

Values and Community: Students Journey to India and South Africa

The concept of community has been an integral part of my life for as long as I can remember. In June, as I listened to the speeches of our 2015 graduates, I was struck by the number of times they referenced their classmates as “best friends” and “family.” They spoke of the many gifts that they had received from being a part of the MMS community and demonstrated a maturity and complexity of mind that comes from being secure and self-aware. I sat there in awe.

The explicit and implicit curriculum at MMS is the scaffolding upon which our community is built. As our students mature and grow, their definition of community grows with them: a sense of security in their own skin and knowledge of the vast communal foundation that supports them in taking risks and growing the circle of individuals who come to be considered family.

I have seen this occur multiple times on our Values in World Thought learning journeys. Again and again my breath is taken away by the



The nightly Arti or “ceremony of light” on the Ganges River in Haridwar

sheer power and beauty of students’ ability to embrace and engage the “stranger.” This openness to new experiences is a powerful learning tool. The following are student blog excerpts from the recent trips to India and South Africa illustrating the impact of these experiences.

“I will remember the people we met and the connections made more than anything else on this trip. More than the colorful sunrise on the safari, more than the ever-present, ever-beautiful Table Mountain, more than the biting winter winds (but maybe not that much more than being

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National Spotlight: President’s Environmental Youth Award



Students prepare cannisters for recycling used fishing line as part of their “Stow It, Don’t Throw It” campaign

In April, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that the MMS sixth grade class would receive the President’s Environmental Youth Award for their work (as fifth graders in 2013-14) to fight environmental threats faced by California sea turtles. The awards are presented each year to exceptional students and teachers who demonstrate creativity, innovation and leadership to address difficult environmental challenges.

“Through their passion and commitment, these amazing students and teachers are making a difference in their community and across the world to protect sea turtles,” said Jared Blumenfeld, the EPA’s Pacific/Southwest regional administrator. “We are pleased to honor their work and inspired to see this community nurture these young environmental stewards.”

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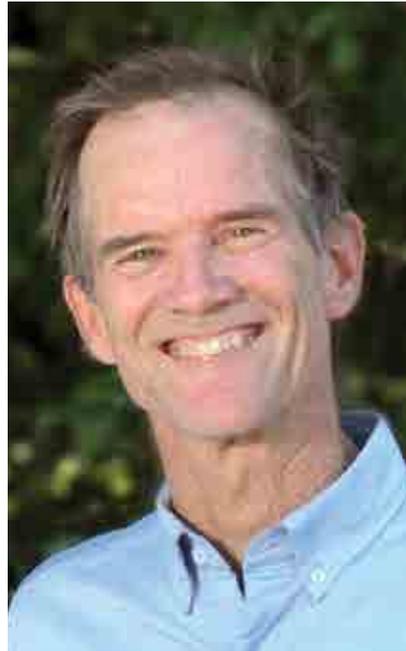
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Our Mission

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.

A Tribute to Premdas "PD" James Rohan



Premdas "PD" James Rohan

*Innovative
Playful
Non-conformist
Stubborn, adamant, tenacious
Lover of learning, lifetime explorer
An expert in his field
Lover of ritual, of yoga
of Babaji and his teaching
Lover of all sports performed
no matter the gender
Athletic, fiercely competitive yet
gentle in ferocity
One who follows his own rhythms
He knows what it is to be young at heart
Fearless to try new things that challenge him
Unafraid to smile, to appreciate
to be grateful, to be kind
That, my friends, is "PD" James Rohan*

Some love his methods, others may scratch their heads; but for those who take the risk and immerse into his play-land classroom, there you'll find your inner Peter Pan... The focus on the positive, the supportive, the "yes-you-can," in small steps, succeed.

PD is a teacher of spirit, his yoga practice infuses his gait, manner, decorum and beliefs.

We can't teach kindness, we can only model it; as teachers, we have our days when we blow it, we lose our patience and let frustration's fuse spark too intensely. Yet in PD, kindness is seen consistently and constantly. In his lifetime of service as a teacher, he is the epitome of positive support, kindness, dedication and stick-to-it-ness.

PD came to Mount Madonna Center in 1980 and joined MMS in 1981, when he and wife Sarojani co-founded the preschool-kindergarten program. He's taught our littlest littles to our biggest bigs; from Montessori lessons to Honors Calculus. He's coached, mentored, camped, and supported Rite of Passage. He's infused each class with his passion for education and support of each student's capacity to learn, grow and understand.

Thank you, PD, for the myriad gifts you gave over the past 34 years. We wish you the very best in all future endeavors and hope that you'll remain ever a part of MMS, too.

— By Sampad Kachuck and Sarada Dikkenbaugh



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A Letter from our Heads of School

Community engagement is one of the School's founding values. In the days of constructing Mount Madonna Center (MMC) and MMS, the infrastructure and connections were built by working, playing, eating and practicing yoga together. This model created a context for learning that continues to serve MMC, MMS and the broader community, as we gather resources for our new gymnasium; celebrate at Summit for the Planet; and create a small "village" each year for *Ramayana!* Large endeavors start with small steps. Placing one rock at a time over years of community workdays built the stone walls that mark the Mount Madonna landscape. Dedicated teachers who share an educational vision involving hands-on experiences, travel, creative expression and connection to nature, bring to life a learning community that evolves one student at a time. This community experience is especially evident in our graduates' self-reflection.

Small Steps and Big Connections

In the elementary, we see many small steps that build community and develop into bigger accomplishments. Days are filled with outdoor adventures, academic growth and projects that students proudly share.

Pre/K students gather in a circle each morning to sing a greeting song that connects them to one another and the Earth. First and second graders explore their playground, gather acorns in the fall, watch birds migrate seasonally, and notice as tadpoles morph to frogs; all small steps for gaining knowledge built on daily experiences in nature.

Third and fourth graders travel together for the first time. Students learn about moral heroes and enact a civil rights march, beginning to build an understanding of right and wrong, empathy and helping others. These activities link to a developing moral compass, as does the year-long environmental project in fifth grade. This project begins with an idea, chosen through a group process of research, discussion and compromise. Each step in the students' learning weaves strands from the various disciplines and culminates in community outreach education, artwork, service learning and a creative film, written and produced by the students.

Building Community

Upper school faculty and students work together to continue developing an awareness of self, community and the world. Together they explore how to build bridges and affect positive change. These efforts take many forms and reach near and far.

This year, middle school (MS) students raised funds to aid Nepalese earthquake victims, planted trees on campus to replace diseased ones, and participated in the Santa Cruz County science fair. Students honed leadership skills by organizing a Halloween dance; and eighth graders completed a spring Rite of Passage, spending two nights in the forest reflecting on their MS experience and identifying future goals. MS students contributed to installing a new mural, adding to the campus aesthetic. They built shelters in Outdoor Adventure; and student representatives attended a Diversity Conference in Saratoga, developing their facilitation skills and then sharing what they learned with their peers.

High school (HS) and MS students exhibited artwork at the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission offices; some had works published in the Santa Cruz High School Poetry Anthology. Spanish classes, grades eight through eleven, established a connection with Colombian indigenous communities, donating supplies that their teacher delivered to the villages.

Freshmen and sophomores studied marine biology and oceanography on Catalina Island. The juniors attended a Panetta Institute lecture on race and racism, and, on their June Values trip to South Africa, visited schools, an orphanage and interviewed dignitaries and leaders. They donated money, clothing and medical supplies to the nonprofits they visited.

Seniors brought insight to their peers about American women's history, accomplishments and current gender disparities. The senior class travelled to India, gathered donations to aid nonprofits and met with students at schools in New Delhi and rural India. Building relationships and awareness, they visited a home for widows, interacted with children at the Sri Ram Ashram and interviewed leaders in Dharmasala.

MMS endeavors require focus, collaboration, teamwork and community. The rock walls our founders built created a stable foundation for growth and, as in the story of *Ramayana!*, we, like the monkeys and bears, can build the bridge to our destination, stone by stone, step by step. Our efforts will not only bring successful attainment of our goals, they will also sustain our community.



Jivanti Rutansky



Supriya McDonald

Jivanti Rutansky
Head of Upper School

Supriya McDonald
Head of Lower School

Competing with Dedication, Intensity and Pure Joy

Congratulations to the varsity boys and middle school (MS) Black teams, both champions in their respective leagues; and to our two sixth grade medalists at the International Games!

Kudos to all of our student athletes for participating in the sports program this past year. In all, an impressive percentage of our student body turned out to compete and fill eight volleyball teams, a basketball team and a cross country squad!

"I will never forget all the fun we had staying in shape," noted cross-country coach John Nink. 2014 was Nink's seventh and final year coaching the Hawks. "I enjoyed running with the young athletes at MMS and was always so proud of them and their accomplishments. It was truly an honor and privilege to train alongside them on the quiet and peaceful trails of Mount Madonna."

On the court, varsity girls coach PK McDonald ('04) said the team showed tremendous determination and focus throughout the season.

"They were able to take on numerous challenges and setbacks and came together for a successful season," said McDonald. "The girls were Central Coast Section (CCS), Division V finalists and inspired me with their dedication and hard work."

Varsity boys coach Nate Rockhold described an amazing season full of small and big successes, culminating in a Santa Cruz Coast Athletic League (SCCAL) championship.



Top: At the International Games
Bottom: Cross country runners compete

"These athletes made sacrifices and worked together as a team to get to a championship level and become great volleyball players," he said.

Junior varsity (JV) coach Ashley England ('08), reflected on the power of sports to build character and community:

"There are some things one is able to prepare for when it comes to volleyball. I know the size of the court, the feel of a volleyball, the height of the net," shared England. "But at the beginning of every season, there is always some uncertainty because every team is never the same as the one that came before. The greatest aspect of coaching JV boys and girls volleyball is the surprise. I get to see students who have never played before. I get to coach players who are still learning and developing their skills. Yet no matter the mix of skill and talent, I am always surprised by the intensity and pure joy that these players compete with, whether it is their first volleyball match or not.

"Both the girls and boys JV teams reminded me that volleyball isn't always about numbers and rotations," continued England. "Volleyball is about playing one's heart out next to a teammate. It is about the determination one learns as he or she chases down that white ball. It is about the exhilaration of winning a point as a team and holding one's head high no matter the outcome of the final score. Both the boys and girls competed fiercely, learned from their mistakes, celebrated each other's successes and enjoyed playing the game and I couldn't be more proud of them."

Over the winter season, basketball got underway with a close-knit group of students who worked hard and showed commitment to learning new skills and developing their game. While their competitive season consisted of just one game, Rockhold said the team played with "great integrity."



2015 varsity boys: SCCAL champions!

The Black team, coached by Athletic Director Sidd McDonald, defended their title from the previous year, winning the Central Coast Athletic League (CCAL) 15-1, and the San Lorenzo Valley Invitational Tournament.



JV boys basketball

"We had great leadership from John Dias, Samith Lakka, Sage Turner, and Noah Tervalon," said McDonald. "Given Reyhani and Riley Wagner played key roles and gave the team a great back row defense, while front row play by Ronan Lee, Sammy Caudill, Corey Mensinger, Oliver Mensinger, Ami Bharghavan, and Ian Meara cemented this team as a dominating force in MS volleyball."

Tina Pendleton coached the MS girls Gold and boys Red teams. "The boys had a great start to what

hopefully will be the future of MMS volleyball,” she commented. “The girls surprised everyone with their game by game improvement and hope to win a banner next year!”

Rounding out the MS roster, was the girls Blue team, coached by Rockhold, who said this focused group of players will be a strong volleyball presence in the years to come.

For the 12th consecutive year, fifth and sixth graders represented Greece in the annual county-wide International Games track and field competition at Soquel High School.

Congratulations to sixth graders Kahlan Tervalon for her third place medal with a football throw of 83 feet, and to Violet Forbes, who earned a

The varsity girls in action!



second place medal for her standing broad jump of 75.5 inches! Way to go! The students were coached by Jessica Cambell, Pendleton and Rockhold, with training support from England.

Volleyball Distinction

SCCAL Champions

2015, Varsity Boys

CCAL Champions

2015, Black Team

CCS D-V Finalists

2014, Varsity Girls

All-SCCAL High School Volleyball, Girls & Boys:

Honorable Mentions:

Lexi Julien, Sophie Ortiz

Co-MVP:

Pedro Aguirre

First Team:

*Holden Smith, Sage Buzzzini,
Tobin Mitchell*

Second Team:

Brigg Busenbart

Honorable Mentions:

Tyler Sullens, Zac Clark



Top: 2015 Black team: CCAL champions!

Middle: A united JV boys team

Bottom: Middle school Gold team



Passages: Randy Getz

Randy Getz passed away in April 2015 after a “valiant and ferocious” nine and half-year battle with cancer. Father to graduates Mara (’10) and Jake (’13), and spouse of current Board member Laurie, Randy was a great supporter of MMS. He funded the middle school outdoor education program in year one. He was instrumental in starting the annual Play It Forward! Golf Tournament, calling on his local business friends to sponsor a hole and come play. His foursome didn’t miss a single tournament over the years, and, in fact, they won the last two! Randy could often be seen on the stands, cheering on the Hawks’ volleyball teams. Randy was an intelligent individual, having worked his way up from scratch to build a very successful company in computer and motion control science, and become a respected and admired leader in the industry. Randy was not shy in sharing his perspective on strategy and business best practices. We will miss his humor and great passion for life.

— By Lara Kilpatrick (’85) and Matt Meachen

Art in Motion: Students' Work Exhibited in Santa Cruz

Motion and transportation – featuring wings, wheels, rails and water – were themes of an array of mixed media works created by middle and high school students exhibited last winter at the offices of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission.

Art teacher Sandy Shaw was contacted by the agency in 2014 to see if she might be interested in exhibiting some of her own artwork in the space. Ever on the lookout for ways to get her students' work out into the public realm, she asked if they'd consider hosting a student exhibition.

"They were interested in exploring the idea," Shaw explained, "but they had only featured the work of professional artists before, and wanted to be sure the student work would be up to their criteria and standards – which it was!"

Using tempera paint, watercolors, pen and ink, and pastels and paper, students created: "Up, Up and Away," works about movement, for which they made paper kites; and "Going, Going Gone," two-dimensional works depicting various modes of transportation.

"Students were encouraged to consider various forms of transportation," said Shaw. "Some were very practical, selecting to depict cars, motorcycles or bicycles. Others wanted to express the most essential and primary form of transportation, our two feet! Still others explored a wide range of themes from horseback riding to concepts of space travel to imagined vehicles of motion!"

A third series, "Scenes of Santa Cruz," featured works by students who also take classes with Shaw at her Pleasant Valley Art Studio. These landscapes were done following a day of plein air pastel painting along West Cliff Drive.

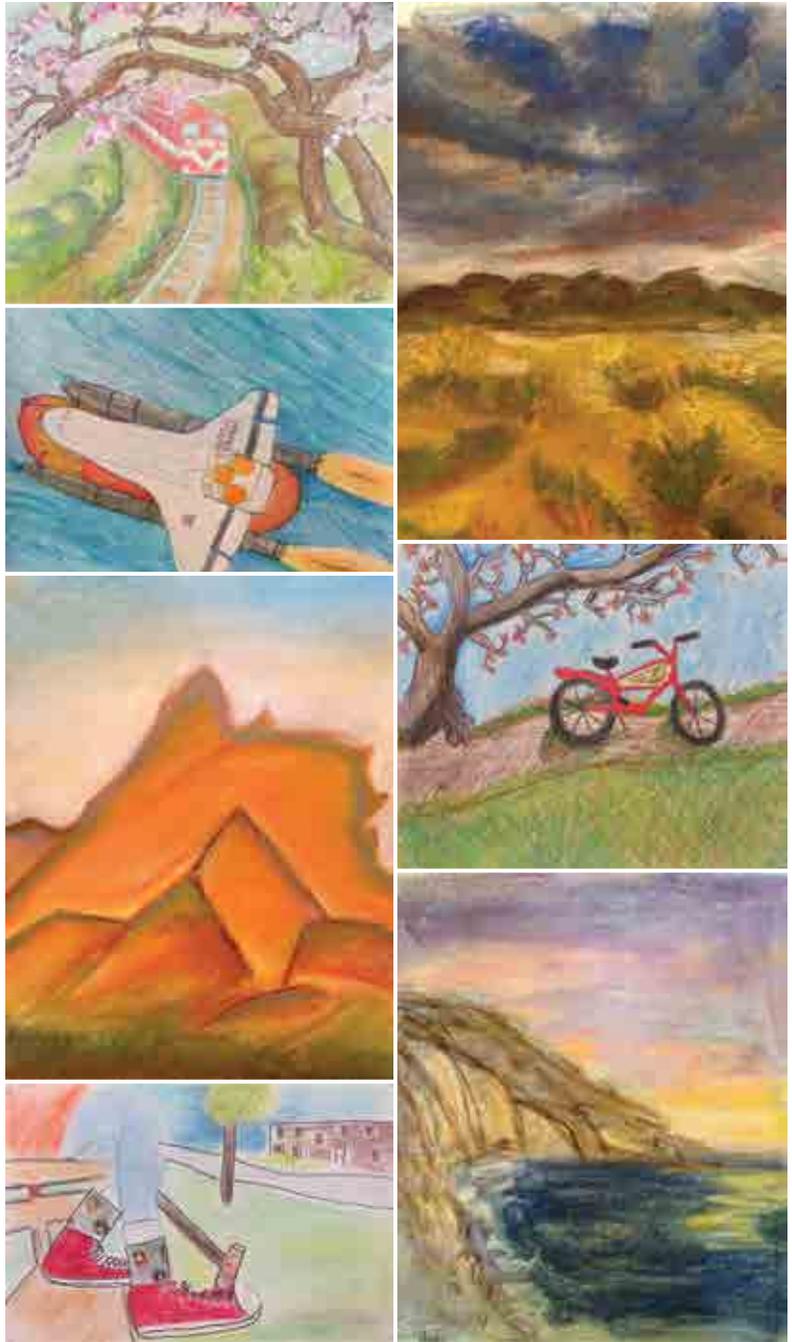
"It was a cold and foggy day along the coast and the sun started to break through the clouds in the late afternoon," recalled Shaw. "The students excelled and their paintings beautifully capture the mood and spirit of that day."

The students whose works were exhibited are: Kira Kaplan, Riley Wagner, Sammy Caudill, and Savannah Cambell, sixth grade;

Aaron Saavedra,
AnMei Dasbach-Prisk,
Brielle Goldstein,
CC Rothman-Salado,
Haley Kerr, Jeremy
Curland, Lily Hernandez,

Paola Jacobs, Robey Reyhani,
and Sarah Babcock, seventh
grade; Alice Herbert, Eleanor
Harrington, Ian Meara, Imogen
Cockrum, John Dias, Kaili Sullens,
Lillian Wayne, Noah Kaplan,
Priyanka Bharghavan, Sage Turner,
Samantha Rogers, Samith Lakka,

and Sophia Simo, eighth grade; Phoebe Grant and Ruby Bracher, ninth grade; Cat Ching, tenth grade; and Clio Herbert, eleventh grade.



Works by student artists (clockwise, from top left): Eleanor Harrington, Clio Herbert, Kaili Sullens and Imogen Cockrum, Phoebe Grant, CC Rothman-Salado, Alice Herbert, and Noah Kaplan



Bird kite by Lillian Wayne

All middle school students study art, and Shaw's curriculum is rich in fine art subject matter and techniques. In addition to exploring an array of mediums, she encourages each student to grow individually through his or her own personal art pieces.

"It's a pleasure teaching art," she said. "I'm happy to give students a place where they can freely express their creativity, while supporting their individual growth and technique. There are a lot of students interested in pursuing careers in fine art – whether architecture, graphic design, painting, or something else – and it all begins with getting their art out there and having it seen."

— By Leigh Ann Clifton

Making New Friends in Colombia

For a project in their Spanish classes, eighth through eleventh grade students collected donations of school supplies and clothing for students at two indigenous schools, the Arhuacan school, La Institucion Etnoeducativa Tairona de Bunkwimake and the Wiwa school, Zalemaku de Sertuga, located in the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta, Colombia.

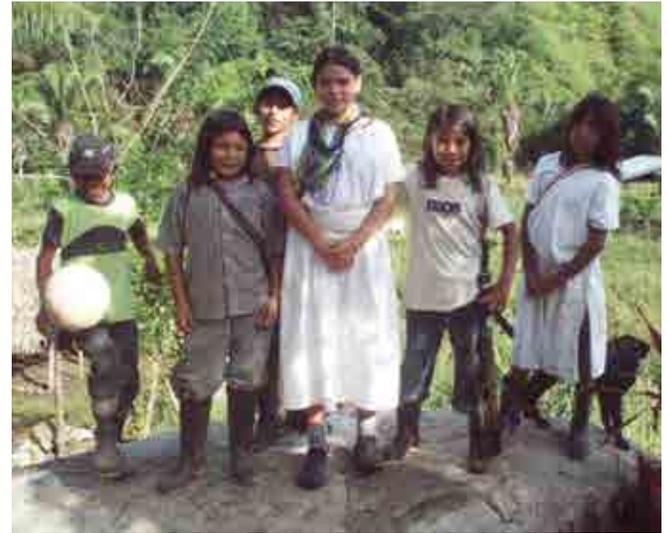
“My students learned about the Arhuaco, Wiwa, Kogi and Kankuamo people and the cultural background of their communities, especially in regard to their traditional ecological knowledge (TEK),” explained Spanish teacher Stewart Diaz-Mogollon. “This ethno-ecological work, mostly carried out by the Kogi Mamas and Arhuacan Mamos [spiritual leaders], focuses on the areas of water management and human impact.”

Students used their knowledge of Spanish to build a relationship with the students attending these schools. Diaz-Mogollon began working

with the Arhuaco and Wiwa populations in 2005 as a cultural anthropologist.

“I returned to the U.S. in 2010 to find a school, such as MMS, to help share the importance of this work for the planet,” he explained. “My students created introductory videos in Spanish and community awareness around the topics that Spanish has allowed them to understand and comparatively engage with, such as the California drought, climate change, and MMS’ Summit for the Planet.”

Diaz-Mogollon visited the villages in March, sharing the students’ videos and delivering the donated materials. When he returned, Diaz-



Colombian students near their school campus

Mogollon brought back a recorded response from the Colombian students to share with his MMS students.

To learn more about the significance of the work of the Kogi Mamas and Arhuacan Mamos, view filmmaker Alan Ereira’s BBC documentary, www.alunathemovie.com. — *By Leigh Ann Clifton*

Creative Engineering: The Factory at MMS

The Factory at MMS was inaugurated this year by students who worked on an array of creative projects: flat and sculptural art that moves and lights up, programmed zoetropes and crystal balls utilizing input and output sensors, light-sensitive robotic weevils, pushcarts and automata, and simple “Scribblebots.”

The room’s ‘tinkering’ layout, where students work on open-ended projects around a single table with common supplies — pioneered by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Media Lab, and currently used at San Francisco’s Exploratorium — facilitates individual learning, with lots of idea sharing.

During the year, third, fourth and fifth grades (in ten-week sessions) and the high school Engineering Club utilized this “creativity lab,” which includes a 3D printer, Arduino input/output sensors, LilyPad sewable circuits, Snap Circuits education kits, soldering irons, motors, LEDs, switches and power supplies.

Eighth graders used the space for their annual model solar car activity, benefitting from the additional design tools; and it was used again during the After School Program and for a Makers’ camp as part of the Mountain of Fun summer program.

“The combination of free-form creativity together with technology and electrical engineering

is a great fit for MMS,” commented teacher Lisa Catterall, who planned and coordinates The Factory. “The activities are aligned with grade-level Next Generation Science Standards, while also being open-ended and free-form. The artistic side of these activities appeal to the students who love to build things out of whatever materials they have.”

An additional effort underway is MMS’ connection with the Centers for Research on Creativity (CROC) at the University of California, Los Angeles (founded by Catterall’s father, James Catterall, Professor Emeritus, UCLA). The CROC educational team evaluated the MMS ten-week sessions for their capacity to increase creativity and confidence in engineering skills for students. (For more info: www.croc-lab.org) — *By Leigh Ann Clifton*

Students collaborate, create and work independently in The Factory



Whales' Tale: Disney Recognizes Students' Orca Project

The fifth grade class was awarded a 2015 Disney Friends for Change Youth Grant through Youth Service America (YSA). The grant was given to support their environmental project, "We Ourselves Set This Problem in Motion, So Let's All Help the Orcas of the Ocean."

Eleven-year-old Maddie Erbe coordinated writing and submitting the application on behalf of her class. The class was notified last spring that they'd been awarded \$500 towards their project expenses, including production of an educational film (written, filmed, edited and produced by the students). MMS is one of 125 recipients nationwide for 2015; the grants are intended to support work with a potential for making a positive, lasting change in the world. The project also won First Place and \$300 at the 2015 Santa Cruz Earth Day event.

"Our project is making a difference by showing the public how their everyday choices have a direct

effect on the survival of the orcas," said Erbe. "We know that throwing away plastic is hurtful to the environment and if you reduce the plastic you consume and use less water, this helps orcas too. We are using our booths at public events, our movie, and our own beach cleanups to make change in our community."

"We started a petition to ban plastic microbeads in personal care products because that plastic can harm the orcas. In just a month, the petition had more than 10,000 signatures! We also worked on getting protection laws passed to say that boats need to stay at least 100 yards from orcas and other whales."

In addition to their educational and outreach efforts, the students also engaged in service activities. They coordinated a clean-up of their school campus in honor of Global Youth Services Day (GYSD); and conducted cleanups at two

Santa Cruz County beaches and the mouth of the Pajaro River, where it meets the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

"This is a big deal because our school is at the top of the Pajaro watershed, so we will have cleaned the top of the watershed and the mouth of the watershed where it empties into the ocean and the beach at the river mouth," said Erbe.

"Through our work on this project, my class has changed," shared a fifth grade classmate. "We see things differently and we buy things differently. We notice garbage on the ground and pick it up. We choose to say 'no' to a straw or 'no, thank you' when asked if we want a bag. We think twice before we play with water or before we grab a plastic wrapped item. Each and every choice we make different makes a difference."

— By Leigh Ann Clifton



Fighting Hunger: Second Graders Lead Food Drive Effort

For the fifth consecutive year, the second grade class led an effort to collect donations of canned, boxed and packaged dried food for the Grind Out Hunger Program and Second Harvest Food Bank. Partnering with their fourth and eleventh grade buddies, and setting a goal of collecting enough food to provide 700 meals, the students gathered food for 752 meals!

“Everyone who has enough to eat needs to donate,” said second grader Kinsey Don Carlos. “I don’t want hungry kids to be mad, sad or scared because they don’t know where their food is going to come from.”

The students did research, visited the Second Harvest warehouse, wrote a collective report about hunger in the local community, and gave oral presentations to the MMS student body. They studied human development and nutrition to help them grasp the seriousness of hunger and malnutrition, and its effects on children’s learning, behaviors and emotions.

“This project is perfect for seven and eight year olds,” commented teacher Jenni Leach. “They have a genuine desire to make a difference in the lives of others and feel deeply empathetic and compassionate toward those who are hungry.”

“If people are caring and donate, it will help hungry kids be good and focus in school,” said classmate Rocco Cristallo.

As part of their research, students learned that the local Grind Out Hunger Program was created through the vision of skateboarder Danny Keith, who, when he found out that one in eight kids in Santa Cruz County was going hungry, started a non-profit and asked school kids to help fight hunger in the community.

“I don’t like seeing people suffer,” shared second grader Cavan Smith. “I want to be like Danny Keith. Kids should look out for other kids.”

— By Leigh Ann Clifton



Second grade students created awareness posters to kick-off the food drive



Student Mural Adds Vitality to Campus Aesthetic

Thalia and Melpomene, the ancient Greek muses, are depicted in modern theater as masks with exaggerated expressions. These iconic symbols, one smiling and one frowning, feature prominently in a new student mural installed at MMS.

The mural was created during the previous school year and all sixth through eighth grade students contributed to its design. Art teacher Sandy Shaw oversaw the project, with support from faculty member Bob Caplan.

Shaw said the project was inspired by faculty member Sarojani Rohan, who wanted to encourage the creation of more permanent art for the campus. “I have a deep faith and appreciation for keeping the creativity alive and looking for expression in all of our students,” shared Rohan. “It is a school privilege and responsibility to be able to showcase our students’ talents. Under the guidance of our gifted art teachers, student artwork adds vitality to our campus aesthetics and inspires appreciation for the visual arts.”

“We really wanted the whole middle school to be involved since it was to be displayed in their quad,” noted Shaw. “Part of our intention was to acknowledge and help define that middle school has its own identity and place and that it is more than just a ‘transition’.” — By Leigh Ann Clifton

Gender Equality and Women's History: Students Share Research with Campus Community

March was Women's History Month and the twelfth graders taking the American Women's History elective course chose to commemorate it by launching an education campaign highlighting historical and current gender equality issues.

The students created and displayed a series of colorful posters throughout the upper campus. The posters featured eye-catching graphs and charts related to the wage gap, American women's political participation, sexual assault and representations of women in the media. Other posters offered thought-provoking quotes from activists or highlighted facts related to global issues such as education, poverty, child marriage and women's status worldwide.

"The goals of this course are to provide historical context for understanding women's experiences and contributions throughout U.S. history and to

examine how ideas about gender have impacted the lives of both women and men," said teacher Tiffany Wayne. "Throughout the year we have also related our historical inquiry to current issues in the news that affect the students' lives today."

Wayne explained that when the class discussed doing a Women's History Month project, the students immediately wanted to share some of the issues they had been studying and discussing. The poster project was their visual way to engage the wider campus community.

Response to the posters was immediate, as middle and high school students, as well as other visitors to the upper campus, stopped to read and discuss the issues highlighted. In some cases, other students even left anonymous comments or questions attached to the photos. The feedback caught the Women's History students off guard at first.

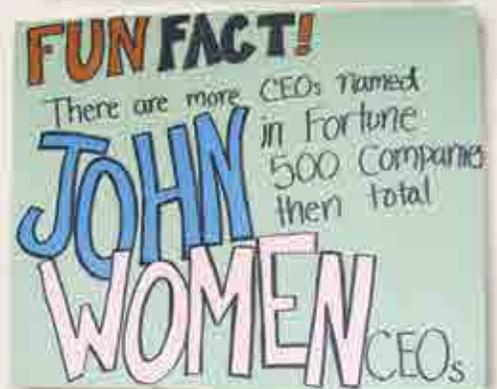
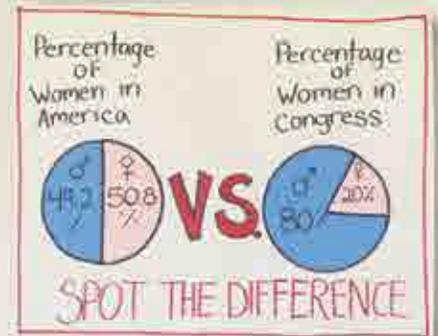
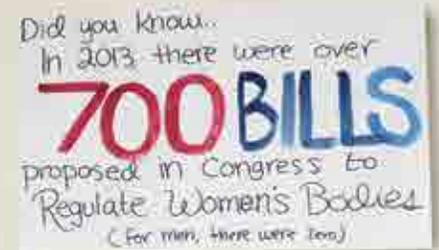
"The reactions to the poster project were surprising to me," said senior Carlo LeGan. "The intention for posting the information was to make a conversation throughout the school, not to create arguments."

Wayne, however, was pleased to see other students engaging with and talking about the information presented.

"I encouraged my students to provide follow-up responses based on their research," she said. "If someone questions our facts or statistics, we have to be prepared to back up the information. This is part of the process of educating around controversial ideas, or challenging people with different ways of looking at the world."

This is the first year that American Women's History has been offered as an elective course at MMS.

— By Tiffany Wayne and Leigh Ann Clifton



Edible Learning: Baking with the Pre/K

“I love baking because after we bake we get to taste it!” said five-year-old Ava Trujillo, a preschool student at MMS.

“It’s really, really fun and it tastes good!” agreed kindergarten classmate Maa Ngala Mapaka.

The students made their comments during a classroom baking lesson. During the school year, baking with students happens twice a week in the Pre/K classroom, once with the preschoolers and once with the kindergarteners.

Five or six children participate at a time so the room is filled with the happy sounds of other children involved in art activities and free play, as participants knead, stir and pour. They take turns joining in the baking fun with their friends and this helps to knit the classroom community together as they work together and build friendships in the process.

Baking food is also a way of cultivating an awareness of where food comes from and the recipes we use are chosen according to the seasons and our curriculum.

Whenever possible, we involve the children in harvesting and preparing the ingredients: picking

Preparing pumpkin for baking



apples from the garden for apple-sauce; grinding wheat in a mill for the bread; and harvesting herbs and greens from the garden for soup. The class also visits an organic farm each fall.

Participating in these activities helps to make our connection with the earth more tangible. Learning about where food comes from and baking our own food helps children to learn about basic nutrition and fosters healthy eating habits.

“Baking is really good for your body and it’s fun making the dough with my friends,” commented student Judah Noland.

Although baking may seem like a purely “fun” activity, several developmentally appropriate skills are naturally embedded and practiced by participants. Pouring, stirring, kneading and dough-shaping activities translate directly into building the hand-eye coordination and hand strength children need to hold a pencil and learn to write. And by following a recipe and taking turns adding ingredients, children are introduced to the concept of order and sequencing that is such an important part of learning how to read.

At MMS, baking is academic, too: for the first half of the school year kindergarteners bake bread every week. They knead the bread dough and shape it into the “number of the week” – no easy task for a five-year-old! In this way, the children gain a concrete understanding of how



Building hand-eye coordination through shaping bread dough

the number is formed. And then, of course, they get to eat it!

In the second half of the year the kindergarteners bake a wider variety of dishes (like the preschoolers do all year) according to what is in season and what culture the students are studying for their cultural awareness social studies unit. For two months during this unit, the students expand their palates as they prepare and eat food from a different country. This year, the class enjoyed baking and tasting African food, including a variety of breads from the different regions of Africa as well as an assortment of desserts and main dishes.

Good food is meant to be shared and enjoyed with good company: whenever possible, the Pre/K students invite their fifth grade “big buddies” to be a part of their culinary adventures.

Together children decorate the cookies that they bake, churn butter for the bread, and make little fruit pies to bake at home and share with their families.

“I like baking with my friends,” enthused student Jade McReynolds, “and learning how to make everything delicious and yummy!”

— By Hema Walker

Student Awarded National Merit Scholarship Commendation

Class of 2015 graduate Alexis “Lexi” Julien was named a Commended Student in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. She scored in the top 5% nationwide of the more than 1.5 million students who took the 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Julien is attending the University of California, Los Angeles, this fall.



Playful Humor and Strategic Insight: Honoring Volunteerism

With his wide smile, neon-bright dress shirt, distinctive vocal timbre and British accent, Rod Caborn kicked off many an MMS assembly over the years. He invited students into the fundraising conversation with his playful games, insightful examples and sometimes hilarious incentives (multicolor pig races, what?!) He inspired each student to reach for his or her best, whether it was selling entry tickets for the Monte Foundation Fireworks, tickets for Drive for Schools, or gathering pledges for the walk-a-thon.

Rod articulated the value of an MMS education to many, and served actively in fundraising and development. With humor and strategic insight, he was an MMS board member for over seven years, after being an energetic class liaison when his daughters, McKenzie ('12) and Cassie ('15) came



to MMS in elementary school. He was the School's auctioneer for many years, and co-founded the Summit for the Planet walk-a-thon as well as the high school Career Forum. At Hawks' matches, fans enjoyed being part of his enthusiastic cheers and proudly donned his gifts of multi-color "mo-hawks" spirit wigs. We offer our deepest thanks to Rod for his gift of service toward growing and sustaining the School.

— By *Supriya McDonald*
and *Lara Kilpatrick ('85)*

Environmental Youth Award Continued from Front Cover

The students engaged in a year-long environmental education and stewardship project titled "Don't be a Nurdle, Help the Sea Turtle: Poaching, Bycatch & Plastic Pollution, Tell the Whole World About Our Solution."

They created an educational movie on the threats faced by sea turtles, presented at a city council meeting to ban single use plastic bags, wrote letters to local and state representatives, cleaned up the MMS campus and a local beach, and created canisters for fisherman to use in recycling their used

line in a local "Stow It, Don't Throw It" campaign.

The students sold copies of their movie, organized a raffle and donated proceeds from the sale of elementary student art pieces, to raise nearly \$4,000. Proceeds were shared with the Save Our Shores organization and a sea turtle conservation camp for impoverished children living in the Indonesian villages where Leatherback sea turtles nest. The then-fifth graders also worked with their ninth grade buddies to create environmental curriculum and games about bycatch, poaching, turtles and marine debris that the camp teachers will use to educate the village children.

"The first thing that made me feel like we made a lasting difference was speaking in front of city council," shared one of the students. "They took us seriously and listened to our reasons."

"We are so honored to receive this national award," shared fifth grade co-teacher and project mentor, Jessica Cambell. "Most amazing to us as teachers is the long-term change these students have made in the lives of Indonesian village children. The village children have grown up

with little regard for the longevity of Leatherback turtle survival and thus consume their eggs out of need. Through our class' postcards, curriculum development, fundraising and supply gathering, the village children will grow up with a new perception of the Leatherback and a conservation mindset."

"Inspiration gives people a purpose and fuels them to work harder," shared another student. "I'm hoping our project inspires others to create more turtle camps and teach people about sea turtles. I hope that the children attending the camp fall in love with the sea turtles and don't want to poach them anymore. And better yet, that they will actually want to protect them."

"By helping children in Indonesia we are helping to create a huge change in ocean protection," shared another classmate. "Even if our change doesn't seem so big, it will ripple, because it's changing their thinking and their future actions to save these keystone species."

Truly, the idea of children empowering children over 3,000 miles away holds the ideal of a global community.

— By *Leigh Ann Clifton*



For their project, students conducted an experiment testing the biodegradability of bioplastics in saltwater

Summit for the Planet 2015

Although the weather was cool, with some sprinkles of rain and just a little sun, the high energy of engagement in learning and having fun together carried the day at the 9th annual Summit for the Planet on April 25! We sincerely thank our students, parents, faculty, staff, board members, and extended families for walking, giving pledges to walkers and being a part of this event. Summit grossed nearly \$40,000!

A heartfelt thank you to all the nonprofit organizations that participated, and to our sponsors and vendors for making this event possible. It is remarkable the outstanding work our local community is doing to reduce our environmental impact and develop strategies to live life on Earth in a more mindful way. We are grateful for the support of our school and extended community!

Our sincere thanks to:

Alladin Nursery
Allterra Solar
Bay Area Amphibian and Reptile Society (BAARS)
Cindy's Garden to Table
Coastal Habitat Education and Environmental Restoration (CHEER)
Cynthia Kingsbury, Homeopath
First Class Fundraising
Gandhi India's Cuisine
Good Times Santa Cruz
Growing Up in Santa Cruz
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Santa Cruz Sentinel
Save the Planet & Go Vegan
Sulphur Creek Nature Center
SunRidge Farms
Trader Joe's, Morgan Hill
Watsonville Wetlands Watch
Whole Foods Market Capitola
Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center (WERC)
World Centric



Catalina Classroom: Citizen Scientists and Environmental Leadership

Each year, the ninth and tenth grades travel to southern California and study the ocean around Catalina Island as part of MMS' UC-approved life sciences program, which includes a semester each of marine biology and honors oceanography. The Isthmus of Catalina has an abundance of educational opportunities, including youth programs and the Wrigley Marine Science Center, maintained by the University of Southern California's Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies. Graduate programs, state and federal governments, research divers and academics from many countries use the Wrigley Center. MMS is one of the few high school groups invited to spend an extended time at the center.

Top: Exploring offshore

Middle: Conducting intertidal zone research with a USC marine biologist

Bottom: Getting to know a spiny urchin



This year, following four years of using the facilities and building a relationship with Center staff, students took a hands-on role in the field research of visiting scientists. Alexa Rosendale ('08), a marine biologist, joined the group.

The students studied the courtship behavior of the Catalina Goby (also known as the Blue-banded Goby). This little fish hides in sea urchins' spines and has a unique capacity for phenotypic plasticity: it can change its gender in the course of two days during courtship season! Students observed the gobies elaborate courtship rituals underwater in the cove and in the lab.

"The cove at the facility harbors an ecosystem that has been restored to a near pre-human level of biodiversity," shared trip leader and science teacher, Lisa Catterall. "Our students were involved as 'citizen scientists' in projects that help California's marine environment; they also observed research on solving world hunger and cleaning up polluted intertidal zones around the world."

In preparation for attending the Wrigley Center as sophomores, the freshman class participated in the Catalina Environmental Leadership Program (CELP), which builds students' confidence for studying marine life underwater and using the field equipment. CELP also showcases a waste-free community and has the students challenge themselves with a ropes course and climbing wall.

Faculty members PK McDonald ('04) and Nicole Tervalon, Ph.D. (Oceanography) offered the students a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) program.

"The trip is important in many ways," commented Catterall, "but the highlight is watching the kids realize that they are all capable of doing science out in the real world. They gain confidence and have experiences that cannot be replicated in a classroom. Some of them go on to study science after high school. Students need to connect the



Recording data for an ethogram in preparation for studies of the Blue-banded Goby

hard work of learning basic chemistry, biology and physics to the fun and impact they can have if they pursue scientific studies."

— By Lisa Catterall and Leigh Ann Clifton

Top: Freshman prepare to go snorkeling

Bottom: Tackling the ropes course



Junior's Poem Earns Top Honors in County Competition

For a second consecutive year, junior Julia Gratton wowed the judges and received First Prize in the 22nd annual Santa Cruz County High School Poetry Competition sponsored by Poetry Santa Cruz. Gratton's poem *To the Janitor* took top honors, while another of her works, *793 Cranes*, received an Honorable Mention.

Congratulation to Julia and the other MMS students whose poetry is included in the anthology:

Lucas Caudill, 9th, *Writing a Sestina*

Caroline Smith, 10th, *Her Happy Aura*

Cat Ching, 10th, *Blank Page*

Cameron Bess 11th, *Spaghetti-A Sestina*

Holden Smith, 11th, *The Perilous Horizon*

Sophia Saavedra, 11th, *Ever-So-Hopeful* and
Tangles and Plaques

Lexi Julien, 12th, *Whisper*

"I am so proud of the creativity and courage in our students, in the classroom, onstage, and pertaining to my subject, in their journals," shared Haley Campbell ('02) high school English and creative writing teacher. "Their creative writing is raw, beautiful and vulnerable.

She continued, "to quote Dylan Thomas, 'A good poem helps to change the shape of the universe, helps to extend everyone's knowledge of himself and the world around him.' This year the majority of our HS students contributed their work to our community in class and at the Creative Writing Reading, and also submitted poems to the competition.

"In all, 235 students from Santa Cruz County high schools entered nearly 400 poems in the competition. From those entries, MMS students had 10 works selected for the final anthology of 51 poems."

— By Leigh Ann Clifton

To the Janitor

You come when the day slips off
and the first pinpricks of silvery light puncture
lavender wisps of air.

When the taillights of Priuses and Teslas
and rattling old sedans
are just glowing red streaks on the pavement.

You come when the hurried, jostling
numbers have left those halls. Though the regiment of gray lockers
cannot remember a single face, they still echo with receding footsteps.

The basketball players and the teachers grading papers
the couples making out under the bleachers and the kids hiding in bathroom stalls
All have left.

Curling tendrils of the plant you bought at the dime store
wrap around bottles of bleach, mops propped against the walls
The Virgin of Guadalupe, held behind glass and old wood, shines her love

on the cardboard boxes of extra-large trash bags
their only purpose to hold
the unwanted debris of lives, the scraps thrown off the back of the train

Do you dance down the long corridors
mop in hand? Do you read the notes you find on the floor
imagining who wrote them, who read them?

Do you toss forgotten paper planes with practiced accuracy
into the trash? Do you
turn on all the lights so you don't feel so alone.

— By Julia Gratton, 11th grade

Inspired Leadership and a Philanthropic Spirit

We express our deep appreciation to Daniela "Dany" Bryan for her many contributions to MMS. Dany joined the School when her children Susie ('11) and Willy ('13) were in fifth and third grades. She brought a wide variety of experience as an international executive coach and marketing/communications professional to each MMS project for which she volunteered. With her calm demeanor and razor-sharp insights, Dany served for six years on the Board, initiated the Board Sustainability Sub-committee, and was a part of Board nominating and school accreditation steering committees. Additionally, she was a founding member of a parent committee that leads and produces the annual high school Career Forum. We thank Dany for her inspired leadership, dedication and philanthropic spirit.

— By Supriya McDonald and Lara Kilpatrick ('85)



Annual Giving and Capital Campaign 2014-15

June 2015 saw the conclusion of the two-year combined Annual Giving and Capital Campaign, which focused on generating funds at the community level after leadership and major donors had made their commitments. Many families, faculty, staff and other community members generously gave a “stretch” gift over one to three years, supporting both annual operating expenses and construction of the gym. The Drive for Schools auto/cash drawing in October grossed \$20,180, which is a school record! The 6th annual Play It Forward! Golf Tournament last fall was a great success in attracting a record number of golfers (107) and raised \$11,676. Together with the golf tournament and Drive for Schools, the combined two-year campaign raised \$119,033 this year for a total of \$356,835 on a goal of \$450,000 (79% of goal). Of the funds raised, \$200,000 was directed to cover general operating expenses and the remainder was directed to the capital project.

At the end of June, Letty and Lane Bess, Capital Campaign Major Gift Committee Co-Chairs, announced another generous gift of \$100,000, in memory of Randy Getz – in the form of a challenge! MMS is seeking donors to match this gift before the end of 2015. Inspired by the Bess Family, Dana and Jeff Kerr made another generous pledge of \$40,000. Including the Bess challenge, the Kerr gift, a donation from the Hanuman Fellowship for the HVAC system and the sale of the boarding school building, a total of \$1.615 million has been raised for the capital project on a goal of \$1.95 million.

Gym construction continues as funds are generated, and a lot of progress has been made! Milestones of the last year are the following: plywood for the lower 12’ of walls was hung and sheetrock was installed above the plywood; the walls were painted, with support from alumna Lilith Ohlson ('90) and her husband, Walter Cortez-Torres, who is a professional local painter and donated his time; basketball standards were mounted; ceiling lights were installed; the bathroom building framing was completed. The wood floor installation and finish electrical work continues. Progress will continue to be made – on electrical, site work, restrooms, parking lot surfacing, all landscaping, bleachers, and the donor recognition pieces – as funds are available through our fundraising efforts.

Our deepest gratitude to the following donors for their gifts and pledges this past school year:

Ambassadors (\$25,000 to \$49,999)

Kerr Family

Leaders (\$10,000 to \$24,999)

Lizabeth Morell

Champions (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

Apple Matching Gifts

Bess Family, in memory of Julia Wiley

Connie and Glenn Brown

Barbara and Morty Cohen

Google Matching Gifts Program

Tomash Family Foundation

Mentors (\$2,500 to \$4,999)

Beth Brennan and Craig Kaplan

Constance and Thomas Broz

Francke Family Fund

Tricia McCurdy-Slater and John Slater

SSB Construction, Stephen Goldman

Sandra and Austin Shaw

Starbucks Coffee Company,
community service grant

Juvy and Richard Timan

Weston Miles Architects,

Lesley Miles and Charles Weston

Patrons (\$1,000 to \$2,499)

Akribis Systems Incorporated, Chin Foong,

in memory of Randy Getz

Walter Cortez-Torres

Diffenbaugh Foundation

Jennifer Frost

Grunsky, Ebey, Farrar & Howell

Joint Electrical Industry Fund (JEIF)

Microsoft Matching Gifts Program

Glenn O'Rourke

SunRidge Farms, Barbara and Morty Cohen

Kelly and John Wagner

William L. Price Charitable Foundation

Deana and Harry Woodrow

Advocates (\$500 to \$999)

Bi-Right Market, in memory of Julia Wiley

Daniela Bryan

Jessica and Forrest Cambell

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Gwen and Rod Koda

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Kranti and Ward “SN” Mailliard

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Pavicich Realty

Laura and Steve Petersen

Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman LLP

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Alice and Brian Saavedra

Serpentine, Inc., in memory of Julia Wiley

Christine and Andrew Smith

Storrs Winery & Vineyards, Pamela and Stephen Storrs

Karina Vogen, in honor of Anna Shelton

Ed and Sharon Wandzell

Lynda and Michael Will

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Albert Family Trust, in memory of Julia Wiley

Alfaro Family Vineyards

Amazon Smile Foundation

Indira Aslan

Debra Baida, in memory of Julia Wiley

Bailey Properties, Lizabeth Morell

Tonia Baker, in memory of Julia Wiley

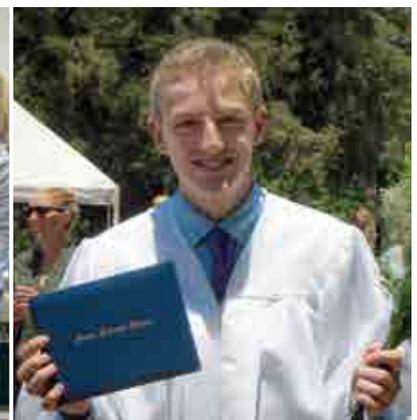


Bar Agricole LLC, in memory of Julia Wiley
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 in honor of her family and Mariquita Farm
 Patricia and Ginez Galvan
 David Gaughen,
 in tribute to Bridget and Sophie Smith
 Dorothy and James Goodman,
 in memory of Julia Wiley
 Soma Goresky and Purnima Conway, in honor of
 Jivanti and all the amazing MMS educators

Andrew Griffin
 Joan Griffin, in memory of Julia Wiley
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 Kathleen and Garth Harley
 Jean and Eric Harrington, in memory of Julia Wiley
 Janaki and Siddartha Hattis
 Christine and Vincent Hernandez
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 Selda Massion
 Gail McCredie and Eugene Massion
 Mary Supriya and Sidd McDonald
 Margaret McGuan, in memory of Julia Wiley
 Ian and Elisabeth McPhail
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 Monterey Bay Mortgage, Forrest Cambell
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 in memory of Julia Wiley
 Outdoor Visions Landscaping
 PG & E Matching Gifts Program
 Pasatiempo Golf Club

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 Sumana Reddy and Vikram Duvvoori
 Redwood Electric Group, Inc.
 Karen Robey and Mehrdad Reyhani,
 in honor of Sidd McDonald, 'Get it! Get it! Get it!'
 Black Hawks '15
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 Atessa and Michael Rogers
 Santa Cruz County Bank, David Heald
 Lori and Edward Scher, in memory of Randy Getz
 Christina Shih, M.D., in memory of Julia Wiley
 V.A. Smiser, in memory of Julia Wiley
 Monique Smith Lee and Samuel Lee
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 Black Hawks '15
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 Jacqueline and Michael Tuttle,
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 'Get it! Get it! Get it!' Black Hawks '15
 Victoria Sheldon Designs
 Sandy Vogen
 Kelly and John Wagner, in honor of Sidd McDonald,
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 Hema and Umesh Walker
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 Penelope Wisner, in memory of Julia Wiley
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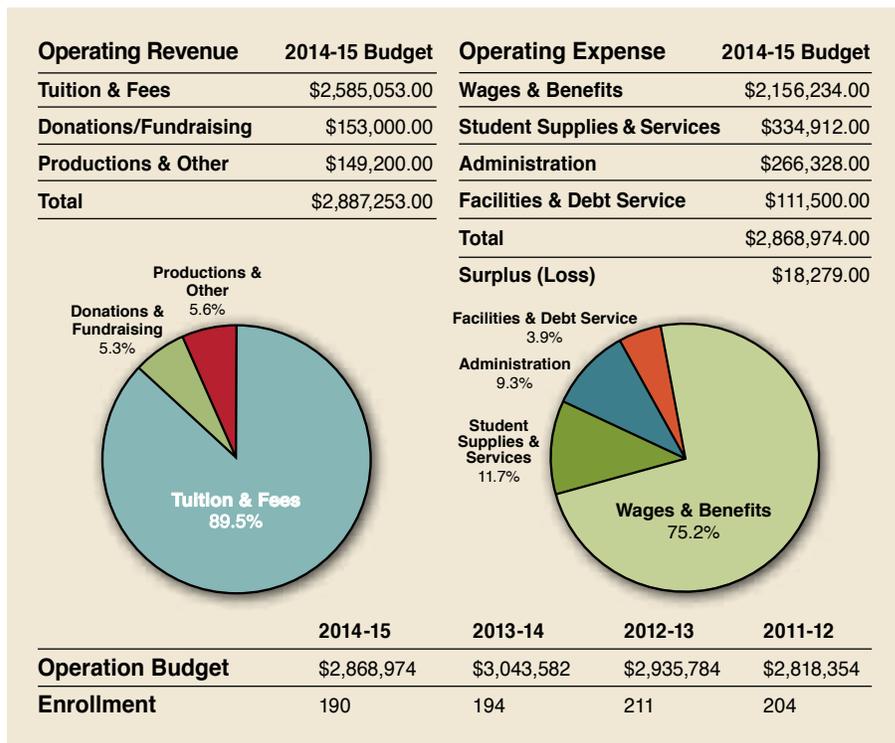
Every effort has been made to avoid errors, misspellings or omissions. If, however, your name has been listed incorrectly or omitted, please accept our sincere apology. For corrections, contact the Advancement Office at 408-846-4032



2014-15 Financial Report

Mount Madonna School completed its 36th fiscal year on June 30, 2015. 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 2014-15 year with 188 students, and ended with 190 students. For the 2013-14 and 2014-15 fiscal years, we combined the Annual Giving Campaign with our Capital Campaign. In 2014-15, we raised \$119,033 for a total of \$356,835 in gifts and pledges for the combined Campaign, including Drive for Schools and the Play It Forward! Golf Tournament. We look forward to a future of increasing financial strength and sustainability, through increasing enrollment, generous donations to our Annual Giving and Capital campaigns, and directed donations to the excellent programs at MMS.

— By Eric Forbes, Business Manager



Note: The audit for this fiscal year is conducted by the Harrington Group in early October. That report will be available in January for anyone wishing to view it.

Directed and In-Kind Donations

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 the School. The total value of directed and in-kind donations in 2014-15 was \$75,442. Many gifts were cash, while others were in-kind contributions including a wide variety of items such as wine, a new sewing machine for the costumes, auction items and gift certificates, a compact refrigerator, volleyballs, computers and related equipment.

Thank you to our in-kind and directed donors:

Alfaro Family Vineyards, Mary Kay and Richard Alfaro
 Maria Ashcraft and John Jimenez
 Ursula and Immanuel Barshi
 Ariel Benson and John Dias
 Leticia and Lane Bess
 Bittersweet Bistro
 Box Tops for Education (merchant giving program)
 Constance and Thomas Broz
 Cindi and Chris Busenhart
 Jessica and Forrest Cambell
 Alan Church
 Leigh Ann and Chris Clifton
 Barbara and Morty Cohen
 Corralitos Feed and Pet Supply
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 Ecology Action
 EmmaLily, Inc., Laura and Steve Petersen
 eScrip (merchant giving program)
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 First Class Fundraising, Rod Caborn
 Julia Gratton
 Vivian Gratton and Andrew Davis

Great Lakes Scrip Center (merchant giving program)
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 Wayne Lockwood
 Tricia McCurdy-Slater and John Slater
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 Microsoft Matching Gifts Program
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 Beth Truso and Dave Sunoo
 Vision Industries, Inc.
 Kelly and John Wagner
 Tiffany and David Wayne
 Shelton Welch
 Deana and Harry Woodrow

Star Domes, Caverns and Working Together: Team Learning at Sierra Outdoor School

Eight-year-old Erik Howley marveled at the brown, white and lavender crystals as he descended alongside his classmates into the depths of the massive, limestone cavern. Nearby, his friend, Sebastian Francke, spied a large lump that resembled a beehive. The boys were on a third and fourth grade class field trip in May, visiting Mercer Caverns in the Sierra foothills, on the way to a three-day learning adventure at the Sierra Outdoor School (SOS).

“We viewed many stalactites and stalagmites,” said Howley. “We also saw rare, snow-like aragonite crystal formations. We learned that the mineral-rich water dripped into these caverns over a long, long time and made many interestingly shaped formations!”

“The ‘beehive’ was about five stories down,” shared Francke. “Bees never got close to it, of course, but Mr. Mercer named the stalagmite that because of how it looked.”

In all, students descended sixteen stories beneath the earth’s surface, and while most were captivated with the surrounding geologic wonders, some were

nervous about being in the dark stony environment – or about being away from home.

“Just being away overnight stretches the comfort level for some kids,” observed teacher Hamsa Heinrich. “Students may experience homesickness, eat food that is different from what they are accustomed to, and adjust to sleeping in a dormitory. I encourage parents to allow their children to participate and grow from new experiences, and know that each child’s well-being is a top priority.”

“The three day journey is packed with learning and fun,” shared parent, MMS board member and veteran SOS chaperone Beth Brennan. “For some, SOS is the first overnight away from their parents, which is why the chaperones have a special position on the trip. The kids are given appropriate responsibilities and learn with kind supervision how to work together to accomplish simple tasks like setting their own table for meals or more challenging tasks like climbing an indoor rock wall with harnesses and helmets. Beyond the academics they come home with a sense of accomplishment and pride.”

“SOS has amazing educators who facilitate students, teachers and parent chaperones, together, providing three days of experiential learning in a beautiful natural setting,” observed Heinrich. “Students are immersed in a rich, hands-on curriculum and the activities are quite varied. Changing the learning environment allows people to shine in different ways. For instance, you might notice that the two students who are less likely to speak up and raise their hands in the classroom, feel empowered and are now the first to answer.”

“Fourth graders love this trip, too,” said teacher Linda Pope. “Sometimes younger or new students are a little fearful because they haven’t done the trip before and don’t know what to expect. The enthusiasm of the students who have participated previously really builds the interest of those about to participate for the first time.”



Inside Mercer Caverns

Fourth graders participated in a rock climbing wall, an activity that some found demanding.

“Students cheered for each other,” Pope shared, “and rose up to support one another, to calm worries



Participating in an outdoor lesson

and nervousness, and shift the focus back to the fun of this learning adventure.”

“The climbing wall was fun but challenging,” acknowledged fourth grader Anna Shelton. “I liked the support from my friends who were clapping and cheering me on.”

SOS specializes in a science-based curriculum, with activities that require cooperation, exercise energetic bodies and engage the senses.

“At the end of one day, we went on a night hike,” shared third grader Katie Garrison. “We learned to use our ‘night senses’ and played the game ‘Bat and Moth.’ We stood in a circle with

Top: Visiting the SOS raptor rehabilitation center
Bottom: Collaborative learning





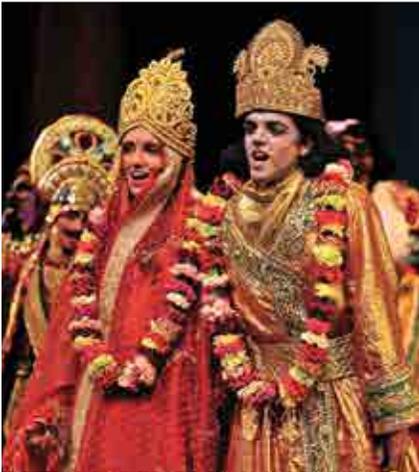
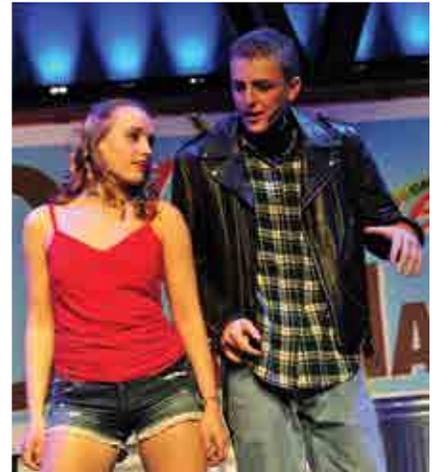
An Exercise in Building Community

For more than three decades I have had the honor of directing theatrical productions at MMS. Each show brings its own unique and varying range of challenges and surprises, booboos and breakthroughs, corrections and reflections, frustrations and exaltations, all intertwined in a colorful kaleidoscope. Yet, what links these productions together is that theater, like many other important endeavors at our school, is an exercise of community building.

Rehearsals and performances are certainly platforms for individuated discovery. Through theatrical immersion, we face our fears, insecurities and negative judgments in order to take risks of creative investment. We often discover our confidences and abilities within the process. Yet, as actors know, we do not perform in a bubble. Through trusted and positive interaction, true theater occurs and community is established.

From the outset of each production, actors, directors and designers are asked to embrace a responsibility to the collective; we practice working collaboratively with respect and openness. We grow to appreciate the underlying support and powerful connection of the whole. In the continuing paradoxical balance between product and process, community remains the brilliant shining epicenter of the whole endeavor.

— By Sampad Kachuck



Middle School Outdoor Shelter Adventure

Tucked against the trunk of a substantial redwood tree, naturally camouflaged and constructed from tree branches, bits of bark, leaves and tree needles, a small hobbit-sized shelter is visible. This snug enclosure, one of several, is just large enough for one, or maybe two, of the middle school students who constructed it. One evening last fall, several students and teachers enjoyed an overnight “sleepout” in the forest shelters.

“Creating shelters provided a chance for the students to get to know the forests better, to learn

Student-designed and constructed outdoor shelters



survival skills and to get dirty and creative all at the same time,” said teacher Ashley England (’08). “We offered the sleepover so students could celebrate their hard work, test out the shelters’ durability, and challenge themselves by stepping outside their comfort zones.”

“We discuss the geometry of a stable structure, and those who have done this before share their experience and expertise with others,” offered teacher Bob Caplan. “Students’ work ethics become obvious as the shelters take shape (or not!) and hopefully withstand the test of a gentle shake as the faculty tests for stability.”

The sleepout was a “daunting challenge,” according to England, and, with the approaching rain and clouds, the number of participants in the optional activity dwindled until a core group of 12 adventurers remained.

“Our small group in no way diminished the fun we had together,” commented England. “It was fun to watch a movie, sip hot chocolate, and then gather around the fire pit to share stories and marshmallows roasted beyond recognition. For some, the challenge was spending the night away from home. For others, it was the elements. While not all ended up staying outside all night as the weather got cooler and wet, there were a few who slept the entire night in a shelter.”



Happy campers!

“The sleepover was super fun!” commented seventh grader Ksenia Medvedeva. “We sat around a blazing fire while staring at the bright array of stars in the sky! I slept outside in a shelter, and surprisingly, was warm and got much more sleep than I expected. Thank you, chaperones, for this wonderful experience!” — *By Leigh Ann Clifton*



Remembering a Friend: Julia Wiley

Earlier this year Julia Wiley, parent of alumni Graydon (’13) and Lena (’15), and spouse of local farmer Andrew Griffin, passed away after living with stage four breast cancer for the past four years.

Despite the diagnosis (and in defiance of the prognosis), Julia continued to support her children and the Mount Madonna School community in a variety of roles: throughout the years she served as a class liaison, a Model United Nations chaperone and advisor, high school Career Forum panelist and coordinator, in addition to helping with performing arts concessions. She contributed wherever or whenever we needed a burst of Julia to get us motivated!

When not at the University of California, San Francisco, for her weekly medical treatments, Julia could be found playing rummy or Mahjong with friends, including many MMS alumni parents; traveling to foreign lands; dining in San Francisco at one of the many restaurants her family

business, Mariquita Farm, supplies; or holding court with friends and family in her kitchen over a cup of tea.

Julia’s tenacity, direct approach to solving most any type of problem, ability to speak on many topics, and deep humor is dearly missed by all who knew her.

— *By Kaye Feskanin*

Values and Community Continued from Front Cover charged by a black rhino). The students we met at the high schools we visited were easy to talk to and make connections with. After timid but warm ‘hellos’ and a showcase of our hit single, *Sbosholozza*, our class and the other students became instant friends. I learned how much we have in common, despite living so far away from each other and in such different circumstances. The people that we had the privilege of interviewing, specifically Archbishop Desmond Tutu, were very wise in what they said, and it made me proud that they took the time to talk to us, and even seemed to enjoy our company. Humanity is universal and kindness and hospitality are abundant.”

— Cece Moreno, 11th



Top: New friends!
Bottom: Zebras in Pilanesberg National Park

“I stood, engaged in a sort of flailing that I call dancing. I felt a tug at my shirt, turned, and found a small girl, no older than five, staring at me. ‘Up,’ she said. At first I was confused and didn’t hear her because of the loud music. I bent down and lent her my ear so that I could understand. Again she said ‘up.’ Then I understood. She wanted me to give her a piggyback ride. I didn’t give it a second thought (It was only after the party that I realized how strange of an occurrence it was). I kneeled down and let her jump up onto my shoulders. I carried her for 20 minutes while mingling with the other kids and dancing like a madman, to songs I had never heard before, in a language I had no understanding of. I asked her if she wanted down

several times, and every time she responded in the same tiny voice, ‘no.’ It was a profoundly touching experience for me to see how open and trusting everyone at the ashram is, including this little girl.”

— David Kerr, 12th

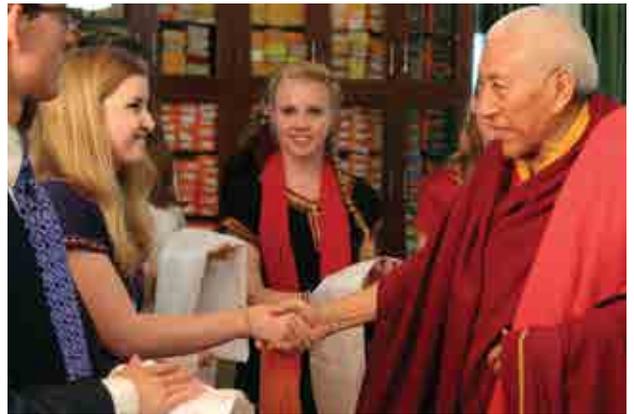
“Yesterday was truly a gathering of gifts. We met with kids from the Heritage and Pathways schools at Samvaad, a conference meant to create dialogue and connections. Over the course of the day, we shared songs, dance, art and discussion, breaking down barriers between cultures and country borders. Samvaad left me feeling more connected to India than any other experience I have had on this trip. The kids I met were so similar to me, expressing the same angst and frustrations that I have had with the education system, and asking themselves the same big questions: ‘Who am I? What is my purpose?’ They have dreams like mine, dreams that are so big they sometimes seem impossible, yet there is no doubt in my mind that they can accomplish them.”

— Lexi Julien, 12th

“Music filled the auditorium in the LEAP Schools [www.leapschool.org.za] as we danced with the other students. Their percussion had me in awe and the way that it connected our cultures in dance was truly inspiring. It made me forget about the hardships we had just previously witnessed in the Langa Township. The township made me realize a harsh irony in everything that we had experienced so far. I had cherished the happy moments and discounted everything serious, yet there is a beauty in seriousness. Without going to Langa, I would never have gained the insight required to truly connect with the kids at LEAP. Once the connection was made, I felt like I understood them on a deeper level and had a wider understanding of who they were, which made our interactions more raw and enriching.”

— Cameron Bess, 11th

“At Sri Ram Ashram, Pardada Pardadi, and the widows project, I made immediate connections and bonds that I will remember for the rest of my life. Young to old, rich to poor, speaking the same language or not, I discovered an openness both within myself, and those I interacted with. I



Meeting Samdhong Rinpoche, Lobsang Tenzin, former prime minister of the Central Tibetan Administration

will never forget when, at Sri Ram, a small hand grabbed my hand, creating a mosaic of colors. She dragged me to the swings and insisted I give her a push. The joyous smile and serene sound of laughter made me feel at home. I was present. I was not thinking about anything other than the pure happiness I felt. I felt welcomed, important and like I had a purpose.

— Cassie Caborn, 12th

“Desmond Tutu enters the room, smiles, looks to me, shakes my hand, and tells me he likes my trousers. I realize why the people he interacts with every day are excited; Desmond Tutu is spontaneity embodied. When we are done singing and introducing ourselves to him, we take our seats for the interview. I start to notice how Tutu’s skin sags with the weight of time and tragedy, but



Top: Soccer break at Pardada Pardadi School
Bottom: A rickshaw ride in New Delhi

his voice and laughter is touched by a contagious youthfulness. He takes a humble sip from a teacup that reads: 'Everyone grows old, but you don't have to grow up.' I notice the Tibetan slippers, wrinkled hands, reckless laugh, and *Ubuntu* bracelet that amalgamate into a human of true moral character. 'Ubuntu' symbolizes Tutu. In his words it is defined as, 'a person is a person because of other persons.' Tutu is a leader because people follow him without



Top: Interviewing former Robben Island prisoner Thulani Mbaso
Bottom: Making a connection

being asked to. I think about those around me: Sophia is a singer because people listen, Julia is a writer because people read, Amy and Haley are teachers because we pay attention, Sielo is a dancer because his friends at LEAP School play the drums, and we are all who we are because someone loves us." — *Holden Smith, 11th*

"We visited the Maitri India project, a sanctuary for abandoned widows in Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh. When we arrived we were brought into a room where the women were singing and chanting together to the beat of drums and chimes. When they noticed us, they turned and greeted us with hands in the air and sounds of exuberance. As they finished their morning Arti to Krishna, we prepared to sing for them. What an audience they were! It was as if they were saying to us, 'Thank you, thank you! What a wonderful gift,' without saying anything at all. The space was filled with so much happiness and gratitude. I felt like I was greeting old friends that I hadn't seen in a long time. Once we finished singing, they stood

up from where they were seated on the ground and approached us with hugs and smiles. It didn't matter that there was a language barrier. The music was the form of communication, and the motherly love was so unconditional and irrevocable that it almost felt like home."

— *Caitlin Gray-Harley, 12th*

"As my energy wore thin, I took a brief break from the energetic children and walked through the courtyard, listening to the laughter and the clicking of Xhosa, admiring the pastel yellow walls, the lush acacia trees and blue South African sky. As I was looking up I heard a gentle voice from below. 'I love you,' the voice said sweetly. Looking down I saw a small girl wearing a blue blouse, looking up at me with a sense of wonder. I was taken aback, partly because I was shocked that she was speaking English, but mostly because the first words that I hear from a complete stranger are hardly ever, 'I love you.' 'I love you too!' I responded immediately after processing what she said to me. I leaned over and swooped her up into my arms so that our faces were just inches apart. A set of thick eyelashes framed her stunning almond shaped eyes that were staring straight at me. I asked her name and she told me that it was Madeba, and she patiently helped me in figuring out how to pronounce it. She pushed my hair out of my face, smiled widely and said, 'You are beautiful!' I didn't know what to do. 'You are beautiful too!' I responded. I was so surprised with how genuine she was. Madeba nuzzled her face into my neck. For a brief moment our worlds were still, and the commotion of ram-bunctious children was set aside as I rocked Madeba gently in my arms while she gave me pure love."

— *Sophia Saavedra, 11th*



Top: Meeting Archbishop Desmond Tutu
Bottom: Collaborating in Tembisa

Community comes in many forms and can be forged in different ways. Dancing, singing, conversing, seeing and helping all create opportunities to build community. All of these students saw the opportunity and said 'yes' to the experience. In the years ahead, as they look back and remember, I believe that for this, they will be forever grateful.

— *Article by Shannon Kelly ('92)*

Read more on the students' blogs:
India.mountmadonnaschool.org
Africa.mountmadonnaschool.org

Visiting the Harmandi Sahib or Golden Temple at Amritsar



Learning and Teaching: First Graders Share Animal Research

First graders at MMS were able to share a lot about some of the animals native to Santa Cruz County, following several weeks of research and presentations this year.

“Students love animals,” commented teacher Cassia Laffin. “When teachers take something students love and ask them to answer questions they may never have thought about, learning occurs. I am excited for my students to learn – and to teach each other – about the animals in our big ‘backyard’.”

“I studied the opossum,” said Cora Kayne. “It is the only marsupial in North America and it is nocturnal.”

Developing public speaking skills



Students presented reports on chosen animals – this was the explicit curriculum – and demonstrated their understanding of the embedded implicit curriculum: learning how to do semi-independent research, developing time management skills and practicing public speaking. First graders presented to other students, teachers and parents. Visitors rotated from one first grader to the next, learning about the various animals.

Aidan Rassech shared that Black-Tailed deer are herbivores; while Kaia Mangus described a hissing sound that barn owls make to frighten away predators.

“The Western Fence lizard has ‘fracture lines’ on its body so it can drop its tail when it’s in danger,” said Share Willoughby.

Eden Fisher told visitors that “poult,” is a term for young turkeys; while Colby Saunders displayed a hand-drawn picture depicting the lifecycle



Sharing research and learning from one another

of the Pacific Giant Marbled Salamander. Siena Liddicoat shared that the Western Pacific Rattlesnake hatches its eggs inside of its body, making it appear to give birth to live young.

“While I love all the learning that occurs, developing confidence and giving students opportunities to learn from one another is my main objective,” said Laffin. “I want to instill a sense of comfort and provide a supportive classroom environment where children feel listened to and competent in their speaking and communication abilities.”

— By Leigh Ann Clifton

Seventh Grader Earns Bid to State Science Fair

Congratulations to seventh graders Ksenia Medvedeva, Lily Hernandez and Will Pramanik, whose projects received awards in the 27th annual Santa Cruz County Science and Engineering Fair!

Pramanik’s study, “Momentum vs. Oscillators with Multiple Time Frames,” earned him Third Place in the Mathematics and Computer Science, Junior Division, and a chance to participate in the annual state science fair in May.

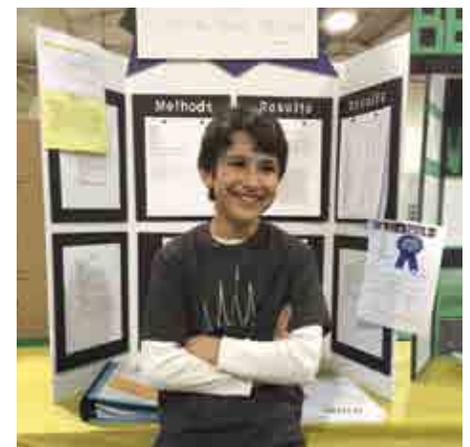
“I used the stock market and created programs to improve the results of different, well-known indicators, and then tested those programs to determine whether momentum indicators or oscillators were better,” Pramanik explained. “I developed this project because I think young people who can’t otherwise afford to go to college,

could use this information and trading system to earn money for their education.

“From my results I concluded that momentum indicators are better during trending markets and oscillators are better during non-trending markets. In the future I would like to try using multiple indicators and test my current systems on real stocks. Once I improve my system, I would like to try trading it live!”

Medvedeva and Hernandez were awarded a Project of Merit in Animal Sciences, Junior Division, for “Le Chicks 2,” their study comparing dry and traditional wet incubation methods.

“Last year, our first project on hatching chicks didn’t really have a hypothesis,” explained Medvedeva. “This year we made a hypothesis based on our previous experiences and discoveries. Our



Will Pramanik

hypothesis asked ‘Does humidity have a role in the hatch rate when hatching chicks?’ We were interested in learning more about what affects the hatch rate and what doesn’t.”

— By Leigh Ann Clifton



Forging a Strong Connection

Through students spending time outdoors in forests and meadows, they forge a strong connection to, and reverence for, nature. Where do the things that we need to live come from? From the Earth, they discover! Through story, song and hands-on experiences such as visiting a working organic farm, a sense of gratitude flourishes in the children and they come to understand our essential role as stewards of the community and caretakers of the Earth.

— *By Hema Walker*



Conserving Santa Cruz Mountain Wildlife – The Life and Times of a Modern Mountain Man

Interview with Chris Fust ('08) by Casey Lightner ('06)

Between hours of bushwhacking and tracking mountain lions in the Santa Cruz mountain wilderness, Chris took the time to share his experience and perspective on working to conserve local wildlife.

In 2006 Chris graduated from MMS and began his freshman year at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC). At first he “despised” the notion of going to UCSC (it was not one of his top choices), but within the first few weeks he came to realize it had everything he wanted: beaches, forest, and an active, outdoorsy student population. During his freshman year, a family friend tipped off Chris that professor Chris Wilmers of the UCSC Environmental Studies Department, had founded the Santa Cruz Puma Project (SantaCruzPumas.org) to research and protect the local mountain lion population. Chris showed up in Professor Wilmers’ office the next day to volunteer, and without being asked more than if he could hike, he got the job and was directed to speak to the field manager.

“The next couple days were bushwhacking through the coastal mountains with the field manager, setting traps for potential study animals, staking them out all night, and investigating kill sites,” shared Chris. “I got scratched up and nearly puked a few times with the sight and smell of the frozen deer we used as bait. I enjoyed the challenge

Chris during the capture of 28f



and felt accomplished doing it, but I had no idea what I was doing at the time and no big picture about what tromping around in the woods meant for the local puma population.”

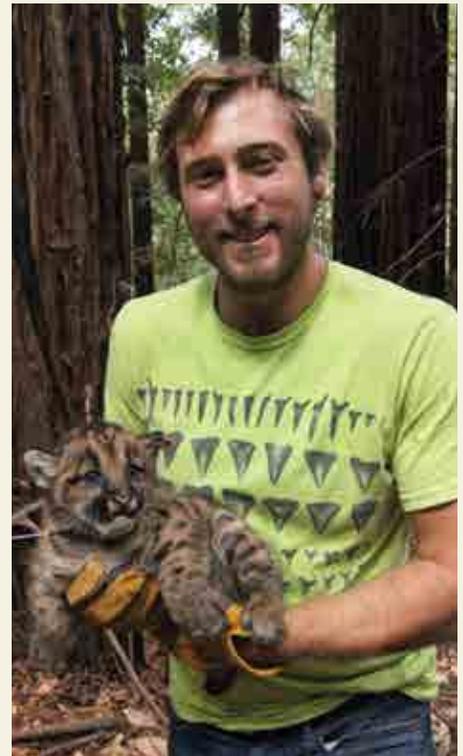
As months passed the bigger picture and quest of the puma project began to materialize for Chris. By researching, tracking, and spending time in the mountain lions’ natural habitat, Chris learned more about these big cats and the impact humans have on their survival.

“Being in the presence of a cougar validates my perception of nature as a powerful yet fragile force. Mountain lions are at the apex of our local fauna, but are still overwhelmed by human influences. While mountain lions can be potentially deadly, people, without knowing, cause many more life changing interactions with these cats. By living in and around nature, people alter the habitat to suit themselves, forcing plants and animals to adapt or die.”

Along with striving to change the public’s misconceptions of pumas as vicious killers, the Project’s data is being used by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County to build an underpass along Highway 17. By creating a spot where lions and other animals may cross the highway safely away from traffic, conservationists hope to decrease the number of traffic collisions, preventing both animal and human casualties.

In many ways Chris was the perfect candidate for this type of work. He grew up just outside the gates of Mount Madonna Center, surrounded by woods and wilderness. While for some the woods are seen as a dangerous place, a wild zone to be avoided lest one get lost, attacked by an animal or struck by the infamous poison oak leaf, Chris’s experience and familiarity give him a rare perspective and allow him to get past common fears.

“Being in nature every day helped me learn how to navigate my way through it. Much of our study requires movement through difficult terrain and the ability to identify subtle signs, so being able



With a puma kitten at The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park

to use my experience growing up on the mountain greatly helped my ability to track animals.”

For anyone who is unsure of the difficulty in moving through the Santa Cruz coastal forest, Chris offers a challenge:

“Have a friend pick two locations 500 meters apart in random places in the woods, and try to walk from one to the other in a straight line. We exert so much effort trying to get to where the cats go; something that took 10 minutes for a mountain lion can take upwards of four hours for a person.”

So Chris jumped in headfirst, unafraid and ready to take on whatever the woods had to throw at him.

“As far as natural dangers go, I’ve kind of accepted them as fact,” he acknowledged. “Yes, I

An uncollared puma in Davenport



will encounter them. Yes, they can hurt. No, they will most likely not kill me.”

But while dangers from the natural environment were commonplace and familiar, Chris soon learned about the greatest danger of all, other humans.

“The time that sobered me up was tracking down one of our dead mountain lions, 7f, in the Sierra Azul OSP [Open Space Preserve].

A graduate student and I went to recover the collar that was sending mortality signals and we discovered a ton of bright, shiny, new black piping from a spring in the hillside leading directly to the collar. As we crept closer we discovered that our mountain lion, 7f, was unusually positioned with blood coming out of her nose. We concluded that she was poisoned, and called the rangers who said to evacuate immediately.

“The next day we assisted four wardens in military camouflage, tactical armor, and carrying AR-15s, by providing information so they could raid the place. They said a warden was shot to death just a year before. The severity with which they treated the operation was quite mind opening. When meeting strangers out in the woods, there is a possibility for disaster. I don’t want to risk my life for my job. I don’t think I was meant to live like that. Needless to say, I’m a little wary when I first meet people.”

So the foremost question for many: how hard is it to capture a mountain lion?

“The concept of catching them is simple but its execution is hard,” said Chris. “We’ve had a couple lions whose collars ran out years ago and we’re still trying to catch them. At some point you have to accept that no matter how hard you try, you will never be skilled enough to catch certain cats, and that luck seems to be at the core of most captures. We’ll keep trying for the same cats even though years have passed, because eventually we do get a good chance to capture the animal.

“We have two ways we catch lions: with hound dogs and with cage traps. The hound dogs require a fresh, few-hour-old scent, and, once they have it, generally lead us straight to the cat. If the dogs

are successful, then the cat will run up a tree as a natural response. We then dart the cat and follow it as it escapes the tree and runs through the woods.

“With cage traps we usually place a frozen road-kill deer out prior to setting the cage. If a mountain lion eats off a piece of the deer carcass, we will place a cage with a carcass inside at the



Top: Chris with an uncollared cat in San Vicente Redwoods
Bottom: Chris with fellow puma project researchers

same location and then wait until the lion comes back. When the lion enters the cage, it triggers the cage door to shut. We then come up and take a jab-pole (basically a syringe on the end of a stick) and dart the lion by hand.”

When asked about what the future holds, and where Chris sees himself five or 10 years down the road, it was delightful to hear of his ambition to pursue a career with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and continue a life fighting for the environment, while striving to find ways that we may better coexist with nature.

“I see the function of the CDFW as a mitigator and a protector to the natural world,” he explained. “It conducts scientific ecological surveys and uses that data to create better ways of coexisting with nature. I’ve worked around biologists with

CDFW and each one of them has a deep love of nature and honestly wants to preserve and conserve it for the future through the scientific method. They all remind me that there are people out there who are actively trying to fight human-caused extinction, pollution and climate change. The thought of actually making a difference for the better to our natural world is my driving force.

It would be great to one day say ‘I saved this forest.’”

Chris credits MMS for instilling him with a love of nature, the connectedness of all things, and the drive to help conserve the environment for everyone. Reflecting on his 14-year journey through MMS, Chris offered these words:

“MMS never let me fall through the cracks. It ingrained in me the concept that everyone is a unique individual with a unique quality to offer this world – a powerful idea for my young mind.”

He credits biology class with [former MMS science teacher] Weston Miller for giving him a foundation for understanding how our planet’s biology fits together. Later, his supervisor, Paul Houghtaling, a field biologist with the puma project, inspired him “to strive as hard as you can, and knowledge you don’t have can always be acquired along the way.”

For MMS students and fellow alumni, Chris offers this advice: “Travel, tinker, use your gut feelings. Do something totally radical that feels right and if you have no idea what that is yet, don’t worry, just try new things. Something will feel right.”

Post-capture with 36m at Coast Dairies State Park



Strong Teamwork and Inspired Movement

“**M**aya,” aka “Mayana” Clarissa Lisboa, choreographer and creative movement artist, joined the school and Mount Madonna Center community in 1989, when she moved from Brazil to the United States. Maya studied dance in Brazil and at Cabrillo College, and it was her dance roles in the adult *Ramayana!* where she discovered the joy of dancing onstage. Maya volunteered as an assistant choreographer in 1994 and later continued her connection with MMS in between raising her children Mira and Pedro (‘15), and continuing her own education. She eventually became MMS’ director of choreography.

Whether in her dance studio or yoga classes or as choreographer, Maya demonstrated strong creative vision, teamwork, commitment, clear communication and execution. Thorough and organized in her preparation, she was also able to adjust to the learning abilities of her classes and individual performers. She was an empathic teacher, creating personal relationship with students of all ages.

We deeply appreciate all that Maya has contributed to MMS and the performing arts program over the last eight years.

— *By Sampad Kachuck and Lara Kilpatrick (‘85)*



Students with Dr. Sarita Shrestha

Nepal Earthquake Relief Efforts

After the April 25 Gorkha earthquake in Nepal, sixth and seventh grade world history students, organized by teacher Tiffany Wayne, launched a fundraising effort. The students were studying the history and geography of South Asia when the earthquake struck, so they felt a special concern and connection to those living in the region. A timely meeting at Mount Madonna Center with Dr. Sarita Shrestha, a physician who works extensively in the rural areas hardest hit by the earthquake, facilitated their earthquake relief efforts.

The students ultimately raised \$554 on campus, plus more than \$5,220 online (see www.crowdrise.com/shrestha/fundraiser/tiffanywayne). *Thank you to all the parents, families and extended community members who joined in supporting this crisis fund and the students’ endeavors to make a difference to the people of Nepal.*

Sierra Outdoor School Continued from Page 19

two kids inside. One of them was the ‘bat’ and another was the ‘moth.’ Both kids kept their eyes closed and took turns calling out ‘bat’ and ‘moth’ – and tried to find each other using echolocation.”

On another stop, the instructor passed around a paper bag and each person took a turn putting a hand inside and trying to guess what was inside by touch. Next, a tube was passed around for students to smell what was inside. After a “dry” sniff, students put some moisture on the outside of their noses and tried again – and this time the scent was much stronger!

“I learned that animals with wet noses, like raccoons, wolves and bears, have a really good sense of smell,” Garrison said.

“I loved being at SOS because it was full of nature,” added classmate Forest Movrich. “I learned that raccoon paws are real delicate. They can feel exceptionally well and sense fish or insects moving in the water – even before they touch them!”

During another popular activity, students were invited into a large, inflatable “star dome,”

where constellations were projected onto the dome’s ceiling.

The students heard stories about a couple of the constellations, including one story about King Cepheus and his wife, Queen Cassiopeia.

“These constellations are “‘upside down’ because they tried to sacrifice their daughter, Andromeda, to a monster,” said third grader Kalissa Acayan. “We learned how to find Polaris, the North Star, and other constellations, like Leo the lion and Draco the dragon.”

“The star lab was a little scary at first, but then I had a whole lot of fun once my eyes adjusted to the dark,” shared classmate Logan Shaw. “We learned that at different times of the year the stars are in different places in the sky. It seems like the stars are spinning, but really the Earth is spinning.”

A short walk up the hill from the main SOS campus is a raptor rehabilitation center. There, trained staff care for several raptors, including a Golden Eagle, Great Horned Owls and a Red-tailed Hawk, which are used for educational programs.

“Raptors have adaptations that help them to survive,” observed student Sophie Smith. “While human hands can squeeze about 40 pounds of pressure per square inch, the talons of Great Horned Owls can squeeze around 400 pounds of pressure! Raptors have excellent eyesight and feathers that help camouflage them in the trees.”

“I liked everything about SOS,” said classmate Ronan Keith. “I loved playing in the dorms and on the blacktop. I loved the night hike, where we learned about night vision for humans and that it takes 45 minutes for your eyes to adjust to the darkness!”

“As a parent,” commented Brennan, “I think that anytime we can make learning fun and relevant to our kids’ everyday lives we give them a gift. We help them to become lifelong learners. Science, history, ecosystems, astronomy, these are exciting and fun topics and SOS really teaches this in a supportive, well-organized and well-supported program. It’s a great age to give the kids these lessons in community-building and self-reliance.”

Alumni Notes

From the Class of...

'85 After leaving her position as MMS director of advancement for nine years, **Lara Kilpatrick** is now serving as director of fund development for the California CASA association, a nonprofit in Oakland that supports 45 county offices in California, through marketing, legal, training and legislative advocacy for youth in foster care.

'86 **Shasta Tierra***, became a doctor of acupuncture and oriental medicine. She studied at Five Branches University, Graduate School of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Santa Cruz.

'89 **Isaac "PK" Lefterys*** married Hanja Von Feldmann in a beautiful outdoor ceremony surrounded by friends. Fellow alumni **Josh Cheney**, **Kira Chandra Winterbotham**, **Daya (Filkow) Moss ('88)**, **Jessica Davis ('92)**, **Aurora Queen ('90*)**, and **Sarah Hinke ('90*)**. After suffering serious spinal injury in a surfing accident in December 2014, **Rajesh Westerberg** is doing well and is back to working as a master carpenter in the theater arts department at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC). *Thanks to the alumni who helped support him and his family during the difficult time.* In July, **Usha Kilpatrick Kotner** retired from her position as founding director of Kona Pacific Public Charter School in Kealahou, HI. She is pursuing career options, including continuing to develop the farm to school food programs for Hawaii public schools.

'90 **Marm (Auston) Kilpatrick**, Ph.D., associate professor in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department at UCSC, received a Bat Conservation International grant to perform a field trial testing the probiotic bacteria his lab has been developing to reduce the impacts of white-nose syndrome on bats. In December, *The Scientist* magazine published his article, "A Race Against Extinction," about his experiences conducting these bat



Dov Rohan '01, receives his scuba instructor certification



Ashley Mayou '14, constructs a sustainable dwelling



Ryan Alfaro '13 in France

studies (www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/41532/title/A-Race-Against-Extinction).

'91 **Charlie (Arbind) Pacey**, a field application engineer for Arrow, is relocating this fall from the Bay Area to New York City; he will continue with Arrow in a new capacity.

'92 **Noah (Suresh) Diffenbaugh**, Ph.D., associate professor and senior fellow at Stanford University, participated in MMS' annual high school Career Forum. In April, he was featured in the *San Francisco Chronicle* article talking about "new normal" weather patterns, and how people in California should expect less rain going forward. (www.sfchronicle.com/science/article/New-normal-Scientists-predict-less-rain-from-6209104.php). In early June, he was interviewed by Amy Goodman of National Public Radio's *Democracy Now!* about steps to creating a fossil fuel-free world (www.democracynow.org/2015/6/5/a_fossil_fuel_free_world_is). **Shannon Purnima (Stokes) Kelly** continues to take on a greater role in co-teaching the MMS Values in World Thought program with Ward "SN" Mailliard. Her daughter, **Zoe Kelly ('15)**, is attending Whitman College, the second graduate of an MMS graduate – another milestone for our school!

'94 **Ryan Oliver** returned to the west coast and is serving as a leadership team member and

entrepreneurship education manager at The Incubator School, a pilot school serving grades six through 12 within the Los Angeles Unified School District. On April 3 **Tobias Aguirre**, wife (and former MMS teacher) Jessica Zovar and son Arias Moon welcomed a baby boy, Finnegan Star.

'95 **Daniel "PK" Diffenbaugh**, Ph.D., new superintendent of schools for the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District, shares that he is happy to be home, loves his job, and being able to bring his kids to Mount Madonna to visit their grandparents, Sarada, MMS board of directors president, and Dayanand, MMS faculty member and trustee.

Umesh Mallery is completing electrical work on the School's new gymnasium. In May, **Rami Vissell**, Ph.D., graduated from the Santa Cruz Fire Academy, with training to serve as a volunteer fire fighter. She continues to teach middle school Life Skills at MMS.

'96 In December 2014, **Matt Prisk**, wife Jessica and son Mateo, welcomed a daughter, Luna Celine Rosabella Prisk. **Santosh Heinrich** and wife Carissa, after 12 years living in Los Angeles and desiring a "cozier community" to raise their children, Lorelei and James, have moved outside of the Boston area. Santosh is employed with Raytheon and transferred to their Marlborough, Massachusetts facility as a senior principle engineer. **Jennifer "Jenny" (Waite) Guerrero**,

Laurén Mitchell '04 wed Chris O'Brien

Alida Lettunich '12 visits Bhutan

PK Lefterys '89 wed Hanja Von Feldmann

Rebecca Turek '99 and family



Continued on Page 30



Santosh Heinrich '96 and family



Liam, son of Alex Jelliffe '05



Kai McDonald '99 and fiancé Ashley Shoshan



Danny Falcao '10 and his son Liam

husband Raul and son Nico welcomed baby Emma Elise on May 21.

'98 **Sara Parvati Fisher** is the executive producer at Chandelier Creative, a New York City-based advertising agency. She oversees all productions, and recently worked on a campaign for Harry's (a new shaving company) that shot in Barcelona, as well as an Old Navy campaign in Los Angeles.

'99 In May, **Kai Ramesh McDonald** got engaged to Ashley Shoshan. Kai lives in Malibu and works for Rule14, a start-up data-mining company. His work includes building models that analyze large amounts of data and predict consumer trends, forecast energy usage, and identify cases of fraud, waste and abuse within benefits programs. **Kendra Froshman** is in graduate school at San Francisco State University, working toward an M.P.A. with an emphasis in nonprofit management. On December 10, 2014, **Rebecca Turek** and husband Chris Hill welcomed son Colton Robert Hill-Eftekhari. In August, **Yolanda Sangita Diaz-Houston** successfully defended her dissertation and earned her Ph.D. in education from UCSC.

'01 In August, **Dov Rohan** achieved his IDC staff instructor certification, allowing him to certify dive masters as assistant instructors.

'02 **Leo James** is living in Santa Rosa and started Tectonic Events, a company providing audio-

visual, photo booth and DJ services. He also serves as director of event technology at Meadowood Resort in Napa Valley.

'03 **Kevin Quinn** and wife Chanel welcomed a son, Casey Michael Quinn, on March 2. Also in March, **Lea (Nash) Allen**, husband Sam and daughter Lily Jean, welcomed baby Iris Camille.

'04 **Colin Safranek** co-owns a business, Adaptify Designs, specializing in front-end web design, SEO, and conversion optimization, as well as back-end code and site functionality (adaptifydesigns.com). Colin also subcontracts for larger agencies in Portland, designing sites on Wordpress and other platforms, as well as developing custom web tools. In March, **Franklin Brightwater** became a registered diagnostic medical sonographer (R.D.M.S.) after passing all of his board exams and graduating from the Foothill College ultrasound program. He now works at Stanford Hospital. **Laurén (Mitchell) O'Brien** married Chris O'Brien in a June 2014 ceremony on her father's Mount Madonna property. The newlyweds spent eight months travelling from Santa Cruz to Panama, enjoying the cultures and learning Spanish, but mostly in search of perfect waves.

'05 In February, **Alexandra (Stemel) Jelliffe** and husband Will welcomed their third child, William (aka "Liam"), a boy to join sisters Charlotte and Isabelle.

'06 **Megan Mitchell** became engaged to Natasha Castro on May 25; they plan to marry in late summer 2016. Megan is a writer and content manager for Games.CrossFit.com.

'07 **Daniel Nanas** lives in San Jose and works as a research programs coordinator at Google, developing and managing programs to identify and engage top research talent. In 2014, **Naomi Magid** received a B.S. in communication disorders and sciences from the University of Oregon. **Prabha Sharan** started work as a nurse in the orthopedics department at Stanford Hospital in August.

'08 **Aaron Colton** received an M.A. in 2014, and is currently working towards a Ph.D. in English language, literature and research at the University of Virginia. **Ashley England**, left her position as MMS middle school English and history teacher in August and departed for Botswana. She is serving two years in the U.S. Peace Corps and helping to develop curriculum for AIDS education. Read about her experiences at <https://findingbotswana.wordpress.com>

'10 **Anneka Lettunich** and Sara Bims have started Fieldtrip Clothing. It is currently a side project for both of them, as Sara is traveling and Anneka is completing her final semester studying art direction at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. **Brittany (Lovato) Lint** earned an A.S. in early childhood education from Cabrillo College while pregnant with her second child. On June 12, Brittany, husband Adam and daughter Ainsley welcomed a boy, Beau Walter. **Danny Falcao** and Bree Rusca welcomed son Liam Christian on April 29. Danny hopes to soon become a deputy for the Santa Cruz County Sheriffs Department. **Jack Massion** lives in Chicago and is a recruiter for Starpoint Solutions, a full-service staffing firm. **Mara Getz** is living in southern California, working and preparing for graduate school. **Mari Fox** is off to Scotland, enrolled in a one-year master's program focusing on modern and contemporary art, curation and critical thinking at the University of Edinburgh.

'11 **Susie Bryan** is studying at the University of San Francisco toward a degree in psychology. She's also

Kabir Ahluwalia, Blythe Collier and Aaron Storrs '12 at the *Ramayana!* alumni reception



Lea (Nash) Allen '03, husband Sam and daughters Iris and Lily





Megan Mitchell '06 and fiancé, Natasha Castro



Soma Sharan and Lily Connor '11 at their UCLA graduation



McKenzie Caborn '12 snorkling in Palau



Yolanda Sangita Diaz-Houston '99 and her daughter Kailani

working part-time and volunteering at a suicide prevention hotline. **Chelsea Bess** earned a bachelor's degree in science, journalism and public relations; with a minor in marketing from Suffolk University. **Lindsey Colton** received a B.A. in communications from San Diego State University. She is attending the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM), Los Angeles. **Lily Connor** earned a B.S. in physiological science from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). **Emma Fladeboe** received a B.S. in viticulture and enology, and a B.A. in economics from the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). **PK Hattis** received a B.A. in psychology, with a minor in human physiology from UC Davis. **Emma Petersen** earned a B.A. in liberal studies with a minor in special education, and a multiple subject teaching credential from Loyola Marymount University. She teaches kindergarten at Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary School in San Jose, and recently joined the MMS board as the alumni representative. **Michaela Schuessler** earned an A.S. in business administration from Monterey Peninsula College in fall 2014 and then transferred to California State University, Monterey Bay to continue her studies. **Soma Sharan** received a B.A. in geography from UCLA and is currently interning with Vital Voices in Washington, D.C. **'12 Alida Lettunich** traveled in Bhutan for six months as a part of Naropa University's pilot study

abroad program. She's now back in Boulder for her last year of school. In May, **McKenzie Caborn** travelled to Palau through a program offered by the University of Redlands' environmental studies department. She and her group interviewed a number of local chiefs and the U.S. Ambassador to Palau, hearing their perspectives on the current ecotourism culture and what it could mean for Palau's future. **Palak Bhatnagar** interned this summer at the Santa Cruz Health Services Agency, working on County alcohol and drug prevention policies. She will graduate early (in December 2015) with a B.A. in public health and business administration from American University. **Ryan Alfaro**, a student at UCLA, travelled to France during the summer for an Introduction to Winemaking program through UC Davis. "I took classes as well as traveled to different wineries throughout France, Switzerland and Germany," he shares. Over the summer, **Nicole Nascimento** completed a labor and delivery internship program in Thailand. **'13 Daniel Fust** participated in a UC Davis study program in Iceland this summer. **Jake Getz** has an internship with Interana, a data analysis company in New York City, and is continuing his studies at New York University. **Karina Fox** completed her second year at Muhlenberg College and is studying for a semester at the Accademia del Arte in Arezzo, Italy. **Vvyanne Mackey** is studying at the University

of Edinburgh for her junior year through UC Davis. **Willy Bryan**, as a part of a five-year degree program at Northeastern University, studied in Cuba over the summer and is currently doing "co-op" studies, which is similar to an internship and involves full-time work with the University's marketing department. **'14 Ashley Mayou** worked on a "sustainable house project" at California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly), creating a transportable structure suitable for dwelling. "Our group slept in it overnight and then carried it out of the canyon the next morning," shares Ashley. "It was made from conduit pipes, seatbelt material, and eco-friendly "blackout" material." **Preethi Balagani** had a summer internship with the Scripps Translational Science Institute. Her mentor was Dr. Brian Modena, an allergy/immunology doctor and KL2 clinical scholar who conducts research at the Scripps Research Institute. She shadowed Dr. Modena at the Scripps Clinic and assisted with his research. She is writing a review paper on the role of *tb1* and *tb17* cells in asthma, and worked with human embryonic kidney cells, learning multiple lab techniques. "It was an amazing experience because I was able to see both the research and practical sides of medicine," says Preethi, "and it further strengthened my desire to pursue a career in this field." **Alumni non-MMS graduates*



Devin (Bhattacharya) Kumar '06 continues to support the School through documenting the learning journeys and also creating videos about the MMS experience to share with prospective families and the greater community. Check these out on the MMS YouTube channel:
Cultivating Citizens for a Global Community: www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_mYkx093XI
A Journey of Discovery: Mount Madonna Middle School: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJ2Bu65lJhQ
Educating Hearts and Minds: Mount Madonna School Elemntary Grades: www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfDXMFOGTD4
Learning Journey Under the Sea: Catalina Island 2015: www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOrKKWY1dus
Muditaa Project: India 2015: www.youtube.com/watch?v=V205r-JWFZ4
Uxhumano Overview: A Journey to South Africa: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Py4fQw43Vcc



Mount Madonna School

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Dear Alumni Parents, if your graduate is no longer receiving mail at this address, please forward this to him/her and notify us of his/her new address.

Congratulations and Best Wishes to our 2015 Graduates!



Front row, left to right: Cooper Stevens, Caitlin Gray-Harley and Pedro Aguirre. *Middle row, left to right:* Lexi Julien, Valedictorian, Sage Buzzini, Magdalena Griffin Wiley, Tobin Mitchell, Cassidy Caborn, Co-Salutatorian, Alyssa Feskanin, Zoe Kelly and Carlo LeGan. *Back row, left to right:* Renata Massion, Co-Salutatorian, Noah Hartman, Rami Walker, David Kerr and Christopher Colip.

Class of 2015 College Acceptances:

Alma College
Berklee College of Music
Cabrillo College*
California State University, Chico**
Chapman University*
College of Wooster
Denison University
Dominican University of California
Foothill College
Goucher College
Humboldt State University
Juniata College

Kenyon University
Kettering University
Lawrence University
Lewis and Clark College
Mount Holyoke College
Northeastern University
Regis University
San Diego State University
San Francisco State University
Santa Barbara Community College*
Santa Clara University**
Santa Fe University of Art and Design
Seattle University

Skidmore College
Sonoma State University
Southern Oregon University*
St. Olaf College
Tulane University*
University of Puget Sound*
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, Los Angeles*
University of California, Merced
University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Barbara*
University of California, Santa Cruz*

University of Hawaii
University of Maine
University of Minnesota
University of Nevada, Reno
University of Redlands
University of Richmond
University of the Pacific
Washington and Lee University
Washington State University
Wells College
Whitman College*
Whittier College
Willamette University**

*denotes school graduate(s) selected to attend