

The LAMP POST



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Journeying Forward

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50th ANNIVERSARY GALA

May 20th, 2023

Join alumni, parents, staff, and friends
to celebrate 50 years of The LP

COVER PHOTO: Students
perform at the 39th annual
Mayfest in Copley Square.

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Student Voice

from JUSTIN HAJJ

In recent years, it has become part of our program for The Learning Project's headmaster to teach a yearlong course on leadership to our fifth grade students. This Leadership Workshop was designed to prepare our students in their penultimate year at The LP to take on the major responsibilities that come with being a sixth grader at the school. We focus on the qualities of great leaders, examine various scopes of leadership from local to global initiatives, practice responsible decision making, discuss building trust among members of a community, and develop each child's own leadership skills through reflection, goal setting, improving self-perception and uncovering one's own capacities.

We cover a lot of ground over the course of the school year, and one of the most powerful and important aspects of Leadership Workshop is seeing how our students put that learning into action, not only as part of the course, but as sixth graders the year following. Later in this edition of *The LampPost*, you will read about that important 'action component' of a Learning Project education. Indeed, action is a core facet of our program at every grade level. Recently, however, during a Leadership Workshop lesson, I was struck by our fifth graders' understanding of a related but equally important element of leadership, and that is their nuanced comprehension of the power of each person's 'voice.'

As part of this lesson, we read Chris Barton's *What Do You Do With A Voice Like That? The Story of Extraordinary Congresswoman, Barbara Jordan*. This kicked off a conversation about what our voice truly is, and how it can inspire and bring about change.

Students' comments about the definition of voice ranged from literal to a deeper, more figurative meaning, and it was astounding to hear our fifth graders'

connections between their voice and a sharing of beliefs; about tone of language; about creating a dialogue between people, even between people of contrasting ideologies; and about the connection between their voice and inspiring actions among others in their community. This was just the very first lesson on the topic of voice, which left me wondering: *Where did our students get this deep, and important, understanding of the power of voice?*

Since then, I have reflected on the origins of this deeply ingrained learning among our children. While we are quite explicit about teaching children how to put thoughts into action and how our actions impact others, our instruction regarding the impact and value of words and voice is more subtle. From an early age, Learning Project children learn that their words matter and that their voice has value. Right away, kindergarteners learn through collaboration and conflict resolution how to problem-solve with words, how to listen to others, and how to ensure that The LP 'Powers' are exemplified through voice. They learn how to advocate for themselves and how to communicate thoughts and feelings effectively.

Like learning a new instrument, the development of voice often takes instruction, practice, and performance. Throughout their time at the school, Learning Project students develop confidence in their voice through public speaking opportunities. Each Thursday at All School Meeting, students are selected to share assignments or classroom curricular topics with the rest of the school community, taking pride in their work in a very public way, receiving the appreciation of their peers and, implicitly, gaining the feeling that their voice matters. Each grade level performs two plays a year in front of both parents and their schoolmates, they engage in important conversations about peace and non-violence within cross-



JUSTIN HAJJ

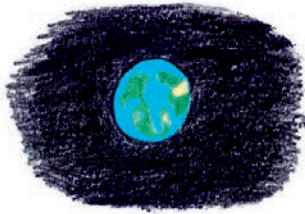
Michael W. McCord Head of School

grade groups each month, and, by the time they're in sixth grade, they're serving as ambassadors for school visitors and independently leading Monday Morning Assemblies. Opportunities to develop voice and confidence abound at The Learning Project.

The school also encourages advocacy in many forms, and at a variety of levels. Just this year alone, I have received a number of petitions and persuasive letters from our students, championing causes that they feel passionate about at the school. Our first graders wrote compelling letters to me, not only asking for a class pet, but anticipating my counter-arguments and sharing potential solutions. While, ultimately, I had to disappoint them and did not agree to the hamster that they requested, I was convinced enough to purchase them a plush hamster—which they've since named Mr. Nibbles—and of which they share the responsibility of caring for each evening. Later in this *LampPost*, you will read about how, in second grade, students learned about public art in Boston, researched various monuments and memorials, and took note of who was and who wasn't represented throughout our city. Following this assignment, they designed their own monuments of important people in Boston history, wrote letters to Mayor Wu, and sent them along for her review, hoping to see more diverse representation throughout Boston. We have also taken part in a number of public rallies, held school advocacy drives, and embraced students'

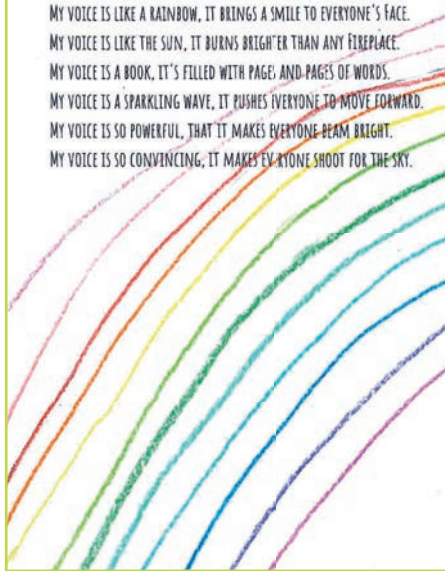
My Voice

My voice is a wave crashing down on the sand
 My voice is so strong it starts tornados
 My voice is as smooth as sanded wood
 My voice is a burning fire
 My voice can erupt volcanoes
 My voice can be as quiet as space



CONFIDENCE

MY VOICE IS LIKE A RAINBOW, IT BRINGS A SMILE TO EVERYONE'S FACE.
 MY VOICE IS LIKE THE SUN, IT BURNS BRIGHTER THAN ANY FIREPLACE.
 MY VOICE IS A BOOK, IT'S FILLED WITH PAGE! AND PAGES OF WORDS.
 MY VOICE IS A SPARKLING WAVE, IT PUSHES EVERYONE TO MOVE FORWARD.
 MY VOICE IS SO POWERFUL, THAT IT MAKES EVERYONE BEAM BRIGHT.
 MY VOICE IS SO CONVINCING, IT MAKES EVERYONE SHOOT FOR THE SKY.

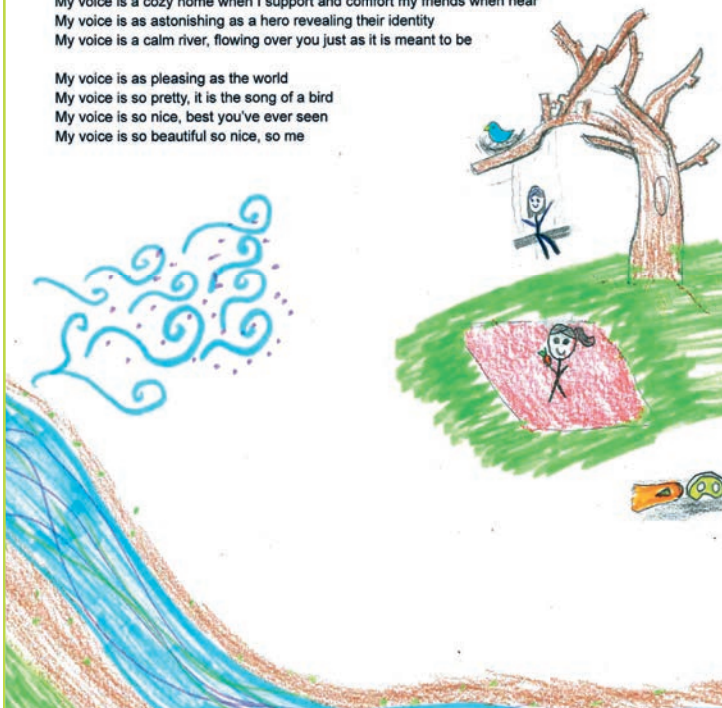


My Voice

My voice is as powerful as the wind on a bitter winter day waiting to blow you over
 My voice is so crisp, it's like biting into a fresh apple, from a picnic, the checkered blanket on top of clovers
 My voice is so clear, it is a cloudless sky, spreading it so everyone can hear

My voice is a cozy home when I support and comfort my friends when near
 My voice is as astonishing as a hero revealing their identity
 My voice is a calm river, flowing over you just as it is meant to be

My voice is as pleasing as the world
 My voice is so pretty, it is the song of a bird
 My voice is so nice, best you've ever seen
 My voice is so beautiful so nice, so me



unique ideas so they can see how thoughts transfer into both actions and voice. It is clear to our students, from the moment they arrive in kindergarten, that their voice matters.

This is not to say that all students need to be extroverts. Introverts have a voice all of their own, and either express them in written form, or save their verbal contributions for when it matters most. And this is exactly the point: Learning Project children grow into themselves—their own one-of-a-kind selves—while simultaneously developing their understanding that their voice is special and unique. Author, Neil Gaiman, writes, “The one thing that you have that nobody else has is you. Your voice, your mind, your story, your vision. So write and draw and build and play and dance and live as only you can.” It is clear through talking with our fifth graders that, while The Learning Project emphasizes the value of coming together and embracing community, there is also an understanding that underlying this is the celebration of uniqueness, and of recognizing and valuing each individual’s voice.

To end our fifth grade Leadership Workshop lesson on voice this year, I asked each child to write a poem about their voice to share with the class. They were to include figurative language in the form of similes, metaphors and hyperboles, but in a way that described the value of their own voice. Within these poems, we see the variety and uniqueness of each child as they compared their voice to animals, to forces of nature, and even commented on how their voice impacts others in positive ways. And while this assignment revealed much about one class, one moment in time, I do feel that it is indicative of Learning Project children in general, and across generations. Inherent in the power of small is the ability to truly see and hear each child, to nurture the emergence of their truest selves, and to help them to value their own uniqueness. And when that occurs, that power of small evolves into something much bigger—into a song that is both powerful and beautiful. A song worth listening to.

PE In the City:

An Interview with PE teacher, John Robinson

by ALEXANDRIA ZIOMEK



The Learning Project's unique, age-appropriate physical education curriculum has always emphasized fitness through strength, endurance, and flexibility, as well as powering up those important LP values of positivity, cooperation, and hard work. An asset to the program itself is our city location, which allows for PE classes to take place down in the Ballroom, but also at Clarendon Street Playground, on the Esplanade, and on the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. This dynamic program has been led by John Robinson, or Mr. Rob, as his students call him, for the past 24 years. This spring, I had the opportunity to sit down with John and ask him a few questions about the PE program at The LP and his creative use of all of the spaces the city of Boston has to offer.

Mr. Rob, this is your 24th year teaching at The LP, can you believe it? For our readers out there, can you catch them up—what's stayed the same in the physical education curriculum? What's changed?

Well, no I can't believe it. When I first arrived, my goal was to see one class through from first grade until graduation. 24 years in, it's safe to say I accomplished that goal.

Many folks may not know that we used to have a gym! Yes, a real gymnasium used for PE classes. It was at the YWCA further up on Clarendon. We always had a raucous, good time in there! There was sadly no kindergarten and most classes only had PE twice each week.



LP students listening attentively to Mr. Rob's directions.

The LP loves using all that the city has to offer , and this includes neighborhood favorites like the Esplanade, the Commonwealth Avenue Mall, and Clarendon Street Playground. How do you think about using each space and the activities you choose for each?

I first think of safety. These spaces aren't necessarily designed for PE class so I have to make sure that I am adapting to our surroundings. The beauty of the city is that each area has its unique advantages. The Esplanade is wide open, but try playing soccer there and you will be asking a kayaker to rescue your ball. The Commonwealth Mall has a nice hard surface for ball games, but we have to share it with pedestrians. Whatever our location, I do try to maximize movement. Our children spend so much time working hard, seated at their desks and it is vital to get them moving about!

Why LGPE (Large Group PE)? Why SGPE (Small Group PE)?

This predates me. But, we try to use LGPE, which is the entire grade participating in PE together, for sports and activities like soccer, flag football, and kickball-team sports, although it's certainly not restricted to those alone. We also use the parachute, play cooperative games and engage in fitness activities. SGPE is more self-contained and is only half of each class at a time. It's a controlled environment (not many pedestrians walking through the Ballroom). And, it allows for more one-on-one attention.

What's your favorite thing about physical education at The LP?

Mostly the children, but I do like being able to work outside! I started my teaching career as a secondary educator and I didn't know that I would enjoy the younger students as much as I do. They are challenging, resilient, full of energy and humor, and they never let you have a day off. You really have to bring your "A game" every day.

Are there any special PE activities for specific grades? Is there anything else you think the broader LP community should know about PE at The LP?

The games and activities that are in the physical education curriculum are age appropriate. That doesn't necessarily mean that these are specific to a certain grade. Instead, what it means is that how we play that game might be specific to that age group. Take a sport like soccer, for instance. In kindergarten, we play "Animal" soccer, where the children get an animal name (monkey, gorilla, dolphin, shark), and they can run onto the field and play when they hear their animal name. If they don't hear it, they stay back and play goalie. On the other side of the age spectrum, the sixth graders have mini games (4-on-4, 5-on-5) where they play a vigorous and strategic mini-soccer game. So, in short, each grade is challenged and gets what it needs according to their developmental stages.



Second graders playing at Clarendon Street Playground.



Students playing a running game at Clarendon Street Playground.



Mr. Rob explaining the directions of a new game.



Starting the third grade race during Field Day at Teddy Ebersol Fields.



Caretakers of the Future

by SASHA ZUFLACHT

Honesty in word and deed, courtesy and a sense of responsibility towards others, respect for nature and care of our material environment and a commitment to talking through and solving interpersonal or group problems are principles that give shape to who we are and what we do. — The Learning Project Mission Statement

With the Mission Statement as our guiding light, The Learning Project's identity is shaped and nurtured by a strong sense of involvement and care, by a commitment to developing students as ambassadors, champions, advocates, and leaders of the future, and by an innate sense of responsibility to be active members of the community. This sense of responsibility to give back, to be responsible stewards of the future, both locally and globally, extends far beyond the four walls of the McCord Building. Many of The LP's beloved traditions—Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF and Read-a-thon, for example—have elements of giving back. These efforts often have tangible outcomes, presenting the total amount raised following the events, but the lessons that they teach our students, and remind us of as adults, are by far what's most important. LP students learn that "giving back" isn't a one size fits all approach—it has different outputs and varying points of impact. It is important that they both observe and participate in that responsibility at a young age.

LP students act as caretakers of the future through their actions, both large and small. From the student that picks up a plastic bottle on the sidewalk and places it in the recycling bin (afterwards walking a little bit taller, proud of their accomplishment)—to the Sixth Grade Charitable Fund, intended to provide soon-to-be LP graduates the opportunity to raise money and inspire a lifelong commitment to supporting causes near and dear to their hearts.

So what, exactly, does this idea of giving back look like at The LP? Below are a few reflections, among countless examples, of our students in action. They remind us what a solutions-oriented, responsible, and empathetic group of kids can do—today, tomorrow, and for years to come. We feel lucky to be part of their journey.

THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE

In early March, as the recent crisis in Ukraine continued to develop, each class, grades K-6, discussed the situation in developmentally appropriate ways. We remain committed to fostering these necessary, albeit difficult, conversations for our students and, equally so, providing action opportunities for them to exercise their empathy, kindness, courage and responsibility. And we did just that.

Through a schoolwide vote during an All School Meeting, students agreed that they would designate a portion of their record breaking Read-a-thon funds to UNICEF's efforts to support children and families of Ukraine. They are well aware of UNICEF's focus on humanitarian aid, having discussed the organization's work in great detail each year before kicking off our annual Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF tradition. Even further, students participated in a week-long 'change drive' to boost

means. It feels extraordinary to report that our students - between their Read-a-thon fundraising efforts and the 'change drive' — raised a total of \$4,750 for UNICEF. We are extremely proud of our students for their commitment to support UNICEF, but more than anything, for their care and concern for others, even those 4,500 miles away.

CITY STUDY IN ACTION

by Anne Zanazzi

Second graders always impress me with their genuine eagerness to effect positive change in their world, but their earnestness in our City Study project this year went above and beyond. In the fall, we focused on the impact of public art in Boston, ranging from murals to monuments. After touring the Back Bay memorials on Commonwealth Avenue, the second graders engaged in discussions about the homogeneity



Students contributed to the UNICEF change drive in The LP lobby.



Second graders studying memorials on the Commonwealth Avenue Mall.

their contributions to UNICEF. An average-looking, modestly sized bowl was placed in the lobby for students to drop their spare change into throughout the week. LP students, motivated by their in-class discussions, dedicated to making a positive impact, and through powering up their responsibility, took direct action to meet this moment. Day after day, penny after penny, the bowl nearly overflowed from rusty coins, a few crisp bills, and a serious sense of purpose and inspiration.

This habit of generosity, this level of empowerment when faced with or learning about a difficult situation, is what living up to our Mission

represented there. As LP problem solvers learning to be active members of their own community, rather than passive observers, they developed their own proposals for new memorials in Boston that would add a better reflection of the true diversity of influential Bostonians.

Each second grader researched an individual from an underrepresented population, discovered their impact on our city, and used that research to craft their proposals. They worked diligently and creatively to not only design a sketch of a memorial, but also to write a short report on their subject's influence and a rationale for how this

memorial would enhance our community and life in our city. Once their proposals were completed, the second graders didn't stop there. We carefully packaged their hard work in a large envelope and mailed it to the office of Mayor Wu for their consideration.

It was powerful for the second graders to realize their ability to use their own voices to advocate for change towards more equitable representation. They not only learned about important people in our city's history and those making an impact in present day, but also witnessed how tangibly they and their learning are connected to shaping our community. No matter our age, we can all use our voice to enact meaningful change.

CLARENDON STREET PLAYGROUND CLEANUP

by Mikah Farbo

park is city-owned, and the city provides any necessary repairs and collects the trash, much of the maintenance comes from NABB, community members, and local schools. After learning about the park's history, fifth graders spend some time cleaning up the playground.

Twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, fifth graders help clean up the playground by picking up trash, sweeping and raking the wood chips off the walkways, removing the broken toys, making note of structures that need repair, and washing the shed and brick wall. Throughout the course of a year, students on the playground have an opportunity to do each job since we do a rotation during the clean up. Students are eager and excited to clean up the park each season, and take their job quite seriously.

At The LP, we talk about collective responsibility, the idea that it is on all of us to contribute to the goodness, cleanliness, and overall maintenance of shared resources. Fifth graders do



Fifth graders use sponges to remove graffiti



Fifth graders clean up the bricks at Clarendon Street Playground.

Ask a fifth grader to pick up trash, clean up, or do yard work at home and you might expect some sort of snarky response, but ask a fifth grader to rake, sweep, or clean the Clarendon Street Playground and they'll volunteer to do it all! For many years, LP students have been helping to maintain our beloved playground, and a few years ago, it became a fifth grade tradition to clean up the park.

As part of our City Study unit, fifth graders learn about the Neighborhood Association of Back Bay (NABB) and their significant role in creating and maintaining, what we know of as the Clarendon Street Playground. Although the

just that—there's a meaningful connection between cleaning and contributing to the longevity of a playground that students use almost every day. This small, but important tradition of cleaning up the playground is something students look forward to, and it's a leadership opportunity they fully embrace. Fifth graders learn the importance of taking care of a precious resource, like their beloved playground, so it's around today, tomorrow, and well into the future.

LP MILESTONES

by ALEXANDRIA ZIOMEK



JULIANA BRINKLEY

First Grade Head Teacher
20 years at The LP

Although Juliana is celebrating 20 years of teaching at The LP, her career in education spans even longer. She was interested in teaching from a young age, often playing "school" with

friends, stuffed animals, and her siblings. Her aunt worked at a textbook publishing company and would bring home copies of books to help stock up her "home classroom." It's no surprise that she went on to study education at Wheelock College. Before joining The Learning Project, she worked at two private elementary schools in Portland, Oregon.

Familiar with the small school setting from her previous experiences, Juliana appreciates The Learning Project for its small feel and huge heart. On her very first day teaching at The LP, during an All School Meeting, she was amazed at how special each part of the meeting was: from the moment of silence, to Mr. McCord's caring words, to the songs that were sung together. She knew she had chosen the right place—and we knew we were lucky to have her! When asked about her favorite part of teaching first grade, Juliana mentions her students' curiosity and love of learning. She enjoys helping them to develop and strengthen their friendships by leading whole group lessons, and also in the day-to-day moments, as they learn to solve problems with their peers.

Outside of the classroom, Juliana loves reading, and she participates in two different book clubs. She is also a self-proclaimed 'dance mom' to her 14-year-old daughter who dances competitively. During her free time in the summer, she loves traveling to see family in Maine and Pennsylvania, as well as exploring the Boston area with her family.



SUZANNE GARCIA

Science Teacher
15 years at The LP

While Suzanne had walked by The LP for many years, she did not know too much about the school before joining the team 15 years ago.

Watching Suzanne expertly guiding her classes through

a science lesson, it's hard to believe that she found teaching later on in her career. After working in sales for many years, she was ready for a meaningful change and an opportunity to be creative every day. She had read several articles about education and started out by taking a few classes at UMass Boston, where she quickly became hooked. Exploring the education field, Suzanne worked for the Museum of Science "Courses" program, worked as a long-term substitute and science specialist, and as an ice skating instructor before finding her teaching home at The Learning Project.

Since working at The LP, Suzanne started the Science Club, which ran for 7 years, and is something she plans to continue in the future. She also developed the coding curriculum with John Krewson. More recently in Science, Suzanne created the Science L.A.B (Learn, Apply, Better the World) curriculum, which will serve as a model for enhanced Science curriculum in the coming years. She is incredibly passionate about the work done at The LP and is impressed by how we do so much in a small space.

One of Suzanne's favorite traditions is Performance Fest, which is held three times a year with beautiful musical performances, jokes, magic tricks and simply children being children! When she's not up in the Science classroom, Suzanne participates in Adult Figure Skating competitively, practicing 3-4 times a week. This keeps her healthy—mentally and physically—and provides her with a community of friends who are passionate about the sport.



JUSTIN HAJJ

Michael W. McCord Head of School

10 years at The LP

Justin Hajj has held numerous positions at The LP, including 6th Grade Head Teacher, Director of External Relations, Upper Grade Division Head, and Assistant Head of School,

before becoming Head of School on July 1, 2020. Prior to The LP, he worked as a technology instructor, 5th grade teacher, drumming teacher, and middle school English teacher.

He had always wondered about a career in teaching before having any real experience in the classroom. His first role was as an assistant teacher, and, after witnessing the sheer joy and amazement as second graders watched chicks hatching, he never looked back. When considering a move back to the East coast from L.A. with his family, Justin discovered The Learning Project and was drawn to its mission and commitment to education after his initial conversation with Michael McCord. He was certain that their values aligned and that The LP would be a good fit for him. The LP felt the same way.

Since joining The LP, Justin is especially proud of the traditions he implemented as a 6th grade teacher, such as the speaker series at Monday Morning Assemblies, and the 6th grade "This I Believe" radio broadcast. As an administrator, he is immensely proud of how The LP has managed the pandemic. He is also thrilled with how we've found new and exciting ways to engage with the city through the City Study program. Even with all of the special events and creative curriculum, Justin still credits his favorite part of The LP as the people, an eclectic mix of community members all committed to the same mission and fueling the joy among students and faculty alike. He is newly inspired in his role as Head of School, having the ability to walk through the building on a regular basis and witness the truly amazing activities taking place in each and every classroom.

Justin is excited for the return of all school traditions and more 'normalcy' in the years to come. He looks forward to seeing the updated curriculum in sustainability, equity and justice, and more. One of his favorite moments at The LP was at the graduation ceremony for the Class of 2015. Knowing it would be his last year teaching 6th grade, the Class of 2015 decided to honor him with his own Learning Project diploma. The whole class came up on stage for a group hug, a true LP moment that he would never forget. Nearly 10 years later, Justin's tenure is now etched in The LP's history books.

J is for Justice, Joy, and Journeying Forward

by JOHN KREWSON

Our goal as historians is to gain a deeper understanding of each period in history by not only following the timeline of our units, but by investigating closely the lives, traditions, social norms, and experiences of humanity throughout the decades.

Vive la révolution!" reads a brightly-colored poster in our 6th grade classroom. It hangs among many other red, white and blue designs, each bearing a unique student tribute to our study of the French Revolution. Every bold design bears a rallying cry or slogan that may have echoed through the streets of Paris, alongside symbolic artwork and graffiti that may have adorned stone cathedrals and cobbled marketplaces in late 18th century France.

This year in Sixth Grade, our class challenge has been to move beyond just the facts and dates of our textbook, and towards thinking critically about how civilizations, nations, people groups, and individuals experienced their lives in light of the events and cultural shifts of their time. Our goal as historians is to gain a deeper understanding of each period in history by not only following the timeline of our units, but by investigating closely the lives, traditions, social norms, and experiences of humanity throughout the decades. To get outside of the four walls of our classroom, and move beyond our textbooks, we were honored to meet, correspond, and visit with three experts in their academic fields.

In December, our unit on ancient American civilizations ended with a critical film screening of *The Emperor's New Groove* (Disney, 2000), where students responded to and critiqued the portrayal of ancient South and Central American civilizations depicted through animation. Our 6th graders explored the cultural appropriation found within the generalization of culture in the film, and researched how the names, places, and mixing and matching of symbols and architecture presented an inaccurate picture of a nameless society. Our discussion was guided by a journal published by Dr. Helaine Silverman, professor of Anthropology at the University of Illinois, who graciously offered her research to us, corresponded with our class via email, and sent fun facts, interesting film notes, and her best wishes as we embarked on evaluating film medium as a tool of cultural commentary.

With Dr. Silverman's writing as a guide, we were able to appreciate the film for its lively entertainment, but also approach it with a critical eye towards the artistic choices, design, casting, and messaging that Disney put forth. As our understanding of the uniqueness of the civilizations of the Maya, Inca, and Aztec grew, our discussions around culture, race, history, and media deepened. By studying the rich history of these civilizations, their accomplishments and culture, and their modern day descendants,

we were able to understand the rich fabric of their history that is still being woven today, and take a step back to analyze and evaluate our westernized and simplified misconceptions about civilizations of incredible architects, mathematicians, astronomers, and artists, while tapping into our first look at higher level academic research and writing.

Our next charismatic contributor to our learning this year was Dr. Richard Clay, Professor of Digital Cultures at Newcastle University and Co-Head of School X. During our February study of the French Revolution, we watched an engaging BBC documentary, *Tearing Up History*, which followed the art, culture, and societal shifts that occurred in Paris and the nation during the revolution. As Dr. Clay, who helmed and led the documentary, patrolled the streets of Paris, highlighting famous moments of the revolution, and spotlighting the symbolism behind the artwork, destruction of property, and religious imagery, our students followed with rapt attention, often echoing his exclamations of “iconoclasm!” When we finished our documentary, we quickly searched for other films from Dr. Clay, and as a class, drafted a short email to him, thanking him for his documentary, and attaching a short list of lingering questions we had about the revolution and art history.

Two weeks later, on a bright sunny Wednesday, Dr. Clay joined us over Zoom for an hour session to meet our young historians, answer questions about his life, education, and career, and to share in our excitement about history. We smiled, laughed, and exclaimed our way through the seminar, and were not only enlightened in our understanding of this specific time in history, but also encouraged by Dr. Clay’s claim that “The revolution is not over,” and that great moments in time take ordinary people to start them. While our questions for Dr. Clay ranged from specific French Revolution inquiries, to the Queen’s possible immortality, to his favorite sport, he took time to answer them all with humor, sincerity, and a commitment to expanding our learning and connection to the world around us. As Dr. Clay left us, he gave us a charge to not only keep investigating the world around us and



Reverend Professor Keith Magee speaking to upper grade students in April in the Ballroom.

behind us, but also to remember that our lives, and the lives of others we touch around us, ripple through the ages. While our class cherished their annual trip to Washington D.C., we also now have a standing invitation to the United Kingdom, to study iconoclasm and art history within the north of England.

Our work in history and geography connects us to the past and helps us understand our present, but it does not always immediately propel us forward into the future. Through Dr. Clay, we were also honored to be connected to Reverend Professor Keith Magee, a public theologian, writer for CNN, and current Chair and Professor of Practice in Social Justice at Newcastle University. Professor Magee has served in many distinguished positions and roles throughout his career, as well as founding the Institute of Social Justice here in Boston. Keith, a colleague of Dr. Clay, kindly visited The LP during a trip to Boston in early April. His visit was an empowering, encouraging, and stirring moment for our upper grades. Sharing openly about his learning journey with dyslexia, his passion for justice, and his hope and dream for a world that is equitable and fair for students and persons of all backgrounds, he walked us through the steps he has taken to arrive at this moment in his career.

During question and answer time after our assembly, Keith shared about his role models and inspirations, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Fannie Lou Hamer, Dorothy Day, and Abraham

Heschel. Professor Magee connected with students about his dyslexia, his vision for an equitable future, and highlighted young students in Boston and around the world that he was mentoring and working with, including Greta Thunberg and other rising activists. As students repeated his phrase of “J is for Justice!” the hope, authenticity, and excitement that Professor Magee brought captured the hearts and minds of those gathered.

As we left our Monday Morning Assembly, after singing our school song, the connection between our time spent in history learning about ancient civilizations, the great changes and reforms of culture, and the blueprints of success and failures became clear. In understanding the world around us, from centuries ago, to the present, and knowing the sacrifices, shifts in thinking, and revolutions that needed to happen to enact change, the choice is evident. Change can happen in the acts of knowing, caring, and learning from others, from listening first, and acting second, and from coming together as a human race to be a part of the next great stride. It develops in the vocabulary we use, the lens we view others through, and the small acts of kindness and understanding that we choose to make. J is for justice, joy, and journeying forward, and the revolution is not yet over.

Celebration of Traditions

by SIBY ADINA

Traditions are part of the fabric of life here at The LP. This year, a new event was born - a Celebration of Traditions! This was a major project of the school's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, and an exciting opportunity for families to share with each other traditions that are important to them, and to learn about and appreciate the heritage and practices of others.

The event came to fruition on Saturday, May 14th at the McCord Building, featuring a variety of exhibits, interactive activities, music, and food. The traditions that students and families shared and celebrated ranged from cultural ones to others that are unique to their family. Mx. Carlyle created a Community Art piece that all students contributed to by sharing a family tradition. Compiled together, the art piece introduced 118 unique squares, each celebrating individual traditions, and representing our community as a whole.

Led by LP families and students, the hands-on activities were the highlight of the day! Over several sessions, these included:

- Pitthu Game
- Play Doh with a Dominican Flavor
- Egg Fight
- Salsa Dance
- Chinese Calligraphy
- Board Games
- Floral Carpet/ Pookkalam
- Rangoli
- Ethiopian Traditions

In addition to the interactive portions, there was an abundance of food items ranging from familiar ones like cotton candy, a fondue station, popcorn, and rice pudding to others such as timatim fitfet, mercimek kofte, appam, makhana, cold sesame noodles, Bombay sandwiches, plantain chips, and samosas. The children, of course, loved the cotton candy! It was easy to tell so by the bright pink and blue color on their tongues.

Over the course of the day, about 120 people participated in the event. For some parents who were leading sessions, it was a chance to reminisce about childhood memories. For the children, it was a way to learn more about the origins of the tradition and their family history. The parents were delighted to share these activities with the children and the children were thrilled to see their traditions celebrated by The LP community.

The Celebration of Traditions planning committee is indebted to the volunteers who provided various types of support, the families who shared displays, food, music, and/or led sessions, and the visitors who joined and helped make this a festive day!



Auction 2022: UNITY IN COMMUNITY

by SASHA ZUFLACHT



At our first in-person Auction in 3 years, we simply wanted, as our theme emphasized: Unity in Community. On Friday, May 6th, we gathered during sunset on the rooftop of the Envoy Hotel overlooking the Boston skyline. It was the perfect backdrop for an evening that was already so special simply because we were together.

We are extremely grateful to our Auction Chairs, Jamie Hayhurst, P '18, '22, and Rebecca Koskinen, P '24, '28, who decided early on to make the evening, above all else, about community connection, enjoying each other's company, and having those sweet moments of embrace. The evening was more of a party and community celebration than anything else.

With this in mind, we prioritized the Paddle Raise as the critical fundraising component of the event in support of The LP's robust Financial Assistance program. The Paddle Raise is about all of us, together, supporting our community.

As we moved throughout each giving level during the Paddle Raise - facilitated by LP auctioneer extraordinaire, Louis Tompros, P '18, '21, '24, (who did, indeed, sport a lovely tuxedo)—we illuminated a piece of artwork that all LP students, grades K-6, contributed to. This was just one representation of our community united.

We raised nearly \$74,000 for the Financial Assistance program and, in total, we raised \$106,000 for The Learning Project. This far exceeded our expectations.

The very essence of The LP glistened in the moonlight: unity in community.



THE TRADITIONS CONTINUE

READ-A-THON



VALENTINE'S DAY BAKE SALE



PENCIL PAL ICE SKATING



SPRIT DAYS



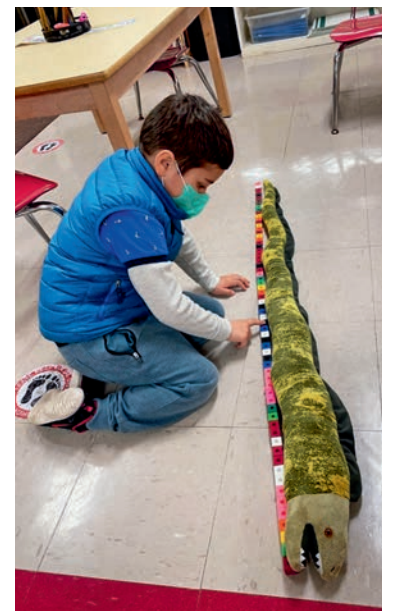
THE TRADITIONS CONTINUE

ADVENTURE SKI TRIP



THE TRADITIONS CONTINUE

STUFFED ANIMAL DAY



6TH GRADE SEND-OFF AND DC TRIP



COMINGS & GOINGS

ALUMNI



Members and Faculty of the Class of 2020 at their Yearbook Signing: Back row (L-R): Annie Wagner, Carolina Domenech, Nayan Seetharam, Ariana Lorenzo Matos. Middle row (L-R): Amelie Kassabian, Emmy Williams, Max Klein, John teDuits, William teDuits. Front row (L-R): Eli Gerstenlauer, Justin Hajj, Michael McCord.



Members of the Class of 2021 at their Yearbook Signing: Back row (L-R): Claire O'Leary, Meryl Sutich, Darian Nasseh. Middle row (L-R): Ginger Knabe, Lila Allen, Charley Belaney, Natu Yesehak. Front row (L-R): Brynn Bennett, Lucas Werning, Milan Kapasi, Paul Tompros.

ALUMNI CON'T

Jenna Garr Aronson, '97, writes: *Chloe Victoria Aronson was born on December 29, 2021 and has totally stolen our hearts. We are still living in Charlestown with our dog Maple. I'm in a PhD program in the department of Brain and Cognitive Science at MIT and also working in early stage biotech venture capital at Two Bear Capital. Her husband, Jason, is the founder of a fintec startup supporting women through their life journeys.*



Rachel (Pingree) D'Amelio, '98, and her husband, Jay, welcomed their second daughter, Danielle, in December. Their other daughter, Vivienne, turned three in December.



Joshua Wright, '98, pictured right, has been named one of five distinguished alumni as Donaldson Fellows for 2021-2022 by Yale

School of Management. He is currently the Executive Director of Ideas42, a leading behavioral economics consulting firm



Zack Hardoon, '99, Intern 2012-2013, writes: *Two years ago I married the love of my life, Ali Thomson, now Ali Hardoon, in a small ceremony on South Beach in Edgartown. Our son, Ezra Forrest Hardoon, was born December 5, 2021. We are moving soon to Hyde Park where we recently purchased a home. I have a business in Roxbury and the Seaport making custom dining tables and desks, called Cannon Hill Woodworking. We make beautiful one-of-a-kind furniture and were featured in Boston Magazine's 2022 February issue. I still keep in touch with many of my LP classmates and I can't wait until little Ezra is old enough to play at the Clarendon Street Playground, which was my backyard as a kid growing up at Commonwealth and Clarendon. It always makes me happy when I'm in the neighborhood and happen to see LP classes at recess! I always think fondly of my time at The LP as both a student and an intern.*



Edgar Torres, Jr., '18, and a current LP student, former Pencil Pals, recently met up for some rock climbing and a playdate. Edgar's

mother **Flor Rivera, '16, '18**, wrote to the family after: *We had a blast today! Edgar Jr. was so impressed with the serious display of rock climbing skills. My husband had a lot of fun too! It is true, these two are a shining example of the bond that LP creates between its students, regardless of grade. We miss The LP.*



Annie Wagner, '20, and **Emmy Williams, '20**, dropped by in March to say hello—and grab a box of their favorite LP After School Snack.



Matthew McCord, '02, and his wife, **Sarah Goodman-McCord**, welcomed their first child, **Violet Francis McCord**, on March 24th, 2022.

ALUMNI PARENTS

Harry Banno, parent of **Yukari Banno, '21**, writes: *We moved to Kyoto, Japan in autumn 2019. Kyoto has long been a capital city of Japan for about 1,000 years before Tokyo. The relationship between Kyoto and Tokyo is something like the one between Boston and New York. We are living near the Kyoto City Hall and in front of the City Hall there is the same lamppost we saw in Boston which is a gift from Boston.*

Yukari misses the environment of The LP and Boston very much. Thanks to the teaching in LP, English has been one of her strengths. We are most grateful for the excellent teaching and friendships at The LP and in Boston. Now she is finishing her 7th grade at Doshisya Junior High School, founded by Jo Nijima, who was the first Japanese graduate from American College (Amherst College in 1870).

Robyn Kievit Kirkman, P'12, writes: *Jared Rapoza graduates from NYU this May from Steinhardt in Music Business. He started his own business, Art Influence, his junior year and primarily has been working for himself.*

ALUM STAFF

Bob Pflugfelder, Associate Teacher, **'87-'93**, now known as Science Bob, is a science teacher, author, maker, and presenter. He is a regular guest on Jimmy Kimmel Live!, Live with Kelly and Ryan, The Dr. Oz Show, and Nickelodeon's Nicky, Ricky, Dicky, and Dawn.

Betsy Bradley Alvord, Third Grade Teacher, **'92-'97**, writes: *I taught third grade at The LP for five years in the early 90s. I got married and moved to the North Shore where I taught at Brookwood for five years. I had two kids and took 12 years off. For the last 9 years, I have been teaching second grade at Derby Academy.*

Edward Henry, Fellow, **'20-'21**, writes: *I started the year at Excel Charter School in East Boston as a Fellow in the 7th and 8th grade. By Thanksgiving, I had applied, was offered, and started a mid-year interim position at Moses Brown School in Providence. About a month ago, I was offered a permanent position for next year. I am an upper school Humanities (History) teacher at Moses Brown. My husband and I are staying in Boston for the foreseeable future.*

I am using many of the classroom techniques I learned and practiced at The LP including improv games, an immense amount of flexibility, and creative lesson planning. Of particular note is The LP's focus on individual student learning needs. I'm carrying through that knowledge and experience into my room as well as into meetings with my colleagues as MB is building up its student learning support structure.

Jen Lesky, 6th Grade Teacher, **'01-'08**, Director of Programs, **'08-'11**, Director of Advancement and Admissions, **'19-'20**, Assistant Head of School, **'20-'21**, writes: *In typical LP small school/small*

world fashion, I ran into Alexa Schmidt, '19, and her family in the woods while cross country skiing in New Hampshire. It was a delight to see Alexa and catch up briefly even if in the most unlikely places to run (or ski) into someone.

CURRENT PARENTS

Elaine Chow, P'27, will be opening ChopValue Boston this summer to locally manufacture carbon-negative furnishings from recycled chopsticks.

Shi Mei and Jenn Tsai, P'29, opened their new restaurant, Lenox Sophia, a casual dining restaurant in South Boston.

David and Anna Goldenheim, P'24, welcomed their fourth child, Samuel Marshall Goldenheim, in April.

Matt Farmer and Carolyn Marcus, P'28, welcomed their third child, Nelle Farmer, in April.

Jed Kelly and Caroline Mullin, P'28, welcomed their third child, Annie Kelly, this fall.

IN MEMORIAM

Jim Stetson, P'96, passed away in February in Orleans, MA. He was the father of Tory, in the Class of 1996, and husband of Carolyn.

Ronald G. Tompkins, P'99, '01, '06, passed away unexpectedly on January 17th. He is survived by his three children **Megan, '99, Ryan, '01**, and **Catie, '06**, his first grandchild, Noelle, and his wife of thirty-seven years, Denise.

This part of our LampPost depends entirely on our readers to provide us with news. People enjoy hearing about what is happening with our larger LP community—that's you! Please update us via a phone call, letter, or email to aziomek@learningproject.org.

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The Annual Fund closes on June 30, 2022 and we need your help. Every donation brings us closer to meeting our goals and the needs of the school. Together, we are *Firmly Rooted and Reaching High*. Thank you!

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