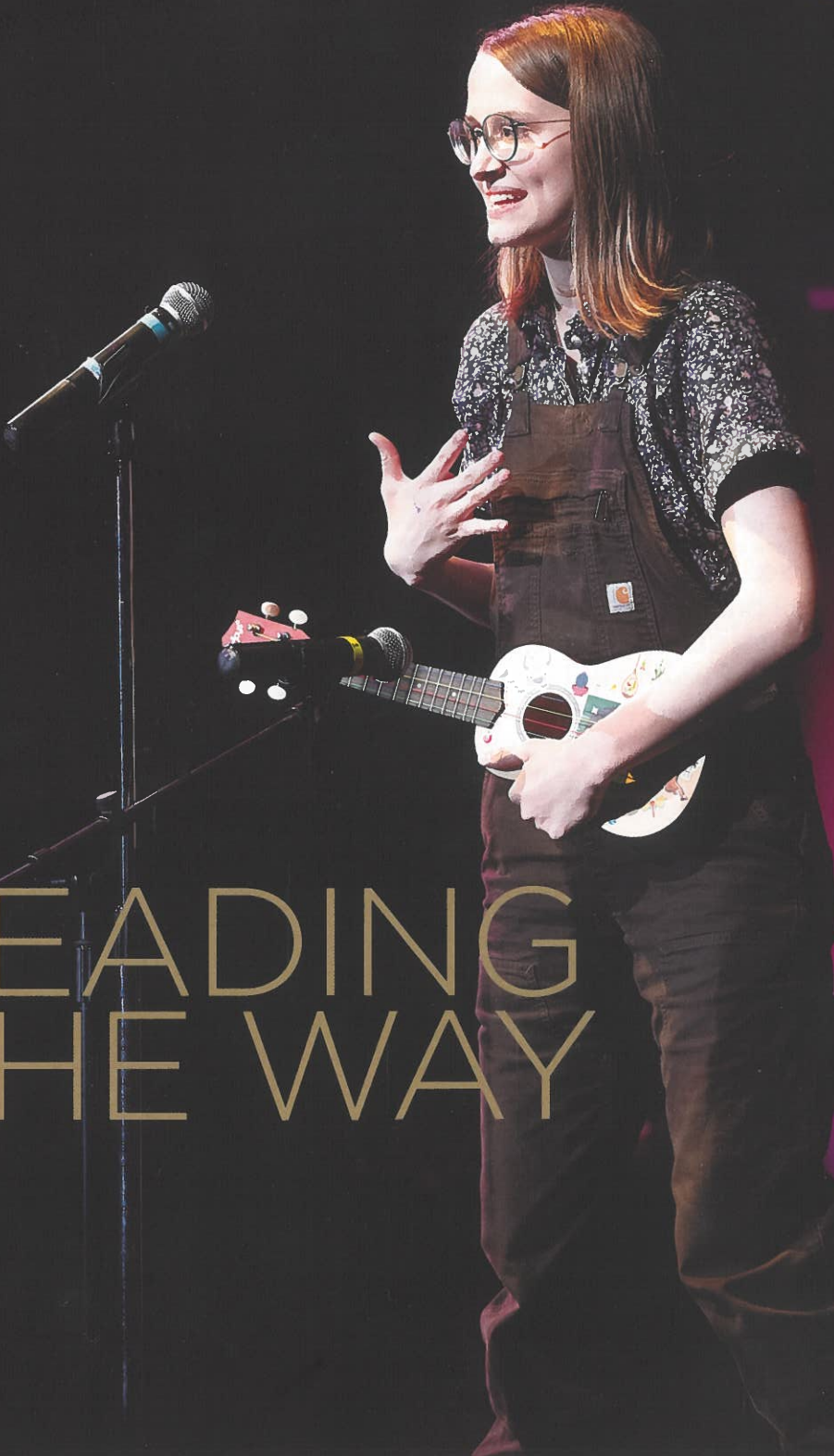


Thistle TALK



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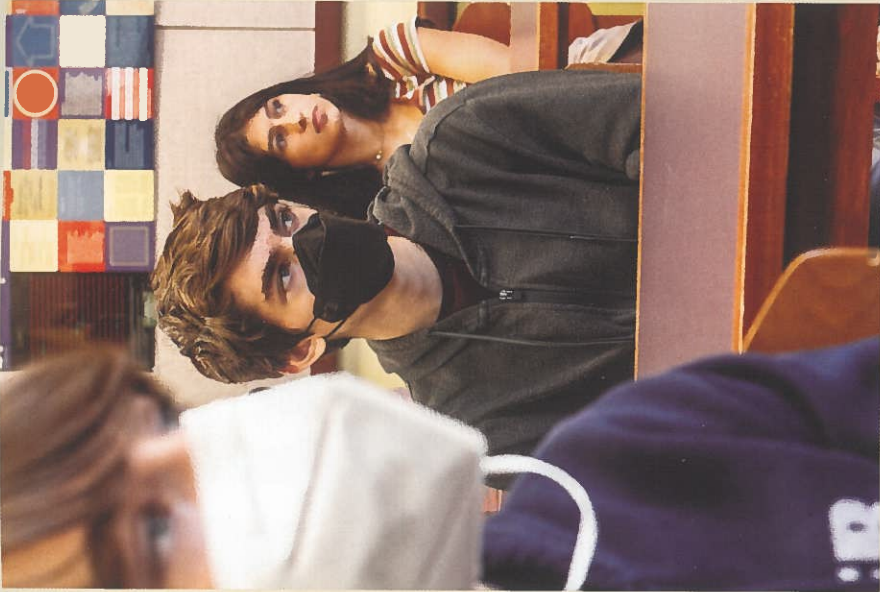
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Grade 9 students (L – R) Lucas Picher, Sami Tarr, and Sarah Nixon participate in a storytelling workshop as part of the culminating project for Multicultural America.

In Multicultural America,

a grade 9 history class, teacher Callie Gropp '03 combines project-based learning and a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to provide students with the opportunity to contextualize the world around them, explore the conditions of their own lives, articulate connections between the past and present, and create spaces where students can see themselves and one another as having an important voice in the communities of which they are a part.

This year, the course culminated in an oral history project featuring alum interviews and student stories. Students interviewed sixteen alums who shared their experiences at Winchester Thurston, the impact of current events on their lives, and their hopes for the future. Working alongside City as Our CampusSM partners, students linked together voices of the recent past with their own stories to create a composite documentary.

Telling Tales: The Stories That Make Our Community is a place-based storytelling project founded on the premise that to “Think also,” we must first listen. To create the documentary, students conducted research, composed interview questions, and selected film segments. The community screening and student presentations took place in May.

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Mission

Winchester Thurston School actively engages each student in a challenging and inspiring learning process that develops the mind, motivates the passion to achieve, and cultivates the character to serve.

Equity and Inclusion Statement

As a means to fulfill our credo, “Think also of the comfort and the rights of others,” Winchester Thurston will be an inclusive community and will pursue the social and pedagogical benefits that diversity brings. We will place the highest value on enabling students to understand their own identity and those of others. It is our moral imperative to be courageous and intentional in promoting understanding, addressing bias, identifying and honoring qualities of justice, respecting multiple perspectives and contributions, and valuing the dignity of all.

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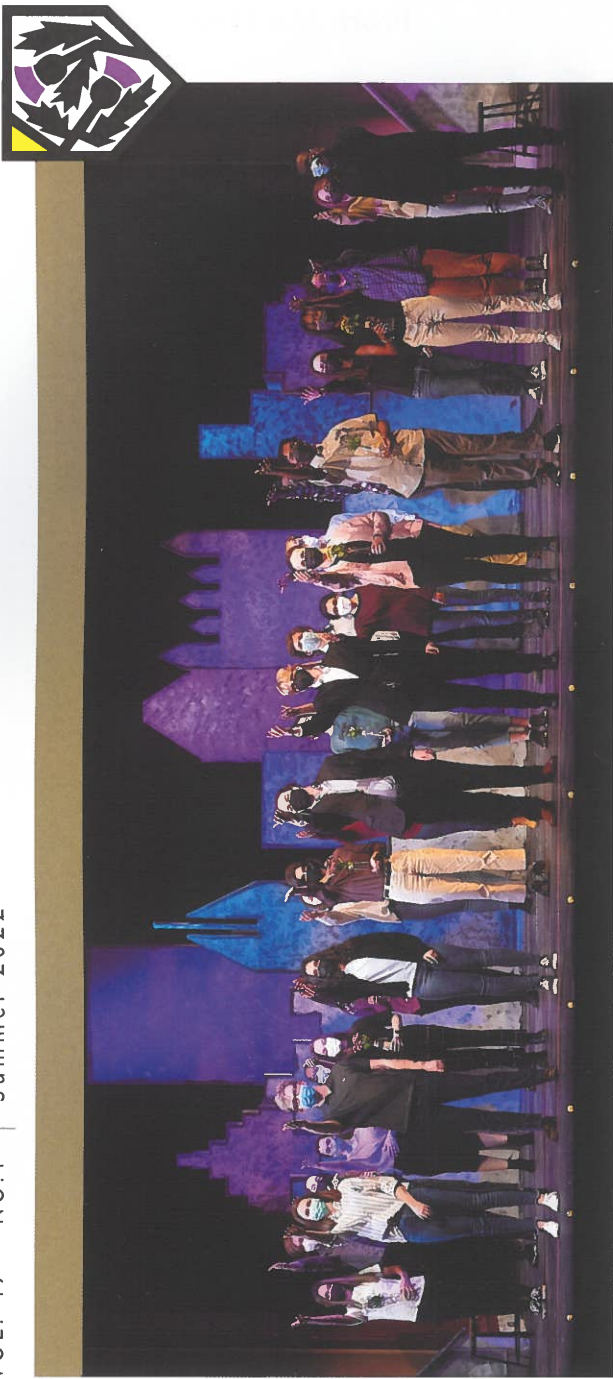
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WT has a proud history of generating leaders in the arts. This past January, WT students performed “It Couldn’t Happen Here” by alum Carrie Mannino ’16. This documentary play explores the Pittsburgh and Jewish communities in the aftermath of the antisemitic massacre at the Tree of Life building on October 27, 2018. Mannino was awarded the Yale Playwriting Award for the play while earning an undergraduate degree at Yale University.

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL | Scott D. Fech, Ph.D.

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Nikki Nesbitt

DEI Update
Courage and Intention:
A Moral Imperative



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Scott D. Fech

Leadership, both inspired and inspiring

A quick Amazon search for books on leadership will show there is no shortage of authors who share reflections, frameworks, theories, and challenges. Are leaders born? Or are they made? What do the best leaders have in common? What do strong leaders do in moments of crisis?

Leadership is built into WT's DNA and has been since our very beginning. There is no question that both Miss Thurston and Miss Mitchell were visionary leaders. Seeing the lack of strong, college preparatory educational opportunities for young women, they each founded schools that would prepare their students for the rigors of college. And they created a school environment where students could develop strong character, passion for learning, and a commitment to serving society.

136 years later, WT continues that strong tradition of visionary leadership in education. Our innovative approach to teaching and learning, by engaging our City as Our Campus partners, challenges our students to stretch beyond the simple memorization of content and strive for the application of that knowledge in real-word scenarios. It is an approach that grabs the attention of other educational leaders, especially as we move into being more deliberate about interdisciplinary learning. One school leader recently said to me, "WT's approach is modeling what the rest of us ought to be doing. We cannot ignore that."

The true secret to our success in acting on our vision lies in the classroom with our teachers. Not willing to rest on their "tried and true" methods, they demonstrate a willingness to take risks in trying new approaches. Their courage and curiosity model important attributes for our students, inspiring them to follow that lead. Our teacher-leaders are deeply involved in our strategic work as we continue to reimagine learning. [See page 10 for just a few examples.]

How do we know that our students are picking up on our call to leadership? They demonstrate it in our classrooms and off campus. From co-creating elective offerings in our Middle School, to bringing music education to schools where it is not currently available, to challenging community leaders to rethink playground and park accessibility, our students inspire us and make us proud. [See page 5.] These successful leadership experiences, so early in their lives, are laying the groundwork for them to have an even larger impact later in life.

None of this would be possible without an engaged and strong Board of Trustees. WT is fortunate to have a Board filled with strong leaders committed to WT's future. Their status as WT alumnae/i, current and former parents, and community leaders helps us to create pathways forward by which WT can emerge as a resource for the broader community, understanding how it might positively impact the social, intellectual, and policy life of the city by taking "Think also" to the next level.

As I continue to meet so many of our esteemed alums on my WT journey, it is clear that you recognize what a powerful experience WT was for you and that often you credit WT, in some part, for the successes you have achieved and the leaders you have become. Thank you for your continued support of our "Dear Old WT." We cannot do all we do without you.

Our teacher-leaders are deeply involved in our strategic work as we continue to reimagine learning.

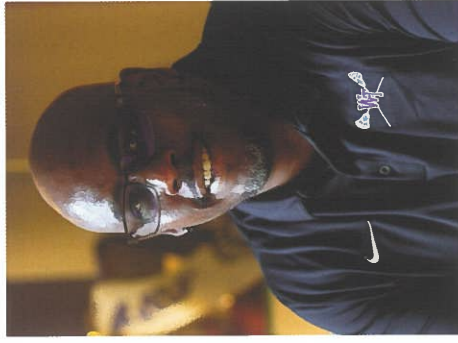
WT welcomes the following new administrators to the 2022–2023 school year:



Moira Regan '92, a proud WT alumna, joins WT as Director of Lower School. Edmiston was most recently the Principal at Blessed Trinity Academy in the Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese. She has more than 25 years of experience as an educator, including Kindergarten through

grade 8 classroom teaching and administration, corporate training, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultancy, and leadership coaching.

Edmiston graduated from Boston College with degrees in Elementary Education and Political Science; she holds an M.A. in Educational Administration from San Francisco State University, and a certification degree from iPEC (Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching).



Bill Fitch, formerly WT's Assistant Director of Athletics, has become the Director of Athletics. Fitch has more than 20 years of experience at WT, having served as an administrator, teacher, and coach. With this deep WT background, Fitch is well-positioned to foster an atmosphere conducive to developing WT's student athletes

within the framework of the school's Mission.

Fitch received both a B.S. in Elementary Education and an M.A. in Educational Administration from Point Park University, and has been a regular WT representative at the National Association of Independent Schools' People of Color Conference. In addition, he has supported the school's work with FAME (Fund for the Advancement of Minorities through Education) and Kids of Steel.



Dana Kooistra joins WT as Director of Upper School. A veteran independent school educator and administrator, Kooistra most recently served as Associate Dean of Academics for Teaching, Learning, and External Partnerships at The Lawrenceville School where she also taught grade nine history

and upper level interdisciplinary electives (Bioethics, Immigration, and Race & Mass Incarceration).

Kooistra was a founding faculty member and admissions director at CITYterm, an experiential semester program focused on New York City, and she was an instructor with the University of Pennsylvania's innovative Independent School Residency Program.

A graduate of Wellesley College, Kooistra also holds an M.A. in Educational Philosophy from Teachers College, Columbia University, and has attended Columbia's Klingenstein Summer Institute.



(L - R) Rising second grade students Atticus Stapinski and Ava Cohen

An engaging blend of programs, events, and opportunities designed to develop leadership has long been essential to WT.

A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

At Winchester Thurston, the seeds of leadership are planted early, nurtured diligently, and designed to flourish far into each student's future. Here is a look at some of the different ways that leadership is instilled and cultivated — uniquely and authentically — across the divisions.

Inquiry and Interest in Lower School

WT first graders learn about leadership—and awareness of the wider world—through The Playground Project, a year-long undertaking that culminates in the hands-on, collaborative creation of a model accessible playground. Driven by student inquiry and interest, The Playground Project lessons run deep.

“The goal of The Playground Project is to teach students about disability and accessibility, as well as to recognize opportunities for greater

accessibility in our own spaces,” states First Grade Teacher Elizabeth Friedman '12. “I’ve found that children are incredibly willing to accommodate the needs of others. Our students are already kind, empathetic, and caring. The Playground Project offers them the opportunity to learn the vocabulary of accessibility and disability more directly, to understand the scope of disability in a

more nuanced way, and to ‘Think also’ by learning how to advocate for themselves and for others.”

Friedman and fellow First Grade Teacher Lise-Ann Brownold lead students on a sustained journey of discovery beginning with a walk through of WT’s campus. Other field trips follow, all with an eye toward analyzing “accessible accommodations, or the lack thereof,” says Brownold. Play Days, a Zoom call with author and disability advocate Amy Webb, and meaningful conversations are interwoven throughout, challenging students to reflect and imagine how they might improve their own play spaces—then charging them to do just that.

“First grade is a time when creative thinking and collaboration allow students to expand their growing awareness of the world around them,” notes Brownold. “This project brings these skills to life in a fun and purposeful way.”

A recent chat among first graders confirms this thinking. Student Jonah Lee defines disability this way: “It’s like some people take one route, and people with disabilities have to take another route, but they can still end up at the same place.” Accessibility, said Derrick Wilson, means “everybody is supposed to be able to use this.”



(L - R foreground) Rising second grade students Camden Marshall, Derrick Wilson, and Amy Ai at the culminating event in Wightman Park.



(L - R) Rising second grade students Shira Gross, Marino Harris, and Cornelia Wang

Emma Pless, whose model accessible playground is named “Everybody’s Playground,” explained the importance of accessible spaces and places. “Without this, people with disabilities wouldn’t be able to do any of the things that Jonah, or Derrick, or I can do, because they have differences in their bodies.”

“First graders are remarkably capable,” affirms Friedman. “I have a motto in my classroom: ‘different friends need different things at different times.’ My students understand this motto and frequently reference it. When students use the wobble board [a balance board used as a tool for movement and open-ended play] in our classroom, for instance, they no longer say, ‘I want a turn.’ They say, ‘let me know when you’re ready for someone else to take a turn,’ because they recognize that some of their peers use the wobble board as a tool to support their learning. It can be easy for children, much like adults, to be afraid of differences. Rather than be afraid, The Playground Project supports the idea that difference is not at all scary; in fact, it’s amazing! And our students are helping lead the way in communicating that message.”

Self-Advocating in Middle School

An engaging blend of programs, events, and opportunities designed to develop leadership has long been essential to the WT Middle School experience. Among them: student-run electives which encourage students to share their knowledge with peers through courses they design and teach. Now, the introduction of a formalized process for proposing student-run electives both fortifies leadership skills inherent in the experience—and builds new ones.

“We had several students interested in running electives and felt a process was needed to support their interest,” explains Director of Middle School Amanda Welsh. “It was also a great way to teach them about formal processes and how to work with teachers and administrators to develop their ideas.

“Students create a PowerPoint presentation and meet with me,” says Welsh. “The proposal includes a description of their idea for the elective, a proposed budget of materials, and a timeline of topics for each class period. They also seek out a faculty member to sponsor their elective. If the proposal meets the criteria (which may require a few iterations), I approve their idea.”

The process enables students to authentically practice leadership skills like “self-advocating, developing confidence and independence, learning time management, and how to break down big tasks,” says Welsh. “It also teaches them how to run an effective class. They truly learn what engages students.”

Seventh grade students Joya Nasr and Lucy Hine can attest to the rigors of the proposal process, and the challenges of teaching. Along with classmates Leah Krifcher, Alice Bussler, and Elizabeth Butera, they have now proposed, and taught, their elective, Creative Arts, for two trimesters.

“There were a lot of steps,” says Lucy. “We had to meet with Ms. Welsh a couple of times, make a video, have everything ready and scheduled, order supplies, and outline our plans.”

“Ms. Welsh helped us to think about budgeting” adds Joya. “She saw that our budget was \$100, and said we would have to use our budget carefully to find good quality supplies, and still have enough money for other things.”

Creative Arts is a creative and performance-based elective. The students originally designed a rotation of dance, drama, and art activities, but soon discovered

Let’s Get Started!

“All draw a paper from a drawer to pick. We will spend the whole class on this.”



Rising 8th grader Lucy Hine in the Creative Arts elective she helped to create.

that they — like teachers — had to adjust their plans to maintain student interest. “Last trimester, we learned that dance might not have been the class favorite!” says Joya, with a laugh. Lucy nods, “This year, we aren’t going to do as much dance.”

The formal proposal process—and the experience of running an elective—complement and reinforce Developmental Designs, a framework for advisory, classes, and building a strong Middle School community whose four major tenets (competence, autonomy, fun, and relationships) integrate social and academic learning while meeting the needs of adolescents.

Lucy and Joya say the achievement of producing an approved program proposal, and being entrusted with the responsibility of teaching a class, has been rewarding.

“It felt nice because we’re only in the seventh grade, and we’ve never been in charge of anything,” reflects Lucy. “It’s been nice to be the leaders. It has been a really fun experience.”



Rising seventh grade students Lola Fox (R) and Willa Elkas (L) share their projects with faculty sponsor Kassandra Humberson ‘08.



Rising eighth grader Alice Bussler (L) and rising seventh grader Fiona Kamin (R) collaborate on their project.

music to children who might not otherwise have that access.”

The students orchestrated a plan, and over the course of a year, Music for Good emerged.

“We had to initially assess the need for music instruction and instruments, identify and build a relationship with a partner school, raise funds for instruments and supplies, develop a transportation plan and COVID-19 protocols, and select students.”

As their enthusiasm grew, so did their leadership expertise—honed over time, trial, and error.

“Starting a program from scratch that requires support from more than one group is challenging. Without the patience and tenacity to be able to simultaneously see the long-term picture, and work on the short-term goals, none of this would have been possible.”

Changing Lives in Upper School

Three musicians + eight instruments = one great idea. As a mathematical equation, the numbers don’t quite add up—but as an example of WT student leadership, it is the ovation-worthy formula behind Music for Good, a program created by rising seniors Marco Cardenes, Alexander Sayette, and Rohan Sykora. Introduced this year, Music for Good provides musical instruments and weekly private instruction, at no cost, to local public elementary school fourth and fifth graders.

Alex, Marco, and Rohan have been connected through Pittsburgh’s music community since childhood. All together, they play eight instruments, and they have played for years as a jazz trio. Music is essential to their lives, and they love sharing it.

“During the earlier stages of COVID-19, we were invited to perform in outdoor neighborhood ‘porch’ concerts that raised funds for various groups hard hit by the pandemic,” they recall. “It felt good to bring the gift of music to people during a time of isolation and uncertainty. Around the same time, we read an article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* stating that funding for music programs in the Pittsburgh Public Schools had been severely cut. The article also mentioned research showing that music programs can benefit children in ways far beyond music, including academic performance. This was consistent with our own experiences, and we wanted to create a way to give the joy, excitement, and creativity that comes with



Rising senior Alex Sayette



Rising senior Rohan Sykora

Rising senior Marcos Cardenes

Also Key: Team-Wide Collaboration and Communication

“We are grateful to Principal Zwierzynski and Mr. Christopher Corbett at Liberty Elementary School, who agreed to work with us to develop the program. With their generous help, we have finally begun lessons! We are equally grateful to Dr. Anne Fay, [former Director of Upper School], who was an incredible source of guidance and encouragement in this process.”

“Alex, Marco, and Rohan embodied the persistence necessary to bring an idea to fruition,” observes Monica Manes Gay, WT’s Executive Director for Institutional Advancement. A seasoned fundraising professional, Gay understands the challenges of such an undertaking. “They kept moving forward, finding alternative avenues, and creatively solving any problems they encountered. I can’t wait to see how their efforts grow and am excited about the numbers of students they will influence.”

Rohan, Marco, and Alex hope that Music for Good will long play on, continuing to impart the power of music throughout the region.



Pre-Kindergarten Teacher Alaina Loman guides Morning Meeting using the Responsive Classroom approach.

Lessons in Leadership

Built on a foundation of courage, foresight, and vision, it is WT’s teachers who ensure that such a legacy of leadership in education continues to be a hallmark of the WT experience. Here we share an example from each division of this passionate and imaginative approach and its impact on creating the leaders of tomorrow.

Developing a Strong Foundation in Lower School

In August, when WT’s doors swing open on its 136th academic year, three-year-olds will walk through as the first students in Junior Pre-K. Through a customized curriculum developed by a team of Lower School leaders, this program will serve as an introduction to learning and school readiness.

“Our program will provide a thematic curriculum that incorporates multiple disciplines and learning styles to provide a well-rounded learning opportunity,” states Theresa Fox, a 17-year veteran of WT’s early and elementary education program, both in the classroom and as an administrator. “Students in our Junior Pre-K program will begin to develop a strong foundation for early literacy

and number sense. Through learning centers, teachers will incorporate purposeful play, the arts, movement and muscle development, and socialization.”

Over the past year, Fox and Jeremy Mangan (who served as Interim Associate Director of Lower School in 2021–2022)—the administrative team steering the program’s development—have worked closely with Lead Pre-K Teacher Alaina Loman, and a host of other Lower School educators, marshaling a broad range of expertise to craft the Junior Pre-K approach.

“This working group brought different perspectives to the development of the program,” notes Fox. It is this collaborative leadership style which will lead to early success. “Jeremy and I wanted the program to have input from the teachers. The Pre-K team of Loman, Rhianna Vignolini, and Roberta Schwarzbach have expertise in developmentally appropriate practices for this demographic of learners. First Grade Teacher Elizabeth Friedman has extensive knowledge of child development and early childhood pedagogy. And, our Specialists Teachers, Kate Gugliotta, Kassandra Humberson, and Rebecca Iezzi,

shared input on how their art, dance, and computer science programs can be woven into the Junior Pre-K interdisciplinary approach.”

Addressing the unique needs of three-year-olds was paramount to planning the program. “We are aware that three-year-old students have a different attention span, communication skills, and social emotional development than four-year-old students,” says Loman. “For example, our Pre-K students are moving in ten-minute intervals during different learning centers throughout the day. We know that this will need to look drastically different when engaging three-year-olds.”

A typical interdisciplinary lesson might feature apples as its theme. After reading a large picture book about apples, students would select pictures relating to the book, then work with a partner to sort a group of pictures into two different categories. Students would also learn to apply various skills in different areas including art, literacy, science, and motor and movement.

“Working closely with the Pre-K team, looking at their scope and sequence of learning goals and expected competencies for four-year-olds, has helped develop the framework for teaching and learning in Junior Pre-K,” says Fox. “When the Junior Pre-K students transition to Pre-K, they will have the readiness needed to begin the work that starts in Pre-K such as phonemic awareness, early math skills, and fostering independence.”

Making Connections in Middle School

An extracurricular science program launched ten years ago in response to student interest has grown into a Middle School mainstay. Science Olympiad, a competition consisting of 23 standards-based events in



Pre-Kindergarten Teaching Assistant Roberta Schwarzbach (L) helps rising Kindergarten student Hannah Coblenz (R) with decorations for the Pre-K Spring Play, *A Day at the Beach*.



Pre-Kindergarten Teaching Assistant Rhianna Vignolini (R) facilitates purposeful play with rising Kindergarten student Ron Jones (L) during arrival time.

science, technology, engineering, and math disciplines, is fun, rewarding—”and a stellar way to explore science,” says Science Teacher and coach Tracy Valenty.

“Science Olympiad fits perfectly with the hands-on nature of our science philosophy here at WT. Team members get to choose many of the events that they work on and compete in, so they can find something they are interested in, and really learn about it in-depth at their own pace. And sometimes kids get put into events because the team needs someone, which can open up new areas of interest and avenues of learning.”

The program has flourished under Valenty’s leadership, from its original team of six students in 2012 to its current roster of 31. The team first qualified for the state tournament in 2016—igniting a streak that continues to this day—and in 2019, an Upper School team was also formed (they, too, qualified for the state tournament).

“Study events” for the competition encourage students to dig deep into subject matter and concepts, while “laboratory events” challenge students to put into practice what they’ve learned. Through it all, passion is nurtured and discovery is celebrated—and it all augments science at WT.

From “aha!” moments when students realize how to apply their learning, to developing tenacity to push through tough problems, the impact of participation is almost impossible to measure. Students increase their interest, knowledge, and skills in science and engineering—and that’s just the beginning.

“Students develop confidence,” observes Valenty. “These exams and tasks are hard. When kids meet with success, it feels great and they believe they can do hard things. They expand social connections—even across grade levels—often forged during memorable circumstances,” adds Valenty. Another byproduct is learning responsibility: “They have to be prepared for events with everything they need; if not, they have to figure out what they need and how to get it.” Such positive experiences flow from the environment Valenty has purposefully created during a decade of coaching.

“The number one thing I try to do is establish a welcoming environment for kids who like and want to do science. This is a place where kids can ‘find their people’ and make connections. To make that happen, we developed a Rights and Responsibilities document to establish team norms. Students on the team helped me draft it, and all team members sign it so everyone has the same expectations. As a team, we work hard to provide an

environment where everyone is supported, treated fairly, and encouraged to work together.”

That, she believes, helps fulfill her goal for the program: “I want to focus on teamwork, integrity in our work, good sportsmanship, and having fun, as well as learning and doing the science and engineering.”

Abundant Possibilities in Upper School

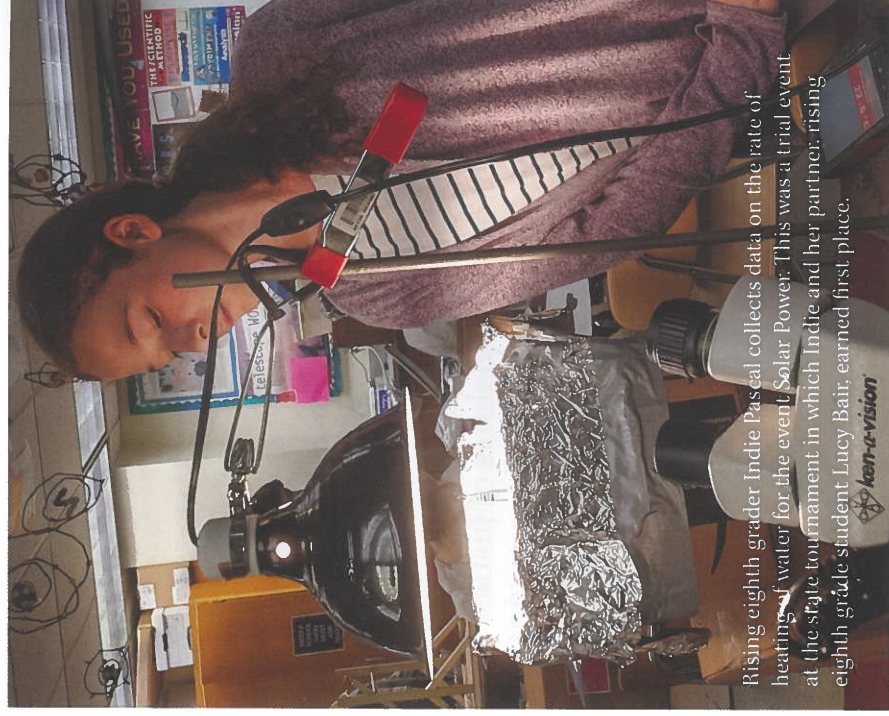
When Nicole Nesbitt greets students this school year, she begins her seventh year as a WT Upper School Biology Teacher—and her first as Science Department Chair, taking the reins at the same time as the school moves away from the limitations of the Advanced Placement (AP) curriculum. It is a pivotal moment, and Nesbitt couldn’t be more energized to help shape the abundant possibilities ahead for teachers and learners alike.

“One of the most rewarding things about teaching at WT is working with faculty throughout the school,” she enthuses. “WT provides us with a lot of freedom in terms of what and how we teach. This leaves room for teachers to be innovative and responsive to students’ needs, and allows us to provide unique experiences for our students to help them better understand the content.”

Nesbitt celebrates the opportunities unfolding now that AP constraints—such as what content must be taught, and the pace at which it must be covered—have



Rising eighth grade students Maya Finke and Marcus Ost work to refine the construction of their trebuchet in the event Storm the Castle. In this event, students design, construct, and calibrate a trebuchet to launch a projectile to hit a target.



Rising eighth grader Indie Pyscal collects data on the rate of heating of water for the event Solar Power. This was a trial event at the state tournament in which Indie and her partner, rising eighth grader student Lucy Bair, earned first place.

been removed. “Now teachers can design classes more closely aligned with student interest and allow classes to delve deeper into content, rather than covering a lot of material at surface level.”

“It requires a lot of time and effort to design a whole new class, and it takes a year or two to tweak and refine,” she says. “But those are challenges that teachers enjoy. The science department is extremely excited to move away from AP curricula, and I am eager to support the other science teachers in developing their classes.”

Nesbitt is also firmly committed to improving her own practice. Last July, she attended the University of Columbia’s Klingenstein Summer Institute (KSI), a two-week intensive program for early career teachers focusing on DEI, cognitive science, and the teaching practices of each participant’s given field—an experience she describes as “transformational.”

“Among the most powerful lessons I took away from the program was the importance of intent and reflection. KSI helps me to remember to always return to those two things. It also transformed my practice in more tangible ways, especially around assessment. Now, when I design my assessments, I do so with a goal to deepen student learning.”

Nesbitt’s leadership has been formed, and forged, by her experiences. No stranger to facing challenges and breaking boundaries, she embraces her new role, fully

intending to share what she has learned with everyone she can.

“Being a woman in STEM is always a challenge, no matter where you work, and it has influenced me as a teacher overall,” she reflects. “It has forced me to build up my confidence, and given me the strength to speak my mind more forcefully regardless of who is in the room.”

That translates to the classroom. I try to make sure everyone’s voice is heard, that no one is interrupted, and that everyone has an opportunity to participate.”



Science Department Chair Nicole Nesbitt



(l. – R) Rising seniors Katherina Burns and Alexis Alarcon observe how bacteria evolve in a lab-based activity with City as Our Campus partner EvolvingSTEM.



“It is our moral imperative to be courageous and intentional in promoting understanding, addressing bias, identifying and honoring qualities of justice, respecting multiple perspectives and contributions, and valuing the dignity of all.”

—from the Winchester Thurston School Equity and Inclusion Statement

COURAGE AND INTENTION: A MORAL IMPERATIVE

Last winter, Winchester Thurston’s deeply-held commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) was violated by a racist act on campus. School leaders, in concert with the full community, reflected, acted, and committed as they forged a path toward concrete institutional change.

“This was a wake-up call to our stated DEI commitment,” shares Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech. “We know that the work we do can’t just be academic in nature. And, when tested, it came up short.”

That work, a key component of the school’s strategic vision, has been built upon an infrastructure of programs, policies, and coursework evolving over several years. This foundation provided a firm springboard for both immediate and long-term action. “Our overall goal in the short-term was to create developmentally appropriate opportunities

for students and employees to process and heal,” explains Jessica Walton, Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Wellness.

The original plan called for individual days of community restoration, but Walton says feedback led to a revised approach lasting the remainder of the school year, focusing on educational opportunities for parents and families, conversations about updating curriculum through a DEI lens, and ensuring that the DEI Action Plan is not merely concrete, but measurable. “Remaining flexible was important because we were receiving new information almost daily about how best to meet the needs of our community, and there were many to consider, especially those of our Black and Brown students, employees, and families.”

WT Education in Action

Not surprisingly, some of the most impassioned feedback came from WT students, who stood up for their beliefs and put together a list of requests including an apology, details on how the school will ensure similar incidents never happen again, and a policy clarifying what disciplinary actions will be taken against any student that commits any act of racism. Their determination and leadership built momentum for change.

“When we think about our priorities to learn passionately, embrace diversity, break boundaries, and foster community, we recognize that with these requests, our students were calling us to do just that,” notes Fech. “So, as challenging as working through this process was, it was also a moment to recognize that the WT education was in action. Our students didn’t sit back and say ‘OK, there it is again.’ They were leaders in creating change, in demanding accountability.”

Learning to Constructively Navigate Conflict

WT also engaged Dr. Liza Talusan, an educator and facilitator who helps school communities build skills in areas of diversity, equity, inclusion,

justice, and leadership—and an existing partner in WT’s DEI work—to facilitate professional development sessions for faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees.

“During the workshops, I shared Glenn Singleton’s Courageous Conversations Protocol,” says Talusan. “The way I talk about that protocol is that we need to build skills to actually create meaningful change as a result of conflict. We need to spend a significant amount of time, energy, resources, and discomfort in naming, owning, and interrupting thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that contribute to an environment where harm can occur.”

WT leadership couldn’t agree more. “We learned that our Student and Community Handbooks needed more clarity around such issues,” shares Fech. “And, in our advisory programs, student wellness correlates to student-teacher relationships. I think in general WT does that very well; however, those programs

need work to be able to respond more appropriately in transformative moments. Finally, how we communicate about ongoing work is another area for improvement. For example, I’ve talked relatively generically, in retrospect, about the fact that we’ve changed admissions processes and updated our hiring processes, but I haven’t unpacked each of those to say, what exactly changed and what are the outcomes?”

“We need to ensure we have systems, structures, and processes in place to clearly hold the school, and its community members, accountable for upholding our DEI commitments,” adds Walton. “For example, how might the school benefit from a bias incident reporting mechanism? In what ways do we measure positive growth across the community? How can we create opportunities to discuss effective restorative measures for repairing trust in our community?”

“How can we create opportunities to discuss effective restorative measures for repairing trust in our community?”

“When we pay attention, we see more”

Because Winchester Thurston established its deep commitment to DEI work more than six years ago, then codified it as a key component of its strategic vision a few years later, and just this past fall re-established a DEI committee at the Board level, last winter’s DEI violation took many by surprise. But it didn’t surprise equity educator Talusan.

“WT has been doing so much work to uncover, unmask, and reveal DEI issues so it makes sense the community would begin to see more of the inequities that have existed. Essentially, when we pay attention, we see more.”

Moreover, she notes, “We are human beings who are constantly adapting to new information. As communities build new habits and skills, we still are working from an existing lens. It is not uncommon to see those overlapping behaviors contradict each other as we learn, grow, and adjust.”

A Pivotal Moment

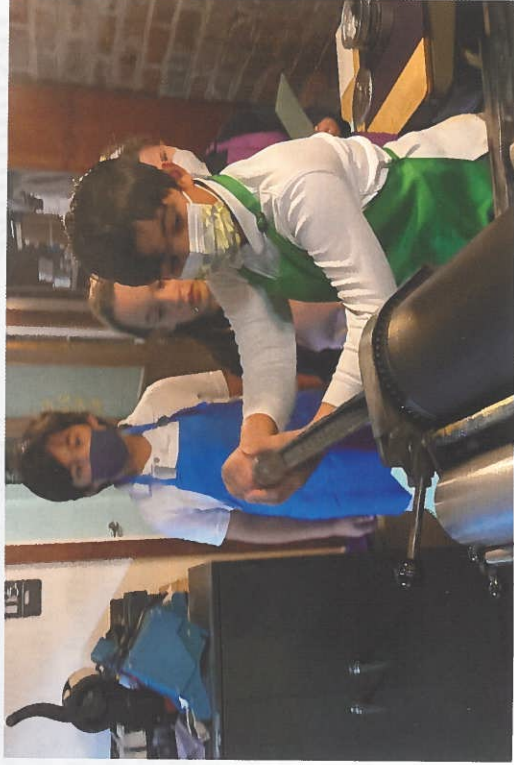
It is a pivotal moment for Winchester Thurston, says Fech, one of challenge, change, and pain—but also one of promise. “We’ve got to allow this to come to some good that will make us a stronger, safer, and better community and school for our children.”

ICYMI*

Experience a taste of some of the great things happening at WT! Be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and visit winchesterthurston.org to keep up-to-date.

Experiencing Science

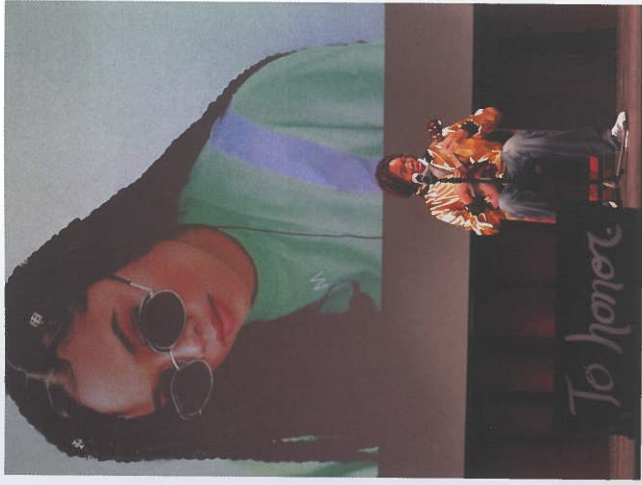
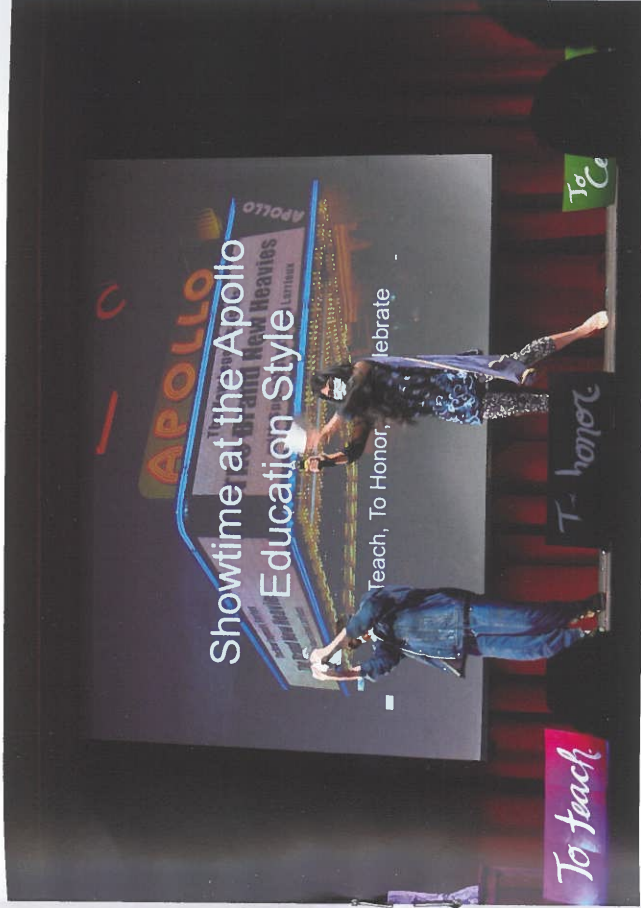
Fifth-grade students traveled to Luthern Environmental Education Center for an overnight, outdoor learning experience. An archaeological dig, exploring ecosystems, and testing water quality were just a few of the hands-on activities that highlighted this annual experience (back for the first time since 2019!).



Hands-on Printmaking

Third-grade students learning about printmaking visited Sapling Press Print shop where they created covers for their notebooks using the letterpress machine, cut stickers with a laser cutter, and inked type to make a poster with our school credo, “Think also of the comfort and the rights of others.”

*In Case You Missed It



Showtime at the Apollo, Education Style

The Middle School Diversity club presented the fourth annual Showtime at the Apollo: Education Style, where students taught, honored, and celebrated Black history through performance.



Social Justice and Equity Explored in Nation's Capital

Back for the first time since the pandemic started, the eighth-grade class visited Washington, D.C. Highlights were the National Holocaust Memorial Museum, the African American History Museum, a bike tour of the monuments, and the musical *Grace* at Ford's Theatre.

The Brain from Planet X

Upper School students presented this year's spring musical, *The Brain from Planet X*, which tells the story of an alien invasion, circa 1958—complete with a dancing, singing brain.





Community and Civic Engagement

In public presentations which included project proposals and 3D models, students from Dr. Naragon's Urban Research & Design class shared their ideas for redevelopment of Beltzhoover Elementary School and for a site along East Ohio Street within the North Side neighborhood.



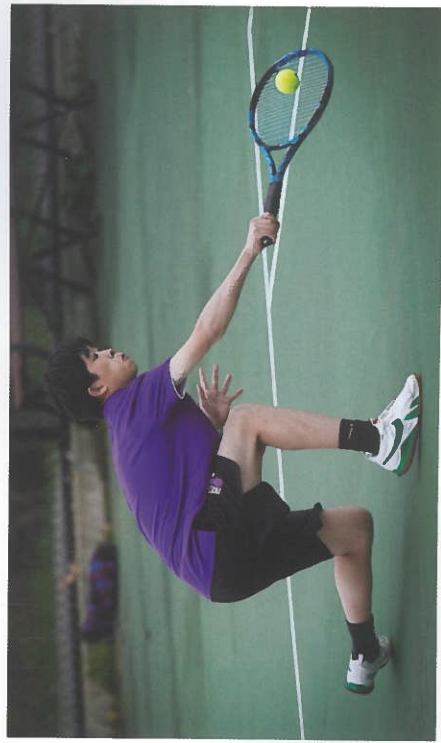
Culture and Cuisine

In partnership with the Programs Department, the Desi Student Union hosted a virtual Indian cooking class for the WT community. Participants learned about Indian culture and cuisine and how to make four recipes – Raita, Rajma, Masala Chai, and Onion Pakora.



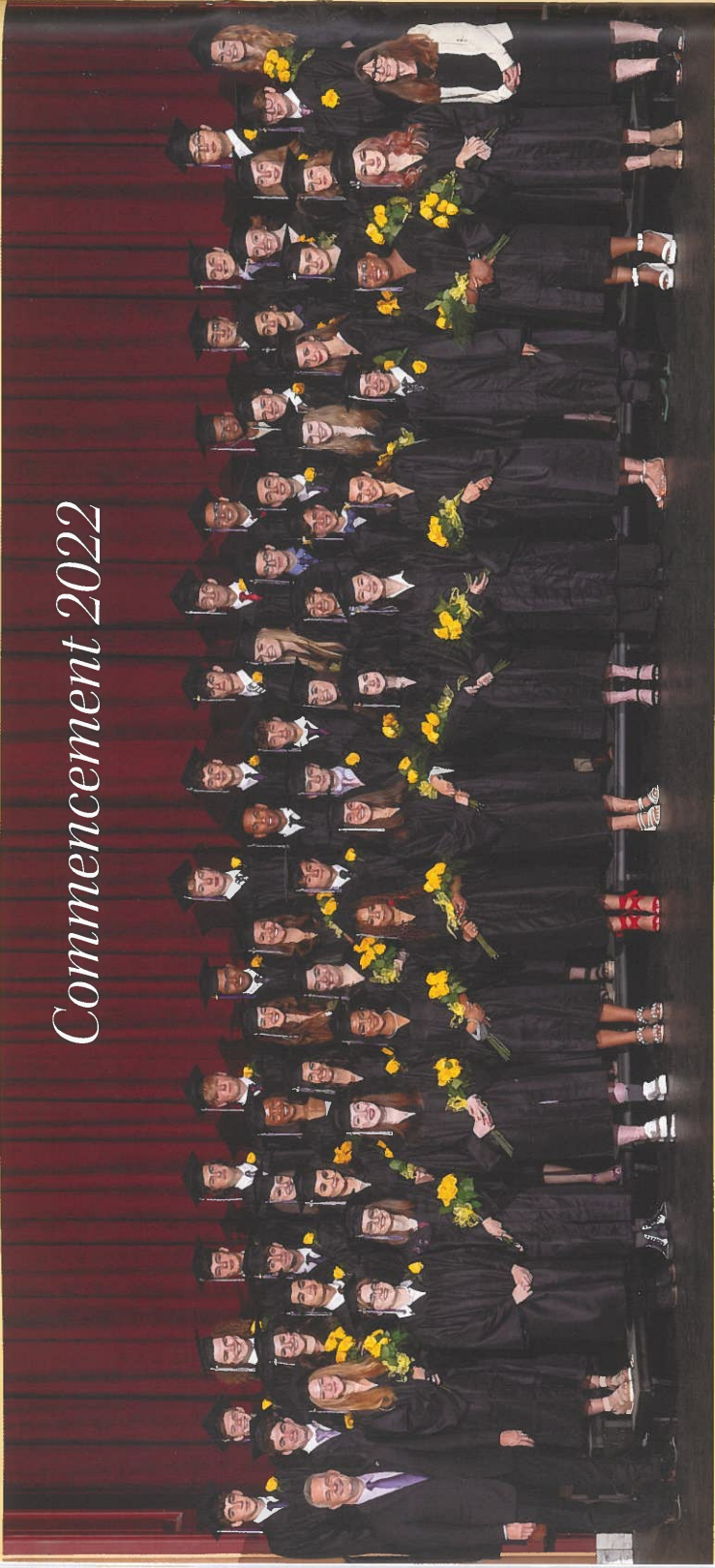
Go Bears!

Winter and spring sports at WT kept spirits high and student-athletes focused. WT even fielded a baseball team this year!



“With quiet resolve, unwavering humility, and the infinite kindness and support of this community, the Class of 2022 has made its mark on Winchester Thurston.”

—STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT JULIA F. STERN



Commencement 2022

The 61 members of the Class of 2022 celebrated the school’s 135th Commencement exercises on June 2, 2022 at Carnegie Music Hall. As a result of student advocacy and leadership, the student body wore caps and gowns during the ceremony as a way to live the WT credo, “Think also of the comfort and the rights of others” and to create equity in this final event.

Student speakers Julia F. Stern, Ajah N. Bowser, Giuseppe S. Llovet-Nava, and Claudia and Hannah Brelsford were joined by Abigail Robinson Foster ’03, Vice President Board of Trustees, and Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech in addressing the students and their guests. Student speakers acknowledged the challenges of their high school experience and lauded the resilience, humor, and compassion that characterized the Class of 2022.

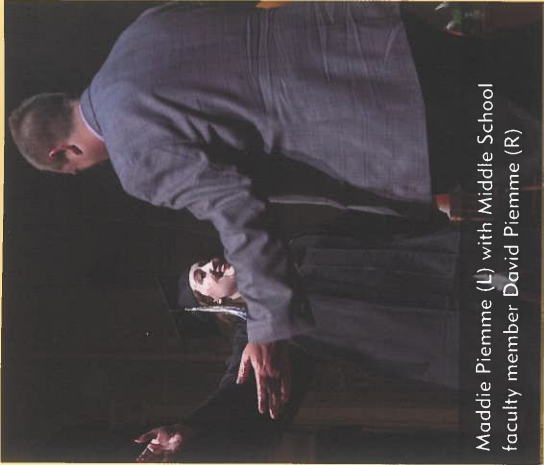
WINCHESTER THURSTON SCHOOL CLASS OF 2022

Jack E. Anderson-Jussen	Otto David Graham*	Massimiliano Memoli	Vikraanth S. Sinha
Yasmina M. Andrews	Sage M. Grodin*	Daniel Elliott Myers	Lorin G. Sleet*
Zoe Mae Apostolopoulos	Leo Hoglund-McGuirk	Lance P. Nicholls*	Molly Jewell Smith
Michael B. Baim	JohnIrv Hollingshead*	Sophia Nicholls*	Julia F. Stern
Kush Bandi	Miranda Rose Hopper*	Eesa Noaman	Kaitlyn Sullivan
Nicholas G. Blair	Najee R. Jackson	Mitra Nourbakhsh	Peyton I. Thomas*
Ajah N. Bowser	Jackson Maddox Juzang	Maddie Piemme	Neil B. Wagner-Oke
Claudia Elizabeth Brelsford*	Tobias F. Kaufmann	Andrew D. Porco	Julian Westray
Hannah Lynn Brelsford*	Jonah I. Keller	Tamia J. Pugh	Florentyna Wojnaroski*
Michael Bruni	Ilyas Xavier Khan	Mackenna Lynne Roberts	Ryan A. Woo
Alexander Burton	Luke Lamitina	Maya L. Roberts	Alivia J. Wright
Hannah Chang	Chase Lehn*	Grant Neil Robinson*	Jackson Zemek*
Abigail Cohen*	Sasha E. Likhachev	Alexander Rotondi*	Siyuan Zhang
Alexis Victoria Crowley*	Giuseppe S. Llovet-Nava	Emily C. Rotondi*	
Charles M. Denko*	Mirelle Lozano	Brian C. Salipante	
Gabriella Duch	Kate V. McAllister	Matthew B. Shlomchik	

*WT Lifer

“That is a beautiful thing that I have been given at this school: the opportunity to reflect and understand the world I live in. To think deeply about the causes and effects of vitally important issues. These seeds of critical thinking planted at this school will take root. Take every opportunity to tend those seeds.”

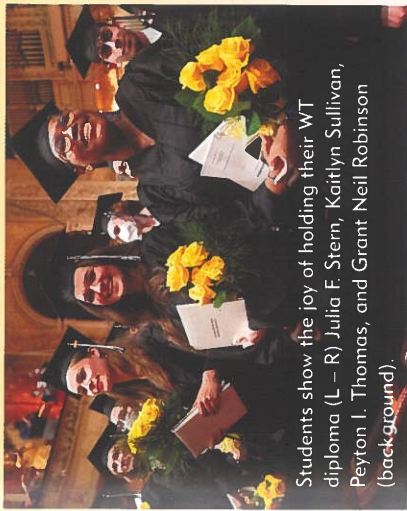
—GIUSEPPE S. LLOVET-NAVA



Maddie Piemme (L) with Middle School faculty member David Piemme (R)

“It is our duty as students and as humans to continue to spread the greatness, uplift other people, and cultivate new experiences and voices in the spaces we will occupy beyond WT.”

—AJAH N. BOWSER



Students show the joy of holding their WT diploma (L – R) Julia F. Stern, Kaitlyn Sullivan, Peyton I. Thomas, and Grant Neil Robinson (background).

Excellence Honored

The Emily E. Dorrance award for a student whose conduct, interaction, and leadership best demonstrates the school credo, Think also of the comfort and the rights of others, given by friends of the Dorrance family

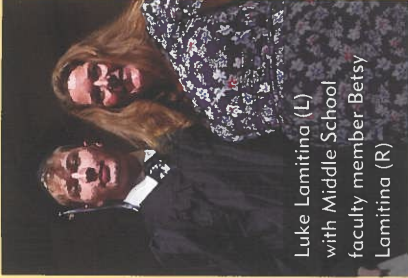
Julia F. Stern

The Mary A. Campbell award for outstanding scholarship, given by Katherine Houston Rush

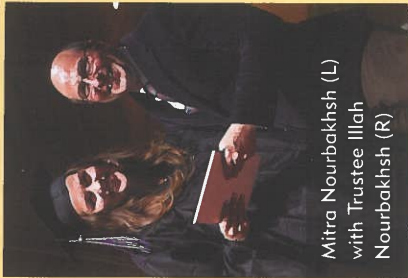
JohnIrv Hollingshead

“So thank you WT. Thank you for shaping us into who we are and who we need to be and for giving us a community that is devoted, passionate, and innovative. We love you forever and always.”

—CLAUDIA AND HANNAH BRELSFORD



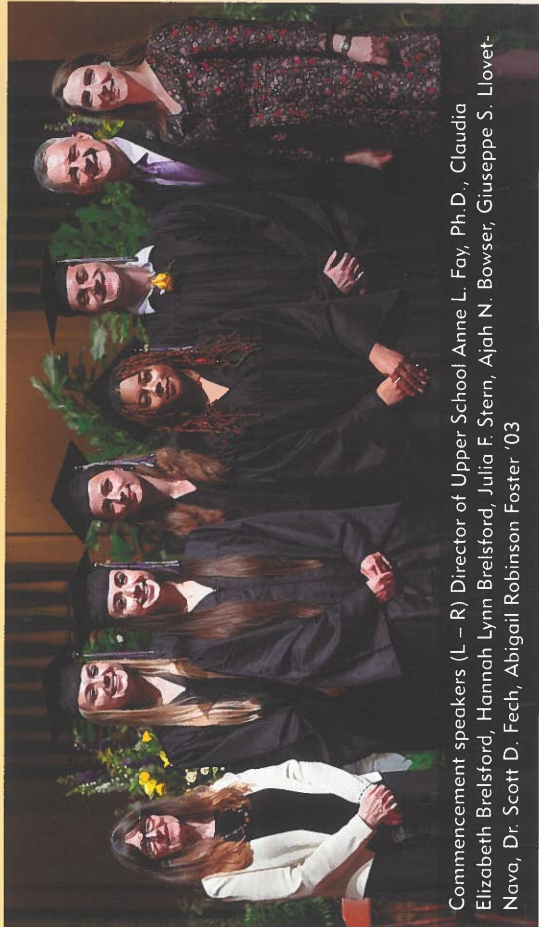
Luke Lamitina (L) with Middle School faculty member Betsy Lamitina (R)



Mitra Nourbakhsh (L) with Trustee Illah Nourbakhsh (R)

“Our founders Alice Maud Thurston and Mary A. Graham Mitchell could never have imagined the WT of today, yet we have not wavered from their founding purpose. We have worked hard to prepare you academically for the rigors of post-secondary pursuits, while keeping an eye to helping you develop to be people of character, integrity, empathy, and intellectual courage.”

—DR. SCOTT D. FECH



Commencement speakers (L – R) Director of Upper School Anne L. Fay, Ph.D., Claudia Elizabeth Brelsford, Hannah Lynn Brelsford, Julia F. Stern, Ajah N. Bowser, Giuseppe S. Llovet-Nava, Dr. Scott D. Fech, Abigail Robinson Foster '03

The Mary A. Graham Mitchell award for character, personality, loyalty, and scholarship, given by the alumnae/i association

Jack E. Anderson-Jussen

The Alice M. Thurston award for integrity, courageous leadership, and service, given by the Board of Trustees

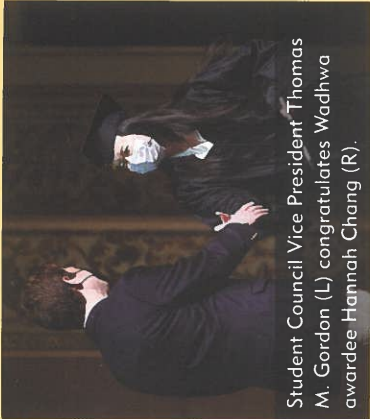
Leo Hoglund-McGuirk

The Ruth S. Gamsby award for citizenship, kindness, and courteous helpfulness, given by the Daniel F. Mullane family

Giuseppe S. Llovet-Nava

The Nina Wadhwa Student Council award for a student who best exemplifies Gentle in Manner, Strong in Deed, endowed by the Wadhwa family

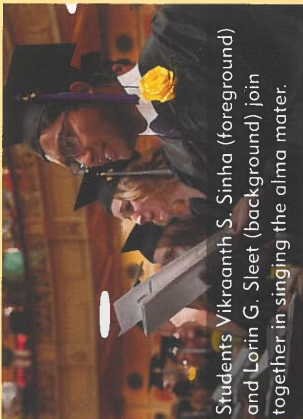
Hannah Chang



Student Council Vice President Thomas M. Gordon (L) congratulates Wadhwa awardee Hannah Chang (R).

“I want to thank you for your leadership in pushing the school forward to tackle changes that will ultimately make us a more welcoming and inclusive place for all [...] your leadership has left the school a better and stronger institution for those who follow.”

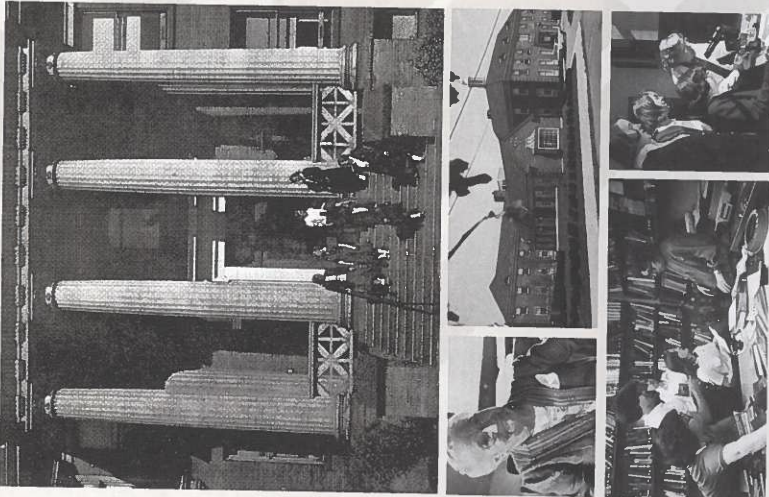
—ABIGAIL ROBINSON FOSTER '03, VICE PRESIDENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Students Vikraanth S. Sinha (foreground) and Lorin G. Sleet (background) join together in singing the alma mater.

Miss Mitchell Society

Expand the Vision of our Founder



Your legacy: the next generation of leaders, innovators, and changemakers.

Including Winchester Thurston School in your will or trust, or making WT the beneficiary of an insurance policy, IRA, or 401 (k), is a simple way to make an incredible impact.

Learn more about planned giving strategies, potential tax savings, and how your gift can spark the next generation of learners: winchesterthurston.org/plannedgiving

For more information, or to let us know of your intentions, please contact

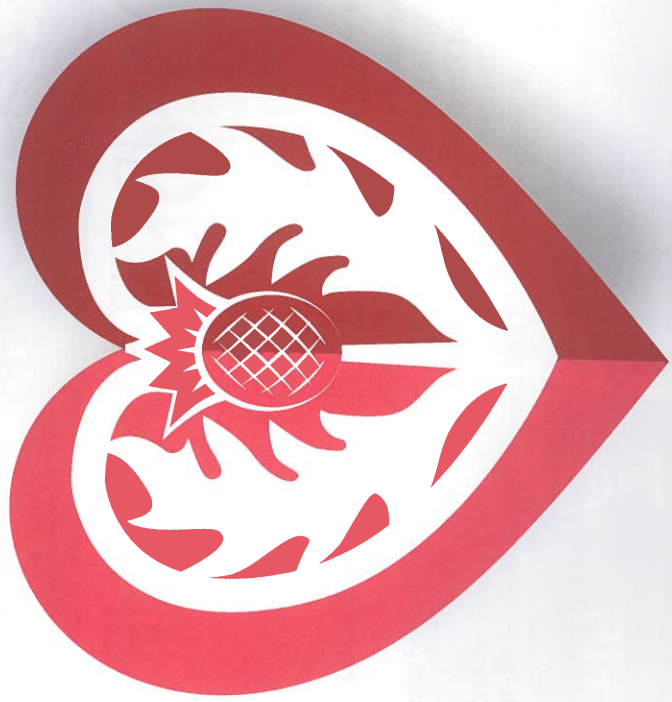
Alex Neal, Director of Leadership Philanthropy, at neala@winchesterthurston.org or 412-224-4644.

MISS MITCHELL SOCIETY MEMBERS

Following are the current living members of our community who have remembered WT in their estate planning.

Betsy Aiken '72	Anna-Stina Ericson '44	Gretchen Larson Maslanka '83	Henry Posner III
Suzanne LeClere Barley '52	Robert I. Glimcher	Kathy Zillweger Putnam '71	
Loretta Lobes Benec '88	Barbara Graves-Poller '93	Marga Matheny '64	
Barbara Abney Bolger '52	Rosanne Isay Harrison '56	Patricia L. Maykuth '69	Sarah Irving Riling '67
Kathleen W. Buechel	Kristi A. Kerins A'67	Beverlee Simboli McFadden '55	Susan Criepp Santa-Cruz '60
Joan Clark Davis '65	Kathryn W. Kruse '58	Kathleen L. Metinko '91	Jennifer M. Scanton
Judith Rohrer Davis '57	Elsa Limbach	Frances P. Minno	Sheen Sehgal '89
Judith Ellenbogen '58	Louise Baldridge Lytle '51	Bee Jee Epstine Morrison '56	Dr. Beth A. Walter '92
Justine Diebold Englert '59	Carole Oswald Markus '57	Eileen Maucclair Muse '61	Gaylen Westfall, Honorary Alumna
			Carol Spear Williams '57

Please visit winchesterthurston.org/missmittell for the complete list of Miss Mitchell Society Members.



A teacher. A coach. An act of love.

Someone in your life, past or present, recognizes your potential, inspires you to be your best self, and helps you find purpose. For many, that someone is a member of the WT community—a teacher, coach, specialist, or administrator.

We all deserve that someone. Be that someone for another.

Celebrate a teacher, classmate, or special occasion by giving the gift that actively engages and develops young minds. Your tribute gift will help provide competitive salaries, healthcare, and professional learning opportunities to the faculty and staff of WT.

Spread joy. Be that someone today.

Visit <https://give.winchesterthurston.org/tribute> to make your gift and send a special ecard or call 412-578-3748 to request a tribute booklet.

THE WT FUND

YOUR CITY AS OUR CAMPUS: FLORIDA, BOSTON, AND WASHINGTON, D.C.

The WT community came together once again for Your City as Our Campus events in Florida, Boston, and Washington, D.C.

In Florida, Kelly Hanna Riley '91 and her family hosted alums at their home in Naples, and Victoria Dym '73 hosted alums in St. Petersburg.

Trustee Joy Titus-Young '92 and Lauren Ober '96 hosted in Washington, D.C., and Kathy Zillweger Putnam '71 and George Putnam hosted the Boston event.

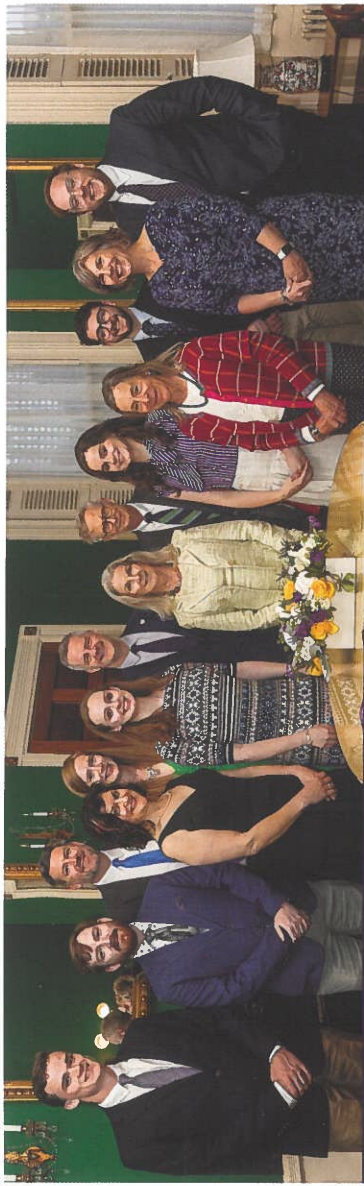
Each occasion offered the opportunity for Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech to share updates on the Joan Clark Davis Center for Interdisciplinary Learning and to reaffirm WT's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.



WASHINGTON, D.C.: (L – R) Joy Titus-Young '92, Lauren Ober '96 and girlfriend Hanna Rosin



WASHINGTON, D.C.: (L – R) Amiena Mahsoob, Director of Alumnae/i and Parent Engagement, Tara A. McGovern '00, Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech, Shari Baruth '83, Monica Gay, Executive Director for Institutional Advancement, Joanna Zawadzki '71, Josephine 'Josie' Podolsky '84, Joy Titus-Young '92, Alyssa Caroselli '94, Sarah McLaughlin Lee '95, Lauren Ober '96, and Dorothy McLaughlin '91; Not pictured: Sophia Stone '18 and Andrew Fingeret '19



BOSTON: (L – R) Gordon Pollock '18, Ellis James '18, Ryan Surprenant, Amiena Mahsoob, Lauren Burroughs '07, Isel Pollock '18, Dr. Scott D. Fech, Kathy Zillweger Putnam '71, George Putnam, Emily Pollock '18, Helen 'Holly' Clay '72, Noah Lampl '17, Monica Gay, and Alex Neal, Director of Leadership Philanthropy; Photo: AnOriginal Photography

SUPER REUNION 2022

OCTOBER 14 – 15, 2022

Classes ending in 0's, 1's, 2's, 5's, 6's, 7's + All are welcome!



FRIDAY

Daytime: Meet with students, visit classes + share your wisdom + be inspired
Lunch: 50th + Luncheon + storytelling + learn about WT today
Evening: Welcome Back Party and Class Gatherings + see faculty and connect with friends old and new

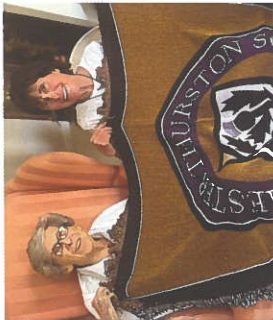
SATURDAY

Alums of Color Brunch + joy + healing
Affinity Spaces + explore how to put "Think also" into action
Optional Class Parties + finding commonalities + share memories

For the full schedule and to register, check out our website.

Interested in being part of the team to make this year's magic happen?
Contact Amiena Mahsoob, Director of Alumnae/i and Parent Engagement.

1937
85th Reunion Year



Mary Jayne 'Whips' Whipkey Redenbaugh '37 and daughter Harriet 'Hartit' Redenbaugh Potts '68—102 and 71!!!

1952
70th Reunion Year

Suzanne 'Suzy' Evans

Benson writes, "Greetings to everyone, especially the Class of 1952. We all need to go to our Reunion in October! We had such fun in the winter getting to know everyone in our Zoom meeting. Remember our word is 'Connect'! Still seeing patients in our Community Hospital with my therapy dog Brendi, who is a member of Pet Partners. Also taking a Zoom class at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Rhode Island. The class is about our great environmentalist Rachel Carson, her life, studies, and her books about the ocean. Since I live near the East Coast, I thought it best to study her interest in the sea. It is very interesting. Remember Silent Spring?"

Know the story behind one of the Reunion year photos? Contact Amiena Mahsoob at mahsooba@winchesterthurston.org.

Barbara Abney Bolger writes, "Hi, everyone! Six of us enjoyed a wonderful Zoom time together in March—**Nita Dressler Argyres, Suzanne 'Suzy' Evans Benson, Cynthia Hill Smith, Barbara Johnston Humphreys, Barbara Brown McFarland,** and me. We shared memories and life updates and all agreed we should do it again. I, for one, was blown away by the incredible lives we have lived, stories we shared, and friendships renewed. We missed the rest of you! Meanwhile, I'd love to hear from any and all of you. '52 Connect in '22 is off and running! Hop on the bandwagon with the rest of us! I am enjoying my three married children and seven grands, ranging in age from 22 to 2! The photo was taken on the beach in Ocean City last summer when my sons and their families, along with three Abney nephews and their families were all together. My daughter and her husband could not travel from Texas. Last year kept me busy co-chairing my virtual Mt. Holyoke College 65th reunion. Now I am working on our WT 70th! Enjoyed one Zoom gathering already and am looking forward to more. It is wonderful to be in touch with everyone, lifelong friends who share so many memories. I have to say, we are quite a remarkable bunch of women! Doing a little volunteer work and really enjoying my weekly Mahjongg game."



Barbara Abney Bolger with her family in Ocean City, Maryland

Over the winter, **Joan Dibert**

Caryl wrote a letter to classmate Barbara Abney Bolger, sharing that she was looking forward to her 66th wedding anniversary in February. She and her husband have three sons and one daughter, all married; four granddaughters, one grandson; and three great grandchildren, two boys and one girl. She has knit baby blankets for each baby, having learned to knit in third grade at WT, making squares for the soldiers.

Ann Fairbanks Schaffer shared with classmate Barbara Abney Bolger that she has four sons, two stepsons, six grandchildren, and one great grandchild. They had a wonderful conversation.



Six classmates from the Class of 1952 reunited via Zoom this March (Top row): Barbara Abney Bolger, Director of Alumnae/i and Parent Engagement Amiena Mahsoob, Cynthia Hill Smith; (Middle Row): Suzanne 'Suzy' Evans Benson, Barbara Brown McFarland, Barbara Johnston Humphreys; (Bottom Row): Nita Dressler Argyres.

Elaine Kauffman Haid shared with classmate Barbara Abney Bolger that she lost her husband suddenly in 2021. She lives in an active adult community in Ohio.



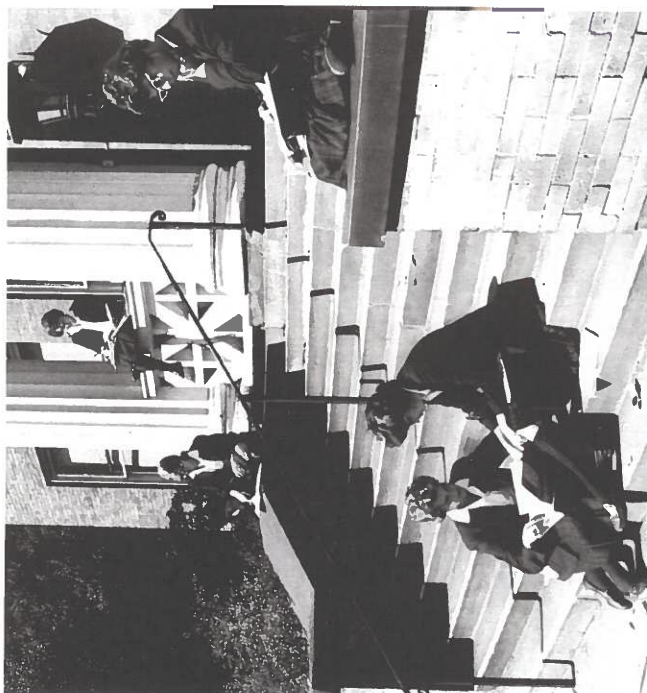
Members of the Class of 1952 at a slumber party at the William Penn Hotel (Front row, L – R): Cynthia Hill Smith, Barbara Abney Bolger, Patricia 'Patti' Imel Martin *; (Back row, L – R): Margaret 'Peggy' Reed Smith, Nancy Martin *, Margaret 'Peggy' Pattison Moore, Barbara Johnston Humphreys, and Nita Dressler Argyres

1957
65th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1957: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

1962
60th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1962: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

1964
Jennifer Davies shared, "I survived the lockdown, grateful I could still work in the studio. Preparing for a solo exhibit in May, I'll take a week off to visit my sons, both in Miami now."

kids in foster care. I also have been tutoring refugees in ESL, and am involved in Imagine, a Center for Coping with Loss, all of which are rewarding. In between, my husband Jeffrey and I spend time with our children and grandchildren, the oldest of whom is graduating from Cornell next month with an engineering degree. Jeffrey and I have also resumed traveling and just returned from

1965
Eleanor Levinson Peris writes, "I continue to volunteer as a peer coordinator for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) for

Costa Rica with another one of our grandchildren. In June, we head to Norway to celebrate our 55th Anniversary."

Susan 'Susie' MacMichael Zuntini shared, "My third grandchild has arrived, Enzo Zuntini, my son's first child. He lives 15 minutes away from us, so we are in close contact (Now that Franco and I are declared cured of COVID-19). Our '65 book group is a joy, sharing things we loved, tips on movies, seeing each other. We have been out in public here in Switzerland—movies, concerts, plays, restaurants. Off to hike in Andalusia. And to see Granada. We keep trying to soldier on!"



Members of the Class of 1966: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

1966

Jane Soxman shared, "In June, I will begin my 40th year in private practice of pediatric dentistry in Allison Park. I have published three text books; I am a pediatric seminar instructor in three dental residency programs; and a national speaker. My son Zachary graduated from the

Naval Academy and is now an investment banker in New York City. My daughter Bailey is an interior designer with a firm in Washington, D.C. Zack has two children, Penn, age one and Ellie, age three. Bailey will be married in Cabo, Mexico in October. My years at WT were some of the happiest in my life."

1967

55th Reunion Year

Heather Wishik writes, "My spouse, Susan, and I have recently sold our Florida home and moved back full time to Vermont. This year, I have had the honor of consulting to the World Health Organization and the U.S. State Department Middle East Region on diversity matters. I continue to write poems and create collages. One poem was published as part of PoemCity Montpelier, a month-long celebration of National Poetry Month. Poems are selected from those submitted and then published as large posters that are exhibited in store windows all over town. Susan is still working as an executive at an insurance company, doing so full time from home. Our son, Gabriel, was admitted to Harvard MGH's Palliative Care Fellowship, which he will start this coming July. In the meantime, he is working as a doctor in a group of methadone clinics in Western Massachusetts."



1967 Thistledown Staff



Members of the Class of 1970: Recognize this photo? Share the story captured here.

1968
Carol Byrom Conrad shares, “Just catching up after many years... Retired after 40+ years in independent school education, teacher and administrator, three schools, three states (some irony teaching in an all-boys school for 8 years). Moved three years ago, August, to Kent Island, Maryland. Driving distance to two sons and three grandchildren. Lots of water, 55+ community and many new friends. Hoping to do delayed traveling abroad in '22. Spent COVID-19 on Zoom taking watercolor instruction from artists in many states and Canada and even Paris! Mrs. Peterson would be proud! Putting my life and history major to work teaching a 60's class to 25 adult learners, more work than I expected, but lots of fun and deeper study for me. Remembering what it was like to watch from our apartment window the march on Freedom Corner and the National Guard camping in the Civic Arena parking lots when MLK was killed. Also connected to WT and Pittsburgh by supporting a new WT Lower School scholarship: “Think also’ focused on diversity in the Lower School and the Hill District.”

Wendy Crawford Galleher writes, “We continue to enjoy living in Charlotte and the activities that retirement brings—bridge, hiking, kayaking, traveling, and making memories with our children and four grandsons!”

1970
70th Birthday Party/ Delayed 50th Reunion

Helen Berkman Habbert shares, “I’m now in California with my new granddaughter! Looking forward to our October 70th Birthday Party/Delayed 50th Reunion!”



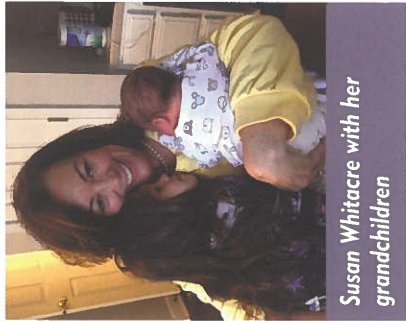
Members of the Class of 1972: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

1973
“*When She Was Free*,” by **Victoria Dym**, has been selected by editor Celeste Gainey, City of Asylum Poet Laureate of Allegheny County, for inclusion in the series, *Eco-Justice for All Poetry Confronts Climate Catastrophe* zine. Victoria read the poem at The Metanoia Retreat for Writers, Well-Being and Right Whales, co-facilitated by Victoria and Martha McDowell on Earth Day Weekend. The retreat included a full Laughter Yoga session, creativity games, writing prompts, and more. In addition, Victoria’s newly released chapbook, “*Spontaneous*,” was also selected by Northwest Florida Poet Laureate Katherine Nelson-Born as the winner of the 2021 Poem-A-Day Chapbook Challenge.



Victoria Dym

1974
Susan Whitacre writes, “I just returned from the Van Gogh Immersive Experience in Houston, TX. I hope that you’ll opt to do the Virtual Reality experience too!!



Susan Whitacre with her grandchildren

It is a magnificent sensory experience that will carry you away on the sounds of fabulous music, vibrant colors, remarkable graphics, and engaging narratives. I was in Pittsburgh in early April for the birth of my fourth grandchild. Mother and baby are thriving. I feel blessed beyond measure! Mother Nature reminded me about how surprisingly beautiful Pittsburgh is in EVERY season. In the two weeks I was there, I experienced fall in all its splendor—with crisp temperatures and leaf-covered lawns, warm and shiny days with the promise of spring, and frigid winter temperatures and a snowfall which carpeted the earth in white. Pittsburgh, you are captivating!! Sending love to my classmates, along with best wishes that you and yours are enjoying great health.”

1976

Jillian ‘Jill’ Shapiro Barnett’s poetry has appeared in *North American Review*, *Nimrod*, *Image*, *California Quarterly* and many other literary journals and anthologies. Her work was nominated for a Pushcart Prize by the *Bellingham Review*. Jill received her MFA from Vermont College in 2003. Follow the link in *ThistleTalk.org* to learn more.



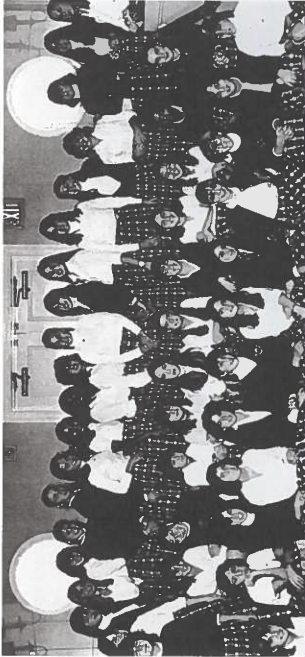
Falling Bodies by Jillian Barnett

1977
45th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1977: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

1982
40th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1982: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

1982

Calling all members from the Class of 1982, **Sofia ‘Stef’ Agras** writes, “Let’s do a Zoom party for the Class of ‘82!”

1983



Edith ‘Edie’ Raphael visited Performing Arts Teacher Barbara Holmes this winter.

1984

Margaret ‘Margo’ Hiller shares, “Hi to all the WT community, especially my fellow classmates of 1984! I can’t believe how fast these years have gone by! Just a quick update, I am primarily residing in the Las Vegas, Nevada area and I still have my place in Pittsburgh! Gone are my dancing days. Oh well... alas all good things...currently, I am working in real estate development with a venture capitalist firm and of course all of my charitable endeavors. My eldest son Max has blessed me with my first granddaughter, Willow, and my youngest son Mitchell is set to graduate Fox Chapel High School in June of 2022! Yeah! If anyone gets out West please give me a call... otherwise, I will catch up with you in the ‘Burgh!”

1987

35th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1987: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

1988

Upper School Art Instructor, Advisor, Equity & Inclusion Liaison, alum parent, and parent **Mary Martin** hosted the inaugural Eid Celebration to mark the end of Ramadan for the WT community.

1990



Wendy Marks Pine and her husband Bobby, along with their older son Brian Pine, celebrated the Bar Mitzvah of their younger son Jake Pine in Boca Raton, Florida on December 11, 2021.

1992
30th Reunion Year



Alums returned to WT with their families to celebrate, including (L-R) Ilyas Xavier Khan '22, Eesa Noaman '22, Niam Noaman '21, and Ahmad Chaudhry '14 (not pictured).



Members of the Class of 1992: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and the story captured here.



Jacqueline ‘Jackie’ Marks Ledo and her husband George, along with their daughters Julia Brooke and Jenna Rose Ledo, celebrated the Bar Mitzvah of their son Justin Neil Ledo in Aventura, Florida on January 22, 2022.

1994

Ian Gould has been weathering the pandemic by appearing in commercials and productions online, including *Much Ado About Nothing* for Pittsburgh Public Theater. He is in his third year on the faculty of the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts where he teaches classical and contemporary comedy, and will return to live theater this summer in *King John* with Shakespeare on the Sound in Connecticut. His wife Gabrielle was recently named Chief Learning Officer of the New York City Office of Management and Budget.



Ian Gould

1997

25th Reunion Year



Class of 1997

1999

Trustee **Brandilyn 'Brandi' Y. Dumas** has been named to the *Crain's New York* 2022 Notable Women in Law list. Dumas was chosen as one of just 119 women for their outstanding professional

achievements and pro bono work or involvement with industry and community organizations. Dumas is a shareholder at Greenberg Traurig, where she focuses her practice on commercial real estate transactions, including acquisitions and dispositions, financing, joint ventures, and development. According to Greenberg Traurig, "Dumas' dedication to raising the next generation remains central to her external activities."

2002

20th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 2002: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and the story captured here.

introducing a new class of devices and hybrid structures enabling quantum information processing. Yiwen Chu '04 attended WT for grades 6-11 before leaving after her junior year to attend MIT. Follow the link in [Thisletalk.org](#) to read the full article.

2007

15th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 2007

2003

Callie Gropp is grateful for all of the alumni who agreed to be interviewed as part of her Multicultural America class. "Your vulnerability, thoughtfulness, insights, and hopefulness for the future of WT make me proud to be an alum, parent, and faculty member!" shares Gropp. Special thanks to **Joy Titus-**

2008

Peter Curtis shares, "I'm working in wealth management for high net worth families. I am getting married in May and just got two beautiful pets: a goldenoodle puppy and Siberian kitten!"

2010

Jimyse 'Meese' Brown was part of The Advanced Leadership Institute's (TALI) 2021 cohort for its inaugural Emerging Leaders Program, which prepares rising Black leaders for professional success. This new program is made possible through a partnership with Carnegie Mellon University and in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh, Robert Morris University, and Duquesne University.

2011

In April, Upper School Black students participated in a virtual roundtable discussion with WT alums of color.

Mary Martin '88 (facilitator),

Joy Titus-Young '92, Brandilyn

'Brandi' Dumas '99, Brea

Heidelberg '02, Earl Hord

'11, and Michael Booker

'12, explored life beyond WT, addressing questions such as

"How does identity inform the

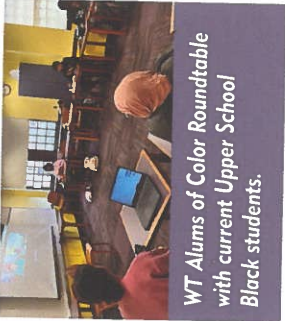
type of adult you become?" and

"How do you give back to your

community or culture to ensure

your stories and experiences

continue to be told?"



WT Alums of Color Roundtable with current Upper School Black students.

2012

10th Reunion Year



Class of 2012: Lifers

2015

Alexa Zytnick is finishing up her second year in the Microbiology Ph.D. program at University of California,

Berkeley and is engineering

bacteria to recycle electronic

waste. Her first publication,

"*Identification of a biosynthetic*

gene cluster encoding a

novel lanthanide chelator in

Methylobacterium extorquens AML,"

went live on bioRxiv earlier this

year.

2017

5th Reunion Year

Adero Kauffmann-Okoko

shares, "Right now, I'm in

Dallas, TX as the McDermott

Intern for Adult Programs at

the Dallas Museum of Art. I started the internship back in August after I graduated last year. I'll be moving again once the program ends in a few months."

Malik Potter, a senior at

Chatham University, recently

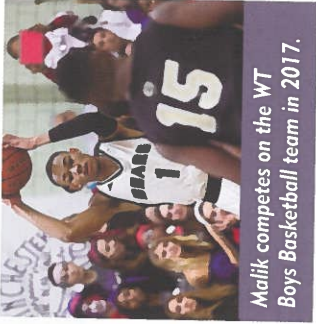
earned All-PAC (The Presidents'

Athletic Conference) First Team

Distinction. Follow the link in

[Thisletalk.org](#) to read the full

article.



Malik competes on the WT Boys Basketball team in 2017.

2018

Reilly Jackman writes,

"I graduated from Oberlin

College with a Bachelor's

degree in History, Politics, and

German. I was accepted to the

U.S. Teaching Assistantship

program administered by

Fulbright Austria and will

spend the next year teaching

English in secondary schools

in Austria. Additionally, I was

accepted into a Master of

International Affairs program

at the Hertie School of

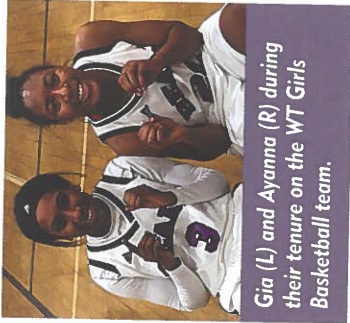
Governance in Berlin, Germany

which I will start after my year

in Austria."

Gia Thorpe, a recent graduate from Howard University, was one of just five Pittsburgh natives competing in the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament as part of the Howard University Women's Basketball team. Follow the link in [Thisletalk.org](#) to read the full article.

Ayanna Townsend, who was a team captain for the Xavier University Women's Basketball team, was named the 2021-2022 BIG EAST Women's Basketball Scholar-Athlete of the Year. Follow the link in [Thisletalk.org](#) to read the full article.



Gia (L) and Ayanna (R) during their tenure on the WT Girls Basketball team.

2019

Current college student

Ian McGough reported

that he thankfully didn't

have COVID-19 again this

year. Wishing all alumni with

COVID-19 a speedy recovery.

2020

Elizabeth 'Liz' Grossman

writes, "I am the Sponsorship

Coordinator for University

of Miami's Esports program

and applied for a combined

Masters of Sports and Esports

Management. For the summer,

I received an offer from the

Indianapolis Motor Speedway."

IN MEMORIAM

The following members of the WT community will be missed by their classmates, friends, students, and colleagues. We offer sincere condolences to their families.

Mary George Gast '37

Betsy Brookes Fink '38

Patricia 'Pat' Williams Gilchrist '41

Nina Sommerville

Patchell '46

Ruth O'Brien Collura '51

Lois Jean Graham

Tingler '51

Alice Stotz Diehl '52

Dr. Jean MacIntyre '52

Nancy Martin '52

Dorothy Jones Menges '53

Roberta 'Robin'

McKinney Weiss '56

Joan Giuliani Auerbach '57

Judith Getty Treadwell '59

Sarah 'Sally' Feland

Perkins '61

Marion Heard McNally '65

Nancy K. Murray '69



The Most Precious Cargo

On March 19, 2022, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* highlighted the humanitarian efforts in Ukraine of WT Emeritus Trustee Henry Posner III and his global railroad investment firm, RDC.

Posner was in Europe on business when RDC Deutschland—the German arm of RDC—was contracted by the German government to run a daily train for Ukrainian war refugees. Acknowledging that this would be the most precious cargo the company would ever carry, Posner altered his plans so that he could be of service on one of the early trips.

As passengers consumed hot drinks and boxed lunches prepared by German aid workers, Posner—who speaks four languages, including Russian—joined RDC staff to build trust, ensure calm, and create a haven of security and safety for the refugees.

“It’s a matter of great company pride that we were able to play a role here,” Posner reflected. Visit post-gazette.com for the full story by reporter Anya Litvak.



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