



Empowered learning, purposeful leadership, and a supportive community

THE CAPSTONE





Message from our Head of School

Capstone

cap·stone [káp st-n] cap·stones- Plural (NOUN)

1. Top stone: a stone used at the top of a wall or another structure

2. High point: something considered the highest achievement or most important action in a series of actions

Celebrating our 25th

We marked our 25th anniversary as a school with many festivities. One special occasion was our 25th anniversary party in January. We acknowledged and heard from one of our founders, Ilana DeBare, and from our founding Head of School, Ann Clarke. They shared how JMSG was created by visionaries who saw a need and acted to build a school to empower middle school girls here in the East Bay. JMSG from its beginning has been committed to providing an inspiring and intentional learning community for girls. In this 25th year, we have so much to be grateful for.

- We thank the founders who spent hours and hours of time conceiving of JMSG, articulating its vision and mission, and setting up our school with a sturdy foundation based on tenets we carry today:
 - We find strength in our diverse community
 - We support students to embody their full selves
 - We provide countless opportunities for our students to use and amplify their voices
 - We uplift women's accomplishments and perspectives
 - We know mentors matter and we ensure our students hear from and learn from inspirational women
 - We tend to the whole child with a focus on math, science, the arts, engineering, the humanities, and of course the social and emotional growth that allows our students to know themselves so well, and interact and collaborate with others.

Thank you to Ilana DeBare, the Founding Board Chair, and the other founding board members who worked endlessly to get JMSG off the ground and to shape JMSG into our outstanding school. Ilana was responsible for the process of creating our mission and core values and for the financial health of the school. Under Ilana's leadership, the goal was to sustain JMSG for the future. She is also the author of *Where Girls Come First*, documenting the history of girls schools, including the founding days of JMSG.

Our Mission

- 2 **Preparing the confident, capable, creative, and compassionate women of tomorrow**



(photo above, l to r): Michele Spitulnik, Board President Amy Urban, Board Member Jermaine Pierre, Board Member Rebecca Silbert.



(photo above, l to r): Founding Board Member Judy Levin, Founding Board Member & Director of Student Life Marcia Bedford, Founding Board Member Barry Epstein, Director of Finance Pam Maycroft.



(photo above, l to r): Edwin Lager, Michelle Lager, Keith Wattley, Michelle Fang.



(photo above, l to r): Cicely Hart, Greg Brown, Julie Wong, Matthew Wong, Amit Shoham, Claire Eustace.



(photo above, l to r): Sonali Joshi, Jet Martinez, Simon Joshi, Sahira Joshi.



(photo above, l to r): Amy Kuhns, Cameron Kuhns, Aria Rothschild, Blake Rothschild, Kath Rothschild, Sean Weyhmiller, Marcela Weyhmiller, Michele Ragon.



(photo above, l to r): Elizabeth Tung, Chris Merhige, Sarah Shere, Cara Flory.





*(photos above, l to r): Founding Head of School Ann Clarke and current Head of School Michele Spitulnik;
Head of School Michele Spitulnik thanks JMSG Faculty & Staff (l to r) Liz Campbell,
Lorraine Smith, Pam Maycroft, Marcia Bedford, Monika Chin.*

Thank you to our Founding Head of School, Ann Clarke, for leading the way and designing the structure that established JMSG as we know it. Her educational expertise and extraordinary creativity benefited our school in ways that continue to define who we are. Ann translated the research about girls' education into a life-changing experience. Because of her, the idea of a girls school in the East Bay became a reality.

We thank our Middle Years, our second Head of School, Sandra Luna, who carried this mission forward and created space for students and staff to build community together by having daily collaboration opportunities during Cornerstone and Community Time. She also led a noteworthy club called Girls in Government, Leadership, and Service that introduced students to political activism. JMSG continues to have a tremendous impact and demonstrates to our students the many ways they can lead, participate, advocate, and serve both the JMSG community and our wider community.

We thank our faculty and staff, past and present, for genuinely caring for our students and their growth. They put their hearts and minds into creating an environment where students learn to advocate for themselves and for others. They make a difference everyday in our students' current lives and also in the future lives they will lead. We honored our faculty and staff that demonstrated a long-term commitment to our mission: Marcia Bedford, Liz Campbell, Monika Chin, Pam Maycroft, Raymundo Ramirez, and Lorraine Smith.

We thank our alum families and current families for believing in our mission and supporting the school in numerous ways, by serving as ambassadors, board members, speakers, financial supporters, and advocates. Their dedication to our mission is steadfast and truly appreciated.

We thank our alums for spreading the ideals learned during their days at JMSG. Our alums learned how to think deeply, how to care deeply, how to create community, and how to stand up for the important issues. We thank our alum for sharing their passions and experiences with us, as they return to JMSG as faculty and staff, inspirational women, ambassadors, and board members.

We thank our board members, past and present, for holding and stewarding our mission forward. Our board members guide the way, by looking ahead, steering the vision, and strategizing for our future.



(photos above, top to bottom): Chorus were among the performances at our 25th Film Festival; (l to r) Michele Spitulnik, Monika Chin, Barry Epstein, Judy Levin, Ilana DeBare, Ann Clarke, Rick Clarke, Marcia Bedford.

Here we are, in our 25th year, on the precipice of our next 25 years as a school. We have a necessary and bright future ahead. We know JMSG is critical now, more than ever, as women's rights, positions, and roles are challenged everyday, in our country and beyond. We know that JMSG is perfectly suited to prepare our students to challenge back, to fight for women's rights, and to push the boundaries on what women can accomplish. We have alums in every possible field, making significant strides and opening doors for future generations of young women. We will move forward boldly. We take cues and great ideas from our current students and alums on how to forge ahead. Our students want to read diverse authors, they want to fight for racial equality and LGBTQ rights, they want to learn about the environment, alternative energy sources and a more sustainable way of living. They want to engage and propose solutions to our toughest challenges. We have the future inspirational women here at JMSG and our future is in good hands.

Michele

Michele Spitulnik
Head of School

Welcoming Familiar Faces on Alum Day

To commemorate our legacy throughout the year, we highlight JMSG on the 25th of each month. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces on our first ever Alum Day on April 25, 2024. Alum reconnected with classmates and teachers and attended classes. A highlight of the day was a lunch gathering supported by current JMSG parents for our faculty, staff, and alum. It was a historic moment!



(photo above, l to r): Abby Raeside ('12), Gianna Garofoli ('12), JMSG Faculty Suzanne C. Morris, Mimi Campbell ('20), Olivia Ryder ('12).



(photo above, l to r): Marijah Smith ('24), Isabella Marsilio ('17), Nuala Gorshow ('17), Avery Ragon ('24).



(photo above, l to r): JMSG Faculty Lorraine Smith, Shayanna Wooten ('10).



(photo above, l to r): Gianna Rodriguez ('20), Sasha Roberts ('20), JMSG Faculty Alix Anthony.



(photo above, l to r): Sofia Piette ('25), Olivia Ryder ('12), Lauren Ahmed ('25), Abby Raeside ('12), Gianna Garofoli ('12).



(photo above, l to r): JMSG Faculty Suzanne C. Morris & Lorraine Smith, Gianna Rodriguez ('12), Sasha Roberts ('20), Shayanna Wooten ('10).

Congratulations, Class of 2024!



Vivienne Brown	Olivia Maggio
Rory Brunetti	Violet Martinez
Anjali Chakrabarti	Zoë McGhee
Finn Lola Duran	Izel Naranjo
Ilana Eustace-Shoham	Olivia Pacheco
Chloe Farrell	Ella Pierce
Nora Frost	Avery Ragon
Abigail Givler	Kara Rothschild
Emma Givler	Mimi Bird Samson
Luella Grasley	Lucy Schwartz
Lucy Green	Alma Simas
Vivian Green	Marijah Smith
Ariana Grijalva	Zada Smith
Eleanor Hahnel	Maitri Sudindranath
Marlee Horpedahl	Clementine Thompson
Isabella Jones	Eva Ulbrich
Itzel Joseph	Louisa Varner
Aleya Joshi	Lila Volkert
Maya Kenny	Colette Vu
Sarina Kongovi	Layla Waladi
Cameron Kuhns	Paloma Weyhmiller
	Avery Wong

The Class of 2024 will be attending these high schools:

**Acalanes High School
Alameda High School
Berkeley High School
Bishop O'Dowd High School
Carondelet High School
Encinal High School
Holy Names High School
Miramonte High School
Oakland School of the Arts
Saint Joseph Notre Dame High School
Saint Mary's High School
San Domenico High School
Skyline High School
The Thacher School**

Getting ready for high school! (*photo right*) A handful of JMSG Class of 2024 at a recent Bishop O'Dowd new student orientation.



Alum News

2006

Natalia Giles (photo right) received her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the University of San Francisco.



2009

Gabrielle Lewis (photo left) is the Supervising Producer of Development at Eater and Adjunct Professor at The New School. She designed and is teaching an undergraduate course called New Approaches to Food Video. Using NYC's rich culinary history and offerings while analyzing popular food-focused YouTube series, students will learn how to pitch, report, produce, and edit videos. In addition, Gabrielle and the Eater video crew are currently nominated for a Daytime Emmy award in the Short Form Program category for its Handmade series.



2010

Emma Shachat is in the third year of her PhD in Art History at Lund University, Sweden. She lives in Malmö, Sweden with her two cats and fiancé. Emma will be getting married this July.

Emma shares: *I attribute so much of my love for learning and academic development to my time at JMSG, where I had the space and support to explore my interests and express my full-self.*

2011

Roxanna Ortiz (photo left at last year's Pacific Northwest Regional Emmy's) is currently working for KOMO news in Seattle, Washington as a Photojournalist. In 2023, Roxanna was nominated twice for an Emmy. She won one Emmy! She has been nominated again this year (2024). At the end of May, Roxanna will leave KOMO to finish her degree as well as infusing more time into her business- RAW+Seattle, a digital media company.



2019

Quinn Gill (photo right) shares: *I am about to finish my first year of pre-veterinary Animal Science studies at Colorado State University in Fort Collins! I'm learning about animal agriculture and health/disease/anatomy and LOVING IT. I am hoping to go to vet school once I get my BS. I love working with livestock, learning about food production, and working with some of the top animal research scientists in the world (genetics and genomics, specifically).*



In my spare time, I enjoy fostering kittens and raising chickens in the backyard with my dad. This summer, I will be working at the Oakland Zoo camp.

2020

Cora Aiman-Smith graduated from Maybeck High School and will attend Oberlin College.

Elliot Beckner graduated from Bishop O'Dowd High School and will attend UC Berkeley.

Sophie Brown graduated from Saint Mary's College High School and will attend Sarah Lawrence College.

Sydney Brown Wilson graduated from Bishop O'Dowd High School and will attend Howard University.

Mimi Campbell graduated from College Preparatory High School and will attend University of Washington.

Abigail Cho graduated from Encinal High School and will attend Chapman University.

Scarlett Crenshaw graduated from at Bishop O'Dowd and will attend Illinois Institute of Technology in the fall.

Clara Johnson-Sandoval graduated from Saint Joseph Notre Dame High School and will attend University of Washington in the fall.

Sierra Judy graduated from Bentley School and plans on double majoring plans to double major as a theatre major and another major to be determined at Boston College.

Addie Maguire graduated from The College Preparatory High School. She was recruited to run on the Wellesley College cross country and track team and will attend in the fall.

Isabella McKerley Coronado graduated from Berkeley High School and will attend Bates College.

Chloe Meyer graduated from The Bay School of San Francisco and will attend Trinity College Dublin.

Zoe Procos, during her senior year at Bentley School, received "Best in Engineering" award at the Bentley Stem Fair with a project that she and her partner submitted to NASA. She was also selected for a NASA summer internship (along with 2 other internships) but decided to intern in a Bio lab working on a project finding a cure for HIV. Zoe will attend Tufts University in the fall.



(Impromptu JMSG reunion, photo above, l to r) JMSG faculty Lorraine Smith, Lexi Zhu ('21), Ava van Amerongen ('20), Addie Maguire ('20), Mimi Campbell ('20), JMSG faculty Liz Campbell at The College Preparatory School Class of 2024 graduation.

Paige Steinmetz graduated from Bishop O'Dowd with Honors, as a member of the National Honor society and three year lettered varsity soccer. She will attend Tulane University in the fall.

Rebecca Stelmach (photos below, top to bottom: Rebecca joins us as our Inspirational Woman at our All-School Meeting; Rebecca second from the left on the podium stage) has been rowing for Oakland Strokes for the past four years and won gold with her Team USA women's coxed four rowing team at the World Junior Rowing Championships in Paris last summer. She will join the Yale crew team this fall and study Environmental Economics.



Ava Taner graduated from Bishop O'Dowd High School and will attend UC Santa Barbara.

Wainani Williams graduated from Bishop O'Dowd High School and is attending DePaul University's BFA, Film and Television program in the fall.

Olivia Williamson graduated from Miramonte High School and will attend California Polytechnic State University.

2022

Alana Meyers (photo top right) received Honorable Mention in the Rocky Mountain School of Photography (RMSP) 2023 Teen Photo Contest (photo at right). She placed in the top 400 (top 100 for her category) out of over 50,000 submissions.

2023

Ingrid Flory (photos right: third from the left) is in 9th grade at Acalanes High School. Recently her team won the San Diego Crew Classic for Womens U16 8+ which is one of the largest rowing regattas in the country.

Camryn Taylor is on the varsity cheer team at Bishop O'Dowd and placed 3rd at nationals. She will also be participating in a summer intensive in New York for four weeks, with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.



Find Us

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We want to hear and share your latest news and photographs.

Email to Monika Chin at

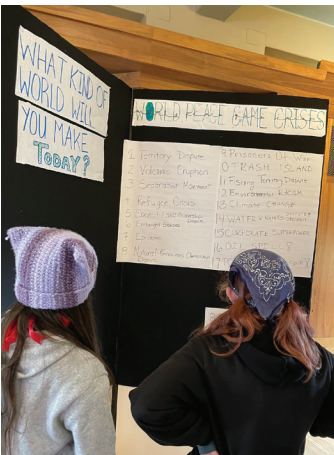
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Way to go, HERicanes!

From the classroom to the stage, our students are front, center, and engaged. We thank our students and community members for a school year filled with growth and learning.



(Photos clockwise from top left) Afterschool Sports Program competes in cross country, soccer, basketball, and volleyball against co-ed teams; Community Time fosters cross-level connections; 8th Grade Invention Convention is the culminating group STEAM project that includes writing a designing a product, writing a business plan, and constructing a prototype; Spring Concert showcases student choreography and performances; 6th Grade Play presents opportunities for growth mindset and comraderie; 6th Grade World Peace Games immerses students in applying systems thinking to complex problems, deepening global citizenship, sharpening fast-paced collaboration and negotiation skills, and builds empathy.

Julia Morgan School for Girls admits girls from any race, national or ethnic origin, or family composition to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or family composition in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.