



# BUILDING BRIDGES

A ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL INITIATIVE

## EVEN RECAP: TESTIMONIALS



**STEVENSON**



**CATE SCHOOL**

**THE THACHER SCHOOL**



**HARVARD WESTLAKE SCHOOL**





# BUILDING BRIDGES

## SPRING CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM

**The Building Bridges Career Exploration Program** is a groundbreaking initiative designed to provide aspiring educators with a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of independent schools. This program caters to future teachers' curiosity and professional development needs by offering them insightful and hands-on experience within diverse independent educational institutions. Through a carefully structured curriculum, participants gain valuable insights into the distinctive locations, departments, philosophies, teaching methodologies, and student-centered approaches that are the hallmark of these schools. Participants will observe and collaborate with experienced educators, fostering a deep understanding of the innovative practices that independent schools employ. The program will provide you with in-depth insight and knowledge of these dynamic and empowering environments and help guide you in the ever-evolving field of education to determine if this path is right for you.

Dwayne Pina,  
*Building Bridges Program Director*



# WELCOME!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the West Coast for the Building Bridges Spring Career Exploration Program. Building Bridges creates opportunities for learning and exploration, the strengthening of networks, and the broadening of professional avenues. St. George's School and our Partner School Network are truly excited to host this pivotal program, providing opportunities for early-career educators and students from historically Black colleges and universities to learn more about independent schools. We are thrilled to work with Stevenson, Cate, Thacher and Harvard-Westlake, enabling us to broaden the reach and impact of Building Bridges. We are excited to meet you and collaborate with you in the days and years ahead.

With all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael C. Wirtz'.

Michael C. Wirtz  
*Head of School, St. George's School*



# SCHOOL OVERVIEWS

## STEVENSON SCHOOL

3152 Forest Lake Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953



- All gender boarding and day school: grades PK - 12
- Number of Students: 775
- Boarding students: 53%
- Students of color: 54%

## CATE SCHOOL

1960 Cate Mesa Road, Carpinteria, CA 93013



- All gender boarding and day school: grades 9 - 12
- Number of Students: 303
- Boarding students: 80%
- Students of color: 54%

## THE THACHER SCHOOL

5025 Thacher Road, Ojai, CA, 93023



- All gender boarding and day school: grades 9 - 12
- Number of Students: 250
- Boarding students: 95%
- Students of color: 55%

## HARVARD-WESTLAKE SCHOOL

700 N Faring Road, Los Angeles, CA, 09977



- All gender day school: grades 7 - 12
- Number of Students: 1,620 (745 Middle, 875 Upper)
- Students of color: 55%

# TESTIMONIALS

## Kyle Mason, Cate School

*Director of Admission & Enrollment*

### *On Building Bridges*

“**Building Bridges is such an amazing initiative.** It’s something that many of us, meaning black professionals in independent schools, have been thinking about, speaking about, dreaming about, and wanting to see happen for years. And to have St. George’s do this, bring this into fruition is a dream come true. The ability to expand the opportunities for black professionals who want to enter the world of education and the ability to share the independent school avenue with people is mind-blowing because most of black America is unaware that this world exists, let alone they can work in it and build a lifestyle.”

“The **partnership that Cate has created with Building Bridges** only expands and builds upon what we have been trying to do since 2008, and it makes our work that much easier and affirms everything we are doing on this campus.”

“Programs like Building Bridges continue to put independent schools in a position to be a place where every child who is eligible to handle the rigor of that school can feel like they belong. They feel like they are supposed to be there and that someone is going to champion them.”



## Randy Person, Cate School

*English Teacher, Assistant Dean of Students*

### *On Impact of Building Bridges*

“**The impact of having this HBCU cohort on Cate’s campus is immediate and immense,** and it won’t only last a day or two while they are on campus; rather, my mind will be wondering about its endless possibilities.”

### *On Cate’s involvement*

“I’m in a great position to speak to that. As a Cate alum, when I was a student, I was so affirmed in who I was. People saw me. They raised me. They celebrated who I was. And at the same time, no one pushed me to explore my blackness in the way that I needed to. In part, that’s why I’m back at Cate as a faculty member, to be that representation pushing students to think about their culture... Partnering with Building Bridges helps that same goal. These future educators are so affirmed in their identity and are driven by sharing what they know and their experiences with like-minded people with the same identities and those with different identities. **The impact of having Building Bridges prospective teachers on campus is so important to the future of boarding schools.**”



# TESTIMONIALS

## Troy Shapiro, **Cate School**

*Dean of Faculty, Science Teacher*

### *On Building Bridges*

“**When we heard about Building Bridges’** mission to create stronger ties between HBCUs and the life and work at a boarding school, **we knew this was a perfect match** with what we have been hoping to do. It’s been a strategic initiative for most boarding schools and certainly Cate for a long time to improve the diversity of our faculty, making sure our students are represented.”



## Janine Jones, **Harvard-Westlake School**

*Assistant Head of School for Community and Belonging*

### *Impact of Building Bridges*

“**The Building Bridges program is absolutely incredible.** All of LA day schools that were represented kept raving about the event. The HBCU students were so wildly impressive with the authenticity in which they showed up in that room. It was something that the heads of our schools needed to see.”



# TESTIMONIALS



**Alona Scott, The Buckley School**  
*Head of School*

*Impact of Building Bridges*

“ **The Building Bridges program participants were so inspiring.** I hope all of them land in independent schools, but if nothing else, I hope they come away from the Building Bridges program as ambassadors for our schools. The impact will be like the butterfly effect. **Culture will change.**”



**Ja'Tavius Anderson, Morehouse College,**  
**Class of 2025**

*Education Studies Major, Double minor in Biology & Spanish*

*Impact of Building Bridges*

“ Where I'm from, I've only seen public and charter schools. **Through Building Bridges, I've learned so much about independent schools.** The schools that we have visited encompass what I believe in as a teacher: an environment that balances a child's mental well-being, happiness, and academics.”

# TESTIMONIALS



## Morgan Willis, Howard University, Class of 2025

Mathematics Major

### Impact of Building Bridges

“ This program (Building Bridges) has been eye-opening to me because I didn’t know too much about independent schools, especially boarding schools. Knowing there are other opportunities out there with **safe and inclusive spaces** for us is inspiring.”

## Nor Harwell, Cate School, Class of 2025

### Impact of Building Bridges

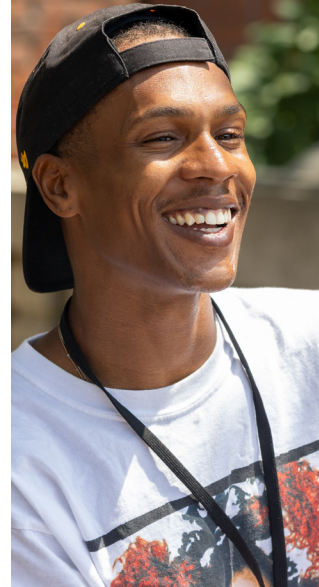
“ **When I learned about the Building Bridges visit, I was jumping up and down.** I was so excited to meet students from HBCUS because, at Cate, not a lot of students go to HBCUs. I was thrilled to hear and learn about their experiences and to have the opportunity to talk to the amazing five women who attend Howard.”



## Victoria Darko, Stevenson School, Class of 2025

### Impact of Building Bridges

“ As a black high school student, it was amazing to see a group of black college students who are thriving and interested in the field of education. **Not knowing much about HBCUs prior to this experience, I can confidently say I have learned a lot and I am considering applying to a few.** This experience not only gives black high school students an understanding of what it is like to go to a school/institution where they are the majority, but also shows them that there are HBCUs full of culture and diversity that are just as prestigious as other schools. I really enjoyed this experience, because I feel that Stevenson’s Black Student Union was able to connect with the college students easily and form a great bond. **My favorite part of the HBCUs students’ visit was when they all sang multiple versions of the happy birthday song when finding out it was my birthday. It was a memory that will always stick with me,** because of how unplanned yet meaningful it was.”



# BUILDING BRIDGES

Invest in diversity, equity, and **education.**

