Dear Friends,

There are many ways we can help shape an education that prepares our students for global citizenship, beginning with the ways that children grow and develop so, too, can their spheres of influence. Lab is particularly fortunate to have so many families and educators who value—and who themselves bring—a global perspective to educating our youth. I am thrilled to share in this magazine stories of alumni who have extended their learning and service through the Peace Corps. While we might not all serve in the Peace Corps, we can embrace a desire to promote peace and friendship. We can share a desire that our graduates leave Lab prepared for all of life’s journeys and have the ability to build a better life for the communities in which they live and serve.

We want Lab children to see all the ways they can make a difference in their local communities. We want them to better understand national issues and place those issues into a global context. We want them to have the confidence to engage in both local and global issues. That is one of the reasons it has been so exciting to welcome students to Lab from China and France (and, at other times in the year, from Germany and Argentina). By hosting these young people in our homes and in our classrooms, we allow our students real-time, real-life opportunities to see that there is not the only image of the world. We are also excited to plan study tours that will send Lab students and teachers to China. These will be part of a larger effort to honor the 100th anniversary of John Dewey’s two-year visit to China, a seminal period for our founder and his work.

We want Lab students to understand global issues, to have knowledge of—and respect for—all cultural differences, and to build meaningful connections with youth from other locales and who have other perspectives. Pluralistic perspectives, an awareness of other cultures, and an understanding of the social, political, and environmental issues facing the world—this knowledge is what will allow our young people to collaborate and solve problems as they move forward.

This summer Lab will embark upon a strategic planning process to help us lay out the desires and goals that will take our school forward. That process will offer our community a chance to reflect on issues that will shape our future, including how we support the interdisciplinary thinking that promotes critical thinking and problem solving, and how we build coherence and community across our school. We are in a wonderful position—with unmatched facilities, amazing and engaged students, and outstanding educators—to reflect and make what is so wonderful about Lab even better.

I look forward to sharing more as we begin that work.

Warm regards,

Charlie

FROM DIRECTOR

CHARLIE ABELMANN

Global citizenship

“We want Lab children to see all the ways they can make a difference in their local communities. We want them to better understand national issues and place those issues into a global context.”

“Watch, watch, watch, Miles. It’s actually really magical!”

“Where’s the water go?”

“Let’s make some mud! I’m the mud maker!”

“Let’s get the water up, up, up the hose!”

“Those are just a few of the gleeful exclamations and inquiries that can be heard as assistant teacher Wendy Minor’s Nursery-4 students explore their latest interactive creation: the water wall.

“It all stemmed from the students’ natural interests,” Ms. Minor explains. “When [teacher] Maureen Mowrich [assistant teacher] Luciana Taschini, and I met over the summer to build the curriculum for the upcoming school year, we compared notes about what had captured our students’ imaginations the previous year.

We unanimously agreed that all of the children were fascinated by water. From there, the water wall was born.”

Each NK classroom in Earl Shapiro Hall was built with direct outdoor access, and the water wall can be found just beyond the back door of room 113. Each side of a large, square pillar has been fitted with wooden garden trellises, and it is to these trellises that the students attach funnels, plastic tubing, and recycled bottles to experiment with different methods of moving water.

“This project has really encouraged the children to communicate and work together as a team,” Ms. Minor says. “One student has an idea, and then others voice possible strategies to make it happen. If that strategy doesn’t work, they brainstorm about what to try next. And they initiated these processes on their own. It’s like they are teaching themselves through experimentation and teamwork.”

Ms. Minor, herself an artist and former adjunct faculty member at the Art Institute, decided to reroute her career into early childhood education after volunteering in her son’s preschool classroom. “I just knew instantly that this was where I belonged,” she recalls. “I felt that this was the age where I could make the biggest impact. Children are naturally creative and inquisitive. Being a part of the catalyst to help them realize their potential is incredible.”

And young Labbies never fail to dazzle their teachers. Because the students wanted to play with the water wall and be on the playground at the same time, they began to wonder how they could get the water across the intermediate sidewalk. From there, learning took a tangent into the concept and practices of irrigation.

“I want to make it clear that these children are not just playing with water,” Ms. Minor says. “They are designing. They are engineering. They are problem-solving and learning collaboratively. I am so grateful to the parents and Lab’s other resources for making this project and others like it possible. The difference they make in the classroom is immeasurable.”

In the Halls

WOTR WOLL

Nursery School students get their hands wet with early engineering exercises.
Go outside, often, sometimes in wild places. Bring friends or not. Breathe.”

For Amy Landry’s first-grade class, a trip to the Lincoln Park Zoo became an opportunity for learning about animal classification and data collection.

The class participated in the venue’s Zoo Explorers program, which guides students through the grounds with hands-on, inquiry-based lessons highlighting zoology. Alongside their facilitator, the students observed firsthand the different qualities—like body coverings and habitats—characterizing mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and fish. They then put their knowledge to the test, exploring the zoo’s small mammal and reptile house and tallying up how many animals fit each classification.

Back at Lab, the students engaged in a similar activity—classifying the classroom pets in their building. After collecting, double checking, and counting their data, their next step will be to assemble a “pet map” showing the locations of the building’s different animals.

For Ms. Landry, a key objective of this project has been to spark curiosity, inspiring students “to feel the excitement of learning something new and being able to figure something out.” That spirit of exploration is what a Lab education is all about. “We strive to provide students with opportunities to learn experientially,” Ms. Landry says. “We want them to move, to investigate, to inquire, and to exchange ideas.”

Whether you’re a skeptic or a believer, Lower School teacher Robert Ley says you practice mindfulness all the time. “Mindfulness is just paying attention to anything that’s happening in our experiences. It means showing up fully in every moment with an open heart,” he says.

Mr. Ley, who underwent two years of training through the Mindful Schools organization, incorporates the practice into his second-grade class. “The practice makes children calmer, less distracted, and more focused,” he says. “Whether you’re a skeptic or a believer, the practice is paying off. Over the past few months, students have noticed significant improvements in their ability to sustain focus and process emotions, which translates into deeper learning.”

Mindfulness matters

“Theory indicates that mindfulness increases self-awareness, improves attention and emotion regulation, and decreases stress and anxiety.”

Research indicates that mindfulness increases self-awareness, improves attention and emotion regulation, and decreases stress and anxiety. Services Nicole Neal. “In our work focusing on the overall health and wellness of our students, mindfulness is an important element.”

“It’s a slow process,” Mr. Ley says. “It’s something you have to do every day—a couple of minutes here, a couple of minutes there.” But the practice is paying off. Over the past few months, students have noticed significant improvements in their ability to sustain focus and process emotions, which translates into deeper learning.

FROM THE SYLLABUS

Lab librarians are always adding to the School’s stacks. And while they read, select and purchase scores of new titles every year, here are just a few recently added to our shelves:

Recommended reading

NK and Primary Principal Carla Young recommends The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healhtier, and More Creative by Florence Williams

For Amyley’s first-grade class, a trip to the Lincoln Park Zoo became an opportunity for learning about animal classification and data collection.

The class participated in the venue’s Zoo Explorers program, which guides students through the grounds with hands-on, inquiry-based lessons highlighting zoology. Alongside their facilitator, the students observed firsthand the different qualities—like body coverings and habitats that allow for daylit, fresh air and patches of blue sky and naturalistic landscaping. These are our daily vegetables. Moving up the pyramid are weekly outings to parks and waterways, places where the sounds and basses of the city recede, places we should aim to imbibe at least an hour or so a week. Moving up higher still are the places that take more effort to get to: the monthly excursions to forests or other restful, escapist natural areas. At the very pinnacle are the rare but essential doses of wilderness.

“Research indicates that mindfulness increases self-awareness, improves attention and emotion regulation, and decreases stress and anxiety.”
This fall, eighth grade teacher Joy Parham asked her students to read *Warriors Don’t Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock’s Central High* by Melba Beals, who was one of the nine black teenagers to integrate the southern high school in 1957. Then, they rolled up their sleeves. “We talked about supporters, bystanders, allies, and of course those in opposition to integration,” Ms. Parham says. “But the point of the assignment was to start a discussion about how all of this relates to us now.” To extend the activity, Ms. Parham asked her students to research a topic that explores the legacy of the civil rights movement. Choices included the NAACP, Shirley Chisholm and the Congressional Black Caucus, Cesar Chavez and the National Farm Workers Association, and the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, the Council on Interracial Books for Children, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII. From there, students chose an artistic medium through which they would express the essence of their topic. “One student painted a boy trying to read a book with words of oppression visible all around him,” Ms. Parham says. “Another student chose five songs from the decade of their topic, then created an album with liner notes and played the music for their classmates. They did such a great job of finding connections between events in the 1950s and 1960s and what is happening now.” In the seventh grade, Peggy Doyle, Joe Drogos, Sam Nekrosius, and Iris Yin’s students read *American Born Chinese*, a graphic novel by Gene Luen Yang that explores race and identity through the eyes of three very different characters. Embedded in a larger unit on identity, the book served as a catalyst to an art project in which the students would explore the experiences of others. “We examined how cultural identifiers are mutable, and how some of them may enclose us more so in ‘boxes,’ which was a metaphor used throughout the unit,” Ms. Doyle says. “We examined how cultural identifiers are mutable, and how some of them may enclose us more so in ‘boxes,’ which was a metaphor used throughout the unit,” Ms. Doyle says. “We spent quite a bit of time exploring the experiences of those whose identities are different, as well as our own experience.” Students began by creating identity collages, which allowed them to visually represent their similarities and differences, as well as understand the dominant culture. From there, a plethora of artistic expression emerged, as the students in Ms. Doyle and Ms. Yin’s classes worked with resident poet Adam Gottlieb to create poems about their identities and infographics to further explore the themes of *American Born Chinese*. “We explored themes such as fitting in, finding comfort and acceptance and even pride in one’s identity, and the issue of turning stereotypes inward on oneself and the damage those stereotypes can wreak,” Ms. Doyle says. The infographics—which the students created in small groups—turned out as colorful and complex as the students themselves. One group expanded on the novel’s "stuck in a box" theme by illustrating how one character, Chin-Kee, was controlling the other characters’ futures with stereotypes. Another group drew a “character abacus,” the beads labeled with words like “popular,” “normal,” and “power.” “The artistic expression allows students to explore some of the complex themes that are harder to verbalize,” Ms. Doyle says. “They get to make connections visually that perhaps later they will be able to make verbally.”
Bunny buildings

Few rabbits are lucky enough to have their own playhouse lovingly built by Lab students with support from a retired architect. Well, two-year-old Cookie has 12 such playhouses.

Cookie the rabbit is one of many animals to call Earl Shapiro Hall home. During the school day, she’s free to explore Catie Gillespie’s second-grade classroom—along with all of its dark corners and intriguing smells. Near the beginning of the school year, Cookie started getting into trouble. “She would take things out of garbage can and get into cabinets where she didn’t belong,” Ms. Gillespie said. “One time she even hopped onto my desk where my computer is.”

Cookie invited her father, who happens to be a retired architect, to talk her class through the process of building a structure—and designing it around the needs and wants of their four-legged, floppy-eared client.

“She would take things out of garbage can and get into cabinets where she didn’t belong,” Ms. Gillespie said. “One time she even hopped onto my desk where my computer is.”

Students could tell that Cookie was bored. How do you keep a rabbit busy? The class came together as a group to address the problem, weighing the pros and cons of obstacle courses, mazes, and other solutions before landing on the winning idea: make Cookie a playhouse.

Ms. Gillespie’s students learned valuable skills that will serve them long into the future.
Seniors finish with honors

As they ready for life after Lab, seniors reach important milestones in their careers as U-High Maroons.

Harrison Shapiro, who runs cross-country and track, was named to the IHSA All-State Academic Team. This award recognizes academic, athletic, and community success.

Basketball player Tia Poelte was named to the Honorable Mention All-State Academic team. Harrison and Tia were elected from over 400 students nominated from across Illinois.

The last Labbie to make the All-State Team was Chase Chavin in 1997. Antonis Whalen (1997), Patrick Spann (1998), Rebecca Cohen (1999), Claire E.W. Stewart (2002), Rebecca Diamond (2003), Andrew Palmer (2012), and Madeline Sachs (2015) were all Honorable Mention All-State Academic.

Horace Shew concluded his stellar swim career with a fine performance at the IHSA State Swimming Championships on Friday at Evanston HS. Shew finished 31st in the 200 yard IM and 18th in the 100 yard backstroke.

Roxanne Nesbitt concluded her U-High basketball career at the IHSA 2A 3-Point Contest, where she finished in the top 20 in the State making 7 out of 15 3-point shots.

Freshman Emily Chang finished 10th place in the IHSA Class A State Championship shooting a 160 for 36 holes. Her finish is the highest in school history.

Emily and senior Jeremy Chizewer and won All-Conference honors in the ISL for top 10 finishes.

The boys basketball team lost to Phillips High School, 61-53, in the IHSA 2A Regional Championship game. The Maroons finished with a 16-12 season record. Senior Christian Brookens was named 1st team ISL All-Conference alongside junior Mohammed Alaua. Junior Jamie Miller and freshman Tolu Johnson won ISL Honorable Mention honors. The Maroons finished second in the ISL, with a 9-3 record. Junior Eddie Rose advanced in the boys basketball 3-Point Regional contest.

The cross-country team placed four runners on the ISL All-Conference (top 10 finish); freshman Vivana Glick, senior Harrison Shew, sophomore Franki Will and junior Abraham Zecherle. Both the boys and girls teams qualified during the IHSA 2A Regional championship for the U-High-hosted Sectional Championships held in Washington Park.

The boys soccer team finished with a 17-2-2 record winning both the ISHA 1A Regional and Sectional Championships before losing to Acero Garcia High School in the super-sectional match (IHSA Elite 8). The Maroons won the ISL Championship with a 9-0-1 overall record. Selected to the ISL All-conference 1st team were sophomore Miles Rochester, and seniors Tomo Liquist and Josh Ulane. Second team: freshman Alex Bal, senior John McKee, and junior keeper Jamison Miller, who recorded 12 shutouts on the year. First-year head coach Josh Potter was named ISL Coach-of-the-Year. The Illinois High School Soccer Coaches Association recognized Josh as Honorable Mention All-Sectional team.

The girls swim team finished 3rd place in the IHSA sectional (out of 15 teams) and set six school records at this meet:

- 100 Breaststroke: 1:09.11: McKula
- 200 Individual Medley: 2:14.02: McKula
- 400 Freestyle Relay: 3:44.12: McKula
- 100 Freestyle: 55.27: McKula
- 50 Freestyle: 24.44: Asthana
- 200 Medley Relay: 1:50.03: senior Elizabeth Van Ha, and sophomores Ava McKula, Donna Tong, and Kaley Qin

100 Freestyle: 55.27: McKula
400 Freestyle Relay: 3:44.12: McKula, Van Ha, Qin, and senior Amber Huo
200 Individual Medley: 2:14.02: McKula
100 Butterfly: 58.3: McKula
100 Breaststroke: 1:09.11: Donna Tong

The girls tennis team placed 10th in the IHSA State Championships, scoring 11 points. Junior Jenny Lewis #1 singles won the IHSA Class A Tennis Sectional Championship and won All-State honors (top 10) finishing 4-2 at the State Championships scoring 6 points.

The high school volleyball team finished the season with a 9-15-1 overall record. Sophomores Troy Johnson and Sydney Rogers were named to the 1st team ISL All-Conference team, sophomore Sara Gregg was named 2nd team All-Conference. The Maroons were awarded the ISL Sportmanship Award for 2017.
Focus on friendship

What it means to be part of a community

Dear Toad,
I am glad you are my best friend.
Your best friend,
Frog.
—Arnold Lobel

First grade can be a big year for students. In addition to laying foundations for academic learning, it’s a time for children to develop socially and get to know what it means to be part of a community.

With this in mind, first-grade teachers Orlando Torres and Carin Peacock are leading their class in exploring feelings and friendship as a key part of their curriculum.

“Beginning our work with a focus on empathy was critical to setting the tone for the remainder of the school year,” Mr. Torres says. So, he started his first graders off with a fall field trip to see A Year with Frog and Toad, based on the books by Arnold Lobel, at the Chicago Children’s Theatre. The musical’s theme of friendship served as an entry point into the class’s focus on socio-emotional learning.

Since then, the students have embarked on a variety of exercises highlighting the role of words, body language, and facial expressions in identifying and expressing feelings.

Through these lessons, which the instructors planned with assistance from Kate Surmeier, a counselor for grades N–2, the children have been learning to express their own feelings to others, as well as to intuit the emotions and needs of their peers, families, and community members. Mr. Torres says the value of these skills extends far beyond the classroom: “When our students learn, at a young age, the value of healthy coping skills and the value of being there to help another person, it’s not only our classroom that wins, but our society.”

Thus far, this focus on feelings and friendship has had a positive impact on classroom dynamics. “We now have students who have improved their ability to self-regulate and have strengthened our sense of community by reaching out a helping hand without a teacher asking,” Mr. Torres says. “This is what the Lab community is all about: seeing the true value of an individual and his/her sense of self-worth.”

Littlest learners interact with nuclear chain reaction art and commemoration

In the Halls

Littlest learners interact with nuclear chain reaction art and commemoration

Nuclear Thresholds, a temporary architectural installation, is part of the University’s 75th anniversary commemoration of the first nuclear chain reaction. It surrounds Henry Moore’s Nuclear Energy sculpture which has, for the last 50 years, marked the location of the original “Chicago Pile-1.” The installation consists of 241 two-inch diameter, seventy-five-foot-long cords of EPDM rubber. Based on computational modeling of unstable processes, the installation creates a material threshold around Nuclear Energy that resonates at radically different scales. It invites visitors to interact with the shape, and Lisa Kuzel’s NK class did just that.

Parent Sean Keller, an associate professor in the architecture school at the Illinois Institute of Technology, helped the children discuss what they were seeing. Before they arrived, the children knew they were seeing a place where scientists had made an important discovery. The scientists had piled up some very special rocks (Uranium) to make energy. Mr. Keller asked open-ended questions about the original sculpture and the newer additions. Then the students explored—some through physical interactions (climbing) and some by creating their own visual reinterpretations (drawing).
Ninth and tenth graders connect with the ancient past

This fall, students in Holly Johnston’s Early World History class explored connections between their own lives and those of people living 4,000 years ago. The Code of Hammurabi, posted around 1750 BCE, served as a guide for peoples in Mesopotamia, touching many areas of law and daily life. Ms. Johnston’s class provided the forum for her students to immerse themselves in this ancient code of conduct and compare it to similar codes in their world.

Ms. Johnston, who moved to Chicago from Philadelphia last summer, came upon the idea as a new member of the Lab community. Thinking about the norms of a new community to share,” Ms. Johnston noted. “That’s not so different from the Hammurabi Code—but without the emphasis on retributive justice!”

Students began the project by researching a particular judgment of the Code’s 282. They debated how each was intended and applied, how it worked for their civilization, upholding or suggesting amendments. As part of their research, students visited the Oriental Institute, where they saw a replica stele of Hammurabi’s Code and other depictions of daily life in Mesopotamia. In addition to seeing history firsthand, students made a valuable Lab-UChicago connection via the auspices of Oriental Institute Director Christopher Woods, father of one of the students in the class.

After completing research papers, students interviewed High School counselors and administrators, focusing on how their approach to rules and expectations shapes their educational philosophy. How and why do rules evolve? How do they differ for different age groups? What is the approach to, and rationale for, consequences? Such questions formed the basis for fruitful interactions between students and faculty. Both groups found alignment in understanding the academic, social, and emotional well-being of students, wanting to create an environment where people can thrive and feel safe.

Scheduling the interviews with adults, interacting with them in a professional manner, thinking through what was most important to Mesopotamian culture in relation to what is important at Lab—all of this fostered critical skills for students and made them feel part of the community beyond their classrooms,” Ms. Johnston noted. She plans to do the project again next year.

How and why do rules evolve? How do they differ for different age groups? What is the approach to, and rationale for, consequences?

High School students guide UChicago grad students on art project

High School Fine Arts teacher Veronica Bruce and some of her Mixed Media students gained valuable experience leading UChicago political science PhD students through an exciting art project. In return the PhD students got to spruce up their space, Albert Pick Hall, with some new abstract artworks—and came away with newfound painting techniques and experience to boot.

At the invitation of one of the PhD candidates, Ms. Bruce, along with freshmen Aisha Ziad and Ella Kraus-McLean, led about 20 grad students in what Ms. Bruce describes as “a ‘controlled’ abstraction workshop to create nine canvases.” The PhD students organize social and cultural events every quarter, but this was their first art event. “I was thrilled that they reached out to us at Lab,” Ms. Bruce noted.

“I’m very happy to see such connections taking place.” In planning the event, Ms. Bruce and her students had to strategize how to keep everyone busy for two hours on works incorporating multiple layers—taking into account paint drying times. “I really believe in creating space and depth in painting,” said Ms. Bruce, “and I love to teach working in layers, progressively working toward those effects.” The two Lab freshmen prepped canvases before the PhD students arrived, literally laying the groundwork with the first layer of paint once the grad students had determined the color palettes for the rooms in Pick Hall. “My volunteers found that the grad students were hesitant to take risks with the work, but responded well to their encouragement,” Ms. Bruce noted. “The Lab kids enjoyed feeling they knew more about the process, and everyone embraced the opportunity to collaborate.” The students worked in collaborative groups, participating in one another’s decision making. “I genuinely enjoy the problem-solving aspect of the work,” Ms. Bruce said, “seeing how students with no art background respond to the prompts—and to one another.”

At the invitation of one of the PhD candidates, Ms. Bruce, along with freshmen Aisha Ziad and Ella Kraus-McLean, led about 20 grad students in what Ms. Bruce describes as “a ‘controlled’ abstraction workshop to create nine canvases.”
We All Live Here

Fourth graders learn how art can change communities

Mr. Alapack leads The We All Live Here project which has a mission to “unite communities through public art installations.” As a first step in what will be a bigger multidisciplinary project, students worked with Mr. Alapack, talking about the meaning of the phrase, and then collectively “sewing” the Blaine hallway installation. In the coming months, the Lab students will be working with fourth graders from the UChicago Charter School to create individual t-shirts—have lunch, chat, and take pictures of each other wearing the shirts, Instagram style. We will then create two photo memory books of the experience, one for each school to keep.

And to remind all of the kids that they have a place in a broader community.

D o fish get thirsty? Why does the sun lighten our hair but darken our skin? Why is it considered necessary to nail down the lid of a coffin? These may not rank among life’s most pertinent questions, but possibly among the most fun—and there is no shortage of fun in Maja Teref’s English I and II classes.

“Lab students are all highly intelligent, successful scholars,” Ms. Teref says. “But when I look at a student’s writing, I want to see the beating heart behind the perfect GPA and high test scores. I want my students to forget they are writing an essay and—just like a child building a sandcastle—get lost in the moment and forget that they are trying to please me.”

The quirky questions above are just some of the many writing prompts Ms. Teref uses to ignite her students’ imaginations. For a recent poetry assignment, she asked each student to pick a Volkswagen card, an Edward Gorey card, and to roll her haiku dice. Restrained only by incorporating the results of their cards and dice into their work, the students wrote original poems, later reading them out loud to their classmates.

“They keep asking me, ‘So it’s even ok if we swear?’” Ms. Teref laughs. “I reminded them that ‘no swearing’ was not one of their three constraints. They couldn’t believe it. The ideas they came up with were hysterical—they had so much fun crafting their free verse poems.”

It was Ms. Teref’s early educational experiences that led her to this approachable, endearing teaching style. As a young girl in the former Yugoslavia, she had two music-school teachers who stand out in her memory. The first—a tall, intimidating opera singer—frightened her and made her dread her lessons. The second teacher—was gentle and mild-mannered—made all the difference to a young Ms. Teref.

“It was from that teacher that I harvested the importance of gentleness and a sense of humor in teaching,” Ms. Teref explains. “She was the first teacher who really saw me, and I want to do the same for my students.”

New to Lab this year, Ms. Teref brings a unique and international perspective to the School. Between her early travels with her parents and her adult excursions, Ms. Teref has visited an impressive 30 foreign countries.

“I learned the art of haggling in Istanbul, I ate whale meat in Norway (it tastes like fishy beef),” Ms. Teref says. “I cherish these and so many other experiences that have broadened my perspective of the world.”

Ms. Teref has published several books, mostly translations of Serbian/Croatian poetry. Her translation of Directions for Use by Ana Ristic is a finalist for the 2017 National Book Critics Circle Award. To share this art form with her students, Ms. Teref’s next venture is to start an annual literary translation journal at Lab, comprised of mostly students and two or three faculty members. Depending on the students’ interests, the journal would be comprised of poetry, flash fiction, or other texts translated from underrepresented languages.

For a recent poetry assignment, she asked each student to pick a Volkswagen card, an Edward Gorey card, and to roll her haiku dice.

“The mission of the journal would be to address the sad fact that only 3 percent of foreign literature gets translated into English versus say, 25 percent in France,” Ms. Teref explains.

“Ultimately, the goal would be to publish a journal that would have a national distribution, though that will take a few years.”

Behind the Scenes

FOUND IN TRANSLATION

Maja Teref opens creative floodgates in High School English students
Despite a rainstorm that forced some last-minute location changes, Lab alumni gathered in October to reconnect. The U-High Family Festival, with DJ Vince and games for kids, filled Lab’s recently renovated cafeteria space. Maroon Key Society students—U-Highers who volunteer for alumni and parent events—gave tours, which included an exhibit in the Corvus Gallery by artist Amanda Williams, ’92, and more than a dozen milestone classes held dinners across campus.

ALUMNIWEEKEND 2017

Monica Davis, ’02 and Amanda Williams, ’02, also this year’s Mark Plotkin | Muriel Rosenthal Alumni Speaker

Marc Nunn, Jordan Zachary Nunn, ’02, Mawadi Ernst Saleh, ’02, and Hehram Saleh

Timothy Wilkins, ’82, and son, Spencer

Jeff Ruby, Sarah Abella, ’93, Class Chavin, ’97, and Stefanie Chavin

Class of 1997

Class of ’92: Craig Slaughter, Valerie Melotti, Marc Piane, a guest, and Cheryl Cortez

Class of 1997 Alumni tour Earl Shapiro Hall

John Ford, ’92, Donald Williams, ’91, and Ernest Baker, ’75

Kimberly Bragg, Nonya Fiakpui and Kwame Foucherall, all class of ’92

Frank Alschuler, ’42, the oldest alumnus in attendance and Director Charlie Abelmann

Kumal Muhammad, ’77, and Kenneth Newman, ’76

Class 1982: Lorie Westerfield, Denise Goldbarg, Heidi Nicholls, and Adrienne Collins King

Marc Nunn, Jordan Zachary Nunn, ’02, Mawadi Ernst Saleh, ’02, and Hehram Saleh

Monica Davis, ’02 and Amanda Williams, ’02, also this year’s Mark Plotkin | Muriel Rosenthal Alumni Speaker

Timothy Wilkins, ’82, and son, Spencer

Class of ’92: Craig Slaughter, Valerie Melotti, Marc Piane, a guest, and Cheryl Cortez

Monica Davis, ’02 and Amanda Williams, ’02, also this year’s Mark Plotkin | Muriel Rosenthal Alumni Speaker
Most recently at Adler University in Chicago as their director of alumni relations and annual fund, Michael’s nearly 20-year career has taken him to academic institutions that will prepare him well for life at Lab and the University. He has served in alumni and donor relations management at a premier urban research university, for a nationally recognized independent school, and at a globally ranked engineering college at a Big Ten university. Says Mr. Zarobe, “The opportunity to work at Lab—an outstanding independent school, connected to a world-class university—provides a rich culture of ideas, diversity, and history. This blend will influence what we do as we work to build a robust alumni relations program.”

At the University of Michigan College of Engineering he worked to shape and facilitate the alumni experience to create a loyal, engaged constituency of volunteers, donors, and advocates. He spent four years as director of alumni relations at the University Ligget School, Michigan’s oldest coeducational independent school serving about 600 students in grades Pre-K through 12 and located in Grosse Pointe Woods outside of Detroit. He spent many years serving his alma mater, Wayne State University, where he obtained both a BA and an MA in communications.

“Alumni are great advocates to show how the Lab experience changed their lives and prepared them for college and making a difference in the world. Parents can see how Lab’s curriculum and academic programs inspire a strong foundation for their children’s growth. Together they raise awareness for Lab’s mission, share their stories, and help rally their peers around our work as a school.”

Meet Michael Zarobe, Lab’s new director of alumni relations

A new Jackman Field

On any given school day, Jackman Field, which sits on the Historic Campus behind Sunny and Kovler Gyms, may be used by more than 1,000 individual players, students, coaches, and instructors. The field is used by all the Physical Education classes for grades 3 through 12, the boys’ and girls’ soccer teams practice and play matches on the field, and Summer Lab uses Jackman for sports camps.

With the support of three anonymous donors and the many people attending Connections, Lab’s gala fundraiser, Lab will have a transformed Jackman Field next fall. The new field will feature an artificial turf playing surface (IHSA regulation size), a three-lane practice track, as well as current batting cage and track and field practice area.

The new surface will withstand heavy use and Chicago’s harsh climate to the benefit of our students and all users. Lab is also pursuing the installation of high-visibility, low-cost LED lighting to extend the useful hours of the field; upgrades to bleacher seating to make the fan experience more comfortable and enjoyable; and the installation of a high-visibility digital scoreboard.

Construction will start as soon as school ends in June.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORT THE REVITALIZATION OF JACKMAN FIELD, PLEASE CONTACT LAB’S OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT, 773-702-0578, DEVELOPMENT@UCLS.UCHICAGO.EDU.

Meet Michael Zarobe, Lab’s new director of alumni relations

Most recently at Adler University in Chicago as their director of alumni relations and annual fund, Michael’s nearly 20-year career has taken him to academic institutions that will prepare him well for life at Lab and the University. He has served in alumni and donor relations management at a premier urban research university, for a nationally recognized independent school, and at a globally ranked engineering college at a Big Ten university. Says Mr. Zarobe, “The opportunity to work at Lab—an outstanding independent school, connected to a world-class university—provides a rich culture of ideas, diversity, and history. This blend will influence what we do as we work to build a robust alumni relations program.”

At the University of Michigan College of Engineering he worked to shape and facilitate the alumni experience to create a loyal, engaged constituency of volunteers, donors, and advocates. He spent four years as director of alumni relations at the University Ligget School, Michigan’s oldest coeducational independent school serving about 600 students in grades Pre-K through 12 and located in Grosse Pointe Woods outside of Detroit. He spent many years serving his alma mater, Wayne State University, where he obtained both a BA and an MA in communications.

“Alumni are great advocates to show how the Lab experience changed their lives and prepared them for college and making a difference in the world. Parents can see how Lab’s curriculum and academic programs inspire a strong foundation for their children’s growth. Together they raise awareness for Lab’s mission, share their stories, and help rally their peers around our work as a school.”

Meet Michael Zarobe, Lab’s new director of alumni relations

A new Jackman Field

On any given school day, Jackman Field, which sits on the Historic Campus behind Sunny and Kovler Gyms, may be used by more than 1,000 individual players, students, coaches, and instructors. The field is used by all the Physical Education classes for grades 3 through 12, the boys’ and girls’ soccer teams practice and play matches on the field, and Summer Lab uses Jackman for sports camps.

With the support of three anonymous donors and the many people attending Connections, Lab’s gala fundraiser, Lab will have a transformed Jackman Field next fall. The new field will feature an artificial turf playing surface (IHSA regulation size), a three-lane practice track, as well as current batting cage and track and field practice area.

The new surface will withstand heavy use and Chicago’s harsh climate to the benefit of our students and all users. Lab is also pursuing the installation of high-visibility, low-cost LED lighting to extend the useful hours of the field; upgrades to bleacher seating to make the fan experience more comfortable and enjoyable; and the installation of a high-visibility digital scoreboard.

Construction will start as soon as school ends in June.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORT THE REVITALIZATION OF JACKMAN FIELD, PLEASE CONTACT LAB’S OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT, 773-702-0578, DEVELOPMENT@UCLS.UCHICAGO.EDU.
An Epic Collaboration

This year, Lab students are having a one-of-a-kind opportunity to explore the intersection of cinema, music, and history through collaboration with the American Epic film team.

By Lindsey Simon
The American Epic team is working with faculty to design an interdisciplinary, experiential curriculum centered on the film’s content. These efforts will eventually serve as a model for other schools throughout the United States.

The American Epic documentary series and feature film—created by Allison McGourty, directed by Bernard McMahon, and presented by T Bone Burnett, Robert Redford, and Jack White—highlights the history of music in the United States, starting with the earliest days of the country’s recording industry in the 1920s. But the filmmakers’ ambition for this unique project extends beyond the screen: they aim to share the history of American music by making the series’ rich array of educational materials available for schools across the nation.

The American Epic team is beginning that work at Lab, working with faculty to design an interdisciplinary, experiential curriculum centered on the film’s content. These efforts will eventually serve as a model for other schools throughout the United States to incorporate American Epic into their courses.

The film’s creators first came together with the Laboratory Schools educators after orchestra teacher Michelle Morales Miles saw the film at a local festival. Struck by the documentary’s compelling content, she described it to her fellow teachers, Rozalyn Torto and Kate Truscillo, who agreed that there was strong potential to tie the film in with their teaching. With support from administration, the team welcomed McGourty and McMahon as the Schools’ first Kistenbroker Family Artists-in-residence.

The collaboration includes three campus-wide events throughout the year, giving students and teachers of all grade levels an opportunity to come together and celebrate the history of American music. First, an initial “kickoff” event introduced McGourty and Bernard as artists-in-residence, as well as spotlighting the film itself. Later on, the community will showcase of the students’ curricular work surrounding the project, with celebrations including interactive spaces highlighting different regions of the United States as featured in the films; and finally, the American Epic team will hold a grand unveiling of the restored 1920s-era recording machine used in the American Epic Sessions, which the students will be able to see assembled and even have the chance to use for recording their own music.

In addition to these celebrations, Lab teachers have found creative ways to integrate the content from American Epic into their courses throughout the year—the films serve as a starting point from which to delve into the complex story of US society as a whole. “We hope that students will gain a new perspective on American history by looking at it through a fine arts lens,” says orchestra teacher Rozalyn Torto.

Many Lab classes have been using the story of music as an entry point for exploring the diversity of America’s cultural traditions. Music teacher En Chen incorporated a story of Hops music from American Epic into her lessons for nursery and kindergarten students. Later this year, High School students will study African American musical traditions as part of their history curriculum; the documentary’s segments on steel guitar inventor Joseph Kekuku and Tejano musician have led into lessons about the influence of Hawaiian and Latin music, respectively. Additional classes will use American Epic as a way to investigate the relationship between music, socioeconomic class, and politics in the early 20th century, with examples including gritty coal miner songs from Logan County, West Virginia.

Lab students have also had the opportunity to experience a hands-on look at music history and more through a variety of interactive projects and activities. For McGourty and Bernard’s first visit to the campus, U-Highers explored production design and writing by putting on a talk show-style conversation introducing the filmmakers: they drew on their visual arts and verbal skills to design a set and craft a detailed list of questions for the conversation. This spring, an end-of-year musical open house will allow students and families to dance and try out instruments in the style of a variety of American musical genres, including blues, folk, and country. Student music groups may even audition to record on a painstakingly restored 90-year-old recording device—the same one that artists such as Elton John, Beck, Nas, Jack White, and Willie Nelson used in the film.

Fine arts, history, social issues, technology—all these topics converge as part of this project. With this wide variety of themes, activities, and events, all students can find something to “be inspired by or relate to,” according to Ms. Torto. “There is something for everyone in this work.” Students with all different academic interests can find a way to connect their favorite subjects with this interdisciplinary curriculum. Beyond that, notes Ms. Torto, working with Allison McGourty provides a special opportunity for Lab’s female students to connect with a successful woman in the film industry.

The project has also helped spark teamwork and idea-sharing within the campus community. “Collaborating with the American Epic team has been a catalyst for working more closely with our colleagues at Lab,” Ms. Torto says. “Not only is this providing material for interdisciplinary connections, but it also reaches across the grades.” The project’s hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to learning serves as a true extension of Lab founder John Dewey’s educational philosophy, according to Ms. Torto. “At the Laboratory Schools we ignite and nurture an enduring spirit of scholarship, curiosity, creativity, and confidence,” Ms. Torto says, citing the Schools’ mission statement. The project is a chance for students to get inspired, pursue what intrigues them, and dive in to learning by doing—all part of Lab’s long-standing commitment to experiential learning and to giving students space to develop their passions, she explains.

“We are truly being a laboratory! Having an idea and undertaking the immense project with open arms and the planning and hard work it takes to make it happen … this is absolutely Lab!”
Outdoor classroom connects experience and education

As envisioned, the classroom has become a place to see nature in transition, a source of inspiration, and a space for contemplation.

By Lindsey Simon
he space is the beginning...one step on a much longer trip toward the development of an outdoor curriculum that begins to redefine, and make real, abstract ideas like sustainability, ecology, environment, native and non-native, natural, adaptation, survival of the fittest, evolution, relationships, and beauty—Outdoor Classroom Faculty User’s Guide

When Lab faculty considered how they would use the new outdoor classroom (situated adjacent to Kovler Gym), faculty coordinators Meredith Dodd, who teaches nursery school, and Jeff Maharry, a Lower School science teacher, shared this and other principles with their peers. As envisioned, the classroom has become a place to see nature in transition, a source of inspiration, and a space for contemplation.

Buddies visit regularly and the classroom sparks a curiosity that bridges age, and teachers from a multiplicity of grades and disciplines are making use of this special resource. “It has opened up possibilities that maybe were only there for the limited number of grades who had time to walk over to Botany Pond,” says Ms. Dodd. “Now, if a math class is studying ripples, they can go outside and apply an equation and see it and feel it.”

Says Mr. Maharry, “I hope the outdoor classroom will grow to be a place where we can connect to nature and to each other in quiet reflection or through shared stories and song, as new traditions take hold. Like our students
“I hope the outdoor classroom will grow to be a place where we can connect to nature and to each other, in quiet reflection or through shared stories and song, as new traditions take hold.”

Says Mr. Maharry,

Sharing the care of the space is something everyone is being asked to do. Says Ms. Dodd, “Do no harm! Each group needs to leave it ready for the next to enjoy and investigate. We are working to communicate that to our whole school without inhibiting investigation, curiosity, and wonder.” One way that might happen? Lift a section of ice to see what lies below—but then replace it carefully. “We want our space to be protected and honored, and for our people to be caregivers.”

The Middle School has taken that idea and translated it into a hands-on service learning opportunity for students—watering plants, keeping the pond clear of detritus, or ensuring that the pump is working properly. Mr. Maharry says, “One of the things I’m most excited to see is the awakening of life that occurs each spring. The ground will warm as the days lengthen and the seeds that we introduced in the fall will sprout and take root. There will be an awakening of learning as well. Along with plants and animals, more teachers and students will emerge and bring their own wonder and creativity to the space.”

There are hopes that with the new makerspaces student will build
“Leopold” benches designed by Aldo Leopold, a famous American environmentalist. The very specific, simple design says Ms. Dodd, “signals to others that the people who use this space care for the environment and value what it offers for thinking and contemplation.”

As the weather turned colder, use adjusted. Dozens of classrooms bundled up to enjoy hot chocolate at Lab’s first “Stories around the Campfire” days listening to librarians—and even Director Charlie Abelmann—tell stories as a campfire blazed.
plan to revisit her past writing and recast it in different poetic forms, ranging from the rigid villanelle to full-on freestyle. At each Thursday meeting, Mr. Krewatch critiqued the poems Florence had worked on the week before. Florence’s poetry study was her first experience working individually with a teacher (piano lessons notwithstanding). “It felt like a lot of pressure in the beginning,” she says. “But when I made that switch to realizing it, it was for a grade, just my own personal development, I started to enjoy myself a lot more.” In one of her poems about her experience as a Filipino American, Florence recalls being mocked for her appearance. “Someone called my nose flat, and I was really offended by that,” she said. So she wrote about it. As part of her study, Florence readapted the piece in various styles—some strict, some more flexible—reflecting on sisterhood, shared experiences, and cultural influence on beauty standards. Her favorite version? The newfangled “bop” form. Practicing poetry also helped Florence hone her music. “I feel like now I have a better understanding of the way that form and content go hand in hand, and how form can emphasize certain types of context,” she says. “Even my piano teacher noticed my songs were more complex, the imagery I was using was less basic.” Florence created a website, which she continues fine-tuning, to share her work with family and friends. At Mr. Krewatch’s suggestion, she also plans to submit some writing for publication in poetry and literary magazines.

The time traveler
For his independent study, Clemente delved into his family history within the broader context of Puerto Rican diaspora. “We have three generations with three completely different experiences as Puerto Ricans,” he says. Clemente’s grandparents opened a barber shop in Logan Square in 1975, not long after the move to Chicago. Their son, Clemente’s father, now a Yale-educated executive, was a first-generation college student. “He had to work harder in high school and figure everything out himself,” says Clemente, whose mother is also of Puerto Rican descent. The variety of perspectives within his own family inspired Clemente to wonder about the presence, pressures, and treatment of ethnic communities across time. His aunt, a professor of Latino/a studies at Williams College, shared her course syllabi as a starting point for his independent study. The resulting reading list included texts in English and Spanish. Clemente’s research examined the impact of racial segregation on once-unified working class communities in Chicago and New York. Racial pressures over the course of the 20th century, combined with differences in skin color and citizenship, left many Puerto Ricans disconnected from their black, white, and Latino neighbors. As a result, many Puerto Ricans abandoned their cultural identities in an effort to gain acceptance. Clemente met with historian Paul Horton to discuss each week’s readings, developing his thoughts across several three-page papers and a longer final report. He also maintained ongoing discussions with his aunt, and spoke with other relatives about their experiences.

Whether in art, history, or science, the same thing can be said about an independent study project at U-High: you won’t find one quite like it anywhere else. Meet three students who charted courses undeniably their own.

By Ingrid Gonçalves, AB’08

E or most of their academic careers, students follow teachers’ lead. Lab faculty and staff work tirelessly to offer support inside and outside the classroom. But some of the most important lessons put educators in the backseat.

U-High students design an academic project in an area of personal interest. Each individual or group works with a dedicated teacher to define project goals and stick to a plan for achieving them. And then—beyond weekly check-ins—students are on their own.

The shapeshifter
Florence is very much an personal growth that can serve students well in the future. “When you show up for a new job, you try to learn as quickly as possible what that job requires of you,” he says. “I think independent studies help with that.”

Lab students enjoy access to a treasure trove of creative and educational resources but there is still room for students to lead their own learning down new paths. In their independent studies this year, three U-High students—senior Florence Almeda, junior Clemente Figeroa, and junior Mitch Walker—chose their own educational adventure.

Florence focused on one specific medium: poetry. With guidance from English teacher Mark Krewatch, she developed a
Immersive learning

Alumni bridge personal and global perspectives as Peace Corps volunteers

By Megan Doherty
mowards the end of her college career, Ashley Kramer, '03, thought about how best to be of service to society and to actively address some of the world’s needs. She recalled an influential moment she'd had as a seventh-grader at Lab: a classroom visit made by a former Labbie who just completed a term of service with the Peace Corps in Africa. Although the two-year time commitment intimidated the 13-year-old Ms. Kramer, as a college senior it seemed like the ideal way to use her good fortune to help others in a prolonged fashion.

“By the end of those two years, you’re really in a position to get to work. You’ve learned the language, and you know the people, hierarchy, and culture,” says Ms. Kramer, who now teaches English and language arts in Washington state. “But just as you’re getting really fluent, it’s time to go home.”

Since President John F. Kennedy founded the Peace Corps in 1961, dozens of Lablies have been among more than 230,000 American volunteers sent to 141 countries to promote “world peace and friendship.” Although engaged in social and economic development by working with governments, schools, non-profits, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the program’s most important contribution may be its promotion of cross-cultural understanding.

“That exchange is where the real work and joy of being a volunteer goes down, and I think Americans have such desperate need of improved cultural understanding, both within and outside of ourselves, that the work is worth doing,” says Ms. Kramer, reflecting on her time as a community health promotion volunteer on Viti Levu, the largest of the 322 Fijian islands.

At first, it was tempting to think that she was the one who had to adapt her behavior to accommodate Fijian cultural expectations. She was shocked by animal slaughter and had to cover her animal slaughter and had to cover her

“Being immersed in another culture may show you things you’d never realize you were missing from your life until you’re exposed to them in a new place,” says Lab’s Service Learning Coordinator Hannah Roche, whose Peace Corps experience was teaching English as a second language in Costa Rica. “In the United States, we can be very focused on work and time, which can lead to some distance between friends and family. Sometimes that can take away from the relationships that other cultures may value a little bit more.”

At Lab, Ms. Roche is responsible for matching students with opportunities in their local communities. There’s also a curiosity of different cultures and different perspectives embedded through their studies here, and that pushes students to go out and explore, she says.

“Lab did a very good job educating me about the world, in a way that made me curious about it and want to travel,” says Matthew Headrick, ’01, a physics professor at Brandeis University. “The level at which you learn things like history and geography is pretty high, and the University of Chicago is, in general, an intellectual atmosphere that is incredibly international.”

Mr. Headrick decided to set aside time for the Peace Corps between college and graduate school, where he served in Gabon in central Africa. He taught math and physical sciences to middle and high school children in Ndendé, a town of about 2,000 people. He is leaving, he was cautioned to keep his expectations in check.

“It was a huge puzzle of how I was going to make a positive impact. The first year I was just trying to keep my head above water,” he says. His school was understaffed and overcrowded, with some classes having upwards of 100 students. Sometimes his

job was less teaching chemistry than it was crowd control and policing cheating, which was more culturally accepted than in the United States. When he first started, he thought he could identify ways to improve the local education system was structured.

“It didn’t work so well,” he admits. “Some changes may have been positive, but I know the students had certain expectations for how things worked in the classroom and they considered me really weird.” The students nicknamed Mr. Headrick “chambouleur,” one who turns everything upside down.

By the second year, however, he had a better grasp of how to manage the situation. That’s when he and the two other Peace Corps volunteers at his school figured out how to get textbooks to the students. They convinced the Shell Oil Company to print them, getting them into the hands of volunteers at schools across the country. They were able to sell the new material, in the form of pamphlets, to the students at very low cost. Mr. Headrick and his fellow volunteers also convinced the school administration to arrange the classes to increase opportunities for the more advanced students.

“I now understand better the importance of having a clear set of expectations, communicating them clearly, and the need to meet students at their level,” he says. “This is something you have to do even if you teach at an elite private college, but I had to learn that lesson fast when teaching in the Peace Corps. It was really good training for what I do now.”

Halfway through her two-year post in Toulouse, Ms. Scarlata, ’12, has learned that the best tea must be poured and re-poured to guarantee a sufficient amount of bubbles. Only then did she realize how much the students were—and that loneliness forced her to imagine how the women in the village

imagine how the women in the village

Young Ashley Kramer ’17, center rear

Although Engaged in Social and Economic Development by Working with Governments, Schools, Non-Profits, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Program’s Most Important Contribution May Be Its Promotion of Cross-Cultural Understanding.

Although Engaged in Social and Economic Development by Working with Governments, Schools, Non-Profits, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Program’s Most Important Contribution May Be Its Promotion of Cross-Cultural Understanding.

Although Engaged in Social and Economic Development by Working with Governments, Schools, Non-Profits, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Program’s Most Important Contribution May Be Its Promotion of Cross-Cultural Understanding.

Although Engaged in Social and Economic Development by Working with Governments, Schools, Non-Profits, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Program’s Most Important Contribution May Be Its Promotion of Cross-Cultural Understanding.
One thing that I’m forced to get used to very quickly is being the walking celebrity of the community. Here are the kinds of reactions I usually get when I’m walking around:

- Some people will hold my hand and walk with me.
- They want to know everything about me like my name, where I’m going, where I come from, when I arrived, where I stay, how long I’m staying, and what I’m doing here.
- BoGogo and boMake will try to convince me to marry their Swazi relatives.
- Some people ask me to buy them bread, or give them money, or ask if I they can have my jacket.
- Many tell me “I love you!!!” (note – the word for ‘like’ is the same word for ‘love’ in siSwati)
- Lots of people gasp in amazement that I know how to speak their language and that I’ll be living here for two years.

Imagine walking a few blocks to the nearest river, stream, spring, or borehole and then hauling as much water as you can carry (and this isn’t magical lightweight water) all the way back every day. Imagine pumping a lever or sucking on a hose in order to just collect that water from the ground. Imagine collecting and storing rainwater using a gutter system attached to the roof. . . . Most of the Swazi families I know do not have running water, and use one of the above methods for collecting water instead. . . . Where does all the water come from? Not Lake Michigan, try again! It’s ground water . . . That’s why part of my daily routine is to boil water, let it cool, pass it through a ceramic filter, and put a drop of bleach in it. But what about those who can’t afford to boil, filter, and bleach their water? Well, water is an essential, so they just carry on without purifying.

Us Peace Corps volunteers use the term “African Moment” to describe a moment when you take a look at your surroundings, and realize how happy you are to be in a rural African village. For me, this moment was on a Friday evening. I was visiting a fellow volunteer to cook dinner together. We were hanging out in the yard of her homestead with a bunch of neighborhood kids. They started to play this game that involves dancing while everyone else stands in a circle around you. A little girl linked elbows with me and we danced around, shaking our butts and making goofy dance moves while the other kids laughed, clapped, and sang along all around us. I was relaxed, happy, and so content to be making a fool of myself with my little buddies as the sun set over the tall brown grass.

I am involved in a project called GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) which strives to empower the young women of countries all over the world including Swaziland. As you may have been able to pick up, life for girls, young women, and older women is not easy in a country that is so swayed by its deep cultural and traditional roots. Unfortunately, many Swazi girls are brought up with very limited notions of life opportunities outside of marriage, children, and work on the homestead. Ideas of having an opinion or say in family matters, seeking higher schooling, and reaching for career goals are almost entirely nonexistent for female youth.
1940 Class Representative
Chicago, IL 60615

Ellen Moore Poullon, ’47, writes, "After the war was over, gasoline was in short supply. I remember coming home from school, Nan Wooley Mayer and Noel Wilson, one of my classmates, would have to take me inside Jerome Milliken’s convertible."  

2059 Class Representative
211 Apple Tree Road
Winnetka, IL 60093-5701
stemmc@yahoo.com

Sue Siedel
2059 Class Representative

Ellen Moore Poullon, ’47, and her granddaughter, Julia

Ellen Moore Poullon, ’47, writes, ‘You're homeless or struggling against regular contributor to the ‘Letters to the Editor’ section of the Auckland Star. I walk every day when the weather is nice and in good health. My biggest accomplishment has been the fact that I have some friends in the earth outside? Scammon Bay, Alaska. My cash register while learning how to build a store from many can remember Miss Adams’ most exciting science room ever, Room 214. Bertha Parker, with the nickname of ‘the professor’ which is planning and supervising the remodeling and renovation of our home here in Berkeley. In the case of the crate crash course in construction and negotiation with architects, designers, and other board members to get things moving. Our present and future needs. Good luck to all!”

Gail Elden
2059 Class Representative

Ellen Moore Poullon, ’47, in kindergarten

Class of 1950: Interested in volunteering to serve as your class representative? Email the Office of Alumni Relations and Development at labnotes@ucls.uchicago.edu.  

Class of 50s: Interested in volunteering to serve as your class representative? Email the Office of Alumni Relations and Development at labnotes@ucls.uchicago.edu.
Bay Area: “It’s been a good year for Lab alumni,” reported Beef Fried, our Class Representative for the Class of 1961 (North Hollywood, CA). "It has been a consuming project. Brent and I had the privilege of being part of a team that was involved in the creation of this book. We have been working on it for five years, and I can assure you that it has been worth every moment of our time and effort."

The book, titled “LabLife: Spring 2018,” is available online at uchs.uchicago.edu. It contains several chapters, each written by prominent Lab alumni, discussing various aspects of their lives and experiences. The book features contributions from notable figures such as Beef Fried, who shares his thoughts on the impact of the Lab on his life, and Ben Stein, who writes about his experiences as a student at the Lab.

In the introduction, Beef Fried highlights the significance of the Lab in the lives of its alumni, stating, “The Lab is not just a school; it is a community, a family, a place of shared memories and experiences.” He goes on to say that the book is a testament to the enduring spirit of the Lab and its alumni.

One of the most compelling stories is that of Beef Fried himself, who writes about his childhood in the Lab and his subsequent career as a successful businessman and philanthropist. He shares how the Lab has shaped his life and how it has influenced his decisions and actions.

Another chapter is written by Ben Stein, who reflects on his time at the Lab and his career as an actor and author. He discusses how the Lab has contributed to his success and how it has shaped his perspective on life.

The book is a celebration of the Lab’s impact on its alumni and a reminder of the importance of the Lab experience in shaping who we are today. It is a must-read for anyone who was a part of the Lab community, or anyone who is interested in learning more about this remarkable institution.
impact of mergers and acquisitions

Park in many ways. Jerry is CEO

walkability and access to so much

Hill neighborhood and love the

husband Jerry and I moved to

friends. Now, South America and

spectacular. Most of the travel was

in Piano Bash, a seven-piano

NY, LA, MN, ID, CA; November:

Wales, Spain, Italy; October: WA,

a recording and UK; September:

writes, “It’s been

and caring family and good friends

some day), we feel fortunate to be in

(spun-off, in which the Lab alumni

Lab days and the highly competitive

weekend were reminiscing about

and Development at labnotes@ucls.

and it

that brought them (and has held

area, so I don’t get back very

parents moved from Chicago a long

was studying for. Since

1980 Class Representative

1986 Class Representative

1997 Class Representative

1990 Class Representatives

2002 Class Representative

1997 Class Representative

2000 Class Representative

2000 Class Representative

I am the Landscape Program Director for Rhode Island, with a background in development based in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I was part of a company dedicated to sustainable forest management. I live with my wife, Erika, and sons, Thomas and Edward in Austin, Texas, which is the lapd, capital of South America. I am a big fan of the Internet with anyone too busy with anything interesting of

Neil Dasgupta is a professor at the

Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I received a Joint PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures and Medieval Studies with a concentration in Women’s Studies from the University of Chicago. I have been a faculty advisor of the UM Solar Car Team, which consists of 50+ students that design and build a car completely on solar power. Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I am the Landscape Program Director for Rhode Island, with a background in development based in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I was part of a company dedicated to sustainable forest management. I live with my wife, Erika, and sons, Thomas and Edward in Austin, Texas, which is the lapd, capital of South America. I am a big fan of the Internet with anyone too busy with anything interesting of

Neil Dasgupta is a professor at the

Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I received a Joint PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures and Medieval Studies with a concentration in Women’s Studies from the University of Chicago. I have been a faculty advisor of the UM Solar Car Team, which consists of 50+ students that design and build a car completely on solar power. Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I am the Landscape Program Director for Rhode Island, with a background in development based in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I was part of a company dedicated to sustainable forest management. I live with my wife, Erika, and sons, Thomas and Edward in Austin, Texas, which is the lapd, capital of South America. I am a big fan of the Internet with anyone too busy with anything interesting of

Neil Dasgupta is a professor at the

Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I received a Joint PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures and Medieval Studies with a concentration in Women’s Studies from the University of Chicago. I have been a faculty advisor of the UM Solar Car Team, which consists of 50+ students that design and build a car completely on solar power. Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I am the Landscape Program Director for Rhode Island, with a background in development based in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I was part of a company dedicated to sustainable forest management. I live with my wife, Erika, and sons, Thomas and Edward in Austin, Texas, which is the lapd, capital of South America. I am a big fan of the Internet with anyone too busy with anything interesting of

Neil Dasgupta is a professor at the

Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I received a Joint PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures and Medieval Studies with a concentration in Women’s Studies from the University of Chicago. I have been a faculty advisor of the UM Solar Car Team, which consists of 50+ students that design and build a car completely on solar power. Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I am the Landscape Program Director for Rhode Island, with a background in development based in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I was part of a company dedicated to sustainable forest management. I live with my wife, Erika, and sons, Thomas and Edward in Austin, Texas, which is the lapd, capital of South America. I am a big fan of the Internet with anyone too busy with anything interesting of

Neil Dasgupta is a professor at the

Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I received a Joint PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures and Medieval Studies with a concentration in Women’s Studies from the University of Chicago. I have been a faculty advisor of the UM Solar Car Team, which consists of 50+ students that design and build a car completely on solar power. Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I am the Landscape Program Director for Rhode Island, with a background in development based in the Ecuadorian Amazon. I was part of a company dedicated to sustainable forest management. I live with my wife, Erika, and sons, Thomas and Edward in Austin, Texas, which is the lapd, capital of South America. I am a big fan of the Internet with anyone too busy with anything interesting of

Neil Dasgupta is a professor at the

Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!

I received a Joint PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures and Medieval Studies with a concentration in Women’s Studies from the University of Chicago. I have been a faculty advisor of the UM Solar Car Team, which consists of 50+ students that design and build a car completely on solar power. Neil recently traveled with the team to Australia for the World Solar Challenge, a five day race where the team finished second place in their class of 30 teams—which is their highest placement ever!
Furniture designer

Doug Cohen, ’60

Doug Cohen, ’60, has spent his life thinking about something we all live with every day, but rarely give much thought or attention to: our furniture. “A lot of people think it’s mundane and it’s not at the top of their shopping lists,” he observes. “But we’re trying to design something that’s really comfortable and very stylish and long-lasting.” Getting the combination of angles and fabrics right doesn’t happen overnight. Usually, each item goes through three to five iterations before it’s ready to become a part of someone’s home.

Now president of Wrightwood Furniture in Chicago, Mr. Cohen worked for his family’s furniture company, Douglas Furniture, until they sold the business in 2000. Wrightwood, a joint-father-son effort, does things somewhat differently than many retailers. “Many businesses today like to say they manage their logistics,” he says. “At Wrightwood we control the logistics.” He saw that customers wanted high-quality pieces for their homes that would express their individuality and stand the test of time—but not at exorbitant cost. To offer unique items more reasonably, they’ve cut out the middlemen and ship direct from factory to store. Removing warehousing, distribution, and all the extra trucking means they can pass those savings on to their customers without sacrificing quality.

“Furniture is purchased for the long run. Some of the things we design and produce are generational, which means you could buy it and keep it 25 years, and then pass it down to your children,” Mr. Cohen says. “It should last that long.”

Over the decades, he’s seen many trends come and go. He’s noticed a resurgence of the mid-century modern look, industrial (think: Restoration Hardware), and modern furniture (think: CB2).

Removal warehousing, distribution, and all that extra trucking means they can pass those savings on to their customers without sacrificing quality.

Owner’s home—a lot of antique pieces; some furniture and some industrial—is “in the ecr4 range,” according to his wife Carol Bergman Cohen, ’83, whom he met in study hall at Lab when he was a senior. “That was the best thing that happened to me in high school,” she says. He’s been married 51 years. he says.

Recently, he and his wife decided to temporarily close the Lakeview and store to build out the brand, update their online store, and talk to potential partners. Staying relevant sometimes means stepping off the treadmill to create a new plan, no matter how scary that pause can be. “If you don’t have a plan, you don’t have a goal, and you don’t have a way to measure your progress,” he says. “That’s a simple concept, but it’s often overlooked.” He advises: “Don’t be afraid to follow it. Or stand in it.” She says, “Listen to yourself rather than anything anyone else says.”

When Donna Sigal Gunther, ‘82, first visited California in 1987, she marvelled at the variegated terrain and the spirit of living. “That’s when she and her husband began to sell vintage California memorabilia: surf culture, mid-century design, Americana. Their lifestyle brand and creative consultancy, Surfing Cowboys, was one of the first that tapped the essence of California lifestyle. The former fashion photographers started out buying for the home they’d always wanted. Ms. Gunther would incorporate their treasures as props in their shoots, and before long, everyone wanted to buy them.

“We were creating people’s imagination. Surfing Cowboys’ motto ‘Defenders of the California Dream’ resonates the California we could see when we squat,” she says. “It’s a literal statement, it’s a state of mind.”

She began to combine icons of California culture with vintage items, creating a design genre that hadn’t been encapsulated that way before. “Until we opened Surfing Cowboys, no one hung a surfboard in the house. They were in garages or museums. Our manner of mixing pieces helped to launch a new aesthetic,” she says.

Since starting out, they’ve sold hundreds of thousands of items, including rare cultural icons such as personal pieces from the collection of Duke Kahanamoku—considered the father of modern-day surfing—and an original Steve McQueen jacket.

The ability to see what others aren’t seeing—it’s the confidence that can move confidently into that space is one Ms. Gunther traces back to a pivotal moment at Lab. One day in Earl Bell’s history class, he said that there was no black and white and everything was shades of grey. This moment helped form her manner of thinking and approaching life by reminding her to continually develop her ability to take a broader view.

Recently, she and her husband decided to temporarily close the Lakeview and store to build out the brand, update their online store, and talk to potential partners. Staying relevant sometimes means stepping off the treadmill to create a new plan, no matter how scary that pause can be. “If you don’t have a plan, you don’t have a goal, and you don’t have a way to measure your progress,” he says. “That’s a simple concept, but it’s often overlooked.” He advises: “Don’t be afraid to follow it. Or stand in it.” She says, “Listen to yourself rather than anything anyone else says.”

When Donna Sigal Gunther, ‘82, first visited California in 1987, she marvelled at the variegated terrain and the spirit of living. “That’s when she and her husband began to sell vintage California memorabilia: surf culture, mid-century design, Americana. Their lifestyle brand and creative consultancy, Surfing Cowboys, was one of the first that tapped the essence of California lifestyle. The former fashion photographers started out buying for the home they’d always wanted. Ms. Gunther would incorporate their treasures as props in their shoots, and before long, everyone wanted to buy them.

“We were creating people’s imagination. Surfing Cowboys’ motto ‘Defenders of the California Dream’ resonates the California we could see when we squat,” she says. “It’s a literal statement, it’s a state of mind.”

She began to combine icons of California culture with vintage items, creating a design genre that hadn’t been encapsulated that way before. “Until we opened Surfing Cowboys, no one hung a surfboard in the house. They were in garages or museums. Our manner of mixing pieces helped to launch a new aesthetic,” she says.

Since starting out, they’ve sold hundreds of thousands of items, including rare cultural icons such as personal pieces from the collection of Duke Kahanamoku—considered the father of modern-day surfing—and an original Steve McQueen jacket.

The ability to see what others aren’t seeing—it’s the confidence that can move confidently into that space is one Ms. Gunther traces back to a pivotal moment at Lab. One day in Earl Bell’s history class, he said that there was no black and white and everything was shades of grey. This moment helped form her manner of thinking and approaching life by reminding her to continually develop her ability to take a broader view.

Recently, she and her husband decided to temporarily close the Lakeview and store to build out the brand, update their online store, and talk to potential partners. Staying relevant sometimes means stepping off the treadmill to create a new plan, no matter how scary that pause can be. “If you don’t have a plan, you don’t have a goal, and you don’t have a way to measure your progress,” he says. “That’s a simple concept, but it’s often overlooked.” He advises: “Don’t be afraid to follow it. Or stand in it.” She says, “Listen to yourself rather than anything anyone else says.”

When Donna Sigal Gunther, ‘82, first visited California in 1987, she marvelled at the variegated terrain and the spirit of living. “That’s when she and her husband began to sell vintage California memorabilia: surf culture, mid-century design, Americana. Their lifestyle brand and creative consultancy, Surfing Cowboys, was one of the first that tapped the essence of California lifestyle. The former fashion photographers started out buying for the home they’d always wanted. Ms. Gunther would incorporate their treasures as props in their shoots, and before long, everyone wanted to buy them.

“We were creating people’s imagination. Surfing Cowboys’ motto ‘Defenders of the California Dream’ resonates the California we could see when we squat,” she says. “It’s a literal statement, it’s a state of mind.”

She began to combine icons of California culture with vintage items, creating a design genre that hadn’t been encapsulated that way before. “Until we opened Surfing Cowboys, no one hung a surfboard in the house. They were in garages or museums. Our manner of mixing pieces helped to launch a new aesthetic,” she says.

Since starting out, they’ve sold hundreds of thousands of items, including rare cultural icons such as personal pieces from the collection of Duke Kahanamoku—considered the father of modern-day surfing—and an original Steve McQueen jacket.

The ability to see what others aren’t seeing—it’s the confidence that can move confidently into that space is one Ms. Gunther traces back to a pivotal moment at Lab. One day in Earl Bell’s history class, he said that there was no black and white and everything was shades of grey. This moment helped form her manner of thinking and approaching life by reminding her to continually develop her ability to take a broader view.

Recently, she and her husband decided to temporarily close the Lakeview and store to build out the brand, update their online store, and talk to potential partners. Staying relevant sometimes means stepping off the treadmill to create a new plan, no matter how scary that pause can be. “If you don’t have a plan, you don’t have a goal, and you don’t have a way to measure your progress,” he says. “That’s a simple concept, but it’s often overlooked.” He advises: “Don’t be afraid to follow it. Or stand in it.” She says, “Listen to yourself rather than anything anyone else says.”

One of her favorite projects has been improving access to the city’s waterways, such as building the downtown Riverwalk.

"It takes a lot of sweat equity with the public and private sectors to get over all the hurdles that pop up to make these projects a reality," she says, "and I want to be a part of that making it happen."
Parents and Alumni Make the Difference

Your unrestricted gift to the Laboratory Schools is an indispensable resource. You allow Lab the flexibility to put your contribution to work where it is needed right now.

To make your gift to the Parents or Alumni Fund:

Call: 773-702-0578
Email: development@ucls.uchicago.edu
Go online: www.ucls.uchicago.edu/giving