Dear Friends,

Summer is usually a time for rest, relaxation, and recreation. But in Hyde Park, there’s no respite for the construction workers tackling Earl Shapiro Hall. They are busy bringing the new Early Childhood Campus to life—including installing the curtain wall of glass on the library—and the building increasingly resembles the renderings we’ve been sharing for the past two years. Meanwhile, plans continue on our Main Campus renovations, and we are welcoming three new principals to our Schools, including our first-ever leader for the Primary School division, which will encompass grades 1–2. (You can read more about these individuals in this issue of LabLife.)

To that end, I have taken the lead on reviewing and updating the Schools’ mission statement, put in place nearly 12 years ago as part of a strategic planning process. While it is not in any way wrong, the current statement does suffer from being overly long and overly complicated. The team conducting our last ISACS accreditation process agreed that the Schools should undertake the work to better define what is at our core. As we have completed the hiring for our new five-division structure and as we look to move our nursery through second grade students to our Stony Island site in 2013, now seemed the right time to do this work.

The very phrase “mission statement” runs the risk of sounding jargon to many people. We hope that the time devoted to this effort (by teachers, administrators, parents, alumni, and students) will be time well spent. Our goal: without jargon, to find a shared articulation that clearly expresses what is most important about a Lab education to us as a community. Done well, it will result in a clear statement that we can all remember. Done well, the very effort of coming up with our reworked mission statement will help knit us together as a community of alumni, parents, faculty, and staff.

I am always interested in knowing your thoughts about improving the Laboratory Schools experience. As we work on this project, please do share your ideas with me. There’s no respite for the construction workers tackling Earl Shapiro Hall. They are busy bringing the new Early Childhood Campus to life—including installing the curtain wall of glass on the library—and the building increasingly resembles the renderings we’ve been sharing for the past two years. Meanwhile, plans continue on our Main Campus renovations, and we are welcoming three new principals to our Schools, including our first-ever leader for the Primary School division, which will encompass grades 1–2. (You can read more about these individuals in this issue of LabLife.)

In the world of education, empty classrooms mean that educators and school administrators have important time to address larger-scale planning issues and to give time to projects that lay the foundations for future work.

Warm regards,

David W. Magill

Director

In this issue

03 In the news
Open heart surgery, diplomates, honorary diplomas, a Math Expo, and more

04 U-High Reunion
Alumni Association bestows awards on Labbies who inspire

18 Art

20 Devoted to
A memorial service for Elizabeth Station

22 History in Theory, History in Practice
Journalism teacher Wayne Brown is the heart of Lab’s nationally recognized program

26 In the halls
China all about the Elisabeths, riots of May celebrates a global community

28 We want to see
An alumna makes a career of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and U-Highers annually make use of that institution as they study the Holocaust


41 House on the high plains

History in Theory, History in Practice

Living by Confucian Principles
Sixth-grade humanities teacher Janice Moy approaches history in a novel way: she asks her students to live it. Focusing on Mesopotamia, Greece, and China, Ms. Moy’s class studies each culture’s values and historical context. In the nine-week unit on Chinese history, for instance, students learn about the development of Confucianism as a response to a crumbling societal order. They memorize selections from Confucius’s Analects that outline what it meant to live well and virtuously in the China of his day—like the idea that “the virtuous person takes as much trouble to discover what is right as a lesser person takes to discover what will pay.” Then they try to live by those principles.

Ms. Moy organizes her students into five cooperative groups, named for the Song, Ming, Zhou, Han, and Tang dynasties. The groups mirror the community values and structure that once guided the culture. This includes focusing on the sincerity, loyalty, modesty, harmony, and mutual respect Confcns believed should characterize human relationships, as well as considering historical hierarchies that privileged age and rank. The experience helps students understand how Confucian China was built on a series of well-ordered relationships, starting with the family unit and expanding outwards to the world.

The class’s culminating activity challenges the groups to make those principles tangible by creating collaborative watercolor paintings. Each dynasty is assigned several symbolic elements—perhaps a tiger, a lotus, and water—and the students work together to put these seemingly disparate elements into one harmonious image, which is, when finished, a vertical scroll nearly six feet long. Ms. Moy says the students behave more collaboratively during the unit, taking turns in discussion, putting chairs and books away without being asked, and thanking each other more frequently.

The class doesn’t study cultures uncritically, however. In the China unit, they discuss what Ms. Moy calls “the dark side” of the hierarchical organization of ancient Chinese society. “We’re constantly asking, ‘What is and isn’t of value here?’” she says. For her students, this blend of internalizing and questioning history means they cultivate critical thinking skills that they use to understand, compare, and evaluate cultures, including their own.

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One Thought. One Sentence. Every Day.

Developing a habit of writing in kindergarten

“This is a helicopter flying in the air.”

So reads a recent journal entry from one kindergarten in Espeelt Stowe-Grant’s class. Her students begin each day by drawing a picture and writing a thought in plastic-bounded journals. Flipping through them reveals the children’s linguistic development, from one-word entries early in the school year to complete sentences later on: “Zebr” reads one October entry; “I am three years old” is another.

Ms. Stowe-Grant encourages her students to spell words the way they sound, introducing them to spell words the way they pronounce them. However, the goal for these young writers is to develop a habit of writing. “It’s about building confidence in their ability to put words on a page,” says Ms. Stowe-Grant. “They learn that writing is a powerful way to get their message across. It’s empowering.”

The students seem to feel that way, too. Though the daily writing activity is not always their favorite at the beginning of the year, Ms. Stowe-Grant says, “By the end, they’re really invested. It’s the first thing they want to show their parents and grandparents, and they always ask when they get to take it home.”

Coming to You Live from the Heart

U-Highers witness live surgery for fifth year

“This is so awesome!” a blood-haired junior whisper to the guy beside him. He’s talking about medical heart. He’s also watching a surgeon perform the procedure live, and, oh yeah—he’s whispering because the surgical team can hear him.

It’s a Wednesday morning in mid-May, just a few weeks before finals, and 35 U-Highers are sitting in an upstairs classroom at the Museum of Science and Industry (MSI). Staring intently at two large-screen TVs, they watch as surgeons at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn perform open-heart bypass surgery.

This is the fifth year U-Highers have had the chance to witness a live surgery through the “Live from the Heart” program run by MSI and Advocate Christ. When physical education teacher Dan Dyra learned about the program at a conference six years ago, he jumped at it, knowing it would offer a great extra-curricular learning moment.

“This is a great opportunity for students to learn about the different systems in the body, to experience the anatomy, the muscular system, the chemistry of it,” he says. “It’s a great opportunity to see the tools in action.”

The students learn about the different medical tools that surgeons use to handle surgical procedures. (No Labbies need to worry—only to watch the surgeons work, but also to interact with them.) The U-Highers take full advantage.

As they watch surgeons perform several micrivalve replacements and bypass reconstructions on the patient, a 72-year-old female, the students ask all kinds of questions: from the average length of surgery to the reasons surgeons might choose not to operate; from medical school course loads to why they prefer to clean a patient’s own blood during surgery rather than use blood from a blood bank.

The high schoolers learn about the different roles of the surgical team members—the perfusionists, for instance, who manage the heart and lung machine to ensure the patient’s own blood flows properly; the anesthesiologists, for instance, who help keep the patient calm and with outstanding care; the nurses, who provide support and comfort; the anesthesiologist, who monitors the patient’s vital signs; the surgical technologists, who handle surgical tools; the surgeons, who perform the procedure.

Via videoconference, the students join the surgical team in an OR at Advocate Christ. During the simulcast three-and-a-half-hour surgery, the students are able to see the surgeons work, but also to interact with them. The U-Highers take full advantage.

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Why yoga? Says assistant nursery teacher Sandy Mulholland, “Besides developing body awareness, yoga improves children’s flexibility, coordination, strength, balance, and posture. And the movements are modeled after nature—lions, snakes, trees, and rivers. When linked through stories, they fire up the kids’ imaginations.”

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Hugo Rheingans
Franklin Award in honor of the late
English teacher to a 1924 alumnus who
was a leader in the field of literature
and others through civic discussions, who
challenged others, listened receptively, has
a gracious spirit and gentleness, and asks
with wonder.

Michael Glick
Brown Book Award for a writer who
combines excellence in spoken and written
expression with outstanding social
involvement.

Diane Mauer Book Award to the
writer of a book of learning and intellectual
curiosity that reflects the work of the world
beyond her.

Yvonne Shunmugam
Dortmund Book Award for a writer in the age
10 to 12 who has demonstrated intellectual
leadership and concern for the environment.

University of Chicago Book Award
Fine Arts
Stella Awards Mixed Media
Katherine Szczesny
Rebecca Hauser
Adam Fine
Ellie Lawrence
University of Chicago Book Award

Lab Life: Fall 2012

The lead surgeon and the students discuss what makes a surgery successful: not just a patient’s survival, but his or her improved quality of life.

The University of Hong Kong: The schools have a long and profound heritage. From traditional Chinese medicine to modern science, the university is committed to excellence in education and research. It offers a wide range of courses, including medicine, law, business, and the arts.

A Second Homeroom

Staffed by teachers-in-training, Late Day employs unique model

At some institutions, after-school programs are an afterthought. At Lab, the Late Day program is an opportunity to build on the learning that happens during the regular school day.

The program, which runs from dismissal until 5:30 pm every day, is staffed by teachers in training—als pursuing degrees at well-regarded schools of education, teaching at the Erikson Institute, DePaul, Roosevelt, and National-Louis.

Late Day teachers have either a bachelor’s or a master’s degree, or are working on a master’s degree. And the program has evolved to be more in keeping with Lab’s broader academic approach.

In past years, the program was “staffed by ratios,” says Candle Lawler, assistant director of Lab. “After School students were hired from the University or local seminaries based on how many children were signed up.” Now, interns are asked to commit to the full year, and all classes also have an intern who is equally committed to the position. For the children, that means Late Day is more like a second homeroom.

Says After School Director Colleen Coyle, “These teachers are people who are really dedicated to a career in education. They understand that being in Lab’s environment is an outstanding opportunity.”

Late Day teachers, in Deweyan style, are free to follow the interests of the children in the group. A lesson on baking a healthy pizza, for example, might provide the opportunity for a quick review of fractions.

As part of their internships, the Late Day teachers have weekly meetings with the director of educational theory and share expertise. They also meet with the counseling staff once a month to talk over any concerns and can observe the teaching experience in the daytime classrooms, which helps improve their own pedagogy.

Mr. Coyle believes that no other school is using this model in an after school program. “It is a win-win situation for both our teachers and our students.”

Recommended Reading

Nursery teacher Sarah Abella,’93, recommends Unplugged Play: No Batteries. No Plug. Pure Fun, by Bobbi Conner

Lab’s early childhood classrooms have a long and wonderful history of play. As we head back to school early this fall, I offer a few recommendations for multiple varieties of play and the rules of Mother May I.

No Plugs. Pure Fun. As we head back to school early this fall, I offer a few recommendations for multiple varieties of play and the rules of Mother May I.

Unplugged Play has a terrific appendix and index for finding the right activity for the right moment and place, such as “Ice cube toss” when kids feel the need to be wet and messy, and “Stoop-ball” when a child needs some time to be active but there are no playmates in sight.

The teacher in me is thrilled by the lists of important materials and toys to have on hand for opened-ended and child-led play. While many books that have play suggestions focus on very small children, this book has sections for children ages 1 to 2, 3 to 5, and 6 to 10.

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Lab’s early childhood classrooms have a long and wonderful history of play. As we head back to school early this fall, we also return to piano lessons and soccer practice.

And when we are home with our children, we hear “I’m bored,” or we watch as our children gravitate to video games, TVs, and laptops. My recommendation as a mother and a teacher is Unplugged Play (Workman Publishing, 2007). Part resource manual, part idea-generator, this book is wonderful to have on the shelf for all those moments when children and craves play at home.

Many of the activities described in the book make me nostalgic for activities I enjoyed as a child. It reminds you how to make cootie-catchers, how to play multiple varieties of jack, and the rules of Mother May I. It also offers thoughtful write-ups on “Learning to Play Fair” and “The Amazing Cardboard Box.” And the teacher in me is thrilled by the lists of important materials and toys to have on hand for opened-ended and child-led play.


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Not Your Father’s Oldsmobile

Landscape of college admission changing faster than ever

When college counselors Patty Kovacs and Melissa Warehall sit down with a student and his or her family to talk about options for college, they start with the present and how to move that student forward. And while they may at what happened to past graduating classes, they won’t look much beyond two or three years. The number of students applying for admission to selective institutions has been skyrocke, while the number of slots in any given freshman class remains unchanged. It’s a simple supply and demand equation, which translates into shrinking admission rates. Just five years ago, when Ms. Warehall worked for the UC’s admission office, the University’s admit rate was in the 35–40 percent range. Now it’s 13 percent, a number that reflects the forces changing selective admissions rates across the country—more applicants (international and US-based), greater use of the Common Application, and students applying to more schools.

Both counselors agree that colleges themselves are under pressure to admit the right students (the ones who will be successful at the institution) in the right numbers (they can’t risk over- or under-enrolling a class) with the right net tuition revenue. In the context of that dialogue the counselors still maintain their focus on the individual student’s interests, values, and personality. Both feel that this year’s class found strong matches not only at high-level academic institutions but also at top arts and music programs:

Girls Soccer
Led by seniors Sarah Schold, Sydney Searlart, and Kathleen Kospich, the team won their seventh consecutive IHSA regional championship and made it to the 1A Sectional Championship game. Sarah received IHSSCA 1st team selection and ISL 1st team honors. Sydney and Kathleen received 2nd place, 3rd place and seniors.

Boys Tennis
The team won the sectional championship for the 7th time in 25 years. Junior Lucas Buchheim-Jurians was sectional champion. At sectionals, doubles-team senior Aneseh Kanamadal and freshman Jenise Kinky-Price, senior, sophomore James Duran and junior Jack Olson finished third.

The team finished second in the 2A Sectional track meet, qualifying five runners for State. Junior Sarah Curci won “all-state” honors in the 3200m, finishing eighth. She was named ISL Runner-of-the-Year, and senior qualified as part of the 1600m relay team with senior Catherine Yomi, sophomore Sarah

Sports Highlights

In Illinois Wesleyan University Indiana University at Bloomington (2) Johns Hopkins University (3) Lesley University Lewis & Clark College Macalester College Massachusetts Institute of Technology (3) McGill University Miami University, Ohio University of Michigan (2) Mount Holyoke College The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music New York University (2) Northwestern University (4) Northwestern University (2) Oberlin College Occidental College Ohio Wesleyan University Pomona College (2) Princeton University (2) University of Richmond Rochester College University of Southern California (5) Spelman College Stanford University Swarthmore College The University of Texas, Austin Tufts University (4) Vassar College Washington University in St. Louis (2) Wellesley College Wesleyan University (2) University of Wisconsin, Madison (2) Yale University (3)

Preliminary: Charlie Grant, Joelle Moore-Carter

Final: Joel Tovey

First place: Grant; Tovey, second; Alison Karlen, third; Sorenson, fourth; Price, fifth; Tovey, sixth

Second place: Grant, second; Karlen, third; Tovey, fourth; Sorenson, fifth; Price, sixth

Third place: Grant, first; Karlen, second; Tovey, third; Sorenson, fourth; Price, fifth; Price, sixth

Fourth place: Grant, second; Tovey, first; Sorenson, third; Price, fourth; Karlen, fifth; Price, sixth

The scored these games at the University of Maine, on the main campus in Orono. UMaine fans loudly cheered all day long.

For more information, visit the Maine Men’s Basketball team website: www.mainet.com

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**Contact Information**

Maine Men’s Basketball

Office of Athletic Communications

University of Maine

Orono, Maine 04469-5741

Phone: 207-581-3144

Email: mainet@maine.edu

Website: www.mainet.com

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**Game Schedule**

**Home Games**

December 1: Maine vs. Sacred Heart
December 4: Maine vs. UMASS
December 7: Maine vs. Saint Mary’s (Maine)
December 11: Maine vs. UMaine (Oro)
December 15: Maine vs. Stony Brook
December 18: Maine vs. Hofstra
December 21: Maine vs. Central Florida
December 24: Maine vs. Ohio University

**Away Games**

November 28: Maine vs. Missouri State
December 5: Maine vs. Georgia State
December 12: Maine vs. Boston College
December 15: Maine vs. Northeastern
December 18: Maine vs. Saint Joseph’s (Maine)
December 22: Maine vs. Colgate
December 24: Maine vs. Cornell

**Regional Games**

January 1: Maine vs. Vermont
January 8: Maine vs. Rhode Island
January 15: Maine vs. Stony Brook
January 22: Maine vs. Binghamton
January 29: Maine vs. Hartford
February 5: Maine vs. UMaine (Oro)
February 12: Maine vs. UMASS
February 19: Maine vs. New Hampshire
February 26: Maine vs. Maine

**National Games**

March 1: Maine vs. Florida
March 8: Maine vs. Providence
March 15: Maine vs. UMaine (Oro)
March 22: Maine vs. Stony Brook
March 29: Maine vs. Hofstra

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**Tickets Information**

Maine Men’s Basketball is open to the public. For more information, visit the Maine Men’s Basketball team website: www.mainet.com

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**Sponsors**

Maine Men’s Basketball is proudly sponsored by the following companies: Maine Cell Phone, Maine Toyota, and Maine Honda.

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**Media and Announcements**

Maine Men’s Basketball is covered by the following media outlets: uMaine Sports Network, Maine Sports Network, and Maine Sports Network.

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Website: www.mainet.com
A bobcat stalks through the forest, stalking its prey. In its white-tailed deer, munches calmly on wildflowers, unaware of the bobcat’s steely gaze. The scene is straight from Wild Kingdom. Each May, lab sixth-graders travel to Camp MacLaren in Burlington, WI. There, in an annual activity introduced about 25 years ago, each student assumes the role of an animal from the Wisconsin woodlands in a survival challenge that Middle School science teacher Debbie Kogelman likens to “a giant game of tag.” Officially called “The Game,” the exercise, held during the final day of camp, introduces students to the ecological pyramid and predator–prey relationships. Before camp, students receive an animal assignment via lottery. Ms. Kogelman and fellow science teacher Mark Wagner order a short for each student, color-coded by animal type—for carnivores, like for omnivores, green for herbivores.

Immediately before The Game starts, students pin nametags to the backs of their shirts, identifying their animal. Participants receive a list of rules and a “life card,” outlining what their animal can eat—and be eaten by. The name of The Game: survive two 50-minute rounds played in the forest, a hilly terrain thick with bushels and trees. Teachers serve as game wardens and food stations—the sole source of nourishment for herbivores and a partial source for omnivores. Students start with two to three “life” cards, based on their animals’ classification, and they lose a life card when tagged by a predator; an animal’s death, thereby reduced to road kill.

One virus twisted her ankle, resulting in a new bandage. And, well after sixth grade, she says, “You never know who appears out of the blue.” Equally lethal is the human touch. “A human's presence can psyche a bobcat out of its game,” says Ms. Kogelman. “The human touch is also a partial source for omnivores. Students start with two to three ‘life’ cards, based on their animals’ classification, and they lose a life card when tagged by a predator; an animal’s death, thereby reduced to road kill.”

Before the second round, all are restored to life and herbivores can enter the game again. Two students can eat—and be eaten by. The name of the game: survive two 50-minute rounds played in the forest, a hilly terrain thick with bushels and trees. Teachers serve as game wardens and food stations—the sole source of nourishment for herbivores and a partial source for omnivores. Students start with two to three “life” cards, based on their animals’ classification, and they lose a life card when tagged by a predator; an animal’s death, thereby reduced to road kill.

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Who could forget spending two hours as a bobcat creeping and stalking its prey, or as a startled deer looking over its shoulder? This role-playing in the forest gives life—and death—to science study.

### Dodging Death

Role-playing in the forest gives life—and death—to science study.
**In Their Own Words**

A brief introduction to Lab’s three new principals

As the Schools prepare to move from four to five divisions, and with the departure of two principals, who, through a timing-happenstance, both go on to be heads-of-schools themselves, Lab has hired three new principals:

**Primary School: Ms. Devetski**

Most recently, Ms. Devetski chaired the education department at Holy Cross College in Notre Dame, IN, where she designed and implemented an undergraduate elementary education major. She began her career as a primary school teacher in Indiana, then spent 12 years at three different Pre-K-8 schools. Ms. Devetski holds a BS in elementary education and an MS in language arts education, both from Indiana University, as well as a PhD in curriculum and instruction from St. Louis University.

Old but new:

“Lab has remained true to its progressive roots, yet stands as a contemporary model of effective curricular education. I am a strong advocate of progressive education and believe this philosophy combined with the long history of Lab makes it a unique and special place.”

Students make the school:

“Getting to know the people of Lab is my first priority and why I am so eager to begin my tenure. I have met many of the faculty and staff and look forward to deepening those relationships. I am excited to meet the families and the students—I really enjoy interacting with the students! I believe they are what makes Lab so special.”

**Middle School: Ms. Swainson**

Ms. Swainson comes to Lab from Head-Royce School in Oakland, CA, where she was head of the middle school. Prior to that, Ms. Swainson spent 12 years at Sidwell Friends School in Washington, DC, teaching French and Spanish while serving as the school’s first all-school diversity coordinator. She received a BA in French and Spanish and an MA in social foundations in education, both from the University of Virginia.

Active education:

“Lab’s long history and tradition of excellence were an immediate draw for me. Throughout the interview process, I was impressed by the focus on student success. It was exciting to see Dewey’s philosophy of ‘learning by doing’ come to life in each classroom.”

Full steam ahead:

“I am looking ahead to a year of learning. It will be important for me to spend time getting to know the students, parents, faculty, and staff as we work together to build a vision for this next chapter in U-High’s future. As the construction makes its way to the high school, it will be critical to create plans for keeping our focus on teaching and learning, as well as reviewing and revising the curriculum, to meet the needs of our students and help prepare them for the future.”

**High School: Mr. Fech**

Mr. Fech served in the Graylake Community High School District as director of staff services and assistant superintendent for personnel before becoming principal of Graylake North High School. Prior to that he was principal of Bishop Noll Institute, a Catholic middle and high school in Hammond, IN, and taught French for many years. He has a bachelor’s in education with a major in French from Indiana University, a master’s degree’s (in theological studies and educational studies) from University of St. Michael’s College in Fly, a college and a doctorate in educational administration and supervision from Loyola University.

Active education:

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In the fall of 2011, parent volunteer Stephanie Beiser started polling parents of Jeff Maharry’s fifth-graders for ideas for a class service project, but it turned out that a great idea was as close as her own home. Her husband, David Beiser, MD, an assistant professor in the Section of Emergency Medicine at the University of Chicago, suggested a project that would combine community service with health education and a little practical geography: mapping the locations of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in Hyde Park.

AEDs are medical devices used to shock a stopped heart back into action, a simplified version of the defibrillation paddles made famous on TV hospital dramas. The devices are designed to be used by bystanders with minimal training and are becoming more common in public spaces, but many people remain oblivious to them. Since every second spent trying to find a defibrillator decreases a cardiac arrest victim’s chances of survival, increased awareness of AEDs could literally save lives.

Besides the Beisers, fifth-grade parent Sheila Webb, Marianna Ingersoll, Carol Horton, and Aretta Fisig helped with planning. They laid the groundwork for the survey by phoning Hyde Park establishments and asking, “Do you have an AED?” Dr. Stacy Tessler Lindau’s research group at UChicago Medicine, which had mapped community health resources on the South Side. Their preliminary survey of AED locations enabled students to divide up the neighborhood effectively.

On the culminating day in April, Dr. Beiser gave the students an overview of how AEDs work. One parent pretended to have a cardiac arrest, and another acted as a 911 operator directing the students through a simulated rescue.

**Emeritus Retirement**

Dr. James Noll, known as “Might Be Yours” at Lab, retires this fall after 35 years as head of school.

Full steam ahead:

“I was attracted to the dynamism of Lab and the quality of the faculty. What really clinched it were the amazing students I met. They were extremely thoughtful, intelligent, well-mannered, and considerate.”

Full steam ahead:

“I am looking forward to getting to know everyone, and having people show me Chicago. Most of all, I am excited about the possibility of taking the Middle School where it wants to go.”

The Life They Save Just Might Be Yours

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On the culminating day in April, Dr. Beiser gave the students an overview of how AEDs work. One parent pretended to have a cardiac arrest, and another acted as a 911 operator directing the students through a simulated rescue, showing the fifth graders that even they could step in and save a life. The students also heard from a woman whose daughter died because an AED wasn’t available, and another woman whose life was saved by one.

Students then fanned out into Hyde Park, Woodlawn, and Kenwood, stopping at establishments along the way to ask whether they had an AED.

“Many places that should have had an AED didn’t have one,” like senior centers, says Ms. Webb. “Many people didn’t know what an AED was. In some cases an AED was present but the staff was not aware or was told not to use it on people outside their premises.”

After two hours, the groups returned to Lab. Emergency medicine resident from UChicago Medicine trained the students on AEDs and hands-only CPR.

The Libbies compiled their survey data, creating a map of the 57 AEDs they found in the Hyde Park area, and later presented a copy to Alderman Leslie Hairston, ’79.

The group won the iBeeve AED Education Challenge and will receive an annual AED that will be donated to an organization in the community that needs one. Local AED locations have been uploaded to a global public database at www.aed4.us.

One parent pretended to have a cardiac arrest, and another acted as a 911 operator directing the students through a simulated rescue.
The Science of Stress-Reduction

PA-sponsored pediatrician visits with the junior class

It’s April, when many juniors are losing sleep over SATs and college applications. Ken Ginsburg, a professor of pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania and an expert on building emotional resilience, has been brought to Lab by the Parents’ Association to talk to parents—and, separately, to the teens themselves—about perfectionism, stress, and coping strategies.

The students arrive late. The charismatic Dr. Ginsburg strides back and forth at the front of the lecture hall. “You’ve been raised by the nicest generation of parents that have ever raised kids,” he says. “They say things like, ‘Dad, I’m a little disappointed’ and they might as well slap you.” The students laugh uproariously.

Dr. Ginsburg cautions them not to pressure themselves to do well at everything—“If you’re uneven, learn to celebrate it”—and to find the college that’s the right fit, not the one with the highest rankings.

On stress, he says, “I do a lot of work with street and gang kids. I’ve been doing that for 30 years. I also work with kids who chose to have their students work on class projects in response to Night of the Spiderfoot Toads, a fictional story about toads endangered by development. One student argued in favor of development, to build a community of learners. When students share what they’re passionate about, that passion is contagious.”

To cope with stress, Dr. Ginsburg advises students to follow these ten points, which he created for the American Academy of Pediatrics:

1. Make your problem manageable. “Every mountain is just a bunch of hills piled on top of each other. All you have to do is step up on that first hill.”

2. Active avoidance. In his work with addicts, Dr. Ginsburg tells them to avoid triggers—people, places, and things that make them want to use drugs. Similarly, everyone can lower their stress by avoiding stressful situations when possible.

3. Let some things go. Dr. Ginsburg learned this lesson from his mother-in-law, an Auschwitz survivor: “Take control of what you can. Let the rest go.”

4. Exercise. Especially for kids with anxiety, depression, or ADHD, “the single most important thing to do is to exercise, particularly in the morning,” Dr. Ginsburg says. The sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach when you’re stressed is literally the blood rushing to your legs. “After 20 to 25 minutes of sweat in the morning, you’ll be amazed at how well you’ll be able to focus.”

5. Breathe. Once you have used up the stress hormone by running, relax by taking deep belly breaths. By breathing deeply and sitting in a relaxed posture, “you have literally turned on your parasympathetic nervous system and used the power of science to get calm.”

6. Nutrition. “More science—the brain exists on sugar. The key is to keep that sugar even. With sweet foods, you feel good for a minute, then you crash in an hour. You have to feed the body properly. You have to teach kids to eat protein, not carbohydrates, and to keep the sugar even.”

7. Sleep. “Eight hours of sleep every night is the easiest way to keep your stress levels down.”

8. Take instant vacations. These mini-breaks might include working on a hobby or reading. “From a brain-science point of view, there is nothing more effective than reading a book.”

9. Keep your emotions in a “Tupperware box.” Everyone needs to contain their emotions, but don’t wall them up in a lead box. Instead, use “Tupperware,” which is transparent and compartmentalized. “Take out” your emotions later and process them, using emotional tools such as laughing, crying, praying, the creative arts, exercise, or talking to someone you trust—a professional or a friend.

10. Figure out how to contribute to the world. “Teenagers continually receive messages that you’re not good enough or you’re self-centered,” Dr. Ginsburg says. “I know that teenagers are the coolest people in the world. What is going to enable you to reach out to other people is the experience of having served.”

of a circle, the Pythagorean theorem. Other projects related math to everyday activities, such as cooking. One pair of students showed the importance of fractions in baking, underscoring their point with free cupcakes.

One pair of students showed the importance of fractions in baking, underscoring their point with free cupcakes.
It’s Been an Honor

Every year since 1971, graduating U-Highers have presented select teachers with honorary diplomas. The student nominators write citations that range from quirky to lofty, but are always sincere. Those presented by the Class of 2012 were no exception.

Daniel Calleri (Science)

“His bowties reflect his many personalities and his knowledge of various plants.”
—Lucy Dvos and Alexander Ortlieb

Matthew Horvat (Principal)

“His contributions to our school are numerous, but the most important are a collection of intangibles. Nobody measures familiarity; nobody defines true excitement in students’ activities, nobody gauges genuine kindness, and nobody can quantify Mr. Horvat’s true, unadulterated passion for his work.”
—Jonathan Reed and Tom Healy

Paul Horton (History)

“Sometimes he would agree with one side and list the reasons why that side was correct and then, suddenly, he would play devil’s advocate just as convincingly.”
—Nathan Eckstein and Adrianna McKenzie

Andrea Martonffy (History)

“It’s impossible not to love learning history in her classes. From debates about Mongols to learning the true meaning of an essay test, and from mountains of primary sources to exploring the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Ms. Martonffy’s classes never failed to engage us.”
—Molly Petchenik and Asha Ransby-Spar

Francisco Javier Sazo De Adana (Science)

“He taught us how to find the maximum elastic potential energy of a spring and how to maximize our own potentials for living life successfully.”
—Cathy Ludwig and Adam Picker

It’s Been a School

Second-grade curriculum. Teachers use the performance and in-class dance activities to teach kinetic energy, spatial awareness, anatomy, biology, language arts, vocabulary, history, art, and even math. Dance becomes a foundation for understanding other ideas, Ms. McFarlane says, noting that in a lesson on spatial geometry, her class brought up the 90-degree angles they noticed in the Alvin Ailey dances. In addition, though it’s not the primary curricular focus, learning about Ailey often leads to discussions of some hard sociopolitical issues, such as segregation in American society and the arts. “It dawned on them slowly—‘Wait, we couldn’t have all gone to school together?’” Ms. McFarlane says. “We’re planting a seed for them to think about as they grow older.”

Lab’s connections with Ailey start with alumnus Denise Jefferson, ’61, who served as the director of the Alvin Ailey School for 26 years until her death in 2010. This spring, four U-Highers (then-freshmen Kennedy Thomas and Catherine Eng, sophomore Katie Harris, and junior Erica Frank) had the opportunity to be among 20 Chicago-area high schoolers to work with the Alvin Ailey company in Chicago, and they brought that experience into Lab classroom. They studied with an Ailey choreographer, rehearsed and performed with the professional company, and still made time to visit second-grade classrooms to lead them through warm-up routines and discussions of the performance.

The Lab–Ailey Connection

Students explore dance as a foundation for learning

For most eight-year-olds, the name Alvin Ailey doesn’t mean much—but Lab second-graders couldn’t stop talking about him.

The late choreographer is celebrated for his impact on American concert dance. He pioneered diversity in dance—bringing in African American performers and drawing on contemporary and personal history as subject matter—and popularized modern dance in America and abroad. In April, 148 second-graders, teachers, and parents took the Metra downtown to see his company perform.

The Ailey outing began 10 years ago when second grade teacher Donna McFarlane—who trained as a dancer and earned a master’s in dance and education before joining Lab 27 years ago—taught a unit on dance, and took her class to see the Alvin Ailey American Dance Company perform. Since then, the trip has become one of the three annual second-grade field trips and an important element of the second-grade curriculum.

U-Highers Kennedy Thomas and Katie Harris work with Donna McFarlane’s students.
Help Connect Labbies

by volunteering for the newly restructured Alumni Association

Last spring in Chicago, the executive board of the revamped Laboratory Schools Alumni Association met for the first time. These volunteer leaders hail from across the country—Chicago, New York City, Boston, Washington, DC, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Haven, and Nashville—and are tasked with increasing outreach to the Lab and U-High alumni population. Already in recent years, the Alumni Relations staff has increased the number of Alumni-on-the-Road events taking place across the United States, and more than 500 alumni and friends participated in these activities over the past year. But the new association—by starting as a more nationally (as opposed to Chicago-based) group, hopes to amplify that involvement and giving back to Lab philanthropically.

The slate of association leaders includes:
- President, Erica Davidovic, ’95 (San Francisco)
- Vice president, Kenneth Ebie, ’97 (New York)
- Secretary, Tai Duncan, ’00 (Chicago)

Says Ms. Barnes, “This is an opportunity for alumni to have a greater voice in helping their peers foster Lab traditions and develop a structure that will lead the alumni population for years in the future.”

While they are still shaping the committee structures, there are already several areas in which alumni volunteers are needed:
- Regional committee members in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, or Boston
- Annual Fund committee members who can help share Lab’s story and motivate alumni giving
- Social media and networking committee members who may have professional experience with these tools

Alumni who are interested in participating in the Alumni Association in these or any other ways should contact Monica Barnes at 773-702-8811 or mbarnes@ucls.uchicago.edu.

The association is focusing on issues from social media to regional events, and of course increasing involvement and giving back to Lab philanthropically.

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While studying at the University of Chicago, Mr. Higdon placed fifth in the 1960 Olympic trials for the 3,000-meter. He also placed fifth in the 1964 Boston Marathon. He achieved his greatest success as a master (over-40) runner, winning four gold medals at the World Masters Championships.

It is estimated that more than a quarter-million runners have trained for marathons using his programs available in his bestselling book, Marathon: The Ultimate Training Guide: Advice, Plans, and Programs for Half and Full Marathons.

As part of this year’s Alumni Weekend awards event, members of the Alumni Association introduced a new award category. In addition to the Distinguished Alumni Award, which has been in existence for more than two decades, they presented the inaugural Rising Star Professional Achievement Award. The award recognizes an alumnus or an alumnna who has made an impact on her or his field and graduated within the last 30 years. A total of four alumni received Alumni Association honors this year.

An excerpt from his nomination describes Mr. Higdon:

“He is a true inspiration in all aspects of his life. He has a passion for three things: family, fitness, and writing. From the importance that he puts on his family, to his long-term dedication to the sport of running (as one of the ‘founding fathers’ of the sport), to his true commitment to being a writer, he always does it to the best of his ability—which is at the highest level possible. While he may be in his 70s, he is certainly young-at-heart. He proves it each and every day. He is truly distinguished.”

Honoring Excellence
Alumni Association bestows awards on Labbies who inspire

Distinguished Alumni Award

Hal Higdon, ’47

While studying at the University of Chicago, Mr. Higdon placed fifth in the 1960 Olympic trials for the 3,000-meter. He also placed fifth in the 1964 Boston Marathon. He achieved his greatest success as a master (over-40) runner, winning four gold medals at the World Masters Championships.

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Distinguished Alumni Award

Peter Kovler, ’69

While at the University of Chicago, Mr. Kovler has served in the Illinois Senate—representing the 13th Legislative District—since November 2004, when he was chosen to replace Barack Obama. During his time in the Senate, he has championed legislation on criminal justice reform, including the recent historic legislation that abolishes the death penalty. He also led legislation creating the Torture Inquiry Commission, in response to the allegations of torture committed under the supervision of Chicago Police Commander John Burns. Mr. Kovler has also received awards for advancing policy to prevent domestic violence.

In addition to his accomplishments in the Illinois State Senate, he has been recognized for his humanitarian work in Haiti, where he is involved in trying to rebuild a children’s hospital that was destroyed in the 2010 earthquake.

Rising Star Professional Achievement Award

Mollie Stone, ’97

Ms. Stone is using music to change lives.

While serving as the graduate associate for the Anherst College music department in 2001, she received a grant from the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation to create a DVD on black South African choral music. The resulting DVD and booklet, Véé Véé, are designed to help conductors, educators, and singers learn about black South African choral music, and learn to teach it in the oral tradition. She has since received another grant to study how South Africans are using choral music in the struggle against HIV.

Currently Ms. Stone is a conductor at the Chicago Children’s Choir and is pursuing her doctorate in choral conducting at Northwestern University. She also gives workshops on black South African choral music across the country.
Originally it was an Elizabethan fair for U-High featuring a Shakespeare performance, a Maypole dance, and guests outfitted in period costumes. Nearly four decades later, Lab’s longest-running annual tradition, Rites of May, has evolved into a school-wide, multicultural happening, celebrating the school’s global reach through a weekend of cultural, culinary, and carnival events organized by dozens of parent and student volunteers. The activities reflect the incredible cultural diversity of the Lab community, where families report speaking more than 50 languages at home.

Reconnected at Reunion

On the Friday night of Alumni Weekend, the class of 1982 (actually a quorum of three or four alums) broke out into a spontaneous arms-flailing Scammon Garden dance-party—a fitting kick-off to a weekend that drew Lab reunion’s largest crowd ever, more than 600 alumni and friends, and offered those guests more to do. English teacher Darlene McCampbell, taught an alumni creative writing class and Labbies strolled the hall on school tours, toasted longtime faculty and staff at a reception, and had the chance to hear some of their expert peers during panel discussions exploring the post-recession legal landscape and forecasting the 2012 election. As always, a few standing traditions rounded out the weekend: the Jazz Picnic (open to any alumni, not just those in reunion years), class dinners, and the alumni basketball tournament.

The Class of 1962 won both alumni giving awards, for highest participation and highest dollars raised. English teacher Darlene McCampbell, taught an alumni creative writing class and Labbies strolled the hall on school tours, toasted longtime faculty and staff at a reception, and had the chance to hear some of their expert peers during panel discussions exploring the post-recession legal landscape and forecasting the 2012 election. As always, a few standing traditions rounded out the weekend: the Jazz Picnic (open to any alumni, not just those in reunion years), class dinners, and the alumni basketball tournament.
Don’t Bury the Lede

Journalism teacher Wayne Brasler is the heart of Lab’s nationally recognized program

by Monica Davey, ’82

Don’t Bury the Lede

Journalism teacher Wayne Brasler is the heart of Lab’s nationally recognized program

About the Author

Monica Davey, Class of 1982 and a former editor-in-chief of the Midway, is the Chicago bureau chief of The New York Times. The last (and first) formal journalism class she took was at Lab and taught by Mr. Brasler.

“When I graduated from college, I wasn’t one of those people who knew exactly what to do next. But I knew that the place that I had felt the most at home—amused and excited and more than a little scared—had been in the journalism office at U-High. After doing this for 25 years, I recognize that Mr. Brasler had the qualities of every great editor I’ve had since. He was genuinely, deeply curious about revealing the truth and events around him. His critiques, sometimes crushing, were never gentle or fake so you could actually trust a good one when it (finally) came. And he inspired a particular brand of loyalty reserved for certain editors, the kind that has over the years sent me racing without pause to hurricanes and riots and whatever else was in store.”
Brasler rattles off names of the winners from 40 years ago without pausing: then, 30, then 20, and so on.

Among the professional journalists who once studied under Mr. Brasler, there is an echo through the generations. Without him, many say, they might not be doing this at all.

Inspiration for any number of writing careers.

There is no question that I went into journalism because of him, says Mr. Grossman, Class of 1988 and the deputy assistant editor of The Chicago Sun-Times. "I didn't know what else to do before I started college. I'm so thankful to him."

Among the professional journalists who once studied under Mr. Brasler, there is an echo through the generations.
Moving Rite into the Future

Once all about the Elizabethans, Rites of May celebrates a global community
by Debra Weiner

Originally it was an Elizabethan fair for U-High featuring a Shakespeare performance, a Maypole dance, and guests outfitted in period costumes. Nearly four decades later, Lab’s longest-running annual tradition, Rites of May, has evolved into a school-wide, multicultural happening, celebrating the school's global reach through a weekend of cultural, culinary, and carnival events organized by dozens of parent and student volunteers. The activities reflect the incredible cultural diversity of the Lab community, where families report speaking more than 50 languages at home.

Following the suggestion of one girl, who’d attended an Islamabad wedding at which her hands and feet were decorated with henna, a group of young Labbies made a beeline for the Pakistani booth and had the intricate designs painted on their arms. “It brought back nice memories,” said the girl who’d traveled to Pakistan. “They look so beautiful,” said another. “It’s cool to celebrate different ethnic backgrounds,” exclaimed a third.

A Ti Mo Chen, originally from Shanghai, has volunteered at the Chinese booth for nearly a decade. Over the years, children have painted pictures of bamboo and flowers on ceramic plates and made drawings on traditional fans. But the perennial favorite, Mrs. Chen says, is getting some Chinese name inscribed onto a metal, dog tag-style necklace by one of the parent volunteers. Last President Obama picked one up when he came to Rites of May several years ago when his children attended Lab. She notes. Her husband wrote out the then-senator’s Chinese name with an electrical pen.

Hands down, Rites of May’s most hopping spot was Kenwood Mall—transformed into a carnival midway complete with inflatable, enormous play equipment. Lab’s beloved “Ice Cream Lady” handed out frozen treats. Many of the carnival games were manned by volunteer High Schoolers, including two eighth-grade boys who worked the ring toss. “It’s better than doing nothing at home,” said the taller of the two. “Plus if we work, we get free food,” added the other. “And oh yeah,” said the first, “it also helps out the school.”

Parent Anastasia Giannakidou offered to help run the International Fest’s Greek booth in Upper Kovler Gym, but given what she called “all the negative discussion about Greece’s financial crisis,” she wanted to accentuate the positive. The UChicago linguistics professor focused on what she knows best and printed up word quizzes matching Greek terms with their English counterparts. Meanwhile, the artistically-inclined created ceramic tile designs fashioned after mosaics from classical and Hellenistic Greece. “Despite Greece’s current difficulties,” said Ms. Giannakidou, “I wanted to remind people that Greek thought is at the foundation of Western civilization.”

Yimei Chen, originally from Shanghai, has volunteered at the China booth for nearly a decade. Over the years, children have painted pictures of bamboo and flowers on ceramic plates and made drawings on traditional fans. But the perennial favorite, Ms. Chen says, is getting one’s Chinese name inscribed onto a metal, dog tag-style necklace by one of the parent volunteers. Even President Obama picked one up when he came to Rites of May several years ago when his children attended Lab, she notes. Her husband wrote out the then-senator’s Chinese name with an electrical pen.

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Five years ago, when Lab’s French teachers first opened a crêpe booth at Rites of May’s Global Café, the batter took so long to cook, there were loads of leftovers. Ever since, the moonlighting cooks have divided the butter-rich dough and made the crêpes at home ahead of time. At Rites, they simply reheat the crepes in special “poêle à crêpes” pans, filling them with sugar, lemon, Nutella, or jam. “We think we’re the most popular booth,” said Catherine Collet-Jarard, who noted that 340 crêpes were gobbled up this spring. “But then French people are proud of everything they do. We’re born that way.”
Speaking at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on April 23, 2012, President Obama vowed not to forget the legacy of the Holocaust. “We must tell our children,” Mr. Obama said. “But more than that, we must teach them. Because remembrance without resolve is a hollow gesture. Awareness without action changes nothing. In this sense, ‘never again’ is a challenge to us all—to pause and to look within.”

When the museum first opened its doors to the public nearly 20 years ago, no one expected it would become a platform for presidents and world leaders to stop and reflect. Yet in its short history, the museum’s role in the international conversation about genocide has expanded beyond all expectations, according to William Parsons, ’63, the museum’s chief of staff. “Never did [the museum’s founders] imagine this place would be doing what it’s doing today,” says Mr. Parsons.

The museum’s activities now include a wide range of ambitious outreach initiatives. In addition to educational programs in the United States, the museum has undertaken an effort to translate its website and materials into languages such as Chinese, Arabic, and Farsi in hopes of broadening its reach worldwide. In addition, FBI recruits and midshipmen from Annapolis now receive training at the museum. In 2002, when the president of Romania claimed there had been no Holocaust in his country, the museum led the effort to disprove his claim. President Ion Iliescu later apologized and promised to teach Romanians about their history.

“The potential of this place is huge,” Mr. Parsons says.

Mr. Parsons became the museum’s chief of staff after spending nearly three decades as a Holocaust educator, including two years as the museum’s director of education, where he was responsible for overseeing outreach programs that reach thousands of teachers and students nationwide. He relishes his new position. "It’s just a bigger classroom," he says.

As chief of staff, “almost every issue, problem, or project crosses my desk at some point,” Mr. Parsons says. "One moment I will be reviewing a statement the museum wants to release to the press on massacres in Syria, next it’s approving a plan for office moves, then it’s checking out a new system for keeping birds off the roof so they don’t drop their guano on the visitors below, and then it’s off to guide the Secretary General of the United Nations through the Museum’s exhibitions while at the same time getting instructions from staff as to what to do when we approach the press and media at the end of the visit. Next day, it starts all over again.”

His years at the Laboratory Schools provided a strong foundation for his work today, he says. “[T]o some extent, the Dewey philosophy of education at the Lab School probably began to influence me to think out of the box, listen to others without rushing to judgment, and being comfortable with the unexpected,” Mr. Parsons says.

Mr. Parsons’s father was the dean of Rockefeller Chapel, and it wasn’t uncommon, he recalls, for students to come to the house and discuss social justice issues. "You just grew up with it," he says.

His enduring interest in the Holocaust began in college. After turning in a paper on the Yalta conference, his professor, a Holocaust survivor, told him, “You learned your history, you don’t understand how complicated this is,” he recalls. The more he studied the history of the Holocaust, the more Mr. Parsons came to see

"Never did [the museum’s founders] imagine this place would be doing what it’s doing today,” says Mr. Parsons.
Lab students annually make use of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC

Each year, Susan Shapiro is faced with the task of teaching the incomprehensible. She begins her U-High senior seminar on the Holocaust by requiring students to read Simon Wiesenthal’s The Sunflower. While imprisoned in a concentration camp, Wiesenthal was brought to the bed of a dying Nazi soldier, who asked for forgiveness.

Ms. Shapiro challenges her students to grapple with the same question Wiesenthal faced: What would you do? Would you forgive the soldier?

For Ms. Shapiro, it’s crucial that her students understand not just the history, but also the moral complexities of the Holocaust. “There are no neat, tidy answers,” she says. “Part of the project is to help students understand that whatever the lessons of the Holocaust are, they’re not going to come to answers through our study.”

Instead, students immerse themselves in a rigorous, quarter-long examination of the origins, events, and aftermath of the Holocaust. The course culminates in a trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. By the time the students arrive in Washington, DC, they are well versed in Holocaust history, from the origins of anti-Semitism to the Nuremberg Trials and beyond.

The ambitious syllabus includes firsthand accounts from Jews who survived in ghettos and concentration camps, selections from Mein Kampf, and scholarly accounts including Life and Death in the Third Reich by Peter Fritzsche, “They’re reading highly sophisticated material and, ‘analyzing it in a way that really reflects the kind of work of which they’re capable,’ Ms. Shapiro says.

The course “demands a lot from students,” agrees Josh Koenig, ‘12, who took the seminar this fall. “It’s a group of kids who have self-selected, because they want to work intensely on history, and they want to study at a high level.”

Ms. Shapiro’s novel assignments ask her students to come to terms with the real people who lived through the Holocaust. For one assignment, Ms. Shapiro asks students to research key Nazi leaders. The students then hold a mock Nazi party meeting, in which they lobby for a greater role within the party from the perspective of the figure they’ve studied. Another project asks students to take the position of a Jew living in Berlin in 1938 and to decide whether they would flee or remain in Germany. “I force them to look through the eyes of the various participants,” Ms. Shapiro explains.

“It’s not about just imparting to them the ‘lessons of the Holocaust’... but rather, enabling them to take what they now understand, in whatever form it is, and make it available to others, to the next generation.”

The annual trip to the Holocaust Museum is “an essential element of what I do,” Ms. Shapiro says. In addition to touring the exhibits, the students use the museum’s extensive library to research their final papers.

“The visit to the museum allows for ‘full immersion,’ according to Josh. Spending three days exploring both the exhibitions and the library gave him the opportunity to “respond emotionally, intellectually, and analytically” to the history he had studied all quarter, he says.

Ms. Shapiro’s encouragement, Rosie and classmate Sydney Scarlata, ‘12, decided to interview Ewing for Rosie’s paper. The experience of meeting and speaking with Ewing was challenging, but Ms. Shapiro urged her students to go forward. “You’re meeting someone who can give you chapter and verse on Holocaust denial,” she told Rosie. “What a fabulous opportunity.”

Ewing, who was visiting the museum to research a book on Himmler, met twice with Rosie and Sydney. During the conversation, as Rosie and Sydney probes his views, Ewing expressed admiration for Hitler and dismissed evidence of the atrocities against Jews as propaganda.

The experience of meeting Ewing brought to life issues they had discussed in class. “We talked about people like him,” Sydney says. “It just seemed unreal that people could think the way he thought about the genocide that occurred.”

Sydney, an editor of the U-High Midway, approached the experience as a journalist. “I wanted to figure him out,” she says. “I looked at it as a ‘why not’ experience. I was just going to learn from it.”

Over the years, students and parents have sung the praises of Ms. Shapiro’s course—Josh, for instance, took the course because of his older sister’s rave review—but “that’s not why I do it,” Ms. Shapiro says.

“It’s not about just imparting to them the ‘lessons of the Holocaust’... but rather, enabling them to take what they now understand; in whatever form it is, and make it available to others, to the next generation.”
Mayor Rahm Emanuel has vision(s)

Improving schools, spurring jobs, promoting city just part of the picture

By JR Reed
Editor-in-Chief

After 14 months in office as Mayor, Rahm Emanuel has succeeded in his principal aims to improve Chicagoans’ job opportunities and lengthen the school day for public school students, while also elevating the city’s status on an international level.

In a six-way race last February, Emanuel ultimately prevailed in a landslide, winning 55 percent of the vote. Throughout the race, Emanuel campaigned to improve Chicago Public Schools and has successfully implemented a full school day, while expanding high performance charter schools and International Baccalaureate programs in schools.

According to the Mayor’s First Year Progress Report, “he has also shown follow-through in improving Chicago’s economy, securing more than 13,000 private-sector jobs in neighborhoods across the city and closing a $650 million budget deficit without significant layoffs, service cuts, or tax increases.

And, to ensure Chicagoans could engage in discussion surrounding the budget, Mayor Emanuel launched Chicagobudget.org, a new interactive website where more than 3,000 people posted 10,000 potential solutions.

Furthermore, immediately upon taking office, the Mayor convened a committee to propose reforms to the City’s Tax Increment Financing (TIF) program. Based on the group’s recommendations, the City will, for the first time, align TIF investment within Chicago’s multiyear economic development plan, helping to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent on high-impact projects.

This new level of transparency centers at the heart of Emanuel’s primary aims as Mayor. Moving into the second year of his term, he says he remains focused on changing the way citizens interact with city government and helping promote a sense of shared responsibility.

“When I entered this office, I promised we’d bring an era of change,” the Mayor said in an interview Friday, May 20, at his office in City Hall. Sporting a blue and orange tie to complement his suit, the Mayor sat with his legs crossed on a comfortable chair adjacent to his desk. “I made that pledge. And I think that at every level, whether it’s an area of education, city government, meaning its budget and services, and crime, we have been true to our pledge of change.

“So, if you ask me, I didn’t say one thing in the campaign and another thing when I got in. I said I was going to do something, and we are working to see that change through.”

While the Mayor acknowledged people sometimes get cynical about politicians because they do not deliver on election promises, he believes his administration has followed through on its goals.

“We have actually gone farther on a host of things, farther than what I even pledged for change,” the Mayor said. “At every level, we handled the budget and balanced it, without raising taxes. And nobody thought that was possible.

“We made major changes to our services and reforms, and I think we also provided more and better services than we had before, even while we were eliminating a $600 million deficit. And now we are working on the next two reforms: reforms for employee contracts to get savings and retirement.

“All in all, we are making sure we raise the standards and level of accountability in our system. I suppose my one take-away is: We pledged an era of change and we are delivering on that. And we haven’t deviated from that.

“And I suppose the other thing I would say is, when you look back: There’s not much in the way of change.”

Amid the key reforms Mayor Emanuel focused on during his first year in office was improving the Public School system and making school days longer so that students could learn more.

“THIS IS A DIVERSE city with a lot of kids from different backgrounds,” the Mayor said. “And I have to make sure that we don’t continue to have a city with the shortest school year, that shortchanges the kids. It was a system that wasn’t designed with their future in mind.”

Over the course of his 14 months, Mayor Emanuel has talked to many administrators, teachers, and students about various public schools.

“I have many teachers who tell me that they have to rush through the material because there isn’t time for individual attention,” the Mayor explained. “There are principals who tell me they collapse science and math into one course because they don’t have enough time for both topics. That’s not right. Those are false choices.

“We need to make sure that, with each day, we’re giving kids a full education and all the resources necessary for arts, music, math, social studies, reading, and science. And that’s my goal and that’s what I want to see happen. It is supported by parents, and it is supported by the city. It’s the right thing to do, and I don’t think the kids in New York, Boston, Miami, L.A., or Houston should have more time in the classroom than kids in Chicago. Whatever it is, it’s environmental.

While the Mayor has made significant improvements to public schools, perhaps his most notable accomplishment to date took place just three weekends ago with the NATO Summit.

Before the Summit, Mayor Emanuel emphasized the event’s potential benefits in elevating Chicago’s status on an international level, in addition to other recent major global events that found a home in the city.

“We hosted the Nobel Laureates here April 23-25, the International Summit with the Kennedy Foundation,” Mayor Emanuel said. “They walked away from here saying that this is the template we have to use in the future.

“And what’s exciting for us is children here in Chicago who got the chance to ask questions to world leaders who shaped the world you and I are living in. De Klerk participated in changing apartheid in South Africa, Gore helped usher in a period of time that opened up Eastern Europe, and Chicago can do that.

“And, if you look at our history, Chicago really emerges on a national and international scene with the World Summit in 1893. So it’s in our history.”

Turning the subject to U-Highers, since his three children attend the Lab Schools and so many students here live in Hyde Park, Mayor Emanuel feels the community is evolving.

“Now it’s not exactly for me to judge, it’s more for the neighbors to judge, but when I drive around and walk around the Hyde Park neighborhood, I can see that it’s really evolving and changing,” the Mayor said.

“Both the University of Chicago and the greater neighborhood seem to be getting stronger in my opinion, especially with the recent developments taking place in the Harper Court area.”

Mayor Emanuel also stressed that U-Highers need to continue to find time to give back to their community.

“You guys should know two things,” the Mayor said. “One, you’re very fortunate. You have loving parents, and you have received a great education. That can’t be said for everybody around the world or in the country, or in your city. So you’re fortunate, but you have to use that fortunate position. And what comes with that is responsibility to give something back—to your city, to your state, to your country.

“My one thing is that you have a lot to be proud of, you’re going to march on to college and other things in life. Somewhere in your life, even this summer, find time to do community service, whatever it is, environmental issues,

“We pledged an era of change and we are delivering on that. We have not let politics stand in the way of reform.”

then the Dali Lama was as well, a spiritual and political leader.

So the Nobel Laureates, the NATO Summit: 60 World Leaders, defense ministers, foreign ministers, and, on May 21, we hosted the National Nutrition and Health Conference here to discuss ways to combat obesity. Part of being an international city is being able to host major international events and community organizing, public safety, tutoring, whatever it is. “Find time to give something back to others, because you’re lucky and you should appreciate how lucky you are. And then use that lucky position to help others, because it’s the responsibility that comes with being fortunate.”

From the Midway

U-High Midway • Tuesday, June 5, 2012 • Page 1

LABLIFE Fall 2012 43
Lab Makes History

Experiencing Education: 1896–2012
This newly updated history of the Laboratory Schools adds scores of new photos and new chapters covering the last 30 years, and includes timelines highlighting moments at Lab in the context of the University, Chicago, and the world.

Experiencing Education: 1896–2012
Written by William Harms with Catherine Braendel, ’81, and Kay Kirkpatrick, MAT’72.
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Saturday, September 22, 5–7 p.m.
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San Francisco Alumni Reception
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Hosted by Pamela Joyner, ’75

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Location to be announced

Connections, Lab’s Gala Fundraiser
Saturday, March 9, 2013

Alumni Reunion Weekend
June 6–9, 2013