

Penn Charter

THE MAGAZINE OF WILLIAM PENN CHARTER SCHOOL

WINTER/SPRING 2025



LEADING THROUGH CIVIC ACTION

PORTRAIT OF A PENN CHARTER LEARNER

The Portrait of a Penn Charter Learner articulates the skills, attitudes and competencies Penn Charter seeks to nurture in our Lower, Middle and Upper School students.

THE PORTRAIT HAS FOUR CORE DOMAINS:

COURAGEOUS LEARNER

A Penn Charter learner is curious and prepared to take risks in their learning. By building intellectual skills including questioning, critical thinking, problem-solving, and academic tenacity, they take ownership of their education.

A Penn Charter learner develops healthy social, emotional, and physical habits that allow them to navigate challenges and reach their goals. Their wonder, inquiry, and exploration of academics, arts, athletics, and community engagement during their time at Penn Charter prepare them to thrive in a changing world.

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATOR

CHANGE CULTIVATOR

COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

Read more about the Portrait of a PC Learner at penncharter.com/portrait.

Celebrating 30 Years of “My Life as a Sine Curve” Charting Life’s Ups and Downs Mathematically



For three decades, longtime Upper School math teacher Liz Flemming Hon. 1689 has been guiding students through a unique and introspective project she calls “My Life as a Sine Curve.” Originally offered as an extra credit opportunity during the 1994-95 school year, the project has since become a staple of Flemming’s curriculum, providing juniors in her Advanced Pre-calculus class a deep dive into both mathematics and self-reflection.

The inspiration for this project was Flemming’s former student, Michael McDonald OPC ’92, who died by suicide during his junior year of college. This tragedy prompted Flemming to think of a way to encourage her students to reflect on their lives in a meaningful way through the lens of a mathematics curriculum. “My Life as a Sine Curve” was born.

Reflecting Flemming’s love of math and commitment to her students, this interdisciplinary project equips students with the technical math skills to graph a series of connected sine, or cosine, curves. Students begin before Thanksgiving break, embarking on a journey of self-discovery by interviewing their families to gather more information about their early childhood experiences. They then create a map that charts the ups and downs, the highs and lows of their lives. From this visual, they create 20 to 40 sinusoidal equations that accurately coincide with their life’s trajectory. This process prompts them to consider: “What mathematical steps do I take to ensure the graph matches a visual representation of my life?”

In addition to the mathematical component, students write a summary paper sharing stories from their lives that inspired their graph’s trajectory, as well as what they’ve learned about the math that is integral to the project. More importantly, they are encouraged to use this paper as a reflective piece on their life journey thus far.

For the last component of the project, students create posters that are displayed in the Upper School hallway. Their graphs and equations are bordered by poems, drawings and/or pictures, making each project as unique as the individual presenting it. And while the graphs used to be hand-drawn, more recently students have used the graphing software Desmos to help check their equations and better display their graphs.

This school year marks 30 years of “My Life as a Sine Curve” for Flemming and her students. “After all these years of assigning the project, I am always awed by the students trusting me with their stories and reflections,” Flemming said. “I am impressed with how much math they learn, but even more about how much they learn about themselves and the perspective they gain. It’s heartwarming to read their concluding paragraphs, in addition to learning about the thrill of a new puppy or the heartbreak of moving away from a close friend.” PC

“Overall, I have been very blessed in my life. I have experienced ups and downs as anyone has, but it is clear to me that the maximums far outweigh the minimums. The amplitudes have been small, and whenever the function of my life had a remarkable drop, I was sure to come up the other side of the curve and even continue to higher midlines. Looking more closely at my life, I have discovered that my happiness level was almost completely dependent on my relationships. My lowest points were when I lost someone to death or distance, and my highest points were when I was with friends, family, or people whom I loved.”

– Excerpt from a student’s reflection on “My Life as a Sine Curve”

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From left: Lucas Gade, Brady Cross, Alara Arkin, Ross Lee, Maisie Optenberg, Alice Allsopp, Oliver Jackson and Olivia Boyd
(Photo: Michael Branscom)

OPENING THOUGHTS

From the Head of School

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the latest issue of Penn Charter magazine, where we celebrate the achievements and highlight the important work of our community. The 2024-2025 academic year began with a unifying theme: *Community: Together We Thrive—Listen, Lean In, Build Trust*. Our students, faculty and staff have embraced this theme, seeking opportunities for connection within and beyond the schoolhouse. A central part of this commitment has been our focus on civil discourse—empowering students with the lifelong skills of listening, engaging thoughtfully and communicating with respect. Whether in moments of harmony or challenge, these tools are helping students to navigate both the opportunities and the complexities of the world with confidence and grace.

As senior class clerk Louella Whitaker recently shared with an audience of newly admitted families, “We seek points of connection that unify us, recognizing that it is our ability to find harmony amid differences that allows us to grow, both as individuals and as a community.” This spirit of connection continues to strengthen our community and prepare our students to face the world with empathy and integrity.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to share two milestones with you: In June, the Class of 2025 will become the 100th class to graduate on this Pinehurst campus, and in September, the Richard A. Balderston OPC '69 Lower School will open its doors to enthusiastic students. We look forward to celebrating these moments that reflect both tradition and progress.

As we prepare for these pivotal moments, we remain committed to continuing our work grounded in Quaker values—peace, integrity, truth-seeking and justice—that inform every decision we make and every path we forge. Our teachers, whose dedication to student learning and well-being is inspiring, navigate the complexities of today's world with compassion and respect. They provide students with the space for essential conversations while fostering growth in both intellect and character. I hope you enjoy this issue, filled with stories of remarkable students, teachers and OPCs who are making a difference in their communities and living lives of purpose.

I am grateful for your continued support of Penn Charter's mission, and I welcome the opportunity to connect with as many of you as possible in 2025 and beyond. As always, thank you for your continued trust and care for this extraordinary community.

Sincerely,



Karen Warren Coleman
Head of School



Penn Charter

THE MAGAZINE OF WILLIAM PENN CHARTER SCHOOL

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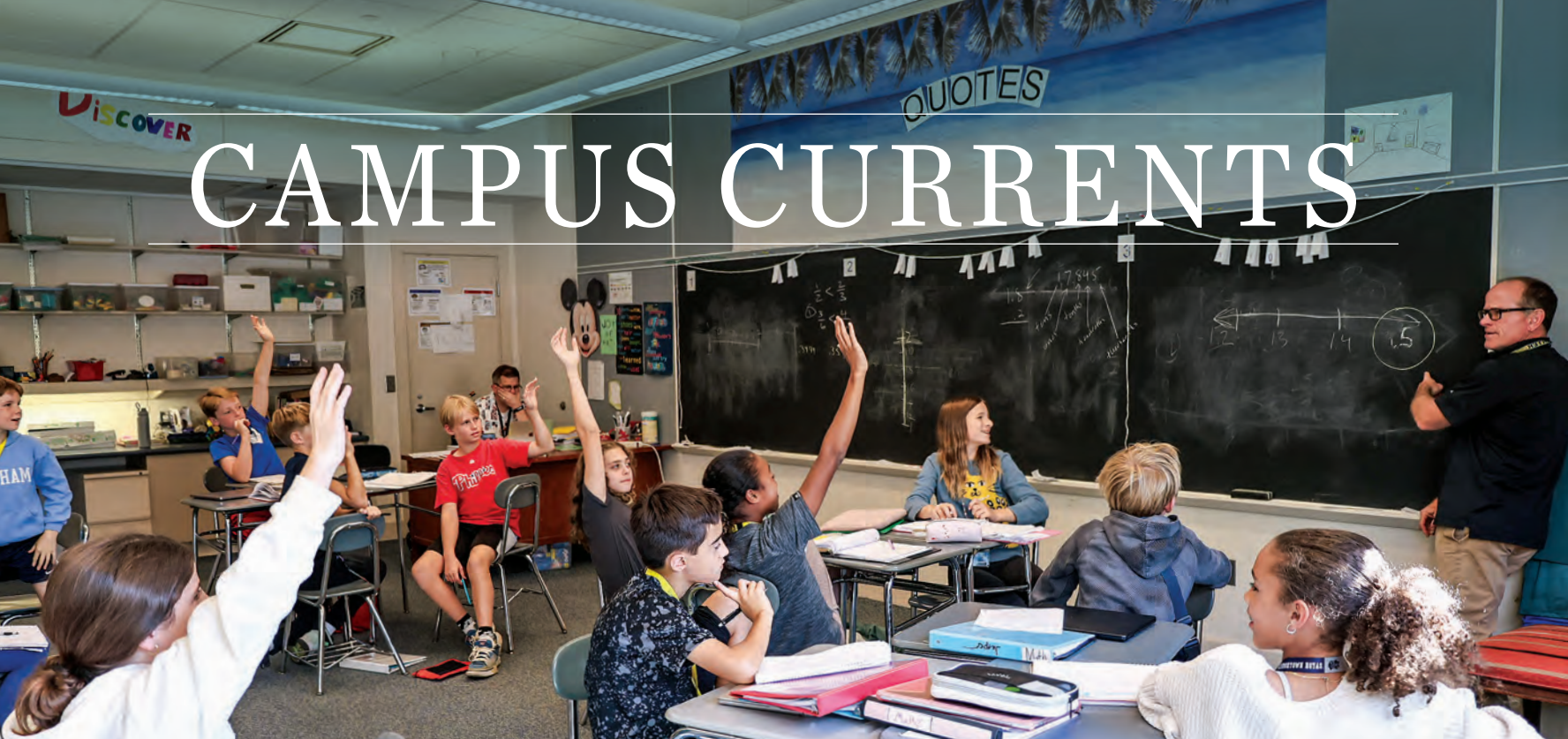
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CAMPUS CURRENTS



EMBRACING MISTAKES AS PART OF THE PROCESS

Last October, with the sun streaming through the windows of a Middle School math classroom, sixth grade students moved busily around the room using number lines strung across blackboards to learn fractions, both positive and negative.

“Which number is larger?” teacher Pete Shaifer OPC ’82 asked them.

“Remember that negative numbers are different.” Teaching his students to see, manipulate and order fractions is how Shaifer creates “number sense.”

“We don’t want them to be calculators—we want them to be thinkers,” he said. “Number lines help them see math.”

Shaifer has thoughtfully developed his pedagogy over time. Greatly influenced by Peter Liljedahl’s *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics*, and by Adam Grant, an organizational psychologist, Wharton professor and speaker, Shaifer creates a classroom built on student engagement—a learning environment where making mistakes is welcomed because that’s how we learn.

He encourages his students to “be an imperfectionist,” as Grant says—to be courageous, to be a sponge—but not the kind of sponge that soaks things up, the animal that helps the other organisms in the ocean live and thrive. “I want them to focus on thinking and learning and growing, not on a grade,” Shaifer explained.

After each test, students correct their mistakes and then assess themselves skill by skill, on a scale of 0-5. Especially in the beginning of the school year, they tend to grade themselves harder than their teacher does.

“What I’m interested in,” said Shaifer, who is also a Middle and Upper School wrestling coach, “is ‘Do you know the skill?’ and not just ‘Did you get



the right answer?” Kids take a test and think that’s the end of the learning process. It’s just part of the process. Like in wrestling, when we have a match and you think it’s done, it’s not. It’s just part of the process.”

Doug Gorham, chair of the math department, knows it’s important for students to build ownership of the material. “To be able to apply math, you’ve got to really understand it,” he said. “Pete helps them understand the math that they’re doing. They’re not just saying, ‘Okay, I know how to divide one-fourth by one-half. There’s an algorithm.’ Pete’s going to get them to understand *why* one-quarter divided by one-half is one-half.”

In math, perhaps, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. “Sixth grade is a foundational year,” Shaifer said. “We are trying to build a strong foundation for students to have success for seventh and eighth grade and beyond.” **PC**

Exploring the Skin's Structure Through the Lens of Tattoo Art

Bridging science and self-expression, Anatomy and Physiology teacher Christy Schwartz transformed the introductory unit on the body's integumentary system into a reflective, project-based exploration of the science behind tattoos and their effects on human skin and the body.

Upper School science teacher Christy Schwartz wanted the opening unit of her Anatomy and Physiology class to be more than just a lesson—it needed to resonate with her students and spark curiosity. Recognizing that many of her students were interested in tattoos, she saw an opportunity.

“In recent years,” Schwartz said, “I have worked to make the Anatomy and Physiology class more project-based, appealing to students with varied interests—from those pursuing medical careers to athletes enhancing their body awareness. This approach allowed students to engage at their level of interest. I aimed to create a project for our opening unit that would capture students' attention and connect directly to their lives.”

She prompted students with a scenario: Advise your fictional friend Buffy, who is trying to persuade her parents to allow her to get a tattoo. Through labs, the creation of a 3D skin model, and lectures, students learned the skin's anatomy, how ink is deposited in the body, and how the immune system responds to foreign particles and collaborates with skin in the healing process.

They also investigated the safety of tattooing.

“Through my lab work and research,” senior Ali Sweeney said, “I learned that tattoos aren't applied to the epidermis, the outer layer of skin, but to the dermis, the second layer. The epidermis is constantly exposed to wear and tear, so a tattoo there would easily fade or rub off, unlike in the dermis, where it remains more permanent.”

“Something that surprised me about the tattoo project and our bodies,” added senior Lauren Gedraitis, “was that our immune system tries and

fails to eliminate the ink.” She also learned that the dermis holds nerves and vessels and if the tattoo artist goes too deep with the needle it can hit a nerve or vessel and cause damage.

To present a balanced case, students conducted research on the history and safety of tattooing. Health risks, Lauren said she learned, include skin infection and cancer—black ink can contain benzo(a)pyrene, a known carcinogen.

To deepen their understanding, the class hosted a panel of tattooed faculty and staff, who shared their experiences. Panelists explained the meaning behind their tattoos and discussed the challenges and rewards of body art.



As the project integrated art and design, each group created a sketch of a tattoo for Buffy along with a written explanation of the meaning and significance of a potential tattoo design for “parent” approval.

“Hearing from the panel,” Ali said, “made me think about what kind of tattoo Buffy should get. For many, the tattoo was in memory of someone important to them, and for others it connected to one of their beliefs or represented them as a person. When my group created Buffy's tattoo, we kept those things in mind and made sure we chose a design that was important to her.”

A majority of students rallied behind Buffy and created presentations to persuade Buffy's parents. Ali suggested that Buffy's youth and overall health could work in her favor, arguing that a strong immune system would likely help her better fend off potential infections.

In a conference-style presentation, students shared their findings with classmates, faculty and staff. Each group showcased their research, displayed their tattoo designs and fielded audience questions.

Schwartz's assignment brought science to life but also left an indelible mark on her students, blending the study of anatomy with personal perspectives. [PC](#)



Building a Better Brain: Students Craft Mind-Blowing Models

Upper School students in Bob Vierlinck's Advanced Studies: Psychology class created models of the brain using atypical materials—candy, cake, fruit, cheese—and even made an interactive board game.

In a psychology class, teaching about the parts of the brain is fundamental. But, said Upper School teacher Bob Vierlinck, the way it is taught can be boring if you're not careful. Vierlinck decided to take a different approach with his Advanced Studies: Psychology students. In groups of four to five, they were tasked with building brain models, but they had free rein over how they did it. He showed students a presentation that included examples from his own past classes and those of his colleagues, "to really hammer home the creativity and the uniqueness of this project."

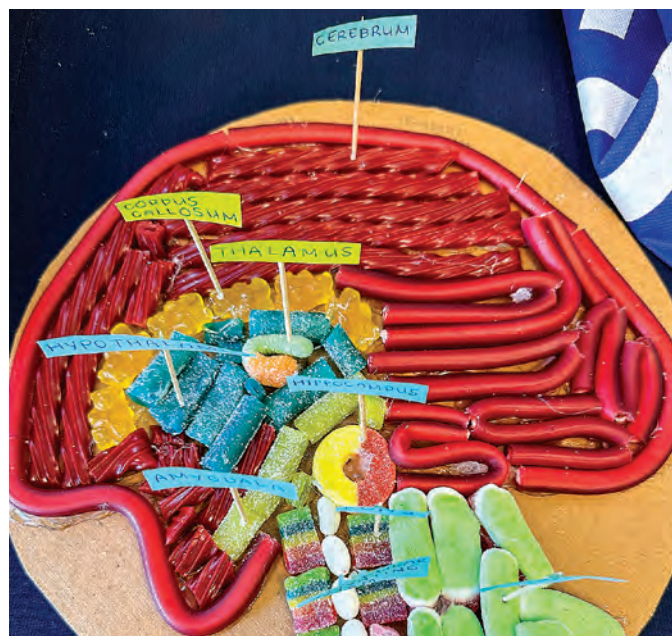


The results were remarkable. Students created brain models out of cake, candy, fruit and cheese, made digital graphics and physical drawings, and wrote brain-themed lyrics to a country song.

"My favorite part of the project was definitely making the physical 'charcuterie brain' of different cheeses, bread, jams and fruits," said senior Sarah Gross. "We got to use different foods to represent the various parts of the brain, and it made the whole process more hands-on and memorable. I also learned how important it is to work well with others and communicate, especially when trying to bring a project to life creatively and clearly for your peers."

Some models were interactive. "One group made a playable game," Vierlinck said. "The best part about it was if you got a question wrong, the consequence was that you lost the ability controlled by that part of the brain. If you got the occipital lobe wrong, that meant that you had to close your eyes for the next round because you couldn't see. That's really ingenious."

In addition to creating the models themselves, each group made a presentation about a specific area of the brain. These areas included the



limbic system, cortex, hindbrain, brainstem and miscellaneous brain structures. Their brief presentations—5-6 minutes long—covered the function and dysfunction of these different areas of the brain and were evaluated based on how informative, creative and understandable they were. Students were effectively teaching each other about the brain. Afterwards, Vierlinck linked it all together by describing ways the different regions interact with each other.

"Each group may be better with 'their' region of the brain than maybe the rest of it, but I think that's okay because it makes the class more dynamic," Vierlinck said. "Last year we had a group that did a rap—they wrote it to Macklemore's 'Thrift Shop.' They just changed all the lyrics to being about the limbic system. It was awesome." [PC](#)

OPCS EMBRACE SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Juliet Webb OPC '17 and Hannah Griffith OPC '17 work at Nuuly, an innovative clothing rental retailer that is part of the URBN family of companies. The two OPCs returned to Penn Charter in November to speak to Upper School students in the Women in Business & Fashion and the Sustainability clubs about their experiences post-graduation.

The movement toward “circular fashion” is based on the concept of a “circular economy,” rooted in the Indigenous principles of minimizing waste and using resources responsibly. Rather than following the linear model that has dominated the fashion industry for decades, which focuses on temporary trends and encourages mass consumption, circular fashion aims to reduce waste and maximize the lifespan of garments. This means reusing and recycling clothing as much as possible, passing a garment from person to person or store to store, and extending its life cycle until it is no longer wearable.

Nuuly, under the direction of president and chief technology officer David Hayne OPC '96, embraces this business model through clothing rental, enabling customers to rent six garments per month for a fixed price. It aims to rent each garment a total of 12 times before its “end-of-life,” when it can either be sold at a deep discount at URBN store Reclectic, or donated to other sustainability projects such as FABSCRAP, which turns damaged garments into fabric insulation. Penn Charter students visited Reclectic’s Philadelphia location to see this process in action.

After graduating from college, Webb told PC students, “I realized I want to work somewhere where I’m going to be making some kind of impact.”



Hannah Griffith (left) and Juliet Webb, both OPC '17, shared their career experience with Upper School students interested in fashion and sustainability.

She said she felt lucky to work for a company where sustainability practices are built into the company ethos. Though sustainability is not yet “always top of mind” when people make clothing purchases, Webb said, Nuuly aims to change that by demonstrating how consumers can be both fashion forward and environmentally conscious.

Webb and Griffith offered practical advice about the post-college job search, including to remain flexible and think about the different ways to use your skills and knowledge. Both OPCs emphasized how Penn Charter has influenced their career trajectories, from taking the Costume Design course at PC that inspired a love of fashion, to being a member of the same Women in Business & Fashion Club that they had returned to address. **PC**



Day of the Dead Gallery Walk Explores Mexican Traditions

On the morning of Nov. 8, the PC community gathered in the Old Gym to celebrate *Día de los Muertos*—Day of the Dead—with a colorful gallery walk. *Día de los Muertos* is a two-day celebration in Mexico in which people celebrate and honor loved ones who have died.

As part of this celebration, eighth grade Spanish students showcased their creativity and cultural understanding by presenting their *ofrendas* (offerings that comprise an altar) to the community. Each student designed an *ofrenda* to honor someone they admire—whether a family member, celebrity or historical figure who has passed away—and spoke, in Spanish, about their chosen person. They decorated altars with

continued on the top of next page

flowers (traditional symbols of *Día de los Muertos*), a picture of the departed, and personal items or foods that represent the person they were honoring.

“The students' presentations not only deepened their appreciation of this significant tradition but also cultivated essential skills such as public speaking, creativity, language proficiency and community engagement,” said Spanish teacher Carlos Salinas.

Eighth grader Lucy Barras reflected on her experience, sharing how the project deepened her connection to past generations of her family. “I hope the community learned something new about Mexican culture and discovered a new way to honor the dead,” she said.

Classmate Max Schoenhaus found the project equally enriching. “It taught me about the customs and traditions of those who celebrate this holiday, as well as the deeper significance behind the items placed on an *ofrenda*,” he explained.

“Through this project, I learned so much more about my grandmother and what she enjoyed,” said eighth grader Aava Dadmarz-Parang. “I also gained a better understanding of traditional *ofrenda* elements like candles, marigolds and skulls.”

The goal of the gallery walk, Salinas said, was to reflect the Language and Culture Department’s commitment to educating globally and culturally aware citizens in a diverse world. [PC](#)



Art in Action: Muralist Shares Her Work, Large and Small



Cindy Lozito

From large-scale murals to tiny hand-drawn books called mini-zines, visiting artist Cindy Lozito shared her work with first and fourth grade students during Hispanic Heritage month in November.

Lozito inspired students to find their artistic voice through color palette, style and subject. “Every image is a story,” she told them, and when she paints a mural, she thinks to herself, “I can tell a big story to anybody who passes by and sees this.”

Lozito recently created a mural, in collaboration with Mural Arts Philadelphia, inside Vetri Community Partner’s headquarters in the city’s West Poplar neighborhood. Titled “Recipe for Community,” the mural tells “a simple story about cooking food” that conveys community, belonging, joy and comfort, Lozito said.

She shared her process with students: First, she created the artwork digitally, then projected it onto the wall and, using scaffolding, sketched the image before painting the vibrant colors. And she didn’t do it alone; she worked with an assistant and others who prepped the space. “It’s so much better making a mural with other people,” she said.

When visiting with first grade Spanish students, Lozito taught them the traditional art of painting on fabric, which reminds her of her grandmother and her home in Puerto Rico. Students used oil pastels and squares of felt to create their own illustrations.

Lozito gave fourth grade art students a more complex assignment: Create an eight-page mini-zine from one piece of folded paper that tells the story of something important to you. Lozito shared one that she had created about her versatile autumn wardrobe. Drawing with colored pencils, students spotlighted their pets, gymnastics, their name story and much more. [PC](#)





COMMENCEMENT 2024



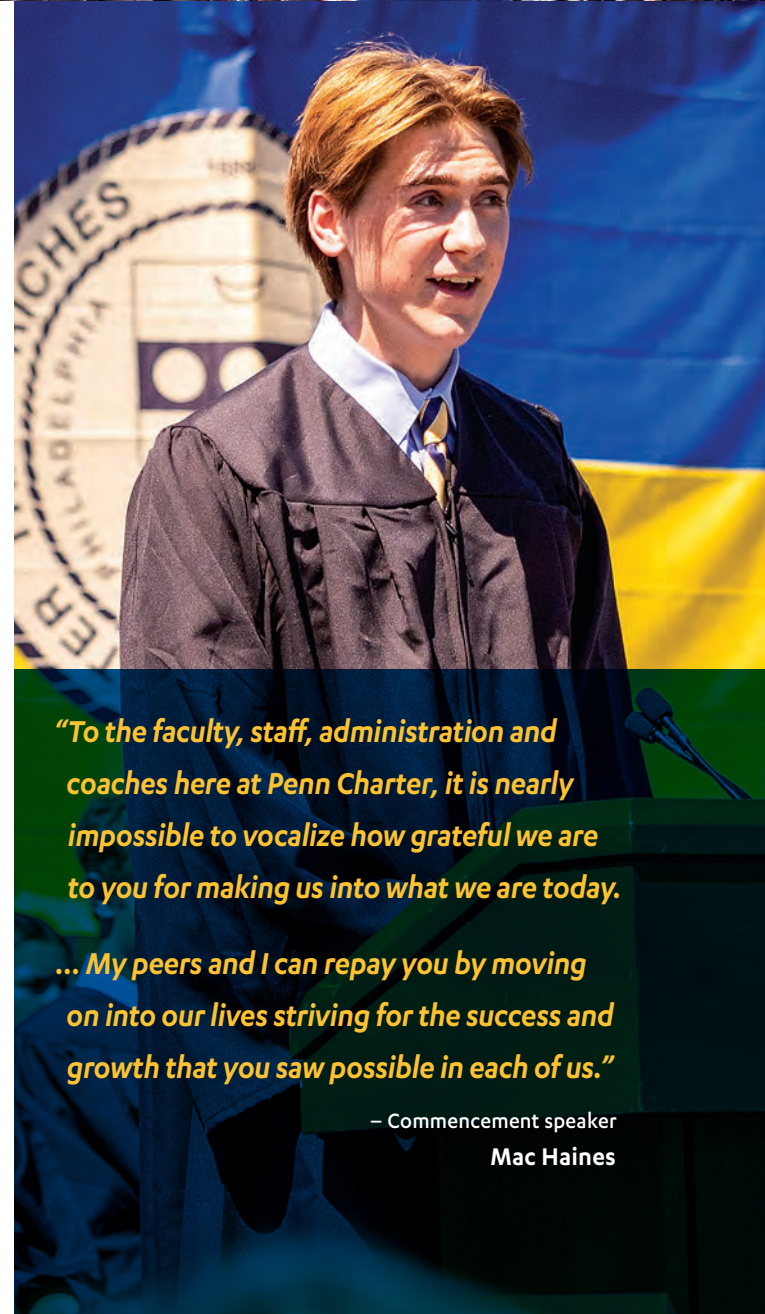
Under a clear blue sky, the 108 members of the Class of 2024 celebrated their Commencement on June 8 on Maguire Field, surrounded by family, friends and teachers. With student speeches that touched on embracing change and expressing gratitude, the class did just that—with smiles and hugs, photos and videos, they captured the excitement they shared and their appreciation for each other and for their families.

Congratulations to the Class of 2024!



“Through chaotic circumstances, you rose above. You learned about yourselves. You created community in ways you hadn’t previously considered. You flourished! Class of 2024, you redefined what ‘coming of age’ really means. ...If any class is ready to embrace, lean into and tackle the challenges that life after high school will present, it’s Penn Charter’s Class of 2024.”

– Karen Warren Coleman, in her first Commencement speech as head of school



“To the faculty, staff, administration and coaches here at Penn Charter, it is nearly impossible to vocalize how grateful we are to you for making us into what we are today. ... My peers and I can repay you by moving on into our lives striving for the success and growth that you saw possible in each of us.”

– Commencement speaker
Mac Haines



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2024!

An end-of-year survey showed that 89 percent of students in the Class of 2024 are attending one of their top-choice schools. Forty-one percent were enrolled at a “most competitive college” according to Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges.

American University	Rutgers University
Amherst College	Sacred Heart University
Arizona State University	Saint Joseph's University
Bowdoin College	Smith College
Brandeis University	Southern Methodist University
Bucknell University	Springfield College
Colgate University	St. John's University
College of the Holy Cross	Swarthmore College
Columbia University	Syracuse University
Commonwealth University at Bloomsburg	Trinity College
Connecticut College	Tulane University
Cornell University	University of California-Los Angeles
Dartmouth College	University of California-Santa Cruz
DePaul University	University of Connecticut
Drew University	University of Delaware
Drexel University	University of Florida
Duke University	University of Michigan
Duquesne University	University of Minnesota
Fairfield University	University of Mississippi
Fairleigh Dickinson University	University of Notre Dame
Florida Institute of Technology	University of Oregon
Franklin & Marshall College	University of Pennsylvania
George Washington University	University of Pittsburgh
Howard University	University of Richmond
Johns Hopkins University	University of South Carolina
Kenyon College	University of Toronto
Lafayette College	University of Wisconsin
Lehigh University	Ursinus College
McGill University	Villanova University
Merrimack College	Virginia Tech
New York University	Wake Forest University
Northwestern University	Washington University in Saint Louis
Oberlin College	Wesleyan University
Ohio State University	Widener University
Pennsylvania State University	William & Mary



Alexandra Will received the Phi Beta Kappa Award for excellence in scholarship.

“Part of growing up is getting comfortable navigating the unknown through all of our missteps. ... It is easy to fall prey to self-doubt and the uneasy feeling of not knowing exactly what your next step will be. However, now is the time to lean into those feelings and move on with confidence that you will figure it out as you go.”

– Commencement speaker
Payton Handler




Elizabeth Choate received the Alumni Society Senior Award in recognition of her scholarship, character, leadership and athletic ability.



Watch a recording and ceremony and view more photos at penncharter.com/commencement2024.



On the cusp of a presidential election last fall, Penn Charter teachers seized upon the opportunity to draw from current events to enliven lessons about the mechanics of the election process, the complexity of national issues and the critical importance of civic engagement.

The pre-K to 12 social studies curriculum, plus the Upper School Global Cultures & Language Certificate program, expanded with summits, press conferences, lobbying and volunteer opportunities, independent studies, visits to polling places and more, as students and teachers found creative ways to engage in American civic life. 



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ★

by Rebecca Luzi

"At Penn Charter, we focus on students' development of the critical skills of thinking deeply and broadly about current issues and how to act and interact in both ethical and civic ways in the wider world," said Alyson Goodner OPC '96, director of the Center for Public Purpose. From left: Lucas Gade, Olivia Boyd, Brady Cross, Alice Allsopp, Maisie Optenberg, Alara Arkan, Oliver Jackson and Ross Lee are just a few of the students who put this into practice.

"Student civic engagement is crucial for a healthy democracy and vibrant communities," said Alice Bateman, director of PC's Global Cultures & Language Certificate program. "When young people participate, they bring fresh perspectives and energy to social issues, often challenging the status quo and driving positive change."

Senior Maisie Optenberg was one of three local student organizers of the Student Civic & Community Engagement Summit, held in October at Friends Select School. The summit spotlighted the civic participation of about 250 student leaders from area public and private high schools and included musical performances, workshops on civic-related topics, and opportunities for students to work with each other on issues important to them.

Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Al Schmidt was the keynote speaker, and students, including 15 from PC, interacted with politicians and voting rights advocates. Bateman facilitated a workshop titled "2024: U.S. Elections... You Decide!" that explored how personal values influence voter decisions. She provided nonpartisan resources for students and educators to learn more about issues that matter to them, culminating in a mock election for local, state and federal offices using a decommissioned Philadelphia voting booth for the students to "cast their ballots."

Maisie, in her junior year, had embarked on a semester-long independent study of voter suppression, and last fall she organized a nonpartisan

continued on next page

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION THROUGH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

postcard-writing campaign through the Center for Common Ground, a black- and women-led voting rights organization. She helped send handwritten notes to unregistered women voters in Florida with the goal of increasing participation in the November 2024 election. The effort she steered, recruiting classmates, family and friends outside of Penn Charter, netted 1,200 handwritten postcards.

“I was four months short of being able to vote,” Maisie said. “I knew that whatever the outcome of the election it would directly impact me for at least the next six years because a lot of the candidates were senators.” If she could persuade new voters to cast ballots, she said, “I’d be able to surpass that age barrier.”



Vote That Jawn

Vote That Jawn—with its unmistakably Philly moniker—is a local organization directed by author and educator Lorene Cary that aims to bring 18-year-olds and other first-time voters to the polls to advocate for their priorities. The summer before their senior year, both Maisie and classmate Oliver Jackson volunteered to help, and before long, Cary invited them to enroll in her class at the University of Pennsylvania, Writing and Politics.

Oliver Jackson, one of three clerks of the Black Student Union at PC, sees his role at Vote That Jawn as meeting other youth where they are. “We’re really trying to market to younger people, so we’re on social media a lot,” he said.

Vote That Jawn also presented another opportunity for the PC students. Leading up to the 2024 election, Oliver helped plan and promote Trend That Jawn, a student-organized press conference in October at City Hall intended to increase youth voter participation. Panelists included city commissioners, student voting advocates and journalists. Student journalists covered the event.

The experience made a big impact on Oliver. “I think what it did most was give me hope,” he said. “I got to meet so many other people around my age who care just as much about the future of our lives, our communities and our country.”



“Call in” the Community

In January, a small group of students gathered for lunch with Bateman and other Upper School teachers to reflect on these queries: How does the nature of our Quaker school call us to live out its mission? And what should fostering civic engagement look like and feel like at PC?

“We saw an opportunity to bring together civically engaged students to share experiences and think collectively about how they want to move forward,” said Alyson Goodner OPC ’96, director of the Center for Public Purpose. “As a Quaker school, we center the concept of continuous revelation, and we seek opportunities for students and teachers to gather and to jointly engage in understanding history and current issues.”



The Student Civic & Community Engagement Summit in October attracted many students from PC’s Upper School. “Civic engagement is largely a habit,” teacher Alice Bateman said. “When young people develop civic habits, our democracy will flourish.”

Top, from left: Liam Haines, Alice Bateman, Penelope Gray, Brady Cross, Dean Kaiser, Lili Hawley, Alara Arkan, Karya Karabucak, Liz Sweigart, Jordan Simon

Bottom, from left: Matthew Brucker, Oliver Jackson, Natalia Modzelewski, Mimi Ohemeng, Evy Hasse, Andrew Marrone



This work led to an ongoing plan to raise current issues to the wider student body to “call in” the community to civic engagement.

Seeing an opportunity to learn what people had been experiencing both locally and nationally, junior Alice Allsopp joined the Women’s March in Philadelphia on Jan. 21 as a way to engage with the larger community and meet other people with similar goals. She found it to be “a melting pot of different ideas, where all voices were welcome.”

Back in December, Alice, along with other candidates for the Global Certificate, had attended a hearing about the proposed building of a sports arena adjacent to Philadelphia’s Chinatown. The students heard

testimony from those for and against it, such as labor unions in favor of the arena, and Chinatown residents opposed to it. The experience, she said, made her realize that “your voice often can feel more heard in local politics, which can have a more direct impact on you.”



Keep People Informed

Alice, Maisie and Oliver, with their shared interests, are co-clerks of the recently formed Young Democrats Club. The group meets weekly at lunchtime with the primary goal of keeping people informed.

“We’re trying to emphasize the ideals of the party as a whole, rather than back specific candidates,” Oliver said. “We’re really just teaching and learning about the democratic process—issues, campaigning, election processes.”

In the lead-up to the 2024 election, members of the club, in partnership with Josh Oberfield’s AP U.S. Government and Politics class, brought to fourth and fifth grades a lesson that explored different scenarios of how one presidential ticket (in this case, KitKat) might win the popular vote while the other (Reese’s) wins the Electoral College vote.

continued on next page



Leaning In: PC Engages Students in the Lifelong Skill of Civil Discourse

Throughout the fall, Penn Charter actively involved students, faculty and staff in lessons on the value of civil discourse, exploring strategies to foster meaningful, productive conversations, even in the face of differing viewpoints.

PC launched the civil discourse initiative before the start of school, with faculty and staff working in partnership with the Close Up Foundation, a leading educational nonprofit focused on civics education and civil discourse. Facilitators from Close Up led professional development programming for all employees, and faculty participated in workshops designed to provide tools to lead classroom discussions around sensitive topics like elections and polarizing political issues.

Beginning in September, ADVIS (Advancing Independent Schools) offered faculty an interactive professional development series to help navigate the election season, taught by thought leaders in political science, law, education, leadership and conflict resolution.

Through a series of dedicated discussions and advisory group sessions, teachers worked closely with Upper School students throughout the first half of the school year to discuss ways to find common ground leading to productive conversations with classmates, family and friends who have differing viewpoints.

Strategies in Action

- PC partnered with the Close Up Foundation on the eighth grade’s annual trip to Washington, D.C. Close Up worked with Middle School faculty to provide dynamic, curriculum-based experiences to help students learn the importance of history, how it impacts them today and how to be active participants in the political process. Head of School Karen Warren Coleman accompanied the eighth grade on their trip. “I found myself bursting with pride to hear the questions they were asking about government, political processes and current issues,” she said. “Their engagement and curiosity demonstrated personal, social and civic responsibility—important core values of a PC education.”

- In advisory, Upper School students learned “The Art of Conversation and Civil Discourse” through 12 active listening skills and scenario training. They practiced with each other, employing these skills in order to listen and to communicate effectively and with respect. The goal of the exercise was not to change the other person’s mind; the goal was to stay in community.

12 ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS



- After spending weeks preparing last fall, fifth grade students competed in the Rendell Center Citizenship Challenge finals in January. Two students wrote essays that were selected to advance to the finals level. “Students brought so many skills to their arguments and creative defense of a complex topic—the Electoral College,” fifth grade teacher Raichl Davenport said. “In the classroom, we’ve taught students to care about others—both their neighbors and strangers—to ask good questions, do good research, use their creativity, work hard and persevere, and to do good work. All of these things are evident in what they’ve produced and the effort they’ve given.”

Fourth and fifth graders were in the midst of writing essays about the Electoral College vs. the popular vote for the Citizenship Challenge of the Rendell Center for Civics & Civic Engagement.

Oliver is not a straight-ticket voter. In his first election, 2024, he voted for Republican candidate for attorney general Dave Sunday because of his focus on rehabilitating criminal offenders and reducing recidivism.

“One of the things that we’re trying to teach in the Young Democrats Club,” Oliver said, “is that you have to separate party from person. You have to research what they stand for, what their policies are.”

“We fact-check each other whenever we’re taking sides and such, just to try and spread information—and correct misinformation,” said Alice, who is in the Global Certificate program. “I know social media can sometimes get in the way of that.”



Let the Conversation Develop

During the 2020 election, senior Brady Cross decided that he could effect change. “I saw the disparities and lack of representation among certain groups, specifically youth voters,” he said. “And that bothered me because we’re the ones who are going to be impacted the most by decisions being made now.”

Beginning last spring, Brady, who is also in the Global Certificate program, worked with two voter registration organizations. Visiting schools, community centers and food banks, he registered scores of voters in time for the 2024 election. “I spoke to people about why it’s so important to vote, how to get involved, where they can vote,” he said.



Senior Brady Cross leads the Civic Engagement Club at PC. “We bring up issues that we think are important to the community, and we discuss them,” he said. “I think it’s really important to have a platform for people to be informed and to share their opinions without feeling judged.”

Back at school, he registered 45 to 50 of his PC classmates.

During his junior year, Brady independently studied the impact of legislation on voter turnout. “I wanted to learn more about what was being done on the state level to increase or decrease turnout and how legislation has affected certain demographics,” he said. “I learned that restrictive voting laws have disproportionately impacted minorities and have infringed on rights that are supposed to be protected, opening the door for further discrimination.”

This year, Brady established the Civic Engagement Club, advised by Oberfield, which meets Tuesdays at lunch. Typically, the group chooses an agenda, and Brady prepares balanced news articles and videos. Then, he said, “we just let the conversation develop.” In keeping with the group’s norms, there are no judgments and no arguments. The group listens and asks questions but does not challenge each other’s views. Topics have ranged from nominees for President Trump’s Cabinet positions to his executive orders since taking office, including restrictions on immigration.



Research and Responsibility

At the Student Civic & Community Engagement Summit, 17-year-old Alara Arkan voiced frustration about missing the age requirement to vote by just three weeks. Fortunately for Alara, representatives from Involved at 17, a Philadelphia City Commissioners program, were at the summit.

Involved at 17 promotes civic participation in the election process by enabling high school students to serve as poll workers on Election Day. Alara completed a two-hour training session, learning the responsibilities of poll workers as well as how to operate the technology. Early on the morning of Nov. 5, they were assigned to a poll in Northeast Philadelphia, checking in voters from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Witnessing the process through to the end gave Alara confidence in the electoral system and an appreciation for poll workers.

“Honestly, it made me really happy,” said Alara, a senior and a candidate for the Global Certificate who would like to work the polls going forward and certainly vote. “I want to know who’s on the ballot. I want to know their stance on things I care about and then make my decisions based on research. I don’t ever want to be uninformed.”

Last July, senior Ross Lee was part of a small group of Penn Charter students who traveled to Washington, D.C. with the Center for Public Purpose for a three-day lobbying experience hosted by the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), a nonpartisan Quaker organization. It was an opportunity offered to students in any of the three PC certificate programs. In addition to the Global Certificate program, PC offers certificates in Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability and in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice. Ross is a candidate for the Environmental Certificate.

Using the Quaker decision-making process of consensus, the students chose to lobby for gun violence prevention. They spent a day training with members of FCNL in lobbying tactics. The next day they met with Rep. Madeleine Dean as well as staff members of both Rep. Dwight Evans and then-Senator Robert Casey.

“The specific ask we had as a group was expanding funds on an appropriations bill for community violence interrupters,” Ross said. “The approach we took was to try to mitigate gun violence in our communities essentially through employing social workers who try to diffuse situations that could otherwise end in gun violence.” PC students found their audience supportive and committed to gun violence prevention.

This lobbying experience, as well as casting his first ballot in the November 2024 election, convinced Ross of his power in the democratic process. “And it’s really motivated me to keep up with politics,” he said, “because now I feel an increasing sense of responsibility.”

After completing PC’s certificate program, Ross plans to major in environmental science in college and exercise that responsibility by returning to Capitol Hill to advocate for the environment.



Motivated by Value Systems

Students begin a deep inquiry into American government and politics with Civics in eighth grade. The course, teacher Jim Pilkington said, typically begins with what it means to be an American and to be civically engaged. This year, on Nov. 5, his students walked across School House Lane to visit the local polling location, talking with poll workers and voters, who were happy to connect with future voters.

Eighth grader Olivia Boyd had been to the polls before. Her mom is a poll worker, and Olivia sometimes accompanies her dad when he votes. “He walks me through the process of who he’s voting for, his reasons for voting for them, and how to vote when I get older,” she said.

“Watching the election unfold this year felt different,” Olivia added. “It felt like I actually knew what I was watching. It felt way more relevant.”

Bateman, a Middle School teacher for 20 years before moving to Upper School, returned to present a lesson designed to help Civics students explore the political landscape of the 2024 election. Each student was assigned a role—reformer, traditionalist, eco-aware or “let me be free.” Imagining themselves in that particular role, students generated the values that were important to them; for instance, privacy, security, inclusion.

“The goal is for students to recognize that people are, at the deepest level, motivated by their value systems,” Bateman said. “How they vote is an expression of the values they deem important. This is a great way to move beyond the two-party discussion to something more meaningful.”



Seniors Taggart Kohles and James Walters presented a lesson to fifth grade students about the Electoral College as the class prepared for the Rendell Center’s Citizenship Challenge.

She hoped the exercise would “humanize various political persuasions and identify if there are commonalities and intersections.”

Olivia’s classmate Lucas Gade, an avid reader of news, has a penchant for politics. Studying civics, with its emphasis on participating in America’s representative democracy, appeals to him.

“Being a politician,” he said, “getting to argue and work with other people who are not just fighting for themselves but fighting for a whole group of people—I just like that idea.” Lucas is already looking forward to 2028 as the first election in which he’ll be able to vote.


Both Lucas and Olivia have some ideas about their future in Upper School and beyond. A member of Community Club, which organizes service projects in the Middle School, Olivia sees herself continuing with the Center for Public Purpose at PC and maybe working at—or opening—a nonprofit health clinic when she’s an adult. Lucas is interested in joining the Upper School Community Council and Model UN. And eventually—just maybe—representing his fellow citizens in one way or another.

Bateman believes that civic engagement motivated by values bodes well for them and for society. “Becoming involved as students impacts their views of the future,” she said. “Students who are civically active are more likely to continue their political participation into adulthood, maintain a greater sense of social responsibility, and remain committed to community service. This long-term civic involvement contributes to a more engaged and responsible citizenry. It empowers young people to be active participants in creating the world they wish to see, fostering a sense of agency and responsibility that can last a lifetime.” **PC**



This year, it was Germantown Academy's turn to host the 138th PC/GA Day, held Nov. 9, and the Quakers made themselves right at home by winning seven events and tying two, with just one loss.

As always, the day represented a melting pot of students, alumni, faculty, staff and families from the two schools that comprise the nation's oldest continuous high school rivalry. The Quakers retained the Competition Cup for yet another year and punctuated the day with a last-second, 30-24 victory in the football game that marked a thrilling conclusion to head football coach Tom Coyle's final game after 12 seasons managing the PC sideline.

 To view more photos from PC/GA Day, visit [flickr.com/photos/penncharter/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/penncharter/albums).



FOOTBALL

Senior Eian Kilpatrick's rushing touchdown with 25 seconds left delivered the Quakers another triumphant victory to increase PC's all-time lead in the series to 89 wins, 38 losses and 11 ties. Kilpatrick's heroics earned him the Geis Trophy as the game's most outstanding player, while all-league selections A.J. Bouie (three sacks), QB Tom McGlinchey and Zahir Kalam Id-Din also produced clutch plays in the win. The Quakers finished their season with a 7-3 record, the team's highest win total since 2018.



BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

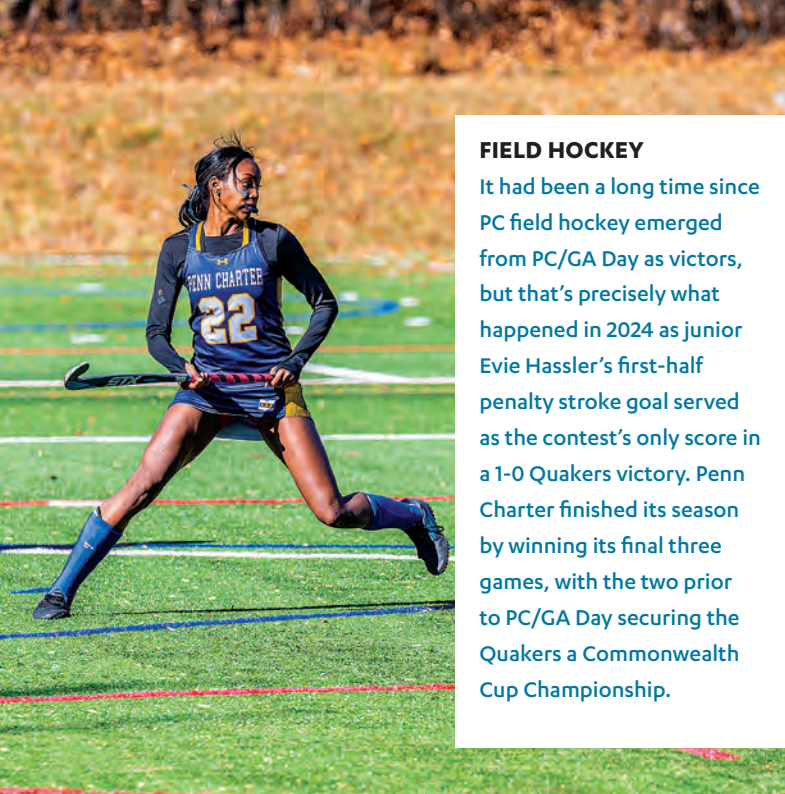
Senior T.J. Zwall won the boys cross country race and the event's most valuable player award for the second consecutive year, leading the Quakers to a resounding 17-43 victory. Senior Nate Johnson, junior Ben Berger, sophomore Matthew Dunn and eighth grader Nate Viands also turned in strong performances for the Quakers, who added a PAISAA Championship to their late-season list of achievements.



GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

Eighth grader Mackenzie Skelly concluded her fantastic introductory varsity campaign by winning the girls' race, being named most outstanding player and helping lead the Quakers to a convincing 19-40 win over GA. The Inter-Ac MVP also had strong support from senior Alli DeLisi, junior Gwen Hamilton, and sophomores Jackie Plastaras and Marlie Klein. In addition to beating the Patriots, PC also won league and PAISAA championships in 2024.





FIELD HOCKEY

It had been a long time since PC field hockey emerged from PC/GA Day as victors, but that's precisely what happened in 2024 as junior Evie Hassler's first-half penalty stroke goal served as the contest's only score in a 1-0 Quakers victory. Penn Charter finished its season by winning its final three games, with the two prior to PC/GA Day securing the Quakers a Commonwealth Cup Championship.



GIRLS SOCCER

Sophomore Ally Bradby got the Quakers on the board with a first-half head ball goal, and freshman Alexis Regan and senior Jul Toomey also found the back of the net in a satisfying 3-0 shutout of the Patriots. Toomey was named MVP in her final game for the Quakers, which won its first seven games of the season, finishing with an overall mark of 14-5-2 and a fourth-place finish in the Inter-Ac.



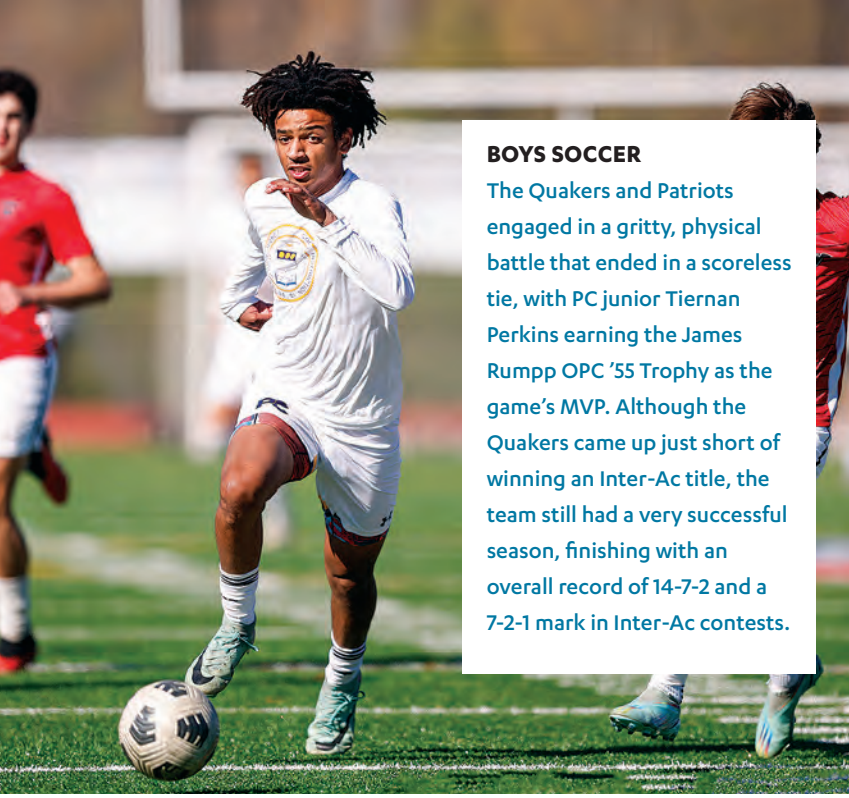
GIRLS TENNIS

The Quakers won six of seven matches on PC/GA Day to sweep the season series with the Patriots. Senior doubles tandem Bridgitte Gold and Karya Karabucak shared the Most Outstanding Player Award in PC's 6-1 triumph, and the team finished 9-7 overall with a 7-5 mark in league contests, good for fourth place in a very strong Inter-Ac League.

GIRLS WATER POLO

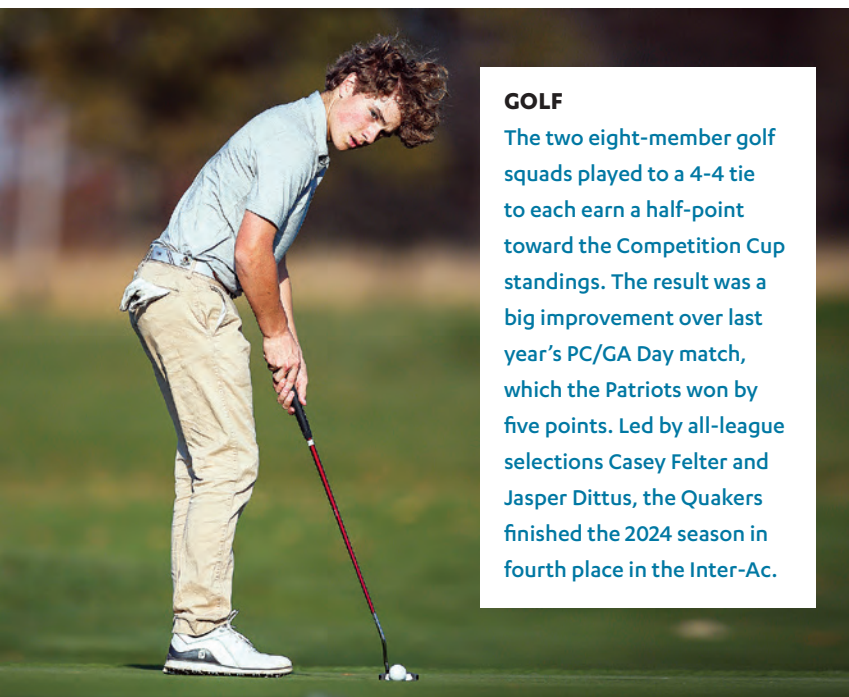
One of the best seasons in program history ended with a 10-7 win over the Patriots, allowing the Quakers to go a perfect 3-for-3 against their arch-rivals in 2024. Junior Lili DeMartinis and senior Zoë Page tallied three goals apiece, with Page nabbing the game's most outstanding player honor. Chelsea Gadsden registered 15 saves in goal, as PC finished with a phenomenal 18-2 overall record.





BOYS SOCCER

The Quakers and Patriots engaged in a gritty, physical battle that ended in a scoreless tie, with PC junior Tiernan Perkins earning the James Rump OPC '55 Trophy as the game's MVP. Although the Quakers came up just short of winning an Inter-Ac title, the team still had a very successful season, finishing with an overall record of 14-7-2 and a 7-2-1 mark in Inter-Ac contests.



GOLF

The two eight-member golf squads played to a 4-4 tie to each earn a half-point toward the Competition Cup standings. The result was a big improvement over last year's PC/GA Day match, which the Patriots won by five points. Led by all-league selections Casey Felter and Jasper Dittus, the Quakers finished the 2024 season in fourth place in the Inter-Ac.



BOYS WATER POLO

Though boys water polo wasn't able to secure the victory that day, the Quakers still engaged in a tight PC/GA Day battle for three quarters until GA's depth prevailed in the fourth quarter of an eventual 20-12 Patriots win. PC goalie James Walters was a standout, keeping the contest close with several highlight-reel saves.

Athletics Achievements

Each year, the Athletics Department celebrates students who are recruited to play their sport in college. In November, students, coaches, families and friends gathered on Caldwell Court in the Graham Athletics & Wellness Center to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and achievements of 20 seniors who had committed to play at the collegiate level—a proud moment for our school community. Congratulations to our student-athletes—who now number more than 30—who will play their sport in college.

Back (L-R): Kai Shinholster (University of Minnesota, basketball); Zoë Page (Drexel University, crew); Matt Gilhool (Louisiana State University, basketball); Ryan Conrad (Villanova University, baseball); Tristan Raymond (Stetson University, soccer); Lauren Gedraitis (West Chester University, softball); Garrett Mathias (Bucknell University, baseball); Jake West (Northwestern University, basketball); Kyle McKernan (Lafayette College, baseball)

Front: Ryan Hatty (Niagara University, softball); Alli DeLisi (University of North Carolina, cross country/track); Kenighan Mattice (Harvard University, lacrosse); Grace Magee (University of Connecticut, crew); Kaylinn Bethea (Saint Joseph's University, basketball); Ava Coombs (Boston University, swimming); Eva McIver-Jenkins (Brown University, swimming); Eliza Black (United States Air Force Academy, swimming); Casey Felter (University of Delaware, lacrosse)



(L-R): Sam Jaffe (Princeton University, squash); Alex Jaffe (Princeton University, squash)



Look for additional college-bound athlete news in the next issue.

“PC” Profile

Chris Johnson OPC '17

BY ED MORRONE OPC '04

An interest in both music and Chinese culture led Chris Johnson OPC '17 from PC to NYU Shanghai. Close to a decade later, he remains in the Far East as a budding local hip-hop artist, music marketer and promoter.



Christopher Johnson enrolled at Penn Charter in kindergarten, and one of his first cogent thoughts was that this place seemed to have something for everyone. If something did not exist at PC, Johnson noted the encouragement teachers gave students to start something themselves. So, he founded a traveling chess club in Middle School that continued into Johnson's Upper School years.

"I had been interested in chess since I was very young," he said, "and the school was willing to invest in the project and see my vision through. It was a dream experience because it fostered a community that is instrumental in developing students into the person they want to be."

Johnson took complete advantage of the student experience at PC as a member of the wrestling team who also played the tuba and performed original music in school showcases with his band, Lethal Mobb.

Johnson's most impactful interest at Penn Charter, however, was learning Mandarin Chinese. In seventh grade, he chose to study Mandarin, which PC had added as a fourth language the year before, in 2010. He quickly became fascinated with how influenced the Chinese were by their own history, customs and cultural traditions.

He traveled twice to China with teachers and fellow students from PC: In ninth grade, he visited Yaohua, Penn Charter's sister school in Tianjin, and directly interfaced with Chinese students; and in 11th grade, he went to Chongqing No. 1 International Studies School. Johnson also hosted visiting students from Yaohua during his time at PC.

Johnson holds PC's Mandarin teachers in high regard; Cory Moy continues to teach at PC, and La Sripanwongsa, who left for a time, chose to return this year. "They did a great job fostering a sense of growth," he said. "They impressed upon me the fundamentals of Chinese, as well as the discipline and commitment required. With that encouragement and my love for the culture, it seemed like a good move to enroll in a university in China."

So that's exactly what Johnson did, enrolling at New York University Shanghai after his graduation from PC in 2017. He majored in interactive media and business, a flexible discipline that allowed him to take a varied course load featuring classes in business, coding, creative projects, music, entrepreneurship and finance.

"The motto of our university is 'Make the World Your Major,'" Johnson said. "It was a bunch of people from different cultures interfacing with each other."

A lover of producing and performing music since his time at PC, Johnson became somewhat of a local influencer in the city he still calls home. He



appeared in a music/branding video called “I Love Lujiazui,” an ode to Shanghai’s glitzy financial district known for its towering skyscrapers and bustling nightlife, where Johnson raps in English about all the amenities the area has to offer.

His studies at NYU gave him the knowledge to help turn Lethal Mobb from an informal group of friends into a full-fledged music production company with an LLC, official website and administrative roles. The group put out an album called *Mobb Ties* in 2021. But now, with only two active members who are split between the U.S. and China, “the brand exists mostly as an idea, a symbol of our individual dreams and motivations, musically and otherwise,” Johnson said.

Johnson teaches English full-time in Shanghai, which allows him the flexibility to focus on his musical endeavors. He recently concluded a 10-show residency at a local club called Stardust, where Johnson got to bring hip hop—his music and that of other artists—to the venue weekly.

“We handled everything from the posters to the artists we brought in to marketing on American and Chinese social media,” he said. “It was an experience that not only allowed me the opportunity to perform, but also to see some of the stuff going on at the back end of these events.”

Johnson is regularly producing new original music, with his songs available on all major music streaming platforms. He currently performs

under the name Blvck Sheep, writing and rapping the lyrics while his producer, Asa Bell, composes the music. Blvck Sheep has a forthcoming record called “Bounce Out” that Johnson and Bell are particularly excited about.

Johnson said he’d like to return home to Philadelphia within the next three years and hopes to ultimately split his time between the U.S. and China. He is still taking Mandarin classes in hopes that complete fluency will help his “big-boy job” prospects down the line.

“I am sort of economically coming to a crossroads as far as my next steps in China. I’d like to do something where I could split time for an international company as a liaison between the U.S. and China.”

When asked about how his PC experience has helped him make his way in Shanghai, Johnson spoke of how Pete Shafer OPC ’82, his wrestling coach at PC, got his wrestlers in the habit of shaking the hand of every person in attendance after matches. Johnson noticed that when he finishes performing in China, he finds himself doing the same thing with his audience members as a means of gratitude for sharing the experience with him.

“It’s a tangible way in which the Penn Charter experience influenced me directly,” he said. “It means a lot to me that people would come see someone they had never heard of perform. Pete was very big on gratitude and being thankful for the people in your corner.” **PC**



A Trip to the Moon

In November, the Upper School presented *A Trip to the Moon*, a captivating vignette-style play set against the backdrop of the transformative summer of 1969. Told through 16 scenes, each inspired by iconic songs from the era, the production explored dreams that defined a generation—dreams of love, equality and the stars.





Featuring events like the moon landing and Woodstock, *A Trip to the Moon* brought history to life with humor, heart and a spirit of reflection. In the scene “You Can’t Always Get What You Want,” a girl makes her case to attend Woodstock. In “Bad Moon Rising,” a woman fights for a job at NASA, while “Fortunate Son” depicts a soldier delivering a sobering reality check. The protest anthem “Come Together” rallies a group of activists, showing a young girl how to stand up for justice.

“I joined this play just for fun,” senior Jack Davey said. “But being part of this production has become a highlight of my high school experience.”

Director Eva Kay Noone was delighted by the the cast and crew. “The cast was large and diverse, with both seasoned actors and talented newcomers,” she said. “The students did an outstanding job with this script—they should be proud of their accomplishment!” **PC**

 See more photos at [flickr.com/penncharter/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/penncharter/albums/).





OPC WEEKEND 2024

Alumni celebrated each other and their alma mater at the 131st Old Penn Charter Weekend on May 3 and 4, 2024.

Last spring, OPCs enjoyed athletic contests, the All-School Art Show, the OPCs of Color Brunch, and the opportunity to catch up with a number of former teachers. On Friday, May 3, Head of School Karen Warren Coleman—experiencing her first OPC Weekend—welcomed alumni at the Annual Awards Ceremony in the Meeting Room, followed by a reception on campus. On May 4, classes ending in 4s and 9s attended individual reunions in Philadelphia and the surrounding area.



Head of School Karen Warren Coleman



DAVID P. MONTGOMERY OPC '64 Alumni Award of Merit

CRAIG J. SABATINO OPC '74

The Alumni Award of Merit is given “to a graduate of William Penn Charter School whose character and outstanding achievement have reflected lasting credit upon this old school.”



John DeSantis OPC '74, left, introduced his longtime friend “Sab” at the awards ceremony.

Co-founder of INTECH Construction Craig J. Sabatino OPC '74—known to all as Sab—has partnered with Penn Charter and many other independent schools in the region on major building initiatives. At PC, Sabatino's company built the Richard B. Fisher OPC '53 Middle School, the Kline & Specter Squash Center, the Graham Athletics & Wellness Center, and Perrott, Maguire and Palaia fields.

INTECH's latest Penn Charter building project is the Richard A. Balderston OPC '69 Lower School, which will open its doors to students in September 2025.

At the awards ceremony, Sabatino thanked Penn Charter for its 25-year collaboration with INTECH, and he recognized others for the roles they've played in his life. “Because of many of the people in this room and this Penn Charter community,” he said, “my young life was influenced and impacted at the appropriate time.”

In particular, Sabatino thanked the former teacher and coach who he said inspires him to this day. “There are many stories of successful people who tell how one teacher changed their lives, and I am one of those people,” Sabatino said. “The one teacher who was influential and impactful by believing in me, guiding me, pushing me, giving me a chance, and who continues to guide me to this day is Mr. Hench Murray. Mr. Murray was that one teacher that made a remarkable difference in my life.” [PC](#)



Craig Sabatino OPC '74 with daughters Nicole (left) and Victoria OPC '05.

Honorary 1689

“Given to a member of the Penn Charter community who has shown extraordinary commitment to the school by demonstrating pride and excellence in the performance of their duties and by consistently providing encouragement and support to the student body.”

CHRISTOPHER BURNETT

Chris Burnett, a fifth grade teacher at PC since 1997, is a well-loved member of the Lower School. In introducing him, Naveena Bemby, who taught alongside him for almost three decades, shared reflections about Burnett from colleagues, students and former students who have known him over the years. They remembered “Mr. B” for making math fun by connecting it with sports in the team activities Math Basketball and NFL Combine; for his classroom pets that have included lizards, turtles and chinchillas; and for being the architect of the fifth grade teaching team’s always-clever Halloween costumes.

One colleague shared with Bemby her experience as a new teacher: “Chris’s authenticity, humility and perspective helped me to get through my first year. His dedication to the PC community inspired me from day one because I noticed immediately how he devotes his time and energy to help his students see themselves as mathematicians and become the best versions of themselves.”

Burnett, in addition to teaching, coaching and mentoring, has been integral to Penn Charter’s Day Camp for 34 years. “For countless campers and counselors,” former PC Summer Camps director Charlie Kaesshafer OPC ’71 shared, “Chris helped to create the quintessential summer, which is the reason that so many return to PC Day Camp year after year.”



Chris Burnett was joined at the ceremony by his wife, Cindy (right), their son Dylan OPC '17, and Dylan's fiancée, Ali Sluko.



SANDRA CARPINO

Sandy Carpino, like Chris Burnett, joined the PC community in 1997. As the school receptionist, she is, to many people, the first contact they have with Penn Charter. “She greets visitors with a friendly smile and helps them find their way to any office, classroom or meeting,” Carol Steinbrook Hon. 1689 said in introducing Carpino. “And when the front-desk phone rings, Sandy is always the pleasant voice welcoming the caller as she answers, ‘Good morning, Penn Charter.’”

“Sandy is not only a receptionist,” Steinbrook added. “She is a willing, helping hand for faculty, staff, visitors, parents and students, no matter the task.”



Sandy Carpino celebrated the conferral of her Honorary 1689 diploma with her sons, Anthony (left) and Nicholas.



OPCs of Color Brunch

This well-attended annual event connects OPCs of color from all graduation years.

William Penn Charter School Then & Now



1974


Head of school and chemistry teacher Wilbert Braxton teaches a student how to use a thermocouple, a device that measures temperature by using the difference in the voltage generated between two different types of metal wires.



2024

Chemistry teacher Michael Avilés teaches a student about the power of the ideal gas law (an equation of state for gases) through problem-solving. After deriving the equation from fundamental relationships, the class practices solving it for a given set of conditions.

Class Notes

 Penn Charter magazine wants to hear from you, and your classmates do, too! Submit your news and photos at penncharter.com/classnote. Digital photos should be 300 dpi JPEGs.

Hon. 1689

John T. Rogers has become a certified Wilson® Dyslexia Practitioner, prepared to diagnostically teach students identified with a language-based learning disability, such as dyslexia, at the beginning levels of encoding and reading. He plans to volunteer to work with three students each year and is extremely appreciative of PC's Lower School faculty and staff, who supported his yearlong training.

1952

Colson H. Hillier Jr. spent time with three grandsons at a college graduation, a wedding and a college football game. "Having reached the age of 90 allows us precious time to spend with grandchildren," he writes. "Pat continues to enjoy her weekly card games of Hand, Foot and Knee (a variation of canasta), and I still enjoy my weekly pétanque games (similar to bocce). We volunteer with several nonprofits that bring us great joy. God bless you all, especially our beloved and dedicated class agents Bruce and Skip, who kept us going for many years."

1953

Robert R. Adams writes, "I'm blessed to still be actively running a business with the help of my GA daughters (PC did not enroll girls at that time) and, on occasion, racing small sailboats on Barnegat Bay, N.J., in the Barnegat Bay Yacht Racing Association and at my club, Bay Head Yacht Club. Sailboat racing has been a major part of my life, locally, nationally and internationally, having competed against some of the best!"

Clark K. Riley writes, "Since '93, I've been retired and living in Keowee Key, S.C., near Clemson University, in a golf-course community on beautiful Lake Keowee. I lost my bride of 56 years in 2011 and my youngest son in '18, but you need to keep moving along. I'm fortunate to have a relationship with a great lady, who's been keeping me going. I have two children remaining, three grandchildren and four great-grands. None live close by, so it's FaceTime and a once-a-year reunion, mostly around Lake George. Looking forward to another great year and all the shows, plays and concerts at Clemson and Greenville, and Clemson athletics. Go Tigers!"

1954

Emil H. Hubschman shares an update of his proudest achievements. "In 1971, I was fortunate to marry the love of my life, Lynn, and inherit her two beautiful daughters, Jody and Tracy, who have become very successful women. In 1956, I created Bucknell University's first 'over the air' radio station: WVBU. In 1985, Lynn and I established the annual Emil and Lynn Hubschman Award at Pennsylvania Hospital, honoring individuals who provide exemplary care and compassion, coupled with outstanding professionalism. In 1995, I helped found the City of Aventura, Fla., where we spend our winters, and in 1996, I founded its chamber of commerce."



From left: **Andrew Beck, William Hamilton III, Alfred Bracher III**, Head of School **Karen Warren Coleman, James Lehman Jr., George McLaughlin**

Class Notes

George H. McLaughlin II writes, “Charlotte and I had a great chance to catch up with **James A. Lehman**. He stayed with us when he came to Princeton for reunions. We all know of his great medical career, but I can personally attest to his abilities. Years ago while in Cleveland, I fell on ice and broke my nose. I upset the Cleveland surgeon in the hospital when I refused his services and rented an ambulance to take me all the way to Jimmy’s house in Akron. He took me to his office the next morning and did the operation.”

1955

Peter T. Clark writes, “What struck me about the two parts of my National Geographic quest Exploring Alaska’s Coastal Wilderness: Denali National Park Pre-Voyage Extension, is an enduring sense of paradox. At first, I’m convinced of my irrelevance as a guest; nature forcefully repels me. Yet nature is no less strongly attractive—with a beauty nowhere else, composing ever-changing situations. Alaska’s wild land is indifferent to me as a human but gives me a sense of difference. Nature at moments frightens me but enlarges the torch of life in me. I sit here and reflect upon my experience with nature and my personal writing about God; I contemplate T.S. Eliot’s ‘The Waste Land’ and become disenchanted with—then liberated from—my senses’ base beliefs. I achieve a nearness to nirvana. Time is short for me; other attractions pull on me, but still I have the desire to visit nature. More still lives in my thoughts for future action if this mind and body cooperate.”

Richard D. Wattis shares that he moved to Easton, Md., in 2015, home of the oldest Quaker meeting house in the U.S. “I welcome any PC visitors.”

Richard Westcott writes, “It has been a very special year for my family. First, my

28th book was published. Then, I and my wife, Lois, whom I first dated when I was a student at PC, celebrated our 65th wedding anniversary. On that same day, our first great-grandchild was born. Along the way, one of our granddaughters was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and is now in France, and her sister participated with her college band in the Tournament of Roses Parade. As a former president of the Philadelphia Sports Writers’ Association, I was deeply involved with the organization, the oldest of its kind—121 years. Finally, our daughter Amy was nominated for an Emmy (Outstanding Fantasy/Sci-Fi Costumes). The previous year, her husband, Mark, won an Emmy for Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series. What a wonderful year it’s been!”



Rich, Lois and Amy Westcott

1956

Joan McIlvaine, widow of **John McIlvaine**, is happy to share the news of her great-granddaughter, Serena Renna, who is one year old.



1957

Peter S. Stern reports, “I’m still practicing estate planning and elder law in Palo Alto, Calif., but got away for a great three-week trip to visit friends in France this summer, pretty much away from the Olympics in Paris, and was in Maine for two weeks on Mount Desert Island, where my family had a summer home many years ago. The island has many moderate-size mountains perfect for hiking, and the surrounding islands provide sheltered bays great for part-time sailors like me.”

1959

James R. Buchanan writes, “Happy to report that I’m still on the green side of the grass. However, each year seems to make it harder to keep the old man out (a reference to the Toby Keith song “Don’t Let the Old Man In”). My snowmobile has gained at least an extra 100 lbs. and my chainsaw at least 50 lbs., this year alone. That’s how they feel when I lift them. Oh well...don’t worry, be happy!”

Robert H. Ezerman writes, “Remarkably, at 83, I’ve taken up writing reality-based fiction, a 250-page volume 1, triggered by an amorous 1971 adventure in the Republic of Vietnam (that part is real). I write neither to brag nor for publicity, this is so far a selfish enterprise, but to share how incredible the experience of starting my first short tale was, and to have the story then write itself, the characters coming to life with crisp dialogue mostly independent of any conscious effort on my part. I’ve done a lot of fiction reading and the really funny aspect is I know my book is worthy and reads like a screenplay with lots of humor, just a flat-out hoot. I can’t be the only wackadoodle in our class to try fiction writing. Go ahead, if you’ve never tried it. Who knows what will spill out of your mind!”

CLASS OF 1959 65TH REUNION



From left: **Stephen Day**, **Henry Schneider Jr.**, **David Evans**, **William Davison IV**

1960

Michael P. Rauch reports, "I retired to do a lot of travel, which helped me to connect with **Richard Schwarz OPC '61**."

1961

Roy A. Beauchamp writes, "I found this old photo from the 1960 football season, 64 years ago. Yikes! It shows me, **Duncan M. McFarland** and **Raymond W. Vickers** (in the background, kneeling). Definitely old school. We came within two points of winning the title that year (because of ties with both Malvern and GA)."



1962

Louis F. Burke and Wendy and **Remy Fox** met in Sarasota recently for a fun evening. Louis shares, "Marce and I have been living in Saint Petersburg, Fla., for the past three years. We have kind of deserted the Northeast. We are living the life in Florida!"



1963

Steven P. Hannes writes, "In the last couple of years, I've been fortunate to travel to some interesting places and with good company! In 2022, I visited the Upper Amazon rivers and Machu Picchu with my youngest son. Then, with classmate **Richard M. Dearnley** and his wife, Maggie, Siobhan and I were in Jordan and Israel in 2023 and Iceland in August 2024. Siobhan and I were also in Tanzania on a wonderful safari in 2023. I'm working on a website to be able to share my photography, including from these trips."

1964

E. Pierce Albright writes, "I'm retired and living on a small farm in upper Bucks County. We raise a small flock of sheep and keep a couple of horses. I have two daughters, who each have two sons: The oldest grandson has finished college; his brother is a college sophomore. On the other side, the oldest is a college freshman and his brother is a high school freshman. I saw that only a couple of my classmates were able to attend our reunion, but I would be interested in hearing about the other alumni."

Class Notes



From left: **Jeffrey Orleans**, **Alfred Silvaggio**, **John Hoffmeier**

1965

Georg Jarzembowski shares, “Through a student exchange program with a German high school, I was invited to attend PC and live with Adair and Clarissa Rogers and son **Anthony Rogers OPC ’66**. I enjoyed PC’s excellent teachers and understanding classmates and living with my host family, who treated me as another son. I’ve returned to the U.S. for vacations and visits to PC, my host family and friends, first alone, later with my wife, Gabriela, and then with our son, **Daniel Werner**, Class of 2011. Even after 60 years, I’m in contact with my host family, and PC alumni **Wayne Partenheimer OPC ’64**, **Mark Hankin OPC ’67**, **David W. Leebron OPC ’73**. This summer, we met David in Germany.

“As a traditional jurist, I was active as an attorney-at-law, judge at the district court of Hamburg, legal advisor at the State Justice Department of Hamburg and legal advisor on European affairs. I spent 12 years as a member of the Hamburg Parliament and 18 years in the European

Parliament. I’m living as a happy retiree with my wife in Hamburg, and our son, by now also a doctor of law, lives with his wife in our neighborhood. We’re both still fond of our times at Penn Charter.”

1966

Craig H. Fischer writes that his life has taken him many places: “From orderly to chief of nuclear medicine. From tinkerer to co-patent holder to opening and operating outpatient diagnostic centers and inpatient geriatric psychiatric units. From an MBA to implementation of a laser-induced fluorescence technology for real-time cancer diagnosis to clinical trials in the U.S., Amsterdam, the UK and China and coauthoring the Shanxi Province Cervical Cancer Study, while working with the Cleveland Clinic and a survivor of Mao’s Cultural Revolution. Then back ‘home’ to East Tennessee to open a new campus for a major hospital system and volunteer with the county sheriff’s initiative, Project

Lifesaver, which tracks at-risk people prone to wander due to a cognitive condition. Nancy has been very patient. It’s been a fun ride, with everything being a collaborative effort.”

Peter S. Linton reports he recently returned from Scotland, enjoying a few rounds of golf where the game was invented. Pictured below: Peter at Muirfield, one of the oldest golf clubs, and Gino, a lost-ball retriever belonging to Peter’s playing partner. During Peter’s round, Gino “found” a ball in the middle of the fairway belonging to the group just behind. Peter reports Gino is learning but has a long way to go to replace his predecessor Rosy, who was the expert.

Many will remember mathematics teacher Bert Linton, Peter’s father, who coached PC’s golf team and won an unprecedented number of Inter-Ac golf championships. Peter and wife Sandra make their home in Brussels, Belgium, and travel extensively around Europe.



1968

Harry C. (Trip) Kahn III writes, “Within the last year, I’ve participated in consultation and/or object loans for exhibits with Mount Vernon, the National Museum of the United States Army, Landis Valley Museum, Rock Ford Museum, Schwenkfelder Library & Heritage Center and the Mercer Museum. I specialize in 17th and 18th century objects and technologies, and high-density object storage methods. Most museums save more objects than they need to and waste many dollars unnecessarily.”

1969

Robert C. Ulin writes, “Our family recently moved to the Portland, Ore., area, where my wife accepted a senior faculty position in school psychology at the University of Oregon’s Portland campus. I taught one final semester online at Rochester Institute of Technology before retiring at the end of December. Our daughter is in seventh grade and enjoys being around our West Coast family.”

1970

Edward R. Over shares, “My wife, Jean, and I traveled to two weddings in the past year—the first outside Barcelona, the second outside Philadelphia. **Glenn J.R. Whitman** and his wife, Anna, graciously included us in their family activities and adventures before and after the second wedding.”



Ed Over and Glenn Whitman

“**Thomas R. Field** moved to Seattle 15 years before I did. As retirement approached, Tom created a star-gazing business that he and his wife now run. He combined a telescope with an application he created, which allows his customers to analyze

the composition of stars by the light they emit. Tom proudly admits that our physics teacher, Sam Tatnall, inspired him during his school years and still does. Nowadays, we enjoy getting together for breakfast, discussing archaeological breakthroughs and occasionally taking part in open water swimming.”

1971

Robert A. Picardo reports that he's going back to the future. Bob will be in the cast of the new series *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy*, premiering in late 2025. He plays the same artificial intelligence doctor as last time, who's been continuously active for more than 600 years, teaching cadets at the Starfleet Academy.

1973

Frederick H. Barlett III writes, “I was excited to return to the Penn Charter campus in the fall to help coach, for the second year, the Middle School football team.”

Frank V. Tuscano shares, “I’ve been married 44 years to Monica; we have two sons, Mark and Steven, and recently welcomed our fourth grandchild. I am happily retired from my roofing business. We’ve spent most of our days golfing at North Hills Country Club and in the mountains in Wellsboro, Tioga County, Pa.”



Frank Tuscano and family

CLASS OF 1969 55TH REUNION



Front row, from left: **E. Bevan Stanley**, **Louis Pierce Jr.**, **Jonathan Sprogell**. Back row: Head of School **Karen Warren Coleman**, **Thomas Lee II**, **Thomas Maeder**, **Philip Golden**, **Richard Mellor**, **Jeffrey Owens**, **Robert Canfield Jr.**, **Craig Melidosian**

Class Notes

CLASS OF 1974 50TH REUNION



1974

Kevin B. Hughes and his wife, Ellen, camped for a week in November at Mount Washington in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.



Patrick D. O'Shea shares, "I got out on the East River on a beautiful day. Past the Brooklyn Bridge, on the water, is one of the world's great restaurants with many memories for me, the River Cafe.

Truly, I am experiencing a dessert course to my whole life. I am grateful."

1975

Robert L. Doelp (pictured, right) participated in the Tunnel to Towers 5K Run & Walk event in honor of firefighter Stephen Gerard Siller, who was killed on 9/11. Rob also participated in the Penn Charter Run for Peace, and walked in memory of **Peter K. Ortale OPC '83** and **Kenny Caldwell OPC '89**, both of whom also died on 9/11.



1976

Robert C. Aitken writes, "For the better part of the last decade, this group has gotten together for a long weekend at the Jersey Shore. Lots of great stories and memories shared; it never gets old, even as we get older.

This year, we were at my house in Sea Isle City. Golf is always a focus but it is much more than that. Bobby was able to get us in the Shore Club! Outstanding!"

Pictured, from left: **Robert L. Nydick Jr. OPC '75**, **Robert L. Doelp OPC '75**, **Alan C. Good Jr. OPC '74**, **Nicholas A. Sommaripa**, **Robert C. Aitken**, **Geoffrey H. Shields OPC '75**, **James S. Still OPC '75**, **Craig N. Bower OPC '75**



1977

Alexander S.M. Gibson shares, "It's been three years since Beth and I moved to Gainesville so she could become a professor at the University of Florida. After almost 40 years in Atlanta, we were surprised how quickly we adjusted to this college 'town' of 100,000, plus 45,000 students. We've been warmly received and joined in activities we never took up in our former, larger city. Beth makes meticulous mosaics to combat the strain of her professional duties. While I'm still running my export transportation company, Hurst & Maxwell, LLC, I've had time to enjoy theatrical commitments and join the local barbershop chorus, the Barbergators. We're a group of 30 men and one lady singing a specialized type of four-part harmony. We compete with other regional choruses and entertain locally."



W. Bruce Murray Jr. reports, “Within AssuredPartners, I recently became national alternative energy practice leader, and I’m actively working deals in battery energy storage systems, fuel cell and hydrogen, biofuel, solar and other green technologies. I’m having a lot of fun with this initiative, working out of Hartford and Denver. All is well with Martha and four children in Avon, Conn.”

1978

Theodore F. Decker Jr. writes, “Sixty years after I entered Joan Costello’s PC kindergarten classroom, a fifth generation of the Decker family entered PC’s pre-K: my grand-niece Noa! Less celebratory is that Noa will be wearing yellow at Color Day, as that was the team color of her mother, **Jessica Rosskam OPC ’04**, and her grandfather, **George Rosskam OPC ’71**!”

1980

William F. (Billy) Rice launched his book *My Power 60 System: The 5 Essentials for Living a Happy, Healthy and Vibrant Life* in Kindle eBook, paperback, hardback and audiobook versions in June 2024.

1981

Dean E. Weisgold was appointed as a hearing officer for the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 2023. He adds, “I’ve been a solo practitioner in Philadelphia since 1999, specializing in commercial litigation.”

1982

George L. Justice has lived in Tulsa, Okla., for more than two years. He serves as provost at the University of Tulsa and has



a lot of time to work this year, as his wife, Devoney Looser, has a full-year fellowship at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, son Carl is a senior at Pitzer College, and son Lowell is a freshman at Wesleyan University.

1983

Edward Malandro III and his sons, **Eddie OPC ’12** and **Dillon OPC ’15** (pictured), enjoyed another summer of fishing trips at the Jersey Shore.



Timothy M. Wall writes, “Several OPC ’83 grads spent a fall weekend hanging out in Avalon, N.J., at my house, then attended the Eagles vs. Browns game. In attendance were: **Sean M. Weston**, **James H. Happe**, **Ruben Amaro Jr.**, **Andrew E. Vye**, **Warren (Jay) Constantine**, **Evan W. Michener**, **Thomas F. Monaghan** and **James J. Heffernen**. Also joining the festivities were **Charles (Mike) Roberts OPC ’84** and **Steven A. Heffernen OPC ’84**. John Brazer, who was Haverford School class of ’83 also decided to join because he always wished he was an OPC. Good times!”



Class Notes



From left: **John Fabbi**, **Joseph DiGiovanni**, **Jeffrey Bigelow**, **Douglas Hawkins**, **Stephen A. Bonnie OPC '66**

1984

Joseph Lowe shares, "Several members of the Class of 1984 gathered for dinner last May to celebrate our 40th reunion. It was an awesome evening of fellowship and sharing of old memories." Pictured, from left: **Ed Jerome**, **Calvin B. Johnson**, **Burbank C. Mitchell**, **James H. Watts**, **Joseph Lowe** and **Lloyd W. Howell**.



David J. (Zito) Robson is an award-winning playwright and educator. His play *Blues in My Soul* had two recent and acclaimed productions in the Philadelphia area. Another play, *Birthright*, was translated into Polish and published in *Dialogue* magazine in Warsaw last spring. He is also the author of more than

a dozen young adult nonfiction books on subjects ranging from social justice to history to mythology. Long inspired by his legendary PC teachers, **Joe Perrott Hon. 1689**, Elizabeth Darby and **John Shug Hon. 1689**, David has been an English professor at Delaware County Community College in Media since 2002. He lives with his wife of 31 years, photographer and actress Sonja Robson, in Wilmington, Del., and recalls his time at PC with fondness, love and gratitude.

1986

Brian D. Ellerson writes, "As president and CEO of BDE Florida Orlando, I own 40 Taco Bells and I'm one of the largest minority franchisees in the Taco Bell system. I joined the Wharton School's Graduate Board and the University of Pennsylvania's Financial Aid Leadership Council this spring. My family has established the Ellerson Family Fund at the university to support socioeconomically disadvantaged students. We've also sponsored the portrait of former head of school **Darryl J. Ford Hon. 1689**

and continue to support the Ellerson Family Scholarship at PC. My family moved into our new home in January. My 17-year-old son plays on his high school golf team, and my 13-year-old daughter plays soccer for IMG. Last month, **Marc R. Lisker** and I played golf at Philadelphia Cricket Club and had a great time. I also had dinner with **Matthew D. Factor** and his family in L.A. in July."

David M. Jaspan was named the chief medical officer for Jefferson Health Plans. He writes, "Our goal is to help create an integrated delivery and finance system that will positively impact the health and well-being of the people we are honored to serve."

1987

David B. Gleit shared photos from the Class of 1987.

Some of the Class of '87 gathered at Mia Regazza in February 2024. From left: **Robert W. Frieman**, Marla Luterman, Monica Freely, **Daniel Van Fossen**, **Charles (Chip) Finney**, **William D. Luterman**, **David Gleit** and **Orville R. Walls**.



Dan Van Fossen, **David Gleit** and **Rob Frieman** caught up at Jake's and Cooper's in Manayunk in September.

William M. Keane joined **Michael A. Gomez OPC '90**, **John S. Michener OPC '89** and **Patrick H. Keane OPC '88** at the Member Guest event at Philadelphia Country Club.



Tod J.D. Trobocco writes, “Last September, **William D. Luterman**, **Richard P. Park** and I spent a week plying the waters of Boston’s North Shore. Over seven days, we called on the ports of Portsmouth, N.H., and Newburyport, Annisquam, Rockport, Gloucester and Marblehead, Mass. Highlights included sunny weather, fair winds, vibrant conversation, a curbside chiropractic adjustment, a moderately unfriendly biker gang, another Tod (also with one ‘d’), and someone named Honey. This trip is the fourth annual weeklong sailing sojourn. **Eric J. Weinberg** had previously accompanied Bill and me but was forced to miss the last three trips for reasons he could not disclose, but which the rest of the Class of 1987 suspects are related to issues of national security. However, Eric has agreeably recruited me to help him storm the Nantucket coast in early October. P.S. Just about all of this is true.”



1988

Craig R. Cubbin writes, “**Christopher M. Nanni** and I continue to dominate the yearly golf challenge versus fellow OPC '88s **Timothy J. Tarpey** and **George J. Maley**.”

Christopher T. Taylor Jr. writes, “I can’t say enough about what Penn Charter has done for me. Even writing this, I was thinking about the possibility of making a grammatical error, and that would severely bother me. My biggest regret is not being able to send my 22-year-old and 25-year-old daughter and son to that unbelievable educational facility. My career took me out of the area. They’re doing fine, but they are

not Penn Charter kids. LOL. I’ve been in practice as a chiropractor for 27 years, with two clinics helping thousands of people. I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

1990

Richard L. Dressler shares, “Since Oct. 7, 2023, in between stretches of army reserve duty, I’ve been trying to hold onto some normalcy, as hard as it may be, during the current war in Israel (living here since 2007). Despite the darkness, I have seen the best come out in many people, including my close family.”

CLASS OF 1989 35TH REUNION



Class Notes

1991

Christopher R. Dilworth moved to Saudi Arabia for advanced Arabic training. Following that training, he will return to the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, as deputy political counselor. Chris's wife, Alison, is serving as deputy ambassador in Riyadh and their youngest son, Zachary, is in high school at the American school there. His mother, Bobbie, is also living with them in Riyadh. Chris's middle son, Jacob, is a sophomore at George Mason University and his oldest son, Owen, works in London.

Thomas S. Lendvay has been enjoying Seattle and the Pacific Northwest for the last two decades with his wife and two teenage boys, who've taken after his old man's competitive swim and diving interests. He is a professor of urology at the University of Washington and a practicing pediatric surgeon at Seattle Children's Hospital, where he specializes in robotic surgery. He's also an entrepreneur, having started companies in the medical device and digital health spaces. His last venture-backed company, C-SATS Inc., was acquired by Johnson & Johnson in 2018. He currently has two startups: one in the antimicrobial brand ingredient space and one in gut microbiome restoration. He also sits on the board of classmate **James M. Smartt Jr.'s** digital health and visual knowledge startup. If anyone is interested in a tour of Seattle when visiting, let Tom know.

1992

David M. Mandell writes, "Whiskey House of Kentucky, the most advanced distillery of custom bourbon, rye and American whiskey in the U.S., officially began operations July 1. It was founded in 2022 by John Hargrove, Daniel Linde and myself, the team that built the Bardstown Bourbon Company. Whiskey House focuses solely on large-scale, flexible, contract whiskey production. The operational and IT infrastructure captures and analyzes data

across the manufacturing process. With the addition of its artificial intelligence applications, the company can improve quality and efficiency, increase production yields and expand sustainability. Whiskey House received a Microsoft for Startups Founder's Hub Grant to accelerate the implementation of AI in all aspects of its manufacturing and distillation process."



1994

Jessica S. Hazz shares, "Earlier this year, I joined the New York City Department of Investigation as the inspector general for vendor integrity. In this role, I oversee DOI's Monitorship Program, which allows the city to enter into or continue existing contracts with companies that might otherwise be precluded from doing business with the city because of identified integrity concerns. I also oversee DOI's programmatic

monitorships on certain large-scale city projects to prevent waste, fraud and abuse of taxpayer dollars. Before joining DOI, I was with the New York State Inspector General's Office for 10 years, where I most recently held the position of attorney-in-charge of special investigations."

1998

Patrick A. Sasse is principal at New Hope-Solebury High School, ranked the 15th best high school in Pennsylvania by U.S. News & World Report, and #1 in the Pennsylvania suburbs by Philadelphia Magazine.

1999

Pierre Revol writes, "I moved to Dallas, Texas, in 2016 to work at a real estate investment trust and be closer to my in-laws. I have two wonderful young kids and keep in touch with many of my classmates. In fact, my son's godfather is **Christopher V. Ferrari**, and I've found some Inter-Ac friends here in Dallas. My work currently is in the data center space, where I lead capital markets for a large data center company."



CLASS OF 1999 25TH REUNION



2000

Susa M. McFall was joined by classmates **Alexander Macy**, **Evin Christman Rezavker**, **Mary Rogers Lewis** and **Matthew Carroll** at the Philadelphia Phillies Wall of Fame induction ceremony for her father, **David P. Montgomery OPC '64**.



2001

Melissa Knight Atkins got together with **William McKinney**, **Ashley P. McDowell** and **Chad A. Flores OPC '03** to celebrate the birthday of her son, Jonas, and daughter, Payton.



2002

Kevin Krieder writes, "I remember being in the basement of the theater room, taking an improvisation class and thinking that this was the best experience. I thought I wanted to be a gym teacher, then a bodybuilder, then a model. But I realized that I wanted to be an actor. I've taken that first experience and gone on to be on the hit Netflix show *Bling Empire* for three seasons, on the Emmy-nominated show *The Traitors* and in international movies such as *Hello, Love, Again*. I've also started my own production company, ALLS Productions, where I produce Asian-lead love stories."

2003

F. Henry Bartlett IV reports, "Our family moved to the New Hope-Solebury area recently, and we have loved the community and living in Bucks County. Morgan, Henry (7), Teddy (4) and Emery (2) are all doing well, and we hope to see classmates at a Penn Charter event sometime soon!"

Lydia Dworetzky writes, "While Philly will always be #1 in my heart, I am living by the beach in San Francisco (which also isn't bad) with my husband, Tim, and kids Emmett (5) and Gusty (3). Emmett began kindergarten at the San Francisco Friends school, where he had his first all-school Meeting for Worship. Everyone is still on a high from celebrating the wedding of my brother, **Adam Dworetzky OPC '10**, to **Madeline Hugo OPC '10** in September."



Class Notes

CLASS OF 2004
20TH REUNION

2004

Jacob Ronan had a big two years. After moving from California to Vermont to Providence, R.I., he changed his name and started grad school in computer graphics and animation at Brown University. In August, he went on a canoe camping trip to the Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada, and then in September saw Charli XCX and Sofi Tukker in Boston in the same week. “It was a little exhausting but all very BRAT.”

2005

Jacob R. Markovitz writes, “The OPC ’05 Shirtless Gentleman’s Fantasy Football League kicked off our 12th year. Members include **Steven L. Sullivan**, **Jacob Tulsy**, **Jared Aezen**, **Bertram W. Strackhouse**, **Jacob R. Markovitz**, **Hunter Maloumian**, **Andrew J. Layne**, **David Roitshtein**, **Jesse D. Levinson** and **Matthew Eshelman**.”

Derek S. Still, along with his brother **Ryan OPC ’03** and their parents, Jill and **James S. Still OPC ’75**, have been overwhelmed by the support they’ve received after the passing of their brother

and son, **Colin OPC ’08**. In an effort to extend the goodwill that Colin extended to the world and to support future OPCs, the Still family has established the Colin Barnes Still OPC ’08 Scholarship Fund at Penn Charter.

2006

Jeffrey Torchon writes, “I’ve started my third year of teaching at the American School in Japan, was promoted to department head of the performing arts department, and successfully defended my dissertation in April, earning my PhD in music education.”

2009

Kirby Dixon was named as a “40 Under 40” innovator in the TV industry by Broadcasting + Cable and Multichannel News. This honor celebrates the pioneering people who are pushing boundaries in the TV and media industry. As a director of publicity for A+E Networks, Kirby spearheads the creation and execution of

CLASS OF 2009
15TH REUNION

innovative publicity campaigns for various tentpole series and documentaries on the History Channel. She also cocreated and cohosts her own podcast titled "The Table Is Ours" for Lifetime.



2011

Cassandra P. Gigliotti writes, "I'm excited to share that shortly before our fourth anniversary, my significant other proposed in Joshua Tree National Park, a place that is near and dear to our hearts, as we reside only a few hours away in San Diego. Hope all is well within the PC and OPC community, which continues to be a cornerstone not only of my education but my identity."



2012

Carolyn M. Grace was awarded the Fulbright U.S. Student Program grant for the 2024-25 academic year. She will pursue a masters of philosophy in creative writing at Trinity College Dublin, concentrating in creative nonfiction.



2015

Sylvia M. Miller (pictured, right) reports, "Frances M. Bernstein OPC '12 and I are both language teachers at the Riverdale Country School in New York. Frances teaches Latin and Greek, and I teach Spanish. We fondly discuss our Penn Charter days over lunch in the cafeteria."



CLASS OF 2014 10TH REUNION



Class Notes

2017

Maya E. Freed began working at MIT at the Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship as an operations and events assistant. Maya was recently an assistant showrunner for Demo Day, a celebration of student business startups.

Andrew J. Sax shares, "After graduating from the University of Vermont in 2021, I pursued an artistic career working with musicians in the improvisational live music space. I created Some Saxxy Art in 2022, an illustration and graphic-design studio in Philadelphia. The art that began as a way to pass time during school has since snowballed into a full-time career. After gaining early recognition as a young graphic artist designing original bootleg T-shirts to share on the Dead & Company lot/shakedown scene, Some Saxxy Art has evolved into a brand that works closely with musical artists to create merchandise for live events. My inspirations are eclectic, ranging from comical styles to street art to something more deeply internal and psychedelic. This year, I designed posters for bands like Dirty Heads and Goose, created officially licensed Grateful Dead merchandise and worked with up-and-coming bands."



CLASS OF 2019 5TH REUNION



The Class of 2019 celebrated their fifth reunion in November.

2022

Jordan C. Patton studied abroad in Italy and Greece in May 2024. He especially loved the architecture and street artists.

2024

PC's newest graduates and their OPC parents and grandparents.



Families, from left: **Maia Kafer**, with **Jane Evans Hon. 1689** and **Megan Evans OPC '95**; **Olivia Roland**, with **Elisabeth Roland OPC '94**; **Gia McCusker**, with **Rosanne Punzo Hon. 1689**; **Gavin Michener**, with **John Michener OPC '89**; **PJ Duffy**, with **Tim Duffy OPC '87**; **Jevyn Dyer**, with **Rachel Dyer OPC '92** and **Carol Steinbrook Hon. 1689**.

DEATHS

1941



E. Victor Seixas Jr.,
on July 5, 2024.

1949



Peter A. Benoliel,
on Feb. 17, 2025.

1950



Christopher W. Parker Sr.,
on July 18, 2024.

1952



Clifford W. Donahower,
on Aug. 28, 2024.



William A. (Wally) Loeb,
on Jan. 10, 2025.

1953



John Stuart Budd,
on June 23, 2024.

1954

Charles M. Barkley,
on March 14, 2024.



Joseph H. Happe Jr.,
on June 6, 2024.

1957



James Masland,
on Feb. 28, 2025.

1958



William A. Graham IV,
on Jan. 29, 2025.

1960



James E. Morrison,
on Oct. 11, 2024.

1961



William A. Stuart,
on Aug. 23, 2024.

1963



John L. McKeever III,
on Sept. 10, 2024.

1964



John S. Morrow,
on Oct. 5, 2024.

1965



John Rulon,
on Aug. 25, 2024.

1969



William Fulton,
on Dec. 31, 2024.

1973



Charles E. Shorday Jr.,
on July 1, 2024.

1974



J. Peter Davis,
on Jan. 22, 2025.



Fred Dohrmann,
on Dec. 29, 2024.

Class Notes

DEATHS

1982



David S. Newman,
on April 18, 2024.

1991



George Edward Mark IV,
on Oct. 13, 2024.

1995



Michael Baran,
on Jan. 8, 2025.

MARRIAGES

2012

Anna M. Kurtz married Joe Laverty on Dec. 2, 2023.

Pictured: **Sarah M. Jobes OPC '15**, **Anna**, **Leah F. Kurtz OPC '15**, **Susannah R. Bonn**, **Julia H. Vahey OPC '13**, **Samantha (Kapnek) Bodek**.



2013

Mark P. Opaliski married Leila Riebe on Aug. 3, 2024, in New Hampshire.

Pictured: **Ted Foley**, **Brendan Riebe**, **Mark**, **Bennett W. Samuel**, **Michael G. Lordi** and **Meredith C. Wurtz**.



BIRTHS**2003**

Leo, to **Miki Omori Pozzuolo** and Jeffrey Pozzuolo, on April 29, 2024.

2004

Ginger Fox, to Kirk and **Megan (Kaesshafer) Jones** on July 8, 2024.

**2007**

Oliver Buckley Williams, to **Bridget McDugall** and James Williams, on May 8, 2024.

2010

Ari Jaxx, to Jason and **Jillian (Falkoff) Cohn** on Aug. 8, 2024.

**2012**

Holly Anne, to **Anna Kurtz Laverty** and Joseph Laverty, on Aug. 30, 2024.

**2013**

Adeline May, to **Katy Decker-Smith** and Keegan Smith, on July 7, 2024.



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Save *the* Date

MAY 2-3
OPC Weekend

MAY 23
Color Day

JUNE 7
Commencement