

VINE & BRANCH

A publication of River Oaks Baptist School Spring 2018



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RIVER OAKS BAPTIST SCHOOL



Caroline Moody

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BE THE EXAMPLE



THE BIG PICTURE from the head of school



Dear ROBS Family,

When was the last time you rode a rollercoaster? Some of you know that riding rollercoasters is one of my favorite things to do. Well, this school year has been nothing less than a rollercoaster—with higher highs and lower lows than any of us could have foreseen.

We started the school year with Hurricane Harvey and a flood of biblical proportions. But the remarkable ROBS community pulled together to help each other and Houston get back on our feet. Our Houston Astros won the World Series. We said farewell to Dr. Nancy Hightower, our beloved former head of school. Our students tested their academic mettle in local, regional, and national competitions such as Quiz Bowl, Continental Math League, the Scholastic Writing Contest, and the National Spanish

Exam, and they excelled. We raised more than \$53 million toward the construction of our new Middle School building, and we're getting closer and closer to breaking ground. We even had snow in Houston!

Looking back on this topsy-turvy year, there's a thread that holds it all together, and that thread is love. Love for our children. Love for learning. Love for our School. Love for our city. All undergirded by a deep love for God. Isn't it fitting that our character theme for this year is LOVE DOES? As we finish this rollercoaster of a school year, as we welcome new families into our community, as we eagerly anticipate the gifts of summer, let's remember always: LOVE DOES.

Blessings,

Leanne B. Reynolds
Head of School





The Road Ahead

For 63 years, River Oaks Baptist School (ROBS) has pursued a bold dream: to provide ambitious academics while always sustaining our Christian roots. We have been dedicated to preparing children for all that comes next. Yet what sets us apart is our commitment to developing great kids. We have always believed that nurturing children's intellect, spirituality, and character go hand in hand.

Like the generations before us at ROBS, we are now undertaking another momentous plan—construction of a new Middle School building and Leadership Center completely designed around the way children learn best.

KIDS.

We cherish the magic of childhood. Children are innately curious and are hardwired to learn. They delight in new discoveries, and their imaginations soar.

Research tells us that the right environment enhances learning. Kids flourish in light-filled spaces, with abundant room to be active. In outdoor areas with breeze and sunshine. In flexible spaces with freedom to experiment, and in quiet alcoves for reflection and solitude.

We are building just such a place.

LOVE.

1 Corinthians 13 says love is the supreme Christian virtue, and it undergirds all we do at ROBS. We witness it from teacher to student and student to peer, among our parents, and throughout our strong community of alumni, past parents, and grandparents. At ROBS, love is an action verb.

Our new building is designed to strengthen the invaluable bonds among students, teachers, and the entire ROBS family. The School's history is built on a foundation of love, and we hope love will be our most lasting legacy.

LEARNING.

Inside and out, the new four-story building will be a model of both contemporary and classic education. Each grade will inhabit its own floor, complete with classrooms, an advanced science lab, and an open collaborative space where the entire grade can gather. The building will also include a versatile black-box theater; dedicated music rooms for instrumental and choral instruction; studio spaces for drawing, painting, and ceramics; and a sophisticated area for robotics, graphic design, and photography. Outdoor terraces and balconies will extend classrooms, while a room for Bible instruction will provide a peaceful sanctuary. The library, which will give all students ready access to books and digital resources, will wind its way through all four floors.

Our new, transformative building will serve many logistical purposes as well. An underground garage will improve parking. The Leadership Center will be designed to provide room for students to hone their leadership skills, to house our administrative offices, and to pave the way for future reconfiguration of Lower School spaces. This addition will also allow us to grow our student body while reducing individual class size.



Payne Davis and Kendall Howes



Our family is benefiting from the generosity of those who came before us. Now it's our turn to pay it forward."

—Susan Cox, Campaign Chair



Aileen Paredes, Emme Day, and Chandler Hollis

ROBS RECEIVES STEELCASE GRANT

Rolling chairs with built-in storage. Flip-top and modular tables on wheels. Lounge seating and ottomans. This is the classroom of the future, and it's coming to ROBS soon. This spring, ROBS received a grant from Steelcase Education valued at \$67,000. ROBS will receive furniture for a new classroom, along with design work, installation, and onsite training in how to use the space most effectively. In return, ROBS will undertake a two-year research project to evaluate how more active, flexible classrooms impact student engagement and participation. Out of more than 1,000 applicants, ROBS was one of only eight grade schools in the country to receive such a grant. We are excited and honored that our work on the new Middle School building is supported by this generous grant from Steelcase Education and services provided by McCoy Furniture.



Cici Sanders, Dr. Todd Herauf, and Gary Hall

HELP US BUILD FOR THE FUTURE.

Our formula for success has produced a unique and treasured school environment—one where *kids love learning*. And over the years, you have enabled this beloved school to become what it is today.

In doing so, you have helped thousands of children define their dreams, strengthen their relationship with God, and go forth confidently into the world.

Today, we have another ambitious vision, one we can only achieve with God's grace and your support. Now, together, let us reach.



We wanted to support the campaign because we could tell from our earliest days in Preschool that ROBS does what is best for its students."

—Keith Mosing, Parent and Leadership Donor

To schedule a meeting to discuss your gift to the campaign, please contact Director of Development Paige Martin at pmartin@robs.org or 713.623.6938 x218.

We gratefully acknowledge the donors listed here who have made gifts or pledges as of May 11, 2018

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In Remembrance:

Dr. Nancy Hightower

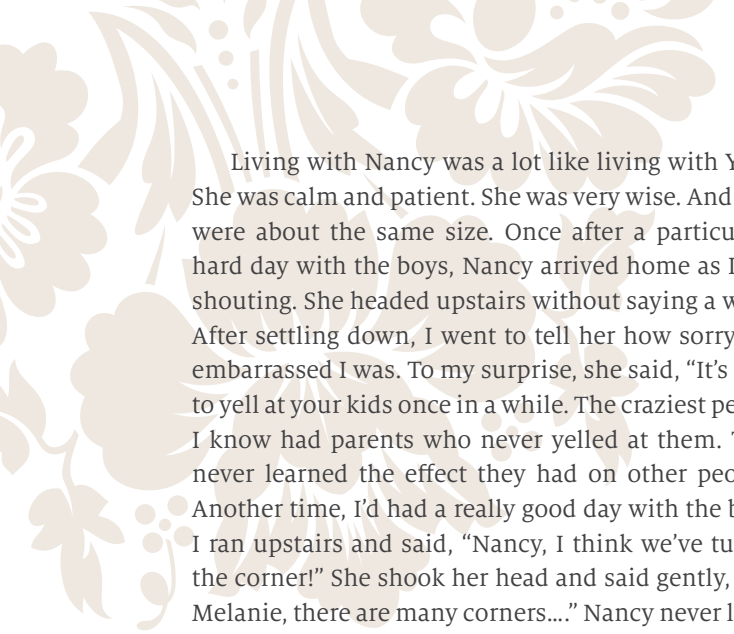
By Melanie Hightower

I met Nancy Hightower when her son Lee and I started dating 22 years ago. We spent weekends with Nancy and her husband Ralph at Heath Ranch, the family homestead in Madisonville, where she and I would sit on the porch and talk as the sun went down. Before Nancy became my mother-in-law, she became my friend. Nine years ago, I started working at River Oaks Baptist School, and then Nancy became my boss. So I had the joy and privilege of seeing many aspects of Nancy's life, but my favorite was being part of her family.

Nancy cherished her family, and we all knew it. She remembered every birthday. She accepted each of us unconditionally. And she put her family's needs ahead of her own. When her daughter Elizabeth's husband was ill and in the ICU, Nancy dropped everything and flew to California without being asked. For ten days, she took care of Elizabeth's kids, got them to school, and helped with homework so her daughter could stay at the hospital. It didn't matter to Nancy that it was the first two weeks of a new school year—always a busy time in the life of a school. She stayed as long as she was needed. Nancy was completely devoted to her children.

Nancy's grandchildren were the light of her life. As the proud grandmother of eight grandsons, Nancy attended many a sports event and not a single ballet recital. She was happiest when the entire family was together, and she delighted in hosting festive parties for those she loved most. Nancy made holidays magical, with an exquisitely set table and decorations for every season. After dinner, the boys would tumble outside to her beautiful backyard lined with wisteria, azaleas, gardenias, and tea roses. It was the perfect place for Easter egg hunts and football games. (Many times, the youngest grandson was the football.)

When it came to mothers-in-law, I won the jackpot, because Nancy embraced those of us who married into the family as if we were her own. In fact, I liked Nancy so much that after Ralph died, she came to live with us for five years. She would stay in our upstairs apartment during the week and return to Madisonville on weekends. I was home with two young sons at the time, and they were a handful. All of us were waiting for Nancy to get home from work. Some days, the boys would run upstairs, and she would read them a book. Some days, I would run upstairs, and she would pour me a glass of wine.



Living with Nancy was a lot like living with Yoda. She was calm and patient. She was very wise. And they were about the same size. Once after a particularly hard day with the boys, Nancy arrived home as I was shouting. She headed upstairs without saying a word. After settling down, I went to tell her how sorry and embarrassed I was. To my surprise, she said, “It’s okay to yell at your kids once in a while. The craziest people I know had parents who never yelled at them. They never learned the effect they had on other people.” Another time, I’d had a really good day with the boys. I ran upstairs and said, “Nancy, I think we’ve turned the corner!” She shook her head and said gently, “Oh, Melanie, there are many corners...” Nancy never let us get too high or too low. She kept us centered.

Nancy also kept us moving forward. She did not believe in resting on laurels. When anyone in our family achieved something significant, her typical reaction was, “What are you going to do next?” Nancy expected no less of herself. She led by example. When Nancy was 39, she was diagnosed with a chronic and painful condition that would affect her the rest of her life. She had to give up many things she loved like playing tennis and running and playing the piano. It was a bitter pill to swallow. It took nine months for her to accept her new normal, and then she made plan B. For ten years, she went to school at night—while working at ROBS during the day—to earn a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction with a focus on special education, followed by a doctorate degree in educational psychology. She became certified as an educational diagnostician and licensed as a clinical psychologist. That effort and grit paved the way for Nancy to become head of school. When God closes one door, He opens another.

So while many people saw Nancy as visionary, they may not have seen how incredibly tough and determined she was. This special combination was the engine that propelled ROBS to such success. Nancy had a clear vision: She believed that to prepare children to lead successful and satisfying lives, they needed to become complete people. They needed an outstanding academic foundation and a strong moral compass. In fact, she thought these two things were completely inseparable—that inner traits such as patience, self-control, joy, and even love were essential to learning.

Nancy served as ROBS’ head of school for 22 years until her retirement in 2012. During that time, she viewed her role as fulfilling the Lord’s plan for the School and enabling those around her to use their gifts to the fullest. Her headship transformed the School. What colleagues remember most was

Nancy’s tireless push to elevate academic excellence and professionalism at ROBS. As a result, the School increased in size and stature to become one of the premier schools in the region, and Nancy came to be regarded as one of the finest educators in Houston. Nancy considered ROBS’ students and graduates the soul of her professional legacy. While the accolades and honors ROBS received over the years are a testament to Nancy’s leadership, she was always quick to give credit to others: the School’s dedicated faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, parents, grandparents, and members of River Oaks Baptist Church, all surrounded by an abundance of God’s grace. As she liked to say, “When people work very hard for a purpose that glorifies God, He joins them.”

Being head of school is a difficult and sometimes lonely job. It’s impossible to make everyone happy. A few years ago after one of Houston’s big storms, the School was closed for several days. When it reopened, a first grader approached Nancy and said, “Dr. Hightower, my dad said if you closed school for one more day, he was going to drop me off at your house.” I think this story shows how confident our students are—and how approachable Nancy was. Perhaps that’s because at the start of the school day, she spoke to students, faculty, and staff alike through her memorable daily devotionals. Each morning long before dawn, Nancy wrote a relevant, heartfelt, Christ-centered message to the School. These devotionals, delivered over the PA system, offered a window into her soul. Everyone at ROBS knew what mattered to her, even the children. One day, a visitor asked a young student for directions to the Chapel. He replied, “If you’re looking for God, you should go to Dr. Hightower’s office. I think He hangs out there.”

Even after Nancy retired, ROBS was often on her mind. She had seen the renderings for the new Middle School building, and she was excited for our future. As Nancy said towards the end of her career, “In the future, there are sure to be opportunities that none of us can foresee, and the only way to seize them will be to think big.” Yes, Nancy kept us moving forward.

Last but not least, Nancy kept us humble. She would have said that every good thing that happened in her life was a blessing from God. She would have insisted that the School’s achievements are *your* achievements, not hers. She would have said she was a work in progress. But we know:

Nancy was a masterpiece.

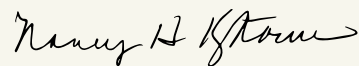
Melanie Hightower is the Director of Communications & Community Initiatives.

Until we meet again...

Summer is nearly upon us, and soon members of the ROBS community will be dispersing for vacation, camp, and other adventures. Children are restless and eager for summer break...and so are some of the grown-ups. Students and families we love will be heading on to high school; others will be moving farther away. The end of the school year is always emotional. It makes us so aware of the passage of time.

At the end of May, after the final bell has rung and our halls are quiet, our faculty and staff gather one last time for a service of appreciation. It is a time when we thank God for His many blessings this year—for watching over us and providing abundantly for us. As many of us prepare to go separate ways, it has become our custom at ROBS to say “see you later” rather than “goodbye.” It represents our deepest hope and prayer that soon, through the grace of God, we will be together again.

Godspeed,



Nancy H. Hightower, Ed.D.

Excerpt from Dr. Nancy Hightower's letter to the ROBS community, May 2011

AMBITIOUS ACADEMICS





All Roads Lead to Washington

For many eighth graders, the much-anticipated trip to Washington, D.C. and Williamsburg marks the pinnacle of their ROBS experience. Through photography, poetry, and prose, students distill the shared stories of faith, courage, and sacrifice into meaningful and often poignant memories.

Photo by Emma Daves '18



• *History through stained-glass windows*

By Kathryn Bragg

The air is heavy here, history hanging in every breath
Shot through with rainbow-hued light
Dust motes, floating, drifting, flitting out of shadow
And in again.
Color, pattern, shape, whirling together in scenes from the last
Miracles, wars, moon landings – even a rock
Once resting on the lunar surface, brought down to earth at last
Now stands as a testimony
Of mankind's otherworldly conquests

A choirgirl's lilting voice
Echoes, then falls flat
Lost amid the seven-story chamber
Whose dizzying height dwarfs every onlooker
Towering steeples, vaulted ceilings, beams, bricks, stones
A never-ending labyrinth under the earth
Holding the bodies of 200 perished citizens
Who once walked the halls of America's history
Forever rest in darkness' embrace.

The nation's children gather here
Bringing prayers from every religion, uniting faiths
All one, in this temple
Built for our century, a house of prayer for all peoples
To lift up their pains and praises
Amid shadows, sunbeams, and silence –
The National Cathedral.



• *The Big Stein*

By Cooper Davis

It was a dark and stormy night when a giant lightning bolt struck the Albert Einstein memorial. From miles away, people heard a large pounding coming from the memorial. When a group of people went to investigate, they were in awe at the giant missing statue of Einstein. The group had no idea what had occurred, given that the statue had been there since April 22, 1979. All that was left were large footprints leading westward away from the monument. An hour later, there was a disturbance near the Washington Monument. What happened next will go down in history as the strangest occurrence known to man: A twenty-one-foot Albert Einstein statue was bathing in the Reflecting Pool. People all around this spectacle started to take pictures and videos, and soon the entire world knew the monument was alive. They called it the Big Stein, who was thankfully a peaceful giant.

People began to realize that the Big Stein could turn into a messy situation. President Trump called in the military to take out the problem. The first plan was to fire at the statue with tanks, which seemed to be working. Then the Big Stein went King Kong on the army. He ran to the Washington Monument and began to climb. He made it to the top, making dents in all three sections of the monument. The government began to worry that the monument could fall because the statue weighed four tons. As the threat became more and more imminent, the army decided to use nitric acid as a last resort. The plan worked since the statue was made of bronze. As the Big Stein was being destroyed, he hurled his giant bronze paper where his famous contributions are written—the photoelectric effect, the theory of general relativity, and the equivalence of energy and matter—and it destroyed all of the attacking acid guns. Then the Big Stein began to run away, hoping to avoid any human contact.

When the Big Stein defeated the soldiers, the country immediately called for the reserves to eliminate this gigantic foe. They planned to get the behemoth into a secluded position, where they would activate a nuclear bomb that would incinerate the freak of nature. Everyone agreed it was time to get the Stein on the move. After two strenuous weeks of maneuvering the Stein, they were ready to activate the bomb. As the timer was ticking away, the clouds began to thicken, covering everywhere in a ten-mile radius. Then a lightning bolt the size of the Empire State Building struck the Big Stein directly on the nose. As the giant collapsed, a yellow glow began to encompass his entire nose. It was apparent that he was back to his original inanimate state, and he was returned to his original position. His nose still glows today. To this day, there have been no other recorded reanimations of the Big Stein, and hopefully there will never be again.

** excerpt from original story*



• *For You*

By Reed Hightower

Nineteen men
That's all we had, nineteen men

Three marines
You know the type;
Hi-ho, go getters
G-I-Joe commandoes
In case times got hard
Harder than they already were, anyway

One pilot
An airforce man, really
But we all just called him a dreamer
Someone who'd rather soar the skies
In a comfy little seat
Rather than being in the real trouble
Like us

One seaman
No good on dry land
But he told good stories
How his wife would bake this roast duck
And every time we heard it, our mouths watered
And the chalky rations of stale bread
Seemed even drier

And fourteen infantry
We were nothing special
The expendables
The nameless ones
Wifeless, parentless, childless
More than willing to sacrifice ourselves

But we trudged through
We made our own
Drank rancid water, infested and rank with disease
Fought man and nature alike
Huddled together in the freezing winds
Waded through rivers
Climbed mountains
Higher than the clouds
Dug ditches
So long you could see them
Stretching out like worms

Made our own paths
Made our own lives
Made our own deaths
For you



• *Hope*

By Morgan Grace

Stripped of their rights
Ripped from their homes
Torn from their loved ones
Hundreds at a time squeezed into railcars
Shipped off to Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau
But still, hope remained

Housed like animals
Shaved to be unrecognizable
Beaten until they could not stand
Forced to work until they could not breath
Starved until all that was left was skin and bones
Hope withered

Faith in what, God?
What God would let innocent people be left for dead?
What God would allow children and mothers to be gassed?
What God would not punish the Nazis for their crimes?
What God would take almost 3 years to send help?
Hope was gone

Weeks and months passed by
Voices of the dead echoed throughout the night
When will someone see their pain?
When will someone hear their screams?

But off in the distance someone listened
And hope appeared in the shape of a tank

Awards Highlight Academic Excellence



JACK KENT COOKE SCHOLAR

Maxx Shearod '17 was one of only 45 students out of more than 2,000 applicants nationwide to receive the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Young Scholars Award for exceptional academic ability and achievement.



YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Five ROBS students—**Lucy Katz, Camron Baldwin, Ava Winn, Amy He, and Lily Durden**—have been chosen to represent the city of Houston as youth ambassadors to Chiba City, Houston's sister city in Japan. ROBS is the only host school in Houston for this foreign exchange program, which has been in existence for over 40 years.



QUIZ BOWL

This spring, in only their second year of competition, our National Academic Quiz Bowl teams qualified for and competed in the state championships against the best schools in Texas. Our fifth and sixth grade team placed first in the state, and our seventh and eighth grade team came in second. The following students qualified for the National Championship: **Samantha Fowler, Sophia Jazaeri, Bhodi Langford, and Anshul Nayak.** **Samantha Fowler** was named as one of twelve All-State Players.

First Place, Grades 5-6

Camron Baldwin
Logan Graham
Austin Howes
Mason Howes
Joseph Marshall
Patrick Sullivan
Ben Who
Ava Winn

Second Place, Grades 7-8

Samantha Fowler
Reed Hightower
Bhodi Langford
Anshul Nayak



William Moursund and Kathryn Bragg

DUKE TIP

The Duke Talent Identification Program (Duke TIP) enables high-achieving students to better assess their academic abilities by participating in above grade-level testing. Seventh graders who have performed in the top 5% nationally on part of a standardized test are invited to take the SAT or ACT along with high school juniors and seniors. Students who score at or above the top 50th percentile relative to high school upperclassmen receive state recognition, and those who place in the top 10% gain grand recognition. In the last two years, three students received grand recognition: **Kathryn Bragg, William Moursund, and Lily Durden.**

Class of 2018

Evie Barrett
 Kathryn Bragg
 Michelle Cai
 Payne Davis
 Nyla Hartigan
 Alex Haug
 Reed Hightower
 Andrew Hung
 Michael Jeffery
 William Jeffery
 Margrethe Jensen
 William Moursund
 Anshul Nayak
 Taylor Nisbet
 Baz Rivera
 Elise Shu
 Elena Small
 Kate Thomas
 Austin Underwood

Class of 2019

Lily Durden
 Samantha Fowler
 Jillian Greely
 Betsy Hammer
 Caroline Hankamer
 Amy He
 Ethan Holmes
 Elisha Rabley
 Elizabeth Reed
 Robert Riser
 Owen Zeng



CHESS TEAM

Now in its second year, the ROBS Chess Team is racking up impressive results. At the quadrennial Super-National Chess Tournament in 2017, the ROBS team placed seventh in the nation, and **Evie Laskaris** placed seventh individually. In the U.S. Chess Federation 2018 National Elementary (K – 6) Championship in Nashville, the ROBS team, comprised of the following students, placed third in the nation.

Harrison Hadnott
 Graham Johnson
 Evie Laskaris
 Niko Laskaris

Bannon Loweth
 Thea Popovich
 James Santana
 Olivia Smith

CONTINENTAL MATH LEAGUE COMPUTER SCIENCE EXAM

In 2017, the seventh grade team (Class of 2018) placed first in the U.S. on the Continental Math League Computer Science Exam. Anchoring the team was **Elizabeth Cox**, who received



the highest score in the nation on the exam. The Class of 2019 placed first among all schools in the eight states of the Southwest region in 2017 and 2018. **Mac Gray** and **Rhyder Swen** earned the highest individual scores in the region in 2017. **Vilmos Lo, Mark Morris, and Rhyder Swen** earned the highest individual scores in the region in 2018. The third grade team (Class of 2022) also placed first in the region.

Class of 2018

Elizabeth Cox
Andrew Hung
Charlie Kugle
William Moursund
Reid Turlington

William King
Katie Miller
Max Palermo
Jeremiah Broughton
John Greeley
Ethan Holmes
Ava Mitchell

Class of 2019

Mac Gray
Rhyder Swen
Vilmos Lo
Mark Morris
Lillian Ashby
Dean Davis
Betsy Hammer
Caroline Hankamer

Class of 2022
Claire Connelly
Owen Almy
William Grace
Thomas Johnson
Ellis Jordan
Eugenie Montz

CONTINENTAL MATH LEAGUE MATH CONTEST

In 2017, the fifth grade team (Class of 2021) received the top team score in the Southwest region in the Continental Math League Contest. **Nelson Wong** earned a national award medal for placing first in the United States with a perfect score. Participating on the team were:



Emma Chang
Dawson Chang
Jonathan Daniel
Chloe Davis
Charles Donnell
Jack Easterby
Austin Howes
Mason Howes

Tori Livingstone
Carson Luna
Michael Nguyen
Amelia Novotny
Grant Petersen
Lea Voytovych
Nelson Wong

STATE MATH AND SCIENCE CHAMPIONSHIP



The ROBS Math Club is open to students in grades 5 – 8 who have a passion for math and science. Students practice before school or during an elective period preparing for contests that attract several hundred top middle school students from the Houston area. Students in grades 6 – 8 can qualify for the Texas Math and Science Coaches Association state championship in San Antonio, which hosts more than 1,200 middle school students from across Texas who have met a threshold score in Math, Science, or Number Sense. In 2017 and 2018, 11 Raiders qualified for the state championship in the following subjects:

2017

Elizabeth Reed	Number Sense
Samantha Fowler	Math, Number Sense
Caroline Hankamer	Math, Number Sense
Amy He	Math, Number Sense
Ethan Holmes	Math, Number Sense
Anshul Nayak	Math, Number Sense, Science
17th place	Number Sense in regional meet
7th & 9th place	Science in regional meets
Andrew Hung	Number Sense, Science

2018

Amy He	Number Sense
Samantha Fowler	Science
Mason Howes	Number Sense
Andrew Hung	Science
Sophia Hung	Number Sense
Andrew Konar	Number Sense
Anshul Nayak	Math, Number Sense, Science
Ben Who	Math, Number Sense, Science
8th place	Number Sense in Texas

NATIONAL SPANISH EXAM

The National Spanish Exam is administered to students in grades 6-12, most of whom are in high school. Students are evaluated with others taking the same level of Spanish, regardless of age or grade level. Gold medal winners place at or above the 95th percentile of students taking the exam. Silver medalists place between the 85th–94th percentile. Bronze medalists score between the 75th–84th percentile. In 2017, three students made perfect scores on the exam: **Caroline Hankamer, Samantha Fowler,** and **Kathryn Bragg.** **Samantha Fowler** also made a perfect score on the exam in 2018.



SPANISH 2

2017

GOLD

Haley Hammer
Krishna Nayar
Hassan Saeed
Marco Stix

SILVER

Ellie Alban
Peter Blomquist
Lila Cary
Olivia Fowler
Sebastian Graham
Khaki McCool
Parker Rose
Maxx Shearod
Megan Smith

BRONZE

Emily Biskamp
Hannah Chang
Zoe Chen
Felipe De Pinho
Alexandra Gill
Ben Wasden

2018

GOLD MEDAL

Kathryn Bragg
Andrew Hung
Preston Popov
Peter Sall

SILVER MEDAL

Elizabeth Cox
Emma Daves
Kendall Howes
Charlie Kugle
Anshul Nayak
William Moursund
Taylor Nisbet
Baz Rivera
Elena Small

BRONZE MEDAL

Payne Davis
Morgan Grace
Nyla Hartigan
Reed Hightower
Michael Jeffrey
Ellie Pratkan
Elise Shu
Jeevan Sidhu
Kate Thomas
Mathias Wagner

SPANISH 1B

2017

GOLD MEDAL

Kathryn Bragg
Payne Davis
Madeleine Harrell
Nyla Hartigan
Margrethe Jensen
William Moursund
Taylor Nisbet
Baz Rivera
Peter Sall
Elise Shu
Elena Small

SILVER

Evie Barrett
Calli Colvin
Morgan Grace
Alex Haug
Reed Hightower
Beck Hollaway
Reed Huffmyer
Andrew Hung
William Jeffery
Charlie Kugle
Bhodi Langford
Mary Louise Mannon
Anshul Nayak
Preston Popov
Jeevan Sidhu
Ella Sklar
Kate Thomas
Austin Underwood
Mathias Wagner

BRONZE

Mitt Black
Mary Ann Cabes
Elizabeth Cox
Maribelle Gordon
Channing Hill
Cameron Hoover
Kendall Howes
Michael Jeffery
Hannah Kothari
Scott Martin
Sam Matthews
Blake Noteboom
Ellie Pratkan
Will Turlington
Mimi Wilson

2018

GOLD MEDAL

Samantha Fowler
Caroline Hankamer
Amy He
Meredith Lium
Sophia Neylon
Aileen Paredes
Yousuf Saeed

SILVER MEDAL

Sophia Black
Jalen Bradley
Michelle Cai
Isabella Caruso
Emily Farris
John Greeley
Cory Kardesch
Christopher Karmonik
Estefania Lopez-Salas
Sophie Martin
Emma Nguyen
Elizabeth Wheless
Owen Zeng

BRONZE MEDAL

Patrick Fanning
Mac Gray
Channing Hill
Samantha Hoover

Augustus Klein

Cannon Low
Katie Miller
Mattie Pincu
Brady Ray
Reid Turlington

SPANISH 1A

2017

GOLD MEDAL

Isabella Caruso
Amy He
Sophia Black
Samantha Fowler
Caroline Hankamer

SILVER MEDAL

Jalen Bradley
Emily Brenning
Michelle Cai
Kenzie Frazier
Mac Gray
Ethan Holmes
Samantha Hoover
Christopher Karmonik
Estefania Lopez-Salas
Katie Miller
Sophia Neylon
Aileen Paredes
Elizabeth Reed
Yousuf Saeed
Locke Stanton
Collin Turbidy
Reid Turlington
Elizabeth Wheless

BRONZE

Audrey Black
Cooper Davis
Patrick Fanning
John Greeley
Betsy Hammer
Tatum Hill
Augustus Klein
Meredith Lium
Corby Martinez
Emma Nguyen

2018

GOLD MEDAL

Spencer Greeley
Sarah Margaret Hill

SILVER MEDAL

Camron Baldwin
Julia Bragg
Nhu Chu
Alden Davenport
Caroline Girard
Grant Greeley
Lillian Jones
Vilmos Lo
Farris Murchison
Elisha Rabley
Zeke Rivera
Halle Roy
Lauren Shu
Mary Caroline Sudduth
Benjamin Who
Nelson Wong

BRONZE MEDAL

Naomi Capdeville
Isabel Curran
Jonathan Daniel
Charles Donnell
Dawn Earles
Abigail Hou
Sophia Hung
Lucy Katz
Tori Livingstone
William Mengwasser
Catherine Moursund
Michael Murphy
Amelia Novotny
Scarlett Suffel
Lea Voytovych
Mary Louise Wareing
Billy Wheless





A is for Astros

What's the winning formula behind ROBS' ambitious academic program? Making school work fun! During the Astros' exuberant march toward their first World Series championship, our all-star teachers raised their game and brought baseball-mania into the classroom.

- Second graders practiced writing letters by composing congratulatory notes to the team.
- Third graders crafted dialogue by constructing captions for action shots of their favorite players.
- While studying parts of speech, fourth graders chose adjectives to describe our beloved home team.
- Seventh and eighth graders explored 3D design by customizing the Astros logo and printing it on our 3D printer.
- Our Lower School librarian read students *The William Hoy Story* about a deaf baseball player whose stature resembled Jose Altuve's. (Did you know baseball hand signals were invented because of Hoy?)

You can learn a lot from the national pastime!
Go, Astros!

Consistency Wins Championships

By Melanie Hightower

If you have the good fortune to talk with Astros owner Jim Crane and his wife Whitney for an hour, you notice how often the word “consistency” comes up. The team was “built for consistency,” Jim says, and that’s how it won the 2017 World Series. Here are highlights from our interview.

Much has been written about the rise of the Astros from the worst team in baseball seven years ago to the World Championship. Tell us about the team’s transformation.

Jim: When I bought the team in 2011, I knew it was pretty bad. We rebuilt from within our own farm system. It was a staged process. I think we’ve got the most sophisticated analytics in baseball, and we used data to make decisions and help every player improve. The team got better. When we reached the playoffs in 2015, we knew we were close to where we wanted to be. Some injuries set us back in 2016, but adding guys like McCann and Verlander last year put us in a position to be really competitive.

The deal for Justin Verlander was announced just days after Hurricane Harvey hit Houston. How did Harvey impact the team?

Jim: When the storm hit, the team was in Dallas. We couldn’t get home. We were calling to check on the players’ families; we even had to send people out to rescue some of them.

Whitney: When we finally made it back to Houston, the players checked on their families and then went straight to George R. Brown Convention Center. They went into people’s flooded homes and ripped out sheetrock. They wanted to help just like everyone else.

Jim: The town was under a lot of stress. That’s when we put the Houston Strong patch on our uniforms. It kept us united; it kept us focused.

Whitney: I moved here from Northern California. While Houston has always been friendly and welcoming, Harvey brought the city together in a whole new way. Some people have said the Astros lifted up the city after the storm, but the people of Houston also inspired and motivated the team.

Is there a memory from the playoffs that stands out to you?

Jim: As the playoff games started rolling, the energy on the team really amped up. We started to see what some of our younger guys could do under pressure. In Boston, when Bregman hit a home run over the left field wall, the energy in the dugout was electric. You could tell something special might happen.

Whitney: For me, it was the day of the victory parade. There was a moment when we were on top of the firetrucks in a downtown intersection. As far as I could see in every direction, the streets were filled with fans. I still get emotional thinking about it. After everything the city had been through, it felt great to celebrate together.

How do you intentionally build teamwork in your organization?

Jim: To start with, you have to get the right people with the right skills in the right jobs. That’s true for the guy on first base, and it’s true for the person in the sales office. You gain respect by being consistent. Being on time. Being respectful. Communicating well. Then you have to get everyone pulling in the same direction. It’s why I like to hire people who played a team sport when they were young. Whether it’s the Astros or ROBS, it’s important to know how to be part of something bigger than yourself. To win a championship, it’s not so much what happens in the game; it’s all about the team.

Whitney: I’d say our approach is, “Do your job, and take care of your people.” The Astros organization



is like a family. We try to take care of each other. For example, we have a nursery at the stadium so players' wives can enjoy watching the game while someone else looks after the kids.

Jim: You have to show people you value them. After we won, we had 1,600 World Series rings made—one for every person who works in the stadium, from the front office to the ushers. Then we made 50,000 replica rings to give away to fans. Baseball connects people, because almost everyone has a memory tied to the game. Now we want to give that experience to the next generation. That's why the Astros Foundation has helped renovate 22 baseball fields in public parks across Houston. As a result, over 3,000 kids have had the chance to play this great game.

What lessons do you think our students can learn from the Astros' journey?

Whitney: Stay focused, and never give up. You have to play with heart.

Jim: It's all about consistency: Plan the plan. Work the plan. Stick with the plan. Our guys are incredibly disciplined. The way they train. How they prepare before games. Even their diets. I remember a players'

party where one of the kids was making popcorn for everyone. Altuve ate a single kernel. The child kept offering him more popcorn, so Jose—who's a really nice guy—kept taking popcorn and hiding it rather than eating it. That takes a lot of self-discipline. Here's another example: A week before the players were due in Florida this spring, Verlander shows up. Pretty soon, there are ten guys in town, all putting in the time before they have to be there. That's how good things happen. As the saying goes, "The harder you work, the luckier you get."

It's clear from talking with the Cranes that luck has little to do with the Astros' success. Instead, the modus operandi at Minute Maid Park is consistency and discipline, coupled with support and appreciation for the entire Astros organization and its many fans. The Astros' tools of the trade resemble character traits taught at ROBS—traits like faithfulness, self-control, and kindness. By learning from the Cranes and the world champion Astros, our students will be better prepared to seize whatever opportunities may come their way.

A high-angle, close-up photograph of a person lying on a sandy beach. The person's right arm is extended, with their hand resting flat on the sand. They are wearing a white long-sleeved shirt with a small circular logo on the sleeve. Their hair is dark and curly, resting on the sand. The sand is light-colored and scattered with small, dried leaves and twigs. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

ABIDING CHRISTIAN VALUES





Lessons from Zambia

By Leanne Reynolds

If I heard it once, I heard it a hundred times: “One body (clap, clap, clap), many parts.” At the Family Legacy Academies school in Lusaka, Zambia, this rhythmic chant was sung often in recognition of good work—a reminder that the success of one is the success of all. I spent a mere seven days in Lusaka last summer, but I came home transformed. Although I went there to teach, I quickly discovered that the Zambians had much to teach me. The biggest lesson was about God’s power to bring hope and joy to a place where hope and joy could have been in short supply.

Most Zambians live on less than a dollar a day. HIV/AIDS afflicts 14% of the population, and drugs and alcohol are prevalent in the shanty towns called “compounds.” School is out of reach for many children who cannot afford the supplies or uniforms required to attend school. While this may sound like a bleak and sad place, it wasn’t at all. In fact, it was one of the happiest places I have ever seen!

My assignment in Lusaka was to work alongside a teacher named Maureen. Teachers in the compounds receive little training, and I was charged with giving Maureen new teaching tools to improve her effectiveness. Initially, she conducted class by having her students repeat the alphabet, sentences, and math facts in unison, without consideration for the children’s differing levels of achievement. Maureen called on the strong performers who knew the answers, while those who struggled hid behind their peers. Students sat at their desks all day, except during recess.

As we worked together, I showed Maureen new techniques to reach all her students: how to check for understanding; how to make sure every student participated; how to plan lessons so she could work individually with a student while the rest of the class engaged in small group work. I modeled bringing students to the board to solve problems so they could move around, as well as quick brain exercises to keep students active and engaged. Maureen learned to use flashcards for vocabulary words and simple math games that required few or no materials. Her students even authored and illustrated their own books and proudly shared their stories.



“Our bodies have many parts, but the many parts make up only one body when they are all put together. So it is with the ‘body’ of Christ.”

1 Corinthians 12:12

Maureen and I covered a lot of ground in five days, but as much as I taught her pedagogically, she and her students taught me about God’s love. Love that has no boundaries. Love that spans differences. Love that shines in those around us. As I watched Christ at work through hundreds of volunteers, I saw God’s love in abundance. Two months later, after Hurricane Harvey, I realized that God was preparing me this summer for what was about to happen in Houston. He was showing me that love is more than a feeling; love is an action word.

The special combination of love and learning that I experienced in Lusaka is the essence of River Oaks Baptist School. In fact, it’s embedded in our mission, which we abbreviate as ambitious academics rooted in abiding Christian values. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus says, “To whom much is given, much will be required.” We give our students the knowledge, empathy, problem-solving skills, innovator’s spirit, strong character, and unyielding faith that will enable them to change our world for the better. We are teaching them to *be the example*.

Leanne Reynolds is the Head of School.

What Love Does



BOOKS FOR MCGOWEN ELEMENTARY

In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, over 350 ROBS students, parents, faculty, and staff volunteered to refurbish the library at McGowen Elementary School, which was damaged in Hurricane Harvey. The ROBS community donated more than 2,400 books to the library, increasing its size more than six-fold. Our families then labeled, organized, and shelved the books, giving our students copious practice using the Dewey Decimal System.



SEE YOU AT THE POLE

See You at the Pole is an early-morning gathering of students in front of their school for prayer, scripture-reading and worship. ROBS Middle School students, along with faculty, staff, and parents, participate in this global event each year.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

In celebration of Christ's birth, buddy pairs packed 400 gift boxes and wrote uplifting messages for children around the world. Operation Christmas Child sends gift boxes to about 28,000 children a year. To date, it has reached children in over 100 countries.



SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR KIPP

After Hurricane Harvey, ROBS students collected and sorted 40 boxes of school supplies for KIPP schools that had been damaged in the flood.



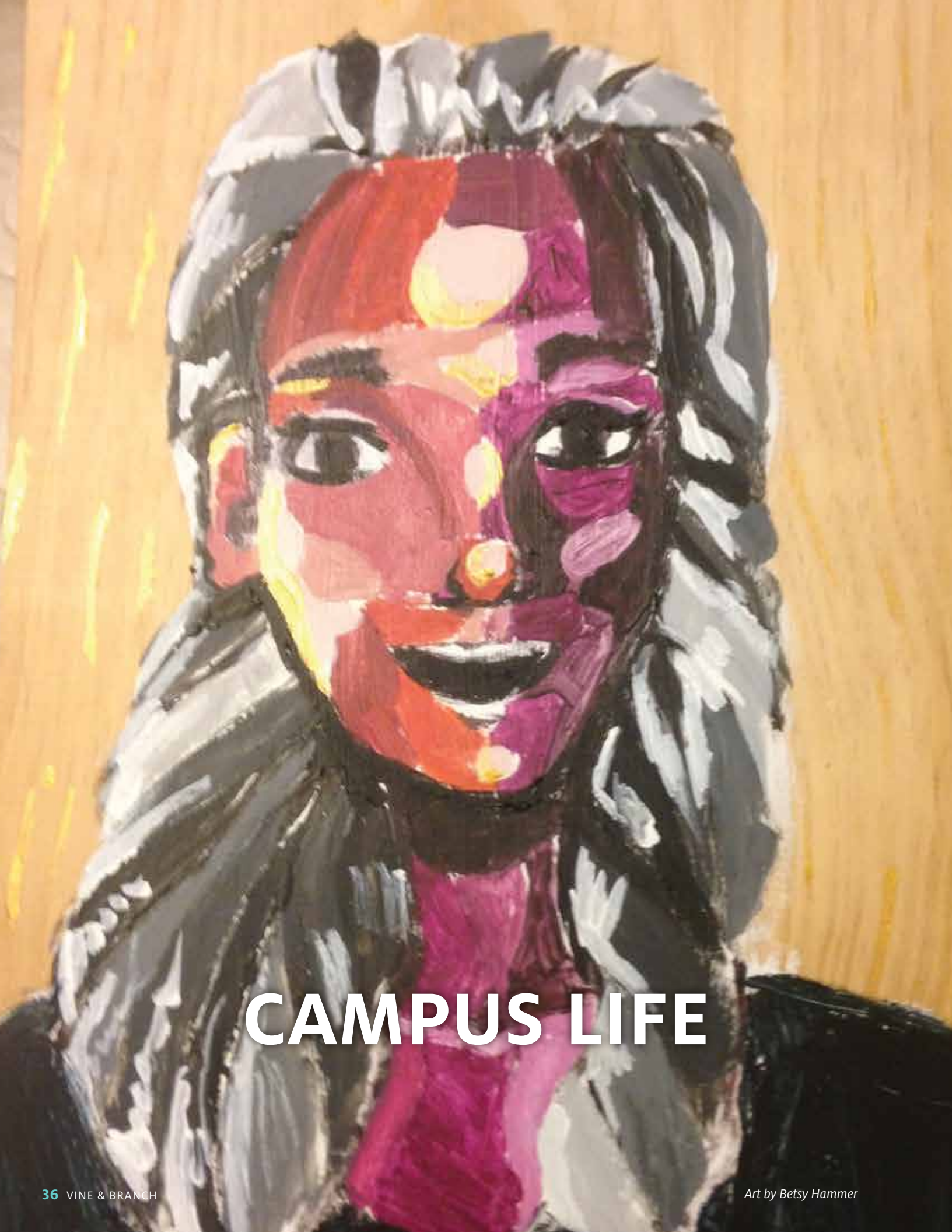
KIDS' MEALS

ROBS students partnered with their school buddies to make over 1,600 lunches for Kids' Meals, which serves Houston children up to age five who would go hungry without delivery of these meals.



BOOKS AS WINDOWS AND MIRRORS

A young immigrant from the Dominican Republic searching for her roots. A boy trying to summon the courage for his first leap off the high dive. A girl from Baghdad who overcomes great odds to become a world-renowned architect. These are a few of the heroes in our first collection of Windows and Mirrors Essential Books, which are being added to classrooms this year. Grab a few of these titles and pull up a chair with your child. You might find a window into someone or someplace new—or you might discover our shared humanity.



CAMPUS LIFE

Raider Creativity Shines

SCHOLASTIC ART AND WRITING CONTEST

For over 90 years, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards have celebrated the talents of emerging artists and writers. The awards are the most prestigious and longest-running recognition program for young artists in the U.S. Work is judged on originality, technical skill, and personal voice or vision.



2017

National Gold Medal
Ellie Alban, Sculpture

Regional Gold Key
Ellie Alban, Sculpture
Hannah Chang, Personal Essay

Regional Silver Key
Krishna Nayar, Drawing
Keith Sill, Personal Essay
Elena Small, Ceramics
Lily Tindel, Mixed Media

Regional Honorable Mention
Olivia Fowler, Personal Essay
Isabella Mach, Ceramics



2018

National Silver Medal
Allie Irwin, Personal Essay

Regional Gold Key
Allie Irwin, Personal Essay
Hannah Kothari, Personal Essay

Regional Silver Key
Patricia Angulo, Ceramics
Betsy Hammer, Painting
Taylor Nisbet, Personal Essay
Ellie Pratka, Personal Essay

Regional Honorable Mention
Reed Hightower, Personal Essay
Lauren Tanner, Personal Essay



POETRY CONTEST

Lucy Katz earned third place in the national *Time for Kids* Poetry Contest. Her poem, "Ode to a Parsnip," was published in the print and online versions of the magazine.

Ode to a Parsnip

*You may be healthy
Some say you are sweet
But I regret to inform you
That to me you are not a treat
I may get vitamin C when I chew
But to me it is just called vitamin ewwwwww
Grandma may love you
Uncle Tom thinks you're neat
But to me you taste like a bowl of stinky
feet
The carrot may be your cousin
This fact you can't deny
But if one more parsnip makes it in my
mouth
I think I just might cry
Please don't take this personally
I hope I didn't offend
But dear parsnip I regret to inform you
Our relationship must come to an end*

VARIETY SHOW

Every year, talented ROBS Middle School students bring down the house at the Variety Show. An illustrious panel of judges award the four top spots. Lower and Middle School students also democratically select the “People’s Choice” awards.



2017

First Place

Nhu Chu
John Greeley
Michael Murphy
Ava Winn
“Thinking Out Loud”

Second Place

Danny Gilbane
“You’ll Be Back”

Third Place

Ella Yu
“Morning Bells”

Honorable Mention

Chandler Hollis
Yousuf Saeed
“The Junior Illusionists”

People’s Choice

Danny Gilbane
“You’ll Be Back”

2018

First Place

Andrew Hung
“Cantina Band”

Second Place

Jonathan Li
“Liang and Zhu”

Third Place

Robert Hammer
Hunter Sauer
“The Other Side”

Honorable Mention

Evelyn Mach
“King of Anything”

People’s Choice

Charles Donnell
Hudson Holthouse
Michael Murphy
“The Weekenders”



YEARBOOK HONORS

In a publication almost solely recognizing college and high school yearbooks, the Balfour *Yearbook Yearbook* awarded ROBS an Honorable Mention for excellence in the production of the 2015-16 yearbook, *Be Dazzled*. The yearbook staff was led by Editor-in-Chief **Christina Betti** and Assistant Editor **Amelia Traylor**. **Priscilla Mach** created the cover illustration.

Raiders Triumph



CROSS COUNTRY

Tori Livingstone won the conference championship in sixth grade cross country.



SWIMMING

Emily Brenning, Mya Broughton, Estefania Lopez-Salas, and **Tori Livingstone** won conference championships and set two new conference records in Girls 200 Yard Medley Relay and Girls 200 Yard Freestyle Relay. **Jeremiah Broughton** won the conference championship in Boys 50 Yard Backstroke.



TENNIS

Reed Hightower captured the conference championship in Boys Singles.



The girls swim team brought home the conference championship trophy, with these girls competing during the conference meet:

Sophia Black
Ellie Bos
Emily Brenning
Mya Broughton
Nhu Chu
Betsy Hammer
Amy He
Sophia Hung
Allie Irwin

Sophia Jazaeri
Hannah Jones
Tori Livingstone
Estefania Lopez-Salas
Sophie Martin
Mattie Pincu
Elizabeth Reed
Lindsay Sauer
Elise Shu



**ROBS COMPETES IN THE HOUSTON JUNIOR
PREPARATORY CONFERENCE WITH
TEN OTHER SCHOOLS:**

- Annunciation Orthodox School
- Duchesne Academy
- First Baptist Academy
- The John Cooper School
- The Kinkaid School
- Presbyterian School
- St. Francis Episcopal Day School
- St. John's School
- Second Baptist School
- The Village School



TRACK AND FIELD

Tori Livingstone
6th Grade 800 meters, 1200 meters

Danielle Earles
6th Grade Shot Put

Estefania Lopez-Salas
7th Grade 100 meters

Elizabeth Reed
7th Grade 1600 meters

Emme Day
7th Grade 200-meter hurdles

Naomi Capdeville
7th Grade Discus

Margaret Anne Krieg
8th Grade Shot Put

Michael Nguyen
6th Grade 400 meters

Matthew Bosarge
7th Grade 100-meter hurdles

Jalen Bradley
7th Grade 200-meter hurdles

The seventh grade girls team brought home the conference championship.

Lillian Ashby
Ellie Bos
Mya Broughton
Naomi Capdeville
Emme Day
Lily Durden
Samantha Fowler
Amy He
Olivia Little

Will Moursund
8th Grade 100-meter hurdles

Elizabeth Black, Mary Louise Wareing, Lauren Shu, Tori Livingstone
6th Grade 4 x 400

Grant Petersen, Holman Rorschach, Michael Nguyen, Grant Pacheco
6th Grade 4 x 400

Will Jesulaitis, John Greeley, Jeremiah Broughton, Jalen Bradley
7th Grade 4 x 100

Will Jesulaitis, Jeremiah Broughton, Jalen Bradley, James Carter
7th Grade 4 x 400

Payne Davis, Charlie Kugle, Mitt Black, Preston Popov
8th Grade 4 x 100

Estefania Lopez-Salas
Macy McCallum
Katie Miller
Ava Mitchell
Mattie Pincu
Elisha Rabley
Elizabeth Reed
Lindsay Sauer

The seventh grade boys won the team championship, too.

Matthew Borsange
Jalen Bradley
Jeremiah Broughton
James Carter
Thomas Field
Grant Greeley
John Greeley
Spencer Greeley

Chandler Hollis
Will Jesulaitis
William King
Vilmos Lo
Yousuf Saeed
Lucas Vaughan
Owen Zeng



Faculty Grow and Excel



Shelby Hammer was named head of Trinity School of Midland.



Sally Walker received the Texas Trailblazer Award from the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.



Melinda Williams served on the ISAS accreditation team at Allen Academy in Bryan, Texas.



For the second consecutive year, **Chef Rylan Snodgrass** and her team have earned top honors from SAGE Dining Services for their excellent work.



Rachel Merren concluded a multi-year project as a member of the Educational Records Bureau's CTP Task Force. The group of ten teachers wrote, revised, field tested, and approved or rejected over 1,000 new test questions. The new CTP 5 test will go live next year.



Class of 2018 Faculty Grants were awarded to Middle School Language Arts Teachers **Casey Lin** and **Julie Blackwell**, who attended the Creativity Workshop in Florence, Italy over Spring Break.



The Johnny and Mia Carrabba Fund Faculty Grant was awarded to Middle School Dean **Victor Pulich** and Athletic Director **Jesse Martin**, who will travel to Israel to retrace the steps of Christ and, in turn, shape more powerful lessons in discipleship for our students. Thanks to **Randi, Johnny, Mia '15**, and **Johnny '14 Carrabba** for supporting our faculty at ROBS.



This summer, Director of Technology/Maker Space Teacher **Michael Honn** will attend a workshop about maker spaces in Sonoma, California. He also received a Class of 2018 Faculty Grant.

SERVICE AWARDS

25 YEARS

Christi DeSpain

20 YEARS

Anne Good

Khen Hechanova

Judy McCloud

Tim Whitten

15 YEARS

Beth Foltz

Alison Johnson

David Sellwood

10 YEARS

Katie Coleman

Melanie Gregg

Paul Mayhew

Teresa Neighbors

Dana Olivé

Betsy Shipper

Traveling Teachers

Representing all three divisions, the 2017 faculty grant recipients traveled far and wide to bring the latest educational trends, tools, and technologies to our classrooms and community.

By Jared Scott Tesler

Twenty-first-century learning was top of mind for the gracious recipients of the 2017 faculty grants, even though the three groups were thousands of miles apart, each exploring a different topic. The grants were awarded through the Johnny and Mia Carrabba Fund for Faculty Grants and the Class of 2017 eighth grade class gift.

Readiness teacher Claudia Sotelo Barrios and Preschool–Second Grade Curriculum Coordinator Sarah Graham were fully immersed in the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education in its birthplace, Reggio Emilia, Italy. Fifth grade science teacher Rachel Scranton journeyed to Oregon to attend the Northwest Council for Computer Education Conference and Maker Education Summit, where she studied how to incorporate a makerspace into a classroom environment. Fourth grade teacher Jessica Henkel and sixth grade science teacher Suzanne Bryant traveled halfway around the world to experience electronic invention tools, spherical robots, and engineering challenges at EduTECH International Congress & Expo in Sydney, Australia. These world-class professional development opportunities coincide perfectly with River Oaks Baptist School's Strategic Plan, in which enhancing 21st-century learning remains a top priority.

MAKERSPACES IN "THE BEAVER STATE"

"With ROBS building a new Middle School complex that will house a makerspace, I wanted to learn more about how this concept will work with teachers and students," Scranton explains. Over the course of three busy days in Portland, she was exposed to coding, collaboration, creativity, design thinking, engineering, formative assessments, innovation, and inquiry-based learning. "While science is not the only subject that can



use this type of space, I hope our Science Department can help pave the way to more student-driven learning and that all teachers can find ways to use a makerspace in their own content area."

Whether in the realm of fine arts, foreign language, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, or technology, the primary purpose of a makerspace, Scranton discovered, is to allow students to take control of their own learning. Heartened by so many school librarians celebrating and contributing to the maker movement at their respective schools, she is partnering with ROBS librarians Christa Pryor, Adonica Aston, and Kathy Ellwood, who are already working on a before-school library makerspace designed to encourage imagination and tinkering.

"To have a successful makerspace, the teacher has to let go of some control and let the students make it what they want. It's okay if it is messy and a little disorganized," Scranton says. "You have to be willing to try new things and take chances. They might not work—but there's a great chance they will. And students will remember what they did and learn more than they would in a traditional classroom lesson."

TECH INTEGRATION IN “THE LAND DOWN UNDER”

Also on the subject of student-driven learning, Henkel and Bryant had the opportunity to hear from Dr. Carol Dweck, Stanford professor and author of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, who served as EduTECH’s keynote speaker. A world-renowned developmental and social psychologist, Dweck stressed the importance of a “growth mindset,” wherein students believe their intelligence is developed through effort and persistence—not based solely on innate ability, which she characterizes as a “fixed mindset.”

Local schoolchildren offered attendees a preview of



how students might benefit from various technologies. After speaking with the robotics coordinator and computer science teacher at Barker College in Sydney, Henkel felt inspired to launch a robotics program for ROBS’ fourth graders. “The students discussed how robotics challenged and engaged them in ways no other classes had, how robotics changed the way they approached problems in their other classes,” she says. She notes that the conference delved into the world her students will likely enter upon graduating from high school and college—a world transformed by technological advances, with many jobs replaced by artificial intelligence. “Understanding the importance of technology and its ever-changing nature, and effectively integrating that technology into the classroom, are vital to getting our students ready for their futures. We need to develop classrooms that promote curiosity, risk-taking, collaboration, creativity, and grit.”

Bryant echoes the same sentiment: “We are teaching tomorrow’s change agents. We need to teach our students to take charge of their own learning voyages and act as their own guides.” She says she will offer experiential and inquiry-based learning opportunities for her students—who she hopes will begin to see

themselves as both problem-finders and problem-solvers who “define, discover, dream, design, deliver, and debrief real-world problems that matter to them.”

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN “THE BOOT”

More than 10,000 miles from Sydney, Barrios and Graham studied the student-centered Reggio Emilia educational philosophy. In the Reggio approach, Italy’s littlest learners are encouraged to express their thoughts, feelings, ideas, needs, interests, and abilities through self-directed activities of their choosing such as dramatic play, drawing, painting, sculpture, and writing. The educator provides guidance and nurturing, while the classroom environment functions as a “third teacher.” In stimulating classrooms brightened by an abundance of natural light, Barrios and Graham watched as young children took learning into their own hands, conscientiously experimenting with light projectors and assembling block structures made of natural materials and found objects.

“Meaningful, purposeful play is the important work of childhood. When children are hard at work on these kinds of projects, the teacher turns into a guide and a documentarian. As we plan lessons and design early childhood curricula at ROBS, the experiences we offer our children will be colored by our time in Italy,” Graham says. Such experiences will include extended classroom time devoted to preschoolers’ creativity, curiosity, discovery, and exploration; new and improved units of study enhanced by STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics); and an optional Reggio 101 study group for teachers aimed at making ROBS’ Preschool classrooms even more engaging environments in which to teach and learn. In true Reggio Emilia fashion, Barrios adds, “I have been inspired to place an emphasis on carefully displaying and documenting children’s progression of thinking, making their thoughts visible in many different ways—photographs, transcriptions of explanations, drawings, and sculptures—all designed to show each child’s learning process.”

Just as the world will be our students’ workplace, the world has become our teachers’ classroom. Thanks to the Carrabba family and the Class of 2017 for sending our teachers on learning adventures of a lifetime.

Jared Scott Tesler is a freelance writer.

WHY
CHOOSE A
SCHOOL
THAT ENDS IN
EIGHTH
GRADE?

IT'S ON THE MIND OF NEARLY EVERY PARENT WHO APPLIES TO ROBS:
WHY CHOOSE A SCHOOL THAT ENDS IN EIGHTH GRADE? ACTUALLY, THERE ARE SEVERAL
GREAT REASONS—ESPECIALLY IF YOUR STARTING POINT IS THIS QUESTION:

“WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF MY CHILD?”

STAY YOUNGER LONGER

A PS-8 school allows your child to stay younger longer. High schools have very different social and academic pressures. Even with separate buildings, younger kids in K-12 schools are influenced by what's happening in high school.



ALL RESOURCES FOR PS-8TH GRADE

All our resources are devoted to younger children, rather than diverted to expensive high school programs. When the choice is between expenditures in lower school or in high school, high school almost always wins out.



BETTER ACADEMIC RESULTS

In a phenomenon known as “top dog status,” research shows that middle school students' academic performance is better when they attend a PS-8 school, rather than a K-12 or grade 6-8 school.



GREATER SENSE OF BELONGING

Students who go to the same school for lower and middle schools and then switch for high school feel a greater sense of belonging and experience less bullying.



DEVELOP MIDDLE SCHOOL LEADERS

Here, our middle schools students aren't in the middle! Children benefit from being the leaders of the entire student body during middle school, and they rise to that responsibility.



SOLIDIFY STUDENTS' FAITH

The early years, especially middle school, are a key time for children to clarify their religious beliefs. It's an important time for your family's religious values to be reinforced at school.



READY FOR CHANGE

After as many as 12 years in the same school, eighth graders are ready for a change. Many look forward to moving on and outgrowing their middle school image. They leave confident and ready for the new chapter of high school.



CHOOSE THE BEST FIT FOR HIGH SCHOOL

In the early elementary years, there's no way to know what high school will be the best fit for your child. But by eighth grade, you and your child will know his or her strengths, and you'll be in a great position to make that decision together.



GUIDANCE DURING TRANSITION

All children must learn how to manage the anxieties of a new environment. Better to have them learn the in's and out's of this kind of transition while they're still under your roof to guide them, rather than away at college.



The Next Big Step

By Whitney Easterling Sharman '04

Choosing which high school to attend is a big deal in the lives of our students and their parents. Our goal is to enable our students and parents to enter the high school application phase with confidence and to emerge on the other side seamlessly. Over many years, ROBS has developed an unparalleled approach to ensure that parents and students alike are well equipped, organized, and prepared for the process. A key aspect of this approach involves our counselors playing an active role in walking our parents and students through the entire journey.

PARENT PREVIEW MEETINGS

The first step begins when Gabriela Flores Irwin, Director of High School Counseling, holds a meeting with seventh grade parents regarding what to expect the following year. Once students begin eighth grade, another meeting is held where parents are given more detailed information, including our comprehensive 'Choosing a High School' guide. This guide is no ordinary 'how-to,' but an in-depth, detailed blueprint that gives parents and students necessary information for applying to high school. It includes a thorough timeline and checklist, important questions to consider, pertinent admission statistics, dates, and deadlines, local high school admission requirements, and so much more.



PERSONALIZED STUDENT PROFILE FORM

Parents are encouraged to have their child fill out the student profile form that also appears in the guide. This form helps students begin to consider how their personality, extracurricular interests, and educational goals align with potential high school options. For example, if a student is an aspiring actor, the strength of a school's theater program should be taken into account.

“Our family has nothing but great things to say about ROBS and the high school application process. Our high school counselor sat with us and presented the acceptance history of each of Scott's favored schools. We felt completely at ease about Scott's projections and were even happier our son was mature and driven enough to complete his applications on his own. We attribute his readiness to his years at ROBS.”

—Dawn Robins, past parent

PARENT COUNSELING SESSION

The next step is participating in a one-on-one parent counseling session with one of our high school counselors. These individual meetings provide parents a time to discuss their hopes, review the student profile form, and talk about which schools best correspond with their child's academic record and other priorities. Grades and standardized test scores are also reviewed and used to predict the likelihood of acceptance to different schools.

ROBS ALUMNI PANELS

While much of the application process involves parents, we do our best to ensure that students understand their options. One great resource is alumni panels where we invite recent alumni who are currently attending Houston-area high schools to discuss their experiences with our eighth graders. These panels allow students to ask questions and hear from relatable sources about what each high school is really like. They also provide students with a sense of comfort to start their first day of freshman year knowing upperclassmen and fellow ROBS alumni.



Recent alumni talk to eighth graders about their experiences in high school.

HIGH SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

An additional opportunity we provide our students is field trips to Houston-area high schools. Some schools even invite us to bring our entire eighth grade class to visit campus together. This allows students to not only see the school during a regular school day, but to do so in a comfortable environment with their teachers and fellow classmates. These invitations speak to the fantastic reputation ROBS students have within local high schools.

WEEKLY EMAILS

August through January of eighth grade is very busy, as this is prime time for attending open houses, filling out applications, participating in high school interviews, and taking entrance exams. With so much going on in the lives of our parents and students during this season, we know it's important to send reminders and updates. We believe that going the extra mile to ensure families feel well-informed and supported is important, which is why every Thursday an e-mail is sent to parents showing upcoming deadlines and events. The emails provide such helpful information that some ROBS parents forward them to friends whose children attend other schools.

THE WAITING GAME

Once applications have been submitted, the waiting game begins. While waiting is hard, Mrs. Flores Irwin offers reassurance: "Year after year, our students have excellent high school choices. Our goal

is to see our kids get in to the schools they want to attend."

THE END RESULT

River Oaks Baptist School takes great pride in knowing our students are well-supported through the application process. One alumna, Allison Favaloro '14, said, "I remember that ROBS and its counselors made sure my parents and I were excited about the process rather than nervous or stressed. I think the high school application process was very beneficial for me because I now have so much confidence going into the college application process."

Over the past 63 years, we have watched as our students have transitioned from middle school to high school with great success. We have seen the fruits of our preschool through eighth grade model because ROBS alumni truly flourish. Of all the advantages of attending River Oaks Baptist School, we believe a crucial one is allowing our students the freedom to forge their own individual identity and then decide which high school best complements their gifts, abilities, and learning styles.

ROBS students are exceptional and unique in ways that stand out to high school admission committees. Whether our students' dreams are to attend a top boarding school or one of the many outstanding Houston-area high schools, we feel confident they will end up wherever they are meant to be. We know our process works, and our students are extraordinarily well-prepared. But above all, we believe God has a plan for each and every one of them.

Whitney Easterling Sharman '04 serves on the ROBS Alumni Board.

Oh, The Places You'll Go!

Members of the Class of 2013 left their mark on their high schools of choice. We can hardly wait to see what else they will contribute to the world!



CLASS OF 2013 HIGH SCHOOLS AND COLLEGE CHOICES

Maren Altman
Episcopal High School
New York University

John James Anderson
Episcopal High School
Champlain College

Erik Andrade
St. John's School
Boston College

Kendall Ayers
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Evelyn Barber
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Ed Bayouth
Episcopal High School
Texas Christian University

Sydney Beckham
Episcopal High School
University of Mississippi

Sarah Blakemore
Lamar High School
Gap Year

Maren Altman was on the honor roll at Episcopal High School, where she also earned Climb Award and theater arts awards for Best Ensemble Member and Best Lead Actress. Maren received a Tisch School of the Arts Scholarship at New York University.

John James Anderson was awarded an Innovation Scholarship and a Champlain Scholarship at Champlain College.

Erik Andrade was an All-Southwest Preparatory Conference (All-SPC) athlete and a four-year high honors student at St. John's School.

Kendall Ayers was an AP Scholar with Distinction, as well as part of the highest honor roll, at Episcopal, where she also received an Exemplary Effort Award.

Evelyn Barber was on the honor roll at Episcopal.

Ed Bayouth was on the honor roll at Episcopal.

Sydney Beckham received a Climb Award and an Effort Award at Episcopal.

James Braniff was on the honor roll at Episcopal.

Peyton Brown received a Presidential Service Award and the "Not Without Honor" Award at St. John's, where she earned highest honors. Peyton participates in Cross Country and Track at Princeton University.

Gwyneth Bryan earned two Bronze Remi Awards and was named MVP and Most Improved in cross country at Episcopal. She was also named Outstanding Animator twice.

Madison Carter was on the honor roll and highest honor roll at Episcopal. She also earned a Climb Award, as well as awards for Outstanding Artist in Portfolio and Exemplary Effort. She was a nominee for Excellent Studio Artist and Excellent Designer. For her efforts on the field, Madison earned a Southwest Preparatory Conference lacrosse award and a South District lacrosse award.

Bentley Chung received an Award of Excellence from Memorial High School Bel Canto Choir, and she was a

Memorial Representative for the 2016 West Houston Teen Leadership Summit. Bentley earned the Top 25 Presidential Scholarship and the Rawls Business Leaders Program Scholarship at Texas Tech University.

Chelsea Collmer was president of Choir and Encore in addition to earning several awards for volunteer work at The Kinkaid School. She was elected to serve on the Fine Arts Board, and she represented Kinkaid at an ISAS arts festival in two different fields. Chelsea earned a President's Gold Scholarship at Baylor, where she is a University Scholar.

Carson Copeland earned a Maverick Award and a T-War Award for effort and grit at St. John's. She was All-SPC in field hockey and lacrosse, All-South Zone in lacrosse, and she received a Sportsmanship Award for lacrosse. Carson received an athletic scholarship at Northwestern University, where she plays lacrosse.

Kate Copeland was named Most Athletic Girl during her sophomore and junior years at St. John's. In addition, she received an athletic scholarship at Northwestern University, where she plays lacrosse.

Joseph Coselli participates in SCCA and NASA racing at the University of Texas at Austin.

Catherine Craft was on the honor roll and was a member of TAPPS Choir - State Solo, State Ensemble at St. Thomas Episcopal School. She received a National Charity League Grade Level Philanthropy Award as well as a Yellow Rose Award. Catherine earned second place in Biology at a National Science League competition. She received a TCU Scholarship at Texas Christian University.

Craig Cronin was the Georgia State Champion for Public Forum Debate while at Marist School in Atlanta. He also earned fifth place at a National Debate Coaches Association Championship for Public Forum Debate.

Ally Day earned a silver medal on the National Spanish Exam. She was also a member of the National Honor Society and the National Spanish Honor Society at St. Agnes Academy.

James Braniff
Episcopal High School
Texas Christian University

Peyton Brown
St. John's School
Princeton University

Gwyneth Bryan
Episcopal High School
Texas A&M University

Jake Bunch
Strake Jesuit College
Preparatory
University of Texas at Austin

Madison Carter
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Bentley Chung
Memorial High School
Texas Tech University

Henry Clark
Strake Jesuit College
Preparatory
University of Mississippi

Sean Cleland
Lamar High School
University of Arizona

Chelsea Collmer
Kinkaid School
Baylor University

Carson Copeland
St. John's School
Northwestern University

Kate Copeland
St. John's School
Northwestern University

Joseph Coselli
St. John's School
University of Texas at Austin

Catherine Craft
St. Thomas Episcopal
Texas Christian University

Craig Cronin
Marist High School - Atlanta
Duke University

Ally Day
St. Agnes Academy
Texas A&M University

Celeste Debnam
St. Agnes Academy
University of Texas at Austin

Celeste Debnam was a National Merit Commended Scholar at St. Agnes.

Stephen Donnell received awards for Academic All-State 2017 and Academic All-District 2016 and 2017 while at Strake Jesuit.

Cleo Epley was on the honor roll at Episcopal, where she won a 2-D Art Award and received a Student Diplomat Award.

Brett Fadrique was a member of the National Honor Society as well as the honor roll/dean's list at Episcopal.

Brad Faison was on the honor roll at Strake Jesuit, where he was a National Merit Commended Scholar. Brad received an Academy Trustees scholarship at Missouri University of Science and Technology.

Emily Fleming is running cross country at University of Redlands.

Sam Folb was a member of the St. Thomas Club at St. Thomas Catholic High School. Sam was also awarded an academic scholarship at University of Georgia.

Turner Gauntt was on the honor roll and highest honor roll at Episcopal, and he earned an athletic scholarship at the University of Texas at Austin, where he is playing baseball.

Gavin Geib was football team captain at Episcopal, where he also received National Merit Scholar recognition. He was on the honor roll and was a member of National Honor Society. Gavin is playing football at the University of Pennsylvania.

Grace Geib was a National Merit Commended Student at Episcopal. A member of the highest honor roll, Grace was also named an AP Scholar and varsity volleyball MVP.

Jacob Grams is playing football at Rice University.

Melanie Green was an AP Scholar and was on the honor roll at Episcopal. Melanie is at University of Missouri, where she earned a Mizzou Heritage Scholarship, a Mizzou Houston Alumni Scholarship, a Mizzou Honors Cherng Fellowship Scholarship, and a Mizzou

Journalism School Walter Williams Scholarship.

Gigi Hanna was on the honor roll and highest honor roll at Episcopal. She was captain of the volleyball team, and she earned an award for varsity volleyball sportsmanship. Gigi was All South Zone and All-SPC in volleyball.

Ella Hawes was a member of National Honor Society and National Spanish Honor Society at Bellaire High School. She was also first team All-District in volleyball and Fellowship of Christian Athletes President.

Alex He was 15th Chair Bass in the All-State Choir. In addition, he was on the honor roll and principal's honor roll at Strake Jesuit. Alex received a Dean's Scholarship at Fordham University.

Jack Hernandez was a member of the National Arts Honor Society at Episcopal. He received a Scholastic Silver Key Award, and his Feast Your Eyes Food Photography Entry was published in a magazine.

Ian Hollaway received a Filmmaking Award at Episcopal.

Isabelle Hornung received highest honors and was on the honor roll at Episcopal. She was an AP Scholar with Distinction, and she received a Scholastic Silver Key Award for Studio Arts.

Elizabeth Hoskins received a Best Sound Design - International Thespian Society Award as well as Gold and Silver National Latin Exam Awards at Carnegie Vanguard High School. She was also a grant recipient for The Idea Fund Spark.

Collins Howell received a Climb Award at Episcopal.

Sebastian Injac was an AP Scholar and was on the highest honor roll at Episcopal. He received a Pioneer Scholarship at the University of Denver.

Bennett Inoff was on the honor roll and highest honor roll at Episcopal. He was also the JV baseball MVP, a member of National Honor Society, and the Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica. Bennett received a scholarship and is playing baseball at the University of Texas at Austin.

Stephen Donnell
Strake Jesuit College
Preparatory
Texas A&M University

Cleo Epley
Episcopal High School
Texas Christian University

Brett Fadrique
Strake Jesuit College
Preparatory
University of Texas at Austin

Brad Faison
Strake Jesuit College
Preparatory
Missouri University of Science
and Technology

Emily Fleming
Episcopal High School
University of Redlands

Sam Folb
St. Thomas Catholic School
University of Georgia

Turner Gauntt
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Gavin Geib
Episcopal High School
University of Pennsylvania

Grace Geib
Episcopal High School
Duke University

Jacob Grams
Episcopal High School
Rice University

Hamilton Gray
Memorial High School
University of Denver

Melanie Green
Episcopal High School
University of Missouri

Gigi Hanna
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Ella Hawes
Bellaire High School
University of Texas at Austin



Divya Jain received a W. T. and Louise J. Moran Foundation Young Philanthropist Award, and she was a National Merit Scholar Semi-Finalist at St. John's. She was a Scholastic Writing Competition Gold Key Finalist and an AP Scholar with Honor. Divya received a Sportsmanship Award, The President's Volunteer Service Award, as well as awards for Academic Excellence in World History, Spanish III, Geometry/Trigonometry Honors, Biology, English II, Algebra II/Precalculus Honors, and AP Calculus. Divya received high honors at St. John's, and she was a candidate in the 2017 United States Presidential Scholars Program.

Caroline Johnson received high honors at St. John's.

Tamiana Lankford-Bravo was on the highest honor roll, and she was a member of National Honor Society, National Arts Honor Society, and Sociedad Honoraria

Hispanica at Episcopal. Tamiana also received a Tracy Renee Clark Award for Continuing Outreach, an Agnes Scott College Book Award, and a Scholastic Gold Key Award in Photography.

Jacob Lawyer was on the honor roll at Episcopal, and he was a member of the National Chinese Honor Society.

Margaret Martin was a varsity cheerleading captain and tennis team captain at Episcopal. She was named homecoming queen, and she was a member of National Honor Society. Margaret is cheerleading at the University of Texas at Austin.

Chloe Nelson was on the dean's list at The Athenian School. She was named a National Hispanic Scholar and a National Commended Scholar.

Alexander He
Strake Jesuit College
Preparatory
Fordham University

Jack Hernandez
Episcopal High School
High Point University

Ian Hollaway
Episcopal High School
Belmont University

Isabelle Hornung
Episcopal High School
University of Notre Dame

Elizabeth Hoskins
Carnegie Vanguard High School
Pratt Institute

Alec Hovnatanian
Lamar High School
University of Arkansas

Collins Howell
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Parker Hughes
Episcopal High School
University of Miami

Henry Hughey
Lamar High School
University of Texas at Austin

Sebastian Injac
Episcopal High School
University of Denver

Bennett Inoff
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Divya Jain
St. John's School
Stanford University

Caroline Johnson
St. John's School
Duke University

Tamiana Lankford-Bravo
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Jacob Lawyer
Episcopal High School
Southern Methodist University

Margaret Martin
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Rebecca Noel was a member of the Cum Laude Society and National Spanish Honor Society at Kinkaid. She was also a National Merit Commended Scholar, and she received awards for Spanish III Honors, Community Service Super Star, and English I.

Isabelle Paine was on the honor roll at St. John's.

Avery Claire Prasher was on the honor roll and highest honor roll at Episcopal. She also received an Exemplary Effort Award.

Liam Pugh was on the honor roll at Episcopal.

Alex Ramzel received a President's Endowed Scholarship and a National Merit Recognition Award at Texas A&M.

Katharine Randall was on the state championship and SPC championship lacrosse team at St. John's. She also was named an M Girl and received honorable mention in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and the President's Gold Medal for Community Service.

John Peter Sanchez received a Climb Award at Episcopal.

Jack Shepherd was a member of National Honor Society at Memorial.

Anthony Small was valedictorian at Episcopal. He was an AP Scholar with Distinction, a Commended National Merit Scholar, and a member of the highest honor roll, the National Honor Society, and the National Spanish Honor Society. Anthony earned awards in History and Social Sciences, Mathematics and Computational Sciences, Science, Geometry Honors, AP U.S. History, and Pre-Calculus Honors. Anthony served as editor-in-chief of the newspaper, where he earned awards for Most Promising Print Journalist and Outstanding Print Journalist. Out of the classroom, Anthony was a member of the varsity wrestling team, serving as captain his senior year and earning a Leadership Award. Anthony received the Lechner Scholarship at Texas A&M.

Joy Smith received awards for Best in Show 3-D Art and Best in Show 2-D Fall Arts at Episcopal. She was also named Student of the Month for her stage direction.

Isabella Smythe was a member of National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, and National Science Honor Society at St. Agnes. Isabella received a High Honors Classic Scholar Award at the University of Georgia.

Hanna Stocks received an award for Most Outstanding Spanish III student at Bellaire. In debate, Hanna's awards include Most Outstanding Freshman Debater, Cross Examination Debate Degree of Excellence, and Cross Examination Debate Degree of Honor. She also placed first in a Museum of Fine Arts Houston Photography Contest.

Wolfi Timm is participating in powerlifting at the University of Texas at Austin.

Michaela Urban was a member of National Honor Society at Memorial. She also received a Presidential Service Award, and she was a volunteer for Amigos de las Americas in Costa Rica.

Ellie Vincent was a member of National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta, and she graduated magna cum laude at Memorial. In swimming, Ellie was a UIL 6A state swimming qualifier, swim team captain, 4-year varsity letterman, and District Swimmer of the Year in 2016. Ellie received a Female Swimming MVP Academic Scholarship at Tulane University.

Sally Wade was on the honor roll at Episcopal.

Harrison Williams was SPC All South Zone for volleyball at Episcopal High School. He also earned a sportsmanship award for volleyball, and he was named MVP. Harrison received highest honors as a senior as well as earning two Exemplary Effort Awards. He received an award for Outstanding Visual Effects and an Honorable Mention Award for Film and Animation, Scholastic Art Award. Harrison received a President's Scholarship at Trinity University, where he participates in track and field.

Will Worthington was on highest honor roll at Episcopal. He set a track and field record in the 3200m, and he was named cross country MVP. Will also received the Andrew Heston Hall Kaufman Scholarship.

Christopher McLaurin
Strake Jesuit College
Preparatory
University of Texas at Austin

David Medellin
Lamar High School
Austin Community College

Robert Montgomery
Episcopal High School
Texas A&M University

Chloe Nelson
The Athenian School -
San Francisco
Massachusetts Institute of
Technology

Rebecca Noel
Kinkaid School
Rice University

Isabelle Paine
St. John's School
University of Texas at Austin

Avery Claire Prasher
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

Liam Pugh
Episcopal High School
University of Miami

Alex Ramzel
St. John's School
Texas A&M University

Katharine Randall
St. John's School
Elon University

John Peter Sanchez
Episcopal High School
University of Miami

Jake Schick
St. John's School
New York University

Jack Shepherd
Memorial High School
University of Texas at Austin

Anthony Small
Episcopal High School
Texas A&M University



Joy Smith
Episcopal High School
Sarah Lawrence College

Isabella Smythe
St. Agnes Academy
University of Georgia

Hanna Stocks
Bellaire High School
University of Texas at Dallas

Wolff Timm
Lamar High School
University of Texas at Austin

Michaela Urban
Memorial High School
University of Texas at Austin

Ellie Vincent
Memorial High School
Tulane University

Sally Wade
Episcopal High School
Southern Methodist University

Harrison Williams
Episcopal High School
Trinity University

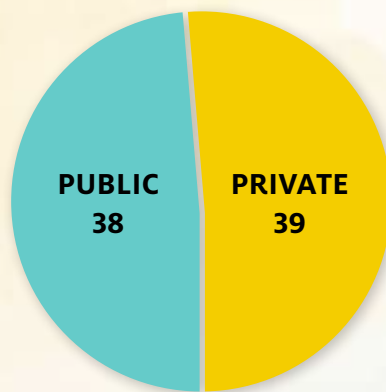
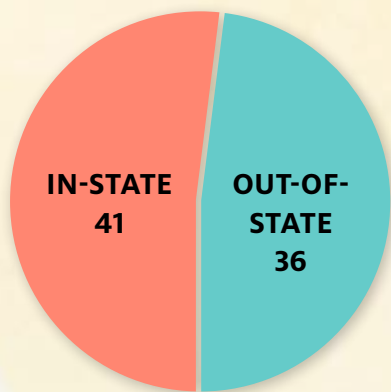
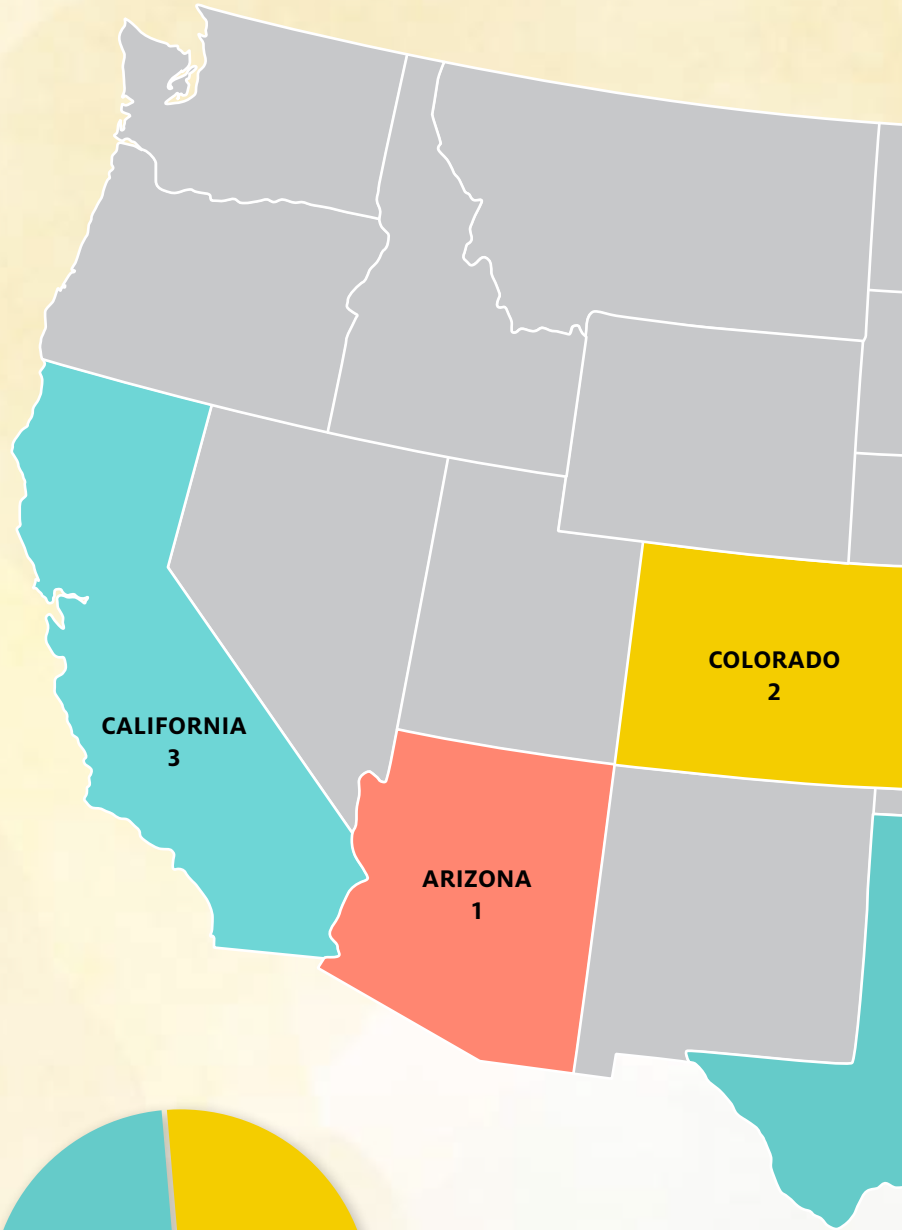
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Loyola Marymount University

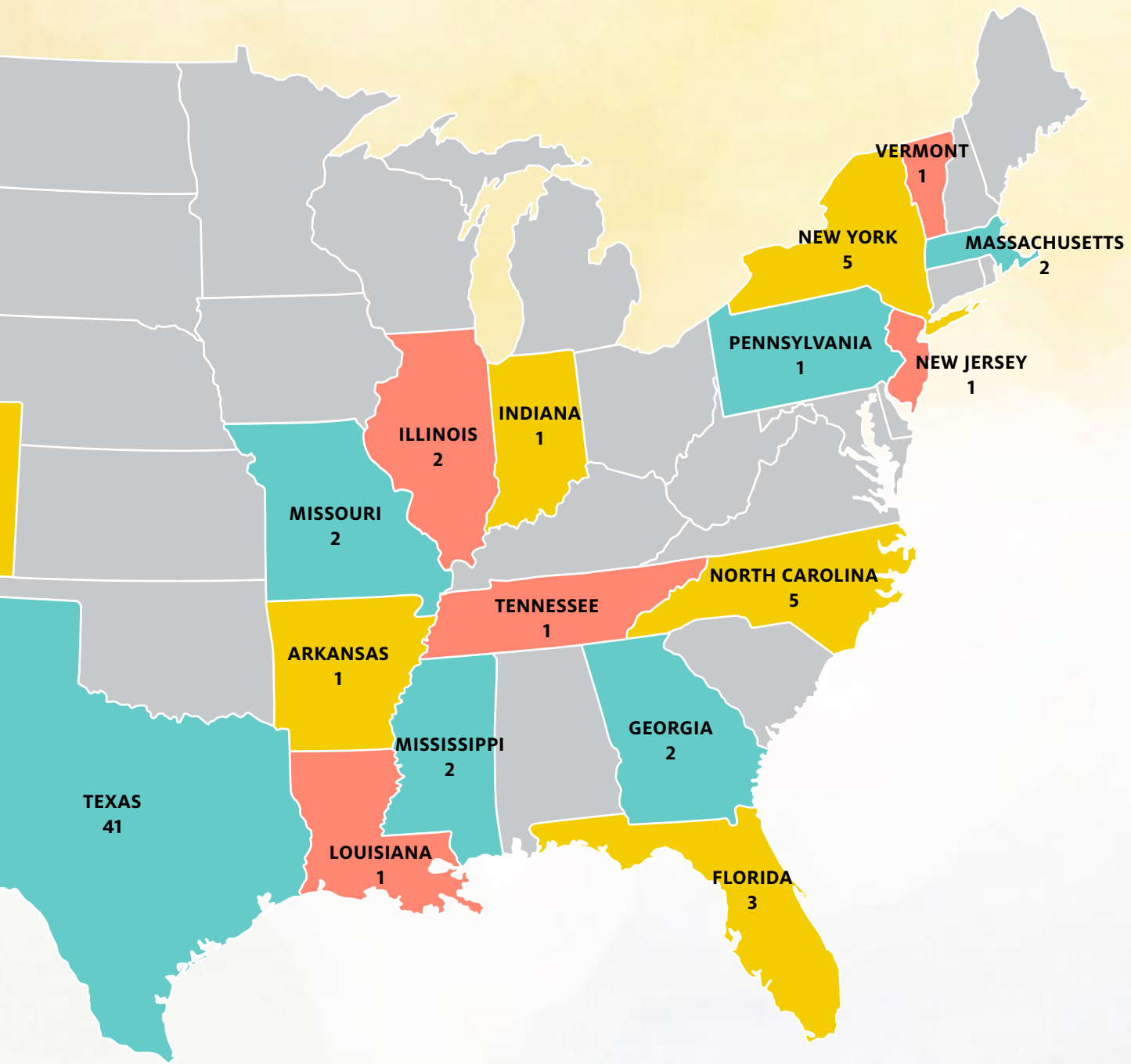
Will Worthington
Episcopal High School
University of Texas at Austin

*Alumni, come visit
ROBS when you're back
in Houston... and don't
forget to call your mom.*

BY THE NUMBERS

WHERE IS THE
CLASS OF 2013
ATTENDING
COLLEGE?





Alumni Relations



Holden Hamblen, Lauren Rothwell, Rachel Robins, Jennifer Brown, Laura Sellingsloh, Robert Cunningham, and Kevin Hassenflu (all '07)

Fellow alumni,

As ROBS alumni, we share a bond of treasured experiences and memories. We are blessed to have enjoyed the unforgettable ROBS experience, and we are fortunate that our school wants to shadow us into adulthood. The Alumni Board works to connect with and engage the diverse pool of ROBS alums in meaningful ways that strengthen our bonds with each other and with ROBS. Whether you graduated from ROBS in 1979 or are one of our newest alums from the class of 2017, we hope you will maintain a close relationship with ROBS. We want to celebrate your milestones with your friends, classmates, and former teachers. Keep an eye out for opportunities to connect with other ROBS alums. And remember, you are always welcome to stop by for a visit!

Most sincerely,

Knox Nunnally
ROBS Alumni Board Chair

2017-18 Alumni Board

Knox Nunnally '93, Chair
Kadriye Gunay Alcorn '02
Carlisle Weaver Brock '97
Collin Gerry '96
Kevin Hassenflu '07
Jerrien Johnson '05
Will Oates '93
Lauren LaFollette Morris '98
Lauren Murdock '02
Laura Sellingsloh '07
Joe Sharman '01
Whitney Easterling Sharman '04
Anna Grace Thompson '08
Kat Turnham '04
Michael Weekley '01

To learn more about the ROBS Alumni Board or to share a class note, email Director of Alumni Relations Jerrod Bain at jbain@robs.org.

A photograph of a large, multi-story brick building with many windows. The building has a central entrance with a small roof over the doors. The text "#ROBSHOUSTON" is overlaid in large white letters on the top part of the image.

#ROBSHOUSTON

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Class Notes

1994

Christian Easterling is on his third local start-up venture and currently serves as the Director of Operations for Dent-Well LLC, which installs and operates dental offices at large corporate and university campuses.



1988

Felicia Graham published *Texas Rollergirls Flat Track Derby* in October 2017. This photo book features moving and candid moments of female roller derby players in their most vibrant, victorious, and intimate moments.

1990

Bradford Mayfield released his second album on iTunes, Amazon, and Spotify in the fall of 2016.

1991

Brad Kirklin and his wife, Natalie, welcomed Bradley McMahon (“Mac”) on December 19, 2016.

1993

Knox Nunnally and his wife, Cara, welcomed Dillon Knox on February 15, 2017.

Will Oates and his wife, Laura, welcomed Griffith Hamlin on January 4, 2018.

1994

Kerry Bollman and her husband, Kris, welcomed Keaton John on March 8, 2016.

1995

Anthony Heins, his wife, **Alex Magliolo Heins '98**, and big sister Annabel welcomed Amelia Blake on August 16, 2016.

Henley MacIntyre Old and her husband, Carter, welcomed Charles MacIntyre (“Charlie”) on December 15, 2016.

Leigh Turner McFarlane and her husband, Michael, welcomed Laura Reese (“Reese”) and John Michael (“Johnny”) on September 3, 2015.

Allison Holmes Spayd, her husband, Mike, and big brother Cole welcomed Scott Morgan on May 20, 2017.

Elizabeth Hancock and her husband, Chris Berg, welcomed Ella Ruth on February 25, 2017.

1996

Ann Bell Moody and her husband, Dan, welcomed William (“Will”) Townsend on January 23, 2017.

1997

Adrienne Morse and her husband, Jared Spain, welcomed Reed Phillip on December 10, 2016.

1997

Travis Brewer appeared on Celebrity Apprentice in February 2017 and was a finalist on American Ninja Warrior. Travis has created a fitness apparel line called Pi Movement.

2000

Rachel Funk married Tyler Lawler on March 4, 2017.

Caroline Brantley Williams and her husband, Ward, welcomed Quinn on March 3, 2017.



Brian Murdock and his wife, Natalie, welcomed Annabell Madison ("Belle") on May 30, 2016.

Thomas McConathy and his wife, Elizabeth, welcomed Julia Kimball on December 27, 2017.

1998

Alex Magliolo Heins, her husband, Anthony '95, and big sister Annabel welcomed Amelia Blake on August 16, 2016.

Gina Von Sternberg Free and her husband, Collins, welcomed William Anderson ("Anderson") on June 10, 2016.

1999

Fritz Eggen married Deisy Chavez in May 2017. Helping the couple celebrate were Fritz' friends from the Class of 1999: John Watkins, Ben Branstetter, Stephen Brewer, and Mac Skelton.

Becca Heilman Davison, her husband, Daniel, and big sister Eve welcomed Hadley Gray on September 24, 2017.

Stephen Brewer, his wife, Linden, and big brother Tucker welcomed Cameron Leslie on September 6, 2017.

Audrey Pustka White and her husband, Matthew, welcomed Vivienne Belle on April 25, 2017.



2002

Alex Crain married Betty Gerecht on September 2, 2017,

John Kerns married Sydney Mafrige on September 30, 2017. Bridesmaids included Alexis Lowe '04, Kat Turnham '04, Kylie Wade '06 and McKinley Wade '10. Best men included Simon Feinsilver '02, Eric Jaschke '02, and Tolar Hamblen '02.



2004

Vivian Heard married Byron Langford on April 22, 2017. Her wedding party included sister Catherine Heard Riewoldt '02 and Emily Brlansky Tamlyn '04.



2004

Kelsey Stewart Pittman and her husband, Aaron, welcomed Madison Reese on June 2, 2017.

Katia Mazzone married Tom Basley on May 28, 2017. Katia's classmate Katie Howard Williamson '04 (pictured here) was a bridesmaid.



Andria Levitt married Jeffrey Berman on April 16, 2016.

Molly Schubert married William McDonald on October 28, 2017.



2005

Blake Rankin and his wife, Mia, welcomed Ford Preston on August 31, 2016.

Tom Martin is working as a sports anchor with KCTV (CBS) in Kansas City, Missouri.

Nia K. Traylor Perkins married former Air Force Staff Sergeant Ellis Perkins in August 2017. Nia completed her J.D. degree and is working in the San Diego public defender's office.

2007

Travis Gauntt and his wife, Lizzy, live in Austin, where Travis is enrolled in the UT McCombs Graduate Business School.

Zoë Gerachis Dobbs and her husband, Tanner, welcomed Hudson Jay on November 11, 2017.

2009

Tyler Gauntt graduated from the University of Georgia in May 2017. He resides in Austin and works for Transwestern.

Christian Segner married Tori Roeder on May 21, 2017.

2010

Courtney Favaloro, a senior at Texas Christian University, was a finalist for Ms. TCU.

Paige Poe's poem entitled "Driving 90 Miles an Hour" was published in *Texas's Best Emerging Poets: An Anthology*.

Xavier Gonzalez, who is a senior at Harvard University, earned a Rhodes Scholarship. Xavier looks forward to exploring his passion for mathematics at Oxford University next year.

2012

Jessica Vlasek plays softball at the University of Texas at Dallas, where she was named the American Southwest Conference All-Tournament Player after helping her team win the conference title in May 2017.

2013

Margaret Martin is a cheerleader at the University of Texas at Austin.

Chase Cambra will serve our country as a member of the United States Marine Corps.

2014

Peter Geib will play baseball at the University of Texas at Austin after graduating from Episcopal High School in 2018. Peter was named one of the “Top 10 Players to Watch” in *Texas High School Baseball* magazine.



Miranda Greenwalt earned an award at the 2017 Association of Texas Photography Instructors Fall Contest in the Digitally Constructed Single Image category. Entries in this category have photographic elements but have been created using computer software.

Cole Hammer was one of the twelve members of the U.S. team to compete in the first-ever Junior Presidents Cup in September 2017. The U.S. team won 13-9. A highlight of this experience for Cole was spending time with the professional golfers whom he admires.

Sasha Vermeil earned a Scholastic Gold Key Award for her photograph entitled “WACO.”

Blake Ogle qualified as a semifinalist in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Drew Woodfolk, who is a senior at St. John’s, earned All-SPC for boys cross country in the fall of 2017.

Jordan Kramer, who is a senior at St. John’s, earned All-SPC for girls cross country in the fall of 2017.

2015

Benny He, who is a junior at St. John’s, earned All-SPC for boys volleyball in the fall of 2017.

Stockton Shaffer earned an award at the 2017 Association of Texas Photography Instructors Fall Contest for Advanced Sports Reaction.



2016

Matthew Boling was one of four Strake Jesuit athletes to earn All-American honors at the New Balance Outdoor Nationals in Greensboro, N.C. in June 2017. Matthew’s Sprint Medley Relay placed second in the United States and was the third fastest time in the history of high school track and field. In addition, Matthew placed sixth in the U.S. in the Long Jump.

2017

Maxx Shearod competed in his first national yo-yo contest in October 2017, earning second place. Maxx is preparing his routine for the 2018 World YoYo Contest in Shanghai.



Brennan Howell '16, **Allison Krieg '16**, and **Camille Hanna '17** were members of the Episcopal High School Volleyball team that won the SPC Championship.

Alumni Events

ALUMNI HAPPY HOUR



1. Stephen Pitt '08, Sam Marziotti '08, Luke Cone '08, Stewart Cartwright '08, Quinton Cone '10 2. Laura Sellingsloh '07, Kelly Bernard '06, Katherine Brock '06 3. Alexander Denard '07, Colin Murdock '07, Kevin Hassenflu '07, Stephen Brewer '99 4. Blakely Hamblen '07, Anna Edelman '07, Rachel Robins '07 5. Alex Magliolo Heins '98, Lauren LaFollette Morris '98 6. William Cheadle '05, Jerrien Johnson '05 7. Jerrod Bain, Sam Kelly '09, Anna Grace Thompson '08

ALUMNI LUNCH WITH FACULTY



1. Alex Jimenez '06, Judy Adams, Liza Evans '96, Jennifer Pritchett Roane '98, Michael Petrizzo **2.** Melanie Malone Criswell '93, Michael Petrizzo, Lauren LaFollette Morris '98, Jesse Martin **3.** Jeff Reynolds, Knox Nunnally '93 **4.** Katie Gonzales '00, Barbara Luengas, Alexandra Ellis '99, Cristina Aldridge '99 **5.** Duncan Underwood '85, Todd Frazier '84, Jesse Martin **6.** Brian Murdock '97, David Murdock '94 **7.** Connor Tamlyn '01, Jeff Williams '01, Michael Weekley '01

Volunteer Relations



Randy Wright, Stephanie Davis, Carrie Field, Anna Claire Hankamer, Adrienne Stokes, Caroline Roeser, Jacquelyn Cox, and Barb Fowler.



“How would I best describe the ROBS volunteers? Creative. Talented. Dedicated. Joyful. Inspiring. The list could go on and on! ROBS is truly blessed to have such amazing volunteers serving our community each and every day.”

—Anna Claire Hankamer, 2017-18 Parent Association President

How do parent volunteers help the ROBS community?

Let Us Count the Ways

Volunteers

pitch in on all kinds of special projects, such as mailings, processing book donations, assisting with service learning, and delivering school donations to partner organizations.

Volunteers

show their innovation and creativity through graphic design projects, decorations for special events, and display case installations.

Volunteers

fun-raise! Volunteers manage events such as Popsicles on the Playground, Reading Festival and Book Sales, Fall Fair, Grandparents and Special Friends Day, Bo Neuhaus Field Day, Treasure Hunt, Passport to the World, graduation events, plus two special events just for teachers and staff. They present amazing special celebrations for students, help with class parties, and lend a hand as field trip chaperones.

Volunteers

are active members of the Board of Trustees and its committees, steering committees, and the Parent Association Executive Committee.

Volunteers

promote literacy and a love of reading by offering assistance in the library on a daily basis, serving as classroom readers, and reviewing book selections for the library.

Volunteers

pray for every member of our school community by name.

Volunteers

strengthen our school community by organizing and participating in community-building events.

Volunteers

keep our students healthy by helping all children in grades K-2 in the lunchroom each and every school day and coordinating vision and hearing screenings.

Volunteers

offer expertise in leadership positions to help our school thrive.

Volunteers

keep students organized and looking their finest. Parents wash and store loads of used uniforms, run Community Closet and Spirit Store sales, and keep our lost and found operating efficiently.

Volunteers

capture countless special moments all over campus, with photography of athletics, student events, and daily life at ROBS.

Volunteers

graciously welcome applicants and new families by hosting tours, open houses, testing sessions, and special events, in addition to serving as shepherd families.



Fenner Currin



*Play is the work of
childhood.”*

—Jean Piaget

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Katie Stanton
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Randy Wright

Ex-officio

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Martus Miley

ACCREDITATION

ISAS, ACTABS, Praesidium

PUBLICATIONS

Editor: Melanie Hightower
Photography: Michael DuBois, Jan Edwards, Nikki at Olive Shoot Photography, Cherise Luter, Melanie Hightower, Therese Schaffer, Paul Swen, and ROBS faculty and staff

We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in the magazine. If we have made an inadvertent error, please accept our apologies. Contact Director of Communications and Community Initiatives Melanie Hightower at mhightower@robs.org with feedback or questions about our publications.

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Associate Head of School for Advancement

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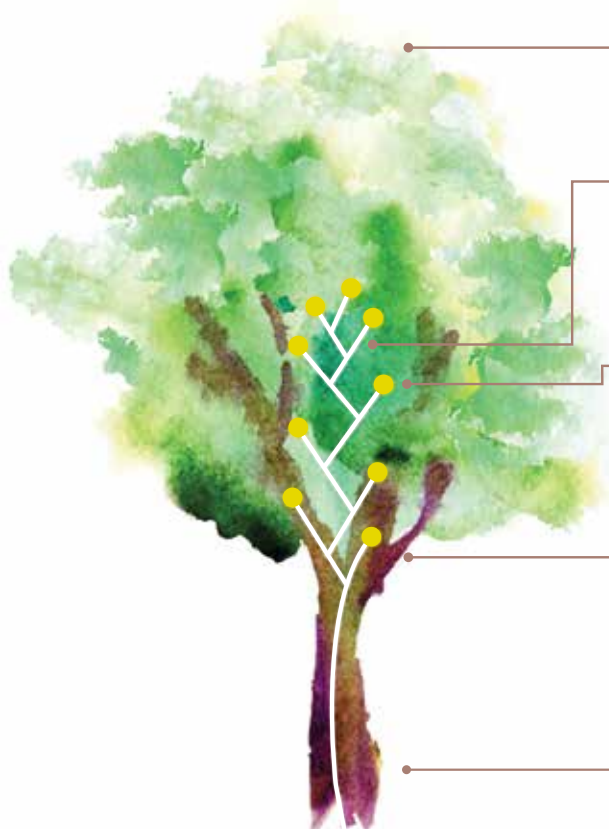
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BE THE EXAMPLE

Ambitious academics rooted in abiding Christian values



WATERCOLOR TREE

Alight with playful color, the watercolor tree represents the beautiful potential and possibility-filled expanse of a child's life.

ACADEMIC PATH

Deliberately engineered, research-based, and comprehensive, the School's thoughtful academic curriculum builds upon itself from grade-to-grade, laying a self-reinforcing foundation for students to be ambitious, courageous, resourceful thinkers.

FRUIT BUDS

Growing naturally from the academic path, the fruit buds represent the practice-based, immersive character curriculum that permeates every lesson and action at ROBS. The nine fruit buds known as the Fruit of the Spirit nourish children's lives well beyond their time at ROBS.

STYLIZED TREE

Fastening together the academic path and the fruit buds, the stylized tree presents a child's journey through ROBS—the way ROBS guides students toward shaping life direction, forming connections, and preparing them for all that comes next.

LAYERED IMAGERY

Layering the artistry of the watercolor tree with the technological imagery of the stylized tree signifies the School's commitment to Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Math—each a priority in our ongoing curricular enhancements and our new master campus plan.