



Middlesex

Spring 2024

Expanding the Circle

The Mindfulness Movement

How Alumni are Paving the Way to a More Mindful Education System

Global Programs

Developing International Understanding

Exploring Opportunities

Middlesex's Support Makes Internships Possible for Young Alumni

Powerful Perspectives

Guest Speakers Raise Awareness of National and Global Issues

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provided by a Middlesex parent,
students in Zhenyan Li's
Chinese language classes
practiced a New Year's
Dragon Dance on the Circle.



Expanding the Circle

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Middlesex

SPRING 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

Middlesex School is an independent, non-denominational, residential, college-preparatory school that, for over 100 years, has been committed to excellence in the intellectual, ethical, creative, and physical development of young people. We honor the ideal, articulated by our founding Head Master, of “finding the promise” in every student, and we work together in an atmosphere of mutual trust and shared responsibility to help students bring their talents to fruition as knowledgeable, capable, responsible, and moral citizens of the world. As a community, we respect the individual interests, strengths, and needs of each student. We also value the rich diversity of belief and experience each of us brings to the School.

We expect that each student will bring his or her best efforts to the shared endeavor of learning and that the School, through its faculty, will engage and encourage each student's growth, happiness, and well-being. We aspire for all Middlesex students to develop personal integrity, intellectual vitality and discipline, and respect for themselves and for others. We expect each student to engage energetically and cooperatively in the life of the School, and we seek to inspire in all students the desire to seek understanding of themselves and the larger world, both now and in their futures.

MIDDLESEX BULLETIN

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Letters to the editor are welcome and may be edited for clarity and space. Please send your letters to Editor, Middlesex Bulletin, 1400 Lowell Road, Concord, MA 01742, or e-mail mlindberg@mxschool.edu.

Alumni News

We welcome news from alumni, parents, and friends of Middlesex School. Please send your news and labeled photographs to Alumni News, Middlesex School, 1400 Lowell Road, Concord, MA 01742, or e-mail alumni@mxschool.edu.

Address Corrections

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Parents of Alumni

If this magazine is addressed to a son or daughter who no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please advise us of his or her new address. Thank you!

On the Cover

Henry Horvath '23 on Nepal's Ama Dablam. Image by Tim Horvath.

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Dear Middlesex Community,

THE GLORIOUS OLMSTED CIRCLE AT MIDDLESEX anchors us as a community. It calls us together, providing beauty, symmetry, and a gathering space for students, faculty, children, graduation festivities, picnics, and even eclipse celebrations! The Circle is a metaphor for the core tenets of our mission: to “find the promise” in every student by inspiring them to “engage energetically and cooperatively in the life of the School.” We have embraced the metaphor of expanding the Circle this year—leaning into creative and bold conversations about what it means for us as students, teachers, a community, and as an institution to expand the Circle. Within this issue of the *Bulletin*, you will note evidence of, and progress made in, our conviction to expand the Circle. From our recent focus on developing our global programs, to our students’ local engagement in conferences, competitions, and community service, to recent graduate Henry Horvath ‘23 climbing one of the most technically challenging peaks in the Himalayas, the Middlesex community is stretching beyond the Circle and making a profound impact around the globe.

While many of us may have experienced the recent solar eclipse from different places on this planet, it was indeed a unifying moment, requiring us quite literally to “expand our circles” as human beings, drawing us beyond ourselves to imagine galaxies, light, darkness, science, and humanity. As students, faculty, and staff gathered to take in the moment, there was an amazing display of cross-disciplinary joy, play, and unity. Students painted whimsical boards of the eclipse

and decorated the drive around the Circle with sidewalk chalk, while our science and astronomy teachers provided opportunities to view the sun and moon through a telescope, even offering moon pies as a sweet snack! I will cherish this time on the Circle, as it inspires us not only to imagine life beyond our campus but also to understand ourselves within the context of the world around us.

To this end, we are fortunate to have two wonderful co-chairs of Middlesex's newly created Strategic Vision Committee, Rob Trumbull '00 and Courtney Portlock P'20'22, who are engaging the community in a strategic visioning process for the future of Middlesex. Exciting ideas are emerging that include the exploration of experiential and service learning within our curriculum, environmental stewardship, additional investment in supporting and recruiting faculty and staff, and more intentional engagement with learning opportunities in our historic town of Concord.

These ideas and more are being discussed as we build upon the foundation of a Middlesex education, with an ongoing commitment to a rigorous academic program. You can expect to hear more about the School's next Strategic Vision and Plan, which the Board will officially approve next January. In the meantime, we have been agile and proactive in a few key areas this year:

- We have formed a Green Team that is imagining ways Middlesex can ensure our students understand and practice environmental stewardship right here on campus. The School will host a Green Summit in the spring on 2025.
- We have convened an AI Task Force made up of thoughtful Middlesex educators who are guiding us on policies that will enable teachers to protect the integrity of traditional methods of teaching and learning, while also offering vistas into new opportunities. The goal is to ensure our students develop the acumen to navigate new technologies and inherent ethics.
- We have formed an Election Task Force of teachers who are guiding our community through the upcoming election season, offering educational

moments about the ideals of democracy and emphasizing our expectations for respectful, intellectual civil discourse within the Middlesex community.

This spring also included two wonderful Admissions Revisit Days, when newly accepted students and their parents were able to visit campus, attend classes, and experience the Middlesex magic! Needless to say, our returns have been excellent, with over 1250 applications for a little over 100 spaces. We are excited to welcome students from the U.S. and abroad, including Austria, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. Similarly, our seniors, the wonderful class of 2024, are headed to a wonderful array of colleges and universities, including the University of Chicago, Harvard, NYU, Dartmouth, Yale, the Naval Academy, and the University of St Andrews.

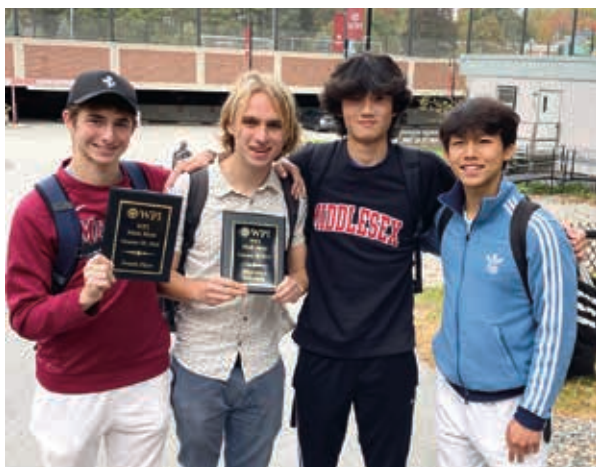
Thank you for your loyal support of this wonderful school! Your interest, engagement, and generosity make us a stronger community. As Tom Speers '76 and I have traveled around the country, we have met so many amazing Middlesex alumni, friends, and supporters who are expanding the Middlesex Circle in profound ways. It has been a terrific first year, and we look forward to continued celebration of and investment in the Middlesex mission, right here on the Circle and beyond!

Bessie



A Calculated Success at WPI Math Meet

Middlesex mathematicians flexed their quantitative skills at Worcester Polytechnic Institute's 33rd Annual Invitational Math Meet on October 20, 2023. Ben Feuer '25, Zeke Fleissner-Kates '24, Alvin Zhang '26, and Ian Lam '25 (pictured left to right) finished fourth as a team, while Zeke earned third place in the individual competition—impressive results amid competitors from nearly 40 schools.



Middlesex Rowers Compete at Head of the Charles Regatta

Facing windy conditions on October 22, a Middlesex four steadily plied its way down the course at the 2023 Head of the Charles. Under the guidance of former Middlesex Crew Coach Will Mills—and accompanied by Boys' Head Crew Coach Michael Harrington—the boat competed in the Men's Youth Four category and was powered by (from left) Daghan Konur '26, Silas Daniel '25, Alex Clapp '25, Stroke Luke Taylor '24, and Coxswain Oliver Ali '24.



Community Day Builds Commitment and Camaraderie

During Community Day on November 3, 2023, Middlesex juniors directed their efforts to helping Heading Home, a leading provider of shelter and support services for homeless and formerly homeless children and adults. While most of the class assembled hygiene kits for Heading Home to distribute, nearly two dozen students headed to Medford to clean a shelter. Meanwhile, Middlesex 9th and 10th graders spent the day participating in class bonding activities at Level99 and Boundless Adventures, respectively.

Hospitality in the Head's Office

With a fire going in the hearth—in the tradition of Middlesex's third Headmaster David Sheldon—Head of School Bessie Speers has been welcoming students, faculty, staff, and trustees into her office all year to enjoy its warmth and, often, a variety of treats and beverages.



On a break from their winter meeting, Trustees Mary Lou Boutwell W'73 P'02'06, Sarah Leary '88, Rob Trumbull '00, and Jasmine Richards '98 stopped by Bessie's office.



Theatre Workshop Fosters Equity and Inclusion

Building on an original theatre production—The Racial Equity Project (or REP)—that was first created at Middlesex in the fall of 2020, a group of 20 students participated in a workshop on February 25, 2024, that was led by two of REP's founding creators, Bobby Bermea and Nik Zaleski. Guided through different games and techniques by these professional theatre artists, the students explored issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion that affect everyday life, both at Middlesex and beyond. The workshop helped them not only to reflect on their identities and recognize their privileges but also to recommit to making Middlesex an equitable and inclusive community for all.



Mountain Warrior Sled Hockey Team

The Mountain Warrior Sled Hockey Team from Fort Drum, NY, made its annual visit to Middlesex in late February while in the vicinity to compete against several Boston-area teams. Founded by Mark McKenna (cousin of yoga instructor Annie Vigne) and comprised primarily of military veterans, the Fort Drum team scrimmaged with a squad of faculty children in the Pratt Rink (right) on February 24, 2024, before facing a group of Middlesex students and faculty the following day.



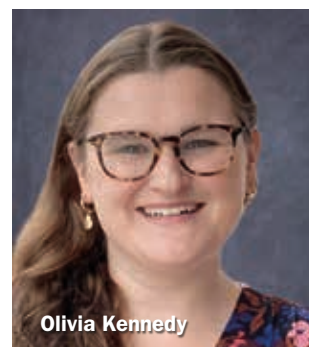
Juniors Attend ISL Changemakers Conference

On November 6, 2023, Finley Crosby '25, Olly Mylon '25, Ryan Wolff '25, Xavier Hazard '25, Maya Lloyd '25, and Ashwini Menon '25 represented Middlesex at the second annual Independent School League Changemakers Conference, hosted this year by Nobles and Greenough. Bringing together promising student leaders involved in athletics—along with athletic directors and DEIB practitioners—the conference provided a meaningful opportunity for athletes to learn how to become powerful agents of change on campus and build an inclusive team and school culture.



Faculty and Students Head to NAIS Conferences

Just after Thanksgiving Break, six faculty members and four students—Sixing Wang '26, Gaby Alonso '25, Nailah Hamilton '24, and Thatcher Foregger '24—traveled to St. Louis, Missouri, to attend the annual Student Diversity Leadership Conference and the People of Color Conference hosted by the National Association of Independent Schools. They were among 8,000 participants from across the independent school landscape who convened to discuss and reflect upon this year's theme, "Gateways to Freedom: A Confluence of Truth, Knowledge, Joy, and Power."



Scholarly Pursuits

As the 2023–2024 academic year draws to a close, congratulations are in order for faculty member **Olivia Kennedy**, who has been accepted to a master's program at the University of Oxford that will allow her to earn her degree on a part-time basis over two years. While undertaking her studies remotely during the school year, Olivia will continue to teach English and serve as an assistant dean of students, dorm assistant, and coach of JV field hockey; she will spend time at Oxford in the summer.

Celebrating 30 Years

For three decades, Facilities Superintendent and Grounds Foreman Mike Rivetts has ensured that the Middlesex campus remains a "green and pleasant land," in the words of Hymn 110. During lunch in Ware Hall on February 16, 2024, Mike was surprised with a cake—and a round of applause—in honor of his 30th work anniversary at the School. In the next issue of the *Bulletin*, faculty and staff will be featured who have celebrated milestone years of service.



Wellness Week Starts New Semester

The second semester kicked off on January 31, 2024, with Middlesex's annual Wellness Week: seven days filled with a variety of opportunities for students to learn how to optimize their own health as well as support the well-being of others. Starting off with a Mass General Brigham Blood Drive on campus, the following days involved a range of activities promoting good nutrition, relaxation, and healthy habits, as well as an all-school assembly with addiction counselor Jon Cohan, who shared his personal story of recovery from substance abuse. The week concluded on February 6 with a Wellness Symposium that featured interactive sessions led by guest speakers who explored topics such as social media, neuroscience, and nutrition. Listening to musical performances by the group Tunefoolery in the Danoff Recital Hall was also among the afternoon options, as was volunteering to build children's beds for families in need, with materials provided by the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless.





Forging International Connections

On February 4, 2024, 20 members of Middlesex's International Student Association (ISA) attended the International Student Conference (ISC) at the Governor's Academy. They participated in two rounds of student-led workshops and connected with other international students from eight peer schools. ISA Co-heads Paetyn Naidoo '25 and Eric Nie '24 successfully co-hosted the conference, while Sixing Wang '26, David Yang '26, Lauren Chan '26, Bryan Dong '27, and Jessica Wu '27 designed and led two thought-provoking, interactive workshops.

Harvard Model Congress

With 30 students taking part on February 22–25, 2024, Middlesex was well-represented at the 39th session of Harvard Model Congress—especially since a photo of veteran delegate Kaya Surmeli '26 was featured on the cover of this year's program!



A Bold Strategic Vision for Middlesex

THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL'S history, astute strategic plans have strengthened Middlesex in myriad ways, from increasing financial aid funding and faculty compensation, to constructing extraordinary new facilities for the arts and sciences, to renovating dormitories and increasing faculty housing on campus. Now, with the leadership of new Head of School Bessie Speers and a notable occasion on the horizon—the quasiqui-centennial (125th) anniversary in 2026—the time is right once again to purposefully envision the future of Middlesex, to articulate specific aspirations for the School, and to define a pathway to reach those objectives.

“We are all deeply invested in Middlesex, especially the Middlesex of today and the student experience here,” says Board President Jason Robart ’83. “We also have an opportunity and obligation to think of the Middlesex of tomorrow.”

Consequently, last fall, a Strategic Vision Committee (SVC) was formed—led by two trustees, Rob Trumbull ’00 and Courtney Portlock P’20’22—and

was charged with undertaking a thoughtful, creative process that will take into account all the School’s constituencies: students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and trustees. The SVC will then devise a strategic plan that will establish definitive goals for



Rob Trumbull '00



Courtney Portlock P'20'22

Middlesex that address such topics as financial sustainability, a reinvigoration of athletics, and the continued support of dynamic academic and arts programs.

To assist with navigating the entire process, the SVC has enlisted the expert assistance of Leilani Brown, who serves as an advisor to executives and boards on strategy, communications, crisis management, inclusion, and equity. In addition to leading her own firm, Ms. Brown currently serves her alma mater as Vice Chair of the

Board of Middlebury College, where she chairs the strategy committee as well as its diversity, equity, and inclusion committee.

Ms. Brown met with the Middlesex Board during its January meeting, outlining the steps involved in the overall process and leading the trustees in the first strategic visioning session. Individually and collaboratively, the trustees considered what might be critical components of a student’s education in future decades and were asked by Ms. Brown to offer “one big, audacious, bold idea” that might further distinguish Middlesex in the years ahead.

In smaller discussion groups, they detailed current areas of strength as well as possible challenges, looking for potential opportunities for the School.

Their observations and evaluations—first shared amongst fellow trustees—have since informed subsequent meetings and conversations of the SVC. And just before the March break, Ms. Brown engaged the faculty in a similar strategic visioning session. Opening that meeting with the words of Pastor Otis Moss in his book, *Dancing*

Timeline



Understanding the process...



The Strategic Vision Committee

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Courtney Portlock P'20'22, Trustee

Rob Trumbull '00, Trustee

MEMBERS

Dan Barber, Head of the Classics Department

Johanna Boynton P'20'23, Trustee

Marc Carter, Chief Technology Officer

Caroline Counselman P'25, Trustee

Therese Ejiofor '24, School Co-president

Ty Fein '24, School Co-president

Bill Ho '86 P'23, Trustee

Mandy Irwin, Biology; Environmental Science; Environmental Stewardship

Tom Kane P'18, Head of the Arts Division

Olivia Kennedy, English

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Natalie Martinez P'26, Associate Director of College Counseling

Stacey McCarthy, Head of the Visual Arts Department

Meg McLaughlin P'20'21'25, Director of Health and Wellness

Karlyn McNall P'21'23, Assistant Head of School; History

Mike Rivetts, Facilities Superintendent and Grounds Foreman

Alex Hanken Russell '08, Trustee

Rebecca Smedley, Director of Spiritual and Ethical Education

Bret Stephens '91 P'22'27, Trustee

Jason Sport, Dean of Students; History; English

Doug Price P'16, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid

Pierson Wetzel P'26'28, Head of the Music Department

EX OFFICIO

Jason Robart '83 P'11'13, President, Board of Trustees

Bessie Speers, Head of School

in the Dark, Bessie quoted, "It is the pause that gives us the chance to see what could be and not just what we have known."

Expanding on that thought, Rob reflected that Middlesex—as a nondenominational school—was founded on a bold idea in 1901. "We have the opportunity to take the School forward even further," he said. "Let's think big." With that encouragement to be imaginative and embrace possibilities, faculty members contributed their own ideas and thoughts about Middlesex, all of which will be further reviewed by the SVC as the group prepares a preliminary draft of a plan this summer.

"People are thinking broadly and boldly about the future of Middlesex through this process," affirms Courtney,

whose children, Mark '20 and Taylor '22, are alumni, as is her father, former Trustee Joe Watkins '71, who was in the second class of Black students to enroll at the School. "It is wonderful to experience how aligned and open the community has been throughout this process."

As Jason rightly noted when speaking before the faculty's March meeting, Middlesex is fortunate to be approaching the envisioning process from an enviable position of strength. Given that foundation, bolstered by the continued engagement, support, and investment of the School's constituencies, this next strategic plan is certain to prepare Middlesex for its 125th anniversary—and for many a celebration for decades to come. **M**

ON THE HORIZON

Fall 2025, Accreditation
Foundation Visit

Spring 2026, Accreditation
Program Visit

Fall 2026
125th Anniversary

September 2024

Board Update
Preliminary Draft
of Strategic Plan
Board Meeting

November 2024

Strategic Planning
Retreat
Board Retreat

January 2025

Present & Approve
Strategic Plan

The Mindfulness Movement

WHOLESCHOOL MINDFULNESS, a nonprofit committed to transforming our education system through mindfulness, can trace its roots back to a Middlesex classroom in 2010. Back then, two of WholeSchool's co-founders were just beginning new journeys at Middlesex. Doug Worthen '96 had just joined the faculty as Middlesex's first dedicated mindfulness director, and Ben Painter '14 was working through his first semester of high school.

Although Ben and Doug were just starting to explore what the intersection of mindfulness and education might look like, they shared a belief that mindfulness was something that could better equip students to face the challenges of society today. Over the years, as Doug grew Middlesex's Mindfulness Program, and Ben continued to explore his mindfulness practice after Middlesex, their shared belief grew into a vision for an education system where every student would have access to a mindfulness teacher.

Now, 14 years later, that vision has materialized in the form of WholeSchool Mindfulness, a nonprofit that is helping to fund and support the launch of more mindfulness directors like Doug in schools around the country. To date, WholeSchool has supported 18 mindfulness directors and plans to launch an additional 30+ sustainable mindfulness directors in the next three years, with 75 percent serving low-income or BIPOC communities.

Jon Luke Tittmann '14 recently sat down with Ben and Doug to ask them some questions about their journey of starting and growing WholeSchool.

Mindfulness Director Jordan Grinstein works with students at Shrewsbury High School in Massachusetts.

HOW MIDDLESEX ALUMNI ARE PAVING THE WAY TO A MORE MINDFUL EDUCATION SYSTEM





In a nutshell, what does WholeSchool Mindfulness do?

Ben: We're a nonprofit that is working to launch and support mindfulness director positions in schools around the U.S. We provide seed funding to schools to support them in bringing on mindfulness directors as faculty members, so that they can build programming for their students, faculty members, and broader community. We then support those mindfulness directors by connecting them with fellow directors and offering professional development.

Another way I like to think about it is that we are creating proof points for the bold idea that a mindfulness director position could one day be an integral part of schools across the country, just like a math or English teacher.

What was the journey of starting WholeSchool Mindfulness?

Doug: I remember my first couple of years teaching mindfulness at Middlesex being both exciting and lonely. I had big ideas about what the program could become. The concept of being a full-time mindfulness teacher was totally new. There were lots of skeptics.

Over the years, as the program took shape at Middlesex, I started to see the impact of this work, and that reaffirmed my belief that this was not only something that could transform school communities but was something that we could replicate in other schools, too.

Then one day, I was walking across the Circle with Ben and Jon Luke, who was another one of my students, and we started to get serious about what it might look like to build a program like ours at other schools. I knew I didn't have time to bring this vision to life on

my own, but Ben and Jon Luke were able to take the idea and run with it.

Ben: We gained a lot of confidence in our idea by seeing another successful mindfulness program at a school in Texas, where one of our donors helped to fund and launch a mindfulness director there. We believed that we could scale this model that Doug had built at Middlesex.

I also remember the first time we had a meeting with a Middlesex parent who had discovered mindfulness through Doug's parent class. He listened to our idea and was willing to support our mission and has since become one of our donors. This kind of support from the Middlesex community and from others who believe in this work has made our vision possible.

Why is this work so important today?

Ben: I think mindfulness has always been something valuable to learn at an early age as a tool to help cultivate resilience, self-awareness, and even compassion. But I think the urgency

of this work has increased in recent years due to the mental health crisis. The data points to the unfortunate truth that young people today are more depressed, anxious, and distracted than ever before. Tech has been one of the driving forces behind this unfortunate trend. In a lot of ways, our attention is under attack—young people's attention is being fractured. Our attention is not only getting distracted but also divided, and this scattered attention is an ingredient for more anxiety and depression and less connection with the people and world around us. Learning how to have more autonomy over our attention is a powerful way to combat these trends.

Doug: Our environment is getting better at drawing or taking our attention. I can see this with my own two-year-old son, for whom seeing a truck on a device is much more interesting for his attention than seeing a truck in real life. Everything is getting better at pulling our attention, and we need mindfulness to help us regain and

re-own our attention, so that we can bring it to things that we actually care about. In school, we're taught a lot of facts and asked to remember definitions, but there's traditionally no class about how to explore and understand the nuances of the inner world, and how to cultivate certain qualities in your mind that you want. Our minds impact everything, and everything we cultivate in our mind will impact everything we come into contact with.

What is particular about WholeSchool's model for bringing mindfulness to schools?

Ben: There's a real movement happening around bringing mindfulness to schools. Schools, teachers, and even students themselves are catching on to how mindfulness can really make a difference in their lives. So, we're not alone in this work. There are so many great groups out there pushing for this change, each in their own way, from using apps and curriculums to make it scalable, to training teachers directly, to bringing in professionals from the

Among the 18 mindfulness directors that WholeSchool Mindfulness has already helped establish is Ashley Williams, shown here leading students in a meditation practice at a middle school in Richmond, Virginia.





Just as WholeSchool Mindfulness has grown, so has Middlesex's own program, which includes an academic elective called "The Origins and Evolution of Mindfulness." On March 26, 2024, Middlesex juniors and seniors enrolled in that seminar—taught by Mindfulness Director Doug Worthen '96 and Director of Strategic Initiatives Erika Ferlins Mills '99—visited the Peace House in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where they talked with Theravada Buddhist monks and sat for a meditation.

outside to hold workshops. Each approach has its own pros and cons when it comes to long-term effectiveness, cost, and buy-in.

From my own time at Middlesex, I've seen firsthand how powerful it can be when mindfulness is woven into the fabric of a school. Having someone like Doug, who was just part of everything, made a huge difference in helping

mindfulness stick. It wasn't just an add-on, but a real part of our education. So that's kind of the bet we're making now at WholeSchool. We believe that for mindfulness to take hold best, it needs to be tailored to fit each community's unique needs. It's about more than just dropping a program into a school; it's about changing the whole system to show that mindfulness is as

crucial as any subject we teach. That's the shift we're aiming for.

Doug: Part of the reason the program at Middlesex was successful was because I was familiar with the community and was given time and space to tailor the program to fit the needs of this community. I also think my presence in the dining hall, in the



dorms, and in the classrooms helped the program grow. We believe that this model is the most sustainable, integrated, and impactful way to bring a mindfulness program to a school community.

What's has been the biggest challenge in growing WholeSchool Mindfulness?

Ben: A significant part of the struggle involves the instability many schools and educators face—especially amidst COVID, with fluctuating budgets and low staff retention rates being common. We had one mindfulness director who was super promising because he

started when the school was starting, so it was an opportunity for the school to set its foundation with a mindfulness program from the beginning. The director was incredibly charismatic and involved in the community there, but the school cut the budget, and his role couldn't be supported.

Another challenge is the resistance each mindfulness director may encounter in terms of how their community resists or misunderstands mindfulness. For example, in some communities, mindfulness practice is conceived as a mechanism for classroom control and not as a tool for supporting student

well-being. And when it's introduced like this, it's rightfully met with resistance.

The last challenge is funding. While there's lots of momentum and interest in the mindfulness and education space, there's not yet a lot of money or funding. There are still many misconceptions about what mindfulness is and how it might fit into a student's education.

At WholeSchool, we're at the forefront of advocating for what I believe is the best, most comprehensive way to bring mindfulness to schools—by bringing a faculty member on

WholeSchool Mindfulness has helped establish full-time directors at 18 schools across the country.



board who can adapt the program and respond to the unique needs of the school community. But our way is also the most expensive and the most bureaucratically challenging.

How can mindfulness help us shape a better education for young people?

Ben: When I ask myself what education should be about, it's about equipping our youth with the resilience, empathy, and insight necessary to thrive and contribute meaningfully to a world in need of compassion, justice, and well-being. School is where we can hone skills like communication and deepen

our understanding of ourselves and the people around us. Mindfulness can play a powerful role in helping us build those skills.

I also think that the urgent need for something like mindfulness in schools comes into sharper focus against the backdrop of the current mental health crisis, which in a lot of ways can be attributed to technology. School leaders are looking for ways to support the mental health and overall well-being of their students and communities, and mindfulness has emerged as a powerful tool. But it's about more than just building skills

to cope with the mental health crisis. We need tools that move us in the direction of self-awareness and systems awareness and that help us investigate our own experiences, our biases, and the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves and other people. If we learn to communicate and understand our own needs better, I just think that will help society.

Doug: I see the answer to this question every day in my work. Students want inner education. They want to know who they are looking at in the mirror. They want to know and understand who and what they are. They want to understand the nuances of their attention and how to tend to the things they care most about. They want to learn a healthy and skillful way to relate to emotions, thoughts, feelings, and impulses. They want to know how to move through the world with more joy, compassion, and less crippling stress. Mindfulness is a practice that supports them in all of these aspects of life.

On average, over 90 percent of Middlesex students report (in our yearly anonymous surveys) that the introductory required mindfulness course for new students should be a required course that all new students should take. Also, 40 percent even consider it a spiritual practice. These are just some of the data points that reaffirm the power of the practice. I think there's a cultural misconception that meditating is about getting away from things—getting away from our thoughts, from stress, from life. But mindfulness is really about staring our experience in the face, understanding it, and not running away—even when it doesn't feel good. When students do this they are better equipped to face the unpredictable, changing world. **M**



Middlesex's Director of Mindfulness Doug Worthen '96 (seated) and Ben Painter '14 are two of the co-founders of WholeSchool Mindfulness; they serve on its Board along with Middlesex's Director of Strategic Initiatives Erika Ferlins Mills '99.

Exploring Opportunities with Internship Support

A **S THEY MAKE THEIR WAY** through college, Middlesex's youngest alumni are eager to find a career and place where they will thrive long after graduation. Since 2008, the Middlesex Alumni Association has helped these undergraduates by offering Summer Internship Support, allowing them to take advantage of great but unpaid internships that will allow them to explore potential professions.

Thanks to this program, which has assisted more than 100 alumni thus far, talented Middlesex graduates have gained invaluable, first-hand experience in a variety of fields and glimpsed where they might make a lasting difference across the country and around the world. Here, four of the alumni who were supported in 2023 describe the focus and content of their internships, as well as what they gained from these experiences.

TYLER JOHNSON '19

*United Nations Dialogue of
Civilizations Program
Geneva, Switzerland*

This past July, I had the honor of attending the United Nations Dialogue of Civilizations program, a four-week program in Geneva, Switzerland, orchestrated by Dr. Denise Garcia, a professor of international affairs and political science at Northeastern

Tyler Johnson '19



Natalie Omori-Hoffe '20

University. The 23-member research delegation had the opportunity to engage with various professionals, from ambassadors and diplomats to NGOs and policy advisors for civil society organizations. Amongst these was H.E. Ambassador Jürg Lauber, extraordinary and plenipotentiary permanent representative of Switzerland to the United Nations and other organizations in Geneva at the Swiss Mission to the United Nations, who enlightened us about his work and experiences in diplomatic affairs. We also had the pleasure of attending the AI for Good Summit, an initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a specialized agency of the UN, that aims to explore and harness the potential of artificial intelligence to address global challenges and promote the use of AI for social good. At the summit, we had the opportunity to speak with Stephen Ibaraki, the founder of AI for Good and chairman of REDDS Capital.

During my time in Geneva, I wrote two papers: one about reforming the UN by breaking down the structures that separate its agencies into isolated silos and one about how the artificial intelligence “gold rush” will eventually

Although this program was only a month long, I felt as though I left the city with a lifetime's worth of knowledge. I will always appreciate the Middlesex alumni who ensured I could have such an incredible experience.

—TYLER JOHNSON '19

lead the world back to a universal gold standard monetary system. Our research delegation was lucky enough to have been offered a space to work at three distinguished libraries in the city: the UN Library, the World Intellectual Property Organization's library, and The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies' library. I am so thankful for the many resources available to conduct my research and expand my knowledge on these relevant and pressing issues.

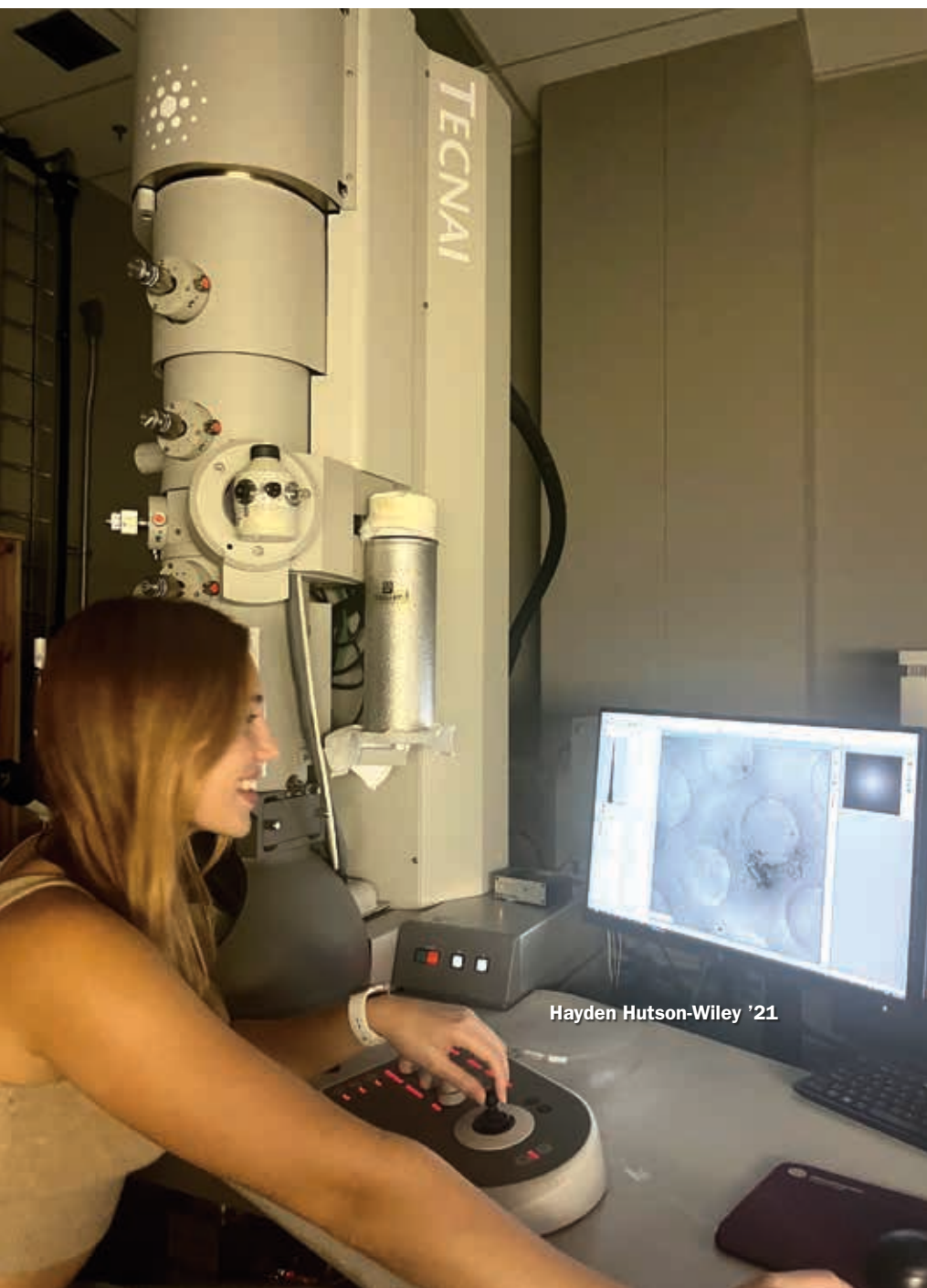
Although this program was only a month long, I felt as though I left the city with a lifetime's worth of knowledge. I will always appreciate the Middlesex alumni who ensured I could have such an incredible experience.

NATALIE OMORI-HOFFE '20

*Institute for the Study of Resilience in Youth at McLean Hospital
Belmont, Massachusetts*

Last summer, I had the privilege of participating in a three-month internship that allowed me to pursue research at the Institute for the Study of Resilience in Youth (ISRY) at McLean Hospital. This experience has been nothing short of extraordinary, and I have grown in ways I could have never imagined. It has deepened my passion for understanding the challenges faced by youth and has reinforced my commitment to helping improve their mental health and well-being.

My journey at ISRY was an unparalleled opportunity that allowed me not only to pursue my dreams but also to grow as a dedicated researcher in psychology. As I reflect on my time there, I am deeply grateful for the experiences and connections that have enriched my understanding of this field of research. One of the most rewarding aspects of my internship was the opportunity to engage in comprehensive research. Over the course of the summer, I completed 50 full-text reviews, delving deep into the literature on resilience



Hayden Hutson-Wiley '21

in youth through STEM education and social-emotional development. These reviews allowed me to develop a thorough understanding of the field and honed my ability to critically evaluate research findings.

One of the highlights of my internship was the opportunity to attend observation sites at Phillips Brooks House (PBH) and the East Boston Social Center (EBSOC), where I took field notes on the Dimensions of

Success (DoS) for youth. These on-site experiences provided a real-world context for the research we were conducting and allowed me to witness the practical implications of our work in action.

Working at McLean Hospital was a dream come true for me, and the experience exceeded my expectations in every way. I now have a deeper understanding of the hospital's environment, and I have forged long-lasting

This experience has been nothing short of extraordinary, and I have grown in ways I could have never imagined. It has deepened my passion for understanding the challenges faced by youth and has reinforced my commitment to helping improve their mental health and well-being.

—NATALIE OMORI-HOFFE '20

connections with mentors and colleagues who will continue to guide and support me in my journey as a researcher in psychology. The knowledge and skills I have gained at McLean are invaluable assets that I will carry with me as I pursue my studies.

HAYDEN HUTSON-WILEY '21

*University of Virginia
School of Medicine
Charlottesville, Virginia*

In most body fluids float small particles called extracellular vesicles (EVs). Previously thought to be “junk,” these EVs have proven to be vast sources of biological information and can be harnessed for liquid biopsy, disease treatment, and early diagnosis. I studied these particles this summer.

I joined Dr. Uta Erdbrügger's lab at the last minute. I had had another opportunity set up for the summer, but unfortunately, it had fallen through. The first few weeks were a whirl of getting up to date on her lab, reading to understand what she was studying and how I could work within it, and brainstorming possible projects I could take on in the fall. I slowly began to feel more comfortable and learned—honestly—more in two weeks than I did in two years in my former lab.

The main thing I studied the first few weeks in the lab was how to extract these extracellular vesicles from various body fluids. For blood, one requires a higher setting for the ultracentrifuge to extract the particles—approximately 500 g—and more time, whereas in urine, the EVs are extracted with relative simplicity and lower settings of centrifugation. Thus, we determined that a chip that could detect pre-chronic diabetes should use urine, as extraction would be more straightforward. This observation formed the basis of my fall project. I have since been working to determine the antibodies needed to do this detection. If we can better diagnose our patients, their outcomes will improve. With 11.3% of the population suffering from diabetes, a national health epidemic is on our hands, so novel diagnostic and treatment measures have become necessary.

While training to use UVA's expensive cryo-electron microscope, I also enrolled in a nursing assistant class, which ultimately concluded with working in a long-term care facility. I also got a job at UVA Hospital in the Trauma Department, helping patients recover from surgery, injury, and trauma. It was so much more fulfilling and fun than I thought it would be, and it became possible for me to formulate

an answer to the question: Why do you want to be a doctor?

Becoming a doctor would give me agency in these patients' lives, and I would do the best I could to give my patients the greatest chance of success through a well-designed care plan. I plan to continue working at the hospital, working on my project, and learning to be the best physician that I can be.

KILEY BRIAND '20

*Ryse Local Ventures
Washington, DC*

Last summer I worked closely alongside Kayla Baker—the founder and CEO of Ryse Local Ventures (RYSE)—as the marketing and business development strategy intern. RYSE is an economic justice consulting firm focused on accelerating the impact and growth of community-focused organizations, businesses, and governments. RYSE believes that everyone deserves a seat at the table. The firm works to shatter economic barriers because we know that historically marginalized communities need it. I think it is important to reiterate the mission statement since the work I was doing was always centered around this mission, which made the experience so rewarding. I was able to connect with individuals who were equally passionate about serving these communities while gaining invaluable experience in my focus areas.

My work focused on developing and implementing a marketing/outreach strategy centered around expanding RYSE's work with government entities. The structure of the internship was remote, with daily intern team huddles and project-based deliverables, including presentations with my research, analysis, and recommendations for the CEO and advisors. Reflecting on my experience, I developed my problem-solving skills and got more comfortable making recommendations

based on my research. My summer priorities revolved around the core values, advocating for a customer-centered, honest, results-driven, equity-focused, and sustainable solutions-oriented approach. The feedback I received was always thorough, which encouraged me to dig deep into the research on my own before putting my work in front of Ms. Baker. This lesson was the most crucial that I learned this summer: how to think it out. I was constantly brainstorming, researching, and collaborating with my fellow intern to come up with solutions.

This lesson was the most crucial that I learned this summer: how to think it out. I was constantly brainstorming, researching, and collaborating with my fellow intern to come up with solutions.

—KILEY BRIAND '20

One of my favorite and most useful parts of the internship was the exposure to personnel from the CDFI, nonprofit, government, and policy industries. We had multiple professional meetings with clients and past colleagues of Ms. Baker, who offered us insights into the industry and illustrated how RYSE is impacting communities. These interactions afforded me the opportunity to present my work and collaborate with individuals with extensive subject matter expertise across various fields.

In short, I gained a plethora of work experience and made invaluable connections through this internship. I am proud and excited to announce that I am returning to RYSE this summer as the business analyst intern and lead intern—this time in person, alongside four other interns, in Washington. DC. **M**

Becoming a doctor would give me agency in these patients' lives, and I would do the best I could to give my patients the greatest chance of success through a well-designed care plan. I plan to continue working at the hospital, working on my project, and learning to be the best physician that I can be.

—HAYDEN HUTSON-WILEY '21



London Theatre Tour 2024: Accompanied by Arts Division Head Tom Kane and Visual Arts Department Head Stacey McCarthy, students enjoyed seeing many productions, including *Guys and Dolls*.

Global Programs

Developing International Understanding

By Dan Sheff

Director of Global Programs

THE IDEAS AND ETHOS OF THE theme “Expand the Circle” are reflected clearly and thoroughly in the work and goals of the School’s Global Programs. While the office of Global Programs is fairly new at Middlesex, student travel has a long history at the School, from language and cultural immersion experiences to community service efforts to preseason team training trips, as well as other departmental initiatives—such as

Annie Ku’s China trip and Tom Kane’s London theatre tour, which have run nearly biennially over two decades. The program “MX Global” launched shortly after the 2015 accreditation process, in which a major recommendation was for the School to continue considering “what it means to be a multicultural institution with a global perspective.” MX Global had a strong curricular focus, launching the course modules Dialogues Across Differences, which all new students participated in for a few years, and Citizenship in Civil Societies, which was offered to juniors

and later replaced with Unraveling Racism. Global Programs subsequently began in the summer of 2020 with a vision to move beyond academic spaces and consider ways Middlesex can increase its strength, presence, and opportunity as a global community.

Over the first four years, the beginning of which was heavily stunted by COVID-19, the School’s focus has centered on strengthening what we already do. For example, Middlesex has engaged more intentionally and profoundly with our international students, families, and alumni, as well as increased efforts

Literary England: High tea was on the menu on this March 2023 tour, led by English Department Head Jecca Hutcheson and English teacher Ruth Baldwin.





Berlin and Prague 2023: Music Department Head Pierson Wetzel, Visual Arts Department Head Stacey McCarthy, and Arts Division Head Tom Kane highlighted music, art, and theatre in this popular March trip.

to broaden the global diversity of prospective students. From leveraging video communication platforms for virtual receptions to creating an international student affinity group to forging new associations with organizations such as Ukraine Global Scholars and ASSIST, Middlesex has thoughtfully expanded the way we engage, support, and attract constituencies around the world.

Considerable time and effort have also been directed to the expansion of school-sponsored, international trips. Focusing on unique, mission-driven, and curriculum-related programs, Middlesex has offered eight such trips in the past two school years. In addition to diversifying itinerary content, we have made an effort to remove some past barriers to travel by increasing financial aid for international trips, timing departures in close proximity

to the beginning of a school break, and removing any conflict in the March break between athletic program trips and cultural or educational trips by designating different weeks for each. In March 2023, Middlesex students could choose from among four brand new offerings, enabling them to travel to Sénégal with the French department, to Berlin and Prague with the arts division, to England for a literary tour with the English department, or to Rome and Campania with the classics department.

This year's three March excursions—which brought students to Taiwan, London, and Panama—represent both a return to Middlesex's classic trips and the forging of new ground. The cultural and language immersion experience in Taiwan is a return to Asia for the first time since 2018, while another successful running of the London theatre tour

was enhanced with visits to several prominent art museums. Students who headed to Panama learned firsthand about tropical ecology and biodiversity through partnering with Cinda Scott '95, the director of the School for Field Studies campus in Bocas del Toro, Panama. This June, the Spanish department is leading a language immersion trip to the Dominican Republic that will also include community service work.

Some goals for the upcoming years are equally ambitious. One is to identify schools with whom Middlesex might set up two-to-four-week exchange programs, offering students the opportunity to fully experience life in another culture. While initially these partnerships will be based purely on facilitating student exchange opportunities, we remain open to exploring ways in which we can grow our



Rome and Campania 2023: Travelers visited Pompei and Rome's many historic sites with Classics Department Head Dan Barber and classics teacher Aura Rizzo '07.

relationships with schools around the globe. Another goal is to establish greater relationships with experiential education organizations that offer summer and semester-long programs, and we are currently piloting this with a student who is attending The Mountain School in Vermont for the second semester of the 2023-24 school year.

Though these examples are spearheaded by Global Programs, the initiative to Expand the Circle is an integrated, multi-office objective that will be driven by thoughtful partnerships and the efforts of many departments at Middlesex. With guidance from the work of the current Strategic Visioning Committee, our collaborative endeavors will provide Middlesex students with even more opportunities to engage with the world and to become informed, global citizens. **M**



Panama 2024: As the director of the School for Field Studies in Bocas del Toro, Cinda Scott '95 (standing, far right) introduced students and faculty chaperones—science teachers Steven Whitt and John MacMullen—to the tropical environment where she lives and works.

Powerful Perspectives

Guest Speakers Broaden Understanding on Campus

WHETHER THROUGH established lecture series or while celebrating heritage months, Middlesex has been fortunate to host outstanding guest speakers who have generously shared their experience and wisdom with the School, expanding the community's awareness of and knowledge about their areas of expertise.

An Idealist Making a Difference

When former UN Ambassador Samantha Power last spoke at Middlesex in March 2020, she had recently published her bestselling memoir, *The Education of an Idealist*, and described

both her career path and her approach to formidable global problems. Now the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), she returned to campus on January 12, 2024, visiting history classes, sharing her journey to this latest post, and detailing some of the challenges involved in delivering civilian foreign aid and development assistance in more than 80 countries. "I'm hoping to plant a seed to inspire you to make a difference in the world," she said.

Born in Ireland, Ambassador Power immigrated to the U.S. with her mother and brother in 1979. As a Yale

undergraduate, she recalled, "All I wanted to do was to play sports and talk sports." Her focus shifted to history

These are no small challenges, and they underscore how important it is for you to stay focused as you get older. We need the best minds to work on problems here and abroad; there is plenty of work to go around.

**USAID ADMINISTRATOR
SAMANTHA POWER**

After her talk, former UN Ambassador Samantha Power—who now serves as the Administrator of the USAID—visited a history class and met with students during lunch.



and foreign policy, however, on seeing live footage of tanks advancing on protesting students in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Combining her writing skills with her interest in geopolitical affairs, she became a freelance journalist covering the Bosnian War, an experience that compelled her to attend law school and led to her first book—*A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*—which won a Pulitzer Prize.

The book also caught the attention of a newly elected Illinois Senator, future President Barack Obama, who initially hired her to work in his Washington office. She subsequently served on the U.S. National Security Council, became the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and met and married Middlesex Trustee Cass Sunstein '72.

Turning to her current work, Ambassador Power explained that USAID was created in 1961 by President Kennedy. Given that “what happens over there matters here,” USAID tackles problems ranging from agriculture and energy to health, girls’ education, and conflict prevention. “These are no small challenges,” Ambassador Power stated, “and they underscore how important it is for you to stay focused as you get older. We need the best minds to work on problems here and abroad; there is plenty of work to go around.” By supporting other countries and helping them to develop resilience and thrive, she said, it is hoped we may build a better, more prosperous world.

Telling a Story of Gender

A veteran English teacher and novelist, Alex Myers noted that he “frames the whole world in terms of story.” Speaking on October 27, 2023—between Coming Out Day on the 11th and Trans Awareness Week in mid-November—he eloquently told his own story of coming out as transgender right before his last year of high school.



▼ English teacher and novelist Alex Myers reflected that it took time before he decided “not to live up to any gender idea other than my own.”

▲ “Classics allows you to live through time and learn more about yourself,” observed Professor Joel Christensen, this year’s Mudge Lecturer.



Illustrating his talk with photographs, Mr. Myers first showed a picture of himself as a preschool girl in a dress—apparently happy yet already aware of wanting to be a boy. He felt lucky to have grown up in a decade where “tomboys” were prominent on TV, as the word “gave me permission to be like a boy,” he said. Eventually, he came out as transgender and returned to his boarding school as a boy for senior year.

“That year was not at all easy,” Mr. Myers remembered. His parents were upset, some friends were confused, and others were critical of him. But a photo of him smiling broadly back then clearly showed “how good it feels to come out and live how you’ve always felt,” he said.

As an adult, Mr. Myers has worked to educate people about gender identity and to assist schools with redesigning facilities, practices, and policies to be more gender inclusive. “When I work with kids today, they tell me, ‘You’re the first boring trans person I’ve ever met,’” he laughed, adding, “You can grow up to be trans and be yourself and have a normal life.”

The Mudge Lecture: The Iliad Still Matters

Whether or not they had read portions of the *Iliad* at Middlesex yet, students benefited from a scholarly explanation of the work—its origin, evolution, and significance—thanks to Professor Joel Christensen, whose visit on January 5, 2024, was made possible by the Mudge Family Fund for the enrichment of the classics. A professor of classical and early Mediterranean studies at Brandeis University, Professor Christensen noted that while the ancient Greek epic poem is attributed to Homer, its true source remains “a bit of a mystery.” Most likely, he said, the *Iliad* developed through the oral tradition of storytelling, with its performance changing over centuries in response to political and cultural influences.

Even the Venetus A manuscript—the oldest, complete, written version of the epic—contains not only lines of the text but also several sets of comments and notations, providing “a history of people reading the *Iliad*,” Professor Christensen said. Clearly, its stories have engaged readers for centuries, perhaps influencing their

reflections, understanding, and behavior—as great literature can. Still, some may wonder, “Why continue to read such an ancient work today?” After reviewing the specific narratives of just one of its 24 books, Professor Christensen concluded, “Read book 6 and then read the news today.” The *Iliad* has only gained relevance, he said, remaining a kind of complex dialogue for understanding others, the self, and the world.

Rising to the Challenge of Dr. King

In celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Middlesex welcomed back four alumni on January 15, 2024, to share their school and career experiences during a morning assembly.



As the keynote speaker, former Middlesex Trustee Wanji Walcott '87 related her educational and professional journey, remembering that she “always felt a little different” as the only Black girl in her class from prekindergarten until college. Yet, in addition to the “world-class education and opportunities to explore,” Wanji affirmed, “The best thing about Middlesex is the people,” noting that every summer, she still gets together with her close-knit group of Middlesex friends.

After earning her undergraduate degree at Howard University—followed by a J.D. at its law school—Wanji embarked on an impressive legal career that has included working for Lockheed Martin, American Express, PayPal, and Discover Financial Services. Today, she is the chief legal and business affairs officer at Pinterest, an image-based social media platform that she is proud to say is “a positive, inclusive corner of the Internet.” Because there are still few Black women executives at major companies, Wanji purposefully promotes diversity and equity, serves as a mentor, and takes on pro bono work, helping

“I love this school dearly and want us to continue to improve and do better,” said former Trustee Wanji Walcott '87.

Having been sometimes told that certain goals were beyond her reach, she advised students, “Don’t let someone tell you that you can’t do something. Dream big and just do it.”

**FORMER MIDDLESEX TRUSTEE
WANJI WALCOTT '87**

people who cannot afford legal assistance. Having been sometimes told that certain goals were beyond her reach, she advised students, “Don’t let someone tell you that you can’t do something. Dream big and just do it.”

Reflecting on Dr. King’s hopes for the nation, Wanji observed, “It might seem that the dream has been realized, but I don’t think it has.” She encouraged the Middlesex community to continue to improve, concluding with a call to action: “You should feel comfortable being here. Some may struggle and feel they don’t belong. What are you going to do about this?”

Student leaders Nailah Hamilton '24 and Kwame Addison '25 then moderated a panel discussion featuring Atiya Walcott '12, Ariana Odom '17, and Dereck Marmolejos '18. Each reflected



on their years as Black students at Middlesex, appreciating the care of faculty advisors and mentors and the chance to try new things, while also recognizing that there is still room for improvement in the student experience. Reminding everyone that “it doesn’t cost to be kind,” Dereck added, “There’s a lot more that unifies us than divides us.”

The Whitlock Lecture: On Fugitive Pedagogy

One of the highlights of observing Black History Month was the February 23rd visit of Dr. Jarvis Givens, a professor of education and African and African American Studies at Harvard University. A dynamic lecturer who specializes in the history of African American education, Dr. Givens was the third Kenneth E. Whitlock, Jr. Black History Month Speaker, a series that was established in 2021 and named in honor of Middlesex’s first Black faculty member.

As a Ph.D. student at UC Berkeley, Dr. Givens knew about distinguished educators like Dr. Carter G. Woodson, whose textbooks on Black history challenged the limited curriculums prescribed for Black students in the Jim Crow Era—and whose work was

foundational in establishing Black History Month. Yet it was only by coming across a footnote that he learned about Tessie McGee, a Black teacher who surreptitiously read to her students from Dr. Woodson’s texts, quietly defying Louisiana’s mandatory curriculum. Her actions, as well as her influence on her students (one of whom recounted her story in that footnote), led to Dr. Givens’ interest in the broader legacy of African American teachers, calling their efforts “fugitive pedagogy”: the covert pursuit of Black education as a path to liberation.

Dr. Givens then began the difficult task of locating and assembling the

Assembling and preserving The Black Teacher Archive “allows us to tell a robust story about the role teachers played,” said Whitlock Lecturer Dr. Jarvis Givens. “They don’t often come to mind in the story of civil rights.”

scattered records of Black teachers and the journals published by Black teachers’ associations. Along with fellow Harvard Professor Imani Perry, Dr. Givens has since been building The Black Teacher Archive, now the largest repository of material about and written by Black teachers. As he pointed out, “Black teachers and students are part of the story we need to appreciate. They are not victims; they are part of the resistance.” **M**



Dereck Marmolejos '18, Atiya Walcott '12, and Ariana Odom '17 shared their experiences at Middlesex during a panel discussion moderated by Nailah Hamilton '24 (at far left) and Kwame Addison '25 (on far right).



Digital Dialogues: Focusing on AI

GIVEN THE PREDOMINANCE OF technology in everyday life—and Middlesex’s commitment in its mission to “help students bring their talents to fruition as knowledgeable, capable, responsible, and moral citizens of the world”—Computer Science Head Ashok Pillai and his department colleagues began developing a program called “Digital Dialogues” five years ago. Geared toward all new ninth and tenth graders, the program was designed to improve students’ technological literacy and their understanding of digital media, including some of the ethical aspects of computing.

Though representing an addition to the curriculum of underclassmen,

Digital Dialogues was carefully structured to expand students’ learning but not their workload; as such, the program would require neither homework nor assessments. Instead, students would meet during one free block a week for six consecutive weeks and engage in investigating and discussing topics through a series of interactive activities.

Through completing Digital Dialogues, students would not only possess a fundamental understanding of algorithmic thinking and basic coding concepts but would also recognize how coding and technology are integrated into a variety of fields—and how they may be incorporated into their future professional lives.

Moreover, students would be better equipped to reason and discuss computer science and technology topics in the context of current events and their own lives.

Delayed in its implementation by the pandemic, Digital Dialogues was first offered in the spring of 2022. It has continued to evolve each year to cover different topics, including a brief introduction to coding, various applications of computing, algorithmic bias, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence (AI). With a revised class schedule being tested out this academic year, the program was tailored to run in two separate, longer time slots, one in January and the other in February.

Considering the development and recent media coverage of generative AI tools like ChatGPT, DALL-E, and Google's Gemini, the main topic chosen for 2024 was artificial intelligence—particularly the unexpected and unintended consequences that can result from biases in AI algorithms, as well as their ethical implications.

During the first session, students watched a short video about the ethics of AI that acknowledged AI's great potential while also cautioning about its capacity for bias if its algorithms are not developed with a broad and inclusive spectrum of data. Students then divided into smaller groups and, using their laptops, played "Survival of the Best Fit," a game about hiring bias in AI that illustrates how "the misuse of AI can make machines inherit human biases and further inequality," as the game's creators explain. In discussing their experience with the game, students could see the adverse results of algorithmic bias—and begin to

think about how not to perpetuate such problems.

Digging deeper into the "machine learning" that underlies AI, the second session began with two students demonstrating Google's "Quick, Draw!" game, in which players must create doodles of specific words (like "butterfly" or "radio") within 20 seconds to see if a neural network can recognize their drawings. A subsequent video helped explain how, in a game like "Quick, Draw," an AI-enabled tool is trying to find and encode patterns, using them to build algorithms that will enable it to identify a variety of drawings. As the video pointed out, an enormous amount of training data (or drawings, in this case) is required to "teach" an AI-enabled device to identify patterns as objects—and even then, mistakes will still be made, as AI programs are not infallible.

A second video about ethics and AI emphasized the need to proceed carefully, taking care that a new tool

or technology is truly benefiting everyone. Once again meeting in small groups, students interacted with "Moral Machine," a platform that presents moral dilemmas involving a self-driving car. In 13 scenarios, students had to judge which was "the lesser of two evils," such as killing two passengers or five pedestrians. They subsequently compared their responses with those of others, adding to the kind of data that might inform AI algorithms.

Did they lean toward saving infants or elderly people, or humans rather than pets? The activity highlighted the ethical complexities involved in programming AI-driven machines, whose operation can entail greater consequences than detecting patterns in doodles. Discussions after this exercise gave students another opportunity to explore both the merits and pitfalls associated with AI, sharpening their critical thinking about technological developments as they arise. **M**

AI Task Force Explores Policies and Practice

Led by Director of Technology Marc Carter, an Artificial Intelligence Task Force is currently studying the impacts, opportunities, and challenges of AI, both at Middlesex and in the broader field of education. Its work will then help guide the Academic Council, individual departments, and the Dean's Office in determining policies and discussing implementation ideas that will allow for the inclusion of AI in ways that align with the School's academic values and integrity policies.

Left to right:

- **Jecca Hutcheson**, Head of the English Department and Humanities Division
- **Matt DeGreeff**, Dean of College Counseling and Student Enrichment
- **Karlyn McNall**, Assistant Head of School
- **Marc Carter**, Director of Technology
- **John Bishop**, Biology & Chemistry teacher

Not pictured:

- **Ashok Pillai**, Computer Science Department Head





Teaching Through Storytelling

Chinese Department Head Zhenyan Li blends culture, creativity, and global connections in her teaching of Mandarin Chinese.

IT'S A GRAY, CHILLY FRIDAY morning in late February, but inside Ware Hall's 1994 Room, several students and two faculty children are contentedly making *tangyuan*, a Chinese dessert typically eaten during the Lantern Festival, which marks the last day of the Lunar New Year celebration. Folding small, soft circles of rice flour dough over a bit of black sesame or red bean paste, they roll these up into balls that will be simmered in water before being sampled by the group—or any passerby who'd like a taste.

Introducing traditions like this to her classes—and the school community at large—is one of Zhenyan Li's favorite aspects of teaching. "When we say in Middlesex's mission that we help students become 'citizens of the world,' I see that as understanding the essence of a culture," she says. "I share Chinese customs and values with them, so that they can develop greater understanding."

Of course, this is just one part of Zhenyan's approach in each of the five Chinese courses that she teaches, from the beginning level through Advanced Placement. Another distinguishing feature is her use of storytelling as a method of language instruction. "I went to a workshop on 'Teaching with Comprehensible Input,'" she

explains. "The idea is that we should teach language like parents do; you don't correct the grammar of everything a child says. The theory is to use a lot of storytelling and story creation with students as a more natural way of learning a language."

Instead of centering lessons on discerning tones, for example, Zhenyan details, "I read a story together with students, and they focus on how I pronounce the words, imitating that pronunciation. Since the words are learned in the context of the story, they remember how the word is pronounced. I make lessons interactive; they all participate." There is no shortage of available material, she finds, as stories can be easily drawn from everything from Japanese manga panels to current news articles.

In turn, with the new words and concepts learned from a given story, students then write their own narratives, often collaborating with classmates. They have also written speeches for an in-class contest and, every October, students have scripted their own horror movies, an assignment that culminates in a Halloween film festival. "Students are very creative, and these are ways for them to show that as well as practice their

vocabulary and grammar,” Zhenyan notes.

She connects her students with native speakers, too—not only by leading weekend excursions into Boston’s Chinatown and chaperoning the March break trip to Taiwan, but also by arranging visits with guest speakers and Zoom conversations with high school students in China. “We have discussions with them about questions like, ‘What makes you happy?’” Zhenyan says. “Sometimes we’ll watch a Chinese movie, and my students will compare what they thought and understood with how students in China interpreted it.”

Whether she is engaged with her five classes, meeting with the Chinese Club or AZN (Middlesex’s Asian affinity group), or running a demonstration on how to make dumplings, Zhenyan’s genuine love of teaching is apparent. “It’s a pleasure to share my culture with the School,” she says. “I enjoy doing it.” **M**



At left: During March break, Chinese Department Head Zhenyan Li (third from right) journeyed to Taiwan with 15 students and fellow chaperone Cynara Wu, who teaches math.

Celebrating New England Championships

For both the varsity field hockey and girls' varsity cross-country teams, the fall of 2023 was an extraordinary season that concluded with winning the New England Championship in their respective sports.

Field Hockey: First in the ISL and in NEPSAC's Class B

While showcasing their individual skills and game sense, this year's varsity field hockey teammates brought out each other's strengths and supported each other in difficult moments. Always encouraged by their coaches to "play with and for each other," the team embraced that motto, resulting in an 18-2 overall record, first place in the ISL, and first seed in the NEPSAC Class B Championships. After topping Berkshire 2-0 in the quarterfinals, Middlesex defeated Groton 2-0 in the semifinals, and then secured the New England title with a thrilling 1-0 victory in overtime against BB&N on November 19.

Surrounded by their jubilant teammates, Co-captains Molly Nye '24 (#18) and Avery Taylor '24 (#27) happily held the NEPSAC championship trophy.



In addition to being named the ISL MVP for a second consecutive year, Co-captain Molly Nye '24 earned the title of 2023 NEPSAC Class B Field Hockey Player of the Year and was named an All-American.



A decisive 3-0 victory over BB&N clinched the 2023 ISL title for Middlesex on November 8.



Coaches Emily Teevens (far right) and Starry Zhu (far left) joined their runners for a team photo with the NEPSA Division II trophy.

Girls' Cross-Country: An Undefeated Regular Season

With wins over Nobles, St. Paul's, Lawrence, and St. Mark's on October 28, the girls' varsity cross-country team finished the regular season with a perfect record of 15-0. At the ISL Championships on November 3, Co-captain Sadie Millett '24 led the charge and finished in fifth place, followed by Cassidy Bruno '26 (7th place), Stella Curwin-Amfitheatrof '26 (12th), Anika Ata '26 (19th), Katie Tantillo '26 (36th), and Co-captain Mitchell Ladd '24 (38th). Together, their efforts earned Middlesex second place and prepared them for their final race on November 11. On a hilly Roxbury Latin course, the team displayed toughness and composure, ultimately taking five of the top 20 spots. Sadie again led the team, taking third place; Cate Corbett '26 finished sixth, followed by Cassidy in eighth, Stella in 17th, and Anika in 18th. Their combined score of 52 points topped Governor Academy's 72 points, bringing Middlesex the NEPSA Division II Championship trophy.



Cate Corbett '26 (on left) and Co-captain Sadie Millett '24 both enjoyed successful seasons and were named All-League and All-NEPSAC. During her Middlesex career, Sadie earned All-League and All-New England honors in each of her competitive seasons, was the individual 2022 New England Division II Champion, and led the team to two ISL Championships and two New England Championships.



Members of the varsity gathered for a photo at their last meet. Pictured, from left to right, are Stella Curwin-Amfitheatrof '26, Co-captain Mitchell Ladd '24, Co-captain Sadie Millett '24, Katie Tantillo '26, Cate Corbett '26, Anika Ata '26, Cassidy Bruno '26, Catherine Bain '25, Co-captain Kate McBride '24, and Florence Morlock '24.

Athletic Highlights

For more sports news visit athletics.mxschool.edu



Football

Headed to Harvard next year, Co-Captain Ty Fein '24 was named All-NEPSAC and earned an All-League Honorable Mention in his senior season, while Frankie Forrest '26 (#11) was named a Boston Globe Player of the Week after scoring three times against St. Mark's.



Co-captain Griffin Miller '24 returned a kickoff under the lights in Middlesex's 28-7 victory over St. Mark's. He will continue his football career at Bowdoin in the fall.



Volleyball

A four-year varsity player, Co-captain Devon Coyle '24 earned the Middlesex Volleyball Bowl for her dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work. One highlight of the 2024 season was the program's 100th win, a 3-1 victory over Concord Academy on October 18. Led by Head Coach Ashok Pillai since the volleyball program was established in 2014, Middlesex has been a perennial playoff contender every year and was crowned the 2016 ISL and NEPSAC Champions.



Girls' Soccer

Fending off a Milton opponent in an early game, Co-captain Ally Haines '24 capped her senior season with a victory against St. George's; she was named All-League and All-NEPSAC for her outstanding efforts.

Boys' Cross-Country

Along with their teammate Daghan Konur '26 (far left), Co-captains Joey Caspar '24 (center) and Nick Costantino '24 led the pack at the start of an early race with Belmont Hill and Austin Prep. At the end of the team's 11-6 season, Nick was named both All-League and All-NEPSAC.

Boys' Soccer

After a pre-season trip to Copenhagen, Co-captains Aidan O'Sullivan '24 (above) and Teddy Fritzinger '24 led their Middlesex team to the quarterfinals of the NEPSAC Class B Tournament and a 13-7 overall record. Having scored 23 goals in the season, Teddy was named All-League and All-NEPSAC. Also an All-NEPSAC selection, Aidan received an All-League Honorable Mention and shared with Teddy the honor of receiving Middlesex's 1976 Soccer Team Bowl.



Q&A with New Athletic Director Craig Najarian

WHEN HE FIRST VISITED Middlesex 18 years ago while recruiting baseball players for College of the Holy Cross, Craig Najarian remembers being “blown away” by the campus and community. “I thought it would be a pretty cool place to be a part of—a small, close-knit school,” he says. Now Middlesex’s Director of Athletics, Craig joined the faculty last July as a veteran college coach with 16 years of experience as an athletic director, most recently at Catholic Memorial. He is a graduate of Saint Anselm College, where he played four years of baseball, and holds a master’s degree in athletic administration from Endicott College.

How would you describe the importance of athletics within Middlesex?

Athletics to me are a critical part of any school community, and a big part of that for me personally was how my experience really stirred my emotions. Learning to step outside your comfort zone, to coalesce as a team, and to communicate interpersonally are skills that I want all students to graduate with. It also provides a unique platform for students to build their self-esteem, learn to compete, and represent their school; this has a profound effect on the overall school culture and provides the opportunity for students to be part of something much bigger than themselves. With the right approach, athletics will always be a galvanizing force that helps bring our community together.

What would you like students to gain through their athletic experience at Middlesex?

My hope and focus for our athletes will always be to develop tremendous

leaders. I want them to learn to communicate proactively and effectively with each other and their coaches, to learn to deal with adversity in its many forms, and to learn to compete when circumstances are not ideal. I want them to build a tremendous work ethic which sets a tone and creates an approach that others will gravitate towards. If our athletes have a strong work ethic, are competitive in the face of adversity, and are effective communicators, then they will be our best leaders. On top of that, I really want them all to build their self-esteem and self-confidence as they grow within the program. All of these things are central to my philosophy and are all wrapped together.

To develop those leadership qualities, what strengths should coaches have?

Our coaches—above all else—need to have an elite ability to connect with kids. That has always been the main X factor that defines great coaches. Having a great depth of knowledge, strong work ethic, commitment to building a program top to bottom, elite communication skills, and thoughtful approach with the kids are things I also focus on. Great coaches make a great athletic program (at all levels), and I know how critical that is to creating a championship culture, a positive culture, and a culture that the students can thrive and grow in.

Plans for a new Field House at Middlesex are well underway. What do they include?

We’re really focusing on making this facility appeal to student-athletes of all levels and trying to promote a dynamic championship atmosphere that brings our students together. With two

full basketball/volleyball courts, a full turf section, a suspended track, and a variety of cardio/rehab equipment, we’ve created multiple options. We anticipate hosting wrestling tournaments in this facility and providing a home for our track team to gather and train. The hub of this facility is our Fitness Center, which will be large enough for full team training and explosive training, while also providing enough space for all our athletes to be at their best. **M**



ANNOUNCING

A Game-Changing Initiative

Middlesex Plans for a New Athletic Field House

FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS of the School's founding, athletics have been an integral part of a Middlesex education. Since the Orr Gymnasium was built in 1916, athletic facilities have been added, renovated, and enhanced—yet without greatly expanding beyond the footprint of that original Gym and the adjacent Cage. The construction of a new Field House, right next to the current athletic complex, will give Middlesex a facility that matches the strength of its dynamic program. As the floor plans and renderings here show, student-athletes will be able to reap the benefits of training in a spacious, well-equipped Fitness Center, practicing on indoor turf, playing on two basketball/volleyball courts, and running laps on an elevated, indoor track.



The new Athletic Field House pictured here has been a long-awaited project that is near and dear to my heart. Middlesex athletics could not be more important to the School's mission. This transformational facility represents the importance of paying it forward; generations of students and athletes will benefit from all the opportunities that Middlesex athletics provide.

Curt Curtis '62, Trustee



I am super jealous of future students! Having an indoor turf field sounds amazing because you will have access to it all year-round; so, if you want to, you can work on your sport all year-round, and that's awesome.

Molly Nye '24, Varsity Field Hockey and Nordic Skiing



An elevated track encircles an indoor turf field and two courts for basketball, volleyball, and wrestling meets.



I am so excited about the Field House and the many ways it will transform the Middlesex athletic experience. It will impact our ability to coach in extraordinary ways and will allow us to meet the needs of our athletes and sports programs more fully and equitably. Not only will the Field House enhance training opportunities for varsity athletes, but it will serve all students as a space where they can exercise and prioritize their health and wellness.

**Emily Teevens, English Teacher,
Head Girls' Cross-Country Coach**



We don't get the track [in downtown Concord] every day because we share it with other schools in the area, so I think having a place where we can practice every day would make us better athletes.

**Malcolm Clark '24,
Varsity Track and Football**



Seen from the football field, the Field House (with the Orr Gymnasium on the right) will greatly increase the School's indoor athletic facilities and provide a second-story balcony for game spectators.

PERFORMING Arts

Radium Girls

Kaye Theatre | November 10 & 11, 2023

In 1926, radium was a miracle cure, Madame Curie was an international celebrity, and glow-in-the-dark watches were the latest rage. Then, the girls who painted those watch dials began to die.

Based on the true story of the women and men who worked for the U.S. Radium Corporation—and the factory girls who made labor history—D. W. Gregory's play *Radium Girls* intrigued Middlesex audiences on November 10 and 11, 2023. Poignant and thought-provoking, the drama gave students much to consider about how the voices of science and women are valued when those very voices may stand in the way of profit.



The Wolves

Fortmiller Studio Theatre
January 12 & 13, 2024

A one-act play written by Sarah DeLappe, *The Wolves* follows a high school girls' soccer team as they warm up for a series of games, preparing for battle. Amid warmups and passing drills in practice, the undefeated Wolves psych each other up—and dive into rapid-fire, unfiltered conversations about the world and their places in it. What happens when life both on and off the field tests the team's endurance?



Sibling Harmony

Winter Recitals by Sarah '09 and Thomas '13 Cooper

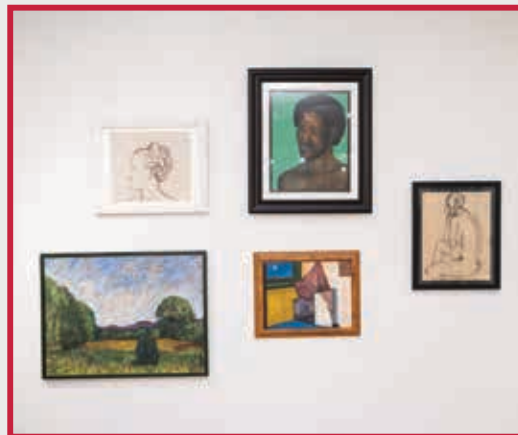
On consecutive Thursdays in January, Middlesex was treated to two extraordinary recitals, first by lyric soprano Sarah Cooper '09 on January 18, 2024, and then by violinist Thomas Cooper '13 on January 25. Each performed first during weekly chapel and then in the Danoff Recital Hall, giving the school community a rare and remarkable opportunity to enjoy their artistry right here on campus. While Sarah performed twice at Carnegie Hall last year and sang with the Boston Lyric Opera in February, Thomas is the founder and artistic director of Fermata Chamber Soloists and recently performed one of Bologne's violin concertos with the Du Bois Orchestra in Cambridge.



VISUAL Arts

Parallel Practice: FACULTY ART EXHIBITION

The Ishibashi Gallery's winter exhibition, *Parallel Practice*, featured works produced exclusively by seven Middlesex faculty members. Including a range of forms—paintings and photographs, collage and sculptures, textiles and carvings—the exhibition was “an amazing opportunity to see faculty work and hear about what compels them to be artists and inspires their teaching,” as Visual Arts Department Head Stacey McCarthy noted. “I hope that I always have that parallel practice,” she added. “I hope that I always have space to make my art, so that I can continue to inspire in an authentic way.”



Ken Whitlock



Laura Darby McNally '80

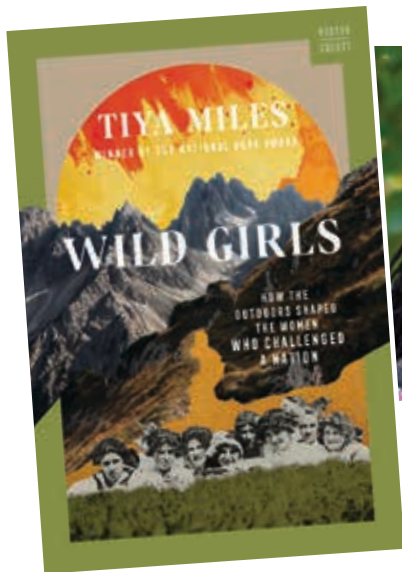


Hannah Minifie



Stacey McCarthy

IN PRINT: Alumni Authors



Wild Girls: How the Outdoors Shaped the Women Who Challenged a Nation

by Tiya Miles '88, Michael Garvey
Professor of History and Radcliffe
Alumnae Professor

A *New York Times* Book Review Editors' Choice and A *Publishers Weekly* and New York Public Library Best Book of 2023

A NATIONAL BOOK AWARD-WINNING, *New York Times* best-selling historian, Harvard Professor Tiya Miles '88 shows how girls who found self-understanding in the natural world became women who changed America. Harriet Tubman, forced to labor outdoors on a Maryland plantation, learned a terrain for escape. Louisa May Alcott ran wild, eluding gendered expectations in New England. The Indigenous women's basketball team from Fort Shaw, Montana, recaptured a sense of pride in physical prowess as they trounced the white teams of the 1904 World's Fair. Celebrating women like these who acted on their confidence outdoors, *Wild Girls* also brings new context to misunderstood icons, like



Sacagawea and Pocahontas, and to underappreciated figures like Gertrude Bonin, Dolores Huerta, and Grace Lee Boggs. For the girls at the center of this book, woods, rivers, ball courts, and streets provided not just escape from degrees of servitude but also

space to envision new spheres of action. Lyrically written and full of archival discoveries, this book evokes landscapes as richly as the girls who roamed in them—and argues for equal access to outdoor spaces for girls of every race and class today.

Described by Kirkus Reviews as “a fresh, graceful contribution to women’s history,” *Wild Girls* is praised as a “unique and compelling entry in the Norton Shorts series (described as ‘brilliance with brevity’) by Booklist, which further noted, “So many fascinating women of different races are included in this little book. It’s a true treasure!” **M**

Savor: A Chef's Hunger for More

by Fatima Ali with Tarajia Morrell '98

Winner of the 2023 James Beard Book Award for Literary Writing

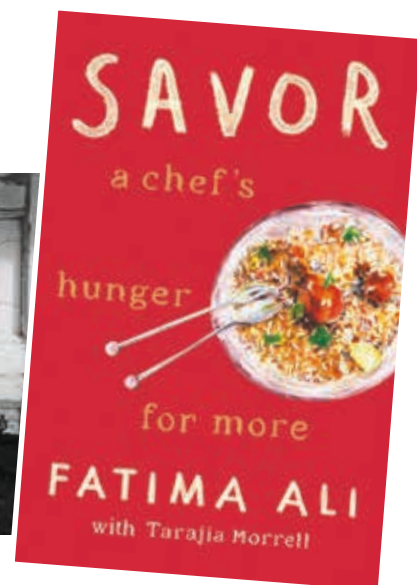
FATIMA ALI WON THE HEARTS

of viewers as the Fan Favorite of Bravo's *Top Chef* in season 15. Then 29 years old, she was a dynamic, boundary-breaking chef and a bright new voice for change in the food world. After the taping wrapped and before the show aired, Fati was diagnosed with

a rare form of bone cancer. Not one to ever slow down or admit defeat, the star chef vowed to spend her final year traveling the world, eating delicious food, and making memories with her loved ones. But when her condition abruptly worsened, her plans were sidelined. She pivoted, determined to make her final days count as she worked to tell the story of a brown girl chef who set out to make a name for herself, her food, and her culture.

Including writing from Fatima during her last months and contributions by her mother, Farezeh, and her collaborator, Tarajia Morrell '98, *Savor* is a triumphant memoir. At its core, it is a story about what it means to truly live, a profound and exquisite portrait of savoring every moment.

From the *New York Times* Book Review: “Inspiring . . . Ali comes across as being sensual, vulnerable, and wise. Even as she righteously mourns all that she’s losing, she maintains a wicked sense of humor. She writes, ‘I want to leave something behind, something traceable, that could perhaps help others to ride the bull, to grab life by the horns.’ With [Tarajia] Morrell as a posthumous guide, that is exactly what she has done with *Savor*.” **M**



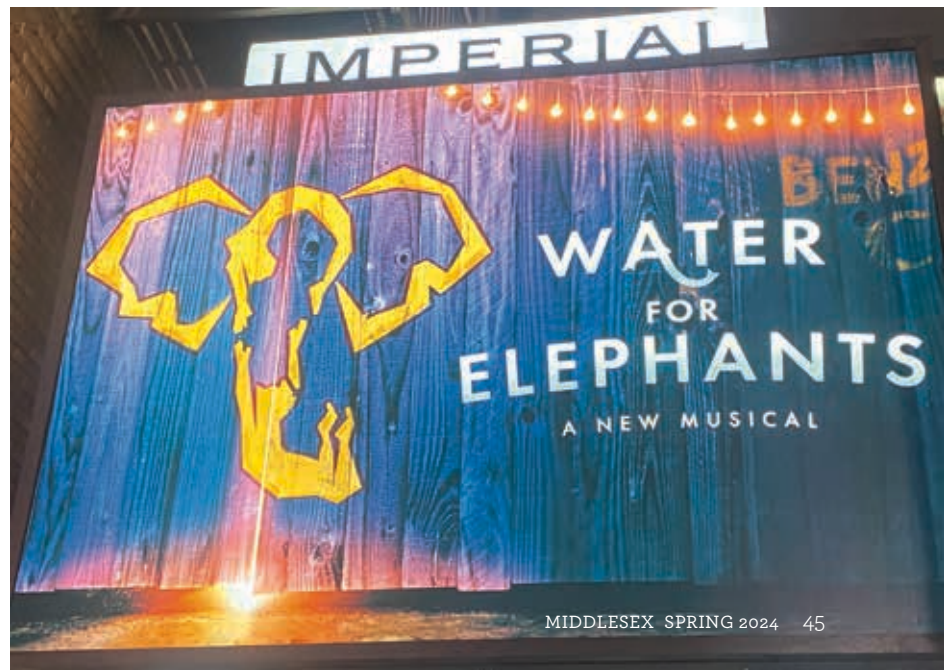
ON BROADWAY: A New Musical's Score by PigPen Theatre Co.

AS A MIDDLESEX STUDENT, Ryan Melia '07 was a mainstay on the Wood Theatre's stage, with leading roles in dramas like *The Seagull* and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, as well as in musicals, including *Into the Woods*, *Bat Boy*, and *Les Misérables*. After graduation, during his freshman year at the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama, Ryan and six like-minded, talented students formed PigPen Theatre Co. and began creating their unique brand of theatre, music, and film. They have since performed, produced, and licensed their original plays in New York City and all over the world—earning them critics' picks from *The New York Times*, *Time Out New York*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Boston Globe*, and many more.

And with the official opening of *Water for Elephants*, on March 21, 2024, PigPen Theatre Co. has now made it to Broadway, having written the score for this unique, new musical adapted from Sara Gruen's bestselling novel. Directed by Tony Award® nominee Jessica Stone (*Kimberly Akimbo*), with a book by three-time Tony nominee Rick Elice (*Jersey Boys*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*), *Water for Elephants* has been described by *The New York Times* as "a synthesis of theater and circus, bedazzled for a Broadway audience."

Eager to support the creative efforts of PigPen Theatre Co.—and, of course, Ryan—a crowd of Middlesex alumni, faculty, and friends turned out for a preview performance on March 3, 2024, at the Imperial Theatre. **M**

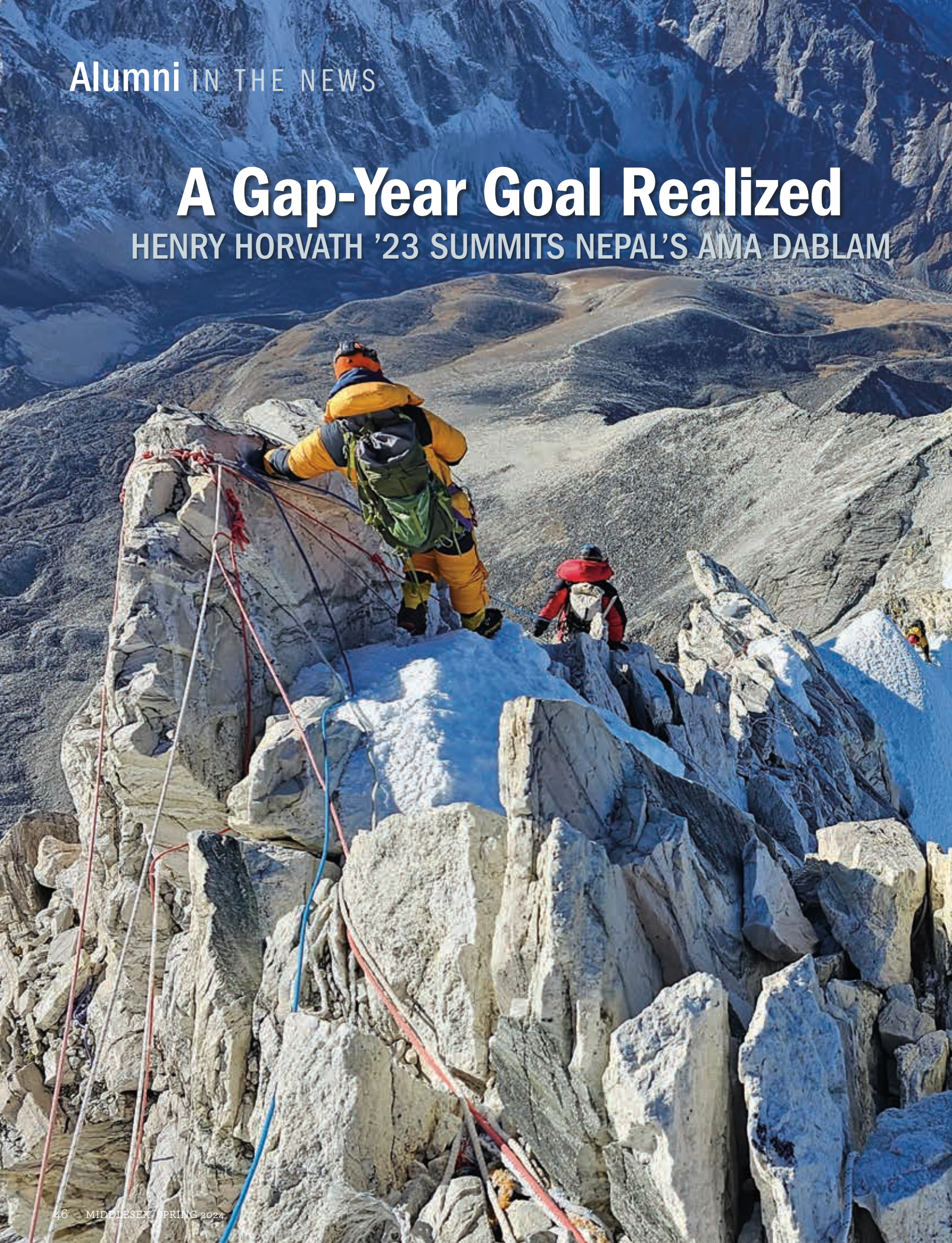
Rosie Lowe '07, Mary Mallen '07, and Middlesex Performing Arts Director Tom Kane were among the contingent of Middlesex friends who met up with Ryan Melia '07 at a preview performance of *Water for Elephants*.




Alumni IN THE NEWS

A Gap-Year Goal Realized

HENRY HORVATH '23 SUMMITS NEPAL'S AMA DABLAM





IN 2021, HENRY HORVATH '23 AND his father had already snowshoed a difficult Adirondack trail in record time before setting off that summer for Alaska, where Henry became the youngest climber that year to conquer Denali—counted among the renowned “Seven Summits” in mountaineering. More recently, the pair reached the top of Ama Dablam—known as “the Matterhorn of the Himalayas”—attaining a major goal of the gap year Henry envisioned before heading to Harvard next fall.

It could be said that this venture has been a lifetime in the making. After all, Henry has been hiking since childhood with his father, who has climbed Everest once and Denali twice. “The first thing I remember is how he would take me on trips to the Adirondacks, backpacking overnight,” Henry says. “It’s something I’ve grown up with.”

Henry also learned both rock and ice climbing skills from his father, eventually taking trips with him to Wyoming’s Teton Range and the Sierra Nevada in California. Then, in 2018, they traveled to Argentina to attempt the highest peak in the Andes—and in the entire Western and Southern Hemispheres. “To go to Aconcagua at 13 was a huge step,” Henry allows. “Unfortunately, I had an altitude-related migraine aura and had to get down to base camp to get checked out by a doctor.” Still, he had climbed more than 20,000 feet, a new personal record that would help prepare him for Denali and inspire new ambitions.

“I had been playing with the idea of a gap year for a while,” Henry says. “The seasons for Himalayan peaks are fall and spring, during which I had always been in school. So, the plan for Ama Dablam was formulated during my senior year, specifically to have the opportunity to go on these bigger, more challenging climbs in the Himalayas.”



Photo: Emily bei Cheng @alpinemily

While his Middlesex classmates went off to college last fall, Henry started working for a construction company while also training for Nepal. “The two main things are legs and lungs,” he notes. Hiking with a pack, running, weightlifting, and high-intensity interval training help to strengthen the capacity of both.

Departing on October 28, 2023, Henry and his father spent nearly a month in the Himalayas, taking time to “trek around, see tea houses and cool passes, and acclimatize on Lobuche,” Henry details. Once they began their ascent of Ama Dablam, he continued, “There are fixed lines from Camp One to the summit, but it is ice climbing—you are on vertical rock and mixed ice. There are a lot of sections that are steep. Then, once you get to Camp 2, the tents are perched on a cliff, looking like they are going to fall off. And from there it just gets steeper. You’re traversing ridges of rock and snow.” Reaching 22,349 feet on November 17, 2023, they summited Ama Dablam, making Henry one of youngest Americans to complete this climb.

He has “a really long list of peaks” that he’d eventually like to get to, drawn to that “ultimate satisfaction of the summit.” Equally rewarding for Henry, though, are the mental and physical challenges of climbing. “When you’re at the top of a peak,” he reflects, “you realize that how you got up there is sometimes more important than being there.” **M**

ALUMNI Events

Catching up with Alumni in College

Since September, faculty in the Middlesex Alumni Office have enjoyed visiting campuses throughout New England—and in New York, Virginia, and Washington, DC—to check in with young alumni and hear about their college experiences.



Connecticut College: Nicollette Roark '20, Holly Levasseur '22, Sydney Feeney '22, and Alana Burm '22.



Trinity College: James Webb '23, Morgan Clapp '22, Charlotte Hinckley '23, Abby Murphy '23, Greg Linton '20, and Colin Cunningham '20.



New York University: Annabelle Rogers '22 and Femi Ogunseye '20.



University of Virginia: Tyler Dooling '20, Pavel Akmaev '21, Hayden Hutson-Wiley '21, George Fulton '21, and Lily Jarrett '19.



University of Richmond: Lincoln Graham '23, Will Tydings '23, and Abigail Riordan '22.



In Providence, RI: Alex Pittelli '22, Cannon Caspar '21, Matt Wing '23, James Ewing '20, Julian Dai '22, Jimmy Symonds '20, Sarah Nguyen '23, and Jojo Nwosu '22.



Alumni attending Boston-area colleges turned out in full force on September 28 for dinner at the Yard House.

Middlesex in Florida

Thanks to the generosity and hospitality of alumni, two receptions for graduates and parents were held in Florida last November, giving friends, families, and new Head of School Bessie Speers a chance to connect.

Palm Beach

The Sailfish Club in Palm Beach was the place to be on November 8, 2023, for a reception hosted by Grant Mashek '98.



Beth Cohen King '97, Director of Advancement George Noble P'23'25, Trustee Courtney Portlock P'20'22, and Macy Jones '61.



Tom Speers '76 with Jill and Peter Weise (P'26).



Emily Herter Sprong '97 P'25, Nia Hatsopoulos Jephson '98, Grant Mashek '98, Allyson Foreman, Lisa Molvar '97 P'27, and Beth Cohen King '97.



Marc Portlock P'20'22 and Dawn Oates.

Coral Gables

Former Trustee Ricardo Albarran '86 and his wife Carla (P'18'20) graciously opened their Coral Gables home to Middlesex on November 7, 2023. Seated in front are Head of School Bessie Speers, Carla Albarran, and Director of Development Heather Parker P'16'18. Standing behind them are Duncan Littlejohn '72, Carla Albarran '20, Melissa Noble and Director of Advancement George Noble (P'23'25), Tom Speers '76, Ricardo Albarran '86, Ricky Albarran '18, Molly Miller '10, Luis Rodriguez, Laura Mendoza and Will Wiseheart '05, Michele Wiseheart W'61 P'05, Monk Terry '64 P'90'93 GP'26, Senior Advancement Officer Christine Steiner, and Kitty Terry P'90'93 GP'26.



Monk Terry '64 and his wife Kitty have added another generation to their Middlesex legacy. Not only are they the parents of two alumnae, Louisa Terry Garrido '90 and Megan Terry Wallace '93, but they are also the grandparents of current student Ollie Wallace '26.

ALUMNI Events



Boston Alumni and Parent Reception

Nearly 200 alumni and parents in the Boston area turned out to greet Head of School Bessie Speers at a November 15th reception, hosted at The Quin House by Trustee Sarah Leary '88.

The evening was also a great time for alumni to catch up with some of their faculty mentors and introduce their spouses. From left to right are Pam Diem Willis '95 P'27, retired faculty member Ned Herter '73 (P'97'99'02 GP'25), Dawn Oates, Lisa Molvar '97 P'27, retired faculty member Nancy Herter P'97'99'02 GP'25, Dusty Nolin P'27, Emily Herter Sprong '97 P'25, Beth Seeley Dietz '01, Middlesex's Head Athletic Trainer Laura Darby McNally '80 P'16, and Beth Cohen King '97.



Middlesex's Board President Jason Robart '83 P'11'13 is flanked by Chris Parker P'16'18 and Director of Development Heather Parker P'16'18.



Tom Speers '76 and Jonathan Warburg '59.



Lee Counselman P'25 and Trustee Caroline Counselman P'25, who serves as president of the Middlesex Parents Committee.

Trustee Sarah Leary '88, Nancy Frost Bland '86, Head of School Bessie Speers, and Todd Bland.



Brian Cloherty '19, Head of School Bessie Speers, and Trustee Rob Trumbull '00.

Resuming Receptions in Asia

With travel restrictions starting to lessen, Advancement Director George Noble connected with Middlesex families in China and Hong Kong for the first time since 2019, wrapping up his fall 2023 itinerary with a return to Seoul, Korea, which he was able to visit in 2022.



At the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Seoul, on December 1, 2023, the Middlesex Korean Parents Association hosted a dinner reception for alumni and parents. Seated, left to right, are Na Young Cho '02, Judy Chi '05, Haejung Chung '06, George Noble, Jun-Suk Li '97, Woo Young Dan '99, Ji Sung Park '02, and Ed Park '05. Standing behind them are Patrick Kim and Vivian Lee (P'27), Hyunsik Yoon and Saecbyul Kim (P'21'24), Byeng Chun Song P'17, Judy Park and Jun Hur (P'24'26), Dr. Jamie Park and BJ Park (P' 27), Stephanie Huh and San Tae Han (P'27), Juhee Sung P'26, and Eun Jeong Kim P'18.



Mothers of current Middlesex students got together for a dinner on November 30, 2023, in Seoul, Korea. In attendance were Sonia Chang P'27, Vivian Lee P'27, Juhee Sung P'26, George Noble, Judy Park P'24'26 (who hosted the event), and Dr. Jamie Park P'27.



A December 7th dinner at the American Club in Hong Kong was hosted by William Chan and Sherry Poon, parents of Stanley '19 and Melissa Chan '27. Joining them and George Noble were David Kurtz '93, Steven Leung '03, Boris Yu '10, Noven Wan P'16, Lawrence and Carol Chan (P'26'27), James Zhao and Catherine Xu (P'27) and their younger son Eric, Kevin Chan P'26, Wilson Tang and Amy Kwong (P'24), and Xiaowen Ding and Lucia Liu (P'27).



On December 2, 2023, Pei Pei Zhang and Yongli Fan—parents of David Fan '15—hosted a dinner in Beijing that brought together (from left to right) Shelley Xia P'21'23, Isabella Zhu P'27, Charlene Ng '99, Jessie Liang and James Li (P'17), George Noble, Jinyang Xue P'17, Jeff Li and Sophy Zhang (P'21).

Touring Beijing, Yongli Fan and Pei Pei Zhang (P'15), George Noble, Sophy Zhang P'21 (with her young friend Stella holding the Middlesex banner!), Shelley Xia P'21'23, James Li P'17, and Jeff Li P'21 stopped at the Great Wall on December 3, 2023.



ALUMNI Events

MX Fam Reception in NYC

The gathering in New York City for the School's MX Fam affinity group drew many alumni to Starchild Rooftop on January 4, 2024.



Former Trustee Joe Watkins '71 and his wife Stephanie (GP'20'22), Duane Jones '70, Head of School Bessie Speers and her husband, Tom Speers '76.



Director of Development Heather Parker P'16'18, Terrence Agbi '07, Ray Sanchez '96, and Gavin Johnson '09.



Ima Edomwonyi '09, Director of Advancement George Noble P'23'25, Diego Maquieira '09, and Chris Lawrence '09.



Trustee Freddie Pantoja '86, Jacqueline Oyola, Jamar Haywood '97, and Ray Sanchez '96.



DJ Williams '16 and Dereck Marmolejos '18.



Odamea Akomah Gbamuse '04, Head of School Bessie Speers, Prentis Robinson '07, and Steve Gunn '06.



California Alumni & Parents Receptions

Traveling to three locations over three days at the end of February, Head of School Bessie Speers and faculty in the Alumni and Development Office enjoyed meeting with alumni and parents in California.

La Jolla



Among those in attendance were (standing, left to right): John Wadsworth '91, host Bill Purvis '64, Chris Simonds '90, James Gordon '71, Stella and David Bloom '81, Olin Lewin '93, Denise Pace-Barshop, and Bruce Barshop '72. Seated: Host Donald Schmidt, Tom Speers '76, Senior Advancement Officer Christine Steiner, Mackenzie Ferguson '03, Kim Simonds, Head of School Bessie Speers, and Development Director Heather Parker P'16'18.



Donald Schmidt and Bill Purvis '64 (on left) graciously hosted a Middlesex reception in their home on February 27, 2024, warmly welcoming new Head of School Bessie Speers.

San Francisco



Head of School Bessie Speers stands with Jon Rotenstreich '88, who hosted the reception for Bay Area alumni and parents at the California Tennis Club on February 29, 2024.



Stanford junior Kwabena Kwakwa '21 and Head of School Bessie Speers.

Santa Monica



Paul Slye '80, Middlesex Director of Development Heather Parker, Heidi Hoffmann Slye '80, and Mason Brown '85 joined the gathering at the Annenberg Community Beach House on February 28, 2024.



Coming to Santa Monica from the Los Angeles area were (from left to right) Rebecca Nelson '05, Brad Holt '94, Nate Donaldson '03, Dani DeLaurentis '03, Katherine Lodge Lowell '07, Will Lowell '06, Henry Hetz '11, and Hayden Emery '23.

IN Memoriam

Henry B. Thompson III '43

Henry Burling Thompson III passed away peacefully in his sleep on January 16, 2024.

Born in New York City on December 24, 1923, Hank joined the fourth class at Middlesex in 1939. On graduating, he was to attend Princeton, but his matriculation was delayed by World War II. Hank enlisted in the U.S. Army and joined the Second U.S. Armored Division (a.k.a. "Hell on Wheels"). After landing in Normandy in the weeks following the 1944 invasion, he then traveled across Europe to Germany, where he was injured and later honorably discharged. He was awarded the Purple Heart and, more recently, received the Legion of Honor from the French Government in January 2023.

After the war, Hank earned an A.B. in history from Princeton and then worked on Wall Street for many years at brokerage firms, including du Pasquier and Moore & Schley, Cameron. Investing in the stock market remained one of his passions for the rest of his life. After his uncle, James Thompson, disappeared in Malaysia in the spring of 1967, Hank shifted careers to become more involved in managing Jim's estate and the successful, growing company he left behind.

For over 50 years, Hank resided in Oyster Bay, NY, with his wife Tina. They enjoyed gardening, fishing, and tennis—but above all, Hank loved competitive sailing, which he did well into his 90s. After Tina's death in 2012, he continued to live independently in the same house and enjoyed doing his own cooking, shopping, and taking care of his cat until the day he died.

Hank was predeceased by his elder son, James W. Thompson, and his brother, **Charles D. W. Thompson '50**. He is survived

by his younger son, **Anthony Thompson '83**, and his grandson Ford.

F. John Wade III '45

Festus John Wade III died after a brief illness on December 13, 2023.

John was born on August 13, 1928, to Catherine Crunden and Festus John Wade, Jr. in St. Louis, MO. From St. Louis Country Day School, he entered Middlesex's third class after winning a Prize Scholarship in 1942; after graduating, John received a B.S. in industrial administration from Yale University in 1949. Developing his rowing skills at Yale, he won the U.S. Rowing Championship in a pair and sat in the stern of the U.S. pair at the 1948 London Olympics.

Following college, John entered the Air Force, serving as a pilot in the Korean War and flying 100 combat missions. Returning to St. Louis after the war, he worked at Mallinckrodt Chemical Company before moving to Jackson, MS, in 1968 to join the Mississippi Research and Development Center. He left there in 1980 to teach in the business school of Jackson State University, having earned his Ph.D. in business management from Mississippi State University.

John was active as a business consultant until moving in 2009 to Trezevant Manor retirement home in Memphis, TN. At Trezevant, he immersed himself in activities and made many good friends. Active with his church, John was also an avid reader and learner who always enjoyed a good discussion. Of his many associations, he was most fond of a group of men who called themselves "the Philosophy Club" and who had many spirited discussions on a variety of topics.

In his later days, John's family was a source of great joy to him.

Predeceased by his first wife, Betty Lu Gordon Wade, who died at an early age, John is survived by his beloved wife, Dorsey Nicholson Wade; the children from their blended marriage, John Brooks Gordon Wade, Thomas Burgis Wade, Catherine Wade McNeel, Susan Gear Deason, and Curry Banister; his sister, Elizabeth Wade Isham; and many nieces and nephews. Middlesex graduates in John's family include his cousins, the late **F. Crunden Cole '40**, the late **Wallace H. Cole, Jr. '42**, and **Wallace H. Cole III '73**.

William W. Locke '54

William Wesley Locke passed away on November 2, 2023, in Cataumet, MA.

Born on April 13, 1935, Bill was raised in Wellesley, MA, and spent many happy summers on the shores of Buzzards Bay. He joined Middlesex's fourth class in 1950 and, on graduating, earned an A.B. in political science at Middlebury College, where he met the love of his life and wife of 65 years, Noelle Caseley.

Bill served in the U.S. Army after college and then joined the Armstrong Cork Company as a sales representative. He had a long and successful career with Armstrong, rising to the position of senior executive responsible for Armstrong's international operations. With a strategy built around his focus on quality, Bill led the company's expansion in Europe, India, China, and Japan. He and his family lived in various locations across America and abroad, settling in Lancaster, PA, where he and Noelle made many cherished friendships. Bill served on the Lancaster Council Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America and, with Noelle, supported community organizations,

including Planned Parenthood and the Heart Association.

Upon retirement, Bill moved back to his childhood home on Scraggy Neck in Cataumet, MA. There he became active in the community and local government, working to restore and protect the natural health of Buzzards Bay. Bill was a long-time supporter of the Bourne Conservation Trust and for many years was on the Leadership Council of the Buzzards Bay Coalition, an organization set up in the 1980s to Save the Bay. He understood and helped to communicate the need to protect our environment and saw the Bay's conservation as his legacy.

Predeceased by his wife Noelle in March 2023, Bill is survived by his children, Clayton, Deborah, Steven, and Jennifer; and four grandchildren. He leaves behind many dear friends from his many walks in life and will be sadly missed.

George N. Monro IV '58

George Nugent Monro IV passed away on January 8, 2024.

The son of Peggy and **George N. Monro III '31** (Middlesex trustee 1955–1958), George was born in Detroit, MI, on December 7, 1939, and spent his youth in Grosse Pointe. He entered the sixth class at Middlesex in 1952, and upon graduating, he earned a B.A. in psychology at Hillsdale College. Starting his career in banking—while also serving in the Air National Guard—George came to the realization that being a banker was far too boring (in his own words). He decided to take his explorer spirit to the air by joining Eastern Airlines in the early '60s. George met Sheila Rogan at an airline mixer in Detroit, and they wed in 1967, remaining happily married for 47 years.

His sales role with Eastern Airlines moved him to Chicago, Washington, DC, San Antonio, Memphis, and finally Savannah, GA. When Eastern Airlines declared bankruptcy, George went on to his next adventure. As a sales agent for R+L Gator Freightways, he covered the land, sea, and air, making many great friends while helping companies move freight through the Lowcountry and beyond.

George gave back to the Savannah community by volunteering frequently at various organizations and fundraisers, including the Muscular Dystrophy Association and Ft. Pulaski National Monument. But his passion was Oatland Island Wildlife Center, where George volunteered for 30-plus years. He always had a great story to tell or a way to bring a laugh; he will be dearly missed by his family and friends.

Preceded in death by his parents, his wife Sheila, and his brother, **Steven W. Monro '61**, George is survived by his daughter, Michelle Lucento; his son, George N. Monro V; two granddaughters; his brother Bill; and several nieces and nephews.

Michael H. Smith '61

Michael Hand Smith passed away unexpectedly at his home on October 30, 2023.

Mike was born to Graydon and Patricia Hand Smith on October 25, 1943, in Concord, MA, where he grew up and attended local public schools before entering Middlesex's sixth class in 1955. After graduating, he went on to earn a B.A. in history at Yale University and an L.L.B. at Columbia Law School. Mike was a partner at Sullivan and Wooster Law Offices in Boston, MA, and subsequently joined Courier Corporation as their chief legal counsel. He ended his career at

Fidelity Investments and lived in Tunisia in North Africa for five years while working for the company.

Outside of work, Mike's true passions were sailing and photography. In addition to being the roving photographer for the newspaper at Yale, he was a member of the sailing team, winning the McMillan Cup in Luders 34's and helping to design the Corinthian Club House. Mike sailed across the Atlantic more than once and participated in several Bermuda races. In his words, "Every day on the water is one more year added to your life." He was a gentle giant with a wonderful sense of humor and will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

Mike is survived by the love of his life, Abby Howell Smith, to whom he was married for 28 years; his son, Christopher Swain; his daughters, Amanda Bingham and Eliza Mellen-Smith; his stepchildren, James Samuels and Emery Chapman; his brother, **Jonathan S. Smith '68**; and 12 grandchildren. He was predeceased by his parents; his brother, **David G. Smith '65**; and his sister, Patricia Jeremiah.

Michael L. Carlebach '63

Michael Lloyd Carlebach died on August 22, 2023.

The son of Priscilla and **William D. Carlebach '37** (Middlesex trustee 1975-1982; 1983-1992), Michael was born on March 3, 1945, and joined the School's fourth class in 1959. On graduating, he earned a B.A. in French and political science at Colgate University. In 1980, Michael received his M.A. in American studies from Florida State University, following that with a second M.A. in 1984 and a Ph.D. in 1988 in American civilization from Brown University.

Michael lived and photographed in South Florida for over three-and-a-half decades, during which time he worked as a photojournalist for *The Miami Herald* as well as a staff photographer for *The Village Post* in Coconut Grove, FL, and as an unpaid photographer for Miami Children's Hospital's Ventilation Assisted Children's Center sleepaway camp. While on the faculty at the University of Miami from 1978 to 2005, he directed the American Studies Program and chaired the Department of Art and Art History. For his contributions, he won the Wilson Hicks Conference Award, the Freshman Teaching Award, an Excellence in Teaching Award, and a Provost's Award for Scholarly Activity. He was also well-known for his books about early American photojournalism—*American Photojournalism Comes of Age* and *The Origins of Photojournalism in America*—as well as for his photographs of South Florida and the U.S. In 2011, Michael donated images from his personal archives to The University of Miami Libraries' Special Collections.

In addition to his wife Margot, Michael is survived by his two sons, Joshua and **Adam S. Carlebach '86**; one brother, **Stevenson W. Carlebach '73**; and two grandchildren. His niece, **Priscilla Smith Rathbone '87** is also a Middlesex graduate. Michael was predeceased by his parents; two brothers, William D. Carlebach, Jr. and **Matthew H. Carlebach '69**; and three sisters, Elisabeth C. Smith, Katherine A. Carlebach, and Melissa A. Carlebach.

John G. Mathers '65

John Grinnell Mathers died on August 6, 2023.

Born on February 19, 1946, John attended East Woods School and The Fessenden

School before joining the fourth class at Middlesex in 1961. After receiving his diploma and earning his undergraduate degree at Hobart College, John married Mary Paine and worked in advertising in NYC. Seeking a more fulfilling life, he moved to California and remarried. With his wife Roseana, he had three daughters: Nicole, Ursula, and Lara. Eventually, he met the love of his life, Margaret Suydam, and they enjoyed 37 years of marriage.

John had a love of life and sense of humor that were infectious. He enjoyed learning from others and would do whatever was necessary to help them succeed. John enjoyed his hospice volunteer work, his storytelling to youth at the Asian Art Museum, his Golden Gate Breakfast Club gatherings, and his work with the Climate Change Youth Program through Rotary International. He became president of the San Francisco chapter of Rotary International and coordinator of their world-wide climate change activities.

Proud of his children and how they evolved, John also adored his grandchildren and did his best to nurture their creativity. He encouraged his wife Peggy in her endeavors, too; through hard work and dedication, she is now a master gardener and Asian Art Museum docent, giving speeches about sustainable water usage, flowers, and Asian art across 17 countries.

At the time of his death, John was survived by his wife Peggy; his daughters Nicole, Ursula, and Lara; eight grandchildren; his brothers, **William M. Mathers '62** and **Michael H. Mathers '64**; and his sisters, Myra, Ursula, and Anne. His late grandfather, **Grinnell Martin (1906)**, his nephew, **Spenser S. Nehrt '09**, and his cousin, **Katherine L. T. Koehne '19**, are also Middlesex graduates.

IN Memoriam

John C. McSween '69

John Charles McSween died after a lengthy illness on October 6, 2023, in Mobile, AL.

The son of Sally Foster and Harold B. McSween, John was born on December 16, 1951, in Alexandria, LA. He entered Middlesex's fifth class in 1964 and, on graduating, continued his education at Boston University.

John's keen eye for real estate guided him to select his Colorado home on Mt. Pisgah, near Cripple Creek, where its elevation of 10,000 feet provided unobstructed views of the Western Range. He was active in Colorado as a real estate broker, an investor, and an accomplished bass player who frequently played in rock and bluegrass bands. John was also an enthusiastic lover of sports, horses, and dogs. Having grown up attending many LSU football games in Baton Rouge, he was a diehard Tigers fan.

His home in Mobile, AL, was located on an estuary of the Dog River near Mobile Bay and was ringed by a dozen 200-year old live oak trees resplendent with Spanish moss, flower gardens, and fruit trees. During the last months of his illness, John was delighted to receive many of the close friends that he easily collected over his life, displaying his honed sense of humor, sarcasm, and wisdom. He took a hand in writing his own obituary, insisting that there be the following statement: "He thanks his friends for all the remarkable memories."

In addition to his wife of 32 years, Sharon Coil McSween, John is survived by John Christopher McSween, his son by a previous marriage; his stepson, Todd Michael Elliott; his granddaughter Finlay Rose; and his siblings, Robert Douglas McSween, Elizabeth McSween, and Sally McSween Ward.

John C. Morley, Jr. '73

John Carrington Morley, Jr. passed away on June 13, 2023, in the company of loving family and friends.

He was born in Saginaw, MI, on June 5, 1955, and was the oldest of six sons born to Sally Spence and **John C. Morley '50** (Middlesex trustee 1966–1970; 1971–1978; 1979–2002). He joined Middlesex's third class in 1970 and, following graduation, earned a B.A. in political science at Colby College and an M.B.A. from the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin. John then began his career with IBM and went on to raise four sons in Cos Cob, CT, and then St. Paul, MN, where he and his family have lived since 1989.

A vibrant son, brother, father, uncle, cousin, and friend, John was committed to staying well-connected to his large, extended family and always made time for people. His knowledge of and passion for family genealogy was vast and illustrated the importance of family to him. John was an avid reader his entire life and sought to instill that passion in others. He loved animals, owned dogs most of his life, and enjoyed sailing, kayaking, fishing, hunting, and playing tennis. He was also a long-standing member of St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church.

Predeceased by his parents, John will be deeply missed by his four sons, Andrew, James, Whitney, and Peter; his five brothers, Thomas, James, Andrew, and **Spence G. Morley '74**; and his entire extended family and close circle of friends. His late granduncles, **Malcolm B. Brownlee, Jr. (1907)** and former Middlesex Board President **James F. Brownlee (1909)**, were also Middlesex alumni.

Thomas M. Ellinwood '77

Thomas Michael Ellinwood passed away from early onset Alzheimer's on August 25, 2023, surrounded by family in his home.

He was born on January 20, 1959, in Phoenix, AZ, to Joan Catherine White and **John C. Ellinwood '44**. Through his father, Tom was a member of a territorial-era family prominent in law, civics, publishing, and education. Indeed, he was named in part for his uncle, **Thomas R. Ellinwood '40**, a co-editor of the *Arizona Daily Star*. Tom enjoyed a happy childhood, and his early experiences spurred his lifelong love of travel and adventure. He attended the Dobe Day School and Phoenix Country Day School, enrolling at Middlesex in 1973. On graduating, he earned a B.A. in economics at the University of Arizona and then earned a master's degree from Thunderbird School of International Management.

Tom worked in private banking, specializing in Latin America and Mexico, first with Philadelphia National Bank and then with American Express and later Citibank. Following an entrepreneurial path in 1995, Tom—along with his friend, Matt Hanson—formed HE Asset Management, LLC, a property development and management business.

In 1997, Tom married Inna Sedova, and they settled in the original Ellinwood family home in central Tucson. Tom had a genius for three things in life: family, adventure, and humor. He loved making others laugh, and his humor was also a part of his grounded and generous personality, aspects that came to the fore as his disease onset began. He was cognizant of the implications of his condition, and in the face of it, he achieved a notable level of emotional

outreach, caring, and consideration of his family and friends.

Preceded in death by his parents, Tom is survived by his wife Inna; his children, Masha, Alex, and Christina Ellinwood; his siblings Catherine, Nelson, **Patrick Q. Ellinwood '75, N. Matthew Ellinwood '79**, and **John C. Ellinwood III '81**; his nieces and nephews; and his grand-niece and grandnephews. His cousin, **Ralph E. Ellinwood '63** is also a Middlesex alumnus.

Amy L. Morrison '80

Amy Lynn Morrison passed away unexpectedly at home from natural causes on October 31, 2023.

Born in Augusta, ME, on September 29, 1962, Amy was the daughter of Captain Dexter Cleveland Morrison and Patricia Roberts Morrison. The youngest of four siblings, Amy grew up in Harvard, MA, attending school there until she joined the fourth class at Middlesex in 1976. After graduating, she attended the University of Colorado and later received her B.A. in creative writing and English literature from Harvard University Extension School.

From the University of Colorado, Amy moved to Santa Fe, NM, where she started working in the movie industry, beginning as an extra on the set of the movie *Silverado*. Finding a ready outlet for her creativity, she lent her expertise to over 63 award-winning films and television series, serving early on as a scenic artist and later as a buyer, set decorator, and production designer. She enjoyed mentoring younger people entering the industry, and all who encountered her warmly remember the infectious enthusiasm she brought to work.

Although Amy was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in early adulthood, she never let it slow her down and managed

this condition with great care for the rest of her life. She felt a strong calling to be a mother and gave birth to her daughter India in 2000. Her life then focused on this amazing, spirited, beautiful being who was the center of her universe.

Amy was a lifelong artist and a voracious reader. She was fearless, never afraid to take an unpopular position if she believed in it. She was fiercely loyal to her friends and family and generous with her affection and time. Her sense of adventure and ability to find humor in nearly any situation were appreciated by all who knew her, and she will be missed beyond measure.

Amy was preceded in death by her mother and her brothers, **C. Craig Morrison '75** and **William A. Morrison '79**. She is survived by her daughter India; her sister, **Elissa Morrison Spiller '76**; her half-brother, James Bentley Morrison; her half-sister, Kate Dayoub; her stepbrother, David Propert; her father and his wife Juliet; as well as many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Zachary Wald '91

Zachary Wald died at home from cancer on December 13, 2023.

Born on December 31, 1973, Zac grew up in Rumson, NJ, as did his wife, **Eliza R. Sorensen '92**. They met and fell in love at Middlesex, and both subsequently attended Brown University, where he earned an A.B. in development studies. Zac was awarded a Coro Fellowship in Public Affairs and received a master's degree in city and regional planning from UC Berkeley. He spent much of his career working for the City Council of Oakland, and he was a proud author of the original

Oakland Pedestrian Master Plan. Zac's life was defined by his love for Eliza, their three children, and his friends and extended family. Having lost his own father at a young age (also to cancer), Zac wished to be a good dad above all other goals in life. He believed that spending time with his kids was the best way to be a good dad, so he spent as much time with them as he could. He will be missed.

In addition to his wife Eliza, Zac is survived by their three children, Sophie, Spencer, and Arden; his mother and step-father, Ellen and Mark Ginsberg; his sisters, **Alexandra Wald Gimbel '87** and Sidney Oshinsky; his brother, Jonathan Wald; and several nieces and nephews. His late father-in-law, **Arthur H. Sorensen '59**, was also a Middlesex alumnus.

Barbara L. Blanchard

Barbara L. Blanchard, a retired staff member at Middlesex, passed away on February 19, 2023, in Kennett Square, PA.

Born in 1933, Barbara grew up in Melrose, MA, and graduated from Endicott College with an associate degree in secretarial arts. After marrying Richard C. Blanchard in 1952, she became a dedicated homemaker, raising their two sons, David and Randall. Barbara later began her own career and found her way to Middlesex, where she ably served as an administrative assistant in the School's Business Office from 1981 to 1994.

Barbara's husband of 70 years passed away nearly a month after her on March 9, 2023. She is survived by her sons; a brother; and many grandnieces and grandnephews. She will be greatly missed.

Anne Nordblom Dodge



Anne Nordblom Dodge, who served as a Middlesex trustee from 1995 to 1999, passed away surrounded by loved ones on March 18, 2024.

Born in Boston, Anne was the daughter of the late Rodger and Mary Nordblom. She graduated from Williams College with a B.F.A. in English and worked at the Bank of Boston, where she met

her husband Steve. In addition to the Middlesex Board, Anne served on the Board of the University of Vermont and was president of the Brookwood School's Board. She was a dedicated member of St John's Episcopal Church in Beverly Farms and was committed to philanthropy, with a special interest in scholarships, animal protection, and land conservation.

Anne was known for her love of family and spirited approach to life. She was a loving wife, a devoted mother to her three children, and a proud Nana Anna to her five beloved grandchildren. Her friends were dear to her. Her dogs were family to her. And throughout her life, her faith in God was a beacon for her. Anne was passionate about outdoor activities, including playing tennis, skiing, riding, sailing, and hiking. She loved art and was an avid photographer, with her camera always in hand. Painting beautiful watercolors became her creative outlet later in life. She loved traveling with family and friends, and she was especially connected to Vermont and Cape Cod. Throughout her life, she loved being with people and gathering everyone together.

Predeceased by her parents and loving husband, Steven B. Dodge, Anne is survived by her sons, Tom and **Benjamin P. Dodge '98**; her daughter, Kristen Dodge; her brothers, Pete and Win Nordblom; her sisters, Carolyn Los and Lee Nordblom; and five grandchildren.

IN Memoriam

David J. Beare



The School was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of former Head of School David John Beare, who died on December 27, 2023, after a seven-month battle with an aggressive form of brain cancer.

Born in Seattle, WA, on June 22, 1963, David grew up in Olympia, WA, where he developed his lifelong relationship

with the great outdoors by hiking and climbing in the mountains. He traveled across the country to attend Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and was immediately drawn to the Jesuits' commitment to thoughtful scholarship, servant leadership, and global outreach. This path led him to degrees from Harvard Divinity School and Harvard Graduate School of Education, as well as his career path as an educator.

While starting out as a history teacher, David enjoyed teaching courses in philosophy and comparative world religions the most, delighting in the opportunity to open students' minds to questions and possibilities that were new, complex, and intellectually invigorating. His career took him from teaching to leading departments at several boarding schools (Loomis Chaffee, Phillips Exeter, and Hotchkiss) and at Lakeside School, a day school in Seattle, WA. At the height of his career, he helped to start Keystone Academy, a K-12 day and boarding school in Beijing, China, and served as the head of Middlesex. Many will remember David standing outside Eliot Hall each morning, greeting students and adults before the class day began. Whether playing catch with students on the Circle, sharing his passion for religious studies, cheering on Middlesex teams, or playing "Jerusalem" on his cello, David immersed himself in the community and spread his warmth everywhere he went. His leadership through the height of the COVID-19 pandemic gave Middlesex students a robust experience, and the school community is grateful for his contributions here.

David is survived by his partner of 33 years, Rachael; their children, Sarah and George; his siblings, Cheryl Bayle and Ken Beare; and a host of extended family and good friends around the globe.





The Landry Challenge for Girls' Athletics

Celebrating 50 Years of Girls' Athletics and the Women Who Champion Their Success

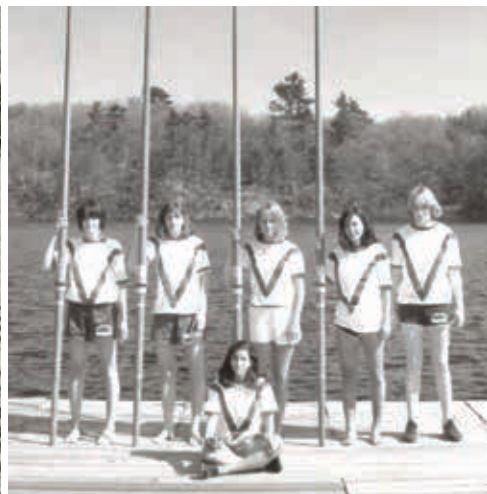


Thanks to the generosity of the Landry Family—Barrie Landry w'62 P'88'89'94 GP'18'27'27, Kim GwinnLandry '89, and Jennifer Landry Le '94 P'27'27—the Middlesex community has a meaningful opportunity to impact the building of a new field house and celebrate 50 Years of Girls' Athletics and the women who champion their success.

This challenge kicks off a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Middlesex's first female students, who arrived on campus in 1974 and became the School's first alumnae in 1976.

The Landry Family Charitable Foundation will match all leadership gifts made by women—up to \$1,500,000—in Middlesex's first-ever women-led challenge. To qualify for matching funds, gift commitments must fall between \$50,000 and \$250,000.

For more information, contact Heather Parker in the Middlesex Development Office at hparker@mxschool.edu or 978-369-5110.





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A Communal Eclipse

Warm weather, nearly clear skies, and the promise of a 93% partial solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, drew the full school community to the Circle to watch this rare event unfold through special binoculars, one of the School's telescopes, or the protective glasses provided to all on campus.

