Director emphasizes unity
Abelmann wants stronger ties among schools

BY PRIYANKA SHRIJAY

As new director Charlie Abelmann takes the reins, he plans to strengthen connections within and outside the Lab community. Dr. Abelmann also hopes to encourage student voice and to promote a balance between work and recreation. Dr. Abelmann has set relationshipships within the Lab community as a primary goal.

“My hope is that we can have more connections between the schools for students to interact with students of different ages more and teachers to interact more as well,” he said, adding that despite five divisions of Lab Schools spanning two campuses, he wants to have one community.

Aside from inter-school relationships, Dr. Abelmann hopes to foster Lab’s ties with the charter schools, University of Chicago and the local community through service learning.

In addition to bolstering relationships, Dr. Abelmann’s vision for Lab is a safe, welcoming institution promoting student voice, innovation and a work-fun balance.

“We need to always question how schools have worked and imagine new possibilities,” he said. “I am a strong advocate for schools working for all students and promoting having a healthy balance of activities for students. We need to be a serious place of learning while not taking our solvers too seriously and knowing we can have fun.”

Most recently, Dr. Abelmann was the head of school at Barr Street School in Maryland, and previously was a principal at Janney Elementary School in Washington D.C.

Dr. Abelmann, who has a bachelor’s degree in English and religion from Duke University and a doctorate in administration, planning and social policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, was involved with the World Bank’s education programs in China, Mongolia and Indonesia. He also worked with ministries of education and local governments in Africa, Europe and South America.

While curious about Lab’s traditions and student experiences, Dr. Abelmann believes his history of working on educational issues in private and public schools around the world will allow him to break new ground on his goals.

“I think my time working in some very progressive schools influences how I value hands-on learning and authentic projects,” he said. “I believe deeply in connecting students to real world and value supporting the work of principals. I value innovation and out of the box thinking.”

Dr. Abelmann — already aware of Lab’s history, standing and connection to the University of Chicago — found he shares many of Lab’s core beliefs, and was attracted to it from the start as a result.

“The job appealed to lots of my interests and experience in education. I value partnerships, and the school has a few great ones and can do much more with the University, the city and organizations and schools in other places. I value student voice and authenticity and when I visited, I felt this was a community that shared that value,” he said. “I also felt people embraced the idea of how Lab can also serve others outside of Lab.”

Dr. Abelmann is excited to grow with Lab.

“I felt like this could be a challenging and rewarding position for me. I hope to make a significant contribution as I help Lab serve students and be a great workplace for adults,” he said. “I know I will learn and grow at Lab and look forward to the challenge of new endeavors.”

BY IVÁN BECK

Students can now embrace a construction-free school

BY JACOB POINIER

Larger numbers of students in the future will be able to access a new outdoor learning classroom and security procedures characterize the beginning of the 2017-18 school year.

ADMISSIONS

The Class of 2021 is U-High’s largest ever with 164 incoming freshmen, 58 of whom are new to Lab.

This is also the first week for five new sophomores and two new juniors, according to Karen Duncan, assistant director of admissions.

Of the freshmen new to Lab, 59 percent are female and 41 percent are male, and 51 percent are from Chicago, with 42 percent from the suburbs or Indiana, and the remaining 7 percent from other states, including New Mexico, New York, Colorado and Michigan.

The new freshmen represent an even split between private and public middle schools, according to Ms. Duncan.

CONSTRUCTION

For the first time in at least three years, confusions detours and endless hammering won’t greet students — no construction projects are left over from the summer, and nothing significant is planned for the school year, according to Director Charlie Abelmann.

“For the first time in years there has been no construction inside the building this summer — which is wonderful,” Ana Campos, dean of students, said.

No significant construction was completed inside the build-

BY IVÁN BECK

Midway reporter

The members of the Principal’s advisory Council, a group of students that will work during the upcoming school year alongside Principal Stephanie Weber, will commence work soon. The group includes class vice presidents and additional students from each grade. So far, the students include Madison Chrisman, Natalie Glick, Ben Hoffmeister, Nolan Issa, Jenna Nimer, Lea Runesha, Henry Sowerby, Cole Summerfeld and Emma Trone. Members from the freshmen class are yet to be determined.

Council will provide provide more of a connection between the student body and the administration.

Henry, a junior, said that during the last school year there was talk among students about changes in student leadership in the school. He wants to work with Ms. Duncan.

Henry said, “I am looking forward to finding a way to efficiently disseminate information from the administration, as well as convey the opinions and thoughts of the student body back to the administration.”

The role also provides another dimension to student leadership in the school separate from Student Council. Madison, a junior, Madison, a junior, recognizes that Student Council has a strong voice and the power to affect change through passing legislation. However, she pointed out that not all voices and groups are represented among the elected members of the Student Council. Madision, who is black, wants to ensure advocacy for the black students in the school.

“I felt that being on PAC would be the perfect way for me to be able to consistently voice the concerns of black students in the school.”

New faculty and staff

Turn To Page 2 for an introduction to new U-High faculty members.

2017 Midway yearbook

FRESHMAN CLASS IS LARGEST EVER

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New council will advise principal on student opinions
Meet U-High’s new TEACHERS

Where did you work prior to coming here?

Veronica Bruyn
Mass Media

I’ve been in a lot of places. I was in District 214 for six years right out of under-grad... I left teaching high school. Recently I’ve been coming back into teaching high school. I’ve done some temporary assignments at Lane Tech and the York High School in the suburbs.

Is there something new that you want to bring to this school?

I don’t know if it’s new per se — I know classes have installation-based work — but I’m really interested in being able to do something of some art installations that are temporary within this new building if allowed, so I don’t know the logistics of that yet, but I’d like to explore that further.

Aria Chet
Learning & Counseling

This is a tricky question because the last school I was at was Stevenson High School. However, the past two years I was fulfilling maternity leave assignments at various suburban high schools as a social worker.

What is something interesting about you?

A lot of things! I’ve recently been very passionate about rock climbing. I’ve only been outside in California a few times this summer, but I climb indoors in Chicago in a gym.

Dr. Elizabeth Rubin
Chemistry, AT Biology

I relocated from New York City where I got my Ph.D. in molecular biology research at the Rockefeller University and then this past year I taught at Fieldston, which is an independent school in New York, and taught biology there.

In the most modest tone, I’m an opera singer.

Holly Johnson
Early World History

I worked at a school that is called The Episcopal Academy. It’s a private K-12 school in the western suburbs of Philadelphia and I was a class dean there.

I sang opera in college. A lot of my student are surprised to hear that.

Dr. Jonas Krammer
Chemistry, Physics, Biology

I taught chemistry in the Netherlands to grades 9 through 11. Before I was a teacher I did research on climate change and other environmental issues.

I wanted to help cultivate a mindset in students that they can be great at everything they don’t just perform in the classroom, but also in athletics. I want to help create lifelong learners of physical activity and help students find their niche activity that they can pursue for years to come.

Joshua Pollock
Physical Education

Yes. For the past five years, I had a great experience in sponsoring a student-athlete’s annual poetry journal called Brichester Review... With Lab’s unique university setting and linguistic diversity coupled with my Brichester Review experience, I think that a student-run publication with national distribution, possibly a translation journal, would engage student editors in an authentic process of leadership, scholarship, and collaboration.

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Dr. Tom Pozan
English 1, English 2, Liberal Arts

I worked at a school that is called The Episcopal Academy. It’s a private K-12 school in the western suburbs of Philadelphia and I was a class dean there.

Absolutely. I’ve taught for 16 years, so I come with a lot of experience. I have a lot of travel experience.

I’ve met so far has been so kind and supportive. Can’t wait.

Finnunni Wund
Advanced Algebra, Advanced Algebra, Advanced Algebra, and Trig

I worked in an all-girls secondary school in Dublin, Ireland, where I taught math and business studies to students aged 16-18.

I’m not really sure yet. The Lab School seems to be so much to offer I can’t wait to get involved.

Sharon Harrison
Computer Science

Ms. Harrison was unavailable for an interview because the Office of publications due to a delay with her work visa. Ms. Harrison taught computer science at U-High in 2015.

New staff members at U-High or Lab Schools administration include Lori Admissions, admissions associate/project associate with the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid, Marta Codoner, library assistant, Laura Hicks, support specialist for the Information Systems department, Elizabeth Noel, wellness and equal opportunity programs coordinator/deputy Title IX coordinator; Kathryn Smidota, communication content manager; Lisa Vandenberg, admission assistant/receptionist with the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid.

6 people join Lab staff, admin

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Hiking to independence

From urban city to wilderness, hikers find peace

BY EMMA TRONE

The staggeringly beautiful scen- ery of sharp mountain peaks, icy streams and lush forest accom- panying exhausting and exhilarating, yet peaceful, journeys of self-dis-covery for U-High students who added a hiking expedition to the list of last summer’s activities.

Those who spend a large chunk of their summer roughing it to the outdoors are often drawn by the allure of disconnecting from Chi- cago’s urban landscape. “I love being outside more than anything, and the disconnect from the real world is the highlight of my summer year after year,” said junior Sofia Kouri, who spent a month trekking through Alaska. Sofia has attended Arbutus Hayes-West-Ha, a summer camp bas ed in Traverse City, Michigan, for the last five years. After complet- ing two summers worth of physically rigorous trips with the camp, Alaska was the culmination of her camp experience.

Junior Sally Carlstrom attended the National Outdoor Leadership School through the Wind River Range in Wyoming’s Rocky Moun- tains after hearing about her older sister’s experience with the program. “I wanted to do something inde- pendent and away from Chicago, and I also thought it would be a strengthening experience,” Sally said. “I also wanted to see if I could sustain a month in the wilder- ness with all the different people.”

Senior Harrison Shapiro previ- ously had attended both Hayes-West-Ha and NOLS, and felt confident enough to take a solo weekend trip through the Royals Arch on the northern shoreline of Lake Superior, east of Minnesota and north of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. “Weber school got out drove up to the Upper Peninsula, flew out there, and hiked the whole island,” Harrison said. “NOLS was incredi- bly good preparation. I was ready for anything, I was there for a month and it was an incredibly peaceful experience.”

For many hikers, the physical difficulty of the trips often ampli- fies self-collection and discovery. “Our summit day was a big chal- lenge, physically but also the best day of the trip. Honestly, every- thing was so beautiful and I was having such a good time that even when things were hard physically, I was still in such a good mood,” Sofia said. “There wasn’t a single moment where I wished I were home.”

Along with growing awareness of climate change while camping on the ground, the physi- cal and emotional disconnection from home helped grow Sofia’s own self-awareness. “I learned a lot about myself from being in Alaska, and I hope to bring a similar outlook to National Parks than I can,” she said. “It makes you forget about your life at home and puts you in a completely new world.”

In the future, Sofia hopes to help everyone on the team individual- ly so that we can be better collectively as a team. “I also think the gold team can benefit individuals off the course as well because it forces kids in all four grades to interact.”

SAM MORIN, SAILING

“As always, our goal for the season is to qualify for the Great Lakes Championship. We’ve qualified the past few years, and Lilian and I are looking forward to leading the team to continued success.”

Quick Q

What are your goals as one of the captains?

JEREMY CHIZEWER, GOLF

“My excited to be captain, and I hope that I can help everyone on the team improve individually so that we can be better collectively as a team. I also think the golf team can benefit individuals off the course as well because it forces kids in all four grades to interact.”

JOSH ULANE, BOYS SOCCER

“Our goals for this year are to win ISL and win a state title, and to play together as one unit. I feel like as senior I have to set an example for the younger kids, either with how I carry myself on the field, giving hundred percent in every practice, and leaving it all on the field.”

Note: Other teams had not selected captains by press time.
Through involvement in internships, travel and lab work, students gain important job skills

BY SONNY LEE
DEPUTY EDITOR
MIDWAY REPORTER

Whether traveling to a foreign country for the first time, interning or earning a couple bucks, summer isn’t just a time to relax — but to get involved in the world outside of school as well.

Senior Elizabeth Van Ha traveled with her family to Japan for the first time, visiting sites old and new, rich with both culture and modern fads like Pokémon and manga.

“One of the craziest things that I saw in the city of Tokyo was this Times Square-esque place that’s dedicated to anime and manga,” Elizabeth said. “Just seeing all the arcades, the anime and the manga, it was very different than anything I’d ever expected.”

Elizabeth recalled that there were games she’d never seen before, being played in ways she’d never imagined with special equipment such as high-tech gloves.

Elizabeth described one of the games she’d seen as “Guitar Hero” on steroids.

Elizabeth also explained that an incredible aspect of Japan was the diversity it had in terms of old and new, rich with both culture and modern fads like Pokémon and manga.

Through the gaming culture, the anime, and the manga, Elizabeth said, “Just seeing all the diversity it had in terms of old and new, rich with both culture and modern fads like Pokémon and manga was an incredible aspect of Japan that was never seen such a large variety of the diversity it had in terms of old and new, rich with both culture and modern fads like Pokémon and manga.”

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While much can be learned in the classroom, life lessons and values like understanding other cultures and histories on a level beyond textbooks can only happen outside the classroom.

Junior Alexis Tyndall didn’t learn about the environment or her community through a textbook but by immersing herself in an internship.

“Stay close to home, Alexis spent five weeks of her summer vacation interning at the Love, Unity & Values Institute on Chicago’s South Side, which works with youth who face challenges with college and career readiness through programs that provide skills to help in planning for the future.”

Alexis worked alongside three other interns from the University of Chicago Charter School at Woodlawn and U-High junior Madison Christmas.

Two projects the four interns worked on were a monthly newsletter and a public service announcement for a campaign the institute called “Hire the Youth.”

Alexis said the team came up with the idea, wrote the script, filmed and edited the PSA throughout the five weeks.

Throughout her time at the LUV Institute, Alexis learned what it’s like to work in an office and how to create a product to showcase.

“Being a part of this was really important and I learned a lot about the community around the organization I was working at and how important their work is,” Alexis said.

Alexis said her internship was an eye-opening experience, showing her both the strengths and the weaknesses of the communities.

Alexis got her internship through the Internship for Civic Engagement. Similar to the Civic Engagement Internship, U-High students could get internships at the LUV Institute, at the University of Chicago and around the community.

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