

# LINK

THE  
LAB  
SCHOOL

SUMMER

'22



## *Inside the Issue*

*pg. 2*

Kim Wargo  
Contemplates  
Transitions

*pg. 4*

Cultivating Scientists  
of Color

*pg. 8*

Senior Thesis Projects

*pg. 20*

The Phillips Collections  
Exhibits Lower School  
Masterpieces

# LABSCHOOL SCENE



**QUITE AN ENTRANCE.** *Medusa cast a very large shadow at the procession that kicked off this year's Annual Academic Club Festival.*



**GAME, SET, MATCH.** *This season saw the Lab School tennis team once again take the court.*



**GREEN THUMBS.** *Students harvested a bounty of tomatoes and tomatillos at the Foxball Farm.*



**HOME STRETCH.** *During the High School Student BBQ, the seniors took a moment to celebrate just 50 days remaining until graduation.*



Students use molds to create bricks out of clay during the Academic Club Festival.

SUMMER 2022

# Table of Contents

## FEATURES

- pg. 2* Kim Wargo Contemplates Transitions: Hers and Students'
- pg. 4* Cultivating Scientists of Color
- pg. 8* Poking and Prying with a Purpose: Senior Thesis Projects
- pg. 16* Seen, Heard, Supported
- pg. 18* There's No Place Like Home
- pg. 20* The Phillips Collection Exhibits Lower School Masterpieces
- pg. 24* Graduation 2022
- pg. 29* Faculty Awards
- pg. 30* Farewells: May the Road Rise Up to Meet You
- pg. 34* Shorts
- pg. 36* Alumni News

### THE LAB SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON

#### Board of Trustees 2021-2022

Kate Fulton, *Chair*  
 Krista Di Iaconi, *Vice Chair*  
 John Jonas, *Treasurer*  
 Lori Soto, *Secretary*  
 Bill Tennis, *Immediate Past Chair*

David Bower  
 Davis Camalier  
 Joe Clark  
 Art Coleman  
 Patrick Corvington  
 Ashley Dabbieri  
 Simone Goring Devaney  
 Martha Bridge Denckla  
 Linda Fisher  
 Kathryn Hamm  
 Shenearah Lassiter  
 Michael Miller  
 Jon Riberas  
 Dave Sohier

#### Head of School Kim Wargo

#### Director of Institutional Advancement Marty Cathcart

#### Writer/Editor Sarah Valente, Beyond Words

#### Design Mari Foret, Foret Design

#### Principal Photography Amy Raab, Image Link Miller Combs

*The Lab School of Washington is an innovative learning community fostering scholarship and creativity in students with language-based learning differences. In an environment of inquiry and hands-on exploration, Lab School students learn to advocate for themselves as they become engaged and compassionate members of a global society.*



www.labschool.org



# TRANSITIONS

## Kim Wargo Contemplates Transitions:

WHETHER YOU ARE an incoming head of school, a teacher learning to adapt to pandemic demands, or a student moving from Lower School to Middle School—or Middle School to Upper School—transitions are not always easy. But when approached with patience, creativity, and purpose, tackling the new can yield impressive outcomes.

When the pandemic hit in 2020, **Kim Wargo's** spring suddenly looked very different from what she had envisioned. Instead of focusing on her own transition to Lab, she plunged into complex discussions about how and when the school could transition from online instruction back to in-person learning.

As the faculty and staff successfully

pivoted from virtual to hybrid to in-person learning . . . several times throughout the year, in fact . . . Wargo was watching, learning, and assessing various aspects of the school's composition. Embedded in Lab's many strengths were several areas she felt could use improvement; one was the structure of the school's divisions.

"After careful consideration, Lab will consolidate our on-campus program into three divisions: The Lower School (grades 1–4) will be on our Foxhall campus," explains Wargo. "Middle School (grades 5–8) and Upper School (grades 9–12) will be located on our Reservoir campus."

The plan for three divisions (four

with the recently created Global Division) allows Lab to provide greater consistency for students, families, and teachers. Rather than having two divisions that encompass a mere two years each, the new alignment makes each division a four-year journey. "The longer trajectory for students in each division means fewer transitions," Wargo points out. "It gives students and their parents more time to settle in and form meaningful bonds with the faculty and administration." The new configuration matches up more closely with other independent schools.

In particular, the new configuration allows Lab to address the pivotal middle years of adolescence (between



*Thanks to a generous grant from **The Edith and Herbert Lehman Foundation**—longtime supporters of Lab—faculty and staff from Intermediate and Junior High, who will be part of the new Middle School, spent a full day at a retreat in the spring: learning, sharing, bonding, team building (and welding!) at Building Momentum in Alexandria, Virginia. They will bring this renewed camaraderie and new strategies for innovation to the Middle School program this fall.*



in art, science, speech and language, occupational therapy, and social-emotional learning,” remarks Wargo. Ultimately, the goal is to build a more cohesive middle years experience that will help students transition successfully from Foxhall to Reservoir and from 8th to 9th grade at Lab.

## Hers and Lab Students’

5th and 8th grades) intentionally and proactively; these are crucial years for students who are developing reading fluency, math competency, executive function capability, and other academic and social-emotional skills in ways that are not linear. Kim Wargo explains that having a middle years program allows Lab to individualize in significant ways. “For example, meeting the needs of a student who needs greater support in reading well into the 7th/8th grades. Or meeting the needs of a 5th grade student who would benefit from greater challenge in mathematics.” She adds that the incoming Head of Middle School **Melissa Wood** and her strong administrative team—Associate Head of

Middle School **Angie Steele** and Middle School Dean of Student Life **MacRae O’Brien**—are well-positioned to lead a joyful, intentional culture for these four middle years. “The middle school years are the time when student brains become more selective; unused connections wither away and other connections are strengthened. This means that we can solidify learning, expose our students to new and exciting opportunities, and help them to develop passions as they learn about themselves and who they want to be. What an amazing journey to be a part of!” says Wood.

There are additional benefits as well. “We will be able to share staff more easily, allowing us to maximize our specialists

**Jon Alexis  
Wants Students  
to Consider  
STEM Careers**

# CULTIVATING SCIENTISTS OF COLOR

When High School science teacher **Jon Alexis** heard that applications were being accepted for The **Aaron Boose Memorial Fellowship**, he knew he had to apply. Throughout his career as a teacher of color, he had thought back to the times in his life when studying science became more than just another science lesson. The times when he was able to learn from a teacher or mentor who looked like him “made all the difference in the world,” he recalls. He had an idea for bringing a similar, joyful learning experience to the emerging scientists, technicians, engineers, and mathematicians at Lab.

“I grew up in New Orleans,” Alexis tells. “Every summer my mother would enroll me in science and math camps that were run by the local HBCUs.” Those experiences stuck with him. “I saw people who looked like me, they were engaged in academic rigor, and they were enjoying it!” Surrounded by peers and teachers of color, he felt inspired, both by the material and by the diverse and inclusive learning environment.

“Creating a similarly rich and inspiring setting where students of color can explore the possibility of STEM careers was very important to me,” he explains.

Alexis was awarded the 2021–22 **Aaron Boose Fellowship**, an honor also awarded to one additional team of LSW teachers. The work that the late Lab School social worker **Aaron Boose** had done in support of Lab’s students of color was a touchstone for Alexis, as was his own passion and career path. “In most

**THE AARON BOOSE MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP** was granted in memory of Aaron Boose, the beloved Lab School Social Worker who passed away in 2020. The Edith and Herbert Lehman Foundation (which has funded many special projects at Lab over the years) created the fellowship to provide grants for faculty designed projects that would exemplify the principles that Aaron stood for:

- a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice;
- a celebration of identity, particularly as it relates to Black identity and experience;
- an engagement with and enlistment of students, in planning for integrations into the curriculum;
- an engagement with and enlistment of faculty and staff to collaboratively work across divisions and disciplines;
- centering integrity, building trust and facilitating relationships.



# LET THE NUMBERS TALK

If you're wondering why there is a need for a science-based group established specifically for students of color, consider the data. The following stats were compiled by the National Science Board and the National Science Foundation in 2020.

## ENGINEERS IN THE USA:

- 68% are White
- 17% are Asian
- 8% are Hispanic or Latino
- 4% are Black (1.6% are Black women)
- 3% are Native American, Pacific Islander, or mixed race

According to the Pew Research Center, among the main reasons why people of color are so underrepresented in the sciences is, "... a lack of encouragement to pursue these jobs at an early age and a lack of professional mentors ..."

schools, STEM instruction and learning takes place almost exclusively in the classroom. I wanted to create a deep-dive experience, one that is concentrated and frequent, and extended past the boundaries of a traditional classroom.” By fall the extracurricular group known as Tinkering Engineers of Color—or TEC—was open for enrollment for students in Lab School’s Junior High and High School.

“My big picture idea was to have cross-divisional mentorship,” says Alexis. He has recruited area college students to mentor the High School participants, offering feedback and suggestions to the group throughout the year. In turn, High School students mentor the Junior High TEC members. And although the exploration of engineering and related sciences is important, building a supportive community for the students is, perhaps, even more so. “Even in a relatively small school, students of color can feel isolated or hyper-visible,” Alexis explains. “We are offering them a situation where they can see one another and build bonds over their shared interests, in ways that would not normally happen during the course of the school day.” Although participation is restricted to students of color, the TEC co-facilitators, mentors, and volunteers include White as well as non-White adults. “A diverse group is more representative of real-world work environments,” says Alexis.

It is important to Alexis that students understand that TEC isn’t “school.” Even though the time commitment is real—High School TEC meets monthly for three hours as well as on occasional Saturdays; Junior High TEC meets weekly for 90 minutes—the kids know they are going to have fun. TEC is active, hands-on, and collaborative. There are team-building exercises, there are snacks, there is time to build and strengthen friendships. The appeal is real: one young man is so committed that he commutes into DC from Annapolis, MD to attend the Saturday sessions.

Students in both sections of TEC are working on projects that are largely engineering in nature (see the Sea Perch example at right). Alexis hopes that eventually the groups will be able to participate in regional competitions with



### THE SEA PERCH PROJECT

Students in the High School section of TEC are working on a project known as Sea Perch. Supported by MIT and the Office of Naval Research, the aim of Sea Perch is to help nurture the next generation of naval architects, marine engineers, and ocean engineers.

Basic skills in ship and submarine design are taught over the course of the Sea Perch experience. Students construct a simple, remotely operated, underwater vehicle using PVC pipe and other readily available materials. They learn how to wire and waterproof the motors, how to wire the switches and power cables in their control box, and how to think critically to troubleshoot along the way.

The Sea Perch is an international enterprise that culminates with regional competitions. During these challenging events, students maneuver their underwater vehicle through an in-water obstacle course, recovering objects from the bottom of a swimming pool.

their projects.

Another of his aspirations for TEC is to cultivate the students’ sense of confidence and agency. “I want my students to say, ‘I can do something with the skills I am acquiring, I can use my knowledge to make a difference,’” says Alexis. He targets and nurtures design thinking throughout the various

engineering challenges tackled in TEC. “With time, I would love to see my students identify a problem in their lives or the life of someone else, then develop a well-thought-out prototype of an original product that would solve that problem. What I am ultimately interested in building are design skills.”

---

“You don’t have to become a scientist or work in a lab to follow a science career path. You can write for a science journal or bring your science background to play in the forming of public policy. There are many, many options.”

—Jon Alexis





*“Research has formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”*

—Zora Neale Hurston



# POKING AND PRYING WITH A PURPOSE

ONE OF THE MOST fulfilling moments at any school is when skills acquired and nurtured in the classroom are applied creatively and effectively by students beyond the normal curriculum. It's no wonder then that The Lab School's 2022 Senior Thesis presentations—held in person after a two-year COVID recess—were exceptionally rewarding for everyone involved.

Lab is not the only school to require a culminating research project from their soon-to-be-graduates. However, the senior thesis program is particularly significant for students who have harnessed their learning differences to dream big, work adroitly, organize effectively, write clearly, and present their work with confidence.

Lab's seniors invest many months in the preparation, planning, research, and presentation process. At the beginning of the school year, students begin to brainstorm topics that pique their interest. The sky's the limit: if a topic is arguable (the student can defend their thesis statement) and if available sources of research are sufficient (15 sources, minimum), a student can choose any area of passion to investigate in the form of a traditional research, arts, or STEM project. After defining in a thesis statement what they intend to prove, the students spend the balance of the first semester immersed in their research.

Autonomy and independent work are important elements of the thesis project process. Students work on their own, without an assigned mentor or advisor. However, as always at Lab, the faculty are there to lend support. Students are also encouraged to reach out to any member of the Lab community who may be an expert in the areas the young scholars are exploring. Interviews with other well-regarded authorities as well as recorded lectures from experts in the field, news articles, leads from Google Scholar, and in some cases visits to field sites are other avenues of information the seniors use to build their case.

Art may also be used as research—and research can be used to make art—explains **Rebecca Alberts**, Director of High School Visual Arts. Referring to the dresses senior **Isa Cabrol** designed for her project, Alberts points out, “Isa’s dresses reflect very specific aspects of specific eras. For instance, her 1940’s dress included ration stamps layered as part of the skirt. Along with intentional decisions around the style of dress and choices of material, she made explicit decisions around how to integrate the stamps into the design.”

One does not have to be an artist to use art or literature as a valuable resource tool. For example, photographs can be used as primary sources (think: Lewis Hine’s photos of child laborers) . . . paintings can be viewed as artifacts (Kehinde

Wiley's use of classical backgrounds in his contemporary portrait of power) . . . song lyrics or poetry can be analyzed for their insight into a particular time, issue, or emotion.

In addition to building independent study and research skills, the senior thesis project enhances other skills vital for seniors who are preparing to continue their formal education after Lab. Intellectual curiosity, perseverance, and academic confidence are perhaps the most important of these, along with strong expository writing, organizational skills, and time management. Even public speaking comes into play: students present their projects and discuss their work with parents, teachers, and guests during Thesis Exhibition Night.

**DIEGO BOCOCK:**

## The Positive Effects of the Punk Subculture

***Thesis Statement: The punk subculture is far from being dead. It continues to encourage political and artistic change. It also continues to help young women find their place in the world.***

**Diego**, who identifies as punk, was concerned by the widespread misconception that punk is a predominately male, intrinsically aggressive subculture. In addition to punk's ability to foment change, Diego was interested in exploring opportunities the subculture presents for self-expression through fashion, music, and art.

For their project, Diego created a Zine, inspired by the underground female-dominated culture of the Riots Grrrls. Diego used social media to contact women punks in the US and abroad, encouraging them to submit their own work to be included in this arts-based thesis project. They also created original art, combining their own painting and photography with newspaper clippings, photography, and paint from the submissions they had

Although Lab has offered the Senior Thesis program for many years, this year's capstone project differed in several ways from those of the past says high school English teacher **Lauren Jacob**. For one thing, it was the first year that STEM projects were an option. Additionally, there were more students opting to explore arts projects over the traditional research format. This was the first live, in person exhibition of senior work in two years. "The seniors' sheer excitement and energy for sharing their work in person was palpable and made their presentations that much more impressive. In some fashion, these seniors felt like trailblazers."



gathered. The result was an oversized collage that explored the intersection of feminism and the punk subculture.

Diego found that their outreach and communication skills improved noticeably thanks to the senior thesis project. "The most fulfilling part of the process for me was sharing my work and getting feedback from parents, especially those who lived through the early punk era," Diego says. Even more fulfilling was discussing the project with their father. "To hear my dad say, 'I'm glad I know so much more about what you do and why you do it,' was really rewarding."

Come September, Diego will attend Loyola University in New Orleans, where they will study musical theatre/musical composition.

### THE 2022 SENIOR THESIS TOPICS

A range of timely, imaginative, and meaty topics were explored by this year's seniors. To say that the students were gratified by such an impressive culmination of their work would be an understatement!

**Michael Ani** | The Future of Recycling  
**Zach Blumenfeld** | Resurrecting the Woolly Mammoth and its Benefits to the Environment  
**Diego Bocock** | The Positive Effects of the Punk Subculture  
**Isa Cabrol** | Historical Events and Their Impact on 21st Century Fashion  
**Lauren Clark** | Benefits of Disney Therapy

**Eli Cuneo** | The Majority of Cars in America Will Be Electric by 2035  
**Oliver D'Esposito** | Short Form AI Sentiment Analysis  
**Tommy Di Iaconi** | Abolition of the Death Penalty  
**Sabine DuMoulin** | Women Who Overcame Misogyny in Ancient Greece  
**Jayshaun Edwards** | Conventional vs. Unconventional Warfare for American Defense

OLIVER D'ESPOSITO:

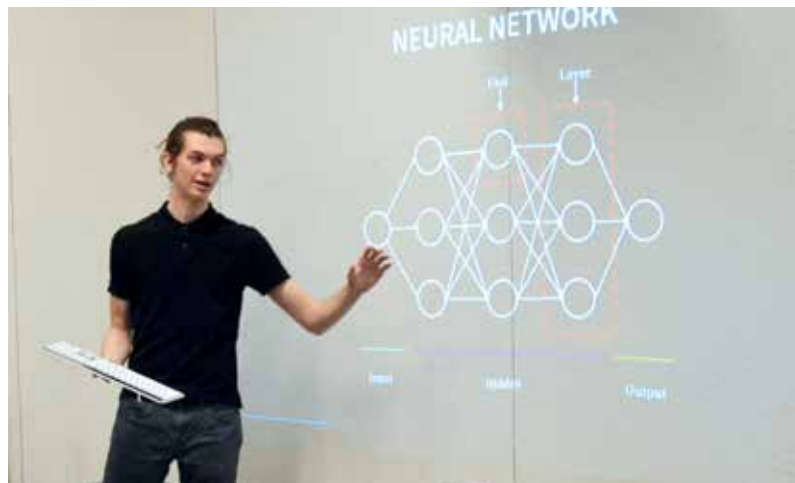
## Evaluation of Deep Learning Methods for Sentiment Analysis of Twitter Data

**Thesis Statement:** *A Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) with Natural Language Processing (NLP) is the ideal method for sentiment analysis of the short text data when compared to Gradient Recurrent Unit (GRU) and Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM).*

**What drew you to the topic you chose for your project?**  
Sentiment Analysis (the process used by a computer to determine the emotion in a piece of text) is widely used in many modern systems that influence our lives daily. Examples include Twitter Feeds, Grammarly, Amazon recommendations, ad targeting, data interpretation, search engines and chat bots. Sentiment analysis—and AI as a whole—is a very important and quickly evolving field, its impact growing by the day. Sentiment analysis is a very basic example of what AI can do, but with AI's inherent complexity hidden within each detail, it was plenty to explore.

**What type of research did you conduct?**  
At first, I started by getting a large survey of the AI field, then I focused on the math behind Forward Feed, Recurrent and Convolutional Neural Networks. My main resources were existing scholarly research papers and the documentation of the programming libraries I used.

**Did you create a physical product in addition to your research paper?**  
My project produced large amounts of data, as well as programs to collect and handle that data. I collected (with Twitter's approval) about 2 million Tweets based on sentiment and stored



them in a database. I then used this data to train AIs, and I analyzed the data using an NLP (Natural Language Processing) method.

**What skills did you acquire or strengthen during the process?**  
I learned to program with TensorFlow (an AI tool), plus I strengthened my skills in program organization, data collection and storage, test driven development, long paper writing, and editing.

**What was the most rewarding part of this experience for you?**  
I was very proud of my work as a whole. However, for me my project was the most profound part. Building the whole program from scratch, collecting all the data, getting my GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) to work with my programming tools, were a few of the many challenges I faced. These were all well worth it. It made me a far better programmer and student.

**Will you continue to explore this topic or expand upon this field of research after graduation from Lab School?**  
Yes, I will be attending the University of Maryland with a major in computer science in the fall. I am still working with the data and continue to work on the programming project as a personal interest.

**Liam Evans** | Psychedelics Should be Used as Medicine

**Merritt Forman** | Understanding Tribalism

**Jack Freedman** | The Negative Effects of Social Media on Teens

**Emry Goldstein** | Diversity in Toy Design

**Josiah Hardney** | Why Project-Based Learning Better Prepares High School Students for the Workforce

**Jaxon Healey** | Decriminalizing Sex Work

**Kyle Herson** | The Growth of Cryptocurrency and US Government Regulation

**Anna Hudson** | Media's Impact on Missing Women of Color

**Elizabeth Jackson** | The Pursuit of Expression: The Exploration of Art Therapy in Adolescents

**Logan Johns** | Black Trauma Within Film

**Beatrice Johnston** | The Long-Term, Beneficial Impact Sports Has on Children Mentally, Physically, and Emotionally

**Aaron Letteri** | Copyright vs. Inspiration in the Music Industry

**Meira Liebman** | Wilderness Programs and the Trouble They Bring

*“I really loved the entire Senior Thesis process. It was great to be able to tailor it to my specific interests and to explore an area that I would like to pursue professionally.”*

—Emry Goldstein, Senior

MERRITT FORMAN

## Understanding Tribalism

**Thesis Statement:** *The tribes of Afghanistan have historically resisted foreign invaders because the foreign invaders did not understand the tribes' system of governance and culture. If the foreign powers had understood the tribes, they could have helped bring stability to Afghanistan and achieve peace among the tribes.*

### **What drew you to the topic you chose for your project?**

I was drawn to this topic because of the recent events that were happening with the U.S. leaving Afghanistan. I have an interest in military history and wanted to know more about Afghanistan, in particular.

### **What type of research did you conduct?**

I explored journals, articles, and videos about tribalism and Afghanistan. I also interviewed an expert on the topic, the author Stephen Pressfield.

### **Did you create a physical product in addition to your research paper?**

For my project, I created a documentary film. One of the first steps was to create a story board, which helped me organize the visual aspects of my documentary and how it would play out.



### **What skills did you acquire or strengthen in the process?**

I intend to pursue a future in film, so creating a documentary was by far the most important skill I acquired. It was also very helpful to determine which research articles would be useful or not useful. I did that by using a source evaluation chart.

### **What was the most rewarding part of the experience for you?**

The most rewarding part, by far, was the excitement of creating my first ever documentary. It was also rewarding to have people interested in my topic and asking well-thought-out questions after hearing my presentation and watching my video.

### **What are your plans after graduation?**

I will be studying film at Savannah College of Art and Design.

**Hugh Meredith** | Prison Reform and Crime Prevention: Analyzing the Problem and Possible Solutions

**Casey Moran** | Women's Reproductive Rights

**Joshua O'Keefe-Walzer** | Independent Record Labels

**Nick Parker** | Microtransactions are Killing the Gaming Community

**Sophie Phillips** | Art Therapy as an Effective Treatment for Anxiety and Depression

**Maya Rajan** | Instagram is Curating a Non-Reality

**Carter Repke** | Social Media Impacts Teens in a Negative Way

**Alex Soto** | Social Media is Beneficial for Social Change

**Olivia Steffe** | Sex-Ed Inclusivity

**Isaac Steinberg** | The Price of Fame

**Avery Stenstrom** | Creativity: The Price of Crunch Culture

**Alec Tongour** | The Benefits of Sports

**Skye Washington** | The Benefits of Video Games and Nintendo

**Ian Weiss** | Democratic Erosion and the Trump Administration

*“Some might worry that research can be boring, but it doesn’t need to be. I suggest that you start thinking about your topic as early as your junior year. That way, you can choose something that really matters to you . . . it will make the process much more fun.”*

—Nicholas Parker, Senior

JOSIAH HARDNEY

## The Case for Project-Based Learning

***Thesis Statement: Project-based learning better prepares high school students for the workforce.***

### ***Tell us why you chose this topic.***

Project-based learning was a topic that resonated with me. It’s a topic I’m passionate about. As a high school student, I had experienced the issues I was researching (the benefits of project-based education) firsthand, so I knew what argument I wanted to make and what to look for to support my thesis.

### ***What did you enjoy the most about the process?***

This was a difficult project, so ultimately, I enjoyed being able to look at the final project and see all the work I had completed. As far as liking something during the actual work, I enjoyed learning how to format my sentences in a way that is more professional; I really liked that people could understand what I was trying to get across.

### ***Did you learn anything surprising while doing your research?***

I was surprised that I had to narrow the scope of my thesis to high schools only; the field of education was too large to tackle for this project. I’d add that I was surprised that I didn’t find too many places that implement project-based learning in the high school curriculum. I was also surprised by how little training teachers have in implementing project-based learning. Often, high school faculty are following a traditional syllabus and handing out papers instead of engaging their students



in group work. At The Lab School it was well balanced. But—having spoken with friends who went to public high schools—many students don’t experience much project-based learning.

### ***How did your senior thesis strengthen your skills—or help you develop new ones?***

Preparing my senior thesis made me work on my time management skills. Having to do the research and work on getting the sources and citations and information: I really had to stay on top of it. Ms. Jacob did a good job helping to keep everybody on track.

The other big skill that I strengthened was self-advocacy. I definitely advocated for myself and asked for help by going to the writing center for assistance from Ms. Weiss [Language and Literacy Specialist and Speech Language Pathologist **Isabella Weiss**].

### ***Will you continue to explore this area of study?***

In the short term, I want to immerse myself at Virginia Tech. I am undecided on my major and I want to explore available pathways. I’m interested in philosophy and ethics, which I feel can be applied to anything. I’d certainly be open to further exploring my research on project-based learning if I talk to people and decide there is room to expand upon it.



EMRY GOLDSTEIN

## Diversity in Toy Design

**Thesis Statement:** *Gendered children's toys are harmful and the best way to fix them is through thoughtfully designed toys.*

For years, **Emry Goldstein** has known what they wanted to do with their life: toy design. A collector of dolls, Emry recognizes the need for greater diversity and gender inclusivity in the toy market. So, when it came time to select the topic for their senior thesis, the choice seemed obvious. “When I was growing up, no dolls reflected me, no dolls were gender inclusive. I wanted to do something about it,” explains Emry.

Although Emry recognizes that a range of skin colors, body types, and bodies that are differently abled is lacking in the market, they concentrated on gender diversity. “Dolls teach really important imaginative skills,” they point out. “Boys miss out when they don't play with dolls, and most dolls are aimed at girls.”

Emry researched a wide range of available dolls including the Creatable World toys, that aim to “keep labels out and invite everyone in.” (Creatable World is owned by Mattel.) They also dived into child psychology studies that explore how young children perceive gender. “It affirmed what I believed: kids aren't born with gender stereotypes. They learn them.”

In addition to their thesis research paper, Emry undertook an applied project: making prototypes of the inclusive dolls they envisioned. With interchangeable torsos and heads, and minus gender-specific anatomy, the dolls reinforce Emry's mantra that “anyone can be anything.” The most rewarding part of the project was their focus group-style visit to Lab's Foxhall campus, where they were able to present the dolls to a group of 10 young children and observe the youngsters at play. The dolls were a big hit and Emry made important discoveries, including the fact that there was no difference between the ways girls and boys play with dolls.

Emry will attend Cleveland Institute of Art, where they will study industrial design. Their goal is to refine the prototype dolls and eventually patent and manufacture them.



NICHOLAS PARKER

## Microtransactions are Killing the Gaming Community

**Thesis Statement:** *Microtransactions are killing the video game community and need to be remodeled or abolished.*

**Nicholas Parker** has always had a passion for video games—that is until microtransactions began to be embraced by the gaming community in ways that began to erode some of the pastime's fun.

A microtransaction is a digital purchase that players can make within a video game. They can be used to unlock specific features, provide decorative adornment, or enable game-changing enhancements. It is this last feature—paying to tilt the game in one's favor—that Nick feels is most destructive. “Paying to level up isn't fair. It takes the gamesmanship out of the experience and makes it all about money,” he explains.

Nick knew a lot about gaming before starting his research project, “. . . but during the process, I found there was a lot that I didn't know.” Specifically, he was surprised at the number of consumer-targeted scams that plague the gaming industry. “I'm playing less often as a result.”

In September, Nick will head to Delaware State University, where he will prepare for a career in broadcast journalism.

*“Navigating change is an important life lesson for our students. Often topics shift and turn based on the research. That's what research is: it's change.”*

—Jonathan Alexis, High School Science Teacher

Belonging

Unity

LOVE  
SMILEYWO

SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON  
ARTS BUILDING  
4222 Reservoir Road NW  
Washington, DC 20007

Fire Alarm Announcements





Throughout the year, students at Lab explored the school-wide theme of “belonging.” Whether as the driving theme in plays written and acted in by students, or as one of the “Aaron words” generated by students to celebrate the memory of the late Lab Social Worker Aaron Boose, the theme was present all across the campus.





# Seen, Heard, Supported

Helping the community recognize and accept themselves and each other is the primary goal of Lab's DEIB Team.

## SDEIBC: A SPACE FOR STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

SDEIBC\*: It's a mighty name with an even mightier mission. This fall, the newly formed **Student Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee (SDEIBC)** will give Upper School students a unique opportunity to develop leadership skills under the broad umbrella of diversity.

The committee will be formed with two representatives from each Upper School grade, representing a range of backgrounds and identities. What they will have in common is a shared interest in further enhancing a diverse, inclusive, and more equitable academic and social environment at Lab.

The committee's aims—in alignment with Lab's Strategic Plan—are to foster improved communication, representation, and engagement; to serve as a platform for students to voice their concerns around DEIB to the Upper School administration; and to co-create educational and social programming in collaboration with Lab's faculty and staff. As DEIB Director **Anthony Perry** observes, "SDEIBC will serve as a space for students to participate in crucial conversations and decisions for the future of Lab's Upper School."

\* Pronounced: Ess-Dee-Bee-Cee

The idea for the committee grew out of a successful earlier initiative of Perry's. "Last year I had the benefit of working with two student interns. Their input and insights about Lab led to the formation of SDEIBC," he explains. The interns had a role in the creating of the committee's proposal and application process.

The process for choosing the student representatives underscores the serious nature of the committee's work. Interested students are invited to submit an application and participate in an interview with the adult members of the committee. In addition, the class representatives must agree to certain requirements. The students commit to attending three half-day training sessions in the fall: Courageous Conversations about Race, Restorative Justice, and Gender & Sexuality Justice. They also agree to attend one of several student/faculty conferences focused on DEIB work—expenses will be paid by Lab. Additionally, student members of SDEIBC must serve as an affinity group and/or club leader, co-lead at least one heritage and/or history month project or event, attend biweekly committee meetings, and remain in good academic and disciplinary standing.

Perry, along with the DEIB coordinators from each division and the incoming Dean of Student Life, **Rashaad Phillips**, will also serve on the committee, although Perry stresses

that the role of the adults will be as facilitators not decision makers. "If there is work the students want to undertake, we'll discuss it with them, maybe offer some guidance, but the final decision will be up to the students."

One of the most important roles of the student representatives will be to engage their peers in meaningful conversation around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Students tend to listen to other students, particularly those whom they respect. By acquiring crucial leadership skills, including a common vocabulary and a talent for initiating and shepherding dialogue, the committee members will gain the gravitas and regard they need to be successful in giving their classmates the comfort and confidence they need to speak candidly. Once they have a solid understanding of what matters to their peers, the committee reps can brainstorm specific actions that can address those concerns. "Lab does a great job of giving students the tools they need to advocate for themselves and others. Our goal is to show them how to apply that strength to DEIB work," explains Head of School **Kim Wargo**.

Perry believes that Lab and its students are uniquely suited to undertake this work. "The world is not necessarily designed so that everyone has an equal chance to succeed," he explains. Because Lab

was founded on that very premise, the idea of instituting changes that make the world more equitable and inclusive is inherent in the school's DNA. "If we can develop systems that support students with language-based learning differences, we can apply that approach to other iterations of identity such as race, religion, gender, and sexuality," says Perry. He also points to Lab's commitment in helping students advocate for themselves; self-advocacy and advocating for others is instrumental to making progress around DEIB matters.

### DEIB TRAINING FOR FACULTY

It isn't just the students and the DEIB team that have been grappling with this important work. Lab's faculty and staff have also been immersed in looking at how they can contribute effectively to the school's equity growth. This past year, the team spent a professional development day in training with **Tamisha Williams, M.Ed.**, a dynamic facilitator, transformational coach, and practitioner in diversity, equity, and inclusion. With guidance from Williams the group explored the need for equity literacy: the ability to read a situation and respond appropriately. They also reflected upon their personal level of competency and took comfort in hearing that their response to a challenging situation need not be shouldered in isolation. "If a teacher observes a racist or sexist situation, they might wind up second guessing how they handled

the problem. That can be a troubling burden to bear alone. It is helpful to reiterate that they can turn to the DEIB coordinators, myself, even a colleague, to talk through their concerns and get reassurance," explains Perry. The faculty broke out into groups by division to further explore, via role playing, how specific situations might be handled in age-appropriate ways. The participants found it beneficial to work with their division colleagues, building on the collaborative nature of equity work. At least one division continued to practice these hypothetical situations and possible responses after Williams' training had concluded. Perry draws the analogy between equity work and an athlete: "You can read books on soccer, you can watch soccer videos. But until you step onto the field and participate, until you practice-practice-practice, you can't really play the game." He points out that role playing helps the teachers and staff be prepared for a variety of experiences.

### MIRRORS, WINDOWS, DOORS

Academics become far more meaningful when you can apply them to real life. Lab's DEIB team is committed to developing a school-wide curriculum that is relevant: as reflective as possible of the scope of human diversity and the range of human experience.

As one of the DEIB coordinators points out, this begins with the "unlearning of the Euro-centric version of history," and exploring the many

meaningful accomplishments as well as the struggles of non-white, non-gender-conforming, non-Christian peoples.

A significant amount of time and care is invested in choosing what materials will be presented in the classroom. Perry points out the importance of books reflecting an actual diversity of experience. "If every book about Black people focuses on Black people suffering or Asians as immigrants what does that say? Blacks are not always miserable... Asians are not always foreign." The DEIB team is intent on finding resources that reflect joy, success, achievement, romance, and hope in addition to struggles. "This is the true scope of real-life human experiences for all people."

### AFFINITY GROUPS

Affinity groups provide a safe space for Lab students to connect, share, and see themselves mirrored by students with similar backgrounds or challenges. Sometimes new affinity groups are formed when the students' need to cope with "being other" arises. The recent rise of anti-Semitic behavior nationwide prompted the origin of a Jewish affinity group.

Some affinity groups welcome participation by kids who do not identify as Black, LatinX, Jewish, or LGBTQ+, but who simply have questions or want to show support. "Affinity groups are a great way for kids to learn and become meaningful allies for classmates who are looked at as 'other,'" points out Middle School Coordinator **Liora Valero**.



### MEET THE DEIB TEAM

**Anthony Perry**, Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging; **Lauren Caldwell**, Reading and Writing Teacher, Lower School Coordinator; **Liora Valero**, Head of Academic Clubs, Middle School Co-Coordinator; **Amanda Palmer**, English Teacher, Middle School Co-Coordinator; **Noelle Vargas**, Science Teacher, Upper School Coordinator

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

THE UPHEAVAL of the last two years gave the Lab School Advancement team and its slew of volunteers the opportunity to reimagine the school's longstanding Gala format.

On April 23, we transformed our signature event into something new, exciting, and welcoming to all, by moving the celebration from our longtime venue at the National Building Museum to the Lab School Gym. And that's not all! For the first time in its 37-year history, the Gala took place on a Saturday night: no trekking into downtown traffic, no worry about what "black tie" means these days, no stress about overseeing homework!

Of course, the tradition of honoring Outstanding Achievers with Learning Differences and raising much-needed funds for financial aid and increased salaries for our amazing teachers continued to be the focus of this popular all-school soiree.

With the perfectly timely theme of There's No Place like Home, the community gathered in a transformed Winans Gym in the Cafritz Arts and Athletics Center on the Reservoir Campus to celebrate being together in person. Guests entered on a yellow brick road surrounded by a field of handmade bright red paper poppies; everyone was stunned that the gym could so "not look like a gym!"

The enthusiastic crowd of parents, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests was welcomed by Emcee and Lab parent (Liam, Upper School) **The Honorable Joe Crowley**; our creative and visionary Gala Co-Chairs **Sarah Bassam** (Ameen, Middle School) and **Becca Mahoney** (Patrick, Lower School); and Head of School **Kim Wargo**. Waiters passed champagne, cocktails,

and delicious hors d'oeuvres while the guests viewed the beautifully displayed silent auction items, including vacation homes, theater and sports tickets, jewelry, wine, dining, art, and much more.

In keeping with the theme of There's No Place Like Home, the Outstanding Achiever this year was our own Physical Education Teacher and Coach, **Jon Stocks '89**, who is also a Lab alumnus. Stocks shared that he came to teach at Lab because he wanted to "pay it forward," by giving back to the school that had given him so much. He does that every day with his students.

**Ben Mattox '08** was our Outstanding Alumnus. Since graduating from Lab and then McDaniel College, Ben sampled several career paths before finding his sweet spot at Building Momentum in Alexandria, VA, a company that uses all the tools of the future to teach lessons for today to the corporate, military, and education communities as well as the public. Earlier in the year, Ben worked with **Daniel Hartmann**, Director of Educational Technology to plan and develop Lab's new Robotics and Engineering workshop space.

We also had as our guests our 2021 Awardees who we honored virtually in 2021: Outstanding Achiever of 2021—author, poet, speaker and disability advocate **LeDerick Horne** and Outstanding Alumna of 2021—**Mia Van Allen '16**, who now works for Live Nation on the Global Festivals Team.

Many thanks to all of our wonderful sponsors, auction donors, Gala chairs, parents, faculty, staff, and everyone who attended this new venture. We look forward to seeing you next year!







## SAVE THE DATE

**38<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GALA**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023**  
**RESERVOIR CAMPUS**

◀ From left: 2022 Outstanding Alumnus Ben Mattox '08, 2022 Outstanding Achiever Jon Stocks '89; 2021 Outstanding Achiever LeDerick Horne, 2021 Outstanding Alumna Mia Van Allen '16



# PHILLIPS

## THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION EXHIBITS LOWER SCHOOL MASTERPIECES

This spring, one of Washington’s most prestigious art galleries, The Phillips Collection, welcomed some of the very youngest artists in its 99-year history. Twenty-one students in the Lower School reading and sciences classes delighted in having their artwork displayed in the same gallery as Renoir, Picasso, Whistler, and O’Keefe. Here is a look at the various projects these Lower School classes worked on to marry academics and art in the most creative and effective ways.

Fundamental to Lab school is the conviction that the arts are a powerful teaching tool in every subject matter. Art is a particularly great way to level the playing field for students with language-based learning differences, a way for them to feel more comfortable sharing the knowledge they’re learning. Humans are born to express themselves—we all crave self-expression. Lab School’s Lower School students not only access academic information they also express it through personal works of art.

As one of Lab School’s two teachers to have completed the Phillip’s Collection’s Fellowship for arts integration,\* **Lynn Gudhus** developed a six-week unit that incorporated subject content along with arts integration projects.

The Phillips graciously waived their admission fee for the students and their families, so they could enjoy the excitement of seeing their hung pieces, and they could tour the rest of the Collection as well. A few skeptics—people who had questioned why Lab would use art as a vehicle to teach science of all subjects—walked away after visiting the Phillips exhibition saying, “Now I get it.” Words that were especially gratifying for students and teachers alike!

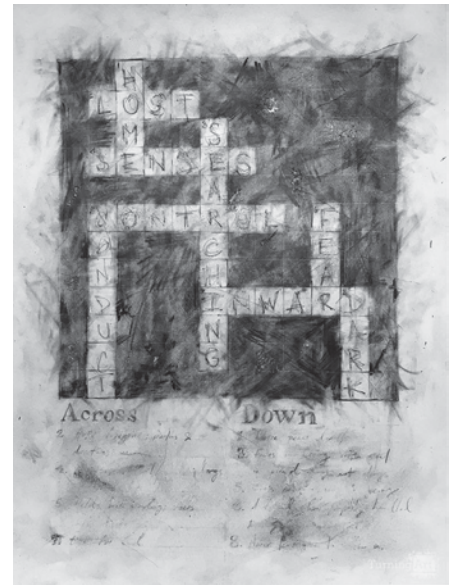
\*The Phillips Fellowship was awarded to Lab School’s Middle School math, robotics, and engineering teacher **Maria Brinza** in 2019.



## WESLEY CLARK: COMPOUND WORDS, HOMOPHONES, AND DYSLEXIA

Lower School reading students were learning about compound words and homophones; the work of DC-based artist Wesley Clark seemed an ideal match for them. Clark is a Black artist who copes with dyslexia, and he uses words in his art frequently, often in the form of crossword puzzles. The words he uses reflect his journey—they're personal to him. As the students studied his art, they were struck by the fact that an artist with dyslexia isn't afraid of words but chooses to work with them.

Using their knowledge of compound words and homophones, the kids chose a bank of words that had special meaning for them . . . perhaps focused on food, or family, or pets . . . and they created their own crossword puzzle art. They used the same techniques Clark uses, like graphite and erasure marks. Clark likes to see the imperfections in his work; he feels that is where art really shines. This really hit home for the students: it's okay to make mistakes, it's okay to misspell. Their connection with the artist was impressive.



### MEET WESLEY CLARK

Wesley Clark was born in Washington, DC and grew up in Silver Spring, Maryland. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from Syracuse University and a Master of Fine Arts from George Washington University—where he was twice awarded the Morris Louis Fellowship in 2010 and 2011; a fellowship primarily awarded once per incoming graduate class. A Black man who deals with dyslexia, Clark infuses social and politic criticisms into his works; merging the historical with the contemporary, to speak on issues faced by Blacks in America.



## WASSILY KANDINSKY: VISIBLE LIGHT, SOUND, AND SYNESTHESIA

Meanwhile, Lower School science students were learning about visible light, for instance the colors on the spectrum. They were also studying sound and how the ear works. Their science lesson was paired with the work of Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), the great Russian abstract artist. Kandinsky lived with a condition called synesthesia, where a person hears color and sees sound. This affected his work profoundly; for instance, he experienced Wagner’s operas as explosions of color.

The students connected their knowledge of light waves and pitch with four musicians who also have synesthesia: Duke Ellington, Billy Joel, Billie Eilish, and Pharrell Williams. The students picked a song by one of these artists and listened to the piece while painting with oil pastels, just as Kandinsky did. They became absorbed in the music and let their art be influenced by pitch, frequency, sound waves, and light waves.

### MEET WASSILY KANDINSKY

Kandinsky is celebrated as one of the pioneers of abstract Western art. Born in Moscow, he graduated from Grekov Odessa Art School, before getting degrees in law and economics from the University of Moscow. Kandinsky began to seriously pursue painting at the age of 30, embracing a range of artistic styles before settling on abstract expression. Kandinsky’s art reflects a confluence of music and spirituality. His object-free paintings portray a spiritual perception influenced by sounds and emotions: a unity of sensation. Driven by his Christian faith and the inner compulsions of an artist, Kandinsky’s paintings display an ambiguity of form rendered in a vast range of color as well as rebellion against the conventional aesthetic values of his time.

## DID YOU KNOW?

According to *Psychology Today*, synesthesia is a neurological condition in which stimulation of one sensory or cognitive pathway (for example, hearing) leads to automatic, involuntary experiences in a second sensory or cognitive pathway (such as vision). In other words, different senses respond in ways typically associated with a different sense. If hearing music causes a person to see colors in their mind, that is an example of synesthesia. Nor is it limited to sound and color; in some instances, a person may hear a name—say, Chloe—and taste a strawberry, or see green and smell brownies. Synesthesia is not a disease, and it isn’t harmful to your health. In fact, many artists, writers, and musicians welcome synesthesia as a muse!





## MEET YAYOI KUSAMA

Yayoi Kusama was born in Matsumoto, Nagano, in 1929. Now in her 90s—and despite debilitating emotional challenges—she continues to produce art in her Tokyo studio. She studied traditional *Nihonga* (Japanese-style) painting in Kyoto before moving to New York City in 1958. In Manhattan, Kusama was active in avant-garde circles just as pop art and minimalism were beginning to emerge. The artist’s fame grew in the late 1960s thanks to her radical antiwar activity, which championed nudity and polka dots in the streets of New York. Kusama returned to Japan in 1973, where she has since resided. In recent years, Kusama has achieved tremendous critical respect as well as celebrity status. You can enjoy a special exhibition of Kusama’s work at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC through November 2022.

## YAYOI KUSAMA: PUMPKINS, LIFECYCLES, AND ANXIETY

A third exercise was inspired by the pumpkins the class grew in The Lab School Foxhall garden. They studied the lifecycle of pumpkins and linked their knowledge to the art of Kusama, who is known for her colorful, oversized pumpkins and orbs. Gudhus explains, “I picked this artist to tie-in the social-emotional component of art, since many of our students struggle with those issues.” Kusama has crippling anxiety and the students considered questions such as, “How does this artist manage her anxiety through art?” and “Is making art a strategy you could use to manage your emotions?”

Each student made two pumpkins—one papier-mâché and one felt in the style of Kusama. They looked at the brochure from her outdoor exhibition in New York and created a class-wide exhibition catalog for their pumpkin projects. Every student had their own page complete with photography, and they wrote artists’ statements explaining a bit about themselves and their artwork.

# GRADUATION 2022



*"I liken your education to finding the key to unlock that part of your brain that flourishes with knowledge, creativity and brilliance that probably would have lain dormant in other schools."*

—COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER AND LAB SCHOOL GRANDPARENT DR. JOYCE LADNER

THIRTY-SEVEN SENIORS walked across the stage to receive their diplomas during The Lab School of Washington's Class of 2022 graduation on Friday, June 17. Following the success of last year's outdoor ceremony, this year's commencement was once again held in the al fresco "amphitheater" formed at the center of the Reservoir campus.

Despite the heat, it was a joyous celebration thanks in part to the returned attendance of the entire Lab faculty and staff, who began the ceremony with a full procession. Head of School **Kim Wargo** took to the stage to welcome the crowd and give opening remarks. She recognized and thanked The Lab School Board of Trustees, the family and friends of the graduating seniors, and the Lab School faculty, with special attention for several departing staff members who had each given 20 or more years of service to Lab.

Turning her attention to the seniors, Wargo praised them for navigating the complex societal challenges of the past few years, adding that "through all of this, they have been leaders in our community. They have inspired us to do better. They have supported their classmates and appreciated their teachers." In small-group conversations throughout the Spring, Wargo spoke with seniors about their experience at Lab, interested to hear what the students most appreciated and what they would change about the school. Repeatedly, the seniors expressed gratitude for each other and their teachers. They then challenged Wargo to continue to make space for every student



*As a teacher, advisor, and DEI Coordinator, I could stand here and tell you all stories about laughing, crying, traveling, protesting, and learning with these amazing human beings. However, all of those tales are essentially about how much I've marveled at each and every one of these graduates as they navigated becoming the wonderful souls they are today."*

—TEACHER, ADVISOR, AND DEI COORDINATOR JEWELL WATSON-HELLKAMP

to be their authentic self and to truly celebrate the diversity and spirit of the community.

At last year's graduation, Wargo added the new tradition of having the graduating class select a faculty member to read a poem at the commencement ceremony. This year, the seniors chose teacher, advisor, and DEI coordinator **Jewell Watson-Hellkamp** who read Maya Angelou's poem, "Human Family." The poem describes the vast diversity of humanity but dismisses obvious physical or geographical differences as minor, instead emphasizing that "we are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike."

After the reading, Student Advisory Council Representative **Ian Weiss** spoke on behalf of the senior class. Recalling his early years in which he loathed going to school, Ian recounted how Lab changed his perspective: "To put it lightly, nothing previously had initiated such a joy and satisfaction for learning as my first day at Lab."

Ian spoke about how The Lab School's academic environment provided a space for his classmates to develop intellectual exploration and foster meaningful friendships. Despite the COVID-dictated transition to Zoom during the class' sophomore year, Ian expressed gratitude for a remarkable high school experience.

The commencement address was given by civil rights activist, author, university president, national public policy analyst, education reformer, and current Lab grandparent **Dr. Joyce Ladner**. Ladner found her passion in civil and human rights while growing up in Mississippi surround by racial segregation and discrimination. She was active in the civil rights movement and was an organizer of the Freedom Democratic Party and Freedom Summer.

Her advocacy for students with learning differences began

when she discovered that her son was dyslexic. Ladner praised the seniors for the trials and tribulations they endured. "You are victorious because you did the work, and often it was very hard work. There were no short cuts for you. This society demands the same from you as it does from students who do not have learning challenges."

Ladner warned the seniors that the resilience, courage, and ability to bounce back they demonstrated in graduating will still be needed going forward. "My generation is bequeathing you a world that is in great turmoil and conflict. For that, I am sorry. But you will meet the challenge because you must." She charged the seniors with finding a cause outside of themselves that they can believe in, "because your lives will be greatly enriched by believing in something outside yourself, and by helping others."

Following the commencement address, Head of High School **Lisa McMahon** gave thoughtful remarks about each of the graduating seniors — no small feat for such a large graduating class! As each senior took the stage, McMahon touched on their achievements, passions, and plans before presenting them with their diploma.

Wargo gave closing remarks and read the poem "Ithaka" by Constantine Cavafy. With allusions to the Odyssey, the poem is a reminder to enjoy the journey as we work towards our own individual goals. The high school band ended the ceremony with a performance of "What a Wonderful World" then joined the rest of the seniors in moving their tassels and becoming Lab School Alumni.

Their high school years were filled with challenges both expected and unforeseen, but the Class of 2022 rose to the occasion and reached this pinnacle through dedication and hard work. Congratulations to the graduates and best of luck in the years to come!

*We will be celebrating your successes, and commiserating in your defeats, knowing—all the time—that you have the resilience and perseverance to pick yourselves up and move forward with new learning and determination."*

—HEAD OF SCHOOL KIM WARGO





▲ FIRST ROW, left to right: Casey Moran, Diego Bocock, Lauren Clark, Beatrice Johnston, Olivia Steffe, Maya Rajan, Isa Cabrol, Emry Goldstein, Carter Repke, Anna Hudson, Jayshaun Edwards, Avery Stenstrom, Joshua O’Keefe-Walzer, Jack Freedman; SECOND ROW, left to right: Sabine DuMoulin, Tommy Di Iaconi, Skye Washington, Meira Liebman, Sophie Phillips, Zach Blumenfeld, Merritt Forman, Nick Parker, Eli Cuneo, Michael Ani, Alec Tongour, Liam Evans, Aaron Letteri; THIRD ROW, left to right: Oliver D’Esposito, Kyle Herson, Logan Johns, Hugh Meredith, Ian Weiss, Alex Soto, Josiah Hardney, Jaxon Healey, Elizabeth Jackson, Isaac Steinberg



*Throughout four years, we have seen firsthand the talents and promising opportunities that each individual in our class possesses. I can only imagine what lies ahead for such a wonderfully distinct set of people.”*

—IAN WEISS ‘22

## SENIOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

### ACADEMIC AWARDS

#### Math Department

Probability/Statistics:  
Skye Washington  
Calculus:  
Zach Blumenfeld

#### Language Department

Latin III  
Merritt Forman  
Spanish IV  
Ian Weiss

#### Science Department

Earth Science  
Sabine DuMoulin  
Physics  
Michael Ani  
Egg Drop Project  
Michael Ani  
Zach Blumenfeld  
Alex Soto  
Robotics  
Oliver D’Esposito

#### Social Studies Department

US Government  
Thomas Di Iaconi  
DC History  
Olivia Steffe  
History of People of  
Color of America  
Isaac Steinberg  
Rhetoric  
Zach Blumenfeld  
Otto History Award  
Ian Weiss

#### English Department

English 12  
Maya Rajan

#### Senior Thesis Awards

Traditional Thesis  
Josiah Hardney  
STEM Thesis  
Oliver D’Esposito  
Digital-Visual Arts  
Merritt Forman



Visual 2D Arts  
Diego Bocoek  
Visual 3D Arts  
Emry Goldstein

**1st Annual Golden  
C-Wrench Award**  
Oliver D'Esposito

**Community Service  
Award**  
Anna Hudson

**PALS Community  
Builder Award**  
Nick Parker

**ATHLETIC AWARDS**

**Cross Country**  
MVP  
Alex Soto

**HS Volleyball**  
MVP  
Anna Hudson

**Coed Volleyball**  
MVP  
Liam Evans  
Most Improved  
Beatrice Johnston

**HS Soccer**  
MVP  
Beatrice Johnston  
Most Improved  
Zach Blumenfeld

**Track**  
MVP  
Logan Johns  
Coaches Award  
Jaxon Healey

**Girls Varsity Basketball**  
Coaches Award  
Maya Rajan

**Boys Varsity Basketball**  
MVP  
Nick Parker  
Coaches Award  
Ian Weiss



**Athletes of the Year**  
Beatrice Johnston, Alex Soto

## CLASS OF 2022 COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

Adelphi University  
 Allegheny College  
**American University**  
**Anderson University**  
 University of Arizona  
**Brown University**  
 Butler University  
**The Catholic University of America**  
 Champlain College  
 Christopher Newport University  
 Clarion University  
**Cleveland Institute of Art**  
 University of Colorado Boulder  
 Columbus College of Art and Design  
 Connecticut College  
**Culinary Institute of America**  
**Davidson College**  
 Dean College  
**Delaware State University**  
 Drexel University  
 Duquesne University  
**Elon University**  
 Fairleigh Dickinson University  
 George Mason University  
 George Washington University  
**Goucher College**  
 Guilford College  
 Hampton University  
 High Point University  
**Hofstra University**  
 Hollins University  
**Howard University**  
 Ithaca College  
**James Madison University**  
**Longwood University**  
 Loyola University Chicago  
**Loyola University New Orleans**  
**Lynn University**  
 Maine College of Art and Design  
 Marquette University  
 University of Mary Washington  
 Maryland Institute College of Art  
**University of Maryland Baltimore**

**University of Maryland College Park**  
 Massachusetts College of Art and Design  
**McDaniel College**  
 Miami University  
 Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design  
**Mitchell College**  
 Morehouse College  
 Mount Holyoke College  
 Muhlenberg College  
 New York University  
**Northeastern University**  
**Oberlin College and Conservatory**  
 Old Dominion University  
**Pennsylvania State University**  
 Pennsylvania College of Technology  
 Reed College  
 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
 Ringling College of Art and Design  
 Rochester Institute of Technology  
 St. Joseph's University  
 Salisbury University  
**Sarah Lawrence College**  
**Savannah College of Art and Design**  
 Smith College  
 Spelman College  
 St. John's University  
**Syracuse University**  
 Tampa University  
 Temple University  
 Virginia Commonwealth University  
**Virginia Polytechnic Institute**  
 West Virginia Wesleyan College  
 Wilson College  
 Worcester Polytechnic Institute

\*Bold text denotes matriculation



# Faculty Awards

## THE 2022 STEVE WOLFE TEACHING INNOVATION AWARD



### CAITLYN KRIECK

This year, Junior High Social Studies Teacher **Caitlyn Kriek** received the **Steve Wolfe Teaching Innovation Award**. The Endowed Award was created in 2018 with generous gifts from now alumni parents **Evan and Sondra Wolff** and **Tige and Elizabeth Savage** to celebrate and support the creative and innovative teaching that is central to Lab’s mission and so particularly successful for our students.

They created The Steve Wolfe Teaching Innovation Fund, to support, acknowledge, and inspire teachers who create innovative curricula. The fund was named for an innovate teacher who taught science at Lab for 21 years. We are grateful to the Savage and Wolff families for their commitment to supporting excellence in creative teaching.

Kriek was selected from a robust group of nominees submitted from parents, faculty and staff. She created a new literacy-based course, Eyewitness History, which prioritized student-driven learning with a significant focus on the reading and analytical skills needed to learn directly from primary sources, detect bias, question traditional sources like textbooks take on historical perspectives, and connect historical events with current events. The scope of the course was almost entirely dictated by student interests and what they wanted to learn about.

She described the year as being unconventional for a history class—the class was not chronological and it followed no clear theme, but it engaged the students in a whole new way. “The students are completely invested in what and how they are learning and how they can express themselves better to show what they’ve learned. I feel I am teaching alongside my students.”

## THE 2021 BLUE HERON EDUCATOR AWARD



### LIZ BILBAO

In December 2021, the leaders of the Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound Program came to Lab to present the very first Blue Heron Educator Award to Lab’s Intermediate Science Teacher **Liz Bilbao**. The Blue Heron Educator Award was designed to honor educators who embody the characteristics of agility, integrity, compassion, and perseverance, and have gone above and beyond to inspire those same traits in their students—both in and out of the classroom.

Her nomination was ranked highest by their panel of reviewers and they said it was their privilege to get to recognize professionals who serve their students in meaningful ways. Many of Bilbao’s students were able to attend the award ceremony and experience some of the team building exercises that the Outward Bound Program offers in its educational programs for students and educators, including soon at their new DC site.



# Farewells

*May the Road Rise Up to Meet You  
May the Wind Always be at Your Back*



**NOEL BICKNELL**

“This is a tough place to leave,” comments **Noel Bicknell** as he reflects upon his 27-year career at Lab School. Noel’s contributions as Director of Academic Clubs have been cornerstones of the Lab program for nearly three decades, providing young learners with a sense of space, imagination, and ownership. “One of the joys of the Academic Club experience has been watching scores of students discover their voices, take responsibility for outcomes, and embrace ownership in crafting their academic experience,” explains Noel.

Academic Clubs were originally conceived by Sally Smith as a safe place where students could utilize—and cement—the skills they were learning through imaginative, immersive role-playing in a multi-sensory, project-based environment. Noel worked closely with the Lab School founder to expand upon her idea, developing such beloved Clubs as the Explorers’ Club and the Renaissance Club.

Noel recalls the challenge of running these role-playing programs on Zoom during COVID. “I had to think of costumes, props, and projects that the kids were likely to have lying around the house. The first stop for everyone was a deep dive into the family’s recycling bin to see what treasures could be salvaged!” COVID introduced another change for

Noel; as with so many people, he found himself yearning to focus more on the needs of his family and the desire to spend more time cultivating his own music and art.

Noel will be spending time with family in the Pacific Northwest—that will bring him back to his roots. He looks forward to a future when he can once more combine his talents, training, and imagination to help students with language-based learning differences.



**KATIE DOUGLAS**

**Katie Douglas**, who served as Lab’s Associate Head of Intermediate from 2017 to 2020 and as Acting Head of Intermediate this year, has accepted the role of Middle School Head at Friends Community School in College Park, Maryland.

Katie made many contributions to Lab over her 11-year tenure. Prior to her roles in Intermediate, Katie served as Lab’s High School Testing Coordinator and for five years was a High School English teacher. Between those two stints at Lab, Katie worked internationally as a Middle School special education and ESL teacher in Bangladesh and a High School learning support specialist in Bogotá. She was the brains behind Lab’s senior thesis project, which continues to be a hallmark feature of the Lab High School experience. She

also began Lab School’s Intermediate affinity groups.

Katie has her B.A. in Sociology from Haverford College, and her M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction, with a concentration in special education and ESL, from George Washington University. She is currently completing a certificate in advanced educational leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.



**KAREN DUNCAN**

Lab School’s Education Director, **Karen Duncan**, retired at the end of the 21–22 school year. Karen began her 44-year career at Lab in June of 1978, hired by **Sally Smith** as the Head Teacher, when the school was served 54 students in elementary and junior high.

Over the years, as a member of Lab’s leadership team, Karen has played an integral part in the School’s expansion, assisting with the move to the Reservoir campus, and supporting the faculty and administration through the renovations and additions of the Castle, Carriage House, gymnasium, and arts wing. She facilitated and supported many programs at Lab, including the high school, the night school for adults with learning differences, the related services departments, tutoring and testing services, the archaeological dig project, the Lecture Series, and the establishment



of Baltimore Lab, which is now a separate independent school.

For the past several decades Karen has focused on supporting our jurisdictionally placed students and families, and has worked closely with division heads, related services providers, and teachers to ensure that Lab meets the needs of individual students. She has deep connections with advocates and educators across our region, and has been committed to ensuring the best possible experience for every student who attends Lab.

Karen has served on the Financial Aid Committee since its inception. She has led the successful accreditation process at Lab through the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, ensuring that Lab maintains the high standards required in this process.

Karen has graciously agreed to stay on as a Senior Special Education Consultant to ensure a smooth transition in our relationships with the school's jurisdictional partners throughout the region. She is looking forward to the prospect of "rewiring," with more time to spend with family and friends.



**DOUG FAGEN**

**Dr. Doug Fagen**, the Director of Psychological Services for The Reservoir Group and Director of Psychological Services and Wellness at Lab, stepped down from his position after 23 years. Doug is returning to private practice as a clinical psychologist.

Since joining the Lab community, Doug has impacted the lives of countless

students, and has made contributions to the entire Lab School community. He has been a wise counselor and resource, as the school strives to foster a culture of wellness and belonging for all students. For the past two years, Dr. Fagen has led the focus on the mental health of students, parents, teachers, and staff. Dr. Fagen has been at the vanguard of integrating mental health, wellness practices, and social-emotional learning into the daily program at Lab, including introducing Responsive Classroom and mindfulness to the school's practices.

Doug Fagen reflects, "When I first came to work at Lab 23 years ago, my goal was to help our incredible students navigate the challenging and complicated task of figuring out who they are. That task was the reason I came to work every day, and what makes this place so hard to leave."



**JESSICA LUX**

After a decade as Head of the Junior High at Lab, **Jessica Lux** stepped down from her role at the end of this academic year.

During her time leading the Junior High, Jessica enhanced student enrollment, curriculum, and programs. Jessica's focus over the last ten years has been on shaping a cohesive curriculum, reflective of grade-level standards, while also supporting the needs of individual learners. With her team, she has worked to incorporate hands-on learning and immersive learning experiences, including special events on topics such as the "Influence of Media on the

Civil Rights Movement," the "History of Blues," and "Antigone and Greek tragedy." She has collaborated with **Melissa Wood**, formerly Director of Speech, Language, and Literacy at Lab, and the speech-language team to train and institute the Orton-Gillingham reading program and The Writing Revolution into the teaching across the junior high.

Jessica served on Lab's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Planning Committee, the recent reaccreditation committee, and the Middle School planning committee. She helped guide faculty, staff, students, and families through the challenges of teaching and learning in a pandemic

Before coming to Lab, Jessica spent 10 years at Kingsbury Day School where, in addition to leading the Middle School and serving as Acting Head of School, she developed and led the High School program. She will pursue a Masters Degree in Social Work.



**LAURELLE SHEEDY MCCREADY**

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations, **Laurelle Sheedy McCready**, retired at the end of the 2021-22 school year.

Laurelle began her career in DC, serving on Capitol Hill and on the White House staff. She enjoyed a lengthy career on Wall Street and at the executive search for TMP Worldwide (Monster.com) in New York City. Following nine years as Director of Finance and Administration and CFO at National

Presbyterian School and The National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, Laurelle joined Lab in 2011.

Laurelle has worked with Lab's senior leadership to improve the school's financial health, while also focusing on increasing teacher salaries and expanding Lab's financial assistance resources. She has led efforts to significantly improve technology infrastructure at Lab, including renovating teaching spaces, adding to the high school building and theater, and upgrading the building/mechanical infrastructure. For the last two years, Laurelle has been an integral member of the team helping Lab navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to her work at Lab, Laurelle has been active in the National Business Officer Association (NBOA), the professional organization for independent school business officers. She is a founding member of the Cherry Blossom Risk Management Consortium, which provides regional independent schools access to more robust risk mitigation practices and better priced liability insurance. Laurelle has been a vestry member at St. Columba's Episcopal Church, a trustee of St. Columba's Nursery School, and involved with Our Military Kids, which provides after-school activity grants to children of

deployed military Reservists and Guards.

As she moves into retirement, Laurelle is excited about shorter to-do lists, more time on the water, and more attention to family and friends. She and her husband, Ron, have settled into their new home on Kent Island.



### SHAUN MISKELL

Few teachers stay in one position for 40 years—especially while continuing to insist, “I don’t wish to be a teacher!”

**Shaun Miskell** joined the Lab School team in 1982 after an early career on the road as director of Library Theatre's Books Alive Touring Show which traveled throughout the mid-Atlantic states. Identified, recruited, and hired by Sally Smith who preferred that her faculty be artists first, Shaun has more

than fulfilled the calling, teaching his students to be accomplished learners through the gateway of performing arts. In 2002, Shaun created Lab's student/faculty play, a beloved part of the school's theater-rich program. In 2012, he and fellow faculty members **Mark Jarvis, Becky Alberts, Nancy Rowland**, and a team of talented faculty members created Lab's signature, performance-based summer experience for middle school and high school students. It was an opportunity to truly integrate arts and academics and create an unforgettable experience that redefined the definition of “camp” at Lab. In 2019, a very fitting honor was bestowed on Shaun with the naming of Lab's Shaun Miskell Theater.

During his time at Lab, Shaun also worked as co-director with Mark Brutsché of C.T. Rex, family theatre in northern Virginia and spent 20 summers with the Smithsonian Summer program making science fiction videos with middle school students.

Kim Wargo reflected on Shaun's decades-long tenure as Coordinator of Performing Arts, “Shaun has changed lives - he has given students the opportunities to challenge themselves, to believe in themselves, to work in a truly collaborative way, and to feel the rush of work well done.”

## *We couldn't have done it without you!*

Countless thanks are due to our two extraordinary school nurses **Adriana van Breda** and **Ruthanne Neary**. For the past 2½ years, these wise and compassionate professionals have been on the front line of the school's COVID response efforts, guiding parents, teachers, and administrators through the formation of Lab's policies and procedures, and being available for students through countless days of testing and masking, and safety protocols.

Both Adriana and Ruthanne retired at the end of the spring semester. The entire Lab School community joins in wishing these tireless team members joyful days and merry adventures!

From top: Adriana Van Breda, Foxhall Nurse; Ruthanne Neary, Reservoir Nurse





## NANCY ROWLAND

After 28 years in an array of roles at Lab, **Nancy Rowland** is making an exciting career move: she has assumed the role of Head of School at the Orinda Academy in Orinda, California. The position comes with the added perk of allowing Nancy to be closer to her West Coast family.

“In 1993, we moved to DC [from the Bay Area] on an adventure we thought would last only 6 months. Then I discovered Lab. I could never have predicted that I would still be here 28 years later,” reflects Nancy.

Nancy began her Lab career in the mid-1990s as an assistant teacher and tutor. During the next several decades, she became a master teacher and eventually Associate Head of the Junior High, before assuming her role in admissions in 2012. She was part of the team that created and directed The Summer Project at Lab, an interdisciplinary summer program for junior high and high school students. She has also been a leader and participant in Lab’s diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging work, helping shape Lab’s DEI strategic plan. As Associate Director of Admissions, Nancy was instrumental in the adoption and organization of MyLab’s enrollment management database. She also worked to create a family-centered experience for those interested in learning about and applying to Lab.

Established in 1982, Orinda Academy currently serves approximately 80 students with learning differences in grades 9–12. We are thrilled that Nancy will continue her work as leader of a strong school serving students with learning differences.



## THE LAB SCHOOL FUND

Show your love for Lab by making a gift to The Lab School Fund, which supports the general operating budget and impacts all aspects of the school.

Learn more by visiting us online at [labschool.org/supportus](https://labschool.org/supportus) or contacting the Director of Institutional Advancement at [marty.cathcart@labschool.org](mailto:marty.cathcart@labschool.org)

**Make a gift at [labschool.org/giving](https://labschool.org/giving) or scan the QR code.**



# S H O R T S

## The Pioneers of the Future

The Global Division offers virtual access to The Lab School’s research-based curriculum to students who live too far away from the Washington, DC campus. In April, however, Global Division students from all across the country came together to meet in person and compete in Destination Imagination, a program where students work together in teams to solve open-ended STEAM challenges designed to teach the creative process. The Global Division’s team (The Pioneers of the Future) had great success at the competition, winning the Spirit of DI Award which is given to the team acting as the best role models in the area of spirit, teamwork, sportsmanship, or volunteerism.



## Another Banner for the Rafters

The Junior High Boys basketball team ended their season as the ISSAC Middle School Champions for the 2021–2022 season. Led by coaches **Gaia Baytop** and **James Bullock**, the team defeated The French School in the championship game to bring home the trophy.



# I AM U and You Are Me

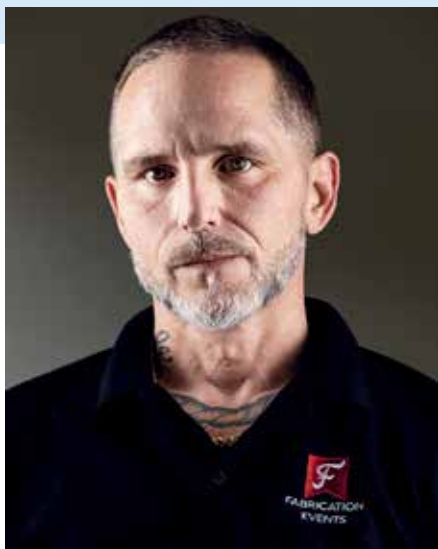
The third annual Identity, Arts, Music, and Unity (IAMU) event was held this spring. First organized by the late Lab Social Worker **Aaron Boose**, this year's event was orchestrated by co-planners **Sara Hawkins** and **Liora Valero** who led a celebration of both Boose's legacy and art's ability to explore identity and create community. This year's theme of celebrating and exploring identity through the arts also included an undercurrent of "healing through the arts." With events half virtual and half in-person, faculty and staff led workshops that fostered a space for students to explore and share some aspects of their identity with one another.



## A Play with Music

This year's student/faculty show, *Antigone in Concert*, was an all-new adaptation of the ancient Sophocles tragedy. The production featured original songs with music composed by **Diego Bocock '22**, who co-wrote the lyrics with **Isa Cabrol '22**. The project was first conceived pre-COVID by Cabrol, who also starred as Antigone, in July 2019. She composed an email to Coordinator of Performing Arts **Shaun Miskell** and the production began its long journey to the stage. It was worth the wait, and *Antigone in Concert* brought the house down during its three-night run in March.

# Alumni News



Matthew Thompson '89



Scott Lange '91 with his rescue pup, Daisy



Zillah Wesley '00

## CLASS NOTES

### CLASS OF 1988

**BJ Muse** is the principal technical architect at the cybersecurity firm Mandiant. Prior to that position, he started his own business and worked at several companies including AOL and Equifax.

### CLASS OF 1989

**Matthew Thompson** is a lead installer for Fabrication Events in the DC area. He has installed several projects for Lab including our recent Gala/Celebration and graduation stages and said that it was great to be back on campus. Lab piqued his interest in photography, which is still his passion.



Vincent Gray Jr. '01

### CLASS OF 1991

**Scott Lange** works in the entertainment industry as a front of house sound engineer and tour manager. He is also the head engineer for Fish Head Cantina in Baltimore. When not traveling across the country with shows and festivals he spends his time with Daisy, his rescue puppy.

### CLASS OF 1994

**Ralph Mills** lives in Upper Marlboro and is a federal employee for the Department of State.

### CLASS OF 1997

Five years ago, after 18 years of teaching, **Jenny Van Agtmael** started a dog service called pawzfriends. You can check it out at [www.pawzfriends.com](http://www.pawzfriends.com)! Jenny has a 10-year-old daughter.

### CLASS OF 1999

In late 2019, **Nicholas Cole** moved to London to work as the finance director for Cerberus Capital Management, an alternative asset management firm. When not working, he spends as much time as possible traveling and exploring Europe.



CLASS OF 2001 MINI REUNION ATTENDEES: (l to r) Megan Whiteley, Chris Johanssen, Eva Martin O'Keefe, Ian Sterne, Tia Prather Medina, Maryalice Beal, Blakely Jackson, Chris Byrne.

### CLASS OF 2000

**Zillah Wesley** works as a policy organizer for the Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice. She loves the theater and to travel.

### CLASS OF 2001

**Vincent Gray, Jr.** has been working in several different career fields since leaving The Lab School. He has started many side businesses including rethriftng and making custom fishing gear to sell. He is a part of a bass fishing club and plans on releasing a clothing line for the club soon. He still loves to bake and enjoys traveling the world.

The class of 2001, organized by **Tia Prather Medina**, held a mini reunion on September 21, 2021 at Butler's Orchard. They reminisced, told great stories and were glad to see each other after many months away from people!

### CLASS OF 2003

**Charles White III** continues his career as a uniformed division officer for the US Secret Service. He is also a real estate investor, owning a four-unit apartment

building in southeast DC. He reports that he has "one amazing nephew named Shane, who is his world."

### CLASS OF 2004

**Constance Griggs** is a special education teacher at DCPS Cleveland Elementary School. It is her first year of teaching and she loves it.

### CLASS OF 2005

**Maxine Katz** works for a non-profit and was recently promoted from administrative assistant to membership coordinator.

### CLASS OF 2006

**Tim Danos** has created the University of Delaware's summer pre-college programs for rising high school juniors and seniors. Tim makes sure to include hands on, experiential learning courses in the arts and music during these programs and handpicks professors to ensure they understand learning differences and want to work with high school students. Last year, Tim volunteered to be part of Lab's IAMU



Charles White '03 with his nephew



Tim Danos '06 with his family.



Jack Feeley '07

Celebration, co-presenting with Sean Rozsics on Music After Lab. He is the father of a six-year-old son and a two-year-old daughter.

**Ali Dreyer Ganssle** married David Ganssle in November 2020. They live in Southern California where Ali works as a project coordinator for the L.A. Opera.

### CLASS OF 2007

**Jack Feeley** is a network news field producer in New York City. He was previously at The Today Show on NBC. He is still playing soccer!

**Mackenzie Martinez** is the press secretary for congressman Steve Chabot, First District, Ohio.

For the past three years, **Max Van Over** has worked as a biostatistician for a clinical research organization under Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield. He is focused on surgical procedures and medical devices used in the treatment and prevention of negative vascular health outcomes. He also is trained to use Anthem's database of information for research purposes. His interests include cryptocurrency, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, snowboarding, playing the drums, and spending time with his niece.

**Bryan Wood** works at the U.S. House of Representatives for the chief administrative officer after spending seven years working for PepsiCo. He had a son and got married in 2016, and over the last year he has followed his gut and started two businesses.

### CLASS OF 2008

**Maya Solomon-Lane** decided to become a locksmith in the DMV area, explaining that there are "so very few women in trade school, and she is trying to help change that!" After graduating she is plans to stay in the area with her partner and their four cats. During the lockdown she taught herself to repair Apple computers and modify both retro and newer game systems.

**Skyla Van Over** is a health and nutrition manager currently living in Boston. She works at ABCD Head Start and Children's Services and is focused on the health and economic aspects of community development.

### CLASS OF 2009

**Rachel Shlaferman Heimann** is working as an associate vice president at Morgan Stanley.

In May 2022, **Emma Safford** received an MBA from American University.

### CLASS OF 2010

In June, **Lee Olson Rochelle** and her husband David welcomed their first child, Liam.

**Andrew Goodman, Tyler Hill, and Gwenn Lavine** had a mini-reunion when Andrew visited from his home in Israel. Andrew works in information technology, Gwenn is an expert at the Apple flagship store at the Carnegie Library in DC and Tyler teaches history and club in the Middle School at Lab.

### CLASS OF 2011

**Jack Casasco** works as a field engineer for Keller North America, a geotechnical specialist contractor. In 2021, Jack successfully thru-hiked the entire 2,650-mile Pacific Crest trail from Mexico to Canada, "a life changing experience to put it lightly." In his spare time, he enjoys whitewater kayaking. He made his first descent of Great Falls in mid-2019 and organizes volunteer cleanup efforts of the Potomac River via the Potomac Pickup / The Great Falls Foundation.

**Ian McDowell** is an alum of James Madison University and graduated from the University of Richmond School of Law in May 2022. He will be taking the DC Bar Exam.



Bryan Wood '07 with his family.



Max Van Over '07





Emma Safford '09

## CLASS OF 2012

**Amanda Libby** is currently finishing up a course in web development then plans on entering the IT field. She has lately been interested in listening to podcasts, particularly on the subject of history.

**Eli Hovland** currently works for the House Committee on Education and Labor. He intends to take the LSATs.

**Caldwell Munk** graduated from the University of Colorado in May 2022 with a degree in anthropology. He wants to attend Georgetown and pursue a master's degree in national security after a year off to work in Colorado.

## CLASS OF 2014



Lee Olson Rochelle '10 with her family

**Kahlil Epps** recently won the Jordan A. Quick Memorial Award for the Class of 2022 at Vanderbilt Law School. This award is given annually to the student judged to have made the greatest contribution to the quality of life at the law school through leadership with the Vanderbilt Bar Association, for which Kahlil served as president in 2021-22. He plans to join Wiley Rein in Washington, DC as an associate after graduation.

## CLASS OF 2015

**Sophie Barrett** works at the New England Center for Children, a school for students with autism. She is in the residential program and works with older girls from ages 17 to 21. She is also in graduate school at Simmons University to receive her masters in social work.

**Chris Kunk** finished his MFA at the New York Academy of Art in June 2021. After graduating he spent the summer in DC then in November accepted a sculpture related job at Brookgreen Gardens in South Carolina. He was nominated by one of his professors at NYAA for the Young Sculptors Exhibit at the National Sculpture Society in NYC and won the President's Prize for his sculpture "An Evening Under the Starless Abyss."



Tyler Hill '10, Gwenn Lavine '10, and Andrew Goodman '10

## CLASS OF 2016

**Emma Cummins** just graduated from Montserrat College of Art with a BFA in printmaking. She is living in Bethesda and is engaged to be married.

**Olivia Redmond** graduated from St. Mary's College of Maryland in the spring of 2021 with a BA in environmental studies. She will be serving with AmeriCorps this summer.

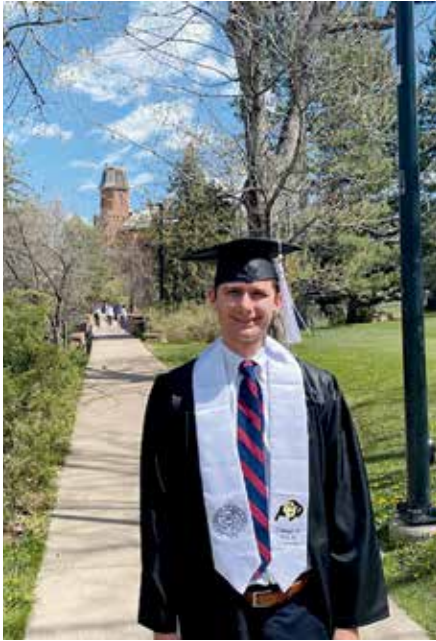


Jack Casasco '11



Kahlil Epps '14

**Nicolai Werner** graduated from the University of Vermont in May 2022. He has accepted a job in Glacier National Park in Montana with AmeriCorps, to do a combination of trail work and GIS (geographic information systems).



Caldwell Munk '14

## CLASS OF 2017

**Cade Brosky** graduated *magna cum laude* from Stevenson University with a BS in business communication and design.

**Telma Fitzgerald** graduated from Savannah College of Art and Design and is pursuing a Master of Arts in Teaching at George Mason University. She was a Group Leader in Lab's Occupational Therapy Summer Program - Camp SMILE.

**Maya Gutzeit** graduated from Dean College in May 2021. She is now living in Berlin where she works in early childhood education.

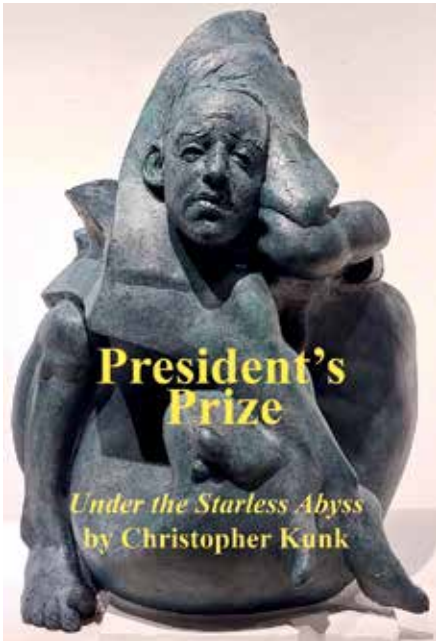
**Ben Sawczuk** graduated from Messiah University in December 2021. He had been the manager of the men's basketball team since his freshman year and stayed on to help the team finish out the season.

In May of 2022, **Sophie Sperduto** graduated from the Catholic University of America with a Bachelor of Arts in theology and religious studies with a minor in philosophy.

## CLASS OF 2018

**Daniel Herman** continues to study at Adelphi University. Daniel has conducted independent studies on the Black Lives Matter movement, voting rights, and the wealth and racial gaps with the director of the criminal justice program. He also serves as the president of the Criminal Justice Club. Upon graduating in December 2022, he hopes to get his master's degree in public policy or criminology then work at a nonprofit to reform or overhaul the American system of criminal justice.

**Baxter Nichols** graduated from Dean College in May 2022 with a BA in arts and entertainment management. He is interested in events planning.



Chris Kunk '15's award winning sculpture



Ben Sawczuk '17



Emma Cummins '16



Cade Brosky '17



Former classmates Sophie Sperduto '17 (left) and Telma Fitzgerald '17 visit with Chris Lanier, Associate Head of the Upper School.

## CLASS OF 2019

**Trey Armstrong** is in the class of 2023 at McDaniel College. He is majoring in business administration with a minor in biology. This summer, Trey plans to take the LSAT.

**Ben Garris** is an event planning/hospitality major at Davis & Elkins College where he is also the manager of the swim team. This summer, Ben is working at The Inn at Little Washington.



Baxter Nichols '18



Max Kline '20

## CLASS OF 2020

**Evelyn Connor** is a sophomore at Allegheny College.

**Perry Jennings** spent the past two years completing four different job assignments working for AmeriCorps: he built houses in Flint, Michigan and Utica, New York; assisted with boy scout camp in Findley, Ohio; and worked on drainage ditches outside of Chicago, Illinois. These experiences gave him an appreciation and new perspective of different people and places in the country. Perry is now applying to college and will pursue a degree in fashion design and merchandising.

**Max Kline** is a mechanical engineering technology student in Purdue's polytechnic program. He recommends the program to any Lab student interested in STEM, saying, "it has been a great size and is very hands on with every class having a lab." Max has also started competing on the hurling team, and over a recent break traveled to Keystone with the Ski Club.

**Michael Morais** lives in Annapolis. He works as a diesel engine mechanic at DiMillo's Yacht Sales.

**Riley Moran** is a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill double majoring in environmental science and geology. Riley also works

in McKee Lab researching microplastic transport by streams. He will continue to work in the lab during the summer and his research will pivot to conducting a geochronology of microplastic accumulation in lake sediment.

## CLASS OF 2021

**Sydney Imredy** is attending Davis & Elkins College.

**Noah Lendman** is studying marketing at the University of Denver.

**Jake Rosen** is majoring in media and television arts at Elon University.

## IN MEMORIAM



On June 25, 2022, **Kara Amey '11** passed away after a 22-month battle against brain cancer. Over the past 20 years, Kara survived battles with five different types of cancer. At The Lab School, she was an advocate for other cancer survivors in the area and was always brave, funny, kind, and selfless throughout her journey. Her legacy will continue to be honored at Sinai

Hospital which houses the Kara Amey Cancer Survivorship Program. Kara is survived by her parents, Scott and Deborah Amey, and her brother, Kyle.

We mourn the loss of **Michael Tobin Collins '96** who passed away on February 1, 2022. The beloved son of Pat and Emily Collins and longtime companion of Janice Moore, he is remembered fondly by all at Lab who knew him.

We are saddened by the passing of **Naomi Whitted '07** who died of cancer on July 12, 2022. After Lab, Naomi got her associate's degree at the Corcoran College of Art and Design and was also a certified makeup artist. She is survived by her daughter Navah Watson, her four siblings, two nephews, and many other relatives and friends. She will be missed.

THE  
LAB  
SCHOOL

THE LAB SCHOOL OF WASHINGTON  
4759 Reservoir Road, NW  
Washington, DC 20007-1921  
202.965.6600  
[www.labschool.org](http://www.labschool.org)



The Academic Club Festival returned fully in-person this year. On a beautiful spring day, students, parents, and faculty visited stations representing each of the Academic Clubs to complete their festival passports.