

The LAMP Post



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Social-Emotional Learning at The LP

Fall 2021

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COVER PHOTO: Students cheering on their teammates at The LP Olympics.

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107 Marlborough St.
Boston, MA 02116-1901

tel: 617.266.8427
fax: 617.266.3543
email: tlp@learningproject.org

EDITORS
Alexandria Ziomek
Sasha Zuflacht

CONTRIBUTORS
Siby Adina
Jim Duane
Justin Hajj
John Krewson
Emma Russell
Alexandria Ziomek
Sasha Zuflacht

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTRIBUTORS
J. Hayhurst Photography
Rachel Whitty Photography

DESIGN
Caroline Buttner,
Four Feathers Studio.com

Javier Amador-Pena,
Pluma2.com

Confident, Articulate and Happy

from JUSTIN HAJJ

Before launching the 2020-2021 school year—a year that we knew would be quite different due the effects of the pandemic—we brainstormed and examined the many ways that we would need to evolve rather quickly in order to deliver a strong academic program in an online environment, and, simultaneously, address the social-emotional needs of our children brought about by the pandemic. From this examination came a comprehensive, formalized plan for social-emotional learning (SEL) that blended our former practices with a new, structured curriculum. And, given this program's success, we have elected to carry it forward into the future.

While it's not explicitly articulated in The Learning Project's Mission Statement, social-emotional learning (SEL) is deeply rooted within the school's core document. In fact, foundational in LP teaching philosophy is that social-emotional learning is just as important, if not *more* so, than academic learning. We know that a child's social-emotional skill set is absolutely essential for success in school and life beyond the classroom. That is, when social and emotional capacities are nurtured, academic potential and personal promise grows. But what, actually, is SEL, and what does it look like at The LP?

Many confuse social-emotional learning for character education—yet the two are not synonymous. In its simplest form, character education can be summed up as the teaching of 'goodness' in our children. It involves the direct teaching of values, or 'powers' as we call them at The Learning Project, through assembly presentations, class meetings, and carefully selected stories and media. It includes class discussions and reflections using real-life examples relevant to children. It includes modeling

for children what good character *looks* like, and recognition of what it *feels* like when we 'do the right thing.' As Marvin Berkowitz, Professor at the University of Missouri at St. Louis and Director for the Center for Character and Citizenship, states, character is "...the complex set of psychological characteristics that make you *want* to and *able* to do the right thing."

Wow, and we thought teaching fractions was hard!

While teaching character education is one of the most challenging and time consuming things that we do at The Learning Project, the effort that we and LP families put into this task pales in comparison to the reward that the child, and the world, experiences as a result. It is worth every second we invest.

Social-emotional learning is equally important, but, while related and sometimes symbiotic, it is not character education. SEL is more about how we recognize and manage our feelings, and the skill set that we tap into and use when we engage with those around us. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), a leading organization in supporting SEL in schools, defines social-emotional learning as the "process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions." CASEL describes five key domains for teaching social-emotional learning in children, which are the areas that The LP has embraced: self-awareness; self-management; social awareness; relationship skills; and responsible decision making.

To do this important work, we use both intentional and organic teaching methods. In the former category, The Learning Project integrates a multitude of cross-age activities which have always been at the



JUSTIN HAJJ

Michael W. McCord Head of School

HEADLINES

heart of an LP education: Pencil Pal activities, Performance Fests, Little All School Meetings, and a recess schedule that ensures that all classes have time with children in other grade levels. We have a 6th grade Advisory program that explicitly teaches SEL skills as our children manage this challenging and important year applying to new schools, managing friendships, and the inevitable emotional rollercoaster that leads toward Graduation. We employ a teaching method, the Workshop Model, that emphasizes one-on-one connections between teachers and students, collaborative work in groups, and emphasizes both autonomy and relatedness among our students. And we provide clear expectations and instruction around 'The LP Way,' which guides students' behavior and interactions.

Later in this issue of *The LampPost*, you will read an article from our School Counselor, Emma Russell, about the social-emotional learning curriculum that we have adopted as a school. This is the latest addition to the intentional realm of how we teach SEL, and Emma's work with our children, and the curriculum that she teaches, has been an incredibly positive supplement to the work we do, bringing a structured scope and sequence to social-emotional teaching and learning and a common vocabulary within our community.

And while these structural and intentional methods are critical to effective teaching of social-emotional skills, always at the core of what we do are those organic teachable moments that pop up naturally in any given day in the life of a school. At The LP, faculty and staff all, collectively, know that we must seize on a moment where a child feels excluded and needs to express those feelings to their peers. Or the instance where a child feels frustrated with a score on a vocabulary quiz and needs to manage that and, perhaps, put the score into perspective within the larger scope of learning. Or the occasion when a child wins their third game of chess in a row and gloats without realizing it, and needs to take a moment to reflect on their reaction and the impact on those around them. It is these natural moments in education that provide real fodder for SEL, and engaging in these moments, rather than glossing over them or ignoring them completely, is a vital component to an LP education. Children are not perfect beings, we know, and in that imperfection

lies the soil to plant the seeds for appropriate and positive social skills and emotional management.

In 2019, I led a professional development with our faculty and staff around character education and SEL, and at the conclusion of that session, our staff members assembled into small groups to develop potential SEL Vision Statements. These statements merged their newfound understanding about social-emotional learning with existing LP practices and our mission. The goal was to create a statement that provided a roadmap for how we address SEL at The Learning Project, guiding our teaching and interactions with students. Here are the results of that brief brainstorm:

SEL Vision Statements

- *Our Learning Project students will demonstrate a genuine desire to learn, contribute positively to the community, and build lasting and respectful relationships. They will continually build on these relationships, deepen their self-awareness, and strengthen their autonomy. They will be supported, listened to, and encouraged to reach their full potential throughout their school career.*
- *The Learning Project community will cultivate and uphold an environment in which children and adults support and respect themselves and others. Our community will achieve this through integrated social and emotional learning, balanced with academic learning and character education.*
- *Our LP community will foster belonging, engagement and competence by providing reliable community support, as well as awareness of and language for emotions so that students become empathetic, balanced, principled members of society.*
- *Our Learning Project community will teach the skills and provide the support for students to build healthy relationships while fostering each student's personal integrity.*
- *Our Learning Project community will help students develop the social-emotional skills to think critically, to have confidence in themselves, and to empathize with others. We will foster a support system that encourages communication, curiosity, and grit to help students to learn and thrive. We will instill lifelong values that build character and contribute to the wider community.*
- *Our Learning Project community will prioritize helping our children learn how to identify and*

manage their own emotions in order to create and strengthen positive relationships with themselves, with peers, with children of all ages, and with adults.

- *The LP will support our community with multiple SEL resources. We will provide access to tools, exposure to positive mentors and opportunities for children to feel safe and valued within themselves and their relationships with others. This will lead to the development of confident, articulate and happy children.*

The goal was to select just one vision from the list and adopt it as our guiding light for the teaching of SEL, but each vision that the groups developed provides something unique and relevant to the work that we do, and picking just one would leave a critical piece of our work out of the equation. Therefore, we have this ‘collective vision’ that provides the roadmap for our daily work—both in our intentional and organic instruction with children. Together, these statements guide how we teach skills around self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, managing relationships, and making responsible decisions in school and in life.

Although social-emotional learning is just one piece of the wide breadth of work that we do with children at The Learning Project, it is a foundational element of that work. And the importance of it, today, is perhaps greater than ever. Across the world, children’s development has been impacted by the pandemic in a variety of ways—and each child, being their own unique being, has processed this differently. As children emerge from the shade of this challenging time, we have some ground to make up and needs to address. Children have spent less time interacting with their peers, they have experienced emotions that they otherwise would not have at this point in their lives, and they are encountering a variety of transitions to be made as we head back, gradually, toward a state of ‘normalcy.’ Teaching, or reviewing, the skills required for joyful and fulfilling relationships, and for both recognizing and managing emotions, is of top priority. By merging our tried-and-true approach with new practices, The Learning Project is up to the task as we raise, what one group’s vision statement above calls, “confident, articulate and happy children.” Truly, what can be a more worthy goal than that?



GRADUATION





by ALEXANDRIA ZIOMEK

After a year and a half of virtual events and reimagined traditions, we were thrilled to hold an abridged, but incredibly special, Learning Project graduation ceremony at First Lutheran Church on June 15th, 2021. Thanks to the collaboration and creativity of our students, faculty and staff, and families, graduation day was just as heartfelt, intimate, and inspiring as in years past.

In the morning, LP students watched a graduation video in their classrooms, masterfully created by Technology and Programs Coordinator, John Krewson. The video included photos of the 2021 graduates throughout their LP career and individualized messages from each class. After watching the video, students and faculty met outside for a gift exchange, in which students from grades K-5 gave personalized gifts to each graduate. With much relief, the threats of rain throughout the week held off, and students were delighted to see—and fist bump—the graduates and leaders of the school before they departed for their in-person ceremony.

The Class of 2021, their families and guests, and LP faculty and staff then gathered in the church for a processional and ceremony, including remarks from Justin Hajj, a speech from Kindergarten Teacher, Kristen Faubert, a reflection from Board Chair, Jim Duane, and a presentation of the honorary diploma to Michelle Duane. The event concluded with an acapella performance of "Long Time Friends" and the All School Song, followed by LP graduation favorites: yellow sheet cake with strawberries and punch. Everyone was overjoyed to celebrate this remarkable and resilient class.

Below is Justin Hajj's first graduation speech as Head of School.

Good morning and welcome to our Graduation Ceremony in honor of The Learning Project Class of 2021. We made it.

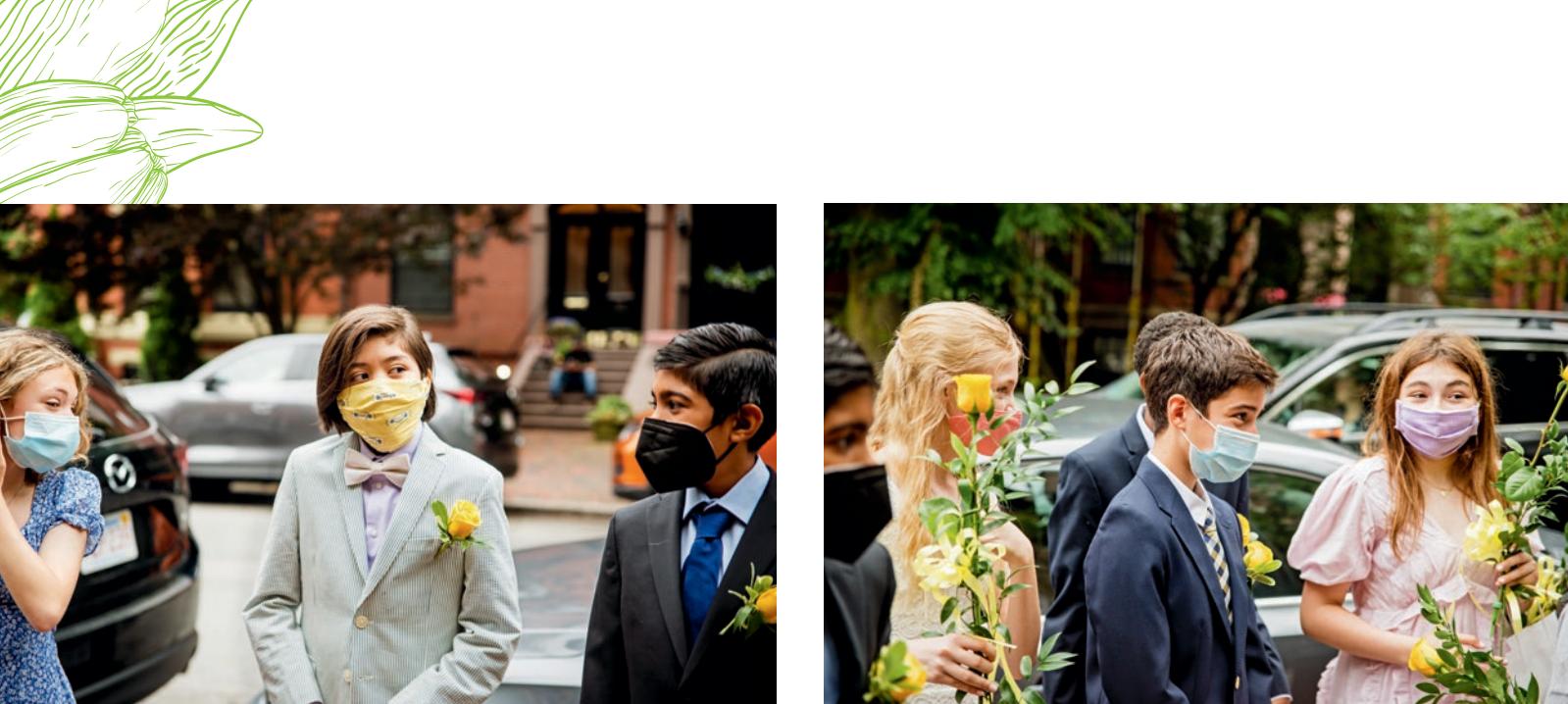
I want to begin by welcoming all of you here today—faculty, staff, board, students, families and dear friends. It has been two years since we gathered here together in this church for such an event, and we are so grateful for your presence here today. And before we carry forward, it's important that we pause to take note of this special moment, this present moment, together, a moment that, just mere months ago, we didn't know if we'd be able to have.

Getting to this day was truly a collective effort—and, while I'm going to talk mainly about the Class of 2021 this morning, I also want to recognize the immense effort of their parents. Not just this year—although this year certainly asked more of you than perhaps any other year in your child's education—but for each year that you have partnered with us to raise these incredible people we see before us on this stage today. So, please join me in a round of applause for the *parents* of the Class of 2021 to celebrate all that *they* have done to assist their child in reaching this graduation day.

And also, before I get to our graduates, I want to take a moment to applaud a couple members of our community in the front row today. Last year, our founders, Michael and Elisabeth McCord retired, and, given the circumstances, they never received the round of applause in person that they truly deserve. So, Michael and Elisabeth, please stand up and receive our long overdue appreciation for all that *you* have done for this class, and for The Learning Project over the past 48 years.

Now, to our Class of 2021: Lila, Charley, Brynn, Devin, Milan, Ginger, Darian, Claire, Sam, Meryl, Elim, Paul, Lucas, Natu—it's time to recognize and honor you, for your efforts, for your achievements, and simply for who you are as individuals and as a class.

You recently heard me say that you are a special class. A beloved class.



You are Mr. Gerstenlauer's final group as an LP teacher, you are my first as Head of School. You were Ms. Faubert's very first Kindergarten class, and a class that will be remembered by all for your fiery passion, for your academic prowess, and for your humor (both the humor that spills outward to those in your presence and the many inside jokes that you harbor just for yourselves).

We've watched you grow as a unit—yes, some of your classmates moved away while new ones were added—but all the while, you have remained you— maintaining your character—that funny, charming, brightness, with the apparent juxtaposition of being rather competitive with each other, but deeply, deeply connected at the same time. And it's that theme of connection that I want to share with you today.

I served as The LP's 6th grade teacher for 3 years, and for each of those classes that I taught and I saw on this graduation stage, I shared with them that I was not their teacher for just one year only—I would always be their teacher, and would be there to support them all the days forward. I tell the same to you now—and I include the entirety of this faculty and staff who have grown with you through these seven years together. The Learning Project, the group of people that you see up on the balcony today, and those elsewhere in this sanctuary, will always be there for you, even when you finally step off this stage.

Today, you stride onward from The Learning Project, but the connections that you have made remain—hundreds of invisible, durable fibers that connect you to all of us, and to each other. And through challenge, connections grow even stronger. This past year has certainly tested the

bonds of each of us. And you can be proud of how you faced the struggles thrown your way.

In an upcoming edition of the school's *LampPost* magazine, you'll read an article that was written by your sixth grade teacher, Mr. Gerstenlauer. And in that article, he marvels at your resilience when traditions that you looked forward to were canceled, or reworked due to the pandemic.

He says, and I quote: "I can't write that our sixth graders took it easily, or that they stayed strong every moment; in fact, they experienced a lot of dips and bumps, expressions of sadness and loss. But I can write, proudly, that they didn't miss a beat. They entered sixth grade strongly, found a positive attitude, and embraced our modified traditions. They practiced presenting their assembly speeches while making "eye contact" with a camera lens. They found socially distanced Rent-a-Rainbow jobs and led remote after school clubs. They thoroughly sanitized their hands, then delivered birthday cards, Valentines gifts, and bagel breakfasts to their schoolmates. They swallowed their disappointment at missing the trip to Washington, D.C., and found the joy and excitement of a brand new adventure here in Boston."

Rather than breaking, you bent and you flexed with each novel scenario thrown your way...and you did it together. And while the year was not all rainbows for our rainbows, you brought the sunshine to make each of these things possible, as a class.

Here we stand today—and I hope that you have learned—not only by the challenges of this past year—but through all of your years with us at The Learning Project that there will always



be challenges that rise before you, and not only through your experiences and through your own grit do you have what it takes to overcome them, but you have a system and a group of people to support you on that journey. Look around you—Today, we gather for you. To show our love, our admiration, and our appreciation for you. As a connected community.

Herman Melville once wrote that "We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along those sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results."

So carry forward with you the memory of these threads, sewn here through first days of school, through Book Fairs, through Zoodio dances and Mayfests, through Performance Fests and Olympics Days and graduations. And keep in mind your interconnectedness to each other, to all humanity, remembering that the actions you take reverberate invisibly, but powerfully, along those threads, and always strive to make sure that the results of those reverberations return to you as messages of goodness.

The world needs you.

Be the love when others are spreading hate. Be the joy when others around you are despondent. Be the respect and responsibility when others around you are not showing integrity. And create a beautiful tapestry with those threads, collectively, that your whole class can be proud of. And know that we'll be there to marvel at it.

I conclude today with the same words that Michael McCord concluded each of his graduation speeches, which he has given me permission to carry forward as school tradition into the future. They are words that remind us

of the bittersweet nature of an event such as the departure of our beloved Class of 2021.

Ending we begin. Every break hurts. But that which holds and keeps us together goes on.

Thank you.

Remarks from the Board Chair:

Each year, Board Chair, Jim Duane, hosts a pizza lunch with the 6th grade class to gather their reflections on their time at The Learning Project. While they could not meet in person, Jim met with the graduates via Zoom, followed by a pizza lunch on the Commonwealth Mall. A selection of his remarks follow.

Parents, faculty, staff, students, alumni, fellow trustees, friends, and, of course, members of The LP Class of 2021, it is my honor and privilege to continue the tradition of having lunch with you in the virtual ballroom on May 20 and then addressing this assembly. As always, the time passed far too quickly, but we discussed a good number of topics. As usual, I learned a great deal.

These are the things you liked about The LP: everyone is so nice to each other; all classes except math; it is very diverse; everyone is included; teachers make room for everyone; 5th grade year; you are allowed to ask a lot of questions; getting together with other classes; you can always talk with some of the faculty; The LP is empathetic.

These are the things that you did not like about The LP: sometimes there is not enough time to finish work; rules are too strict; weekend reading logs; homework.



Here's how you described your class: loud, boisterous, funny, difficult, argumentative, complicated, crazy, kind, respectful, honest, amazing, quirky, inclusive, cooperative, dramatic, happy, cool, legendary.

Here are your LP memories: Stuffed Animal Day and throwing them, conga line, but snow was everywhere, the 4th grade party at Castle Island, competitive recess and PE, competitive kickball with other grades, Olympics.

This is how you believe your parents will feel about your graduation: relieved; Mom will cry for sure and say "don't leave;" Mom weeping her eyes out; Mom will say she will miss The LP; Mom will cry; Dad will take five pictures per second, Mom will ball; Dad will cry, but pretend not to, and then say, "Good job;" Mom will be ready to move on after seven years, but will definitely miss The LP.

Here are the character traits you most admire in a person: courage, kindness, funny, sporty, integrity, good listener, positive attitude, honesty, cheerfulness, generosity, selflessness, caring, trustworthy, intelligent, strength, compassion, humor, loyalty.

These are not just words to you; you live these traits. You have certainly learned a great deal during your time at The LP. Most importantly, you have learned to be life-long learners, not just of academic knowledge, but also of the lessons of character that define you as a person.

Please allow me to leave you with one final thought. Be kind to everyone. Never pass up the opportunity to be kind, no matter how great or small the matter. By your example, you can make kindness the norm in the world outside The Learning Project. Then like LP alumni and alumnae who have gone before you, you too will

do great things to make this world a better place. Thank you and congratulations to The Learning Project Class of 2021.

Below is an excerpt from the speech Caroline Buttner, P '14, '16, Board Member, wrote about Michelle Duane, the 2021 Recipient of The Learning Project Honorary Diploma. It was read by Will Murphy, P '14, '16, '19, Board Member.

The purpose of our Honorary Diploma is "To put before the children at graduation individuals who have led lives characterized by significant civic service to others." This year's recipient of The LP Honorary Diploma is Michelle Duane, for her dedication and masterful support of The Learning Project family, for stitching the fabric of what we all know as 'The LP Way,' and for her passionate commitment to community and life-long volunteerism.

Michelle Duane is a parent of LP alumni, James, '94, David, '96, and Caitlin, '99. She is also married to Jim Duane, who has served as an LP Board member and, for the past seven years, served as the Board Chair.

In his *LampPost* article honoring Michelle's 18 years as The LP Events Coordinator, Andy Gallagher, The LP's Director of External Relations from 2006-2014, wrote: "The story of Michelle's transition from parent volunteer to Events Coordinator illustrates her generous spirit that is obvious to all of us. In Michelle's early years as a school parent, she was a ready and willing volunteer to help out. Michael McCord recalls that 'If the front office person



was out sick, I could always call Michelle and she'd gladly fill in for the day. She thought nothing of it, but eventually I felt we needed to have her on the staff.' So from 1994 to 2012, Michelle served as the school's Events Coordinator, but when asked to describe her job, she was known "to rattle off a million things and then pause, and say something like, 'I do everything here but teach.'"

Michelle has been heralded as the "impresario of our LP social culture," a champion of tradition and community, who helped cultivate what The LP community is today.

Amber Ream, Former LP Second Grade Teacher from 2007-2016, said of Michelle:

She remembered every tradition and had a heavy hand in making sure each element was executed as history would dictate. She made sure the maypole was constructed, potlucks were well attended and the table full of food. She made sure staff lunches were delicious and patronized many different local establishments. She connected families to one another, spearheaded The LP Girl Scouts, kept tabs on alumni, and put fun "while the cats away..." treats and notes in our mailboxes when Michael was out of town.

And, finally, from Andy Gallagher:

We will be mindful of her legacy—her caring and kind manner, her unlimited willingness to help out, her over and above dedication to her job, her amazing memory for details, and the value she attached to nurturing the school's people, traditions and culture.

Throughout her life, Michelle has shown again and again her commitment to volunteerism, choosing to follow her heart and to serve her community offering her time, her truly exceptional organizational skills, as

well as a never-ending source of kindness and awareness of the needs of others.

Michelle Duane's lifetime commitment to community and volunteerism, serves to remind us all that the word volunteer means so much more than just an act of service, of "doing." It is, at its root, at its simplest, an act of kindness, and a way of "being."

Opportunities for volunteering, for sharing acts of kindness, are truly part of The LP journey. It can be a small or spontaneous act, such as choosing to hold the door for a classmate or a more organized activity, such as Trick-or-Treating for UNICEF. An act of kindness comes from your heart, it is a piece of you that you choose to share with others. This is being a volunteer, and every kindergartener to sixth grader has done this, many times, and it is what makes The LP community so special. People choosing again and again to follow their hearts, and to share it with others.

We want to thank you, Michelle, for following your heart and sharing it with not only The LP community, but with every community you are a part of.

Introducing Linda Seeley as Chair of the Board of Trustees

by SASHA ZUFLACHT



In the spring 2021 issue of *The LampPost*, Linda Seeley wrote a beautiful tribute to our outgoing Board Chair, Jim Duane. As Clerk for the Board of Trustees over the last 2 years (and on the board since 2018), Linda's writing, and her overall dedication to the role, has been nothing short of exceptional. She has a true finesse for storytelling, as her care and concern for each detail says a great deal about who Linda is. She has an innate ability to connect with others—whether in writing or in person—and her genuine joy for all things LP comes through in her every interaction.

Linda is an alumni parent and mother of Griffin Seeley, '07. After spending her childhood in various Midwest states, Linda attended Rice University in Houston, where she majored in English and French. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Linda works as an attorney for MassHousing, a quasi-public state agency created in 1966 that works on providing financing for affordable housing in Massachusetts.

With the start of the new school year, Linda begins her tenure as Chair of the Board of Trustees. This is no small transition for the Board, for the school, or for Linda—but, without a doubt, there is no one better suited for the role. I had the chance to ask Linda a few questions about her vision for The LP; her responses, to no surprise, are filled with immense inspiration and dedication as we look towards the bright future ahead.

What is your favorite LP memory?

While I have too many “favorite” LP memories to count, one that comes immediately to mind is bittersweet. A classmate’s family had invited our son’s sixth grade class to a day at the beach shortly after graduation, with a plan for parents to meet at the Clarendon Street Playground in the early evening for pick-up. When the kids tumbled out of the cars, sandy, sunburnt and exuberant, several started a soccer game that just kept growing; even those who’d never or rarely played soccer, as well as a few fathers who rediscovered their own inner 12-year-olds, joined in, until it was more a party than an organized game. The sun had started its slow slide down, but every parental suggestion that it really was time to go was rebuffed with a chorus of “Wait – not yet! Just a few more minutes!” It felt like we all wanted that, just a little more time, one suspended moment, of this beautiful day while we were all still together, everyone looking forward to the summer break and adventures at new schools in the fall, but also so aware of our years together at The LP and our shared memories, and the friendships, among both parents and children, that had formed and become such a significant part of our lives.

What are you most excited about as you step into your new role as Chair of the Board of Trustees?

I have been thinking about “building” as both a noun and a verb: I am delighted that we are back home in the McCord Building at 107 Marlborough Street and am excited about the building we will be doing at The LP in 2021-22 as we continue and expand on work and initiatives that are already underway.

From its foundation, The LP has been committed to creating and fostering a diverse community, but the work of the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is helping us more fully live up to that ideal: to recognize where we have fallen short, how we can address that, and what we can, working together, create now and for the future. I’m also inspired by Justin Hajj and Jen Lesky’s report on “lessons learned” at our final Board meeting of the year last May: the School’s responses to the challenges of the pandemic have provided new insights that we want to retain and leverage as we work to enhance The LP’s academic program and expand opportunities for participation and outreach. Finally, as the School’s 50th anniversary in 2023 approaches, we are working hard to ensure that The LP has a solid foundation for the 50 years that follow: we are continuing a deep “inside-out” and “outside-in” analysis of the School and reviewing emerging trends and demographic changes, including current and potential long-term impacts of the pandemic and changes in the Boston Public Schools exam school admissions policy, and developing a plan so The LP will be well-positioned to maintain an affordable tuition and strong admissions far into the future.

What is your favorite LP tradition?

Halloween at The LP is my favorite tradition: as a parent, it was always a treat to be able to be part of the celebration and to see all the kids transformed into superheroes and mad scientists, pirates, princesses, and post boxes, and to try to figure out the theme that the faculty and administration had chosen for that year’s costumes (best theme ever: what they each, as a child, wanted to be when they grew up). I love that the UNICEF fundraising and the focus on helping others is an integral part of the celebration and that the money raised is a school effort, not a competition among the students or between classes. And Zoodio—song, dance, run—is the perfect culmination. I’m already looking forward to Halloween 2021. Maybe the Board could come up with our own costume theme!

What does ‘The LP Way’ mean to you?

To me, ‘The LP way’ is centered on connections—the close, personal relationships LP teachers have with our children, the ties among LP families and in our broader LP community—and how those links of affection, trust, growth, and mutual responsibility help us to be our best selves, individually, as a community, and as we engage with our neighbors, our city and our world.

What are your hopes and dreams for The Learning Project?

I served on the Head Selection Committee almost two decades after we first visited the School when my son was a toddler, and what struck me was how similarly The LP families described what they most appreciated about the School at those long-ago Open House and admissions events and the much more recent community meetings about the School’s next steps with a new Head: what a happy place The LP is, how much they treasure the values and character development that is an integral part of the School’s academic curriculum, and how being part of The LP community has been an unexpected gift the parents never anticipated, for themselves as well as their children. My hopes and dreams are that all of us who are an active part of The Learning Project community now do our part to ensure that LP families decades into the future will say the same.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS

by JIM DUANE

This year, we bid farewell to Thatiana Gibson, Alex Harvey, and Ben Brady. We are very grateful to have had these three dedicated and valued members serve on our Board of Trustees. Below are the tributes written and shared by Board Chair, Jim Duane, at the final board meeting of the 2020-2021 school year.

THATIANA GIBSON

The parent of an LP alumna, Thatiana has been a dedicated and long-standing member of the board. During the entire time of her involvement with The LP, she has volunteered for the school, including and especially working tirelessly at school fairs and admissions events and with prospective parents to ensure that The LP has a diverse student body. Thatiana has served on the Marketing and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committees, and for the last four years has ably chaired the Committee on Trustees. In every task she has undertaken, including her service on this board, Thatiana has demonstrated her deep commitment to The LP. Thank you for your service, Thatiana.

ALEX HARVEY

The parent of two LP alumni, Alex, my former law partner and long-time friend, has served The LP in any number of ways. For many years she was the school's unofficial and unpaid employment lawyer, providing wise counsel to the administration whenever asked. Alex has served on the Committee on Trustees and the Head's Review and Compensation Committee and, after serving on the Personnel Committee for five years, she ably chaired that committee this past year. Alex has the courage to ask the tough questions and look at issues from a different perspective. In this way she has made us better trustees and, in all her impactful service, shown her deep dedication to The LP. Thank you for your service, Alex.

BEN BRADY

The parent of two LP alumni, Ben has served with dedication and distinction on this board. He has served on the Personnel, Head's Review and Compensation, and Reopening Committees. For the last two years, he has served as Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee. With the unprecedented pandemic-driven financial demands on the school's resources the last two years, there was never a greater need for a Finance Chair who inspired confidence and possessed a steadfast sense of purpose. Ben has been that person. That the LP has weathered the financial storm and continued to fulfill its Mission is due in no small part to Ben's leadership and wise counsel. Thank you for your service, Ben.

WELCOME TO THE NEW TRUSTEES

by JOHN KREWSON



KAYRON WRIGHT

Kayron Wright was an Intern at The Learning Project during the 2001-2002 school year. He initially acquired "the teaching bug" after working at summer camps for high school students, whose goal was to keep them academically invested through the summer months.

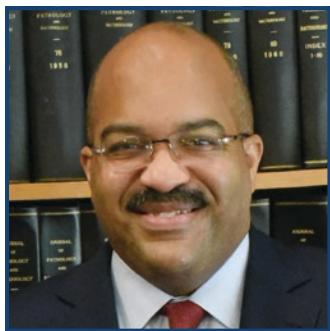
While looking to continue teaching in some capacity, he found the Teacher Training Internship Program (now known as the Teaching Fellows Program) at The Learning Project and began to develop his teaching skills in the classrooms of the McCord Building.

Born and raised in Boston by parents who immigrated to the United States from Trinidad & Tobago, Kayron attended Lexington High School through the METCO program, and then went to the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, where he earned a B.F.A. in Electronic Imaging. After many years working in education, he went back to school to earn his Master of Education in Elementary Education from Boston College in 2021. Kayron has spent the last seven years teaching science at the Mather Elementary School in Dorchester, hailed as the "first publicly funded elementary school in the nation." Before that, he spent eight years teaching 7th Grade Math at a charter school in Hyde Park. He considers himself a career teacher, finding the most joy in the classroom.

What stands out to Kayron about The LP is its intimacy. A smaller student body means smaller class sizes, so teachers are able to create and foster lasting connections with their students. One of his favorite LP moments was having his father come to the school to play piano for the students in a small showcase. The joy the students, and his father, had was indelible.

Prior to joining The LP Board, he served as a Trustee of the Board of Little Voices Early Care & Education where both his sons attended. As a Trustee, Kayron looks forward to ushering in a perspective on matters of inclusion, representation, and social justice, supporting the transition of leadership, and overall giving back to the school where his journey in education first began.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES NEWS



ABNER LOUSSIANT

Abner Louissaint, P '22, graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with concentrations in Biology and English Literature. Abner met his wife, Angelica, at Weill Medical College of Cornell University, where he graduated with his medical degree and a PhD

in Neuroscience from Weill Graduate School (Tri-Institutional MD/PhD Program). After completing residency in Pathology and a fellowship in Hematopathology at Massachusetts General Hospital, he joined the faculty at MGH Pathology, where he is the Medical Director of the hospital's Hematology Laboratory and runs a research laboratory focused on lymphoma biology.

Abner vividly remembers visiting The Learning Project for the first time with Angelica, and being so impressed by the school's palpable emphasis on both academic excellence and developing well-rounded people of good character. As members of The LP community for 6 years, volunteering as class parents and at The LP Book Fair, Abner and Angelica have grown to love 'The LP Way,' and appreciate how the school actively embraces each member of its community. Abner has also enjoyed special opportunities to engage the August Scholars and a fifth grade LP class about topics and careers in science.

This past year, Abner participated as a member of The LP's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, thinking about new ways to further promote The LP's Mission of being a welcoming and inclusive school for all families. He looks forward to continuing his work on the DEI Committee and joining the school's Strategic Planning Committee. Abner is excited to do all he can to support The Learning Project in continuing to achieve it's important Mission, one that he believes has a "critical impact on the lives of our children, and, through them, the world."



GINGER DAGLI

Ginger Dagli, P '17, '20, previously served on the Board from 2014 – 2019, during which she chaired the Advancement Committee that focused on launching The LP's recently completed capital campaign. Ginger is an Indian immigrant who moved to the US in 1993 and fell in love with

Boston after spending most of her life growing up in the Middle East and India. She leads the international fundraising strategy for Boston University and travels to Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Previously, she led a UAE funded program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, before which she was an international development and public policy analyst at Abt Associates. Ginger currently serves as a corporation member at the Community Music Center of Boston and volunteers on the parent's Communication Committee at the Boston Latin School. Ginger has also served as an overseer for the Boston Ballet, and was a founding member of "She Gives," which funded many local non-profits.

Ginger was drawn to The Learning Project's philosophy, pedagogy and size of the school and was devastated to learn she was too old to attend The LP herself! She appreciates how the school contributed to the intellectual and emotional growth of her daughters. Embracing 'The LP Way' remains the motto of the Dagli family. Ginger looks forward to working with the members of the Board and The LP community and building on the foundational principles and The LP ethos.

New Faces

by ALEXANDRIA ZIOMEK

Fellows

Each year we are delighted to welcome a group of aspiring and beginning teachers into our classrooms as participants in the school's Teaching Fellows Program. It is a pleasure to introduce this year's cohort to our wider Learning Project community. In addition to our new Fellows, this year we have two returning fellows, Paige Beede and Carlie Musto, who were both introduced in the Fall 2020 issue.



EMILY BROWN graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges this spring with a major in sociology. She is excited to begin her career as an educator at The Learning Project, and has plans to earn her Master's in Education in the next few years. Emily was born in China, but has lived most of her life in Williamstown, MA. Growing up, she was a competitive horseback rider, and has spent several summers teaching horseback riding lessons. She is thrilled to be starting her career in education at The Learning Project.



SHERRY ANN MORGENSTERN graduated from Yale University in 2019 with a B.A. in Philosophy and is currently pursuing a Master of Education degree from the University of Virginia. After college, she spent a year as an AmeriCorps volunteer, teaching 5th and 6th graders math and science. She enjoys games and creative projects, and she performed in an improvisational theater group for several years. She looks forward to meeting the students at The Learning Project and getting to know their interests, talents, and personalities.



ALEJANDRA NAVA GARCIA recently graduated from Harvard University with a major in neuroscience and a minor in Latinx studies. She will be joining The LP as the Math and Science Fellow, a new role for this school year. In addition to her studies, Alejandra volunteered as a teacher with Science Club for Girls. She loves zombie shows and movies. She is excited to engage with LP students about topics she is passionate about.



DOUG PETERS earned his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Vassar College and holds a certification in Childhood Education from the state of New York. Before joining The LP, Doug served as an AmeriCorps member—first as an academic and social-emotional coach for 3rd and 4th graders at the Holmes Innovation School in Dorchester, followed by a role as a leader in their Boston Civic Engagement Team, planning and carrying out more than 50 service projects and events throughout the city. Doug also worked as a first grade teacher at the Summer Learning Academy at the Oak Square YMCA, and looks forward to continuing his career in education at The Learning Project.



MOLLY SANTORA comes to us from Greenwich Academy in Connecticut, where she has spent the last two years as an Associate Teacher in grades three and one. She completed her undergraduate degree at Trinity College and has earned her Master's in Education at Penn State University. Molly loves to hike and spend time outdoors, and she is also a certified yoga instructor. She is looking forward to getting to know each of her students and supporting them as they learn and grow.

Faculty and Staff



MEG CARLYLE, Art Teacher

Meg holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Vermont in elementary education, with a minor in special education. They earned their master's degree in art education at Tufts University and completed their student teaching in Arlington Public Schools. Most recently, Meg has served as the elementary art teacher at Buckingham, Brown & Nichols, while also facilitating the school's Racial Justice Community Time and Rainbow Affinity Spaces.

Meg has always had a deep appreciation for the arts and they originally realized their passion for sculpting through the art of cake decorating. As a teenager, they started their own bakery and made custom cakes for anything from birthdays to bridal showers. Meg is most excited to join a community that is committed to supporting its learners and engaging in social justice teaching practices. They immediately felt at home when coming to visit The LP in June.



CAROLINE CARVER, 4th Grade Head Teacher

We are overjoyed to welcome Caroline Carver back to The LP as the 4th Grade Head Teacher. Caroline first came to The LP as a Teaching Fellow in 2002 while earning her master's degree in education and creative arts from Lesley University. She later served as The LP's Head 5th Grade Teacher from 2005 to 2008, and then as the Head 2nd Grade Teacher from 2008 to 2011. Caroline took time off to raise her children, and later, her family was given the opportunity to move to Amsterdam, Netherlands, where she raised her three children for almost three years. Over the last few years, Caroline has served in a variety of roles, including as a lead teacher, a math interventionist, as well as a Title I and Inclusion educator for grades K-5, and, most recently, as a long term 4th Grade substitute in Brookline where she and her family now permanently reside.

Throughout the years, she kept in touch with The Learning Project and has always expressed interest in returning to what she refers to as her "teaching home."

Outside of teaching, Caroline loves spending time with family—making art, playing music, and attending concerts. She is an avid reader and enjoys skiing, biking, and attending her children's sporting events.



TENZIN CHOEPHEL, Programs and Technology Coordinator

Tenzin Choephel will be joining The LP as the new Programs and Technology Coordinator. Tenzin is a graduate of Colby College, where he majored in economics and classical civilizations. He previously worked at The Rivers School, where he served as their Advancement Coordinator for the past two years. During his time at The Rivers School, he was also the co-leader of their Asian American Pacific Islander Affinity Group. Tenzin has a wide variety of experiences working in education with AmeriCorps, teaching reading and writing at *Let's Get Ready*, and teaching in an after-school program. Outside of work, Tenzin is an avid water polo player. He is passionate about learning new technology and looks forward to joining The Learning Project community.

New Roles



MIKAH FARBO, 5th Grade Head Teacher, will take on an additional role in leading the Teaching Fellows Program this fall. Having served as an LP Intern prior to her head teaching position, Mikah has a deep understanding of the extensive, deliberate and thorough training that is involved in this mentorship role. We look forward to seeing her dedication, engagement, and thoughtfulness shine.



JOHN KREWSON, former Technology and Programs Coordinator, will be stepping into the 6th Grade Head Teacher position this fall. No stranger to The LP community, John has worked in virtually every capacity at The Learning Project, including teaching lessons in math, language arts, and history as an Academic Support teacher, running the After School program, planning and leading field trips and more. Although John's most recent role was on the administrative side, he has never strayed far from the classroom, serving as a 'jack of all trades' and taking the lead on curriculum design projects.

John holds a bachelor's degree in history from Syracuse University, as well as a master's degree in eLearning and instructional design from Northeastern University. He began his education career as a Tenacity Americorp Fellow in the Boston Public Schools in 2013. John then served as a Teaching Fellow at The Learning Project for two years, teaching students in 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 6th grades before taking on the Technology and Programs Coordinator role for the past five years.

John is thrilled to have found a home in education at The LP. His passion for elementary education, respect for the sixth grade leadership opportunities and traditions, and thoughts on fostering and nurturing a positive classroom environment made him the perfect candidate for this role.

John and his wife, Anna, recently welcomed their first child, Otto James Krewson, in April of 2021. They currently reside in Brighton. Outside of The LP, John loves playing basketball, drawing and sketching, serving at his church in Allston, and traveling to visit family throughout the US and beyond. We cannot wait to see John take this role to new heights as he leads the 6th graders through their final year of elementary school.

A New Director of Academics, Faculty, and Inclusion

by SIBY ADINA



When I reflect about my own education, I can't help but recall the first school that I attended and its intimate nature with only 100 students in grades 1-5. It was a special place where all the students, the school staff, and the families knew each other and we were part of a close-knit community. School was so much more than academics; it was also about friendships, making memories, and learning how to take care of each other and our community. When I first read about The Learning Project, I was immediately drawn to its mission and commitment to being a small school because it reminded me of my childhood and many of my own core values.

I'm excited to be joining The LP as the new Director of Academics, Faculty, and Inclusion—a role that allows me to draw from my various experiences in education while continuing to learn and develop along the way. I have lived in a range of places where my life events and interactions with people have shaped my perspectives and the

person I have become. My childhood was spent in India and teenage years in New York City. I moved to Western Massachusetts to complete my undergraduate studies at Mount Holyoke College and have been living in Central Massachusetts ever since.

My professional background includes over 20 years of progressive experience ranging from elementary teacher, to Instructional Coach in the Worcester Public Schools, to Elementary Curriculum Coordinator at Abby Kelley Foster Charter School. I have always believed in providing all students with the best educational experience possible and have worked very closely with families and school staff to support all aspects of children's development. As a Focused Instructional Coach, I supported teachers with their professional growth. In my most recent role as a Curriculum Coordinator at a K-12 charter school, I was in a building level leadership role and also part of the district team. Some of my primary responsibilities included staying on top of current trends in education and instructional best practices, updating and aligning our curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development with a focus on access and equity for all students, and collaborating with all stakeholders. Along the way, I obtained a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Lesley University and a master's degree in Organizational Leadership from Endicott College, which have been immensely helpful in supporting my professional responsibilities. I believe learning is a life long process and love to read and attend courses. Outside of work, I enjoy gardening, reading, traveling, and spending time with my husband, two teenage children, and my dog.

So far, I've had an opportunity to meet many of The LP faculty and staff members and am eager to get to know the students, families, and the rest of the school community. I look forward to our partnership and collaboration, becoming part of the traditions, and the new experiences here at The Learning Project.



Social-Emotional Learning at The LP

by EMMA RUSSELL

In the fall 2020 issue of The LampPost, we briefly introduced our School Counselor, Emma Russell. After a year in her role, Emma reflects on the strength of the Social-Emotional Learning curriculum and her inspiring plans for the program moving forward.

When asked to join the staff at The Learning Project in August 2020, I felt everything from overwhelming joy to a slightly worried sense of "can I do this?" Even though a pandemic was already defining the school year, I felt both ready and excited to begin the challenge of creating a school counseling program at The Learning Project. In the early planning stages of this past school year, Justin Hajj and Jen Lesky looked closely at what curriculum would both fit the needs of our students and complement the comprehensive character education program that is at the heart of The Learning Project experience.

The curriculum, Random Acts of Kindness, provides a strong evidence-based foundation and vision for Social-Emotional Learning, making "kindness the norm." As soon as I heard this, I knew it was right as kindness is at the heart of my practice. In fact, I referenced it several times throughout my initial interview for this job (little did I know it was one of The LP's "powers"). I believe in the power of kindness. I believe in the science of kindness. I believe that kindness is teachable, contagious, and capable of changing the world around us. Many of us operate in a world where the emphasis lies in test scores, grades, and other measures of success, but this program gives students and educators alike an opportunity to shift their perspective.

The Random Acts of Kindness curriculum offers differentiated programs for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade and addresses themes of respect, caring, inclusiveness, integrity, responsibility, and courage. The framework of each lesson is built to accommodate a variety of learning styles so that students all can access the information in the way that works best for them, while also concentrating on the lifelong skills of sharing, inspiring, empowering, acting, and reflecting.

I have outlined the 5-steps of the framework below.

1. SHARE

This is a crucial first step as it creates a space where students and teachers can connect, empathize, and understand each other. It also allows for students to discuss both their personal experiences and their initial wonderings.

2. INSPIRE

This step asks students, and educators, to find their "why." That is, to find their connection to the lesson, their reason for participating and engaging. This step encourages students to think about how they relate to the world around them.

3. EMPOWER

Now that the students are connected and inspired, this step asks that educators provide students with the "how." This is where discussions, role plays, books, and other modalities come into play to learn more about the skills involved in regulating emotions, solving conflicts, accepting others, and moving through all walks of life with kindness.

4. ACT

In this step, students engage in various projects and activities that put what they have learned into practice. Whether they are creating a skit, writing a story, drawing a picture, or creating a game, students are using their creativity to construct tangible moments of kindness in their world. Students are able to see the change that they are capable of.

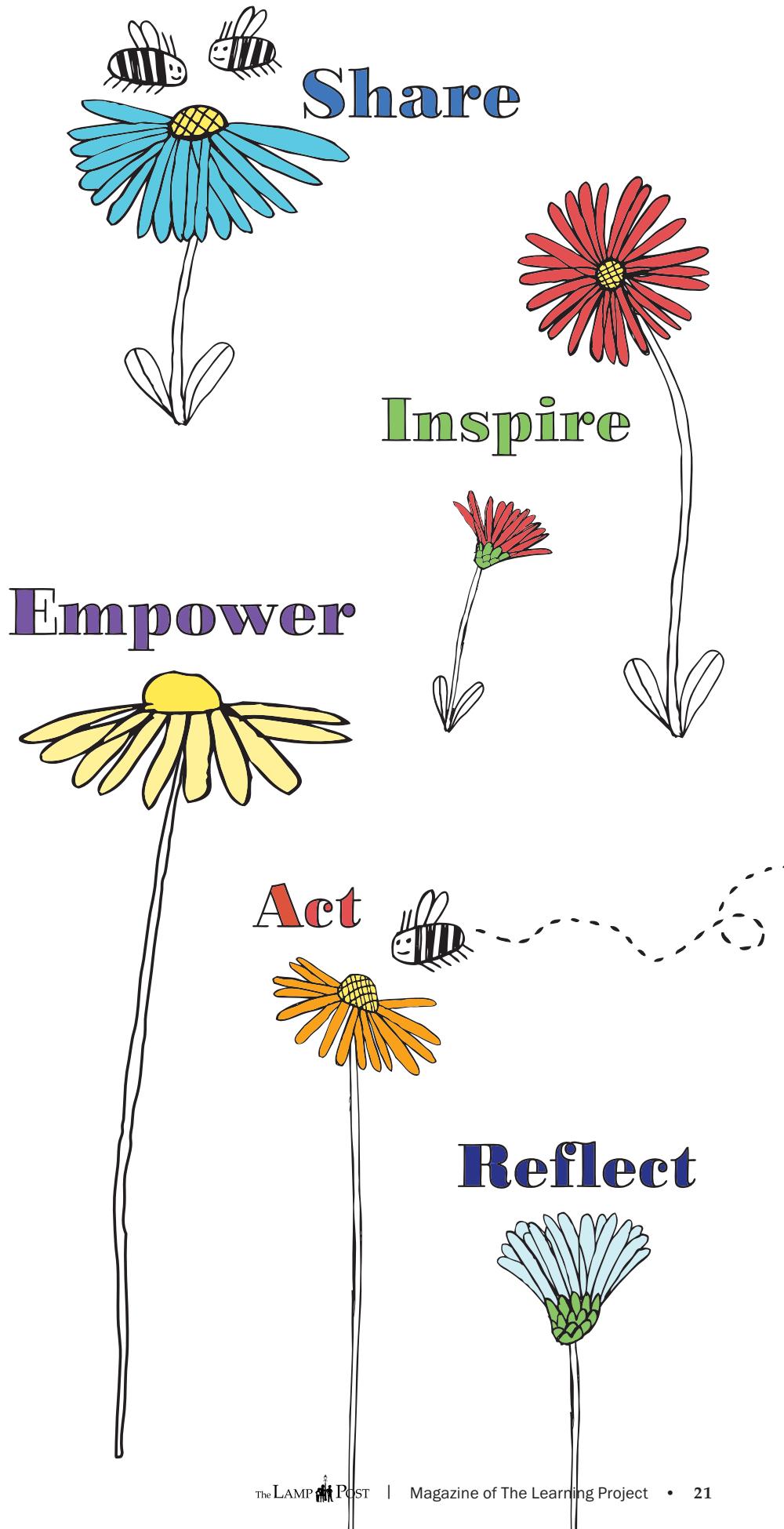
5. REFLECT

This fifth, and final, step was my favorite step in each of the lessons that I taught last year. While I love watching the children engaging in debates, listening intently to stories, writing poetry, or cooperatively playing games together, listening to their thoughtful reflections is powerful and proves to me what I believed all along—kindness can change the world.

During the 2020-2021 school year, I was focused on learning about the traditions of The LP, meeting and connecting with the students and families, and the addition of social-emotional classroom lessons. As we move into this year and beyond, I am grateful to have the opportunity to build upon the current school counseling program. Ideally, I will do this through the addition of small group interventions and the continuation of individual work with students, while constantly updating the classroom lessons and staff interactions with the curriculum. My intention is to treat this program as a living organism—it will grow and change with the needs of students and members of the school community. It will require feedback and attention, change and flexibility.

Parents and students of The Learning Project are asked to reflect upon their hopes and dreams before each new school year, so I thought I would take this opportunity to do the same. My hopes and dreams for this program go far beyond the curriculum that we use, the lessons that I teach, or the projects that our students complete. I hope that this program serves as a change agent that pushes students to succeed, but also provides a safe space to learn and to question. I hope that as we build this program together, it reflects the diverse needs and interests of our community members. I hope that students, parents, and teachers feel as though they have a voice and that their voice is heard.

As we move into the 2021-2022 school year, I will carry with me the lessons that I learned last year, ideas for the future, and a sincere desire to bring you all along on this journey. Together, kindness will continue radiating throughout our community.



THE TRADITIONS CONTINUE

5TH GRADE PLAYGROUND CLEAN-UP



JUNE AT THE LP



MAYFEST REHEARSAL



OLYMPICS



THE TRADITIONS CONTINUE

OLYMPICS CON'T



COMINGS & GOINGS

ALUMNI



Matthew McCord, '02, and Sarah Goodman-McCord celebrated their wedding on Sunday, July 25th, at the Saphire Estate in Sharon, MA, with their family and friends. The couple officially married in a small backyard ceremony in May 2020, but chose to hold a reception and vow renewal this July. Congratulations to Matthew and Sarah!



Several LP alumni attended the wedding celebration. From left to right: **Evan Smith, '01**, **Jonah Rodriguez, '02**, **Matthew McCord, '02**, **Sarah Goodman-McCord**, **Katherine McCord, '96**, **Billy Wilson, '03**, **Sam Dang, '02**, and **Mike MacDonald, '04**.

Luke Boelitz, '02, got engaged to Maxine Builder on July 1, 2021, at the Edgar M. Tennis Preserve in Deer Isle, Maine. They first met as undergraduates at Tufts University in 2009. The couple currently resides in Brooklyn, New York, with their dog, Harmony. Luke works as a filmmaker and Maxine is an editor at New York Magazine. They plan to get married in fall of 2022 on Deer Isle, where Maxine's family has a home.

Norah Brady, '14, is heading back to Brynn Mawr College in Pennsylvania for her sophomore year.



Maggie Fleck, '15, picking up a current LP student at school last spring. Maggie started helping out with this family when she was a Rent-a-Rainbow and just graduated from Thayer Academy. She will be attending Syracuse University in the fall, studying sports management at the Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics.

Sandy Lavallee, P '15, writes: **Jack Lavallee, '15,** recently graduated from Boston College High School. He is currently taking courses in real estate and will be attending Curry College in the fall. He remains close friends with fellow LP graduates from the Class of 2015.

ALUMNI CON'T

Sam Nelson, '10, graduated from the University of Michigan in 2020. He is currently working at the Boys and Girls Club in Chelsea, supporting 6-12 year old students with classes and homework. He notes that his experience working at August Scholars made a huge impact on him and opened his eyes to the joys of working with kids.



3 former classmates, **Ava Nace, '15**, **Lillian Gibson, '15**, and **Ella Tweedy, '15**, graduated together from The Winsor School this year.

Andrew Lee, '15, will be attending University of St. Andrews in Scotland, and living in St. Regulus, one of the historical dorms situated right in town.

Lillian Gibson, '15, is working as a campaign fellow for Ruthzee Loujeune, candidate for Boston City Council At-Large, this summer. In the fall, she is heading to Oberlin College.

Olivia Ardito, '15, graduated from Boston Latin School in June after a busy senior year in which she received both the Ward and Topol Fellowships, attained her Spanish Seal of Biliteracy, and led The Mayor's Youth Council—Youth Lead the Change Committee—as Director. She is heading to McGill University in Montreal to study political and computer sciences in the fall.



Emma Hayhurst, '18, stepped in to assist the Class of 2021 during their maypole dance last spring.

Anya Pakhladzhyan, '19, recently completed 8th grade at Boston Latin Academy. She was awarded three unique awards, "Upstanding", "Participation", and "Online Culture Keeper." Her family is especially proud of her "Upstanding" award, which is granted to "individuals who have shown respect to all people and various perspectives, beliefs, and cultures to ensure that a safe and inclusive learning environment exists."

ALUMNI PARENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF



The Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay recognized longtime activist **Sue Prindle, P '79, '83**, Alum Staff Member and Alum Board Member, and her late husband, Paul, last week with a tree and a plaque on the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. The above photo was featured in the Boston Guardian on 7/2/2021. Pictured: Sue's daughter-in-law, **Beth Prindle, P '12**, son, **Carl Prindle, '79, P '12**, Board Member, Sue, and her grandson, **Carson Prindle, '12**.

Carlin Tindall, Fellow, '18-'20, and Assistant and Interim Art Teacher, '20-'21, recently accepted a job at the Bement School in Deerfield, MA. She will be serving as an assistant teacher in 3rd and 4th grade, as well as a dorm parent to 8th and 9th grade girls.

REUNIONS



Parents of the Class of 2014: Back row (L-R): Alicia Towns Franken, Michael Franken, Tony Bordon, Ben Brady; Front row (L-R): John Gillis, Paula Luccio, Catherine Bordon, Colleen Brannen, Claire Corcoran, Will Murphy.



Members of the Class of 2014 at their 7-year reunion (L-R): Lindsey Robbins, Norah Brady, Sylvia Murphy, Samkyu Yaffe, Daniel Gillis, Lukas Towns Franken, Anthony Bordon.



Parents of the Class of 2015: Back row (L-R): Matthew Gibson, Thatiana Gibson, Robin Ardito; Front row (L-R): Eileen McCormack, Ed Fleck, Ashton Goodfield, Jim Goodfield.



Members of the Class of 2015 at their 6-year reunion. Back row (L-R): Ramsey Anis, Andrew Lee, Fergus Sullivan; Middle row (L-R): Tatiyana Stanton, Lillian Gibson, Ellie Goodfield; Front Row (L-R): Olivia Ardito, Ryann Hally, Maggie Fleck.

COMINGS & GOINGS

IN MEMORIAM

On Friday, July 16th, The Learning Project's brilliant and beloved Art Teacher of the past eight years, Caroline Schmidt, passed away after a long and brave battle with cancer. All connected to Caroline will surely feel her absence profoundly, and we send our deepest sympathy to Caroline's family members, friends, and to all of our community members who were fortunate enough to cross paths with Caroline during her time at The Learning Project.

Without a doubt, Caroline has been an incredibly positive and powerful influence on our community—bringing pure joy wherever she went, and to whomever she interacted with. Nothing made her happier than making art with children, and anybody who was fortunate enough to observe a lesson of hers witnessed firsthand that effervescent energy, that passion for art and everything it entailed, her attention to her children and the way she supported each and every one of them with humor and authentic kindness. And for those of you who weren't able to see her in action, undoubtedly you heard about Ms. Schmidt's warmth, devotion and talent through her students, or knew of her empathy and care within moments of meeting her. Caroline Schmidt was a magical teacher in every sense of the word—and an equally magical human being to all of us who knew her personally in our lives.

A memorial is being planned for this fall, and, following the event, a full tribute to Ms. Schmidt will be included in the subsequent *LampPost*. For now, we have included the obituary written by Caroline's family, and published in the Boston Globe.

"Caroline Schmidt, 37, of Jamaica Plain, MA, died peacefully on Friday, July 16, 2021. She was born on October 13, 1983, in Albany, GA, to Gary and Gloria Barton. Caroline and Nick Schmidt wed in 2010 and, in 2016, she gave birth to Elliott Schmidt. A graduate of the University of Georgia and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, Caroline worked as an art teacher in Washington, DC, and Boston, MA, most recently at The Learning Project since 2013. The embodiment of "work hard and be kind," Caroline's patience, gentle nature, playfulness, and love and knowledge of art, music, and ballet inspired hundreds of students, parents, and colleagues. Caroline is survived by her husband, Nick, son, Elliott, mother, Gloria Barton, and sister, Mary Prickett."

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.



The 2021 Annual Report Summary

BREAKDOWN OF GIVING 2020-2021

Annual Fund:	\$346,170
Spring Auction (net):	\$61,955
Funds for the Future:	\$50,000
Community Scholarship:	\$25,000
Read-a-thon:	\$10,778
Scholarship:	\$1,000
The Richard and Ann Dins Nemrow Fund:	\$5,000
The Prindle Scholarship Fund:	\$3,267
Fall Book Fair (net):	\$1,069
Other Restricted Funds:	\$3,539
TOTAL	\$506,778

CHARITABLE GIVING

6th Grade Philanthropy

Each year, The Learning Project sets aside \$500, plus any surplus Rent-a-Rainbow money, for its Sixth Grade Charitable Foundation. This is intended to provide soon-to-be LP graduates the experience of philanthropy, and inspire them to develop a life-long habit of giving. In the spring, sixth graders research local, national, and international charities as part of their charitable giving project. They each narrow down their own personal selection to one organization, which they "pitch" to the rest of the class in hopes of convincing their peers to donate to their cause. The class then votes on the charities that they'd like to support.

The Class of 2021 elected to split their donations in the following ways:

- Joyful Heart Foundation: \$250
- Roca: \$200
- The Trevor Project: \$50

Read-a-thon Donations

Esplanade Association: \$2,500

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107 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA 02116-1901
TLP@learningproject.org

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Class of 2021 Next Schools: Beaver Country Day School-1, Boston College High School-1, Boston Latin Academy-1, Boston Latin School-3, Newman School-1, Newton Country Day School-1, New Mission High-1, Roxbury Latin-3, St. Sebastian's School-1, Tandem Friends (Charlottesville, VA)-1

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