

Relationships: Opening the Doors to Transformational Learning

I am often asked, “How do you manage to engage the prominent leaders that the students interview?” and “How do you have access to the communities and projects that are so unusual?” My answer is always the same: relationships – relationships based on trust developed over many years of showing up, engaging with sincerity and a desire to learn.

This year in South Africa we sang for a packed house at a festival in the township of Tembisa at the Moses Molelekwa Art Centre. This event was seeded years ago in a friendship with Oupa Malatjie, the founder of the Tswelopele Performing Artists, when our students gathered with his in a small room to sing together. Eight years later a student writes:

“The performance of the final show might be the most fun I’ve ever had doing a performance of any kind. The crowd was so full of life, clapping and cheering at every opportunity. . . When we sang a South African-ified version of ‘Stand By Me,’ I sang a duet with one of the Tembisan girls named Ellen. The crowd cheered so loudly during it that I could barely hear myself. By the time it was over, I didn’t want to get off the stage, but I had to. . . This trip has been packed with eye-opening experiences, but our three days at Tembisa might just be my favorite. . . So many things happened with us and those kids, and I feel like I’ve known them for months. They welcomed us into their musical world, and I’ll never forget what that world truly is. Music is the heartbeat of South Africa, and I hope I never stop hearing it.”

— *Carl Ward, 11th grade*

From an earlier experience, a classmate writes:

“Another moment that stuck out to me was when we were walking through the Langa township near the LEAP School. We walked into one of the



Making friends at Botshabelo children’s village in South Africa

rooms where three families were living. . . In the room, there were two twin beds with about one and a half feet in between. We learned that the older woman sitting on the bed had lived there for 40 years. My heart sank to find

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Soaring to New Heights

Like red-tailed hawks soaring above this innovative mountain-top school, students “stretch their wings” through engagement with our local communities, nation and the world. For nearly four decades MMS has offered an educational program connecting students with the environment and their own potentials. The results are abundantly clear in several recent notable achievements.

Governor’s Environmental & Economic Leadership Award

The work of fifth grade students for the past nine years was recognized with the Governor’s Environmental and Economic Leadership Award (GEELA), the state’s highest environmental honor. MMS is one of 12 California organizations – and the only school – recognized in 2016.

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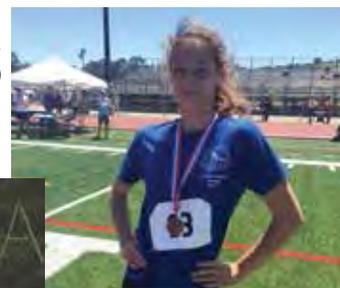


Seventh graders visit the UC Santa Cruz Forest Ecology Research Center for a lesson with Campus Natural Reserve Manager Alex Jones

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Our Mission

We are a community of learners dedicated to creative, intellectual and ethical growth. We support our students to become caring, self-aware, discerning and articulate individuals. We believe a fulfilling life includes personal accomplishments, meaningful relationships and service to society.

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the photographers whose work is included in this issue: Carla Gomez, Cassia Laffin, Claire Azar, Devin Kumar ('06), Erin Mitchell ('10), Haley Campbell ('02), Hema Walker, Isa Stead, Jenni Leach, Jessica Cambell, Jose Lopez, Katrina Leni-Konig, Komala Correos, Leigh Ann Clifton, Len Willis, Linda Manzur, Lisa Catterall, Maureen Pramanik, Monique Smith Lee, Nicola Percy Photography, Nicole Silva Culbertson, Nicole Tervalon, Preston Merchant, Richard Timan, Sara Sobkoviak, Shmuel Thaler, TC Clark, USCPA, Ward “SN” Mailliard, Zach Wilson, and other volunteers. Newsletter Editor: Leigh Ann Clifton; Graphic Designer: Marina Michaelian Ward.

Markers of Progress: A Letter from Our Head of School



Mary Supriya McDonald

The year shined brightly with the opening of the new Hawks' Nest Gymnasium, meaningful learning journeys and several distinguished academic awards honoring our program of college preparedness alongside creativity and environmental citizenship. From the lower to the upper school, Mount Madonna was acknowledged at a local, state and national level for building leadership skills and a world perspective in young people.

In the high school, the students received Central Coast Section academic team awards for girls cross country, boys varsity volleyball, and girls and boys track and field. The boys track and field team also earned the state scholastic award. Several students were recognized locally and nationally for their creative writing strength and creativity. The middle school environmental Seed of Flame project (grade seven) received the prestigious Lexus Eco Challenge award. The sixth grade was recognized for their Western Snowy Plover project, completed in grade five, with the national President's Environmental Youth Award (the second time an MMS class has received this honor in the past three years). Finally, the lower school (grade five) was recognized at the state level with the Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award for their nine-year commitment to environmental education and leadership training.

Achievement awards are markers of progress and effort towards a goal. What is truly being recognized with awards? Accomplishments take time, commitment, effort and practice.

At MMS this translates into:

- A daily commitment to disciplined study that is scaffolded in small, achievable steps, reinforcing students' confidence
- Clear communication and a trusting relationship between students, teachers and staff, creating a classroom open to trial and error; free of labels and welcoming diversity of ideas and perspectives
- A multi-age buddy program encouraging peer leadership and character development through modeling. Older students learn their leadership role and responsibility as their little buddies find support from cross-age friendships
- Opportunities for reflective learning built into the curriculum, allowing for applicable knowledge to be transferable across disciplines. Students process their understanding by writing and talking with others. Whether sharing a math solution with the class, or processing after plays, science projects or learning journeys, students focus on incorporating what they felt and thought about during the experience, taking learning to a deeper level
- Pushing limits and creating space for creative insights to emerge. Students are challenged to think deeply on relevant, meaningful questions, and learn to express themselves in thoughtful ways using all the modalities of communication

A hallmark of an MMS education is the overnight field trips or learning journeys that begin in lower school and build student readiness for international trips in the upper grades. Trips to the Montara Lighthouse and the Sierra Outdoor School in grades three and four build readiness for the grade five Merced River backpacking adventure, which in turn prepares students for their beginning-of-the-year middle school camping trip. The experience of traveling and living with a group expands students' sense of responsibility and abilities to work together towards a common goal. The shared learning experience bonds them with their teachers and peers in a way that deepens character development and builds trusting, transformational relationships.

High school students venture out on a team-building rafting trip and science explorations to Santa Catalina Island. They travel to our nation's capital and abroad to expand their understanding of the world and themselves. These unique one-, two- and three-week journeys afford opportunities for self-growth and understanding well beyond textbooks and classroom spaces.

People learn more from what we do than from what we say. It is in the doing together with others where positive character is forged; this is the real reward behind our program. We can see the progress when listening to students' questions, speeches, songs, performances and videos. We feel the connections when the team huddles in unity during a challenge, or in the smiles of students returning from a learning journey, proud of their independence and full of new experiences. The academic and athletic trophies, banners and certificates that line our walls are symbolic of the effort, persistence, confidence and teamwork that Mount Madonna students strive to embody. We commend them, one and all!

Thank you for your continued support of the unique and personal learning journey of education at Mount Madonna School.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Supriya McDonald". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Head of School

Students Win National Writing Competition



Imogen and Mara are recognized by Watsonville Mayor Oscar Rios

This winter our high school participated in *Yes! Magazine's* National Student Writing Competition. Six winners were chosen from 2,000 submissions, and two of the winners were sophomores in our high school. Mara Peruzzi was one of three Powerful Voice winners; Imogen Cockrum won the high school category.

Students read the article, "Why the Founder of Standing Rock Sioux Camp Can't Forget the Whitestone Massacre," and they responded to the prompt: *Describe how you would feel if a place that defines you was threatened to be destroyed or taken away. What would you do? Would you fight to save it?*

Several other MMS students' essays were honored as well: Brigg Busenhart, Carl Ward, Izzy Thomas, and Tara Ching's essays were chosen as Literary

Gems, and a selection from their essays was published with the winning essays. Ching, Aki'o Nanamura, and Noah Kaplan were all told that they had been finalists.

In May, Cockrum and Peruzzi were invited to attend a Watsonville City Council meeting, where Mayor Oscar Rios presented them with Certificates of Recognition for their literary achievement.

I am constantly wowed by the stories, poems, and essays I read in the classroom, but it is such an amazing honor for our students' work to be recognized on such a grand scale.

— Haley Campbell ('02)

Read
Mara's
essay:



Read
Imogen's
essay:



"I was honored and excited to be awarded as one of the Powerful Voice winners. Entering my essay was a hard push for me because I am not one to share my writing with even my closest friends, let alone across the entire U.S. for this competition. Winning this award brought out a confidence in myself that has pushed me to feel okay with being vulnerable when sharing my writing."

— Mara Peruzzi,
Powerful Voice Winner

"It felt surreal that the news of winning the essay competition had reached Mayor Rios and that he wanted to recognize us for it... The Mayor noted that he comes from El Salvador... and it made me think about how many other people who also come from El Salvador might have seen or read my essay, and could relate to it as well. I'm so grateful to have been recognized by the Mayor and City Council. I'm sure I won't forget this experience."

— Imogen Cockrum,
High School Overall Winner



School Buddies

A special part of MMS is the cross-age buddy program, which helps to build positive connections and deeper relationships. In 2016-17, student buddies collaborated on creative writing, environmental service work, science activities and more. For one project, second and third graders and their senior buddies worked in The Factory to create sock puppet characters for an original iMovie about a moral hero. The students wrote stories about bullying, gratitude, happiness and perseverance.

Advancing a Student-Driven “Math Path” Selection Process

At MMS, students can experience a transformative approach to learning mathematics that goes beyond the curriculum to enhance each person’s lifelong relationship with the subject. The goal is to create an environment where every individual thrives, fueled by curiosity, confidence and determination.

Our teachers view mathematics as a tool to support the development of students’ emotional intelligence, and nurture a classroom culture encouraging self-awareness, resilience and humility. By middle school students take the lead in determining their own “math path,” considering which classes they will take in high school.

Too often, students are sorted into math classes by a test, grades or other forms of top-down selection. This process often leaves out students who would enjoy an accelerated class, or pushes others into a class that is not yet the right fit for them. We wanted to develop a student-driven process, allowing each person to discover what feels right for them.

Our math path selection begins in sixth grade, when students select either Math Lab Intensive or STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art

and mathematics). STEAM links logical thinking with creativity through music, engineering, and art. By seventh grade, Math Lab Intensive becomes required algebra skills practice in order to advance into an accelerated algebra course in eighth grade.

“Research shows that math achievement correlates with hard work and motivation more than any other factors,” said Lisa Catterall, MMS director of middle school. “The opportunity to accelerate at any time through tenth grade means that students can jump ahead when they are truly excited about math and want to do more.”

Dr. Nicole Tervalon teaches the accelerated eighth grade class (the first group to walk the new math path), and observed that these students “have self-selected into a class they are pouring their hearts and motivation into.”

Many people in traditional programs are left with feelings of math inadequacy that can last well into adulthood. At MMS, we wanted to shift this narrative by providing students with choice and opportunities to explore mathematics in different ways. In doing so, we are opening the possibility for all students to be confident and successful in math.

— *Katrina Leni-Konig*



Sixth graders collaborate on solving math problems

Illuminating the Voices of Diversity: LGBT History Curriculum Project

I was honored to participate this year in a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) history curriculum development program, funded by a grant through the Safe Schools Project, to address a new state mandate for a more inclusive K-12 social studies curriculum.

At collaborative monthly meetings with high school teachers from public, private and charter schools throughout Santa Cruz County, we shared resources, ideas, and lesson plans. One of the program requirements was that each teacher create a resource to share. We met in May to present our final projects, which ranged from primary source document and film collections to use in U.S. history classes, to integrated art and writing projects around themes in U.S. history, to using online programs to help students create historical timelines that integrate LGBT history with other civil rights struggles.

As a social and cultural historian, I think it is important for students to hear the voices of diverse



Participants in the LGBT History Curriculum Project

individuals who have contributed to our national experience, and to see how broader themes of politics or the law are impacted by ideas about race, gender, and sexuality at different times in history.

I came away with so many new ideas for my classes, and great new connections and friendships with teachers at other schools. I’m pleased to see so many teachers in our community committed to this project.

— *Tiffany Wayne*

Growth, Resilience and Scholastic Champions

Congratulations to our scholar athletes! Four high school teams – girls cross country, boys and girls track and field, and boys varsity volleyball – were each recognized with the Central Coast Section (CCS) of the California Interscholastic Federation’s Scholastic Championship Team Award.

In addition, state accolades go to the boys track and field team, awarded for having the highest collective GPA among all California boys track teams in 2017! Next time you’re in the Hawks’ Nest gym, take a look – a banner noting this substantial achievement is on display!

“I’ve always believed that a strong mind is the common thread that binds all great athletes,” commented first-time cross country coach Nicholas Cabassa. “And the good news kept coming: [senior] Tara Ching, for a second year in a row, qualified to compete in CCS postseason.” [*Illness intervened, however, and Ching was unable to participate*].

“Being a part of the cross country team has been one of the best parts of my Mount Madonna experience,” shared senior Caroline Smith. “It has shown me that what’s important is not coming in first all of the time, but trying your best and being happy with everything you’ve done.



Eve Willis earns a bronze medal

“Being named as scholastic champions is amazing,” she continued. “It feels great to be recognized in the cross country world. I am especially grateful that we were awarded the title two years in a row. It shows that as a team, we take our education seriously and not only work hard as runners, but also as students.”

The varsity girls volleyball team, coached by Middle School Athletic Director Erin Mitchell (‘10), finished seventh in the Santa Cruz Coast Athletic League (SCCAL) and tied for third in the DV CCS playoffs.

“Having a team of mostly underclassmen, one might expect a possible lack of focus or drive, but that was not my experience coaching these girls,” said Mitchell. “With hard work we were finally able to find our groove, unfortunately just a little too late to make an impact in the league.”

The junior varsity (JV) girls, led by incoming coach Marissa Ottesen, competed with determination and finished sixth in league.

“With a predominantly freshmen team of seven players, three of whom were new to the sport, these girls had a season of tackling the fundamentals,” said Mitchell. “The team exhibited an endless love for volleyball, and maintained a positive outlook.”

The middle school (MS) girls (fifth/sixth) Gold team, coached by Sara Sobkoviak, finished the season with a 7-4 record.

“The Gold team did a fantastic job of learning how to play together as a team: communicating on the court and learning position and transition responsibility,” said Sobkoviak. “Their overall skill level really improved over the season and was evident in their confidence, determination to make improvements and ownership. My most memorable moment of the season was hearing team members talk about how a win was at times not satisfactory because they felt they could have played better together, or how a loss was not a loss to them, because they all worked well together on the court, which made the game fun!”

The (seventh/eighth) girls Blue team, coached by Sidd McDonald, finished third in the SVAL A class, and second in the playoffs.

“An outstanding effort by eighth graders Kahlán Tervalon and Savannah Cambell led our mostly young team on to a fantastic season,” said McDonald.

Coaches Jenne Miranda Rodrigues and Sobkoviak returned for a second year with the track and field team.

“With five seniors competing this year, they led the team during practices and meets, keeping everyone engaged and the energy up,” shared Miranda Rodrigues. “Though our squad was



Will Murphy with the discus

smaller than last year, the athletes competed in nearly as many events as last year, and all of our athletes achieved personal records, some a few times during the season. Sara and I ended the season proud of our athletes for both their integrity and athletic performance, as well as the academic accomplishment of the scholastic team award.”

The varsity boys volleyball team demonstrated a fierce competitiveness during the season, finishing third in SCCAL and tying for third in the DII CCS playoffs.

“This team experienced tremendous support from students, friends, family and alumni,” said coach and High School Athletic Director PK McDonald (‘04). “We competed through a tough schedule and showed an incredible amount of growth through this adversity. Some highlights were taking PCS to the brink at home, finishing second in the Aptos Battle of the Bay Tournament, and making the CCS semifinals by beating a good Sacred Heart Cathedral team, while upsetting a strong Branham team on the road.

“The boys developed incredible resilience in their ability to bounce back from adversity,” he continued. “Looking back it was clear they had a special year, and did a great job on the court and in their studies – including the honor of being academic champions. Thanks for all the support that made this possible!”

The JV boys team finished second in league.

“With just eight players this was a hardworking, eager team,” noted coach Mitchell.

The MS boys (sixth through eighth) Black team finished second in the Central Coast Athletic League.

“Led by setter Ronan Lee and outside hitter Riley Wagner, this team had a terrific season, commented

coach Sidd McDonald. “Each person improved their skills and played strong!”

For the 14th year, fifth and sixth graders represented MMS in the county-wide International Games track and field meet hosted by Soquel High School. All of the students seemed to enjoy the opportunity to meet and compete with peers from other local schools. Sixth grader Eve Willis earned a bronze medal for her finish in the 100-yard dash.

“I was surprised because I did not think I was going to win a medal,” said Willis, “and happy to represent Mount Madonna School!”

And last but not least, thank you to parent volunteer Mark Mattern, who coached third, fourth and fifth grade boys eager to start hitting the ball over the net! This energetic Red team practiced fundamentals and skill building, and even scrimmaged on one occasion with the Lakeview Middle School, and another time with a seasoned girls 12 and under team, where the Red team won one of the three games.

“They were scrappy,” said Mattern, “moved well, served smartly and passed, set and swung on nearly every play.” — *Leigh Ann Clifton*



Special Honors

**California State and
CCS Scholastic Champions**

— Boys Track and Field

CCS Scholastic Champions

— Girls Cross Country

CCS Scholastic Champions

— Girls Track and Field

CCS Scholastic Champions

— Boys Volleyball

**All-SCCAL
High School Volleyball,
Girls & Boys**

Honorable Mentions

— *Mara Peruzzi, Paola Jacobs*

First Team — *Brigg Busenhart*

Second Team

— *Luca Peruzzi, Zach Wagner*

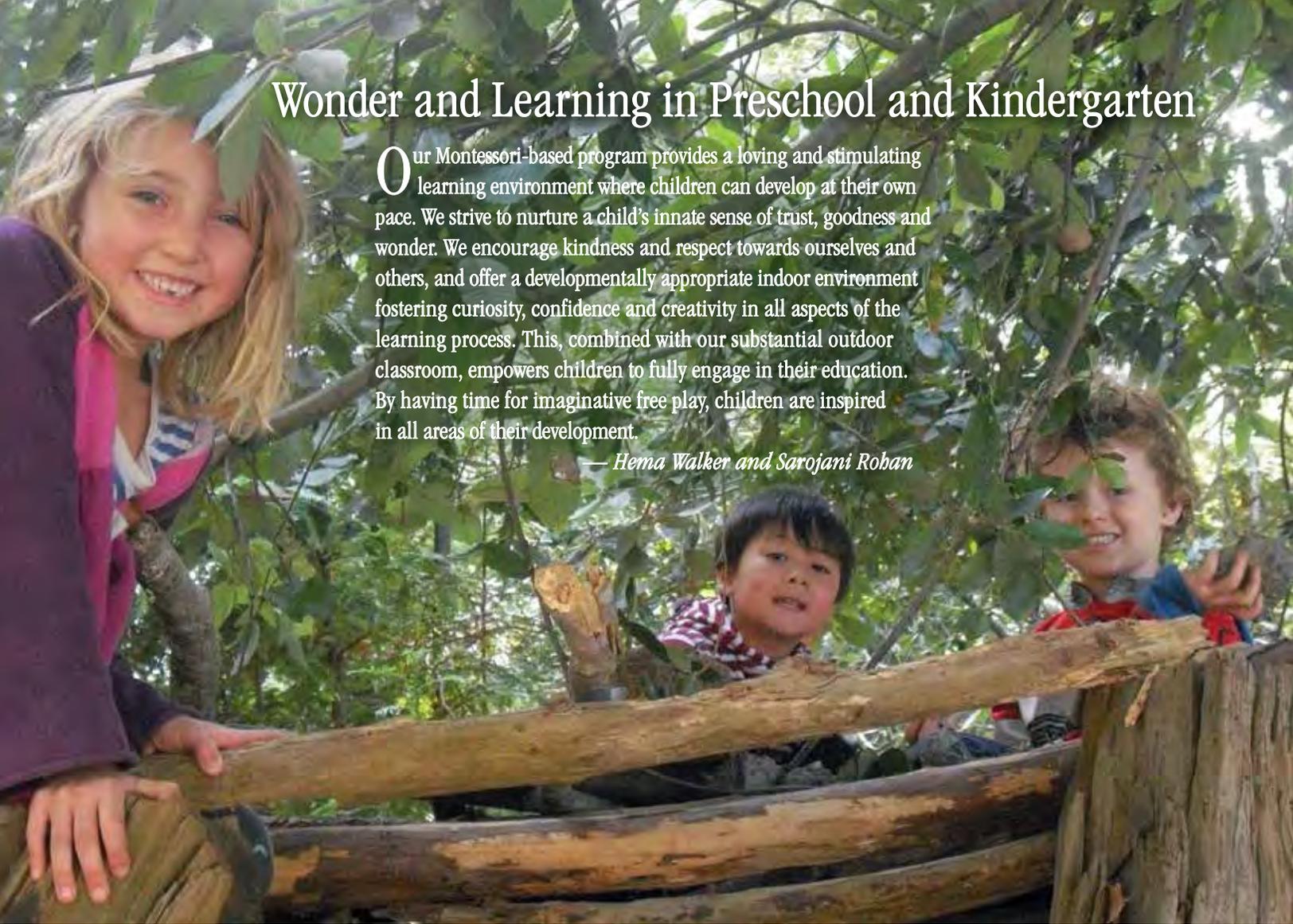
Honorable Mentions

— *Nate Vince, Zac Clark*

Wonder and Learning in Preschool and Kindergarten

Our Montessori-based program provides a loving and stimulating learning environment where children can develop at their own pace. We strive to nurture a child's innate sense of trust, goodness and wonder. We encourage kindness and respect towards ourselves and others, and offer a developmentally appropriate indoor environment fostering curiosity, confidence and creativity in all aspects of the learning process. This, combined with our substantial outdoor classroom, empowers children to fully engage in their education. By having time for imaginative free play, children are inspired in all areas of their development.

— Hema Walker and Sarojani Rohan



Education, Community and Selfless Service: Jivanti Helene Rutansky



When the only original buildings on these 355 acres were the old farmhouse and a larger ranch house, before roads and trails wound around the property, before the lake was dug and filled, the school that would become Mount Madonna first opened its doors in an open space around a carport and within the flaps of a tipi.

Jivanti taught her first class in the tipi, where the lake now rests. She had recently completed her Master of Education degree with an emphasis in pupil personnel services at Florida International University and through a series of fortunate events found her way to Santa Cruz.

“We were young, we hardly had any possessions, and we had the whole mountain. We did everything. We cooked, we cleaned, we worked on the rock crew, we got poison oak, we played with the kids, and we studied with Babaji. It was a pretty amazing time to be part of the project,” Jivanti recalled.

Her first responsibility for the school, beyond helping with the young children in the tipi, was college counseling. College counseling was her most rewarding role overall. “I was one of those people that asked why and why not, so I really wanted a school where people could question, people could discuss, and people who wanted a higher education had the opportunities to do so and were guided.” College counseling was a duty that called upon Jivanti’s educational training and her dedication to lifelong learning. She loved bonding with students in this way – learning about their passions and goals and researching schools that could help them achieve those goals.

Throughout Jivanti’s time at MMS, she held many other roles – assistant to Sri Gyan James McCaughan in a fourth, fifth, and sixth grade combined class (Lilith Ohlson-Perez, ’90, Brightstar Ohlson and Shannon Kelly, ’92, were in this class), producer and coordinator for the *Ramayana!*, auction coordinator, guidance committee member, director of admissions, director and head of the upper school, and director of the high school. One of her most cherished roles was running the girls’ boarding school for nearly two decades, in which she was caregiver, disciplinarian, and confidante for many girls.

Jivanti’s passion for education and for community has guided her in a lifetime of selfless service. The students motivate and drive her. “I care about building and maintaining a place where students can learn not just the academics but about themselves and overcoming obstacles. . . . In our minds we think we can’t do anymore, but we’re so capable of doing more than we think we can. Babaji modeled that and worked to teach us that most of the obstacles we have are self-created.”

When asked about her favorite school events, she said, “It’s when we come together as a whole community – the *Ramayana!*, also the middle and high school plays and Summit for the Planet because there is so much joy. Parents and kids and staff working together as a community to make something happen that is positive. It’s hard work, and it’s fun. Also, I love athletics, watching the kids grow and change and work as a team.”

In retirement, Jivanti is taking a step back and finding more time and space for herself. She anticipates visiting her 95-year-old mother in Florida as needed, and finding ways to support and volunteer with the ashram remotely. She plans to make time for her spiritual practice and her love of walks and nature photography, to garden and care for her home, and to reconnect with the Mount Madonna Center community and participate in a meaningful way. “I want to keep my mind challenged, so new things are good.”

As a final piece of advice before she begins this new journey, Jivanti offered, “We’re not in this alone, and we have each other. The world isn’t ours



From top: Jivanti in college, teaching in a tent, with her mom, dancing, and backstage *Ramayana!*

to hold, but we can do our small part in making things better.” She has made our lives and our community better, and we wish her a peaceful and meaningful retirement.

— Haley Campbell (’02)

The Spirit of Play: Opening the New Hawks' Nest Gymnasium

On April 29, more than 300 people attended the new gymnasium opening ceremony. At the courtyard reception we welcomed many donors, current families, grandparents and alumni, who have given their generous support in creating this exceptional facility.

The gym began as a spark of an idea in 2007, to help meet Central Coast Section requirements of expanding our athletic program, and to provide additional indoor athletic and PE space. Through the steadfast commitment of donors and volunteers, we have now completed a facility that will serve our students for generations.

Philanthropic gifts and a spirit of volunteerism created this gym and reshaped the upper lot into a scenic playground for our children. We had an incredible level of support from several key volunteers: project manager Ward Sadanand Mailliard, Dayanand Diffenbaugh, earth mover and visionary, and Soma Goresky, civil engineer. This, combined with the dedicated service of many parents, faculty, staff, alumni, students and Mount Madonna Center residents, including alumni parents Michael Doherty and Rabindra Bazarnick, helped us to finish the gym!

"From simple aspirations arise complex projects," shared Mailliard during the ceremony. "The way to solve complex situations is to just keep on going and going, and face each challenge as it comes. . . This was a community project at every level. In addition to the huge amount of work done by our fundraisers and families within the school, our host, Mount Madonna Center, supported this project in both labor and financial contributions. This is what community does. It

comes together to support the learning and growth of our children. This is not just a building, rather a story about community. This community from the very beginning always put children at the center of what we do. Our founder, Baba Hari Dass, always made a space up front for children. I think it is unfair to ever expect gratitude so we should not demand that. It is a self-generated feeling. However, studies have shown that it is not happy people who are grateful, it is grateful people who are happy. So for the kids here, just take a note when you think about living a happy life."

Fundraising for this gymnasium was an enormous task, raising just under two million dollars. Lara Kilpatrick ('85), former director of advancement, along with major gifts chair, board member and alumni parent Letty Bess, were instrumental in helping to reach our financial goals.

Addressing the crowd, and in particular the assembled alumni, Kilpatrick shared how meaningful it was for her to return to MMS so her daughter could attend school and to work on this project. Bess observed that the new gym was a huge undertaking and thanked me for my efforts as head of school in generating support. She also suggested that our next goal be building an endowment fund to help ensure the school's sustainability.

The commemorative courtyard tiles are an ongoing opportunity for donors who wish to recognize someone or inspire us with a message. Each year the tiles and business banners will help fund our growing athletic program.

"Athletics prepares students for future careers in life through self-discipline, commitment and focus," said Sidd McDonald, coach, math teacher



Project manager Ward "SN" Mailliard

and longtime former athletic director, commenting on the role of athletics in character development.

High School Athletic Director, coach and teacher PK McDonald ('04) acknowledged that this building honors athletes past, current and future, and is a remarkable facility in which to expand our program.

Middle School Athletic Director, coach and PE teacher Erin Mitchell ('10) encouraged students to join teams and talked about how athletics has given much meaning to her own life.

Sarada Diffenbaugh, board president, alumni parent, and former head of school, concluded the indoor remarks with a beautiful dedication (page 11) and led everyone outside to complete the ceremony.

Jai Aguirre ('90) unveiled his bronze sculpted hawk and dedicated it to the athletic directors and many coaches (past and present), who give generously to support and train student athletes.

School trustee, faculty member and alumni parent Dayanand Diffenbaugh invited all to join him in a blessing by raising their arms to the sky and turning in a circle. The youngest members of the audience joined our eldest member, Angus McDonald (age 91) in a celebratory dance. A Gilroy Chamber of Commerce representative congratulated us and passed giant scissors to an alum and two students, who cut the ribbon, followed by the crowd's loud, jubilant cheers.

From beginning to end, the ceremony was a moving, heartfelt and thoughtful honoring of MMS athleticism and opportunity.

Next, students rushed to the starting line on the budding new track area, where I set them off on their 5K and 10K Summit for the Planet trek with the words, "Runners, take your mark! Ready, set, and go!" — Mary Supriya McDonald

Alumna Lara Kilpatrick ('85) and students cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony





Jai Aguirre ('90) created a bronze hawk sculpture for the gym courtyard

We dedicate this athletic facility, the gym and the future track and field:

To the Spirit of Play

To all who have and will play on this beautiful mountain, and,

To the learning that comes from play

Babaji once told us that “play is children’s work.”

At first the school’s teams had to earn their way into the Santa Cruz Coast Athletic League through the hard work of good play: persevering through the humiliation of loss and being willing to learn the lessons taught by the Spirit of Play.

What are those lessons?

Respect for body and cultivation of health

Vehicle to connect brain to body to heart

Camaraderie, fun, discipline and skill

Mental focus leading to freedom from thought

Positive channeling of emotions toward a common goal

Accepting loss and its accompanying grief

Celebrating victory and its accompanying joy, and,

Abandoning all sense of personal limitations into the Spirit of Play that expresses itself through the human interaction of sport

Today those who play with spirit at Mount Madonna School have a tradition of league, regional and state championships, scholar-athlete awards, as well as a new frontier of basketball, track and field and wrestling opening before them.

And now, a new facility worthy of the Spirit of Play that is cherished and respected on the mountain, and to which it and we are dedicated.

Let the games begin!

— Sarada Diffenbaugh, April 29, 2017

Thank you to our 2016-17 donors:

Leader (\$10,000 – \$24,999)

Leticia and Lane Bess
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We honor and thank those who made the new gym possible:

Capital Campaign donors of \$1,000 and more

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Raising Environmental Awareness and Funds at the 11th Annual Summit Festival and Walk-a-thon



The 11th annual Summit for the Planet festival on April 29 was a success due to our wonderful students, parents, faculty, staff, board members, extended families and community partners. We truly appreciate the time and effort of every individual who participated by gathering pledges, walking, volunteering and donating! Through the collective efforts of everyone, the event netted \$23,403 and exemplified Mount Madonna School's commitment to environmental education and sustainability!

Sincerest thanks to the nonprofit organizations and vendors who participated in this event by donating their time and resources. We are proud of our unified efforts to educate and inspire our community to think, live and be environmentally conscious.

— *Linda Manzur*

A heartfelt thank you to:

Allterra Solar
 Bay Area Amphibian and Reptile Society (BAARS)
 California Academy of Sciences
 CineLux Theatres
 Coastal Habitat Education and Environmental Research (CHEER)
 Costco
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An Expanding Circle of Love: Sarojani Rohan



I have a clear image of Sarojani kneeling in front of a preschooler, giving her undivided and loving attention, modeling for all what deep listening looks like. Lately, I find myself thinking about this and her golden lessons:

The importance of play

A curiosity about the natural environment and learning to love the outdoors

If you take something out, you put it back

Caring for and respecting each other

Asking for help

Music is an essential part of the day

Each of us has a gift and a talent to share

And most importantly, a healthy day includes snacks and a nap

She developed a program filled with wonder, joy and fairies in the woods. Often, what looked like simple playtime was a carefully crafted “lesson” helping to build a student’s cognitive, social and emotional skills.

Through circle times Sarojani provided opportunities for our youngest students to learn to be together socially, share, sing, tell their stories and practice compassion. These important skills are the foundation of building community and healthy lives.

I think one reason Sarojani said “yes” to teaching at MMS is that she looked around the entire property and thought, “this would make a great classroom.” She often said, “when in doubt, take them out.” Yes, that means, take your students outside. I was always astounded that she saw taking a group of little ones out in the woods as a normal school endeavor.

You see, she saw her group of three to five year olds as curious, budding biologists, as artists and poets who just needed an opportunity to connect with nature. In that connection, they would touch their larger selves and discover their responsibility to the environment.

Sarojani shared her musical love and skill with the entire elementary school, offered choir to Mount Madonna Center residents, and brought her band, Innisfree, to the broader community. I am grateful that she always modeled, “when the music starts, feel free to get up and dance.”

It really does take a village to raise a child. Sarojani has always taken communication with each family seriously. I have watched with deep admiration as the love and care she extends to her students is also extended to their families.

What higher work is there? For her 36 years of service I have no doubt that the world is a better place, a better place for the values she has instilled and all the lives she has touched. My friend, you have many songs yet to sing, poems to write, and lives to touch. — *Kalpana Kachuck*



From top: Sarojani as a teen, in the classroom, and with her family

Writers’ Corner

Part two in a series of four life cycle poems

II

A blossom in the prime of youth,
That seeks only to see the truth,
To find the things that some neglect,
And earn from peers sincere respect

Curiosity governs all thought,
Discovery’s thrill intensely sought,
Inside a maze with walls of fire,
You walk a thin and fragile wire

Despite your care soon, in the end,
You’ll meet a wall you can’t ascend,
And then like paper you shall burn,
The punishment for your wrong turn

But greater tortures you shall bear,
And greater wisdom you now wear,
And so you stand from your defeat,
A lesson learned not to repeat

Now down again the unwalked path,
To brave again the world’s harsh wrath,
To go where none have gone before,
And see what nature has in store

But as you search for the unknown,
And walk down unmarked trails alone,
There will be those who try to shield you,
Unknowingly they shall impede you

They’ll wrap you in their loving arms,
That turn to chains to your alarm,
Once a gentle tender feel,
Fear twists them into stiffest steel

To form a prison without key,
Within from which you must break free,
Alone you must learn right and wrong,
And teach the world your unique song

— *Noah Kaplan, 10th grade*

Read more:





Celebrating Aarti or "ceremony of light" on the Ganges River in Haridwar, India

this out. I had read and heard about the townships, but until I was standing in one, it never truly sank in. . . To hear that 30 people were living in such a small space with so little made me feel useless and unsure of a way to help. The moment of looking into this woman's eyes stuck with me the whole trip." — *Sienna Clifton, 11th grade*



New friends!

In a similar way, a student writes about our visit to a rural women's cooperative in the Punjab state of India.

"After our inspiring interview with Dr. Metre, we split into two groups and went into the villages to see some of the self-help groups. . . Once we arrived, we walked toward a group of about 20

women. They arranged a line of chairs for us and asked each of us to introduce ourselves, which we gladly did. . . We were all surprised when they wanted us to sing. . . In response to our song, the group sang their own. Some of the women stood up and started dancing to the song as we clapped along. They took Izzy, Savannah and me by the hand, put us in a circle and asked us to dance. We tried our best to do the dance moves they had been doing moments earlier, but their laughs and chuckles told us we weren't quite doing them right. Although I won't remember that trip to the village for our stellar dance moves, I'm never going to forget how much fun we had and how connected I felt to the women."

— *Caroline Smith, 12th grade*

The relationship threads on these journeys are the same for life in general. Many studies show relationships, and service to something greater than ourselves are the two main determinants of happiness or fulfillment. This is underscored by Bella's words from our engagement with India's Pardada Pardadi School.

"After we returned to the school and had a short activity, it was time to go... Everyone embraced their new

friends. Jassi and Anu grabbed my hands...Tears welled up in my eyes as I hugged the two girls. We stood for a few moments, putting off my inevitable departure. Jassi promised to never forget me and I promised the same as I climbed into the bus, with tears now streaming down my face. I looked out the window where Jassi and Anu stood with similarly tear-stained cheeks. As the bus pulled away we waved goodbye to each other. . . I had only known these girls for a little over 24 hours, yet I made connections as strong as those that I have with friends I've known for years. I had no idea when we first pulled through the gates at Pardada Pardadi that I would leave with a new kind of love in my heart, and an appreciation for the openness of a young stranger."

— *Bella Bettencourt, 12th grade*



Peer-to-peer interactions

Before our learning journeys, relationships open the doors to extraordinary opportunities. During the journeys, relationships provide much of the meaning we take from our experiences. It is also true that the relationship of our students to each other deepens in their shared triumphs and challenges. Afterwards, even our relationship with ourselves and our purposes in life are often transformed. — *Ward "SN" Mailliard*

Meeting Desmond and Leah Tutu in Cape Town



Organized, Cheerful, Willing and Capable: Honoring Volunteerism



If you have called the MMS office or stopped in, you may have been greeted with the helpful

smile of Dana Kerr. Dana began volunteering in the office in 2013 when her daughters came to middle school. Over the years, she has filled numerous roles: receptionist, middle/high snack bar attendant, lower school recess monitor, parent volunteer coordinator, concessions coordinator, office supply inventory, childcare coordinator and numerous other duties. In addition to this work, so invaluable for maintaining smooth school operations, Dana has helped with public outreach at the annual Taste of Morgan Hill and Kid Fest events.

Dana is the mother of four children: Soul ('14), David ('15), Aimee, 12th, and Haley, 10th. The embodiment of organization and competence, Dana juggles her family's needs, her family's

business and her volunteer work for MMS – and does it all with a smile!

Over the years, she has steadfastly and cheerfully graced us with her abundant skills two days each week. Shortly after starting to volunteer for MMS, Dana's help was enlisted in the arduous task of coordinating parent volunteer roles for our middle and high school winter productions and *Ramayana!*. Several years ago, she also took over as concessions coordinator. Dana continually amazes us with her willingness to jump in and successfully and efficiently complete any task presented to her. We continue to rely on her expertise and organization and feel very fortunate to have her with us. Thank you, Dana, for your dedication and service to MMS!
— Monique Smith Lee

Protecting the Santa Cruz Kangaroo Rat

A small rodent endemic to the Santa Cruz Sandhills was the focus of the fifth grade's annual environmental study, titled Harry Hopper and the Tri Threat Tournament: Working to Protect the Santa Cruz Kangaroo Rat.

Students worked with environmental consultant Jodi McGraw to remove invasive species and replant habitat from an old quarry at the Sandhills; partnered with their kindergarten and ninth grade buddies and the Save Our Shores (SOS) organization for a cleanup along the San Lorenzo River mouth (the affected watershed); and created and sold copies of an original parody movie to raise funds for SOS, and for the Santa Cruz Land Trust, which will oversee the Sandhills habitat once restoration is complete.

Fifth and ninth graders collaborated to design sustainable alternatives to balloon pollution (a common type of plastic debris), and create public service announcements. Students presented at the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Plastic Pollution Summit and at Santa Cruz Earth Day, where they were awarded in the Class Challenge.

"We did the beach cleanup so that plastic wouldn't travel into the ocean," said fifth grader Anya Gonzalez. "We collected more than 2,000 pieces of trash, and about 90% of it was plastic. Plastic is a major threat to the kangaroo rat and every animal including us humans. A lot of the plastic that we make has BPA (bisphenol A) in it, which disrupts hormones in our bodies."

"The river cleanup helped because we all worked together to tackle the litter, and people saw, were impressed and also wanted to help," added classmate Katie Garrison. "With this project, we got people to learn and tell others about this, and if the learn-tell cycle keeps going, this will last into the future and make a big impact."

— Leigh Ann Clifton



Clockwise from top: Removing invasive species at the Sandhills, Kangaroo rat, Learning how to transplant native seedlings

Annual Giving Reaches a Record High!

Annual Giving at Mount Madonna School helps all students receive a quality education by adding to the tuition revenue that covers about 85% of the program expenses. MMS relies on the spirit of philanthropy from our committed donors and their tax-deductible gifts. Thank you one and all!

In 2016-17, we reached a net of \$131,458, which includes the Drive for Schools fundraiser. AG received \$114,490 in donations, which is a record high for MMS and surpassed our goal of \$110,000. The Drive fundraiser added an additional \$16,968.

We appreciate the generous support from our families, alumni, faculty, staff, grandparents and friends of MMS. 100% of our school community participated in this giving campaign which began November 1, 2016 and ended January 31, 2017.

With sincere gratitude, we thank the following donors for their generous support:

Leader (\$10,000 – \$24,999)

Google Matching Gifts Program
Ann and Nico Peruzzi
Adelle Tomash

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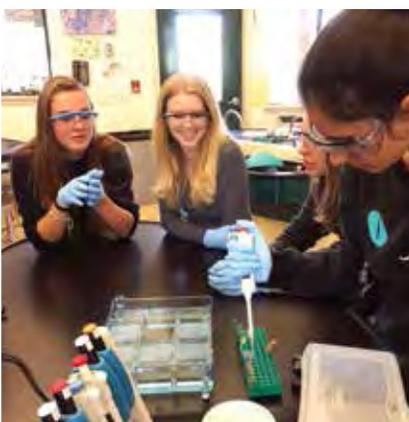


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Every effort has been made to avoid errors, misspellings or omissions. If, however, your name has been incorrectly listed or omitted, please accept our sincere apology. For corrections contact Head of School Mary Supriya McDonald at 408-847-2717.

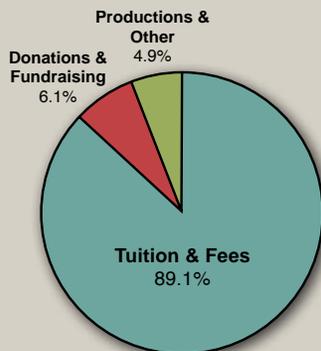


2016-17 Financial Report

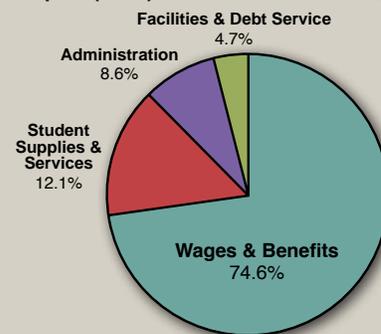
Mount Madonna School completed its 38th fiscal year on June 30, 2017. The school operates under the committed stewardship and oversight of our Trustees, Board of Directors and Finance Committee. The tuition generated by enrollment remains the primary source of operating revenue, while salaries and benefits comprise the majority of operating expense. We began the 2016-17 year with 178 students, collected revenue from 179 students, and ended the year with 176 students. Our Annual Giving Campaign netted \$114,490, plus an additional \$16,968 from Drive for Schools. Our Capital Campaign netted \$96,670 in gifts and pledges plus a net of \$11,684 from the Randy Getz Memorial Golf Tournament. This enabled us to finish and open the gym buildings! We look forward to a future of increasing financial strength and sustainability, through increasing enrollment, generous donations to our Annual Giving campaign, and directed donations to the excellent programs at MMS.

— Eric Forbes, Business Manager

| Operating Revenue | 2016-17 Budget | Operating Expense | 2016-17 Budget |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Tuition & Fees | \$2,668,401.00 | Wages & Benefits | \$2,232,786.00 |
| Donations/Fundraising | \$182,150.00 | Student Supplies & Services | \$361,950.00 |
| Productions & Other | \$145,500.00 | Administration | \$257,400.00 |
| Total | \$2,996,051.00 | Facilities & Debt Service | \$141,500.00 |
| | | Total | \$2,993,636.00 |



Surplus (Loss) \$2,415.00



| | 2016-17 (Budget) | 2015-16 (Actual) | 2014-15 (Actual) | 2013-14 (Actual) |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Operation Budget | \$2,996,051.00 | \$3,111,036.00 | \$2,892,286.00 | \$3,067,779.00 |
| Enrollment | 179 | 193 | 190 | 194 |

Note: The audit for this fiscal year was conducted by the Harrington Group in September. That report will be available in December for anyone wishing to view it.

Directed and In-Kind Contributions

Each year, our families, friends and community members give generously to specific programs for which they have a special affinity. These include financial assistance scholarships, the scholarship endowment, athletics, performing arts, Values in World Thought journeys and the fifth grade environmental studies, among others. Additionally, merchant giving programs – such as the Scrip gift and grocery cards – contribute to supporting programs vital to MMS. Some gifts were cash, while others were in-kind contributions.

Thank you for your support:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Amazon Smile Foundation | eScrip | Angie Lackey and Alan Olson | Raley's of Bel-Air |
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| Anand Darsie | Kalpana and Sampad Kachuck | Oracle | Wharf to Wharf Race |
| Ecology Action | King's Paint & Paper | PG & E Matching Gifts Program | Visual World, LLC |

Fundraising with Scrip

We are pleased to report that our Scrip sales for the 2016-17 school year reached \$60,000, which equates to \$2,300 in revenue generated for MMS. Scrip is a no-cost way to raise money for the school. Before you shop for groceries, gifts, or gas, consider stocking up on Scrip gift cards or signing up for presto pay accounts. Check out mountmadonnaschool.org/scrip/ to learn how you can raise money for MMS by shopping at your favorite stores. A special thank you to Tiffany Trujillo for coordinating our Scrip program, and to our families who participate.

— Linda Manzur

“This year’s GEELA recipients stand out as examples for how sustainable practices go hand in hand with economic and organizational success,” said CalEPA Secretary Matthew Rodriguez.

The GEELA program recognizes individuals, organizations, and businesses that have demonstrated exceptional leadership and made notable, voluntary contributions in conserving California’s precious resources, protecting and enhancing its environment, building public-private partnerships and strengthening the state’s economy.

Following the award ceremony Assemblymember Mark Stone presented teacher Jessica Cambell with a California State Assembly certificate recognizing MMS’ achievement.

Seed of Flame

Seventh graders tackled issues of forest ecology after wildfires, with their Seed of Flame project. Students began a native plant seed bank, raised funds to support tree planting in Africa, and entered the Lexus Eco Challenge, where they won \$25,000 and First Place in the Air Climate Challenge. The Mount Madonna team is one of four middle school teams to earn first place in this nationwide competition. The prize money was shared by MMS, teacher Katrina Leni-Konig and participating students.

“Seed of Flame showed me how working together, even for a short time, can have a big impact,” said student Amirah Alexander.

Their project was inspired by the 2016 Loma wildfire. Students transformed a school greenhouse into a forest nursery to help restore forests after wildfire, disease, and other human impacts.

“We need to understand that wildfires are a necessary part of our ecosystem, but climate change is making it more difficult for forests to regenerate on their own,” commented Leni-Konig.

“Wildfires in California are larger, burn hotter, last longer, and are more frequent than usual. The forests need our help!”

The project’s impact extended globally. Students ran a social media campaign, #hugatree, and asked friends around the world to plant trees in their communities. They compiled a film of the tree planting action to demonstrate global stewardship.

“I think our commitments and ideas proved us worthy of first place and captured the judges’ attention,” commented student Ben Pearson.

“We accomplished a lot,” observed student Summer Howley. “We made science kits, a clayma-

tion, and lots of seed packets. Despite being seventh grade kids, we had help from all over the world and were able to reach and educate many people.”

View the project webpage:



President’s Environmental Youth Award

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded the 2015-16 fifth grade class with the President’s Environmental Youth Award (PEYA) for their work to fight threats faced by the Western Snowy Plover. The EPA honored the students at a school assembly in June and again in August as part of a national ceremony in Washington, D.C.

“These students have both raised awareness about this shorebird and inspired the next generation of scientists,” said Jeff Scott, EPA land division director for the Pacific Southwest.

The students (now sixth graders) were recognized for their in-depth environmental education and stewardship campaign titled Shore Wars: The Shore Awakens.

“We are pleased to honor these impressive young leaders who demonstrate the impact a few individuals can make to protect our environment.”

— Scott Pruitt, EPA administrator

“As fifth graders we really worked to educate the public about environmental issues, and raise awareness about the dangers of plastic for the snowy plover population,” said sixth grader Ronan Keith. “I am super excited that we are being recognized for our work, and that what we did is making a difference!”

Over the 2015-16 school year students created an educational movie on the environmental hazards faced by snowy plovers that was screened publicly, and at the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s World Ocean Day and Plastic Pollution Summit; wrote letters to elected representatives; cleaned up beaches, replanted and restored nesting habitat.



Top: 2016 GEELA commemoratives
Bottom: At the PEYA ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Students collaborated with California State Parks to create informational signs to protect wintering flocks at Seabright State Beach.

“Writing letters to the government about issues such as climate change, plastic threats, sand mining, recreation on the beach, and factory farming not only helped me to learn more about this,” reflected a classmate, “it was also a cool experience to know that you really have a voice in these things.”

This is the second time MMS fifth grade students have received this national recognition. In 2015, students were awarded the PEYA for their 2013-14 work to protect endangered sea turtles.

“We are pleased to honor these impressive young leaders who demonstrate the impact a few individuals can make to protect our environment,” said EPA administrator Scott Pruitt. “These students are empowering their peers, educating their communities, and demonstrating the STEM skills needed for this country to thrive in the global economy.”

“When it comes to leadership and environmental education,” noted Santa Cruz Sentinel writer Justine DaCosta in an article earlier this year, “Mount Madonna School is king of the mountain.”

Indeed.

— Leigh Ann Clifton



Randy Getz Memorial Golf Tournament: A Decade of Gym Support

Mount Madonna School's Golf Tournament was started in 2008 by a small group of parents and support staff. In 2015, the tournament became the Randy Getz Memorial Golf Tournament. The vision was clear and simple: gather the community in support of the new gymnasium construction. On Friday, October 7, 2016, we gathered over 100 of our community members for fun in the sun, while remembering a founder of the tournament and lover of golf and athletics, Randy Getz.

The 2016 tournament netted \$11,684, which aided in the completion of the gym. Thank you to this year's presenting sponsors: Sunridge Farms, Joint Electrical Industry Fund, JPMorgan Chase,



Golfers & friends socialize over dinner

and TreeLine Security. Special recognition to the Moreno family and their friends Jesse and Elvira for all of their contributions, support and delicious food they've provided and prepared over the years.

This year's committee was made up of volunteers: Laurie Getz, alumni parent and board member; alumni parent Lara Kilpatrick, '85; alumni parent and board member Letty Bess; Juvy Timan, parent, and MMS' resident golf pro; parents Samantha Samuels; Robert and Lisa Moreno, myself, and my wife, Linda Manzur. The unsung heroes of the golf tournament are our incredible office support staff: Benna Dimig, Olwen Skogerson, Robyn Pearson, Monique Smith and Leigh Ann Clifton.

Gratitude, as well, for the more than two dozen volunteers that gave their time and energy to bring our vision into reality by setting up, registering, hosting on the course, serving dinner, or cleaning: Jivanti Rutansky, Melinda Powers, Eve Ortiz, Jose Ocampo, Christine Smith, Amy Howley, Sara Drobshoff, Amanda Schader Wilson, Jenni Leach, Brian Spector, Komala Correos, Sarah Grant, Christopher Werry, Miguil, Nora and Chris Gonzales, Naguib Manzur and our own Head of School, Supriya McDonald. It was a privilege to be a part of such a meaningful event and witness our community take collective action to accomplish a vision. What will we imagine next?

— *Stevan Manzur*,

2016 golf committee chairperson

Our sincere appreciation to:

*Alfaro Family Vineyards & Winery,
Mary Kay and Richard Alfaro
Animal Damage Management
Berkshire Hathaway/Campos Real Estate
Letty and Lane Bess
Chardonmay Sailing Charters Santa Cruz
Class of 2023
Class of 2024
Class of 2025
Crow's Nest Restaurant
DeLaveaga Golf Course
Diamond D Company
Sarada and Dayanand Diffenbaugh
Discretion Brewery
Earthbelly
East Cliff Brewing Company
elucidate
Emmalily Vineyards, Laura and Steve Petersen
Fortino Winery
Gayle's Bakery & Rosticceria
Hellam's Tobacco Shop
The Hideout
John Shelton, Inc., Dave Shelton
Joint Electrical Industry Fund (JEIF)
Joseph George Wines
JPMorgan Chase
Kona Brewing Company
Lawson's Bakery
Jenni Leach and Brian Spector
Martin Ranch Winery
John Maxon
Monterey Bay Mortgage, Forrest Cambell
Monterey Bay Sailing
Lisa and Robert Moreno
Om Gallery
Sinead O'Neill and Kevin Gibson
Pelican Ranch Winery
Peruzzi Fresh Olive Oil, Ann and Nico Peruzzi
Pillsbury, Wintthrop, Shaw, Pittman, LLP
Plumbed Elegance, Julia and John Bettencourt
Melinda and Jeff Powers
Princess Monterey Whale Watching
Redwood Electric Group
Redwood Engineering, Leonard Willis
Rock Bottom Brewing Company
Michael Samuels
Samantha Samuels and Daryl Long
Satori Cellars, Sandy and Tom Moller
Lawrence Schreiber
Shadoubrook Restaurant
Sinaloa Cafe
Christine and Anthony Smith
Spector Corbett Architects, Inc., Brian Spector
SSB Construction
SunRidge Farms, Barbara and Marty Cohen
Synergy Learning Systems, Debbie Dutra Lord
and Mark Lord
TreeLine Security
Watsonville Coast Produce
Visual World, LLC., Carson Kelly*

Exploring Our World

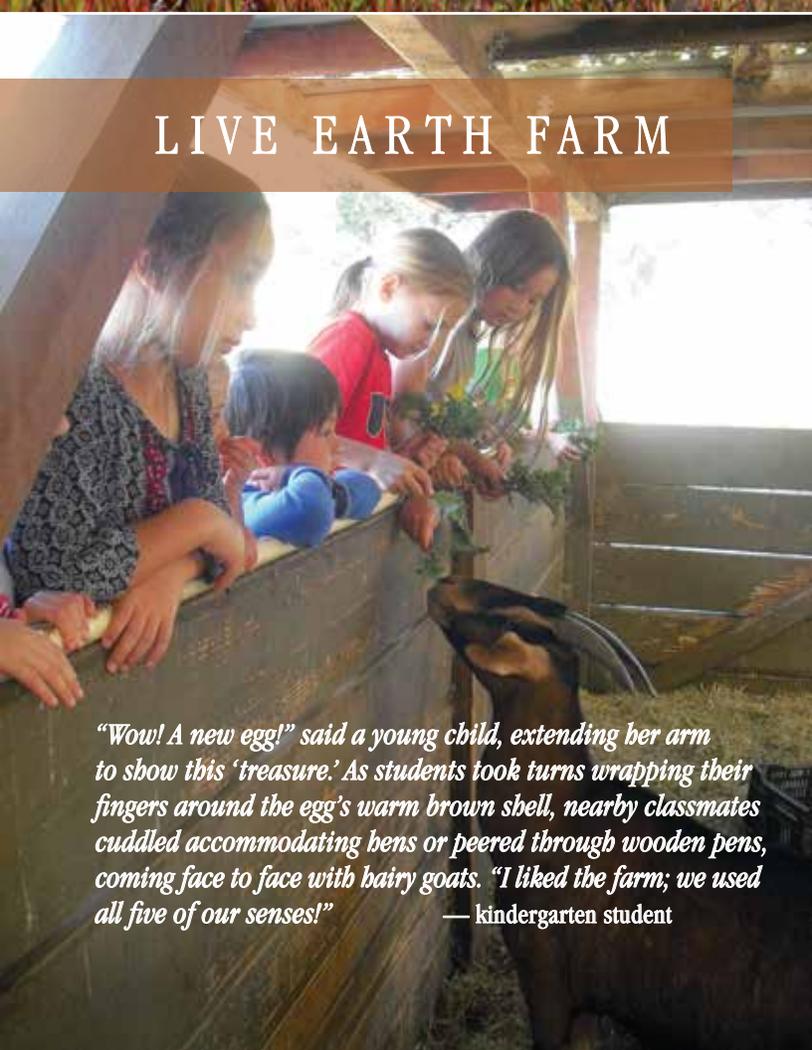
Outdoor education and travel offers students the opportunity to learn, build relationships and reflect outside of the classroom. A foundational aspect of Mount Madonna's program for nearly four decades, this process is integral to guiding students in becoming engaged, discerning citizens. From the Merced River to Catalina Island, local organic farms, South Africa and India, curiosity, compassion and creativity – and positive character – are nurtured, as students practice independence and resourcefulness. In these unfamiliar, and at times wild, settings, they build relationships that can last a lifetime. What follow are reflections on these experiences by the students and their teachers.



MONTARA

"I liked journaling at Pescadero Marsh. We sat in the ice plant along the trail with a little space between each person and wrote in silence for about 15 minutes. I wrote about the landscape. It was a comfortable and sunny day. There was a little river and a little lake or estuary leading to the marsh. Behind the marsh was a forest. We could see a long meadow of golden grasses in the hills."

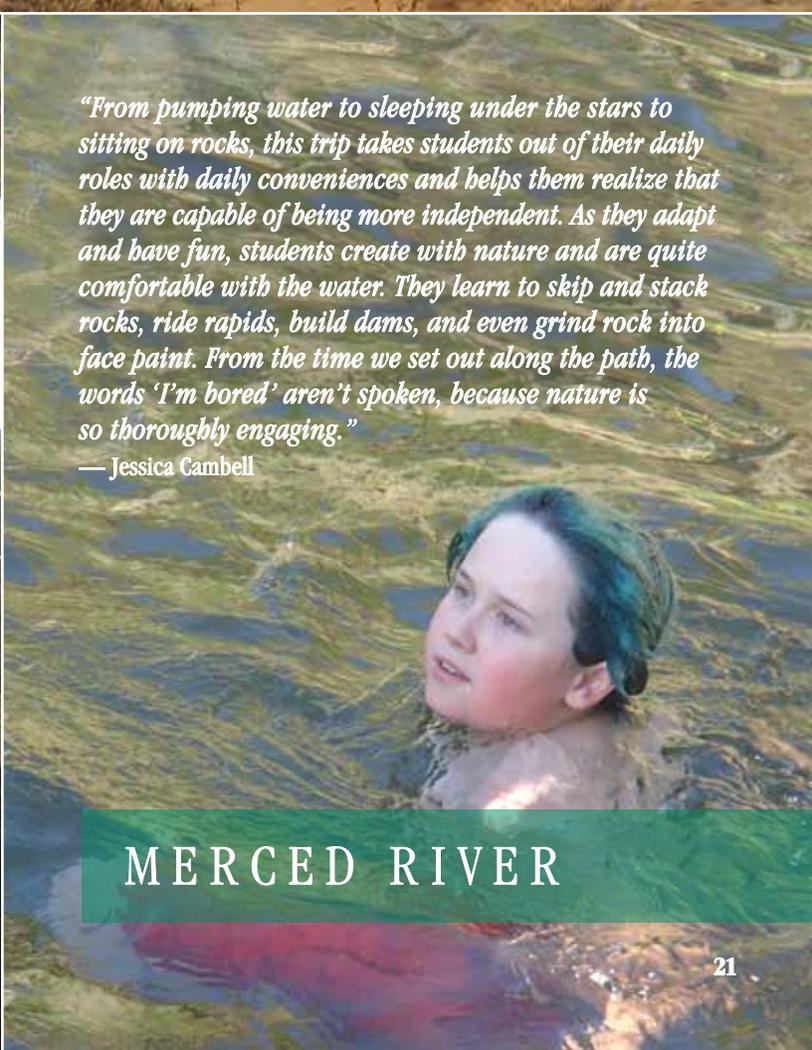
— Nikowa D'Costa-Hemp, 3rd grade



LIVE EARTH FARM

"Wow! A new egg!" said a young child, extending her arm to show this 'treasure.' As students took turns wrapping their fingers around the egg's warm brown shell, nearby classmates cuddled accommodating hens or peered through wooden pens, coming face to face with bairy goats. "I liked the farm; we used all five of our senses!"

— kindergarten student



"From pumping water to sleeping under the stars to sitting on rocks, this trip takes students out of their daily roles with daily conveniences and helps them realize that they are capable of being more independent. As they adapt and have fun, students create with nature and are quite comfortable with the water. They learn to skip and stack rocks, ride rapids, build dams, and even grind rock into face paint. From the time we set out along the path, the words 'I'm bored' aren't spoken, because nature is so thoroughly engaging."

— Jessica Cambell

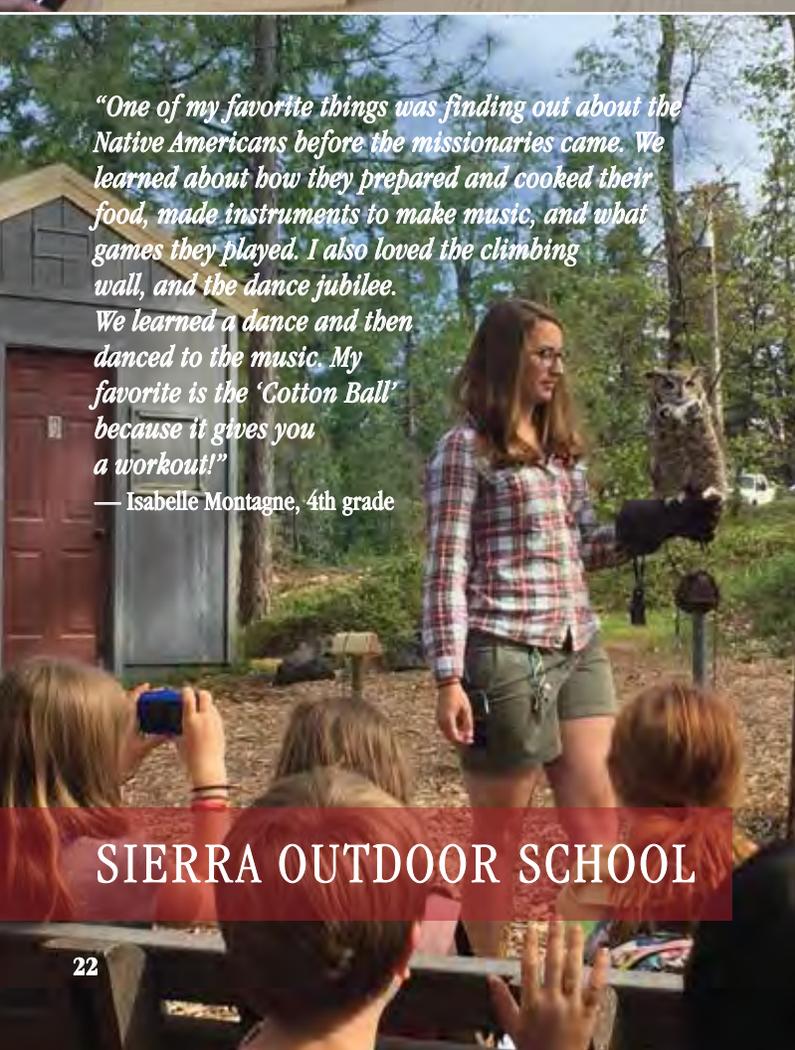
MERCED RIVER



SOUTH AFRICA

"Today we interviewed Peter Harris. Earlier this week, we spoke with Pregs Govender, who talked to us about the importance of having the courage to be insubordinate, and what struck me most about Harris was just that. It must have taken a lot of courage to defend four black rebels during Apartheid, who were revolting against the very source of Apartheid. I highly appreciate people who stick to their beliefs no matter how little support they have because they know what they are facing is wrong and needs to end. Answering a question about how having children impacted him during the trial, he said something to the effect of, 'In court, you are defending someone's son, someone's daughter.' This comment sat with me for the rest of our interview, and will continue to do so. It is a more personal view of the relationship between a lawyer and his client, and the result of a trial now holds a truer meaning for me... We asked Harris if he had any advice for our generation, and he said, 'Take an interest, get involved, make a difference.' He told us that the effort for change and advancement starts now. It's not just the future generation's problem; it is a problem for all of us, right now. I want to serve my community and country in some positive way, and his advice added more of a spark of motivation to do so."

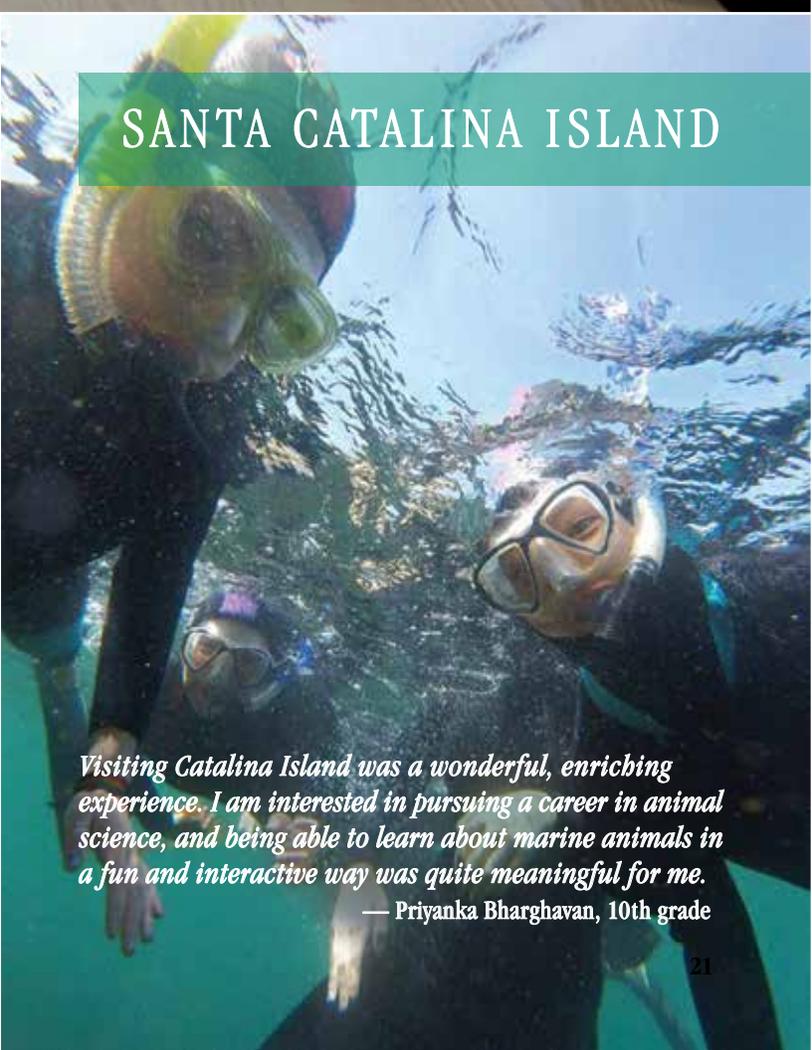
— Cyrus Kamkar, 11th grade



"One of my favorite things was finding out about the Native Americans before the missionaries came. We learned about how they prepared and cooked their food, made instruments to make music, and what games they played. I also loved the climbing wall, and the dance jubilee. We learned a dance and then danced to the music. My favorite is the 'Cotton Ball' because it gives you a workout!"

— Isabelle Montagne, 4th grade

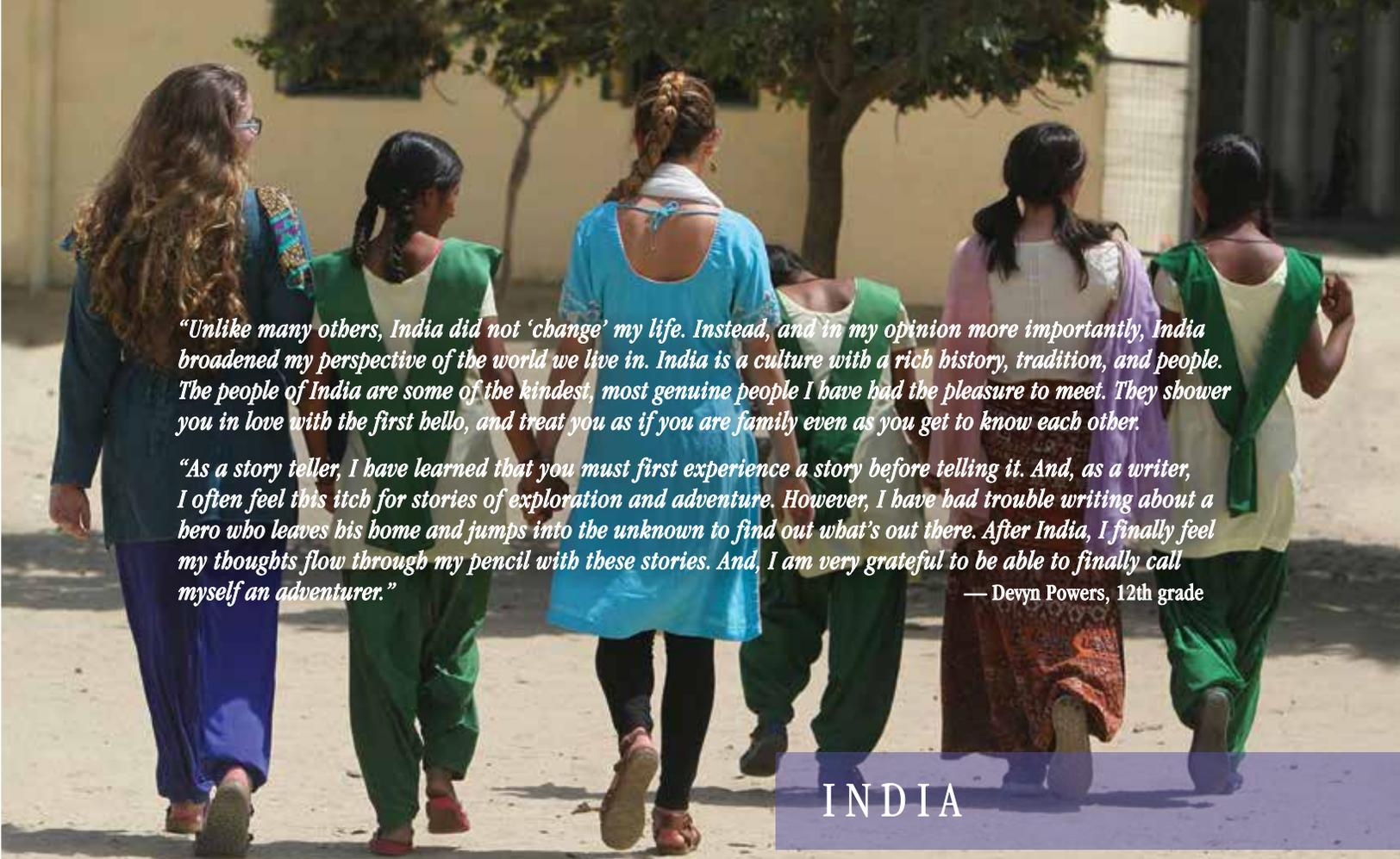
SIERRA OUTDOOR SCHOOL



SANTA CATALINA ISLAND

Visiting Catalina Island was a wonderful, enriching experience. I am interested in pursuing a career in animal science, and being able to learn about marine animals in a fun and interactive way was quite meaningful for me.

— Priyanka Bharghavan, 10th grade



“Unlike many others, India did not ‘change’ my life. Instead, and in my opinion more importantly, India broadened my perspective of the world we live in. India is a culture with a rich history, tradition, and people. The people of India are some of the kindest, most genuine people I have had the pleasure to meet. They shower you in love with the first hello, and treat you as if you are family even as you get to know each other.

“As a story teller, I have learned that you must first experience a story before telling it. And, as a writer, I often feel this itch for stories of exploration and adventure. However, I have had trouble writing about a hero who leaves his home and jumps into the unknown to find out what’s out there. After India, I finally feel my thoughts flow through my pencil with these stories. And, I am very grateful to be able to finally call myself an adventurer.”

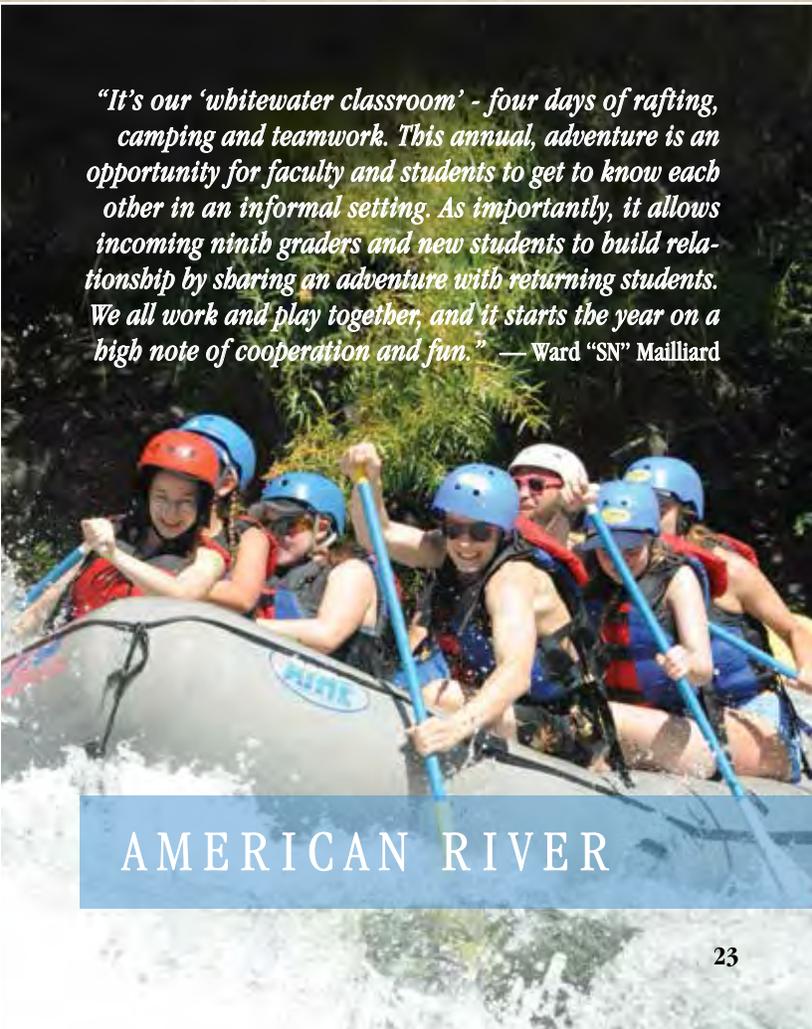
— Devyn Powers, 12th grade

INDIA



BIG BASIN STATE PARK

“The transition from summer to classroom can be precipitous and rather abrupt. Designed to be at least 75% fun, this excursion provides just the right kind of buffer from carefree summer afternoons to the responsibilities of school days. Hidden strengths emerge, friendships are formed and renewed, and adolescents and adults live, work, and play together. When we show up for classes back at school the following week, there is more of a family feel on campus from having shared this experience.” — Bob Caplan



“It’s our ‘whitewater classroom’ - four days of rafting, camping and teamwork. This annual, adventure is an opportunity for faculty and students to get to know each other in an informal setting. As importantly, it allows incoming ninth graders and new students to build relationship by sharing an adventure with returning students. We all work and play together, and it starts the year on a high note of cooperation and fun.” — Ward “SN” Mailliard

AMERICAN RIVER



The Role of Character Monologues

To truly embody a character requires the actor to see and experience the world from that character's perspective. Discovering a connection to character takes detective work, personal reflection and an embracing of the journey. Aside from spontaneous discoveries within rehearsal, another method of creating character is the Character Monologue Project.

Students read the ENTIRE script including songs to discover context: situation, time, place, and relationships. They search for a character's goals and dreams, as well as conflicts and issues. Yet, what happens if in the script or libretto there aren't enough details regarding the character's journey? With this project, students have opportunity to create a character's backstory, from family origins, to desperate needs and formidable conflicts. In life, we want everything easily achievable. Ironically, in theatre, we want just the opposite. We foster conflict. The journey must be difficult, the obstacles formidable.

Writing from the character's perspective, the monologue incorporates the other established characters and important events from the play, as well as revealing the personal struggles and issues of the portrayed character. Students are encouraged to play with a surprising point of view, a haunting vulnerability, or a burning question or confrontation.

Students also create an artistic project to accompany the monologue. The projects range from portraits or depictions to metaphorical representation. A short writing accompanies the art, revealing connection between art and the character.

The character monologue is simply one aspect of the complex, fluid and dynamic journey of characterization. Actors know that it is in community and interaction with other performers that the true formation of character occurs. Our discoveries and unpeeling of the layers of our created persona continue through the last performance. — *Sampad Kachuck*



Sheer Will and Designer Skill: Girija Kathleen Beavers



*Loving mother, doting grandma,
fierce friend
Miracle worker
Vibrant, fearless, determined, a seeker,
a healer
Skilled massage therapist, brilliant artist
She once built a 64-foot "pirate" ship,
the Stone Witch,
Oh, and did you know, she can sew
and stitch?*

Her genius on display with every play, creative and inventive, so skilled, thorough, and

attentive to detail, without fail, willing and able to hold to her own high standards.

The job itself beyond full time: two Broadway winter shows in a row. Yet what makes sanity more elusive is that the program is inclusive, over 50 students per play, often in multiple roles.

The *Ramayana!* lands in the spring, nearly 200 strong, stacked into a play that runs very long. Add to all of this, quirky directorial designs and plans that place often unfair demands on all involved and yet every year she does the task, exceeds what is asked, and her reward hopefully substantial, but truthfully more intrinsic than it is financial.

Through sheer will and designer skill, she and her gallant crew gather, borrow, and mine the cluttered costume shop until they find enough to stitch and hem, cut and adjust, and then from piles of clothing, and designs theoretical, comes professionally stunning and visual spectacle.

Not a job for the thin skinned or the simply impatient. She can be blunt, she speaks her mind, but I find what drives her is her caring; tough love on the shell, but soft sweetness dwells right under the surface.

Girija, I know you don't like the spotlight of praise but as your daughter Priya wrote me,



Top: Girija helping with the *Ramayana!* costumes
Bottom: Girija, Anurag White and Sarojani Rohan

better grin and bear it because there will be a lot of people who want to thank you. Me, included. We have danced this dance for a very long time together. I treasure you deeply and will miss you.

— *Sampad Kachuck*

A Way with Words: Annual High School Poetry Competition

This year marked the 24th annual Santa Cruz County High School Poetry Competition. In past years the majority of the high school has participated in this competition, but since we focused our efforts this year on the *Yes! Magazine* national essay competition, just one student submitted to the poetry competition. Priyanka Bharghavan's poem "Hanuman's Garden" was selected for publication in the anthology. — *Haley Campbell ('02)*

Hanuman's Garden

Hampi –

An unspoken wonder of the world, built on crimson earth,
Its tales and culture woven in the grass, ingrained in the ancient stones.
It resides in the lilting voices of the priests' monologue of prayer,
And the strident shrieks of the monkeys, a campaign for liberation.

On one end of the hall, the Virupaksha temple,
Its pyramidal steeple painted with carvings of the gods, and the vast
array of life seen through the eyes of the ancients.

Across lies the shrine of the Monolithic Bull, adorned by piercing
eyes of spying monkeys.
Both tethered to the exotic bazaar brimming with a cornucopia of
voices and buffet of smells.

The birthplace of Hanuman is seen across the river,
The descended perform a vibrant river dance on the sandy seashore.

An ocean of power condensed into the miniscule bodies of spunk
and determination,

Strong spirit propelling them into thievery, they scurry into the tearful
banyan tree with their horde of human souvenirs.

The river bullies the shrines, molding them back into the stone obelisks
from which they were born.

The coracles are lined up on the sand, crying to be in the water,
Bowls fashioned from newspaper and banana leaves set sail,
Overlooking the painting of ruins and glorious hybrid of colors against
the textured stone canvas.

The evening hums with dragonflies drifting above precarious boulders,
And the Indian sky bleeds with sunset color.
The ghosts of the ancient people lay to rest,
And the monkeys smile in Hanuman's garden.

— *Priyanka Bharghavan, 10th grade*

The Spirit of Being Bold

Interview with Tobias Aguirre ('94) by Haley Campbell ('02)

“If you take care of the present, the future will take care of itself.” This is one of the many positive beliefs that guides Tobias Aguirre’s life. Tobias is the Chief Executive Officer of FishWise, a nonprofit sustainable seafood consultancy dedicated to improving the health of ocean ecosystems. Tobias is helping individual companies integrate sustainable practices, but more importantly, he is working to influence the global industry by building impactful collaborations and resources that empower the industry to take responsibility for itself, thus benefiting the environment and human welfare.

Tobias’s journey has been fueled by a strong work ethic, deep passion, and inherent trust in himself and in life. He began his education at a Waldorf school in Sacramento, and in 1987, when Tobias was 11, he moved with his father and two of his four

brothers to Mount Madonna Center (MMC). They lived briefly in a tiny room below the farmhouse and then moved into an old goat shed across from the lake where the Conference Center now stands. This was a fun time to be a kid at MMC – there were many resident children and the Mount Madonna School (MMS) boarding school was a lively place. Then, as now, theater was central to school life. Tobias played Ravana in the *Ramayana!* all four years in high school. His senior year director Sampad Kachuck asked if he would like to be Hanuman instead, but Tobias was too attached to his role as Ravana. His powerful performance remains a highlight for long-time community members (including this author). Like today, many high school students played volleyball back then. In 1992, the very first year that MMS joined the league, it was the league champion, a streak Tobias and his team held onto throughout high school. Tobias and several of his teammates went on to play in the Junior Olympics where he, PK Diffenbaugh ('95), and Jagadish Cheney ('92) were named All-Americans.

After graduating in 1994, Tobias attended Stanford and studied 20th century protest movements, such as the Civil Rights Movement and anti-colonialism in Africa. He was fascinated by the ways that generations can clash as young people seek to throw off the old order and determine their own destinies through the pursuit

of greater equality and new societal design. To complete his senior thesis, Tobias attended the Plum Village Summer Opening in southwest France where he studied under the Zen Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh, who was nominated by Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963 for the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in the Vietnamese Peace Movement. Tobias spent five weeks at Plum Village, gaining a deeper

understanding of the history and circumstances of the Vietnam War, which inspired Thich Nhat Hanh’s teachings of Engaged Buddhism, a practice that moves meditation to action. Tobias was very moved by the experience and teachings, which built upon an aphorism he had learned from Baba Hari Dass (Babaji) at MMC: “Motivation to bring peace to others is the cause of peace within.” This has remained a central theme in Tobias’s life and work.

After graduation, Tobias returned to Santa Cruz and worked at Wildwood Natural Foods. “I was the only Stanford-educated tofu delivery guy



possibly in the world at that time.” He remained at Wildwood for three years, which afforded him the freedom to explore his next steps.

Tobias attended graduate school at the University of California San Diego’s (UCSD) School of International Relations and Pacific Studies. During the summer between his first and second year, he interned at FishWise. The organization was brand new and had just received its first grant of \$75,000 from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, which was funding organizations to help develop sustainable seafood strategies as a means to improve the overall health of the oceans. Tobias participated in a pilot program with New Leaf Community Markets wherein FishWise applied the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch science and sustainability recommendations to the point of sale, so that customers could be more informed about their seafood choices and help the ocean environment. New Leaf made more money overall when offering sustainable choices. This success motivated Tobias to focus his second year of graduate school on building towards a career in this field, and upon graduation, he convinced FishWise to hire him as a project manager. He was their fourth employee. A few years later he was promoted to his current role.

“Dreams come true,” is a platitude that Tobias and his wife Jessica, a yoga teacher and counselor at Salud Para La Gente, often say to each other. Tobias first met Jessica at a youth retreat at MMC when he was sixteen. Fifteen years later in 2007 they met again at Carby’s Zimmerman’s ('92) wedding in Corralitos. “It was love at second sight,” Tobias said of Jessica. By living with gratitude, positive intentions, and a strong work ethic, they have created their dream life. They married in 2011 and have two sons, Arias Moon (four and a half



Tobias evaluating the sustainability of a salmon farm in British Columbia

brothers to Mount Madonna Center (MMC). They lived briefly in a tiny room below the farmhouse and then moved into an old goat shed across from the lake where the Conference Center now stands. This was a fun time to be a kid at MMC – there were many resident children and the Mount Madonna School (MMS) boarding school was a lively place.

Then, as now, theater was central to school life. Tobias played Ravana in the *Ramayana!* all four years in high school. His senior year director Sampad Kachuck asked if he would like to be Hanuman instead, but Tobias was too attached

and Finnegan Star (two and a half). They recently bought a beautiful home in the Aptos hills. “I’ve never had a grand plan for myself, but if I live life well day to day, life seems to be taking care of itself and taking care of me. You can turn your passions and dreams into a vocation.”

More than a billion people rely on seafood as their primary source of protein. With such power, the industry can be a force for good or bad. By engaging in conversations and collaborations around the world, FishWise helps to create systems and resources for an incredibly complex industry. “If your seafood is environmentally sustainable, but is connected with modern day slavery, you’ve only solved part of the problem,” Tobias said. Recent investigative journalism uncovered labor abuses and human trafficking in Thailand. Vulnerable populations of migrants were promised jobs at resorts, but were then shipped out to sea for three years where they were forced to work around the clock and were threatened with violence or death. FishWise does outreach to labor and environmental groups to integrate the conversation and act as a liaison to address the human rights and labor issues. Through collaboration they create resources to understand the complexities of the problems and its potential solutions.

FishWise is working with the World Wildlife Fund, Future of Fish, and the Global Food Traceability Center to change traceability practices. President Obama initiated a Presidential Task Force that resulted in a seafood import-monitoring program wherein suppliers are required to provide traceability information in order to export products into the U.S. market. Starting in October 2017, Tobias will be working more directly with the U.S. government through a collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admini-

stration (NOAA), the State Department and leading foundations to increase the adoption of electronic traceability.

With every project and collaboration, Tobias sets out to help people become leaders in the industry. His core organizational philosophy is that, “We’re all leaders and we’re all more ready than we think. I want to empower people to live and embody that.” His work revolves around building a community of practice, which he carries from his Mount Madonna days. “There is no better description for MMC than a community of practice.” Drawing from those early experiences has allowed him to live a life where he can create environments where everyone’s voice is heard and respected and everyone contributes in their own way. “This has become my way of life professionally.”

He credits Mount Madonna for launching him into a successful life. “Going to MMS makes you realize that people are trying to live with meaning, not materialistic pursuits.” He kept that mindset as he transitioned to Stanford, UCSD, and FishWise. Every time he is on a panel or speaking at a conference, he thinks about being onstage and remembers that he’s been doing this since he was in seventh grade, in performing arts classes. “In that sense, Sampad is always with me.” He often reflects on former teacher Sadanand Mailliard’s consistent inquiry of what it means to live a meaningful life. Teacher Premdas Rohan taught him that having fun and playing is just as important as learning and studying.

Mount Madonna remains a community touchstone and foundation in Tobias’s life. “All of the family and friends that I have there... that will always be a grounding force. It will always be a home to go back to.” Someday he hopes his two boys will help put more champion volleyball banners on the gym walls.

Tobias is excited to see where his work will go and what his talented staff at FishWise can achieve. He hopes that we will soon see a seafood industry that respects and values the people who are responsible for bringing our food to us, and he works for a demonstrable change in the health of fisheries and oceans. “That spirit of being bold and trying to improve society has never been more important. So my advice to fellow alumni and current students of Mount Madonna is to aspire to make a difference in the world; there’s no greater journey. As Paul Hawken said, ‘you are brilliant and the Earth is hiring.’”

What can consumers do to support the health of the ocean and the seafood industry?

- Find a grocery store that has a publicly available sustainable seafood policy (usually on their website) that explains what they’re doing and what credible programs guide their choices
- Buy local seafood. California and the U.S. in general have some of the best fishery management, so farmers markets are good places to shop
- Download the Seafood Watch app for decision-making at your fingertips
- The lower on the food chain the sea creature is, the more sustainable they tend to be because they reproduce quicker to be more abundant. For example, farmed shellfish is generally very sustainable
- Throw out the myth of only buying “wild-caught.” Done responsibly, aquaculture fills the gap for production that wild fisheries cannot keep up with, and it often offers more sustainable options. Catfish, trout, and shellfish are often good farmed options

Tobias at Mount Madonna in 1992

Tobias with his family in Fiji in 2016



High School Student Service Projects



Rainwater Storage

A service project to upgrade the rain catchment water storage system in the lower school Children's Garden was completed this spring. The volunteer effort was led by Eagle Scout candidate and junior Will Murphy, with help from his brother Connor and Braeden Will (both Scouts and freshman), along with volunteers from Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Troop #711. The boys leveled the ground, added a base under each barrel and built fencing around them. They plumbed the gazebo downspouts into the barrels, and connected the barrels to improve storage capacity, and repaired and installed an old-fashioned water pump. Well done!



Campus Benches

During summer of 2016, senior and Eagle Scout candidate Isaac Harris built three wooden park benches as a gift for MMS. He installed the benches around the upper campus, where they provide comfortable seating for casual conversations or quiet reflection.

"I chose to do my project at Mount Madonna because I know just how pretty of a school it is, and that these benches would be graciously received by both faculty and students alike." Indeed, we are thankful; these lovely benches invite all to take pause and enjoy the serenity of the campus environment.



Shyama Beth Friedberg, Mount Madonna Center (MMC) resident and MMS supporter, passed away at home on December 31, 2016, following a

Remembering Shyama Friedberg

lengthy illness. She is survived by her husband Brajesh, daughters Carol Simmons and Gail Alderman, sons Benny and Eric Alderman, and grandchildren Brett Turchin, Madeline Graham, Sophia and Elena Alderman, Camilo Arana (who attended MMS for elementary school), and great-granddaughter Aliyah Cheyanne Corder.

She and Brajesh, who served as MMS' principal from 1984-1990 (and is a former MMS board of directors member and a current trustee), first came to the MMC property in 1978. Shyama contributed to MMS in many ways: a trained marriage, family and child therapist, she organized a peer-counseling class for middle school students;

and in the early 1980s was one of the first stage managers for the children's *Ramayana!* Shyama volunteered to organize the first and then many subsequent MMS auctions; and as an accomplished and talented ceramicist, brought pottery to the Pre/K for several years. She was the first organizer of the art shows that graced the MMC community building walls for many years, allowing local artists to be represented and with a portion of sales, initially, benefitting MMS. For decades Shyama modeled engaged citizenship through her political activism and dedicated participation in the MMC community. Her gentle and caring presence is greatly missed. — *Sarojani Rohan*

Alumni Notes

From the Class of...

'85 **Lara Kilpatrick** is now director of development at FishWise. "I am excited to bring my organizational development skills to this nonprofit in support of sustainable fish-sourcing practices around the world. I remain involved at California CASA association through at least the end of 2017, working to diversify funding for the statewide organization that supports 44 local CASA programs advocating for 13,000 abused and neglected children who are in the foster care system. Additionally, I continue to serve on the board for Teen Kitchen Project in Santa Cruz, where we are proud to be celebrating five years of bringing young people into the kitchen to learn how to cook healthy, delicious meals, and 100,000 meals served to individuals and families dealing with life-threatening illnesses."

'90 **Marm (Auston) Kilpatrick**, Ph.D., associate professor in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), is working to figure out why reported cases of Lyme disease in the United States have tripled in recent decades. His report was published in a special issue of *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* and covered in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*.

'94 **Ryan Oliver** has returned to the Bay Area and is working at Lodestar charter school in Oakland. In May, Ryan got engaged to Louise Place. "Well friends, he's finally here," shared **Yogi Shapiro** and **Maryjane Tutzauer**. "Bodhi Oliver Shapiro was born beautifully into our world on March 22. We are more in love than we ever imagined possible and we will cherish these early days as we all learn and grow together."

'95 **Sarah Davis** and husband **Peejay Mapumulo** welcomed son **Jaylen Noah Nkosi Mapumulo** on September 9. "His smile and sweet nature keep us going each day," said Sarah. "All the 'Davis Aunties' have been a great support too!"



Yogi Shapiro ('94) with his son Bodhi Oliver Shapiro



Sarah Davis ('95) with her son Jaylen Noah Nkosi Mapumulo



Noah Lyon Limbach ('11) aboard a tall ship at sea

'98 **Ana Saroj Harris** has returned to Santa Cruz with her son **Adrian**. She teaches Pilates on the weekends and works for a startup artificial intelligence consultancy.

'99 For the second year in a row, **Marita Priya Diaz** and husband **Ravi Albright** received a \$10,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for their nonprofit, the Anindo Chatterjee Institute of Tabla (ACIT). The award is funding a series of public concerts and educational workshops in the greater Seattle area.

'02 **Oriana [Potter] Teran Valdez** and **Saul Teran** were married July 1 in Felton. Sister **Belle [Potter] Atkinson ('05)** was the maid of honor, and her other siblings were also in the wedding party, including **Serena** and her new baby, **Goldie Luna**. Classmate **Haley Campbell** attended, along with several other alumni, faculty and Mount Madonna Center community members. **Raj Fisher** married **Lydia Shute** on the Fisher family property in Greensboro, Vermont on September 9. Sister **Sara Parvati Fisher ('98)** baked the wedding cake, classmate **Leo James** served as DJ, and **Dov Rohan ('01)** and retired faculty member and Pre/K director **Sarojani Rohan** provided music for the ceremony. Attendees included classmates **Mike Lightner**, **Alizah Davis**, **Oriana [Potter] Teran Valdez**, **Paul Crubaugh ('05)**, **PK McDonald ('04)**, and **Kusum Corina Forson ('03*)**.

'04 On September 23, **Dylan [Sanders-Self] Sanders-Torres** wed **Jasmine Castro-Torres** on a beach below the historic Pigeon Point Lighthouse. Their reception was held at the nearby Pie Ranch. Brother **Luke Sanders-Self ('07)** was the best man; **Leo James ('02)** was the DJ, and friends **Montgomery [Todd] Wilson ('06)** and **Ehrin Sale ('03)** gave speeches. Attendees included classmates **Kelsey Lewis**, **Laurén [Mitchell] O'Brien**, **PK McDonald**, **Thomas Tissot**, **John Thatcher ('05)**, **Mike Lightner ('02)**, **Bodhi Shaffer ('08)**, **Hannah Meade ('08)**, **Eyla Cuenca ('05)**, **Gaylen Wolfe-Pauly ('02)**, **Paul Crubaugh ('05)**, **Daniel Nanas ('07)**, and **Naveen Hattis ('08)**. It's a boy: **Laurén [Mitchell] O'Brien** and husband **Chris** welcomed baby **Sterling** on February 28, 2016.

'05 **Alexandra [Stemel] Jelliffe** has started her own photography business, www.alexjelliffe.com. **Belle [Potter] Atkinson** married **Colin Atkinson** on February 28, 2016. The couple live in Santa Cruz and Belle works as a nanny. **Seraphina**, daughter of **Eyla Cuenca** and husband **Julio Garcia**, will turn two in November.

'06 **Alyssa DeBenedetti** wed **Kevin Watt** of Scotland on August 12 at the Seymour Marine Discovery Center. Several alumni attended, including **Alexandra [Stemel] Jelliffe ('05)**, Alyssa's maid of honor. The couple live in the Bay Area and

Oriana [Potter] Teran Valdez ('02) wed Saul Teran

Eyla Cuenca's ('05) daughter Seraphina

Raj Fisher ('02) with sister Parvati ('98) and his bride, Lydia Shute

Laurén [Mitchell] O'Brien ('04) with her husband Chris and son Sterling





Alyssa DeBenedetti ('06) wed Kevin Watt Prabha Sharan ('07) as an American citizen Belle [Potter] Atkinson ('05) wed Colin Atkinson Allison Ota ('12) and family at her college graduation

Alyssa works as a zookeeper at San Jose's Happy Hollow Park and Zoo. **Casey Lightner** and **Naveen Hattis ('08)** raised money for the Santa Cruz AIDS Project by riding 100 miles in the 17th Annual Surf City AIDS Ride earlier this month.

'07 **Prabha Sharan** became an American citizen in a ceremony in Campbell on September 19.

'08 **Christopher Fust** continues to work with California Department of Fish and Wildlife as an environmental scientist and volunteers at the Marine Mammal Center rescuing wildlife in his spare time. **Dr. Sweet Tessa Fischer** graduated from the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine in Urbana. She has a master's in public health with an emphasis in biostatistics and epidemiology. Tessa is working on a year-long fellowship in Sacramento with the state Food and Drug Branch in the epidemiological investigation service department.

'09 **Trevor Forry** is living in New York City and working as a marketing assistant for Group Sales Box Office at Broadway.com.

'10 **Mariel [Mari] Fox** earned her master's in museum curation from the University of Edinburgh. During her two years in Scotland, Mari spent some time working as an intern at the Gallery of Modern Art in Glasgow. In September she moved to London to pursue her career.

'11 **Michaela Schuessler** graduated with a B.S. in business administration from California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB), with a concentration in international business and a pre-law minor.

'12 **Aaron Storrs** graduated from UCSC with a B.S. in engineering. **Allison Ota** is student teaching at Landmark Elementary School in Watsonville and is a teaching credential candidate through CSUMB. She coaches club volleyball and enjoys competing in beach volleyball. **Blythe Nora Collier** began publishing a blog, Dreamsense Poetry. Her poetry explores themes such as the tension between logic and intuition, the interplay between motion and stillness, and the meaning of home. Read her poems at blythenora.wordpress.com. **Kabir Ahluwalia** graduated with a B.S., highest honors, in biochemistry from Georgia Technical University. For post-graduate school, **Ryan Alfaro** is completing the wine science program at the University of Auckland; he expects to finish in November.

'13 **Aimee Hopkins** graduated from the University of California, Davis (UC Davis), with a B.S. in neurobiology, physiology and behavior. **Amber Zeise** graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a B.A. in psychology. **Bryson Smith** graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) with a double B.A. in English and philosophy, then travelled to Baja for some outdoor adventures. "Graduating UCSB was cool. Spending 10 days surfing in a remote part of Baja

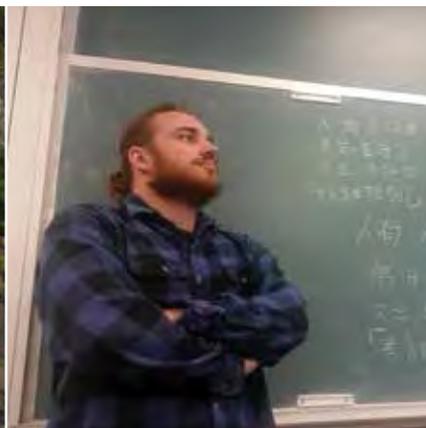
made it cooler. It was a fitting way to cap off almost four years of pursuing wild places with some wild people. Here is to a lifetime of chasing adventure!" Bryson is working as an operations manager with Nomad Goods in Santa Barbara. **Daniel Fust** graduated from the honors program at UC Davis with a B.S. in mechanical engineering. He entered the graduate program in aeronautic engineering at Davis this fall. **Graydon Griffin** graduated from UC Davis with a double B.A. in international relations and Chinese. **Karina Fox** graduated with a B.A. in theater arts from Muhlenberg College. Over the summer she went to Chicago for an internship with the Victory Gardens Theater, and this fall began a year-long apprenticeship with San Francisco's Magic Theatre. **Kavi Duvoori** graduated with a B.S. in mathematics and a B.A. in literary arts with honors in creative writing from Brown University. "I love learning about everything I can, and sharing what I have learned," said Kavi. "I am fascinated by the ways of using language to talk about the world that have been developed both in literature and, perhaps surprisingly, in math too." This fall he began the M.F.A. program in digital arts and new media at UCSC, where he's hired as a teacher's assistant for three courses over the coming year. **Sanika Lakka** graduated from Santa Clara University with a B.S. in web design and engineering. In February, Sanika and team won third place (out of 400 teams!) in the Unigame 2016-17 challenge. She is currently pursuing a masters in engineering management

Bryson Smith ('13) in Baja

Ryan Alfaro ('12) in New Zealand

Graydon Griffin ('13) in Chinese language class

Sanika Lakka ('13) with a prize from Unigame





Luciano Jimenez ('14) with frat brothers



Talia Speaker ('14) in Tanzania



Lena Wiley ('15) in Buenos Aires



Lexi Julien ('15) in the Netherlands

and leadership. **Vyvyanne Mackey** is finishing her final year at UC Davis, completing wildlife, fish and conservation biology courses.

'14 **Luciano Jimenez** is majoring in human biology at the University of California, Merced, where he plays volleyball and is the current president of the Kappa Mu Chapter of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity. **Talia Speaker** is a senior at Scripps College majoring in organismal biology. She works as a writing tutor on campus, plays womens club volleyball, and is co-president of the Outdoor Club of Claremont Colleges. Talia recently returned from Tanzania, where she studied with School for Field Studies' wildlife management program. She is currently working on her senior thesis project on east African mammals using motion-activated cameras.

'15 **Alyssa Feskanin** is a junior at Willamette University studying economics and philosophy.

She is vice president of recruitment for her sorority, Alpha Chi Omega, and works in the admissions office for the College of Law. **David Kerr**, a Santa Clara University student, was commissioned to write a choral composition. His finished work, "Acquiescence," was performed in May and June. "Acquiescence was written as a setting of Oscar Wilde's poem *Requiescat* for Maggie Simons' Pathway to Peace Project," shared Kerr. "What initially enticed me to use *Requiescat* as the text for the composition was the delicate imagery, lyrical grace, and dark suspense with which Wilde approached the experience of his sister's untimely passing." **Lena Wiley**, a junior at UCSB, is doing a Spanish intensive program in Buenos Aires, Argentina. "Next quarter I am moving to Santiago, Chile where I will be taking classes in Spanish at Pontifical University. I am double majoring in global studies and art history." **Lexi Julien** is studying for a semester at University College Utrecht

in Utrecht, the Netherlands. "I have been in Europe for three months, and before beginning my studies I solo traveled across the continent, visiting 10 different countries. My time at Mount Madonna and the learning journeys that I was fortunate enough to be a part of taught me of the value that lies in immersing yourself in new cultures and unfamiliar contexts; in my experiences with both traveling and studying abroad, I have been challenged to expand my perspectives and to embrace the "stranger," as SN is so fond of saying." **Pedro Aguirre** became coach for the MMS middle school girls Gold (fifth and sixth grades) volleyball team.

**Alumni non-MMS graduates*



Stay Connected! Let us know what you are up to. We love learning about the interesting things you are doing! Contact the Mount Madonna School Alumni Facebook group or check in at: mountmadonnaschool.org/alumni/stay-connected/

Theatrical Masks and Temple Gates

Last fall **Rajesh Westerberg ('89)** brought master Noh carver Hideta Kitazawa to meet with middle and high school students, and share an introduction to his work and Noh theatre. Rajesh, technical director for theatre arts at the University of California, Santa Cruz, was hosting Kitazawa for a workshop and lecture series at UCSC.

"Some of my students were carving with Hideta," Westerberg explained, "and using old growth redwood harvested from around the Mount Madonna campus. There's so much interest in his work, that it seemed appropriate to bring him to Mount Madonna for a presentation, as well."

Kitazawa also works carving intricately detailed gates for Shinto temples. When High School Director **Shannon Kelly ('92)** heard about these carvings, she thought that Kitazawa would be a good fit to talk with seniors, who study Shintoism in World

Religions class.

"In World Religions we try our best to reach beyond the textbook and allow our students to engage directly with spiritual and religious practices. Mr. Kitazawa comes from a long line of Shinto temple carvers and Noh mask makers. We want our students to understand the intersection between art, ritual, and spiritual practice and felt that speaking with Mr. Kitazawa and witnessing his craft would help them with this."

Students gathered alongside two narrow tables which displayed about a dozen masks, carefully



A display of Noh masks



Master woodcarver Hideta Kitazawa

placed upon traditional makura or buckwheat hull pillows. Kitazawa began with a short slideshow on Noh and Kyogen theatre and talked about the history of the art form and mask symbolism.



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Congratulations and Best Wishes to Our 2017 Graduates!



Left to right: Nathan Vince, Tara Ching (Valedictorian), Param Walker, Isabella Bettencourt, Caroline Smith (Salutatorian), Savannah Willoughby, Isaac Harris, Aki'o Nanamura, Amelia Busenhart, Izabella Thomas, and Devyn Powers.

Class of 2017 College Acceptances:

Cabrillo College***
California College of the Arts
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
California State Polytechnic University,
San Luis Obispo
California State University, Long Beach
California State University, Monterey Bay
California State University, Northridge
Chapman University
Eckerd College*

George Washington University
Hawaii Pacific University, Honolulu
Loyola Marymount University
Mount Holyoke College
Northeastern University
San Diego University
San Francisco State University
San Jose State University
Simmons College
Smith College*

Sonoma State University
University of California, Santa Barbara*
University of California, Davis*
University of California, Irvine*
University of California, San Diego*
University of California, Santa Cruz
University of North Dakota*
University of San Francisco
Vassar College*

*denotes school graduate(s) selected to attend