

# PrepTalk Annual Report

2020-2021

Flintridge Preparatory School



VISUAL ARTS HIGHLIGHTS



Ceramics teacher Biliana Popova captured Georgia Yamamoto '21 placing the finishing touches on her work last spring.



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The Class of 2021 marks their graduation and a memorable ceremony at the Rose Bowl Stadium.



# From the Head of School



2021 has been simultaneously remarkable and bittersweet. While the year began in difficulty, I cannot express to you the positive energy and the hope that our faculty, staff, and students have brought back to campus this fall as we returned to learning fully in person. Book Day, a tradition many alumni will remember, radiated joy, and the weeks that followed have been spent celebrating the opportunity to return to school and to community. We have hosted dances, fall sports, and guest speakers. As this magazine hits your mailboxes, the Flintridge Prep Wolves football team is preparing for our Homecoming game against our longtime rival, Chadwick.

How did we get here? Reflecting on the last two years, it's hard to fully articulate the pace of change and unpredictability Prep has embraced. We've had to be creative, to take risks in our teaching and in our programs. From that experience, I believe Prep has emerged stronger, more resilient, and with new ideas for the future.

Our entire faculty and staff, some of whom are highlighted in this magazine, quietly accomplished what might have seemed impossible in March 2020 as we moved our entire community online overnight. They worked selflessly to support each other, and above all else, to support our students. Their priorities were safety, health, wellbeing, and providing exceptional educational experiences, no matter whether we were online, hybrid, or most joyfully, in person. The ultimate representative of the work we do is Midge Kimble, featured on page 16.

Our students have been on a similar journey. They are strong and capable, motivated to learn and grow regardless of the circumstances. Above all, they have been deeply supportive of one another. I have seen evidence of this journey as a teacher, advisor, assistant head for student life, and now as head of school. In my one-on-one meetings with students last school year, I was routinely touched by our children's focus on others, their gratitude for their parents and teachers, and their drive to find purpose in a time of crisis. Resilience is built on gratitude and purpose.

This issue of the magazine also highlights alumni who work on the local and national levels to create change and advocate for justice, as well as alumni and parents who bent over backward to support Prep with their knowledge and resources as we confronted the evolving crisis created by COVID-19. The Annual Report acknowledges and thanks the many families, faculty, and alumni who donated generously to support our students' increased needs this last year. We could not be more grateful to our community—you are our backbone as well as the reason we do our work with such a strong sense of purpose and care.

Vanessa Walker-Oakes  
Head of School



# Looking Forward

## with Prep's Head of School

*Vanessa Walker-Oakes, Prep's first female head of school, on what she's learned from the pandemic, the value of failure, the need to connect, and meeting students where they are with emotional and learning support, curriculum, and assessments.*

### **What was this past year and a half like for you, as a teacher, administrator, parent, and now, head of school?**

Last year, I was experiencing the exact same thing we were all experiencing, that the boundaries that we've tried to establish that help us to manage our time or stress were, in some ways, ripped away. Where was the line between work and home? Between my analog and my digital time? Where was the line between my life and my child's? As much as I want to be a loving parent, online learning meant that my children were trying to go to school in the same room in which I was trying to teach. We were in a world that was boundaryless and sometimes a bit lonely.

I also had more of a view into the student experience of the pandemic. Often our students felt their connections to Prep and to each other were getting thinner and thinner as we spent months and months apart.

What sustained me were my colleagues. It was such a web of people who wanted to support our students and our families. Watching that commitment was inspiring. We all had to be creative, take risks in our teaching and in our programs. Everyone was contributing. Seeing my colleagues' dedication made me want to be better, too. (Read more about how faculty and staff experienced the pandemic on page 8.)

### **The pandemic prompted many industries and sectors, including education, to rethink and reimagine how and why we do what we do. What are some lessons that you've learned from this past year? What will stay with us?**

Recently, I was reading this book about how schools should try to be more open to being experimental design spaces. So instead of saying, "I'm going to up-end my whole curriculum," what if I try this new thing for two weeks and be a little less afraid of failure? As a teacher, that is something I learned last year. If I had

done things exactly the same, I knew I was going to fail. So, I had to change; there was nothing to lose. It was liberating.

Last year, I tried so many things in the classroom—and so did all our teachers. We learned a lot about how to teach and assess students in new, different ways—some of which worked fantastically and some of which fell really flat, and some I will never do again!

This year, we will almost certainly be thinking about assessment. How do we prepare students for the kind of work they're going to encounter in college and beyond? That doesn't mean they will never do a research paper again—they certainly will. But teachers and students did all kinds of wonderful things last year—projects, presentations, videos, experiments, artistic expressions. These are areas we can grow.

We also learned a lot this year of students' need for executive functioning support, mental health support, and advisory programs. We're building out our advisory programs so that students have dedicated spaces in their days and weeks to work with an advisor. What we're working toward is that when every child walks onto campus, we've already had conversations with them so that we understand their differential needs. Immediately, we're able to start providing them with the support they're going to need to thrive. That is what I see the Center for Student Life as a symbol of moving forward.

### **What are the short-term and long-term goals for student support and wellbeing?**

Our first step was to build out a space where students can go for the support they need, and bring in professionals in student counseling and learning. The Center for Student Life is right in the heart of campus. This speaks to our desire to support all our students holistically: their learning needs, their social and emotional needs, and their mental health. We've brought in our School Counselor Kiara Best and our Learning Specialist Ann Vradenburg, who can not only serve students but also help teachers and deans

understand how to address learning differences in the classroom and how to meet the needs of students struggling with social or emotional challenges.

We've also added new programs this year, such as the 8th grade advisory and an all-school outdoor education week, that provide even more dynamic opportunities for students to build relationships with each other and to grow. In 2022-2023, advisory will expand to all grades at Prep.

We have made a real commitment here, examining our resources so that we can continue to build out this very important resource for students. Our grade level deans will continue to do amazing work evaluating and monitoring student progress, offering one-on-one support, and building relationships and experiences for the entire class. Our hope is that this new structure provides even greater opportunities for everyone to be seen, and for everyone's perspectives to be valued.

### **How will the school be evaluating and developing the curriculum and overall educational vision?**

There are several ways to assess our curriculum and student experience. We currently have a very robust teacher evaluation system, where students complete surveys in their classes about their experience. We learn a lot about student engagement and what works for them. These surveys let the students speak.

Another interesting thing that came out of the pandemic was that more teachers conducted informal surveys in class. For one of my classes, we did an assignment twice a quarter. I sent out surveys after a few of these and asked, "What did you like? What did you not like? Should I keep the format the same or mix it up?" There was such diversity in what students said, but there was a consensus around a few items that was so helpful. We changed it up again and again.

Allowing students to have more opportunities to weigh in is so important. At their core, students want to learn. Our teachers and students are not on opposite sides of the equation. They want a meaningful engaging experience, so this process of gathering feedback from students allows teachers to consider their lesson planning and course design with the student voice in mind.

### **How does all this dovetail with the school's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative?**

The core goal of any DEI initiative is that eventually it is not a separate initiative. It becomes part of how the school operates. That is our goal. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are absolutely essential to the school's mission and philosophy. DEI has to underlie everything we do here at Prep. It must be part of our decision making. Where DEI work is ineffectual is when it's grafted on as an afterthought. We have to think of ways to integrate this vision into all that we're doing, and have a community that supports this vision.

As we embark on a long-term strategic design with our Board, DEI is part of this process. We are taking immediate steps while we're developing that vision. We've partnered with the Institute for Social and Emotional Learning (IFSEL) to expand our advisory program and create spaces for students to share and be themselves. IFSEL believes there is no social-emotional learning program without DEI. Our advisory program will integrate these ideas and vision. Last fall, we started incorporating resources from Facing History and Ourselves into advisory and peer counseling, specifically around conversations about identity, belonging, and bias.

We have embarked on a partnership with Dr. Elizabeth Denevi to provide monthly faculty and staff professional development on DEI concerns, as well as individual access with specific questions. Dr. Denevi and IFSEL will also be hosting events for parents throughout the year.

There are a lot of steps we've begun that express our commitment to DEI including efforts in admissions, hiring, and curriculum (read more about DEI on page 6). Ultimately, we want to make Prep a place where all community members feel they belong.

### **What is the time frame for all of these goals being achieved?**

How we allocate time says a lot about the school's values. The first priority this year was to get our kids back onto campus and make sure our families, faculty, and staff are well, to reconnect and build relationships.

Prep is a place that nurtures our mind and intellectual growth and our spirit, heart, and bodies. Balance is a concept that is core to our mission. If we want to support a balanced adolescent experience, we're going to have to intentionally provide for the emotional, intellectual, and social development of our students. That's where we are directing our energy toward an ever-richer fulfillment of our mission for each and every student.



# Update on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative

*In August 2021, we detailed our latest progress on the DEI initiative. Below is a condensed version of the message, which can be found in full on our website.*

**IN JUNE 2020**, when Prep launched its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative, our Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and administration pledged to listen to our community, understand and analyze our needs, and align our actions with the values we cherish.

As foundational statements, our mission, honor code, and philosophy exhort us to develop the community values necessary for an engaged and responsible life, a life that honors each person's individuality and uniqueness. It is our responsibility as educators to nurture the desire and the skills to positively impact the world, to engage generously, honestly, kindly, and, above all, with deep respect for others. Our school philosophy states, "we believe in the essential value of diversity." We must live this belief through real action and daily effort.

During the coming year, the Board of Trustees and school leadership are engaging in a comprehensive strategic planning process that will generate an expanded vision for Prep's future growth. Commitment to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Prep community will be an integral part of this planning process. We expect to see a completed strategic design document in fall 2022.

Over the last year, Prep collaborated with Christina Hale-Elliott to engage in a process of reflection and assessment. As a result of that process, we identified areas for immediate action, which include:

- expanded student support services;
  - continuing faculty, staff, and community training;
  - student advocacy;
- and areas for future analysis and growth that will inform our strategic planning process.

We have many planned opportunities for our community to share feedback about the Prep experience and to help us understand our community's greatest needs.

We are already working on several initiatives.

### Student Advocacy and Support

Our new student support center opened in August with a charter to develop and deliver a curriculum of social-emotional learning, enhanced counseling, and expanded learning support, ensuring all Prep students have access to the mentoring, skills training, and personal support needed to thrive. The center is home to a larger staff, including a full-time learning specialist and a school counselor, allowing us to strengthen the supportive services for students.

### Community Education

Providing consistent, meaningful dialogue and educational opportunities for faculty, staff, students, and parents is at the heart of fostering a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. The school has contracted with Dr. Elizabeth Denevi to provide professional growth and facilitation over the course of the next school year.

### Educational Mission

As a part of our ongoing assessment and development of our curriculum, we will work to design an academic program that is meaningfully challenging, creative, and responsive to how students learn best. Students should have the opportunity both to see themselves reflected in course content and to expand their world view by exploring ideas that differ markedly from their own.

### Additional Areas for Growth

- Reaffirm our commitment to DEI in our admissions policies and practices;
- Assess and redesign our parent and alumni engagement program;
- Administer a climate survey this year and in succeeding years.

We must promote a sense of connection that will be experienced equitably by all members of the Prep family. We must address crisis recovery and foster hope after our prolonged time apart. We must commit ourselves to supporting one another's healing, honoring one another's boundaries, celebrating one another's joys, and eliminating barriers that prevent community members from feeling fully present and accepted.

We are heartened that the efforts of our community this year have paved the way for even more positive change in the years to come. We don't have all the answers. We still have lots of listening, learning, and strategic planning before us to reach our goals. But we are committed to a Prep that welcomes, sees, champions, and inspires every community member to thrive. ■

# Behind the Scenes

In this issue, we want to spotlight people in the Prep community whose work behind the scenes kept all of us moving forward. The people you meet throughout this issue are only a few of the many Prep people who always carry with them the common ethos of creating the best possible life for their community, whether it's at Prep, in their hometown, or across the world.





## Faculty and Staff Share Their Pandemic Experiences

by Camila Ryder



### Andrea Cardenas Dining Services Staff

Without students and teachers on campus, our Dining Services team had no one to feed. They transitioned into new roles to support the school, addressing the new needs within our new normal. “We always spend summers working with Facilities, once summer school is over, helping them get the campus ready for the fall,” Andrea Cardenas shares. “This past year was different.”

Throughout the summer of 2020 and the 2020-2021 school year, the Dining Services team was busy every day. When L.A. County safety guidelines permitted, they provided prepackaged meals for all essential staff and faculty. They assembled—and distributed—all the care packages students received last year, from Book Day to the Winter Movie Drive-In. They also joined forces with the Facilities team in disinfecting and sanitizing the campus for essential employees and eventually for hybrid learning.

Cardenas and her colleagues worked every day with the Facilities team, led by Norma Basilio. “I was active all day long. Norma had a routine for us daily. We were trying to maintain the school for the staff that was here and make sure everything was constantly cleaned. On top of that, we were keeping up with all the changes to rules, what the school needs...

every day there was something happening that we were managing,” Cardenas says.

The restaurant and dining industry overall suffered through layoffs, overwork, and fluctuating protocols, which Cardenas watched with empathy and gratitude, as Prep never furloughed or laid off anyone as a result of the pandemic.

“COVID is very sad, and you start thinking you’re really fortunate. I appreciated life much more and all the stuff I was doing. I like to keep busy. You come in, you do your work, and you do it well, no matter who sees you. You do it well,” she says.

Through the windows at the Prep Kitchen, Cardenas is a support system for many students. “I get to know them starting from summer school through graduation. They stop by the kitchen, and I get to know their names,” she says. “Pretty soon, I’m always seeing them, they come by and talk with me because I’m very easy to talk to. I’m a mom. I notice when kids are going through things and I try to give them advice, always about doing the right thing.”

Even though her work for much of last year was active, it was quiet. “After a while, though, I kept missing the people. Seeing people, even just a hello, makes a difference,” she shares.

**W**HEN ASKED FOR A WORD that best describes Prep, people often respond with “community.” Everyone and every institution has a community, but what about Prep’s is so impactful on the lives of students, teachers, staff, alumni, and parents for multiple generations?

So much of what makes our community unique is the people who work, teach, and learn here, and the connections they build with each other. From the newest student or staff member to the most seasoned faculty member or alum, every person who passes through our halls and classrooms is dedicated to seeing the school and its people thrive. They contribute what and where they can to support this goal.

Often these contributions are visible: A teacher catches up with a student during passing periods or lunch to see how they’re doing; a lively discussion from history class spills over onto the Senior Patio; alumni across generations bond at reunions; parents volunteer at countless events.

Last year, all our complex, intertwined, and dedicated connections to each other—connections that are most often rooted in in-person interactions—were tested. For many, life was not easy. Yet, while balancing their own anxieties and struggles, the people of Prep came to work and school remotely (and for essential employees, on campus) ready to learn something new, to adapt, listen, and support each other through a difficult time.

Teachers quickly tried to find out

the best way to support the diverse needs of their individual students. Staff took on new roles and responsibilities. Students ran virtual Morning Meetings and reimagined traditions to keep us together. Parents and alumni contributed in powerful, unseen ways.

Our collective experience last year was a bit like the Japanese artistic process of kintsugi. In this practice, gold or silver fill the cracks in a broken pot. The breakage is not forgotten, and the process of healing is memorialized, as the pot takes on a new chapter in its life. Like rivers of gold leaf, the work done by the people of Prep, often behind the scenes, were acts of healing that which might have felt broken, lost, or distant because of the pandemic. In acknowledging the magnitude of our experience, we also found our silver (or gold) linings.

The people you meet on these next pages are only a few of all the staff, faculty, and administrators who work hard, every day, to nurture the best possible Prep experience for everyone.





### Shane Frewen

#### STEAM Coordinator

Dr. Shane Frewen took full advantage of the accessibility that last year's fully remote world offered, transforming the STEAM & Service Fair into a dynamic virtual event. All student research, Community Impact Projects (CIPs), and faculty projects were shared on a website Frewen built, allowing more community members than ever to attend the fair. He also turned a long-held dream into a reality, as teachers, staff, and students led interactive workshops on Zoom, engaging fair attendees with live dissections, kirigami lessons, 3D printing of hooks, and citizen science.

"The fair is not a one-person job, and last year, it was the same—it required a lot of people working together," Frewen notes. "Laura Kaufman gathered all the AP Biology projects. Hilary Thomas helped the CIP students. David Herman spearheaded the science fair research component. Susanna Kwan coordinated all the virtual meetings. Teachers created Padlets or microsites for their projects. I created the website, troubleshooted, and made everything visible for everyone. So many community members contributed, whether it was leading workshops, doing awesome projects, judging projects, or helping students."

Frewen plans to continue the interactive workshops at the 2022 STEAM & Service Fair and to show-

case community work in the Bachmann Collaboration Building. In a year and a half of challenges, Frewen finds the positive.

"I remember near the end of last year, when we returned for hybrid learning, I was in the Makerspace after school one Friday. There were four or five different student groups. Clarice Pranyoto '21 was doing an independent study engineering project. The Girls Who Code and the Competitive Computer Science clubs were meeting. A group of students were using the embroidery machine, and another was working with the vinyl cutter," Frewen muses. "There was this energy, this vibrancy, with all the conversations happening between students, teachers, staff. It's those really beautiful moments of joy and spontaneity that I missed. Saying hi to students in the hall, asking them, 'How did your game go?,' congratulating a student on their play performance...just that organic opportunity to stop and talk with a student or colleague is so powerful."



### Norma Basilio

#### Head of Custodial Services

For Prep's Facilities team, working from home was not an option. "The work we do is physical," Norma Basilio says. "While other people can work from home on their computers, everything we do is physical, on-campus work."

The Facilities team expanded when the Dining Services crew joined them. Basilio managed these teams as they started every day at 7:00 a.m. implementing the extensive cleaning protocols. Once students returned for hybrid learning, the disinfecting and sanitizing increased twofold. "We were cleaning and disinfecting door handles, bathrooms, lunch tables, and desks multiple times a day," says Basilio. She and Director of Facilities Nick Adams-Wright spent countless hours learning new guidelines, planning out sanitizing stations, and researching the best cleaning supplies.

"This work was different. We needed to make sure we were following all instructions and protocols

that were changing a lot," shares Basilio. "It might sound simple, the work we're doing, but I want to make sure we're doing the right thing for everyone. I want to protect myself and I want to make sure others feel the same—I felt, I *feel* responsible."

A calm, reassuring presence, Basilio leads her team with empathy, and that same empathy informed how hard she and her team have been working. "We've tried to do the best for the school. We tried to do the best not just for us, but for everyone. We pushed ourselves," Basilio says. "We are always busy, and it was good to also have different experiences. For the first time, we got to be part of activities and events since there weren't many people on campus. I'd never worked at Book Day, and I got to hand things out to the students. We helped put together all the furniture in the new Bachmann Collaboration Building. These all helped me to learn more and were part of us just helping each other."





## Molly Mattei

### Performing Arts Chair

"The main thing we were all concerned about were virtual performances," Molly Mattei says about the Performing Arts team. "We were asking a lot of questions. How do we do that? How do we showcase the students' talents in a way that shows how much they've learned? How do we do it all at home?"

In music classes, students rehearsed on Zoom while muted. In dance classes, asynchronous movement and prerecorded dances stitched together became the norm. In drama classes—and frankly, all classes—mental health and wellness check-ins and journaling took the spotlight. The department also hired video editors to help create the virtual

performances our community enjoyed, including dance and music concerts and the spring musical, *Cinderella*.

Even with the professional editors, Mattei, her fellow teachers, and the students faced additional challenges.

"We couldn't actually sit with the editor while they were working, making it 10 times more work and more communication for this back-and-forth process," Mattei says. "For the students, normally, they are the performance. Last year, they were recording themselves at home, sending it in, and they didn't have any idea what was happening behind the scenes or what the final product would look like."

The limits on many art forms and industries from hosting live shows and performances reminded all of us of the magnetism of seeing art in person. "A lot of art and performance is live, and mistakes happen and things shift, and that's all part of the magic. But the students now had this control over recording themselves, and it brought out a lot of insecurities that their performance needed to be perfect. Because they could do as many takes as they needed, it was challenging for the students to send something in and feel good about it," Mattei explains.



## Sylvie Andrews

### Chief Information Officer

"Whenever I set up a new system at Prep, the student in the classroom is in my mind and in my heart throughout the process," Sylvie Andrews notes. This thoughtful approach to technology could not have been more useful over the last few years.

In the school years preceding the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the school had rolled out a major Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative to ensure that all students had laptop technology. This work proved to be prescient, as the school was forced to transition to what was initially thought to be a brief period of online learning in March 2020.

As the pandemic continued through the spring and fall of 2020, the Tech team collaborated with teachers and staff, testing out cameras for multiangle views, installing new interactive projectors for every classroom, and retrofitting the school's tech infrastructure. The team also oversaw the installation of audio/visual tech throughout the Bachmann Collaboration Building, which was completed in the midst of the pandemic. Because of the careful planning and work done while most of the school was closed for business, the school transitioned smoothly to hybrid learning and is now set up for a whole host of new virtual connectivity opportunities in the future.

"You would think our work was remote, but we had to be here to handle the hardware, manage infrastructure, internet and WiFi connections, and support our essential faculty and staff who were working on campus," says Andrews. The pandemic coincided with a robust expansion of the team, with additional staff members brought on to aid with all campus technology needs. IT Support Specialist Michelle Correia joined in summer 2020, and Tech just brought on two new employees, Tech Operations Manager Nicole Ricalde and Information Systems Specialist Jess Moxley, in 2021.

Mattei and her Performing Arts colleagues, as well as many teachers, found themselves doing more emotional work than they've ever done with their students. "For my dance students, I reminded them that even professional dancers are not happy with everything they do. We talked a lot about how social media affects that—we see the final products that are perfect, but for the students, it was eye-opening to have the experience of doing 50 takes, and that the one that went well is the one they might see up on social media," she says.

Mattei's focus last year and this year is less on the result or product. "It's really about how we're all doing right now. Is everyone okay? The idea of expectations and perfection within performing arts is huge, so everyone really took a step back and said, the performance is not our main goal. It's making sure everybody was okay."



Andres Alamillo  
Athletic Trainer

Before COVID-19, contact tracing, and surveillance testing became household terms, Andres Alamillo was already focused on the health and safety of our community. Treating athletes daily, as well as dancers and performers, crafting customized physical therapy and workout regimens, advising coaches on hydration and safety techniques, organizing athletes' health forms, coordinating cognitive health checks and concussion tracking...the list goes on.

In March 2020, Alamillo swiftly added interpreter of federal, state, and local COVID-19 guidelines to his responsibilities, alongside the entire COVID-19 School Compliance Task Force. "Basically, I'm the health care provider for these athletes and my role just expanded largely, interpreting LADPH guidelines, using my background in medicine to interpret them, trying to understand, 'What does this mean?' We have to decide, what's going to be our best practice?" he says.

For the past year and a half (and for the foreseeable future), Alamillo, the Task Force, the Athletics Department, and the Physical Education Department have had to keep up with the rapidly changing guidelines for sports. "Guidelines would change weekly," Alamillo says. "For example, LA County would put something out on a Friday afternoon. By Monday morning, they'd change it a little bit and by Monday afternoon, the guideline would be down. On Tuesday afternoon, they'd upload a completely new guideline. It was that quick. We would all be preparing for one thing, and then have to start on a completely new guideline immediately."

His athletic training work changed as well. The old training room was quite small, so Alamillo moved everything outside. "Being outside was a blessing for treatments, as I didn't have to limit how many people I could treat. It helped with that part of my job. It would have been a lot more challenging if I was in that old training room," Alamillo says. This past summer's renovations to the gym created an expanded athletic training room and office for Alamillo. His team expanded as well, adding Kylie Snyder as the assistant athletic trainer this fall. In recognition of his dedication to the community, Alamillo received the 2021 Scott Studenmund '08 Memorial award. ■



**“My role just expanded largely, interpreting LADPH guidelines, using my background in medicine to interpret them, trying to understand, ‘What does this mean?’ We have to decide, what’s going to be our best practice?”**

– Andres Alamillo

Remembering Melissa Kobe, Photographer

In an issue of our magazine that describes the work done behind the scenes, we would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge one of our chief documenters, Melissa Kobe, who died on June 16, 2021 while hiking the Pacific Crest Trail in extreme weather. Melissa's lens captured school events and campus life at Prep for nearly a decade, and her work this past year chronicled the challenges and triumphs of life during a pandemic. Born in Salt Lake City, UT, Melissa was an accomplished artist known for her photojournalistic, documentary style. Her work was seen across Pasadena and Los Angeles. She worked with and donated to several nonprofit organizations, and had been working on The Feminine, a multiyear project with poet Sarah Suzor. Though her big personality made her seem larger than life, those closest to Melissa appreciated her subtle eye when taking photos, her matter-of-fact honesty, and her quiet but powerful observations. She is survived by her parents, Jack and Denise, her sister, Erin Fox (Trevor), nephews Atticus and Elliot, and her partner of 22 years, Kevin Campbell.





# MIDGE KIMBLE

## Thirty Years of Supporting Students



by Mel Malmberg

**M**IDGE KIMBLE always, always has time. She seemed to attend every after-school event, every parent coffee, all while attending to the needs of every student.

As dean of students, science and psychology teacher, grade level dean, and middle school director, Kimble invited countless kids to come by her office and be heard. Her contributions to Prep range from the Peer Counseling program to Homecoming, from class trips to service days and dances. Kimble always made sure her favorite time of year, culminating in Baccalaureate, Commencement, and Promotion, ran smoothly.

Even before her retirement in June 2021 after 30 years at Prep, Kimble's impact upon generations of students and colleagues was palpable, deep, and far-reaching.

Since she stepped onto campus in 1991, she personified the honor code. In fact, she helped create it,

among her many achievements at Prep.

Her name transformed into verbs. In Science Department Chair Laura Kaufman's house, "To Midge" is to take care of something immediately. "Kimbling" is 11th Grade Dean Katie Canton's word for purposeful wanders around the campus. Used as an adjective, "Kimble-approved" conjures up sweaters and spirit days, appropriate t-shirts and jeans riding at the hip, not below.

Kimble knew all the best napping spots on campus, though her usual mode was on the move. "Let's go, it'll be fun!" was a common phrase her friends and colleagues heard often. She would walk the campus, easily found at Nutrition, lunch, and passing periods as she caught up with students.

Intellectual and curious, she is compassionate, authentic, approachable, affable, egoless, and direct. She investigates, connects, shares. She

lets people tell their stories, helps them look for the roots of their problem, and prompts, "Okay, so what's next? What do you want to do? How can I help?" Above all, she remained student-first.

### Everyone Has a Story

Kimble always invited students to tell their stories first, just to her. She might involve teachers and parents, but at the beginning, it was just her and the student and the problem at hand. Students report that her friendliness, her belief in them, and her check-ins were invaluable.

Everyone agrees that even when she was busy, Kimble put everything down to listen with calmness, wisdom, and compassion. As she grew as a teacher, and then as a dean, she says, "I learned that life is complicated for kids and families, and that you need to hear their stories." Director of Outdoor Education and history teacher Michael Roffina agrees. "She never

gave up on anybody, even when they weren't their most likable selves. She always says, 'Wait a minute before you pass judgment,'" Roffina notes.

"When we see kids at their lowest points—when they are daunted, or intimidated—she knows how to support, to bring students out of defeat, to tell them they are wanted, that they are invited to be part of this community because we care about them," says Assistant Head for Student Life Barrett Jamison.

Kimble's lifelong friends are her current and former colleagues. A parent of Megan '04 and Katie '03, Kimble is a dynamic database and connector of alumni, involving graduates as Science Fair judges, mentoring them, teaching their kids, and meeting them for coffee.

Twenty years after crashing into her at a class retreat, Ben Teitelbaum '04 remembers her "grace and firmness."

"She was glad I was having such a good time; she also thought I needed to better understand time, place, and energy...a lesson I'm still grateful for today," Teitelbaum shares.

"She is more concerned with somebody's overall emotional wellbeing than grooming the next leader," says Registrar Brenda Diaz, who believes Kimble's relationships with students keep her open-minded and learning everything she can. "She doesn't ever say 'I disagree'—if she doesn't fully understand, she'll be reading a book on the topic the next time I see her."

### A Lifelong Learner

Kimble always knew she wanted to work with young people and taught for 10 years before her start at Prep in 1991 as a 7th grade science teacher. "Students' energy is amazing," she says. "They're moldable, they can change, and it's fascinating to see them come up with their own ideas about life. So much happens between the ages of 12 and 18!"

A perpetual student herself, Kimble relished the opportunity to bring research to campus policies alongside Head Emeritus Peter Bachmann, who praised "her omnipresence, her absolute commitment, and her eternal scholarship." She studied distractibility and addiction before coming up with Prep's cellphone

policy. Kimble delved into learning and the brain; she attended conferences with her colleagues and read into new research to apply what she learned into her own teaching, inspiring her fellow faculty along the way.

Fittingly, Kimble gave the Baccalaureate address to the Class of 2021, acknowledging a year of struggle for herself, for the graduates, and for the world. "This year has made me grateful for things that I previously took for granted like being able to walk around Prep and see all of you, to have spontaneous conversations, to wonder out loud about your latest performance on the basketball court or your latest play. I missed lunch lines, breakfast burritos, and the various outdoor spaces at Prep.

"This year has also revealed to me how our society is unequal, how access to opportunity depends on your race and income, how racism has been a part of our society, and injustice is part of our world. May we all use this knowledge to face our changed world and take action," Kimble emphasized to the graduating senior class.

"From every student I've mentored and every student I've disciplined, I've learned something new, something that has broadened my life and perspective..." she reflected. "May you all be so lucky to find the thing that gives you as much fulfillment and purpose as teaching and being a part of this community has given me."

### Forever Connected

This summer, Midge Kimble moved to Austin, TX with her husband Jeff to create new connections, to continue to mentor others, and to spend time with her daughters and grandchildren.

"Her footprint is on this campus forever," Dean of Students Beth Pattinelli says.

Byron Yang '05 spent the pandemic administering COVID-19 tests and vaccines, inspired by Kimble's philosophy of science that was instilled in him in 8th grade. He wrote to wish Kimble well in her next phase and encapsulated the impact she leaves upon us all: "We carry your voice with us wherever we go." ■



Faculty, Staff Retire and Bid Farewell

LORNA HORRES

Our parent volunteers play a vital role at Prep, and nurturing these relationships starts in the External Affairs Office. As the director of stewardship and volunteer programming, Lorna Horres knew firsthand the importance of our parent community to the overall work of Prep, as she oversaw benefit galas, parent parties, golf tournaments, and more. Horres resigned from Prep this summer and is currently living in Virginia with her husband and two children.

Horres joined Prep in 2015 as a development associate before transitioning to her role in 2017. As a liaison for parent volunteers, fundraising events, and stewardship recognition, Horres was generous with her time and talent, and appreciated by the parents with whom she worked.

"Lorna's calm, thoughtful approach as she worked with our parent volunteers on events such as the Benefit, Golf Tournament, and more will be missed," says Director of External Affairs Lakshmi Dastur-Johnson.



MEL MALMBERG

If you've ever worked with Staff Writer Mel Malmberg, chatted with her about unique travel destinations and books, or were interviewed by her, you found yourself enraptured in her creative world of storytelling and adventure. Malmberg retired in June 2021.

An accomplished and diverse author, Malmberg lent her deft hand to telling the story of Prep. She served as Prep's director of publications from 2006-2008 and returned to Prep in 2010, serving as a staff writer and resident archivist in the Communications Office. Malmberg's multifarious connections to the local communities led to story after story infused with this rich knowledge and a love for Prep, which only deepened when her sons Kellan Rohde '12 and Brandt Rohde '15 started high school here.

"Few people know the history of Prep as well as Mel. She interviewed dozens of alumni over the years and captured the story of our school, decade by decade, as we celebrated our milestone 75th anniversary," Director of Communications Nicole Haims Trevor '91 shares. "She has taught me the power of understanding our past as we grow toward a new future."

English teacher Patrick Ferry connected with Malmberg when their kids were at Sequoyah School, and they became fast friends. "She's not just a great storywriter and communicator, she's also a really good person, with a generous soul and great spirit," Ferry says.

**"I will totally miss the energy of the kids, from the super-enthusiastic 7th graders to the seniors who are looking inward and outward at the same time."**

— Mel Malmberg

In retirement, she and her husband, Joe, will travel, write, voraciously read books, and relish the slow life.

"I will totally miss the energy of the kids, from the super-enthusiastic 7th graders to the seniors who are looking inward and outward at the same time. No matter what age they are, I really like when the kids push back because I think it's a huge part of growing up," she says. "High schoolers question. They remind us to have our eyes open."

GENEVIEVE MORGAN

Dr. Genevieve Morgan, a member of Prep's English faculty since 2017, retired from her 30-year teaching career to devote more time to college counseling. Morgan will continue volunteering with Scholarmatch, supporting underserved youth and first-generation students throughout college.

Before Prep, she taught in middle and high schools, including Archer School for Girls, where she worked with Prep English Department Chair Dr. Tyke O'Brien, and five years at UC Davis. Morgan brought "vast knowledge and years of innovative pedagogy, fused with a calm energy," shares O'Brien. "Genevieve opened students' eyes to new ways of looking at literary history, gender, the media, authorial voice, and so much more. I see the Regency dance lessons she organized alongside the *Pride and Prejudice* readings as symbolic of the fluidity of ideas and levity always at play in her classroom."

"I've especially enjoyed working with students in 9th grade and then having them again in 11th grade; it's so exciting to see them bloom into nuanced readers, thinkers, and writers," Morgan says. She is planning future explorations of Slovenia and the Cotswolds, but for now: "I am going to read all of the books stacked on my night table!"



**"Genevieve opened students' eyes to new ways of looking at literary history, gender, the media, authorial voice, and so much more."**

— Dr. Tyke O'Brien

JIM PICKETT

Our Board of Trustees announced in June that Jim Pickett would not be returning as head of school. In a year that was incredibly challenging for schools and heads across the country because of COVID-19, Pickett committed himself to making this transition as seamless as possible.

"It has been an honor to serve as head of school, and I am so grateful for your support and the opportunity to serve the mission of Flintridge Prep," Pickett says. "The time is right to pass the torch to a new person and turn my energy toward matters of a personal nature."

In managing the ever-changing landscape of rules and restrictions,

Pickett guided Prep through the transition from online, to hybrid, and finally to in-person learning. "The Board of Trustees is grateful to Jim for his stewardship during the last 12 months where despite the tumult of COVID, he was able to set the stage for our next steps in DEI, student services and support, upcoming academic program work, communications and marketing, admissions and enrollment management, and strategic planning," Board Chair Kris Leslie says. "We are also appreciative that he has agreed to stay on in an advisory capacity through the end of the calendar year to assist with the transition to a new head. The Board wishes Jim, his wife, Susie, and their daughter, Anna, well as they take their next steps."

ART STETSON

After he completed the most statistically impressive year in Flintridge Prep history, Director of Admissions Art Stetson retired after 26 years. Stetson's memory is legendary; he can recall students' families and hobbies for years to come. In his retirement letter, Stetson noted how his sons John '22 and Geoffrey '23 connected him even more deeply to Prep.

"I've been privileged to experience the school as a parent and can testify to its magic," he says. "I love being part of this remarkable community and take pride in the school's progress, particularly its astonishing mission-appropriate student body and decades of alums."



Book Day 2021 marked an epic return to campus for our students!



# CONNECTIONS



## Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

As the Class of 2021 walked onto the Rose Bowl Stadium field toward their Commencement ceremony, to the roaring applause of their families sitting under a gorgeous blue sky, a wave of emotions swept through the Prep community, from excitement to relief and triumph, and, most of all, pride. We’re so proud we could celebrate the Class of 2021, together. Congratulations on your many adventures and journeys through life...and remember you’ll always have a home at Prep.



*May you enter this next phase with that same understanding that every person you’ll encounter has something to teach you, if you just have the patience to listen. Ask for help and build a new community, keeping in mind how Prep has supported you.*

– MIDGE KIMBLE, *Baccalaureate Speaker*

*We don’t have to have it all figured out... Perhaps all that we really need to know is that life is more forgiving than many people think, especially when we have the support of family, friends, and the entire Prep community behind us. This realization is freeing because it means that we don’t have to know what “dream” we’re working toward just yet. [Commencement] should not be a checkpoint that demands a list of future plans and accomplishments from us; rather, it should be a moment of reflection on what we are proud of and what we’d like to change.*

– LEON KUO '21, *Benton Memorial Award*

### Class of 2021 Awards and Recognition

#### SPECIAL AWARDS

**Benton Memorial Award**  
Leon Kuo

**Class of 2010 Tom Fry Memorial Award**  
Bennett Oakes

**Founder’s Trophy**  
James Dixon

**Parents Association Scholarships**  
Lu Patterson  
Mona Patterson

**Scholarship and Service Awards**  
Will Gunter  
Claire Senft

### Faculty and Staff Awards

**Class of 1987 Award**  
Beth Pattinelli

**Class of 2021 Award**  
Eric Kleinsasser

**Detoy Award**  
Kim Kinder

**Parents Association Chair**  
Biliana Popova

**Scott Studenmund '08 Memorial Award**  
Andres Alamillo



At an uncertain time, you consistently brought a joy in ideas, a creative flair, and purposeful leadership to the Prep community. When we remember 2020-2021, the “Zoom” year, we’ll remember James guiding a proactive Student Senate; Alex and Leon redefining Morning Meeting; Nick, Ella, and Jackie setting a standard for their castmates in the musical; and Emma and Gabi emceeding Mr. Flintridge Prep.

– SCOTT MYERS, 12th Grade Dean



We ended up making memories a traditional senior year never could have replicated. We overcame the challenges of the pandemic together, and our relationship changed from a group of kids that happened to go to the same school to a tight-knit family.

– NOLAN COSTIN '21, Class Speaker



## 8th Grade PROMOTION

Congratulations to the Class of 2025 on their 8th Grade Promotion! Middle school faculty, staff, and Class of 2025 parents celebrated the 8th graders at the 8th Grade Promotion on June 1, 2021.





The Wolves Make Their Mark!

After so much uncertainty for our athletes and teams, we were so grateful that many of our Wolves were able to return to the pool, the field, and the court to play and compete last year. The 2020-2021 girls tennis team played their way to the top, earning the 2021 Division 4 CIF Southern Section Runner-Up award at last year’s championships. The girls and boys soccer teams both had an opportunity to play at the Rose Bowl Stadium, and both earned victories with a limited but very enthusiastic crowd cheering in the stands.

Over 200 athletes competed for Prep last year, representing the Wolves in competition across the region, and securing five league championships last spring.

The return of the Wolves marked a moment of unity that we see often in our mascot. In our research, we learned how community-oriented wolves are, with teamwork and affection central to their lives. We saw this in our athletes last year, who supported each other and their school throughout a difficult time.





# ALUMNI MAKING CHANGE

by Mel Malmberg



## Meigan Thompson '99 Advocate for Justice

Meigan Thompson '99 is an assistant public defender in Memphis, TN. Her tough, necessary job has been made incalculably tougher, and more essential than ever, by the pandemic and the national wrestling with generations of racial inequities.

Thompson's office is in the same building as the county jail. She often meets clients just before their hearings and has little time to consult with them; a best-case scenario might involve huddling for 20 minutes, before having to address the court on their case. In spring 2020, the state of Tennessee kept court dates live, then began pushing back hearings. Remote video visits were poor quality and brought worries about attorney-client privilege. In April 2020, COVID was sweeping through the jails, where conditions were bad, with lockdowns enforced 24 hours a day.

Ensuring accurate testing and effective isolation measures was difficult. It became imperative to get as many people released on bail as possible, even if living situations on the outside were often far from ideal; most of Thompson's clients experience housing insecurity or live in cramped spaces. Thompson saw any hope of justice and equity slip away as she worried about her own health and the health of her clients and their families. One morning, she would

meet with a client, and the next, they tested positive for COVID-19. "I have a job to do, I will do my best to keep myself safe," was her mantra.

But Thompson had a way to get the word out: she started the Humanity Project (HP) for the Shelby County Public Defender's Office, to shine light on her clients' struggles in May 2020. She created the Project to help interns learn interviewing and storytelling skills, fundamental to effective work in the justice system. The HP became a tool for advocating for what her clients need: transparency, truth, respect, representation, reduced bail, and early release.

Her first article, "I Can't Breathe" is about a client with COVID-19, but it's about much, much more. It led to an October 2020 profile in *The Washington Post* feature "24 Hours with American Workers," which followed Thompson for a single hour as she met with three clients, including an 18-year-old man chained to the wall in a basement courtroom holding cell.

A graduate of Spelman College, Thompson worked briefly in public relations and then in a variety of nonprofits in Washington, DC before leaving to work for Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign. "[I was] dissatisfied with the privileged ambience of the well-funded nonprofit scene, as it is so disconnected from the daily struggles of everyday peo-

ple," Thompson says. After moving to Jackson, MS to work for the Southern Poverty Law Center's Mississippi Youth Justice Project, she worked with civil rights lawyers on juvenile justice reform and earned a master's in Community Development.

"I developed a vocabulary (and experience) to identify, name, and discuss the way that systems criminalize blackness, and therefore black people," Thompson says, which inspired her to become a civil rights lawyer, earning a JD from UC Irvine.

A Spanish major in college, Thompson is a powerful writer to whom language is of primary importance. "It is great to see the younger generation, who already have a language and vocabulary for systemic inequality and racial injustice—that can be hugely transformative," she says.

As a public defender, she is one of the few black lawyers in the Memphis Public Defender's Office. The city suffers high unemployment, despite major corporations headquartered there. Memphis has, as Thompson describes, "a reverberating energy, a legacy of racial injustice, and a community of advocates for change, many of whom are black women."

While she's not officially allowed to be political, Thompson sees her work as the beginning of a fight against one of the most troubling legacies of slavery: mass incarceration. So, she does her job, inspired by the small victories that come from winning a legal argument or a client success story, and mentors others to join her in the struggle for justice.



Meigan Thompson meets Hillary Clinton (with a young Rishi Sahgal in the background!)



## Rishi Sahgal '98 DC Insider with a CA Heartbeat

When he was elected Prep's Commissioner General his senior year, Rishi Sahgal '98 had already interned for a U.S. presidential campaign. After graduating, he attended Georgetown University, majored in government, and worked at a political PR firm for a few years there before returning to LA to earn a law degree at USC.

Sahgal worked in the Obama White House for five and a half years before transitioning to the Department of Energy, where he developed an expertise on energy, transportation, and environmental policy—those interlocking spheres which affect our daily lives in countless ways.

Take, for instance, California's high-speed-rail project. As Senator Dianne Feinstein's legislative advisor for climate, energy, and transportation, Sahgal works on and thinks about, this project regularly. Is it feasible? Is

it fiscally, and/or environmentally responsible? Will it be safe? Who does it serve? Why? Meeting with people on all sides of the debate, "exercising a different muscle every 15 minutes" is his job, Sahgal says, and he loves it.

Sahgal has 40 million constituents to represent and to please. He relishes the information, the negotiation, and the strategizing. He is also mindful of the position California holds as a trendsetting gorilla in the room, with a brand name and a big economy. "California is physically removed from the NY-DC corridor—and that's good—but we're not too far removed," he says. "What California does, with the fifth-largest economy in the world, reverberates, like our insistence on higher fuel economy. Working in Congress, I can elevate what California does and extend it nationwide."

Climate, energy, and transportation have frequently been at the top of the news amid the pandemic. Then, there was the political upheaval of the last year. Sahgal was working from home on the Biden transition team, horrified and worried for friends and colleagues, when the Capitol building was breached. He says now that things have calmed down and the military presence is dissipating. "We're glad to not get alerts on our phones," he says, adding that he's extremely proud of the "two senior California women" standing behind the podium at the State of the Union, calling it "momentous."

A momentous act for Sahgal came just two days before the Capitol riots, as he saw his first major bill passed. The Small Passenger Vessel Safety Act, a reaction to the loss of 34 lives off Santa Barbara on the dive boat Conception, was part of the congressional override of former President Trump's veto of the National Defense Authorization Act, which required bipartisan support in both houses.

He's realistic about what the federal government can and does accomplish. "I am optimistic: the activism of the young people coming into our office as interns has been inspiring," he notes. He remembers his own passion, working on campaigns and as a White House staffer. He says there is definitely an esprit de corps as a young politico, but over the years he has felt that "a dose of cynicism is also necessary. Change can be a years-long process, and what I often think of as a commonsense measure takes effort and persistence."

"Norms and institutions are important and irreplaceable," he believes, and points out that the last year has proved how interconnected we all are, "If I am fully vaccinated in DC, but people halfway around the world are not—that is a problem of safety for all," Sahgal says. "We have a responsibility to each other, and the planet, and to the future, and we need to live up to that."





Jamie Tijerina '05  
**Local, personal, passionate**

As a Latina-Middle Eastern-American millennial, scientist, MBA, and former musician, Jamie Tijerina '05 is deeply thoughtful about macro-social justice issues around access to resources including education and health care, technology, and the arts. She sees people who struggle; she relates, and she wants to help. Whether it's finding a resource or addressing systemic issues around equity, she's found a way through local politics to make an impact.

"Somebody has to do it. But who is that 'somebody'? I look left, I look right—and I have to step up," she says.

Tijerina works full time at Caltech in a cell biology lab. Since moving back to LA 10 years ago (after college and grad school at Drexel and working at UPenn and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia), she has put her considerable intellect in the service of Northeast Los Angeles (NELA) and the Eastside, where she grew up and now lives. She recently ran for LA City Council, pointing out her strengths as a scientist, nonprofit leader, and community advocate.

"I learned that running for office is not fun, but that's normal," she says with a laugh. She has been a delegate to the California Democratic party and is currently a Budget Advocate for the NELA region, an appointee to the Proposition K Regional Volunteer Neighborhood Oversight Committee for the Central Region, a Board Member for Art in the Park Los Angeles, and is President of the Highland Park Heritage Trust.

Tijerina has knocked on doors, authored papers, attended meetings, sent postcards, run digital communications for all kinds of organizations. She created NELEARN, a community forum addressing the intersecting issues of citizenship, tenants' rights, and student loans. Contacting other Neighborhood Councils, she advocated for Los Angeles to become a Sanctuary City, and the City Council adopted a resolution to that effect in February 2019. She wanted an ordinance, and now has her sights set on federal immigration reform and support of the LA Justice Fund. "Just getting one person to think what's possible—you're doing your job," she says of her range of community work, which also includes affordable

housing advocacy, increasing budgets for parks, and recognizing the buildings on Figueroa Boulevard that birthed the Chicano Artist Collective as LA-designated Historic-Cultural Monuments.

COVID-19 brought to light equity issues Tijerina has worked on for years, including broadband internet access and the requirement to attend community meetings in person. Her work on a 2015 proposal for municipal broadband throughout LA finally bore fruit as many recreation centers got robust WiFi connections and helped both students and adults with crucial connectivity for remote work.

As community meetings went online, more people could attend, resulting in greater efficiency and efficacy. "I can see people downtown without driving and paying for parking. People can show up for hearings virtually, not missing as much wages or family time. We can get actual work in meetings done, and our outreach is sometimes more successful," she says. "Remote proceedings have allowed more working people to be involved. Improved access to community meetings was something that I had been working on for some time, and this pandemic forced action."

Tijerina hopes the online trend continues for reasons of equity, inclusivity and "time, our most valuable resource." Meanwhile, she is reassessing her pre-pandemic schedule and enjoys the gift of time for herself, trying to stay healthy, cooking meals at home, reading more, dreaming about finding time for music. "I enjoy and care about too many things, perhaps. The saying goes that you can't pour from an empty cup, and I want to ensure that I can continue showing up in the world and contributing as best I can," she says. "The next frontier is balance!"

**Alumni News**

**Let's Celebrate Together! Reunions 2021-2022**

We are thrilled to see you at our upcoming alumni events and cannot wait to celebrate with you.

**Winter Alumni Days**

**December 22, 2021**  
GOLD Networking Event

**Special Reunion**  
Class of 2020 and 2021

**December 23, 2021**  
Alumni Happy Hour and  
Tribute to Midge Kimble,  
Milestone Reunion Dinners

**15th Reunion**  
Class of 2005, 2006, 2007

**10th Reunion**  
Class of 2010 and 2011

**5th Reunion**  
Class of 2015 and 2016



**Spring Celebrations**

**April 8, 2022**  
55th-80th Reunions

**80th Reunion**  
Class of 1940, 1941, 1942

**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

**April 30, 2022**  
20th-50th Reunions

**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

1959

**GRAHAM SMITH** checked in on the Prep community back in October and has been actively engaged with Prep throughout the past year, stopping by the Town Hall with Representative Adam Schiff and Prep AP Government students in May 2020. He also encouraged his younger counterparts to make a mark in the world by voting. "Your students are committed, and the faculty are passionate about leadership," Graham said. "Millennials and Gen Zers can change the world for the better if they just vote!"

1980

**CHIP JACOBS** published his latest book, the nonfiction thriller *The Darkest Glare: A True Story of Murder, Blackmail, and Real Estate Greed in 1979 Los Angeles*. "This true-crime story, which is about as different as can be from quirky Arroyo [Jacobs' 2019 novel], first came to my attention in 1998," he says. "It was then, on frenetic Hollywood Boulevard, that my golden-goose, reporting source remarked, 'Did you know I once had a double-murderer chasing me?' Ever since, I've been chasing this stunning, dark-humor story, first as a biography, and now as a real-life mystery/murder tale that I've packed with fresh details, juicy twists, weird turns, and a stronger sense of time, locale, and class." Chip

spoke about his new novel with author Ron Franscell at a Vroman's Bookstore virtual event in March 2021. For anyone interested in purchasing *The Darkest Glare*, Chip encourages buying from local independent booksellers in their area.

1985

**CHRIS WALDHEIM** traversed the Grand Canyon in October 2020 (below), "crossing on foot from the North Rim to the South Rim in a 24-mile hike that took us about 16 hours," he says. "There is over 6,000 feet of elevation change and a 50-degree temperature swing from top to bottom."



1989

**TANEKA SHEHEE** married Shawn Gomez (above). "We had a well-attended virtual wedding on March 21, 2021, and recently honeymooned in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. We are vaccinated and look forward to years of travel!"

1992

**ELLA KIM** and her husband, Charlie, and two kids Jackson (12) and Olivia (7) are living in Greenwich Village in New York. She is currently working on her startup Cloak Supply, a multi-brand luxury sunglass online store. "I would love to connect with any fellow Prepsters here in NYC, as well as parents and entrepreneurs for a post-COVID vaccine meetup," Ella shares.

1997

**EDWARD REIB** recently published his first book *Thomas and the Wolf*, which you can find on Amazon.

1998

**RISHI SAHGAL** is featured in the *Alumni Making Change* article, alongside fellow alumni, on page 27.

1999

**MEIGAN THOMPSON** is featured in the *Alumni Making Change* article, alongside fellow alumni, on page 26.



2003

**ANNA MARIA "RIA" MYERS CONNAMACHER** gave birth to Scott Michael Connamacher on June 21, 2021. Ria lives in Allegheny County, PA with her husband Richard Connamacher.

**DAVE HENRY** and Jill Henry published *The Greatest College Health Guide You Never Knew You Needed: How to Manage Food, Booze, Stress, Sex, Sleep, and Exercise on Campus* in May 2021. Dave and Jill both have played many roles in the Prep community over the years, as students, coaches, and teachers (Jill has coached cross country since 2008 and taught math at Prep for nine years; Dave attended Prep prior to moving out of state and coached the football team for four years). Inspired by conversations with their Prep athletes and students, Jill and Dave spent the last four years researching and crafting this guide for college students to help them navigate campus life and manage their physical and mental health.

2005

**GRAHAM BRADLEY** and his wife, Maria Zizka, welcomed their son, Arthur Zizka Bradley, on January 27, 2020, in Oakland, CA.

**JAMIE TIJERINA** is featured in the *Alumni Making Change* article, alongside fellow alumni, on page 28.

2009

**TENY GERAGOS** married Ashwinn Krishnaswamy on July 4th of this year and celebrated with a beautiful reception at her parents, **MARK '75** and Paulette Geragos' home. Teny and Ashwinn met their sophomore year at NYU and began dating when Teny moved back to New York City after getting her JD



**KATHLEEN SHEEHY** has been a cast member of ComedySportz Philadelphia since March of 2019. Although the theater space closed in 2020, Kathleen and her team kept playing over Zoom! "The virtual matches give us the opportunity to play against other ComedySportz companies around the country, and they give our fans the chance to watch from anywhere in the world," she shares.



from Loyola Marymount University in 2016. Teny's matron of honor was **ERIN MCDONNELL PETERSON**, current faculty member at Flintridge Prep and Teny's best friend from the first day of 7th grade at Prep.

**JAMES LYON** recently passed the California Bar Exam and accepted a three year offer as an honors attorney at the IRS Chief Counsel Office in Los Angeles. James graduated with honors from Loyola Law School's LLM Tax Law program, where he received a merit scholarship. He also graduated from USC Gould School of Law with a scholarship from USC's Tax Institute.

2010

**CARA LOWE** and **PETER DENTON '08** (below) were married in Pasadena, CA on June 19, 2021. Prep alumni in attendance at the wedding were **BRYAN FAIRBANKS '08, TARA GUARINO FAIRBANKS '08, NICK WEINSTEIN '07, JESSE FLEECE '04, STUART DENTON '04, DENNIS LOWE '08, BRYAN DENTON '01, BRICE GUMPEL, EMILY LAW, NATALIE WEINSTEIN, BRIAN EVANS**, and **OLIVIA OUYANG**.

2011

**NOLAN JIMBO** (above) graduated from Williams College with a master's degree in art history in June. While in graduate school, he curated "Close to You," an exhibition of contemporary artists at MASS MoCA, which was reviewed by the *New York Times*. Currently, he is the Marjorie Susman Curatorial Fellow at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, where he is curating two exhibitions that will open in June 2022. Over the years, he has benefited from the generous support of





**LESLIE ITO '92**, the executive director of the Armory Center for the Arts, whom he met through Prep's Alumni Relations office.

**2013**

**CHADD COSSE** spoke to Prep students in November 2020 at the FLINT (Flintridge Leadership Initiative) series, FLINTerview. Chadd Zoomed in from New York, where he is currently an associate at Goldman Sachs. He talked with current students about his experiences at Prep and shared how leadership has impacted his life.

**2014**

**ERIC FUNG** graduated on May 15 from the MDiv Program at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he met his fiancé Kelly Lau. They got married on May 30, 2021, in Princeton Junction (below). "We were very thankful that our friends and family could make it out to Princeton for the wedding. This was the first major event for most of our guests since March 2020, and it went off without a hitch. With our health and safety precautions, we were able to dance the night away. After the wedding, we moved to Boston, as we will both be starting at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health, concentrating in epidemiology."



**GRADY WILLARD** accepted a position as an intelligence analyst with the FBI after two busy election cycles. He spent most of the spring and early summer training at the FBI Academy in Quantico, VA. Upon graduation in early July, he was assigned to Huntsville, AL where he is working on national security issues for the next year.



**2016**

**JACOB BRAWER** graduated from Pomona College in May 2020 and is currently conducting computational neuroscience research at Stanford University. Jacob is the lead on a joint study with the school's Infectious Disease Department in evaluating neurologic sequelae of COVID-19 "long-hauler" patients through fMRI imaging. Jacob is also the lead on the RBRAIN study, using neuroimaging and behavior to examine the effects of ketamine and MDMA on the brain's risk and reward neurocircuitry. He is also working on his lab's primary projects in brain mapping, where they're identifying subtypes of depression and anxiety that can help support precision-oriented treatments. Jacob recently submitted two articles for publication from his Stanford COVID study. He just received a publication at an Oxford Academic journal, *Social Cognitive & Affective Neuroscience*, based on his senior thesis at Pomona College, evaluating the neuroanatomical correlates of humor creativity in professional comedians.

**VICK LIU** graduated from MIT in 2020 and joined Scale AI, a tech startup in the Bay Area. Recently his book, *Points of You*, which he coauthored with three other MIT graduates was covered on Forbes.com. All sales through spring and summer 2021 were donated to Khan Academy and Teach for America.

**2017**

**HANNA BARAKAT** (above) competed at the Tokyo Summer Olympics. A senior at Brown University and member of the Palestinian Athletic Federation, Hanna was one of five athletes representing Palestine at the Olympics. She competed in the 100m race, breaking the Palestinian national record with a 12.16 time. Read our story about her on Prep's website!

**2019**

**CAROLINE WRESZIN** is currently studying ethics and advertising at the University of Oregon. Having been an avid runner throughout middle and high school, she turned her attention to cycling after needing rehabilitation from an injury. She recently became involved with gravel racing, where she has already had tremendous success out of the gate, having finished in the top ten in two races in her racing debut. She raced at the Belgian Waffle race in mid-July. Read more about Caroline in *Cycling News*.

**MAX ROSENFELD** is currently studying at Dartmouth College and climbs on Dartmouth's rock-climbing team. When the pandemic hit during Max's freshman year, he returned home to Los Angeles for online learning. Max's love of climbing is shared by his family, including brother **THEO '16**, prompting the Rosenfelds to build a custom rock-climbing wall in their backyard for



practice. With a bit of engineering and ingenuity, the wall allowed for a small training session before going out into the Angeles National Forest to climb.

**2020**

**MIA BELLA CHAVEZ** won the 2021 Juror's Prize at the Loyola Marymount University Labard Art Gallery's 37th Annual Juried Student Exhibition entitled "Young Contemporaries 2021." Mia Bella's piece titled *Glitch*, a photo-collage with paint, is part of a series of photo collages "which each explored a unique concept or theme in my identity," she says. *Glitch* expresses what Mia Bella describes as her navigation of different educational worlds, that of Prep and that of the world around her. "I was able to flip back and forth between these predetermined cultural dialects in a form of code switching," she says. "This is my interpretation of both versions of myself fighting to be present at once like a glitch." Mia Bella is currently a freshman at LMU majoring in Studio Arts with photography emphasis. She is also the youth award recipient of the 2020 Self-Expression Award from Los Fotos Project, where her work was also featured in her solo show "All At Once."



## Alumni, Parents Step Up for Our Community

Our responsibility toward supporting our expansive community is part of the school's DNA. As Prep managed the multilayered and ever-changing landscape of COVID-19, our alumni and parents were key members of this process.

Across generations and locales, Prep alumni and parents reached out to the school, offering everything from COVID-19 testing and vaccine appointments to expert advice on effective masks. Young alumni participated in virtual admissions panels, speaking with prospective families, and returned to Prep as substitute teachers. Thank you to everyone who reached out, checked in, and helped!

- **LAVAN RAJAN '14**, a medical student on leave from Georgetown University, reached out to Prep, gathering any PPE to support the nonprofit Medical Supply Drive for which he was volunteering.
- **TYLER SETO '94**, vice president at City of Hope, offered vaccines for educators as part of the hospital's community outreach efforts.
- **MATT NG '19**, a volunteer with Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE), which ran the Dodger Stadium vaccine site and other sites around Los Angeles County, offered near-daily tips on testing and vaccination clinics established just for educators.
- Parent **MICHELLE SULLIVAN P '22 '24**, director of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Verdugo Hills Hospital, helped Prep participate in the educators' vaccine clinics held there.
- **NILES PIERCE P '23** and **LIOR PACHTER P '25**, professors at Caltech, lent their expertise as scientists at a Mask Testing and Safety Town Hall in February, which was open to faculty, staff, parents, and alumni.
- **MAHEK AHMAD '18**, **JILLIAN BRADY '17**, **AMARI DENNIS '17**, **BEAU DETCHEMENDY '17**, **RYAN HUNTLEY '19**, **ISAAC LAMARR '19**, **BRYCE LEW '15**, **DANIELLE MAXWELL '19**, and **JENNA MIJARES '19** spoke at virtual events hosted by the Admissions team, lending their insight into the Prep experience.
- **KENALYN ANG '15**, **DAVID ARCIA '16**, **JOEL BRYANT '09**, **NATALIE CHESTER '13**, **CAT COMBS '06**, **CLAIRE KINDER '08**, **BRENDEN MCKIERNEN '14**, **MEGAN MITTELBERG '14**, and **KATE TUCCI-SHARE '07** helped out Prep faculty, serving as substitute teachers throughout last year.

Do you or any of your classmates have unique stories you'd like to share with the community? Reach out to the Communications Office at [communications@flintridgeprep.org](mailto:communications@flintridgeprep.org)



# Class of 2020 Returns to Prep

As the spring in Los Angeles brought more safe opportunities for outdoor events, the Prep community sought to celebrate the Class of 2020. On June 4, Class of 2020 alumni and their families stepped onto Prep’s campus for the first time since March 2020.

Graduates frolicked on Memorial Field, caught up with their friends and teachers, and toured the new Bachmann Collaboration Building with their families.

For a class whose lives were changed drastically by the pandemic, stepping onto campus provided a sense of relief and closure, and a toast to new beginnings as alumni.



## Class Notes Wanted

Submit Class Notes any time to [alumni@flintridgeprep.org](mailto: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.

Please contact

Jacqueline Epley Tegart '97  
Director of Alumni Relations  
818.949.5526

[alumni@flintridgeprep.org](mailto:alumni@flintridgeprep.org)

## Can we get your number?

Are your parents still getting your mail? Then it’s time to update Prep’s alumni database with your most current information.

Please contact us at [alumni@flintridgeprep.org](mailto:alumni@flintridgeprep.org) with your email address, phone number and mailing address. Let’s stay in touch!

## IN MEMORIAM

**REID ALLEN ‘42**, an indefatigable local volunteer who was also Prep’s oldest living alumnus, died on February 19, 2021. Wounded during his service in the Navy in Okinawa, he graduated from UCLA and began his career at his parents’ insurance business, then joined Ingham, Coates, and Paine, retiring in 1997. He became a member of the Kiwanis Club in 1975, holding many offices including District Governor, and served as a Kiwanis representative to the Tournament of Roses; he had joined the Tournament of Roses in 1943 and in 2013 rode the Kiwanis float entry in the parade. In a 2015 *PrepTalk* interview, Reid estimated he volunteered an average of 300-700 hours a year for the YMCA, the Salvation Army, and the boards of The Gooden School and Prep. He was a founding member of the Doane Lowery Society and a Bachmann Circle member. Reid is survived by his wife, Kathy, whom he married in 1959.

**SPENCER MURRAY IV ‘44** died on October 14, 2020. After graduating from Prep, he enlisted in the Navy, serving on the West Coast as a rear-seat tail gunner. Spencer’s passion for cars, specifically hot rods and custom cars, drove him to become the founding editor of *Rod & Custom* magazine, the creator of the custom hot rod Dream Truck, a winner of the Baja 1000, and a habitué of the Bonneville Salt Flats alongside racing luminaries like Steve McQueen. A prolific author and journalist, Spencer was fascinated by Mexico, boating, and history, and wrote several books about his wide-ranging interests including *Pitcairn Island: The First 200 Years* and *Cruising the Sea of Cortez*. He travelled the world as an award-winning journalist covering hot rods and was a member of many automotive halls of fame. He continued writing until the age of 90, penning over 2,000 articles. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn, six children, and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. His son, **SPENCER V ‘66**, Prep’s first legacy graduate, said of his father: “Dad never really grew up; he spent his life doing what he loved.”

**ROBERT “BOB” HALL FRAME ‘46** died on January 1, 2021. As a teenager, Bob was a talented saxophone player and an avid hot-rodder. After graduating from Prep, he served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and upon his return married Beverly Anderson, his teenage sweetheart. Bob served in the Navy in San Diego, then returned to La Cañada, where he was a grading contractor for 35 years, and a legendary Scoutmaster for a decade. He is survived by Beverly, seven children, 29 grandchildren, and 29 great-grandchildren.

**ROBERT “DJ” DEJERNETT ‘48** died on March 31, 2021. A boarding student at Prep from 1946-1948, he lived in Skillen House (which was torn down to make way for the Norris Auditorium and Helen and Will Webster Family Science Center). He served four years in the Army, then attended UCLA, where he majored in geology. He became a civil engineer, inventing a slide rule for earthwork design, enjoying his hobbies of woodworking and photography, and volunteered on the Preservation Commission of Redondo Beach, where he lived. He is survived by his wife, Lucille, and their son, Dave.

**WILLIAM “BILL” BARRINGTON ‘49** died on December 21, 2020. At Prep, Bill was part of the inaugural six-man football team, which had its first season in 1948. A graduate of Claremont McKenna College, Bill was a devoted community member of Newport Beach, living there for over 50 years. He was actively involved with the Exchange Club of Newport Harbor and supported its work with the Orange County Child Abuse Prevention Center and the Commodores of the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Bonnie, daughters Kathy, Sally, and Laura, sons-in-law Dirk and Peter, five grandchildren Madison (David), Debbie, Ella, Ryan, and Lilly, and great-grandson Wilson, as well as his sister, Sue, and her family.



**JAMES “JIM” BEEKS ‘49** passed away in June 2021. A graduate from the University of Southern California, he earned a degree in international relations and served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. Jim stayed close with his Flintridge Prep classmates, joining BILL BARRINGTON and others in 2014 for a special reunion that was memorialized in a 2014 *PrepTalk* class note. He is survived by his wife, Darlene, and his children.

**STEVE BEHRENDT ‘59** died on November 9, 2020. After graduating from Pomona College and UCLA Law School, he worked in the Public Defender’s office before opening his own law practice. He spent several years coaching and positively impacting numerous boys and girls through his Westdale-Mar Vista Soccer Camp and was a passionate golfer, world traveler, and family man. He leaves his wife Marilyn, sons Daniel (Soyeon), Scott (Evelyn) and Kevin, grandchildren Thiago, Adacio, Rena, Koa, and Cai, and numerous nephews and nieces.

**BRIAN SMITH ‘79** died November 19, 2020. A graduate of the University of Puget Sound, he was a network administrator for Mann Theaters and Baskin-Robbins before leaving the field to become a licensed marriage and family therapist. He joined the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, counseling incarcerated juveniles at risk for recidivism. Brian, along with two of his nine rescue dogs (and two cats), worked as a volunteer in Huntington Memorial Hospital’s Pet Assisted Therapy program. His other passions included airplanes and automobiles, and he created movies and a comic strip. He is survived by his mother, Jean; his two brothers, GEOFF ‘72 and STEVE ‘76; and his two chihuahuas, Mali and Moxey.

**BRETT PESJA ‘83** died on November 7, 2020. Known as the Guitarist at Large, Brett hosted the Ramblewood program on public radio station KSJD in southwestern Colorado. He taught music and English as a Second Language (ESL) after studying music at the University of Colorado. He described himself on his social media as “a barefoot Jeep-driving musical community of ONE.” His album *More Faith* was released in 2013. He is survived by his children, Forest and Faith, his sister Kerry Enderle, and his mother, Ann.

**HUBERT LAM ‘84** died in July 2020. He attended the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business and was the Regional Director for ABM, a Fortune 500 firm that contracts nationally for maintenance and cleaning, electrical, climate control, and parking. He is survived by his wife, Linda, and two children, Hailey and Hannah.

**KEVIN ROPP ‘88** died on July 12, 2021. Kevin graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in economics and earned a graduate degree in business administration from Duke University. He worked for many years at Ford Motors and Milliken & Company in business management and served as director of global corporate development at L&L Products until 2016. Kevin started his own business as a private investing consultant. In an email to the Class of 1988, Head Emeritus Peter Bachmann wrote that he spoke with Kevin at their last class reunion. “He was full of good cheer and great memories, as we traded yarns about his former coaches Glen Beattie, Manuel Nuñez, and Alex Rivera, and his turn as MC at Junior Parent Dinner. Kevin was a bright, funny, warmhearted man.”

**REID YOUNG ‘97** passed away in June 2021. Reid was a digital compositor with the Rhythm and Hues Studio, and was part of the team that won the 2007 Oscar for Visual Effects for *The Golden Compass*. His friend and classmate DAN KLEIN ‘97 writes that Reid was a dedicated advocate for animal rights and “was the funniest, most genuine, and most original person I have ever met.”

**ADAM PERKINS ‘15** died on April 11, 2021. With his twin brother PATRICK ‘15, he was a star on Vine in high school and during college. Adam graduated from New York University with a degree in music theory and composition in 2019. He released an EP, *I Am Away from Home*, recorded at his parents’ home in Maine, and worked as a sound designer and a business analyst at community.com. He is survived by his brother, who released Adam’s album *Latch Relay* in honor of his passing, and his parents Susan McConnell and Lars Perkins. The spring 2021 edition of *The Big Bad*, Prep’s student satire magazine, was dedicated to Adam, who lent his talents to the publication at its inception as a student.

**LELAND LOUIE P ‘17** died January 14, 2021. A community leader who personified Prep for Life, Leland found great joy serving as President of the Prep Fathers Club from 2014-2017. An executive director at Kaiser Permanente, where he worked for 18 years, he was also a devoted parent and a talented photographer. In a message to the community, Head Emeritus Peter Bachmann remembered Leland’s mischievous smile and twinkling eye, and his effortless “ability to merge good works with good times.” He is survived by his wife, Christina, and his twins, MIMI ‘17 and EMERY ‘17, his mother Hazel Louie, and siblings, nieces and nephews.

**ROB ALVAREZ P ‘20 ‘23** passed away on May 28, 2021. A member of the Prep Fathers Club for many years, he was a dedicated volunteer and exemplified devotion to family. Head Emeritus Peter Bachmann remembered him as a “raconteur, who entertained us with great stories of classic concerts and bygone adventures. He loved his family deeply, and took great pleasure in spending treasured hours together.” Parent Mike Comer notes that Rob “was an incredibly proud father and husband. His commitment to his family was unparalleled. He always championed what he knew to be right. I feel our school and community will be far less without him, but we are so much more because of him.” He is survived by his wife, Syd Smith, and his two children, MAX ‘20 and ZACH ‘23.

## Prep for Life in Pandemic Times

by Kurt Hofer ‘04



If you go to Prep, serve on its faculty or staff, or are a Prep parent—as an alum and a current Prep teacher, I check two of those boxes and aspire to the third for my two daughters—you’ve heard the phrase “Prep for Life.” But what does that mean and look like in practice? Amid trying times, with the pandemic surging and a paucity of positive news, I had an unlikely encounter with what Prep for life means in action.

It started when I visited Prep’s campus over winter break 2020 to check my mailbox. I hadn’t been on campus in at least a month, and I expected to enter a ghost town. To my surprise, a few of my former students who already graduated, among them Jeffrey Pendo ‘20 and Emily Yam ‘20, were sitting on the tailgates of their cars, trunks open, with masks on and physical distancing. They had chosen Prep as the place to meet for in person interaction. Maybe they chose Prep because it was equidistant from all their houses. I like to think they chose the parking lot because they wanted to come back to Prep—because Prep is the kind of place you can’t help but return to, even when you’ve graduated. It was my return visits to Prep, that got me interested in teaching.

During one of these visits to Prep, Dr. Robert Parker ‘78—who sadly passed away in March 2020—told me I

should get a PhD if I really liked learning and being a student. Ironically, Dr. Parker never had me as a student, and yet he took the time to say hello and impart that wisdom. Peter Bachmann, Peter Vaughn, and others similarly encouraged my academic pursuits and made me feel welcome every time I visited campus.

Seeing my former Prep students sitting in the parking lot brought back these memories. In radio-speak, they use the term “driveway moments” for when a listener stays in the car to continue listening. What I was having was my own Prep parking lot moment. In that moment, I felt just plain gratitude—gratitude for all the connections I’ve made with the Prep community and gratitude in seeing more proof that the bonds forged at this school far outlast the time you spend here as a student.

On my way into the office, I thought about the holiday party Prep throws every year. All faculty and staff families are invited. Santa (usually played by Bob Loughrie) makes an appearance and Madeline Barraclough makes sure that every child (or grandchild!) of a Prep employee gets a present on their wish list. Every time we go my wife says the same thing: “This is a really nice event. Not many employers would do that.” As an education consultant, she’s been on lots of school campuses across the

country. Sadly, not all of them have the same Prep ethos that embraces students, alumni, staff, and faculty, no matter whether we can physically hug, or even be present with one another.

When I got to my office, I found a few presents. One of them was a t-shirt that said, “You don’t scare me, I have two daughters.” The other was a coffee grinder and some fresh coffee from my favorite shop, Peet’s. (Disclaimer: I was not paid by the Peet’s coffee corporation to say that.) I had mentioned the t-shirt in passing to a section of my students during a remote learning class. Likewise for the coffee. I didn’t think anybody was paying attention when I made these comments. The gifts were great in themselves, but I also believe there was a deeper meaning behind them, that they were a show of solidarity. My students were telling me that we were in this together, and that they understood that my coffee habit and a healthy sense of humor about tight family quarters during quarantine were the things keeping me going.

On my way back to my car I said hello to the students in the parking lot. They didn’t sugarcoat the difficulties of the pandemic, but I was glad to see them. I drove home with a new appreciation for the phrase “Prep for Life” ...and also, some fresh coffee to fuel me through the coming months.



A group of students are playing soccer on a green artificial turf field. They are wearing face masks and casual clothing. In the background is a modern, multi-story building with large glass windows and a light-colored stone facade. The building has the text "BACHMANN COLLABORATION BUILDING" on its upper right side. To the left of the field, there are blue storage containers and a blue fence. A tall silver pole with a sign that says "5" is also visible. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a hillside in the background.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

COMMUNITY SUSTAINS US



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Perhaps we should retire the words “challenging” and “pivot” as descriptors of the 2020-2021 school year. Certainly, the year was unprecedented. While it is easy to immediately reflect on what we lost, there are so many silver linings that we should also acknowledge. We have grown more comfortable with change; we are more resilient, more introspective, and more cognizant of what is most important in our lives.

At Prep we learned to rely upon creative teamwork, problem-solving, innovative reimagining of curriculum, and a newfound appreciation for things we often take for granted, including being together. Last year’s Annual Fund campaign focused on how community sustains us. Thank you to everyone who came through and proved this point by volunteering and making a gift to Flintridge Prep last year. You kept us optimistic and motivated to do our very best for our students, teachers, and staff. We leaned into your philanthropy to give us strength and it reminded us our cups were half full, not half empty.

With students back on campus, it feels like our cups are full and brimming over with promise again. For most of last year we missed the bright smiles and exuberant chatter of students walking through our halls or the intermittent shouts of glee during a game. Hearing those sounds on campus again has been energizing for our souls. As we embark upon a year of reconnection, we are enjoying welcoming families onto campus—some for the first time—and seeing old friends and alumni.

Along with our commitment to connection, there is also an understanding of our continuing responsibilities as a community, including a shared duty to safety and wellbeing. As we return to in-person school life, we are continuing to allocate resources to ensure safety measures are in place. We are focused on ensuring all our students thrive by making the reentry to in-person learning as smooth and as stress-free as possible. We are committing significant resources to address any pandemic related learning gaps and to support the mental wellbeing of our students through our new Center for Student Life, staffed with a new school counselor and a learning specialist. For the 2021-2022 year, we will provide \$3.5 million in tuition assistance this year to approximately 30% of our students, expanding our tuition assistance from last year to support more students and families. It is important to us that a Prep education is accessible, inclusive, and does not pose hardships on our families. This year’s Annual Fund dollars will provide resources for all the above objectives, supporting things such as:

- Health and safety protocols
- Student support programs
- Scholarships
- Social and emotional learning activities, outdoor education, the arts, and athletics.

In addition, Prep’s 2022 Casino Royale: Let’s Bond Benefit will create a new Global Studies Endowment that will provide funding for guest lectures, Global Studies projects, international student travel scholarships, and professional growth opportunities for faculty in perpetuity.

Thank you to everyone who donated over \$3.9 million in gifts last year, including \$1.64 million to the Annual Fund campaign! Here is to a brilliant year of reconnecting and surpassing these numbers by June 2022, as we lead with gratitude for everything Prep represents and our good fortune to have such a special community of supporters.

Warmly,

Lakshmi Dastur-Johnson  
Director of External Affairs

OUR COMMUNITY, SUSTAINED BY YOU IN 2020-2021



**\$3.27 million**  
in financial assistance for students

**\$250,000**  
in COVID-19 emergency financial assistance

**27%** of students received  
financial assistance

**\$800,000+**  
Cost of COVID-19 health  
and safety measures

**4,000+** Wolves mascot swag  
delivered to current students and alumni

**\$275,000** Dedicated to social-  
emotional learning activities for students

**\$110,000** Funds supporting  
faculty and staff professional growth

**\$400,000** Technology expenses  
(excluding labor costs)



NEW NAMES, NEW TRADITIONS

What’s in a name? A lot when it comes to traditions. Yet, there comes a time for some traditions to make way for new ones. As Flintridge Prep enters a new era, with its first female head of school, we have moved away from using the term “headmaster.” We will officially be retiring our Masters Circle\* giving society after the publication of this Annual Report. In its place, beginning July 2021, we are happy to announce our newest recognition societies honoring our generous community. We’re excited to introduce our leadership giving circles and names: Heads Council, Patrons Circle, and 1933 Circle.

**Heads Council** - Gifts of \$5,000 and up  
Our Heads Council remains our premier leadership giving level. Last year, Heads Council members contributed 87% of the \$3.9 million we received in total gifts. Over 68% of all dollars raised by the Annual Fund last year came from our Heads Council members. In 2011, there were 64 Heads Council members and last year we benefitted from the generosity of 136 members—a 213% increase over 10 years!

**Patrons Circle** - Gifts of \$3,000 to \$4,999  
**and 1933 Circle** - Gifts of \$1,933 to \$2,999  
Beginning in July 2021, we have created two new leadership giving levels to recognize generous Prep donors who have given \$1,933-\$4,999 during the prior school year. These recognition levels will replace our previous Masters Circle. The 1933 Circle is named in honor of the year Flintridge Prep was founded.

Members of all the above leadership giving circles will be invited to an annual appreciation reception in the fall. In addition, members of our Heads Council will be invited to a special event in the spring each year.

No matter the amount, your participation is important and makes an impact! It takes many gifts to support the school’s multiple needs, and we are so grateful to every one of our donors!

2020-2021 FAST FACTS

87% of \$3.9 million in gifts came from Heads Council members

\$113 Average gift amount from Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) Alumni\*\*

\$700 Average gift amount from all Alumni

\*When the Masters Circle was first formed in 1976, it recognized donors who gave \$1,000 or more each year. In 1976, \$1,000 covered 42% of a Prep senior’s \$2,400 tuition!

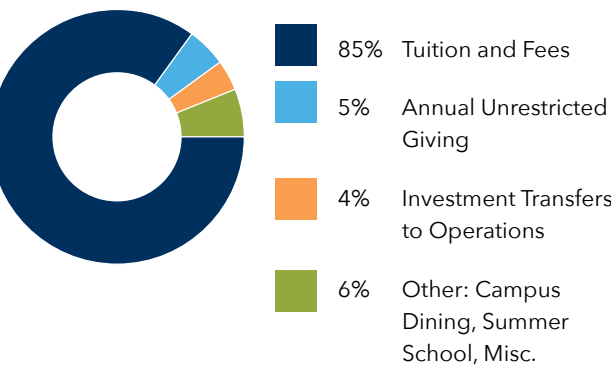
\*\*GOLD alumni represent over 25% of our solicitable alumni.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2020-2021

BUDGETED OPERATING REVENUE

Tuition and Fees	\$20,320,000
Annual Unrestricted Giving	\$1,200,000
Investment Transfers to Operations	\$1,020,000
Other: Campus Dining, Summer School, Misc.	\$1,440,000

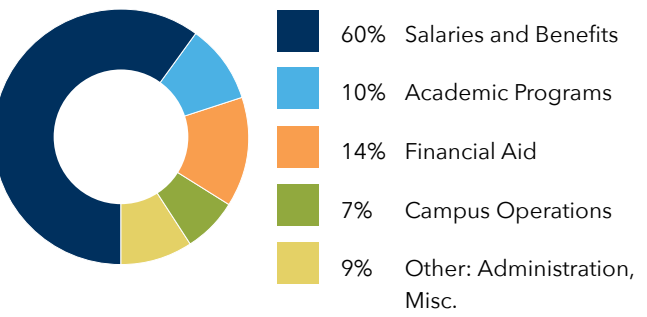
Total Budgeted Operating Revenues \$23,980,000



BUDGETED OPERATING EXPENSE

Salaries and Benefits	\$14,491,000
Academic Programs	\$2,384,000
Financial Aid	\$3,380,000
Campus Operations	\$1,685,000
Other: Administration, Misc.	\$2,040,000

Total Budgeted Operating Expenses \$23,980,000



ASSET HIGHLIGHTS

	Unaudited Amount as of June 30, 2021	Percentage of Total	
Invested Assets	\$ 44,847,000	50%	
Land, Buildings and Equipment, Net	31,388,000	35%	
Real Estate Holdings, Net	6,239,000	7%	
Cash and Restricted Cash	5,503,000	6%	
Contributions Receivable, Net*	1,909,000	2%	
Other	279,000	<1%	
Total Assets	\$90,165,000	100%	

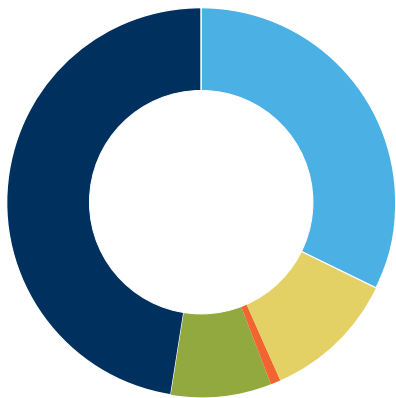
\* Includes campaign pledges payable in future years. Pending final audit.



TOTAL GIFTS  
AND COMMITMENTS

In 2020-2021, our community generously supported Prep’s general operating funds, scholarships, endowment, and construction projects with cash donations totaling

\$3,902,958



CURRENT OPERATIONS		
Unrestricted Gifts		\$1,266,581
Budget Relieving		425,364
ENDOWMENT		
Unrestricted		36,882
Restricted		323,813
CAPITAL		
Plant and Facilities		1,850,318
		<b>\$3,902,958</b>

ANNUAL FUND GIVING

If there was ever a year to support our community, it was the 2020-2021 school year. We are so grateful to everyone who made a gift to the Annual Fund to support the unexpected and ongoing operating expenses of Prep, from increased financial assistance, COVID-19 safety measures, online learning support, and more.

Thank you to the entire community for your consistent and dedicated participation in the Annual Fund.

Total Amount Raised:

\$1,636,708

ANNUAL FUND GIVING 2011-2021

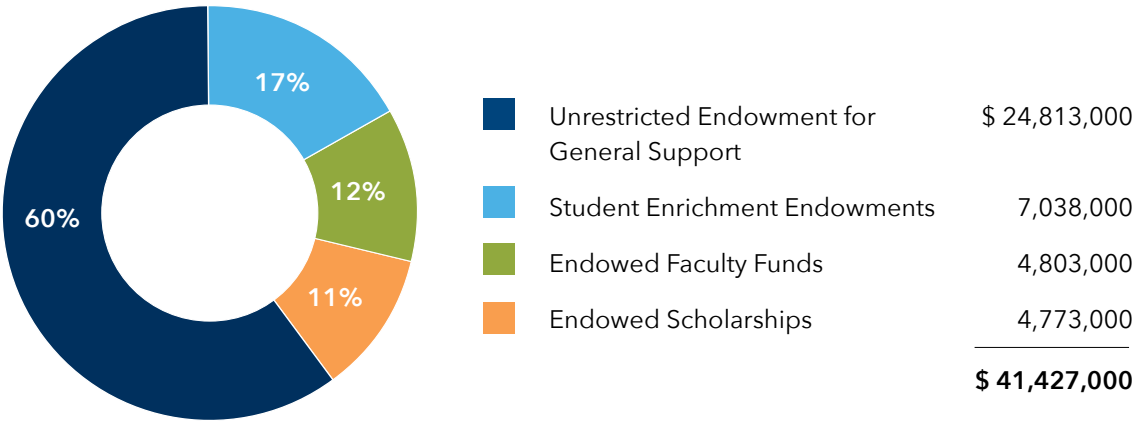
2011-12	\$1,341,130
2012-13	\$1,605,357
2013-14	\$1,602,967
2014-15	\$1,629,315
2015-16	\$1,791,500
2016-17	\$1,737,138
2017-18	\$1,748,857
2018-19	\$1,654,423
2019-20*	\$1,401,837
2020-21	\$1,636,708

*\*Due to COVID-19, Prep halted its fundraising three months before its fiscal year end.*

ENDOWMENT SNAPSHOT

Flintridge Prep’s endowment funds enable the school to meet expenses in the general budget each year and enhance our educational vision by funding programs of strategic significance, including financial assistance for students, educational programs and projects, and faculty and staff professional growth. This year, general endowment funds were vital in the face of unexpected expenses generated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ENDOWMENT VALUE AND DISTRIBUTION 2020-2021



At \$78,200 per student, endowment funds allow us to continue to reach for our dreams. We appreciate the generosity of donors who have specified programs that are essential to furthering our mission. A full list of endowments can be found on page 68.

\$78,200 Endowment Per Student

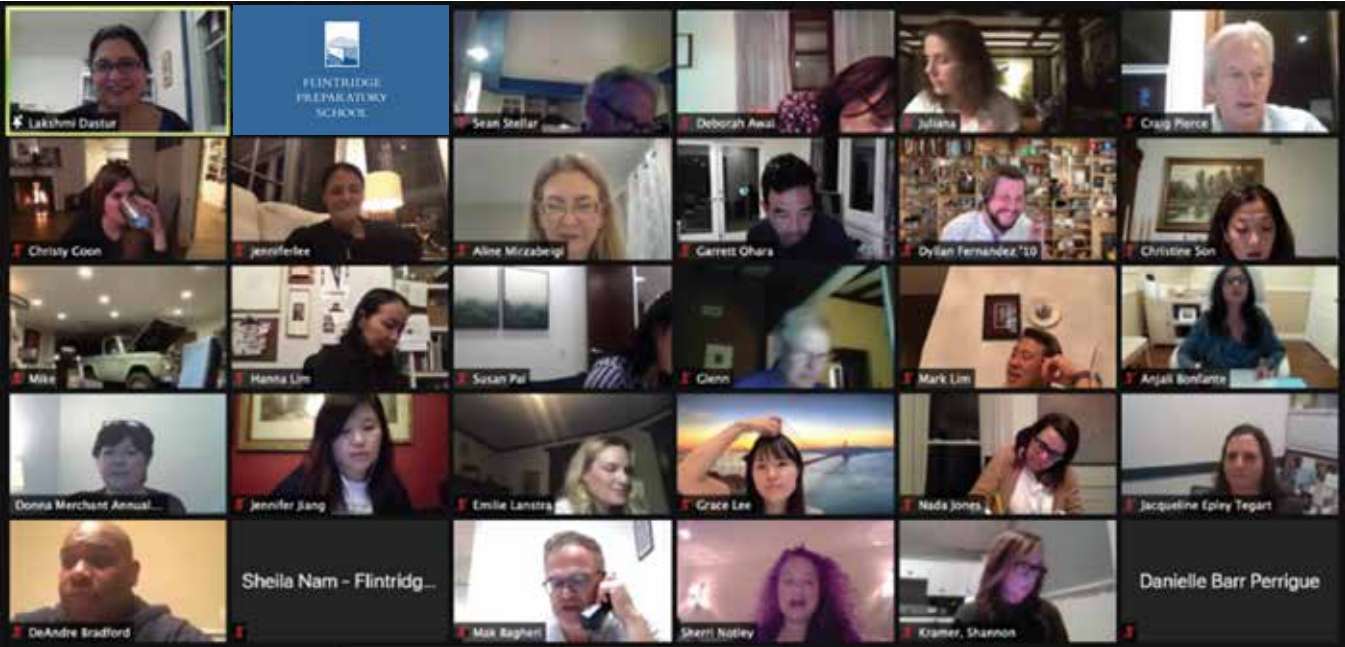
22.1% Endowment Increase Over Prior Year



volunteer leaders

**THANK YOU!** While the pandemic postponed many volunteering opportunities last year, we wish to thank everyone who was able to volunteer with our community in 2020-2021. We are particularly grateful to the following volunteers who continued to support our community virtually and in other ways to nurture our community connections.

2020-2021 PARENT VOLUNTEERS		ANNUAL FUND VOLUNTEERS	
Parents Association President	Juliette Harrhy P '21 '23	Deborah Awai P '22	Garrett Ohara '84 P '21
Fathers Club President	Mike Comer P '19 '22	Mak Bagheri P '17 '21	Susan Pai P '16 '22
Fathers Club Vice President	Andrew Son P '20 '23	Anjali Bonfante P '22	Danielle Barr Perrigue '92
Parents Association Treasurer	Jennifer Stetson P '22 '23	DeAndre Bradford P '21	Craig Pierce P '21 '22
Community Speaker Series	Trina Unzicker P '19 '25 '25	Christy Taylor Coon P '15 '24	Mike Richards '93 P '26
	Denise Walklett P '20 '21 '25	Rose Cortez P '22 '25	Shannon Staat P '22
Parents Mixer Chairs	Charisse Tolleson P '21 '23	Dyllan Fernandez '10	Christine Son P '20 '23
	Sherry Kully P '19 '23	Nada Jones P '21 '23 '26	Sean Stellar P '19 '21
Volunteer Coordinator	Kirsten Harbers P '20 '22 '26	Emilie Lanstra P '22	Jennifer Stetson P '22 '23
Prep Internship Network Chair	Charles Ginn P '21 '24	Grace Lee P '23 '24	Sharon Wong P '24
		Jennifer Lee P '26	Kelly Wu P '17 '21
		Glenn Leisure '72	
		Hanna Kang Lim '98 P '26	
		Mark Lim '97 P '26	
		Aline Mirzabeigi P '22	
		Sheila Nam P '24 '26	
		Juliana Nocker P '18 '21 '24	
		Sherri Notley P '22 '24	
GRADE LEVEL COORDINATORS (GLCS)			
7th Grade	Una Battaglia P '22 '26		
	Sheila Nam P '24 '26		
8th Grade	Michelle Chino P '25		
	Caroline Fong P '25		
9th Grade	Carrie Martin P '24		
	Sherri Notley P '22 '24		
10th Grade	Gabby Klatsky P '20 '23		
	Sonia Nikore P '23		
11th Grade	Emilie Lanstra P '22		
	Aline Mirzabeigi P '22		
12th Grade	Yue Auyuong P '21		
	Laurie Smith P '21 '21		



Volunteers supported the 2020 Days of Giving over Zoom. We were thrilled to welcome our parent volunteers back to campus for Book Day 2021, where they passed out prepackaged boxes of textbooks.



## 2020-2021 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kristina M. Leslie, *Chair*  
Andrew E. Crowell/  
Rob Tolleson, *Vice Chair*  
Daniel V. Murray, *Treasurer*  
Janice Ohta, *Secretary*

Chantal I. Bennett  
Richard Chino  
Jeffrey G. Crawford '86  
Cristina Perez Gonzalez '86  
Kenneth S. McCormick  
Daniel V. Murray  
James L. Notley '88  
Carol J. Ramsey  
David L. Samuels  
Srinivas J. Sarma, MD '89  
Jaynie M. Studenmund  
Katherine Thompson '05  
Harry Tsao  
Paula Verrette, MD  
Denise O. White  
John W. Wong, Jr. '85



## WAYS to GIVE

Your yearly **ANNUAL FUND** gift provides ongoing operating support.

Gifts to **ENDOWED FUNDS** provide income to Prep in perpetuity.

**PLANNED GIFTS** through your estate ensure future support to Prep and may provide special tax and income benefits.

**CAPITAL GIFTS** allow Prep to build for the future.

For more information or to donate:  
[flintridgeprep.org/giving](https://flintridgeprep.org/giving)

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This hybrid issue of *PrepTalk* and the *Annual Report* was published for the entire community of Flintridge Preparatory School.

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## [flintridgeprep.org/news](https://flintridgeprep.org/news)

Flintridge Preparatory School seeks to nurture in its students the knowledge, critical skills, community values and creativity essential for an engaged, balanced, and responsible life.

The fiscal calendar for Flintridge Preparatory School is July 1 through June 30. The Office of External Affairs is deeply grateful to the dedicated and generous parents, grandparents, alumni, faculty, staff and friends who contributed their resources, time and talents to Flintridge Preparatory School during the 2020-2021 school year. We have made every effort to credit each gift made through June 30, 2021, accurately. In the event that we have made an error, please accept our apologies and notify the External Affairs Office at 818.949.5524 or [ldastur-johnson@flintridgeprep.org](mailto:ldastur-johnson@flintridgeprep.org).

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Our magazine is printed on paper that includes post-consumer fiber.



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PARENTS OF ALUMNI:  
If this publication is addressed to a child who no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please inform the Alumni Office of his/her/their current mailing address. Thank you for helping us keep our records up to date.

818.949.5526  
[alumni@flintridgeprep.org](mailto:alumni@flintridgeprep.org)



PrepTalk  
Annual Report

2020-2021

Flintridge Preparatory School

