

Flintridge Preparatory School
Winter 2022

PrepTalk



VISUAL ARTS HIGHLIGHTS



by Nicole Mirzaian '22



Dancers returned to the Norris Auditorium stage in December for the Winter Dance Concert “Elemental.”

On the cover:
AP Biology student Abigail Wang '24 prepares a sample for a photosynthesis lab.

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From the Head of School



What a joy it is to greet our community and to welcome our newest community members, the classes of 2026 and 2028! This year has been an exciting journey back to campus, back to togetherness, back to traditions, old and new. Our students, faculty, staff, families, and alumni have seized upon the opportunities of this moment to enjoy all that Prep has to offer and to begin to imagine all that Prep will become.

This fall, I had the opportunity to meet with every member of our faculty and staff. They are brimming with ideas, enthusiastic about the road ahead, and excited about their roles as models of perpetual learning. I know our students are in excellent hands. As we embark on a year of listening, reflection, and intentional strategic planning for our school’s future, we could not have better partners than one another in the exercise of envisioning the Prep that lies ahead.

Recently I took a trip through the new Bachmann Collaboration Building, witnessing the future of Prep unfolding before me. Our students worked beside one another and their teachers who served as mentors and guides. Students huddled around tanks of jellies in the Jelly Lab, crammed onto benches wielding woodworking tools in the Makerspace, gripped spray cans poised to paint in the art studio, and gesticulated and debated as they enthusiastically planned for an upcoming leadership event in the third-floor meeting rooms. The BCB points the way forward, toward an educational vision that draws upon Prep’s deep commitment to relational, connected learning and expands our students’ opportunities with creative new experiences that prepare them to be leaders, problem solvers, and team-builders in a global, interconnected world. Iterative, flexible, responsive, the design thinking underlying our newest spaces foreshadows the Prep to come. I cannot wait to see what our students and their teachers imagine next.

Vanessa Walker-Oakes
Head of School



Update on Prep’s Strategic Design Process

In a January Board retreat, Flintridge Prep officially launched a strategic design process that will continue through the summer. During this process, we will be gathering ideas and insights from a wide range of community members so that we can set our course for ambitious future institutional growth and development.

The first major step in this incredible time of learning and discovery was the administration of a survey of alumni, parents, parents of alumni, faculty, staff, and students, which we just completed as *PrepTalk* reached your mailboxes.

At this moment, the anonymously collected survey data is being analyzed by our external consultants at Greenwich Leadership Partners, who will use the rich examples provided to get a window into how our community members experience Prep.

This process shines a light on the aspects of our culture and processes that we often take for granted. The strategic design framework that will emerge will be flexible but honed. It will help us learn, assess, plan, and operate as a school and as a community so that we identify opportunities for improvement and innovation and design solutions that will strengthen our school for the future.

This is a very exciting moment in our shared history, and we sincerely appreciate your participation in the process. Together, we will advance our mission and thoughtfully position ourselves for a future in which our graduates will continue to benefit from a Flintridge Prep education that nurtures the knowledge, critical skills, community values, and creativity essential for an engaged, balanced, and responsible life.

We look forward to sharing our strategic priorities with you this fall. ■

A Network of Support

Get to know Prep's Student Support Team

by Camila Ryder

IF YOU WERE TO FOLLOW our students around for a day, you'd soon realize how much they're managing. They juggle academics, sports, performing arts, clubs, and their social lives. They're simultaneously going through immense personal growth, developing their identities, exploring their autonomy and agency, building relationships, and understanding who they are in the world.

That can be a lot to take on, for anyone of any age, and students undergo many changes as they move from middle school to 9th grade to senior year.

Prep seeks to create a community that our students can feel rooted in and supported throughout every step of their time here, starting with the social-emotional learning (SEL) that is central to Prep's mission of nurturing a learning environment that is trusting, collaborative, evolving, and equitable. It's a partnership between teachers, students, staff, administrators, and parents to ensure our students have the best possible Prep experience.

"We want every student to have a meaningful, rich, and engaging middle school and high school experience at Prep, both inside and outside the classroom," Assistant Head for Student Life Barrett Jamison says. "Part of the Prep culture is to encourage students to get involved at school, but that can be challenging when it comes to balance. Our students might ask, 'How do I play on the soccer team, get my homework done, and still have time to see my friends on the weekend?'"

Prep's Student Support Team is here to answer the call. This dynamic network is comprised of Jamison, Dean of Students Beth Pattinelli, newest team members School Counselor Kiara Best and Learning Specialist Ann Vradenburg, and six grade level deans, including this year's deans Heba Allen (7th

grade), Claire Kinder (8th grade), Abel Fuentes (9th grade), Megan Burton (10th grade), Katie Canton (11th grade), and Scott Myers (12th grade).

"We provide structural support to help students balance their schedules, time, and wellbeing so that they can participate in the life of the school," Jamison says.

The overall goal for the Student Support Team is to help every Prep student thrive. As students form their identities and explore their passions, some students might need additional guidance in this process. The Student Support Team is right by their side.

Every other week, the newly formed Student Support Committee meets to check in with each other about what's happening around campus and discuss what students or classes might need additional support. Comprised of Jamison, Best, Vradenburg, Pattinelli (who represents the deans), Director of College Counseling Brooke Yoshino, and Athletic Trainer Andres Alamillo, the Committee represents the many facets of a students' physical, mental, intellectual, and emotional growth at Prep. In addition to those biweekly meetings, Pattinelli, Best, and Vradenburg meet every week.

"We're able to see our students in a 360-degree view based on their academics, college counseling, athletics, extracurriculars, injuries, or illness. We don't compartmentalize students by their mental health or academic needs—we come up with solutions for them as a whole person so that we all can then meet their needs as they walk into the door," Vradenburg says.

"We're all trying to work together to fit the students' needs best and send them to the proper person to help them—there is always the right person, it's just getting them there," Best says.



Top, clockwise: Dean of Students Beth Pattinelli, 10th Grade Dean Megan Burton, 12th Grade Dean Scott Myers, 9th Grade Dean Abel Fuentes, 8th Grade Dean Claire Kinder, 11th Grade Dean Katie Canton, and 7th Grade Dean Heba Allen; Middle: School Counselor Kiara Best; and Left: Learning Specialist Ann Vradenburg

It's Okay to Ask for Help

Mental health and social-emotional wellbeing have become much more publicly acknowledged and discussed, especially at schools. Just as adults do, students find themselves dealing with stress, anxiety, external pressures, and personal conflicts, not to mention living through a pandemic.

"A lot of times, young adults feel like they're the only one that has this experience or stress going on in their life, or they feel that they have no one to talk to because, 'No one else understands, or no one else has been through that.' But it's not true," Best says. "People are experiencing these issues all the time. Our work is to let them know: you are not alone."

"Prep is a place where it's okay to ask for help," Jamison explains. "This is really part of the fabric of our school. We want students to be self-aware and to know when they're struggling, and to feel comfortable and confident in going to someone and saying, 'I need a little extra help here.' Whatever or wherever *here* is, whether it's socially, emotionally, or academically. The Student Support Team is essential in being here for our students."

As school counselor, Best counsels students dealing with stress, anxiety, exploring autonomy and agency, and navigating the new world of the pandemic, including managing expectations.

"A lot of adolescents, prior to COVID, could do all these different things, but times are different now," Best explains. "They still have the same expectations as to what they were doing prior, and when they don't meet

those expectations, then they're really down on themselves and wondering why they can't meet these expectations."

Vradenburg works one-on-one with students, teachers, and deans to help them troubleshoot through academic subjects, learning differences, time management, and organization skills—areas she sees as essential to equity and inclusion.

"I want to be able to spread equity amongst all the students so that they get their needs met, uniquely," Vradenburg says. "The one thing that struck me that is so amazing here that I know is not present on other high school or middle school campuses is the flexibility that our teachers give these students to be able to succeed on assessments for projects. Instead of teaching to the crowd, our faculty teach to the individuals."

Building Relationships and Connections

When asked what was the most important work she has been doing this year, Pattinelli had one word: connections. "Providing the opportunities and spaces for students to connect with each other and their teachers and coaches has been our top priority," Pattinelli says. "Just engaging them in all that the Prep community has to offer, like club life, athletics, performing arts, and visual arts shows...and doing all of that *in community* with each other."

On top of every student's personal identity, each grade has its own unique identity that requires the expertise of the grade level dean. "Each grade level is at different stages developmentally, so they experience life, both at school and outside, very differently," Pattinelli says. "Deans are helping our students not only navigate the developmental stage of their grade, but they're also finding ways to help them bond as a class."

As both a teacher and 7th grade dean Heba Allen knows how important her role is in helping 7th graders and their parents as they start at an entirely new school environment.

"Since 7th graders are all new to Prep, the biggest thing we emphasize is integrating them into the Prep community right away and we do that in a lot of different ways," Allen says, including their class trip, advisory groups, peer counseling groups, and the 8th grade buddy program. "We try to mix it up for them right off the bat to help



them get to know each other and help them make friends, get to know upperclassmen and faculty members, so that pretty early on, they feel well integrated into the community."

As students move from middle school through high school, grade level deans are there for them every step of the way. Once they reach senior year, they've developed into the leaders of the school.

Independence and leadership are two central themes that 12th grade dean Scott Myers has found define senior year. "The school, the families, and the students themselves accept the vital importance of developing confidence and clarity in personally resolving challenges in their academic and social lives," Myers explains. "In my first step as dean at the Class of 2022's junior retreat, I invited them to envision a senior year framed around their roles as campus leaders. They remember the admiration they held for seniors when they were new to Prep, and they relish the joy and responsibility of leadership."

What's Ahead

Over the next year, Prep is expanding its advisory program to all grade levels. Currently the program serves 7th, 8th, and 9th graders through weekly advising sessions, where they meet in small groups led by an advisor, chat about what's happening in their lives, and bond with their classmates. The program is designed in partnership with the Institute for Social and Emotional Learning (IFSEL) and based on needs that have

been identified by grade level deans.

This is one of the most robust changes to Prep's student support services in the past few years, and it will dovetail with Prep's other long-standing support services, including academic advising at each grade level, grade-level class meetings for faculty and students, and student-led programs like Peer Counseling, 8th grade buddies (in which seniors work with 8th graders), and Senior Leaders, a network of seniors providing academic support in all subject areas.

Best is developing the curriculum for the expanded advisory program. "Right now, we're devising a plan with different topics for advisory groups to discuss. It's meant to help guide students in small group settings where they can talk comfortably and openly with the same group of people for the entire year," she says. "It helps to really build that connection and understanding between the students, faculty, and staff."

"We are all trying to build positive relationships, between the students and between the students and adults, so that our students themselves can feel confident that they will be successful here at Prep," Jamison says. "We want to strengthen our students to help them reach their potential and we're doing that in a very individual way, person by person, student by student. Our students are not just names on a list or names in a meeting. We are each working closely and individually with all our students to help them find their space at Prep." ■



A Day in the Life



Bachmann Collaboration Building

The Bachmann Collaboration Building, which opened in fall 2020, signals a new era of education at Prep where student-centered learning, collaboration, experimentation, and iteration are the norm. The images assembled here, taken over two days, represent the flexibility of the spaces to meet students where they are and to evolve as their educational needs change.

We love hearing the spirited conversations spill out of the classrooms, seeing students tinker after school in the Makerspace, and observing the flow of students and faculty gathering for club meetings and lectures. This rhythm is the heartbeat that courses through our campus.

Welcome to the Bachmann Collaboration Building.

Photos by Jenna Schoenefeld

8:15 am

PRACTICE MANDARIN

PRANYOTO LEADERSHIP CLASSROOM

Students jumpstart the school day with morning Mandarin class.



7:30 am

FEED THE JELLIES

SCIENCE CLASSROOM

A student lab assistant feeds brine shrimp to the moon jellyfish.



10:15 am

TALK THROUGH A PROJECT

GLOBAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

Just about every room in the building has a beautiful view and warm natural light.



9:30 am

TAKE A BREAK

COMMON AREAS

Students catch up during Nutrition break.



11:50 am

REVIEW THE GREAT BELIEVERS

GLOBAL STUDIES CLASSROOM
9th grade English students
read Rebecca Makkai's
novel.



11:00 am

TALK IT OUT

COLLABORATION ROOMS
Students can study together in third-floor meeting rooms.



12:30 pm

CUT OUT DESIGNS

HIOE-HANDOJO ART STUDIO
7th grade art students create cut-out masks
with expert guidance from Melissa Manfull.



1:00 pm

CHECK IN WITH STUDENTS

GLOBAL STUDIES RESEARCH LAB
Ingrid Herskind checks in with Chloe Liao '23.



2:45 pm

BUILD A ROBOT

MAKERSPACE
The Robotics teams prepare for an upcoming competition.



1:45 pm

DISCUSS RECONSTRUCTION

GLOBAL STUDIES SEMINAR ROOM
AP U.S. History students learn about life and laws during the Reconstruction era.

Poetic Reflection on Gratitude with English 9F and 9G

As English Department Chair Dr. Tyke O'Brien was preparing for the spring semester, she wanted her 9th grade English students—known as 9F and 9G—to create something together.

The classes had recently read poet Ross Gay's book *Against Which* and watched him recite his poem "Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude," in which he meditates upon what we lose and what we find solace in—whether it's something grand or minute.

"We went very deep into these poems that are emotional and personal. Some are extremely painful, and others are celebratory and revelatory," O'Brien says. "It's just the stuff of life."

Before the students wrote analytical essays of these poems, O'Brien prompted them to create a collective poem out of their individual writings that were inspired by Gay's original piece and reflected their own gratitude.

"Ninth grade is a great time for a collaboration like this," O'Brien explains. "Sometimes they come in at the beginning of the year not knowing each other—they have so much spunk, zest, creative energy, and silliness; collaborative work brings them a strong sense of teamwork and camaraderie. I wanted them to come together as a class and create together."

The students walked around Prep's campus for some time alone, to get some space and clear their heads, observing what they saw or reflecting on a memory. "Poets pay attention, and this was a chance to be inspired, as poets and observers," O'Brien says.

After writing their own stanzas that mused upon gratitude, the students in each class came back together. They partnered up in small groups, acting as "sequencers" (who assembled the order of the stanzas, finding threads and themes between them), "titlers," "printers," and "designers," to create one collective poem.

O'Brien notes that the students chose the group that they were either most comfortable in—or chose to challenge themselves and try out a new skill. Simultaneously unique to each student and a chorus of all their voices, their poems evoked gratitude for the world around and within them and allowed for pause within their busy lives. "This was their moment—they made it a poem that was entirely theirs," O'Brien shares.

"The stanzas in each classes' poems read like one cohesive artwork—they decided to remove their individual names next to the stanzas they'd written and rather speak as a group, to make their voices come together," she says. "When they worked together as a group, there was no homogeneity—they're all individuals with originality shining through within that collaboration."

Following are excerpts from 9F's *Bevy of Bittersweet Gratitude* and 9G's *Catalogs on the Light of Gratitude*. The full poems can be found on our website.

"Thank you to the familiar spot in front of locker 176, where I can leave my things I start my day, and leave with a sense of security knowing it will be there..."

Thank you to the lone yellow flower, sprouting out of the grimy sidewalk, pleading me to remember the color that still gives, in this grimy sidewalk of a world...

And thank you to those who shaped my life...Every day, every single one—all stacked together like books on a shelf – That is me!"

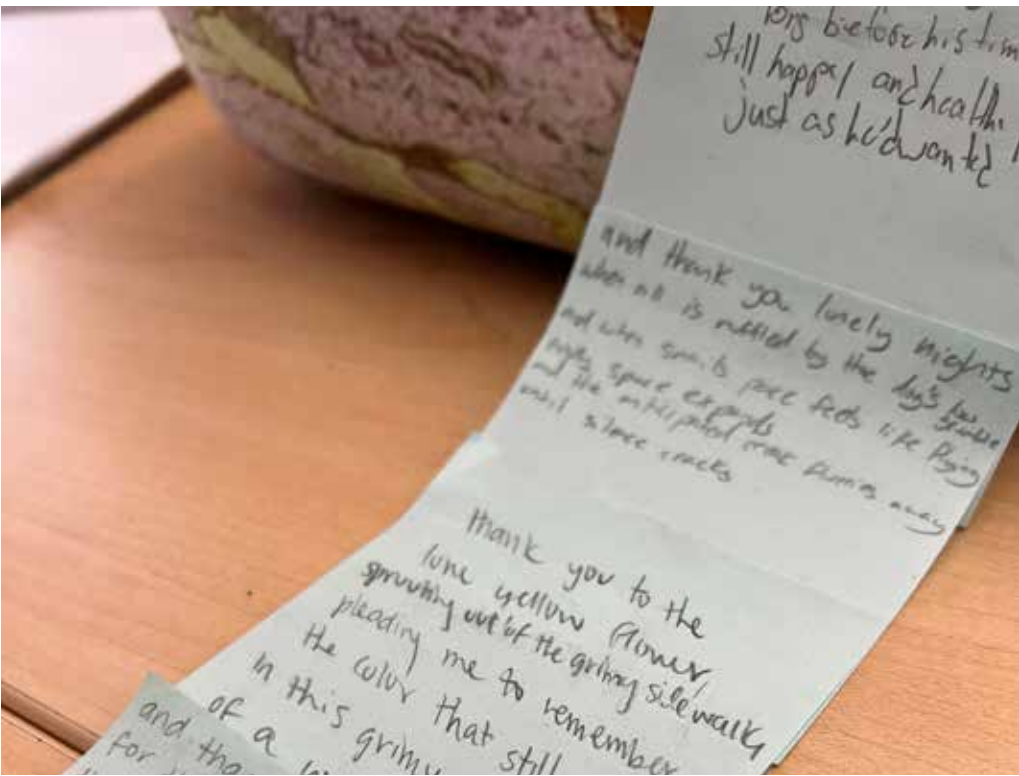
Excerpts from *Bevy of Bittersweet Gratitude* by 9F

"To those who recognize, understand, and empathize [with] my parents' accents, and taught me, too, when everything was simple and easy, before the crocheted strands of life capture any and all..."

Thank you for all the days with grandma, climbing on the cold coarse countertops, scraping against my bare feet as I reached for elusive pots on the top shelf that she couldn't get any more...

Things that make me erupt with gratitude will forever be growing so thank you to the future, for what has yet to come. To what I have not yet thanked: I thank you..."

Excerpts from *Catalogs on the Light of Gratitude* by 9G



Notes from the Jelly Lab



WALK PAST the Science Classroom on the first floor of the Bachmann Collaboration Building and you might see something different, curious, and slightly soothing. Those are the moon jellies, blissfully floating along in their tanks in Prep's first-ever Jelly Lab.

Officially launched in 2020, the lab is the brainchild of Science Department Chair Laura Kaufman and science teacher Dr. David Herman, who were searching for a project that would allow high school students to design and run their own lab. "Many students start researching in labs once they reach college. We wanted to provide them with that experience much earlier on in their career, where they learn to ask questions about the world around them and discover what it's like collaborating with each other," says Kaufman.

The lab originated as a collaboration between Prep and the Goentoro Lab at the California Institute of Technology



(Caltech), where researchers are currently studying various phenomena in moon jellyfish. "We have been working closely with Aki Ohdera, a post-doc at Caltech, who helped set up the lab and has mentored Flintridge Prep students as part of Caltech's Summer Research Connection program," Herman explains.

Prep's Jelly Lab currently has 15 student researchers and lab assistants (pictured below). Three times a week, the lab assistants come to campus early in the morning or stay after school to feed the jellies their brine shrimp meal, clean the tanks, and monitor research projects. Kaufman, Herman, and Dr. Kristen Corning advise and oversee the lab.

"Getting the lab up and running involved a lot of trial and error, but also a lot of fun," Herman says. In the early days of the lab, the teachers were raising moon jellies on their own and discovering some obstacles along the way, as many jellyfish were being sucked up by the filter. This past year, a few students took on the challenge of fixing that issue, using their physics and engineering acumen to come up with a simple, cost-effective solution.

The jellies have also made their way into the 9th grade biology curriculum.

During their Ecology unit, students were observing the pulse rates in "teen-age" jellyfish. "It prompted students to ask questions and design controlled experiments to understand how living and nonliving factors might affect pulse rates," Corning says, noting that her biology classes like to observe the jellyfish, as the tanks live in the Bachmann Collaboration Building's science classroom. "The lab sparks spontaneous student-



driven conversations in the classroom about the process of science and about what scientists do."

This past fall, Jelly Lab members started devising their own research projects and quickly discovered how to hone their questions and the trial-and-error that defines the research process.

Seeking answers to questions like, "Do moon jellies prefer frozen or live brine shrimp" or "Do jellyfish secrete hormones to communicate with each other and sense objects around them," students are also intrigued by jellyfish regeneration, as marine biologists have found a handful of medusas are capable of regenerating arms after amputation. Matt Wang '23 (pictured above) is cur-

rently looking into the effects of thiamine biosynthesis on the medusa regeneration process.

Wang joined the lab in its early stages and created the Jelly Lab's first research project. When Prep closed for online learning in March 2020, Herman and Wang worked together to continue the experiments by creating a lab on Wang's desk at home, with Herman delivering sodium chloride (salt) every other week for the tank water.

Herman, Kaufman, and Corning plan for seasoned researchers like Wang to mentor younger students working in the lab, allowing for cross-grade mentorship where new Jelly Lab students learn and hone important lab skills and the experimental design process. Eventually, those students could become mentors themselves in their junior or senior year.

"We are thrilled that our students are already enjoying their time in the Jelly Lab and experiencing the joys of collaborative learning and scientific discovery and we look forward to working with our students to continue to grow the program," Kaufman says.

Students will present their research findings at the STEAM & Service Fair on March 9. We'll be following the Jelly Lab on social media and our online news, so stay tuned for more updates from the lab! ■



Student Leaders Share Insights from SDLC

In December 2020 and December 2021, two groups of Prep students attended the three-day Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC), sponsored by the National Association of Independent Schools. The conference centers on providing educational resources, instilling a sense of belonging, and providing support for high school student leaders across the country who want to extend their advocacy. SDLC provides a unique opportunity for students of color to engage with their peers, build community around shared experiences, and hone effective cross-cultural communication skills and strategies that they can bring back to their schools.

“At SDLC, you’re with people who are just like you. They’re in the same boat as you, and they know exactly what you’re talking about—you don’t have to explain yourself,” shares Chase Sullivan ’22, one of the 2020 Prep SDLC leaders. “Sometimes, you feel like you’re the only one going through certain things, and then you go to this conference and realize that that feeling is of being a minority at a predominantly white institution. It makes you feel validated.”

Sullivan attended the 2020 conference over Zoom alongside Ian Hunte ’22, Nadya LaMarr ’22, Aaron Lee ’22, and Gya Rodríguez ’23. The 2021 SDLC attendees were Halia Benn ’24, Kyrmina Habashy ’24, Advait Kartik ’24, Lauren Lopez ’24, Cameron Paxton ’24, and Hailey Wilson ’24.

“You really feel at home,” says Benn, who was a 2021 SDLC peer facilitator. “I was in the African American/Black affinity group, and we talked about predominantly white institutions, how we feel in those spaces, and if we feel at home in them or comfortable. We had such similar experiences, and I’ve actually never felt more seen or heard.”

Already leaders within and outside of the Prep community, the students who attend SDLC are committed to having an impact at Prep. Their experiences at the conference help them shape this impact and sharpen their leadership skills.

“We all want to bring back our education to the school. In my peer facilitation at SDLC, I learned that listening is so important. It’s about listening to people who have different experiences, different backgrounds, and different needs,” Benn says. Benn is also a cofounder of BKWC (Black Kids Who Care), alongside William Bigby ’24, a group formed outside of Prep that shares educational resources and spotlights the perspectives of Black teens.

As a senior, Sullivan has infused what she’s learned from the 2020 SDLC conference into other leadership roles, including captain of both varsity volleyball and track and field, a Peer Counselor and a Senior Leader in English classes, and a captain on the Athletic Council on Leadership (ACL). She also has taken the initiative for causes that matter even if she won’t get to experience the benefits of her work directly—an essential lesson in leadership that points to the impact of our student leaders and SDLC. In fact, Sullivan was one of the 2020 SDLC attendees who proposed creating a student leadership organization led by SDLC attendees, which is currently being implemented by the school.

“Having a Black girl be in leadership positions...that, in and of itself, is my own way of stepping up,” Sullivan says. “If you want something done, you have to be willing to do it and voice it in a way that people will be willing to receive it and in a way that gets your point across.”

Assistant Head for Student Life Barrett Jamison notes that Prep is committed to sending student delegations to SDLC every year.

“We are investing time and resources in these students to send them to this conference because they are passionate about questions related to identity. We want this investment to impact both the students attending the conference and all the other students back home at Prep,” he says.

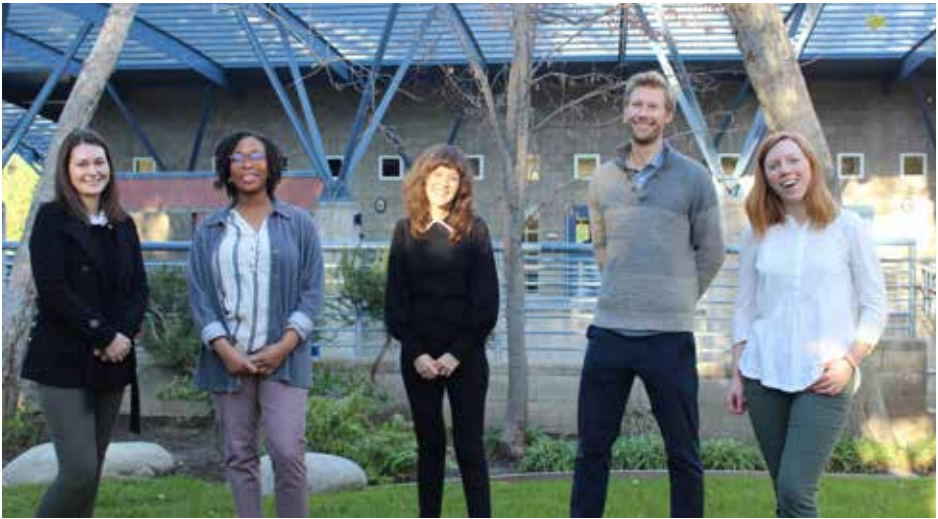
“I learned that listening is so important. It’s about listening to people who have different experiences, different backgrounds, and different needs.”

– Halia Benn ’24

The student leadership organization, led by SDLC attendees, currently being developed will join the Big 4 leadership organizations of Student Senate, ACL, the Student Community Action Council (SCAC), and FLINT. Additionally, the 2020 and 2021 conference attendees collaborated on a presentation for the school’s Student Life Committee that was shared on February 23, 2022, as this magazine went to press. The group’s presentation centered on inclusivity, identity, education, and advocacy through community outreach.

Math teacher Maddie Martin and School Counselor Kiara Best, SDLC faculty advisors, facilitated the students’ on-campus experience during the 2021 conference, holding rest-and-digest sessions each day. Martin has been an SDLC advisor for two years and is currently guiding SDLC attendees in their continued work. Once the group’s mission statement and goals are decided, the group will launch in April and students can apply to be members for the 2022-2023 school year.

In the minds of the SDLC participants, inclusivity and diversity are equally important values. As Benn puts it, “We should not fear diversity. It’s a very important and sensitive topic, but we’re the team that’s here to help with that. People are counting on us to work out how we may be inclusive of everybody. There is a way to work things out so that everybody feels included... If you’re interested and you feel like you have something to contribute, definitely apply.” ■



Meet Our New Faculty and Staff

We’re excited for our growing team of faculty and staff. Read more about our new team members on Prep’s News site!

- Emily Balliet, *English Faculty*
- Kiara Best, *School Counselor*
- Emily Cronkhite, *Administrative Assistant and Summer School Administrative Support*
- Ruben Flores, Jr., *Dining Services Support*
- John Gjorup, *Dining Services Support*
- Kyle Johnson, *Library Assistant*
- Claire Kinder, *Math and Science Faculty and 8th Grade Dean*
- Robert Medina, *Campus Safety Officer*
- Jess Moxley, *Information Systems Specialist*
- Gina Peters, *Development Associate*
- Andrew Phillips, *Physical Education Faculty*
- Nicole Ricalde, *Tech Operations Manager*
- Kylie Snyder, *Assistant Athletic Trainer*
- Ann Vradenburg, *Learning Specialist*

Top (L to R): Emily Cronkhite, Kiara Best, Emily Balliet, Kyle Johnson, Claire Kinder
Bottom (L to R): Nicole Ricalde, Jess Moxley, Ruben Flores, Jr., Gina Peters, John Gjorup, Kylie Snyder, Robert Medina
Not pictured: Andrew Phillips, Ann Vradenburg

Faculty and Staff Farewells

We say bon voyage to our colleagues who have gone on to new adventures!

- Sylvie Andrews, *Chief Information Officer*
- Jen Bascom, *Drama Teacher*
- Liam Carrillo, *Systems Administrator*
- Richard Feliciano, *Web and Marketing Designer and Summer School Outreach Manager*
- Emma Goo, *Office Coordinator and Visual Arts Teacher*
- Erin Peterson, *Drama Teacher and Coordinator of Student Activities*

Announcing Our Newest Community Members

We’re excited to welcome **Rob Lewis** as Executive Artistic Director and **Jeanette Woo Chitjian** as the Director of Enrollment Management. Both will begin at Prep this summer.

Rob taught drama at Prep from 2007 to 2020 and served as the Performing Arts Chair. In his role as Executive Artistic Director, he’ll teach several high school drama classes, coordinate extracurricular Performing Arts productions, and continue to build relationships between Prep and local arts institutions. He has spent the past two years at the Menlo School teaching middle school drama.

Jeanette joins Prep after 27 years as the Director of Enrollment Management and Community Engagement at Marlborough School. “In her time at Marlborough, Jeanette has provided forward-thinking, strategic vision to their enrollment management program,” Head of School Vanessa Walker-Oakes shared in an email to our community. “She has served on Marlborough’s Leadership Team, liaised with the Board of Trustees’ Equity, Enrollment, and Education Committee, advised the Parents’ Association, and served as a mentor to colleagues and an advisor to students, to name only some of her many contributions.”



GLOBAL STUDIES GUEST SPEAKER

Author Mark Arax Speaks to California's Changing Landscape

Author and journalist Mark Arax spoke to students, teachers, and staff during an all-school assembly on February 9. Weaving his personal journey growing up in the Central Valley in California and his work covering the human impact upon the land of California, Arax explored topics like climate change, displacement, urban sprawl, and storytelling during his talk with students. He also spoke at a virtual event for our entire community that same evening.

Organized by the Global Studies Initiative and the BCB (Bachmann Collaborative) Team, the event provided moments of reflection upon our interactions with the land, especially living here in Los Angeles, and the pressures upon the students' generation to combat climate change.

For some of the younger members of the Prep community, Arax is a familiar name. Students who operate the Los Angeles Museum of Geography—which runs out of Will Bellaimey's 7th grade history classes—have read Arax's writings on California and Los Angeles' long, complicated history with water.

The BCB Collab Team is one of the newer faculty collaboration groups aimed at nurturing a deep, interconnected relationship between Prep's STEAM, Global Studies, and Leadership initiatives. The team includes Global Studies Coordinator Ingrid Herskind, photography teacher Ricardo Rodríguez, STEAM Coordinator Dr. Shane Frewen, history teacher Dr. Megan Bowman, and Maker-space Coordinator Erin Thomassen.

Last fall, Global Studies partnered with the English Department and two student groups—the Near Eastern Student Association (NESA) and the Cultural Education Club—to host the "Investigating Islamic Identity" series that featured Maha Elgenaidi, founder and CIO of the Islamic Networks Group, and Salam Al-Marayati, president and co-founder of the Muslim Public Affairs Council.

Spotlight



A Return to Performance

With many modifications and safety measures in place, Performing Arts celebrates a return to live, in-person performances, including the fall play, an outdoor music concert, and the dance concert. The spring musical "Legally Blonde, Jr." debuts as this magazine goes to press.

Winter with the Wolves

Winter athletes persevered through the 2021-2022 season with grit, determination, and passion, with all five of the Wolves winter teams advancing to CIF playoffs!

Girls soccer led with another great season, winning their 11th Prep League Championship Title, which also happens to be their 7th consecutive title. The team dominated every game played this season with a 13-1 record, only breaking their winning streak in the final match of the season against Mayfield.

Boys soccer enjoyed a strong year with epic wins against Providence, Poly, and Chadwick and the team walked away with 2nd place in league.

Girls water polo powered through an incredible season, defeating the Poly Panthers for the first time since the 2010-2011 season and unseating La Salle, who had been undefeated in league until the Lancers met the Wolves. The team placed second in league.

Placing second in league, girls basketball saw outstanding performances from its players, with Ashley Chea '23 setting a new Prep record for highest single game scoring. Chea is now tied with Maya Okamoto '14 for the single game record for most three-point baskets. Girls basketball also marked a 72-league game winning streak that began on January 8, 2016.

Boys basketball played some of the most nail-biting games this year, keeping their opponents on their toes. The Wolves took on rival Poly at two back-to-back games in February, routing the Panthers in the first matchup. The team also advanced to the 1st round of CIF playoffs.



Alumni Return to Campus for Winter Reunions



Over two days in December, we caught up with young alumni celebrating their 5th, 10th, and 15th reunions, as well as the Classes of 2020 and 2021, who visited for a special reunion. Alumni, faculty, and staff fêted Midge Kimble, our esteemed colleague, with a retirement tribute.



Announcing the
New Date for
Spring Reunions:
May 21, 2022

We cannot wait to see you soon!
We’re celebrating the 20th-75th
reunions for the following
class years:

75th Reunion
Class of 1945, 1946, 1947

70th Reunion
Class of 1950, 1951, 1952

65th Reunion
Class of 1955, 1956, 1957

60th Reunion
Class of 1960, 1961, 1962

55th Reunion
Class of 1965, 1966, 1967

50th Reunion
Class of 1970, 1971, 1972

45th Reunion
Class of 1975, 1976, 1977

40th Reunion
Class of 1980, 1981, 1982

35th Reunion
Class of 1985, 1986, 1987

30th Reunion
Class of 1990, 1991, 1992

25th Reunion
Class of 1995, 1996, 1997

20th Reunion
Class of 2000, 2001, 2002



Class Notes

1958

In early fall, **KENT SANTELMAN** completed a 63-mile backpack trip on the John Muir Trail, and he has nearly completed the entire John Muir Trail.

1961

ANTONY ACKER has been a member of SAG-AFTRA since 1994 and now adds the role of family archivist and genealogist to his plate! "I am doing this so my two daughters will not have to wade through all the paperwork, photos, collectibles, and 'important' memorabilia," he says. "Do not keep as much as I have!"

1969

Senator BILL MONNING finished his term in the California State Senate at the end of 2020 (term limits) after a 12-year run in the Assembly and the Senate where he served as the Senate Majority Leader. He and his wife, Dana Kent, are enjoying retirement, grandchildren, and various projects.

1972

ROGER CUTTING loves living near his first grandson, who is now two years old.

STEVEN OPPENHEIM is happy to be continuing his career in healthcare, which started when he was at Prep.

TIM PORTWOOD retired on June 30, 2021, after three careers spanning 42 years as a lawyer, development officer, and consultant. Tim and his husband, Jim, live near the Russian River in Sonoma County, where they are very involved with the Sonoma Land Trust.

JOHN THOMPSEN has been practicing dentistry in Perkins, OK for 39 years, where he lives with his wife, Cindy.

1983

DAVID HOUSE MEDINA founded Stewardship Financial, providing fiduciary grade advice to individuals and retirement plan sponsors.

Save the Date
Spring Reunions
May 21, 2022

1990

BIJAN KARIMI started working for the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco as part of fellow Prep grad **PHIL JOHNSON'S '80** team. In August 2021, Bijan completed his doctorate at USC, where he researched cryptocurrency and economic security. Last fall, he started teaching part-time for the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA.

1999

AMY SYLVIS received a breakthrough and life-changing medication for cystic fibrosis (CF) in November 2019, which has dramatically improved her health and given her and husband **JOEL GUTIERREZ** hope for many more decades of great health to come. Amy reentered the workforce and is the founding member of Sylvis Capital, a firm that invests in large multifamily properties throughout the southeast.

2002

AMY THOMAS PICCIOLI and her husband welcomed their third child, Vivian Dee Piccioli (below), on August 5, 2021.

"Her two brothers, Everett and Gage, are very excited to have a baby sister!" Amy writes.



2004

BROOKS KIRCHHEIMER along with his father, David, recently opened their second Park City, UT-based food establishment, Hill's Kitchen, in addition to their three-year-old Hearth and Hill restaurant. Come visit!

RAMSES BARDEN teaches Physical Education at Prep, where he is also the head basketball coach and the assistant football coach. He and his wife, Felicia,



welcomed their third child, Zuri, who joins her two elder brothers, Imani and Myles (above).

2005

CHRISTINE FOLLETT married Timothy Ridley on September 18, 2021 (below).



JENNY SETO GARCIA and her husband Jason Garcia welcomed their first child, Lucas, on July 19, 2021 (above opposite). Lucas made a dramatic entrance into the world, coming nine weeks early while the couple was on vacation in Washington state. After an agonizingly long ferry ride, they made it to the hospital where Lucas was born just a little over 3 lbs. and relatively healthy. They spent the next two months living in WA and spending every day in the NICU. The entire Seto family,



including **TYLER SETO '94** and **ZACHARY SETO '96**, rallied around the couple, providing support at home in Los Angeles by building their nursery and helping take care of their house and dog. Once discharged from the NICU, Jenny and Jason brought Lucas home via a three-day road trip. "After all that, being at home with a newborn has seemed easy in comparison!" Jenny said. "Lucas is 4 months old now and doing really well. It's been a tough journey, but it's all been worth it!"

HANNAH VAUGHAN launched her "Crushed" collection at the WantedDesign Manhattan's Look Book 2021 in November. "The new 'Crushed' collection creates future objects from the debris of humanity's past industriousness," Hannah shares. She uses ventilation tubing, discarded oil barrels, chromed car fenders, corrugated roofing material, shells of washing machines, and mangled metal shelving to create her discrete furniture forms.

RACHAEL MADORE is excited to announce the birth of her second child, Harvey Theodore Kummer (below). Harvey joins big sister, Clara, who is now three years old and is an amazing big sister.



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If you are 70½ or older and taking mandatory income distributions from your IRA, you can avoid the income tax generated by these distributions by directing a gift directly from your IRA to Flintridge Prep. You can direct up to \$100,000 per year—it's a great estate planning tool.

Contact Lakshmi Dastur-Johnson
ldastur-johnson@flintridgeprep.org

2006

CAT COMBS was accepted to the Critics' Choice Association, the largest film and TV critics group in North America and host of the Critics' Choice Awards. She is also a member of the African American Film Critics Association, Online Association of Female Film Critics, and the Online Film & Television Association.

2009

JACQUELINE REYES BLACKSON and her husband Dan Blackson are proud parents of a son, Lucas, who was born June 2021 (right).



2010

DREW EDWARDS joined a small startup in 2017 (Lighthouse AI) that was acquired by Apple in 2018. After leaving Apple in 2021, Drew moved to London to pursue a PhD in computer science at Queen Mary University of London, where he's studying music information and machine learning.

WILL PETERMAN is a television writer with several credits and recently became a member of the Writers Guild of America West.

2011

THEO MILLER is working for the California Department of Agriculture in Los Angeles.

2012

CHARLEY AYERS will marry Katie Downey, his Berkeley sweetheart, in August 2022 at the Ayers' family home in Rhode Island. Charley's groomsmen include four Prep alumni: **MICHAEL DEFOND**, **JEFF DEFOND '10**, **JACK PURVIS** and his brother and best man, **JAMES AYERS '18**.

2015

ALYSSA EVANS graduated from Pepperdine Law in May 2021 and was sworn in as a CA attorney in December 2021.

LAUREN HEKMAN (below) is a first-year medical student at Loyola University Chicago, Stritch School of Medicine. She lives with her Prep high school sweetheart **GARY LEE** who works in finance, and Prep best friend, **MARINA CORBISIERO**, who is a first-year law student at Loyola University Chicago.



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2016

WILLIAM PAI graduated from UC Santa Barbara with Economics and Accounting degrees and has been working at KPMG in the audit division in Los Angeles. He is currently living with best friend and Prep classmate **JONAH SACHS**. William caught a Rams game with classmates **ALDRIDGE KHIN**, **THOMAS TURCHAN '14**, and **KYLE LAW '14** (above), and also met up with **ANDREW TSANGEOS**.

2017

ZOE RUCKER graduated with a BA in English Literature from Durham University (UK) in 2020 and an MA in Modern Literature from UCL in 2021. She's currently working on her PhD in English literature at Balliol College, Oxford University, focusing on W.H. Auden and T.S. Eliot. Her love for T. S. Eliot and modernist poetry began in Megan Burton's English I class, where she first encountered "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." She sends sentiments of gratitude to the amazing members of the English department at Prep who taught and inspired her throughout high school.

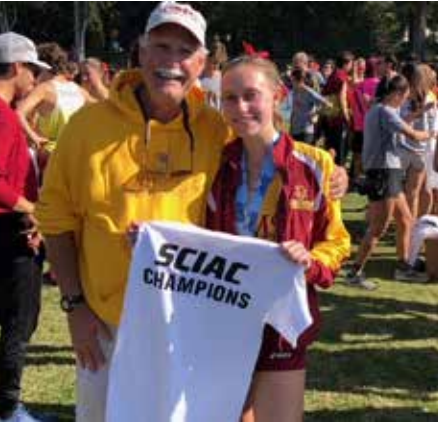
2018

JAMES AYERS is a senior at UCSB with a double major in communication and music composition. He has a great job as the video editor for ShipHawk, a Santa Barbara-based software company.

AVA FERRY is in her senior year at Barnard College, majoring in English with a concentration in creative writing and film. She recently moved the family dog to New York for a temporary stint as well!

ALICIA REYNAGA is currently studying a dual degree in Spanish and media studies at Claremont McKenna College. At CMC, she is a Spanish TA, resident assistant for the student apartments, and a student assistant for the dean of students. Over the past year and a half, she has studied in Havana, Cuba and Madrid and Barcelona, Spain. Next fall, she will begin working on the marketing team for Sephora US and Canada.

SOPHIE GITLIN is in her senior year at Claremont McKenna College and earned First-Team ALL-SCIAC honors and USTF-CCCA All-West Region for her contributions to the women's cross country team. She continues to be supported by Prep teacher and former coach, Michael Roffina, who often attends her races. Sophie and Mr. Roffina are pictured (below) at the SCIAC Championships.



OLIVIA WONG (below) graduated from USC where she led the USC Free-hand team, which works with Children's Hospital, Los Angeles, to provide free and custom 3D printed prosthetics to children. She also worked with Freepaw and made a wheelchair for a French bulldog. This spring, Olivia plans to go on a medical Spanish immersion trip to Guatemala. She will start medical school at the Baylor College of Medicine, and hopes to specialize as an orthotics and prosthetics practitioner.



2019

DELILA BROWN took a gap year and is working with dog rescue, Wags and Walks.

YAYA BROWN is now attending Reed College, where she is majoring in art.

MADISON MANNING is a junior at Howard University in Washington, DC, majoring in English and minoring in African American studies.

2020

KATYA BESCH is playing for the Amherst College women's soccer team, who were the NESAC Champions in 2019 and are a top Division III team.

JULIA BOBERG is pursuing dual degrees in dance and visual arts (concentration in graphic design) at Fordham University. She is dancing in the Alvin Ailey professional program and spent the summer dancing in Steamboat Springs for the Perry Mansfield professional division.

JAY DADWAL is a sophomore at Loyola Marymount University, majoring in film and TV production.

MATTHEW SON is a sophomore at Wesleyan University and a member of the varsity football team.

2021

MAKENNA DOMINGUEZ is working hard managing her academics and intense training with the women's soccer team at UNC-Chapel Hill, where she's also loving the campus and new friends.

DYLAN MCGAHARN is adjusting to dorm and campus life at Northwestern University, where he is busy with his classes, especially music. He is also part of an ensemble.

GAVIN O'LEARY is in the undergraduate school of business at Santa Clara University.

LUCAS PIERCE loves all his classes at Cornell University, except for physics. He is also taking a Quechua class, which is one of the Indigenous languages of South America.

SCARLETT FERRY (below) is loving her first semester in the Global Business program at Trinity College in Dublin and has already entertained fellow Prep grads **CAMERON SLATER** and **KATIE BENNETT**.



Class Notes Wanted

Submit Class Notes any time to alumni@flintridgeprep.org or by phone, 818.949.5526. Email digital images (JPEG or TIFF, 300 dpi resolution, size 5x7 inches) or send photo prints to Flintridge Prep's Office of Alumni Relations. News and photos may be reprinted in *PrepTalk* and/or our alumni web pages, depending on image quality and space availability.

PrepTalk reserves the right to edit Class Notes, primarily for length and style considerations, though also for clarity and redundancy. Class Notes entries are not fact-checked for accuracy, nor should their inclusion in the magazine be considered an endorsement from the school.

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IN MEMORIAM

DR. RICHARD "DICK" RIDDELL '53 passed away on March 7, 2020. At Prep, Dick served as Commissioner of Finance on Student Council his senior year, played football, basketball, baseball, and swim, and was noted in the Prep Log yearbook for his "innate charm." After graduating, Dick attended USC School of Medicine and practiced orthopedic surgery for 35 years in Laguna Beach and San Clemente, CA. He is survived by his wife, Bobbie, his son, Ted, and stepson and stepdaughter, Neil and Dru.

LEWIS HASTINGS, JR. '64 passed away on October 24, 2021. Born in Glendale and raised in La Cañada, Lewis played football, basketball, and tennis at Prep, and in his senior year, served as Commissioner of Finance on Student Council. At his 50th Prep Reunion, Lewis noted that he had a "better education at Prep than at college." While at the University of Redlands, he met his wife, Julia. Lewis worked for Southern California Edison's Environmental Science Department before transitioning to commercial real estate finance at W. Ross Campbell and eventually heading Union Bank's commercial mortgage division. From 1994 to 2020, Lewis was a partner at Sunrise Mortgage & Investment Company. A lover of the outdoors, Lewis could be found fly fishing, hiking, surfing, or birding, and volunteered his time at various organizations, including the California Fish and Game and the Pasadena Audubon Society. He is survived by his wife, Julia, of 53 years, daughter Devony Hastings Ferraro (Charlie) and son Lewis James Hastings III (Laura), grandchildren (Tyler and Alyssa Hastings, Blaise and Roman Ferraro), and his sister, Hilary Hastings Ross (Tony).

CASINO ROYALE

LET'S BOND

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Best Game &
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Global Studies

4.30.2022

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