



Taft

BULLETIN

IN THE HEART OF THE

AMAZON

SUMMER 2018

In this **ISSUE**



TAFT'S CHAMBER ENSEMBLE led by T.J. Thompson on the Jig patio this past spring. ROBERT FALCETTI

36

In the Heart of the Amazon


Two Taft science teachers learn from the Maijuna people of Peru.


By Debra Meyers





ON THE COVER

Taft science teachers Mike McAloon and Amanda Benedict traveled to the Amazon region. Read more about their lessons from the rainforest in the feature on pages 36–45.



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COMMENTS? TELL US!

We'd love to hear what you think about the stories in this *Bulletin*.
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On Main Hall

A WORD FROM HEADMASTER WILLY MACMULLEN '78

COMMENCEMENT 2018 AND WHAT A CENTURY-OLD HANDBOOK CAN TELL US

An excerpt from Taft's 2018 Commencement Remarks

A mark of a good school is that when it is challenged, students and faculty are their best: their most caring, resilient, thoughtful, and brave. I know this because I saw this this year and because it has always been the case, and I have been thinking this ever since several years ago someone mailed me, out of the blue, the Student Handbook from 1918, exactly a century ago. Since then, it has sat in my desk drawer, and I have waited for this day to speak of it.

It is a tiny, leather-bound book—you can cup it in your hand—with sepia aged pages, the corners frayed, the spine dried and cracked. It has the same purpose or function of today's Handbook: it has a welcome from the headmaster, provides the year calendar, summarizes the school rules, lists the clubs—you get it. To hold it, to think of it tucked into the pocket of a blue blazer, is to be carried back 100 years. You find yourself smiling, perhaps a bit patronizingly, at the admonition that all new boys memorize the school cheers and songs, or the reminder that lower level football is available “for the fellows who are too small.” It's kind of cute.

But we should catch ourselves from that smugness. What we cannot see from the pages is that these students were caught in a moment of extraordinary complexity and change, which tested everyone, and summoned forth strength and courage and love, and so perhaps there is a lesson for this class, which shares exactly the same qualities. It's worth imagining their Taft days.

First, those boys had to confront fears we can only guess at, as the 1918 influenza epidemic swept across the globe and onto this campus. It was medical holocaust. In this country alone, some 600,000 died; and estimates of global fatalities all begin with 50 million. As the academic year began, newspapers were carrying stories of doctors falling dead next to patients, bodies being pushed in wheelbarrows to crowded morgues. Connecticut, with its dense urban areas, saw some of the highest mortality rates in the country.

Imagine the fears of every student, every teacher, of Horace Taft. The first case reported by the Connecticut authorities was in New London on September 12, the week students returned to campus. Before we had given midterm grades, nearly 300 had died in Waterbury alone.

Like all schools, Taft suffered. The tiny infirmary overflowed, nurses were rapidly in short supply, and most of the campus fell ill. Horace Taft wrote in his memoir, “It looked like a battlefield.” One boy died, his mother here on campus, Taft writing, “Bravely she

“It is a tiny, leather-bound book, with sepia aged pages, the corners frayed....To hold it, to think of it tucked into the pocket of a blue blazer, is to be carried back 100 years.”



▲ The Taft Student Handbook from 1917–18.

faced the inevitable.” A teacher died the next week. Statistically, Taft was lucky, but when we think of a mother bearing her son’s body away, or Taft writing the parents of a promising teacher, it is hard to see it that way. I can only imagine the emotional weight shouldered by teacher and student alike: fear, grief, confusion.

But it was not just the epidemic. Those same Taft students, 18-year-olds just like you seniors, fell asleep every night with World War I raging behind them.

By March of 1918, the Germans had pushed the edge of the Western Front to within 75 miles of Paris. Seniors, returning from spring break, must have wondered whether they would be in a muddy trench in a year rather than a college dorm room. American troops were pouring into Europe. The list of operations and battles that took place that spring is numbing. The casualty lists were sobering. I can only imagine the worries of the boy who held that handbook.

Somehow the school endured and thrived: classes were taught, games played, dances held, meetings called, speeches given, jokes told. How did they manage? How did they function—much less thrive—amidst such challenge? The mind reels when we think of the grit, the focus, the caring, the love. One imagines the lessons they carried with them after graduation—the call to service, the resilience in the face of setback, the conviction that life was precious—and how the world was the beneficiary.

There are two reminders for us here. First, we are reminded that this school has never existed in a vacuum, and that the problems of the world have always entered through the gates and become part of our lives and work. We know this: think of the sociocultural and political issues with which these seniors had to wrestle in their years here.

Second, we know that as a school we can and must be our best when we are most challenged, as all schools are today. And I hope that someone reading their yearbook in 100 years will not underestimate what the seniors have experienced, the challenges they have faced, the strength they have exhibited. I hope they will read it in the same spirit as we read that aged Handbook and recognize perhaps these seniors came of age when, in an internet era, the world outside was never just outside, when they stood on a shifting and unstable cultural political landscape, and where they had to develop rare and needed vision, strength, and balance. Just as Horace Taft in 1918 saw courage, resilience, and goodness, so, too, did I. I will always remember you as a class of unusual principle, kindness, and resilience. And love.

You will leave far more able to live and lead than when you began. I am proud that you will go to college better for the conversations you have had with faculty and peers, your mind more sharp, your heart more spacious, your tongue more subtle, your ear more open.

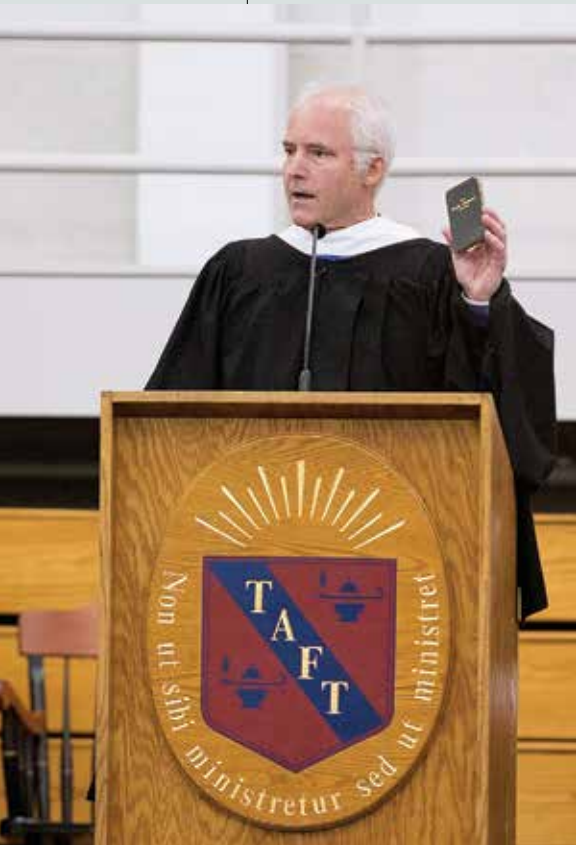
Seniors, when I showed that little 1918 book to a colleague, he said, “It looks like a prayer book.” Perhaps it is. It’s the prayer from that class to yours asking that next year in college and years out as adults, you will be as good and caring and principled as they tried to be and as you have been here. It is a prayer of gratitude from this school to your class, for the legacy you have bestowed on us, a kind of family heirloom at once fragile and permanent. To each of you, I say thank you for what you have given the school, the faculty, and parents. ■

Willy MacMullen

Willy MacMullen ’78

“You will leave far more able to live and lead than when you began.”

▼ Headmaster Willy MacMullen ’78 holding the 1918 Student Handbook during his Commencement address in May.



LETTERS



Salute to Service

We thoroughly enjoyed reading the entire spring issue of the *Bulletin*. As a retired Naval officer, I was particularly pleased to see an article about military service and the three alums that were featured. As grandparents of a rising 10th-grade Taft student and having four children and four grandchildren who attend (and attended) private schools, this is the very first time we have seen such an article in a school publication. It was a very nice read on the anniversary of D-Day. Well Done!

—Ed and Polly Cole GP’21

Comments? Tell us!

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SOCIAL SCENE

Follow us @thetaftschool on Facebook and @taftschoool on Instagram for daily glimpses of Taft life.



Senior prank? Seniors having fun? Whatever it is, it’s, shall we say, “classic”Well done!



This is what Wednesday looks like.
#mytaft #taftlife #whytaft



Alumni SPOTLIGHT



Craig Reistad '80, center, with the State Department's supervisory diplomatic security team during a visit to the Olympic cluster in Gangneung, South Korea, which hosted the ice sports.

Olympic Mettle

SAFEGUARDING TEAM USA AT PYEONGCHANG

THE ATHLETES WEREN'T THE ONLY ones carrying the weight of a nation on their shoulders at the PyeongChang Winter Olympics. So was Craig Reistad '80, only there was no medal stand.

The gold standard was the uneventful. Be vigilant but unobtrusive—and do

it all just 50 miles from one of the most heavily fortified and most mysterious borders in the world, the 38th Parallel between North and South Korea.

Reistad served as Olympic security coordinator for the U.S. contingent of athletes, staff, media, and dignitaries

including Vice President Mike Pence, during a 20-month assignment with the Diplomatic Security Service.

The agency is the State Department equivalent to the Secret Service and provides protection at U.S. embassies and consulates around the globe, as well as

for U.N. General Assembly week in New York and at major international events such as the Olympics and Paralympics. The agency is also responsible for protecting the secretary of state and visiting foreign dignitaries, and for investigating passport and visa fraud.

“When you’re doing security, there’s a delicate balance between security protocol, allowing things to happen but keeping it safe,” Reistad says.

The 56-year-old U.S. Army veteran is accustomed to geopolitical threats and uncertainty, serving as an infantry officer in Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Germany during the first Gulf War. So, too, were the South Korean hosts of Reistad, who was based at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul.

But even for journeyman Reistad, a visit last summer to the 2.5-mile wide Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), to the so-called “Peace Village” was unlike anything

he had ever experienced. And he’s got the passport stamps to prove his worldliness, having been posted at embassies in Mongolia, Jordan, South Africa, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Norway.

“So half the room is in North Korea and half is in South Korea,” Reistad says. “It’s historic. You can see over the border into something like a Potemkin village. You’ve got the loudspeakers blaring. It’s kind of surreal to look across the border and be in the joint security area.”

Reistad embarked on his assignment in September 2016. His job: set up and staff a joint security operations office from the embassy, coordinate with his counterparts from the host nation, visit and prepare security surveys for all of the Olympic venues (about 100 miles away), safeguard the Americans, and close up shop.

“One of the most difficult parts of any Olympics is getting access to where

you need to be to do your job,” he says.

The DMZ was not the only barrier that faced Reistad. There were language and cultural ones. The specter of a nuclear-capable North Korea wasn’t the only one looming over the Games either. His team, which was comprised of about 100 special agents from the Diplomatic Security Service, planned for every conceivable permutation. Cyberterrorism. A drone attack. Unruly fans. Counterfeit credentials.

There was little time to kick back and watch the competition, but Reistad did manage to watch the Czech Republic play Canada in men’s hockey. His wife, Vladimira, is Czech.

While the world watched to see whether the on-again, off-again summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un would come to fruition, the couple was preparing for yet another move. This time, it’s back to the Washington, D.C., area, where Reistad will start a 10-month master’s program at the National Defense University at Fort McNair.

It’s all part of the drill for the Reistad family. One son was born in South Africa, the other in the U.S. in between Reistad’s overseas tours and was delivered by his Taft classmate, Marc Alembik. They lived in Mongolia and took a newborn to Jordan. “So they’re third-culture kids,” says Reistad, who has two sons, ages 15 and 13, and a daughter who is 8.

The family would like to plant roots, however. “Right now, we’re going through the hard part, which is packing up 8,000 pounds of household goods and putting it into containers,” Reistad says from South Korea. “It’s your life. It’ll be nice to stop eventually.” ■

—Neil Vigdor '95



Reistad ready to launch an unmanned aerial vehicle (shadow drone) that was providing aerial surveillance of the Olympic clusters for the South Koreans. His visit to the UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) Unit was part of the country’s requested assistance from the U.S.

From On the Ice to On Air

TWO YEARS AFTER RETIRING FROM hockey in 2003, AJ Mleczko (Griswold) '93 could not recall being as nervous and intimidated as when she walked into a tiny studio in Stamford, Connecticut, for an audition with NBC. Seated across from her, behind a microphone, was Mike "Doc" Emrick, the legendary play-by-play man whose distinctive voice and florid language have become a favorite soundtrack for the NHL playoffs.

Then NBC threw Mleczko a curveball: the game she was asked to analyze in her audition was none other than the 2002 Olympic gold medal matchup between Canada and Mleczko's Team USA—a game the United States lost, in a heartbreak, 3–2. Mleczko had not watched it since playing in it.

"That really threw me," she says. After the audition, "I left there thanking them for the opportunity and thought that was a good experience, but the ship with NBC had sailed."

Not exactly. A few weeks later, NBC called back. They wanted her in Turin, calling games for the 2006

Winter Olympics, and Mleczko's post-playing career was officially born.

While the mother of four says she still considers herself a "full-time mom," in May she became the first female broadcaster to call an NHL playoff game from the booth, during the second-round series between the Nashville Predators and the Winnipeg Jets. The milestone capped an already momentous season: A few months earlier, Mleczko had been in South Korea calling the U.S. women's hockey team's victory over Canada in the gold medal game of the 2018 Olympics in PyeongChang.

Mleczko's evolution from a star on the ice to a barrier-breaking voice off it has surprised her more than anyone else. "I didn't go to school for communications or any sort of broadcasting," says Mleczko, who played at Harvard. But she has found that she enjoys staying connected to the game through her experiences talking about it and analyzing it. "I really enjoy looking at the game analytically," she says. "I like the challenge of seeing the game that I know so well and trying to put words to what I'm seeing in a way

that other people will understand it."

This winter, her fifth time covering the Olympics—including the 2016 Summer Games in Rio, where she called field hockey—was a highlight because it marked 20 years since she won a gold medal as a member of the 1998 U.S. women's hockey team.

"The fact that the women won and redeemed the heartbreak from four years ago in Sochi was much more emotional than I expected it to be for me," Mleczko says. "My husband brought our kids over, and it was really special for me to have them there witnessing it live, knowing that I had won the same medal 20 years ago. They know I did it, but seeing it and seeing how special it was, they were really into it. That was especially touching for me."

While she was in PyeongChang, NBC asked her to call an NHL regular-season game when she returned. That led to another assignment, then several more, until the Stanley Cup playoffs arrived. Her phone kept ringing.

"I was in the airport flying home from Nashville and I got the call saying, 'We want you to stay on for the rest of the series, can you fly to Winnipeg?'" Mleczko recalls. "I said, 'I don't have my passport!' So I had to fly to Boston, get my passport."

She hopes to keep calling nationally televised games for NBC during the regular season next year, when the schedule is hopefully a little more predictable.

As for people calling her a "pioneer" in broadcasting, she gives credit to other female broadcasters who are in similar roles for other networks, such as ABC's Doris Burke and ESPN's Jessica Mendoza. Mleczko says her job is made easier by the fact that her colleagues at NBC have never treated her any differently.

"There's no extra attention given to the fact that I'm a woman in the booth," Mleczko says. "Which is exactly the way I want it. It's the way it should be." ■

—Zach Schonbrun '05



Former Olympic gold medalist AJ Mleczko '93 at the 2018 PyeongChang Olympics for her fifth assignment as NBC's women's hockey analyst, pictured with commentator Kenny Albert. NBC SPORTS GROUP

The Digital Architect

IF YOU'VE BEEN to any of the major websites owned by the media brands Meredith, Time Inc., Condé Nast, or Univision, you've seen Clarence Kwei's work.

The Class of 1991 alumnus is now vice president of product and engineering at Univision Communications, where he oversees product and technical strategy across the company's digital platforms for web, mobile, and television. He didn't start out wanting to develop websites, though.

After growing up in Hong Kong and



then graduating from Taft, Kwei headed to Tufts University, where he studied economics and fine arts through a dual degree program with the Museum of Fine Arts. Following his time in Boston, he moved to New York City and worked for the Federal Reserve Bank, where he worked in a group that handled U.S. Treasury auctions for a year and a half before moving to the Solomon Brothers finance desk for a few years.

He left in 1997 to start graduate school at Columbia University. Two years later he had earned a master's degree in a completely different field: architecture.

In architecture school, Kwei says, "You learn about the design process, and you take an abstract concept like movement and learn how to apply that to something physical." But a career in architecture—at least of the physical



Univision's vice president of product and engineering, Clarence Kwei '91, at work in their New York City office.

nature—was not meant to be for Kwei.

"My part-time job options in graduate school were to be a teaching assistant for \$15 an hour, to work at library for \$12 an hour, or to build websites for \$20 an hour," he says. "I started building websites for academic centers at Columbia as the internet was on the verge of taking off, and within a semester I had accumulated six academic centers that were all paying me to build and maintain their websites, so I ended up dropping out of graduate school and doing it full time."

Kwei's first media gig was at Primedia, where he worked for the digital team of *American Baby*. Since the headquarters were in Des Moines, Kwei was flying to Iowa for a week out of every month. In 2005 he moved to Time Inc., where he relaunched InStyle.com and was part of a seven-person team that launched People.com.

By 2012 that team had grown to 200 people, revenue was over \$90 million, and the site was getting more than a billion page views per month. Later that same year, Kwei headed to Condé Nast, where he worked to modernize the publishing behemoth's dated technology.

"My role, really, is to change the way teams think about product and engineering, change the way they think about the product experience, and change the way they work in terms of how they actually deliver it," Kwei says. "My job is to elevate these teams and help them change the way they work in ways that are faster and more iterative, similar to how you would think of Google or Facebook."

When asked if he sees a parallel between his graduate school training and his work today, Kwei says his time in architecture school helped him to understand design and the way people experience it.

"Compared to drawing a floor plan, you think about similar elements when you draw a design for a website—like which buttons go where and all the associated design elements," he says.

He may not be drawing up plans for buildings, but his impact on the digital landscape has been remarkable. When asked how many websites he has built in his career, Kwei laughs and says simply, "a lot." ■

—Sam Dangremond '05

Big IT, Big Impact

BY THE TIME MARINA MARTIN '03 was 12 years old, back in the early, early days of the internet, she was creating fan websites for shows like *General Hospital* and official web pages for stars like Jean Smart and Dixie Carter of *Designing Women* fame. Her skill was such that those Hollywood luminar-

to streamline business practices through technological innovations, and that's fascinated her ever since.

In 2013, Martin was hired as the chief technology officer for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, where she began working to address huge inefficiencies in the department while

When I came to the VA, my job description was to discover the art of the possible for how our nation serves our veterans."

The VA had come under national scrutiny for failing to help veterans in multiple ways. Martin convened a group that planned out the best-case scenarios and then worked out what it would take to accomplish those big ideas.

"We laid it out on Post-It notes first," and came up with 48 different projects," she says. "I got a lot of buy-in and support, and when I left after five years, we had accomplished all but two of the projects." For instance, Martin imagined, what if a disability claim was processed immediately? What if VA employees answered the phone? "We didn't have enough trunk lines [to handle the incoming calls]," she says.

After Obama left office, Martin became a partner with Layer Aleph, a digital services company that restores complex systems to service, or, as she puts it, "fixes big IT disasters." That "day job" helps fund Martin's true passion, which is finding ways to make the nation's complex foster care system function safely and efficiently to minimize the time children spend in foster care.

"About 12 years ago I was looking for a volunteer opportunity that was meaty and challenging," she says. "Where was a place where I could be genuinely helpful?"

After lengthy training, Martin became a court-appointed special advocate for foster care children caught up in the legal system.

"It's your job not to let them fall through the cracks," she says. "I'm a tiny drop in the bucket, but I feel like it's what I was put on earth to do."

These days, she also is a fellow at the New America Foundation, where she works on technological solutions for foster care to help make connections that will bring best practices to states across the country.

"It provides an additional national platform," she says of the foundation, which asked her to stay for a second year. "It's the ability for multiple people to genuinely collaborate" to solve big national problems.

"Systemic change takes a long time," she says. "It took me years at the VA and that was with full-force gusto. This is a long-term commitment. I want to work in the unsexy spaces where you can help veterans and foster care kids." ■

—Bonnie Blackburn-Penhollow '84

Marina Martin '03 on the first day of her Presidential Innovation Fellowship at the White House.



ies didn't know she was not yet in high school. By the eighth grade, she was state president of the Technology Student Association. Once she entered Taft, her skills led her to designing and maintaining websites for sports teams.

More important, she began to see how she could use the logic of programming

President Barack Obama was in office. That led her to found and lead the Digital Service team at the VA, tackling hundreds of different outdated systems that were preventing the agency from efficiently serving the needs of the nation's veterans.

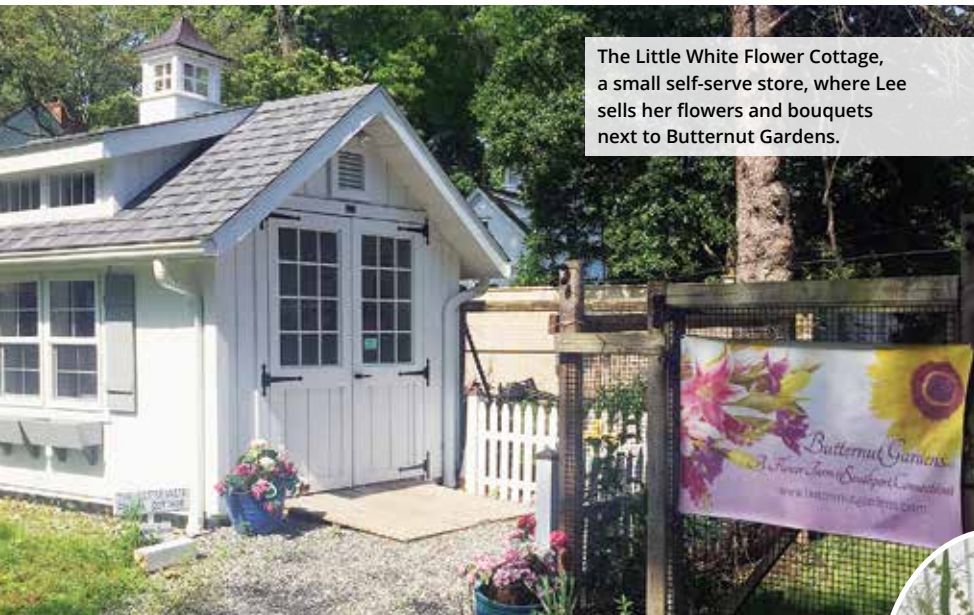
"I immediately fell in love with the problem," she says. "It was multifaceted.

Martin, center in front of President Obama, when she worked at the White House as a senior advisor in the Office of Science and Technology Policy.



Martin, on left, who served as chief technology officer for the Veterans Administration, with a colleague after a meeting at the White House for a *Fast Company* feature.





The Little White Flower Cottage, a small self-serve store, where Lee sells her flowers and bouquets next to Butternut Gardens.



Evelyn Barata Lee '75 with a bouquet of flowers grown at her fresh-cut flower farm. PATRI FEHER



A Business in Bloom

WHAT USED TO BE A BACKYARD

where Evelyn Barata Lee's children played is now covered from one side to the other with dozens of flower beds, growing everything from snapdragons and bachelor buttons to lilies and lady's mantle.

In 2011, after her children left for college, Evelyn Barata Lee '75 transformed her Southport, Connecticut, property into Butternut Gardens, a fresh-cut flower garden that produces about 45,000 beautiful flowers every year. Since then, Lee's business has grown to include a small retail cottage, wholesale accounts, weddings and events, workshops and presentations, and even a flower delivery subscription service for local customers.

Growing up on 30 acres, Lee became accustomed to the outdoors at an early age and continued to learn more over the years. Sharing a bit about her knowledge, she says, "I have my master's from

Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. It comes in handy with knowing what to plant in the different little microenvironments. I studied horticulture at the New York Botanical Gardens, worked in a nursery, and studied floral design at FlowerSchool New York. I've just always been around plants, and I learned a lot as I ventured into my own business."

Just under half of Lee's 1.4-acre property is dedicated to flower beds. She also has a barn that serves as her workshop space for everything from starting seeds on heat mats, to storing flowers in an industrial-sized refrigerator, to creating arrangements and bouquets.

If cut at the right time, Lee can store certain flowers, like peonies and tulips, in her refrigerator for several weeks. "You want to cut, in most cases, before something is fully opened. It usually

means cutting in the morning when they are hydrated and have the best sugar content, and then taking off a lot of the lower foliage. Then it's getting all the flowers together in the cooler. Either bundling them in bunches or mixing them together in bouquets," she says.

When it's time to sell the flowers, Lee moves them from the barn right next door to her self-serve flower cottage.

During the off-season from the end of October to the beginning of March, Lee focuses on website maintenance and planning. "In the winter, I have spreadsheets thousands of lines long. I think, Okay, I'm going to have this many sunflowers as the main focal flower, but then what am I going to have around it and how long does that take to grow?"

"It's hard running a small business, but I enjoy that. I love the plants and the different flowers. Because I'm sharing, I get to grow more than what I would if I were just growing for myself. It's fun to try all these different things. I love the beauty of it. I love how happy people are," says Lee. ■

—Hillary Dooley



Lee's Pro Tip

Daffodils have a certain sap in them, so you want to put them right in hot water when you first cut them. Try not to mix them with other flowers because they can cause the other flowers to decay faster.

IN Print

INVENTING THE OPERA HOUSE: THEATER ARCHITECTURE IN RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE ITALY Cambridge University Press Eugene J. Johnson '55

In this book, Eugene J. Johnson traces the invention of the opera house, a building type of worldwide importance. Italy laid the foundation for theater buildings in the West, in spaces invented for the commedia dell'arte in the 16th century and theaters built to present the new art form of opera in the 17th. Rulers lavished enormous funds on these structures, which were part of an upsurge of theatrical invention in the performing arts. At the same time, the productions that took place within the opera house could threaten the social order, to the point where rulers would raze them.

Johnson reconstructs the history of the opera house by bringing together evidence from several disciplines, including music, art, theater, and politics. Writing in an engaging manner, he sets the history of the opera house within its broader early modern social context.

Johnson is the Amos Lawrence Professor of Art History emeritus at Williams College, Massachusetts.

WHY TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD MATTERS: WHAT HARPER LEE'S BOOK AND THE ICONIC AMERICAN FILM MEAN TO US TODAY St. Martin's Press Tom Santopietro '72

With 40 million copies sold, *To Kill a Mockingbird* has cemented its status as a global classic. Tom Santopietro's new

book, *Why To Kill a Mockingbird Matters*, takes a look at the *Mockingbird* phenomenon both on page and screen.

He traces the writing of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and the impact of the Pulitzer Prize, and he investigates both the claims that Lee's book is actually racist and the controversy surrounding the 2015 publication of *Go Set a Watchman*. Santopietro also includes a behind-the-scenes story regarding the creation of the 1962 film.

From the earliest casting sessions to the Oscars and the 50th anniversary screening at the White House, Santopietro examines what makes the movie and Gregory Peck's unforgettable performance as Atticus Finch so captivating.

Santopietro is the author of seven books and a frequent media commentator and interviewer. He lectures on classic films, and over the past 30 years has managed more than two dozen Broadway shows.

POWER PLAY: MRS. SMITH'S SPY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS Aladdin/Simon & Schuster Beth Von Ancken McMullen '87

In this second book in the *Mrs. Smith's Spy School for Girls* series, Abby Hunter and friends go international as they embark on their first "official" mission. After discovering the truth about her spy school/boarding school and her super-spy mom, Abby is ready for her next adventure.

Everyone at The Smith School is obsessed with Monster Mayhem, the latest reality video game craze. But when Drexel Caine, the mastermind behind the game is suddenly kidnapped, it's

clear that the kidnappers are playing for more than just special badges.

The group tangles with the world's most notorious hacker, gets in trouble for the possible theft of the *Mona Lisa*, and prepares for the ultimate showdown in London. Along the way, they discover with a little luck, they might just save the world.

Beth Von Ancken McMullen lives and works in Northern California with her husband and two children. Visit her at bethmcmullenbooks.com.

CONFESSIONS OF A YO-YO DIETER Girl on Bliss Katheryn Gronauer '09

Author Katheryn Gronauer has a major dilemma: should she focus on her diet and forget her social life, or engage in social activities and ruin her diet?

With an eagerness to control and indulge in both, she spirals into a world of obsessive dieting. That is, until she takes a trip abroad that forces her to question everything she had learned from diets.

Now 40-pounds lighter despite still being an afternoon tea aficionado, Gronauer reveals how to create a life you love in your body and with food and be free from worrying about your diet.

Gronauer was born in Florida and currently works as a wellness coach in Tokyo, Japan. She graduated from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition and helps yo-yo dieters integrate their health goals with their lifestyles. She is a contributor to *Women's Health*, *mindbodygreen*, *HuffPost*, and more. For more, visit her website www.girlonbliss.com. ■

If you would like your work added to the Hulbert Taft Library's Alumni Authors Collection and considered for this column, please email the editor (lindabeyus@taftschooll.org) and mail a copy to:
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For more information, visit
www.taftschool.org/news

Around the POND

BY DEBRA MEYERS

student SPOTLIGHT



Disabled Hockey Program leader Caeley Smith '19 (right) with program participant Owen.

Giving is Everything: Non ut Sibi on Ice

PATRICK IS NOT A TYPICAL

7-year-old. Diagnosed at a young age with autism and sensory processing disorder, Patrick finds communication extremely challenging.

"Patrick is a little boy with few words," says his mom, Jessica,"but he does say, 'Play hockey.'"

Patrick discovered hockey in the fall of 2017, after bringing a flyer home from school that described a new, no-cost hockey program on the ice at the Taft School. The flyer was from Caeley Smith '19; the program was specifically designed for children with special needs.

"Hockey has given me so much and Taft has given me so much," Caeley says. "I am of the age and ability to give something back, and felt it was important to do so."

Caeley was familiar with USA Hockey's Disabled Hockey Program. She contacted the New England District representative, Richard Oliver, to talk about raising funds to support it.

"Mr. Oliver said, 'Why fundraise for a program when you can start one yourself?'" explains Caeley.

Disabled hockey programs are supported by USA Hockey across the



Caeley Smith '19 (left) with program participant Gabe.

nation, and incorporate four disciplines: standing/amputee hockey, deaf/hard of hearing programs, sled hockey, and special hockey. Caeley turned her attention to the latter, special hockey, which creates an adaptive play environment for people with physical and developmental disabilities. According to USA Hockey, "Special hockey emphasizes having fun through teamwork, social interaction, and improving the quality of life through on and off ice activities." There are currently special hockey programs in more than 30 cities across the nation.

Caeley spent much of the spring and summer of 2017 gathering information about program requirements from Oliver and from USA Hockey. She researched what was involved with starting a nonprofit organization and how to become a certified youth coach. She also began collecting used hockey equipment and cash donations.

"It was very important to me that this be 100 percent free to families who wanted to participate," Caeley says. "I didn't want there to be program fees or equipment costs. I wanted people to just be able to come and enjoy learning a new skill in a supportive environment."

Caeley spent a good deal of time, she says, pounding the pavement, making phone calls, and working her network of friends, their families, and acquaintances. A friend's mom who is a superintendent of schools in Connecticut offered tips on getting information about her new program in front of the



Caeley Smith with Disabled Hockey Program participants and volunteers.

right people—including parents and special educators—in the state's public schools. Caeley called other communities with active special needs hockey programs to see just what she needed to do to set the wheels in motion.

"There was definitely a lot of trial and error involved," Caeley says. "I learned a lot through the process, but was very fortunate to have people like my parents and Ms. Ryan guiding me along the way."

Rachael Ryan is Caeley's academic advisor at Taft. She is also a co-director of athletics who, Caeley says, provided invaluable direction and support.

"She made sure I knew what permissions I would need and how I should go about securing them," Caeley says. "She directed me to the right people and made sure I understood all the considerations involved in establishing and managing an athletic program."

Athletic Facilities Manager Bryan McCleary also played a critical role in her ability to bring hockey to the community, Caeley says. It was McCleary who always made sure that the ice would be ready for Caeley's team, and who provided access to equipment and storage throughout the season.

Caeley's Watertown-Rhino Youth Disabled Hockey Team took to the ice in Odden Arena every Sunday, from the first day the ice was open until it closed in the spring. With help from her friends and fellow Rhinos—including Dennis Franklin '19, Liv King '20, and McKinley Karpa '18—Caeley welcomed nine children, ages 5 to 12, to her inaugural team, including Patrick.

"Playing hockey at Taft lightened up Patrick's world in more ways than you will ever know," his mom says. "He has grown so much in these past six months, thanks to Caeley, her wonderful family, and all the volunteers who took time away from their busy lives and schedules to get these kids on the ice."

Caeley is already thinking about next season. Since participants keep the donated gear, she is always looking to replenish her stock. She is thinking about new ways to spread the word and to grow her team. Caeley also hopes that the program will continue at Taft after she graduates in 2019.

"For these families, to have an extracurricular like this is everything," Caeley says. "For me, it was everything to be able to give it to them." ■

A Passion for Learning

TWENTY-FIVE TAFT STUDENTS presented the outcomes of their year-long Independent Studies Program (ISP) inquiries during the ISP Fair in May. The ISP Fair is the culminating event of the program, which has been a fixture at Taft for more than 50 years.

Established in 1964 by then-Headmaster John Esty, Taft’s ISP allows students to pursue their passions through high-level, inquiry-based, self-directed courses of study; it was the first program of its kind in the nation. The program is open to upper mids and seniors, who are invited to submit project proposals to the ISP Committee in the fall. Accepted students work with a project advisor throughout the year; they may also receive support

and guidance from faculty volunteers serving on the ISP Committee. Students earn no credit or grades for their work—the goal is intellectual fulfillment through advanced and self-directed learning.

This year’s projects included a wide range of unique and innovative studies, including: A project by senior Samantha Chan integrating neuroscience, art history, and art interpretation to study mental illness and artistic creativity; a study of malignant hyperthermia by senior Sydney Gerbel; and a look at virology and digital molecular modeling by Isabelle Posmantur. Upper mids also brought their best work to the table, with Joel Edholm ’19 taking a unique approach to looking at the next stock

market crash, Yaya Lu ’19 studying the very timely history of the relationship between America and North Korea, and Osi Bialunska ’19 looking at human rights laws in the United States, a project she hopes to continue next year.

“Our ISP students completed truly inspired and creative projects this year,” says ISP Director Dr. Amanda Benedict. “The scholarship was impressive. Remember, these students complete these projects independently, through their own curiosity and perseverance. In the words of Taft’s Portrait of a Graduate, these students truly ‘possess intellectual curiosity and resourcefulness, and actively engage in the process of learning.’ I am so proud of them.” ■



Joel Edholm’s take on the next stock market crash was a unique and powerful project.

New England Mathematics League champion Leo Li ’19.

Leo Li ’19 Leads the New England Mathematics League Pack

AFTER SIX MONTHS and six contests, Taft mathletes walked away with an impressive second-place finish in the highly competitive New England Mathematics League contest, which sees students from more than 150 secondary schools across New England face off in problem-solving events once each month from October through March. The contests challenge competitors with sets of six problems of increasing complexity. Students work individually to solve each problem, earning one point for each correct answer; each team reports its top five scores from the round to build a cumulative ranking. Taft’s Zhiyuan (Leo) Li ’19 not only sat for all six tests, but also earned a perfect score on each. Li finished the competition as the

top individual competitor and was the only student of the more than 1,000 participating to achieve a perfect score on all 36 problems. “Of course, one perfect contest is a feat in itself,” said math teacher and team coach Joseph Zipoli ’84. “But to

What’s more, his reasoning and computational skills are quite impressive.” Benjamin Le ’21 finished the competition in a five-way tie for fourth place, earning 33 points over the course of the competition. Bill Lu ’19, Linh Vu ’21, O Wanichkul ’18, and

“To be thorough and perfect through all six contests is very, very difficult. Leo has a way of remembering situations in mathematics.”

be thorough and perfect through all six contests is very, very difficult. Leo has a way of remembering situations in mathematics, which means his approach to problems is informed and deliberate.

Peter Yu ’20 each turned in impressive performances, which also included several perfect scores along the way. All five of Taft’s lead mathletes placed in the top-10 cumulative scores. ■



Scott and Lillian Serafine supporting Taft wrestlers.

Fond Faculty Farewells

DIRECTOR TOM CESARZ and Assistant Director Lillian Serafine have retired from the Hulbert Taft Jr. Library, having contributed nearly 50 years of combined leadership and experience. Scott Serafine, who has led Taft's Video Arts program through five years of growth and innovation, also retired in June.

Cesarz graduated in 1972 from Williams College, where he played football for four years and lacrosse for two. After earning a library degree from the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science, he worked as a librarian and library director in Boston area colleges and universities for more than 20 years before coming to Taft in 2003. Cesarz has lived and coached at Taft for 15 years, most recently working with the boys' thirds lacrosse team, while supporting dorm life in HDT.

"When Tom came to Taft, we were very, very lucky," said Headmaster Willy

MacMullen '78. "How many schools find a library director, with college experience, who says that he wants to live in the dorm and coach football? Tom brought a gruff, loving presence on the dorm, and scores of boys were shaped by him. As a coach, he was tough, loud, and demanding—and always kept the game in perspective. And most of all, he led our library services with singular dedication, humility, and professionalism. We were very lucky that Tom's last stop in his fine career was with Taft."

After earning a master's degree in library science in 1986, Lillian Serafine came to Taft as a public services librarian. She previously taught fifth grade, as well as middle school English and science. In her 32 years at Taft, Serafine has effectively shepherded students, staff, and faculty through dramatic changes in the breadth and depth of library services, embracing technological advances in data and resource sharing that have changed the way Taft faculty and students teach and learn. She's also been known

to don hockey pads and stake her claim on the ice with other faculty members.

"Lillian served with the most remarkable dedication, professionalism, and cheer," Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78 said. "She taught hundreds of students how to research, and that's such an important—and tough to master—skill. And people forget that in addition to serving as the assistant librarian, she was director of media services—IT before we had IT. Always she was upbeat, funny, warm, gracious."

Scott Serafine began teaching at Taft in 2013, though he was already a familiar face on campus, not only as Lillian's husband, but as a 10-year assistant director of the Taft Educational Center (TEC), a summer program for educators. Serafine also taught TEC and Taft Summer School courses in video production. He came to Taft after a 30-year career in public schools, including nine years at the progressive Waterbury Arts Magnet School. Serafine was named both Waterbury's Teacher of the Year

and a Connecticut State Teacher of the Year semifinalist in 2006. Serafine and his students have earned high praise and industry awards, including a top honors at the Tribeca Film Festival's "The America I Am" National Youth Film Competition.

MacMullen added, "Scott was always a member of the extended Taft family, but it was his five years teaching video that was amazing. In those years, he taught and inspired some of the finest videographers we have had—he took a very good program and made it great. A legendary Waterbury public school teacher, Scott came out of retirement to teach at Taft, and he was singularly professional, unselfish, and dedicated. "The Serafines retire having together devoted their lives to the call of teaching, and Taft was lucky to have them."

To say the Serafines are avid water skiers might undersell their passion for the sport. Still, they have spent their time practicing for retirement on Lake Keuka in western New York, where they now live. ■



Tom Cesarz, leading a summer reading book discussion.

Our Newest Trustee: Diana Sands Calvaruso '06

TAFT ALUMNI HAVE ELECTED Diana Sands Calvaruso '06 to serve her alma mater as the newest member of the Board of Trustees.

A native of Farmington, Connecticut, Calvaruso came to Taft as a lower mid to follow the family footsteps of grandfather Edward Van Vokenburgh Sands '14, father Edward Van Vokenburgh Sands '65, sister Kate Sands Mascarenhas '98, and a number of cousins. The family's enduring legacy places a Sands at Taft during the tenure of each of the school's five headmasters.

While at Taft, Calvaruso earned nine varsity letters playing field hockey, squash, and tennis. She also served as a corridor monitor and—inspired by the late Brian Denyer's love of berets and crepes—spent a few unforgettable weeks with Taft in France. She won the history award both junior

and senior years and was inducted into The Cum Laude Society.

Calvaruso attended Northwestern University, where she earned a B.A. in history and philosophy, graduating with departmental honors in Middle Eastern history. She served as vice president of administration for Kappa Alpha Theta, spent a semester in London studying philosophy at University College London, and played club team squash for Northwestern's (otherwise!) all-male team. She later became the first squash player at Northwestern to be ranked nationally in both men's and women's squash.

After graduating in 2010, Calvaruso worked in the Chicago office of Goldman, Sachs & Co. in Private Wealth Management. Returning to the East Coast in 2012, she joined Goldman Sachs Asset Management's Global Fixed

Income Team in New York. She was named vice president in 2016 and

currently works in Fixed Income as a portfolio manager, responsible for representing taxable fixed income strategies to the private wealth management business nationally.

Calvaruso has volunteered with inner-city squash programs in Chicago and New York. She also works with Northwestern's Chicago Field Studies program, helping students prepare for job interviews, and serves as a mentor for Girls Who Invest, advising college-age women on careers in asset management.

She lives with her husband, John, and their two cats in Fort Lee, New Jersey. ■





TAFT ECOMONS CELEBRATED ARBOR DAY by inviting the full school community to plant trees around campus. Nine trees, including linden, sugar maple, and dogwood varieties, were planted in Main Circle and in the open area bordering Route 6.



Jon Willson '82 Honored by Peers

JON WILLSON '82, history teacher and the Moorhead Academic Center's director of teaching and learning, was recently named the 2018 Kidger Award winner by the New England History Teachers Association (NEHTA). "This is a very big deal and a wonderful honor," said Headmaster William R. MacMullen '78 in sharing the news with the Taft community. Established in 1952, the Kidger Awards honor the legacy of Horace Kidger, a teacher at both the Newton School and at Harvard. Kidger served as NEHTA secretary for more than 40 years, including a period spanning the two world wars. Candidates are identified

through a formal nomination process, and recognized for their excellence in teaching, research and writing, and service to the profession. The award is presented annually to both a prominent historian (often a college professor) and a precollegiate instructor. With his selection, Willson joins a cohort that includes Yale's David Brion Davis, a leading authority on slavery and abolition in the Western world; Jill Lepore, David Woods Kemper '41 Professor of American History at Harvard University and a staff writer at *The New Yorker*; American Civil War historian, Pulitzer Prize winner, and Princeton University professor James M. McPherson; and Charles L. Newhall '82,

a history teacher and cultural history researcher at St. John's Preparatory School. After graduating from Taft, Willson earned a bachelor's degree from Amherst College. He spent the next nine years teaching at a large magnet school in New York City while earning a master's in history. Willson joined the Taft School faculty in 1996, where he has taught history, served as history department chair, held various class dean posts, and was dean of academic affairs from 2007 to 2015. Following a sabbatical during the 2015–16 academic year, Willson rejoined the faculty as director of the Moorhead Academic Center, expanding its mission to include more extensive work with faculty on pedagogy and assessment, and with students on working not necessarily harder, but smarter. He is also the head coach of the girls' varsity basketball team. Willson received the award during a ceremony in April at the annual Northeast Regional Conference for the Social Studies, where he delivered an address to conference attendees. "I take the job of finding a way into the heart and mind of each of my students to try to stoke their historical curiosity—I take that very seriously, more seriously than ever given the tenor of our times," Willson said during his address. "Teaching students history is an act of love camouflaged as scholarly pursuit. How grateful I feel to do it every day." Willson's full address will be published in *The New England Journal of History*, the semiannual publication of the NEHTA.

Founded in 1897, the New England History Teachers Association (NEHTA) is the nation's oldest association of teachers of history and social studies in the United States. Through conferences, publications, and awards, the NEHTA provides teachers, students, and academics opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations about the teaching and learning of history and its related disciplines.



THE CLASS OF 2018 GATHERED IN SERVICE one last time during Senior Week for Senior Community Service Day. The tradition solidifies each individual's bond to the Taft motto, and to the shared experiences that are hallmarks of Taft life.

Dancing into Spring

Keren Egu '21 was one of five Intermediate Dance students to choreograph and perform *Broken Silence* during the Spring Dance Showcase.



Advanced Dance student Erin Farrell '20 choreographed and performed *flexin on u* during the Spring Dance Showcase, a piece, she says, that features a character based on Wonder Woman. Using classical movements with a bold, contemporary twist, Farrell matches dance with "super-strength" to "excite and empower" the audience.



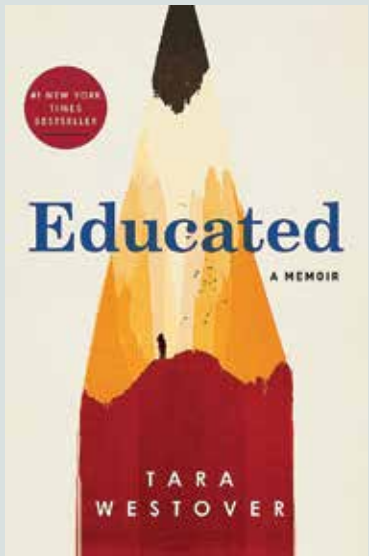
High Note

CINDERELLA AND HER WICKED STEPSISTERS, JACK (AND HIS BEANSTALK), LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD AND THE BIG BAD WOLF, AND A CURSED WITCH WITH SECRETS AND SECRET POWERS WERE AMONG THE ENTERTAINING CAST OF CHARACTERS WHOSE STORIES COLLIDED IN A MOST EXTRAORDINARY WAY DURING THE SPRING MUSICAL AT TAFT, STEPHEN SONDHEIM'S *INTO THE WOODS*.





The many faces of Hamlet, from left, Mihiir Nayar '19, Tania Tsunik '20, Gerry Calles '18, and Louise Gagnon '18.



Getting Educated

THE TAFT SCHOOL SUMMER Reading Committee has selected Tara Westover’s memoir *Educated* as the all-school summer reading book this year. A No. 1 *New York Times* bestseller, *Educated* recounts Westover’s journey from social and educational isolation to a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Westover was 17 the first time she entered a classroom. She battled violence, dysfunction, and mistrust to educate herself, ultimately earning admission to Brigham Young University, Harvard, and finally, Cambridge. ■

Hello, Halo

TAFT STUDENTS WERE AMONG the winners during the 15th annual High School Halo Awards, given out at Waterbury’s Palace Theater in May. Sponsored by Seven Angels Theatre, the Halo Awards celebrate excellence in all aspects of theater production and performance. This year’s nominees represented more than 60 schools from across Connecticut. Taft mounts three stage productions during the academic year. This year, audiences enjoyed *Footloose*; *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*; and *Into the Woods*. All three shows garnered multiple Halo nominations, for a total of 16. “Needless to say, it has been a great end to my Taft career,” says Gerry Calles ’18, who was part of the ensemble taking home two Halos for their unique staging of *Hamlet*. Calles was also nominated for his unforgettable turn as Jack in *Into the Woods*.

With Calles, Taft actors Milan Moudry ’18, Tania Tsunik ’20, Will de Melo ’19, Louise Gagnon ’18, and Mihiir Nayar ’19 were named Best Specialty Ensemble in a Play for their shared role as Hamlet, and their multiple roles as other characters in the Shakespearean tragedy. The production also earned a Halo for Best Classical Play. Director David Kievit built the concept of six Hamlets on a production he had seen years ago. “Many years ago, I saw a production in which the role of Hamlet was played by four actors,” says Kievit. “They were always on stage together sharing lines, thoughts, and emotions.” The dynamic, he says, was a “formidable force” and one that added clarity to the storytelling and to the theatrical experience. For a full list of Taft’s nominees, visit the news section of our website at www.taftschoool.org. Congratulations to all of the Halo Award nominees and winners. ■



Hail and Farewell

THE CLASS OF 2018 will scatter far and wide in the fall, having enrolled at exceptional colleges and universities across the country and around the world. More Rhinos have enrolled at Tufts than any other school this year, with Brown, Colgate, Georgetown, and the University of St. Andrews close behind. *The number of students from this year’s graduating class attending a given university is reflected in parentheses following the school name. Those with no parenthetical reference will welcome one Taft student this fall.*

Amherst College	Franklin University Switzerland	Purdue University	University of California, San Diego (2)
Berklee College of Music (2)	Georgetown University (5)	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Chicago (2)
Boston University	Hamilton College—NY (2)	Ringling College of Art and Design	University of Connecticut
Bowdoin College	Harvard University (3)	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Florida
Brown University (5)	Haverford College	Rollins College	University of Maine
Bucknell University (2)	Hunter College of the CUNY	Santa Clara University	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Carnegie Mellon University (2)	Johns Hopkins University	Skidmore College (2)	University of Miami
Case Western Reserve University	Kenyon College	Southern Methodist University (2)	University of Notre Dame (3)
Chapman University (2)	Lafayette College	Stanford University	University of Pennsylvania (4)
Claremont McKenna College	Leiden University College	Stonehill College	University of Richmond
Colby College (2)	The Hague	Suffolk University	University of Rochester
Colgate University (5)	London College of Fashion	Swarthmore College	University of Southern California (2)
College of William and Mary	Marist College	The Catholic University of America	University of St. Andrews (5)
Colorado College (2)	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2)	The George Washington University (4)	University of Vermont (3)
Columbia University (2)	McGill University	The Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University	University of Virginia (4)
Connecticut College (2)	Merrimack College	Trinity College	University of Waterloo
Cornell University (2)	Miami University, Oxford (2)	Tufts University (6)	Vanderbilt University
Dartmouth College (2)	Middlebury College (2)	Tulane University (4)	Villanova University
Dickinson College (2)	New York University (2)	Union College—NY (3)	Washington and Lee University
Drexel University	Northeastern University (4)	University of British Columbia	Wesleyan University
Duke University	NYU Shanghai	University of California, Davis	Williams College
Elon University	Oberlin College of Arts and Sciences	University of California, Los Angeles (3)	Yale University
Emory University	Pitzer College		
Endicott College	Pomona College		
Franklin & Marshall College			



Sammed Bawa '20 runs in a relay race against Trinity-Pawling and Brunswick on April 18.

ANNE KOWALSKI

For more on the spring season, please visit www.taftsports.com

Spring Sports **WRAP-UP**

BY STEVE PALMER
Photography by Robert Falcetti

Girls' Track 10-2

► FOUNDERS LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

The defending Founders League champions surprised the league again in a nearly identical performance to last year's unexpected title. With it raining steadily and 50 degrees—just like last year—the Rhinos were undaunted in their full effort, scoring in 15 of 17 events, to eke out a second consecutive league title with 127 points, edging rivals Hotchkiss (124) and Loomis (123). The meet was not decided until the final two events, when Claudia Vira '18 and tri-captain Hanna Murphy '18 finished 4th and 5th, respectively, in the 3000m, followed by the 4x400m relay, where tri-captain Mary Alice Ewing '18, Molly Lohuis '18, Kaitlyn Macdonald '19, and tri-captain Taylor Jacobs '18 earned a 3rd-place finish to secure the team victory. All four athletes scored in other events, with Jacobs earning 14 points in the 800m and the 1500m. Ella Losee '20 (pole vault) and Liv Santini '19 (javelin) were Taft's individual league champions, while Kayla Robinson '19, the team's leading scorer on the season, put up 25.5 points for Taft in four events (4x100m relay, long jump, triple jump, shot put), and Liz Barré '19 earned 14 points in the 100m hurdles and triple jump. Like last year, the Rhinos were a tight team of multisport athletes who achieved at the highest level because they worked together and ran for each other. Next year's team will be led by captains-elect Eleanor Streit '19 and Kayla Robinson '19.

Boys' Track 9-5

Relying on a mix of seasoned veterans and promising underclassmen, the team finished in the middle of the league, but with some outstanding individual performances that bode well for the future. Justin McLeod '21, Jordan Miller '20,

Sammed Bawa '20, and Jayce Fraser '21 formed the 4x100 relay that ran a speedy 43.5 and placed at the New England Championship meet. McLeod (triple jump), Miller (long jump), and Blessing Agbonlaho '21 (high jump) also scored in the three jumps at that meet, and post-grad Gabbe Eliasson '18 placed 2nd in the



Cierra Ouellette '20 competes in shot put against Berkshire.

ANNE KOWALSKI



Scott Del Zotto '18 looks to make a pass during an April game against Westminster.

Navy Prep (19–11), Choate Rosemary Hall (17–11), Westminster (14–11), Avon Old Farms (15–10), Trinity-Pawling (11–9), and Hotchkiss (18–3). In terms of league honors, Dennis Kennedy '18, MacGregor Peterson '19, and Scott Del Zotto '18 were named Founders League All-Stars. Additionally, Will Bock '18, Jack Sheehan '18, Peter Davies '19, and Billy Dobensky '19 were named to the All-Western New England Team. Sheehan was honored as Western New England's Lance Odden Award winner as the league's most outstanding midfielder, and Bock earned the Jim Wilson Scholar Athlete Award as Western New England's leading vote-getter for Academic All-American. As a tribute to their great on-field accomplishments and their demonstrated leadership, Billy Dobensky, Peter Davies, and MacGregor Peterson were selected as captains for the 2019 season.

pole vault. The highlight of the regular season was Taft's convincing win over New England Division II champions Berkshire (89–56). Throughout the season, hurdler Daniel Yen '19, jumper Isaiah Hernandez '19, and 400m specialist Dennis Franklin '19 were mainstays in the Rhinos' balanced team effort. Tri-captain Calvin Palmer '18 was the team's leading scorer, dominating the 800m, 1500m, and 4x400m relay. Palmer won the Founders League title in the 800m and then set a new school record of 1:55.65 in winning that event at the New England Championships. Next year's team will be led by captains-elect Daniel Yen and Dennis Franklin.

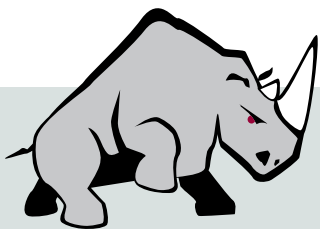
Boys' Lacrosse 12-3

► **FOUNDERS LEAGUE CHAMPIONS**

Boys' varsity lacrosse finished their 2018 campaign with a record of 12–3, which included a perfect 7–0 in the Founders League for the first time since 2003. All three of Taft's losses were to teams that were ranked nationally according to multiple publications. Key wins came over



Taft's Emma Hentemann '21 makes a play against a Kent player in early May.



SPRING ATHLETIC AWARD WINNERS

Alrick H. Man Jr. '09 Award (Tennis)
Dylan Powell '18

George D. Gould Award (Tennis)
Lily Turner '18

Crew Award
Emma LaRose '18
Benjamin Roberts '18

Galeski Golf Award
Rex Riefler '19

Girls' Golf Award
Grace Dreher '18
Portia Wang '18

Odden Lacrosse Award
Joseph Hardison '18
Alexander Salnikoff '18

Wandelt Lacrosse Award
Natalie Witkowski '18

Seymour Willis Beardsley Track Award
Mary Alice Ewing '18
Taylor Jacobs '18
Calvin Palmer '18

Softball Award
Allison Kalvaitis '18

Stone Baseball Award
Zane Segalas '18

Girls' Lacrosse 7-7

The Rhinos won close games this season against Westminster (7–4), Berkshire (12–8), and Northfield Mount Hermon (11–9) to reach .500 overall. Taft scored 117 goals, with 13 different players finding the back of the net throughout the season. Lily Cook '20 had an amazing 115 saves in goal, finishing with a 51 percent save percentage. Four seniors led the way throughout the season: Natalie Witkowski '18 as a midfield, Katie Piechnik '18 and Jamie Howie '18 as starting defenders, and Courtney Wandelt '18 on attack. Founders League

All-Stars were Howie and Cook. Western New England All-Stars were Wandelt and Piechnik. Other major scoring contributors this season were Charlotte Powell '19 and Emilee Adami '19. Next year's very solid group of returning players will be led by captains-elect Eva Baurmeister '19 and Charlotte Powell '19.

Softball 9-4-1

► **WESTERN NEW ENGLAND CO-CHAMPIONS**

After earning the #4 seed in the Western New England tournament, Taft hosted #5 Deerfield in a quarterfinal game. In one of the finest games of the season, Taft scored 10 runs on 12 hits, committed no errors, and shut out the visitors. The weather forced the postponement of the semifinals to Sunday, and according to league rules, the two semifinal contests turn into championship games, with the winners declared co-champions. Taft squared off against #1 Westminster, who had only one loss over the last two

seasons. Taft had faced the Westy team earlier in the season and came away with a heartbreaking loss in extra innings. However, Taft arrived with another scoring punch, posting 11 runs, and played solid defense to upset the #1 team and earn its first Western New Championship since 2012. All four regular season losses came to other playoff teams, with three of the losses by one run. The Rhinos outscored their opponents 122 to 36 during the season. Captain Alli Kalvaitis '18 led offensively and defensively, striking out 112 batters (only 8 walks total) and leading the team in batting average and RBIs. For her splendid play, she earned the Softball Award as well as recognition as Western New England All-Star. Other leaders included seniors Nathalie Bonilla '18 and captain Sidney Molnar '18, who were joined by post-grads Mya Berretta '18 and McKinley Karpa '18 (Founders League All-Star). Morgan Trimper '19 and Ally Trimper '19 contributed much to the offense and defense and will lead the team, along with Natalie Locarno '19, as captains.



McKinley Karpa '18 makes a play against Deerfield.

Girls' Crew 53-33

The girls' crew team exhibited their commitment to preparation and constant improvement with some strong results this spring. The first varsity lineup of Elly MacKay '20, Hayley Jubitz '19, co-captain Emma LaRose '18, co-captain Lily Thebault '18, and coxswain Maggie Keeler '18 had an especially strong season, losing only four times in the regular season and beating 25 other crews. They earned a bronze medal at the Founders Day Regatta and placed 6th overall at the New England Championships. The girls' second boat also earned a bronze medal at Founders Day and finished one place out of the Grand Finals at New Englands. The third and fourth

boats qualified for the New England Championships and narrowly missed qualifying for the Grand Finals. All four varsity boats contributed to the strong 3rd-place team points at the DuPont Cup, 4th place at Founders Day, and swept the Alumnae Cup for the third year in a row. The team graduates eight wonderful seniors who have been instrumental in driving the competitive nature of the team and will surely be missed.

Boys' Crew 60-23

In their dual-meet races and regattas, Taft's four varsity boats compiled an overall record of 60 wins versus 23 losses. The first varsity lineup of Ben Roberts '18, co-captain Thomas Muller '18, Ali Sinan Kaya '18, Jack Ewing '18, and Zoe Eberstadt-Beattie '18 (cox), earned a bronze medal at the Founders Day Regatta, and the following week won

the du Pont Cup for the fourth time in seven years. The second varsity boat, with co-captain Nick Mortimer '18, Hudson Groner '18, Otto Piasecki '19, Mac Nolan '19, and coxswain Daisy Cook '20, was beaten by only two opponents all season long, posting a record of 18-4. This same boat also won a bronze medal at Founders Day and finished fourth in the New England Championships. The third and fourth varsity boats also won



Julia Kashimura '20 in action against Miss Porter's School in April.




Jonathan Elkins '20 tees off.




Girls' crew first boat during a practice at Bantam Lake.

Learn how to use the Layar interactive app on page 2.



Scan this page to watch a crew practice in action.





Boys' crew first boat during a practice at Bantam Lake.

bronze at Founders Day. All four varsity boats qualified for the New England Championship regatta; three of the four qualified for the afternoon finals. The first boat won the Petite Final and the 3V won a bronze medal. At the end of the day, Taft finished fourth in the team points trophy—its best showing in the 25-year history of the program.

Girls' Golf 12-2-1
► FOUNDERS LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

Always in the hunt for the title, Taft came in 4th in this year's Pippy O'Connor New England tournament competing against 25 schools. Julia Kashimura '20 was the individual champion with a strong round of 73. For the fifth consecutive year,

the Rhinos won the Founders League Tournament, this time by five strokes over Loomis. Varsity players who scored in these major competitions and played well throughout the season were co-captains Portia Wang '18 and Grace Dreher '18, Olivia Wivestad '19, Cho Dechen '19, Kashimura, and Ella Hough '21. Dreher, Wang, and Kashimura received All-League recognition, while Wivestad was recognized for exemplifying the "spirit of Taft golf." The Girls' Golf Award, for the player who through commitment has displayed the highest level of integrity and sportsmanship, went to Wang and Dreher; together, they have been part of a team that has won a New England title, four league championships, and contributed to the 166-17-6, 12-year program record. The captain-elect for 2019 season will be Olivia Wivestad.

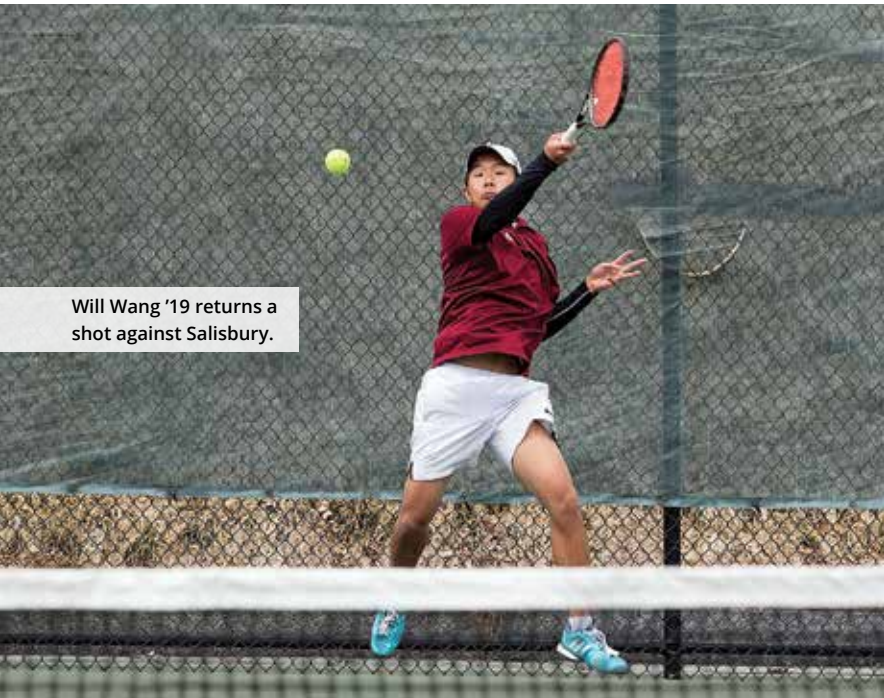
Boys' Golf 12-3

Having graduated three top players from last year's squad, perhaps the most successful in the program's history, the 2018 team was made up of talented younger players eager to take advantage of the opportunity to climb the ladder and develop their skills in competitive rounds. The team's 12-3 record came as a result of steady play at the top of the ladder from returners Jonathan Elkins '20, captain Rex Riefler '19, Chris Gaeta '18, and Henry Horne '20, and inspired efforts from a mix of players in the five and six spots. Craig Cagner '18 played remarkably consistent golf in the five spot, and varsity newcomers Gus Harper '19, AJ Davidson '20, Tiger Zhang '19, Oskar Leithner '20, and Sam Shaker '21 all contributed well in

varsity matches. During the tournament portion of the season, the team took home 2nd-place honors at the Founders League Tournament and at the Andover Invitational at Newport Country Club, as well as 4th place at the New Englands and Western New Englands.

Boys' Tennis 13-5

With four returners from last spring's New England Championship team, the foundation for a good season was solid. At the top of the ladder, Gabe Rissman '19 and co-captains Dylan Powell '18 and

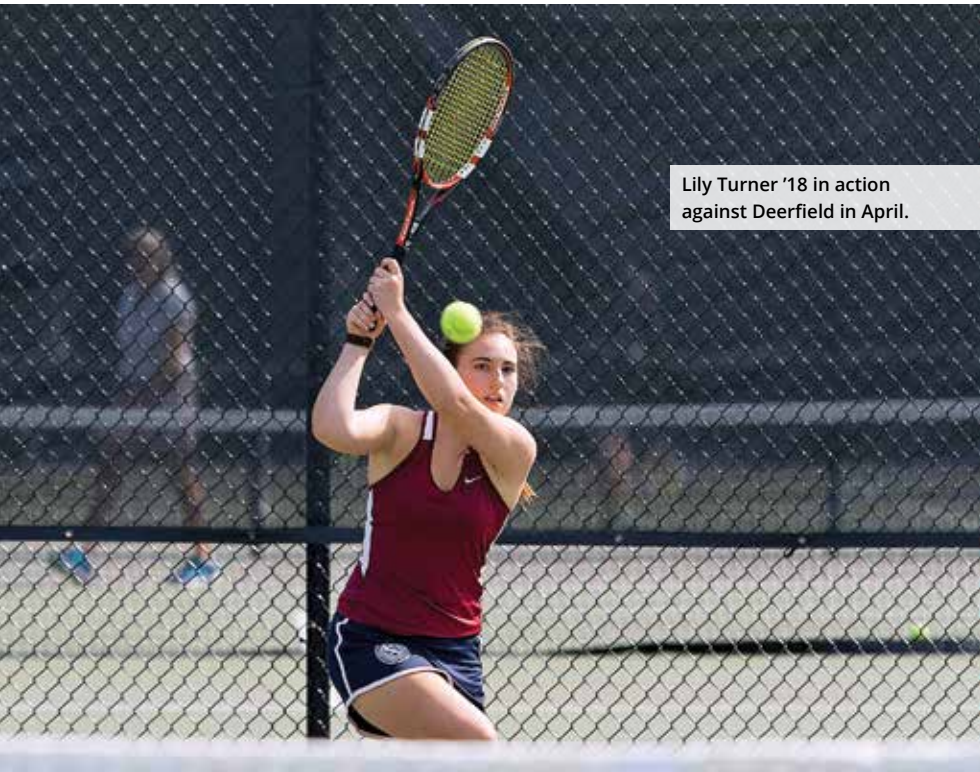


Will Wang '19 returns a shot against Salisbury.

Peter Horne '18 were experienced, highly skilled, and gritty. A much improved Chris McDermott '18 rounded out the veterans, joined by three up from last year's JV: serve and volleyer Isaac Lennon '18, baseliner Will Wang '19, and grinder Peter Denious '20. The Rhinos shut out eight opponents 7-0 and had key wins against always strong Choate and Hopkins. The biggest wins came against Deerfield, twice, the second in a thrilling New England quarterfinal match in which Denious came back from a 1-5, 0-40 second-set deficit and won a third set tiebreaker 10-8 to send Taft to the semifinals. Of special note, Powell was selected by the League coaches to receive the Alban Barker League Sportsmanship Award for stellar sportsmanship during his four-year varsity career. Prospects for next year look good with captains-elect Gabe Rissman, Will Wang, and Peter Denious joined by fellow returners Leo Li '19 and Lucas Escallon '20.

Girls' Tennis 8-4

This deep Rhinos team was a talented mix of eight returners and three lower middlers. The team qualified for the New England Class A tournament this year as the #8 seed. Tiebreaker matches determined the Rhinos' tournament placement, with Taft falling short early in the season against Deerfield 4-5, dropping three tiebreaker matches, but later in the season defeating Greenwich Academy 5-4, winning two tiebreakers and one overtime match. In Founders League play, the Rhinos defeated Loomis (5-4), Miss Porters (8-1), and Kent (9-0), but dropped matches against Westminster (3-6) and Hotchkiss (0-9). Leading the singles were #1 Kate Zhang '20, who achieved an impressive 8-3 record, and #2 Regan Brewer '19 (7-4), whose overtime battles were instrumental in two tight wins. The singles ladder saw additional strong play from co-captain Lily Turner '18, Macy Toppan '18, Kira Siebrecht '19, Maddie Meister '21, Leigh Root '21, Janse Schoonmaker '21, and Nico Gusac '19.



Lily Turner '18 in action against Deerfield in April.



Yi Won Kim '20 pitches against Kent.

The doubles pairings of #1 Turner and Meister, #2 co-captain Fran Hough '18 and Minna Holleck '18, and #3 Siebrecht and Root were instrumental in the team's successes. Next year, the team will return many members and will be captained by Kira Siebrecht and Regan Brewer.

split the series with Avon (who finished second in the league), and also beat Hotchkiss, Deerfield, and Salisbury in their only matchups with those teams. Taft lost to Kent 13-4 the first time they played, but their 2-0 win at Kent in their second matchup was perhaps one of

the best played and best pitched games ever for Taft. Middler Walker Wonham '20 gave up a fourth-inning single, but retired the other 21 batters he faced in a masterful performance, and Grooms singled home the eventual winning run with two outs in the sixth inning. ■

Baseball 7-12

The team posted a 7-12 overall record and 4-11 in the Founders League. Senior co-captain Zane Segalas '18 led the team in both RBIs (23) and home runs (3) and was second in hitting with a .315 average. Upper middler Nolan Grooms '19 led the team with a .345 batting average and had the pitching staff's lowest ERA (3.10). Grooms struck out 34 hitters in the 32 innings he pitched, and will serve as tri-captain next year along with Beau Root '19 and Dylan Kim '19. The team



ILLUSTRATION BY MADELYN YOW '20



Highlights

OF THE 2017-18 ANNUAL FUND

The Taft-Hotchkiss Young Alumni Challenge was held in November with the Classes of 2003 to 2017 competing with Hotchkiss to achieve the highest participation in one week. Taft bested Hotchkiss by reaching a participation rate of 19.4% vs. Hotchkiss's 18.1. It was a fun competition won with much team effort!

Taft's Day of Giving on May 1 was a rousing success with 530 gifts totaling \$274,005. The classes with the highest participation in their decades were: 2012, 2000,

Annual Fund Class Agent Awards 2017-18

SNYDER AWARD
Largest Annual Fund amount contributed by a reunion class 50 years out or less
Class of 1978: \$79,044
Head Class Agent: Chris Smylie

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AWARD
Highest percent participation from a class 50 years out or less
Class of 1998: 57%
Head Class Agent: Devin Weisleder

MCCABE AWARD
Largest Annual Fund amount contributed by a non-reunion class
Class of 1974: \$152,513
Head Class Agent: Brian Lincoln

CLASS OF 1920 AWARD
Greatest increase in Annual Fund dollars from a non-reunion class
Class of 1974: Increase of \$92,044
Head Class Agent: Brian Lincoln

ROMANO AWARD
Greatest increase in participation from a non-reunion class less than 50 years out
Class of 1969: 49% from 41%
Head Class Agent: Bob Leary

YOUNG ALUMNI DOLLARS AWARD
Largest Annual Fund amount contributed from a class 10 years out or less
Class of 2009: \$8,062
Head Class Agent: Ben Brauer

YOUNG ALUMNI PARTICIPATION AWARD
Highest participation from a class 10 years out or less
Class of 2017: 45%
Head Class Agents: Eliza Denious and Michael Wasserstein

SPENCER AWARD
Highest percent of gifts from classmates who have not given in the last five years
Class of 1968: 17%
Head Class Agent: Jim Sterling

Awards determined by gifts and pledges raised as of June 30, 2018.



Dylan Simonds '89, Annual Fund Chair

WE CLOSED A TERRIFIC YEAR FOR THE Annual Fund on June 30, which resulted in \$4,893,445 of total giving—more than \$375,213 over goal—as well as achieving an impressive 43% alumni participation and 92% current parent participation. Notably, there were some particularly profound displays of generosity and enthusiasm by our young alumni. I know that I speak on behalf of all of Taft in expressing sincere gratitude to our Annual Fund donors for their commitment to sustaining educational excellence, and for the example they set for the rest of our community to follow.

We owe much of the success of this Annual Fund campaign to an incredibly devoted team of volunteers, including the Parents' Committee; Stuart and Jean Serenbetz P'03, '06, '09, Chairs of the Former Parents' Fund; Joanie Dayton GP'14, '16, '20, Chair of the Grandparents' Fund; and hundreds of Class Agents across more than a half-century of class years. I particularly want to take this opportunity to recognize the extraordinary efforts of Marietta Lee and Jeff Keeler

P'16, '18, who, after two years of exemplary service, are handing over the co-chairmanship of the Parents' Fund to Sara and Bob Savage, P'18, '20. As always, I also want to offer special thanks to the staff of the Alumni and Development Office for keeping the Taft community connected and strong—they work tirelessly and without much fanfare, but their impact is great and deserving of our genuine appreciation. I am truly grateful and humbled to work with such a wonderful group of talented and dedicated people—they are the pride of Taft.

On behalf of Taft, I thank all of the donors who have made this year's Annual Fund such a success. It takes consistent, deep, and broad support from all corners of our community to build and steward the Taft we know and love, and I look forward to working with many of you to reach higher and achieve even more in the years to come.

With my warm regards and thanks,

Dylan

1999, 1980, 1978, 1961, 1957, and 1946. The Class of 1999 had the overall highest participation rate of 15% from 21 donors. Congratulations to the hardworking Class Agents and volunteers who helped achieve so much in one day.

The **Class of 1998** celebrated their 20th Reunion and reached record highs in both dollars raised and class participation. The class receives the Chairman of the Board Award for raising \$419,996 in both annual and capital dollars from 57% of the class. Kudos to the class for their impressive show of school spirit!

Parents' Committee 2017-18

Marietta Lee and Jeff Keeler, *Chairs*
Kathryn and Chris Adams
Hilary and David Allen
Bridget Baratta
Lisa and David Barr
Sónia and John Batten
Pam and Scott Bowman
Melissa and Michael Bradley
Victoria and Tim Brewer
Rhys and Amanda Shepard Brooks '91
Patricia Carrera
Jason Chan and Tracy Tsai
Reiko and Milton Cheng
Leslie and Kevin Coleman
Marie and James Crouch
Licia and Christopher Dawe '81
Carrie and Beau Delafield '87
Eleanor Waud Dorr and Glenn Dorr
Bonita and Howard Erbstein
Stefanie and Paul Feidelson '85
Kristine and Joshua Fenton
Sue and Bill Groner

Abby and Brian Hail
Jane and Chris Hentemann
Stephen Holt '85 and Laura Black Holt '85
Mary Beth and David Lohuis
Gloria and Michael Masterson
Gigi and Averell Mortimer
John and Joan Atwater Nolan '81
Karen and Jake Odden '86
Colleen and Stephen Pizzitola
Victoria and Kirk Posmantur
David Rupert and Sarah Ondaatje
Sara and Robert Savage
Marni and Bill Schwartz
Lisa and James Segalas
Clare Evert-Shane and Steven Shane
Karen and Rick Shea
Anne and Joe Sheehan
Angela and Kevin Siebrecht
Catherine and Compton Spain
Ryder and Brooke Sheppard Stahl '84
Chinelo Umeh

Lydia and Ted Verheggen
Monica and Andrew Vogelstein '85
David Wang and Nana Chiu
Jodi and A.J. Wasserstein
Karen and Ray Winicki
William Woodworth '79 and Lisa Zonino '79
Jenn and Joe Yamin '85
Kimber and Harry Yerkes '82
Joanne and Wayne Yow
Kevin Zheng and Lili Xie



Jeff Keeler and Marietta Lee, Parents' Fund Chairs



FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, THE MAIJUNA HAVE LIVED IN ONE OF THE MOST BIOLOGICALLY RICH AND ECOLOGICALLY DIVERSE REGIONS OF THE WORLD.

Threatened by unregulated and unsustainable logging, the Maijuna are working to protect, conserve, and restore their corner of the Amazon rainforest—with some success. Science teachers Amanda Benedict and Michael McAloon traveled to northeastern Peru to learn from the Maijuna, and to bring those lessons back to Taft.

—IN THE HEART OF THE— AMAZON

By Debra Meyers

There are no roads or highways carrying travelers to Iquitos, Peru. It is, in fact, the largest city in the world that can only be reached by boat or air. Long inhabited by the indigenous people of the region and later colonized by early conquistadors, Iquitos is an island city steeped in history, yet central to the future of the Amazon rainforest. It is a gateway to some of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the world, and it is where science teachers Amanda Benedict and Michael McAloon boarded a boat and began their 10-day journey into a remote region of northeastern Peru.

Low-slung, pontoon-like boats ferry passengers up and down the vast Amazon River and its tributaries. The experience is one that awakens all of the senses: pink

dolphins splash in the river alongside the boats; songs of the more than 1,500 species of birds in the Amazon Basin fill the air; monkeys, insects, and a plethora of plant species—some waiting to be discovered—provide visual, olfactory, and auditory wonder. Benedict and McAloon traveled nearly 100 miles by boat, through the rainforest, up the Amazon, north to the Rio Napo, then deeper still into the Peruvian forest along the Sucusari River. Their destination: the ancestral homeland of the region's indigenous people, the Maijuna, who would teach them about conservation in one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the world through a course developed specifically for independent school teachers.

Inquiry, Conservation, and Sustainability in the Amazon Field Course is a pilot

“LOGGERS CAME IN AND TOOK OVER THEIR AREA OF THE FOREST. THE DEFORESTATION ALTERED THE ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS IN THE AREA; THE LOGGERS KILLED THEIR FISH AND HUNTED THEIR ANIMALS. THE MAIJUNA HAVE REALLY DONE AN AMAZING JOB PUSHING BACK AND REQUIRING THE GOVERNMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR NEEDS IN THIS AREA.”

—Amanda Benedict



Views of the Amazon River, approaching the island city of Iquitos, Peru.



The inaugural Amazon program for independent school educators welcomed teaching faculty from Taft, Millbrook, and the Asheville School.

course sponsored by Amazon Rainforest Workshops LLC (amazonworkshops.com), and its travel partner EcoTeach (ecoteach.com) and the nonprofit OnePlanet (oneplanet-ngo.org). The program was proposed by Dr. Mike Hill from North Carolina's Asheville School after attending an Amazon Rainforest Workshop program in July 2017.

"We had a lot of terrifying/awesome interactions with biology while we were there," says Benedict, who unwittingly shared space with a bullet ant, packing a sting 30 times more painful than a gunshot wound. "I caught and ate a piranha, we held lots of interesting bugs, and came upon one of the most deadly snakes in the forest."



start a new program in March just for independent school teachers." Dillabaugh worked with Hill and Millbrook School's Ava Goodale to build a curriculum that would meet the specific needs of independent school teachers working at the secondary level. McAloon and Benedict, along with a dozen faculty members from the Asheville and Millbrook schools, made up the inaugural class. It was, says Hill, "an opportunity to immerse oneself in the areas of emerging conservation programs, indigenous cultures, and tropical rainforest ecology, all in the most amazing ecosystem on the planet with an incredible group of people." Notes Benedict, "The course in Peru explores rainforest ecology and the interactions of humans with that ecosystem. In signing on, our objective was to learn how the Maijuna are doing sustainable agriculture and working with the government to promote conservation of the natural resources they are so dependent on—topics that are immediately relevant in our classrooms, and which also tie in with what kids learn in AP Human Geography and what they learn in AP Environmental Science. It is one of those interdisciplinary moments that brings everything together that we've been talking about all year."

"I was wowed by the people and the place," Hill explains. "Before I left, I begged Amazon Rainforest Workshops director Christa Dillabaugh to let us



For Benedict, evening dinners with members of the Maijuna community were among the best parts of her time in Peru. "We had really amazing conversations....It felt like we made real connections." Adds McAloon, "They were so welcoming and so kind to us. I have a high level of admiration and respect for the Maijuna, the people living in the region who call themselves mestizo, and all the people that helped and served us while we were in Peru."

CONSERVATION & SUSTAINABILITY

For thousands of years and across many generations, the vitality of the Maijuna people has been inextricably intertwined with the natural resources of the region: life and livelihood, strength and sustenance, security and survival come from the forest, the rivers, and the land—nearly one million acres of it. At one time, the tribal population numbered in the thousands. Today, fewer than 500 Maijuna remain, living in four separate villages in a large, forested area between the Napo and Putumayo rivers.

"Loggers came in and took over their area of the forest," Benedict explains. "The deforestation altered the ecological systems in the area; the loggers killed their fish and hunted their animals. The Maijuna have really done an amazing job pushing back and requiring the government to acknowledge their needs in this area."

In 2006, the four villages came together to petition the regional government for the authority to manage their ancestral land. Their goal, McAloon notes, is to help the government understand the importance of the land to their culture and their survival, and to establish real conservation efforts in the region that would preclude not only the continuation of unsustainable logging practices, but the construction

of a road through Maijuna land.

"The government is still pushing for the road," says McAloon, "which would be disastrous. It creates a disruption of the corridor, destroying communities and wildlife. Still, protection of the area is something the Maijuna have had to defend."

Their conservation efforts are notable for both their innovative methods and their measurable impact: in 2015, the government of Peru granted protected status to 977,600 acres of Amazon rainforest, establishing the Maijuna-Kichwa Regional Conservation Area (RCA). It is an area 22 percent larger than California's Yosemite National Park.

"All four villages are continuing their efforts to conserve their forests and to conserve their community," notes



Benedict. "The Sucusari village works most closely with outside groups—those are the people we worked with. We spent a lot of time asking questions, letting them answer, listening to translation, trying to bridge connection. We did many different things with them, just learning how they are able to live in this environment and sustain it, and how they are protecting it from the Peruvian people who don't fully understand its value."

"IT'S INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT FOR OUR STUDENTS TO SEE ENTHUSIASM COMING FROM OUR TEACHERS—THEN THEY GET EXCITED THEMSELVES. AT THE END OF THE DAY THEY WILL REMEMBER HOW BUYING A MAHOGANY TABLE OR BUYING PEPPER AFFECTS THE RAINFOREST, AND THE PEOPLE WE SPENT TIME WITH AND WHO MADE SUCH AN IMPRESSION ON US WHO HAVE LIVED THERE FOR SO MANY GENERATIONS."

—Mike McAloon



Benedict and McAloon visited agricultural areas within the forest—spots where yucca, bananas, and pineapples are grown and harvested.

“We spent time with a woman named Luceli who is actually grafting cacao from native cacao to produce a hybrid species that is more robust,” says Benedict. “They are able to sell that in Iquitos, and also keep some as a kind of candy for themselves. They also use sustainable methods to harvest chambira palm,

which they use to craft and sell as art.”

The Maijuna have begun using biosand filters to convert water containing biological contaminants into safe drinking water, are cultivating stingless bees through sustainable apiculture to both revive the bee population and produce medicines and sweeteners from their honey, and have adopted more sustainable fishing practices.

“One of the more common fishing methods among indigenous groups used



Benedict weaving chambira palm.

to be the use of rotenone, which is a very toxic compound that occurs naturally in some tropical plants,” Benedict explains. “They would basically just poison all the fish, then collect them. Now they use fishing line and are conscious of where they are fishing and what they catch to avoid overfishing in any one area.”

They are also bringing technology into their conservation efforts.

“Maijuna hunters are using a GPS tracking feature on their rifles that allows them to monitor where they find and capture different animals,” McAloon says. “It is a tool that helps them avoid overhunting and also track the return of some animals to specific areas. Hunters share that information with one another in an effort to help sustain the resurgence of some animal populations that were driven deeper into the forest by the loggers, and to prevent overhunting in areas commonly hunted by different groups.”



“There’s so much for discovery,” says McAloon, an entomologist. “And that’s around every single corner in the rainforest. At every turn, you’re going to be stepping on something or touching something that has an incredible story to it.”



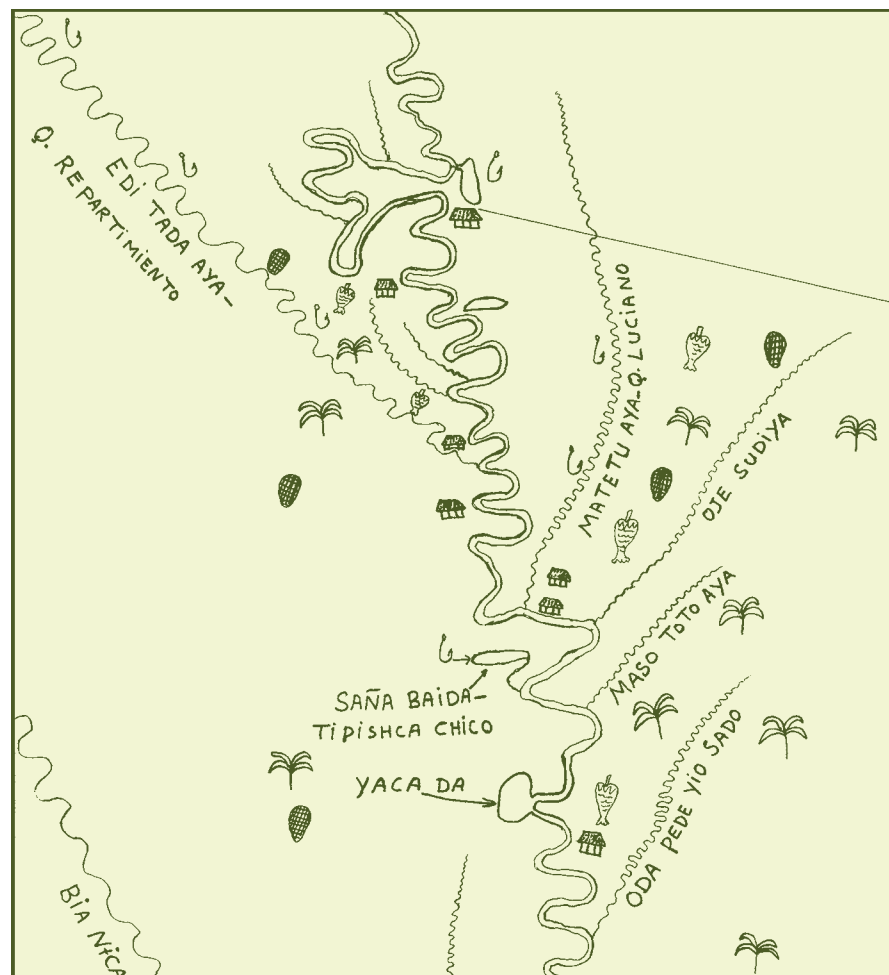
A hand-drawn Maijuna map. See Notes on page 45 for source information.

Perhaps one of the most meaningful initiatives undertaken by the Maijuna is participatory mapping. The inclusive, collaborative, and ongoing project brings communities together to create hand-drawn maps of their land and resources. Pictorial icons mark bountiful fishing sites, set boundaries, identify hunting areas, and pinpoint culturally significant locations. The project is both important and empowering.

“The Maijuna are still working to gain legitimacy—to prove that they use their ancestral lands for sustenance, and that is also a historic and culturally important area for them,” explains Benedict. “Participatory mapping was one of the tools that gave credence to their ability to ask that their land be designated a protected conservation area.”

Ethnobiologist and George Mason University Professor Dr. Michael Gilmore has worked extensively with the Maijuna and took the mapping project to the next level, visiting the sites on the map and fixing their locations using handheld GPS units.

“Having these types of data to show the government was very important to the Maijuna petition that ultimately established the Maijuna-Kichwa conservation area,” notes McAloon.



INTO THE FOREST

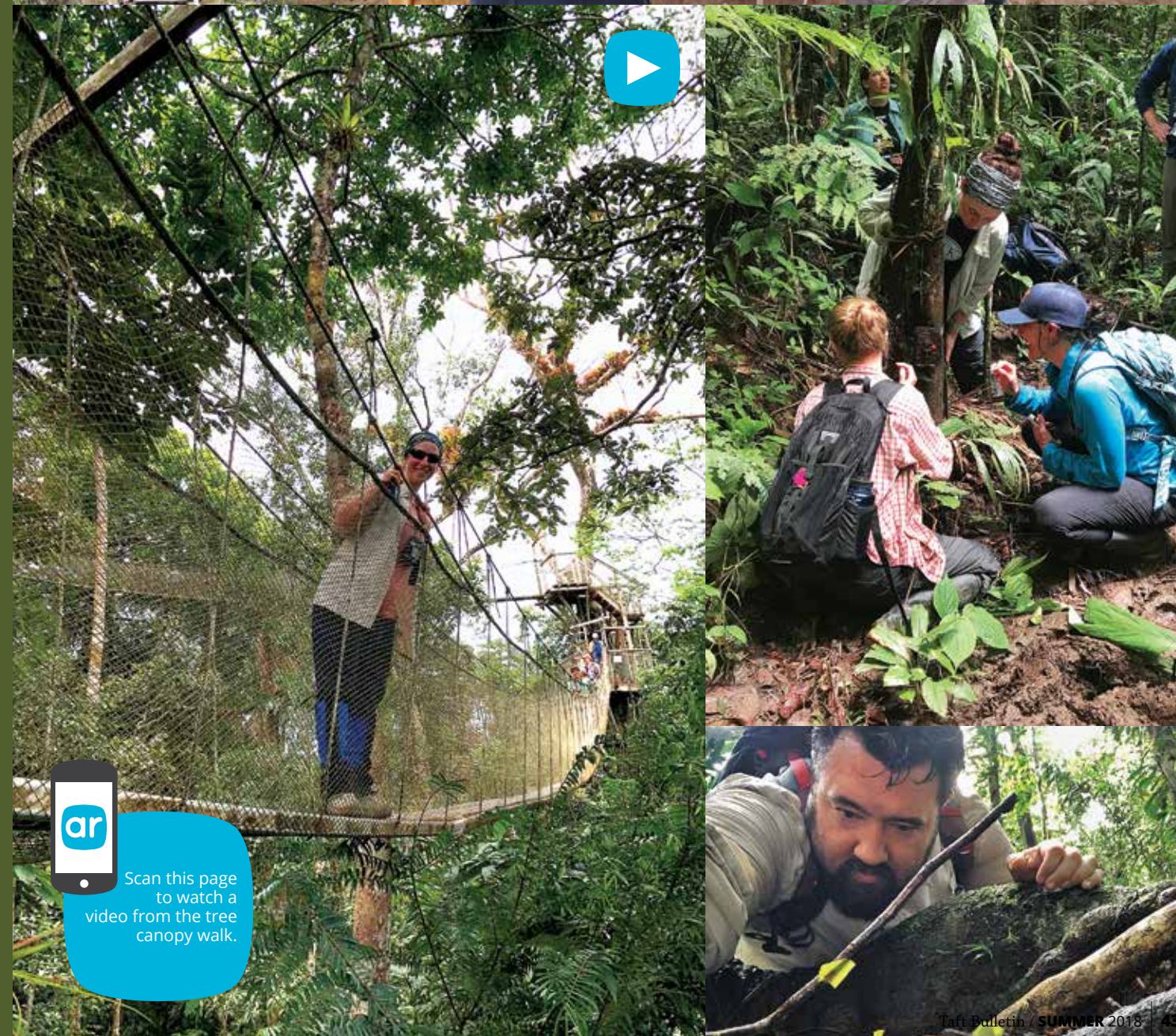
In their final days in Peru, Benedict and McAloon journeyed deeper into the forest to continue their scientific inquiry at the Amazon Conservatory for Tropical Studies (ACTS), an open laboratory for scientific research, education initiatives, and sustainability projects. It is also home to one of the largest canopy walkway systems in the world, running more than 500 yards through the treetops and rising to a height of nearly 120 feet at its peak.

“We spent a lot of time up in the canopy—we were up and down maybe four times a day—early in the morning, late at night in the dark, two or three times in the afternoon,” says Benedict. “It offers a completely different view of the forest and is a place where we engaged in

more in-depth research and discovery.”

Research and discovery included biological sampling, identifying birds, and trapping insects. They also laid the groundwork for additional scientific study in the region by setting camera traps. More camera than trap, the devices use sensors and cameras to capture images of animals as they move through the forest. Most shoot both still images and video throughout the day and night.

“Mammal observation through camera trapping is something new there,” says McAloon. “The presence of certain animals in an area is an important indicator. We set cameras in the *colpa* for the first time, in a mineral lick. Animals visit the lick for its nutrients. But no



Scan this page to watch a video from the tree canopy walk.





one knows how the animals know it's there and which animals visit it—is it just tapir, or peccaries, too? Now that the loggers are gone from the conservation area, what animals are coming back, what populations are recovering? Are poachers entering the area? The data from the camera traps should answer some of those questions and help lead to more sustainable hunting practices.”

The data from the traps set by Benedict, McAloon, and their teams will be recovered in July, when the next group of teachers visits the site.

“The camera traps are really interesting science and really important science,” says Benedict. “They should provide meaningful data to show that the conservation efforts are working, that the forest and the forest life are coming back in the areas where the Maijuna have done the conservation work.”

“THE WAY THAT TAFT SUPPORTS TEACHERS IN DOING THESE KINDS OF THINGS IS REALLY POWERFUL. THIS IS WHAT KEEPS TEACHERS PASSIONATE ABOUT THEIR SUBJECT—BEING ABLE TO GO AND DO THE THINGS THAT THEY TEACH ABOUT. IT IS SOMETHING THAT MIKE [MCALOON] AND I ARE BOTH VERY GRATEFUL FOR.”

—Amanda Benedict

PEDAGOGY, COLLABORATION, CONNECTIONS

The foundational tenet on which Hill and Goodale built their course for independent school teachers in the Amazon was this: Educators need opportunities to *participate* in inquiry themselves in order to incorporate inquiry methods in their classrooms. For 10 days, Benedict and McAloon were students in a hands-on, experiential classroom without walls.

“One of the faculty members on the

“Part of the science was practicing techniques for ecological studies so that we can inform our students,” says Benedict. “We talk about surveying plant diversity. We actually did that.” McAloon explains, “We went 75 feet off the trail in a direct line, then collected samples in a one-meter square from that measure. Excluding ferns and palms there were 87 species of plants—and that’s a lot, but it’s also not perfect, because there are so many things that can’t be identified to species unless you look at their DNA. You can also do that with insects, you can do that with birds, then extrapolate populations from there.”

trip was David Pearson. He is an incredibly brilliant, amazing teacher and traveler who led a lot of sessions on student-directed, active learning,” says Benedict. “We already know that if kids are active they’re learning more. But doing this gave us lots of ideas on how to better integrate and make connections. Mike and I were both very excited about bringing some of these ideas and experiences into our classrooms.”

And they have.

“We’re learning about plants and fungi in Accelerated Biology, so I took students outside to find some and tell me what they’re like,” says McAloon. “They identified structures, they found mites living inside little tiny snail shells that were in the mosses—they got excited. I



The Maijuna find many uses for irapay leaves, among them, weaving packs to carry home the spoils of their hunt.



just let them look at everything and do observations like we did in the canopy.”

Both teachers have also altered their assessment strategies to include collaborative student experiences, while Benedict has also incorporated a flipped classroom model into her teaching.

“I’ve given the kids the instructional material to consume as homework. In class, then, we can start with a 10-minute plant observation, integrating the things that we’ve talked about and they’ve read about. I ask them to identify the stem, the leaf, likely location of the stomata, and to talk about how the plant system works. So they’re seeing real things, rather than just looking at pictures of things. It is about making the content come alive for them in a more meaningful way. I think I got an injection of excitement through this trip—I’m inspired.”

Which, says McAloon, translates to a more meaningful learning experience for Taft students.

“I think it’s incredibly important for our students to see enthusiasm coming from our teachers—then they get excited themselves. At the end of the day they will remember how buying a mahogany table or buying pepper affects the rainforest, and the people we spent time with and

who made such an impression on us who have lived there for so many generations.”

Both Benedict and McAloon are eager to see how the pilot program grows in the coming years, and look forward to having a hand in its development. They also hope more Taft teachers will consider participating in the course.

“We had a lot of pedagogy sessions and a lot of time to think and collaborate as teachers about how we can integrate

“The Maijuna are trying out ecotourism with the hope that it is going to encourage and support conservation,” says McAloon. “I think if there is tourism bringing money into the region the government is going to respond, too, and support their conservation efforts.” Adds Benedict, “They only make \$500 a year per family on average. They live off the land primarily. I think the figure they gave is that they will hunt three big animals, eat one, and sell the other two. If they can make the same money through these ecotourism efforts, they would only have to take one animal to eat and wouldn’t have to kill more for the markets.”

everything we experienced into the classroom,” says Benedict. “To me, the power of this trip was getting a bunch of teachers together to have a meaningful experience and think deeply about the connection our kids can have to the content they’re studying. A lot of teachers can benefit from that—I could see Spanish teachers, Human Geography teachers, other disciplines going and benefiting from this trip. The way that Taft supports teachers in doing these kinds of things is really powerful. This is what keeps teachers passionate about their subject—being able to go and *do* the things that they teach about. It is something that Mike and I are both very grateful for.” ■

BENEDICT’S travel was funded by the Davis Fellowship. Established in 1997 by Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey D. Davis and their daughter, Whitney J. Davis, Class of 1997, the Davis Fellowship promotes excellence in teaching by encouraging faculty members to pursue cultural and scholarly experiences through international travel and study in order to broaden and deepen their capacity as classroom teachers.

MCALOON traveled with sponsorship from the Won Family Endowment for Service and Cultural Knowledge, established to provide faculty an opportunity to enhance their knowledge of international culture with preference for projects in South Korea or Nepal.

NOTES

Page 42: Example of a hand-drawn Maijuna map (from Gilmore and Young 2010). Only a small portion is reproduced here to protect Maijuna biocultural resources and intellectual property. Reproduced with Maijuna permission. From: Gilmore, Michael P. and Jason C. Young. 2010. “The Maijuna Participatory Mapping Project: Mapping the Past and the Present for the Future.” In Perú: “Maijuna, Rapid Biological and Social Inventories Report 22.” Eds. Gilmore, Michael P., Corine Vriesendorp, William S. Alverson, Álvaro del Campo, Rudolf von May, Cristina López Wong, and Sebastian Ríos Ochoa. pp. 233–42. The Field Museum. Chicago.

PHOTOGRAPHY provided by Amanda Benedict and Mike McAloon and other trip participants.



1

1 Melanie Royster '98 and Ernest Kwarteng '98 brighten up a rainy parade.

2 Willy MacMullen '78 marches with classmates Casey Padgett and Chris Smylie in the Alumni Parade.

3 Nici Tietjen Derosier '86 and Sarah Elisabeth Curi '86 at the Breakfast for Class Agents and Secretaries.

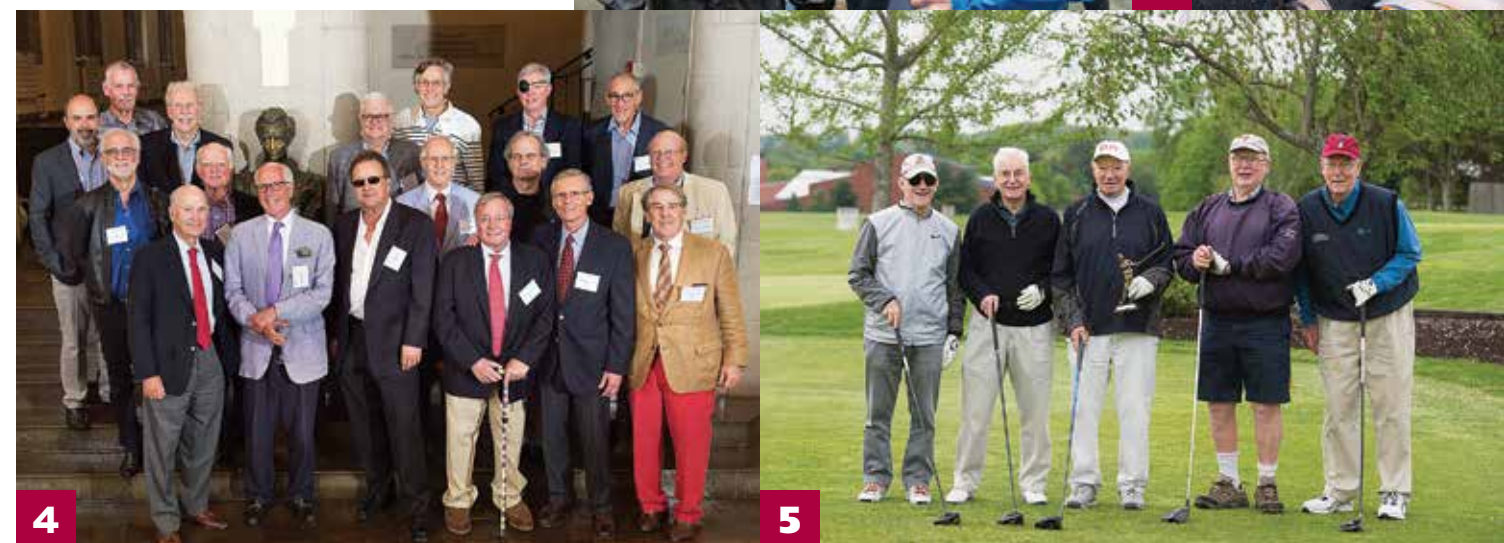
4 The Class of '68 gathers for their 50th Reunion Dinner, joined by Headmaster Emeritus Lance Odden.

5 1953 classmates at the Alumni Golf Outing: from left, Mike Brenner, Paul Duevel, Jim Goldsmith (winner of their Class Trophy), Nat Smith, and Phil Reed.

Spring showers were no match for the excitement of classmates reuniting for Alumni Weekend over several days of celebrations both on and off campus. Not only was the Class of '68 back for its 50th Reunion, but members of the Class of '43, attending their 75th Reunion, joined the many generations of alumni in Watertown. Some excitement was added when an uninvited black bear decided to visit a tree on Centennial Quad, requiring a quick rerouting of the Alumni Parade! Here are some photos to remember the weekend by.

Alumni Weekend 2018

Photography by
**Robert Falcetti,
Anne Kowalski,
and James Shannon**



UMBRELLA ILLUSTRATION: ANINATA/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM | RHINO GRAPHIC: PO11/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



1 Proudly celebrating their 75th Reunion, Tom Moore '43, Ted Pratt '43, and Jim Morrison '43 are greeted by Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78 before the Old Guard Dinner.

2 The annual Service of Remembrance held in Woodward Chapel.

3 Walter Graham '58 and Richard Dranitzke '58 on the way to the Alumni Luncheon.

4 Chip Gronauer '68 enjoys a look at the Reunion Book during the 50th Reunion Cocktails in the Woolworth Faculty Room.

5 The annual ritual of the Alumni Parade.

6 2008 alum friends reunite before the Alumni Parade.

7 Tiana Todd '03 and Massiel Santos '03

8 Back to attend the tribute to Coach Larry Stone, 1975 alums "reenact" a photo of their 1975 varsity football team; from left, Jim Shepard (#44 in football photo), John McDonald (#8), and Mike Ormiston (#15) reunited 43 years after their League Championship and undefeated season. Kenny Bane '75 (#22 in photo) was sorry he couldn't make it back.





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1 Monitors Leigh Sharpless '18 and Jake Wasserstein '18 lead the way for the Alumni Parade.

2 The tribute to Coach Larry Stone held in the Woolworth Faculty Room was attended by many Stone family members and loyal former players.

3 An unplanned-for visitor came to a tree on Centennial Quad before the Alumni Parade began.

4 A visit with the Rhino before the Alumni Parade.

5 Sherrard Upham Cote '73 with Reese Owens '73 and his wife, Vi, at the 45th Reunion Party.

6 At the Old Guard Cocktail reception: from left, Rick Muhlhauser '63, Shelly Bell (wife of Drum), Joanna Wandelt (wife of Ferdie '66), Roy O'Neil '63, and Drum Bell '63.

7 Wendy Treynor '93, AJ Mleczo Griswold '93, Brian McCormick '93, Ana and Mike Humphreys '93 and their son under the tent at the Headmaster's Dinner.

8 Members of the Class of '13 celebrate their 5th Reunion at the Headmaster's Dinner.

9 Headmaster Emeritus Lance Odden, Ray DuBois '66, Horace Dutton Taft Alumni Medal recipient Philip Howard '66, and Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78 at the Old Guard Dinner.



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1 The tribute to Clayton "Chip" Spencer '56, dedicating the Spencer Room, in the Alumni & Development Office, attended by alumni, guests, and the Spencer family. Pictured, from left, Jonathan '88, Jane '03, Susan, and Oliver '85; Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78; and Chip's classmate Charlie van Over '56, who shared remarks.

2 Checking out the 2003 photos during the Reunion Party.

3 Alumni Parade marchers Amanda Costanzo McGovern '93, with her twin sons, and Margaret Fitzgerald Wagner '93 pass through Main Hall on their way to lunch.

4 1993 classmates at the Headmaster's Dinner: from left, Christine Toma Munn, Lynya Floyd, Carter Turrell Celente, and Nina Varanelli Kinnear.

5 Mshangwe Crawford '00, faculty member Steve McCabe, Onaje Crawford '98, and Ernest Kwarteng '98.

6 Class of '58 members gather before the Old Guard Dinner.

7 The children of Larry Stone at the tribute to their father, next to a photo of the baseball pavilion named in his honor in 2009: Jim '83, Kelly '76, Katey '84, and Mike '74.

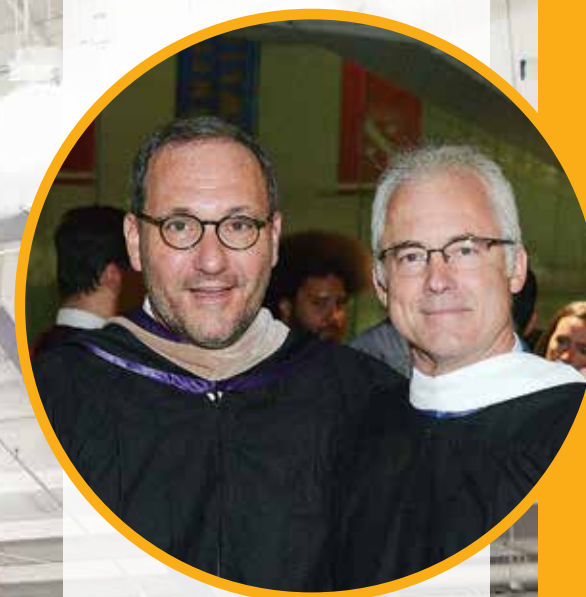
8 A young Taft Rhino fan couldn't be happier to have his caricature drawn before the Alumni Parade.



8

128th COMMENCEMENT

Photography by
Robert Falcetti



SPEAKER

A.J. Wasserstein

Parent of Jake '18
and Michael '17

Current and former Taft parent A.J. Wasserstein was invited to give the school's Commencement address. Here, we share excerpts from his talk about what he wished he had known when he was about to enter college.



1
Tattnall Holt '18
(winner of the George
H. Morgan Award)
with his parents
Stephen '85 and
Laura Black Holt '85.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES



2
Dig Singh '18
and his family.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES



3
O. Wanichkul '18
surrounded by
Taft friends.



4
Clyde Ramos '18,
winner of the
Thomas Sabin Chase
Award in Art.



5
Kevin Wharfe '18
shares a touching
moment with
his mother.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES

When I was your age I thought I had it all figured out. After all, I was graduating from high school—clearly, I had mastered everything there was to possibly know about life. Turns out I was wrong about many things. What I thought was important was not. And what I thought was unimportant was actually quite important. The single most vital concept I wish I understood was

that life is all about optimizing around long-term happiness. This might seem obvious, but so many young adults rush ahead into life without making happiness their primary goal. Sometimes the excitement and noise of our lives on a day-to-day basis pulls us away from long-term happiness. Aristotle defined the very purpose of life as developing your virtues in order to find happiness.

Before we continue, let me define

happiness, from my perspective.

Happiness is not fleeting or a temporary rush—like devouring a hot fudge sundae or bungee jumping. Happiness is enduring fulfillment, satisfaction, and joy, moving from novice to proficiency. Happiness is being in harmony in your personal relationships, your college activities, your spirituality, and your health. Happiness is knowing and living your values—having a strong and intentional sense of

6
Pearl Young '18,
winner of the Dance
Award, the Berkley F.
Matthews '96 Award,
and a recipient of a
Global Studies and
Service Diploma.

7
Head Monitors
Leigh Sharpless '18
and Peter Horne '18
display the 2018
class stone, which
was later installed
in Centennial
Quadrangle.

8
Assistant Headmaster
Jeremy LaCasse
presents Raymond
Bai '18 with the
Aurelian Award,
awarded to a senior
who is "outstanding
in sterling character,
high scholarship, and
forceful leadership."
Bai was also a recipient
of the Heminway
Merriman Award.



who you are. Happiness feels like being in a state of flow. But happiness is hard, just like mastering a foreign language. It takes time, energy, and diligent work to get there—but it is certainly worth it and best of all, you can absolutely do this.

Your next stop on your destination to happiness is college!

College is an amazing opportunity and experience. It is a magical four-year period in your life that should be



Leigh Sharpless '18 Head Monitor

With age came experience, sometimes painful, but other times a privilege....As upperclassmen, it came that the most beautiful moments were those outside of our structured schedule, such as picnics on the fields as the sun set atop the flag of the athletic building, or perhaps going sledding....

All these new awakenings, opening our eyes to more than just responsibility, but also the somber realization of injustice and inequality....To that end, this was the class that came together beautifully in the face of adversity, hosting an inspiring yet productive meeting one night in the winter, and so at last we recognized our place on this campus, holding on in solidarity.... So here you all sit before me, the eldest students of Taft—an admirable group of unique individuals [who worked] together to guide this campus as best we could.

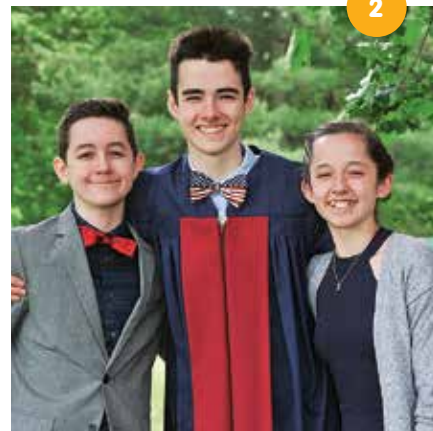
Peter Horne '18 Head Monitor

Thank you, Taft faculty, for guiding us....Whether it was in the form of advising, teaching, coaching, or just chatting, the help you all have given us over these years has propelled our transition from timid freshmen and sophomores to confident young men and women....

While we'll miss your exemplary teaching inside the classroom, we will miss the impromptu and informal moments the most, where you have helped us grow as people. The late-night dorm discussions [and] the last-minute lunches...were just a few moments that helped shape the community into our family. We admire your contagious energy....We cannot imagine living in an upper school boys' dorm with young children and constant fire alarms as requirements for the job, yet you always maintained your friendly attitudes. No one can thank you enough for what you do!



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1 Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78 addresses the Class of 2018 and their families.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES

2 Salutatorian Colin Schlissel '18 with family after the ceremony.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES

3 Kaedi Dalley '18 and family. Dalley received the George H. Morgan Award and Berkley F. Matthews '96 Award.

4 Dean of Faculty Edie Traina presents Academic Dean and math teacher Jeremy Clifford with the William and Lee Abramowitz Award for Teaching Excellence.

"To find happiness, and to answer what do you want to be, you must first understand who you are going to be—and college is a fantastic venue to discover and answer the 'who are you going to be' question."

-A.J. Wasserstein

embraced, relished, and most of all, not wasted. Although it might seem like being admitted to college is an ending point—particularly after all the hard work you did during the daunting college admission process—it's a new beginning.

Whether you are off to study physics, philosophy, or finance, one of the main goals of college is to learn how to learn—to become analytical, a critical thinker, and a great communicator, skills you have

already begun to develop at Taft. Exactly what the faculty here has worked hard at and is the essence of the Portrait of a Graduate, a mosaic I admire so much. But the very key in college is to fully discover who you are and what you want in your life.

Go all in while at college. Don't coast through and do the least you can get away with. This is a narrow window in time where you can test and try different activities and experiences with few

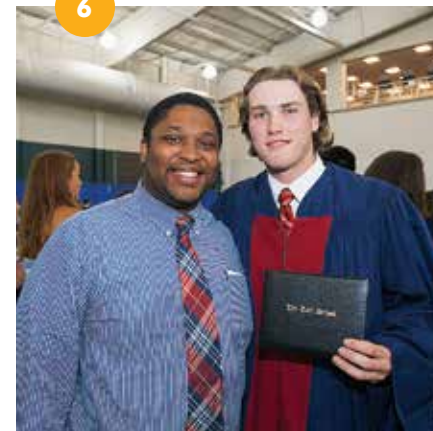
consequences. Try the hard English class; push yourself to give a new club sport a whirl; join the school newspaper. While in college, lean in—take full advantage.

When you are in college, resist the temptation to stay ensconced in your own bubble. In a conversation I had with Mr. Mac last year about transitioning into college, he asserted that different is not only good, but should be sought out with the desire to understand. College is a perfect



5

5 Class speaker Barbara Garza Herrera '18, who also received the Berkley F. Matthews '96 Award, with Senior Class Dean Susan McCabe.



6

6 English Teacher Khalid Tellis with Caleb Hannon '18.

Barbara Garza Herrera '18

Class Speaker

There are certain qualities that are, because of their inability to be assessed numerically or comparatively, taken as secondary to extracurricular endeavors, like the way we treat or engage with one another....Like the multiple abilities you possess, the affection and sense of care we develop for our peers is learned behavior that is strengthened over time. At Taft, I have come to acknowledge that I am the person I am now because of who you are, and the same applies to us all: students, parents, staff, and faculty alike.

As said by my first English teacher at Taft, "One must love kindness before she can be kind to anyone else. One must cherish humility before she can show it to those people in her orbit. Kind and humble actions, this way, become a prayer—a statement of faith in the fixed value of the most important element in human life, love."



7

7 Juliana Yamin '18 with, from left, brother Matthew '22, parents Jennifer and Joe '85, and brother Michael '20.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES



8

8 Mthabisi Tshuma '18, one of the recipients of the Class of 1981 Award, which recognizes students who have shown exceptional personal growth and perseverance during their time at Taft.

place to do this. Interacting with people who are not like you is incredibly important in life to broaden and expand yourself.

When you get to college you might experience something for the first time—failure. Failure is going to be part of your life, so you might as well get used to it and embrace it. To think you'll coast through college and life without experiencing failure is optimistic and naive. All people pursuing happiness

trip regularly and encounter failure. And when you do suffer that first failure in college, try not to get down. Instead, get gritty. Persistence, resilience, and stick-to-itiveness are all your allies and will help you prevail and find happiness.

When I was your age, people would ask me what I wanted to be when I grew up. An innocuous enough question, but one that might be exactly the wrong question to ask a young person. The right question



1

2018 graduates Jake Wasserstein, Kevin Wharfe, Kaia Whiteley, Natalie Witkowski, and Ian Wohlhieter.



2

Juliana Yamin '18, Lauren Pelosi '18, and Benjamin Laufer '18.

3 Raveeno Douglas '18 received the Harry W. Walker '40 "Non ut Sibi" Award, which is presented to the senior whose service and work outside of Taft best exemplifies the School's motto.



3



Charles Verheggen '18 Class Speaker

Earlier this year I visited the Library of Congress to [do] research while I was at home in Virginia.... I noticed a stone plaque with gold lettering [that] puzzled me: "We taste the spices of Arabia, yet never feel the scorching sun that brings them forth." I began searching for some extraneous idea that could be reflected in these words.

Throughout our careers here we have been offered the spices of Arabia in many different ways. The attention we receive at Taft has cultivated, enhanced, and "spiced" our individual talents and interests.

We have opened art galleries to showcase our paintings and photographs. We have hosted open dialogues to lead conversations on social issues. We have worked for a spot on varsity baseball team, and been given a lead role in the fall musical. We have learned to no longer consider ourselves just math students or English students, but all-around students. Tasting these various spices at Taft has enhanced our very being....Our future service to the school should reciprocate all that it has offered to us.

to pepper young people with is, "Who are you going to be when you grow up?" "Who are you?" gets to the essence of how you see yourself—your core and character, what type of person you aspire to be. With no simple or reflexive answer, it's much deeper and more challenging to answer than "What do you want to be?" To find happiness, and to answer what do you want to be, you must first understand who you are going to be—and college is

a fantastic venue to discover and answer the "who are you going to be" question.

As part of defining who you are, I hope you consider and embrace Taft's school motto: *Non ut sibi ministretur sed ut ministret*. You are incredibly fortunate to have received a Taft education. Think about how you will use this gift and how you will serve.

There is an ancient Chinese saying that goes, "If you want happiness for



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4 Bagpipers lead the processional of faculty and graduates into the Athletic Center.

5 Seniors Angie Narvaez, Courtney Wandelt, Emma LaRose, and Nathalie Bonilla share a moment before graduation begins.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES

6 Jake Marx '19 and Annabelle Pulver '18 before the ceremonies.

7 Shamir Johnson '18 and family.
HIGHPOINT PICTURES



7

an hour, take a nap (just not right now please). If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody." If you embrace Aristotle's view that our purpose is to find happiness—part of that answer is through service.

When you finish college, it would be wonderful if you have a fully formed sense of your values, goals, and identity—who

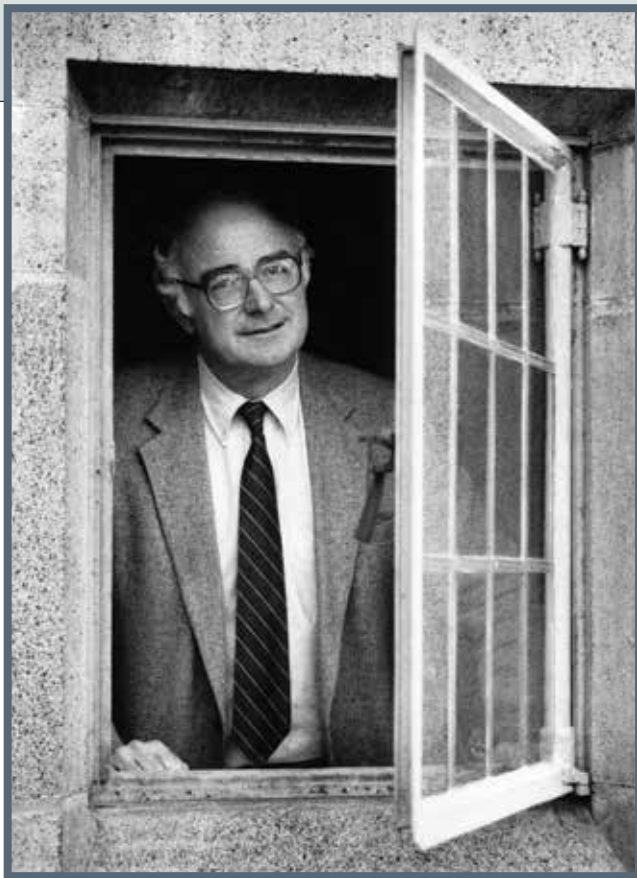
you are going to be. Nobody can tell you specifically what these are—there are no right or wrong answers, you simply need to find what works for you. Think about this in great detail while in college.

To all of the graduates, I wish you good luck and success in your next chapter. I wish you fun and enjoyment. I wish you new experiences and new friends. But more than anything else, I wish you happiness. ■

A.J. Wasserstein has led a distinguished career as an entrepreneur, received numerous awards for his leadership, served on multiple not-for-profit boards, taught at the Yale School of Management, and authored a book on raising children.

For more Commencement photos visit www.taftphotos.com/Commencement-2018.

Selected photos, where noted, courtesy of Highpoint Pictures.



Faculty Emeritus Barclay Johnson '53

1934–2018

It is with great sadness that we share that Barclay Johnson '53, longtime Taft English teacher, died on July 3 in Maryland, at the age of 83. His family said, "He lived as a literary artist and a teacher."

He grew up in Plainfield, New Jersey, with two younger sisters. He proudly loved his father, Barclay '27, a Navy veteran of WWII, and his mother, Susie. Like his father, Barclay attended Taft. He graduated with the Class of '53 after putting on a theatrical roast of the faculty.

He studied literature at Middlebury College and graduated in 1957 after writing and producing two musical comedies. As a 1st lieutenant of the U.S. Army Armored Corps in 1958, he led a squadron of tanks.

Johnson started teaching English and coaching football and track at Taft in 1961. He led the school's Independent Learning Programs and served as dean of faculty. Headmaster Emeritus Lance Odden recalled, "For nearly 40 years Barclay Johnson was Taft's beloved teacher, coach, and school master. Great characters make great schools, and Barclay Johnson stood at the forefront of that group of inspirational leaders touching the lives of thousands of Taft students."

As Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78 wrote to the Taft community, Barclay Johnson was a legend at Taft. "Barclay possessed an incredible energy and intellect. When he walked in the room—the classroom, the faculty room, the

department room—you knew he had arrived," MacMullen said. "He was physically big, he had a booming voice, and he had an unquenchable enthusiasm for life. Barclay made friends everywhere, and once you met him, you never forgot him. In the English Department, he was beloved and respected. His colleagues knew that there was perhaps no one who read literature, drama, and poetry with more passion and insight. He was perpetually learning, reading, growing. Great writing never failed to excite him, no matter how many AP essays he read or how many times he had taught *A Streetcar Named Desire*. When he entered a class, it was like a weather event: everything changed."

He was fortunate to have his son, Matthew, daughter-in-law Sarah, and two grandchildren living nearby in Maryland. He also had visits from son Paul '83, daughter-in-law Susan, and a granddaughter.

His former wives are former Taft faculty member Sabra Field (formerly Johnson), and second wife Patricia. His stepchildren from Patricia's first marriage are Chris, Tim, Marion, and Ruth.

He had recently expressed gratitude for the good fortune in his life and said that his sons were "at the center" of his mind. With the expectation of dying, he offered, "The world has been good to me."

A celebration of Barclay Johnson's life will be held at Taft in the fall. ■



LOOKING BACK

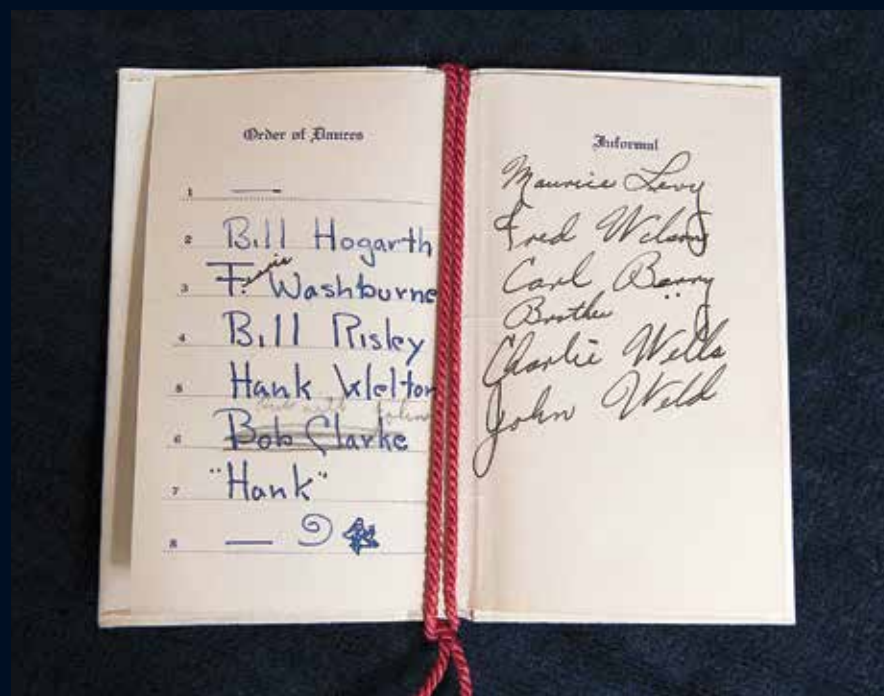


This Dance Card from the 1934 Commencement Dance was a cherished memento that belonged to a young woman who lived in Middlebury. Her daughter came across it in the original mailing envelope with other memorabilia and donated it to Taft's Archives.

From the Senior Dinner Cruise to the Senior Class Dinner at the headmaster's home to the Graduation Processional, it's a special time that we look forward to and one to look back on for years to come. This little booklet brings us back to a different era.

—Beth Nolan Lovallo '93
The Leslie D. Manning Archives

The Leslie D. Manning Archives contains materials reflecting the history of the Taft School from its founding in 1890 to the present. The purpose of the Archives is to conserve and catalog items and to make them available to the wider school community.



The Taft Charitable Gift Annuity— RATES INCREASED!

"The Taft School has certainly been an essential part of my education. I would very much like to support the school in a significant way, but can't part with income-generating, non-retirement funds at the moment."

—Comment shared at one of the school's planned-giving seminars

We hear this on a regular basis. Enter the charitable gift annuity (CGA), an arrangement with The Taft School in which you give an irrevocable donation, usually with cash or marketable securities. In return, we make fixed payments to you for life. What's left of your gift after your lifetime helps to bolster our endowment.

An Example of How It Works:

- A Taftie, age 75, transfers \$10,000 to The Taft School in July 2018.
- A simple two-page contract is signed to establish the gift annuity.
- The annuity distribution begins on October 1, 2018.
The immediate tax deduction is \$4,575.*
- The annuity rate is 6.2 percent, which is based on age; the older you are, the higher the rate.
- The gift annuity per year for life is \$620 and won't change.
- Eliminate "up-front" capital gains tax.
- There are no management or custodial fees, a real plus.
- The Taftie helped the school—we can now thank the donor as a Horace Dutton Taft Legacy Society member!

The annuity is fully backed and guaranteed by The Taft School—the school's rating by Moody's is AA.

*Rates at time of publication. Rates are based on annual payments and a 3.4 percent charitable midterm federal rate. Deductions vary based on income earned. Above for illustration purposes only. Please consult your financial planner.

Find Your CGA Rate Below

For One Life

Age	Rate
55	4.3%
60	4.7%
65	5.1%
70	5.6%
75	6.2%
80	7.3%
85	8.3%
90+	9.5%

For Two Lives

Younger Age	Older Age	Rate
55	60	4.0%
60	65	4.3%
65	70	4.7%
70	75	5.2%
75	80	5.7%
80	85	6.6%
85	90	8.0%
90+	95+	9.3%

Rates INCREASED as of July 1, 2018.



- 1 Create a gift annuity using cash or marketable securities.

Charitable Gift Annuity

You

2

- Receive an income tax deduction.
- Receive fixed payments for life.

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Remainder to the school after your life.

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