

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

John Dewey

# THE LIVE CREATURE

Diversity / Innovation / Citizenship

Winter 2018



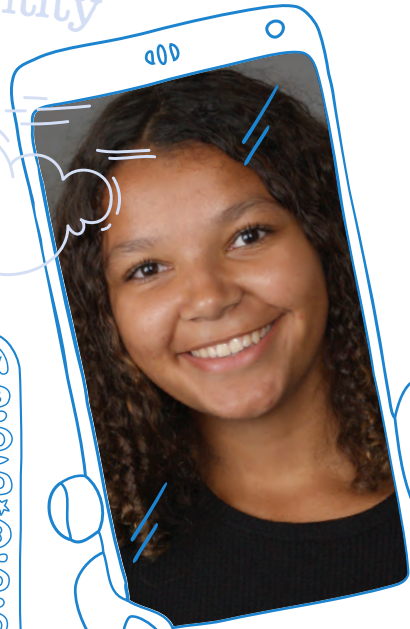
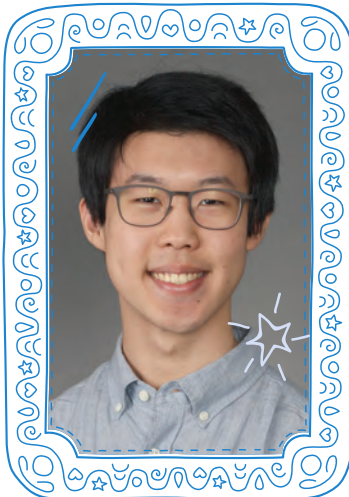
Francis W. Parker School  
Expanding Learning



Exploring  
Identity



Expanding  
Voice



# Contents

## Exploring Identity, Expanding Voice

Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Competency in the 21st Century .....	4
Express Yourself: Parker’s Slam Poetry Club.....	11
The Bridge.....	17
Thinking, Designing and Making in the Newly Designed Kovler Family Library .....	22
Telling Our Stories: Parker Works Project .....	30
Expanding Learning Opportunities through Public Events.....	34
A Community of Learners	
Parents: Rami Nashashibi .....	36
Faculty/Staff: Sunnie Hikawa.....	42
Alumni: Alicia Gonzalez ’96.....	47
Alumni Reconnect.....	52
Class Notes.....	54
In Memoriam .....	62
Welcome the Newest Member of Parker’s Colonel Crew! .....	63

Principal Daniel B. Frank ’74, Ph.D.

The John G. Levi Chief Advancement Officer Anedra Kerr

Director of Communications Dominic V. Saracino

Director of Admission and Financial Aid Karen G. Fisher

Editor/Writer Jill Chukerman ’77, JAC Communications

Design Communiqué Graphic Design

Principal Photography Dominic V. Saracino and Nick Robinson

Francis W. Parker School, 330 West Webster Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614  
773.353.3000 [fwparker.org](http://fwparker.org)

## An Introduction from Dan Frank

Learning can be exhilarating. Learning can also be troubling. Learning sometimes evolves easily and with joy, when life makes sense, even as new insights and understandings come to light. Other times, however, learning is a struggle, marked by confusion, contradictions, anxiety and loneliness. In the live creature of our school, creativity and education follow these similar paths of flow and frustration. Through creativity and education, we learn to become people in our own right, with our own affirming identities and voice, increasingly confident to speak out and listen openly to others, both essential factors in the social and emotional development necessary to become a responsible citizen in a diverse, democratic society.

Parker understands that we all are born into a social world full of assumptions, expectations and histories, emanating from our families and the cultural domains of the society in which we live. The school approaches education with knowledge and wisdom about the best methods for supporting each student—through curriculum, teaching and mentoring—to find her or his way through the myriad complexities of growing up as each searches for meaning and purpose. We know learning sometimes affirms our growing awareness of self, who we are, our core, essential identity as a person and a member of a group. We also know learning sometimes challenges those very understandings, moving us uncomfortably to encounter our blind spots and question ourselves and our relationships with others in newer, more expansive ways.

Through creativity and education, we learn to become people in our own right, with our own affirming identities and voice, increasingly confident to speak out and listen openly to others, both essential factors in the social and emotional development necessary to become a responsible citizen in a diverse, democratic society.

This issue of *The Live Creature* features stories illustrating the ways Parker supports students' exploration of identity—their own and those of others. These stories portray opportunities for students to expand their sense of voice and appreciation for the voices and experiences of others. We follow the Studs Terkel-inspired research of English teacher George Drury and his 6th grade students as they conduct oral history interviews of people who work at Parker. We learn of the imaginative ways our faculty and librarians engage students in the iterative process of design, testing and reimagining that takes place in the creative process of making ideas and objects. English teacher David Fuder provides insight into the student experience of writing poetry for live performances and the risks writers take as they explore their identities by using their voices with courage and confidence. Diversity, equity and inclusion consultant Dr. Derrick Gay outlines how students and adults can more deeply appreciate the complex ways our social and cultural worlds shape our identities. And Music Department Co-Chair Kingsley Tang explores how the collaborative art of making music depends on and enriches the diversity of perspectives as individuals join together for a performance.

Parker's community of relationships provides the trust, hope and possibility for us to know ourselves and others by discovering our own voices and leaning in with curiosity and respect for the voices and identities of others.

# Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Competency in the 21st Century

## Exploring Identity, Expanding Voice

Francis W. Parker School strives to meet the current needs of our students as we prepare them as young citizens for their future lives. Aiming to develop a greater understanding of and respect for all people in our evolving world, the school, in keeping with our past educational commitments, has embarked upon a new initiative to create and support an authentic sense of belonging for the members of the school community—not only students, but also faculty, staff, parents and leadership.

nurture empathy, enrich inclusion and cultivate cultural competency.

“As a society, we continue to navigate an unprecedented era of rapid and ongoing innovation and technological advances that inform, iterate and question longstanding social, economic and political models and ways of engaging with each other,” Gay said. “As it relates to global citizenship, the technological innovations associated with the Digital

“Ideally, we should strive to foster a school community with students of various differences who represent the incredibly cosmopolitan city, country and world in which we live.”

Principal Dan Frank emphasized, “Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion lies at the heart of Parker’s mission and overall strategic plan. Excellence in progressive education moves us to widen equitable and inclusive access for all students to the depth and expansiveness of what a Parker education can be. And this process includes advancing the education and awareness of all in our community, adults and students alike.”

To guide these efforts, the school has been collaborating with Dr. Derrick Gay, an internationally recognized consultant to organizations in the United States and around the world, on issues of diversity, inclusion and global citizenship. He collaborates with thought leaders to

Age—computers and the Internet that democratize production and access to information, coupled with more economic air travel—have literally made the world smaller. We live in an interconnected globalized world, and that’s not going to change anytime soon. We also live in a country where demographics continue to shift in significant ways, such that success in school, business and effective citizenship is predicated on an individual’s ability to communicate across difference with respect.”

Though the terms “diversity” and “inclusion” often appear together in this type of work, they are not the same. “Diversity means difference, and we are all different to each other,” Gay described. “Ideally, we should strive





to foster a school community with students of various differences who represent the incredibly cosmopolitan city, country and world in which we live. Research finds that all students learn and benefit from sustained engagement with individuals who are different from them.

“Inclusion captures the ways in which individuals perceive a sense of belonging and/or connectedness to an organization. Therefore, it is quite possible to have a diverse school where students, teachers or families perceive differential understandings of belonging. In a pluralistic society such as ours, inclusion is never an organic product of bringing good people together. Fortunately, inclusion is measurable, and there are numerous frameworks and strategies to develop intentionally inclusive schools.”

Gay’s work with Parker began during the 2016–17 academic year

was to obtain more data on the ways people in the community were feeling a sense of connection and belonging,” Gay commented.

Next, Gay had a similar full-day workshop with members of the faculty to consider identity and perspective. “We looked at our own identities and how our notions of who we are have informed how we interact with others. We acknowledged that we are good people and we’re all in this work for the benefit of students, for promoting democracy, peace and justice, but we all have blind spots and implicit bias. So we engaged in excavating some of our biases and thinking of ways to modify our behavior and our actions. What are we teaching in the classroom? What aren’t we teaching in the classroom? How does our identity inform the ways we interact with the school, students and each other?”

Another part of these conversations

“Inclusion captures the ways in which individuals perceive a sense of belonging and/or connectedness to an organization. Therefore, it is quite possible to have a diverse school where students, teachers or families perceive differential understandings of belonging.”

focusing on the adults in the Parker community. Spending two days with the school administration, he helped staff articulate ways of framing conversations about diversity and inclusion that align with the school’s mission statement, enhance curriculum and create an environment where everyone—students, faculty, staff, parents—can bring their true selves. “It became apparent that a large portion of this work around inclusion

is the concept of cultural competency:

Creating the conditions that allow diverse human beings to reach their full potential (a staple mantra of schools and businesses) requires inclusive practice in all facets of school and organizational life. Authentic inclusivity is characterized by flexibility, power sharing and restraint by the dominant culture, and by freedom and confidence among the people of color, women

# Boy Stereotypes

Active, brave, strong, rough, competitive,  
inventive, intelligent, logical, decisive,  
problem-solving, messy, mechanical,  
independent, leader, innovator, expressing  
anger, unemotional, playing or working  
outdoors, unconcerned about appearance,  
having an innate need for ad



Dr. Gay addresses a group of parents at a Lower School 2nd Cup of Coffee event.

and other minority group members to show up whole, embrace their power and act in service to their felt needs and interests.\*

“Cultural competency work is essential, particularly for faculty, staff and administrators to be effective with students who have multiple identities,” noted Assistant Principal Ruth Jurgensen. “Multicultural awareness and cross-cultural communication are vital skills for student success at Parker and after graduation. We have to teach these skills, and, to do so effectively, we also must have them ourselves.”

The third step in the first year of the process was extending the conversation to include parents—specifically, Grade Chairs and Parents’ Association leadership. As was the case with the faculty and administration,

Gay had parents consider the implications of diversity, inclusion and cultural competency, not only in terms of their relationships with their own children but in their interactions with other parents.

As a result of workshops Gay has been leading at the school, each division (Lower, Intermediate, Middle and Upper Schools) now has three diversity, equity and inclusion coordinators. Among the objectives are clarifying divisional goals, coordinating the vision of this work across the school and supporting the development of additional divisional ambassadors and identified allies for a potential diversity steering committee.

Also this year, Gay has expanded on work from the first year to include all current parents in morning and evening meetings, as well as Middle

and Upper School student audiences during two Morning Ex assemblies. Among the ways students are learning to incorporate diversity and inclusion into school life is through affinity groups in the Middle and Upper Schools (see sidebar).

“Our students will be leaders, and the need for culturally competent leadership is necessary for success in our ever-changing, ever-connected world,” said Jurgensen.

To keep the process looking forward, Gay is developing a Climate Assessment, a mixed-method research methodology that includes qualitative and quantitative components. Consulting with Parker’s administrators and its diversity, equity and inclusion coordinators, as well as the SEED

(Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) program groups (one for faculty and one for parents), the school is creating different surveys specific to faculty and staff, parents and students to complete this winter. The survey responses will drive the creation of smaller focus groups for further discussion. The result will be a comprehensive report highlighting programs, policies and practices the school can leverage to enrich inclusion, as well as dynamics that might be undermining a sense of inclusion.

“With this data, we will design an inclusivity strategic plan that will serve as a roadmap for short-term and long-term progress,” said Gay.

For more information about Derrick Gay’s work, visit [derrickgay.com](http://derrickgay.com).

*\*Caroline Blackwell, “Social Psychology, Action Research, and Other Essential Field Work Skills,” in Diversity Work in Independent Schools: The Practice and the Practitioner. 2013. Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools. (pp. 108–114.) Caroline Blackwell is the NAIS vice president for equity and justice.*

Members of the Middle School Social Justice League work with Dr. Gay on ways to expand their outreach and influence within the school.





## Affinity Groups

One way Parker students explore identity and offer opportunities for everyone's voice to be heard and respected is through affinity groups that meet during lunch periods, before school or after school.

### Middle School

#### Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)

Students interested in supporting equity for all, regardless of gender preference or adherence to stereotypical gender roles, are welcome to participate. This group uses articles in the news, videos, discussions and activities to raise awareness around Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered or Questioning (LGBTQ) issues. GSA also strives to ensure a safe and inclusive school for gay and straight students, in part by using and promoting positive and inclusive language and by asking people not to make sexist or homophobic remarks.

#### La Mesa Hispana (The Hispanic Table)

This group is for students who self-identify as Hispanic to gather around a "table" with those who have an interest in Hispanic culture of any identity. The group explores food, music, art, dance, history and more with interested native speakers sharing their own cultures.

#### Students of Color Affinity (SOCA)

SOCA provides a safe space for students to share and discuss their experiences of race at Parker to feel supported, included and successful.

### Upper School

#### Latin American Students Organization (LASO)

LASO provides a space for students who identify with Latin American origins to celebrate their cultural and ethnic diversity, discuss local and national issues that affect them and educate the school and the community at large about their cultures and issues that affect Latinos at large.

#### Men of Color Heritage Affinity (MOCHA)

MOCHA provides an open, student-run space for young men of color to gather and talk about different topics related to their experience. This organization aims to develop the voice of young men of color in the school.

#### Positive Racial Identity Development through Education (PRIDE)

PRIDE fosters development in Parker's Upper School student body, centers and amplifies marginalized voices, stimulates interest and awareness among the Parker community in central program themes and forms relationships with individuals and organizations who share common goals and mission.

#### Students Affirming Gender Equality (SAGE)

SAGE provides a safe discussion space for Upper School students to explore current issues surrounding gender and sexuality.

# Express Yourself: Parker's Slam Poetry Club

By David Fuder, 8th grade English teacher

## Exploring Identity, Expanding Voice

On any given Saturday morning, one might find 10 to 15 Upper School students sitting in a classroom lit only by daylight, pens in hand and journals open, with an occasional laptop fired up as well. The faint smell of tea may linger in the air, but most notable is the attention to the craft of writing these students return to after a long week of school, when many of their peers are still catching up on their sleep. This is Parker's slam poetry club, and this is their jam.

Slam poetry is a simple concept, though at first hearing it is easy to misunderstand. It simply is spoken word poetry written for the purpose of performance. Yet what distinguishes slam poetry is the cadence and the content; through this honest and open writing, poets explore identity, take risks through self-revelation and deliver their pieces with uncommon passion.

introduced me to the concept of a poetry slam. It wasn't because he was a poetry aficionado, but rather that he had a preconceived notion that I was part of some modern beatnik scene, and whenever he'd see my pierced ear and Birkenstock-wearing self around the gym, he'd inevitably assume I was coming or going to a poetry slam.

I had no clue what he was talking about. If only I knew how prophetic he was.

Fast forward a few years to the winter of 2009, when my former 8th grade student, senior Molly Kuhlman '09, had registered for a poetry competition and needed a faculty sponsor. While I didn't have to commit to anything other than placing my name on a form, I was curious what this was all about, so I went to support Molly when it was her day to perform. And when I did, I entered a

There is a safe and welcoming space for students to express themselves and speak their truth at Parker. That space helps build confident and courageous young people who support each other's writing because they believe in the art of self-expression; they believe teenagers have important things to say about the world in which they live.

To understand the evolution of slam poetry at Parker, I first must take you back to a time when Parker wasn't even a blip on my radar—the 1990s, when my college basketball coach

space on Columbia College Chicago's campus that would forever change me as an educator and poet. Here was an intimate, encouraging community of high school students supporting fellow



spoken word poets on a humble stage. The atmosphere was electric, fun, inspiring, diverse. The adult emcees running the poetry competition were dynamic and funny, and they connected with their audience. This thing was called Louder Than A Bomb, and before I left, I bought my first LTAB T-shirt (many more would follow), still not certain of what I'd just seen, but knowing I wanted more of it.

revise, perform and critique poems they hoped to present on stage for an audience of their peers. At that time, the number of schools participating in LTAB could fit on the back of a T-shirt (and they did), but to those first slam poets, this was huge. What set this apart wasn't so much the idea of performance because Parker's progressive style creates confident and participatory students; rather, it was the personal

Students look forward with anticipation each year to the start of slam because it's proven to be a valuable outlet for written and vocal expression that transcends the work students are doing in their academic classes, free from pressure or expectation.

The serendipitous evolution of slam at Parker was in motion, as an Upper School club fair in 2010 introduced students to Young Chicago Authors (YCA), an organization in Wicker Park that works to foster youth creativity and expression while providing safe spaces to cultivate poetry. YCA runs Louder Than A Bomb, the world's largest youth poetry festival, that same festival I had witnessed the year before. The curiosity of junior Izzy Kadish '12 about Parker's involvement in this poetry scene eventually led her to me a couple years later, thanks to my colleague Theresa Collins. And that's when slam poetry officially started at Parker.

That first year was new for all of us. Trying to carve out time to meet was challenging, and we all were unsure of the focus this new venture should have, but we were excited and determined to see where slam poetry at Parker was headed. We started in early winter, just in time to sign up for Louder Than A Bomb, which became the focal point of our writing and preparation. Students met during the day or after school to compose, edit,

content these poets realized they would share publicly—stories about parental struggles, class difference in a private school, self-image and self-doubt and the joy that comes from making music. I still remember their pieces clearly, and I still feel a sense of pride for what that first group of eight poets accomplished in those months of preparation and hard work.

Ask anyone involved in the slam poetry community in Chicago about Louder Than A Bomb and they'll probably give you a slight eye roll and tell you it's really just a gimmick for something bigger, something this city needs more of: the breaking down of walls. Founders Anna West and Kevin Coval created LTAB as a direct response to the anti-loitering laws sweeping up Chicago's black and brown teenagers in a post 9/11 environment. So, with the help of YCA, they created a poetry competition that would pit schools from across the city against each other. Each year it grew in size, enabling LTAB to earn the prestigious (though not all that hotly contested) title of largest youth poetry festival in the world.





Parker's 2016–17 Poetry Slam team, including one of the school's earliest competitors and current co-coach of the team Molly Kuhlman '09 (bottom, center).

For many schools, LTAB preparation begins with the start of each school year; other schools access it as an outcrop of an existing poetry club. Regardless, the intentionality of LTAB is displayed in a kickoff event called Crossing the Street, a day-long gathering of every student from every team from every part of Chicagoland for the purpose of “crossing the street” to get to one another and get to know one another through the shared love of writing. It’s perhaps the most joyful time I spend with more than a thousand teenagers each year. Kids are placed into mixed groups where they workshop poems, share a meal and perform those pieces together. The set goal is that students will meet and socialize with fellow student poets from all around the city and suburbs and leave fired up to see each other again on the stage of a slam bout.

Right about now you might be wondering: What exactly is a slam bout and is it dangerous? It’s a fair question, so let me explain. A slam

bout consists of four teams of poets competing against each other in four rounds, followed by the group-piece round. Each round has one poet perform from each team, and each poet is judged on a scale of 10. After four rounds of individual poet performances, the fifth and final round is a thing of beauty to behold: the group piece. Each school has four poets that perform simultaneously, and these are the most energized and fantastic poems of the bout. At the end, the team with the highest score wins, but each team and each poet is celebrated as part of something larger than just individuals. Here’s the rub: judging poetry is a subjective exercise. Who can say one poet’s truth is superior to that of another? That’s why YCA has embedded within LTAB the mantra, “The point is not the points, the point is the poetry,” which you will hear repeatedly at any LTAB bout. A score that doesn’t sit well with team members or the audience in general will often be met with passionate cries



of, “Listen to the poet!” as a reminder that this is a scene of solidarity and support for students’ stories.

Slam poetry at Parker has thrived since we began seven years ago, and I’ve been blessed to see things come full circle with Molly Kuhlman becoming my co-coach after graduating college. Students look forward with anticipation each year to the start of slam because it’s proven to be a valuable outlet for written and vocal expression that transcends the work students are doing in their academic classes, free from pressure or expectation. That doesn’t mean we don’t push kids to grow as writers and commit to the craft. We provide poems by relevant and vibrant poets for them to analyze and use as springboards for their writing, but encourage them to work out the telling of their own stories—and we are blown away each year by students’ honesty, courage and artistry. These are

immensely talented writers we have the pleasure of working with each year. To see teenagers attack an idea with sustained concentration and effort and be willing to share what they’ve created and open themselves up for honest critique is a beautiful thing to witness each week. To see students graduate and then find a slam community on their college campuses and continue their writing and performance is a joy to know. To see our students perform at Morning Ex each spring to a vocal and engaged audience affirms in our poets that what they have invested in their craft is valid and appreciated by their peers. To see our students share the stage at Morning Ex with another school’s poetry team because the kids struck up a friendship at LTAB they wanted to sustain makes the YCA model of bridging the city’s gaps a reality. To have Kevin Coval spend a day here, sharing writing tips with the 3rd grade, performing at MX, then leading a writing workshop with 8th–12th grade students is confirmation that the spoken word poetry scene at Parker is alive, well and thriving.

There is a safe and welcoming space for students to express themselves and speak their truth at Parker. That space helps build confident and courageous young people who support each other’s writing because they believe in the art of self-expression; they believe teenagers have important things to say about the world in which they live. So if you’re interested in paying closer attention to the slam poetry scene at Parker, I have one thought to leave with you.

Listen to the poets. They have a lot to say.

Anna Marx ’14 competing at a 2013 LTAB competition.  
LTAB Co-Founder Kevin Coval runs a poetry workshop for nearly 120 8th Grade and Upper School students.

## Louder Than A Bomb 2018

**February 21–24**

**February 28–March 3**

Preliminary bouts at Columbia College Chicago

**March 4**

LTAB presents Chicago Bicentennial Celebration featuring Kevin Coval and Friends at Parker

**March 7–8**

Quarterfinals at Malcolm X College

**March 9–10**

LTAB University at Flashpoint Tribeca

**March 11**

Semifinals at Metro Chicago

**March 16**

Indy finals

**March 18**

Team finals at Auditorium Theatre







# The Bridge

By Music Department Co-Chair Kingsley Tang

We all live in a state of profound isolation.

No other human being can ever know what it's like to be you on the inside. And no amount of reaching out to others can ever make them feel exactly what you feel. All media of communication are a by-product of our sad inability to communicate directly mind to mind. Sad, of course, because nearly all problems in human history stem from that inability. Each medium (the term comes from the Latin word meaning middle) serves as a bridge between minds.

—*Understanding Comics, The Invisible Art*, Scott McCloud

## Exploring Identity, Expanding Voice

Our world is full of different mediums of self-expression, yet every medium—prose, poetry, visual arts, films, science, dance, spoken language and music—is flawed. None completely and perfectly transfers ideas, feelings and notions. Each is an attempt to address the “inability to communicate directly mind to mind,” the central source, as Scott McCloud writes, of nearly all our problems.

Hans Christian Andersen wrote, “Where words fail, music speaks.” Music can communicate from person to person in ways words cannot. However, music is imperfect, and as a medium, it fails as well. Each method of human expression succeeds where others fail, and only by being fluent and literate in the plurality of different mediums can we begin to overcome that inability to communicate mind to mind. It is in this diversity of expression that we find the power to make the communities we belong to more just, more equitable and more inclusive.

At the center of a Parker education is the value of citizenship, and the

primary tool of citizenship is voice. This isn't a tool that we exercise and express through a single medium, like a speech in front of a crowd. At its most effective, and most powerful, voice encapsulates many mediums of human expression. To rely only on the written word is to struggle against this medium's imperfections. To embrace the diversity of different mediums of self-expression is to rise above these imperfections, allowing an individual to express his/her voice more authentically and more easily understood.

As important as the ability to authentically express an individual voice, as the prayer of Saint Francis meditates, is “to be understood as to understand.” Only through foundational knowledge in many methods of human expression can people complete the work of citizenship by pairing the ability to express one's voice with the skill to understand others in whatever ways they express their thoughts and feelings.

So why am I talking about voice and citizenship? Because this is the



Third grade students shared simple tunes on the dulcimers they made in Art and Shop class with their Lower School peers.

foundation of our music education philosophy at Parker and at the core of the most meaningful work in music classes. Our work doesn't start with Beethoven; it starts with empowering our students to be citizens by developing their authentic voice.

Music is integral to the human condition, interwoven in almost every single culture in human history, and it continues to be one of the most important forms of human expression. Some of the most powerful voices in human history found their voice through music, and some of the most influential members of our American society continue to change the world through music.

Music class at Parker is about more than creating music; it's about developing music as part of an authentic voice, a means of expression, a way to understand the world and a way to change the world

as a citizen. Music is an essential part of the bridge that connects us as humans and brings us closer to a higher level of understanding.

In our curriculum, students develop their musical voice in different ways. In 3rd grade, students compose music to describe nature. Inspired by music of Native Americans, they capture sounds and observations that words cannot. They come to understand different ways people use music to share the way they see the world, providing students with tools of self-expression.

When 5th graders study "Have You Ever Seen The Rain?," they compare several versions of the song, including the original by Credence Clearwater Revival, a Spanish language version by Juan Gabriel, a cover by the Thai group the Drivers and Joan Jett and the Blackhearts' punk rock styling. Students learn how different



interpretations of the same song can have different meanings and that there is as much power in how you say something as what you say.

In the Middle School band curriculum, students learn the power of musical instruments as an external extension of one's voice. Students play instruments that are louder, higher or lower than their voices and learn to create sounds nigh impossible to create with the human voice. As humans have learned throughout history, Parker students discover that a musical instrument allows them to externalize emotions through a sound that is

facets to identity, and only with deliberate and careful planning can young people develop and understand their identities. As different mediums of human expression are critical in developing voice, identity is what gives meaning, depth and context to a person's voice. Understanding Sam Cooke's identity as an African American brings power to his voice in "A Change Is Gonna Come," and the Dixie Chicks' struggles with their identity as country singers is what make their music controversial for some, powerful for many.

The development of identity is

**Music is integral to the human condition, interwoven in almost every single culture in human history, and it continues be one of the most important forms of human expression.**

completely different than a singing voice but undeniably personal and significant.

As the Upper School choirs sing music from all over the world, they recognize the many ways master musicians have pushed the boundaries of human expression. By studying choral works, analyzing their meaning and working to capture the composers' intent, choral singers gain more tools for self-expression. While they are singing, speaking through a composer's voice, students mix in experience and emotions, creating bridges between composers, singers and audiences. As these composers represent the rich diversity of the world, this amalgamation builds bridges across time, cultures and geography. In the richness of this music, student voices gain depth and meaning.

At Parker, the development of an authentic voice as a tool for citizenship runs parallel to the development of identity. Like voice, there are many

complex and personal, but this hasn't stopped Parker music teachers from working to help students develop parts of their identities. A multiplicity of musical experience in Lower School music helps students develop tools of expression but also begin to create their musical identities as they grow to understand their preferences and strengths.

In 5th grade, students steer head-on into gender identity, wrestling with the gross gender inequities that permeate almost every aspect of our musical culture. Students are shocked to find out how few female artists are in the iTunes top 100 best-selling songs. By asking questions about this inequity, they examine their own gender identities. This process is challenging but important in understanding what gender identity means to oneself and others.

One of the most important parts of racial development that Parker's music

instruction actively addresses is racial identity. By deliberately providing windows (views into the cultures of other races) and mirrors (representations of students' own races) and engaging in purposeful conversation about race, students find space in music class to do the essential and very difficult work of racial identity development.

Windows allow students to see others, to understand what is different and appreciate others because of their differences. When students who do not identify as Japanese study Japanese music in 2nd grade, they come to understand the traditions and cultures of another race. This refusal to be color blind, to go beyond tolerance to celebration, brings students to a place where viewing another race provides important perspectives that help them reflect on their own racial identities.

young people come to see all facets of their identities with pride.

Music at its best is an authentic voice expressing one's identity. Music deliberately examines all elements of identity, drawing upon other mediums of human expression to find authenticity and meaning. Music at Parker is one muscle of citizenship, one powerful way to develop identity and express voice—which is more important now than ever.

Parker has always been a school that understands the essential place of music in the education of its students to become active citizens in our society. One recent example of this priority is the new Joan W. Harris Visiting Music Scholar in Residence program.

With the success of other programs, such as the Robert A. Pritzker Visiting Scientist•Inventor•Engineer in

**Music at Parker is one muscle of citizenship, one powerful way to develop identity and express voice—which is more important now than ever.**

Mirrors provide students with a sense of pride and belonging. When almost 250 Middle and Upper School students performed “My Shot” from *Hamilton*, students who identified as Latino saw the entire school community embrace and celebrate one of their own, Lin-Manuel Miranda, the musical's composer and primary creative force. This choice of repertoire and the time studying Miranda and his racial identity provided all students, especially those who identify as Latino, a nuanced and important example of Latino culture. Mirrors are critical in creating an inclusive environment that nurtures students' racial identity development. Only by seeing themselves and others can

Residence, the Jean Harris Hansell Endowed Fund for Poetry and the Francine C. Rosenberg Memorial Lecture, along with other visitors to our community, a visiting music scholar program was a natural expression of our school's values. With the support of Joan W. Harris, the administration and the Music Department, we are proud to have musicians from The Chamber Music Society (CMS) of Lincoln Center as our inaugural Visiting Music Scholars on January 22.

Mirroring our school's mission and the Music Department's work, the CMS will present music that celebrates the transformative power of classical music, the democratic process of creating with others and the important

role of classical music in promoting a more diverse and inclusive society.

In our search for the first Visiting Music Scholar, we wanted to find artists who understood ideas of citizenship and diversity while bringing the best in classical music to our community. Chamber music, which involves creating music as a group without a conductor, is a challenging process that speaks directly to the role of citizenship and the power of individual voice. This, along with the CMS's commitment to diversity and inclusion, assured us that their residency would also address and support our work fostering the development of identity.

The Joan W. Harris Visiting Music Scholar in Residence is a bridge between the best of classical music and the Parker community. This program supports the bridges we are helping our students learn to build through the development of their voices and their identities with members of the community, leading to the nurturing

of active and productive citizens.

This is the work of our school: building bridges between each other and, with great optimism and hope, helping develop in our students the tools to express themselves and understand others that too often are lacking, which can lead to conflict and strife.

Our inability to communicate can bring conflict, but it can also lead to beauty. Our attempts to compensate for flaws of human expression have led to vibrant colors and motion in the paintings of Archibald John Motley, Jr., and the indescribable passion in Kathleen Battle's operatic arias. We struggle through incredible art and innovation that aims for that closer understanding of one another. In the progress of this work, in the beauty that comes out of this struggle, we find optimism and hope in the human condition. The bridges we build are structures of beauty, and making these bridges is an act of hope.

Kingsley Tang conducts Middle and Upper School instrumentalists in a spring music Morning Ex.



# Thinking, Designing and Making in the Newly Designed Kovler Family Library

## Exploring Identity, Expanding Voice

Parker's Integrated Learning and Information Science (ILIS) Department combines the expertise of library and technology staff who work directly with teachers to develop opportunities for students to learn creatively and integrate projects with their classroom studies. The recent redesign of the Kovler Family Library has expanded these possibilities with new technology and more flexible space configurations, providing an optimal environment for maker-centered learning and the development of an innovator's mindset.

The Live Creature spoke to members of the ILIS team—Library and Information Services Specialists Mary Catherine Coleman and Annette Lesak and Education Technology Integration Specialist Sarah Beebe—about the incorporation of maker movement philosophies and practices in education and projects the ILIS team is creating in cooperation with classroom teachers.

### What is the maker movement? What is its value in an educational setting? And beyond?

**Mary Catherine Coleman:** The maker movement can be described in different ways. It is the traditional idea of craftsmanship, the idea of making and creating connected with new technologies; it can be about learning a skill that has existed for generations or developing completely new knowledge using new ideas. The most important aspect of the maker movement is that it includes doers and creators; it isn't about doing something in an exact way but being part of the creation process through which individuals express themselves and their knowledge and passion.

In an educational setting, the maker movement is valuable for acquiring new knowledge and developing student empowerment. Agency by Design at Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, a research initiative

launched in 2012 to investigate the promises, practices and pedagogies of maker-centered learning, focuses on three areas of maker-centered learning and maker empowerment in education:

- Characteristics related to community: students develop collaboration skills, information-sharing techniques and a sense of ownership of their learning and in teaching others.
- Characteristics related to process: students find motivation in curiosity, experimental learning and a cross-disciplinary approach to problem solving.
- Characteristics related to environment: students have open, accessible spaces, tools and media to work and create with.

Maker-centered learning opens up a world of possibilities beyond the classroom. Developing a sense of maker empowerment in students







helps them gain an understanding of systems, how they work and the purpose of all the features within both simple and complex systems. When a person understands a system, opportunities to improve or change a system develop, and this understanding empowers human beings to dive deeper and work to change or fix areas of human existence. Students can carry this sense of empowerment with them. It fosters a mindset that reminds students they have the power and ability to effect change and benefit from a commitment to lifelong learning. In maker and building projects, students face the challenge to try something new or learn a different skill, and if something does not work, they must rethink or redesign their plan. Many projects also include working with others and building collaboration and communication skills, which is incredibly important in our ever-changing world. Helping students to be flexible and accustomed to change is an essential life skill.

### **How does Parker's faculty work with the ILIS team to incorporate this way of thinking/doing in its philosophies and practices?**

**Annette Lesak:** Making isn't a new concept—our colleagues in the fine and applied arts have always embraced and taught it. Making has expanded into the world of libraries because of the shift in the way people access and use information. The Internet has made information ubiquitous and tremendously accessible, so the real question is: What can one make with that information to create new knowledge and contribute to society? In Anthony Shaker's 7th grade History class, students recently researched and

learned about a significant building somewhere in the world. One of the culminating pieces of their study was to rebuild that piece of architecture using a variety of maker materials, including LEGOs, 3D software, 3D printers and soft-maker materials, including cardboard, model magic, paint, glue guns, wire, etc. The act of building gave students better understanding of their building spatially and allowed them to develop a new appreciation and perspective of its design and construction.

**MCC:** Sarah Beebe and I work collaboratively with Lower and Intermediate School teachers to plan projects that connect with the topics in their classroom curriculum. Research shows that incorporating technology and maker skills in the foundation of curriculum helps students to better understand topics and use technology and maker tools more fluidly and quickly.

The ILIS team, 3rd grade heads and Lower School Science Department are collaborating on a yearlong project on innovation in Chicago history that draws upon elements developed by the Institute for Imaginative Inquiry. This project ties directly to the 3rd grade study of Chicago history, including a deep dive into Native Americans who lived in this area before European settlement, pioneers and the Chicago Fire/rebuilding, and concludes with a study of present-day neighborhoods. During ILIS time, 3rd graders have been receiving mysterious letters from an Agent X who wants to assemble a team of researchers, adventurers and collaborators. Students submitted video applications to join the Agent X team. Next, they received a "test"—a box containing letters from the 1800s, images of birchbark canoes and a

piece of birchbark. Students made connections between the images, letters and materials. Next, students were “accepted” onto the Agent X team. Agent X sent the 3rd graders a message telling them to use the past to inform the future; they then received a package with a map of Chicago from 1517, a map from 2017 and a question mark with the year 2517. Students used print and digital research materials to learn how to make birchbark canoes and their role in Native American life. This project coordinated with work in their classroom on their Central Topic, Native Americans, and a study in science class about buoyancy. Using information they collected, students thought about why the birchbark canoe was innovative.

The next mission was a design challenge. Inspired by what they had learned about the process and materials native tribes used to make canoes, 3rd graders designed a canoe prototype with only three materials. Throughout the rest of the school year, Agent X will send students more challenges, asking them to become researchers and experts as they study the innovation of Chicago’s early transportation systems and the impact of access to transportation on our city’s neighborhoods. For their final challenge, students will think about the history of innovation in transportation, then design a transportation system for Chicago that is efficient, sustainable and equitable for future residents.

Third grade students test the seaworthiness of their birch bark canoes.





Sarah Beebe works with Junior Kindergarten students and Ozbot technology in the TIDES Garage space in the newly designed Kovler Family Library.

**Sarah Beebe:** As part of their study of ancient Rome, 5th graders wrote a first-person historical fiction letter from the perspective of a person who witnessed and survived the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in Pompeii. Wanting to share their engaging and dynamic accounts with their 1st grade buddies, 5th graders worked with the ILIS Department to make sound button stories for 1st graders to read and explore. They used cardboard, foil, markers, print-outs of their stories and the coding program Scratch to program circuit boards called Makey Makey to make sound and construct “board books.” Using free online sound databases, they downloaded and integrated appropriate sounds into their stories. Their sound button books brought their Mt. Vesuvius eruption stories to life and encouraged them to think further

about the sensory experiences of an ancient Roman who witnessed the eruption at Pompeii. After completing their books, 5th graders shared them with 1st graders during a collaborative storytelling period.

#### **How do the recent renovations to the library impact learning and relationships between faculty and students?**

**MCC:** The redesigned library offers students and teachers many spaces that allow students to learn in a variety of ways. The library offers quiet space for students to work individually or *small collaboration rooms* with writable walls for group work. *The teleport area with dual screens and Chromecast* (digital media player) enables classes to Skype with an expert on one screen and work collaboratively on the other

screen. Students use *the LEGO table* to create in a large space linked to their class or library project work, but also provides room for individual creative building. The story studio area is a great gathering space for class discussion and story sharing. *The TIDES Garage* has soft-maker materials, like cardboard, duct tape, pipe cleaners, etc., and hard-maker materials, including 3D printers, a laser cutter, coding robots and recording equipment. There are also writable walls that allow for individual ideation as well as collaborative design planning. Throughout the space there are small tables surrounded by clusters of chairs for more small group work or sharing as well as plenty of individual comfy seating for quiet work or reading. The new space offers the opportunity for students to learn, make and create in many ways and flow through those phases and styles of learning in one space.

**AL:** I've seen the new library space become exceptionally functional and productive in the short time we've been open. There are many types of spaces to accommodate different-sized groups and ages. It's a wonderful three-ringed circus.

#### **Why do you think it's important for students to develop "an innovator's mindset"?**

**AL:** It's imperative for students of all ages to develop an awareness and understanding of the systems in our world. Everything around us has been designed with intention, from government to doorknobs. Sometimes these designs are ineffective or detrimental to certain segments of society. When students realize there are designers of these systems, they

come to understand they can tweak and iterate these systems, ultimately improving them for everyone.

An innovator's mindset helps students develop a growth mindset and break down established beliefs about themselves or their skills. An innovator has the ability to look around and ask why something is the way it is and consider if that's the best way. Honing that skill of evaluating and critiquing enables students to see themselves and the world around them as ever-growing and changing, making them more flexible and comfortable with change and ambiguity.

#### **How do you feel these practices help each student explore individual identity and find his/her voice?**

**MCC:** Our projects and programs offer students the structure of an overarching theme and a link to their curriculum and studies while giving them the freedom to make their thinking visible in a way that allows their creativity to shine. Students collect information and knowledge and create new knowledge using their voices.

As teachers, when we are planning and implementing these projects and opportunities, we ask ourselves:

"How might we encourage students to make something better or create something new?"

"How do we allow for student inquiry to drive questions?"

"What should I do to ensure I don't receive 18 of the same project?"

By using these framing questions, we develop projects and programs that let students be the driving force of their own learning and ensure we are hearing each student's voice. The process students follow and projects they produce give them ownership by seeing



themselves in what they create. In addition, all design thinking starts with empathy—as designers, students also must understand what the “end-user” needs, which involves listening to other people’s voices and ideas, in addition to their own, to create viable solutions.

**AL:** The library is where students constantly exercise choice and explore options for growth. Through the Middle School Passion Project cycle last spring (before the renovation), students followed an interest or curiosity and devoted time to that project, ranging from digital animation to computer programming to button making to Japanese mud-ball making (hikaru dorodango). We’re thrilled to offer the Passion Project cycle again this year in our new library, especially in the TIDES Garage, which will provide access to even more maker equipment, like a laser cutter, 3D printers and sewing machines. The Passion Project is a distinct opportunity for students to explore their interests and better understand themselves.

### What plans are in place during the spring semester and next year?

**SB:** Last year, Mary Catherine and I worked with 5th grade teacher Mike McPharlin on some Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) work, introducing students to the interview component that is key in design thinking work—specifically, interviewing with empathy. The 5th graders interviewed students to design ice cream sundaes for them. We worked on listening skills/interview skills, using guided questions to dive for deeper meaning. The students used what they learned to formulate interview questions for the community and develop interview skills to use

with a bigger group. From there, the students interviewed members of the Parker community about the concept of personal responsibility and what it means to individuals as well as to the community. Students built games to teach the community about personal responsibility and its meaning to different individuals, based on their interview responses. Some made games using cardboard and designed intricate playing pieces with a variety of materials, while others coded online interactive games or created Web-based choose-your-own-adventure stories.

We are looking forward to implementing more SEL projects using the materials in the new space. With the laser cutter, students can create more sophisticated game pieces they design, as well as incorporate 3D printed pieces. With the new space, we can take this project to the next level of design.

**MCC:** I am looking forward to continuing the 3rd grade Chicago history project. This is the first time we are trying a culminating project connected to yearlong curriculum. We’re eager to see the connections students make with learning and the ways they apply that knowledge to a design challenge: improving transportation in our city. They consider sustainability for the long-term health of the planet as well as equity of access to transportation for all residents and its impact on access to schools, libraries, jobs, etc. I hope this project reveals a link between what we learn from the past and how it can inspire us to imagine a positive world in the future. This project also incorporates the idea of maker empowerment: students look at the systems around them today and in

the past, identifying what works and doesn't work and finding ways to create something better. I'm excited to see what the 3rd graders come up with in their designs for future transportation systems.

**AL:** I'm thrilled to be teaching the Upper School Social Entrepreneurship course in the new library. We've made great use of all areas, including the design studio, story studio and Teleport, and have taken advantage of the multiple dry-erase surfaces (walls, doors and tables!) to brainstorm ideas and document thinking. We've used the screens to video conference with our outside business partners and present research and recommendations to these businesses.

**SB:** The new space has allowed students and teachers to experience technology in accessible ways that align with our thinking at Parker. We view technology as a helpful and transformative tool to use thoughtfully when it helps generate creativity, new ideas and communication. In the ILIS spaces, we are intentional in harnessing new technologies for positive impact, including digital thoughtfulness in communication and voice. We model and implement the use of social media as a platform to connect with knowledgeable experts around the world and work with students to think about how they respond to negativity online, engage in positive conversations in online spaces and use the tools in the world around us to be change makers.

Upper School Social Entrepreneurship students use Teleport screens to video conference with outside business partners and present research and recommendations.



# Telling Our Stories: Parker Works Project

“Work is about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying.”

—Studs Terkel

## Exploring Identity, Expanding Voice

As Parker students come to know themselves and feel known by their teachers and peers, they also develop an understanding that the people who make up the Parker community, who work together to bring the school’s mission to life, have stories to tell about the work they do to contribute to that communal effort. And we should know them better.

Sixth grade English teacher George Drury has helped cultivate that most human of traits, curiosity about others and the work they do, in his students. During his second year at Parker, he taught 7th grade, which previously had included a project

he took the project with him. The year before, Drury’s students developed the school’s first individual Web pages. So, the Parker Works project brings the two strands—conducting interviews and creating websites—together.

Students prepare for the interviews by reading and talking about excerpts from Terkel’s groundbreaking oral history, *Working*. After identifying their interview subjects, they carefully develop questions, covering general topics and those specific to each interviewee. “I’ve been impressed by the serious nature of the questions,” Drury commented. “The interviews

“People are hungry for stories. It’s part of our very being.” —Studs Terkel

involving students interviewing family members. Inspired by his work as an archivist and co-worker with the legendary Chicago writer and interviewer Studs Terkel at Chicago’s fine arts radio station WFMT, where Drury also was spoken word curator, he shifted the project’s focus to interviews with faculty and staff from all areas of the school. When he moved to 6th grade English in 1998,

require poise and follow-through from the students. Knowing how to conduct an interview is a great skill.” The students are also responsible for documenting the interview, editing the material they gather, taking photographs and deciding how to share the information they’ve collected. “The teams are committed to doing right by the people they’ve interviewed. That commitment has



A collage of interview subjects and a progress chart for Parker Works 2.0.

been reciprocated; the people who’ve agreed to be interviewed—all of whom are busy making the school the remarkable place it is—have been unstinting with their time.

“It’s wonderful to witness the students establishing direct contact with the people who are devoting their professional lives to making Parker possible. It’s also moving to realize that each staff member we have interviewed has expressed a deep commitment to the education and overall well-being of young people. They see themselves as integral to all Parker seeks to accomplish, day and night. The students sense on some level the school doesn’t just happen by itself. The Parker Works project gives them a fuller understanding of the careful work that goes into keeping

the whole scene together.”

Drury emphasizes the grassroots nature of the project. “What people do for a living, and how they feel about the work they do, is our key consideration. Studs Terkel’s abiding interest in documenting the experiences of working people brought new attention to an oft-neglected realm of human experience. The students work tirelessly to make sure their questions are the kind likely to elicit candid and interesting responses. We set out to talk to real people about the actual work they’re doing. That clear sense of purpose has kept us grounded.”

The Parker Works project is a “live creature” of its own, evolving as Drury and his students make discoveries. After interviewing



Lenny Marsh, a drummer who offers lessons at Parker, the class decided to include a short video of him performing. The published interview of Director of Auxiliary Programs Alex Franke features samples of her artwork. Adrian Leo, who co-teaches with Drury, uses his design skills to introduce new elements and helps the students plan, schedule and conduct the interviews. And Middle School Technology Coordinator Steven Files contributes to the online publishing of the finished interviews.

“The primary value of the project is that it shows we all play equally important roles in the community,” said Leo. “Everything the students appreciate about their daily school life is thanks to someone else’s hard work, which is one of the more

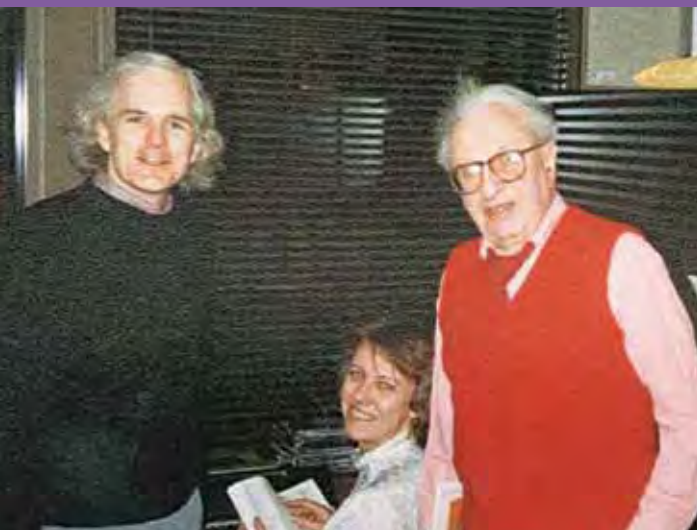
important things you can learn, to not take others’ hard work for granted. And that appreciation is more easily directed when you can put a recognizable face to it.”

Leo continued, “What I enjoy most about Parker Works is it brings out the best in the students. The project is entirely student driven: they write the questions, they take notes, they follow up, they type up the articles, they take the pictures and design the artistic elements. And props to Parker for creating an environment that promotes student-driven collaborative project work from an early age; they take it and run with it, and they show such maturity and a strong work ethic.”

Eighth grader Alex Carlin was especially excited when her grade

Sixth graders interview longstanding Parker maintenance staff member Freddie Smith for the Parker Works project.





George Drury (L) at WFMT with Studs Terkel and WFMT staff member Andi Lamoreaux.

worked on this project two years ago. According to Drury, she took on extra tasks, including writing press releases about her classmates' progress in conducting the interviews. "I have always been interested in the news, and I was able to learn about it in this process," Carlin recalled. "There are many wonderful people at Parker who help our school thrive that many of us do not know about. This project helps the unsung heroes of Parker get the attention they deserve, and it helps teach 6th graders about our school, too."

Drury is pleased with the positive responses to Parker Works—from those whom the students have interviewed to those who've visited the sites and commented on the quality of the students' work. "The project has elicited an array of encouraging responses within the school and in the world at large. Dr. Derek Goldman, founding director of the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics at Georgetown University, wrote, '...this is incredibly exciting and inspiring—Studs Terkel would be proud.'"

## Parker Works

To read interviews from the past two years, visit the Parker Works websites: [fwparker.org/parkerworks1](http://fwparker.org/parkerworks1) and [fwparker.org/parkerworks2](http://fwparker.org/parkerworks2)

For those interested in learning more about George Drury's work with Studs Terkel, visit [voiceofwitness.org/notes-on-studs-terkel/](http://voiceofwitness.org/notes-on-studs-terkel/).

"What I bring to the interview is respect. The person recognizes that you respect them because you're listening. Because you're listening, they feel good about talking to you. When someone tells me a thing that happened, what do I feel inside? I want to get the story out. It's for the person who reads it to have the feeling... I have come across ordinary people who have done extraordinary things."—Studs Terkel

## Expanding Learning Opportunities through Public Events



While Parker's classrooms and campus provide a home base for dynamic teaching and learning, the school has long served as welcoming destination of thought and intellectual growth for the Chicago area through its *Nightviews* speaker series, endowed lecture and performance initiatives and partnerships with local organizations, such as the Chicago Humanities Festival and Family Action Network.

During the 2017–18 school year, Parker has scheduled eight public events—the most ever in a single year—with additional events to come. With more than 800 free seats available for each event, the Heller Auditorium serves as a publicly accessible seminar space to enrich the lives and minds of all who venture to our model home to learn more about current educational, artistic, social, political, psychological and scientific issues.



Eric Liu, founder and CEO of Citizen University, kicked off this year's series of public events as our 20th Annual Francine C. Rosenberg Memorial Lecturer in September. Prior to his evening lecture, Liu spent the day at Parker sharing with students in a Morning Ex and faculty and staff later that day. At each gathering, Liu's energy and eloquence left his audiences—whether they were our youngest students or those who came for the nighttime lecture—with the desire to “be a part of something greater” and the confidence that, regardless of our past actions, thoughts or beliefs, we can have a positive impact on the future of America and the world at large.

Award-winning author, journalist, comic book writer and educator Ta-Nehisi Coates came to Parker just one month later for a public conversation with WBEZ correspondent Natalie Moore about his new book, *We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy*, and entertained questions from a packed Heller Auditorium audience. And Parker's 19th Annual Francine C. Rosenberg Memorial Lecturer Julie Lythcott-Haims returned in December to read from her new book, *Real American: A Memoir*, and share her recollections of growing up as a biracial black woman in America.



The new year brings at least five more opportunities for the Parker community and beyond to share in the life of the mind via public events at the school, including a visit from members of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center as the school's inaugural Joan W. Harris Visiting Music Scholars in Residence in January (see “The Bridge” on page 17).

Details for upcoming events are listed on the facing page; a complete list is available at [fwparker.org/public-events](http://fwparker.org/public-events). Please plan on joining us for one or more of these events, and spread the word—there is learning for everyone at Parker!

# Upcoming Public Events



Joan W. Harris Visiting  
Music Scholar in Residence presents  
**The Chamber Music Society of  
Lincoln Center**  
**Monday, January 22 | 7 p.m.**  
More at [fwparker.org/Harris](http://fwparker.org/Harris)



11th Annual Robert  
A. Pritzker Visiting  
Scientist•Inventor•  
Engineer in Residence  
**Dr. Rick Stevens**  
**Associate Laboratory**

**Director of Computing, Environment  
and Life Sciences at Argonne National  
Laboratory and University of Chicago  
Senior Fellow and Computer Science  
Professor in the Computation Institute**  
***The Future of Computing and its Impact  
on Science and Society***  
**Tuesday, January 30 | 7 p.m.**  
More at [fwparker.org/Pritzker](http://fwparker.org/Pritzker)



*Nightviews* Speaker Series presents  
**Free Public Screening of *Barney's Wall***  
**Discussion to Follow**  
**Friday, February 9 | 7 p.m.**  
More at [fwparker.org/Barney](http://fwparker.org/Barney)



*Nightviews* Speaker  
Series presents  
**David Farber '74**  
**Roy A. Roberts**  
**Distinguished**  
**Professor, Modern**

**America at University of Kansas**  
**Author of *Chicago* '68**  
**Monday, March 19 | 7 p.m.**  
More at [fwparker.org/Farber](http://fwparker.org/Farber)



The Jeanne Harris  
Hansell Endowed Fund  
for Poetry's  
Fifth Annual  
Presentation  
**Naomi Shihab Nye**

**Acclaimed Poet and Author**  
**Wednesday, April 4 | 7 p.m.**  
More at [fwparker.org/Hansell](http://fwparker.org/Hansell)



*Nightviews* Speaker  
Series presents  
**Dr. Lisa Damour**  
**Author of *Untangled:***  
***Guiding Teenage Girls***  
***Through the Seven***

***Transitions into Adulthood***  
**Monday, April 30 | 7 p.m.**  
More at [fwparker.org/Damour](http://fwparker.org/Damour)





# Rami Nashashibi

**A Community of Learners:** Rama Nashashibi has lived in many places around the world, but his dedication is to the place he has called home since young adulthood: Chicago, particularly the South and Southwest Sides. Though Nashashibi's mother grew up on Chicago's South Side, he was born in Amman, Jordan and spent most of his childhood moving across Europe and the Middle East until it was time to attend college.

*Parents*

"It was a last-minute decision to enroll at St. Xavier University on the far Southwest Side," he recalled. "They had a good soccer team, and I liked the brochure showing the Chicago skyline and the lakefront." After he arrived, Nashashibi not only discovered St. Xavier was nowhere near downtown or the lake, he received a rapid introduction to conflict over race and other issues he had not experienced before. "I had some growing pains as one of the only brown kids on a predominantly white campus; the only diversity was on the soccer team."

*"Parker is a very impressive place; it imparts upon young people that it's not enough to hear about important issues and challenges but to ask ourselves how we are going to be part of a solution."*

He transferred to DePaul University and quickly became active with black and Latino students around race issues, "raising some 'righteous hell,' as we called it, taking over school buildings and newspapers, but that rabble rousing led to some significant changes for students of color the university still benefits from today." Nashashibi was also eager to make similar strides off campus, so during the summers he went where he thought he could make the biggest difference—63rd Street. "I connected with community residents, the larger African-American Muslim community, Palestinian young people who grew up there, students and others across the city interested in building an organization that would collectively respond to the challenges and opportunities facing particularly low-income families in the inner city."

After graduating from DePaul in 1995 with a double major in English literature and international studies, he and a small team of leaders took the seeds of this work and founded the Inner-city Muslim Action Network (IMAN). As its website describes, IMAN is:

a community organization that fosters health, wellness and healing in the inner city by organizing for social change, cultivating the arts and operating a holistic health center. IMAN incorporated as a nonprofit in 1997 through the drive of people directly affected by and deeply invested in social issues affecting communities of color living on Chicago's South Side. Since that time, IMAN has steadily grown and, in 2016, opened a second office in Atlanta to continue mobilizing a cross-section of people committed to this mission.





The organization models an integrative approach that employs holistic interventions to address a spectrum of structural and systemic injustices impeding a dignified quality of life for people in marginalized communities. Through four programmatic thrusts, IMAN:

- Offers primary, behavioral and oral health care through its community health center
- Provides transitional housing and job training for formerly incarcerated men and high-risk youth through its Green ReEntry initiative
- Organizes around issues such as criminal justice, housing, immigration reform and healthy food access
- Inspires transformation through spiritually grounded, socially conscious arts and culture programming and creative place making

Nashashibi has served as the executive director of IMAN since its founding. He earned a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Chicago and has taught at a number of colleges and universities across Chicago. He recently completed a three-year term as visiting professor of sociology of religion and Muslim studies at the Chicago Theological Seminary. He has lectured across the United States, Europe and Asia on a range of topics related to American Muslim identity, community activism and social justice issues and is a recipient of several prestigious community service and organizing honors—most recently, a fellowship (known as the “genius grant”) from the MacArthur Foundation in 2017.

Among the ways Nashashibi hopes to use the MacArthur Fellowship resources is to find more time and space to leverage additional support for the work he has spearheaded during the last 20 years. “It’s critical that we institutionalize models like IMAN and make sure the American Muslim community has long-lasting, thriving institutions that serve as a force for good, justice and mercy amid challenging times and circumstances.” He views this prestigious award as an opportunity to do all he can to celebrate and continue the dynamic legacy of American Muslim activism in urban areas across the United States. “Much of my mentorship and development came at the hands of African-American Muslim leaders who devoted their entire lives to that legacy, and that’s something I will always be eternally grateful for and indebted to. I am committed to making sure this award helps me express that in creative and lasting ways.”

He also hopes to seek some spiritual renewal by undertaking his first spiritual journey to Mecca—known as the Hajj—this coming year. Nashashibi plans to travel with a group of American Muslims commemorating the 40th anniversary of the largest collective Hajj by an American Muslim community.

Nashashibi married Sherene Fakhra in 2000, and their three children—7th grader Jenah, 4th grader Nia and 1st grader Adam—have attended Parker since JK. “My kids have received extraordinary encouragement, nurturing and support at Parker,” he commented. “This has been a phenomenal set of years in their development and their creative cultivation as human beings, and they are learning to appreciate all the complexities of the world. As a person who deals with the consequences of educational inequity in the city, you walk into Parker, and you feel like—wow, this is what education should feel like for every kid in the city of Chicago.

“Parker is a very impressive place; it imparts upon young people that it’s not enough to hear about important issues and challenges but to ask ourselves how we are going to be part of a solution. Young people know perhaps better than we do that we can either help make Chicago great or contribute to the city’s ongoing disparities. What I appreciate about the families I’ve known at Parker is they take the privilege of a Parker education seriously and have wrestled with it in ways that challenge us to think about how this privilege must be a source of transformation and healing in the city.”





Nashashibi has made sure his children have exposure to the shifting circumstances of different Chicago neighborhoods. “For many years we drove from our home in Marquette Park through Englewood to get to Parker, so they saw the juxtaposition of those realities. They’ve met a lot of people involved in the work I do, and I hope that sticks with them as they consider what it means to be Muslim, to be privileged to have this education and live in a city like Chicago with extraordinary opportunities but also profound and crippling disparities. I’m excited that they ask thoughtful questions and we have passionate conversations about their experiences.

“I’m also inspired by the teachers, administrators and students at Parker who have sought out meaningful opportunities to engage in the work that we do at IMAN. On several occasions, that drive has brought Parker Upper School students to our neighborhood around efforts to study and directly confront issues like food deserts and the legacy of segregation in Chicago.”

Though Nashashibi looks back on 2017 as “a long, difficult year,” he appreciates that his children have had the opportunity to grow up with a vision of how the world can look when leaders provide aspirational vision. “Whether you agree or disagree with all the policies of the Obama administration, one thing that was undeniable was that kids of all walks of life felt a sense of dignity and respect from the White House; we took it for granted, and it’s not something we should take for granted. Dignity and respect is something people have had to struggle, bleed and die for in this country. There are so many places, especially in our major urban centers, where that lack of basic dignity is a quality of life issue. Structural and systemic injustices have kept people out and created winners and losers—something we all must continue to wrestle with.”

*To read a student interview with Nashashibi in the Parker Weekly, visit [fwparker.org/weeklywithrami](http://fwparker.org/weeklywithrami).*



# Sunnie Hikawa:

## Music Department Co-Chair

### A Community of Learners: Faculty/Staff

When it comes to seeing Francis W. Parker School from many perspectives, Sunnie Hikawa has quite a few she can claim: student (now alumna, class of '67), parent (now parent emerita) of Chelsea Dolinar-Hikawa '92 and Courtney Dolinar-Hikawa '94, faculty—and, for the past two years, grandparent to SK student Atreyu Ribaudo-Hikawa. “I’ve worn all the hats,” Hikawa said with a smile; her sisters, Christine Hikawa, (former vice-president of ABC-TV) is an alumna from the class of '69, and Dale Hikawa Silverman (principal violist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic) is an alumna from the class of '70.

But the role that has kept her at Parker the longest is within the Music Department, from 1985, when she joined the department as a part-time accompanist, to today, as an Upper School music teacher and co-chair of the department.

“My students are amazing and wonderful. I love my students; they are bright and interesting, and they all offer something different—inquisitiveness, challenge, enthusiasm, talent.”

After receiving her bachelor’s degree in English, with a theatre minor, from Lawrence University, Hikawa spent a year as a substitute teacher in the Chicago Public Schools. She then earned a master’s degree in English literature from the University of Oregon, returning to Chicago as an actor to take advantage of the growth of TV and film production in the city. She had roles in the film *Rookie of the Year*, the TV program *Jack and Mike* and various commercials and industrial films.

She found an appealing job opportunity at her children’s school—Parker—as a part-time accompanist. “The idea was that I could accompany classes and still be available to audition and perform outside Parker,” she said. A year later, she expanded to teaching full time in the Middle School; later, when longtime music teacher Bart Wolgamot shifted his focus to the Lower School, Hikawa and Lucius Bell shared music responsibilities in the Middle and Upper Schools. She has taught only in the Upper School for about 10 years, although she accompanies Rob Denien’s Middle School classes (and he reciprocates). In the meantime, she went back to school for her master’s in music education from DePaul University.

While many who know Hikawa—and her passion for purple—may think the name of the Advanced Choral Ensemble, Grape Jam, came from her, in fact, it was the suggestion of one of the singers. “About a year or two after I came to Parker, a couple of students were interested in forming an a cappella singing group. A faculty member in the group actually came up with the name, but I was all for it!” Starting with interested faculty and students, Grape Jam has comprised exclusively students for many years.







In addition to directing Grape Jam, Hikawa teaches the New Chorale (9th grade chorus), Special Chorus (10th–12th grades), Music Theory, Music Appreciation and a keyboard class. She also serves as musical director for the annual Upper School musical. She used to work on the 8th grade play and was instrumental (pun intended) in the replacement of that program with the extracurricular Middle School Musical, which she helped to organize in its first year. “It’s a great warm-up for the more intense commitment of the Upper School production,” she noted. “The kids love it, and they do such a good job.”

Among other developments during Hikawa’s tenure has been the expansion of the Music Department to include a band program. “Our class sizes were growing as the school building grew,” she explained. “It got to the point when there were 50 or 60 kids in chorus, not all of whom were interested, so we decided to recruit faculty specifically to teach band.” The program starts in 6th grade, when students experiment with various instruments during the first few weeks of the school year, then commit either to an instrument or choir for the rest of the year.

(L–R, back row): Sisters Christine Hikawa, Dale Hikawa Silverman and Sunnie with their mother, Martha Hikawa, who turns 97 in February 2018.



Hikawa's approach has evolved in terms of how and what she teaches. "When I first started, the breakdown of musical genres was probably about 70 percent classical and 30 percent 'other'; now it's about 20 percent classical with the rest a mix of world music, folk music, contemporary choral originals, Broadway and pop. For example, Special Chorus recently performed music adapted from Brazilian tribes of the Amazon at a Morning Ex." She constantly introduces new music in her classes. "I've always got new pieces to try. It's like a conveyor belt—we'll work on three pieces, then I throw in something new. If it works, we keep on with it, and if not, we move on to something else."

"Though everything is changing in the world sociologically, politically, I appreciate that the school still values the arts. ... Here, the administration and the faculty understand and accept that the arts are important, that getting up on stage at a young age builds confidence."

Advancements in technology also have made a significant impact. "I spearheaded the addition of our recording studio laboratory so we could have classes in recording and music technology. If you want to go into the music business today, you have to know about the software, it's all digital. We have music software programs like SmartMusic we can use to project music on a screen to work on sight-singing, and it also helps students when they practice at home. If I'm not at school, I can send audio and video links to students' devices for them to learn a piece of music."

Along with these changes, there are things important to Hikawa that remain the same. "Though everything is changing in the world sociologically, politically, I appreciate that the school still values the arts. I don't have to justify my existence at Parker as arts educators may have to do at other schools. Here, the administration and the faculty understand and accept that the arts are important, that getting up on stage at a young age builds confidence. At the same time, maintaining the integrity and vigor of the music program and keeping it from being whittled away by lack of time in the schedule and the demands of other subjects is a constant battle."

But after more than 30 years at Parker and with retirement on the horizon, her job, while demanding, still brings her joy. "My students are amazing and wonderful. I love my students; they are bright and interesting, and they all offer something different—inquisitiveness, challenge, enthusiasm, talent. And I love music. Our department is truly an important public face of the school; it brings the school community together."



## Alicia Gonzalez '96

### A Community of Learners:

#### *Alumni*

Alicia Gonzalez is the founding executive director of Chicago Run. Helping to launch the organization as its first staff member in 2008, she has built and led Chicago Run to its current size of serving more than 17,000 students in 43 Chicago Public Schools in 28 low-income neighborhoods across the city. Prior to Chicago Run, she served as the head of Hispanic Business Development for First American Bank, where she oversaw the expansion of private-public partnerships in the Latino community. She also held positions as a community organizer and youth development program director in Chicago and Boston. She is board chairman of Instituto Justice and Leadership Academy; serves on the boards of Heartland Alliance Human Care Services, Chicago Life Science Consortium and Enlace Legacy; and is an advisory board member of Good Sports Foundation. She was named one of the 2017 “40 Under 40” in *Crain’s Chicago Business* and has received the 2017 Roberto Clemente Community Leader Award from the Chicago Cubs; the 2016 President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition Community Leadership Award; the “Latina Entrepreneur of the Year (2012)” from the Chicago Latino Network; the “35 Under 35 Chicago Leadership” Award (2009) from the Community Renewal Society; and the “2009 Emerging Health Leader” from the Health and Medicine Policy Research Group. Most recently, she participated in the 2016 Aspen Institute Health Scholars program and the 2016–17 German Marshall Memorial Fellowship program. She graduated from Stanford University Business School’s Non-Profit Executive Leadership Program and was a fellow in the 2013–14 American Express NGEN Fellows Program with the Independent Sector, a fellow in the 2011 Leadership Greater Chicago Class and a fellow in the 2012 Latino Leadership Academy with the Latino Policy Forum. She graduated with honors in Latin American history from Brown University. An avid runner herself, she has completed seven marathons since 2004, including qualifying and participating in two Boston Marathons. She lives in Humboldt Park and, in her spare time, enjoys yoga, hiking, art and politics.

Working directly  
within a community  
seems to have been a  
primary factor in your  
professional life.  
Can you talk about  
why that’s been  
important to you?

As a young child growing up in Chicago, both of my parents were activists. My father was an arts activist and promoter in his Pilsen community, and my mother was an academic activist at University of Illinois at Chicago. They taught me the importance of fighting for equality and justice and instilled the value of service. Even though my father was a starving artist, he always gave what little he had to others. It seemed very natural for me to follow in his footsteps and have a career in the nonprofit sector.



How did you come to found Chicago Run?

Penny Pritzker and Bryan Traubert are both avid athletes and also generous philanthropists. In 2008, many of our Chicago Public School students were receiving only an hour of physical education per week. Penny and Bryan believed that running programs would be simple, cost-effective and easy to replicate and could help counter the lack of exercise in our schools at the time. They hired me to launch the organization with their seed funding. I had announced in a newspaper article that I wanted to start a running nonprofit for children and youth, so it was serendipitous that I found out about this opportunity with Penny and Bryan. I was an avid runner and believed that running was a great equalizer with the potential to not only improve health, but also build cross-community relationships in a city that is appallingly segregated.

Why did you believe that running was the right outlet for CPS students?

I believed one of the social justice issues of our day was that our children could not be active and play. Many children in communities where we work have experienced trauma from a young age and are coping with much more than any child should have to. I thought running would provide our children and youth with an outlet to cope with some of the trauma and stress they experience. There isn't a problem you can't take with you on a run, and that is always what I tell our kids: "Run it out." Running has the ability to bring people together, as Chicago Run is not about one's athletic prowess. We welcome children and youth of all athletic abilities. These are not track and field teams. Our programs emphasize running for social inclusion, team building, youth development and cross-community relationship building. In addition, our middle and high school youth programs infuse community service. That comes from my childhood. I wanted our youth to know, even if they live in a low-income neighborhood, they too can give back, just like my Dad did.

What are some of Chicago Run's accomplishments that you are particularly proud of?

We have grown the organization by almost 800 percent in nine years, pretty organically. Teachers, principals, students and parents tell others about our programs, and we have had wait lists at times because we can't keep up with the demand. It's a good problem to have. I am particularly proud of the solid relationships we have built within CPS. It is not easy to work with the country's third largest school district, but we have managed to forge close relationships with each school and customized our programs to best suit their needs.

I am also particularly proud of the impact of our programs on the parents and teachers in our schools. Their children have inspired them to get fit and active as well. Many parents, teachers and principals have run on our Marathon Charity Team raising funds for our programs and being healthy role models for our youth.



It all came full circle this past spring when one of our own youth, who started with us in 2008 when he was in 4th grade and went through all our programs until college, decided to run his first marathon for Chicago Run. When I asked him why he wanted to raise \$1,000 and run on our team, he said, “I have to give back to the program that gave me so much and built me into who I am today.” Nike, one of our biggest funders, heard about his story and ended up putting him in all their running marketing materials for the fall in Chicago. It was amazing publicity for Chicago Run, but more important, it was one of the greatest days of my life to see one of our youth leaders cross the finish line of the Chicago Marathon.

As you approach  
your 10th  
anniversary,  
what are your  
goals for the  
next 10 years?

We have launched a new strategic plan, Chicago Run 2.0, which will expand not only our programs to more Chicago Public Schools, but also our reach to include early child care centers, immigrant/refugee centers and more community-based organizations. Currently, we are serving 17,500 children. Our goal is to serve 30,000 children and youth annually by 2022—ambitious, but we are determined to reach our goals.

How do you think your Parker education prepared you for the choices you've made since graduating?

Parker's environment is nurturing and allows for creativity. I was impacted by AIDS at a young age with the death of a good family friend. With incredible teacher support and the emphasis on community service at Parker, I knew I would have the resources to start a group that worked closely with AIDS/HIV-afflicted communities. Many people feared reaching out to people with AIDS/HIV at the time, but Parker gave me the courage to start this committee, which worked with AIDS organizations across the city. It was my first real stint at community organizing and volunteering in the nonprofit sector. The Parker community was extremely supportive, and we had many students and a few teachers volunteering at several AIDS organizations during my years at Parker. I truly believe I would not have been able to start this group as easily at another school. Parker was open-minded and supportive and certainly encouraged me to make an impact.

Were there individuals or experiences that made an especially strong impact?

In Andy Kaplan's English class, I read the book *There Are No Children Here*, which impacted me and confirmed my drive to lead a life fighting to make our communities healthier and more equitable, especially for our children and youth.





What are some of your favorite Parker memories?

I loved being a Big Sister to Greenie’s Senior Kindergarten class. I loved visiting them every week and having time in the Lower School, especially since I never knew the culture of the younger grades given that I started at Parker in the Upper School. I also had a great relationship with my freshman “little sister,” Katharine Loring, who I am still pretty close with. I also always loved County Fair because it brought the whole Parker community together.

As a runner yourself, what has been your personal best?

In 2010, I ran my second Boston Marathon with a broken foot, detached hamstring and high fever. Despite all those ailments, I managed to actually run it eight minutes faster than the previous year, and it was my fastest marathon time at 3:28. I realized that day that it was definitely mind over matter because I was determined to beat my time from 2009 and wasn’t going to let a few injuries stop me. (Of course, in retrospect this was not the smartest idea and I have not been able to run a marathon since 2010, but at least I went out with a bang!)





# Alumni Reconnect



(L-R, top) Linda Lott '67, Melody Oates '72, (seated) Candi Benford '67, Stephen Carney '67, Melanie Carney and Dr. Jewell Oates '69 at Mon Ami Gabi during the Alumni of Color and Friends Luncheon, the kickoff event for Reunion Weekend 2017.

(L-R) Alli Bennett '14, Becca Jarcho '14, Emma Eisendrath '13, Izzy Hannigan '14 and Erifer Fernandez '14 at the annual Chicago Alumni and Friends Gathering June 6 at the home of Jennifer Ames '79 and Paul Lazarre.



Principal Dan Frank '74 and Chris Holabird '44 at the annual Los Angeles Alumni and Friends Gathering November 29 at the home of Barri Klutznick '85 and Package Pencak.

Class of '77 members  
Mark Stephens (L)  
and Bill Mintz.



(L-R) Josh Kotin '99, Sarah Haskins '97  
and Ralph Shayne '85 at the  
Rick Haskins Alumni Soccer Game  
during Reunion Weekend 2017.

(L-R) Upper School English  
teacher Theresa Collins,  
Lily Homer '13, Kim Kerbis '81  
and her husband, Clark Bender, at  
the San Francisco Alumni  
and Friends Gathering November  
30 at Tacolicious.



# Class Notes

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

## 1944

[William “Bill” Marshall](#) recently celebrated his 90th birthday. His family organized a trolley around Chicago to stop at his favorite places, including Parker. His daughter writes, “To say that Francis Parker changed his life is an understatement. With no father and a mother barely scraping by during the Depression, getting a scholarship at Parker in high school was life altering. He went on to Kenyon. Working in chemical sales after college, he was able to put four of us through great universities.”



[Bill Marshall](#) and his family stop by Parker.

## 1947

[Mary Harris Marks](#) and Mel Marks have moved to California: 2661 Tallant Rd., Santa Barbara, CA 93105

## 1950

[Alfred M. King](#) writes, “Two things of note for 1946: I moved to Chicago and started at FWP that fall. Second, the Cubs had won the National League Pennant in 1945, and I attended a game in 1946, saw the pennant flying over Wrigley Field, then waited some 70 years for redemption. The Cubs winning the World Series and the election of Mr. Trump were two of the major highlights of 2016. In case anyone wonders, I was the Chairman of our county’s Republican organization and was proud to have a small part in his victory. Speaking of politics, I read daily in the *New York Times* about the fiscal problems in Illinois and the crime problems in Chicago. How the mighty have fallen! I plan to visit Chicago this summer to take in a Cubs game and completing one item in my life’s bucket list: seeing the World Series pennant flying over Wrigley.”

## 1951

Betty Heistad Barrett writes, “I had a nice reunion with Barry Hornstein and his wife, Melanie, in Cedar Crest, New Mexico, between Albuquerque and Santa Fe, while visiting my son for his son’s high school graduation. Barry brought along his 1951 Parker *Record* to show our senior pictures to my four grandchildren in attendance. There were lots of memories shared with my family, a different look at their mother/grandmother. Barry and Melanie had attended an earlier concert at the New Mexico School for the Arts, where my grandson was a cello student. We plan on having another reunion to meet the Hornstein family. Thank you for the story on Toy Shop returning. That was always a highlight of my school year, as it will be for future students. My choice was always the wood shop, cutting and assembling large wooden blocks to be painted in the paint shop. During my senior year, I was the student in charge of the wood shop on Parents’ Night, in the early 1950s a non-traditional job for a girl, telling the fathers what to do. Many of the toys were given to Olivet Community Center, where my father was director, so Toy Shop was a double pleasure.” Her address is 356 Bradley Foster Drive, Huntington, WV 25701.

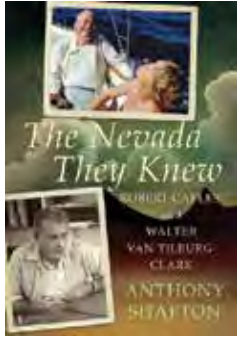
## 1954

Annick Smith writes, “Here are some updates from Montana. I am delighted to announce that Milkweed Editions has agreed to publish an anthology about the importance and meanings of hearth in our time, which is edited by Annick Smith and Susan O’Connor. The book has an introduction by Barry Lopez and includes essays, poems and fiction by 31 notable writers from around the world, including Bill McKibben, Natasha Thretheway, Pico Iyer, Sherman Alexie, Terry Tempest Williams and W.S. Merwin. It will include photographs by the noted Brazilian photographer Sebastiao Salgado and will be available next fall. I am also proud to let you know about the latest feature film—*Walking Out*—written and directed by my sons, Alex and Andrew Smith, based on a novella by David Quammen. The film, starring Matt Bomer, Josh Wiggins and Bill Pullman, premiered last winter at the Sundance Film Festival and was released this fall with many rave reviews. It has been screened in New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, Denver, Minneapolis and Montana, as well as London, Naples and other cities here and abroad, and is available on pay-per-view TV. Otherwise all is well at my Montana homestead with snow arriving early and winter coming on.”



## 1955

[Sally Jo Brady Murphy](#) has become a great-grandmother to two healthy beautiful great-granddaughters, one born in January and one born in October.



[Anthony Shafton](#) moved to Reno in 2012. *The Nevada They Knew*, his newest book, “tells the story of a legendary friendship in Nevada. Robert Caples (1908–79) was Nevada’s leading artist of the 20th century, and Walter Van Tilburg Clark (1909–71) was its leading novelist. Caples’ works range from risqué cartoon maps of Reno during the heyday of its divorce mill and exquisite charcoal portraits honoring Nevada Indians to profoundly spiritual landscapes—especially of mountains of the Great Basin. Clark’s fame rests on *The Ox-Bow*

*Incident*, but his great novel is *The City of Trembling Leaves*, a celebration of youth and the life of art based in part on the early years of his friendship with Caples in Nevada. Tony goes back and forth between the novel and the men’s biographies to understand their lives and works. He explores the reasons Clark’s fiction too soon came to a dead end, while Caples eventually ceased painting as a spiritual choice. The book is also a memoir of Tony’s own friendship with Caples, his attachment to Clark’s novel *The City of Trembling Leaves* and his connection to a land both men taught him to love.”

## 1961

[Larry Garner](#) performed in the Neil Simonesque comedy *Clever Little Lies* at Chicago’s Athenaeum Theatre in November and December. He writes, “It’s a very funny riff on entangled relationships under the strain of an extramarital affair.”

## 1964

[Tony Salzman](#) writes, “The top item on my bucket list was checked off last fall. Three days in Chicago (with my son) included a visit to FWP and two days at The Friendly Confines at the World Series.”



[Tony Salzman](#) and his son.

[Lore Silberman](#) has moved to San Diego, California. Any 1950s–60s alumni living in the area should contact the Parker Alumni Office to get in touch with her.



## 1966

[Jamee Tucker Gregory](#) has been named President of the Society of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. She will lead a group of dedicated women who volunteer to help patients and fund critical, cutting-edge research.

[Nora T. Marsh](#) writes, “My dear friend and former teacher at FWP, Pat David Boothby, celebrated her 90th birthday in September. She did not want a party, but I’m sure she would be very gratified to hear from former students and Chicago friends. She remains beautiful, bright and funny, as she has always been. She still lives in her house at 2011 Marengo St. in New Orleans.”

## 1968

[Tom Nathan](#), [Bill Rosen](#), [Steve Tinsley](#) and class of ’69 alumni David Marienthal and Randy Server gathered at the Union League Club on November 11 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Parker winning the ISL Football Championship. They shared great stories, mostly true, about on-field heroics and wonderful team spirit. They are making plans to get together soon to watch long hidden films of this victorious and legendary Parker team. They send best wishes to all their teammates who couldn’t make the gathering.

## 1969

[David Marienthal](#) has been hard at work producing a documentary film about his father’s nightclubs, Mister Kelly’s and London House. Called a “supernova in the local and national night life firmament,” the legendary Mister Kelly’s illuminated Chicago’s Rush Street, and the entire country, by launching talent like Barbra Streisand, Woody Allen, Steve Martin, Bette Midler, Herbie Hancock and Richard Pryor. Its visionary owners, George and Oscar Marienthal, smashed color and gender barriers to put fresh, irreverent voices on stage and transform entertainment as America knew it in the ’50s, ’60s and ’70s. For an entertaining look at the nightlife of a famous era in Chicago’s history, check out [misterkellyschicago.com](http://misterkellyschicago.com) and Mister Kelly’s Chicago on Facebook.

## 1975

[Casey Dinges](#) and his colleagues at the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) were featured in “No Passing Zone: America’s Infrastructure” in *Wesleyan University Magazine*. The article discusses the ASCE’s report card on our country’s infrastructure.

1977

[Elise Paschen](#) has been reading from her new book, *The Nightlife*, in San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, Boston, Portland and Los Angeles.

1978

[Ross W. Blair](#) writes, “I’ve moved as of May 1 and am co-owner of a house with my significant other, Cynthia Evetts. I moved north to Denton, and Cynthia’s moved west, cutting down her commute to TWU (Texas Woman’s University) where she’s the head of TWU’s School of Occupational Therapy. I’ve just taken on a new role for IBM Legal, supporting IBM’s R&D division (looks like I’ve finally gotten my head out of the clouds and can only hope I can wrap it around Cognitive Technology and Learning—wish me luck). Denton’s the Austin of North Texas. It’s home to two colleges and a small live music scene. So if anyone ever gets stuck at DFW for the night and would prefer a bed over an airport cot, please reach out on Facebook, etc., and let us know, as we’ve downsized but have two very functional guest rooms (with five kids between us, and a smaller house than either of us have lived in for 25 years, we no longer have a memorial bedroom for each kid frozen in time at age 18). So, all y’all are welcome if you get stuck, or otherwise want to pay a visit to DFW.”

1981

[Kim Kerbis](#) was recently appointed by the Parker’s Alumni Association to its Board of Trustees. Kim previously served as Vice President of the Alumni Association beginning in 2004.

1984

[Elizabeth Skidmore](#) writes, “I was at Parker from Junior Kindergarten through 5th grade, when my family moved to Houston. I have such good memories of Parker! After college I became a union carpenter and now work for the union. A major part of my work is bringing more women into high-skill, high-wage careers in union construction. ...I work with fellow Parker alumna Ayanna Pressley ’92, who has been a huge supporter of opening the doors to folks who have historically been excluded from these good union careers.”

## 1985

[Daniel Klutznick](#) writes, “After working more than 25 years in commercial real estate development, I left the industry to pursue a career in commercial photography. While I continue this new career path today (primarily photographing live music, film stills and other documentary work), my most recent path is raising money for Alzheimer’s disease research. My dad became ill more than 10 years ago with the disease and both of his parents died from Alzheimer’s. I am a director of a nonprofit called These Things Foundation. Our first campaign to raise awareness and money for research is based upon the following premise: if you had to leave planet earth tomorrow, what would you take to remember your time here? It is a film and photography project. We are always looking for new participants! Please check out our website, [thesethingsfoundation.org](http://thesethingsfoundation.org), and contact me if you are interested in participating and helping us find a cure for Alzheimer’s disease at [dk@thesethingsfoundation.org](mailto:dk@thesethingsfoundation.org).”

## 1988

[Linda Perry \(Babich\)](#) writes, “After spending my whole life in Chicago and even sending my kids to Parker through 8th grade, my family and I made the big move nearly a year ago to Vail, Colorado. It’s been an incredible year for our family happily adjusting to a more outdoor way of life. I’ve also started Soul Genius Branding, a new branding company helping businesses with a purpose and passion connect with the people that need them. After spending over 17 years practicing law, I felt something was missing and have slowly shifted my business to help give people a voice in a different way. It’s been incredibly rewarding. I feel lucky for all the changes. Although I miss Chicago and my Parker friends, I’m lucky to base my business in both Chicago and Vail. I can head back to Chicago often and eat at my favorite restaurants (good food is so missed).”

## 1990

[Cornelia McNamara](#) writes, “It’s been eight years since I’ve written in class notes, but in the meantime I’ve been raising my son, Leo, who is now nine; running my floral and event design company here in Chicago (complete with burgeoning urban flower farm!); and caring for my mother, Omie, who had a rare form of Alzheimer’s and died in early 2016. On November 4, I got married for the first time! My now-husband, Greg Walters, is the director of development at Ravinia, and Leo gained two stepsisters, ages eight and 10, with whom we now live in Old Town. [Anne Addington](#) was my maid of honor, and [Jacob Estes](#) was a bridesman, while his daughter, Iris, was one of my eight flower girls. My team filled The Casino with wildly beautiful flowers from our farm, and Luke Carroll ’88 and [Norena Mikicic](#) came to dance the night away to the Stones, New Order and the like!”

[Cornelia McNamara](#) and her eight flower girls.







## 1991

[Steve Feldman](#) happily remains a Chicago resident where he maintains his law office. On December 16, 2017, he and his lovely fiancée, Claudia, got married. He is also running for Cook County Judge in the 8th judicial subcircuit, which primarily includes the following Chicago neighborhoods: Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Wrigleyville, Boystown, Old Town, Gold Coast, River North, Streeterville, West Loop, South Loop, Chinatown, Edgewater, Andersonville, Uptown, Buena Park, Lincoln Square and Bowmanville. Election Day is March 20, 2018, and the campaign is underway. He has been working

hard to get the word out, and he and Claudia had a great time marching with fellow members of the Parker community in the 2017 Chicago Pride parade. For more information about Steve Feldman and his campaign, please visit [votefeldmanforjudge.com](http://votefeldmanforjudge.com).

[Steve Feldman](#) and his wife, Claudia.



## 1999

[David Grass](#) has merged his passion for children's health and development with a background in brand-building marketing and operations. He has joined Weissbluth Pediatrics as the Chief Operating Officer. In doing so, he has partnered with a Latin Roman rival and friend, "Dr. Dan" Weissbluth '97. He writes, "At Weissbluth Pediatrics, we are dedicated to providing your family with the highest level of personalized, attentive and collaborative care. By merging high-technology tools and old-fashioned practices, we do our best to

optimize your child's health and development. To learn more, please visit us at [weissbluthpediatrics.com](http://weissbluthpediatrics.com)."

[David Grass](#) (R) and partner and former rival Dan Weissbluth.

[Katie Nordine](#) has recently moved into a larger role with her collaboration with Len Goodman '80, whom she has worked with as an event planner since 2012. As of June, she is his executive assistant, working on many projects they hope have a positive impact on our community, locally and more broadly. Beyond that, she is living through all of life's ups and downs with her husband, Dave Heltibrand; their two children, Nils Heltibrand and Valley Nordine; and their fluffy kid, Kashyyyk, in Evanston.

## 2002

[Jeremy Kotin](#) was thrilled to see *Blood Stripe*, a feature film he edited and co-produced, play in limited release across the nation this fall after winning top narrative honors at the LA Film Festival and the audience award at the Austin Film Festival last year. He is also thrilled to be collaborating for the fourth year in a row with Barneys New York to document the making of the holiday windows. On the personal front, he tied the knot with Evan Jacobs during a rainstorm late this past spring with a handful of Parker alums in attendance: his brother, H. Joshua Kotin '99; cousins Rachel Levin Albert '96 and Ari Levin '00; friends [Tom Elson](#), [Lauren Gidwitz](#) and Leigh Parrinello-Adelman '01; and future Parker graduates Talia Albert '28, Gabe Albert '20 and Maxwell Kotin '31.



## 2006

[Rachel Z. Arndt](#) writes, "I'm thrilled to say that my first book, *Beyond Measure*, is coming out in April. It's a collection of essays about the metaphorical and literal ways we measure our daily lives. I can't wait for it to exist out in the world!"

## 2008

[Bea Koch](#) and Leah Koch '10 are featured in *The New York Times* article "In Love With Romance Novels, but Not Their Lack of Diversity" for their report on the state of diversity in romance publishing.

## 2012

[Cindy Avila](#) is the youngest recipient of Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center's annual Hispanocare Award for 2017, which she received in recognition of her community engagement, leadership and commitment to provide better health care opportunities for Chicago's Hispanic and Latino patient population.

## In Memoriam

[Lois Checkers Jacob '52](#) earned a B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College in 1955, according to an obituary from the *Chicago Tribune*. “Soon afterward she met Robert ‘Bud’ Jacob, of San Francisco, who proposed just days later on the shore of Lake Tahoe. They married in Chicago in 1956 and moved the family to California in 1967. Lois was the first franchisee of Gymboree Corp, running a successful play program for tots and new mothers at four centers across the East Bay during the 1980s. Known for her angelic singing voice, she performed in numerous musicals and plays, later forming a theatrical reading troupe to entertain Bay Area seniors. Lois is survived by her husband, Robert; sons Michael, Daniel and Stephen; daughter Elizabeth; and five grandchildren. The family suggests donations in Lois’ name to the Alzheimer’s Association, Northern California and Northern Nevada.” Classmate Pat Eldredge writes, “Lois was so much a part of the class of ’52! She was a leader in all aspects of school life, loved by everyone. I realize that to most readers of alumni news she is just a name. But if you had known her for even a moment, you would miss her as much as we do.”

[Eric Martin '54](#) was the son of longtime beloved 4th grade teacher Lynn Martin. Classmate Dorothy Ramm writes, “Eric really personified our class. He was president of Student Government our senior year at Parker, had a great academic record and participated in lots of activities including dramatics. We will miss him very much!”

[Anthony R. Rosenwald '54](#) lived in Santa Barbara, California for 35 years with his wife Toni Harlan. He traveled extensively, took a million photographs and ate in many great restaurants around the world.



## Welcome the Newest Member of Parker's Colonel Crew!

Our beloved Colonel Francis W. Parker mascot has a new partner to help him direct the energy and enthusiasm of Parker sports fans. The 2017 fall athletics season welcomed a younger, more feathery and gender-neutral mascot to the school in the form of an eagle, which made its debut at a Homecoming-timed Morning Ex focusing on the history of Parker mascots.

The eagle represents the insignia of a Colonel, a rank held by founder Francis W. Parker while fighting in the Civil War. The original Colonel Parker mascot remains, but now has a mascot "buddy."

In a collaboration of the school's administration, Athletics Department and Student Athletics Committee, Parker decided to invite the eagle to join our Colonel Crew to ensure that every student at Parker, from our youngest Jker to our oldest senior, can connect with our mascots and join them in cheering on our student-athletes as they compete.





Exploring  
Identity

