LabLife

the magazine for alumni, parents, and friends of the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools

Spring 2016

LabLife

in this issue

FROM DIRECTOR ROBIN APPLEBY

Looking back, looking ahead

"It is exciting to be at a point when we can begin to focus less on managing the daily challenges of construction and new facilities, and more on the opportunities Lab has been given to maximize the potential of our people and our educational programs."

As we end another school year, this is a good moment to reflect on all that our community has accomplished this year, and to share plans for Lab's future strategic efforts.

Reflecting on Lab's accomplishments

Since school began in September, Lab has:

> celebrated the opening of Gordon Parks Arts Hall;

> hosted the three-day, 27-person Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) accreditation team visit;

> completed two major leadership searches for next year;

> developed our partnership with the University of Chicago Charter Schools;

> created makerspaces and implemented Design Thinking projects and interdisciplinary courses.

While navigating all of this change, there is a strong sense that we are well positioned to make the most of the many opportunities before us.

Thinking strategically about our future

To most effectively maximize Lab's opportunities, we will engage in a community-wide strategic planning process which will include faculty, staff, parents, students, alumni, and our University partners. While there is already general agreement that the success of the Lab+ project will allow our next strategic plan to be focused primarily on people and programs rather than facilities, we need time to develop a shared understanding of our aspirations. We will engage a strategic planning consultant to partner with Lab and guide a comprehensive process. The timing is excellent as our strategic planning work will dovetail nicely with the completion of our ISACS reaccreditation, which included a self-study and the visiting team's report of commendations and recommendations.

Managing Lab's long-planned growth

By the fall Lab's work on the Historic Campus will be nearly complete and will have full use of all our spaces on the Historic Campus including, for the first time ever, all four floors of Judd Hall. Over nearly a decade, Lab has thoughtfully and actively planned for growth and we will have six sections in each grade up through fifth grade next year. Our admissions team has worked hard to identify the best candidates for our expanding Middle and High Schools. In the fall, we will enroll approximately 34 additional students to sixth grade, and 46 additional students to ninth grade—including four High Jump students (high achieving students who come from families of limited economic means), the fantastic result of Lab's partnership with the High Jump organization.

The growth of the student population will, of course, be supported by parallel growth of the faculty and staff. Individual classroom sizes will not increase, and, excitingly, we can begin to offer new courses and electives in the High School. And Lab has made a commitment to invest in important all-school programs and partnerships, Over the past 18 months, we have seen significant growth in these programs that keep Lab connected to our community, create new professional growth opportunities for faculty, and result in essential and innovative hands-on learning opportunities for students.

It is exciting to be at a point when we can begin to focus less on managing the daily challenges of construction and new facilities, and more on the opportunities Lab has been given to maximize the potential of our people and our educational programs.

The strategic planning process ahead will allow us to dream big about how to both maintain the most important and meaningful traditions of a Laboratory Schools education, and establish new opportunities for the future. Through this comprehensive process, we will ensure that Lab remains one of the world's most outstanding pre-collegiate educations.

Sincerely,

Robin Appleby

LabLife, published three times a year, is written for the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools' community of alumni, parents, faculty, and staff.

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Volume 9, Number 3

Start your engines—finally

Science curriculum reshapes the "car project" as an eighth grade activity

What? Wait. Really? We're* not *doing cars this year?

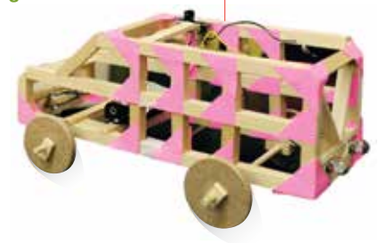
Many sixth graders felt surprise back in 2013–14, when a strategic shuffling of the Middle School science curriculum moved the car project, a much-anticipated part of the sixth-grade Lab experience, to the eighth grade. But now the class of 2020's two-year wait is over, and they've snatched up their soldering irons and mitre boxes with gusto.

The goal remains the same: to design and build a foot-long car—basswood frame, electronic circuits, two batteries—that can move forward and in reverse and flash its headlights. In older hands and minds, however, this challenge opens up new pedagogical possibilities. "The biggest impetus to move the project to eighth grade was to take advantage of a couple more years of math," says science teacher **Mark Wagner**, who originated the car project more than a decade ago. Things now get rolling with a unit on Newton's laws of motion, with students testing basics on inclined planes, and then move into electricity and magnetism when it's time to tinker under the hood.

Another student taught her car a neat trick: to roll over and continue moving on a second set of wheels on its roof.

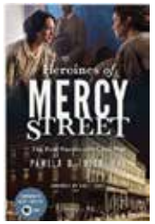
The older students also have more "ability to work independently compared to sixth grade," says science teacher **Michael Wong**, "and that lets them take the project further," including more ambitious special features. This year one student redirected some of the power from the lights to the wheels, upping the vroom factor without burning out his motor. Another student taught her car a neat trick: to roll over and continue moving on a second set of wheels on its roof. Further out the whimsy spectrum: an ice cream truck with flip-down counter and, compliments of a chip transplanted from a birthday card, its own miniaturized siren song.

Says science teacher Mark Wagner, "Building a car like this is an exercise in creative problem solving."



Recommended reading

Nurse Mary Toledo-Trevino recommends *Heroines of Mercy Street: The Real Nurses of the Civil War* by Pamela D. Toler



Until the Civil War, a woman working as a nurse wasn't respectable—nursing wasn't even considered a real profession. But when the war broke out, women responded to President Lincoln's plea for volunteers to serve their country.

Pamela Toler tells the story of how nursing evolved from a private, home-based activity to a skilled and respected profession and how that evolution tied into the expanding rights and roles of women in the United States.

In 1859, just a before the war broke out, Florence Nightingale published *Notes on Nursing*, which helped the public see nursing in a more respectable light. Toler estimates that more than 20,000 women worked as nurses during the Civil War. Many joined through organized channels, others followed family members, some arrived at the battlefront on their own. Without training, these women learned on the job: caring for the wounded, assisting amputations, providing a calming presence to the dying, managing supplies, maintaining hygienic workspaces, even writing letters home for patients. These women worked at the battlefront, in military hospitals, on hospital transport ships, and in convalescent camps until well after the war ended. They risked death and many did die from the contagions that became the main causes of death throughout the war. All the while, they fought for fair treatment and respect.

Their work paved the way for the important role and respect people like me now have in a profession that is crucial to healthcare. By the end of the war, nursing schools were opening across the country and famous nurses helped advance the role of women: Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross; Dorothea Dix established the army nursing corps; some became physicians; others campaigned for women's rights, better healthcare, and other reforms.

Toler estimates that more than 20,000 women worked as nurses during the Civil War.

Today, registered nurses comprise one of the largest segments of the US workforce. Toler's is an exciting story that helps illustrate how nurses arrived on the frontline of healthcare worldwide and gave me a deeper appreciation for nursing's history. Through their battles, these Civil War nurses allowed future nurses—myself included—to be able to thrive.

FROM THE SYLLABI

The glass cases outside Rowley Library hold a rotating series of book displays curated by the librarians. "Then and Now" included photos and book selections of faculty and staff from years ago and today—a little literary window of insight into each person.

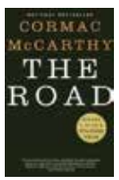
JAN YOURIST

One Hundred Years of Solitude
Gabriel Garcia Marquez

City on Fire
Garth Risk Hallberg

LESLIE SCOTT

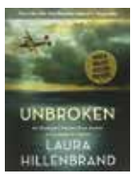
Salem's Lot
Stephen King



The Road
Cormac McCarthy

LAURA SALAS-DAMER

The Grapes of Wrath
John Steinbeck



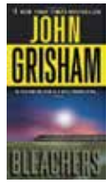
Unbroken
Lauren Hillebrand

MARTY BILLINGSLEY, '77

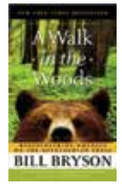
The Once and Future King
T. H. White

Snow Crash
Neal Stephenson

LUKE ZAVALA

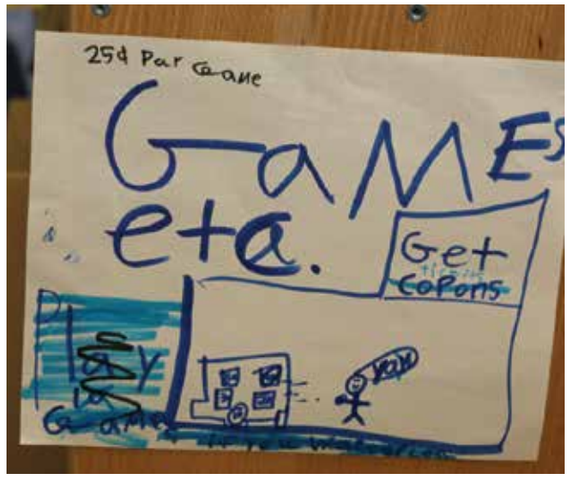


Bleachers
John Grisham



A Walk in the Woods
Bill Bryson

Second-grade startups



In January and February, students in Lauryn Marinho's and Catherine Gillespie's classes spent six weeks learning how to be entrepreneurs.

The second-graders were given a lot of freedom to design a dream business. They could work independently or with a partner. They could sell a product or a service that was homemade, inexpensive, and not food (because of concerns about allergies).

The students conducted market surveys, signed rental agreements, made business cards, and filmed commercials. There was also an optional field trip to Target to study store design, pricing, and advertising.

Many of the second-graders chose to sell products: bracelets, bookmarks, portraits, origami, clay animal figurines. "Anything very small and cute did well," says Ms. Marinho. Others tried selling services—manicures, Chinese lessons, playing songs on the piano—with less success. Here, in student's own words, are some other business insights:

> It's better to work with a partner because running a business is a lot of work.

> If someone works for you, you have to pay them.

> Location is important.

> You can have an order form in case you run out of what you are selling.

> It helps when customers see your product being used by others. It makes them want it, too.

> Sometimes you have to walk around and sell door-to-door.

> It is hard to work with a business partner. You might have disagreements and you have to share the profit with them.

> It is fun to have a popular and successful business.

The students began the project with $3 of their own money to spend during four "open store" days, held every two weeks. After each store day, students could change their business or partner if things weren't going well or if they wanted to try something new.

On the first open store day, Ms. Marinho's students sold to each other. The second day, they sold to their eighth-grade buddies. The third day, they sold to Ms. Gillespie's class. On the final store day, they sold to their parents at a celebration potluck.

Each time, students had to decide which pricing strategy to use: sell a lot for a low price or a few for a higher price. "By the end, they figured out that 20 to 40 cents is a very good range," says Ms. Marinho, although one student did a roaring trade selling intricate bracelets for $1.50. A competitor tried selling bracelets for 40 cents, even though each bracelet took two hours to make. "So the students learned how much their time and effort is worth," she said. Students also learned that running a business costs money. If they ran out of change, they could get it from the Ms. Marinho Bank, but they had to pay a transaction fee of two cents. They also had to pay rent—10 percent of their profits—on their assigned storefront in the classroom.

The students conducted market surveys, signed rental agreements, made business cards, and filmed commercials.

Ms. Marinho broke the rules onthe final day, allowing a group of students who loved baking to sell cupcakes, brownies, and Rice Krispie treats. These proved so popular and were priced so competitively that consumer protections quickly had to be put in place.

Work in progress

Making the most of Earl Shapiro Hall's new Makerspace

This past fall Lab's first grade classes underwent an American rite of passage: a trip to a farm. Animals. Hayrides. Pumpkins. At the farm, the children learned how pumpkin skins are cured to protect the flesh inside for future use. Back at Earl Shapiro Hall, the students encountered another farm. Situated in the new third floor Makerspace, teachers had set up a small pretend farm—complete with red barn and pumpkin patch. And so began a Makerspace Challenge: The students' were to transport small pumpkins (mementos of their field trip) from the pumpkin patch to the barn for curing. Hint: you couldn't just carry them.

With guidance from teachers **Elizabeth Luna**, **Amy Landry**, and **Blair Wagonheim**, and using drinking straws, bottle caps, and other recyclable materials, students set about building wagons, conveyor belts, and other contraptions to accomplish the task.

"The first thing a lot of kids did was just glue round objects onto the side of boxes," says Ms. Luna. "Our role as teachers was just to ask questions: 'How are you going to make that move?' 'How do you think the pumpkins will stay in there?'"

This is problem solving. This is a developmentally appropriate Makerspace.

The idea for Lab's MakerSpace—part of a national movement to encourage creativity, innovation, and collaboration—had been bubbling since ESH opened. Ms. Landry and Principal Susan Devetski got further impetus from a May 2014 conference they attended as part of their professional development. "They were talking about this idea of kids making things in the classroom, and I could picture my own students," says Ms. Landry. "This was them." She thought it might be an especially useful strategy for kids who weren't into traditional sit-down class activities.

Inspired by the short film *Caine's Arcade*, about a nine-year-old who builds a game arcade, Ms. Landry tasked students with designing and building games like ring toss out of materials from the reusable room. It grew so big, they hosted a potluck and invited parents and families to come play the games. Building projects became a regular part of choice time in Ms. Landry's class, and ESH Tech Coordinator **Louis Coronel** contributed magnets, motors, and circuits and helping the students build a cable car.

More work followed during professional development days at Lab, and as more teachers got involved throughout the school year, a committee formed and spent the summer exploring how to introduce maker activities to students and integrate them into the curriculum. Classes also needed materials—lots of materials—which came with the help of parent volunteer Mary Hayes, who manages the reusables center, and donations from parents: empty containers, alligator clips, buzzers, and the aforementioned bottle caps and straws, to name a few examples.

The idea for Lab's MakerSpace—part of a national movement to encourage creativity, innovation, and collaboration—had been bubbling since ESH opened.

Last fall's mini pumpkin patch was the first test of this larger, integrated approach. The response from the first graders? "They didn't want to stop," Ms. Luna gushes. "I would tell them it was lunchtime, and they would actually get mad at me. They asked to come on their free time to work on their projects."

This spring the second grade had their turn, adding a wagon-building component to their unit on the Oregon Trail. Looking ahead, projects might require woodworking tools (thanks to a grant from the Parents' Association) and newly acquired 3D printers.

"You can do pretty much anything you want on a 3D printer," says Mr. Coronel. Yet, he cautions, "But you need to ask if it fits in meaningfully with the curriculum." One good use for the new technology might be with an N/K unit on architecture, he says, in which the students already use drawing software to design and draw their own buildings. Adding 3D printers would be the perfect extension, allowing students to turn their drawings into physical objects.

The students learn to plan and problem solve through trial and error, and, says Ms. Landry, they gain "stick-to-it-iveness" (more technically, task perseverance) and "how to deal with frustration, to be OK with making mistakes and work past them."

"It's the direction the country is moving in," says Ms. Luna. "You have to be creative. That's what's going to take these kids into the future—innovation and problem solving. It's up to us as educators to prepare them to face the challenges of our rapidly changing world."

Words of world discovery

Families share language and heritage through stories

Each Friday before school since November, N/K and Primary Schoolers and parents have gathered in Earl Shapiro Hall's Lim Family Library for multilingual story time.

The program is one of the first projects of Lab's Multilingual Parent Group, formed in June 2015. **Noha El-Sharkawy-Aref**, a reading specialist who chairs the group's library subcommittee, thought it would be interesting—and fun—to hear children's stories in other languages. Given the large number of languages spoken by Lab families at home, there was no shortage of parents willing to come and read.

Ms. El-Sharkawy-Aref, whose daughter is in nursery school, read an Arabic translation of Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. The selections include other translations of familiar English-language stories—*Buenas Noches Luna*, or *Goodnight Moon*, was another—as well as works originally written in another language, such as the German *Zauberwort: die schönsten Gedichte für Kinder aus vier Jahrhunderten*, loosely translated as *Magical Words: Four Centuries of the Prettiest Poems for Children*. Many of the books are available for checkout from the Lim Family Library.

To start each story time, children and parents learn to say "hello" in the day's language, and at the end the group learns a word or song—they sang the Spanish children's song "Los Pollitos" after Spanish story time; after *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* they repeated the Arabic word for caterpillar: *douda*.

Emeritus Retirements

Charles Branham, PhD'81

U-High history teacher Charles Branham, PhD'81, taught African American history at Chicago State, Roosevelt, the University of Illinois, and Northwestern University before joining Lab in 1991.

How did you get interested in African American history?
My interest was always just a search for a usable past. I grew up in the South in the 1960s and was involved in the Civil Rights movement. But there weren't any courses on African American history offered in college.

When I got to graduate school at the University of Chicago, again, they didn't have any courses. The premier African American historian, John Hope Franklin, was there, but he taught Southern history, particularly Reconstruction history. So I learned African American history by teaching African American history.

How was teaching at Lab different from your college teaching?
I had been lecturing for 20 years, but that's counterproductive at the high school level. What you want to do is involve students more actively. You want them to develop specific areas of interest and bring in outside sources to the class. Students need to have opportunities to work in small groups, compete, and even move around the classroom instead of being hidebound to a desk.

What do you think your students will remember about you?
I require at least three strong pieces of evidence in support of any argument. Stay away from contemporary analogies, because they're too easy to make. Andrew Jackson is not like Richard Nixon or Ronald Reagan.

I come from the generation that wrote a PhD dissertation on a typewriter. [Today's students] have access to information that would have been unimaginable when I was a student. But it's too easy to just pick the first or second cited source.

And recognize that you're God—you know how it turned out, whereas people who were actually living through it didn't know how it was going to turn out. So approach history with a degree of humility.

I emphasize writing, not just research. We started a student history journal, *Inflame*, which publishes twice a year. I also have had a student published in the *Concord Review*, a national student history journal, for the last four years in a row.

Will you do some writing of your own during retirement?
I haven't decided. I think I'll take a deep breath once I finish grading.

"Approach history with a degree of humility."

Gerold Hanck

Science teacher Gerold Hanck has been at Lab for 27 years. He taught third and fourth grade from 1989 to 1999, then became a third-grade science teacher. "Science was my first love and what I really love teaching," he says. "That's the job I was meant to do."

Do you remember your first day?
I remember my first class and my first year. The kids were great. I remember feeling a bit lost. I came from Ancona School, which was much smaller.

What have your students taught you?
Patience. You have to be willing to change your pace and adapt to what the kids can accept and learn. That's not always an adult pace or an adult set of priorities.

What's the project you're most famous for?
The cricket project. The students design a habitat suitable for a pair of crickets. Then they have to feed and take care of them for about five weeks. The kids really get into observing them and taking care of them.

"I'll miss their energy, their enthusiasm, their spontaneity."

Do all of the crickets make it?
That's part of the learning curve. I emphasize at the beginning that because crickets are insects, they have a short lifespan. Also some of the crickets, as they grow, go through molting, and sometimes they won't survive. So it is a learning experience.

I've been doing this for 16 years and had maybe one or two kids who have really not wanted to do the crickets. They had reservations about taking the crickets home, for example. I think the resistance came from the parents.

Plans for retirement?
Try to get better at two of my passions: tennis and photography. I have children and grandchildren on both coasts, in New York City and in Seattle. I want to do some international traveling as well.

What will you miss the most?
Definitely the kids. I'll miss their energy, their enthusiasm, their spontaneity. It's certainly true that being with the young keeps you young.

What will you miss the least?
When you teach, you want every lesson to go perfectly. When it doesn't happen, it feels like a missed opportunity. But that's the nature of teaching.

Kathy Piane

Kathy Piane began her career as an assistant teacher in the nursery school in 1982. During her 34 years at Lab she taught kindergarten, first, and second grade, and now teaches a first and second grade looping class.

How did you end up at Lab?
I was in the business world originally, in corporate investments. It was fun and exciting, but I didn't think I wanted to do it for the rest of my life.

My mother was a teacher. Everyone always told me I was going to be a teacher too, so I decided I wasn't. Eventually I realized that really was what I wanted to do, so I pursued a master's degree with a reading certification. In education, things are fresh every day and every year.

You have a lot of family connections at Lab.
That's right. My husband Dom was at Lab for 38 years in the music department. My younger son, Tom, is now the chair of the PE department. My older son, Marc, is a musician, and he co-directs Summer Lab Onstage. My daughter-in-law, Lisa Harrison, teaches here too. And I have grandchildren in the fifth and seventh grade. So we have a few Pianes at Lab.

Did you ever have your children or grandchildren in your classes?
There are multiple sections, so the school purposely doesn't place them in your class. But my sons both had my husband for a music elective. Apparently that went OK.

What do students remember you for?
When former students stop by, they often reminisce about "choice time." It's very brief, usually 20 minutes, but happens daily. We have a nice collection of blocks and art materials for creating and constructing all sorts of wonderful group projects. Being able to incorporate that into first and second grade is something that we're very fortunate to be able to do at Lab.

Any retirement plans?
I'll probably substitute a day or two a week. I don't think I can stop cold turkey.

What will you miss the most?
The curiosity and cheerfulness of young students. Exploring new curriculum and technology—I love doing that. And bumping into my grandchildren.

What will you miss the least?
I won't miss getting up in the dark. I won't miss that a bit.

"I'll probably substitute a day or two a week. I don't think I can stop cold turkey."

Joan Vande Velde

Physical education teacher Joan Vande Velde has taught at Lab since 1991. She has taught all levels of physical education, from kindergarten to high school.

Where did you teach before?
I started out in public school at the high school level, teaching PE and coaching gymnastics. Then I had three kids and totally changed my focus—I became really interested in their development. So I got my master's in early childhood education.

Were you a gymnast yourself?
I graduated college in 1971, so I'm of the era when women couldn't really do sports. I played basketball at the University of Illinois, but we weren't truly a varsity team. We coached ourselves and got ourselves to our games. I was awarded a varsity letter about 10 years ago. The university had a whole weekend for women athletes that culminated in a big dinner where we finally got our varsity letters. I believe the oldest was 80.

I was teaching at Lab when I received the invitation. I brought my letter to school to show them. I started out by saying, "Who knows what Title IX is?"

What have you learned from your students?
How many ways there are to look at the same thing. Sometimes I feel like it's shame on me, that I should have seen that right away. But it takes a student to teach a teacher.

Awarded a varsity letter for college sports decades after she graduated, Ms. Vande Velde shared it with her students asking, "Who knows what Title IX is?"

What do you think students will remember from your class?
I did the Maypole dance for probably 20 years, as part of the Rites of May. I'm afraid I'm taking the dance to my grave. Nobody has stepped up to take that over.

Also Nancy King and I run Scooterville. We've got a double gym, so we open the doors and set it up to look like a village. Then the kids scoot from one thing to the other. It's a big deal. Just one day a year—that's about all we can handle.

Retirement plans?
I'm so lucky to have three kids with four grandkids—soon to be five. So I'll be able to spend more Nana-time with them.

I'm also a Fulbright teacher. I went to Slovakia on a teacher exchange some 10 years ago. I lived in my exchange partner's teeny-tiny flat, not much bigger than a college dorm, and she came here. Fulbright sponsors some trips that I'm hoping to go on.

How will you stay fit, now that you won't be teaching gym every day?
I have a very big dog who's a large part of my life. I take him on long walks at least twice a day. I do yoga and Pilates, and believe it or not I'm a tap dancer.

Parenting

If we do our jobs well, we put ourselves out of work


JESSICA LAHEY

Failure. It's not usually thought of as a positive experience, but one can hardly listen to a successful entrepreneur or scientist without hearing about how failing—often and repeatedly—laid the groundwork for success. Infused with stories from her experience as a middle school teacher and mom of two boys, Jessica Lahey, a contributing writer for *The Atlantic*, writer of "The Parent–Teacher Conference" column at *The New York Times*, and author of *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed*, spoke to both failure and motivation when she visited Lab in March as part of the Parents' Association Speaker Series.

Before an audience of more than 100 parents, teachers, counselors, and members of the Hyde Park community, Ms. Lahey drew from a wide body of research peppered with stories culled from her experiences as a middle school teacher to highlight the importance of intrinsic motivation. Her talk outlined the importance of instilling in each child autonomy, competence, and connectivity.

"She explained the subtle but important distinction between autonomy and independence, and as well, between competence and confident," says parent-volunteer Christie Henry, who organizes the series. "The *confident* child is the nursery

schooler who bursts into the classroom with enthusiasm and proclaims she knows she will be the best student because her parents have told her so—but she has no school experience on which to draw. The competent student is the one who has faced similar experiences, gained exposure, overcome a few challenges, and possibly even mastered some similar situations. That student can draw on that experience and channel it to successfully navigate like situations."

Ms. Lahey talked about a range of experiments that show how invaluable intrinsic motivators are and that extrinsic motivators—grades, incentives, etc.—don't benefit children in the long run. Giving children the autonomy and space to fail is an important aspect of an environment that allows them to build competence and experience success.

Explained Ms. Henry, "As parents, it is our job over time to render ourselves out of a job, to ensure our lists of priorities for our kids become their own lists, that they write their own life stories, in their voice, and that we don't edit them into our view of perfection."

The goal of the Parents' Association Speaker Series is to bring to Lab—and now that Lab has the space in Gordon Parks Assembly Hall, to our greater community—highly regarded experts who speak to the art and science of raising and educating children.

>>SEE VIDEOS OF PAST EVENTS AND FIND RESOURCES RELATED TO THE PA SPEAKER SERIES ONLINE AT LABPARENTS.ORG.

SPRING HIGHLIGHTS 2016

FENCING

Members of the 15-team Great Lakes High School Fencing Conference, U-High hosted its sixth annual fencing tournament in January. Winning individual honors were juniors Athena Chien, with a silver medal in foil at the Illinois State Championships, and Janine Liu, with a silver medal in saber at both the Illinois State Championships and the Great Lakes Conference Championships. Senior Nikita Dulin won medals in saber at both events.

SQUASH

Interest remained high in this second varsity season with 20 students participating and using the new MetroSquash facility located near campus for home matches. The Maroons finished in second place in the first Annual U-High/MetroSquash Invitational in February.

DANCE TROUPE

Under the guidance of Physical Education faculty Nicole Magliocco, the dance troupe performed at a number of contests and school functions this year.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

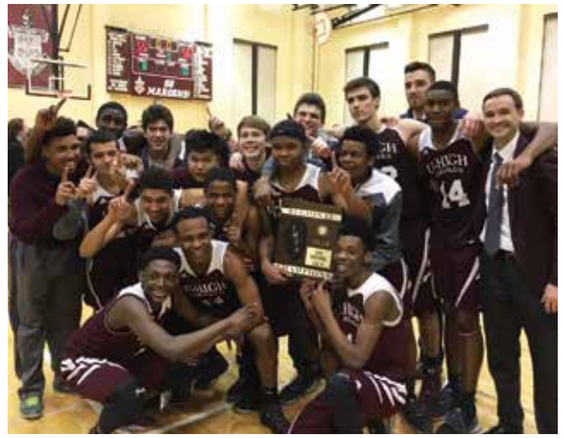
The Maroons finished with an overall record of 8–16 and a fine 5–2 record in the ISL, tied for second place. Sophomores Roxanne Nesbitt and Tia Polite were named ISL All-Conference First and Second Team, respectively.


TIA POLITE

BOYS SWIMMING

The Maroons continued to rewrite the school record books again this year. The team set eight new records this year (on top of the nine records last year) and qualified three individuals and a relay team to the IHSA State Swimming Championships. Senior Kelvin Xie set records in the 50-free, 100-free, and 100-breaststroke; senior Nigel Van Ha in the 100-back; and junior Eamon Keenan in the 200-free, 200-medley, and 500-free. The three of them and senior Fabrice Guyot-Sionnest beat their 400-free relay record from last year with a 3:12.49. Coach Paul Gunty celebrated his 40th year coaching swimming, the past 26 at the helm of the Maroons.

JASON LIN AND EAMONN KEENAN


BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL 2A REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2016

BOYS BASKETBALL

Winning the IHSA Regional Championship in front of a packed Upper Kovler audience over Seton Academy 56–55 in overtime on a last second basket by senior Caleb Hill was the highlight of the season. The Maroons won the Lisle Thanksgiving Tournament, the ISL Championship (11–1), and IHSA 2A Regional Championship reeling off a terrific 22–7 season record. Seniors Xavier Smith and Caleb Hill were named ISL All-Conference along with juniors Oliver Maciak and Jameel, who was also Illinois Basketball Coaches Association (IBCA) Honorable Mention All-State Class 2A. Head coach Rob Ley was named ISL Coach-of-the-Year and IBCA District Coach of the Year Class 2A.

New leaders to join Lab

Director Robin Appleby appoints two new leaders who will join the Lab community in July

Stephanie Weber
High School Principal

Nicole Neal
Director, Student Services

Ms. Weber is a seasoned leader with significant independent school experience in senior leadership roles. Most recently, Ms. Weber served as the assistant head of school and head of upper school at New York City's Hewitt School, where she led the strategic planning process that resulted in a new vision for the institution. Before joining Hewitt, Ms. Weber served as director of upper school at the Westridge School in Pasadena, CA; director of studies at Kent Place School in Summit, NJ; and dean of students at Riverdale Country School in New York. She has taught math and history at schools, including Spence School in New York City and TASIS in Switzerland. Ms. Weber has a deep understanding of independent school culture and \ demonstrated leadership experience in strong schools undergoing change. She earned advanced degrees from Wesleyan and Harvard's Graduate School of Education, and holds a BA from Hamilton College.

"The committee was impressed by Ms. Weber's deep and broad experience, and her clear articulation of the importance of working as a community to develop a balanced yet ambitious educational vision for U-High in the 21st century," says Ms. Appleby. "Her strong communication skills, ability to listen, and sophisticated knowledge of the complex challenges in today's educational environment were noted by many who participated in her two-day visit to campus. Ms. Weber's dedication to what she calls the 'joyful hard work' of leadership in a rigorous school environment makes her the ideal next principal of U-High."

Ms. Neal has two decades of experience in teaching, counseling, and school administration, most recently as the assistant principal at Beulah Shoesmith Elementary in Hyde Park/Kenwood. There she managed student services, including social-emotional learning, working closely with faculty and families to support the growth and success of each child. Prior to Shoesmith, Ms. Neal spent nine years at Whitney Young High School managing admission and ensuring the successful transition into the school of their freshman. She has also served as an English teacher and a school counselor at Whitney Young and as a counselor at Proviso East.

Ms. Neal is an adjunct professor at Loyola's School of Education, and holds her MEd from Loyola. She earned her certificate in school leadership from Concordia.

Says Director of Educational Programs Scott Fech, who led the search process, "Ms. Neal's experience serving children and families from elementary through high school is an excellent match for this position overseeing Lab's learning and counseling services. Ms. Neal's energy, enthusiasm, and student-centered philosophy impressed members of the search committee, parents, faculty, and administrators."

Motor skills

New Middle School robotics program born from math and computer science

Middle School mathematics teachers **Jessica Hanzlik** and **Tom Luthy** and computer science teacher **Jeremy Schwartz** knew nothing about robotics, so when they formed the Middle School Robotics Program, they were learning right along with the students. "We give them some information, the tools, and get out of their way," says Mr. Luthy.

The three-month program, which began with 24 students this winter, teaches students to design, build, and program robots. Integrating computer science, math, and engineering, the program incorporates the LEGO Space Challenge, which uses LEGO robotics kits and assigns missions related to Mars exploration. Following a "curriculum structure that allows the groups to move self-paced," says Mr. Schwartz, the students engage "with hands-on programming challenges controlling the robot's movement and interaction with its environment."

The robotics activity emphasizes creativity through design and construction, problem-solving by testing and revising the design, and critical thinking while coding and debugging programming language. Ms. Hanzlik emphasizes the important of resilience: "We hope that students walk away with greater confidence in their abilities to tackle a long-term project that requires skills they don't yet have."

In addition to exposing students to a field that is fast becoming essential to a technologically advanced world, the teachers hope the robotics program will promote an "interdisciplinary treatment of topics in mathematics, science, and computer programming," says Mr. Schwartz. They also hope to prepare Lab's first robotics team for local and national competitions.

Integrating computer science, math, and engineering, the program incorporates the LEGO Space Challenge, which uses LEGO robotics kits and assigns missions related to Mars exploration.

A blast of the bard

PHOTO: MICHAEL BROSILOW

In 2016, all of Chicago's a stage. Throughout the year, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death, organizations across the city are sponsoring lectures, movie screenings, dining events, and, of course, performances. Lab's fifth-graders got in on the act in February with their own (in teacher **Diane Bloom**'s words) "three-day blast" of the Bard.

First they traveled downtown for a special Chicago Symphony Orchestra performance of Felix Mendelssohn's "Incidental Music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*," complete with guest actors from Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Act II: a crash course in *The Tempest*, compliments of the Theatre School of DePaul's magic- and puppet-filled production of *Prospero's Storm*. Back at Lab, students connected Shakespeare's themes and wordplay to books they'd read, including *The Wild Hunt* by Jane Yolen and Natalie Babbitt's *Tuck Everlasting*. And with materials shared by teacher **Catherine Mannering**, they dug deep into one of the most famous passages in all of Shakespeare: the seven ages of man (and woman) from *As You Like It*, which begins: "All the world's a stage..."

Correction Due to the manner in which National Merit awards are announced, Lab's finalists for 2015 and 2016 were not among the list of honors included in previous issues of this magazine. Only students who opt to take the SAT are eligible. **Class of 2015**: Rajan Aggarwal, Clara de Pablo, Adam Fine, Michael Glick, Jeffrey Jou, Clare Keenan, Kevin Li, Edward Litwin (and a corporate scholarship from National Merit Corporation and Advocate Medical Group to finalists from the Chicago area), Jackson Martin, Jane Maunsell, Walker Melton, Luke Newell, Nathaniel Posner, Maddi Ross, Madeline Sachs, Alexander Schonbaum, David Yunis **Class of 2016:** Robert Bacon, William Bremer, Micaiah Buchheim-Jurisson, Joanna Cohen, Marcel Dupont, Fabrice Guyot-Sionnest, Nathan Isaacs, Julian Lark, Arun Sharma, Angela White

Show and tell

Artifacts and stories teach Lab's third graders about immigration and family

If you were leaving your homeland to start a new life on the other side of the world, what would you bring with you? Which family traditions would be important to preserve in your new home? These were a few of the questions that **Brandy Wortinger** asked her third-grade students during their unit on immigration this past winter.

As part of a simulation set in the 1890s, Ms. Wortinger's students were each assigned a profile of an immigrant and tasked to choose six items they would bring on their international boat voyage. Popular objects were teddy bears, family quilts, and food. Because the simulation was set 125 years ago, the children learned which electronics weren't yet invented (and therefore couldn't be brought along).

This helped demonstrate how immigration has changed throughout history, says Ms. Wortinger. "We talked about transportation and innovation. It used to be a long and complicated process to go to another country. Now it can be as simple as buying a plane ticket."

On board the ship, chance affected the students' experiences. A roll of the dice determined that some students' family members were unable to say goodbye at the port and that some lost their belongings. "There were some kids who took it more seriously than others," says Ms. Wortinger. "There were tears the first day."

The students also learned what a transatlantic boat journey might have been like during the turn of the century. By another roll of the dice, the children might have been extremely ill, a little sick, or well; without food or lucky to have meager portions; feeling too ill to move or playing games and dancing.

To reflect on their experiences, the students wrote letters to family members back home. "We talked a lot about how you would feel," Ms. Wortinger says. "You could feel excited to go to the new world but still miss home. The kids really honed in on that."

The simulated journey continued with an actual field trip to the Swedish American Museum in the Andersonville neighborhood, where they pretended to emigrate from Sweden in 1870. The children discussed reasons for immigrating, dressed in period clothing, did chores in a Swedish cottage, packed, used a passport to board a ship, and started their lives in America.

After the simulated immigration, the class read Paul Fleischman's *The Matchbox Diary*, in which a girl finds her great-grandfather's collection of small objects that tell his story of emigrating from Italy. "We learned how a memory associated with an artifact or family heirloom teaches us about someone's personal and family values," says Ms. Wortinger. Each student then shared an object important to his or her family. One boy brought in his grandmother's wedding ring, which his mom now wears; others brought in a grandfather's war photo, a string of pearls, a family bible.

For the unit's culmination, students created oral histories. Each child interviewed a family member, made a family tree, drew an ancestor map, wrote and recorded a family story, and shared a family recipe or unique tradition, with a few parents visiting class. One student's parents told the class about the Korean New Year. Another student's parents taught the class how to play *Squash, Crab, Fish, Tiger*, a Vietnamese game with dice.

"It was fun for the kids to learn about each other's family histories and take pride in sharing their own," says Ms. Wortinger. "Learning about how their families made their way to Chicago brought a lot of interesting conversations." People immigrate differently today than they did in the past, and families move more frequently throughout their lives. "A big theme in third-grade social studies is change," Ms. Wortinger says. "How has the past impacted the present? How will our actions impact the future?"

The stories that photographers tell

Kindergarteners learn about documentary and artistic photography through the work of Vivian Maier

GABRIELLE LYON, AB'94, AM'94

When **Elspeth Stowe-Grant** and **Martha Jannotta** took their kindergarten class to see the exhibition of Gordon Parks's photographs in the new Gordon Parks Arts Hall, they told the students to look thoughtfully and ask, "What story is the photographer trying to tell?"

"The children were inspired by the subjects and the dramatic settings in Parks's iconic images," says Ms. Stowe-Grant. So she and Ms. Jannotta—who share a passion for photography—decided to launch a photography unit.

Both teachers had seen the work of photographer Vivian Maier at the Chicago History Museum. Ms. Stowe-Grant brought in a book about Maier, a nanny whose images of Chicago street life were entirely unknown until discovered posthumously. Each child chose one of Maier's photographs. They looked closely at the subjects' facial expressions, gestures, clothing, setting, season, and time of day. Then the teachers helped the students write a short narrative.

One photo showed a dog in a car; in the background was a building with classical columns. The kindergartener surmised that the dog was being driven to an art museum, because he enjoyed looking at art. Another photo showed two hippos in a small enclosure. The student imagined the hippos knocking down the door and making their way to the jungle, "where they belong."

When parent **Gabrielle Lyon, AB'94, AM'94**, noticed the photos and stories displayed outside the classroom, she offered to show the class what kind of camera Maier had used. Lyon visited the classroom twice, bringing a Rolleicord and Rolleiflex camera. She explained how the cameras worked and let the kindergarteners try them out. The students also looked at the work of Lyon's father, documentary photographer **Danny Lyon, AB'63**, who had sometimes used a Rolleiflex.

This spring they planned for the children to shoot pictures with a Polaroid camera and create images using Sunprint paper. Later, as the unit continues and the weather gets warmer, Ms. Stowe-Grant and Ms. Jannotta plan to introduce the students to the photography of Ansel Adams and the nature sculptures of Andy Goldsworthy. The kids will build their own nature sculptures outside and photograph them. Through photography, says Ms. Stowe-Grant, "students have learned about observation, language skills, story-telling, and even science."

Giant steps

Following one man's walk around the world, fifth graders learn to engage

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN STANMEYER/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

As soon as **Stephanie Mitzenmacher** heard about the Out of Eden Walk at a professional development program last summer, she knew it would be perfect for her fifth-grade class.

The Out of Eden Walk, sponsored by National Geographic, is a project by Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist, former *Chicago Tribune* foreign correspondent, and National Geographic Fellow Paul Salopek, retracing humans' migration from Africa across the globe. He left Ethiopia on foot in 2013 and plans to conclude his trip in Tierra del Fuego, at the tip of South America, in 2020.

Along the way, he chronicles online the people, places, and events he encounters while walking. A companion website, Out of Eden Learn, helps students around the world follow Mr. Salopek's trip. The students are organized into "walking parties," which consist of several classes around the world who begin following a section of Mr. Salopek's walk at the same time. The students in each walking party respond to Mr. Salopek's posts as well as to each others'.

Ms. Mitzenmacher initially thought the project would be a good opportunity for students to learn about other countries, but because Mr. Salopek is on foot, he moves slowly and has spent the entire school year in Azerbaijian. The students have learned about Azerbaijian and other countries, but equally important, they've learned how to interact and create an identity online.

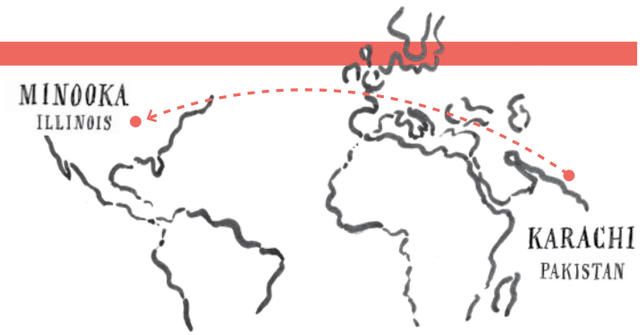
Every two weeks the students write "footsteps," or posts, based on a photo or entry that Mr. Salopek has posted. Each student's first footstep was to introduce themselves to the walking party and share what made them curious about Mr. Salopek's journey. The second footstep involved drawing and telling stories about a neighborhood map. The third invited students to photograph and write about what they noticed while walking around their own neighborhoods. A later post asked students to interview someone about the history of their neighborhood. Students are required to comment on posts by at least two other students.

In the beginning, the students focused mainly on the mechanics of posting and responding, but by March, Ms. Mitzenmacher says, they had started to enjoy the interaction with other classes around the world and to think about ideas like, what do you want people to know about you? How do you respond to other peoples' work and comments in an authentic and meaningful way? "It's not as much about [Mr. Salopek]," she says, "as the kids' learning to engage with other people."

>>FOLLOW THE OUT OF EDEN WALK IN REAL-TIME AT HTTP://OUTOFEDENWALK.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM

KEEPING THE FAITH

Kiran Younus helps Muslim children connect with their identities



KIRAN YOUNUS

Learning to integrate faith into an overall sense of identity can be tricky, so it helps to have a support network. Lab Nursery/Kindergarten teacher **Kiran Younus** has been an essential part of that support network for many Muslim children in the Chicago area for the past decade—by running a special weekly after-school program and a two-week summer camp for children of Muslim faith.

"We want to supply children with tools to be articulate about who they are and their identity," Ms. Younus says.

The summer camp features many typical camp activities: field trips, horseback riding, karate, the occasional cooking lesson and community service project. But it also has Arabic calligraphy and lessons about Islam and the varied cultures associated with the religion. Each year's session has a theme; for this year's, "Muslim Contributions: Past and Present," students will learn about Muslim inventors, scholars, and artists throughout history.

"One of my goals," she says, "is to help them build this authentic American Muslim identity where it's not two different worlds."

Ms. Younus started the after-school program for students who needed a place to learn about their faith and build friendships. They study verses and stories from the Qu'ran and talk about their meanings and values like kindness and honesty.

The daughter of Pakistani immigrants, Ms. Younus grew up in a small town southwest of Chicago, as part of the only Muslim (and only ethnic minority) family in the community. In 2005, she and some Muslim friends started a Montessori preschool for their children, called "River Garden," committed to diversity, inclusivity, and a love of learning. They envisioned "a place where [the children] would feel comfortable and that would also reflect our vision of how education should be."

As her children—now Labbies in seventh, fifth, and second grades—got older, she discovered a lot of those values at Lab. River Garden's focus shifted from its Montessori program to its summer camp, at American Islamic College in Lakeview, and the after-school program, in Hyde Park at the Chicago Theological Seminary.

With fellow Lab parent Noha El-Sharkawy-Aref's help on the summer camp, Ms. Younus runs both programs and has hired local college and graduate students, including several from UChicago, to teach. A number of her children's Lab friends also participate, a point of commonality that helps to build a more integrated sense of their identity.

"One of my goals," she says, "is to help them build this authentic American Muslim identity where it's not two different worlds." As a child she regularly wore different clothing, spoke a different language, and ate different food at home than she did at school. She was delighted—and a little surprised—when one of her children asked to bring a traditional Pakistani dish to school for lunch.

Nowadays, a school lunch that looks different from their classmates' is among the least of the challenges Muslim children face. An American Muslim identity can be fraught with misconceptions and stereotypes. The parents of River Garden students sometimes discuss anti-Muslim rhetoric and issues at their monthly meetings, especially when news stories create a media storm, Ms. Younus says, but in general they leave detailed discussions with children to the individual families.

As River Garden's student group matures, Ms. Younus considers how its teachers may best equip the students to both deal with the unfortunate realities of extremist actions and to understand and respond to potential anti-Muslim sentiment. For now, River Garden's aim is to cultivate confidence in the universal values and basic teachings of the faith, "helping give them a voice," she says, "so that if someone says something inaccurate about our beliefs, they understand that it is not consistent with the religion as they have learned it."

River Garden's students come from different backgrounds: from Sunni, Shia, and mixed-faith families, and a range of ethnicities and socioeconomic groups. But, Ms. Younus says, "We are proud of our diversity and focus on our commonalities."

A BIG BIRTHDAY A BIG YEAR

CONNECTIONS FUNDRAISING BREAKS RECORDS

In January 1896, a young University of Chicago professor of philosophy opened a new elementary school on 57th Street. In three rooms with a large backyard, John Dewey and 16 students gathered to revolutionize the way that teachers taught young children. This year, Connections, Lab's gala fundraiser, also served as the Schools' 120th birthday party.

"It was a great party that raised more than $1 million for financial aid," says Interim Director of Alumni Relations and Development Alice DuBose. "Our Connections volunteers were spectacular, enthusiastic, and effective."

All proceeds from Connections 2016 will be directed to student financial aid to enable exceptional students of limited financial means the opportunity to experience a Lab education.

The next Connections will take place in 2018 as this event moves to a bi-annual schedule.

Leah Taylor, '78, Jeanette Taylor, Oliver Taylor, and Joanna Taylor, '80

Triste Lieteau-Smith, Don Elligan, Tracey Lewis-Elligan, Kristin Finney-Cooke, MBA'98

Joanna Pappas and Tiago Pappas, '00

The Dewey Lounge

U-High Jazz Band with Jamie Brady

Director Robin Appleby (center) and Connections Co-chairs Lena Jessen, MBA'04, Chelsea Smith, James Smith, Tai Duncan, '00, David Solow, '97, and Andrew Jessen, MBA'04

Sam Valenzisi, MBA'05, Meggan Friedman, Mark Yee, Jennifer Keller, Ashley Keller, JD'07, MBA'07, and Brooke Hillman

Valerie Tkachenko Weaver and Ulrike Lengyel

Cheryl Rudbeck, Board Chair David Kistenbroker, and Cynthia Heusing

Michael C. Markovitz, AM'73, PhD'75 and Ling Z. Markovitz

Amy Runjavac-Duda and Peter Duda

Yolanda Tyler and Jason Tyler, '89, MBA'99

David Davidovic and Erica Castle Davidovic, '85

Jayesh Mehta and Seema Singhal

Art Inspired

ArtsFest, a spirit-filled U-High tradition, attracts alumni and parent "arts boosters"

by Catherine Braendel, '81

Students have permission to select a winning design and to use school wall space for a permanent, yearly ArtsFest mural. A design by senior Julia Hedges is the first installed in Gordon Parks Arts Hall.

below: Adjunct professor at Philadelphia University's College of Architecture Sophia Lee, '04, taught students to pour concrete to form a planter.

right: An art studio in Gordon Parks Arts Hall turned fashion atelier: in this workshop, U-Highers used splatter techniques to make "chaotically colorful" ArtsFest t-shirts and transform canvas sneakers, tote bags, and more.

For decades, ArtsFest has been a U-High tradition, and as a student-run experience you wouldn't expect it to be any different: a sometimes messy, sometimes eccentric, always interesting, exuberant combination of creation, experimentation, celebration, and innovation.

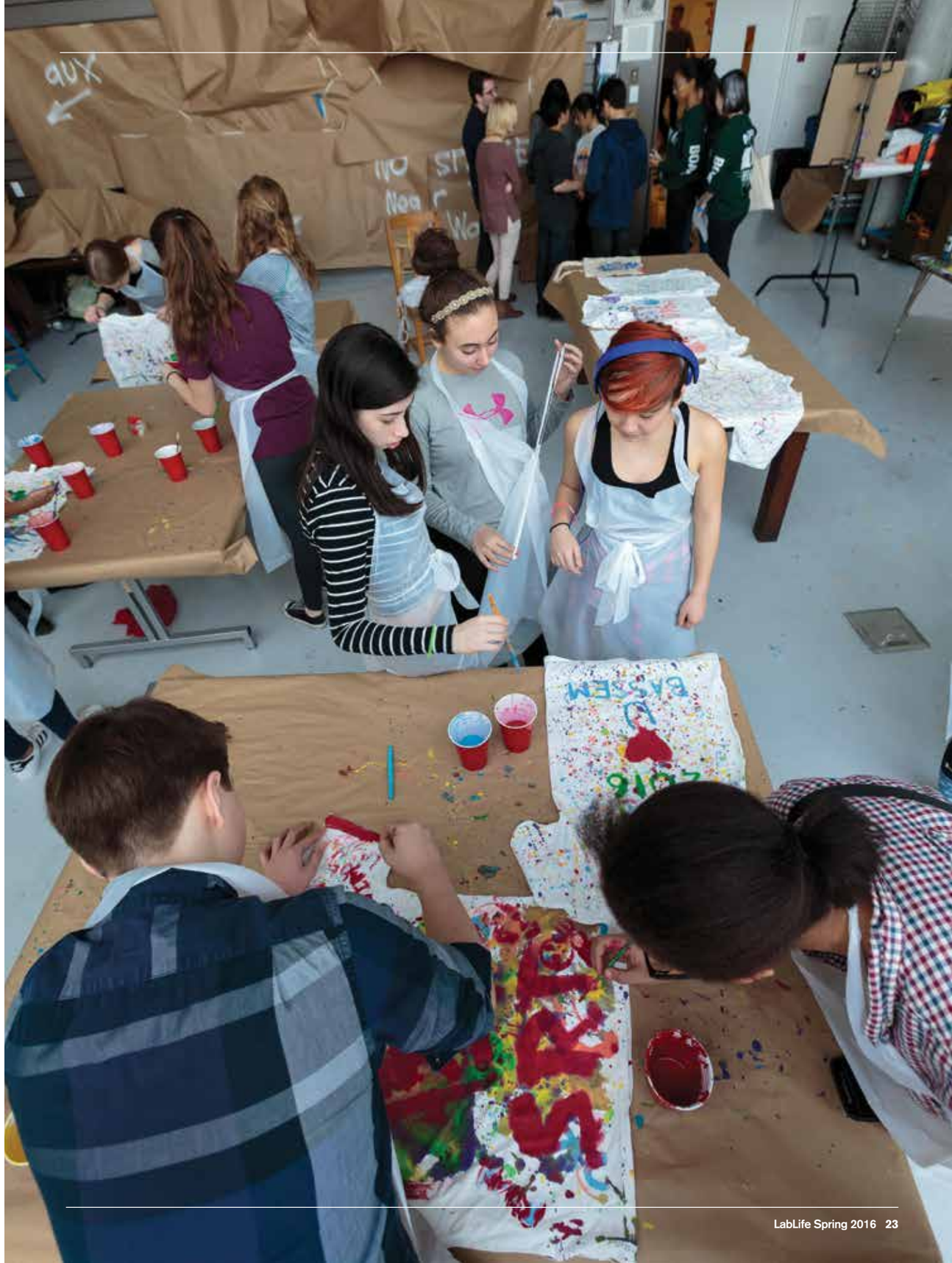
Brian Wildeman, who's served as ArtsFest advisor for two years and even ran workshops in the late 90s when he was student teaching at Lab, says, "It's the only day in the High School where the students get to completely decide what their day is all about. Everything's different and it's lots of fun."

In recent years, driven by student initiative, ArtsFest has been re-expanding (it was once called Arts Week.) This year, the student curators decided to build up the number of professionals involved and they successfully recruited alumni and other experts to lead workshops. Says senior Halima Mossi, ArtsFest president, "We take in the constructive criticism from each year and try to figure out how to make the experiences more enjoyable for everyone—students, administrators, faculty, and staff. ArtsFest is one of the major school spirit events at Lab and that brings a lot of pressure."

A couple of years ago, students added a Friday-evening of celebration and student performance called Art in The Dark. This year, the committee created a new scav-style event called The Hunt and, with a little help, a special weeks-long student art show held at the Steven Daiter Gallery, owned by the father of senior Maya Daiter. "We were so lucky to have the opportunity to install student work in a professional art gallery," explains Halima. "We got so many submissions . . . It was very special to go to the gallery event and see what artwork Lab students were producing. The pride in the students' and parents' faces was very cool. Also having students support and compliment other students' artwork was really nice. Maya and her father helped tremendously with the organization of the event, and the product was very inspiring."

The days leading up to the event can be stressful for the student curators and the many other student volunteers, says Mr. Wildeman. "It's a tremendous amount of work and a learning experience to coordinate events, IT, communications. It has the flavor of putting on a big theatrical performance—people buzzing right before, high energy.

"ArtsFest is an opportunity for students to see what it's like to be a teacher: to plan curriculum, materials, deliver lessons. And it can be hit or miss–It's great way to create empathy."



top: SAIC student, Ellen Ma, ’13, (center) invited U-Highers to hang out, listen to some rap, try out new spray painting techniques, and learn “weird art and pop culture facts.”

bottom left: Amrita Singh, ’11, (seated, in yellow) taught stop motion animation workshops in which students created a short animation around the theme of daydreams and filmed using colorful post-it notes, dry erase markers, and a large white board.

bottom right: Jackie Robertson, ’11, and Anisha Sisodia, ’11, who works as a graphic designer at Wilson Sporting Goods, taught students how to use Photoshop (instead of an app) to build a GIF—a short video made up of a string of photos that loops.

top: Armed with an enormous supply of found and other odd objects and materials, parent and Redmoon Theater Teaching Artist Tria Smith and Costume Designer Anna Glowacki ran “Trash Couture” to make costumes for a future pageant,

bottom: “Gore galore.” Guest make-up artists taught the basics of special effects for stage and film and participants covered themselves with realistic-looking battle wounds.

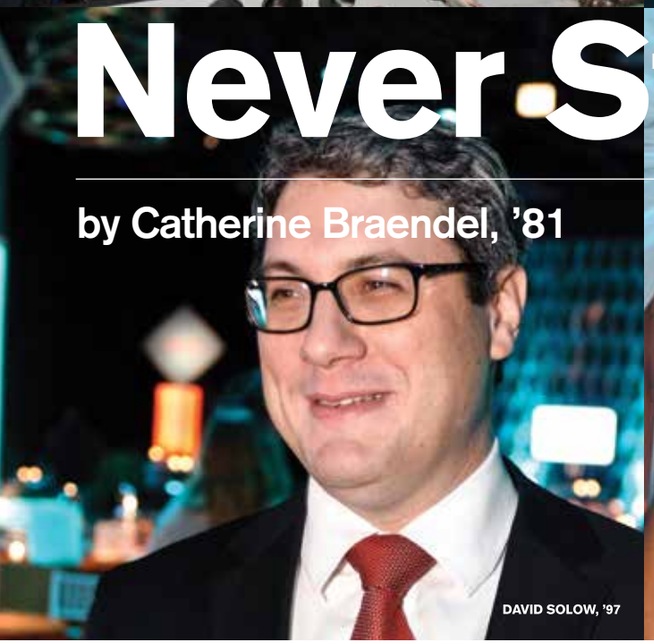
LENA AND ANDY JESSEN

TAI DUCAN, '00

Parent and Alumni Volunteers Share a Commitment to Lab

The Love Never Stops

by Catherine Braendel, '81



DAVID SOLOW, '97

CHELSEA AND JAMES SMITH

Every year, scores of Lab parents and alumni volunteer their time—chaperoning a field trip, serving as a classroom parent, mounting a gallery show, speaking to an econ or humanities class, touring children through a science lab or sharing research, mentoring a U-Higher during a Summer link internship.

This year, four Lab parents and two Lab alumni volunteered for the role of Connections co-chair. It is a time-heavy commitment, but each of these volunteers shares much in common with any parent or graduate who gives time to Lab. That shared experience starts with a shared belief that Lab changes lives.

A Lab education creates a lifetime of curiosity. Lab teachers inspire young minds and value the contributions of every child, no matter how young. Lab friendships last a lifetime. Here is a brief introduction to one group of Connections co-chairs whose volunteerism reflects the best of our Lab community.

Tai Duncan, '00

The quintessential Labbie experience might just be called the Tai Duncan. She has been a student (a "lifer"), an employee (girls' varsity basketball coach for five years), an employee for a Labbie-owned business (John W. Rogers, Jr., '76's Ariel Investments), and a volunteer. And, boy, has she volunteered (reunion planning committee—twice, alumni association board secretary, hosting May Project students at Ariel, and three years on the UChicago Alumni Club of Chicago as the only Lab grad without another UChicago degree).

Ms. Duncan reels off a list of the "incredible gifts" she received from Lab "that benefit me every day—freedom to speak my mind and follow my passions; critical thinking; being inquisitive; valuing diversity of opinion and experience in the people in both my personal and professional spheres; how to not only accept difference but embrace it; an exceptional network I started cultivating in my youth without even realizing it; lifelong friendships; examples set by phenomenal teachers, some of whom still teach—what a commitment to young people!"

She describes the creativity and freedom fostered by Maureen Ellis and the compassion and thoughtfulness Darlene McCampbell showed in her comments on assignments, always grading in purple pen rather than red. "I learned much more from her notes and encouragement than any letter grade could indicate."

"I encourage Lab grads to volunteer and give back to Lab because of how much the school has given us. It's more than a building with classrooms—it's a community. And we have a responsibility to do whatever we can to help students have an extraordinary experience."

Lena and Andy Jessen

Lena and Andy met one another as grad students at what was then referred to as the GSB (now Booth School of Business), got married in the University's Bond Chapel, moved to Hyde Park, and have been sending their three children to Lab since their now fifth-grader entered in N3. To say they have "always felt connected to the University" is understandable.

Over the years, Ms. Jessen has volunteered in many capacities, serving as a room parent every year and in every one of her children's classes, giving tours to prospective families, serving on the Lower School Council and on the Development Committee of the Board. "There has never been a day that our kids did not want to go to school," she says. "If a place can foster that love for all those years—it's very special."

The Jessens appreciate all the opportunities that Lab, and its families, present to a child—like meeting Jane Goodall, working in a garden, or talking to a Sutherland award-winner.

Says Ms. Jessen, "Our kids are not going to realize how special their school is until they are much, much older. They have access to so many resources, not just books and libraries but also people in our community. The people in our community underestimate what they have to offer and that is part of the charm!"

Chelsea and James Smith

Like many parent volunteers, the catalyst for parents Chelsea and James Smith to volunteer their time at Lab was their three children. "We joke about how our kids don't know how great they have it," says Mrs. Smith, "but they do!" In choosing Lab, she explains, "It was clear that Lab was diverse and stressed critical thinking. It was important to us that our children learned in that kind of environment."

...CHAPERONING A FIELD TRIP, SERVING AS A CLASSROOM PARENT, MOUNTING A GALLERY SHOW, SPEAKING TO AN ECON OR HUMANITIES CLASS, TOURING CHILDREN THROUGH A SCIENCE LAB...

Says Mr. Smith, "We are certainly not unique in wanting a healthy environment for our kids. We get up and go to work every day to give our kids an education. One day you look up and have been a Lab parent for years. You are invested on so many different levels. The desire to help comes from a lot of angles. "

Being a part of Connections resonated for the Smiths in part because of just how much it reinforced their sense of the Lab community. First and foremost, the Smiths valued the fact that Connections ties to the very diversity of Lab since proceeds go entirely to financial aid at Lab.

"We have built relationships, and communicating the [Lab] story is important. We need to allow others to share the Lab experience and financial aid helps do that." Says Mr. Smith, "We were uniquely positioned to help with fundraising, being in the financial services world and being diverse in our own right. We had the opportunity to get other people involved."

Connections also allowed them to be a part of the larger community and to bring people together. "Connections speaks to the power of the community," says Mrs. Smith. From the alumni she met, Mrs. Smith learned, "The love never stops! I sometimes felt like they still went [to Lab]. They had such enthusiasm to tell the story and they were truly excited that we sent our kids there."

David Solow, '97

More than a decade ago, David Solow joined Lab's newly reconstituted Alumni Association Executive Board to help reenergize how Lab alumni engage with the Schools and with each other. "I am involved because I had a great experience at Lab. My best friends in the world—still—are from Lab and I communicate with them everyday."

Like many graduates, Mr. Solow attributes much of who he is as an adult to Lab's "great academics, teachers, and a dynamic environment that challenges you in the best way." And he feels that alumni can play an important part is helping Lab maintain its "unique character."

"Especially as teachers retire, alumni are the connection to the best of the Lab that we remember, to the essential character that makes the school special. We are the ones who remember what Lab was like. And in order to help preserve that special character, it's up to alumni to steward that past."

This year, Connections included a special "Alumni Lounge" area where grads could find one another and marvel (in horror?) at photos from Lab years gone by, including some wonderfully dated hairstyles and fashions. As co-chair, Mr. Solow recognized that showing up is half the battle. "When people show up it's the great way for them to reconnect with the school and the Lab experience. Their memories of what makes Lab a special place are quickly re-kindled," he explains.

"The more connections that we can create between alumni and the School, the easier our collective job is to get folks to participate, donate, and help our students."

Voice of discomfort

The Rev. Howard-John Wesley, ’90, drives social justice as a voice in the national dialogue on race

by Mary Abowd

After 17-year-old Trayvon Martin was killed in Florida in 2012, the Rev. Howard-John Wesley, '90, took to the pulpit of the Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia, to pay tribute to the African American teen.

Grief in the church was palpable that day. Martin had been shot in the chest by neighborhood-watch volunteer George Zimmerman while walking home after dark. For Alfred Street congregants it was yet another senseless death of a young black male, a life ended prematurely, and the pain of it stung.

Rev. Wesley stood before them wearing a hoodie, in remembrance of Martin, channeling the emotion that rippled through his 7,000-member congregation. "God, what do I do in a moment like this?" he asked mournfully. "What do I tell my sons?"

He can't stop asking those questions. National events since then—in Ferguson, Missouri; in Baltimore—won't let him. "We've got to expose that there's a problem here," Rev. Wesley says. "Black life has always been threatened in America, from the time it was legal under the shackles of slavery to the present."

A biblical scholar and orator, Rev. Wesley has become one of the most charismatic voices in the national dialogue on race. When violence has mingled dangerously, often lethally, with black lives, his prophetic response has won him numerous accolades. In 2013, Time magazine hailed his sermon "When the Verdict Hurts"—delivered after Zimmerman was acquitted—as "the best sermon about Trayvon that you will hear." That same year he won the Root 100: A Who's Who of Black America Award, which lauded him for "leading his congregation to social justice and modernity" not only for his activism around the Martin case but for his support of gay marriage and advocacy against domestic violence. This past February Rev. Wesley was selected for the 2016 NAACP Chairman's Image Award, an honor that recognizes the outstanding achievements of people of color in the arts and those who creatively promote social justice.

IN 2013, *TIME MAGAZINE* HAILED HIS SERMON "WHEN THE VERDICT HURTS"—DELIVERED AFTER ZIMMERMAN WAS ACQUITTED—AS "THE BEST SERMON ABOUT TRAYVON THAT YOU WILL HEAR."

Rev. Wesley says his advocacy is integral to his role as pastor. "It's a natural outpouring of not only the God of the bible I worship but also the tradition of church I come from," he explains. "The black church has always been a hub of social justice and activism. I would not be doing my job if I did not follow in this tradition."

Rev. Wesley was born and raised in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood, the son of the late Alvin J. Welsey, a Baptist minister, and Helene J. Wesley, who first helped with Alvin's shoe business and later pursued Christian education. His parents enrolled him at Lab beginning in nursery school. "My father came out of the Deep South with nothing," he says, "but made sure his children always had the best education."

His call to preaching came in 1989 during his senior year of high school. A friend had been in a near-tragic car accident and was in a coma at the University of Chicago Medical Center. Rev. Wesley visited her daily during his free

periods. "I would walk over to the medical center from Lab and pray with her," he recalls. "That experience made me see that the Lord was using me for something more, that I had a call in my life."

In the Baptist tradition, when someone has a call, they give a sermon. That year, Rev. Wesley gave his first one—at Hermon Baptist Church in Lincoln Park, where his father was pastor. He credits the success of that first foray into preaching—and the career that came later—to his Lab English

"WHEN WE SAY 'BLACK LIVES MATTER,' WE HAVE TO SHOW HOW BLACK LIVES HAVE SHAPED AMERICA."

teacher, Darlene McCampbell. "She taught me how to read and analyze, how to write and be persuasive," Rev. Wesley says. "A lot of what I do every Sunday with my sermons is take texts and help people read between the lines. People ask me, 'How did you see that?' Ms. McCampbell helped me see what authors were implying."

Rev. Wesley didn't pursue the ministry right away. He headed to Duke University as a biomedical and electrical engineering major, graduating magna cum laude in 1994, with plans for medical school and a career as a doctor. An Engineering Research Center/National Science Fellow, Rev. Wesley was involved in developing implantable defibrillators—small life-saving devices inserted into the chest of heart disease patients to keep the heart beating if it were to stop.

But parts of that experience pushed him away from the field. Prohibitively expensive, the defibrillators "were not promoted or used in poor communities," Rev. Wesley says. "I saw very clearly the discrepancies in the health-care system—the underside that is all about the bottom dollar—and I saw people die because they could not afford proper health care."

That reality troubled him, and again he felt a pull toward ministry. He abandoned medicine to earn a master's in divinity at Boston University School of Theology, where as a Martin Luther King, Jr., Scholar he concentrated in biblical studies and African American religious history. He then pursued a doctorate from the Associated Chicago Theological School's Doctor of Ministry in Preaching Program, graduating from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2003.

By 2008, Rev. Wesley was installed as pastor at Alfred Street, a congregation founded in 1803 and steeped in history. During his tenure, membership has tripled and the church budget has grown exponentially. At present, Rev. Wesley oversees a staff of 55 and a host of ministries that serve the community's needy. He has emphasized programming tailored to youth, including the church's annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities festival, the only such college fair of its kind, that this year attracted 5,000 high school students from around the country. The Alfred Street community gave away $2.1 million in college scholarships.

Alfred Street is the only faith-based organization to be a founding donor to the Smithsonian Museum's National Museum of African American History and Culture, scheduled to open this year on the National Mall in Washington, DC. The church donated $1 million to the museum, which will celebrate the contributions of African Americans throughout history. It will house three of Rev. Wesley's sermons, including "When the Verdict Hurts." "To have this museum stand on the Mall in our nation's capital is a critical statement," Rev. Wesley says. "When we say 'black lives matter,' we have to show how black lives have shaped America." Rev. Wesley hopes the museum will spark ongoing, urgent conversations about race.

When he thinks of Trayvon Martin, he can't help but think of his own two sons, Howard-John II, 12, and Cooper Reece, 9. "We live in a society where young white men are apprehended and arrested and taken to trial, but black men are shot in the street," Rev. Wesley says. "As uncomfortable as that narrative is, it's one that people must be aware of. There must be more voices like mine and others that make us uncomfortable with these truths."

Clustered Learning

A hands-on Summer Link experience inspires students to try grid computing at Lab

by Claire Zulkey


BEN GLICK, LOGAN YOUNG,THEO ANDO, AND TEACHER DANIEL WHEADON

During the summer of 2015, five days a week, six U-High students interned at the Computation Institute, a joint venture of the University of Chicago and Argonne National Laboratory. Through these Summer Link internships, the students paired up with Computation Institute researchers to work on projects ranging from analyzing Wikipedia data sets to conducting statistical analysis of biomedical contagions.

Some of the Lab students worked on local projects, such as an urban data realization assignment that included counting the potholes on certain Chicago blocks and correlating the area's income level. "We also did some basic data analysis statistics to see which places are more polluted and possible causes," says senior Ben Glick, who worked with the group, although not as part of Summer Link.

Each project, says Kyle Chard, a Computation Institute fellow who oversaw some of the Lab students' work, involved addressing "a real scientific problem by applying large-scale computation and big data analytics," an experience that left the students equipped with skills that can transition between different sciences.

He was impressed by the students' gusto. "I've been consistently impressed by Lab students' enthusiasm and work ethic." He jokes that some U-High students are more advanced than his grad students. "They just jump headfirst into everything."

So much so that after their summer internships ended, five U-High students didn't want to stop working. Theodore Ando, Jonathan Lipman, Fritz Reece, Logan Young, and Ben proposed a Computation Institute-inspired independent study to pursue over the school year. "We all knew we wanted to do an independent study because we'd exhausted all the classes in computer science," says Logan. "We formed this group over our interest in [the subject]. We all agreed that we wanted to do something—we just didn't know what."

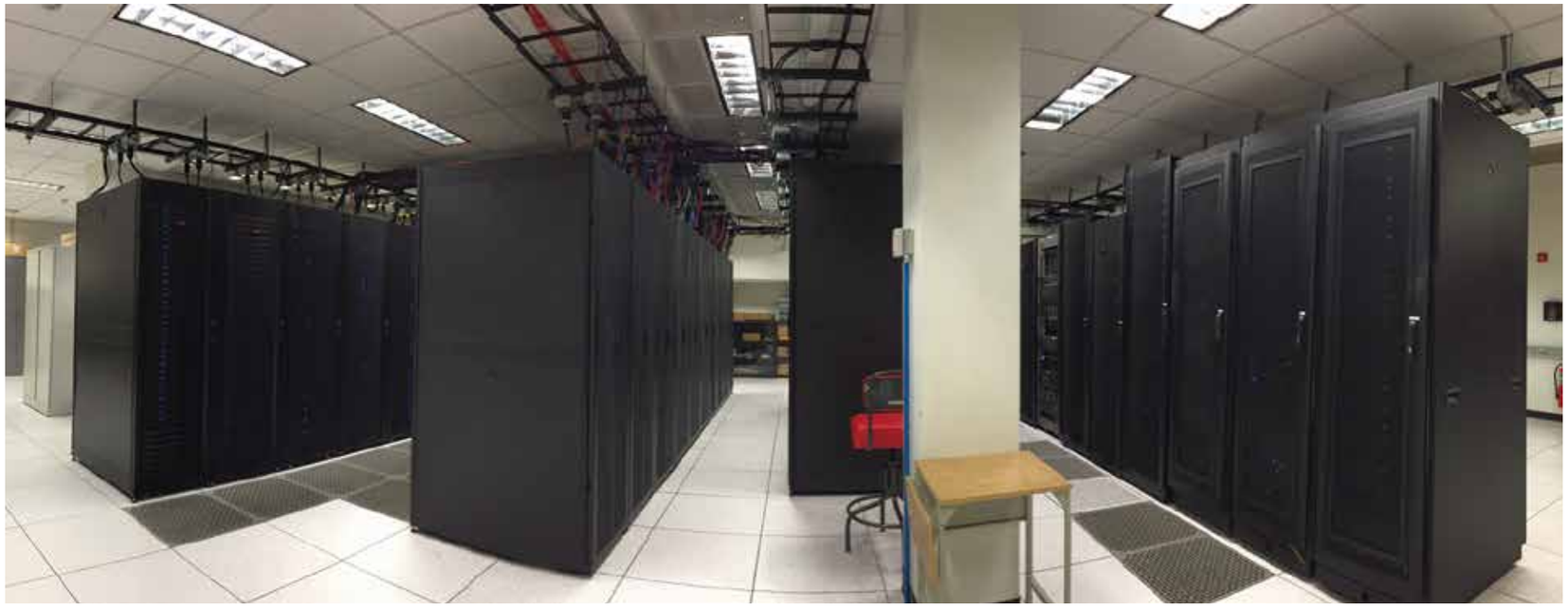
The answer came from something they'd learned about during their summer work: distributed computing. Distributed computing is a form of grid computing, a technique pioneered by Computation Institute director, Lab parent, and UChicago Arthur Holly Compton Distinguished Service Professor of Computer Science Ian Foster. In grid computing, a series of computers, sometimes in different locations, work together in a cluster to solve a problem that one computer alone couldn't solve.

The Lab students saw an opportunity. "We have noticed how many idle computers there are around the school, especially in computer labs when computer science classes are not in session," the students wrote in their proposal letter, which they pitched to computer science teacher Daniel Wheadon. After conferring with programmers at the Computation Institute, the students felt confident they could link Lab's computers to take part in distributed computing to tackle large-scale computation.

What they proposed was no small task. At the Computation Institute, computer scientists use software called HTCondor, which takes unused time on computers and makes them available to researchers. At grid computing's highest levels, scientists from across the world use the Open Science Grid for large physics experiments with the Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland. "In our setup, we have dedicated resources for this," says Lincoln Bryant, a Computation Institute researcher who worked with the students. "What Ben and the others are doing is trying to set that up at Lab."

Still, Mr. Wheadon approved the project. This school year the students have tackled the job a few hours each day in his lab. "Our goal is to take as many computers as we're given permission," says Ben, "and set them up together to run in a cluster so that students and teachers can submit large-scale jobs." The clusters could run data analysis on physics simulations, for example. The students have discussed other possibilities with U-High math and science teachers.

By this spring the students were still working to get the computers to operate as a cluster. "It's probably a little more challenging than we expected," says Logan.



Mr. Wheadon has been realistic from the start—he describes the boys' plan of clustering computers as "grandiose." Not only were there technical challenges involved with setting up the computers as a grid, he says, but there were also logistical challenges. "There are always human inhibitions that have to be overcome: people who wouldn't want to give the students administrative access to their computers or wouldn't want to deal with the possibility that it might mess up or slow down their systems."

Instead of getting a large group of the schools' computers to work in tandem, they've reduced the scope to the 26 in Mr. Wheadon's lab. Still, he says, "I think they had expected to be much farther at this point." One problem involves the types of computers the students are using—Macs whose operating system isn't as well supported for HTCondor.

"I've been consistently impressed by Lab students' enthusiasm and work ethic," says Kyle Chard, a Computation Institute fellow.

Mr. Wheadon is optimistic that on a smaller scale the project will come together. "We certainly will have something that will run here in the computer science labs." At weekly meetings the students detail their progress and plans, which gives Mr. Wheadon an opportunity to steer them in the right direction. "We're seeing the light at the end of the tunnel."

The project has proven valuable, says Mr. Wheadon, in giving the students problem-solving experience. In computer science, he says, it's common to run into problems from permissions issues to firewalls. "These are the things you run into on a practical basis; you learn by trying stuff and finding out if it fails, doing searches and seeing if other people have done that problem—and if it's not exactly the same solution, then you use that to get insight." The students are gaining "the nitty-gritty know-how," he says, "of how permissions work, how to use an administrative account, and just using the machines."

Another lesson the students are learning through their independent study, perhaps unexpected in the stereotypically solitary world of computer science, is teamwork. Working as a group, Mr. Wheadon says, "helps to keep your sanity. If something doesn't work for you, then somebody else can try it. When it's just you, banging your head against the wall, it can get very frustrating." The students, he says, have expertise in different areas, knowledge they share with each other. "One of them might have used the Unix system more than the others, so s/he can teach the others how it works."

The students will keep plugging away until the end of the school year, sometimes with the help of their mentors from the Computation Institute. "They periodically pop up over here to catch up with everyone," says Mr. Chard. "They've come in a couple times for advice." The students bring energy when they visit, he says. "We have an open door, and they're always welcome to come back."

Lawyer makes good

Richard Salomon, ’71

Lawyer and legal consultant Richard Salomon, ’71, wants to be remembered for being an “upstander”—not a bystander but rather someone who is an active, positive force for change.

Mr. Salomon, who lost much of his family in the Holocaust, has worked to have his family's history preserved and shared as a cofounder and member of the executive committee and board of directors for the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center. In addition to helping to organize museum events, he spent six years amassing one of the largest collection of papers about the Japanese diplomat who saved his father's life. Contrary to his government's orders, Chiune Sugihara issued transit visas to more than 2,000 people, providing safe passage out of Lithuania to Japan.

“This man dared to do what was right, even though he knew it would ruin his career,” says Mr. Salomon, who invokes a quote his son taught him: “You make a living by what you get; you make a life by what you give.”

“You make a living by what you get; you make a life by what you give.”

Aside from the museum, he also volunteers for the Visas for Life Foundation, NYU’s Of Many Institute, the Israel Policy Forum, Alliance for Justice, the American Jewish World Service, Interfaith Youth Corps, and the Auburn Theological Seminary. He also lectures at his alma mater, Harvard Law School.

“It helps that I only need four or five hours of sleep at night,” jokes Mr. Salomon, the CEO and founder of Vantage Point Consultants, which advises corporations on ways to optimize their expenditure of legal dollars.

Mr. Salomon, who lives in New York with his wife, Jacquie, watched *Perry Mason* as a kid and was enamored with Clarence Darrow. He attributes his life in law to his Lab May Project, when he spent a month working for a law firm. The experience convinced him that lawyers are not only creative problem-solvers but also can seek to do right and correct injustices.

After college he spent a year on a Watson Fellowship studying criminal justice and visiting prisons in Scandinavia, where he found alternatives to incarceration and shorter prison terms than in the United States. Those experiences raised his compassion for those from the “more hardscrabble side of life.”

“The wheels of justice often move more slowly than I'd like and take considerable time,” he says he learned early in his practice. His nonprofit work is a way to try to make those wheels move a bit faster.

Back to math

Justine Henning, ’84

Justine Henning, ’84, loved learning math—until an off-hand comment when she was a High School senior dissuaded her from continuing her studies.

“Someone, I don't remember who, told me college math was too abstract and had nothing to do with the real world,” she recalls. “Naively, I believed him.”

Yet later in her career, she was drawn back to math. Two years ago, she founded Math4Science, a non-profit that connects math to STEM fields and the working professionals who use it in their jobs.

“Never again will students ask, ‘When will I ever use this?’” says Ms. Henning. “Too often, by the time kids get to algebra it's not clear to them why they should bother to learn math.”

Drawing on two decades of experience in education and tutoring, Ms. Henning is developing a K–12 math curriculum that is now used in three New York City public schools, each with a high percentage of low-income families. With her sights set on seeing the curriculum in schools across the country, her road to Math4Science began with Lab's Ms. Kobrin and Ms. McDonald, who both taught her to love math.

“Often math textbooks do a poor job teaching math. They're either too conceptual or too focused on rote learning,” says Ms. Henning, who began creating her own teaching materials 19 years ago, when, as a tutor, she was disappointed in the available math textbooks. “How can we expect kids to go into these STEM careers if they don't even know what they are?”

In addition to creating a curriculum, she's amassing a list of professionals in as many science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers as she can find to serve as role models, including fellow Lab alumni Derek West, '89, a bioengineer, and David Scheiner, ’84 an internet applications developer and architect.

“How can we expect kids to go into these STEM careers if they don't even know what they are?”

Seeking out role models from a variety of backgrounds, races, and genders will make it easier to inspire a diverse crop of youngsters to pursue STEM careers at the highest level.

“The best thing is to go into a classroom and see kids who grew up in the projects and are stressed by life at home engaged, largely because they see someone inspiring who looks just like them,” Ms. Henning says. “That means we've already succeeded. I deeply believe in the capabilities of each of these students. No matter where they're from, I want them to see their potential and realize it.”

Serendipitous storyteller

Sarah Rose, ’92

Sarah Rose, ’92, may have been the last person to predict she’d wind up an author and a journalist.

“My teachers at Lab knew I was a good writer, before I did,” says Ms. Rose, who is a columnist at the *Wall Street Journal*, and at *Men’s Fitness*, and whose magazine features appear in *Outside Magazine*, *Departures/Centurion*, and *Men’s Journal*.

“Lab was an intellectual Valhalla. If you were creative and wanted to structure your own education, it was a great place to be curious,” she says. “This is very good for reporters, who are paid to be curious. All we have is a question and a pen.”

That curiosity turned a post-college backpacking trip into a career path. After graduating from Harvard, she took a train from London, across Siberia, to Hong Kong for six months of freedom and travel. Reaching the bottom of her bank account, however, prompted her to try journalism: with the British handover of Hong Kong approaching, she saw an opportunity for a willing and capable wordsmith and landed her first job as an assistant to the *Boston Globe* Asia Bureau.

It was one of many “small decisions that cascaded into a major life direction,” she says, including her first book. *For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World’s Favorite Drink and Changed History*, is the story of a 19th-century botanist who snuck into China to steal the secrets of tea for England and the East India Company and break the Chinese tea monopoly. It is the greatest theft of trade secrets in history.

That book about a pirate-fighting Victorian plant-hunter and corporate espionage was named the BBC’s book of the week—the Brit equivalent of being an Oprah pick—and went on to become a bestseller.

Last winter, when looking for a new book idea, Ms. Rose was reading the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, where she found an article about 39 women who parachuted into France during World War II to train and arm the resistance ahead of the D-Day landings. Her next book, *A Most Ungentlemanly War: The Women of Churchill’s Secret Army*, set to be published in 2018, will tell the story of the first women in combat since Boudicea led the Celts against Rome. “The story of war has always been told by men, about men, and for men,” she says. “I’m hoping *A Most Ungentlemanly War* will be an important contribution to the literature of combat, where women’s voices are increasingly necessary.”

“Lab was an intellectual Valhalla.”

“My career path has benefitted from not knowing what I was going to do beforehand. There’s been a lot of serendipity,” says Ms. Rose.

But her teachers saw some of it coming. At her 15th reunion, Ms. Rose told her English teacher Darlene McCampbell, “I’m a writer!”

To which Ms. McCampell responded, “You always were!”

The right tenor

Karim Sulayman, ’94

Opera singer Karim Sulayman, ’94, was talent-scouted early. A “lifer” at Lab, music teacher Vanya Wang heard him singing as a kindergartener and told his parents there was something special about him. By seven he had become a member of the Chicago Children's Choir, and about two years later he sang as a soloist.

“People come to a concert to be transported, to feed their soul,” says Mr. Sulayman, whose tenor voice has now echoed through Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, the Guggenheim, and the Boston Lyric Opera. “It's much bigger than I am, as the individual.”

Mr. Sulayman, who has sung in 12 languages, credits Lab's language teachers with a strong foundation of language study. “I always think of Mr. [Randall] Fowler when I sing in French," says Mr. Sulayman, who describes himself as a “text-driven” singer. “It's not just about the beautiful sound you make. When you're singing words, they matter. It's always about expressing the entirety of what you're singing, which includes the text.”

A top prizewinner at the Kurt Weill Foundation’s Lotte Lenya competition and a fellowship recipient at Rice University, Sulayman is most proud of his latest effort, a classical crossover album. Debuting at number five on the Classical Billboard Chart, *Sephardic Journey* puts a baroque spin on traditional Sephardic music. “No one else has done anything like this,” he says. “It's the first album of its kind.”

“People come to a concert to be transported, to feed their soul.”

It’s likely not the last time he tries something different.

“Music is an ephemeral art; it's dangerous to get bogged down in what you've done,” he says. “You put it in the universe and then it's gone. Don't get stuck in where you've been.”

His upcoming season includes performances of Handel's “Messiah” at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, but more than that he anticipates singing his first Orfeo by Monteverdi, “a pinnacle role for a tenor of my voice-type,” says Mr. Sulayman, who notes that while it's one of the first operas ever written, it has stood the test of time.

“As long as I'm continuing to move people, as long as I'm taking them to a place emotionally that they don't let themselves go to very often and I'm respecting the integrity of the music as well, then I'm doing my job.”

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LAB ALUMNI WEEKEND

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2016

We look forward to welcoming you back to Hyde Park this fall for Lab Alumni Weekend 2016!

All alumni are encouraged to return to campus and reconnect with the Laboratory Schools community. U-High class years ending in '1 and '6 will celebrate milestone reunions and enjoy special class gatherings and dinners.

Please contact the Office of Alumni Relations and Development with any questions at 773-702-0578 or alumni@ucls.uchicago.edu.

save the date

Annual Alumni Donor Thank You Party
Late July, details to come
This annual event hosted by Smita Shah, '91, celebrates the generosity of alumni who gave at any level during fiscal year 2016.