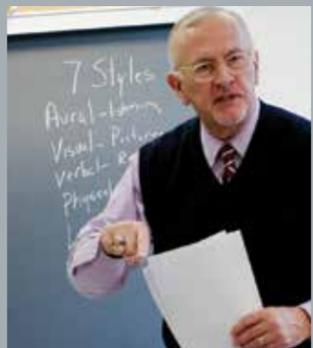


LABLIFE

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

spring 2013





Dear Friends,

A few years ago, an alumnus from Denver told me that he had added to his résumé that he went to Lab. The employer—in Denver!—said to him, “There are only a couple of schools in America that justify putting your high school on your resume and that’s one of them!”

It is a reminder that the Laboratory Schools experience proves again and again to be transformative for our graduates and an experience that benefits them for life in so many ways.

That story, for me, is also reflective of what about Lab translates into an education, and a reputation, that supports our graduates beyond our campus: community and excellence.

Our community—faculty, parents, alumni—take a “pride of ownership” out into the world. They share their ideas and their enthusiasm for learning and their Lab experience in all of their disciplines.

We live in an increasingly competitive world, and with so many students (and families) of talent, intellect, and passion at Lab, it is refreshing that students talk about what a kind place this is. And it has been that way for generations. Alumni talk about finding a home here—not just friendship, but a community of like-minded learners who made them feel embraced. Current students talk about how supported they feel by their teachers and peers. It’s genuine and it’s unique. And that is why the idea of kindness has been included as part of our new mission statement.

On to excellence: it is in our everyday teaching but it goes beyond our campus. Our faculty participate in professional development activities and conferences, sharing our pedagogy and our narrative across the US and the world. And our graduates do the same in their everyday lives. It’s why a hiring manager in Denver might care about an applicant’s high school alma mater.

Our community—faculty, parents, alumni—take a “pride of ownership” out into the world. They share their ideas and their enthusiasm for learning and their Lab experience in all of their disciplines.

As I enter my final year at Lab, I want to reiterate that I have taken seriously my role as both steward and champion of the Laboratory Schools. I have made a commitment to support the kind community and academic excellence that are hallmarks of this institution and to champion the traditions and improvements that will support our talented people with the facilities and systems that they need and deserve.

Every June I have the honor of handing diplomas to our graduating seniors and wishing them the very best as they head out into the world armed not only with their Lab education but the Lab reputation that so many before them have helped ensure. It’s a great day, a culmination of all of our innovations and all of our traditions.

I wish you all a very enjoyable summer.

David W. Magill
David W. Magill, EdD
Director

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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Marathoning Mathematician



“I teach math and see the world.”

Eight marathons, four half-marathons, and dozens of shorter races, in places from Paris to Zimbabwe. Those are U-High math teacher **Shauna Anderson’s** stats.

She ran her first marathon while in graduate school at Harvard. Flipping through a magazine in October 1995, she saw an ad for a running group and signed up. Six months later she entered the lottery for the Boston Marathon, open to nonqualifiers that year in honor of its 100th anniversary. She didn’t get a number. But some friends from her running group did and Ms. Anderson accompanied them to registration. Waiting in line, she chatted with her neighbor, who offered her his number. “It was fate. He’d been injured and couldn’t run, and I just happened to be there,” she says. “So I got to run the fabled Boston Marathon.”

After grad school, Ms. Anderson lived in Ethiopia, a volunteer teacher in a poor, rural area—“a life-changing, eye-opening experience,” she says, “and

where I got the travel bug.” Later she moved to Thailand, continuing to teach and run, and signed up for her second marathon in April 2001—during her spring break—in Paris.

She has since completed six more, and she’s inspired her mother and sisters to run, too. “I never ran in high school,” Ms. Anderson says, “but now they tell me I’m motivating them.”

Although she calls herself “a total back-of-the-packer,” she has never started a race she hasn’t finished. That determination spills into other areas of her life. “I sort of make these declarations that I’m going to do something, and it ends up happening,” she says. “Growing up in Indiana, three young ladies and I all made the declaration that we were going to engineering school. And we all did.”

Although she had envisioned becoming an engineering professor, during graduate school Ms. Anderson realized her heart was in teaching and transferred to Harvard’s master of education program. Now in her sixth year at Lab, she is “appreciative that I get to do the job I love to do and travel and experience other cultures—that I have both the mindset and the ability to do it.”

She anticipates running races in Hawaii this June, Brazil in July, Iceland in August, and the New York Marathon this fall. “Since Ethiopia,” she says, “I’ve been to 30 countries. That’s what I do: I teach math and see the world.”



Although she calls herself “a total back-of-the-packer,” Shauna Anderson has never started a race she hasn’t finished. That determination spills into other areas of her life: “Growing up in Indiana, three young ladies and I all made the declaration that we were going to engineering school. And we all did.”



Student Research Advances Science... and Gains Recognition

Summer Link program projects take students to national stage



Danny Zhang, Lane Gunderman

Seniors **Lane Gunderman** and **Danny Zhang** earned accolades for their science research in this year's Intel Science Talent Search—Lane moving on as a finalist and Danny as a semifinalist.

The Intel competition recognizes 300 students and their schools as national semifinalists each year to compete for \$1.25 million in awards. From that pool, 40 finalists are invited to Washington, DC, to display their work, meet with notable scientists, and compete for the top award of \$100,000.

Both of these students began their

work as part of Lab's Summer Link science research program, a unique partnership with the University of Chicago that allows U-High students to get a glimpse into the world of practicing scientists while working side-by-side with University faculty and graduate students and getting paid. There are also Summer Link partnerships with the Booth School, Law School, and Chicago businesses.

Lane, whose research stemmed from his Summer Link project with UChicago Associate Professor of Chemistry **Greg Engel**, says going to DC was exciting. "My favorite part of the trip was meeting the other finalists," he says. He hopes those relationships last a lifetime.

For his project, Lane used computer

simulations to investigate whether part of the Fenna-Matthews-Olson protein complex, involved in photosynthetic energy transfer, moved as a photon flowed through the system. In nature, this complex "exhibits near-perfect quantum efficiency," he says, "and if we can understand the mechanics" that allow for such efficiency, scientists can create similarly efficient synthetic materials for, say, solar panels.

Danny's project started in her Summer Link program in the laboratory of UChicago cancer researcher and Blum-Riese Distinguished Service

Professor **Janet Rowley**, '42, PhB'45, SB'46, MD'48. Danny proved that the protein LIN28 regulates the microRNA miR-150, "which in turn is a key regulator" involved in certain types of leukemia. "Thus," she says, "I have found a potential therapeutic target."

Much Ado about Shakespeare

UChicago experts guest lecture at U-High

For her fall-quarter English elective this year, "The Comedy of Love," **Darlene McCampbell** continued her tradition of inviting UChicago guest speakers at quarter's end. Shakespeare scholar and Phyllis Fay Horton Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus **David Bevington**, editor of the texts used by Ms. McCampbell's students, addressed *Taming of the Shrew*. Edward Olson Distinguished Service Professor **James Redfield**, '50, AB'54, PhD'61, a classics scholar with theater experience, discussed *Much Ado About Nothing*.

For Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Court Theatre artistic director and Lab parent **Charles Newell** held a rehearsal-like workshop. The short scenes the



James Redfield



A "shape museum" helped second graders in **Catie Gillespie's** class better understand geometry. Each child brought in a three-dimensional object and put it in the right category. Then during a "museum walk," students wrote down observations for each group of shapes: "I noticed that the cylinders all have two faces" or, "I notice that the spheres don't have a vertex."

students performed, Ms. McCampbell says, "opened up many questions that enlightened the text."

She recalls giving a Shakespeare workshop in Stratford, England, years ago, and casually mentioning to a Turkish teacher that Mr. Bevington visits her class. The teacher "drooled with envy," Ms. McCampbell says, and asked, "The real David Bevington? The scholar?"

Steps to Security

At Lab, even security is about learning. "The educational opportunity we have to offer is very significant," says **Fountain Walker**, Lab's new, and first-ever, director of security. From stopping by a preschool

classroom for a fire-safety lesson to forming a safety committee for the Lab community, training is his top goal. A month into the job, he conducted 20 "SWOT" exercises—Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats—"with different stakeholders," he says, "to maintain the open culture within the walls of the school but also provide layers of security."

Formerly combined with facilities, security warrants its own director as Lab adds to its footprint this fall, opening Earl Shapiro Hall for nursery through second grade. To keep up with industry standards, the new building and future renovations "will be done with security in mind," says Mr. Walker, who previously served as deputy chief of the UChicago Police Department's Patrol Services Bureau. That means modern access controls, smart architectural design, on-site security staff, and training to help staff assess threats, resolve conflicts, or find security or a counselor when necessary.



Fountain Walker

Foremost, Mr. Walker plans to educate parents, faculty, staff, and students on how to react in an emergency. "If the opportunity exists to instruct," he says, "I will do so."

Beyond the Fruit Fly

U-High freshman working on new laboratory protocol

When University of Chicago organismal biologist **Urs Schmidt-Ott** first proposed that a half-dozen Lab students work with him to breed black soldier flies, U-High biology teachers **Dan Jones** and **Daniel Calleri** offered him one better: 120 freshmen working on Professor Schmidt-Ott's project as part of U-High's ecology curriculum.



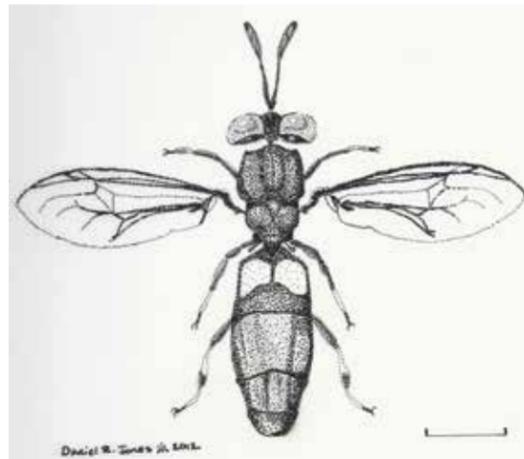
Urs Schmidt-Ott

They've determined an optimal tank size, found a light wavelength in which the males and females recognize each other, and discovered they won't mate below 26 degrees Celsius. "So it's like June 21 at noon in Southern Georgia," Mr. Jones says.

The next step, he says, "is convincing the female to deposit the eggs in a place where you can get them," rather than in dark corners or plants around the lab, where he suspects the flies are hatching. The students have concocted structures out of straws and other materials, so far with little luck. When they succeed, they can deliver the eggs to Professor Schmidt-Ott for research, and they will have created the first laboratory protocol, or standard procedure, for this species. It's a feat, Mr. Jones says, that "has enormous potential to be a new genetic model."

Black soldier flies, or *Hermetia illucens*, would be useful for research, like fruit flies or midge flies. "They develop similar to ancient flies but have characteristics similar to modern flies," Mr. Jones says. "They are in the middle." But they aren't bred for laboratory use.

That's where U-High comes in. Last year, Lab purchased 5,000 of the flies from a company in Georgia that breeds massive amounts as reptile food. The students have experimented to find which conditions encourage the flies to mate.



When they succeed, the U-Highers will have created the first laboratory protocol, or standard procedure, for this species.

"Luck Favors the Mind that is Prepared"

Lab students get a lesson in emergency preparedness

Louis Pasteur set the tone and now Lab students know how to be proactive if disaster strikes. Thanks to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and **Michele McKee**, assistant professor of pediatrics at Comer Children's Hospital and director of emergency medical services and disaster preparedness, sixth-grade students received training on how to prepare for an emergency.

In early March, Lab parent Dr. McKee and sixth-grade teacher **Debra Kogelman** taught the children such skills as preparing an emergency supply kit and creating a family emergency plan, like establishing a safe meeting zone after a fire. As a community-service component, the students shared the information they learned with a friend, neighbor, or extended family member.

Dr. McKee, who was in the Navy for several years, is an expert on delivering important information in digestible amounts. "I was part of a response force between the Navy and the Marines," she says, "so I had to provide synopses and scale down how much information there was."

The FEMA modules are part of a nationwide initiative for disaster-preparedness planning, aiming to get children involved in family safety readiness. Instead of being fearful of events out of their hands, the kids learn to be empowered with practical ways they can help. The planning is a bit like a game: "Would you have the ability to make it three days without electricity?" "Can you show your mom how to conserve cell-phone power?"

"We're staying away from terrorism, while focusing on events that are more plausible for our geographic location, like a snowstorm or a blackout," says Dr. McKee. "It's basic things like knowing how much water the family has, that they have a battery-powered radio, or not having your phone on except at key times during a blackout. Children are ready for that. They're very bright, very capable."

Illinois children tend to be well prepared, in general, for emergencies. "When local emergency departments get accredited with the care that they're able to provide children, children's disaster preparedness is part of what they look for," says Dr. McKee. "Our state's doing a great job."

Eventually, the FEMA readiness plans will be taught to other grade levels, Dr. McKee says. "We're trying to make sure that disaster preparedness for children is part of everybody's global plan. As long as you give people tools to be prepared, they're able to handle what comes their way."

Jump In

About half the third graders go into the deep end. The others start in the shallow.

Lab's swimming curriculum begins in third grade, and for many students it's their first experience with swimming, ever. (It's also everyone's first time using the locker rooms and changing clothes for gym like the older kids, something they will not start to do for daily gym class until fifth grade.)



When it comes to swimming, starting young is important, says **Joyce Grothuss**, a swimming and PE teacher at Lab for 22 years. "Our biggest goal is to get them comfortable in the water, so they feel safe and can evaluate a pool and their ability."

The classes build both confidence and skills. Beginners learn to put their faces in the water and blow bubbles, breathe to the side, flutter-kick across the pool with flippers and kickboards, float on their fronts and backs, and swim freestyle. In the deep end, students learn advanced skills: diving, backstroke, breaststroke, and sometimes flip turns.

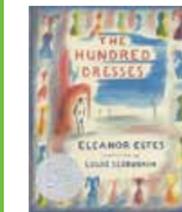
"Get them comfortable, make it fun, and teach them the fundamentals," Ms. Grothuss says. "That's what we're all about."

From the Syllabi

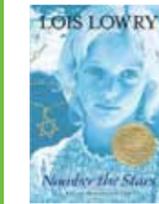
How to be a Hero

The fifth grade humanities curriculum uses literature to teach children to identify the elements of a story and to develop their own values and intellectual standards along the way. Says **Catherine Mannering**, fifth grade chair, "They are seeing characters grapple with universal themes in these books and stories—learning how to be brave or how to stick by a friend.

They see that children can make a difference." The fifth graders are also learning to use textual evidence to support and interpret a story in terms of character, setting, plot, conflict, theme, and point of view. Once in Middle School, they will use these skills as they advance to Harkness discussions.



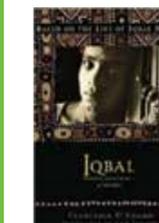
The Hundred Dresses
Eleanor Estes



Number the Stars
Lois Lowry



The Great Gilly Hopkins
Katherine Paterson



Iqbal
Francesco D'Adamo



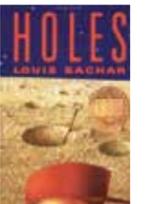
Beowulf: A New Telling
Robert Nye



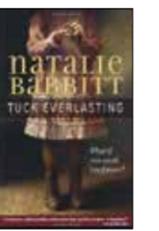
Zebra
Chaim Potok



In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson
Bette Bao Lord



Holes
Louis Sachar



Tuck Everlasting
Natalie Babbitt



The Liberation of Gabriel King
K. L. Going

Emeritus Retirements

Four departing teachers have dedicated a combined 126 years



Jan Bollig

When Jan Bollig retires in June, she'll say goodbye to the sunny Blaine classroom where she taught for 24 of her 26 years at Lab. She'll also leave behind 24 unusual artifacts, each decorated with photos of the students in as many first-grade classes: a blue wooden chair stuck with glow-in-the-dark stars; a painted hockey stick from the year the Blackhawks won the Stanley Cup; a beanstalk that climbs a heat pipe.

Each object relates to something a class studied—horses, clocks, 9/11—and most of them sparkle with glitter. Laughing, Ms. Bollig says that's one of the best things about teaching first grade: "Almost every project deserves glitter." First graders have an eye for art and detail, she adds. They're receptive and ask great questions. When she began teaching at Lab, she would show students how to search for answers in the library, consulting a dictionary or encyclopedia. Now they use a classroom computer or iPad.

In retirement she plans to travel and to cheer on the Cubs. "I'd love to get a job at Wrigley Field." Chances are Ms. Bollig, who lives in Andersonville, will be cheering along with her daughter, **Britt Bollig, '96**, and son, **Bjorn Bollig, '02**, both early-childhood teachers in Chicago.

Laughing, Ms. Bollig says that's one of the best things about teaching first grade: "Almost every project deserves glitter."

Stacey P. Hamburg

"Lab is such a part of the fabric of my life," says nursery teacher Stacey P. Hamburg. Her sons, **Adam Hamburg, '96**, and **Michael Hamburg, '99**, were students in the room where Ms. Hamburg later taught. Their teacher, Vivian Paley, mentored Ms. Hamburg.

"Every day I come to work, I'm reminded of my kids," says Ms. Hamburg, who came to Lab in 1985. That experience gave her perspective on what parents go through when they separate from their children. She also got energy and ideas from Reggio Children, a worldwide center for early-childhood education in Reggio Emilia, Italy, which she visited on four professional development trips.



"I'm going to miss the children terribly—their affection, their wonder, their energy," Ms. Hamburg says.

Ms. Hamburg's two-floor Woodlawn classroom reveals her teaching philosophy. At the "choosing board," kids pick where they'll play during free time. There are corners where they can curl up with a book and nooks for imaginative play. Self-portraits cover the walls, and a climbing room has wooden play equipment built by grandparents.

"I'm going to miss the children terribly—their affection, their wonder, their energy," Ms. Hamburg says. She'll also miss co-teachers **Sandy Mulholland** and **David Williamson**. But new horizons beckon—Ms. Hamburg and her husband moved downtown from Hyde Park four years ago and are still making discoveries. "Change is wonderful," she says. "If you don't change, you don't learn."



Bea Harris

After 40 years teaching home economics—28 at Lab—Bea Harris has seen triumphs and mishaps. There was the eighth-grade boy who made flawless, flaky croissants and years later went on to cooking school. There was also the student who put a cup of salt into the cake batter instead of a teaspoon—and the kid who ran cold water over a hot jar of freshly preserved grape jelly, which exploded.

"Everything becomes a lesson," says Ms. Harris, whose daughter **Chakka Reeves, '01**, and granddaughters **Bianca Harris, '08**, and **Jasmine Harris** attended Lab. "In many cases, I learn as the students learn." Shelves in Ms. Harris's classroom are lined with 20 years of *Bon Appétit* and *Gourmet* magazines. When she didn't know how to teach something, she took a class herself. That's why seventh and eighth graders finish home ec knowing how to make good pancakes and biscuits, and also have experimented with sushi, cream puffs, or raw cuisine.

Ms. Harris also teaches students to sew—making plush stuffed animals is a favorite seventh-grade project—and helped

Shelves in Ms. Harris's multi-kitchen classroom are lined with 20 years of *Bon Appétit* and *Gourmet* magazines.

start a vegetable garden at Lab. In retirement she hopes to create a program to help inner-city public school students develop basic life skills. She joined the DuSable Museum Education Council and plans to take an Australian cruise and keep gardening.

Susan Joseph

When Susan Joseph came to Lab in 1967, French, German, Russian, and Latin were the foreign languages taught at U-High. A native New Yorker, Ms. Joseph came to the Midwest to study the development of modern French theater at the University of Wisconsin. After seeing women with doctorates accept teaching jobs at small-

"I decided—city girl that I am—to get my MA in French lit, live in Chicago, and teach at Lab."



town colleges, she says, "I decided—city girl that I am—to get my MA in French lit, live in Chicago, and teach at Lab."

A few years after Ms. Joseph arrived, the demand for Spanish classes began to grow. She learned the language by studying in Mexico, taking classes at the University, and attending a summer-immersion program at Middlebury College. She then taught both languages and is proud of her role in launching the Spanish program, which has since grown "by leaps and bounds."

Ms. Joseph says her classes concentrate on spoken language. By the time students graduate, she hopes they're equipped to carry on a conversation with a native speaker. She has fond memories of trips to France with students and says she'll miss the teenagers' enthusiasm and sense of humor. She looks forward to retirement as a chance "to sleep, play tennis, cook, and do volunteer work." An opera fan, she also plans to learn Italian.



Lego sets allow the third graders in Gerold Hanck's science class to construct machines with gears, axles, wheels, levers, screws, and wedges, and to see them work in combination as complex machines. The process fosters problem-solving and observation skills—when something doesn't look like the design, or doesn't work as it's supposed to, the kids have to figure out why and fix it.



Afterglow

A visit to a UChicago lab shines light on scientific experimentation

Thanks to interactions with the class's friendly pet rats, **Gwennan Ickes's** fourth grade science students are accustomed to seeing rodents in the lab, but not ones with blue hair and glowing green eyes, ears, and tails. Photos of fluorescent mice were just some of the wonders the students witnessed in December when Ms. Ickes's class visited the labs of **Navneet Bhasin**, lecturer in the Biological Sciences Collegiate Division of the University and parent of two Lower Schoolers.

Fourth grade is a prime time to get students excited about science, explains Ms. Ickes. "We want them to feel that it's something that they're capable of, that it's not something that's big and scary and distant." It's also an ideal time for children to learn scientific habits of mind. "We want them to think about things like what kind of questions can scientists answer? What does your evidence tell you? How can you interpret from that evidence? How do we set up an experiment? It's those kind of process skills that we're focused on."

The glowing mice demonstrated green fluorescent protein (GFP)—scientists had cloned in these particular mice a gene that originally comes from jellyfish and causes them to glow in certain lights. Ms. Bhasin, who suggested the class field trip and has worked with young Lab students in the past, talked

about how GFP works and discussed its scientific uses, like how GFP can be used to tag and track certain genes. Ms. Ickes elaborated, "The purpose of GFP isn't to make rats whose ears and tails glow; it's that you use it to track the location/function and regulation of various genes." After examining preserved jellyfish through microscopes in the lab, the students also visited the department's greenhouse to learn about extreme variations among members of the same plant family, different methods of seed dispersal, and plant components in routine household items.

Ms. Bhasin was impressed by her visitors: "I was totally floored by their questions, which went beyond those from undergrads, who get too shy and take things for granted," she says. The Lab students asked questions like, "Can you put GFP in a human?" "Can we clone it in my dog?" and "Why is the rainbow curved?"

In preparation for the trip, says Ms. Ickes, "We went over appropriate lab



behavior." In the classroom, when the students are conducting an experiment and someone walks through and disturbs it, they must start over, so they knew to keep a respectful distance from the experiments in Ms. Bhasin's lab.

The students are now learning chemistry, studying the reaction of acids and bases in the laboratory that is the home kitchen. To put science into action, "We'll all make pancakes," says Ms. Ickes.



Navneet Bhasin

Fourth grade is a prime time to get students excited about science, explains Ms. Ickes. "We want them to feel that it's something that they're capable of, that it's not something that's big and scary and distant."



Shopping for Music

Percussion instruments line the front of Belfield 134, from bells on one side to timpani on the other. Eighth-grader **Shaunak Puri** stands near the middle to perform a snare-drum solo full of *rat a tat tats* for the fourth graders before him. "You put on a practice pad," says music teacher **Brad Brickner**, as Shaunak holds up the black rubber pad that dulls the sound, "because we like our friends and neighbors."

Mr. Brickner explains that drummers practice "rudiments," equivalent to scales for singers or piano players. Music teacher **Francisco Dean** tells the fourth graders that, if they choose percussion next year, they'll spend about half the time playing snare and bass drums and the other half on mallets. Eighth-grader **Tobias Ginsburg** demonstrates with mallets playing a melody on the wooden bars of a marimba. Then he plays the same solo on the xylophone and the glockenspiel to show their different sounds.

It's the first of five musical demonstrations the fourth graders get during winter quarter, as they "shop" for

the choice they will make for music in fifth grade.

"Through fourth grade, music is in a classroom setting," says Music Department Co-chair **Lee Gustafson**. Students sing, play keyboards, read music, learn pitches and rhythms. From fifth grade on, "students and parents self-select how they'll experience music."

In addition to percussion, older students exhibit brass, woodwind, and string instruments, as well as chorus/general music. After spring break, parents and students attend an open house where students can try the instruments before choosing one for fifth grade. They submit three options, and almost all get their first choice as teachers work to assemble bands, orchestras, and choirs that will learn and perform together over the next several years.

"Fifth grade is about learning fundamentals," Mr. Dean tells the fourth graders. "It's a great journey every year to add an instrument to your arsenal and to learn how those sounds play off each other."

A Fishy History Even Kids Understand

PBS documentarians visit first graders

This winter students in **Kathy Piane's** first grade class not only had the chance to see a model of the famous fossil *Tiktaalik roseae*—they got to do it on television.

A team from PBS is producing a three-part documentary based on Professor **Neil Shubin's** best-selling book, *Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body*. In the 2008 book, the UChicago Robert R. Bensley Professor of Organismal Biology and Anatomy describes showing the 375-million-year-old "fishapod" to his son's

nursery class at Lab. For the documentary, he re-created the scene with his daughter's first-grade class.

The four-person camera crew arrived early, so the students could ask questions about the camera and the microphone. By the time Professor Shubin arrived with *Tiktaalik*, they had forgotten all about the camera, "partly because they were so interested in the fossil," says Ms. Piane.

The students reacted to the fossil exactly like the students in the book, says Professor Shubin: "One kid said, 'It's a crocodile.' Another kid said, 'It's a fish.' And then another kid said, 'Maybe it's a walking fish.' Exactly. I wanted to

"One kid said, 'It's a crocodile.' Another kid said, 'It's a fish.' And then another kid said, 'Maybe it's a walking fish.' Exactly."



Neil Shubin

underscore the fact that the fossil was so straightforward, even a six-year-old could interpret it."

For about an hour, the crew filmed the children holding the fossil and talking to each other. The footage will be cut down to "maybe three minutes in the finished documentary," says Professor Shubin. "The kids learned the pain of the B-roll. They were all asking, 'Why do we have to do this again?'"

Your Inner Fish will be broadcast in early 2014—cons away, Ms. Piane says, from a first-grade perspective. "But they're excited they're going to be on television someday."

Scripting the Big Ideas

Playwriting work inspires young Labbies to ask important questions

Anna, a Latina aspiring actress, tries out for the role of Maria in *The Sound of Music*. She nails the part in auditions: she sings and emotes much better than the vapid, showboating mean girls who also try out. Anna needs the role: With the money from the job, her family could afford to stay in Chicago. Otherwise they must move to Texas to seek financial aid.

Despite Anna's superior audition, she's given the role of Dinner Guest #4. "The board didn't want a Hispanic Maria," the director says apologetically, and Anna endures an uncertain future and the teasing of her competitors.

Although the themes are real, the story is fictional. *Marisol: Racism in the Schools* is a play written by and starring eighth-grader **Marissa Martinez**, a project she did in class with Middle School drama teacher **Audre Budrys-Nakas**. Ms. Budrys-Nakas found the play such a thoughtful look at race that a filmed version was screened for Lab students at the March 5 Diversity Day. "The students were asking after they saw it, 'Does anything like that happen here?'" says Ms. Budrys-Nakas. "They were also talking about the [character of] the director in the film. So often racists

are portrayed as evil ogres who we don't see amongst us, so it was deep thinking on Marissa's part to write the director's character differently."

All of Ms. Budrys-Nakas's eighth grade drama classes include an independent project. Students find or write the pieces outside of class. Sometimes they collaborate on the writing, sometimes one person writes a script, and students rehearse on their own, too. Then students workshop the pieces in class, explains Ms. Budrys-Nakas. "That may include revising the actual script, but it definitely includes working on the staging and receiving feedback from their peers."

Despite the serious subject matter of Marissa's play, it's clear that Marissa and her co-stars are giddy to perform. The enthusiasm is typical, Ms. Budrys-Nakas says, and spills into the way



the Middle Schoolers approach their independent projects. "They're really great about revising," says Ms. Budrys-Nakas. "They adjust for time, take out what's not needed, and then rehearse in class." Within three weeks of the initial assignment, the students put on a final presentation.

She teaches them theater building blocks, such as soliloquies, building scenes, and object work, but the students take on a majority of the work—they self-direct and appear in each others' pieces.

The students first tried independent writing in the fall, and the project was a hit. "I'm glad it's not forced on them," says Ms. Budrys-Nakas. "They like to explore what's going on in school or the community." She teaches them theater building blocks, such as soliloquies, building scenes, and object work, but the students take on a majority of the work—they self-direct and appear in each others' pieces.

Says Ms. Budrys-Nakas, "It's a great chance for them to do their own stuff."

The Power of the Pen

Kindergarteners flex their writing muscles with daily journal entries

In their kindergarten year, **Christina Hayward**'s students become writers. All year they build the skills they will continue to use in first grade—and for the rest of their lives.

One place they practice writing is in daily "dialog journals," staple-bound books that represent a written conversation between teacher and student. Each day students write in the journals—they choose the topic and how much to write—and Ms. Hayward or her assistant teacher, **Kristin Smith**, pose questions for each child to respond to the next day. *Where will the bird fly? Who will help the knights escape? What will you use your invisibility cloak for?* Through these dialogs, students learn to develop storylines, add detail, and make stories more interesting to readers.

"Exercising your muscles a little every day is good for you," Ms. Hayward says, and the journals act as daily writing workouts. Over the year, students' writing evolves. Journals from September feature more illustrations, and the writing sprawls in brightly colored markers. Later they grow tidy: students write longer pieces—on lines, in pencil, with spaces between words—on right-hand pages, complemented by illustrations on the left.

Such organizational strategies are part of the year's writing curriculum, which progresses from building students' confidence in themselves and trust in the teachers, to putting their knowledge to use, to organizing writing and building stamina, to practicing conventions such as spelling sight words and ending sentences with periods.

Just as students' ability to form letters and spell words improves with practice, so does their ability to form ideas. From simple statements of action—"we are dancing"—to complex storylines—one student watched *The Sound of Music*

and wrote about an imagined trip to Austria and the Alps—the dialog journals encourage growth and self-expression.

The combination, Ms. Hayward says, is the beauty of the daily process of writing. "Partly it's baby steps, building up the skills you need to become a reader and writer. But the approach also values the child, showing that the child is powerful, is important, and that their teachers and classmates think their ideas have value. And that helps build the internal motivation to become thinkers and learners."

In fact, she says, the individual research projects U-High seniors undertake might be considered a culmination of this kindergarten lesson: "At some point, a child learns that she has good ideas."



Just as students' ability to form letters and spell words improves with practice, so does their ability to form ideas.

Responsive Classrooms

The rules for **Catie Gillespie's** second-grade class are simple: Take care of yourself, others, and the classroom, and make sure everyone is involved. The rules hang by the door, signed by every student.



Nearby, a “Hopes and Dreams” poster lists what each child wants to accomplish that year: go ice-skating, learn the Pythagorean theorem, play snakes in the grass.

Each morning the students gather around a dark blue rug and greet each other by name, share what’s on their minds, do a group activity, and read the morning message.

Welcome to the responsive classroom, a teaching approach that intentionally pairs a social curriculum with the academic one.

In fact, “welcoming” is a big part of what the responsive classroom is all about. “Children learn best when they’re safe, welcomed, and known,” Ms. Gillespie says. “When they feel significant and comfortable and cared for, they’re more willing to explore, take risks, and make mistakes—and to learn that mistakes are an important part of learning.”

After taking a weeklong course on the responsive classroom this past summer, as part of Lab’s professional development program, Ms. Gillespie interwove aspects into her classroom and curriculum, using elements like the posters, activities, and personal greetings, and teaching practices like positive teacher language, guided discovery, and interactive modeling.

Added together, these elements create an environment where students are actively involved in the learning process—and therefore learn more.

The responsive classroom approach has already shaped her teaching, Ms. Gillespie says, and she’s prepared to learn more. She plans to take a second workshop this summer and has inspired several colleagues to try it, too.

“Children learn best when they’re safe, welcomed, and known,” Ms. Gillespie says. “When they feel significant and comfortable and cared for, they’re more willing to explore, take risks, and make mistakes.”

Experiencing Education

Now available online

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

Experiencing Education: 1896–2012 (written by William Harms with Catherine Braendel, ’81, and Kay Kirkpatrick, MAT’72, with a forward by Catharine Bell, PhD’07) builds on the 1967 history written by Lab teacher Ida DePencier.

Available at the Blaine Paperback Bookstore and online through the UChicago Press, Amazon, and other online retailers.



Sports Highlights

Girls Basketball

The team finished with a fine 21–7 record (placing second in the ISL with a 6–1 record). The Maroons won the Mather Holiday Tournament, edging out Gordon Tech in the championship game, 50–43. Senior **Sophia Gatton** received ISL MVP and all-tournament team at the U-High Midway Classic and Mather Holiday Tournament. Sophomore **Kendall Rallins** was first team All-ISL and all-tournament at the U-High Midway Classic and Mather Holiday Tournament. Juniors **Lillian Eckstein** and **Maud Jansen** were second team all-ISL and honorable mention ISL, respectively.

Boys Basketball

The Maroons won the IHSA 2A Regional Championship for the second time in four years. The team finished with a 21–8 record (10–2 and second place in ISL). Junior **Max Rothschild** was elected to first team All-ISL and the all-tournament team at the Romeoville Classic. Seniors **Michael Dowdy** and **Kyle Parker** joined Max on the ISL team. Sophomore **Jordan Moran** was named All-ISL honorable mention.

Fencing

The varsity team landed four members on the Great Lakes High School Fencing Conference all-conference team: Seniors **Charlie Green**



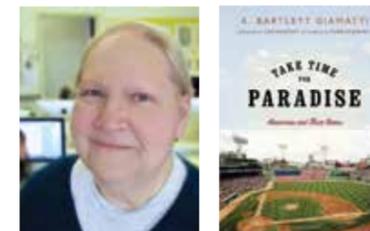
(second) and **Nathaniel Green** (eighth) medaled in epee; junior **Elle Hill** and sophomore **Jennifer Chien** were first and second in foil. Junior **Harrison MacRae** won the Midway Fencing Classic and competes for the United States epee team in international competition.

Boys Swimming

Senior **David Tong** set three school and a sectional record at the IHSA meet held at UIC and qualified for the IHSA State finals. He is only the second U-High swimmer to qualify in the past 10 years. (**Luke Schleusner**, ’03, qualified in 2003.) With a meet and U-High record of 52:06, David bested his own school record in the 100-yard butterfly and qualified for State in that event. David also set the school record in the 100-yard freestyle with a time of 49:45 (breaking the 49:92 record set by **Daniel Hoffman**, ’02, in 2002) and he set a new 100-yard backstroke record with a 56:02. The record had been set in 1996 by **Erik Mikaitis**, ’96, with a 57:11 time.

Recommended Reading

Computer Science Department Chair **Karen Putman** recommends *Take Time for Paradise: Americans and their Games* by **A. Bartlett Giamatti**



For the longest time I have been drawn to good books about sports. One of my favorites is a slim volume called *Take Time for Paradise: Americans and their Games* written by **A. Bartlett Giamatti**. Giamatti was a Renaissance scholar and president of Yale University before becoming the commissioner of Major League Baseball on April 1, 1989. He served a brief term, only six months as commissioner, until his death on September 1, 1989. This book was finished shortly before that.

In three chapters, Giamatti takes us through a series of reflections on the enduring influence that sports, games, and play have had on us as individuals and as societies throughout history, and why this continues to be relevant today. He raises questions about the relationship between work and leisure. He makes connections to the value of a liberal arts education. He points out that the Greek word for *leisure* is *scholé*. Is it any surprise that this happens to be the same Greek word that gives us school? A quarter of a way through the book and I was officially hooked. How great is it to have picked a profession that lets me both work and play?

To some extent, I’ve always defined my role as a teacher as someone who helps children learn the rules of the game. How do you excel individually but also be part of the collective? How do you play well with others? How do you develop the skills you need to be good at a given activity? How and when do personal and public values intersect? As Giamatti addresses these questions in a philosophical and historical context, I’m hearing the language of the classroom.

At one point, when he is describing the sports experience, he speaks of “the repeated interplay of energy and

Giamatti takes us through a series of reflections on the enduring influence that sports, games, and play have had on us as individuals and as societies throughout history, and why this continues to be relevant today.

order, of improvisation and obligation, of strategy and tactic.” These are just some of the contrasts that students of all ages confront, and teachers of all disciplines offer guidance so that children might find a good balance among them.

Before the book ends there is a lyrical and gentle math lesson about symmetry and threes and fours in baseball to send you on your way as you ponder the other ideas Giamatti presented.

Over the past 42 years I have watched the societal impact of technology on several generations of students and parents. The questions that Giamatti posed in *Take Time for Paradise* have great relevance still. We might be surprised by how we answer them today.

The Campaign Carries On

A conversation about the next phases of the Lab+ Campaign

with:

- > Laboratory Schools Director David Magill,
- > Associate Director of Business David Stafford, and
- > Lab Trustee, Development Committee Chair, and parent Christopher J. McGowan



David Stafford, David Magill, Christopher McGowan

When you go down Stony Island Avenue, it's easy to see that Earl Shapiro Hall (ESH) is a reality. What happens now?

DM It was a long time in the planning but once work began it's moved briskly. Starting this June we pack up all nursery through second grade classrooms and move them to Earl Shapiro Hall. As has been true all along, each phase of this project is contingent upon approval by the University

of Chicago Board of Trustees and we're hoping—and planning for—formal approval at their June meeting so that activities on the Arts Hall can start. Today's conversation will give our community a sense of how the work will unfold—our planning will pay off no matter when we start.

DS There are lots of moving parts: by July 5 of this year, we will have moved into Earl Shapiro Hall and moved the remaining Blaine classrooms into the west half of Blaine so that renovations can start on the east half. Over winter break Blaine west will move back into Blaine east and similar abatement and renovations will start on the west side of the building. We expect all of Blaine Hall to be finished by July 2014.

DM Blaine is nearly 100 years old, and this will be the first time that it will receive a complete overhaul and the kind of attention that this building needs and deserves.

CM We're working hard to reach our \$55 million goal by December 31 and have been very happy, and thankful, that so many parents and

alumni have made the Schools a philanthropic priority.

How does the Arts Hall fit into the Lab+ Campaign?

DM Let's start with the purpose of the Lab+ Campaign. It kicked off in 2007, shortly before the economy entered its downturn, but our parents and alumni have been so generous and we are closing in on our goal.

Because of our unique relationship with the University, we realize that as it grows, so must Lab. Our student body needs to expand in order to maintain the diversity that is, and always has been, essential to the Lab experience—and that includes maintaining a balance between University and non-University families.

It's been a priority of our Board of Directors and the University to make once-in-a-lifetime, transformative investments in our learning spaces so they finally match the talent of the outstanding students and faculty that use them. Shapiro Hall is uniquely designed for our early childhood education program and Lab has never—never—had spaces

specifically designed for the arts. All of our spaces for the visual and performing arts are rooms converted for that purpose—lighting, acoustics, storage, etc., were afterthoughts.

CM And no more hauling double bass instruments up the staircases!

DM There are decades of deferred maintenance on our historic buildings. Repairs and upgrades are essential, and with these improvements we'll have comparable facilities across the grades. Don't all our teachers and students deserve to have year-round temperature controls in their classroom?

DS Work on the Arts Hall (pending University Trustee approvals) should also start this summer. When we move Blaine classrooms, we'll also move the classrooms and offices out of the single-story section of Belfield Hall, working carefully to avoid disrupting summer school activities. By the middle of August we start demolition, which we expect to complete in early November. With that, we officially start construction of the Arts Hall and, if all goes as planned, it will be ready July 2015.

With all of that construction, what can people expect over the next two years, especially when it comes to the student experience?

CM As a parent, I know how important it is to deliver minimal disruption to teaching, traffic flow, schedules. That has been the focus of most of our planning and ongoing conversations with our University project managers and contractors.

DS Kids will come to school every day and do the same things they're doing now.

We're looking at lots of options—first of all taking the building down: instead of using a wrecking ball they may go in (as they did at the new hospital) with big jaws that take it apart, which is less noisy. And they'll start at each end, near the towers,

working in towards the middle so that by the time the kids are here in September we are hopefully many feet away from the Belfield towers themselves.

The other noisy part of this work is putting in the caissons that support the building. We're looking at techniques to push rather than hammer those into the ground. And we will be doing work on Saturdays.

DM We know how important it is to have answers to all of these questions and make sure we are communicating with everyone who will be affected by this work, so there will be meetings with all of those who will be affected by the changes and construction.

CM I've been impressed (but not surprised!) with how the faculty found teaching moments in the building of Earl Shapiro Hall, and I'm certain they'll find similar opportunities as everything happens on the main campus.

We're working hard to reach our \$55 million goal by December 31 and have been very happy, and thankful, that so many parents and alumni have made the Schools a philanthropic priority.

Beyond the Arts Hall, what else will feel notably different?

CM Access to the Stony Island site for Earl Shapiro Hall allowed us to preserve the important outdoor spaces we have—athletic fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, gardens. That's pretty special and unique for an urban school. And more is planned—not just at Earl Shapiro Hall. There's exciting design thinking being applied to what is now the Pebbles Playground, envisioning it as an outdoor classroom for all ages.

DM Two other things we care a lot about are community and libraries.

The Arts Hall will include an assembly hall, which will hold an entire division. Right now that can only happen if we take over a gymnasium and disrupt physical education. We expect that new

assembly hall to be used often and to bring students and faculty together in new ways.

And like the University, Lab has made a deep commitment to the importance of libraries. Earl Shapiro Hall will have a library in that soaring space overlooking the museum. Blaine Library will be solely for the Lower School and have 50 percent more floor space. Rowley will be uniquely for the Middle School. And, as Lab takes over full use of Judd Hall, we'll restore to its original use one of



They say when you want answers, follow the money. Where would it take us?

CM We have plenty to talk about for anyone who is interested in that! We can suggest some outstanding naming opportunities—the Arts Hall, the assembly hall, classrooms, and outdoor spaces. And for those who have asked, we honor requests for anonymity, of course.

We're striving for broad participation—it takes a

the University's beautiful gothic library spaces—what was for decades the School of Education library will become the new High School library.

DS We can't forget that there are major life safety improvements being built into our main campus—sprinkler systems, an intercom system throughout the whole complex, adherence to new codes and ADA standards.

CM Everything has been designed with the future of education in mind. Lab even consulted cutting-edge educators, all thinking about how teaching would change and how Lab can best be prepared for that.

while for us to get to everyone individually—when we do, we love to be surprised by people saying, "I've been waiting for you to come talk to me!" And some of the best conversations have been with people who sought us out—we are going to need more of that in these final six months.

DM We are in a position financially to do all of this, and the Board and everyone involved is committed to making sure we do not exceed budget. We know this campaign has been successful not only in receiving gifts of money but in allowing people to feel invested in the future of this place.

LAB+ INVESTING IN THE POWER OF LAB



David Kistenbrocker and Garland Taylor



Nancy and Gary Stern



David Greene, Ruth O'Brien, Eric Posner, Christopher J. McGowan, Emlyn Eisenach, Wayne Pietraszek, Sandy Wang, and Cindy Pietraszek



Jonathan and Laura Lichter



Holly Harrison and Andy Neal

More than 700 alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and friends celebrated Lab at the annual Connections gala fundraiser, which raised more than \$400,000.

Funds raised this year and last together will make possible two innovative outdoor spaces. The large playground west of Shapiro Hall will be named for Connections, and on main campus, the "Pebbles" play area will be redesigned as a cutting-edge outdoor classroom available to all divisions. In keeping

with Connections tradition, a quarter of all proceeds will fund student aid.

Connections 2013 also allowed an additional contribution to the Schools—the purchase and installation of a sculpture by artist (and Lab parent) Garland Taylor. Inspired by a Lab field trip with his Lower-schooler to the Garfield Park Conservatory, Mr. Garland has created this beautiful tree-form sculpture by welding and repurposing discarded bits of steel.



Gina Alicea and Rick Soria



Irene Reed and Tai Duncan



Chelsea Smith and Pam Simon

Connections 2013

Flowers courtesy of parent Chelsea Smith of Breathe Florals



Judy Magill, with Garland Taylor's sculpture, Generosity



Mary Jane and Jeffrey Maharry



Ian and Triste Lieteau Smith



Cynthia Ballew, Susie Hultquist, and Margo O'Donnell



Darrel and Nickol Hackett and Maria and William Lin

by Brooke E. O'Neill, AM'04

In the Name of Art

Parent volunteers lead the charge to showcase creativity at Lab

It was well after midnight, but the lights in Kovler Gymnasium burned bright.

Under the glow, a small band of Lab parents was transforming the gym into something magical: an art gallery. For weeks prior, teachers collected works by students of all ages. Kindergarteners sculpted self-portraits using wire. Older artists experimented with landscape painting. Others sketched familiar campus buildings in Pop Art style.

Now was the time to hang it all—more than 1,000 pieces. The next morning, the gym would reopen as the second annual LabArts Expo. Designed to showcase students' creative talents, the two-day event would turn Kovler into a vibrant arts enclave, complete with music, dance, and theater performances.

The evolution happened, quite literally, overnight. As soon as school ended on Thursday, parent volunteers and Lab art teachers gathered in the gym to begin the facelift. For three hours they constructed a maze of recycled-wood gallery walls, made for the event by sculptor and Lab parent Garland Taylor. By 6:30 p.m., they moved on to displaying the art, pinning each piece by hand.

"Everyone worked really hard," says parent volunteer Cynthia Heusing, who spearheaded the February event and led the original push to bring it to Lab last year. Historically, a student art "mini-exposition" had been part of



Connections, Lab's annual fundraising gala at Navy Pier. As the 2012 event's co-chair, Ms. Heusing saw an opportunity to turn the showcase into a stand-alone gallery that could better highlight students' talents—and Lab's dynamic arts curriculum.

Connect to art

"At Connections we would hear people say, 'I wish I had more time to spend with the art,'" recalls Ms. Heusing, who co-chaired the gala for a second time this March. Yet with an auction and socializing happening throughout the evening, the exhibition rarely got its due. "Plus, if you didn't go to Connections, you didn't necessarily see what Lab had to offer in terms of art," points out Cheryl Rudbeck, this



For teachers and administrators, such parent leaders are part of what makes Lab unique. "Their tireless support brings our community together through countless events and endeavors."

year's Connections co-chair and a member of the Development Committee. There had to be a better solution.

Aside from the work displayed at Connections or posted on bulletin boards, the school had no arts festival or all-school exposition. Nor was there a way to highlight how students' talents develop from nursery school to high school studio-art courses. "I really wanted parents to have an opportunity to see the rigor in Lab's arts education," Ms. Heusing says.

LabArts was born. The inaugural event was a hit, drawing curious parents and students from every division. This year's exposition attracted an even larger audience, with an estimated 400-some students and parents visiting over the two days.

Come together

The massive undertaking wouldn't have been possible without Ms. Heusing and a dedicated team of parent volunteers. "With this sort of parent collaboration, there is nothing we can't or won't do to provide our students with the stage they deserve to let their hard work shine," says Jason Lopez, Lab's associate director for educational programs, who was part of the event's six-month planning process. Partnering with art and music teachers, parent leaders such as Ms. Heusing and Jennifer Rhind curated a full program of visual arts and performance.

"It gave parents a glimpse into the deep and varied artistic talents of our students," says Ms. Rhind, who worked with music teacher Katy Sinclair to coordinate a performance schedule that included piano solos, dramatic monologues, spoken-word poetry, and Indian classical dance. Rather than having formal auditions, students took the lead, volunteering their talents through their music teacher. The organic format, says Ms. Rhind, gives students a chance to express themselves—even those who might be shy in class. "It's really looking at what this can spark in students."

"You see a different side of the kids," adds volunteer Tracy Coe. "There's the athletic program and academics, of course, but you also need a showcase for kids in the arts," Ms. Coe says. "This is a weekend for them."

Commit to the kids . . . and pedagogy

Lab's art and music teachers appreciate the opportunity to share student work: "These parents have a commitment to the arts and to making sure the arts are seen," says Fine Arts Department Chair Gina Alicea, who sat on the LabArts planning committee. "I'm so thankful for their dedication to making sure our students are showcased."



Displaying student work from all grade levels, the event also illuminates the pedagogy behind Lab's arts education. When parents see kindergartners' self-portraits made of wire and read a teacher's accompanying explanation, for example, they learn how the project helps children represent their personalities. And as they walk through the gallery, passing from Lower to Middle to High School art, they see how the work—and students' thinking—evolves.

Ultimately, for LabArts volunteers, the event is about putting kids and their intellectual development in the spotlight. "I'm glad for the opportunity," says Ms. Heusing, who has served as a Lab volunteer for years and whose husband, David Kistenbroker, serves on Lab's Board of Directors. A corporate events planner by trade and parent to a third and a fifth grader, she's characteristically humble about her roles leading LabArts and Connections.

"I was introduced to it by other people who had done it many times," Ms. Heusing says. Besides, she adds with a laugh, "my kids are only going to be this age and want me around school for a little while longer, so that's really the bottom line."



Anne Catterson

Others are less reserved about Ms. Heusing's leadership. "She's amazing," says Ms. Coe, co-president-elect of the Parents' Association and a member of Lab's Development Committee with Ms. Heusing. "She can multitask, get everything done, and never show signs of stress," says Ms. Coe. "She's a complete asset to this community."

Cherish the community

Strengthening that community is what motivates many parents to give their time to Lab. "That's really the goal of my volunteerism," says Ms. Rhind, a longtime Development Committee member and coordinator of the Parents' Association's speaker series. "To bring people together, to celebrate the kids, to support them in their growth. It doesn't ever feel like work."

Ms. Rudbeck agrees. With a son in kindergarten and twin girls starting nursery school in the fall, she wants to stay close to the Lab family. "I want to be connected to the school," says Ms. Rudbeck.

For teachers and administrators, such parent leaders are part of what makes Lab unique. "Their tireless support brings our community together through countless events and endeavors that showcase the talents of our



Showcasing student work from all grade levels, the event also illuminates the pedagogy behind Lab's arts education.

students," says Beth Wittbrodt, acting executive director of Alumni Relations and Development. "Without the work of these dedicated volunteers," she confesses, "I think Lab would grind to a halt."

To find out how you can volunteer at Lab, contact either the Parents' Association, parents@ucls.uchicago.edu, or the Office of Alumni Relations and Development, alumni@ucls.uchicago.edu.

University Of Chicago Laboratory Schools Mission

“The Laboratory Schools are home to the youngest members of the University of Chicago’s academic community. We ignite and nurture an enduring spirit of scholarship, curiosity, creativity, and confidence. We value learning experientially, exhibiting kindness, and honoring diversity.”

by Susie Allen, AB’09

On a Mission

Creating Lab’s new mission statement connects threads throughout the school community

When Nancy Aronson was hired to help develop a new mission statement for the Laboratory Schools, she quickly realized **one thing**. It was important “to have a process that represented the spirit of the school,” explains Ms. Aronson, a consultant who works with educational institutions around the country.

Rather than assigning a committee of wordsmiths, Ms. Aronson and a team of faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and students embarked on something resembling a full-scale ethnography of Lab. Through interviews, illustration, storytelling, and discussion, the team worked to identify the values that most define the Schools and describe them in a “powerful, meaningful” way, explains fifth-grade teacher and Lab parent Stephanie Mitzenmacher.

This “very Lab way of approaching things,” as Ms. Mitzenmacher describes it, was not only effective but also surprisingly engaging for many of those involved in shaping the new statement.

“If someone says, ‘We’re going to spend the next hour working on the mission statement,’ you think, ‘Oh God, looks like a good time for a bathroom break,’” jokes Ben Zimmer, ’03, a member of the Lab Alumni Association’s executive board. “But the way they structured the exercise actually made it a fun experience.”

Emphasizing process as well as product is true to Lab’s philosophy, according to parent Christie Henry. That lesson was driven home the day she helped with a cooking lesson in her son’s class. “Parents try to come in and create these great recipes. But once you have

“Lab was a great school without working on a new mission statement,” Ms. Aronson says. But developing the new statement reminded the community “what’s at the heart of what makes education so terrific at Lab” and created a conversation that connected the threads of the school.

22 children involved in measuring and stirring and putting things in bowls, you lose ground on the accuracy of the cooking.” The teachers reassured the parents “that it’s the process,” Ms. Henry says. “Perfect or not, it all becomes an important, vital learning experience.”

In the same way, perfection was never the goal in crafting the new statement. “No mission statement is perfect,” Ms. Aronson says. Instead, she wanted the community to create a mission statement that made its members think, “That feels like us.”

Finding commonality

Ms. Aronson and Associate Director of Educational Programs Jason Lopez decided that Lab’s spirit of curiosity and discovery should guide the process. They convened meetings with teachers, alumni, and parents and asked them to talk about experiences and stories that captured the essence of Lab.

Common themes emerged from the stories. “It was really interesting to see that regardless of how you’re connected to the school, everyone pulls the same things out,” Ms. Mitzenmacher says.

Ms. Aronson recalls one illustrative story told by a Lab teacher: She was watching a group of students return to their classroom after playing outside. One student stood dawdling and staring at the ground. Rather than disciplining him, the teacher crouched down to see what had caught his attention—an interesting-looking rock, it turned out. “Well, would you like to bring that in the classroom?” the teacher asked.

The idea that learning can be inspired by almost anything arose in story after story. Junior Marissa Page used the journalism skills she honed working for the *Midway* to interview fellow students at all grade levels. “The kindergartners were talking about how it was fun to learn, the fourth graders were talking about specific things that were fun to learn, and in high school, kids were talking about their future careers in learning.”

Many members of the Lab community

spoke of the school’s kindness and respect for differences. One student, Ms. Aronson recalls, believed she would have been bullied at a school where intellectual achievement was valued less. Even at the nursery level, Ms. Henry says, children are encouraged to consider how their behavior might affect their peers.

“I do think that at Lab—especially for a place that’s filled with so many accomplished, ambitious students, teachers, and parents—there is a sort of mutual respect,” Mr. Zimmer says. “You’re taught a lot of important, basic life skills. That’s something you don’t get at a lot of schools.”

After identifying these major themes—creativity, curiosity, kindness, diversity—a smaller group broke into pairs and wrote first drafts of the mission statement. To Ms. Mitzenmacher, it initially seemed impossible that they would be able to find a mission statement that spoke to the entire Lab community: “How on earth are we going to find something that’s meaningful to people who teach three-year-olds, and also meaningful to people who teach [students] about to head off to college?”

Yet through “constant dialogue and conversation that felt like it was moving toward something,” Ms. Mitzenmacher says, the group



Children, and adults, used drawings to help explain what they value most about Lab.

arrived at a consensus and gradually narrowed nine drafts down to one. Director David Magill presented the final draft to the Lab community for feedback, which was largely positive. “It felt like it was just magic,” Ms. Mitzenmacher says.

Why we stay engaged

“Lab was a great school without working on a new mission statement,” Ms. Aronson says. But developing the new statement reminded the community “what’s at the heart of what makes education so terrific at Lab” and created a conversation that connected the threads of the school.

“It was a really good reflection moment for everyone on the [alumni] board,” agrees Mr. Zimmer. “Why is it that we value Lab and continue to volunteer our time to continue to stay engaged with it?”

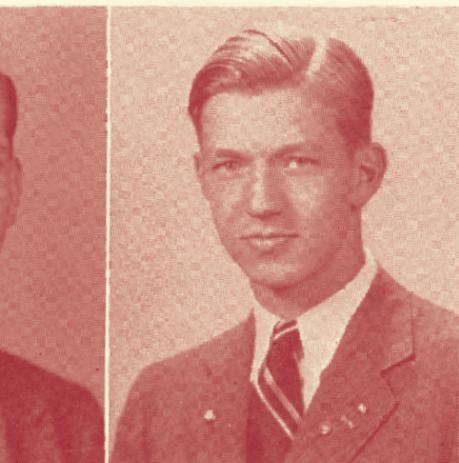
Ms. Mitzenmacher was especially grateful to learn from colleagues who teach in different divisions, as well as from fellow parents and alumni. “It was amazing to make those connections,” she says.

Ms. Henry was reminded that Lab “is a very inviting place to be,” she says. “The school has made an incredible commitment to every kid that walks its halls—and I think by extension, every family that walks its halls—to be innovative, to be nurturing, to be safe, and to be original.”

Looking back on his education, Mr. Zimmer says, he realized how important and how formative his experience at Lab was for him. “It was the most distinctive [educational institution] I had access to,” he says. “Growing up is tough. But doing it at Lab is better than at other places.”

Until working on the mission statement, “I didn’t realize I liked Lab that much,” Marissa admits. As a junior, visiting the younger divisions and speaking to her peers “stirred up some nostalgia” and helped her see how much Lab had cultivated her passion for learning. “Lab teaches you to love to learn,” she says. “Maybe not even teaches you. It ignites that in you.”





C L A S S

A workhorse, who's always in demand,
When there's loads of work on hand.
His job's printing and you may guess,
There's never a better hand for the press.
And also at studies he's one of the sharks,
(If you don't believe it look at his marks.)
Really in shop and in school, CARL CHRIST,
By one and all you will be missed.



em
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d.

Whenever one thinks of auburn hair,
Violent tempers then come to mind;
But this opinion is hardly fair,
For many exceptions you'll find.
We all know JANE CHRISTIE'S hair is red,
But we also know she's composed;
The unruffled poise and level head
Her real disposition disclose.

When brains are required, When thought must
be clear,
We have the best of recipes here.
Take one blonde girl and give her a story,
She'll do the rest herself with glory.
PAT CLARIDGE, the solution to any troubles,
She will burst any mysterious bubbles,
And she will follow it out to the end.
Pat's swell to have for a friend.

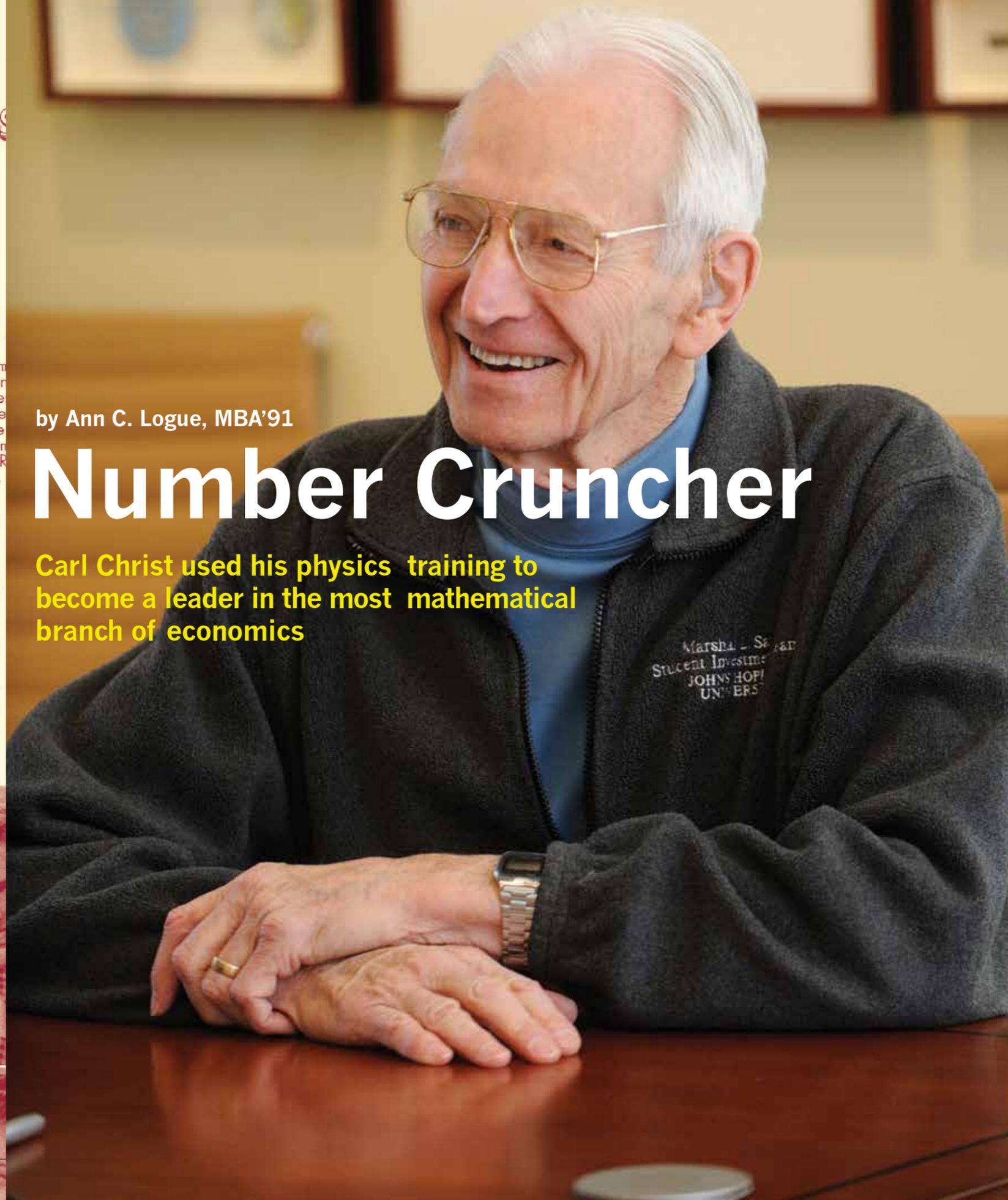
posed, ever awake,
expressed will make
o and with surprise,
ment with widened eyes.
rality orderly set,
sion and expression yet,
NS is a fellow to know
nding and brilliantly so.



by Ann C. Logue, MBA'91

Number Cruncher

Carl Christ used his physics training to become a leader in the most mathematical branch of economics



Carl Christ, '40, SB'43, PhD'50, is a product of storied times at UChicago. He attended the Laboratory Schools and the Hutchins College, worked on the Manhattan Project, and earned degrees in the University's legendary physics and economics departments. In economics, he found, he could use his interest in mathematics to address social problems. On the Johns Hopkins University faculty for much of his six-decade career, he's been a leading figure in econometrics, the most mathematical branch of the field.

During his career, Professor Christ wrote one of the first econometrics textbooks, *Econometric Models and Methods* (Wiley, 1966) and published more than 100 articles in journals, books, and other publications. He's served as board chair of the National Bureau of Economic Research, and served on the governing boards of the Econometric Society (where he is a fellow) and the American Economic Association. He's also a fellow of the American Statistical Association.

It all started, he says, when he was in fifth grade and transferred from Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to what was then called the University Elementary School. Professor Christ grew up in Chicago's Beverly Hills neighborhood on the Southwest Side. When CPS proved not a good fit for him, his parents enrolled him at Lab, where some of their friends sent their children. Professor Christ's first teacher was longtime faculty member Ida B. DePencier. "The thing I liked about her so much is that when she asked a question, she didn't give you a clue if you were giving the right answer," he says. "I thought that was wonderful preparation for life." He remembered it throughout his teaching career at Johns Hopkins.

He also remembers biology teacher Orin Denton Frank, who had a summer home in the Indiana Dunes and took his students there. "He pointed out the many types of plants growing in the dunes area," Professor Christ says, "from the beach grasses by the lake to the pine, poplar, beech, oak, and maple trees in the woods."

Professor Christ's introduction to physics took place at U-High. He took basic physics with Clifford Holley, who was the subject of a poem that appeared in the student newspaper (see sidebar). Then came a course taught by Selby Millmore Skinner, which was, says Professor Christ, "one of the survey courses that the University, at that time, was giving to freshmen." U-High didn't teach calculus then, but George

Hawkins, who taught Professor Christ algebra and trigonometry, recommended he read *Calculus Made Easy* by Silvanus Thompson. Professor Christ used it to teach himself calculus and has recommended it to others over the years.

Life at U-High wasn't all study and lecture, Professor Christ says. "There was some fun involved." He and some friends discovered that the faculty regularly played volleyball after school, so they challenged the teachers to a match. "We were absolutely blown away. They made mincemeat of us," he says. "We were so confident that we'd be able to humiliate these 'old' guys," who were probably about 30 years old.

Most of Professor Christ's athletic activities consisted of keeping statistics for intramural

Professor Christ helped the push to make economics a more quantitative field, an advancement that aligned with developments in high-powered computing.

fascinated him and led him to take up sailing as an adult. When his children were old enough to swim, he bought a catamaran. His family still keeps a boat on Lake Michigan, where Professor Christ has a summerhouse. It was in Michigan that Professor Christ saw early windsurfers; it looked so fun that he took up that sport too.

Professor Christ began his collegiate career at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. World War II brought him back home; he transferred to the University of Chicago, where he worked toward his bachelor's, as well as on the Manhattan Project. "My first lab was in what had been the men's room under the north stands at Stagg Field, where water spilled on the floor in winter would freeze," he says. "I worked on a very ancillary part of the project," testing methods of bonding aluminum to uranium to prevent uranium corrosion.

Professor Christ's interest in economics emerged while living in a co-op house in Hyde Park. His housemates were students from across the University, active in social issues. Racial equality and pacifism were especially hot concerns and frequent topics of conversation. "Most of the people I admired in those years of my life were people who were interested in social problems," he says. "I decided that I would look for a social science that would use the mathematics I learned as a physics major." And that was economics.

After the Manhattan Project ended in 1945, Professor Christ moved to Princeton University to teach introductory physics. The regular faculty had not returned from the war effort, so Princeton was happy to have Professor Christ, his bachelor's degree, and his Manhattan Project experience for a year. He, meanwhile, was happy to sit in on some economics classes, he says, "to see if I liked it." He did, and applied to doctoral programs at both Princeton and UChicago. Accepted at both, he returned to Hyde Park. "I had a soft spot in my heart for the University of Chicago."

That spot got even softer when he met his wife, Phyllis Tatsch Christ, AB'45, in Hyde Park while he was working on his doctorate. One of his roommates worked with her on an opinion-research project in Peoria and invited all the interviewers to a party at their apartment. The pair married a year later. They have three daughters; two of them, and one grandchild, attended the University of Chicago.

During his graduate work he came to appreciate another U-High teacher, Cecil Denton. Mr. Denton wasn't popular with the students, Professor Christ says, but he taught

them well. Mr. Denton had his students write précis, a skill that, ten years later, proved an advantage because Professor Christ knew how to create a tight summary of a reading or lecture. His class notes, and those of three others who'd taken Mr. Denton's English course, he says, "were in great demand."

After graduation in 1950, Professor Christ joined the Hopkins faculty in economics. He spent 1955-61 back at UChicago before returning to Hopkins, where he's been ever since, except for visiting teaching and research positions. Over the years, he's visited at Cambridge University, the University of Tokyo, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, the University of Essex, the Kyoto American Studies Summer Seminar, the Brazil Econometric Society, the Bank of Japan, and the Chinese Universities Development Project II at Fudan University Shanghai. One thing he loves about being an economist, he says, is the opportunity to travel.

Professor Christ helped the push to make economics a more quantitative field, an advancement that aligned with developments in high-powered computing. In the past, the economy was analyzed more with logic than with statistics. When Professor Christ entered the field, he could crunch numbers. His first specialty, econometrics, involves mathematical tests of theoretical ideas using actual data—a concept straight out of physics.

His initial research looked at the predictive performance of economic models. Through that work, he became interested in monetary and fiscal policies. Economists had long assumed that policy makers could manage independently the four fiscal-monetary variables: government spending, taxing, borrowing from investors, and printing money. He and others noted that government spending must be financed by some combination of the other three variables, so that as soon as any three of the four have been set, the remaining one has been set too. This understanding was a major contribution to the field, for both economic theory and government policy.

In addition to his textbook, Professor Christ also did work on the history of econometrics, tracking its evolution from idea to practice. Professor Christ, who turns 90 this September, lived through much of that evolution. In 2005 he retired as professor emeritus, feeling, he says, like he'd been paid for half a century to pursue his hobby of research and teaching.

MAELSTROM

POEME

A bunch of boys were whooping it up
In Holley's physics room.
One lad was tossing erasers
While they batted with a broom.

But then the fateful step was heard,
The room turned deathly quiet.
For Clifford Holley had returned
To quell the growing riot.

He fixed the class with cold green eyes
And mirthlessly he smiled.
Then all the class knew by that sign
Their teacher sure was riled!

"Well, class," he said, in coldest voice,
His arms crossed on his chest;
"I think that it's about the time
For us to have a test."

The pupils heaved a heavy sigh,
And prayed to patron saints.
But when they saw the questions
They fell over into faints.

Epilogue

And still they talk about that test,
With voices hushed and quiet
As they recall that fateful day,
When Holley quelled the riot.

But some folks say that Holley was
A cruel and base deceiver,
And loudly they proclaim that he
Knew not the answers either!

—Contributed.

(Although the names are historical, all events mentioned above are fictitious.)

teams. He still has the records. He also worked at the campus print shop where, after hours, with teacher Lester C. Smith's permission, he made parody cigarette packs that were popular with his classmates, if not their parents ("Horse-Shit Cigarettes: Not a Fart in the Carload"). "At least some of the faculty had tolerance for the peccadilloes of the students," he says.

Although not much of an athlete in high school, he did read a series of books by English author Arthur Ransome about families vacationing in England's Lake District; the books

from the Midway

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A big day
for the Arts
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Out with the old,
in with the new
PAGES 10-11

Musicians soar
with new projects
PAGE 14

Formal fashions
fancy and fun
PAGE 20

U-HIGH MIDWAY

Volume 89, Number 5 • University High School, 1362 East 59th Street • Chicago, Illinois 60637 • Tuesday, February 19, 2013

One college deferral isn't the end for this senior

By Duncan Weinstein
Opinion columnist

As soon as I got home, my mother was waiting. With much fanfare, I logged into my Yale account, my mom hovering over my shoulder. A letter popped up, which she frantically scanned.

"Sorry," she said, tapping me on the shoulder, before I had a chance to finish reading. I had gotten deferred from my only early action college.

On a whim, I checked Facebook. The girl down the street got in. A classmate also applying to Yale texted me his news, which was the same as mine.

Yet for some reason, I really wasn't upset. Maybe because I had expected this result, or I had decided I wouldn't let my college decisions affect my self-esteem.

Throughout the next few days, everyone I told was supportive and sympathetic. I appreciated their consolations, but they also made me feel like I should've been sadder than I was. Knowing this wasn't the end—that seven other schools would consider me—made it a lot easier to deal with.

As the Midway sees it

One course doesn't fit all

Level up. With only so many hours in a day, and many classes required for graduation, offering multiple levels of some classes would allow U-Highers to better prioritize their efforts. Already, classes such as Precalculus and Conceptual Physics have offered U-Highers a range of alternatives.

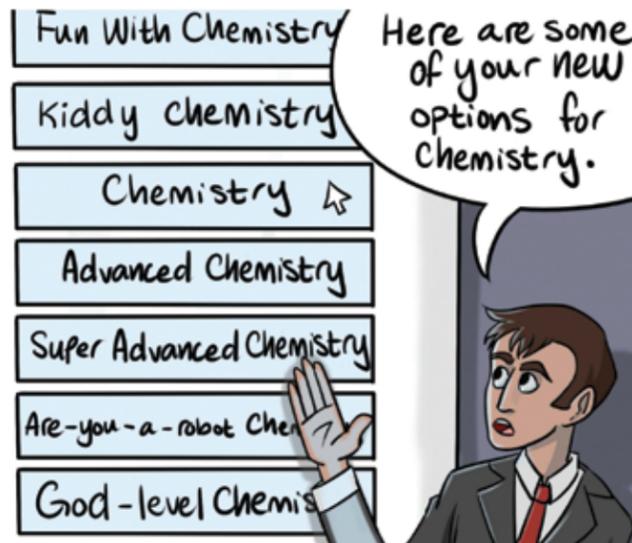
Added to U-High's course selection last year, Precalculus presented a third choice of difficulty level for students looking to enroll in a precalculus course. The course has become a popular alternative to its more rigorous counterparts, Precalculus/Intro to Calculus and Advanced Precalculus/Calculus A.

Similarly, for sophomores and juniors enrolling in their second year of history, the History Department offers three options: AT Modern European History, AT Modern World History and Modern World History, all of which cover similar material but with different focuses and levels of rigor.

Classes like Precalculus and Modern World History provide U-Highers with an opportunity to learn a subject without having to struggle through the course. However, many courses at U-High, such as Biology and Early World History, are offered at only one difficulty level. Gifted students, and those who struggle with the subject, are lumped into the same class, a standardized model of education that, by design, sets some students up for failure while insufficiently challenging others.

These core introductory classes—Biology, English 1, Early World History—should be offered at varying levels of difficulty. According to Principal Scott Foch, additional class levels can be added without needing to hire more staff, if enough students sign up for the courses.

Instead of pushing students past their limits in classes beyond their difficulty level, U-High should shift its focus to ensuring that U-Highers can learn and enjoy a subject without struggling to pass.



Cartoon by Lydia Fama



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Consider making a planned gift

Planned gifts come in many forms, from bequests to charitable trusts and gift annuities. You can even designate the Laboratory Schools as a beneficiary for a retirement plan. Some options provide income to you and your family; others may have significant tax benefits; and all of them ensure future support for the Schools.

For many individuals, a bequest may be a way to make a gift that they couldn't afford during their lifetime. For others, a bequest to Lab might be the culmination of years of charitable giving. Made with cash,

securities, real estate, or a retirement plan, a charitable bequest is fully deductible for estate tax purposes.

Let us honor you as part of the Phoenix Society

Alumni who include Lab in their estate or who make life income arrangements are honored as members of the University's Phoenix Society, which comes with special recognitions and invitations to events.

Have you already included Lab in your estate plans? Please let us know so we can honor you in your lifetime and discuss your desired goal for your gift.

Please contact:

Heather McClean, '93
Director of Gift Planning
Phone 773-834-2117
Email hmclean@uchicago.edu



Save the date

Earl Shapiro Hall Grand Opening Celebration

Saturday, September 28, 2013

Details to come for this community, family-friendly day of fun

For details and to RSVP to any event go to www.ucls.uchicago.edu/alumni or contact the Office of Alumni Relations and Development at 773-702-0578 or alumni@ucls.uchicago.edu

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