“What the live creature retains from the past and what it expects from the future operate as directions in the present.”

John Dewey
An Introduction from Dan Frank

“The direction I would give all teachers is: Watch the child, watch his attitude of attention. Is it spontaneous? Is the light of pleasure in his eyes? Is interest the motive which controls him?” —Colonel Francis W. Parker

During a Morning Ex several years ago, I looked up to read the words on the Auditorium's proscenium arch: “A school should be a model home, a complete community, an embryonic democracy.” At that moment, I noticed something that had been looking at us for generations. The first 17 letters of this statement revealed an essential message: A school should beam.

A school that beams is brightened by the pleasure in the eyes of all learners. And that light is sparked by moments of spontaneity and motives long cultivated and nurtured by love, perseverance, hard work and the eager drive of curiosity. This issue of The Live Creature features examples of how Parker nurtures the inner light of students and teachers so their creativity can generate the joyful light that allows our school to beam.

Social and Emotional Development
Parker’s consistent appreciation for the importance of social and emotional development in the growing intellectual life of our students is vital for them to become whole people and citizens who lead with character consisting of empathy, courage and clarity. Awareness and appreciation of oneself and others open the mind and heart to engaging in the world in meaningful, imaginative and impactful ways.

Faculty and Staff Professional Development
Providing students with opportunities to develop their “attitude of attention” occurs when teachers, too, have the light of pleasure in their eyes, when they, too, are feeling alive, creative and free to apply their skills, wisdom and insight with spontaneity—indeed, a genuine sense of being in the moment with their students. This is why Parker invests robustly in the professional growth of Parker educators, which is essential for our school to beam.

Getting the Inside Out and the Outside In
Sharing what we are learning with others and learning from those who have knowledge and insights are twin hallmarks of a Parker education. Morning Ex is a perfect example of how we support students and teachers getting the inside out and the outside in by gathering as a learning community where the presenter and the audience together create a culture of mutual learning and respect. At Parker, we have expanded this dynamic learning paradigm to include our robust Nightviews speaker series and hosting and sponsoring professional educational conferences.

In a world that needs inspiration and enlightenment, these dimensions of a Parker education illuminate learning and contribute to making Parker a school that beams.
Today is Thursday, October 18, 2018.
This morning, we have Superfit at 9:15. We will finish our portraits this afternoon.

Love,
Your Teacher

The Live Creature
Social Emotional Learning, Parker and the Data that Matters Most

By John Novick, Intermediate and Middle School Head

Data. It’s a myth, a misconception, that progressive educators do not appreciate, value and employ data. All that we know about the brain, including the critical role a growth mindset plays in intellectual, social and personal growth, rests on data gathered during research. Our understanding of the unique stages of human development, of psychology, of our physical health and wellness—even our assessment of the needs of society as a way to determine the work of the school—are rooted, largely, in data. And while a progressive vision for what a school can and should be—for Parker, a model home, a complete community, an embryonic democracy—is not built upon the too-narrowly-defined and thus limited data of standardized achievement test scores (think of how one’s complete mastery of the history, rules and strategies of soccer is not sufficient to make one the next Leo Messi), there is a role for such testing in sizing up relative areas of strength and challenge and in providing a simple benchmark in the specific knowledge and skills the test measures. But for progressive educators like those at Parker, the most important piece of data, the most available, current, useful and potentially transformational data point, is the expression on a student’s face.

What might that expression—along with body language and tone of voice—reveal to a careful observer attuned to human development and well-versed in the emotional lives of children? A lot, including whether a student’s primary physical and emotional needs have been met and therefore what scaffolding the child needs in this moment before he/she is available and ready to learn. Is the student tired, confused, distracted, self-conscious, eager, angry, giddy, bored, lonely, engaged, feeling invisible or disconnected, in some type of pain (emotional or physical), ashamed, excitable, overwhelmed, withdrawn, hungry, confident, in desperate need of movement, curious, joyful, frustrated or in a homeostatic position, poised to move in any direction?

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is building the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, identify and strive for healthy goals, develop and share empathy for others, sustain affirming relationships and make responsible decisions. In a progressive learning community such as Parker, it is impossible to overstate the degree to which SEL—integrated into the curriculum in a variety of subjects, at the core of our student-teacher interactions and relationships every day and evident in our counseling.
learning resource, advisory, mentoring, public speaker and Parker PM programs—drives our ability to bring the school’s mission to life for all students as learners and as citizens in a diverse democratic society and global community.

Parker has always integrated SEL into its educational climate and culture, even as technology and the needs of society have changed with the passage of time. The school's notion of collaborative intellectual endeavor for the 21st century—TIDES (Technology, Innovation, Design thinking and Entrepreneurship for Society)—includes, at its core, intentional student practice in listening for understanding first, rather than skipping right to debate, and listening with empathy to those who possess firsthand experience with the societal challenge or problem to which students are seeking creative solutions to prototype. In addition, Parker enlists all students as thoughtful, engaged and reflective builders of a more inclusive and equitable community, empowered by voice, agency and a community of educators, parents, alumni and friends who seek to make it safer every day for students to bring their authentic selves for the greater good. This demands awareness of the health, well-being and sense of dignity and belonging of those around us, as well as reflection on how changes in our own attitudes and practices can make this community more inclusive and healthier for all its members.

Furthermore, Parker has a philosophical and financial commitment to the professional development of faculty and staff in cultural competency and SEL, along with our faculty’s powerful commitment to the practical and ethical imperative of helping students stay healthy and well as they grow so that they may offer one another and the wider world their best selves. This commitment reflects not only our most important aspiration for every child, but also what our city and nation need most today: healthy, whole, empathic, reflective and engaged citizens dedicated, individually and collectively, to re-envisioning and developing a future that includes and offers dignity to all.

No one, not students, educators or parents, can accomplish that without caring about, considering and remaking our practice based upon the data revealed by the look on a child's face. But it’s not contentment or happiness we pursue in our work; these are organic outcomes of other qualities, not qualities we can teach (and, in fact, seeking to instill happiness or contentment, research shows, actually leads to unhappiness and discontentment). Instead, we’re seeking to instill curiosity, authenticity, empathy, resilience, imagination, open-mindedness, a growth mindset, integrity and what Eric Liu calls the ability to imagine better. It might just be the most progressive educational tenet of them all: don’t accept, passively, what is, for you or for your community, but imagine better, imagine together, and live an engaged life. Ultimately (and study after study confirms this), the metrics that matter most will be those that inform our work toward these goals.

It might just be the most progressive educational tenet of them all: don’t accept, passively, what is, for you or for your community, but imagine better, imagine together, and live an engaged life.
The Give and Take of Professional Development

As one of the country’s premier educational institutions, Parker does as much as possible to ensure the school has highly qualified educators working in its classrooms. After identifying and hiring the best talent, the school strives to provide teachers with a range of professional development experiences to help continually expand their knowledge and skills for the benefit of the school and students alike. While many Parker teachers attend professional development events around the country, the school is also fortunate to have faculty members present at these conferences and share their own expertise and experiences with teachers from around the world—all with the goal of bringing the most innovative thinking in education to the school and simultaneously sharing the work taking place in Parker’s classrooms. Following is a sample of recent professional development experiences Parker teachers have been engaged in.

Lower School teachers Ashleigh St. Peters and Kirk La Rue collaborated, alongside a faculty of 65 other educators, in developing and delivering a curriculum to more than 1,700 participants in the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC), part of the annual People of Color Conference (PoCC) in Anaheim, California last year.

Each year, this three-day intensive student conference features keynote speakers and workshops that explore the multiple facets of identity, as well as the spaces that connect those identities. While the curriculum is perpetually shifting, it is always responsive to the needs of high school students and aims to provide students the opportunity to practice the skills and conversations they need to be successful student and school leaders upon their return.

In designing curriculum for this event, St. Peters and La Rue wanted to ensure participants left the experience feeling seen and heard. For many

Getting the Inside Out and the Outside In

After identifying and hiring the best talent, the school strives to provide teachers with a range of professional development experiences to help continually expand their knowledge and skills for the benefit of the school and students alike.
Zeller thinks it is important for white teachers to be able to comfortably and knowledgeably lead students in conversations about whiteness, race and privilege.

“We know it is important for students to have teachers and peers who look like them,” stated La Rue. “However, it’s equally important for teachers to have students who offer those mirrors, too. I appreciate Parker’s commitment to PoCC and SDLC, which reinforces that equity and inclusion are not ancillary to academic excellence, but inextricably linked.”

St. Peters and La Rue assisted in a similar capacity at the SDLC in Nashville this past November.

Senior Kindergarten teacher Dana O’Brien recently led a teaching workshop for more than 15 independent school teachers from around the country at the Progressive Educators Network Conference in Boston. O’Brien discussed the power of using improv games in classrooms,

who may feel isolated at their schools around some facet of their identity, this conference provides a chance to feel included and supported within a community. La Rue said, “I hope students feel like their experience has fueled them to return to their schools. I think the conference is transformative for many; SDLC ignites a spark that is hard to dim thereafter.”

Designing and developing an engaging and thought-provoking curriculum for high school students provided this pair of Lower School teachers with an ideal opportunity to stretch beyond their traditional roles and capacities. Additionally, the conference allowed them to see students who reflect parts of their identities that aren’t always visible in their classrooms.
Mary Catherine Coleman which can amplify student voices. She has found them effective in helping students speak about things (emotions, situations, choices, etc.) that are not always easy or do not always come up in class. Many of the games she demonstrated revolved around the benefits of mirroring, a key factor in building empathy.

O’Brien hopes these teachers will return to their classrooms and try something new. She said, “Improv is something that saved me. It continues to give meaning to so much of what I do and who I am. Being able to share this passion with other educators and teach them some of the activities that have made me feel like a better teacher and person meant that perhaps I could provide a spark for someone to think about something in a different way.”

O’Brien is aware many people have an aversion to improv—they think it is something they could never do. To her, it’s not always about being funny or thinking on your feet. “To me, it’s about listening and mirroring. It’s about being in the moment with your fellow participants and exploring that moment. It’s about making other people look good and feel good. Through this process, we become better partners and understand each other just a little bit better.”

The American Association of School Librarians’ (AASL) National Standards include collaboration as one of six foundational elements. When the AASL was looking for the best person to develop a new text about collaboration for learning and libraries, they looked no further than Parker’s Lower and Intermediate School Library and Information Services Specialist Mary Catherine Coleman to write the book.

Coleman was already on the organization’s radar due to her recent Collaborative School Library Award from the organization for her 1st grade Dot Day project in 2017. The AASL
thought that the project, the concept and outcomes were a good fit with the new AASL School Library Standards and Foundations, so Coleman talked to the editors, fleshed out some ideas and started an outline and concept. She completed the bulk of the writing during the summer and edited and fine-tuned this past fall.

The book focuses on collaborating between the school librarian and co-teachers, developing the mindset of collaboration in students, including examples of student collaborative projects, and using a school library as a collaboration space—not only the physical space, but also the space and time students have to collaborate, design, fail and redesign together.

Coleman said, “I’m very humbled and honored that AASL thought of me and my work to write this book. Also, I am very proud of the work that I do here at Parker in collaboration with the ILIS Department and team, other teachers and students. I’m excited to share how innovative and forward thinking the Parker ILIS/Library program is. I think we are doing amazing work, and I look forward to sharing it more widely.”

Upper School English teacher Cory Zeller attended a five-day intensive StirFry workshop with Lee Mun Wah on cross-cultural facilitation techniques and learned a number of new mindful practices to facilitate conversations about race. Zeller thinks it is important for white teachers to be able to comfortably and knowledgeably lead students in conversations about whiteness, race and privilege. She was interested in this particular workshop because of its focus on “mindfulness.”
During conversations about race, it is important to pay attention to verbal and nonverbal cues to be able to address what is happening in the room. Zeller related, “I now feel like I have a tool kit to access when I engage students in conversations about race and privilege. The training I received included exact phrasing that will help me in those often-contentious moments. Phrases like, ‘I heard you say...’, ‘Tell me more...’, ‘What hurt you about...’, ‘How is this interaction familiar...’ and more will help me make those conversations more effective.” At the workshop, Zeller learned by doing, leading conversations and receiving feedback about her techniques.

All three teachers emphasized their expectation of sustaining “vigorous effort,” especially in terms of mathematics, and maintaining the progressive characteristics of their courses. They evaluated how closely the AP curriculum for various tests aligned with Parker’s process-oriented and whole-child approach. The team then made curricular choices based on a common method in all three Advanced Topics in Science courses. Zhang noted, “Achieving 100 percent content coverage by strictly following the AP curriculum is the opposite of what I and my colleagues teaching the Advanced Topics science courses want to achieve.” However, Zhang found

“Collaborating with Parker’s teachers is like going to a trusted news source. You may not encounter what you expect, but you always expand your horizon.”

Parker’s Science Department made a concerted effort during the summer months to discuss and collaborate on pedagogy. Among the ways they accomplished their goal was by attending professional development institutes, collaborating with members of the school’s Mathematics Department and committing to ongoing evaluation of their practice through the work associated with the ISACS Self-Study accreditation process.

Last June, Upper School science teachers Kara Schupp, Leslie Webster and Xiao Zhang attended AP Institutes for Advanced Topics in biology, chemistry and physics, respectively. From their experiences, this teaching team planned new pedagogical approaches to teaching their Advanced Topics classes.

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Advanced Topics in Physics course can use the skills students learn in those courses and view mathematics as a tool to solve real-life problems in physics.

“Collaborating with Parker’s teachers is like going to a trusted news source,” Zhang said. “You may not encounter what you expect, but you always expand your horizon.”

Stephanie Lorenzo, 8th grade history and social studies faculty, spent a week in Cambridge, Massachusetts at Harvard’s Project Zero Classroom with her colleagues, Intermediate and Middle School Learning Resources faculty Val Ginnan and 8th grade math faculty Tim O’Connor. Together they explored questions about effective and powerful learning experiences and how to teach for the deep understanding that requires learners to solve complex problems. Lorenzo found Project Zero an intellectual wellspring exposing teachers to the practice of educational theory from top researchers at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education. She said, “My favorite part of the program is how it is anchored in the arts and humanities and gives practical reflections on how to build understanding, creativity and cross-cultural thinking within multiple and diverse contexts.” Lorenzo came away from the conference convinced more than ever of the power of enculturation and how it prepares learners well for the world they will live, work and develop in.
The Live Creature
Conferences Emphasize Parker’s Role as a National Center for Learning

One of the ways Parker maintains its commitment to building community and affinity within the school and in the national arena is to develop opportunities to interact and communicate with peers and counterparts. Under Dan Frank's vision and leadership, Parker has hosted a variety of educational conferences, symposiums and speaker events at the school since at least the 1990s (see “Parker as a Center for Educational Thought,” p. 22). These events facilitate the growth of fruitful relationships, allowing educators, administrators and students to share their experiences and be part of a larger community confronting common issues and challenges. Recent examples and a few coming up illustrate the value of these events.

Social Emotional Learning Workshop
Last June, 5th Grade Head Mike McPharlin arranged for Parker to host a four-day workshop led by the Institute for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), an event he has attended in the past. The goals were:

- Build a deep, experiential understanding of the core SEL principles and practices
- Help educators cultivate in their teaching practice the humanity and empathy that can help them inspire students to evolve into compassionate leaders and resilient learners
- Inform an educator’s perspective in ways that help spark creativity and renew inspiration for teaching
- Strengthen an educator’s capacity to bring SEL to the classroom and community in ways that transform a school

“The event was a great success,” McPharlin said. “We hosted close to 100 participants from across the country, including about 10 representing all of Parker's divisions. A conference like this was a unique experience because it allowed teachers to take things immediately back into their practice. The practical takeaways as well as the deeper conversations have helped the conversation about how we are approaching teaching SEL at Parker.”

“It was a real pleasure having the Institute here at Parker, bringing together people from all over the country to work toward integrating social emotional learning into our curricula,” commented 7th grade English teacher Kate Tabor. “The workshops made me consider some novel uses for shared spaces on campus for group problem solving, quiet thinking and conversation. The event provided some wonderful strategies for me as a teacher but also as a learner with my own emotional reactions to the stressors of our world right now. It was helpful for me to remember that we teachers have to help ourselves before we can help others.”
Chicago Area Independent School Development (CAISD) Summer Camp
Parker hosted this fourth annual conference, which aims to connect independent school development professionals in the Midwest to network and learn from one another, in August. “Our goal is to bring together as many perspectives, ideas and experiences as possible so that participants can learn something innovative and new to help them achieve their goals,” said Associate Director of Development Connie Molzberger.

This year, for the first time, CASE V Venture Fund supported the event, which helped expand the conference length, fund professional speakers and provide travel sponsorships to those from outside the Chicago area. More than doubling the attendance from last year, this conference welcomed 74 development professionals from 24 independent schools. Professional speakers included Bob Burdenski, an annual giving consultant; Leo Latz, a partner at Latz & Company; and Sarah Abram, Rob Jones and Jami Hougen Johnson, members of the University of Chicago Analytics team.

In reflecting upon the success of this annual conference since its inaugural year in 2015, Molzberger shared, “I think it’s great. I wanted to create a dynamic, local, professional development option for collaboration and sharing among school fundraisers, and now we can look forward to it every year and watch it grow!”

Parker is sponsoring three events during the current academic year that intend to address issues affecting school communities by creating spaces for conversation, connection and enlightenment.

Administrators of Color in Independent Schools Conference
The first such conference specifically for educational leaders of color took place at Parker this past October, welcoming more than 70 senior administrators from around the country. Assistant Principal Ruth Jurgensen explained, “I go to other conferences that involve talking about leadership with other leaders. I might be one of at least 400 educators from around the country, but one of perhaps only a handful of clearly identifiable people of color. And while the National Association of Independent Schools hosts the People of Color Conference every year, the number of participants and events don’t allow for this very specific group to meet. So I talked with Dan [Frank] and Upper School Head Justin Brandon about creating an opportunity for administrators of color to discuss matters that resonate specifically with them.

“Our positions deal with the challenging and the mysterious at times, so being with others in similar positions is helpful and necessary.”

Keynote speakers included Northwestern University Provost Jonathan Holloway, historian of post-emancipation American history and black intellectualism and former Dean of Yale College; American University Professor of History and International Relations Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, founding director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center and author of Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America; and
Eugenia Cheng, scientist in residence in liberal arts at the School of the Art Institute, who has spoken several times at Parker. “Cheng’s upcoming book, *The Art of Logic in an Illogical World*, addresses the notion of how you exist in a world that is so emotive and appreciate that way of getting things done, yet not be allowed to show emotions,” Jurgensen described.

Three breakout sessions took place on the second day:

- “Leadership Branding for People of Color in Leadership in Independent Schools: The Critical Role of Authenticity” with Dr. Gene Batiste and Dr. Raymond Yu.
- “Measuring Inclusion: Conducting a Climate Assessment at Your School” with Dr. Derrick Gay, who has been collaborating with Parker faculty and staff on issues of diversity, equity and global citizenship (see *The Live Creature* Winter 2018 issue).
- An “Aspiring Heads” panel, moderated by Principal Dan Frank, with Marin Country Day School Head Dr. Lucinda Lee Katz, Edmund Burke School Head Damian Jones and Latin School of Chicago Head Randall Dunn. “Very few heads of school are of color or women or both,” noted Jurgensen. “So how do they get there?”

The timing of the conference was deliberate, according to Jurgensen. “We made a point of hosting this event during the school day so students could see a significant number of people of color in leadership positions.”

“I think the overall arc of the conference helped to create—and reinforce—a sense of community for participants,” said Sidra D. Smith, Ph.D., faculty recruitment director for Whittle School & Studios in Washington, DC. “I appreciated the workshop format of the midday...
session. We weren't passive listeners in the space of the workshop but rather active thinkers and doers engaged in dialogue. It was great to hear multiple voices, not just those of the presenters. …Overall, I left feeling that I had had some professional development, personal development, intellectual stimulation and interpersonal support.”

Young Men of Color Symposium with Wes Moore
This November event at Parker targeted young self-identified men of color in 6th–12th grades at Chicago-area independent schools. Participants explored their multiple identities and learned skills geared toward self-advocacy and community building. The goal was to empower students to affect positive change in their lives and their communities, using newly acquired language and knowledge. Additionally, adult participants attended workshops to help them critically examine how to create and sustain courageous, safe spaces within their schools and beyond to effectively serve young self-identified men of color.

“This symposium has run on the East Coast for years,” Jurgensen said. “Justin and [Middle and Upper School Director of Studies] Sven Carlsson attended last year and connected strongly with the program, so we partnered with the event founder, Dwight Vidale, to bring it here. The goal was to create affinity, community and spaces for young men of color who don’t experience critical mass at their schools.”

Keynote speaker Wes Moore is the CEO of Robin Hood, one of the largest anti-poverty forces in the nation. After being raised by a single mom in Baltimore and the Bronx, he graduated Phi Theta Kappa from Valley Forge Military College and Phi Beta Kappa from Johns Hopkins University. He earned an MLitt. degree in international relations from Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar and served as a captain and paratrooper with the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne, including a combat deployment to Afghanistan. He later
served as a White House Fellow to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Before joining Robin Hood, Moore was the founder and CEO of BridgeEdU, an innovative tech platform addressing the college completion and job placement crisis, and remains chairman of its board of directors.

Race, Privilege and Community Conference with Duchess Harris

This day-long conference on Saturday, March 30 will offer a dynamic and interactive program to educate and bring together Parker’s various constituency groups, such as the Upper School Student Task Force for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, as well as administrators, alumni, diversity coordinators, faculty, parents, students and trustees, to broaden and improve inclusion within Parker’s racial, socioeconomic and sexually diverse communities. Parker developed this event in partnership with Pollyanna, which creates discussion platforms for groups of people to explore issues of diversity, equity and inclusion and share experiences and knowledge.

“This event offers a real opportunity for substantive results,” Jurgensen outlined. “In the morning, members of all seven constituencies meet to address issues around the conference theme of race, privilege and community. In the afternoon, students present on topics related to the theme. The day ends with all community members reconnecting to create an action plan based on what everyone heard. So it’s very productive because a wide variety of stakeholders are invested in the work that needs to happen.”

Professor Duchess Harris, the conference’s keynote speaker, is chair of the American Studies Department at Macalester College. She co-authored *Hidden Human Computers: The Black Women of NASA* and *Black Lives Matter* with Sue Bradford Edwards, (Essential Library), authored *Black Feminist Politics from Kennedy to Clinton/Obama* (Palgrave Macmillan) and published an edited volume with Bruce Baum, *Racially Writing the Republic: Racists, Race Rebels, and Transformations of American Identity* (Duke University Press).

“I am so pleased and excited that Parker is demonstrating its leadership by hosting these events,” Jurgensen stated. “We are very fortunate that the school is devoting the resources to promoting a larger look at these issues that affect us all every day. We are setting an example for our peers around the country.”
Parker as a Center for Educational Thought: *Nightviews* and Educational Conferences

**Getting the Inside Out and the Outside In**

*Nightviews* is an “Evening Ex” program for adults and students from within the Parker community and for the public at-large. Started by Dan Frank more than 20 years ago, *Nightviews* has grown in scope and appeal, making Parker a local and national center for creative citizenship and educational leadership by featuring prominent thought leaders in a wide variety of fields.

“At first, I wanted to create a venue for Parker educators to share their knowledge with adults in our own community,” Frank explained. “Because Parker is a center for progressive thinking about education, society and human development, that vision soon expanded to include thought leaders sharing their insights with a broader audience. Parker is a community of young people and adults, and these programs are an impactful way to engage adults in enriching community learning experiences.”

Throughout the years, *Nightviews* has included conversations with Parker faculty members as well as invited guest speakers and authors sponsored by the school’s growing endowed scholar-in-residence series.

In addition, Parker has hosted many forward-thinking speakers through the school’s institutional partnerships with organizations including the Chicago Humanities Festival, the Family Action Network and the University of Chicago Press.

Parker also creates and runs many educational conferences and hosts conferences with such partner organizations as DePaul University, Bard College, the Institute for Social and Emotional Learning, the Progressive Education Network, the Institute for Psychoanalysis and more.

“I saw the opportunity for Parker to grow as a center for thinking about education, society, culture, history, science and citizenship, so I began organizing and hosting professional development conferences at Parker,” Frank said. “In time, other educational and cultural organizations joined us in sponsoring such opportunities for adult and student learning. Our central geographic location and commitment to public outreach has made Parker a desired place for educators around the country to come think about the broader field of education and human development. Parker’s international education journal *Schools: Studies in Education* is another example. We started the journal on our own, and when the University of Chicago Press—the largest academic press in the United States—learned about it, they were thrilled and eager to partner with us.”

Following is a comprehensive list of *Nightviews* presentations, endowed lectures and educational conferences Parker has offered to date.

Julie Lythcott-Haims spoke at Parker in spring 2017 as the school’s 19th annual Francine C. Rosenberg Lecturer and returned the following December for a *Nightviews* public lecture.
The Francine C. Rosenberg Memorial Lecture Series honors the memory of one of Parker’s most dedicated and effective volunteers, Francine C. Rosenberg. In her memory, the Lecture Series is dedicated to exposing Parker and the extended community to innovative views, philosophies and teachings relevant to the education of children and how we live our lives.

Dr. Shauna Shapiro  
*The Power of Mindfulness in Parenting and Teaching*  
2018–19

Eric Liu  
*Citizenship and Making Change Happen*  
2017–18

Julie Lythcott-Haims  
*How to Raise an Adult*  
2016–17

Dr. Bruce Perry  
*The Power of Empathy*  
2015–16

Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair  
*The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationships in the Digital Age*  
2014–15

Paul Tough  
*How Children Succeed*  
2013–14

Kenneth Ginsburgh, M.D., M.S.Ed.  
*Resilience in Action*  
2012–13

Michael G. Thompson, Ph.D.  
*Best Friends/Worst Enemies*  
2011–12

Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot  
*The Essential Conversation*  
2010–11

James P. Steyer  
*Raising Kids in the New Digital World*  
2009–10

Sir Ken Robinson, Ph.D.  
*The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*  
2008–09

Ruth J. Simmons, Ph.D.  
*U.S. Education in the Service of the World*  
2007–08

Michael J. Gelb  
*How to Think Like Leonardo da Vinci*  
2006–07

Robert Evans, Ed.D.  
*Raising Healthy Children*  
2005–06

Wendy Mogul, Ph.D.  
*Self-Reliant Children*  
2004–05

Edward Hallowell, M.D.  
*Roots of Adult Happiness*  
2003–04

Alvin Rosenfeld, M.D.  
*The Overscheduled Child*  
2002–03

Maria Trozzi  
*Resilience*  
2001–02

Beverly Daniel Tatum  
*Racism*  
2000–01

John Gottman, Ph.D.  
*Emotional Intelligence*  
1999–00

Judith Viorst  
*Lifelong Parenting*  
1997–98
Dr. Eve Van Cauter
Sleep as a Pillar of Health and Wellness
2018–19

Dr. Rick Stevens
A Look Into the Future of Computing
2017–18

Dr. Wendy Freedman
The Size and Age of the Universe
2016–17

Dr. Sian Beilock
Performing at Your Best Under Stress
2015–16

Dr. Elizabeth Gerber
Our Kids and the Future of Innovation
2014–15

Dr. Matthew Tirrell
Nanoparticles that Target Diseases Without Symptoms
2013–14

Dr. Don Hillebrand
Chicago: A Leader in Energy and Technology Breakthroughs
2012–13

Dr. Ka Yee Lee
An Interdisciplinary Approach Towards the Development of New Therapies for Treating Disease
2011–12

Dr. Edward “Rocky” Kolb
The Dark Side of the Universe
2010–11

Dr. Russell Mittermeier and Christina Mittermeier
Global Biodiversity Conservation
2009–10

Dr. Paul Sereno
People of the Sahara
2008–09

Dr. Leon M. Lederman
Symmetry and the Beautiful Universe
2007–08

The Robert A. Pritzker Visiting Scientist•Inventor•Engineer in Residence program was created by a gift to Parker in honor of engineer, industrialist and philanthropist Robert A. Pritzker ’44. This program aims to expand science education opportunities at Parker and foster an ongoing dialogue among students and teachers about current issues in science.

(L–R) Drs. Ka Yee Lee, Sian Beilock, Wendy Freedman and Edward “Rocky” Kolb came back to Parker last year to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Robert A. Pritzker Visiting Scientist•Inventor•Engineer in Residence program.
Last year, violinist Sean Lee and cellist Mihai Marica of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center visited the school as Parker’s inaugural Joan W. Harris Visiting Music Scholars in Residence.

The **Jeanne Harris Hansell Endowed Fund for Poetry** was established to enable the school to host renowned guest poets and speakers about poetry annually.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>2018–19</td>
<td>Naomi Shihab Nye</td>
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<td>2015–16</td>
<td>Kevin Young</td>
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<td>2013–14</td>
<td>Nikky Finney</td>
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<td>2014–15</td>
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<td>2012–13</td>
<td>Billy Collins</td>
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The **Joan W. Harris Visiting Music Scholar in Residence** was established to provide experiences for students to find inspiration in, learn, appreciate and understand the transformative power of classical music.

- **Music of the Baroque**<br> 2018–19
- **The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**<br> 2017–18

The **D’Rita and Robbie Robinson Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Speaker Series** was established to provide opportunities to share insightful perspectives on vital issues facing our democratic society and global world.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2018–19</td>
<td>Charles M. Blow</td>
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Additional Nightviews Events

Michael S. Roth
Why Liberal Education Matters More than Ever
March 2019

Dr. Lisa Damour
Parenting in an Age of Anxiety
May 2018

David Farber
50 Years after Chicago ’68
March 2018

Julie Lythcott-Haims
Real American: A Memoir
December 2017

Ta-Nehisi Coates
We Were Eight Years in Power
October 2017

An Evening with Representative John Lewis and Andrew Aydin on the book March
in partnership with the Family Action Network
May 2017

Revisiting the Underground Railroad with Colson Whitehead
in partnership with the Family Action Network
February 2017

An Evening with Beverly Daniel Tatum
December 2015

Free Public Screening of Most Likely to Succeed
with Post-Show Discussion
October 2015

Ron Lieber ’89
Money and Class
February 2015

An Evening with Ken Burns
The Roosevelts: An Intimate History
in conjunction with WTTW
September 2014

Sam Chaltain
The Promise (& the Peril) of School Choice
May 2014

Free Public Screening of Good Morning Mission Hill
with Post-Show Discussion
April 2014

Danny Heumann
How to Overcome Adversity and Manage Change Effectively
October 2013

Poetry at Parker: Original Works by Parker Poets
May 2012

Free public screening of The Interrupters
with Post-Show Discussion
February 2012

Poetry at Parker: Original Works by Parker Poets
December 2011

Eric Klinenberg ’89
Going Solo: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone
in conjunction with the Chicago Humanities Festival
November 2011

Deborah Riley
Beneath the Mask: Understanding Adopted Teens
February 2011

Diana Hess, Ph.D.
Controversy in the Classroom
February 2011

A Play by Rohina Malik
Unveiled
November 2010

Jonathan Alter ’75
The Promise: President Obama Year One.
in conjunction with the Chicago Humanities Festival
June 2010

Anna Deavere Smith’s Fires in the Mirror
performed by the 16th Street Theater
March 2010

Dr. Richard Weissbourd
The Parents We Mean to Be
March 2010

Free Public Screening of Race to Nowhere
with Post-Show Discussion
February 2010

Tim Wise
Race, Privilege and the Trouble with Color-Blindness: Getting from Equity to Diversity
December 2009

Dr. Michael Thompson
The Pressured Child
November 2009

Feeling Connected to Self, Others and Ideas: Paths Towards Educational Excellence
April 2006

Middlesex: A Community Discussion with Author Jeffrey Eugenides
February 2006

An Evening with Frances Judd
Words of Wisdom on Children’s Issues of Gender
November 2005

Kenneth Eisold, Ph.D.
When the Client is the Organization: Using the Unconscious at Work
in conjunction with the International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations and Chicago Center for the Study of Groups and Organizations
March 2005

Paul Trafton
Math for the 21st Century
October 2004

Children of Willesden Lane:
Musical Moments with Mona Golabek and students from Alexandar Graham Bell Elementary and Francis W. Parker School
in conjunction with Facing History and Ourselves and the Allstate Foundation
May 2004
A Passion for Excellence in Education: Creating a Culture of Inclusion
February 2004

Parker Alive!
Parker, Dewey and the Green Garbage Bag
November 2003

Robert Minor, Ph.D.
Scaring Our Children into Masculinity and Femininity
October 2003

Jim Trelease
Reading Aloud: Motivating Children to Make Books into Friends, Not Enemies
April 2003

An Evening with Adrienne Rich, with Ed Pavlic and Sarwat Rumi
in conjunction with the Guild Literary Complex
April 2003

Integrated Central Subjects and Social Studies in the Lower School
April 2003

Mike Riera
Right from Wrong: Instilling a Sense of Integrity in Your Child
April 2002

The Promise of International Collaboration Among Schools
March 2002

Internationalizing Secondary Education for the 21st Century
January 2002

Dr. Michael Thompson
The Dynamics of Friendship and the Parental Role
December 2001

Ilana Kaufman
What Does Racial Identity Even Mean? Lessons We Can Learn From Students with Multiracial Backgrounds
April 2001

Kevin Tavin
From Barbie to McJobs: What Do Children Learn About Race, Gender and Class Through Popular Visual Culture
April 2001

Mary Dilg
Race, Gender and Identity in School Life
March 2001

Dr. Cornel West
January 2000

Patricia Hirsch
A Tribe Apart: A Journey into the Heart of American Adolescence
December 1999

Experiencing Progressive Education: An Evening for Parker Parents with Parker Teachers
March 1999

Dr. Michael Thompson
Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys and Friendship, Relationships, Conflict and Cliques Among Early Adolescents
January 1999

Francis W. Parker: Father of Progressive Education
Play by teacher Marie Kirchner Stone and Parker students
October 1998

Education at Parker Night I
October 1998

Free Public Screening of The Long Way Home
with Post-Show Discussion
June 1998

Louise Derman-Sparks and Carol Brunson Phillips
Confronting Issues of Race, Culture and Gender: How Parents, Teachers and Students Can Work Together
April 1998

Longitude and Latitude: A Poem of Navigation
with Dan Frank, Cokey Evans, George Drury, Zev Frank, Jonathan Grossman, Julia McMurray, Amanda Gecht and Casey Jacobs
November 1997

Carol Gilligan
A Talk on Adolescent Development
October 1997

Robert V. Remini, Ph.D.
Could Daniel Webster Be Elected in 2000?
in partnership with the Chicago Humanities Festival
September 1997

Barry O’Connell, Ph.D.
What is at the Heart of Secondary Schools
February 1997

John Leary, Ph.D.
Traveling in the Gulf States: Two Weeks in Kuwait and Oman
May 1996

Bernard Kent Markwell, Ph.D.
The Crisis in Values: American Society and the End of the 21st Century
April 1996

Harold S. Koplewicz, M.D.
The Hurried Parent: Can Our Kids Keep Up with Us?
April 1996

Prexy Nesbitt, M.A.
Tarzan, Elephants and Foreign Policy
April 1996
Poet Nikky Finney visited the school as Parker’s second Jeanne Harris Hansell Endowed Poet during the 2013–14 academic year.

Einstein Conference
Celebrating Einstein and Science: Past, Present and Future
December 2005

The Hidden Questions Conference
Listening to the Subjective Experience of School Life
A School Romance Roundtable Conference
December 2000

The School Romance
Psychodynamic Approaches to the Subjective Experience of School Life
A Roundtable Conference
December 1995

Conferences Hosted in Partnership with Parker

Einstein Conference
Celebrating Einstein and Science: Past, Present and Future
December 2005

The Hidden Questions Conference
Listening to the Subjective Experience of School Life
A School Romance Roundtable Conference
December 2000

The School Romance
Psychodynamic Approaches to the Subjective Experience of School Life
A Roundtable Conference
December 1995

Educational Conferences

Race, Privilege and Community Conference with Duchess Harris
March 2019

Young Men of Color Symposium with Wes Moore
November 2018

Administrators of Color in Independent Schools Conference
Keynote Speakers: Jonathan Holloway, Ibram X. Kendi, Eugenia Cheng
November 2018

Journalism and Society News in a Post-Truth Nation
January 2018

Chicago Education Festival
A Celebration of Thinking Big in Education
September 2014

Reuniting Parker, Dewey, Makiguchi and Ikeda
Educating for Community and Citizenship Across Language and Culture
co-sponsored with DePaul University School of Education
March 2011

Progressive Education National Conference
The Power of Progressive Practice
March 2011

Progressive Educators’ Conference
Living Progressive Education: Thinking About Opportunities and Struggles Facing Progressive Education Today
in conjunction with Winnetka School District 36
April 2006

Metropolitan Math Conference
Spring 2005
When talking with Parker parents Anny Gary and Ali Kagan ’87, one would never guess they hadn’t met before May 2017, when they found out they would be co-chairs of the Parents’ Association (PA) beginning in the 2017–18 academic year.

“From the moment we spoke on the phone, after we found out we got the job, we have been so in sync,” said Gary. “Even though Ali’s family represents three generations at Parker and I’m fairly new, our vision has been very aligned.” With children in all four of the school’s divisions when they started last year—Gary’s children were in 1st and 5th grades, Kagan’s were in 6th, 9th and 11th—the two have an unusual school-wide perspective as well as the balance of fresh eyes versus decades of experience with the school. They are so “in sync,” they frequently finish each other’s sentences.

Both parents were destined for parent leadership. Kagan had served as a grade chair every year since her children started at Parker, except the two years she was co-chair of the Athletics Council. Even her family members were active parents. “My mom [Marilyn Kushen] co-chaired the Evening Courses, my dad [Buzz Ruttenberg ’58] was president of the Board of Trustees, and my grandmother [Sarajean Ruttenberg] co-chaired the Auction in 1959.”

Gary had been active at her children’s preschool and was ready to get involved right away. “One of the things that attracted us to Parker was the strong sense of community, not only among the students but the faculty, parents and alumni. I was eager to help build on that sense of community among parents.” Her background in marketing led her to the committee that designed the recent parent survey assessing the success of the PA’s goals; she also has been a grade chair and a member of the Parent Trustee Nominating Committee.

Kagan and Gary truly hit the ground running, determined to use the survey results as a guide to reimagining the role of the PA and how it can best serve parents. “The survey results confirmed that Parker has a very positive parent community that loves being part of the school,” said Gary. “But we had an area of opportunity: helping parents who want to be involved to feel included, no matter their background, where they live, what they look like, whether they were multi-generational or brand-new, whether they work full-time or have lots of time during the day, whether they are moms or dads. The challenge: How do you engage every parent on some level in the life of the school?”

“We have a tremendous number of ways to volunteer at Parker, so we want to be sure to promote volunteer opportunities to the widest audience possible.”
To address this challenge, the PA has expanded its executive team from four people—the Co-Chairs, a Secretary and a Treasurer—to 15, including divisional Grade Chair Liaisons, Event Chairs, Volunteer Chairs and Year One Committee Chairs. Collectively they operate with two new priorities—inclusivity and parent engagement—as they continue to work towards achieving the long-standing PA goals of fostering community, facilitating communication between home and the school and supporting volunteerism.

“The expanded executive team has allowed Anny and me to have a broader reach,” Kagan explained. “Our predecessors were juggling so many responsibilities and supervising 84 grade chairs and multiple volunteer committees. That is a huge job and doesn’t give you time and opportunity to move things forward. Insight from the survey, then putting the right team in place and allowing them to run with things have allowed us some additional time to function at a macro level school-wide.”
Among their accomplishments: a complete revamping of the Grade Chair program, including orientation and all the materials, to support inclusivity and engagement. “We’ve shifted the concept of the grade chair from someone who assists in the classroom to that of a parent leader,” Kagan said. “Although the survey indicated parents viewed grade chairs as leaders, the grade chairs themselves didn’t necessarily see it that way, so we gave them a clearer job description.” Gary added, “We’re promoting the idea that no matter where you are—in a school meeting or at a potluck or dropping off your children—you represent Parker and the PA as a parent leader. And that means having a host mentality—reaching out and helping people to feel included, just like a host would do.”

Another area that has undergone streamlining is volunteering. “We have a tremendous number of ways to volunteer at Parker, so we want to be sure to promote volunteer opportunities to the widest audience possible,” Kagan described. “Before, when volunteers were needed, parents often reached out to friends or past volunteers, which we want to continue doing, but we felt there was an untapped group of volunteers. The survey indicated some people felt left out because they’d see people volunteering and didn’t know how to get involved. Now, for every school-wide event, we send out an open call to all parents, followed by a reminder email and an additional reminder in This Week @ Parker. This open call happens at the grade level and class level, too. The response has been tremendous! New parents are volunteering to chair activities and, as the leadership, we’re discovering these highly capable people in our community. And having new parents and families get involved causes a domino effect by attracting even more new families.”

Gary and Kagan also were eager to take a fresh look at another key aspect of their work, based on the survey responses: how Parker welcomes new families into the community. They worked with what were the New Parent chairs and Host Family chairs and decided to re-create the first-year process. “We realized that the school already does a phenomenal job of welcoming new students, but the kids don’t need much time to feel comfortable since they come to school every day, so this needs to be for the parents,” Kagan said.

Gary elaborated, “Previously, the school invited new parents to opt in for a host family early and then there was a one-on-one match. It happened during the summer and relied upon parents to take the initiative. Now it starts upon enrollment, and our chairs of this newly named Year One program are the ones who make the calls to new parents.” The Year One Committee has a team for each grade that includes new parents. The size of the team varies, with larger teams for the grades that typically welcome more new students (JK, 6th and 9th), though every team has at least three veteran parents. And in these grades, there is now one new parent on the grade chair team. The PA has also centralized communication within the Year One Committee and created some materials, including a “Cheat Sheet” about all things Parker that longtime Parker families may already know.

“People can make a lot of assumptions about what someone knows and doesn’t know,” Kagan said. “That’s another reason Anny and I make a great team because sometimes there are things I take for granted and Anny doesn’t know about them. These situations open our eyes to a variety of perspectives. We share the Cheat Sheet with new faculty, too.”
Another area the co-chairs have updated are the PA meetings, which run longer “to allow us to be more substantive,” Kagan commented, but take place fewer times during the year. Each meeting includes standard updates from the Board of Trustees, the PA and the school and a featured topic, such as the “State of the School” or news about admission or finances. “We also are including topics that offer a peek behind the curtain at the wonderful education our children are getting,” said Gary. “Last year one topic was ‘Reading and Literacy,’ the other was ‘Math and Science.’ Our first one this year took a look at Parker’s approach to social emotional development.” She and Kagan are also pleased to make it easier for parents to find out what they missed if they’re unable to attend the meetings, both through This Week @ Parker and the new Parent Portal.

All the work by these dynamic parent leaders has led to a brand-new PA mission statement: to cultivate a vibrant parent community that engages every one of us in the life of the school. “After a year on the job, we wanted to articulate what we’d been doing, so moving forward everything would be clear,” Gary stated. “That idea of inclusivity and parent engagement is front and center; it’s what we strive to do every single day. We still have our three goals—community, communication and volunteerism. But this is our passion and now it’s in writing.”

Ultimately what Kagan and Gary value most are the people they are there to support: Parker parents. Said Kagan, “The best part of being in this position is the opportunity to meet so many people. The relationships we already had become even more enriching. Plus we’re meeting people we might not have otherwise met.” Added Gary, “And we try to make it fun, too!”

References to “parent” and “parents” in this article also include legal guardians of students.
New Classroom and Lab Spaces Provide New Opportunities for Learning and Collaboration

The places and spaces within the school where teaching and learning take place can be as important as the curriculum taught within their walls. Thoughtful attention to how the school designs and uses a space intentionally opens up a world of possibilities for teachers and students to engage with as part of their ongoing studies. Here we offer a closer look at three such new spaces on campus.

**Spanish Language and Cultures Classroom for Grades 3–5**

Parker 3rd–5th grade students are experiencing a special new learning space, the Spanish Language and Cultures classroom. Designed from the ground up with students in mind, this bright and welcoming space features furniture and a layout conducive to the flow of studies and offers a much-needed anchor space for all things Spanish language and culture in the Lower and Intermediate Schools.

Previously, Spanish teachers taught these students in their home classrooms. While this worked well for many years, there were limitations in three areas: curricular offerings in the realm of cultural competency, materials for use in class and technology.

The new space has eliminated these obstacles, and the student response has been overwhelmingly positive. In addition to using the space as a home for their Spanish curricula, Intermediate School students also enjoy their morning enrichment program Martes Social, when they take “deeper dives” into the language and cultures of the Hispanic world, in the new classroom.

Commenting on her new space, Spanish teacher Karen Liszka shared, “Having a Spanish anchor space between the 3rd grade atrium and the Intermediate School hallway is the perfect spot for collaboration. Interdisciplinary units incorporating math, science and the grade-level Central Topics are already in progress, as well as joint projects between students engaged in Morning Math Enrichment and Martes Social.”

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TIDES Garage in the Kovler Family Library

When the reimagined Kovler Family Library opened its doors to students last year, the TIDES Garage quickly proved to be one of the most popular—and noisy—destinations in the new space. The 3D printers grind away next to sewing machines, and ample shelving and cupboards provide student-accessible homes for numerous robots, virtual reality (VR) viewing devices, electronics such as LittleBits circuits, as well as fabrics, glue, cardboard and more conventional crafting materials.

TIDES (Technology, Innovation, Design thinking and Entrepreneurship for Society) is a school-wide initiative that seeks to empower Parker students to think, create, adapt and invent. The Integrated Learning and Information Science (ILIS) Department works with teachers to provide collaborative design-thinking projects for students. The TIDES Garage is a space where this happens.

The TIDES Garage is Parker’s dedicated space for maker/technology tools and materials for collaborative curriculum and independent projects. Serving JK–12 learners, the space is flexible. Tables and chairs are height-adjustable to serve different sized students, and they are on wheels, allowing for quick reconfiguration of the space depending on the work at hand. The walls and doors have writable surfaces for students engaged in collaborative work to collect ideas and plans and share with their peers. These doors also swivel and slide, opening up the space to the rest of the library—or not—to help teachers manage noise and activities.

“As technology changes and emerges, and new building materials become available, we can adjust and rework the space to meet those changing needs.”

After nearly a year and a half, the TIDES Garage has become a whole-school resource. Upper School students have used the space for their Social Entrepreneurship class and green screen filming for a history class. Middle School students have used it for a history and science project on identity. Fifth graders have connected their study of the Middle Ages with a coding/technology project there. And Lower School students have engaged in maker projects rooted in their Central Topic studies. Students and staff regularly use the 3D printers and laser cutter for class and personal work, and students visit the space during lunch to use materials to complete projects. Before and after school, students participating in Maker Wednesdays explore creation tools with their peers, as does the Maker Morning Club. Faculty teams and teachers also regularly gather in the space to collect ideas using the whiteboard walls.

Educational Technology Integration Specialists Sarah Beebe and Mary Catherine Coleman played a large role in designing and developing this purpose-built space. They knew the importance of making and building in their curriculum and wanted a space that would be accessible to all students and fit Parker’s culture.

Reflecting upon the TIDES Garage after its first year in service, Beebe shared, “We hope it will grow so students can expand their knowledge and skills as they move through the grades using the TIDES Garage to collaborate and build. As technology changes and emerges, and new building materials become available, we can adjust and rework the space to meet those changing needs.”
Robotics Shop

After 15 years of working out of the back areas of science classrooms, Upper School students and teachers involved in Parker’s Robotics program began this academic year with a dedicated space to explore aspects of engineering from all angles in the new Robotics Shop.

This space provides a permanent home to nearly 30 students who contribute to one or more of Parker’s three Upper School Robotics teams (two FIRST Tech Challenge Teams and the MATE ROV team, which focuses on underwater robotics). The Robotics Shop connects to the woodshop, providing easy access to existing shop capabilities and offering a host of new resources, including a laser cutter, CNC mill and 3D printers.

Having a dedicated space to prototype, test and refine their designs using light welding, laser cutting, painting, grinding, pneumatics and other disciplines was impossible when students were working in the science classrooms. Upper School science teachers, Parker parents and Robotics advisors Aaron Lee and Elizabeth Druger worked directly with students, the Facilities Committee and the contractor to develop a finished space that Robotics programs can grow into for years to come.

Lee sees this new space as an extension of the TIDES Garage in the Kovler Family Library. “The 3D printing and laser cutting fabrication in the library makerspace has been a great resource for teachers and students to introduce a maker culture, innovation and design into the classroom. The Robotics Shop is a similar resource for collaboration, with a focus on more intensive engineering and fabrication projects.”

The team put the Robotics Shop to the test when they hosted a “build a robot in a weekend” session in the new space during the first weekend of the school year. Parker teams and volunteers built three competition robots in just 16 hours of work inside the new space. The event received sponsorship from the two largest parts suppliers for FIRST Robotics (AndyMark and REV Robotics) and would not have been possible without the new Robotics Shop.

“The new Robotics space is important for many physical reasons as well as a major symbolic one,” said senior Nathan Satterfield. “Having a dedicated space will allow the Robotics teams to work in a safer environment and build more freely, since we will no longer need to put away our work and tools at the end of every meeting. Symbolically, it’s a huge signal from the school that the Robotics team is an important part of the community, and it recognizes our great success of the past few years. I hope the Robotics teams will be able to build even more technically advanced robots. I also hope the Robotics program will grow and welcome even more student participation.”

The space provides a permanent home to nearly 20 students who contribute to one or more of Parker’s three Upper School Robotics teams.
A. Kyle Mack

Like many Parker parents, A. Kyle Mack recognizes the value of one of Parker’s oldest traditions: Morning Ex. When he presented an MX this fall on the topic of sickle cell disease (SCD), his 4th grade daughter Alayna introduced him with confidence and humor. “One of the great things about Parker is having this opportunity to develop the ability to speak in front of a large group of people,” he commented. “Everyone needs to be able to own the room, look people in the eye and speak clearly.”

An attending physician in the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology and Stem Cell Transplantation Division at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago and assistant professor of pediatrics at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Mack educated his audience about his work as a physician who takes care of children with blood problems, specifically SCD. Parker recently partnered with Mack and Lurie Children’s to host a blood drive for SCD, attracting first-time donors, return donors, teenagers, staff, parents and administrators, all with the goal of increasing the blood supply for patients in need. “A specific goal was to collect units from donors of African descent largely for patients with SCD who are also of African descent,” Mack said. “Many patients with SCD need red blood cell transfusions, and donations from people of African descent are the best match for these patients. This blood drive was extremely successful due to the commitment of the school and its students. We exceeded our goal, which is a remarkable achievement.” Parker will host a second blood drive on Wednesday, March 6, 2019.

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Mack, who grew up in Miami, Florida, followed in his father’s footsteps when he chose a career in medicine. His father, who had wanted to go to medical school but could not afford it, earned master’s and Ph.D. degrees in genetics and immediately joined the staff at the University of Miami medical school, where his son eventually obtained his M.D. Prior to medical school, Mack attended Stanford University, where he took a somewhat less traditional track before enrolling in medical school.
“I majored in human biology, which is a bit different from the typical biology track,” Mack explained. “A biology major typically takes upper level bio classes and labs, but a major in human biology—‘hum bio’—is a little different. I had modules for developmental biology and developmental psychology at the same time to help me appreciate the entire person. This compelled me to pursue my passion in medicine. I’m a big believer in the art of medicine. I don’t believe that a computer or a robot can do my job because I connect with my patients and especially with their parents, and I strive to connect with them on a human level.”

He stayed at the University of Miami for his pediatrics residency and then did his fellowship at Johns Hopkins University and the National Institutes of Health. Though he was fortunate to have several professional opportunities, a colleague at what was then Children’s Memorial encouraged him to come work with her in Chicago.

Other pieces of Mack’s life were falling into place that connected to Chicago as well: the night before his first interview at Children’s, he had his first date with the woman he’d eventually marry, Kristin Lane. “I joke that I moved to Chicago in 2006 for her, and she moved here later that year for me. Her professional background is in development and planning, and she helped develop and plan my career.” They married in 2007 and moved to Oak Park. Now they have a lot of family in Chicago, including Kristin’s brother and sister-in-law, who live in Hyde Park, where their sons go to the Lab School; Mack’s sister, who previously worked for the Washington Post, Chicago Tribune and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and now works for the MacArthur Foundation in Chicago; and Mack’s father, who retired, as did his in-laws.

Though they enjoyed living in Oak Park, Mack and his wife realized that much of their life was downtown. “Our church was in the city, I worked in the city, we’d go out in the city,” he recited. “I did the math and realized I was spending more than 350 hours a year commuting. Then we had ‘the storm of the century’ and a flooded basement three springs in a row, so we decided to move.”

They had heard about Parker and ended up living close by. When the time came for their oldest daughter to start school, they toured the school. “Alayna loved it right from the beginning and still does,” Mack said. “Then Eva (2nd grade) and Thea (SK) followed the same path, and they are very happy at Parker—we all are.”

Mack has also enjoyed deepening his relationship with the school, serving on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee for the past two years. He also recently acted as a facilitator at the school’s Young Men of Color Symposium.

Though his medical specialty, hematology, covers many diseases of the blood, sickle cell disease has been a particular focus. “My father was the executive director of the Sickle Cell Center of America at the University of Miami,” he said. “Then he became dean of minority affairs at the medical school. So, growing up, all my school science fair projects were on sickle cell disease; it made sense that, by the time I got to medical school, I’d focus on that.”

Because SCD largely affects people of African descent, Mack has focused considerable time and energy on helping to increase the number of African-American blood donors, partnering with the Red Cross on the Blue Tie Tag Program. “Though African Americans represent 12 percent of the general population, they account for less than one percent of blood donors,” he shared.
Mack with his wife Kristin Lane and their daughters (clockwise from R) Alayna, Thea and Eva.
“Our rationale is that we want to better match red cells for some of the minor proteins on the red cell membranes of donors and SCD recipients to reduce the chance of rejection of those donor blood cells. We modeled this program after a program at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. They brought in unprecedented numbers of young donors, including people of color and women. We’re hoping to do the same thing in Chicago.” Mack himself has been a consistent donor, recently earning his “gallon pin.”

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Mack serves as a director of the Chicago and Northern Illinois chapter of the American Red Cross. He is also a trustee of Erikson Institute, a child advocacy and graduate school for early childhood development in Chicago.

He is pleased with the direction his career is taking and the progress his efforts are making. “I didn't foresee carving out this particular niche but I’ve enjoyed it. It's allowed me to stay grounded and connected with students through my work at Parker, with educators through my work at Erikson and with patients through my work at the hospital.”
Liz Villagomez: Upper School Spanish Teacher

Though it’s common for the transition from Middle School to Upper School to present challenges for students, what about for a faculty member? Liz Villagomez taught 7th grade Spanish at Parker for 12 years, but this year she moved to the Upper School. “It’s been amazing working with older students,” she said. “I’m excited about it; it’s like being a first-year teacher all over again.”

Actually, Villagomez, who is also co-chair of Parker’s Languages and Cultural Studies Department, had taught high school Spanish previously, in her first professional position at Lincoln Park High School (LPHS). But the path there wasn’t a foregone conclusion.

Villagomez grew up in Chicago, with a two-year stint in Mexico, as one of five children whose parents wanted them all to go to college—but not too far from home. “My two older sisters were enrolled at DePaul and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC),” she explained. “I wanted to explore the possibility of going to the University of Illinois in Champaign, but that was not going to happen. Our culture is very protective, so there was no convincing my parents.”

Villagomez enrolled at UIC, majoring in secondary education with a focus in Spanish, thanks to guidance from her mother. “My sisters were in the business world, and I knew I wanted to do something different. My mom said, ‘You’re such a patient person, maybe you should consider teaching.’ I hadn’t considered that but thought it might be a good idea.”

She knew she wanted to teach high school but didn’t decide on a subject area at first. She had loved her French teacher when she attended Bogan Technical High School, and she had a desire to learn her family’s language better. “I was teased as a young person that I didn’t really know how to speak Spanish,” she recalled. “A lot of what I spoke was ‘Spanglish,’ so I thought this would be a perfect opportunity to truly learn my language, the language I grew up listening to and thought I knew.”

LPHS hired Villagomez right out of college to teach in its International Baccalaureate program. “Pretty quickly I noticed a lot of kids in my classes came from native speaker backgrounds like me, and they were bored out of their minds learning the basics. So I approached the administration and suggested we start a Native Speakers course. It was only my first year there, and I had no idea how they’d respond, but they said they’d support it!” After a year of creating the program and identifying qualified students, Villagomez launched the Native Speakers course with 15 students at the first level. Eventually it expanded to include second- and third-level Spanish and an AP Literature course as well. “It was a very successful thing that I accomplished there, and I was really proud of it,” she said.
A few years later, a former LPHS colleague who had been teaching 7th grade Spanish at Parker was moving out of town and encouraged her to apply for his position. She was happy at LPHS and didn’t think she was ready for a change. But her friend insisted, so she took a chance, and when Parker offered her the position, she realized she had a decision to make.

“I would be leaving a place I loved, and I had never worked with middle schoolers,” she remarked. “But I was working on my master’s in administration and leadership at DePaul, and I realized what a great opportunity this would be, so I took the job without knowing what I was getting myself into.”

Though Villagomez wasn’t as sure of herself teaching younger students, then-Middle School Head Tom Rosenbluth, who had hired her, assured her she should keep doing what she was doing, and after a couple of years, she felt more confident. “I think I was being too critical of myself,” she commented. “I realized they needed more hand-holding; they were seeking a sense of independence and responsibility but still needed that built-in support. And clearly they grew on me after 12 years!”

Similar to the way she came up with the Native Speakers program at LPHS during her first year there, Villagomez thought of a way to combine her personal passion with professional purpose. “I enjoy music and dancing, and dancing to Spanish music is dear to my heart. During my first year, I decided I wanted each section of 7th graders to learn a different Latin dance, but I didn’t know how to choreograph.” As it happened, Celso Cardenas, who worked in Parker’s College Counseling Department, offered his choreographic skills, so together they developed the program for the following year.

“The debut of the Latin Dance Morning Ex was a big success. “I can’t tell you how many emails I got saying how much people enjoyed it, how great it was to see the kids on stage,” Villagomez exclaimed. “My inbox was filled with love from the entire community.” Though she wasn’t sure the program would last past the first year, her 7th graders the following year asked about it, and now it has become a highly anticipated annual tradition. In more recent years, Registrar Matt McGaw has helped with the choreography, “and I even took the risk and started choreographing a little myself,” Villagomez revealed. “Culturally you’re exposing the students to so much—a country, its music, dance, history, all of which we discuss in class. Every year, my goal was to figure out a different theme for the Latin Dance MX.”

“Culturally you’re exposing the students to so much—a country, its music, dance, history, all of which we discuss in class. Every year, my goal was to figure out a different theme for the Latin Dance MX.”
Putting her master’s degree to good use, Villagomez served as 7th Grade Team Leader for four years and became co-chair of the department two years ago. “Leadership roles help me think about things differently,” she said. Though several opportunities arose to return to the Upper School—where her career started—it was never the right time before this year. “If I take on something, I want to fulfill my responsibilities to do the best that I can, and it wasn’t my time before now.”

Someday she might even find her own children, who are in 1st and 3rd grades at Parker, in her classroom. “The boys love the school, they love every moment they’re here,” she stated. “I’ve met some lovely parents in my boys’ classrooms, too. I don’t know what it’s going to look like when they are in the Upper School but I have a little time on that!”

Villagomez’s husband, Felipe Orozco, also loves Parker. “He thinks we are very fortunate to have our boys attend such a great school,” she said. “Not only are the boys getting a great education, but the fact that I teach here makes it super-easy on our family life!” Orozco, an independent contractor for the Chicago Tribune Distribution Department, appreciates having the flexibility to volunteer at the school when his schedule permits. “Felipe enjoys volunteering because he likes being around the boys and helping out in whatever capacity he can. He speaks highly of Parker because he knows the teachers will get to know our boys well and nurture their learning.”

Villagomez has never let go of her lifelong love of travel. “Although my parents didn’t want me to go away to school, I decided to apply for a study abroad program in Spain,” she said. “It was hard for my parents to think of me being so far away but my Dad convinced my Mom. I fell in love with Spain; it was a magical experience. So when I got to LPHS, I urged my students to study abroad. I told them it didn’t matter where they went; it would open their eyes to many things.” She continued encouraging that experience during the biannual 7th and 8th grade trips, the most recent to the Dominican Republic.

She’s also cultivating the value of travel in her children. “In the last three years, we’ve been back to my parents’ hometown, which has been great for my boys,” she noted. And those experiences inform her Parker role as well, exemplifying that desire to “get the inside out and the outside in.”
A Community of Learners: Alumni

Marta Kenar ’98

Although she was born in the U.S., Marta Kenar’s first language was Polish. Her parents left Poland, lived in Sweden for eight years, then came to the U.S. After graduating from Parker, she earned a psychology degree from DePaul University, interning at Children’s Memorial. She opened A Vision, a boutique floral and wine shop in Chicago’s East Village, with two friends, “which ended up being a 12-year rodeo, rom-com and Chicago version of Cheers,” she said. In 2016, she opened MCP Rescue & Outreach, a nonprofit dog rescue and humanitarian organization that has saved more than 515 dogs to date.

What were your early school experiences like prior to Parker?

Before coming to Parker my school experiences were fairly empty. I was a sickly child and missed a lot of school. When present, I didn’t identify with my surroundings—or more, they didn’t with me. I attended Catholic school till 5th grade, when an art teacher gave me a C, and my mother dragged me out halfway through the school year. I come from a family of artists—go figure, that wasn’t acceptable. Feisty women in this family! It was truly only the straw that broke the camel’s back.

Moving on, I was placed at Oscar Mayer Elementary. I pretty much had no friends and was the laughing stock of each classroom’s jokes. Thankfully my Mama knew I was different and from the age of five introduced me to a new world to identify with. I rode horses and essentially lived at the stables. In school I was daydreaming of the smells of hay and calming exhales of the magical mammals. I became best friends with a horse named Strawberry who went barn sour and was to be sent to the glue factory. We lived our best life for the next eight years, showing and traveling. She was retired to live out her seniority on a grassy farm. Barn life and animals saved me from becoming too weird and shut down. I graduated from there in 1994 and moved on to Parker for high school. Waiting list or no waiting list, Mama Bear was an immigrant fighting for the proper education of her child. I was going to Parker and that was that. Parker remains extremely dear to my heart. It’s a sense of Home, forever.

How did you first develop your love of animals?

My love of animals was from birth. Sounds cliché but it’s true. Their presence connects me to the world whereas things like Starbucks shut me down. Instead of dressing dolls for tea parties, I was outside or staring out the window pretending to be sorceress of the wind and birds. Can you imagine? Hilarious, and completely true. From toddler age through adolescence to current day, animals have been and will always be my best friends. I understand their language. I feel their pain. I’m grateful for the frequency on which they communicate and connect. I understand animals better than humans. They annoy me less. Their hearts are gold. Their intentions are pure. If an animal cannot be rehabbed, it’s human fault, not the animal’s conscious intention to fail. I trust them. I see them. I feel them. There’s lots of incredible language between us and them or just among themselves. It’s fascinating to me. They possess more truth, beauty and unconditional love that goes without saying. They complete and deplete me in the same breath.
Why did you decide to create MCP Rescue & Outreach? What are you most proud of accomplishing with MCP?

MCP stands for Mission Compassion Paw. Our branding was inspired by old school hip hop, our love for animals and an urban feel—less cutesy was our goal. We are working on integrating programs with urban youth. We partner with organizations that are three times our senior and size. We put on spay/neuter/vaccination clinics for communities in all corners of the city. We take on many hospice dogs, trauma dogs and special needs dogs that are overlooked at the kill shelters. Each of our creatures is saturated in storybook character. Outside of making a difference in so many animals’ lives, building this incredible Pack that is MCP is mind blowing. I’m so beyond grateful for the time, tears, dedication, poo, pain and full heart our humans give. They inspire me. Those who believe in what and how we do inspire me. We know our animals well, and we look for organic connections and humans willing to put in the work to create a successful and thriving forever relationship. We stand behind our magical friends 100 percent.

At MCP we are extremely hands-on and personal. We know our dogs well. We are extremely picky about the humans we bring in as our dogs come first, always. We look at it as bringing people in as adopters and new additions to our Pack as opposed to adopting our dogs out. We look for organic connections and humans willing to put in the work it takes to create and maintain successful relationships with their new love. We are small but mighty. I’m extremely grateful for the teamwork that keeps the engines of MCP gaining strength on a daily basis.
I struggled acclimating to Parker at first, but now many aspects of my four years there will forever be a form of home. I have a solid handful of friends that I consider my family. My role models were, Ironically, both the Dean of Students: Ms. Lowry and Mr. Nesbitt. I spent much time with both for multiple reasons. Hanging out in their offices talking life and exploring the world without ever leaving the room was always a welcomed brainstorm.

How to choose? My worldly adventures in Prexy’s [Nesbitt] office were magical. Family, differences, Africa, human rights, things bigger than us, love, Mandela—that office transcended time. Senior year homeroom and math class with Mr. Heiam also rents a solid portion of these years. One can compare it to Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, except the updated version: The Chronicles of Marta’s Adventures in Parkerland. What a great man, great storyteller and innovative teacher. We were special kids, to put it politely. He’s deserving of a medal for surviving us. Ms. Wagner also had fire. Her cloak took you away from the classroom. Her passion and pizazz carried me through her lessons and vigor.

MCP will be three years old in March 2019. I work more hours a day than not. My free time is spent outdoors, whether hiking, watching the sun rise or jogging—usually with dogs. I love food. Food is Earth. Food is art. I love to create in the kitchen. I love going out to try new concoctions. My household eats organic and views water as a gift. Dogs and human food are the same, essentially. Let’s be real, wine has a room as well—for humans, not dogs. My days consist of some combo of the above. I admit to being heavy from the world and her tears; however, I’m grateful for all that I love and all to do with my colorful, potent and wild, wild life.
Alumni Reconnect

Jewell Oates ’69 (L) and her sister Melody Oates ’72 enjoyed time together at the Alumni of Color and Friends Luncheon, which kicked off Reunion Weekend 2018 on September 21 at Cafe Ba-Ba Reeba.

Ina (Feldman) Burd ’58 reunited with Prexy Nesbitt ’62 at the All Class Reunion Celebration on September 21 in Parker’s courtyard during Reunion Weekend 2018.

Upper School English teachers Theresa Collins and Mike Mahany (third and fourth from L) caught up with class of ’08 alumni (L–R) Elana Schulman, Harrison Freund, Raven Evans, Max Scodro and Ari Berkowitz at the All Class (etc.)
Carl Steib ’08 (L), Melissa Luu ’08 and Upper School science teacher Xiao Zhang hung out at the San Francisco Alumni and Friends Gathering on November 8 at Marianne's in Union Square.


(L–R) Pachina Henderson ’87, Suzanne Chevrier ’86 and Melissa Mitchell ’87 enjoyed the All Class Reunion Celebration on September 21 in Parker’s courtyard during Reunion Weekend 2018.
Class Notes

Parker alumni: please send your class notes to Associate Director of Alumni Engagement Joe Bruno, jbruno@fwparker.org.

1950

Alfred King writes, “My wife is recovering very well from a stroke, but it has reduced our travel. I continue to be active in local Republican politics and bowling, where my scores are now above my golf scores. I still follow the Cubs, but not the Bears or Blackhawks. Finally, it is not as though we are getting any older, but I attended my granddaughter’s wedding in June. Hope to get to Chicago and to look up classmates who live there.”

1953

Ellie MacMahon Schonfeld writes, “This hardly fits your criteria of exciting news, but I was surprised to read in a recent release from the Alumni Office that my classmate, Mike Rosenberg, had an aunt in the class of 1933. I, too, had an aunt who was born in 1915 and attended Parker. It is very possible that the two of them were classmates. My aunt’s name was Mary Ellen Collins. She probably would have been at Parker from about 1920 until sometime around 1930 when she dropped out to pursue a career in dancing. I always enjoy reading alumni news. Thanks for doing such a great job of keeping in touch.”

1954


1956

1963

Steve Mosel and his wife Marilyn finally retired after an active opera and stage career. They moved to The Villages, Florida in 2013 and now fill their time in this busy community with various pursuits. The couple spends time directing a theatrical troupe, and he has spent the last four years as a certified firearms instructor. Once a week he hacks around one of the many local golf courses. With the exception of Tom Still, he has not kept up with any of his former Parker classmates and would love to get emails from any that would be willing to exchange updates, pictures and lies.

Steve Mosel (C) with wife Marilyn and Florida governor Rick Scott at a veterans’ award ceremony.

1966

Conway Collis writes, “The focus of GRACE (Gather, Respect, Advocate, Change, Engage), where I have served as CEO for the last five years, is to develop and seek to implement comprehensive solutions to California’s child and family poverty, which is the highest in the nation. Last year we sponsored state legislation, the Lifting Children and Families Out of Poverty Act, which is now law. The legislation mandates the development of a comprehensive, data-based plan to be completed this year by a state task force of leading state and private experts. The California Director of Social Services and I serve as co-chairs of this task force. Now we’re working with committed legislators and the presumed incoming state administration on a package of bills to implement the task force recommendations.

“GRACE’s child poverty education campaign is crucial in building the public awareness and engagement necessary to fully implement the plan. It can be viewed at endchildpovertyca.org. A rally we organized to kick off the effort that featured civil rights champion Rep. John Lewis, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and other committed state and national leaders can also be viewed there. I continue to be active in Democratic politics, hosting events for Pelosi, congressional candidates around the country and state offices. Let me know if anyone would like to be added to my invite list!

“My wonderful spouse of 35 years, Margaret Henry, a Superior Court Judge, continues to preside over a court deciding foster care-related cases. In December, she was honored as Juvenile Court Judge of the Year by the California Judges Association.

“Our son Luke Collis, a quarterback, is in his sixth season playing professional indoor football. After two seasons playing for the Arena League Champion Philadelphia Soul, Luke became the All-Pro Quarterback for the Beijing Lions, winners of the China Arena League Championship, in the American off-season. Last season he was the league-leading quarterback for the Georgia team in the new American Arena League. In the off-seasons, he has been employed by the Los Angeles County Labor Fed, the California Treasurer’s Office working on school finance, an HIV clinic in Nairobi and was on Stacey Abrams’s staff in her historic bid for Governor of Georgia.
“Our older son Rocky Collis, a former right-handed pitcher in the Seattle Mariners’ minor league system and later editor-in-chief of the Georgetown Law Review, is a lawyer in Los Angeles (definitely downhill from baseball). The U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team Players Association, for which he serves as outside General Counsel, is one of his favorite clients. He has really enjoyed working with the team on both business and gender equity issues, while getting to know many of the players.”

Peter Logan writes, “So many classmates turning 70 now. Coincidence? I was in Chicago for Thanksgiving 2017. I visited my sister and got together with Bonnie Kustner and Frank Lewin ’69. I am making similar plans for 2018. I am a semi-retired lawyer, very busy amateur musician, or should I say rock drummer? Having a great time with it.”

Cathy Salzman and Jim Genden ’65 occasionally get together when Jim visits the Netherlands with his Dutch wife. This year they arranged to meet in Bruges, Belgium. Reach Cathy at salzman1948@gmail.com and Jim at jgenden@hotmail.com.

1969

Mark Anderson writes, “I heard Parker alum Eric Roth ’95 conduct the ’Final Fantasy Suite’ on September 21 at the University of Pennsylvania. Also, I just came back from Phoenix where I visited another Parker alum and former student Kristie Marks ’82 and her family; they look great and are doing very well. As for me, I am retired. I continue to sing with the Philly Pops and volunteer teaching vocal music to kindergarten through 3rd grade students in their neighborhood outreach program. I recently gave a pre-concert lecture on West Side Story and the use of the tri-tone before their tribute concert for the 100th birthday of Leonard Bernstein. I performed in the concert as well, with music from On the Town, Mass, West Side Story, Candide and Trouble in Tahiti among the selections. Parker students from my classes may remember ‘Leonard Bernstein, On The Town’ was always a free bonus point on any test I gave. Some of you may even remember seeing me play Candide at Northwestern long ago! Next year is the 50th reunion for my class and I plan on being there!”

Mark Anderson in Candide in 1978 at Northwestern.
1971
Joel Hoffman was a 2017 recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. His Fellowship project, a major work for Chinese Traditional Orchestra called “Nautilus Symmetry,” will be performed by the Taipei Chinese Orchestra in June 2019.

1978
Glenn Karlov writes, “Late last year, Marta and I moved to Madison, Wisconsin to take advantage of all of the cultural, recreational and academic offerings around this lovely city. We live in a beautiful neighborhood adjacent to the University of Wisconsin Arboretum. We are always open for coffee and chat to FWP folks passing through or up for a visit. Feel free to contact me at 920.475.5194.”

1983
Joe Weisberg won an Emmy for Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series for The Americans in 2018.

1984
Maggi Valdes Steib recently joined Parker’s Admission team as assistant director for outreach and recruitment and writes, “I’m thrilled to be home again at FWP! After having spent 20+ years as a Parker parent, I no longer have a child in the school, and now it’s all about me! Well, actually, it’s about diversifying and strengthening our applicant pool. I support the Admission team by seeking out and developing relationships with schools and community organizations across the city, mainly to introduce Parker. Believe it or not, not everyone knows about our incredible school. What I truly enjoy is the making of professional connections with personal stories. Another bonus for me: I get to hang out with my ‘old’ buddy Chris Riff. It’s great to be back!”

1988
Adam Sher, an executive producer of Queer Eye, won an Emmy for Outstanding Structured Reality TV Program in 2018.
1989

Eric Klinenberg is director of The Institute for Public Knowledge at NYU and author of a new book, *Palaces for the People* (Penguin Random House). He also just had a piece published in *The Atlantic*, in which he quotes Colonel Parker:

Just as certain hard infrastructures, such as those for power and water, are “lifeline systems” that make modern societies possible, so too are certain social infrastructures especially crucial for democratic life. Colonel Francis Wayland Parker, whom John Dewey called the “father of progressive education,” believed that the neighborhood school was a vital space that, when organized properly, served as a “model home, a complete community, an embryonic democracy.” Schools, Parker and Dewey believed, teach young people not only their roles and responsibilities within the larger and more diverse society, but also the skills and dispositions required to participate as citizens.

In addition, in *The Atlantic* article, he references the American Society of Civil Engineers, where Casey Dinges ’75 is the senior managing director.

Alicia M. Senior-Saywell writes, “My hubby Phil and I enjoyed a busy summer of rock-n-roll at Lollapalooza and Riot Fest—and bumping into all the other FWP alums who share our old school taste (what up, Jake Rossof ’88 and John Oppenheimer ’88). This fall sees me enthusiastically spreading the word about all the amazing theater in the Belmont Theater District (BTDChicago.com), which represents the 25+ theaters in the Lakeview area (the largest theater district in the city)—an initiative I helped found and now run. 150 shows A WEEK play in the area, including the top dive Equity neighborhood theater companies, plus comedy, improv, standup, musicals and more. This includes the 37-year-old Saint Sebastian Players, led by the lovely Jill Chukerman Test ’77. If any alum from our days onstage wants to continue the fun from the audience, by all means get in touch at amsensay@gmail.com and I’ll tell you what is great—at any given time! Look for rock star Rachel Bradley Sullivan gracing one of my stages in early 2019. Real Chicagoans go to the theater. Be a real Chicagoan!”

Alicia M, Senior-Saywell (L) and Kim Kamin attended Mercury Theater’s production of *Avenue Q*. 
Congratulations to our alumni who won elections this past November:

**Craig Foster ’76** was re-elected to the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School Board.

**Bill Lowry ’80** has been elected Cook County Commissioner of the 3rd District (for more about Bill, see *The Live Creature Summer 2018* issue).

**Ayanna Pressley ’92** joins the U.S. House of Representatives for Massachusetts’ 7th Congressional District in January. She is the first African-American woman from Massachusetts elected to Congress (for more about Ayanna, see *The Live Creature Winter 2014* issue).

**Wiley Nickel ’94** has been elected to the North Carolina State Senate (for more about Wiley, see *The Live Creature Summer 2018* issue).

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**1992**

**Camellia Noriega** writes, “**Ayanna Pressley** is from Uptown Chicago like me and we are very, very proud of her. We were supposed to be statistics and she is not and I am not. Thank you, Parker. Also, **Allison Amend** successfully raised $10,000 for her mentee to attend another year at a prestigious private school in New York by crowdfunding her community. Giving back is always a great joy!”

**1993**

**Jenifer Ratner** writes, “I have some exciting news: I’m now a Licensed Real Estate Agent. After being in the child care industry for the last 11 years, I’ve added a lane to my career path and joined Keller Williams Realty Partners.”

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**1999**

**Catherine (Whelan-Wuest) Merritt** recently launched a marketing and PR agency called Spool. Unlike traditional agencies (where she has worked most of her career), she launched Spool with a cohort of agency ex-pats to create a solution that offers its employees true flexibility while delivering exceptional ideas and work to its clients. Spool is growing with new clients, and she is always eager to connect with people curious to learn more. When she’s not running her company, she is driving her boys to various sporting practices and lives in Evanston with her husband Ian and sons Teddy and Archie.

**John Raskin** and his husband Eric welcomed their son Jacob Schneider Raskin on October 7. He writes, “Jake is brilliant and athletic and exceptionally strong, judging mostly by his preternatural ability to bust out of swaddles. We hope to introduce him to members of the Parker community soon!”
2002
Jessyca Dudley writes, “I am excited to share that I have been selected to participate in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Leaders programs, a highly selective program designed to equip leaders across the country—in every sector and field—to collaborate, break down silos and use their influence to make communities healthier and more equitable. As a member of the program’s newest cohort, I will spend the next three years working to build healthy and safe communities in Chicago.”

2007
Maceo Haymes has a band, the O’My’s.

2010
Grace Smith writes, “Next spring I will be a Michigan Law Geneva fellow working with the Center for International Environmental Law in Geneva, Switzerland. I’ll be helping to draft treaties that regulate chemical and plastic pollution and will meet with officials from around the world to discuss international climate change policy development. Parker is where I first developed my interest in environmental issues and public governance. I am so grateful to have attended, or I wouldn’t be on the path that I’m on now.”

2014
Aidan Hargis is in his final year at Columbia College Chicago working toward a B.A. in music. His band CONWAY has a new single, “Forbidden Fruit,” and plays around the Chicago area.

In Memoriam
Jack Albu Hirsch ’58 was living in San Francisco. He was born in Chicago April 1, 1940, an aspiring musician, prolific in art with a brilliant mind. He graduated from the University of Chicago (early entrance). He is survived by his siblings, Thomas Hirsch ’61 (Madison, Wisconsin) and Noa Margalit ’55, née Violet Hirsch (Tel Aviv, Israel).

CORRECTION:
In the Summer 2018 issue, Class Notes incorrectly listed Lise Haines’s class year as 1979. She graduated in 1969.
Parker Honored with Casa Central’s Community Builder Award

Casa Central recently honored Parker with its Community Builder Award. A nonprofit social service agency in Humboldt Park, Casa Central aims to transform lives and strengthen communities, with a special emphasis on the LatinX community, through a network of services that propel a diverse population of all ages towards self-sufficiency.

For more than a decade, Parker has helped to advance Casa Central’s mission by bringing student volunteers to engage with its participants and enhance their programming. The organization formally recognized Parker at its 19th Annual Awards Dinner at the Hilton in early October. Principal Dan Frank accepted the award, cheered on by the entire Admission Office, Head of the Intermediate and Middle Schools John Novick and teachers Marcie Frasz, Kate Tabor and Liz Villagomez, who currently supervise students volunteering at the site.

Director of Enrollment and Financial Aid Karen G. Fisher, who volunteers at Casa Central and serves on its Board of Directors, has a personal connection: her father helped found the organization more than 60 years ago. She reconnected Parker with Casa when her daughter entered Middle School 13 years ago. In its original incarnation, the agency, based on the settlement house model, was a place of welcome and hope for disenfranchised immigrants arriving in Chicago. Today, the agency continues to thrive and provide necessary services to Chicago’s Hispanic community. Serving more than 11,000 participants, Casa’s programming includes Headstart, Violence Prevention for Teens, Homelessness Empowerment, Day Care for the Elderly and much more.

Parker is proud and honored to receive the Community Builder Award for our commitment to Casa’s mission and looks forward to continued partnership in perpetuity.