

Connection

An annual publication for families, friends and alumni of Mount Madonna School — 2018 | 19

MOUNT
MADONNA
SCHOOL
CELEBRATING

40
YEARS



In This Issue

	Our Mission	2
Teaching Children Well: A Reflection from Our Head of School		3
Voices for Change: Whale Project Honored Nationally		4
Clear Eyes and Sustainability		5
Body, Breath and Mind: Teaching a Healthful Yoga Practice		6
Carpentry Skills and Confidence		6
Math in Action: Students Create Model Tiny Homes		7
Students' Conservation Efforts Awarded \$5,000 at WE Day		7
Creating Momentum and Overcoming Obstacles		8
Launching Our 40th Anniversary Endowment		10
The Power of Jiv Scholarship		10
Vision, Leadership and a Lifetime of Service: Jivanti Helene Rutansky		11
The Jivanti Rutansky Memorial Award		11
Broadening Our Perspective		12
Heart of the Hawks: Dayanand Diffenbaugh		14
In Gratitude to Baba Hari Dass		15
Historical Context and Seeing Deeply		16
<i>Do Not Fear to Be Alone</i>		16
<i>Look what I made!</i> – Academic Achievement and the Creative Process		17
A Record High for Annual Giving!		18
Student Writers' Corner: <i>Resonance</i>		20
Social Skills, Social Studies and Science		21
Annual Financial Report		22
Directed and In-Kind Contributions		22
Fundraising with Scrip		22
Performing Arts Photo Montage		23
Science, Nutrition and Culinary Studies		24
Live Animals, Skeletons and Understanding Adaptations		24
Abolition, Revolution and the Roots of Democracy		25
<i>Your Home</i>		25
Hardwiring for Diversity		26
Life Cycles and Field Lessons		27
Geometry Studies and Constructing Kites		28
Young Artists' Spotlight		28
Stewardship and a Day of Play: Summit for the Planet		29
Embracing Experiences and Investing in Relationships		30
A Discussion of Global Issues		32
Passages: <i>Julianne Anila Zimmerman</i>		32
Alumni Notes – <i>From the Class of...</i>		33
Women Who Inspire		34
Visionary Research		35
Congratulations and Best Wishes to Our 2019 Graduates!		36



5



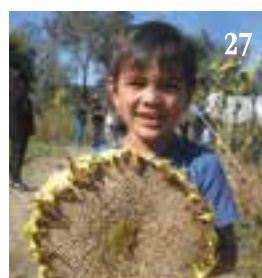
8



13



21



27



33

Our Mission

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

We Value:

- Our learning community, which includes students, alumni, faculty, administrators, staff and families
- Intellectual inquiry that fosters a love of learning, self-discipline and perseverance
- Continual exploration of how our students learn best
- The development of relationships based on self-acceptance, empathy, honesty, integrity, respectful communication and shared experiences
- The transformative power of the creative process
- Experiential outdoor learning that inspires an appreciation for nature, environmental stewardship and a sense of well-being

Cover photo: 2017 aerial view of the MMS upper campus by Devin Kumar ('06).

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the photographers whose work is included in this issue:

Carmen Virgos, Cassia Laffin, Chris Hudnut, Christlaine Miller, Devin Bhattacharya, Encarna Buendia, Erin Mitchell, Forrest Cambell, Jessica Cambell, Jessica Westbrook, Hema Walker, Jenni Leach, Jose Lopez, Juan Reyes, Kami Pacheco, Katrina Leni-Konig, Leigh Ann Clifton, Linda Manzur, Lisa Catterall, Nanette Hardin, Nicholas Cabassa, Nicole Silva Culbertson, Prema Gammons, Preston Merchant, Ross Bryan, Sara Sobkoviak, Shmuel Thaler, Tiffany Wayne, Ward Mailliard, and other volunteers. Editor: Leigh Ann Clifton; Copy Editor and Proofreader: Christine Smith; Proofreader: Tiffany Wayne; Graphic Design: Marina Michaelian Ward

Teaching Children Well: A Reflection from Our Head of School

The 2018-19 school year marked the 40th year of Mount Madonna School (MMS). Four decades of students, teachers, staff and parents have worked creatively and collaboratively, building upon the legacy and foundational programs that are pathways for learning. Each year invigorates the evolving vision with new talents, ideas, dedication and celebration.

A favorite quote by Baba Hari Dass, who inspired the founding of MMS, is a powerful reminder of how to simply live our life in peace and contribute in a meaningful, connected way to the community:

Work honestly, meditate every day, meet people without fear, and play.

This past year was marked by many successes, new explorations and triumphs in the program. These include academic accolades for our environmental science work, athletic expansion and championships, meaningful learning journeys, senior year culinary studies, yoga classes and a retreat in the middle school, and the continuation of our remarkable performing arts program, where students shine and amaze us with their talent and confidence.

The 40th year was also marked by great sadness, with memorial gatherings at our lake and ponds to honor and release the emotions of grief and sorrow experienced with the passing of Baba Hari Dass in October, and former head of school Jivanti Rutansky in February. Babaji and Jivanti embodied the above aphorism with humility, enormous energy and aim. Our school closed the fourth-decade chapter with their passing, and yet, the ripples that expand from their everlasting presence are visible and felt in the stone walls, fountain, and upper school program, at volleyball games, and in the words and memories we share of them.

Going forward, we pay tribute to our elders and carry forth their intention, while welcoming change and inspirational leadership from all who work to educate future generations.

Our daily work is to remember the importance of kindness, compassion and forgiveness. We model these qualities for our children and teach them to follow their natural curiosity without fear, to work diligently with resilience to overcome obstacles, allow space for silent reflection, and make play and creativity a part of every day.

MMS is blessed by many lives lived generously. Our school was created and sustained by adults who care deeply about quality education and the difference it makes for children. There is nothing more vital for this moment than teaching children well. Thank you for your gifts, time and support of Mount Madonna — past, present and future.

With peace, gratitude and love,

Mary Supriya McDonald

Mary Supriya McDonald



Voices for Change: Whale Project Honored Nationally



While in Washington, D.C. for the national PEYA ceremony, students met Congressman Jimmy Panetta (D-CA).

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has awarded the 2017-18 fifth grade class with the President's Environmental Youth Award (PEYA) for their work to protect humpback whales.

"We're proud to honor this special group of young leaders at Mount Madonna School who are promoting whale conservation," said EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Mike Stoker. "These students are making a real difference by engaging their community, reducing plastic pollution, and teaching other students the importance of environmental stewardship. This class is an inspiring example of what's possible when young students create solutions through passion and dedication."

The students were awarded by EPA representatives at a school assembly in May; and in July they traveled to Washington, D.C. for a ceremony honoring all of the 2018 PEYA awardees.

"Our being recognized with this award is amazing," commented student Kinsey Don Carlos. "It shows how all of our hard work has paid off and that we really can make a difference."

The fifth graders (now sixth graders) were recognized for their year-long campaign titled "Whalemanji: Welcome to the Ocean, an Environmental Project to Help Protect the Humpback Whale."

Over the 2017-18 school year the students created an educational movie on the environmental hazards faced by humpback whales; wrote letters to elected representatives and the ambassador of

Costa Rica; removed trash from local beaches; and visited the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sanctuary Exploration Center in Santa Cruz.

"One thing that I really understood after our field trip is that there is a lot of plastic trash on our own beaches – it isn't just happening in some far-off land and it's a threat to all of us," said student Colby Culbertson.

"From writing letters and speaking up change, I learned that if you actually try to help what you

Top: Students share their project at WhaleFest 2018
Bottom: WhaleFest visitors try a student-created conservation game



think is right, people will notice and stand up with you," wrote a classmate, reflecting on the project.

The students worked with several non-profit organizations, including Marine Life Studies, to host an educational assembly and create conservation games for WhaleFest; The Last Plastic Straw, to encourage local restaurants to reduce their use of plastic straws; and with Centro de Investigación de Cetáceos (CEIC) de Costa Rica, to encourage the protection of the whale breeding and birthing grounds at Golfo Dulce, and raised funds to support a trip where some of the

students worked with CEIC in research and public education. They also conducted an awareness campaign to help prevent the U.S. Department of the Interior from opening up coastal waters to oil and gas exploration.

"When we learned that our coastline could be opened up to oil drilling we knew we had to do something to help protect the ocean for ourselves and the whales," explained a student in a written reflection. "We went to work right away to get as many people as we could to comment during the open period. I was surprised at how many flyers we gave out and how many people viewed and shared our PSA video."

"I cannot tell you how special it is to me that their hard work is being honored at a national level," commented fifth grade teacher and project mentor Jessica Cambell. "They were an amazing class and passionate about the whale and making a difference."

This is the third time MMS fifth grade students have received this national recognition. In 2017, students were awarded for their 2015-16 work to protect snowy plovers; and in 2015, for their 2013-14 sea turtle conservation efforts.

"To be recognized and have our project acknowledged gives me even more of a driving force to continue to push for change," commented student Emi Lord. "To see animals threatened by something they have no control over is a challenging and sad thing. We all live together on this Earth and that means being the voice for others." — Leigh Ann Clifton

Clear Eyes and Sustainability

The ocean is the bloodstream of our planet. It's our lungs. It's how we have oxygen to breathe. It's what we all have in common, and it covers the Earth. But it's in serious trouble. Our kids are going to need every tool we can give them to tackle this challenge. They need to know not only what is happening, but how we know it; then they need the language and empathy to spread that knowledge so that it sinks in. You can wave a sign and shout, but someone else is doing the same thing on the other side of the line, shouting the opposing view. So how do we change minds?

One way is to find out the truth, to discover facts and make them sink in where they are needed, and to do that you have to understand what the story numbers are telling you. Whether you are a scientist or a leader and decision maker, you have to understand where information comes from so you can weigh its truth. You have to be the person who can take in new information and let it affect you, let it change your mind. If you have no idea where the truths science tells came from, it's easy to ignore those truths when they conflict with your agenda. MMS students are getting the deeper tools they need to be agents of change. By using their own two hands and taking part in making real discoveries from the ground up, standing right next to the top environmental researchers in the world, they can see the foundation supporting their convictions about the environment. — *Lisa Catterall*

Why, in our most technically advanced position in history, with near limitless information at our fingertips, are we paralyzed to look with clear eyes at some of the most existential threats to humanity? Water supplies, rising energy demands, climate change — each of these issues is as much a product of our success as it is a challenge to continued human flourishing. As the Catalina Island learning journey coordinator, I see these questions continue to frame our approach to STEM education. We take students to the Wrigley and CELP centers to help conduct meaningful research and perform the scientific methods in one of the world's most idyllic settings. They understand how questions are asked and how information is gathered, and are able to synthesize and integrate this information into their decision-making process. The students come to understand that even the most basic measurements of ocean algae or snails, when considered in the context of the larger strategic perspective, can help shape a shared view of reality and arm us to make the most critical decisions facing humanity.

Our MMS mission is two-fold: to develop world-class students who are prepared with knowledge produced by academic rigor, and second, and perhaps most importantly, to produce thinking individuals who are aware of their responsibilities to ask and answer some of the world's toughest questions. After our students complete their two Catalina trips, they can accomplish exactly what is asked of them as critical thinkers in a global society. — *Nicole Silva Culbertson*



Body, Breath and Mind: Teaching a Healthful Yoga Practice



Asanas, or yoga poses — for strengthening body and mind, easing tension, and focusing breathing — are a healthful practice for students to incorporate into their school days.

Three times a week, middle school students led by yoga teacher Jessica Westbrook and other faculty spend 15 minutes warming up their minds and bodies. For each class there are two teachers, allowing students to choose between an outdoor mindfulness walking meditation or indoor asana practice. Westbrook also leads weekly elective yoga classes with high school students, focusing on stress relief, self-reflection and flexibility.

“I encourage students to explore all yoga and Ayurveda have to offer them in the health and wellness of their lives; it’s so much more than ‘downward dog!’” said Westbrook. “I use asana practices to encourage breath awareness, alleviate discomfort, and focus on injury prevention and strengthening of bodily structural alignment. This usually entails asanas to lower stress and counter-

act aches from sitting and ‘smartphone necks.’ I introduce concepts of Ayurveda by bringing awareness to the season, time of day, and weather as something to consider when building an asana practice. In class we discuss eating healthy with the

seasons, studying sleep patterns, exercise and self-care.”

Many of the participating students find the classes beneficial.

“Yoga class is very helpful for me because it gives me time to ‘get ready’ for the day, so I can give my best in other classes,” reflected sixth grader Mordecai Coleman.

“I really like the restorative yoga, breathing exercises, and using the yoga props,” said classmate Amelie Zands. “If I am feeling at all stressed, it helps me to feel calmer.”

When it comes to children and adolescents, much of our culture is impatient, rushed and goal oriented, acknowledged Westbrook.

“Just as we adults get wrapped up in being ‘human doers’ and not human beings, this is translated down to our children in alarming rates and ways,” she said. “Research is showing the extent to which children are on screens, are over-scheduled, are pushing to achieve, are not getting

enough (or the right kind of) sleep, and how their relationships are being affected by social media, all factors affecting anxiety, fatigue, depression and immune issues. I want students to develop an awareness, if not a deep experiential awareness, of the connection between body, breath and mind as a tool for stress reduction.”

“Yoga class is a nice way for me to relax and take a break from everything, whether it be school related, such as the stress that homework or tests can cause, or other activities outside of school,” shared freshman Alyssa Manzur. “It has benefited me in many ways, including getting in tune with how my body is feeling, learning how to control my breath and finding new methods of relaxation.”

Westbrook encourages students’ open questioning of the practices — the “why” of what the class focuses on.

“Through practice and experience, students can see benefits of lower stress, improved sleep, improved immune function and deepened concentration by using the practices shared in class in their own time and asking for feedback.”

Eleventh grader Noah Tervalon acknowledged the benefits of his yoga practice.

“It allows me to take some time out of my day to ‘let go’ and release any negative emotions I am carrying with me,” said Tervalon. “I have taken a few yoga classes before, but with Mrs. Westbrook I find that she really understands how the kids are feeling and has the tools to allow us to truly relax and calm down. After every class, I find myself feeling fantastic and ready to take on the world.”

— Leigh Ann Clifton

Carpentry Skills and Confidence

Sixth and seventh grade students constructed meditation benches to be used in the middle school yoga program. The benches can facilitate kneeling, which makes sitting in an alert meditation position more comfortable. The students learned basic carpentry skills and worked with reclaimed wood to craft the benches. Students were encouraged to use stencils and stamps to paint the benches and add personal, artistic touches.

“Middle school is an excellent time to teach students how to use tools to create something useful,” said Katrina Leni-Konig, part of the middle school yoga teaching team. “Carpentry projects really engage students in the work at hand. In addition to learning practical skills, they practice mindfulness, cooperation, and problem solving, and build confidence in their abilities.” — Leigh Ann Clifton



Math in Action: Students Create Model Tiny Homes

Tiny homes – small, portable houses that average 300-400 square feet – have become increasingly popular in recent years. Seventh graders, with the guidance of teacher Hilary Alvarado, created their own, very tiny, 3-D model houses.

“My students were learning about the concept of scale, and I wanted a way to apply the concept in a practical situation,” explained Alvarado. “I introduced the project by showing a video of a



16-year-old who built his own tiny house. This young man took his tiny home to college to live in! The video caught my students’ interest and showed them that this creative math and engineering project has real-world application.”

Students drew scaled blueprints of their houses, and determined the type, amount and cost of materials needed. They were assessed on the sustainability, home features, engineering and the overall aesthetic design.

“I liked applying the concepts we were learning about with a hands-on project, and not just reading about them in a textbook,” commented student Wyatt Adams.

Alvarado asked students to integrate design elements such as solar panels, a rainwater catchment system or barrels, composting toilet, and renewable flooring resources. The houses also had to have a small “footprint”: between 100 and 400 square feet and a maximum of 8.5’ high by 12’ wide by 40’ long.

“Between the blueprint and the model house, there was a lot of precision required,” said student Paris Mahoney. “You had to be so precise. If you



were off on a measurement by even part of an inch, for example, the staircase might not fit.”

Students were introduced to architectural symbols for various design features, and drew their blueprints to scale, with half an inch equaling one foot. In April, the students displayed their blueprints and tiny houses at the annual Summit for the Planet celebration.

“The finished houses definitely exceeded my expectations,” said Alvarado. “The students’ attention to the level of detail with tiny fixtures, lofts, and pop-up details was nothing short of impressive. One student wanted to include a deck, but because the deck exceeded the overall dimensions, he made it into a fold-out deck to keep the house in compliance with road-legal specs. Very clever.”

— Leigh Ann Clifton

Students’ Conservation Efforts Awarded \$5,000 at WE Day

In April, fifth grade students attended WE Day at The Forum in Inglewood. The students were invited because of their project to protect sea otters. Event organizers asked for a student spokesperson to share their efforts with the huge, youth-filled audience.

“It felt good to know my class trusted me with the responsibility to go on stage and present our project,” said fifth grader Aidan Rassech.

WE Day corporate sponsor Rodan and Fields presented a \$5,000 award to support current and future MMS fifth grade environmental projects.

The WE organization was started more than 20 years ago by Craig and Marc Kielburger. With their original Free the Children effort, the brothers set out to work with developing communities to free children and their families from poverty and exploitation, and the scope just kept expanding.

“It’s so inspiring to learn about what they did as young kids,” remarked teacher Jessica Cambell. “In fact that’s what got me interested in sharing their story and work with my students. The Kielburgers were just 10 and 12 when they got started. They cared a lot about other people and our world, and would not drop it – and look at what they were able to accomplish. I knew their story



would inspire my fifth graders, who are about that same age, and help to show them that each kid really can make a difference!”

“We are one of the few classes from many states that had a spokesperson invited to go up onstage,” commented student Nikowa D’Costa-Hemp.

“Anything that honors what the kids do and validates their work can make a lasting impression,” said Cambell, “and fuels their passion for creating lasting change.”

“This project is really important to us,” said student Eden Fisher. “Being part of WE Day is a really big deal and shows what a difference our project made – and that is something we will always remember.” — Leigh Ann Clifton

WE Day video clip of Aidan Rassech onstage:



Creating Momentum and Overcoming Obstacles



Shot put form and focus

In 2018-19, MMS fielded 16 teams across seven sports. A total of 91 athletes from fourth through twelfth grades participated, the majority competing in two or more sports!

Athletic participation allows students to develop their physicality, mental and emotional durability, and confidence. We thank our coaches, administration, transportation, facilities staff, and parent volunteers who supported our athletes with rides, snacks, logistics and enthusiasm.

Cross Country —

Middle School (MS): Fifth through eighth grade runners joined Coach Nicole Silva Culbertson for morning practices.

“We had a fantastic season with 28 students competing,” said Culbertson. “Students ran well at meets and continued to improve at each race.

The boys varsity in action



Our tough hills and trails around campus allow our students to continually improve and race on any terrain, with a few first-place team wins!”

High School (HS): “It was an honor to host our first cross country league meet at MMS,” commented Coach Nick Cabassa. “From measuring the course, to marking and blocking off the trails and timing the runners, this was a giant undertaking that required organization, dedicated volunteers and good coordination with other Santa Cruz Coast Athletic League (SCCAL) schools.

As a result, runners and coaches shared positive feedback about our course and campus.” At the conclusion of league competition, the boys team qualified for the Central Coast Section (CCS) championships.

Girls Volleyball —

MS: Coach Pedro Aguirre ('15) guided the Gold team through a strong season in the Silicon Valley Athletic League (SVAL).

“I am impressed with the commitment of these girls in sticking with the season,” commented MS Athletic Director Erin Mitchell ('10). “They made giant physical leaps, and learned what it takes to be part of a team.”

The Blue team, coached by HS Athletic Director PK McDonald ('04), went undefeated and won the SVAL division championship!

Competing at the all-school Track and Field Day



“This team had a great run through middle school, with undefeated seasons in 2017 and 2018,” said McDonald. “Come out and support these players as they rise to the new challenge of competing in SCCAL!”

HS: Mitchell and Marissa Ottesen coached girls varsity, which won the CCS D-V championship for the first time in nine years! Due to the team's high level of play, the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) bumped them to D-IV for NorCal playoffs, where they competed through round two.

“During the regular league season we suffered some tough losses,” said Mitchell. “Although it was hard to see the benefit of those losses in the moment, they were learned lessons that allowed us to take the CCS D-V title. To come out as champions, our girls had to overcome dwindling confidence, physical injuries and overwhelming stress. As a team they decided together to leave it all out on the court, and that is exactly what we did.”

Basketball —

MS: Coach Tom May led a practice squad to introduce them to basketball basics, with a focus on ball handling and passing.

HS: Led by Coach Cabassa, the team competed in scrimmages and hosted MMS' very first game in the new Hawks' Nest gym!

“While our season began a little rough, by the end, the team had really come together and started clicking as a unit,” said Cabassa. “Next year we hope to get our Hawks team into a league.”

Wrestling —

MMS introduced a new middle and high school sport: boys and girls wrestling.

“The inaugural wrestling season was extra special and tougher than any other year,” shared Coach Stevan Manzur. “It required creating momentum and excitement for the sport while also laying the foundation for future years. There is a great sense of pride and gratitude for our first-year wrestlers. Without their courage to enter into the unknown we would not have a wrestling team. The wrestlers accomplished their goals: they learned basic skills, broke in the mat with blood, sweat and tears and put the motto ‘never give up’ to the test.

“Over 25 middle and high school student athletes practiced the sport. Wrestling is unique in that it is just as much a team sport as it is an individual sport.



SVAL champions: the undefeated Blue team



Our inaugural Hawks wrestling team



Each person brings their own skills, talents, style and energy, which helps their teammates become stronger and well-rounded. This mirrors the culture at MMS: an inclusive community that supports, celebrates and thrives on the self-expression of its members. My goal is the holistic development of student-athletes. I focus on the long-term benefits by instilling healthy diet and exercise habits as well as positive characteristics, like integrity and determination. Next season we look to challenge ourselves by applying our skills at a competitive level while building on the foundation we established this year.”

Soccer —

MS: “Our first-year co-ed soccer team had a phenomenal season,” said Coach Culbertson, who guided the team along with parent volunteer Juan Gonzalez. “We had a roster of 20 students who played against other small private schools in Santa Cruz County. The season ended with only two losses, one tie and five wins!”

Track and Field —

MS: MMS fielded its first middle school track and field team.

“Our inaugural middle school co-ed track team had a roster of 25 athletes who competed against public schools in south Santa Cruz County,” said Coach Culbertson. “We had many first place finishers, as well as one of our teams winning the overall team score! I look forward to continuing to grow this fantastic program.”

HS: MMS fielded its largest team (19) since the track program began in 2016. Coach Sara Sobkoviak shared some season highlights:

Junior Paola Jacobs medaled at the SCCAL championships: third in varsity discus with a school record-breaking throw of 93’ and third in varsity shot put with a throw of 21’10.5.” Jacobs placed fourth in the varsity high jump with a jump of 4’10”. Sophomore Octavio Moreno placed in the top 10 in both varsity discus and shot put.

Other achievements that broke school records include freshman Liana Kitchel, jumping a varsity long jump distance of 15’8”; freshman Maddie Erbe, in the 100m with a 14.12 speed, and 200m at 29.06; and freshman Jimmy Bregman, with a varsity long jump distance of 16’2”. Our seniors left a mark as well, with Noah Kaplan running his best mile at 5:11.09, and Sage Turner topping his 110m hurdle time with a speed of 18.32.

“We look forward to our next track and field season as our team continues to grow and mature



Top: Setting the pace
 Middle: The high school basketball team
 Middle: Girls varsity volleyball team: CCS champions
 Middle: Middle school Hawks soccer team
 Bottom: The boys varsity volleyball team

Special Honors

SCCAL 2018-19
Athlete of the Week 10/1/2018
AnMei Dasbach-Prisk, volleyball

SCCAL 2018-19
Athlete of the Week 5/6/2019
Paola Jacobs, track

All-SCCAL
High School Volleyball,
Girls & Boys:

Freshman of the Year —
Ben Pearson

First Team —
John Dias, Luca Peruzzi

Second Team —
Mara Peruzzi, Octavio Moreno,
Sage Turner

Honorable Mentions —
Paola Jacobs, Samiith Lakka,
Savannah Cambell

Continued on page 26



We are pleased to announce the founding of our 40th anniversary Mount Madonna School (MMS) Endowment Fund! This fund will be used to improve the compensation of our employees, helping to ensure that Mount Madonna is able to attract and retain talented faculty and staff. Funds may also assist with student scholarships.

Our goal is to raise \$5 million over the next few years, with a \$1 million target by March 1, 2020. Current donations and pledges total nearly \$800,000. The board of directors will be

responsible for conducting an annual review of the investment strategy and directing the use of these funds.

We are more than halfway to our first year's goal! We invite all who care about the sustainability of MMS to contribute! Pledges may be paid over five years. We can also work directly with families and individuals to plan legacy giving and tribute gifts, honoring friends and family members.

Please join us in continuing the MMS legacy for years to come with an endowment gift. You may donate online at <https://www.mountmadonnaschool.org/support/endowment/> For more information, contact Linda Manzur at linda.manzur@mountmadonnaschool.org or 408-846-4032.

We acknowledge our 2018-2019 endowment fund donors who gave their gift by June 30, and thank them for their vision and leadership.

— *By Supriya McDonald*

Ocean View (\$250,000+)

Bess Family Charitable Fund
Tomash Family Foundation

Hawks' Nest (\$100,000-\$249,000)

Estate of Jivanti Rutansky

Redwood Circle (\$50,000-\$99,999)

Ann Bolger Peruzzi and Nico Peruzzi

Live Oak (\$25,000-\$49,999)

Anonymous

Tanoak (\$10,000-\$24,999)

Kranti and Ward Mailliard,
in memory of William S. Mailliard
Christine and Anthony Smith
Timan Family

Madrone (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Arpita Ezell and Rajendra Bingham
Alrene Flynn

Azalea Grove (\$2,500-\$4,999)

No donors for the 2018-19 fiscal year

Lotus Lake (\$1,000-\$2,499)

Nora Bianchi and Martin Hobbs
Lighthouse Bank
McDonald Family

Manzanita Grove (\$249-\$999)

ANB Insurance Services
Carstens Family
Clifton Family
Hooker Family Fund
Ginger Hooven, in memory of Jivanti Rutansky
Louise Place and Ryan Oliver ('94),
in memory of Jivanti Rutansky
Lori and Edward Scher

Camelia (up to \$249)

Sharon Dirmberger,
in memory of Jivanti Rutansky
Ginez John Galvan,
in memory of Patricia C. Galvan
Jo and Michael Hand
Marge Koval
Marsha Lucas, in memory of Jivanti Rutansky
Colleen and Eddie Silva
Glenda Simon, in memory of Jivanti Rutansky
Daryl Zimmerman,
in memory of Jivanti Rutansky

The Power of Jiv Scholarship

During the year-end upper school academic and sports award assembly, Jivanti Rutansky's life was honored and remembered through a scholarship gifted on behalf of one of her lifelong friends. This friend, who wishes to remain anonymous, wrote of the scholarship, "Over many years we all experienced the Power of Jiv. The woman who handled pressure with ease, who tackled and overcame all obstacles. Jivanti never let a problem slow her down; her perseverance was inspiring and her work ethic legendary. Jiv was a force of nature who uplifted every situation she walked into. This scholarship is awarded to the student who best exemplifies Jivanti's work ethic, positivity and eagerness to help in any way possible. My only request is you nurture these qualities throughout your life and pass them on to others just as Jivanti did." The scholarship was awarded to Cecilia Rothman-Salado, class of 2020.



Vision, Leadership and a Lifetime of Service: Jivanti Helene Rutansky

Our dear friend, mentor and colleague, Jivanti Helene Rutansky, passed away on February 20, following a brief battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Two days later her passing was honored with a gathering of upper school students, alumni, faculty, staff and parents. We offered flower petals, and sang and shared remembrances alongside the small pond near her house. The love and dedication that Jivanti shared with the school and Mount Madonna Center (MMC) for more than three decades shimmered, reflecting sparkling sunlight on the water's surface and on the faces of those who love and remember her compassionate spirit. Jivanti was also a devoted student of Baba Hari Dass, and on March 5, as is tradition, an Indian Vedic memorial ceremony known as a shraddha was held.

As a founding teacher and administrator of MMS, Jivanti began her career teaching in a tipi where the MMC lake now rests, and team teaching in the elementary school with the late Sri Gyan James McCaughan. She completed her Master of Education degree at Florida International University and through a series of fortunate events found her way to Santa Cruz.

"We were young, we hardly had any possessions, and we had the whole mountain. We did everything,"

Jivanti shared in a 2016 interview. "We cooked, we cleaned, we worked on the rock crew, we got poison oak, we played with the kids, we studied with Babaji. It was a pretty amazing time to be part of the project."

Her first responsibility for the school, beyond helping with the young children in the tipi, was college counseling. College counseling was her most rewarding contribution overall.

"I was one of those people who asked why and why not," said Jivanti in 2016. "So I really wanted a school where people could question, people could discuss, and people who wanted a higher education had the opportunities to do so and were guided."

College counseling was a duty that called upon Jivanti's educational training and her dedication to lifelong learning. She loved bonding with students in this way – learning about their passions and goals and researching schools that could help them achieve those goals.

"I care about building and maintaining a place where students can learn not just the academics but about themselves and learn to overcome obstacles," said Jivanti in 2016. "In our minds we think we can't do anymore, but we're so much more capable of doing more than we think we

can. Babaji modeled that and taught us that most of the obstacles we have are self-created."

For many years she served as coordinator of the girls boarding program, one of her most cherished roles. Jivanti cared for the boarding school alumnae with dedication and love. She stayed closely connected to several of these young women and they became part of her extended family.

Jivanti served as the director of admissions and the upper school director for many years, during which time she also produced the all-school *Ramayana!*. From 2008 to 2015 she assumed the role of head of upper school. During her last few years of service she guided the upper school, training and mentoring new leaders. In addition, Jivanti served on the executive council, school board, and as a trustee.

We are forever grateful to Jivanti for her vision, leadership, keen intellect and lifetime of service to the school and Mount Madonna Center community. Jivanti will be dearly missed and fondly remembered. — *By Supriya McDonald and Haley Campbell ('02)*

The Jivanti Rutansky Memorial Award



In honor of Jivanti Rutansky, the MMS faculty has decided to present two students – one high school, one middle school – an award in her name each year.

The honor will be presented to students who embody the qualities that made Jivanti such an important ambassador of the MMS mission. The recipients will be engaged and dedicated members of the school community, empathetic and compassionate classmates, engaged and curious learners, honest and self-reflective individuals, and protectors of the environment. The recipients should demonstrate support of their classmates in their endeavors and dedicate themselves to service.

The students selected for the inaugural award are senior Mara Peruzzi and eighth grader Sam Kaplan.



Broadening Our Perspective



At Lodi Garden park in New Delhi

As part of the Values in World Thought program, senior students traveled to India and the juniors to South Africa this year. Although I have visited both countries many times with our students, each experience is unique and exciting. Every group creates its own alchemy, which influences how the trip unfolds.

I am always amazed at the caliber of individuals who our students are invited to spend time with. In India, we were encouraged daily by our interactions with dedicated people doing inspiring work. On one day, we sat with His Holiness the Dalai Lama for an hour, laughing and talking about the state of modern education. In South Africa, it was incredible to sit across the table from individuals such as Piet Meiring, an academic and theologian, who was part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Mamphela Ramphele, one of the founding members of the Black Consciousness Movement. Hearing directly from leaders and social activists who we have encountered provides our students with something that they could never have learned from a book.

Our students did a wonderful job of capturing their experience through writing for the trip blogs, as you can see from the following excerpted reflections.

“Tembisa was one of my favorite experiences of this whole trip. Every single kid was outgoing and treated us with kindness. All of the kids were so talented and had many gifts to share with us. They were proud of who they are and what they could do, instead of being shy and embarrassed. We made friends within 20 minutes and we became attached to one another. Practicing and performing with

them was an experience that I will hold in my heart forever. Overall, my experience in Africa has been one that I will never forget. It was truly life changing.”

— *Ceci Rothman-Salado, 11th grade*

“Kids of all ages performed choreographed dances for us. They blew me away. The amazing thing about music and dance is that it always seems to bring people together. Joy took the wheel when we danced together, and love radiated through our songs. We performed a Bollywood dance that the kids taught us. We ended up performing two encores because the crowd kept cheering us on. When we started the last encore, they all came up and danced with us. I picked up a little girl named Ambika; she was quiet and shy at first but then her sweet heart and sassy attitude poked through, and I ended up dancing with her in my arms for the rest of the night. Ambika was abandoned as a baby; when she was found, her condition was critical. But this little girl, and every single kid on that stage with us, despite the horrific things they’ve been through, chose to dance, laugh, enjoy life, and show my class and me unconditional love. I looked at Ambika, smiling with her hands up, bouncing in my arms, and enjoying the music. Watching her, I had so much gratitude toward Sri Ram Ashram for giving this precious girl and all these children a chance at life, a home, and most importantly, a place where love, playing, and partying comes first.”

— *Lillian Wayne, 12th grade*

“One of the most important things I have gained on this trip is insight into living in the moment. Everywhere we went we would meet people and learn all about them and enjoy their company, and

the one thing that everyone we met had in common was that they were all dedicated to living in the moment. Whether they were living with AIDS, had worked hard to get into a prestigious school, or were just living their lives, everyone here realizes how important the present moment is. If they don’t enjoy the present moment and accept what is, they will never be happy. They will be constantly searching for happiness they can’t find in the present moment.”

— *Noah Tervalon, 11th grade*

“Dr. Metre emphasized the importance of community and how diversity makes a society stronger. Societies, she explained, often have a hard time changing due to people being stuck in their own ways. ‘We cannot change people,’ she said, ‘but can lead them through active listening.’ I liked this statement because I feel as though we, as a society, try to change people by force, which ends up causing resistance. Active listening creates trust

Top: Visiting Sri Ram Ashram
Middle: Arriving in Dharamshala
Bottom: Meeting the Dalai Lama



and discussions, which is more effective than brute force and ignorance... Being in India has been an amazing opportunity to remove myself from the rush and stress of life back home, and given me time to truly reflect and look within, at who I am and how I feel. I have learned new things about myself, some that I love and others that I do not. With this awareness, I can really think about where certain things I don't like about myself are coming from, and begin to improve those parts of myself."

— *Kaili Sullens, 12th grade*

"The journey to South Africa is coming to an end and what a journey it's been. Going into this trip I tried to have no expectations. I decided to just go with what happened in the moment, and it brought great experiences and life lessons. The interviews were primary sources of knowledge, especially with Mamphele Ramphele and Thulani Mabaso. It struck me when Thulani explained his horrific experiences – how he was tortured and how his father was killed days before he was supposed to see him. It was striking that, despite these experiences, he was still able to have a positive outlook and continue his life."

— *Given Reyhani, 11th grade*

"One of the greatest lessons I've been learning over the course of our trip has to do with service. We have met incredible leaders, who have dedicated their lives to serving a cause much greater than themselves. This has inspired a life-changing, new outlook on life, and a greater understanding of what I seek to value."

— *John Dias, 12th grade*

"My takeaway is that I learned to respect myself, bonded with my class and made new friends. I also realized that even halfway across the world people have similar lives to ours and that they want to bridge the gap between our countries. It makes me want to work harder for future generations. I want the next generation to recognize the beauty in the world instead of staring through screens."

— *Tessa Ortiz, 11th grade*

"I've been reflecting, and it's made me realize how lucky I am to have experienced the things



Service work at Philani



On safari in Pilanesberg National Park

I did in South Africa. I'm learning things that most people don't learn in their lifetime. I want to take the things I learned from this trip and use them as fuel to find something that makes me happy and helps others. I want to support places like Botshabelo, because the kids there still need clothes and food. They are my definition of what a community is. This experience has taught me to appreciate the things I have because they might not be there forever."

— *Paola Jacobs, 11th grade*

"I have never been so immersed in happiness, living history, love, poverty or connection before. South Africa is a place where the visual of people trying to rebuild after almost a century of legalized oppression is ever present. Unfortunately the people who continue to feel the effects of apartheid are many of the people who are barely getting by. We saw this in the townships we visited, like Langa, Khayelitsha and Tembisa. Fortunately, there are people in all three townships who are working to help the people who need it. Langa has Leap Math and Science School, where we met some incredibly talented and smart peers. I was struck by how committed they are to their studies because school really is a lifeline for them. Philani, in Khayelitsha, is an organization run by women to bring education on raising children and proper nutrition to mothers in the area. The kids have so much talent. The power of song really displayed itself in Tembisa, as everyone was able to connect and rejoice with the music."

— *Tabitha Hardin-Zollo, 11th grade*

"We began our discussion at Step by Step in small groups, writing and sharing the deepest questions plaguing our minds. The interconnection between

Continued on page 14

Top: Making friends
Middle: A walk at Botshabelo
Middle: The view from Table Mountain
Bottom: Along the River Ganga near Anupshahr



Heart of the Hawks: Dayanand Diffenbaugh



Dayanand Diffenbaugh, a dedicated, tireless volunteer

Dayanand John Diffenbaugh joined our faculty in 1980. He and his family were the first settlers on the Mount Madonna Center (MMC) property in 1978 and he is the founding director of MMC, serving as director until this year. His contributions to the school are both visionary and concrete, modeling the spirit of karma yoga, or selfless service. Dayanand's love for nature, this land, his understanding and experience with the various ways people connect and express themselves spiritually, and his own yoga practice under the guidance of Baba Hari Dass, inspired him to engage with our students. He developed the world religions class for high school seniors, and continues to mentor the eighth grade rite of passage – influenced by mentor and anthropologist Angeles Arrien. He has joined many eighth grade classes on their beginning of the year backpacking trip and helped, along with all the elementary staff in the early days, on the first through sixth grades camping trips. His relationship with native people's

elder Brant Secunda has guided the annual sweat lodge for seniors.

Beyond his work with students, Dayanand is a heavy machine operator who has spent endless hours preparing the ground for the school buildings and roads and is currently working on the new track and field practice area. He serves in a leadership role at the school as a trustee and on the MMC Council of Elders. Dayanand enjoys sharing his musical gifts at many ceremonies and is an inspiring graduation speaker. At *Ramayana!*, he has tied more turbans and dhotis over the years than any other volunteer, with the exception of Baba Hari Dass, having learned the technique directly from him. In a community built upon selfless service and volunteerism, Dayanand stands out as the school's longest-serving volunteer. He is passionate about creating and leading the next generation. His own sons, alumni Noah ('92) and PK ('95), are contributing to society through careers in education and science. Noah is a professor and

research climatologist at Stanford University. PK is the superintendent of Monterey Peninsula Unified School District. Dayanand's wife, Dr. Sarada Diffenbaugh, was Mount Madonna's longest serving head of school and continues to serve as the school board president. We are extremely grateful and humbled by the multitude of ways in which Dayanand has contributed to creating, nurturing and sustaining MMS. — *Supriya McDonald*

Top: Playing music among the redwoods
Bottom: Guiding the eighth grade rite of passage in 2010



Broadening Our Perspective Continued from page 13



At the Apartheid Museum

India.MountMadonnaSchool.org
Africa.MountMadonnaSchool.org

these was especially interesting. Even in a group of three, one of the people in my group had, effectively, the same question as me. During our reflections, the other students shared that they were amazed by the effects listening with curiosity can have on dialogue. Their enthusiasm made our conversations fun and meaningful. It was especially encouraging to see their excitement at trying something so new, and productive, that they are rarely exposed to in India. The conversations also had an unexpected effect on the students: it made them more open and

friendly. The entire experience reinforced what we have already learned about the power of dialogue.”
— *Noah Kaplan, 12th grade*

One of the aspects of these learning journeys that I appreciate the most is our students' ability to learn from, absorb, integrate and reflect on their experiences in such a short amount of time. These writings beautifully articulate the richness of the students' perceptions and the power of exploring the diversity within, and between, cultures.
— *Article by Shannon Kelly ('92)*

In Gratitude to Baba Hari Dass

1923 ~ 2018

*Work honestly,
meet people without fear,
meditate every day
and play.*

The moral teachings that shine throughout the children's *Ramayana!* were introduced to us in 1973 by Baba Hari Dass, or "Babaji," as he was affectionately known. This silent master yogi, sculptor, philosopher, playwright, and teacher adapted this epic tale for American audiences, revealing the hidden symbolism of the characters and universal life lessons. His artistry inspired this magical production, and the creation of the costumes, masks, and props that transport us to another land in an ancient time.

Babaji, adept in the vast universal philosophy of yoga, taught that living a virtuous life, developing positive qualities, caring for family, community, nation and earth, and serving selflessly, are the path to peace and inner harmony. His teachings inspired many to create spiritual retreat centers and children's schools. His discipline inspired many in their spiritual practice. His loving kindness inspired many to join in community. His joyous exuberance inspired many to play. He loved to be in the presence of children, and they loved to be with him; no words are needed to communicate when life's wonder is shared.

His life, love, and service enriched and inspired countless people of all ages, from different cultures and walks of life. His legacy lives on in his teachings and the people and institutions that strive to fulfill them.



Historical Context and Seeing Deeply



Students visit the Claude Monet exhibition at the de Young Museum

This year, high school students were offered a new University of California-approved elective, History of Art with Studio. The course was added to provide students interested in visual arts with an outlet for learning more on the subject.

In this class, students studied different cultures and historic phases of art while practicing sample techniques from each. For example, they looked at Yuan Dynasty art in ancient China, and then tried their hand at ink brush, painting landscapes on parchment. Students also developed their art interpretation skills and vocabulary through classroom discussion and a weekly, moderated

Top: Sampling the fresco painting technique
Bottom: Viewing the work of a master



online discussion board. The Italian Renaissance was another focus.

“We first focused on Michelangelo for the High Renaissance, and began by taking two minutes to draw a human figure with the sketchbook held over our heads to explore how it felt in the early stages,” explained teacher Lisa Catterall. “At the beginning of the work in the Sistine Chapel, there was no scaffolding for the team of painters to lie flat. The painters suffered ergonomic injuries from spending hours looking up and holding a brush facing toward the sky. We also actually tried the fresco technique, which is like no other type of painting as it is done by absorbing pigment into wet plaster. It takes masons as well as painters to complete.”

“I can’t imagine how angry it would have made Michelangelo and his team if the masons had not made the plaster flat,” said junior Rowan Davenport-Smith. “This is really, really difficult.”

“Can you imagine making the Sistine Chapel?” commented classmate Braeden Will. “It’s huge. I could barely do a plate!”

“I really appreciate how vibrant the colors look on the plaster,” said junior Paola Jacobs. “It’s a very cool way to create art. I wasn’t expecting it to look this good because it seemed like a strange idea to draw over plaster.”

In late spring the class visited the de Young Museum in San Francisco to view the largest collection of Claude Monet’s late paintings ever assembled. *Monet: The Late Years* featured 60 of the artist’s works from all over the world, including 20 of his water lily paintings. The exhibition supplemented a class study of plein air painting and

offered a chance to dive into the Impressionism unit. The students completed multiple studies as they worked up to producing a canvas using the impasto technique with the colors and ideals of the impressionists, of course using the beautiful MMS campus in full bloom as inspiration.

“Studying and understanding visual works of art can give students an avenue to look at everything more deeply,” said Catterall. “Once you learn to see a thing in full depth, in the context of history, society, techniques, philosophies, economics, and emotional resonance, you can never go back to seeing that thing from a shallow perspective. For me, that was the call to create this learning opportunity for my students.” — *Leigh Ann Clifton*

Do Not Fear to Be Alone

Do not fear to be alone,
To be lonely is to be with yourself,
To explore the ravenous cavern
of your heart and mind.
No being can limit you,
Nor harm you,
Nor try to prove you wrong.
To be lonely is to be utterly safe.
Feelings envelop you as a blanket
envelops an infant,
And you can breathe as easily as
the waves of the ocean,
And the rhythmic water nipping
at your toes,
To be lonely is to know that you
are loved.
You can reminisce on the golden
moments of unity,
The moment or moments of family
and friends and lovers,
The moments that fill you with
the sensation of joy,
As bubbles fill a champagne glass,
As honey soothes a sore throat.
Do not fear to be alone.

— *Ksenia Medvedeva, 11th grade*

Look what I made! — Academic Achievement and the Creative Process

*...As the sun colors flowers,
so does art color life.*

— John Lubbock, *The Pleasures of Life*

The joyful sights and sounds of children creating their own masterpieces and engaging in the creative process reveal more than just a playful diversion from the important work of academics. The process of creating with one's own hands, and as a group, is rife with essential skills that enrich and support academic pursuits and give rise to meaningful connections between the student and the academic material. A wealth of research indicates that the inclusion of the arts in education creates well-rounded individuals who possess not just strong academic skills but also the social, emotional and problem-solving skills that support creativity, collaboration, empathy and civic engagement.

Our preschool/kindergarten (Pre/K) students have abundant daily opportunities to experience the satisfaction and sense of empowerment that come through engaging in the creative process. From painting at the easel and creating works of art during free choice time, to teacher-led art, sewing, felting and baking projects that reflect the seasons and themes of study, our students gain vital skills that come through working with their hands. Artistic self-expression is valued and incorporated into our academic lessons, empowering the children to create their own ABC and 123 drawing journal and seasonal books that reflect their unique creative spirit. Singing, dancing, yoga asanas and dramatic storytelling are woven into our daily curriculum, bringing the creative process joyfully to life for young children. To share the fruit of their creative pursuits, students have four opportunities each year to present what they have learned to the larger school community through performances on stage.

When young children engage in coloring, painting, cutting, gluing, baking, felting and sewing they are exercising and refining their fine motor skills. These activities strengthen hand-eye coordination and directly support the academic skills of holding a pencil and forming letters and numbers. Crafting activities encourage both hands to work together, encouraging bilateral coordin-

ation, as connections are made between the right and left sides of the brain. The creative process especially strengthens the frontal lobe of the brain, our “control panel,” which manages purposeful mental action and positive personality development. The quiet focus required for creative projects strengthens the child's attention span and encourages perseverance and patience. The complex tasks involved in the creative process fortify the skills of planning, sequencing, critical thinking and problem solving. This process involves trial and error, self-regulation when things don't turn out as planned, and flexibility to accept “mistakes” or use these mistakes to create something new. Innovative endeavors develop a child's inner vision, encouraging independent thought and the ability to look at things from different perspectives. Children's connections to the natural world and seasons are strengthened by using natural materials and objects collected from nature. Finally, engaging in the creative process builds self-esteem as children experience the satisfaction of creating something on their own, as well as empathy and connection when they engage in the creative process with their peers.

As our Pre/K students delve into the hands-on, engaging activities and academics that constitute the “work/play” of their day, they are fulfilling an essential human need to create and develop their imagination. This creative approach to educating young children addresses the developmental needs of the whole child, as it cultivates the essential skills of capability, creativity and collaboration, as well as a joyful and positive attitude towards education.

— *Hema Walker*



A Record High for Annual Giving!

Mount Madonna School (MMS) Annual Giving (AG) ensures every student receives a quality education by adding to the tuition revenue, which covers about 85% of program expenses. Our generous and committed donors believe in an MMS education, and through their gifts have helped sustain the program. Tax-deductible gifts also offset the rising costs of wages and benefits, without significantly raising tuition.

In 2018-19, a net of \$168,953 was raised, and includes \$19,522 from the Drive for Schools kick-off fundraiser. AG received \$149,431 in donations – a record high – and surpassed our goal of \$115,000!

Thank you families, alumni, faculty, staff, grandparents and friends! For the fourth consecutive year, 100% of our school community participated in AG, which began on November 1, 2018 and ended January 31, 2019, with pledges due by June 15, 2019.

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

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Student Writers' Corner: *Resonance*



I move into the wings and my hand brushes against the curtain. The whole thing ripples like a still pond, waving out to the audience like the lazy petals of a flower and then billowing back into my hand. I sit down resolved to not be so careless.

My foot beats an incessant rhythm to the allegro of the orchestra. I close my eyes and take a deep breath to cleanse myself of my anxiety. I exhale until I feel my core engage and hold. For a moment the jittering neurons die inside me. The hormones that make my body feel light and weightless freeze in their tracks as the blood stops in my veins. Everything is still. I am grounded once more. My lungs claw for breath. I inhale. I breathe in a river of anticipation and fear, like the overexcited electrons of a gaseous fluid, jumping from ring to ring, unable to sit still. I open my eyes and stare at the QSC speaker in front of me.

I watch the subwoofer contract and expand, watch it expel air in rhythmic harmony. The sound crashes upon my ears in waves, a beautiful melody. The music is a smooth largo.

I stand up. I should start warming up, right? But I know that it doesn't really matter, and that I'm only moving to keep ahead of my nerves. I watch the dancers on stage swaying back and forth, exploding into fast-paced movements before returning to their adagio.

I do not recognize this part of the music. I've heard it before, but I do not know where we are. Have I missed my cue? Do I have one minute or ten? Is it time yet? My heart is pounding, a steady thumping in my chest to remind me what is real, but my body is adrift like a cloud. The music picks up, and I feel a flash of recognition like a clutch

engaging. I am again safe. I have time, but that time is almost spent.

What if I fall? What if I enter late? What if I forget my director's note from yesterday? What was her note? Is it Tuesday? What if the performance runs late and I miss the bus home? What if I can't pay the rent next month? What if I was not meant to be a dancer? I'm sorry, did I refer to my heartbeat as steady? It is a one-cylinder engine pushed up to 90-thousand RPMs, spiraling out of control, breaking the fragile connective tissues that hold it in place, spilling out of my chest and bleeding its fluids into my body.

The song concludes in a grand arpeggio, and I enter with a smile even though I cannot feel my legs. What if they don't like me? What if I finish and nobody claps? What if this is my last performance?

The first chord is struck and I snap into first position, my legs racing to keep up with the music, but I know I was late. I can already see my director's face when it comes time for notes tomorrow.

Focus!

Time freezes over. I'm shell-shocked. I cannot hear. The audience is sitting transfixed. I hold my position, teetering on the edge of a plié and a retiré. I cannot hear. A million thoughts race through my synapses in an instant. Thirty unmyelinated firings per second times the 10 billion neurons trapped in my cranium. Why isn't the music playing? They can all see me. Is my head up straight? Fix your posture! Energize your fingertips! I focus every bit of my intellect on controlling each impulse, the twitching of my little finger, the itching of my forehead, the laryngeal spasm in my throat. Every cell in my body rebels. I can feel the blood in my veins pounding, pressurizing, boiling. My calf

is exhausted. I need to drop. The bacteria in my stomach are on strike. The voices of the multitude are becoming louder. My whole body prickles with goosebumps as every particle of my being strains to break free, each in a different direction. I panic. Every ounce of concentration is devoted to minimizing the minute tremors racking my body, but I can't hold it. I can feel it falling apart like a sandcastle, held up briefly in elegance, but impermanent, the little granules shifting back and forth, threatening to collapse. I don't know which way is up and which is down. The earth is moving. My muscles are exhausted. I can't hold this pose any longer. Every fiber of my being is rebelling, and then the music changes to a brisk presto. My muscles rally.

Jump. Pirouette. Move downstage. Pivot. Spin. I dance on that knife's edge between success and failure, but now it's thrilling. This dance is life or death, but suddenly I don't know that, I don't care. I don't know what happened yesterday, or what will happen tomorrow or even who I am, other than an extension of the music that fills the stage, and fills me with its resonance. I'm a hollow vessel and it fills me up like the horn of a trumpet so that it can play me like an instrument. I exist in that fine line that splits the past and the future. The only time I know is the steady thrumming of the cello. It counts my steps, but I don't count its beats. Time is passing. I know because I am moving, but I don't know where I was a split second ago.

I land a jump and feel the stage give fractionally; the shock goes into the floor and bounces back through my tendons, and then I push off, leaving a ripple in the floorboards that has dissipated before I land. This is what I was made to do. The music does not lead me; I am the music, every step, every arpeggio of the piano, every extension of the arm and flutter of the flute synchronized. They happen simultaneously.

The music slows, but we are together until the end, until the last fading drone of the piano is broken by applause from the audience. I smile, bow, and ride the elation of my connection a few moments longer before I exit, and collapse exhausted on the bench. The moment is over, and I feel again the insatiable hunger for its return. Again I am just a dancer with no part to play.

— Noab Kaplan, 12th grade

Social Skills, Social Studies and Science

Each fall, third and fourth grade students take a two-day, overnight learning journey. These off-campus trips have alternated between Sacramento and the Coloma gold discovery site in the Sierras, to the coast north of Santa Cruz to study California history and ecology.

In 2018, teachers Jenni Leach and Nicholas Cabassa designed a new experience to incorporate other regional historic and educational sites. Their goal was to teach social skills, social studies and science, while exploring and learning in nature. They designed the trip around the school's academic curriculum map, with a positive character development and social service emphasis. The trip incorporated visits to Mount Madonna, Uvas Canyon, and Chitactac-Adams Heritage county parks, Point Lobos and the Carmel Mission. Following are excerpts from Leach's reflection on this experience.

Once our camp at Mount Madonna Park was set up, students explored nearby and climbed on and into huge redwood stumps. One parent led a Native American gratitude circle, a tradition of giving thanks to the Earth for providing for our needs. At our next stop, Uvas Park, students noted the differences between the varieties of acorns, identified and described many of the trees and plants, and observed snakes, newts, spiders and insects. The children climbed, ran and stumbled along the rocky path, helping each other up and over boulders and fallen trees, and down and through the

creek, enjoying conversation and treating each other and the animals with respect and kindness.

Next was Chitactac-Adams Park and an emphasis on native Ohlone people. Students enjoyed touching, feeling and trying to manipulate small sticks to make fire; playing with musical instruments; using utensils and hunting tools; and imagining wearing deerskin clothing. On the trail, they explored the bedrock mortars used to grind acorns, and discussed food sources, methods of hunting and gathering, and gender roles in providing food for the people. They looked for the ancient petroglyphs and questioned why the spiral was so significant. They learned about the architecture and building materials, and shared their thoughts on tule houses and boats. They questioned the people's lack of clothing, and considered how cultural norms differ.

Back at our camp that evening, while I read the students a traditional Ohlone creation story, the students created their own "mini me" out of clay. Their finished pieces were displayed together along the base of an ancient redwood tree. Students were invited to say a wish for someone or all humanity as they placed their creation at the foot of the tree,



where they would remain and once again become part of the Earth. Before bedtime students celebrated their full day of learning experiences with a warm campfire, followed by a short hike to a nearby open meadow for stargazing splendor.

The next morning, we traveled to Mission San Carlos Borromeo del río Carmelo, where an engaging docent shared about mission history and the ways the Spanish impacted life for indigenous people. Later, at Point Lobos State Natural Reserve, we learned about the reserve ecology and the importance of preservation.

"It was a great bonding adventure for our classes," shared Cabassa. "The fourth graders are taught to look after their third grade buddies and this gave them an opportunity to really do that outside of school. This trip is brand new to our curriculum. The children had an awesome experience, and can't stop talking about it. It was fun, educational, and well worth doing on a biannual basis." — Jenni Leach

Visiting Chitactac-Adams Heritage County Park



At the Carmel Mission



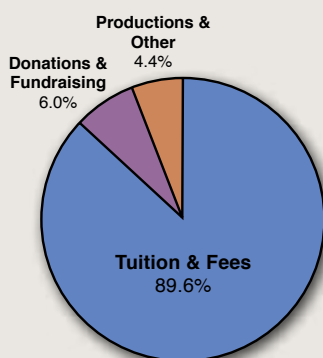
Exploring Mount Madonna County Park



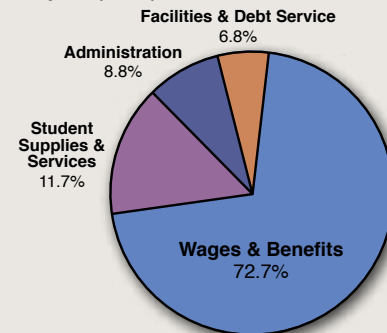
Annual Financial Report

Mount Madonna 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. The school ended the 2017-18 fiscal year with a surplus of \$150,273, largely from greater than expected enrollment. We completed our 40th fiscal year on June 30, 2019. Our enrollment reached 188 students during the 2018-19 school year. Our Annual Giving campaign netted \$149,431, plus an additional \$19,522 from the Drive for Schools fundraiser. With 100% participation from families, staff and the board, this was the most successful Annual Giving campaign in the school's history. Also, in 2018-19, we raised an unprecedented \$771,791 for our Endowment Fund. We look forward to a future of financial strength and sustainability, through increasing enrollment and generous donations. We thank all who give to Annual Giving, the Endowment Fund, and directed donations to our excellent programs. — *Eric Forbes, Business Manager*

Operating Revenue	2018-19 Budget	Operating Expense	2018-19 Budget
Tuition & Fees	\$2,953,974.00	Wages & Benefits	\$2,399,131.00
Donations & Fundraising	\$198,150.00	Student Supplies & Services	\$386,500.00
Productions & Other	\$146,500.00	Administration	\$289,400.00
Total	\$3,298,624.00	Facilities & Debt Service	\$223,200.00
		Total	\$3,298,231.00



Surplus (Loss) \$393.00



	2018-19 (Budget)	2017-18 (Actual)	2016-17 (Actual)	2015-16 (Actual)
Operation Budget	\$3,298,624.00	\$3,334,192.00	\$2,984,777.00	\$3,111,036.00
Total Students	188	196	179	193

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

Directed and In-Kind Contributions

Each year, our families, friends and community members give generously to specific programs for which they have a special affinity. These include scholarship funding, athletics, performing arts, Values in World Thought journeys and environmental education, among others. Additionally, merchant giving programs – such as the Scrip gift and grocery cards – contribute to supporting programs vital to MMS. Some gifts were cash, while others were in-kind contributions, including books, book shelves, art supplies, scarves, containers, educational toys, a stainless steel table, calculators, and scientific digital thermometers. Thank you, as well, to all who purchased Dress Circle reception tickets, which directly support our annual *Ramayana!*.

Thank you to our in-kind and directed donors:

Lindsey Acharya
Amazon Smile Foundation
Anonymous
Maria Ashcraft and John Jimenez
Lora Bartlett and James Burgess
Julia and John Bettencourt
Alan Church
Barbara and Morty Cohen
Rashmi Cole

Colgate Corporation
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James Hanway

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Lauden Pharmacy, Karen Robey
and Mehrdad Reyhani
Thomas May
Karille Mayer
Tricia McCurdy-Slater and
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Lisa and Robert Moreno

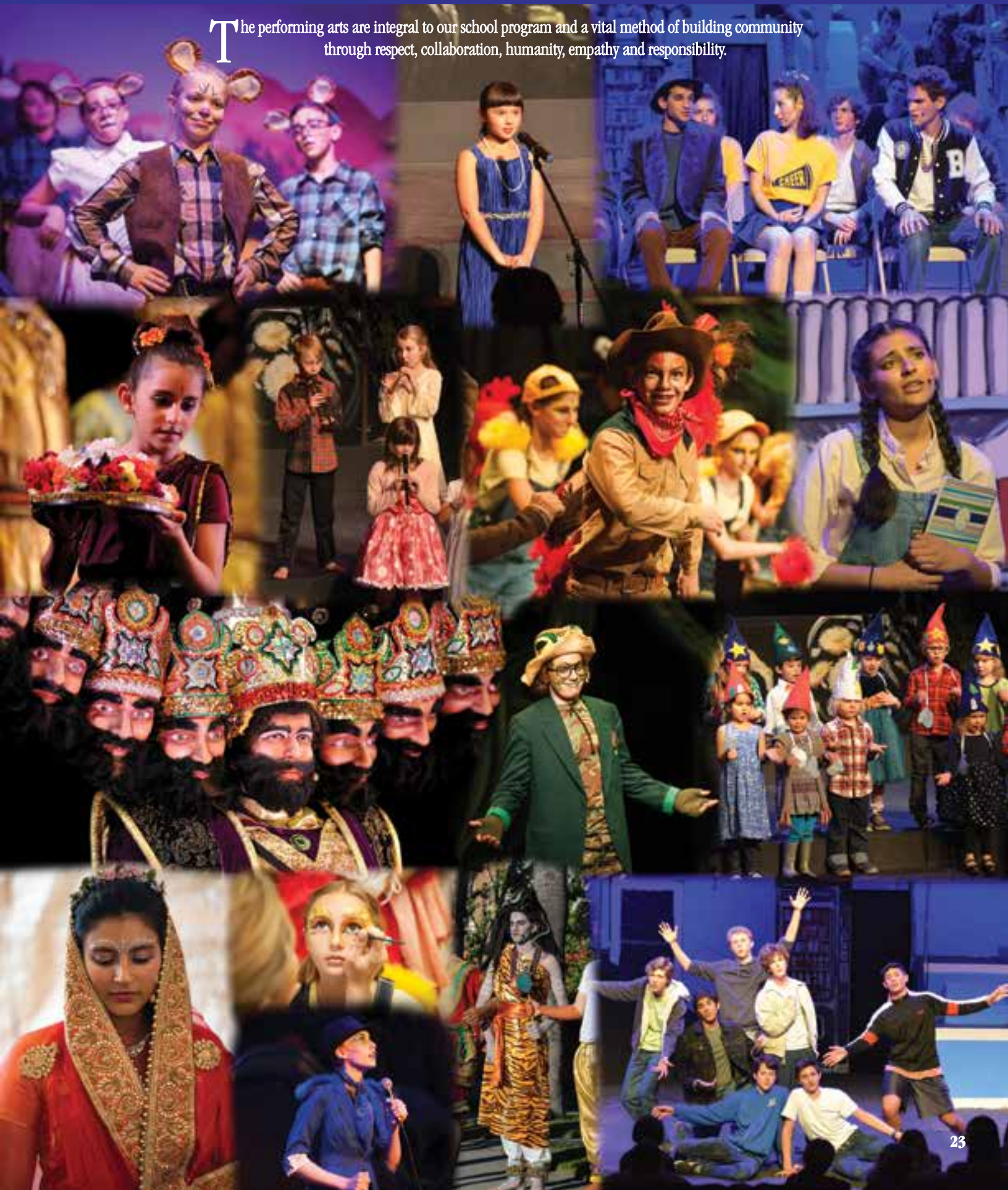
Vishwa Nath
New Leaf eScrip
PG&E Corporation Foundation
Redwood Engineering, Cat and Len Willis
Felicia and Jim Saunders
Staff of Life
Tomash Family Foundation
Kishor Trivedi
West Coast Contract Flooring
Wharf to Wharf Race

Fundraising with Scrip

Thank you to our Scrip sales coordinator, Deana Woodrow, and all of the families who participated in our Scrip program. Each Scrip gift card purchase generates anywhere from 2%-5% of the purchase price and goes towards school income. For the 2018-19 school year, MMS received \$2,112 in revenue. Anyone can raise money for MMS by purchasing gift cards to use like cash when grocery shopping, filling up on gas, and gift giving. Visit mountmadonnaschool.org/scrip for more information. — *Linda Manzur*

This world is but a canvas to our imagination. — Henry David Thoreau

The performing arts are integral to our school program and a vital method of building community through respect, collaboration, humanity, empathy and responsibility.



Science, Nutrition and Culinary Studies



Senior students were offered a new elective this year – Culinary Studies. Students were introduced to a broad “menu” of learning – including visits from guest chefs to introduce different cooking techniques, industry innovations, and a sampling of chemistry-focused food science.

The course emphasized the art of prepping and cooking meals from scratch, including a look at organic, sustainable, local and seasonal food and menus, recipes, and the importance of “Mise en Place” or “everything in its place.”

In their weekly kitchen labs, students prepared a variety of dishes, including soups, homemade pastas, and French pastry, and practiced advanced plating and the preparation of hors d’oeuvres.

“I have been working in professional kitchens since age 15,” commented teacher Sara Sobkoviak, “starting in my mother’s commercial kitchen. I participated in the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management program at Cabrillo College, and worked in professional kitchens in Carmel and Pebble Beach. I have an immense passion for cooking and am excited to explore the science, nutrition and creativity of making our own food with students!”

The school community had several opportunities to sample food prepared by the students, including at the fall Open House, where students made cookies and vegetable platters served with homemade sauces and dips, and an offsite dinner fundraiser in March to benefit the students’ trip to India.

“Having someone like Chef David Jackman of Chocolate Restaurant, with his experience and knowledge in the food and service industry, bringing another perspective into the classroom, was exciting and inspiring,” said Sobkoviak.

“David had a lot of really great advice for how to keep our event well organized,” commented senior John Dias. “The knowledge he shared with us was clear and concise, and he encouraged us to prepare for the unexpected. Hearing this from an experienced person was awesome.”

“As we planned for the Maitri Fundraiser Dinner, this was an important step in giving the students a few more tools centered on organization, time management and creativity,” added Sobkoviak. “This dinner was a capstone in their culinary studies journey as they prepared absolutely every part of the dinner from making connections with our local businesses, site preparation and strategies, menu planning, recipe testing and conversions, service management and overall execution of the dinner from start to finish.” — *Leigh Ann Clifton*

Preparing chocolate mousse



Live Animals, Skeletons and Understanding Adaptations



During a visit to the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History, first grade students were eager, interested and engaged in the interactive learning exhibits, and carefully touched live marine life, heard about animal adaptations and examined animal skeletons.

“As they studied the skulls of different animals, students learned how the shape of an animal’s teeth indicates whether they are herbivores, carnivores, or omnivores,” shared teacher Cassia Laffin. “There was so much great information to take in! The docents were dynamic, with personalities that held the students’ interest. Our parent chaperones were also impressed with learning things that they did not know before!”

“These children had a total blast learning about animal adaptations and enjoyed very much the free time at the beach,” shared parent chaperone Carmen Virgos. “They are very fortunate to have had this learning opportunity!”

Meanwhile, in class, each first grader created an animal report to share with their peers.

“Each person showcased different strengths and there is much value in allowing students a chance to research and present to their classmates,” said Laffin. “I place great emphasis on creating opportunities for my students to learn how to communicate creatively and effectively.” — *Leigh Ann Clifton*

Abolition, Revolution and the Roots of Democracy

During spring break, eighth grade students traveled to Massachusetts for a Boston-area history trek. The six-day trip supported students' classroom study and provided an opportunity to survey the major events and ideas that led to the American Revolution. The tour highlighted Boston's importance as a city that experienced slavery, revolution, and abolition, and how these events impacted the development of the United States. The students explored several sites along the Freedom Trail, including the Massachusetts State House. It was there that a chance meeting led to an insightful, engaging – and unexpected – tour.

"In the hallway we happened to meet Patrick Prendergast, chief of staff to Representative Paul Brodeur," shared teacher Chrislaine Miller. "Mr. Prendergast graciously offered to show us around and proceeded to spend an hour discussing with us the history of Boston and the House and Senate, both past and present. We were amazed and grateful for being able to experience a view of Boston history that few people receive when they visit the State House."

Following their return to MMS, Miller and her students each wrote and sent a letter of appreciation to Rep. Brodeur, to express their appreciation for his chief of staff's time and service.

"He gave us so much information about the different branches of the government and the different bills Massachusetts was trying to pass," wrote student Iris Hobbs. "I now have much

Studying an exhibit in the State House rotunda



Students re-enact a scene from a Civil War mural at the Massachusetts State House

more knowledge than I did before about how politics work."

The trip was successful and well-received, and teachers Miller and Tiffany Wayne are planning to again offer it over spring break in 2020, as an optional eighth grade learning adventure.

"My hope is that this trip created valuable memories and new experiences in traveling as a group for our eighth grade students, setting the groundwork for extended learning journeys to Washington, D.C. and internationally when they are juniors and seniors," said Wayne. "Students at MMS study U.S. History in eighth grade and again in tenth grade, so I know the places we visited provided tangible connections and layers of

Participating in a Boston Tea Party re-enactment



meaning to events and places they either learned about in eighth grade or will study in future classes. I'm very excited that Chrislaine and I were able to work together to share our passion for history with the students!" — *Leigh Ann Clifton*

Your Home

If you still don't know what you want,
If you still don't know where you're going,
You will be okay.
If your mind drifts like a soft and aimless
breeze ruffling a willow's branches,
Let it drift.
Let your mind look, for what it's
looking for.
Let the breeze play with the
willow's leaves.
Let your mind be free and uncontained.
And if you still don't know your place,
If you are still blind to your beautifully
perfect surroundings,
You are okay.
You don't need to be like the salmon,
its path already mapped out from birth;
You can roam like a young bear cub
exploring its beautiful home.
Just familiarize yourself with your
surroundings and find Your Home.

— *Violet Forbes, 10th grade*



Educating and preparing students for their next stage in life is both a long-term goal and a daily work in progress at MMS. The preschool and kindergarten program works on practical life skills, while teaching students to socialize with their peers. Elementary school lays an academic foundation and encourages socialization, empathy and the ability to work with others towards a common goal. Middle school fosters growing independence and responsibility for learning, with practice in leadership and reflection as students transition into teenagers. High school is a time of exploring the responsibilities and freedoms of young adulthood. Students practice planning ahead and develop the discipline necessary for success in the challenges of academic rigor. High school students hone their abilities to discern, evaluate, analyze and

make predictions. These developmental skills — academic, social and emotional — take time, plus trial and error, to grow.

Among the many core competencies that 21st century schools are called upon to teach, one of the most essential in this global age is understanding the “other.” The value of teaching diversity is not a new concept. However, understanding the brain science behind the instinctual roadblocks to inclusion is evolving.

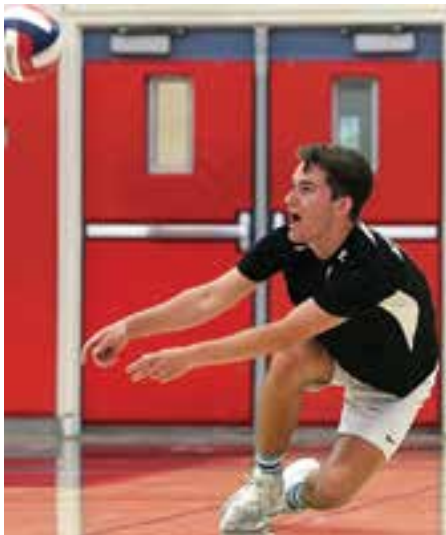
Dr. Robert Sapolsky, a neuroscientist at Stanford University who spoke a few years ago at Mount Madonna School on the topic of stress, recently published an article entitled, “This is Your Brain on Nationalism.” He highlights the research showing that we are hardwired neurologically to separate people into “us” and “them.” The way to overcome

this instinctual tribal group separation, according to Sapolsky, is by teaching explicitly the value of diversity in all its many forms.

At every level, Mount Madonna consciously educates students to overcome the natural fear of differences and be curious about those who are different than ourselves. Whether it is differences among peers or in completely different countries and cultures, such as India or South Africa, students are asked to question, explore and develop relationships with those outside their comfortable affinity group. Of all the lessons and life skills, respecting and appreciating diversity may be the most relevant for our graduates. By valuing diversity, including biodiversity, we gain an understanding of the “other,” expanding our perspective of life and personal understanding of ourselves. Mount Madonna School experiences broaden and strengthen students as they become engaged citizens, making choices for themselves and others that will impact future generations.

— *Supriya McDonald*

Athletics Continued from Page 9



Going for the save

athletically,” said Sobkoviak, “and plans to develop a training facility move forward.”

Beach Volleyball Club —

HS: Organized by parent volunteers Ilga Celmins and Kent Kitchel, 10 students joined MMS’ first beach volleyball club and competed in two tournaments.

Boys Volleyball —

MS: The Black team, led by Coach Mark Mattern, competed in the Central Coast Athletic League, and scrimmaged with three local schools.

“The season focused on individual skill development and the team finished with an even win-loss record,” said Mattern. “The team was able to be victorious against teams that had defeated them earlier in the season.”

HS: The boys junior varsity (JV), coached by Stephen Trevitt, finished in first place in the SCCAL JV division, with a very impressive record of 9-1! The boys varsity, coached by McDonald, came in second in the SCCAL varsity division, and went on to the CCS quarterfinals.

“These athletes did an outstanding job competing for their team and school in one of the top leagues in the section,” commented McDonald. “All of them worked extremely hard and showed an exemplary level of sportsmanship throughout the season. Congratulations one and all!”

— *Linda Manzur and Leigh Ann Clifton*

Support Hawks’ Athletics!

Gym Banners:

Promote your brand while supporting MMS’ highly recognized, well-attended and expanding sports programs. Your banner will hang in the Hawks’ Nest, where it will be seen by all who attend our sports and social events.

Commemorative Tiles:

Purchase a beautiful and long-lasting commemorative tile. Honor an alum, a graduating senior and/or senior class, a favorite quote, or memorialize a loved one.

Contact Linda Manzur at
(408) 846-4032
for more information.

Life Cycles and Field Lessons

Immersing students into nature is integral to the MMS program and particularly relevant when studying living systems and life cycles.

“One preschool and kindergarten (Pre/K) curriculum focus is exploring where food comes from and helping students to understand the powerful connection that exists between them and the Earth,” shared teacher and Pre/K Director Hema Walker. “Throughout the year students observe nature’s cycles by spending time exploring the outdoors, and making life cycle and identification books of what they learn. The children also help to tend their class garden and work together to bake their own snacks.”

“Food comes from seeds and you need sun and rain and dirt,” observed student Kylie Hanover. “I planted carrots and I gave them water.”

Second graders, meanwhile, learned about insect, amphibian and mammal life cycles, with a focus on monarch butterflies. They wrote reports about the monarchs and completed creative art projects.

“I am a big believer in creative expression as another avenue of exploring knowledge, connections and feelings,” commented teacher Hamsa Heinrich, who helped to guide students in their studies and led the art projects.

Second graders also visited Natural Bridges State Beach, and viewed migrating monarchs in their winter haven of a eucalyptus grove.

“The culminating activity of witnessing monarchs in their natural habitat, while understanding their migrating patterns, really brought to life the concept of life cycles and the necessary elements living things need to survive,” commented teacher Prema Gammons. “The second graders were able to grasp each stage in this continuing process on a deeper level and how we are all part of a greater shared environment.”

“I love that our school makes time to take the children outside the classroom for further learning,” said Heinrich. “Academically, it gives new insight and depth, and reinforces learned information. Equally important, it provides new opportunities for students to connect socially, creates memorable, positive shared moments within a class, and serves to gel students into a community of learners.”

— Leigh Ann Clifton



Geometry Studies and Constructing Kites



Although a little more wind would have been nice, MMS sixth and seventh grade students made the most of their spring visit to Waddell Creek Beach north of Santa Cruz. The students came to the beach to fly their colorful kites, constructed during math class to conclude a unit study on geometry.

“I learned how to make a kite and that it’s in the shape of a polyhedron!” commented sixth grader Cavan Smith. “Making the kites was difficult because there were a lot of steps involved, but it was worth the effort.”

Before constructing their kites, sixth grade students learned how to calculate the area of triangles, while seventh graders learned about calculating the surface area and volume of various 3D shapes, including pyramids.

“The students learned about tetrahedrons, which are four-sided 3D figures or triangular pyramids,” said teacher Hilary Alvarado. Each kite was constructed with 10 tetrahedral cells, arranged into a triangular pyramid and put together with paper straws, string, tissue paper and glue.

“The hardest part was weaving the tissue paper and framing together,” commented seventh grader Sophia Manzur.

“It was a fun trip and the kites were beautiful,” shared parent chaperone Encarna Buendia.

“I liked that we got to fly our kites,” added Smith, “and enjoy math on the beach!”

— Leigh Ann Clifton



Young Artists' Spotlight

Top left: Third grade “mini-me” portrait
 Top middle: Second grade “mini-me” portrait
 Top right: Creativity in action
 Bottom left and middle: Point Lobos watercolors by third grade students
 Bottom right: Colorful and creative in second grade



Stewardship and a Day of Play: Summit for the Planet

The community gathered for a day of environmental stewardship and lots of play on April 27 for the 13th annual Summit for the Planet.

Just over \$32,000 was raised to support our award-winning environmental education program. We are so thankful for every single donation received on the part of our students, parents, faculty, staff, board members, extended families and the community at large, for raising these essential funds and volunteering their time to make the event successful.

A very special thank you to our community partners who participated in this event by donating their time and resources to Summit for the Planet.

— Linda Manzur

Thank you to:

- Areperia 831*
- Bay Area Herpetological Society (BAHS)*
- CineLux Theatres*
- FishWise*
- Gandbi India's Cuisine*
- Gilroy Gardens*
- Gilroy Life*
- Happy Hollow Park & Zoo*
- Honeybee Ceramics*
- KAZU*
- Lazy Suzan Designs*
- Marianne's Ice Cream*
- Michael Lee Environmental Foundation*
- Monterey Bay Aquarium*
- Monterey Bay Farms*
- Morgan Hill Life*
- Mount Madonna School*
- Mt. Madonna Stables*
- Plantronics*
- Roaring Camp Railroads*
- SantaCruzParent.com*
- Santa Cruz Sentinel*
- SunRidge Farms*
- The Tech Interactive*
- Tree Sloth Camps*
- Wildlife Education & Rehabilitation Center (WERC)*



Embracing Experiences and Investing in Relationships



Parvati and her dog Billie

Across from the garden at Mount Madonna Center (MMC), there is a little cottage in a grove of redwood trees, with a deck that wraps around the front, and a prickly pear cactus buttressing the front yard from the narrow lane that loops around the property. Parvati Sara Fisher grew up in this house, built by her father and made magical by her mother.

I grew up on the mountain alongside Parvati's younger brother, Rajiv ('02). Their mother Devaki would visit our classroom and tell us the story of King Alexander and our adventures in his kingdom, which we accessed through a secret

Top: Parvati with her mom Devaki
Bottom: Parvati with her dad Vasudev



An interview with Parvati Sara Fisher ('98) by Haley Campbell ('02)

portal at the back of the garden shed.

Theirs was a childhood full of animals and adventures. "A Mount Madonna childhood is such a special thing," Parvati said. "I'm appreciative of that time of real security and freedom at the same time."

As a child, Parvati was drawn to the artistic and creative world. She loved performing arts, dance, art, and yoga. In a small community, your life is so public, and there are so many people willing to invest in you and your future, if you are open to their support. After graduating from MMS, Parvati attended Amherst College in Massachusetts where she double majored in fine arts and psychology. After college Parvati traveled to Italy for a summer internship at the Guggenheim Museum in Venice. From Italy, she traveled to Dublin where she spent four months on a work visa before purchasing an Around the World ticket, a flight package that allows you to visit multiple destinations around the world at one price within a year. In 10 months she traveled to 13 countries, she spent one month at the Sri Ram Ashram in India, and the only continent she didn't visit on that trip was South America.

When she returned to the States, Parvati settled back at MMC to plan her next steps. She knew she wanted to eventually live on the East Coast, so in February 2004, she flew to New York City with \$1,000, which felt like a lot of money, and temporarily moved in with her friend's family in Brooklyn.

Fascinated by art, culture, and media, Parvati got an internship through a college friend at a French publishing company that specialized in art and style and had an internal creative agency for luxury goods. She was initially responsible for photo research, organizing, and other general tasks, but soon she hit it off with the creative director, Richard, and started to work on his projects. When her

internship ended, Richard offered Parvati a position as art and photo coordinator at a startup fashion magazine. Time Inc. shut down the project after 10 months, and so Parvati went with Richard to a new magazine called *Radar*, and after that, Richard started his own advertising agency, Chandelier. Parvati freelanced with *People* magazine while Richard built up his company enough to hire her. When she started working full-time at Chandelier in 2005, there were three people on staff; when she left 12 years later, there were over 40.

During those years at Chandelier, Parvati found that her skills and interests were sparked in production — she liked to be part of the execution of projects. She worked as executive producer and head of

accounts for Old Navy, among others. "That was always a world I was drawn to," Parvati said. "Magazines and advertising provided a way for me to commis-



Parvati with Babaji

sion and work with a lot of really amazing [artists]."

Throughout her 12 years in advertising, Parvati strengthened her expertise in the workplace, she nurtured the relationships that mattered so much to her, and she tended to her own passions with an admirable tenacity. She became skilled at striking a balance between deep professional dedication and hard work when she was in New York, and then, when needed, taking sabbaticals to travel and prioritize self-care. Research has shown that for our health and well-being we need to learn how to slow down and take time for ourselves — to remember that we have but one life to live and thus live it fully. Parvati embodies that balance.

"Experiences are worth so much," Parvati said. "In the back of my mind, I'm always thinking, is



A magazine cover shoot with a baby tiger



On set in Hawaii for a surf brand



Polo camp in Argentina



A talented and avid baker

there a way to explore that, and what would that look like for me?" For Parvati it often looks like subletting her New York apartment and venturing to some far off place. "Between baking and horses, I've been able to visit a lot of different places."

She fell in love with horses at her childhood summer camp in Vermont, and her love of horses became an activity that allowed her to travel independently because she could tap into riding groups. She worked on a ranch in Australia, she spent time with Icelandic ponies in Iceland, and she joined riding groups in Jordan, Greece, Mexico and Wyoming. In Argentina, she completed polo school and then became a riding guide at a ranch where she was partnered with a Spanish-speaking gaucho to lead guests on trail rides.

Parvati's other great passion is baking and cooking. She has taken cooking courses in Thailand and Italy, and she completed a six-month certificate pastry program at the French Culinary Institute in New York.

In December 2017 on a trip to New York with a friend, I visited Parvati at her college friend's family's brownstone in Brooklyn Heights. While we ate bagels she had baked that morning, she shared that nine months before she had quit her job at Chandelier and sublet her apartment. Since then she had spent six weeks in North Carolina learning about wood-fire baking and sourdough and spent the summer in Europe completing an executive education class on entrepreneurship at the London School of Economics.

Five months later I was back in New York by myself. I had recently become obsessed with baking sourdough bread, and I wanted to pick Parvati's brain on her process. She invited me to her home for brunch. There were fresh flowers on the table, and books on art on shelves near the floor-to-ceiling windows. Parvati had started her sourdough process and showed me three different doughs — one plain,

one speckled yellow with polenta, and one with chunks of chocolate. While we ate fresh raspberries and quiche with broccoli, mushrooms, and ricotta, I paged through her baking journal wherein her recipes and process were laid out in tiny meticulous script.

That day with Parvati she taught me a lot about sourdough — a process I had come to love — and I learned so much about life. Parvati spoke about her new journey, freelancing and conceptualizing her next career move. She wanted to find a way to bring together her passions. "What does that mean?" I asked Parvati, truth be told a bit desperately.

Parvati had discovered what was most important to her in a career — flexibility, fewer work hours, working from different places — and she knew what she was most passionate about — traveling, baking, horses. . . She works with a career coach, who encourages her to start doing!

I had never considered a career coach, and I told Parvati that. She laughed. "I get jokes from my friends that I have this huge stable of people — from my financial planner, my career coach, my acupuncturist, my naturopath." She has realized she doesn't have to figure out everything alone. Building a network and investing in those relationships helps us to succeed.

I was curious to see what Parvati would end up doing next. The following October I saw a post on Instagram that Parvati had adopted a nine-week-old Blue Heeler puppy from Muddy Paws Rescue in New York City. "She's taken over my life," Parvati said.

This summer Billie is a year old. In June Parvati wrapped up her most recent freelance job in New York and spent the first part of the summer in St. Lucia and Maine. Now she is settled in Vermont at her father's home, exploring the green hills with her dog Billie, baking in the outdoor pizza oven, and contemplating her next career move.

She explained to me the idea that has been

mulling around after a conversation about sabbaticals with a friend at work. "She was saying how she'd never taken one and had always wanted to, but it felt so daunting. And I was like, 'Oh my god, I'm great at taking sabbaticals. I could take sabbaticals for a living. I'll organize a sabbatical for you.' And she said, 'I'd hire you to do that! I actually think that could be a career.'"

The next time Parvati met with her career coach, she mentioned jokingly that maybe she could plan people's sabbaticals, and her coach responded, "No, you could produce people's sabbaticals. You are a producer; you are 100% qualified to do that."

I have admired Parvati's intellect and focus since we were small, but spending time with her and hearing her story in adulthood has been an amazing gift of inspiration. It seems that Parvati has found the secrets essential for living a life of meaning: taking the time to nourish her passions and gifts, leaning into experiences and opportunities, and investing in meaningful relationships. "I don't have it figured out at all, but I feel like what I'm trying to be is open and willing to take risks and have experiences. I think people come out of Mount Madonna very well-adjusted, social, and relationship-minded, and I think as you move out into the world, your ability to connect with people and develop relationships is so important. You never know where the next opportunity is going to come from."

Horseback riding in Jordan



A Discussion of Global Issues



Ready for the Model United Nations assembly at Stanford University

Middle School Students Participate in Monterey Model UN Conference

In May, sixth and seventh grade students joined students from other area schools for the 10th annual Middle School Model United Nations Conference organized by the Lyceum of Monterey County and held at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. This was the first time that MMS middle school students participated in a Model United Nations (MUN) event.

Students were organized in pairs and assigned a country and a committee to work on debating a global issue with other delegates at the conference. These included the Security Council, the World Health Organization Executive Board (WHO), and the Social Humanitarian and Cultural Committee.

Students had eight weeks to prepare and learn about their country and what position their country would take to address their committee topic. Each student pair wrote a one-page position paper that stated clearly their country's position and provided several proposed actions that the United Nations

committee could take to address the issue. At the conference, students split their time between debating their views and trying to agree on an action plan to draft into a formal UN-style resolution contract.

"It was a success," said teacher Chrislaine Miller. "Seventh grader Ethan Lee was selected by his committee (WHO) to be on the panel discussion at the closing ceremony. And classmates Wyatt Adams and Henry Jacob's position paper (Dominican Republic, WHO) won an award for best position paper. Our students did really well, especially as first timers."

Middle school students at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies



High School Model UN Delegation is Largest to Date

In November, 20 high school students, the largest MMS delegation to date, attended the annual two-day MUN conference at Stanford University with teacher and MUN coordinator, Tiffany Wayne. The students were assigned to represent various countries on topical committees, including the Organization of American States; the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee; the World Health Organization; and specialized and historical committees such as Italian Wars and Exploring Space Colonization.

"I saw a lot of collaboration between delegates to develop the best resolutions," shared a participating student following the Stanford conference.

And for the first time, MMS students also attended a spring MUN conference hosted by the University of California, Berkeley.

The high school MUN club meets weekly to prepare by researching and writing position papers on assigned topics. All MMS high school students are invited to participate in MUN. Although a large group of freshmen joined MUN for the first time this year, most of the sophomore and junior delegates are returning participants who have attended several conferences. — Leigh Ann Clifton



Passages — Julianne Anila Zimmerman

Julianne Anila Zimmerman passed from this life on October 8, 2018. The mother of alumni Carbys ('92) and Rob ('98), Anila served MMS in a variety of ways while her sons were students. She was a Mount Madonna Center community member for many years, and her passing was honored with a shraddha on June 25. She is loved and missed by her family and friends.

Alumni Notes

From the Class of...

'85 **Lara Kilpatrick** enjoyed the experience of working with some of the founders of the Hanuman Fellowship and Mount Madonna Center (MMC), including Sudhir Dass, Soma Goresky, Sunanda Pacey, and Sadanand Mailliard; and "next generation" members Avi Kruley, Kelly Landry, **Jai Aguirre ('90)**, **Prabha Pacey ('86)**, **Ryan Oliver ('94)**, **Tobias Aguirre ('94)**, Jessica Zovar, and **Usha Kilpatrick ('89)**, to create a "Re-Union" retreat held in October at MMC. The retreat included projects to support and beautify MMC, meditation and yoga classes, opportunities for meeting with new and old friends, and time to play.

'89 **Usha Kilpatrick** continues to live on Hawaii Island. Daughter Ella is a senior at Brown University and Rowan is a freshman at Evergreen State College. Usha works with The Healy Foundation as their Hawaii program director. A favorite MMS memory? "Staff class with Babaji, *Ramayana!*, and hiding puppies on our laps during class!"

'94 In July, **Ryan Oliver** wed fiancé Louise Place in Carmel. Ryan is the regional executive director for BUILD Bay Area/LA. BUILD uses entrepreneurship and experiential learning to propel first-generation students of color through high school to college and career success. One favorite MMS experience? "The feeling of standing in the opening and closing circles for *Ramayana!* with Sampad rallying us, and the whole MMS/MMC family there to support us."

'99 In September, 11 of 16 grads – **Mallika (Pettengill) Bush**, **Nathan Cramton**, **Darien Crane**, **Yolanda Sangita Diaz-Houston**, **Kendra Froshman**, **Megan (Waite) Ivanoff**, **Kai Ramesh McDonald**, **Jenn (Marcellino) Paul**, **Kate (Kathryn) Ray**, **Gwen (Jennifer) Richard**, and **Rebecca Turek** – came together in the Santa Cruz area for their 20-year class reunion. For the fourth year, **Marita Priya Diaz** and husband Ravi Albright received a \$10,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for their nonprofit, newly renamed the Seattle Tabla Institute. The award supports the Access to Ustads Project, a series of



Class of '99 reunion gathering

public concerts and educational workshops in the greater Seattle area.

'01 **Dov Rohan** and Mary Hunter McDaniel were married on September 23, 2018 at their new home in Hood River, Oregon. Alumni in the wedding party included **Elliot Waite ('03)**, **Mike Lightner ('02)**, **Paul Crubaugh ('05)**, and **Isaiah Vest ('00*)**. The couple are expecting their first child in January. "We have been working on our property, slowly turning it into a future wedding venue and small retreat center (GorgeRetreat.com)," shared Dov. "We both have studied at the Mount Madonna Institute, and hope to share our knowledge of Ayurveda health counseling with this local community (Rhythms-ofNature.org)."

'02 **Alizah Davis** and husband Roey Herzel welcomed a son, Ido Micah Herzel on September 19, 2018.

'05 **Paul Crubaugh** is working for a Santa Cruz-area green building company, as well as teaching primitive wilderness survival with Adventure Out.

'07 **John G. (Jonji) Barber** is finishing his first year of residency at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. **Mark Hansen** and girlfriend Vicky Hu announced their engagement during a visit to Japan. Mark is also the drummer for the 90s and 2000s rock cover band ZeroStars. ZeroStars performs regularly in the San Francisco area. During a recent vacation in Hawaii, **Roxy Brown*** and Antoine Woods announced their engagement.

'08 In June, **Amita Kuttner** graduated with a Ph.D. in astrophysics from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Earlier in the year, Amita announced her Green Party of Canada (GPC) candidacy to run for Parliament representing



Susie Bryan ('11) cycling in Austria

Burnaby North-Seymour. Amita earned nearly 10% of the vote in the October election. Amita is also the GPC Science and Innovation Policy Critic. Amita's policy priorities are climate preparedness, emerging technology and affordability. **Chris Fust** is pursuing a master's degree in environmental science at the University of Sydney. **Naveen Hattis**, following a year and a half working as a visual designer for Google, has relocated to southern California to pursue an M.F.A. in graphic design at the California Institute of the Arts.

'10 **Marief Fox** lives in London and works at the Royal Academy of Arts as a trust and international projects manager. **Zoe Bostick** is working as a research assistant in Portland, Oregon.

'11 In February, **Emma Petersen** and Conor Havstad became engaged, with plans to marry in August 2020. Emma, in her fifth year teaching, teaches first grade at John J. Montgomery Elementary School in San Jose. **Michaela Schuessler** coaches varsity volleyball for York School and is applying to the Hartnell College LVN/RN program. **Soma Sharan** founded Women Who Inspire (see story on page 34) to honor the memory of Jivanti Rutansky. **Susie Bryan** is working towards a master's in cognitive neuroscience at the Freie Universität in Berlin and will be finishing her thesis in the spring. About six months ago she began working with Backroads, leading week-long bike tours across Europe, and cycling thousands of kilometers through more than a dozen countries this past summer.

'12 **Allison Ota** teaches sixth grade math and science at Cesar Chavez Middle School in Watson-

Continued on Page 34

Mark Hansen ('07) and fiancé Vicky Hu



Dov Rohan ('01) and Mary Hunter McDaniel are married



Amita Kuttner ('08) ran for Parliament



Emma Petersen ('11) and Conor Havstad are engaged



Women Who Inspire

Dedicated to Jivanti Rutansky, 1948-2019

Women Who Inspire is an online platform featuring women who advocate and strive to make the world a better place. These leaders, whether through philanthropy, career, entrepreneurship, or education, are making far-reaching impacts that begin in their own local communities. The platform was created by **Soma Sharan ('11)**, in honor of Jivanti Rutansky.

Sharan also launched HerFutureFund.org to inspire individuals to pool resources, so their collective philanthropy can magnify impact and help to create a more just future for all women and girls.

"When Jivanti passed away, I was devastated," acknowledged Sharan. "Just a month before she told me, 'I need you to be strong; we are going to fight this.' In a 2016 interview she said, 'We are not in this alone, and we have each other. The world isn't ours to hold, but we can do our small part in making things better.' I can't think of a better way to honor her memory than Women Who Inspire, which is focused on uplifting and inspiring, and Her Future Fund, for connecting and transforming.

Prabha Sharan ('07), Jivanti Rutansky and Soma Sharan ('11)



Zoe Bostick ('10)



Blythe Collier ('12)



Sage Buzzini ('15) graduates



Graduate Alyssa Feskanin ('15)



Antoine Woods and Roxy Brown ('07)* are engaged



Renata Massion ('15) with a friend in Croatia



Preethi Balagani ('14)

ville, and frequently competes in local beach volleyball tournaments. **Blythe Collier** lives in Washington, D.C., where she is a research assistant in policy and practice systems change at the American Institutes for Research (AIR). Congratulations to **Kabir Ahluwalia** and **Palak Bhatnagar** who were married in July. The couple live in Los Angeles, where Palak is the associate manager for medical and business development at DermaSensor, and Kabir is working towards his Ph.D. in clinical and experimental therapeutics at the University of Southern California (see story on page 35).

'13 **Daniel Fust** is pursuing a master's in engineering at the University of California, Davis. **Karina Fox** is working at Magic Theater in San Francisco, where she recently directed her first professional play, *Visible from Four States*. She was also assistant director for *Top Girls* at the American Conservatory Theater. **Willy Bryan** moved to Berlin a year ago, and is a photo and video producer at venture capital company builder NBT, where he crafts marketing content. His recent travels have taken him to Spain, Italy, Austria, England and the Czech Republic.

'14 **Luciano Jimenez** graduated with a B.S. in biological science and an emphasis in human biology from the University of California, Merced. **Preethi Balagani** graduated from the University of California, San Diego, in June 2018 with a B.S. in molecular biology. She is currently in her second year of studies at the California Northstate University College of Medicine. In June, **Rosino Legan** received a B.A. in communication from Santa Clara University (SCU). He was accepted

into the Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honor Society, and the Public Relations Student Society of America. Prior to graduation, and in response to an impending tuition hike, Rosino started a petition for reduced tuition at SCU. While tuition was ultimately increased, a dialogue was established with the SCU administration, and an ad-hoc committee was formed to help avoid (or at least minimize) future tuition hikes. In 2018, **Talia Speaker** moved to Washington D.C. and spent a year working on the wildlife conservation team at the World Wildlife Fund. Her work focused on facilitating collaborative innovation around technology in conservation and assessing the role of the U.S. in global illegal wildlife trade. In August she relocated, and began a Master of Science program in global conservation leadership at Colorado State University. This program will include several months of independent research in Kenya. "I am thankful to MMS," said Talia, "for preparing me for the interdisciplinary, cohort-based experiential learning this program so highly values. Going to South Africa with MMS was an influence early on in my conservation career with thoughts about how social justice is tied to environmental sustainability."

'15 **Alyssa Feskanin** graduated from Willamette University with a B.A. dual major in philosophy and economics. She was active in the Alpha Chi Omega sorority and served as the vice president of recruitment for the Panhellenic Council of Willamette. Alyssa recently began a job as a marketing coordinator for the San Francisco Opera. **Cassidy Caborn** graduated from Chapman University with a B.A. double major in dance and public relations and advertising. **David Kerr** graduated from Santa Clara University (SCU) with a B.A. double major

Visionary Research

Kabir Ahluwalia ('12) received the inaugural Ginsburg Institute for Biomedical Therapeutics (IBT) Research Student Award of \$20,000 for his research on age-related macular degeneration.

“My current project aims to restore sight for those with age-related macular degeneration (AMD),” said Kabir. AMD has no single attributable cause, making the development of effective therapies complicated. Only about 10% of AMD patients are able to be treated by currently available medicines and the AMD population is still growing.

“A handful of research labs around the world have begun developing stem cell transplants to replace the dying cells in the eye. These treatments, however, involve complicated surgical procedures,” he continued. “It is well known that cells have to communicate with each other to produce systemic effects in the body. We hypothesize that some of the therapeutic value of this transplant therapy comes from these communication factors. Our goal is to extract these factors from the stem cells and use them as a therapy to avoid complicated surgical procedures.”

This research project is a smaller piece of a bigger project that Kabir has been part of for nearly a year. This larger project recently received a \$3.7 million grant from the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

“By the end of this larger grant, we aim to have enough data to support a meeting with the FDA and initiation of human clinical trials,” he said.

Kabir credits the influence of dedicated MMS teachers in igniting his passion for scientific research.

“Lisa Catterall and Asha Pandya fostered my love for the sciences. Both showed their own incredible passion for science through their teaching and made clear to me how to use it to solve real world problems,” said Kabir. “Having positive role models early on is what I believe made science so fascinating for me, and ultimately helped me decide to pursue it as a career.”



Graduate David Kerr ('15)



Palak Bhatnagar ('12) and Kabir Ahluwalia ('12) are married



Cassidy Caborn ('15) majored in dance and public relations

in music composition and computer science. **Lexi Julien** graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of California, Los Angeles, with a B.A. in English. A favorite MMS memory? “One I have been thinking about often lately is when my class and I went to Sri Ram Ashram. The chance to share and experience the magic, love and joy of the ashram with my very best friends is something I will always hold dear to my heart.” **Rami Walker** graduated *cum laude* with a B.S. in history from Southern Oregon University. She continues to live in Ashland, and is enjoying work as a baker and barista. **Renata Massion** graduated *magna cum laude* from Tulane University with a B.A. double major in political economy and international development. This fall she began a graduate program in environmental science and management through the Bren School of Environmental Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara. **Sage Buzzini** graduated from SCU with a B.S. in psychology. He graduated from SCU’s Army ROTC program and commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army. After a nine-week Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) in San Antonio, Sage began serving active duty in the Medical Services Corps at Fort Carson in Colorado Springs. **Zoe Kelly** graduated from Whitman College with a B.A. in politics. Zoe was selected for the Running Start/Walmart Star Fellowship program. The Star Fellowship brings together seven women from diverse backgrounds to train them in political leadership and introduce them to national politics. Zoe is working with Congresswoman Jahana Hayes, representing Connecticut’s fifth district. **'16 Saniya Lakka**, a student at Willamette University, interned at Nike with the advanced

analytics and machine learning team “Through this internship I analyzed data to improve athlete performance,” said Saniya. “It was an incredible learning opportunity.” **Sophie Ortiz** is studying earth and soil science at California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo. “I recently finished an internship with the California Strawberry Commission,” shared Sophie. “I am excited to be the communications coordinator for the San Luis Obispo branch of the national Sunrise climate action movement. I am involved in minor political activism with this group, and focus on science and education.”

'18 Brigg Busenhart and partner Wyatt Harrison won the Hot Sand USA Pro Harbor Beach AVP America beach volleyball tournament in September. After graduating from MMS, **Cyrus Kamkar** contacted former Secretary of State George P. Shultz to request – and was granted – a one-on-one interview. Read more at “Boot-Camp Wisdom” on the MMS website. Cyrus also organized “The Cost of Freedom,” an MMS-hosted panel discussion with United States service veterans on Veteran’s Day 2018. The discussion focused on war and service from WWII to present day.

*Alumni non-MMS graduates

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

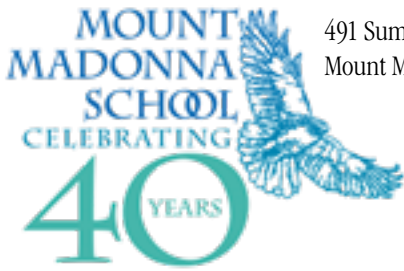


Alizah Davis ('02) and son Ido

Michaela Schuessler ('11)

Talia Speaker ('14)





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Congratulations and Best Wishes to Our 2019 Graduates!



Left to right: Imogen Cockrum, Lillian Wayne, Sage Turner, Kaili Sullens, Luca Peruzzi (Salutatorian), Samith Lakka, Anika Compoginis, Noah Kaplan (Co-Valedictorian), Mara Peruzzi, John Dias, and Priyanka Bharghavan (Co-Valedictorian).

Class of 2019 College Acceptances:

Cabrillo College*
California State University, Channel Islands
California State University, Chico*
California State University, Long Beach
Chapman University*
Colorado College
Colorado State University
George Washington University
Loyola Marymount University*

Michigan State University
Middlebury College
Occidental College
Rutgers University
San Francisco State University*
San Jose State University*
Sonoma State University
University of California, Berkeley*
University of California, Davis
University of California, Los Angeles

University of California, San Diego
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Redlands
University of San Diego*
University of San Francisco
Whitman College*
Willamette University
*denotes school graduate(s) selected to attend