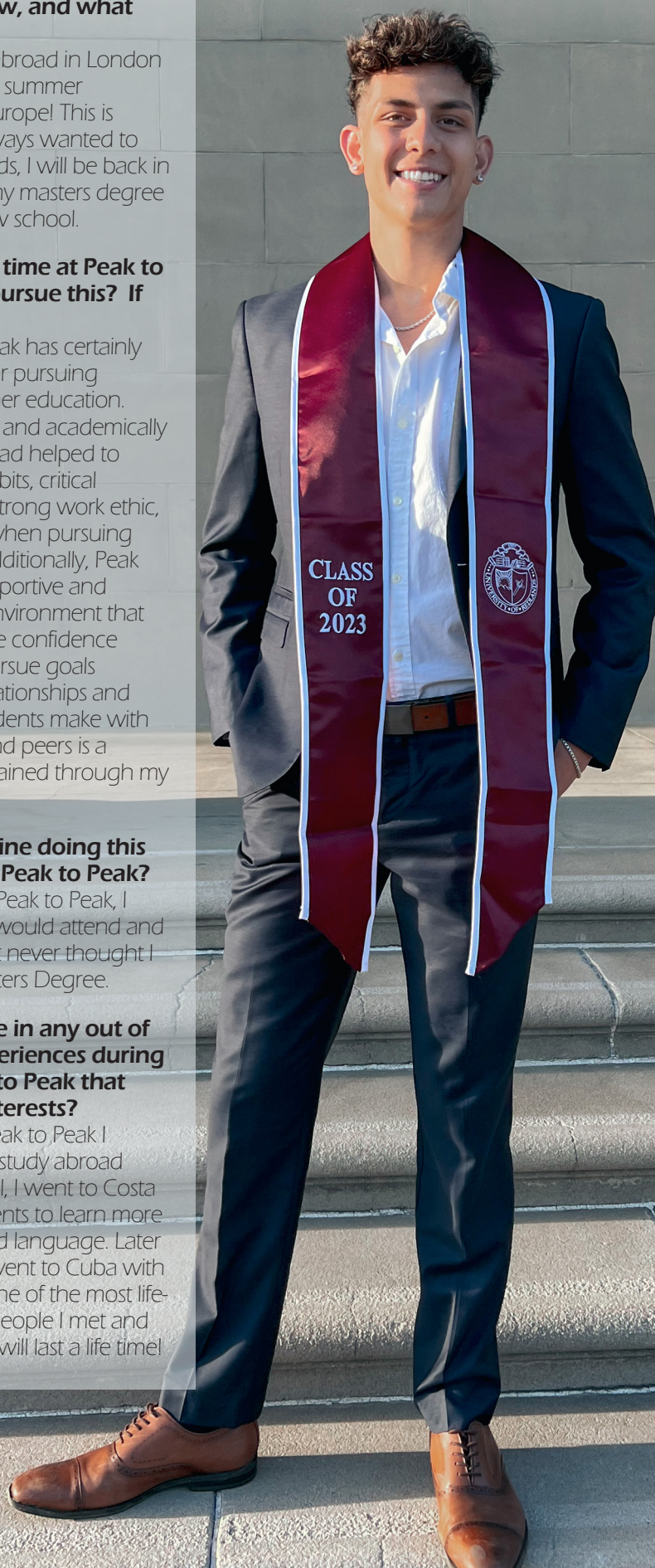
Attending Peak to Peak has certainly help pave the way for pursuing and completing higher education. Attending a rigorous and academically challenging school had helped to develop my study habits, critical thinking skills, and a strong work ethic, which is invaluable when pursuing higher education. Additionally, Peak to Peak offered a supportive and nurturing learning environment that provided me with the confidence and motivation to pursue goals and interests. The relationships and connections that students make with teachers, mentors, and peers is a valuable resource I gained through my educational journey.

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

Through my time at Peak to Peak, I was confident that I would attend and complete college but never thought I would pursue a Masters Degree.

Did you participate in any out of the classroom experiences during your time at Peak to Peak that supported your interests?

During my time at Peak to Peak I participated in a few study abroad trips. In middle school, I went to Costa Rica with a few students to learn more about the culture and language. Later on in high school, I went to Cuba with Señor where I had one of the most life-changing trips. The people I met and the times we shared will last a life time!



It was truly incredible to have the opportunity to show Peak to Peak students around and share my experiences as a college student at the University of Redlands. Working in the Office of Admissions, I have given tons of tours, but no tour was as special and meaningful as that one. It was great to catch up with former staff members who joined the tour. I appreciate the support and encouragement that they continue to provide to students like myself, even after we graduated.

Who was your favorite teacher, and why?

I had a few favorite teachers. Mrs. Tarbutton was a student favorite and really helped my journey through Peak to Peak. I will always be grateful for her! Mr. Puccio, he helped me pursue some of my basketball dreams and was a great friend. I also have to give it up to Ms. Gannett; my connection to her was one of the most meaningful and impactful relationships and really made the college application process easier.

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

Yes, I still have some long lasting friends from Peak to Peak!

What's the most influential class you've taken in college?

The most influential class I had taken in college was my Business 226 (History of Business). The class is known as the hardest class a business major will take and is known for its high drop rate. I ended up completing the class in the top 20% and, as a result of taking this course, have grown so much as a student.

What would you like to tell your fellow alumni?

"Be the change you wish to see in the world" -Gandhi

Or, "I told you I would be in a magazine one day!"

Sending my best wishes to you all!

nah Eaves Class of 2019



Faculty Spotlight: Cinc



How long have you worked at Peak to Peak, and what classes have you taught?

I came to education later in life and started teaching at Peak to Peak in 2018. I currently teach 9th - 12th grade students in Art 10, Art 20, Digital Art + Photography I, Digital Art + Photography II, Yearbook and Architectural Design I. I've also been the Eye to Eye advisor since 2019 for neurodiverse students. Eye to Eye is a peer mentoring program that pairs high school students with 5th - 8th grade students who have similar learning differences. It's hard to believe that I'm finishing my 5th year at Peak to Peak!

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

Peak to Peak isn't that much different from when I first started teaching here, except that I know students a lot better since there is a good chance that I've taught them at least once by the time they graduate high school since I teach all grade levels. We are also doing much better to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for all through our continued work on diversity, equity and inclusion as a school. Finally, the new Peak Week experiential learning initiative championed by Andy Matthews really energized the school community this year and provided opportunities for the students and staff alike to bond outside of the traditional classroom.

What's the secret to a successful class?

I think the secret to a successful class is developing good relationships with students! I know that might seem trite, but it's true. I work hard to get to know everyone and to foster a supportive, fun, yet challenging classroom. The other thing that I do regularly is mix up my projects a lot to keep content fresh and challenging for students and myself.

Tell us about your recent successes/adventures?

In 2019, I proposed a new architecture class based on my previous experience as a landscape architectural designer. The class was given the green light and I taught the first iteration in 2020. I'm continuing to grow and develop the class into one where students who might not be interested in fine art can see themselves in a more technical but creative field. In April, I took architecture students to The School of Architecture and Planning at The University of Colorado Denver, my alma mater, and it was a full circle moment for me to bring a new generation of potential designers to the only college in Colorado to offer a full suite of undergraduate and graduate design degrees. This was the first year I was able to take students on this field trip thanks to Peak to Peak's new electric buses and the lifting of COVID restrictions.

Andy Guajardo



At far left: Students transformed the lobby of the North Building during Peak Week.

Top row, left: Architecture students hear from a guest and alumnus during class.

Top row, center: Students participating in the Eye to Eye program chalk their messages of encouragement on the cafeteria wall.

Top row, right: Students explore structures with dry noodles and marshmallows.

Bottom row, left: Architecture students on a college visit at the University of Colorado Denver.

Bottom row, right: Structures on display at the School of Architecture and Planning at University of Colorado Denver.

Will you share your course offering and experience with our first Peak Week, and why that's important to you?

I partnered with Bob Hettmansperger to create an immersive art/tech experience for students in the North Lobby of the high school building inspired by Meow Wolf. It is a fun, quirky and student driven installation that welcomes students, staff and visitors alike. Students worked really hard on their very visible design installation that greeted everyone back to school after spring break. There was a moment during Peak Week that I didn't think that it would turn out well and then on the last day of Peak Week when we installed all of the components it all came together beautifully. I had tears in my eyes and felt very proud of student's creativity and hard work. I love when I see random groups of students sitting in the giant mushroom chair between classes.

What message would you like to leave for our alumni?

I LOVE when Alumni return to visit! You leave a mark on this community and your teachers really want to know what you have been up to since graduating. Visiting alumni have shared their creative work and college experiences with classes and I think it helps current students see all the possibilities once they graduate from high school. So please stay in touch!

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

I'm probably in the Art/Architecture/Design section of the bookstore or you might just find me in Self Help. One can never have too many art and design books - plus I'm a curious person and am always looking for interesting content that might end up in one of my classes. Two books on my nightstand right now are *What Can a Body Do? How We Meet the Built World* by Sara Hendren and *Dare to Lead* by Brené Brown.



Peak

A Week They Will Never Forget

Last spring, Peak to Peak established a new component to the K-12 journey for students: "Peak Week." The idea for an experiential learning week initiated with a grassroots effort by teachers and the desire to provide expansive opportunities for students. The idea grew into an annual experiential education week where students learn in unique settings that create real-world connections and applications of our curricular content and beyond.

Once school leaders approved the program, it was both "full steam ahead" and "all hands on deck" to make Peak Week a reality. We began with a mission statement: Peak Week will provide students the opportunity to learn in unique settings with real-world connections and experiences that seek to pique students' interests, allow them a peek at various potential passion areas, and challenge them to reach new peaks, all while growing intellectually, socially and emotionally.

Teachers, administrators, staff, and counselors spent twelve months executing a plan that came to fruition this spring. For one week in March, every high school staff member and teacher played an integral role in implementing Peak Week, and every high school student participated in a 5-day course (some were longer). The courses addressed a wide variety of topics and interests. Destinations included courses offered on campus and locally in Lafayette, as well as travel across the state, nation, and overseas. An option to complete an independent study was also incorporated for students who wanted to design their own adventure.

The result was an unforgettable experience, and for some, life-altering!

Each course addressed one or more of the following components:

Intellectual: These courses challenge students to question, explore, and broaden their knowledge and skills.

Social: These courses provide opportunities for students to connect to each other and positively contribute to group dynamics. Students build acceptance of differences, willingness to do more than one's share, empathy for others, and make a positive contribution.

Emotional: These courses encourage honest exchange, open discussion, respectful boundaries, and productive confrontation of emotional boundaries. Students are expected to reflect on their thoughts and feelings, and consider ways in which they struggle with challenges, adapt to discomfort or new experiences, or push their emotional boundaries.

Altruistic: These courses incorporate thinking beyond oneself and acting in ways that serve others. Courses address personal, local, national, and/or global issues in a way in which students are called to act for the betterment of others.

Peak Week participation is required for all students during their four years of high school and is a graduation requirement. To ensure all students had access to quality programming, the school assisted families who demonstrated or requested assistance. This program addition demonstrates our commitment to nurture and engage students through experiential learning opportunities where they can apply their learning from the classroom in a variety of ways. Peak Week is a true manifestation of our updated strategic plan.

Experiential

Week

CATALINA ISLAND



Students traveled to Catalina Island in Southern California to explore the marine ecosystem and engage in an environmental leadership program. The experience included kayaking, snorkeling, climbing, zip-lining, hiking, and more. All of which challenged personal limits and expanded boundaries in unique and individual ways.

CHANGEMAKERS



This course focused on developing student voice and agency in making an impact on issues they care about. Through a consensus-seeking process that began soon after students signed up for the course, they selected issues grounded in the passions, values, and interests of the team. Teams collaborated to research their issues, map power systems, develop advocacy plans, and prepare for face-to-face meetings with policymakers. There were guest speakers throughout the week, and the work culminated in an “advocacy day” trip to the capitol.

CHICAGO-PALOOZA



Students visited Chicago, the Windy City, for a historic tour that also included visiting the colleges and universities that dot the city. They explored some of the 77 vibrant, globally diverse neighborhoods, the eclectic arts scene, stunning skyline, and even indulged in some of Chicago’s famous culinary options.

CLIMBING AND CAREERS



This course included four half-day rock climbing locations, interspersed with college and local business visits. Students were introduced to belaying (the use of climbing ropes) through an instructional course and had the opportunity to continue growing their climbing skills with an extended membership to the local climbing gym. Students used this opportunity to exercise both mind and body and to explore post-secondary options.

Peak

COLOMBIA



In this language and cultural exploration course, students visited the colonial city and UNESCO world heritage site of Cartagena. They learned to bake and drum with locals at the first free African settlement in the Americas. The trip included visits to scenic beaches and a 28-mile round-trip trek to Colombia's most famous archaeological site: Ciudad Perdida. With homestays in the coffee highlands, students were immersed in the indigenous communities as a part of this unique experience.

COOKING ON A BUDGET



In this creative course, students planned, budgeted, and selected groceries for a week's meals including main courses and desserts. They learned to make pastas and pastries from scratch and shared in the heritage of making ethnic foods as a community activity. Students were challenged to follow recipes and then to adapt, improvise, and problem-solve when things didn't go as planned. Through it all, cooperation and teamwork reigned as the superior strategy to a great meal.

LAFAYETTE TRAIL



This altruistic local course was focused on community service in the truest sense. Students visited Lafayette's network of trails, parks, resources, and scenic locations to provide assistance to the community. The week was a combination of exercise, connection, and appreciation of community as students painted, constructed, organized, and cleaned-up sites that may have otherwise been left in disorder or disrepair.

MEOW WOLF



What began with a visit to Meow Wolf in Denver, proceeded with months of planning, and ultimately concluded in a week-long course. Part art-installation, part hackathon, students form small groups created and installed an interactive and immersive exhibit space in the lobby of the high school building at Peak to Peak. Students developed a theme, designed its expression, and created the story of Peak to Peak through a series of artifacts and dioramas. They transformed the lobby into a post-apocalyptic fantastical forest with a tunnel, glowing eyes, and even a mushroom chair.

Week

STARS, VOLCANOES, PEOPLE



In this immersive, engaging, and educational course, students explored the natural wonders and astronomy highlights present on the Big Island of Hawai'i. This unparalleled cultural immersion experience provided students with the opportunity to visit the world's largest telescope, surf, stargaze, tour the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, and snorkel with manta rays at night.

KITCHEN HUMANITIES



Food tells stories of people and history. In this course students traced how foods, recipes, and cuisines have changed as they have moved around the globe. Students had the opportunity to eat at local restaurants, experiment with ingredients, and ultimately, cook their own meal together in a professional kitchen. From urban farms to locally resourced foods, this course introduced the story of people across time and place, and through the cultural kitchen.

NEW YORK CITY



With a focus on visual and performing arts, students engaged in this creative exploration course set in New York City. They explored museums, neighborhoods, culturally significant sites, and, of course, the most popular destinations in The Big Apple. The trip rounded out with a Broadway play to make the experience, and learning, complete.

SOUTH DAKOTA



This camping trip course extended the Humanities classroom experience by adding the sciences of biology and geology to the learning. Students visited monuments as well as sites of cultural and scientific significance. The course included expectations for observation, conversation, comparisons, and evaluations of South Dakota's most phenomenal sites. The trip gave the phrase "making connections" new meaning as students connected their learning to the classroom while also connecting with each other.

Peak

SHARK TANK



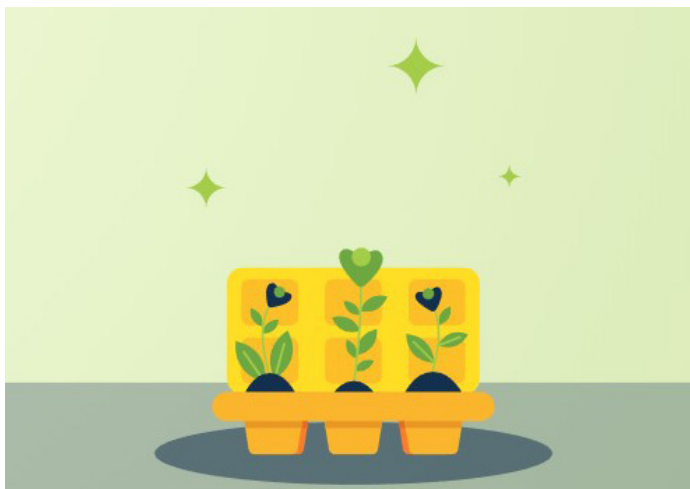
In this course, students used the design thinking process from ideation to pitching. They were challenged to create prototypes of an innovative solution to a real problem. With mentoring and a head start, students pitched their ideas to guest judges, earning prizes along the way. From blueprint to pitch deck, students were challenged to engage in a creative process that can be applied to future projects and experiences.



SPAIN

In this week-long language immersion trip to the Basque Country in Spain, students fell in love with the food, culture and history. The sites included Bilbao, Pamplona and San Sebastian as they explored the beautiful northern region of Spain. Students were paired with a Basque family for a homestay to further the authenticity of the experience.

GREEN WEEK



During this green-focused course, students learned strategies, choices, and lifestyle choices to harmonize their relationship with the natural world. They spent the week engaged in laboratory science and design activities, as well as walking trips to investigate urban ecology and the human-wildland interface. Field work, lab exercises, research activities, and design challenges were all aimed at reducing environmental impacts and living in harmony with the natural world.

TOUR DE FRONT RANGE



While the springtime weather in Colorado threw a monkey wrench into the full course plan, students were challenged to learn basic bike safety and maintenance, impacts of art on society, local and indigenous histories through authentic experiences, and team building throughout the week. Students visited a variety of different art and history museums such as Meow Wolf, Selfie Museum, Boulder Museum, Denver Museum of Art, Museum of Natural History, Zoo, History Colorado Center and more. Students set goals for their own cycling experience and were challenged in unique and individualized ways.

Week

SPORTS ANALYTICS



Playing is not the only way to be involved with high level sports teams. All professional sports teams/organizations as well as most colleges utilize analytics. In this course, students learned the basics of a programming software and the calculations to create graphs of specific sports statistics! They also were able to tour Empower Field at Mile High and Coors Field. They heard from guest speakers, including, Dan Webb, Director of Performance Analytics at the US Olympic Committee, and Scott Flaska, Senior Manager of Football Analytics for the Denver Broncos.

DC: BLACK HISTORY



Students on the Washington DC tour engaged in a course that maintained the lens of black history while visiting sites that are explicitly and implicitly tied to black history. Students worked to hone their equity lens and to develop a deeper, asset-based understanding of Black culture in America while experiencing our nation's capital, the monuments, the White House, and the Capital buildings.

Students, staff members, and families each had an opportunity to provide feedback regarding this inaugural year for Peak Week. The following quotes reflect the impact of these experiences specifically for the students:

“Didn’t feel like school and I feel like I’m more likely to remember this than if I were to have learned all of it in a class. Aside from the learning I thought it was a really great bonding experience for me to get to know people I wouldn’t normally talk to and it helped me work on my anxiety and even in the personal conversations about random things I was able to connect them to class better.”

“It was an amazing opportunity for me and many other students to connect on things other than school. Not only that but also with our incredible teachers and counselors. It was incredible to see what everyone was like outside of school, and to really understand them as a person and not another classmate. I also really loved seeing our teachers and counselors enjoying

their time and smiling with the rest of us. In all, it was an absolutely amazing experience of growth and community. I loved every single moment, and I hope others will be able to have the same opportunity to connect with our Peak to Peak community.”

“This week was honestly one of the most fun weeks that I have had in my life. I know I already said this earlier, but mixing the grades and friend groups was really good for all of us, especially to meet new people and becoming closer friends with people we otherwise would not interact with.”

“I believe dedicating a week to field experience learning is very valuable. Even the local courses give students a great opportunity to experience different careers, habits, and aspects of the world.”

“This was such an amazing opportunity for students to be able to learn outside of the day to day school environment and I feel like I have gained knowledge and experience that I would have never gotten from a regular school week.”

On Campus...



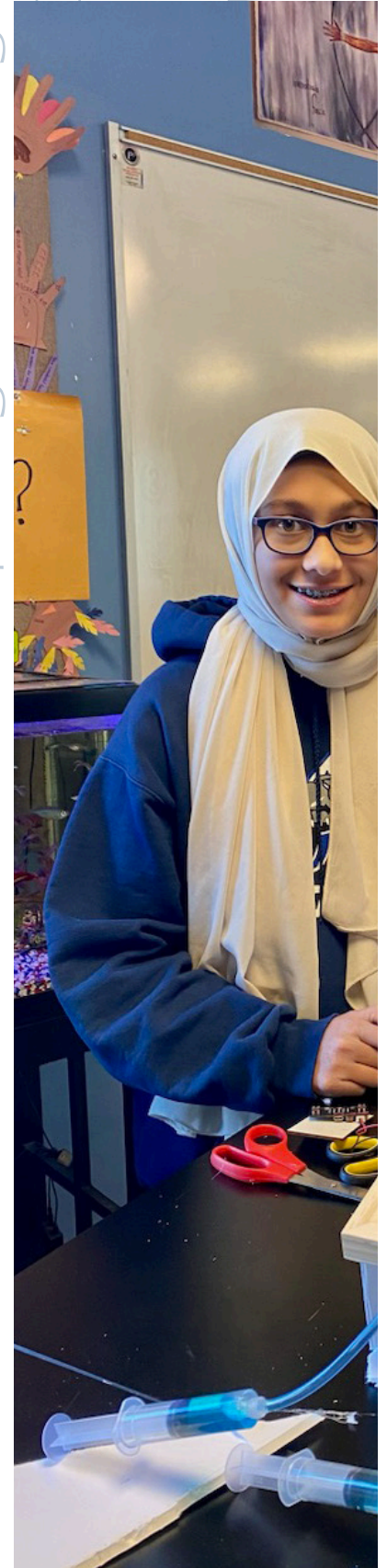
Above: Middle school students are treated to guest speaker Ed Gerety, a nationally recognized youth leadership trainer.

Top right: Kindergarten swim lessons return after over two years without this pivotal program.

Middle right: The cafeteria buzzes with energy and friendship.

Bottom right: The middle school theater production of *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* was a hit with audiences of all ages.

Center: Engineering students in the middle school share their project collaboration with classroom visitors.





Top right: Kindergarten students hold their 3D-printed bubble wands high in the air before they give them a test to see if they work.

Middle right: Middle school students in an English classroom take time to collect their thoughts in their writing journals.

Bottom right: High school math students built bridges with Popsicle sticks, then tested the strength of those bridges by stacking books across their span.

...and Beyond!

Cultivating a resp

Opportunities

Responsive S
Creating Opp
Culture • Insp
Cultivating
Learning • Cr

On Campus...



Top left: High school students in chemistry class.

Center left: A group of female-identifying middle students are interacting and relating to one another through images.

Bottom left: Elementary students pause for a photo during a St. Patrick's Day assembly.



Creating
Culture
Cultivating
Learning



Center top: Elementary Principal Christensen shares a book to the Puma during the Book Swap.

Center bottom and bottom right: Fifth-grade students work the grocery store and automotive shop, respectively, during a visit to Young Ameritowne.

Top right: Elementary students in technology class focus on programming robots.



...and Beyond!

Athletics

Girls Tennis

The High School Girls Tennis team has had an impressive season winning seven of eight dual matches with continued success into the postseason. Although their team competition recently ended in regionals after a narrow loss to Vail Christian, the individual regional competition was led by Peak to Peak's Lena Crotty, Sydney Lewis and Quinn Burns at Eaton High School followed by the state tournament at Memorial Park in Colorado Springs. At the time of this writing, results were not yet available.



Girls Golf

The High School Girls Golf team is having its best season in Peak to Peak's 21 year history building on last year's 4th place finish at State. Currently, the team is ranked #1 in the state in 3A, led by senior Noelle Thompson. Noelle is ranked #1 individually with a 74.1 scoring average followed by Shira Sharma (16th), Kaylee Craig (22nd), and Ava Sommer (32nd), all of whom will receive All League Honors. The Pumas are the favorites going into State, which is held at the Aspen Golf Club. Coach Ventimiglia has the team focusing on one event at a time with regionals taking place in Sterling. "We are in a good position and a great mind set for this time of year. We are truly having fun and focused on making each other better. We cannot control outcomes, we can only focus on what we can control, preparedness and attitudes."

PEAK WEEK BASEBALL



The High School Baseball team escaped the cold and went to the Cocoa Beach training facility in Florida this year during Peak Week for an action packed week of baseball. They played two games against local Florida teams and witnessed a NASA rocket launch from the Kennedy Space Center!



Coach McConnell Returns

Peak to Peak's Track and Cross Country head coach Kim McConnell, who coached here from 2012-2018, has returned for her 3rd season after a brief hiatus during which she coached at Colorado Christian University from 2019-2021. Her impact was felt immediately upon return as she quickly reestablished the sense of community and belonging in our running program that she had created in the past. She has consistently guided both the Track and Cross Country teams to the state tournament where several student athletes have placed very highly in their respective events. Welcome back, Coach McConnell!

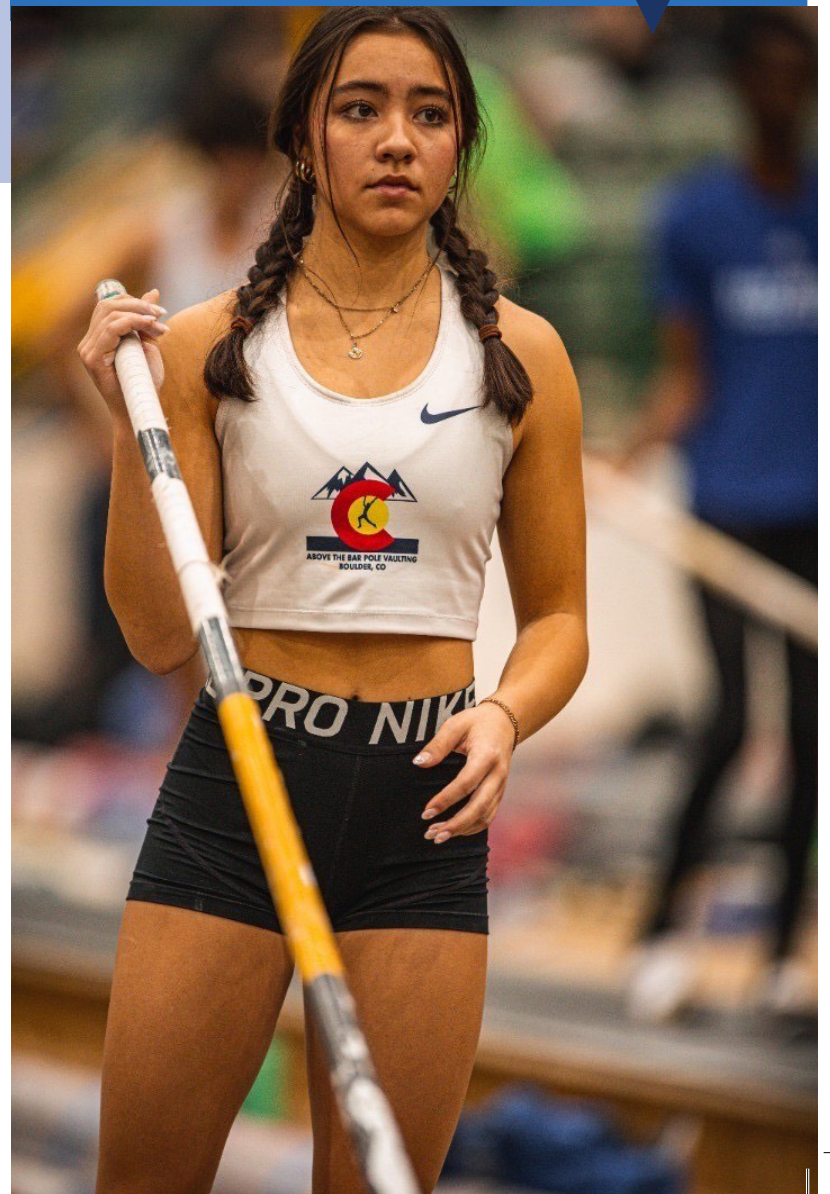
Good Luck, Puma!

Champion pole vaulter, Kourtney Rathke, makes a return to the state meet! Building on the impressive foundation from last year and an indoor season during which she cleared 13'9.25", the highest ever vaulted by a high school female athlete in CO, Kourtney is in a great position. She attributes her success to hard work behind the scenes and along with her coaches, believing in herself.

Save the Date

Homecoming will be the week of
September 25th, 2023

Both Middle School Girls Basketball teams advanced to the post-season tournament and the "A" team rose to the top winning 1st place in the league.



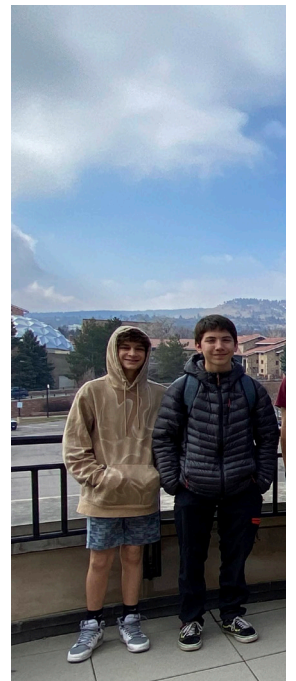


The Peak Gala has been a long loved tradition of our community for 20 years! This year's guests were invited aboard the "SS Puma" for nautical-themed evening celebrating our students and teachers while raising money for our general operating fund and Peak Innovation Fund. If you missed this year's gala, we'd love to see you next year as each year the Peak Gala planning committee extends a special ticket price for alumni, students, and families. [Please check out these videos](#) of recent project updates from our Peak Innovation Fund. To date over 40 projects have been implemented thanks to the generosity of our gala guests and other community supporters.





Peak Week College Visits



Coast-to-coast, the Peak Week courses included dozens of college campus tours as a part of the week's plan. Whether the course was a local course in Colorado, or whether the students traveled across the country to other states, teacher leaders recognized that Peak Week was an opportunity to fold in campus tours, walks, intensives, and drive-by's as a part of the itinerary. In addition to the courses offered by the school, numerous students who elected to design their own independent study plans for Peak Week also included college visits as a part of their plans. These students shared the impact of their self-designed Peak Week programs with panelists and other students.



Alumni Updates

Class of 2013

Chase Bersano (Robbins)

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

Brianna Seeberger

Current City: Watertown, NY
Graduations: B.S. Criminal Justice and B.S. Political Science
Current Job: Active Duty Army Officer (Field Artillery)

Class of 2020

Noah Irwin

Current City: Colorado Springs, CO
Graduations: B.S. Electrical Engineering, University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, 2023
Current Job: Radiation Test Engineer

Luke Smith

Graduations: B.F.A. Comic Arts, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, 2024

Class of 2021

Monica Konold

Graduations: Undergraduate, Atmospheric Sciences & Meteorology, Colorado State University
Current Job: Internship, National Center Of Atmospheric Research



Alumni:

We want to hear from you!

As our school matures, our alumni community grows. Stay connected with us so that you can participate in alumni events and opportunities. Use the links on the opposite page to send us your contact information and updates, join our LinkedIn community, or follow us on Facebook.

**Once a Puma,
Always a Puma!**

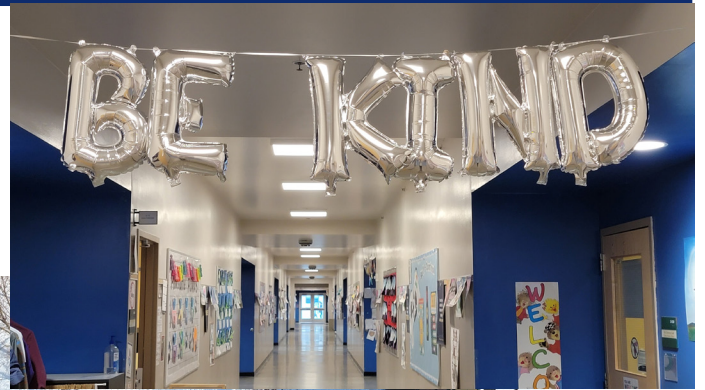
Opposite: The elementary school took on the Kindness Challenge and shared their message to "Be Kind" in unique ways across the school.

Below: A mural has been added to the hallway near the cafeteria to showcase and highlight figures from diverse backgrounds: Malala Yousafzai, Anna May Wong, Selena Quintanilla Perez, Jessica Watkins, and Marsha P. Johnson. The mural was designed by Melissa Lopez (12th grade) and made possible by the National Art Honor Society at Peak to Peak.



Each year, the **Peak Scholarship Fund** provides financial support to four or more graduating seniors who even after significant merit and need-based financial support for college, may still not be able to afford to attend a college of choice. Your support for this important campaign helps ensure all our seniors have the opportunity to attend college, providing immediate funds (\$3,000-\$5,000 per year) to bridge their financial gap. [Please view this short video from our counseling office](#) to learn more about past recipients and information about this important campaign.

Donations made to the Peak Scholarship Fund can be made in honor of a teacher, coach, or other Peak to Peak staff member. Honorees will receive a special card sharing that a donation to the Peak Scholarship Fund was made in their name (donation amount will not be disclosed). This is a great way to show appreciation for a Peak to Peak staff member while supporting future graduates.



Artists on the Back Cover:



Divyanshi Pandey
8th grade



Olivia Brayman
7th grade



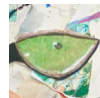
Juston Liu
6th grade



Lily Simonsen
7th grade



Easton Urban
8th grade



Kyson Webb
7th grade



Ivana Lee
6th grade



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?

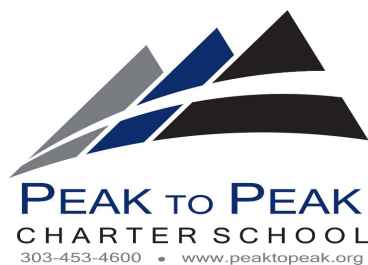
Consider a gift in their honor to the Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund. This is an easy way to thank someone who has made a difference in your life while leaving a legacy to support future Pumas.

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



Stay Connected

Fill out [this form](#)



Join our [LinkedIn page](#)



Like our [Facebook page](#)





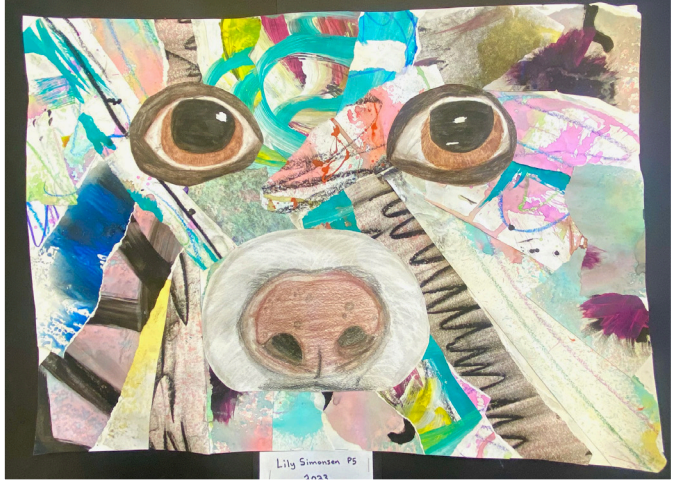
Tim of the Tiger
Dany Tardif
Mixed Media



David Grayman PS
2013



Justin Liu
2023
Mixed Media



Lily Simonsen PS
2022



Edwin Wilson
Mixed Media



Yuan Maly 2023
Mixed Media



Ivana Lee
2022
Mixed Media