MEDIA-PROVIDENCE FRIENDS SCHOOL
DRAGON Tales
FALL 2025 mpfs.org

What a Friends Education Looks Like at MPFS

In a world grappling with increased division, parents are searching for an education that goes beyond the traditional. At Media-Providence Friends School (MPFS), a Friends education offers a powerful and comprehensive approach to preparing students not just for academic success, but for a meaningful life of purpose and integrity. It is an experience that intentionally nurtures each student's intellectual, physical, spiritual, and social-emotional capacities, fostering the resilience and moral courage needed to navigate today's complex world. Our philosophy is rooted in the Friends belief that every individual



holds an Inner Light—a guiding truth and goodness — and our goal is to help students cultivate their own Light while learning to recognize and respect the Light within others.

"In a world that presents so many challenges to young people, a Friends education at MPFS isn't just about what students learn, but who they become," says Head of School Teacher Jon Hall. "It's a purposeful education designed to equip them with the resilience, integrity, and sense of community needed to be agents of positive change. That kind of education simply looks different here."

Annual Giving Report Now Available Online!
mpfs.org/annual-report

Since its founding in 1876, MPFS has been recognized for its challenging academics and a whole-child approach to intellectual and moral development. Our faculty are not just teachers, but facilitators of a learning process centered on dialogue, reflection, and inquiry. This approach encourages students to become engaged, creative, and critical thinkers who can respect diverse perspectives in a cooperative search for knowledge. The Friends Testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship/ Service (SPICES) serve as the foundation for this worldview, nurturing a passion for truth and a commitment to justice.

A Friends education at MPFS is dynamic and manifests in various ways throughout the school. The curriculum intentionally integrates themes of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI), providing a lens through which students learn to care for their community and the world at large. This commitment extends to service learning, which instills in students the belief that they are part of a larger community and can make a powerful, positive difference in the lives of others. The school's emphasis on peaceful conflict resolution and consensus-based decision-making teaches students practical skills for navigating complex social interactions constructively.

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LETTER FROM
The Head of School Jon Hall



Dr. Jon Hall, Ed.D.

To the MPFS Community,

As I sit in my office, listening to the hum of construction that will soon become our new science-themed playground, I am struck by the parallels between building a physical space and shaping a child's future. Both require vision, intention, and care. This commitment to purposeful growth is what makes a Friends education so distinctive.

At its core, a Friends education is far more than a curriculum — it is a way of life that enriches students, faculty, and the broader community. Two definitions capture its essence. The first is philosophical: we are guided by the belief that a divine spark, or Inner Light, lives within every individual, and our role is to provide an environment where that light can shine. The second is more practical: a Friends education produces a mindful awareness that comes from paying attention — on purpose, in the present moment, and without judgment.

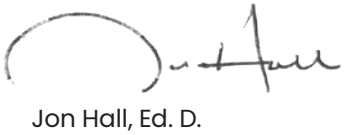
Research consistently shows that a holistic approach to education yields powerful benefits, particularly in strengthening emotional regulation and self-awareness. Our teachers work tirelessly to create a space where every student feels seen, known, and heard. This empowerment allows children to grow into their most authentic selves. As recent graduate Charley Parker reflected, "My creativity has been fostered here, and if I had chosen to go anywhere else, I would not be the person I am today—the person who is constantly imagining stories, drawing game ideas, and wanting to create videos."

Mindful and compassionate practices are woven throughout our curriculum and grounded in our school's core values. The Friends testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship are not abstract ideals — they are lived principles. They guide how we teach empathy, problem-solving, and responsibility for the wider world. A recent example of stewardship is the generous support from our extended community, including a grant from the Walter Garrison Foundation, which is making our new science lab and science-themed playground possible.

At the heart of this philosophy lies our weekly Meeting for Worship, a cherished tradition where quiet reflection and shared presence shape our collective identity. In the stillness, we learn to listen deeply — to others when they are moved to speak and to the Inner Light within ourselves. Families and friends are warmly invited to join us each Wednesday from 9:40 to 10:00 AM to experience this essential part of our school's identity.

Just as planning and executing a construction project requires vision, patience, and a strong foundation, so too does educating a child — each step carefully building toward a future of strength, resilience, and possibility, until something strong, beautiful, and enduring stands in the world. And just as surveying equipment, jack-hammers and excavators are some of the tools required to do a project such as our new playground, these practices are the tools we provide our students for navigating the challenges of both their academic and personal lives. They learn to regulate their emotions, think critically, and cultivate a strong sense of community. Most importantly, they gain the confidence to face life's challenges with resilience and grace. A Friends education does more than prepare children for the future — it grounds them in the present, equips them for a changing world, and empowers them to shine their light wherever life takes them.

In Friendship,



Jon Hall, Ed. D.
Head of School

ANNUAL GIVING REPORT

2024-25 MPFS Fund by the Numbers

TOTAL: **$1,396,701.75** • DONORS: **46** • GIFTS: **258** • FIRST-TIME DONORS: **43**
NUMBER OF NEW DONOR GIFTS: **51**

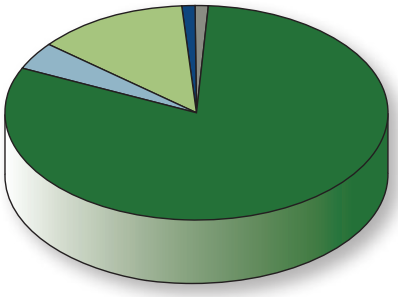
2024-25 Special Donations beyond MPFS Fund

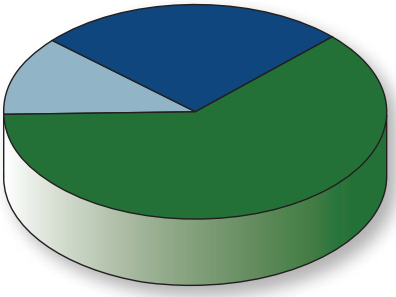
TOTAL: **$398,701.75** • DONORS: **45** • GIFTS: **257**

A complete list of our supporters is available at **mpfs.org/annual-report**.

INCOME

- Tuition 81%
- Auxiliary Programs (camp, gym rentals) 4%
- Fundraising 13%
- Interest Income 1%
- Other 1%





EXPENSES

- Student Instruction & Financial Aid 62%
- Facility 12%
- Auxiliary Programs 0%
- Administration 26%

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Honoring a Legacy of Service:

A Philanthropy Profile with Bruce and Susan

After twelve years of dedicated service, Media-Providence Friends School (MPFS) honors two rotating members of the Board of Trustees, Bruce and Susan, for their profound commitment to the school's mission. A lifelong Quaker, Bruce attended Friends schools from preschool through college, bringing a career rooted in both law and educational leadership to his board service. Susan, a spiritual caregiver and group facilitator, is a "convinced Quaker" who first joined the board after her three sons attended the school. Their combined wisdom and deep connection to the values of Friends education have left an indelible mark on the MPFS community.

A Foundation of Trust and Collaboration

When asked about their most fulfilling moments, both Bruce and Susan immediately recalled the board's partnership with Head of School Jon Hall during the COVID-19 pandemic. This period, they explained, exemplified the power of Quaker decision-making and collaborative leadership. "The board was like the wind beneath the wings," Susan shared, noting the administration's "steadiness for keeping everyone safe" and their "ability to be creative and sensitive to what people, especially students, were missing." Bruce echoed this sentiment, highlighting the board's support for Jon and the administration, and the profound trust that defined their work together. This experience not only strengthened the school's leadership but also forged a deeper bond among the trustees.

Beyond the pandemic, both were deeply proud of the board's commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI). They shared how the board took on this work personally, growing as individuals while helping the school evolve. This commitment to inclusivity, they noted, is a testament to the Quaker belief that leadership must begin at the top.

The MPFS Difference: Cultivating the Whole Child

Bruce and Susan believe MPFS's most significant contribution is its ability to help students become the best versions of themselves. Bruce highlighted how the Quaker principle of "that of God in each person" is a living pedagogical core at MPFS. "Students are seen, known, heard," he said, "and they develop their own voices and confidence." This personalized approach, Susan added, is driven by teachers and staff who meet each student "where they are with a lot of warmth and creativity," always finding new ways for them to move forward.

This philosophy is powerfully demonstrated in the service learning initiatives that define the MPFS experience. Bruce recalled a project where middle schoolers partnered with the





University of Delaware to create working prosthetic hands for two children. It was a rigorous, iterative science project with a deeply human outcome. "That one just kind of blew me away," he said, as the students "got to make a difference in somebody's life."

Parting Hopes and Enduring Wisdom

As they rotate off the board, their hopes for MPFS are clear. They envision a future where the world is shaped by more Friends school graduates—collaborative, thoughtful problem-solvers with "compassion, spark, and voice." They shared invaluable advice for future philanthropic leaders at the school, urging them to "trust the process" of Quaker-led decision-making and to make time for genuine connection. "When you know someone," Bruce said, "decision-making is easier because you have real affinity and empathy for them, and you really hear their voice a little more clearly."

Their service is a testament to the power of dedicated leadership grounded in community and shared values. MPFS is deeply grateful for their twelve years of guidance and the lasting legacy of integrity and kindness they have championed.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Nurturing Young Minds with Friends Values: A Profile of Teacher Kristin

This year marks a particularly exciting milestone for our youngest learners as our Kindergarten program expands to two classrooms, a testament to the growth and strength of our community. Teacher Kristin will lead one of these classes, while Teacher Lisa Dainton, our former Preschool Age 4 teacher, will lead the other. The expansion of our Kindergarten program reflects the confidence and trust our families place in our school's unique approach to education.

Kristin, with 18 years of teaching experience, is delighted to be a member of the Media-Providence Friends School community. Her background is rich in nurturing children, from her years as a children's librarian to her extensive teaching career. This unique experience allows her to see the world through a creative lens, with a deep understanding of how stories can help young learners connect with big ideas.



Kristin's dedication to Friends education is at the heart of her classroom. She uses children's literature to nurture an understanding of Friends testimonies like **Community** and **Integrity** with her young students. For Kristin, a classroom is more than a space for learning—it's a living community where every child has a role to play.

"I am passionate about creating classroom communities that are welcoming, engaging, challenging, and joyful, and where each child's voice is heard and respected," she says. This philosophy directly reflects the Friends belief in the **Inner Light** of every person. In Kristin's classroom, and now in Lisa's as well, this means creating an environment where even the smallest voices are not only heard, but also valued and celebrated. This foundation of respect and community is where a lifetime of learning and growth at MPFS begins.

FRIENDS EDUCATION… | Continued from Cover

Academically, MPFS fosters independent thinking, resilience, and self-reliance through a progressive pedagogy that combines both teacher-directed and hands-on learning. Our unique and scaffolded overnight trips program is a hallmark of this approach, building independence for students and their families from the earliest grades.

Grade 2 students have a 1-night sleepover on campus, a gentle introduction to independence in a safe, familiar environment.

Grade 5 takes the learning further with a multi-night stay at Echo Hill Outdoor School, challenging students with hands-on learning and teamwork.

The program culminates in an unforgettable 10-day trip to Costa Rica for our Grade 8 students. This immersive service learning and language experience is the capstone of their journey, requiring them to adapt to a new culture and use their skills in a real-world setting.

This intentional progression of trips builds a profound sense of courage in our students, preparing them for a life of purpose. It's an experiential education that can't be replicated in a traditional classroom.

Ultimately, a Friends education at MPFS is about more than just academic success. It's about creating a community of lifelong learners who are equipped with the integrity, intelligence, and resilience to meet the world's challenges head-on. By nurturing the potential within each child and fostering a deep sense of compassion and responsibility, MPFS aims to give its students a lasting worldview that resonates with meaning and purpose, empowering them to be the change they wish to see in a world that so clearly needs it.

MPFS Alumni Highlights: Classes of 2025, 2021, and 2017

Class of 2025: High School Destinations

Celebrating New Beginnings — Our Graduates Take the Next Step!



We proudly celebrate the Class of 2025 as they move on to high school. Each student has chosen a new community where they will continue to learn, grow, and thrive.

- Ava Simone Gibson – Penn Wood Ninth Grade Academy
- Chase Irwin – Strathhaven High School
- Cash Kortum – Ridley High School
- Londyn Ostad – The Center for Performing and Fine Arts (CPFA) - PALCS
- Charley Wayne Parker – Springfield High School
- Adam Salim – STEM Academy
- Saya Jane Spalding – Marple Newtown High School
- Hydan Wolff – Friends Central School

We wish each of you a wonderful start as you begin this next chapter!

Class of 2021: College Journeys

Charting Their Course — MPFS Alumni Embark on College Adventures!

The Media-Providence Friends School community extends heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the Class of 2021 as they embark on their college journeys.

- Sage Costa Baker: Studying engineering at Cornell University
- Sammy Ernst: Pursuing nursing at Randolph-Macon College
- Kayla Keenan: A Drexel Presidential Scholar majoring in nursing at Drexel University, with a research internship at CHOP
- Maddie Moore-Barkley: Attending Denison University with an interest in pre-law
- Parker Riess: Studying aerospace engineering at Purdue University
- Chloe Stetler: Majoring in aerospace engineering at Florida Tech
- Jeremy Peyton Jones: On a gap year in the UK as a Portsmouth Cathedral Choral Scholar before starting a dual degree in music and biology at St. Olaf College



- Henry Derk: Taking a gap year after graduating from Marple Newtown High School
- Gracey (Aquilla) Mixon: Attending Moore College of Art and Design with the Visionary Scholars Award, and was also awarded the Senior English Department Award at Abington Friends
- Alex Bogle: Attending Penn State after graduating from Friends' Central

Class of 2017: College and Beyond Updates

Reaching New Heights — Alumni Achievements and Next Steps!

The Class of 2017 is reaching new milestones, with many graduating from college and pursuing advanced studies. All are following their passions in unique ways. We are proud of the many paths the Class of 2017 is forging and look forward to seeing what they accomplish next!

- Aiden McLean: Graduated from UC Davis with a degree in Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning. He will begin an online graduate program at Penn State and plans to attend law school at UC Davis to study environmental law.
- Casper Hoffmann: Graduated from Haverford College with a double major in Comparative Literature and Education and is now enrolled at UPenn's Urban Teaching Apprenticeship Program to earn a Master's in Education and a teaching certification.
- Christopher Green: Graduated with honors from Rowan University with a degree in Radio, Television, and Film and is considering a career in film production.
- Jack Schlegel: Will graduate from the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in Environmental Engineering and credits his time at MPFS for fostering his passion for engineering and analytical thinking.
- Jake Greenlaw-Scully: Received an AA from Penn State and expects to earn a BA in Strategic Communications next May.
- Jay Kostal: Entering his fifth year at Drexel as a Sports Business major, with an internship as a sports writer and communications intern for Real Salt Lake.
- Julia Coffman: Graduated from Temple University with a degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders, and works at Bryn Mawr rehab while planning to attend graduate school.
- Lucas Lindenmuth: Graduated from Lafayette College with a double major in Physics and Math and is moving to New Mexico to pursue a Ph.D. in Pure Mathematics at the University of New Mexico.
- Margot Sissell: Recently earned a bachelor's in psychology and is interning at SCI Phoenix with hopes of becoming a corrections counselor.
- Natalie Dodds: Graduated from Oberlin College with a double major in Psychology and Biology and will begin her career at the Comprehensive Learning Center.
- Sherisse Peterson: Graduated from Howard University summa cum laude with a bachelor's in psychology and will begin a Master's program in Sports Psychology at Arizona State University.



- Tom Pepper: Gaining hands-on experience in drone technology and hoping to turn it into a business venture.

We are proud of the many paths the Class of 2017 is forging and look forward to seeing what they accomplish next!

Attention Alumni Families:

Please help us keep our records up to date! Submit all new contact info and other alum updates: **mpfs.org/update**

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IMPORTANT DATES:

Dazzle's Drive for Education
October 6

Pizza Pumpkin Night - October 17

The Friends Collaborative In-Person Information Session - October 22

Halloween Parade & Trunk or Treat
October 31

Annual Giving Campaign
November 5-7

Meeting for Worship every Wednesday
9:40 - 10 AM ~ ALL WELCOME

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Please join our online giving campaign: **mpfs.org/light**

