



Family Tree²⁰¹⁷

A magazine for the extended family of Ojai Valley School



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CONTRIBUTORS

Our sincere thanks to students past and present in the award-winning Upper Campus journalism program for their contributions to this issue, including Natasha Freudmann (U17), Emma Gustafson (L14, U18), Josh Han (L13, U17), and Ally Feiss (U16). Thanks to alumna Elizabeth (Curran) Hermes (L66, U69) and journalism instructor Fred Alvarez for their editing and writing contributions as well as photographers Misty Hall, Darcie George, Soham Kondle, and John Boyd.

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Alumni Weekend

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On the Cover

In 2015, as a class gift, the graduating seniors built a sand volleyball court on the hill at Upper Campus and named it "Sunset Point" in recognition of the stunning evening views. In his freshman year, student photographer Soham Kondle captured one of those sunsets and the silhouette of friends Usmon Mirzozaliev and Peter Weckerle.



The outdoor amphitheater, built when Carl was a student at the Upper Campus, was dedicated in his honor at graduation as the Carl S. Cooper Amphitheater.

By Michael J. Hall-Mounsey

OVS has more than 5,300 alumni worldwide. Our international alumni represent 50 countries globally, and our domestic alumni hail from 47 states, though most are right here in California. In recent years, those alumni have become more connected, more philanthropic, and more have attended reunion weekends, including this year's record-breaking attendance of more than 275 alumni, faculty, and guests who gathered for the 2017 Alumni Weekend at Upper Campus in June.

It was a fabulous reunion celebration, full of music, laughter, hiking in the Sespe, and sharing stories. Many alums were drawn back to honor retiring Headmaster Carl Cooper – and to reminisce about the friendships, camp trips, and shenanigans that took place under his watch. Indeed, Carl's life at the Upper Campus has been filled with adventure, and ultimately the joy, that comes from raising so many teenagers, his own and others.

For the past 47 years he has truly lived the OVS experience.

As a student, he helped to build the reputation of the fledgling Upper Campus on the sports field – particularly the soccer field – where he was a fierce competitor. As a coach, he channeled that same passion for the game to his players. On the soccer field, he expected you to “die on the ball” and, in the words of former Headmaster Wallace Burr, to “give nothing less than your best.”

As a teacher, he ensured students questioned history through a critical lens, and as Headmaster he attracted the very best faculty – teachers who shared his enthusiasm and commitment to quality education for each student.

Under Carl's leadership, athletics bloomed to include girls' and boys' lacrosse, golf, cross country, and baseball teams, and a 7-year run in 8-man football. We built a pool, stables, playing fields, a leadership ropes course and deepened our commitment to sustainability through our water savings and significant solar installation.

In academics, many challenging AP courses have been added, with an emphasis on the sciences and math, which has progressed with the addition of STEAM and robotics programs, along with the construction of the Lucila Arango Science and Technology Center.

Hundreds of students have benefited from Carl's wisdom, patience, guidance and coaching. Above all, he has asked all students to conduct themselves with integrity and to account for high expectations in all phases of school life.

This important work continues seamlessly, and without pause, with the appointment of Craig Floyd, Class of Upper '83, as our new Head of School. Craig brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the leadership role. He has served as Director of Summer Programs, Dean of Residential Life, and Assistant Head since returning to OVS in 2007, and Craig's own educational experience is firmly rooted in the values and traditions he learned at OVS.

Although Carl is stepping aside as Head, he will continue to guide and shape the high school experience for future generations of students by helping us complete the Upper Campus Master Plan, which provides a road map for growth and improvement during the next 20 years.

That effort begins with a new Student Commons – a signature two-story dining hall and library in the heart of the campus. Architectural plans are now underway, and more details will be forthcoming in the fall.

For now, I look forward to working closely with Carl as he joins our alumni and development team to campaign for this exciting project.

For our 2017 graduates, and the alumni who traveled across the country, and the world, for this year's reunion weekend, I hope you enjoy this issue of Family Tree as we celebrate our traditions, our achievements, and our community. Stay in touch, and visit often.

Sincerely,

Mike Hall-Mounsey

Michael J. Hall-Mounsey
President/CEO



From the Archives

By Jack McClenahan, Director of Development and Major Gifts

Generations of Lower Campus students have learned to love literature in the Van Patten Library. Then as now, the library was a warm and welcoming place to read quietly or to study alone or with others. Sometimes there was the opportunity to sit by the fire listening to memorable storytelling by Principal Gudrun Thorne-Thompson (1923-1936) or Librarian Carol Hall-Mounsey (1980s to the present day).

The historic Frost Hall did not originally house a library. When the building opened in 1924 that space was a large playroom with the two existing fireplaces facing each side of the room. It was the natural place for Gudrun to gather the children and read to them. So as time went by, the playroom became a library, which it is today.

The Van Patten Library, as we now know it, is named in honor of the Philip and Emily Van Patten family. The Van Patten sons, Philip and Charles, were tutored in 1911 by Ida Belle Lamb and in 1912 and thereafter by her sister, Olive Bristol. This was the beginning of the Bristol School, attended by the children of local families but also Eastern families wintering in Ojai. When they settled in the valley about 1920, Bristol was the choice of Edward and Julia Yeomans and of Frank Frost for their sons. In 1922-23 Yeomans and Frost discussed, negotiated, and purchased the "goodwill" of the Bristol School - retaining Mrs. Bristol as a teacher and, importantly, most of the enrollment - to form the Ojai Valley School.

The Van Patten family suffered a tragic series of events that left young Charles all alone - first, the death of his mother and then the passing of his father from different illnesses, and finally the loss of his brother, Philip, in a car accident in Hermosa Beach. Charles went back East to live with relatives. He attended Choate, Yale, Yale Law School, and settled in Manhattan with his wife, Barbara.

With only occasional contact with Ojai Valley School over the years, finally visiting and being visited in the 1980s, Charles informed the school of his decision to remember OVS in his will. President/CEO Mike Hermes thought it appropriate to memorialize the Van Patten family and recognize Charles Van Patten's generosity by naming the library in their honor. Today, OVS invites other alumni and parents to help fund the historic renovation of Van Patten Library taking place this summer.

Even with additional technology being installed, the library project includes significant restoration work. Front window frames will be restored, entry doors will be replaced, and a north patio area added. Cleaner burning and safer gas fire connections will be installed in each of the two fireplaces, with protective glass doors facing both sides of the library. A solid wall of new technology will replace windows looking into the primary dining room. The sturdy old library tables and chairs will be refinished and repaired. Comfortable seating will be added—a loveseat, armchairs, low tables and seating for our primary students. Adjustable shelving will replace fixed shelves to increase the library's collection.

Yes, we still love real books.

The school is still fundraising for this project, which is estimated to cost \$111,000. We invite you to support the effort, and encourage you to stop by Lower Campus this summer to see the work in progress or visit the newly restored library during the upcoming school year.



Alum Nicholas Thacher (L60) Joins OVS Board of Trustees, Bringing Expertise with Independent Schools

By Elizabeth (Curran) Hermes (L66, U69)



Independent school education: it's in Nicholas Thacher's blood. Nick grew up on the boarding school campus his grandfather had founded in 1881; that same Ojai campus where, in the 1930s and '40s, Nick's father, Anson Thacher, served as headmaster and, in the '60s, Nick attended high school. His father, who served on the OVS Board when the Upper Campus first came into being, had a high regard for OVS founder Edward Yeomans and made a close study of Yeomans' educational

philosophy, often quoting from his books on education, thereby passing his appreciation for Yeomans' writings down to his younger son.

Carrying on what has become a family tradition, Nick spent his career teaching and serving as headmaster. A prolific writer, he has published more than 40 articles and three books (two about education) to date. He has been a trustee of several independent schools and has served on a number of regional as well as national educational boards and commissions. And now he has graciously agreed to share his considerable expertise as the newest member of the Ojai Valley School Board of Trustees.

As a Lower School student beginning in 1952, Nick made a strong impression; he was quickly spotted as being "gifted with creative promise." J.B. Close, who ultimately became Nick's English teacher, described him as "really a joy to teach," and that seemed to be the consensus of all Nick's teachers during his seven years there. But if the OVS faculty appreciated Nick's talents and aptitudes, so did he appreciate what his teachers had to offer.

Looking back at his OVS education at fifty-years' distance, Nick writes, "My mid-century years among the oaks on the OVS Lower Campus were profoundly important, as one's elementary years usually are. Gifted, dedicated teachers taught me skills and dispositions in equal measure, helping me (and my classmates) understand the Emersonian verity that character is far more important than brains. The towering figure of Wally Burr underlined that message for us on an almost daily basis.

"I was encouraged to take risks—in class, on the athletic fields, on stage in our juvenile production of *The Thirteen Clocks*, in nocturnal contests of flashlit capture-the-flag on the chaparral hillsides overlooking the Sespe river valley, even in J.B. Close's memorable 'camp-cooking' after-school

elective. Teachers such as Kitty Bragg, Beulah Hazzard, Dorothy Burr, Ada Dugger, Bob Cooper, Otis Wickenhaeuser, and, above all, J.B. Close taught me the importance of verbal and mathematical precision, the beauty and the power of great literature, and the importance of hard work."

Those lessons served him well. After graduating from Thacher School in 1963, Nick finished an honors English degree at Yale and a M. Phil at Balliol College, Oxford University. For the next eight years, he taught English at Dunn School, ending up as acting headmaster there. He went on to become permanent head of three coeducational day schools in the East after that, including 21 years at the New Canaan Country School in Connecticut and, most recently, 12 years at Dedham Country Day School in Massachusetts.

But Nick's vision takes him well beyond the ivory tower, and his volunteer efforts reveal a social consciousness as well as a range of strongly held convictions. While in Connecticut, Nick joined the board of the Horizons Program, an organization dedicated to supporting thousands of economically disadvantaged children and families. In addition, he became a charter member of the Parents' Foundation for Transitional Living in Connecticut, which provides housing for young adults suffering from mental illness.

Nick says he looks forward to serving as an OVS trustee, observing, "It strikes me that this is a particularly exciting time for OVS. While the proverbial 'bricks and mortar' are by no means the most significant aspect of the enriching experience the school has always provided, the recent (and dramatic) physical improvements on the Lower Campus as well as the Upper Campus Master Plan dormitory renovations and the much-anticipated Student Commons will clearly be transformational.

"'Ever reaching skyward' we sang in our reedy voices at mid-century. It feels to me like time to give back, and I'm delighted to be part of the next chapter in the evolution of OVS. I hope whatever service I can render as a member of the OVS Board will serve in some small way to repay the school for shaping me as a student and as a person. After all, growing up is never a simple matter, especially when one is required to eat everything on the plate, including liverwurst."

"...Children do not need to grow up in a hurry. As parents, as teachers, we have an obligation to do everything we can to preserve their childhood, to shield them from the inexorable pressure to be adults too soon, to give them the chance to be young and grow at their own real pace. Patience and time are commodities too rarely available to us as adults; let us at least make them available for our children..."

- Nicholas Thacher (L60), from his book *Patience and Time*, the title inspired by one of former English teacher J. B. Close's favorite pieces of advice to his students.



Launched from the Lower Campus athletic field, the Project X capsule traveled 100,543 feet into the atmosphere before returning to Earth and landing near Piru Creek. The capsule contained two cameras. This image was among those captured on video during the ascent.

Middle School Breaks 100K Mark with Project X Launch

By Misty Hall, Associate Director of Admission

Twelve students, two advisors, and one goal: Build a legitimate OVS space program. For three years, middle school students have advanced this goal by using science, technology, engineering, art, and math to launch a capsule into near space to photograph the curvature of the Earth.

This past spring, the Project X team reached new heights in its pioneering STEAM scheme by rocketing the capsule 100,543 feet into the atmosphere before it returned to Earth and landed near Piru Creek. The mission's success can be marked in many ways. The middle school students sent their payload one-third of the way to outer space. They completed scientific experiments on the atmosphere's effect on solar power generation, and they did so by successfully putting into action the skills they learned in the technology lab — from creating complicated Excel spreadsheets to soldering solar panels.

Project X has no step-by-step guide, no textbook. It is a truly student-led project under the guidance of Assistant Head of School Mike Mahon and alum Jason Goldman (L01, U05), who has volunteered his time and experience for the past three years. Lessons learned in Project X go beyond learning to build and launch a payload. The students learn to set objectives, manage teams, think beyond themselves,

solve difficult problems, and improvise on the fly. They also learn how to apply lessons they'd learned in core classes — science, math, physics, technology, even history and English — in real life applications. Last fall, the students decided to

include a solar panel experiment in the payload. They soldered a small panel in the capsule to gauge the energy output as it traveled through the atmosphere.

After pulling an all-nighter in the tech lab, the big day finally came in mid-May when the Project X team launched the capsule, about the size of a toaster oven. The school eagerly awaited the return of the capsule, which was found on a bluff above Piru Creek. The solar panel experiment was intact and proved that solar output is, in fact, better above the clouds.

As Project X graduates five eighth-grade team members this year, those who remain are already thinking up new, more complex experiments for next year. Setting lofty goals is intentional and an integral part of Project X.

“Failures in this environment are joyful. There is no pressure to be successful when doing something no one else is doing.”

“People work so much harder to achieve something when they are not sure their desired results are possible,” Mahon said. “Failures in this environment are joyful. There is no pressure to be successful when doing something no one else is doing.”

Law student Jason Goldman Moonlights as Mission Director for Project X



Jason Goldman, left, and Mike Mahon, right, after recovering the elusive Project X capsule in 2015. The pair spent days trekking through brush in the Juniper Hills south of Palmdale before finding it.



From left to right, eighth-graders and Project X participants Grace McHale, Jenny Han, and Adam Pepper-Macias assist with the launch.

For the past three years, OVS middle school students have rocketed a capsule into space as part of an integrated science program known as Project X. Each year, the capsule has ascended to greater heights, carried by a giant white balloon and carrying a tiny camera to capture images of the curvature of the earth and the darkness of space. This spring, the capsule reached an altitude of more than 100,000 feet.

Mike Mahon, Assistant Head of School at Lower Campus, initiated Project X in collaboration with alum Jason Goldman (L01, U05). They wanted to do something exceptional that would challenge students to tackle a real-life problem using science, technology, engineering and math.

For his part, Goldman embraced the challenge like one of the tech-savvy middle schoolers he has been coaching. Family Tree asked Mahon to reflect on Goldman's contributions, including working in the classroom each week and how alumni can enhance the student experience through their volunteerism.

WHAT ROLE HAS JASON PLAYED IN PROJECT X?

Jason has been the mission director of all three of our missions: Spudnik, Gudrun's Revenge, and Buddy Bison. He is an electronics expert. He brings his experience from prototyping high-end drone systems capable of flying miles from the controller to Project X.

HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN WORKING WITH YOU, AND WHAT KIND OF TIME HAS HE DEVOTED TO THIS?

One hour a week for three years – plus three overnights a year. That's some serious volunteer time. It's worth noting I tried to pay him and he refuses to put in time cards.

WHAT EXPERIENCE DOES HE CONTRIBUTE?

Beyond his expertise in radio control, GPS tracking, and electronics integration, Jason believes he can do anything that he sees on the Internet. It doesn't matter if it was a NASA project or a guy playing around in his backyard. If Jason sees someone else do it, he believes the Project X team can duplicate it. That adds some serious spirit and inspiration for the kids.

IN WHAT WAY HAVE HIS CONTRIBUTIONS MADE THE EXPERIENCE BETTER FOR OVS STUDENTS?

Jason has the full perspective. When they complain about a project, or get down about something not being perfect, Jason reminds them how much harder the world used to be. He puts their values into check and reminds them about the philosophy the school has instilled upon them. He wants them to celebrate hard work, achievement, and intellectual curiosity.

WHAT HAVE THE STUDENTS LEARNED ABOUT OVS ALUMNI BY WORKING WITH JASON?

That OVS alumni are everywhere and doing amazing things. Jason himself has been awarded 1st in his law school class three years in a row – a record performance for Ventura School of Law. No other student has been first place every semester. This inspires the kids because they have the same background as Jason. I hope they also realize how cool it is to stay in touch with your school.

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE?

Jason never tells the kids what to do; he challenges their ideas, gently reveals holes in poor logic, and inspires them to try again or go bigger. He thinks he's a lawyer, but he is a natural educator.



Outdoor Education

The 8th grade class, on the day before graduation, ventured into the Sespe Wilderness for a traditional hike from White Rocks to 10-foot Hole, followed by a climb through the Boney Bean cave. "The kids did great, sang the OVS song on the bus, showed real camaraderie, and generally had a transition day full of OVS tradition and history," said Outdoor Education Coordinator Matt Inman. "They organized themselves to go through the Boney Bean cave in graduation order, which I thought was awesome."



Festival of Talent

Under a canopy of stars and oak trees, high school students (and a few middle schoolers) performed at the annual Festival of Talent in May. The vocal and instrumental performances showcased the depth of talent at Ojai Valley School, and were enjoyed by an enthusiastic audience gathered outdoors at the Carl S. Cooper Amphitheater. The evening concert was preceded by a showcase of fine art from the high school art, photography and ceramics students.



State Science Fair

Three middle school students participated in the California State Science Fair in April, and sixth-grader Hannah Little was awarded second-place for her entry in the product science division. Hannah, sixth-grader Caleb Carver, and seventh-grader Alex Alvarez joined more than 900 middle and high school students from across the state at the California Science Center in Los Angeles in presenting innovative projects in a range of scientific fields. Last year, Aaron Wolf (L16) and Bella Slosberg (L17) competed at the state level.



PK Community Service

The Pre-Kindergarten class organized a campus yard sale this spring and raised \$325 for the Humane Society of Ventura County. The students were then treated to tour of the Ojai shelter and a behind-the-scenes look at where their donations would be put to good use, helping to care for abandoned dogs, cats and other animals. Teacher Linda Gartrell said the yard sale also taught her 3-year-old and 4-year-old students about sustainability by recycling used items that might otherwise have been thrown away.



Honoring Veterans

OVS students did their part to honor military veterans for Memorial Day. Lower Campus students helped tie ribbons on roses that military family members then placed on graves at Ivy Lawn Memorial Park in Ventura, while Upper Campus students in the AP United States History class joined a small group of volunteers in placing American flags at the graves of veterans buried at the Nordhoff Cemetery in Ojai.



Journalism Award Winners

Student journalists once again took top honors at the annual tri-county live writing journalism competition, bringing home three individual trophies and an honorable mention in the sweepstakes category for overall excellence. They competed against more than 120 students from 10 high schools in Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. Sophomore Caroline Morrow (L15) earned first place in the feature-writing category while junior Joy Campbell (L14) took third place for editorial writing. The On The Hill website earned third-place honors. All of those wins are given a point value and tabulated to determine sweepstakes winners. This is the fifth consecutive year that the journalism crew has placed in the sweepstakes category. Read more on the journalism website at oth.ovs.org.

KERN RIVER





OUTDOOR EDUCATION

If one of the goals of OVS Outdoor Education is to teach perspective, then the Upper and Lower Campus whitewater rafting trips to the Kern River this spring should earn high marks. Fourteen high school students and two teachers trekked to the southern side of the Sierra Nevada to tackle the rough water of the Kern and tour the Trail of Giants at Sequoia National Park. A week later, 16 middle school students departed for their own rafting trip on the Kern.

Following years of drought, a combination of heavy winter snow and warm spring temperatures combined this year to produce a roiling Kern River, so much so that students were initially shocked at how much whitewater they would traverse.

"When we were driving up the canyon to get our campsite we saw these expert runs," said sophomore Clover Griffin (L15). "I think everybody got a little freaked out looking at that...But once we were in the boat, the guides were really helpful and it never felt overwhelming. It was really fun!"

Indeed, aided by able river guides the students learned to work as a team, taking three runs down the Kern, each progressively harder than the one before it. Outdoor Education Director Zach Byars, a swift water rescue instructor before coming to OVS, taught the high school students all about river safety, showing them how to read the water and avoid trouble spots. And he taught them how to have fun on the river, providing a new perspective and a healthy dose of respect for the waterways in our backyard.

In Pursuit of the Right Fit

By Fred Alvarez, College Counselor

Miles Munding-Becker (L08, U12) is a good friend of mine.

But before he was that, the University of Redlands graduate was one of my best and brightest Humanities and World History students, and a standout athlete on my track and cross country teams. And before that, he was a talented, albeit highly mischievous, student at the Lower Campus, where he started as a Tater Tot.

And now look at him. Miles graduated from Redlands in May with a degree in environmental science and a minor in spatial studies. As part of his college experience, he studied abroad in Freiburg, Germany, took part in a month-long exploration of Peru, and served as a trip leader in the university's outdoor program, tapping skills he learned at Ojai Valley School to guide his college classmates on adventures to Joshua Tree and Yosemite.

He practiced the science of ecological conservation, resource management and biological diversity, and now, in so many ways, he's ready to put his knowledge and skills to use in the larger world. He is also a poster child for the college counseling team's primary mission: finding the right fit for our students.

As spring of his senior year in high school approached, Miles had offers of admission from a half dozen colleges and universities. He chose Redlands in large part because of the financial aid package offered by the university. But he also chose Redlands because, for him, it was the best fit, offering an impressive blend of academics in his chosen field of study and a good number of co-curricular activities that allowed him to apply his classroom learning to his areas of academic interest.

I was reminded of our mission a while back as various publications began to release their annual rankings of "best colleges." There are now dozens of such reports – including Forbes, the New York Times and US News and World Report – ranking everything from top public schools to best liberal arts colleges to top value schools, which include in their calculations how much money their graduates go on to earn. There's a list of the Top Schools that mint the most billionaire alumni. There's another for Best Campus Food and another for Best Campus Dorms.

For whatever information such lists impart, and however much consternation those rankings might stir, the one thing they can never tell students is how well they might fit into the landscape of any campus they are considering.

I was also reminded of our mission during spring break when I, along with two other teachers, led 15 OVS students on a whirlwind tour of a dozen

East Coast colleges and universities. Those visits included such academic titans as Harvard, Yale, and Columbia University. But we also spent time at lesser-known schools such as Wesleyan University and UMass Lowell.

And all the time we talked "fit." We asked students whether they could "see" themselves at these campuses and what about those schools appealed to them or turned them off. We asked students whether they saw these campuses as good fits for their style of learning, their academic and social interests, and a myriad of personal considerations such as size, location, and financial aid offerings.

Of course, I was also reminded of fit as National College Decision Day approached. May 1 marks the day that students across the country must make final choices about the schools they plan to attend, decisions that bring to a head the months-long, angst-ridden process of filling out applications, writing essays, and culling college lists.

For our seniors, months had been spent in pursuit of the right fit school – but just how do you measure fit?

A 2014 study by Purdue University and the Lumina Foundation, in conjunction with Gallup, arrived at the "Big Six" experiences that students should seek from any college or university they attend. Those experiences are:

1. A professor who makes them excited about learning
2. A professor who cares about them as a person
3. A mentor who encourages them to pursue their goals and dreams
4. Opportunities to work on a long-term project
5. A job or internship where they can apply what they learn in the classroom
6. Opportunities to be extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations

When talking fit, this isn't a bad place to start. And if you talk to Miles, you'll find he was able to check off every one of those criterions during his four years at the University of Redlands.

"I loved Redlands because it gave me so many opportunities," Miles said. "It introduced me to incredible people and allowed me to have amazing experiences I don't think I would have had at any of the other colleges I applied to."

All of our students should be so lucky. And that's our mission in college counseling.





THE ROOT OF INSPIRATION

The people make the place. Just ask our alumni. They will tell you it was the close-knit community of students and inspirational teachers who made their OVS experience great.

**What makes an
inspirational teacher?**

Let us introduce you to a few.

FRED ALVAREZ

Humanities, AP World History, Journalism, College Counseling

BIOGRAPHY

Before coming to OVS, Fred worked for two decades as a journalist for a number of California newspapers. His last stint was with the Los Angeles Times, where he worked as a metro reporter for 14 years covering immigration, agriculture, and government. Fred left the newsroom to become a full-time dad and joined OVS shortly thereafter. Fred developed the award-winning journalism program at the Upper Campus. In addition to his teaching and coaching assignments, he is stepping into a new role this fall as college counselor. Fred ran cross country and track at Cal State Fullerton, where he earned his degree in political science, and he remains an avid runner in perpetual training, most recently for the 2015, 2016 and 2017 Boston Marathons.

WHEN NOT IN THE CLASSROOM, I CAN BE FOUND

Running. Always running. Or walking the citrus ranch in Ojai where I live with my 13-year-old daughter, Alex, and a menagerie of dogs and cats.

WHAT STUDENTS CALL ME

Mr. A (and a few unmentionables)

ADJECTIVES THAT BEST DESCRIBE MY TEACHING STYLE

Tough. Passionate. Enthusiastic. Inquisitive. Encouraging.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

I've become smitten with ceramics. I love the idea of making things from mud (this echoes lots of the stories we read in Humanities). And I love the idea of trying to make something beautiful in this world — and the idea that you can work and work and work on a piece, and in the end, it all goes wrong, and just collapses. And that's ok. It's about the process, and you learn as much by your failures as you do your successes.



ZACH BYARS

World History, U.S. History,
Outdoor Education

BIOGRAPHY

Zach joined the faculty in 2016. He teaches world history and U.S. history, and he serves as the outdoor education coordinator at the Upper Campus – organizing and leading trips throughout the school year. He earned his bachelor's degree from Trinity University in Texas. Beyond his academic pursuits, he has applied his teaching talents to instruction in outdoor activities, including swift water rescue and wilderness medicine. He has taught skiing in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and led ropes course activities. When not in the classroom, he can be found on the climbing wall, in the field scouting for new trips, or leading students in outdoor activities, including surfing, hiking, backpacking, mountain biking, river rafting, and rock climbing.

WHAT STUDENTS CALL ME

I am new to OVS, but in the past, it was Mr. Z, or Mr. B. A lot of my swift-water rescue students referred to me as "The River Otter."

FAVORITE PLACE TO CLIMB IN THE WORLD

Yosemite Valley. There are endless slabs of granite.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

I play the mandolin, and was once a mandolin player for a Rock 'n' Roll band!

FAVORITE BOOK

Undaunted Courage, which is Stephen Ambrose's chronicles of the diaries and journals of Lewis and Clark during their 1803-1805 journey through the Louisiana Purchase. It was newly acquired land, and their exploration brought a lot of new contact. They traveled along a lot of rivers I have guided on, so I have some personal history in those area. Oh, and I also read the *Game of Thrones* series before it became super popular.



LAUREL COLBORN

Assistant Head of School
for Academic Affairs, AP
United States History,
Law & Society

BIOGRAPHY

Laurel received her undergraduate degree in history from UCSB. Thereafter, she attended Southwestern University School of Law in Los Angeles, earning her juris doctor degree. After passing the California Bar Exam, she practiced both criminal and civil law before her passion for history led her to OVS, where she began her teaching career in 1998. Laurel also serves as Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs, and is the first point of contact for new families navigating the academic side of the high school program. When not in the classroom, Laurel can be found spending time with her husband, Doug, and their children, Parker, Nolan, and Avery.

FAVORITE PLACE AT THE UPPER CAMPUS

The amphitheater. We're so lucky to have this outdoor venue for plays, concerts, the Festival of Talent—it is one of my favorite things about OVS.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

Because they see me indoors, or in the classroom so much, I bet they'd be surprised to know I wakeboard, snow ski, and I once caught a sailfish!

FAVORITE BOOK

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. I also recently read *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. It's about the French resistance to the Nazis during World War II.

BEST PART OF MY JOB

The people. This is my 19th year. I absolutely love the community, the family feel, getting to know the students, the families, the teachers—nobody gets lost like you would at a big school. I'd say the best part of being an administrator is when I send out the students' schedules during the summer, and I get emails from all the kids and parents. I really feel connected. By the time they come through orientation, I already know everyone!



DANA DEYOUNG

Kindergarten

BIOGRAPHY

After immersing herself in the Montessori School philosophy as a parent and teacher, Dana became Ojai Valley School's first pre-kindergarten teacher in 1991. After eleven years, Dana moved into the Kindergarten classroom, where she remains today. Her on-going education includes studying the latest research in child development and participating in early childhood education forums. Dana is an active member of National Association for the Education of Young Children, and she attends many conferences and workshops.

WHEN NOT IN THE CLASSROOM, I CAN YOU BE FOUND

Dancing, traveling the world, or having family time. I'm a mom of three and a grandmother of seven!

FAVORITE PLACE AT LOWER CAMPUS

My classroom. Teaching is my passion and after 37 years I am delighted to go to school everyday.

FAVORITE BOOK

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. It's about family, love, moral values, resiliency, magic, perseverance, and it's all wrapped up in a fantasy that takes place in a chocolate factory. (Did I mention that I love chocolate?)

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

My eldest daughter, Autumn, married into a farming family in Cape Town, South Africa, so I visit there often. In 2005, the Philippi Children's Centre, was set to close. This meant that the township children would be sent back into the townships with very little to no supervision, and the farming laborer's children would be left unattended in the fields as their parents worked. I immediately applied for our OVS educational grant, and by June of that year had formed a nonprofit, A.F.R.I.C.A, Inc (American Families Reaching, Inspiring, Children of Africa). I went over and within a two-month period, I completely redid the impoverished school from top to bottom. From painting the classrooms, installing new floors, putting in educational materials, to teaching child development, I managed to make it a fully functioning school. Today it is a Montessori school with an accredited teaching staff and more than 200 enrolled students.





MICHELE FLOYD

**Elementary Division
Coordinator, Fifth Grade**

BIOGRAPHY

Michele launched her career as a bilingual teacher in Watsonville, California, before moving to the Santa Cruz Mountains, where she taught first grade for 12 years. She served as a member of the school's leadership team and as a liaison to bilingual families. An OVS alum, she moved back to Ojai in 2007 to teach at the Upper Campus and later joined the Lower Campus faculty as a fifth grade teacher and elementary division coordinator. Michele lives at Upper with her husband, Craig, and their boys, Connor and Gavin, both OVS graduates who are now in college.

FAVORITE LESSON TO TEACH

I love teaching the kids about colonial times. In one project, they research a colonial-era trade, then they make a shop and dress up and do a little colonial fair. I also love the "Morning at the Museum" project, where they take on the persona of a character from the American Revolution.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

I have two big goals coming up — I want to get certified in SCUBA diving, and I would really like to go hang gliding.

MOST MEMORABLE OVS CAMPING EXPERIENCE

Leo Carrillo State Park. It was the most perfect low tide, with every sea creature you could ever want to see, just waiting to be found. And it was perfect weather. As we sat around the campfire, playing guitar, the full moon was rising, and I just thought, "I am doing this as a job! This is what I get paid to do!"

FAVORITE PLACE AT THE LOWER CAMPUS

I love the woodshop. I also love my classroom, and I love the stables — that's where I learned how to ride, when I was in 3rd grade!

STEPHANIE GUSTAFSON

Equestrian Director

BIOGRAPHY

Stephanie began riding at the age of five. She worked her way through a variety of equestrian disciplines, including Western barrel racing, hunters, and eventing. Now, she combines her training as a historian and her love for horses by focusing on classical dressage, an art form conceived during the Italian Renaissance. She works closely with acclaimed author and dressage clinician Paul Belasik, as well as with Don Sachey, who represented the United States in international three-day eventing. At OVS, Stephanie directs the equestrian program and instructs riders at both campuses. She lives in Ojai with her husband, John, their children – Alexandra, Matthew, and Emma – and a menagerie of pets.

MOST MEMORABLE OVS CAMPING EXPERIENCE

Rancho Oso in the Santa Ynez Valley. I had a group of six international students who had never been on a horse camping trip before. Their level of excitement was amazing. They had learned enough within our environment at school to take those lessons into the wilderness.

FAVORITE SCHOOL HORSE

Snickers. He was my daughter's old pony and has been at OVS for nine years. He has tons of personality and is really charming. He always recognizes me and I always get a whinny – it's really sweet!

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

I once taught history at a university – and I like to dance!

FAVORITE TEACHING MOMENT

It's a really satisfying experience when our beginning riders make milestones, like being able to post the trot or canter for first time. The student is enjoying it so much and feels such an intense sense of accomplishment. It reminds me of all students I've taught, and even what it felt like when I was learning how to do the same things.





MATT INMAN

Middle School Science,
Outdoor Education

BIOGRAPHY

Matt joined the faculty in 1990 and performs numerous roles at the Lower Campus, including outdoor education coordinator, middle school science teacher, and boys' soccer coach. Matt earned degrees in environmental studies and law and society from UCSB. As science department chair, he oversees student participation in the OVS Science Fair, the Ventura County Science Fair, and the California State Science Fair. Weekends often find Matt with students backpacking, mountain biking, rock climbing, surfing, or kayaking. Matt and his wife, Ann, live with their sons, Jay and Scott, on a pixie tangerine ranch in Ojai.

WHEN NOT IN THE CLASSROOM, I CAN BE FOUND

Sharing the joy of outdoor adventures with OVS students. One of my favorite traditions is taking the eighth graders to White Rocks, 10' Hole, and Boney Bean waterfall the day before graduation. It is a chance for them to run, play, swim, bond, and reflect on their experiences at the Lower Campus.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

I spend so much time with my students that I think they really know everything about me! Maybe they don't know that I can't stand pickled beets – or that I collect sea glass?

FAVORITE PLACE AT THE LOWER CAMPUS

There are two places that I absolutely love. One is the Outdoor Ed office, which is filled with all of the equipment necessary to have amazing adventures in the wilderness. The other is our beautiful soccer field, where I've spent 27 years coaching.

BEST PART OF MY JOB

For me, the best part is teaching students with their own unique educational experiences that learning can be fun, should be fun, must be fun, and that they are far more capable than they ever thought possible.

MIKE MAHON ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

BIOGRAPHY

Raised in the greater Boston area, Mike earned a degree in philosophy at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, before working for a major aerospace firm. He left the private sector to join OVS as a computer teacher in 2002. In the past decade, he has developed a project-based curriculum that encourages students to explore and develop problem-solving strategies. Always on the lookout for ways to involve students in technology, Mike has led robotics, STEM, and space exploration programs that have resulted in successful launches of two weather balloons, one that reached more than 100,000 feet into space. Although Mike transitioned to the administrative team in 2015 as the Assistant Head of School, he is still actively involved in the classroom and outdoor education.

WHEN NOT IN THE CLASSROOM, I CAN BE FOUND

Surfing, sailing, backpacking — either at the beach or in the mountains.

WHAT STUDENTS CALL ME

Mahon or The Mahon, which plays a lot differently now that I'm the discipline guy.

MOST MEMORABLE OVS CAMPING EXPERIENCE

Walking all day on the Sisquoc River with eight middle school girls, searching for a rumored secret waterfall that we found actually existed.

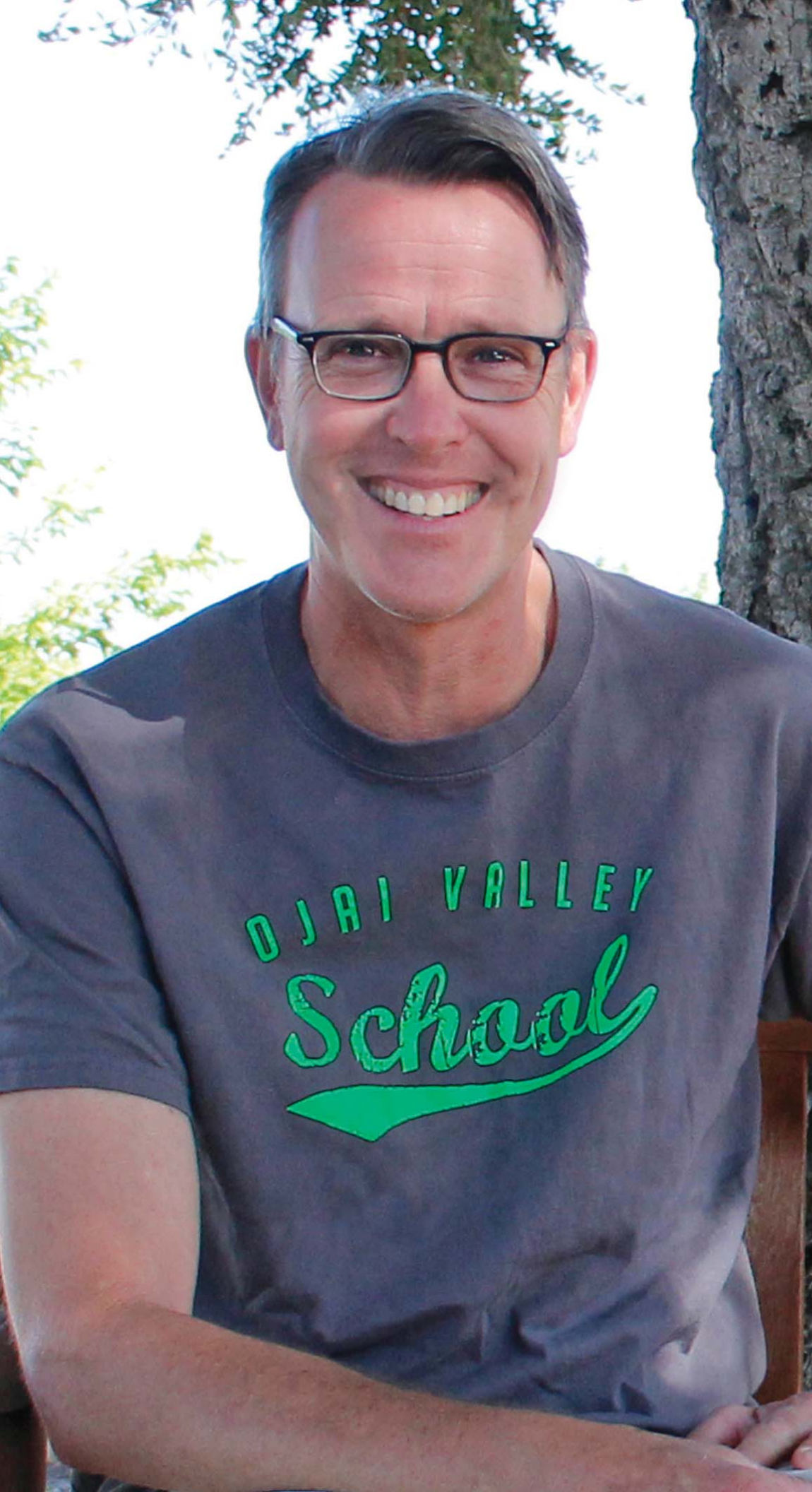
FAVORITE PLACE AT THE LOWER CAMPUS

I miss my lab, but it would have to be the Wolf Den. It's a cool environment to see students take on a leadership role and solve problems, and see the tech buffs serving their peers by running the sound, lights, and technology for campus events.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

I had a challenging experience in education. I had a major speech impediment as a child. Actually, I am scared of public speaking — even though I do it all the time.





JOHN ROWAN

Middle School Social Studies, Life Skills

BIOGRAPHY

After earning his bachelor's degrees in psychology and English at Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas, John moved to the temperate rainforests of Southeast Alaska. His first teaching position was as the high school teacher in a small logging community. John migrated south to OVS in 2001 and now teaches seventh-grade world history, eighth-grade U.S. history, and life skills. He also leads the annual eighth-grade trip to Washington, D.C., plays various instruments in school musical productions, and enjoys backpacking with students on OVS Outdoor Education trips. John also overseas the academic program during the OVS Summer Camp. John lives in Ojai with his son, Marlow, and daughter, Clementine. They enjoy hiking local trails and playing at the beach.

WHEN NOT IN THE CLASSROOM, I CAN BE FOUND

I love to hike and run trails around Ojai.

WHAT STUDENTS CALL ME

My students call me Mr. Rowan, of course, but on the trail I'm known as Roro, J-Ro, or Rohillus.

FAVORITE PLACE AT THE LOWER CAMPUS

I love my classroom ... but the Dining Hall is a close second.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

Most students might not know that I actually wrestled an Alaskan brown bear in 2003. And that I used to kayak to work!

MOST MEMORABLE OVS CAMPING EXPERIENCE

When Mr. Mahon wanted me to chase a bear out of our campsite.

BEST PART OF MY JOB

I love the students at OVS. They are a dynamic bunch of well-rounded, sharp and funny kids. We camp, backpack, tour Washington DC, and explore the world through art, words, and the web.

BRAD WEIDLICH

English, Lacrosse,
Basketball, Volleyball

BIOGRAPHY

Brad was drawn to California when the lacrosse coach at Whittier College called him at his boarding school in Connecticut during a snowstorm and mentioned sunshine, palm trees and the ocean. He graduated from Whittier with a bachelor's degree in English and spent five years teaching special education before he found Ojai Valley School in 2003. The opportunity to teach literature and coach was the perfect match.

Brad teaches English 9 and English 12. Outside the classroom, he coaches basketball, lacrosse, and volleyball, participates in the Surf Club and oversees the annual Love Poetry Contest.

MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT AS A LACROSSE COACH

The season that we had 10 players — for a game that requires 10 players. We had some success, but really it was more about the unity, trusting and relying on each other to get through the season with so few resources. It was a pretty special experience.

ONE THING STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME

I went to boarding school in Connecticut, so I understand their experience. I played lacrosse there too.

FAVORITE BOOK

East of Eden by John Steinbeck. Not only for the style, the storytelling, the originality, the characters and the challenging and difficult subject matter, but also because it was written with beauty and grace.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT OVS STUDENTS

The incredible amount of support they give each other to cross over into other areas of school life — athletes in musical performances, students creating clubs or trying new sports. The school community really embraces and encourages you to go and try things you wouldn't normally try. The doors are open to all students who want to open them.



See additional Faculty Profiles
on the OVS website at
www.ovs.org/meet-the-faculty



**JOHN
WICKENHAEUSER**
AP Environmental
Science, Director of
Sustainability and
Technology

BIOGRAPHY

John is a transplant from the private sector, where he worked as vice president of a company specializing in rescue and safety equipment sales and training. In a search of a career change that matched his passion for teaching and the environment, he returned to OVS, where his father, Otis Wickenhaeuser, taught in the 1950s and 1970s. John became the Director of Technology in 2010 and added a new role as the Director of Sustainability in 2015. He also teaches AP Environmental Science, coaches baseball, and assists with the Ropes Course. John played a key role in the school being named a California Green Ribbon School in 2017 for its sustainability initiatives. John's son, James, and daughter, Claire, both graduated from OVS and are pursuing careers in engineering and environmental science.

**WHEN NOT IN THE
CLASSROOM, I CAN
BE FOUND**

Hiking, backpacking, camping, or tinkering in the garage or under the hood of a car. Definitely not at a computer.

**WHAT STUDENTS
CALL ME**

Mr. Wick, which is also what students called my dad when he taught at OVS.

**MOST MEMORABLE OVS
CAMPING EXPERIENCE**

Camping in the eastern Sierras with the high school football team. The boys woke at dawn to run plays in the park next to Mono Lake before playing the Lee Vining Tigers. We cooked mounds of bacon on that trip. Those boys could eat.

**ONE THING STUDENTS
DON'T KNOW
ABOUT ME**

In my former rescue and safety training career I used to hang off the edge of buildings, roller coasters, towers — and I crawled into confined spaces. Your perspective of the world changes when you're on the end of a rope.

CLASS OF 2017



We are exceptionally proud of the accomplishments of our graduating seniors. At times serious, at times playful and irreverent, these 20 students worked hard to prepare for their futures.



Head of School Address

By Carl Cooper



Sometime in September I start to have nightmares that graduation is just a few hours away and I have yet to plan what I will say to the audience on both sides of the moat. It is at that moment I pray a bear will sweep me from this life and today's program will be the responsibility of someone else. I go on my early morning walk to inspect the campus and greet the members of the staff who are arriving to prepare breakfast and maintain the school facilities. I do catch a glimpse of the wild creatures that roam the campus in the mystery of the night sadly no bears on this morning.

The creatures I do see are just disappearing into the protection of thick brush and trees as the creatures of day start to stir. I breathe easy as I

realize I have about nine months before I must send a significant and important portion of the school away to pursue their dreams beyond the boundaries of this small country campus. Then just yesterday it was June and graduation was the next day, "Today."

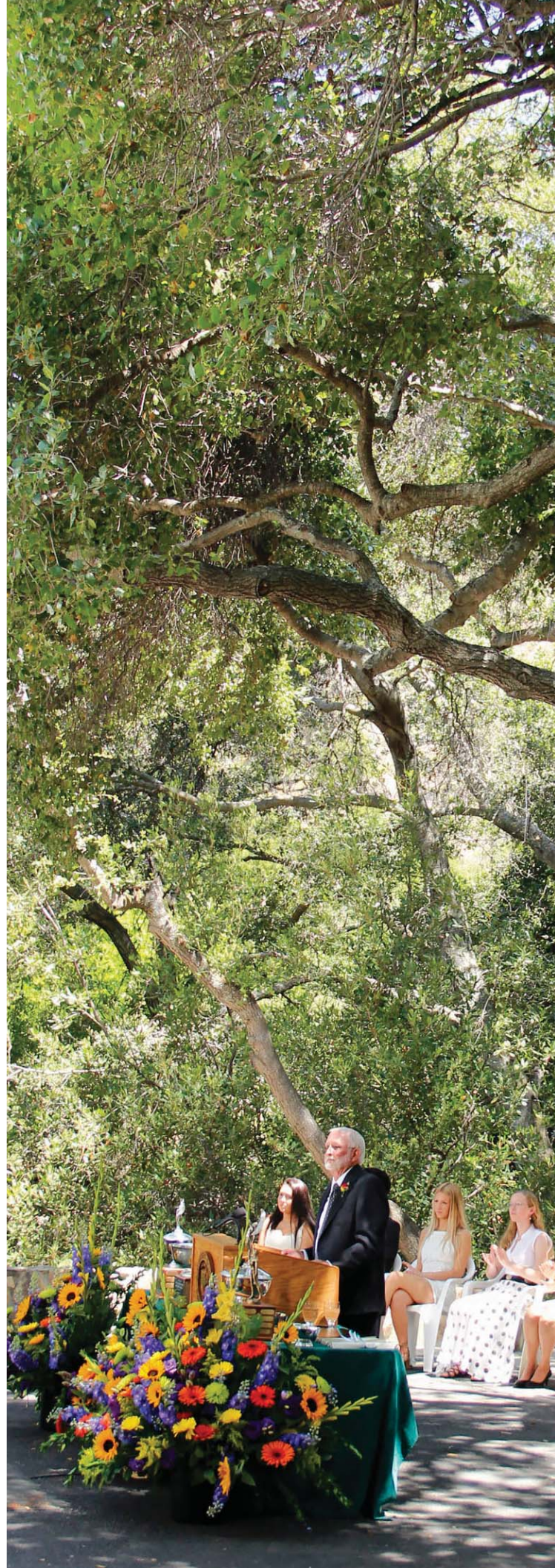
I may have prepared the words for this ceremony but nothing I do can prepare me or others for all this day brings. This school year has passed much too fast but the graduates before you are ready to journey into a larger, more complex world. My confidence in their ability to navigate beyond our supportive confines is based on the experiences they have had as OVS students. We can be assured they have mastered the three R's: reading, writing, and arithmetic, and in fact their foundation of knowledge far exceeds society's expectations.

What distinguishes the graduates of the Ojai Valley School is their understanding of the fourth R. The impact any individual has on society is dependent on that individual taking responsibility — responsibility for his or her behavior and the contribution he or she makes to their community.

The members of the senior class have learned about responsibility competing on the athletic field, performing on stage, working on class projects, leading their peers in team competition, donating their time and energy to community service projects, and exploring the wilderness in the outdoor program. Individually, they have taken ownership of their academic achievement. They understand that "potential" is an empty promise until there is a delivery of some action or product that promotes their contribution to the community. More than anything, today's graduates have come to recognize that their education to date goes far beyond the academic world, to a world that they are responsible for as individuals and as a society.

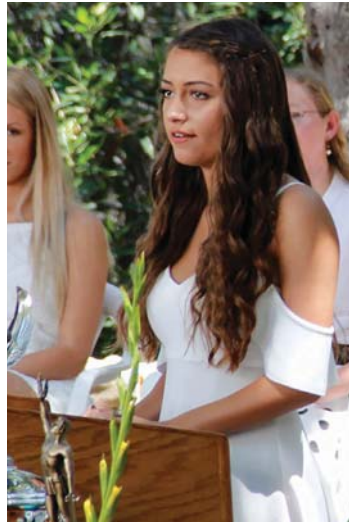
When the school year started we spoke of the difference between having freedom and taking on responsibility. It was suggested that you could not have freedom without being responsible. When Thomas Jefferson wrote "We hold these truths to be self evident" he was stating that until "We," each of us, takes responsibility for our freedom, our freedom is determined by someone else's interpretation of liberty.

To the Class of 2017, while your education will never be complete, you have the fourth R, the responsibility is yours. We must rely on your motivation and judgment to meet the challenges you will face in tomorrow's world. You can make a difference!



Class Message

By Natasha Freudmann (U17)



I could stand up here and go on and on about how wonderful our class is, how we've accomplished so much, and how we're all destined to do great things. I could make tons of vague references and you could "ooh" and "ahh" about how incredible we are, but that's not what I'm here to do. If I did that, I could be talking about any graduating class.

But today, I'm here to talk about us, the Class of 2017. We're a class of individuals, a collection of people from all walks of life who deserve to be recognized. As you can see, we are a small class. There are only 20 of us. And each individual person brings something special to the class as a whole. To be completely honest, our class is not what you might call cohesive. I know some of you in the audience might see this as a weakness, but it turns out that it is one of our greatest strengths and is something to be celebrated.

We all have our own passions and talents and we all just kind of do our own thing. It's not to say that we aren't close, but we each have that one thing that makes us tick.

For me, that thing is writing. I love to write because it allows me to express myself and organize my thoughts. In my four years here, I've found myself through writing, especially in journalism. I didn't even know it was something I enjoyed, but OVS has shown me that words flow from my fingertips.

For Evelyn, that thing is filmmaking. She has made countless short films documenting life around campus, with topics such as life at boarding school, college-bound seniors, and her most recent one, what it's like to be mixed-race. Evelyn has an immense talent, and you should all check out her videos.

For Ted, that thing is playing the guitar. We'll miss his call for garage band meetings and the way he would lift his fist in celebration after a performance. For Winnie, it's the magic she can work on a blank canvas during an art class. And you should see what Josh can do with a camera.

And did you know that two students, Gavin and Jeffrey, started their own outdoors company this year? It's called Streme Outdoors, and they make hammocks, hats, and other gear.

Anyway, you get the point. And, I think, that's why all of us are here on this stage. Because we have found our passions, we have found the things we are ready to pursue. We have reached the point where we have dreams for our futures, and OVS has helped us discover these dreams and has given us the tools to pursue them.

So while we have a diverse set of interests, we've all found them thanks to OVS, that is our greatest connection. I believe we can say, with confidence, that this school has helped us grow as individuals, and has prepared us for whatever the future may hold. The people in our class have big goals for our futures. In other words, these colleges have no idea what's coming for them.

Next year, we're leaving this little hub and scattering across the country. From Oregon to Louisiana to Massachusetts to Hawaii, we've all found our new homes. And once we're there, we might not talk everyday. We won't see our friends in the hallways like we do here, and we might not keep in touch. But as we spread out across the country, we'll always have one thing in common. And that is OVS.







“We’re a class
of individuals, a
collection of people
from all walks of
life who deserve to
be recognized.”



Major Awards

WALLACE BURR AWARD

Established to recognize the student who has made a significant impact on the OVS community by giving unsolicited service.

Evelyn Brokering **1**

ROBERT G. COOPER AWARD

Honors the senior who has demonstrated the most growth during his or her senior year.

Molly Taylor, Jeffrey Lin **2**

A. CARL KOTCHIAN AWARD

Awarded to the most outstanding scholar, not only for academic achievement but also for this student's level of effort and intellectual curiosity.

Lily Cao **3**

ANDREW KILLE AWARD

Given to the senior who has demonstrated himself or herself to be a leader with a strong sense of community; one who has been consistently hard working, helpful, friendly, and who has exhibited a good sense of humor.

Gavin Floyd **4**



Additional Awards

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Given to the athletes who have most demonstrated integrity, leadership, and, above all, good sportsmanship.

Olivia Brown, Winnie Chang, Nolan Colborn, Gavin Floyd, Leila Giannetti, Kase Skillern

J.B. CLOSE AWARD

Recognizes the student, or students, who have exhibited the most enthusiasm and active participation in the outdoor program.

Ellen Hou

SANDY BALLOU MEMORIAL TROPHY

Recognizes the student who demonstrates good horsemanship, sportsmanship, and the belief that competition is not as important as the simple joy of being with a horse.

Ellen Hou

DOROTHY BURR LITERARY AWARD

Recognizes the student for outstanding writing based on the submission of written work.

Lilli Trompke

Congratulations to the Class of 2017

Evelyn Brokering

Cal State University Northridge



Evelyn practiced an uncommon generosity during her years at OVS, possessed of a spirit that held giving and contribution above all other values. In that way, she made us a better school and made Ojai a better community. And lucky for us, her spirit was infectious. She was a cheerleader like no other, exhorting her peers to get off their phones and get out of their rooms and give some of their time to help others. She led us in a fight against cancer at the Relay for Life and in a scramble to bring clean, safe, reliable water to sub-Saharan Africa at Ojai Day. In describing her, one of her teachers said that her heart was the biggest muscle in her body. It's hard to disagree. But we shouldn't discount her many other talents, which included her tireless

work as videographer for the award-winning journalism program, work that this past year explored the rise of Spikeball, the secrets of dorm life and the struggles encountered by bi-racial students. She is a master storyteller, and the best part is she's just starting to tell her own. We can't wait for the next chapter to unfold.

Lily Cao

Mount Holyoke College



Lily is *wicked smart*. As she heads off to college near Boston, she should grow accustomed to the Beantown vernacular, and she should understand how that term, in particular, applies to her. Arriving to the Upper Campus as an ESL student, Lily emerged as one of our most curious and accomplished learners, earning the A. Carl Kotchian Award at graduation as the most outstanding scholar in the senior class. She took a total of eight AP courses – five of those in her senior year – and participated fully in every facet of OVS life. She was a talented equestrian, an accomplished volleyball player, and a gifted pianist and

vocalist. She served as a dorm prefect and launched an extracurricular club dedicated to the exploration of the sciences. Lily is incredibly kind, quick to smile and to show concern for others. But that belies a fierce, competitive nature, one that propels her to attack problems and seek new challenges. It is in the way she balances these fine qualities that Lily distinguishes herself and assures a future that is bright and full of promise.

Winnie Chang

Pasadena City College



She appears to be so sweet. And really, she is. But way down deep, beneath that quiet, serene exterior, is a student, artist and athlete blessed with grit and brimming with talent. On a basketball court or a cross country course or in an art room, Winnie represented all we expect from an OVS student – someone who shows up and gives her best. Someone who falls short, gets up and tries again – a student who truly experiences all facets of her education, whether they take place in a classroom or at a backcountry campsite. We have seen Winnie drive herself to impressive levels, and we have seen her recover from exceptional depths, that included a serious head injury her junior year during basketball practice. No matter. There she was, as a senior, a wizard with the basketball, a

wide smile on her face, a study in courage to all those who face adversity and need a reason to try. She earned the Sportsmanship Award to end the school year, and her peers and teachers cheered and applauded wildly in support. The word brave comes to mind. She would never say it about herself, but deep down, beneath that quiet exterior, all who know Winnie know that it is true.

Carrie Chen

University of California at Riverside



During her four years at the Upper Campus, Carrie grew from a shy, introspective student to a zealous participant who realized her potential to have a positive impact on her school community, and on the world at large. She emerged as a curious and tenacious student, one driven to perform at a maximum level at all times. She took Advanced Placement courses in physics, statistics and environmental science, and found her voice by singing in the school chorus all four years, and by joining the elite voice class her senior year. She also discovered her inner-toughness on the

basketball court, where she was a force in the paint. A serious knee injury ended Carrie's basketball season early in her senior year, but true to her character she turned a negative into a positive, chronicling her surgery and physical therapy rehabilitation for her Senior Seminar project. On graduation day, the head of school called her a walking example of courage and dedication. No doubt, that was the greatest lesson she learned in her time with us, and the greatest lesson she taught us in her time at OVS.

Jeff Ding

University of California at Riverside



Quiet and focused, Jeff earned praise from his teachers for his strong work ethic and dedication to learning. Indeed, the Head of School talked on graduation day about walking by Jeff's dorm room late into the night, only to find the young man deeply entrenched in his studies. Outside of class, he gave his time to the Humane Society, served as official videographer for school performances, and worked hard to improve his game on the soccer field. But it was the golf course where he shone the most, demonstrating a remarkable stroke and laser-like focus on the links. Not only did he understand the physical aspects of the game, but he remained true to

the principles of integrity that go with it, and those carried over to every part of his life

Gavin Floyd

University of Alabama



With apologies to Shakespeare, high school was Gavin's stage and he was the *main* player. Student body president. Scene-stealing thespian. Triple-threat star athlete. There was no corner of OVS life left untouched by Gavin's giant personality, his winning smile and his infectious energy. A natural-born leader, he had an air of authority about him that was hard to miss and easy to follow. He excelled in the classroom, so much so that faculty voted him this year's *Ventura County Star* Scholar, joining a group of seniors countywide deemed the best and brightest in their graduating classes. He earned the Sportsmanship

Award at the year-end awards ceremony, and at graduation was handed the Andrew Kille Award as the school's most outstanding senior. And he was an entrepreneur extraordinaire, joining with a friend to launch a line of recreational products worthy of an OVS outdoor experience. But while that list of accomplishments says a lot about Gavin, it doesn't say the most important things. This country boy at heart, the one with the affinity for Spanish-language tunes and outdoor adventures, gave generously of his time and his friendship, and he led his school with a roll-up-his-sleeves ethic that made us proud. In all ways, Gavin demonstrated he not only cared about doing and being his best, but that he was dedicated to the ideal of helping others achieve the same.

Natasha Freudmann

University of Oregon, Clark Honors College



On graduation day, Natasha told the crowd she had found her voice at Ojai Valley School. We couldn't agree more. A gifted, purposeful writer, Natasha crafted an amazing tale over the past four years. She served as a dorm prefect, Student Council officer, and editor-in-chief of the school newspaper. She worked faithfully as an AP mentor, spending countless hours tutoring younger students in subjects at which she excelled. And she earned the year-end award as the top AP Psychology student, her teacher praising her commitment to and curiosity about a subject

she intends to study in college. Most notably, Natasha was the leader of the award-winning OVS journalism crew, overseeing a small team of writers that racked up top prizes in writing competitions, while winning her share of writing awards herself. Indeed, it was her flair for the written word that really set her apart at OVS, a gift she exercised freely and forcefully during her time at the Upper Campus, and which she is now ready to share with the wider audience that awaits her off the hill. How lucky they are.

Shawn Harvey

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo



Shawn could very well be our most versatile student. He was a workhorse in the classroom, taking a half dozen Advanced Placement courses during his time at OVS and earning all A's both semesters of his senior year. He was an outstanding athlete, making mighty contributions to the soccer program, even playing part of one game with a broken thumb. And he was an outdoorsman of the highest order, a young man most at home with an ocean breeze in his face and a fishing rod in his hand. In fact, his Senior Seminar project focused on his love of fishing, a sport

he has practiced and perfected, elevating it to the level of craft. To end the year, Shawn added to his student repertoire, playing the role of the lead prosecutor in the annual mock trial. His prosecution team lost the case, but Shawn won the day as he was voted the trial's "best lawyer." Naturally quiet and reserved, Shawn demonstrated a tremendous talent for public speaking. And even if his aspirations don't lean toward a study of law, he leaves knowing that he has added yet another tool to his academic arsenal.

Josh Han

Vancouver Institute of Media Arts



View the world through the lens of his camera and you'll find a place filled with adventure and worthy of exploration. Josh is a first-class talent with a camera in his hand, and he was a ubiquitous presence at all things OVS. Festival of Talent? Click! Game winning run of a baseball game? Click! Team competition, Spikeball tournament, high school musical? Click, click, click! However, his brilliance as a photographer was overshadowed only by his wide smile and the strength of his character. Josh was gentle and kind,

the antithesis of the beast he had to become when he stepped into the lacrosse goal and deflected one hard shot after another. It always amazed us how one so sweet-tempered could take on such a tough, athletic task. But that sums up Josh – a humble guy, a good guy, and a young man always eager to do and be his very best.

Won Jun Han

University of the Pacific



Watch Won Jun run and you'll know everything you need to know about his drive and perseverance. He worked tirelessly to achieve his running goals, dedicating himself to improving each year at a sport he found punishing yet rewarding. His hard work paid off as in his senior year he was a member of the varsity squad that earned a berth in the CIF cross country preliminary meet. He applied the same dedication to the subjects he studied, excelling in the sciences and in music theory, where he demonstrated keen insight on the language of rhythm and notes. He worked backstage on musical productions, and even took a turn in the spotlight his junior year in the show "Into the Woods." He plans on pursuing a degree in the challenging field of dentistry, an obtainable goal given his grit and determination.

Melody Hou

University of California at Irvine



Ask her coaches and teachers, and they will describe Melody as a quiet force on the OVS campus. She was an exceptional student, whether devouring literature or taking on the role of a key witness in the annual mock trial. She was an inspiring athlete, taking on a leadership position on the basketball and volleyball courts. She walked endless laps in the Relay for Life cancer fundraiser, and put her musical ability on full display as a member of the school chorus. Spend just a little time with Melody and you would quickly come to understand that she embodies the idea that leadership is best demonstrated by

deeds, not by words. True to her word, Melody gave her best to OVS, and we were better for it.

Ted Jung

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign



Rock on, Ted! That's what we felt like saying to this young honors student every time we saw him. He was the glue that held together the Garage Band, the master musician who made our jaws drop by composing a song for his Senior Seminar project, then taking us step-by-step through his artistic process. He's the guitar soloist who held us in rapt attention at the Festival of Talent, making us wonder how one, once so shy and reserved, could have come so far in his four years at Ojai Valley School. But that's Ted, as fearless in the classroom as he was on the cross country course or soccer field. Possessed of boundless energy and a genial nature, he graced

our all school meetings with enthusiastic announcements, and he helped hold together his peers when they struggled to get to the finish line in completing their Senior Project. High school was his symphony, a blend of notes and melodies that matched his actions and contributions. For those of us you rocked, Ted, we salute you.

Jeffrey Lin

Loyola Marymount University



Jeffrey's Senior Seminar project provided the perfect metaphor for his time at OVS. In that presentation, he took us under the surface to explore the wonders of the ocean as part of a scuba certification program he completed. Under Jeffrey's placid, good-natured surface is a young man of incredible substance. He served his fellow students in various leadership and student government positions, and served the community off the hill with volunteer work not meant to pad his college resume, but meant instead to fill a need and offer contribution. He was an honors student and a committed athlete, taking full advantage of

nearly all of the school's sports offerings, including a stint as an equestrian and a star turn on the soccer field all four years. Jeffrey also held the distinction of being the last member of the school's disbanded eight-man football team, a point of pride for him and all involved in that program. On graduation day, he won the Robert G. Cooper Award, which goes to the graduate who has demonstrated the most growth during his or her senior year. It was an honor well deserved. But the truth is that, since he arrived, Jeffrey has fearlessly embraced all the opportunities OVS had to offer, and as a result has been developing into the curious, considerate and caring young man who stood on the graduation stage.

Jack Pan

University of California at Riverside



Passionate about basketball and a leader on the court, Jack worked hard to elevate the game at OVS after transferring from rival Midland in his sophomore year. By all accounts, he succeeded. A key member of a team that improved with each game, Jack spent countless hours on the court, practicing and perfecting his skills. He also was a talented artist, and in his senior year he took on the challenge of Advanced Placement Studio Art while emerging as a capable ceramicist in learning a new craft. Friendly and funny, Jack was up for any challenge, and that included playing a key witness in the annual mock trial. He played with conviction the role of a mobster,

dressing up for the part and cracking up the jury with his deadpan delivery of lines that could have come straight out of Goodfellas. In many ways, Jack reminded us that it's important to have fun on this journey called life, and that was a contribution worth making.

Dahee Roh

University of California at Irvine



Dahee had an energy about her that was hard to miss, and OVS will miss it next year. She was a deep thinker and a hard worker in the classroom, and outside of it she was a fierce competitor, volleyball and soccer being her sports of choice. She wielded immense talent as an artist and musician, and she generously shared those gifts with our community. She was particularly brilliant while sitting at a piano – her music teacher said Dahee was one of the best to ever tinkle the ivories at the Upper Campus. High praise indeed. Now there

would be some who would describe Dahee as loud and opinionated, and they would be right. But we shouldn't confuse volume with noise. Because in a world that too often tells young people, especially girls, to sit down and hold their tongues, Dahee learned as an OVS student how stand up, speak her mind, and be counted. These are remarkable attributes, and qualities that will serve her well in college and beyond.

Maeve Spainer

Tulane University



Maeve came to us from New Orleans, and during her OVS years she always carried with her a bit of Southern girl style. She was soft-spoken and demure, generous with her time and fiercely loyal as a friend. And she was strong and smart and tough, qualities she put to good use in the classroom and on the volleyball court, where she was instrumental in the team's success. Indeed, her Southern roots ran so deep that she made them the focus of her Senior Seminar project, taking her fellow seniors along on a whirlwind tour of New Orleans, a presentation so vivid you

could almost smell the gumbo and hear the Jazz music. It's hard to imagine what adventures await Maeve as she returns home to attend college, but you can be certain that she will bring her creative, can-do spirit to whatever comes her way

Molly Taylor

University of Hawaii at Manoa



There's an insatiable curiosity to Molly, a pressing need to understand why the world works as it does. That inquisitiveness was alive and well in the classroom, where Molly routinely led discussions, helping her peers drill down to the core essence of English compositions and computer code. It was evident in the athletic arena, where she moved beyond her comfort zone to figure out the complexities of the sweet game of soccer. And it was on full display during her Senior Seminar project, where Molly explained to her peers how she taught herself Mandarin. As with most challenges she took on, the end product – her ability to read

and write in a third language – was not the real reason she tackled such an endeavor. Rather, it was the process of learning for the sake of learning that drove Molly forward. Is it any wonder then that on graduation day Molly was presented with the Robert G. Cooper Award, which is given to the graduate who has demonstrated the most growth during his or her senior year. It was an honor hard earned and well deserved.

Annie Wang

Cal State University Long Beach



Annie would agree with Socrates on this point: the unexamined life is indeed not worth living. The way we know that is that she spent her years at Ojai Valley School examining deeply who she was and what she was meant to contribute. And contribute she did. This gifted equestrian lent her vocal talents to the school chorus, and in her senior year was a member of the elite voice class, wowing us on the day before graduation with the depth and beauty of her music. She was drawn to math and the sciences, but flourished in all academic areas, providing unique insight as an AP English Literature student while challenging

herself to learn a third language by studying Spanish at the honors level. But perhaps it was her Senior Seminar project that told you all you need to know about this remarkable young woman: a study of sunsets and storytelling that explored the importance of individual, meaningful moments in our lives. Annie's life at OVS was made up of just these kinds of moments, and we know with certainty that for her there are many more ahead.

Johnson Wang

Southern California Institute of Architecture



When asked on a college application to explain his passion for art and architecture, Johnson offered this explanation: The diverse culture in his native Shanghai, China, can be seen in its buildings, he told college admission officers, a blend of British and French and Chinese influences that tell the history of that place. Each culture left an architectural footprint. And Johnson, after his college education, said he wanted to do the same. What an answer. And what an artist. With a blank canvas in front of him or a mass of art supplies at the ready, Johnson practiced and perfected his talent often and with vigor. Quiet

and easy going, it's almost as if he stored his energy on purpose, keeping it pent up until it was forced to come out, exploding in fine lines and brilliant colors in his work. A gentleman and a scholar, an athlete some seasons and an outdoorsman when he was called upon, Johnson enthusiastically lived the whole-child OVS experience. But in a world of generalists, Johnson was a specialist, a master of fine arts who definitely made his mark.

Felix Yen

Babson College



Easy going and self-assured. Laid back yet driven to excel. Brash but sensitive. To characterize Felix is to arrive at a contradiction in terms, but that's what made him such a special member of the Class of 2017. He was genius personified, whether leading a discussion in an Advanced Placement class or calculating the weaknesses in an opponent's defense on the basketball court or soccer pitch. With gentle humor and a wry smile, he would "mosey" through campus with little sense of urgency, seemingly unmoved by the daily deadlines that so readily captured others

in their gravitational pull. But inside in the classroom, Felix was transformed: hard-hitting defense attorney in Law & Society class, curious observer of human behavior in AP Psychology. He absorbed information into his very being, not to memorize and recite, but to contemplate and consider. Perhaps Felix's best OVS moment came as he was delivering his Senior Seminar presentation, and stopped to give a shout out to a fellow classmate who would not be making it to the graduation stage with him. It was a tender moment, and one where Felix reminded us that scholarship is as much about character as it is about achievement.

College Acceptances

Our seniors were accepted to an impressive list of colleges and universities. The schools they have chosen reveal the depth of their talent and the diversity of their interests, while reflecting our goal of helping students find the “right fit” school for the next phase of their education.



Adelphi University

The University of Alabama

Babson College

Boston University

California College of the Arts (San Francisco)

California Lutheran University

California State Polytechnic University,
Pomona

**California Polytechnic State University,
San Luis Obispo**

California State University, Chico

California State University, Fullerton

California State University, Long Beach

California State University, Los Angeles

California State University, Monterey Bay

California State University, Northridge

California State University, Sacramento

University of California, Davis

University of California, Irvine (2)

University of California, Merced

University of California, Riverside (3)

University of California, San Diego

University of California, Santa Cruz

Chapman University

Coastal Carolina University

University of Colorado at Denver

University of Delaware

University of Denver

University of Detroit, Mercy

Dominican University of California

Drexel University

Eastern Washington University

Emerson College

The Evergreen State College

Fairleigh Dickinson University

Franklin & Marshall College

George Washington University

University of Hawaii at Manoa

Humboldt State University

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Johnson & Wales University (Providence)

University of La Verne

Louisiana State University

Loyola Marymount University

Marymount California University

Michigan State University

University of Mississippi

University of Missouri

Mount Holyoke College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Northeastern University

Occidental College

Oregon State University

University of Oregon

University of the Pacific

Pennsylvania State University

Pepperdine University

University of Puget Sound

Purdue University

University of Rhode Island

Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Saint Mary's College of California

San Diego State University

University of San Diego

San Francisco State University

University of San Francisco

University of the Sciences in Philadelphia

Sonoma State University

**Southern California Institute of
Architecture**

State University of New York

Stony Brook University

University of Toledo

Tulane University

University at Buffalo

The State University of New York

Vancouver Institute of Media Arts

Westchester University of Pennsylvania

Westmont College

Whitman College

Whittier College

University of Wisconsin, Madison

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTIONS



Major Awards



MICHAEL D. HERMES AWARD

Given to the most outstanding eighth-grade student athletes.

Henry Fisher and Grace McHale



SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

The highest honor we can give an eighth-grade student. Its purpose is to commend the student who, through his or her actions and attitude, contributed to the school community in a sensitive and constructive manner in all phases of school life.

Timothy Chadwick

Major Awards



HEAD OF SCHOOL AWARD

Given for the significant contributions an eighth-grader has made during his or her years at Lower Campus.

Coral Jae and Izabella Slosberg



MICHAEL J. HALL-MOUNSEY AWARD

Honors the boarding students who have consistently served as outstanding role models for their peers and who have demonstrated initiative, leadership, and responsibility.

Minseong “Amy” Kweon and Timothy Chadwick



PAUL PITTMAN AWARD

Recognizes the student who has exhibited the most enthusiasm and active participation in the equestrian program.

Giselle Rosen



J.B. CLOSE AWARD

Given each year to the student who best exemplifies the goals of the OVS Outdoor Education program. This student's consistent contributions to camping, backpacking, and rock climbing trips, his or her love and respect for nature, and commitment to helping others in the face of adversity set this recipient apart.

Grace McHale

Lower Campus Head of School Address

By Gary Gartrell



Ned Yeomans, the founder of Ojai Valley School, and whose philosophy we follow more than anything else, wanted students to enjoy school. As was evident when he said: "Therefore, don't let us prepare for other schools so much as prepare for a generous and interesting life, which will thrive anywhere."

Mr. Yeomans wanted students to be educated in a manner that was not representative of the times. He wanted students to be

taught hands-on, practical lessons that revolved around experience rather than lecture. He wanted to make sure that students did not miss the joy of life and that their appreciation of nature was strong.

This class did not miss out on the joy of school.

The graduating eighth graders are a spirited and high volume group. Our school theme for the year was "Roots and Wings," and they began this journey to explore their roots and wings as a group at Sequoia National Park in the fall. Here is one example of why I appreciate and respect this group.

At Hume Lake, there is a gigantic Redwood log that's been floating in the lake for at least 80 years. It is about 10-feet long and probably 5-feet in diameter—it is HUGE. Because of the drought, it has been stuck in the sand, along the edge of the lake, for several years. When we arrived, we saw the log and decided to see if we could set it free.

That water soaked log weighed at least a thousand pounds. There was no way we were going to be able to do it, but that was not the point. The point was that everybody in the class, including the teachers, went for it. We worked on it for at least a half an hour, pushing and pulling, digging and prying—working together for a common goal.

Did we fail because we did not succeed in freeing the log? No, we succeeded because we took on the challenge and had a great time doing it. That was a Yeoman's test and we passed.

This year I was in charge of the 8th-grade Committee. This leadership group runs various activities and special events for school-wide enjoyment and

participation. We had a record number of 8th graders; half the class in fact, volunteer to be on the committee. Over and over again they came up with good, creative ideas for events and activities to further spice up life at school. We had lively discussions and thoughtful conversations about different events and if they were a good idea, or not. Many times they totally disagreed with my recommendations, struck down my idea on the vote but I'm sure they enjoyed respectfully telling the Head of School, "sorry, but you're wrong, and we disagree." In the end, this animated, lively, and caring group of eighth graders worked hard and sponsored many fun-filled activities that gave everyone an opportunity to play together and be challenged. It was an honor to work with such a creative group of students.

Class of 2017 - Are all of you ready for the next step? Do you have the skills necessary to succeed? Can you get along and collaborate with others? Are you self-motivated? Do you love learning? Do you have grit no matter what the situation? Do you have compassion for others? Do you have perseverance? Do you trust your teachers? Do you know it's okay to fail and try again? Can you get up in front of 300 people and sing a song? Can you give 100% effort on the sports field? Can you speak a second language? Can you solve an equation? Can you launch a capsule into space? Can you do your own laundry? Can you fly a drone? Can you ride a horse? Can you write a poem? Can you understand the current events in the world? Can you build a bridge out of popsicle sticks? Can you pack your own backpack and take care of your own stuff? The list goes on and on.

Well, if you're an Ojai Valley School eighth grade graduate you can do all of the above, and so much more.

No doubt some of the skills you have learned here at OVS you may have questioned in the process. Why am I learning this? Will I ever use it again? Those questions came up when we were building our 8th-grade class gift. The question was "why do I need to know how to use a post hole digger?" Of course my answer was "how are we going to dig that hole unless you know how to use a post hole digger?"

So the group had a lesson on how a posthole digger works, and they dug away. Will you ever use this skill again? Well, we don't know. But, I do know if you are ever asked you are prepared to say, "You bet! And let me show you how!" At that moment, you will have yet again passed the Yeoman's test. One of many moments in the years ahead when you will be proud of your roots and the strength of your wings.



“We all are parts of an intricate puzzle, we fit together, bond together, and, although we are strong on our own, together we are stronger. Again, like a puzzle, we are incomplete with the absence of even one individual. This dynamic is how it works in our grade. From the biggest personalities to the quietest of voices, everyone is woven into this environment of care and trust equally with the others.”

— Bella Slosberg



A POEM

A year is made out of quality
 The quality of time you had at your home
 for that year
 Quality needs to Astound
 And Awe
 And Woah.....
 Schools are not homes
 School is a boring, long, tiresome way to
 learn

OVS is an enriching, fulfilling, and hands-
 on way to learn
 School is memorizing dates and places
 OVS is visiting those places

School is hard
 OVS is harder, and more fulfilling
 Schools use classrooms as a way to hold
 back growth

OVS uses the wilderness, for our minds,
 bodies, and souls to explore, to grow
 School is far, far away
 OVS is close to home

OVS is home
 Eternity would still not be enough time to
 spend here.

- Timothy Chadwick









THE COOPER *Legacy*

Carl Cooper stepped down in June after nearly 30 years as Upper Campus Head of School. But don't mention the word "retirement."

By Natasha Freudmann (U17)

As he has done more times than he can remember, Carl Cooper woke up with the sun on a recent morning and set out on a walk around campus, his faithful yellow lab, Harley, by his side.

Trekking up the back road, walking past water tanks and rows of avocado trees, he took in the beauty of his surroundings and watched as the campus began to buzz with early-morning routine. He checked the water level in the tanks and took the temperature of the brisk morning air. He greeted the housekeepers and maintenance staff as they arrived and watched as lights began to flicker on around campus, indicating the start of the day.

In other words, as he has most days for the nearly 30 years he served as Head of Upper Campus, Mr. Cooper was making sure everything was in order and that the day got off to a good start. This daily walk is integral to his morning, a cherished time that provides a sense of security and allows him to start his day with peace of mind.

"This walk reminds me that I'm alive," he said. "It gives me a chance to do what I usually call meditate – it keeps me in touch with the earth, so to speak. And it brings me out with my best friend."

But in early June, this well-practiced morning routine came to an end. After decades of calling the Upper Campus home, Mr. Cooper stepped down as head of school, packed up his belongings and left his longtime home on the hill.

And what a home it was.

His father, Robert G. Cooper, was the first headmaster of the Upper Campus and this is the place Carl Cooper grew up and attended high school after graduating from the Lower Campus. With the rugged hillsides and abundant wilderness providing an idyllic playground and a unique educational experience, he filled his time with sports and studies, camping and just a bit of mischief. These were formative years, a time that shaped his belief that learning takes place in many ways and in many places. That is why, nearly a half century ago, Mr. Cooper returned to OVS as a history teacher and coach, and then held a series of administrative jobs that eventually led to his appointment as headmaster in 1989.

"I loved my childhood – I had one of the greatest childhood experiences, one of the greatest lives growing up as part of the OVS community, and I wanted to preserve that as long as I could," Mr. Cooper said. "And, I've done a really good job of that."

Indeed, he loved his job even as he entered the final act of his storied career, demonstrating at every turn the importance of traditional OVS values – integrity, curiosity, and participation – at the core of his own life.

And now the curtain has come down.

After a series of teary farewell events – including an emotional yearbook dedication in his honor, orchestrating a final graduation, and a heartwarming Alumni Weekend gathering that brought out hundreds of former students, teachers, and staff to say goodbye – Mr. Cooper and his wife, ceramics teacher Jody Cooper, have moved to a new home in the Ojai Valley and started a new life.

But don't dare mention the word "retirement" in his presence.

While he will no longer run the Upper Campus, he will remain involved with OVS, though his role won't be nearly as demanding. He will work closely with his successor, new Head of School Craig Floyd, over the next year to answer any questions that arise over the transition period. Additionally, Mr. Cooper will work closely with alumni to promote the school and to raise funds for new building projects, such as the renovation of Hermes Hall and construction of a contemporary Student Commons to serve as the new central gathering place of campus life.

In many ways that work will serve to solidify the legacy Mr. Cooper built during his tenure as head of school, one centered on ensuring that generations of students could have the same kind of remarkable educational experience he had at the Upper Campus.

In that way, OVS President/CEO Michael J. Hall-Mounsey said Mr. Cooper's new job will be a natural extension of the role he played in guiding the school all these years – a role he executed expertly and with deep devotion.

"He brought with him a calm, quiet, but constant leadership," Mr. Hall-Mounsey said. "He took a real interest in every student as an individual, and he was genuine in his love to see them grow and be the best they could be."

Mr. Cooper's success as headmaster can be attributed to the lifetime he spent living and breathing OVS. He came to the school with his siblings at the age of four and attended the Lower Campus, graduating in 1964. That's also where he got his first OVS job, working maintenance at Lower while a student at the Upper Campus. He worked his first summer program at OVS in 1966, and five years later, while attending Cal State Northridge, he began coaching athletics at Upper and working as a weekend supervisor. A year later, he moved into the Bristol Dorm, now known as Hermes Hall, and became a full-time dorm counselor.

In his last year of college, as an intern under then-Headmaster Tom Lee, Mr. Cooper taught a government civics class and expanded his coaching career, leading the boys' soccer, basketball, baseball, and track teams. He progressed from coach to teacher to administrator, eventually serving as dean of students and dean of faculty before finally following in his father's footsteps.



"I was lucky that I had colleagues and mentors that prepared me well for the duties I had," Mr. Cooper said.

He has spent much of the past two years providing the same kind of mentorship for his successor, Craig Floyd (U83). The pair go way back. When Mr. Floyd was a student, Mr. Cooper was his dorm parent, teacher, and coach, and ten years ago he gave Mr. Floyd the job that would put him on the path to leading the school. The two are close friends, so much so that Mr. Floyd even refers to Mr. Cooper as his "second father." Through their strong bond and two years of formal training, Mr. Floyd is now set to step into Mr. Cooper's shoes.

"The past two years he's given me a lot of advice," said Mr. Floyd, who until graduation served as the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs. "We've been working on the transition the whole time...I'm very excited to be taking over, and it's also very exciting to be taking over for him because of how close we are."

Like with Mr. Floyd, Mr. Cooper's far-reaching impact has prompted countless alums to remain involved with the school, even years after leaving.

OVS alum Cooper Hefner (U09) continues to participate in the school on a number of levels, including having served on the Board of Trustees. He attributes his ongoing involvement in OVS to the family-like culture Mr. Cooper helped create at the Upper Campus.

"I think Mr. Cooper's biggest impact on the school actually has less to do with the physical institution and more to do with the impact he's made on so many people who belong to so many different generations," he said. "There are few people who can say they have had a career where they participated in guiding and mentoring hundreds and hundreds of different kids from different cultures and countries all around the world."

The two are now very good friends, getting together socially when time allows. But Mr. Hefner is quick to point out that their relationship evolved over time, dating back to when he was a rascally student, not unlike Mr. Cooper in his high school years.

"In many ways Coop is like another father," Hefner said. "He drove me absolutely insane when I was at school, but it was evident that the older I got, the more I realized that it was coming from a good place, and that place is love and care."

There's plenty of love and care in Mr. Cooper's future.

Without the day-to-day demands of running the Upper Campus, he hopes now to be able to dedicate more time to his family and to his own interests.

He plans on visiting more with his kids and grandkids, reading the books he never got around to reading, spending more time with his wife, and taking his dog on long, leisurely walks. And he will now be able to devote time to some of his favorite activities, such as golfing and fishing.

Beyond that, his future is wide open.

"I don't know where all these possibilities are going to take me, but there are all kinds of things that haven't been explored yet," he said. "I don't see myself as being somebody who idly sits by and watches time pass."

While Mr. Cooper said he will miss his morning campus walks, he isn't sad to be leaving. He has lived his life to the fullest and is now ready to move forward. Most importantly, he is grateful to have grown up and worked at OVS for all these years, and that he is now able to hold all of these memories close to his heart and cherish the institution that shaped his life.

"All I can say is I have had a great life doing what I do," Mr. Cooper said. "I thank my parents for introducing me to Ojai Valley School and allowing me to live a rich life. And I think that's the most important part – that I have been afforded the opportunity to live wealthy beyond anyone's imagination. Because it has nothing to do with money – it has to do with getting up and being able to be part of the sunshine."

Natasha Freudmann (U17) wrote this profile of Carl Cooper. She served as editor of the Upper Campus newspaper On The Hill. She will attend University of Oregon's Clark Honors College in the fall.



Clockwise from top, Carl Cooper pictured at center with Bristol Highlanders in 1967; Carl and Jody with young Megan and Nate; Coopers during Sespe hike at Alumni Weekend; Carl and Bob Cooper during Honors Ski Trip; the Cooper family in 1968, Robert Sr., Susan, Bob, Bonnie, Carl, Helen and Jim.





Lynn Whipple



Lynn with grandsons Gavin, left, and Connor, right, who graduated from Upper Campus in 2017 and 2015, respectively.

LYNN WHIPPLE

By Ally Feiss (U16)

She arguably was one of the most popular people at the Upper Campus and definitely one of the most beloved. But even the best things must come to an end.

So it is that after 25 years, Lynn Whipple has ridden off into the Pink Moment sunset.

She gave people plenty of notice. Mrs. Whipple had set a plan to retire from school life when her grandson, Gavin Floyd, graduated high school and that happened this year. But while those who love her – including a legion of students, parents, and teachers – had time to prepare for her departure, it still hit like a thunderbolt as the final days of her OVS career counted down.

“I’ll miss her just being there for me,” junior Leila Giannetti (L14) said. “I knew every day, when I walked by her office, she was there and always so amazingly kind and thoughtful. She was a much-needed constant comfort in the hectic world that is high school.”

Mrs. Whipple first graced the Upper Campus in 1977 as a girls’ dorm parent and then eventually took over as head of the girls’ dorm. After three years, she decided it was time to hang up her dorm parent shoes. Twelve years later, she felt like there was something missing from her life, so when she heard there was an opening for assistant to the head of school, she jumped at the chance to rejoin the OVS family.

“I really did miss being here, and being with the young adults,” Mrs. Whipple said. “Working here fulfills a deep part in me — it fills the soul.”

Through a quarter century she held together the OVS family. Whether it was a shoulder to cry on or a craving for something sweet, Mrs. Whipple could always be counted on to make campus life a little bit better.

“Mrs. Whipple was one of the best teachers on campus,” Leila said. “Although she didn’t teach English, math, or history, she taught us all amazing life lessons that helped us get through hard times and brought light and happiness into every day.”

Not only did Mrs. Whipple touch the hearts of many students, she also had the unique opportunity to work at the campus where her grandsons – Connor Floyd, Gavin Floyd, and Corbin Mueller – attended. The boys agree that having their grandma so close was a special part of their high school experience.

“The best part about having my grandma being so close to me was getting to see her everyday, because I know some people don’t get to see their grandparents so often,” Gavin said.

Students, past and present, widely agree that they were truly lucky to have the experience of Mrs. Whipple greeting them at the front office every morning. And while she might be gone, her infectious smile, comforting hugs, sometimes-sassy attitude, infectious humor, and never-ending compassion will not be forgotten.

“She was always the one to talk to when I needed to get my mind off of school,” said alum Momoe Takamatsu (U15). “She is so down to earth and honest. Mrs. Whipple’s office was everyone’s go-to place to get a little break. My high school experience wouldn’t have been the same without her, and she definitely made my time at OVS a special one.”



Judy Oberlander



Judy counseling Nakita Moler (U15) on her college choices in 2014.

JUDY OBERLANDER

By Emma Gustafson (L14, U18)

Concluding a career of teaching and college counseling that spanned more than three decades, Judy Oberlander has retired from Ojai Valley School – for the second and final time.

Ms. Oberlander started at OVS in 1979, teaching English for the first six years and then adding college counseling to her plate, and she continued in that dual role until 2011, when retirement number one took place. However, that one didn't stick.

Three years later, she was called out of retirement to reassume the role of college counselor, a job she performed masterfully for the past three graduating classes. But retirement beckoned once again, and this time, she says, she has shelved her College Guide for good.

"Being at OVS these last three years has been a great experience for me," Ms. Oberlander said. "I loved being back on campus, having an office with a great view, and hanging out with the kids and getting to know them. I'm really grateful to have had the opportunity to return. It has been special."

Ms. Oberlander arrived at Ojai Valley School by pure chance. She earned her bachelor's degree in English literature from UC Riverside and a master's in Educational Administration & Policy Studies from UC Santa Barbara. She was teaching freshman English at UCSB and Ventura College when she heard about an opening at OVS for an English teacher. As she was already living in Ojai, the job was perfect for her.

During her first stint at OVS she served as head of the English department, assistant head of school, and dean of faculty. But it was college counseling where she perhaps made her biggest mark, and during her second run at OVS her sole task was to prepare students for the college application process and help them get into their dream schools.

"I like it because it's different everyday, every student is different, and there are lots of problems to solve – I like solving problems," Ms. Oberlander said in the final weeks of her final year. "I like it because I get to deal with microcosm and the macrocosm. OVS is the microcosm, it's a really small school, but I get to deal with the outside world – colleges and other high schools."

Over the years, she has helped hundred of students navigate the college counseling maze, and her students have been deeply appreciative of her efforts. Celeste Addison (L14) was a student in Ms. Oberlander's final college counseling class and said she has benefited from one-on-one meetings at which they have crafted Celeste's college list and started work on her essays.

"I had a lot of questions before college counseling started, but she answered them all," Celeste said.

Ms. Oberlander also worked with her last graduating class this year, guiding the seniors through the application process and helping them choose which colleges to attend. Shawn Harvey (L13, U17), who will attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in the fall, said he was grateful for all of Ms. Oberlander's assistance.

"She would have us pre-write essays, and I every time I wrote a college essay she would revise it over and over, no matter how many times I re-sent it to her," Shawn said. "I really appreciated her help."

After retiring the first time, Ms. Oberlander spent time in educational consulting, worked as an application reader at UCSB, and volunteered with the American Red Cross and at Channel Islands National Park. This time around, those things are likely to get back on her radar, and be joined by other interests including rowing at Lake Casitas, and writing more poetry and prose.

But however she choose to spend her time, Ms. Oberlander said she will always remember how sweet it was to return to OVS, and how incredibly lucky she was to have been able to do this job for such a long time.

"Probably the most rewarding part about being a college counselor is being able to get to know students really well and find out things about them," she said. "Most people don't get the chance to sit down with a high school student and really talk, and find out who they are and what they care about. To me, I feel really lucky that I got to do that."

PONS DINNER





This year marked the 22nd annual Pons Dinner, which celebrates the bridge between middle and high school. It is also a time to recognize those Lower Campus graduates, now in their senior year, as they prepare to transition from high school to college.

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's festivities, and special thanks to our alumni guest speaker Max Wheeler (L06, U10). With humor and eloquence, Max shared with the students and faculty members in attendance some of his fondest OVS memories, including shenanigans in the dorm and the last time he spoke at Pons as a student leader.

"At this dinner 11 years ago, I stood up here as class president and told everyone how excited we should be for the future," Max said. "And now I stand up here to tell the 8th grade class and seniors that you should feel the same way. This school has prepared you for more than you can imagine. Whether it's academics, social life or athletics you will be ready for any challenge because of this school and the people here tonight. Don't be afraid to go outside your comfort zone and get involved in something that sparks your interest. Try out for the plays, going camping, joining a club or even starting one. What you do in the future is up to you, because of the confidence OVS has instilled in all of you.

"As you look around, remember your classmates, teachers and faculty because I guarantee that they will remember you no matter how long you have spent on campus," Max concluded. "This is more than school, it's a family. When you take that long-awaited walk on stage and receive your diploma give yourself a pat on the back for what you have accomplished, and remember that you are just getting started in life."



Senior to Alumni Dinner

By Tracy Wilson, Director of Advancement and Admission

Just before graduation, the seniors took a break from final exams and gathered for a casual pizza dinner at Boccali's restaurant in Ojai to celebrate their transition from students to alumni. Guest speaker Reika Kijima (L12), who just graduated from the University of Southern California, encouraged the seniors to stay connected with each other as they venture out into the world.

"One thing that I want to let you guys know is don't forget the relationships you've built at OVS," Reika said. "Even though you are super excited for college, just don't lose contact with the people you met here — not just students but the teachers."

Reika explained that like many of the soon-to-be graduates, she was itching to leave high school and start the next chapter of her life. She said, "I was in your position, feeling like 'I just want to get out of here! I want to explore!' That is all I had in my head — especially last semester of my senior year."

But after she started college at Asuza Pacific University, and then transferred to USC, she realized that the deep relationships she formed while at the Upper Campus were the most lasting, and still are. Reika remains close with former roommate Serry Park (L08, U12), who recently graduated from Wellesley College, and classmate Anni Mansikkaoja (U12) who returned to her native Finland after attending OVS.

"You're going to struggle in college — academically, socially, culturally, anything," Reika told the seniors. "And the people who were there for me were the people I met at OVS, especially Serry and Anni."

Reika, who majored in international relations, will be working in Los Angeles for a year before transferring with her new employer, Mathnasium, to its new offices in Tokyo, Japan. She offered a few additional words of advice to the Class of 2017: Manage your time wisely. Meet with your professors often. And work hard to play hard.



Alumni Working Summer Camp!

We are so grateful to have some of our alums back on campus to staff summer camp! This summer we have 14 OVS alumni working Summer Camp. They are performing a myriad of roles, including classroom teachers, camp counselors, dorm parents, equestrian instructors, and health center staff. We appreciate the knowledge, enthusiasm, and commitment to the OVS community that they bring. We also recognize the key role they play as role models and in educating campers about Ojai Valley School to help recruit the best and brightest future students to our fall program.



Pictured, from left to right, are alumni Destani Ciccio-Green (L13), Evelyn Brokering (U17), Ally Feiss (U16), Sara Lawrence (L68), Lee Roberts (L72), Annie Wang (U17), Ben Malkin (L04), Brittany Whipple (L02, U06), Callen Gartrell (L01), Caitlin (Black) Cooper (L97), Hunter Helman (L06, U10), and Paloma Sandoval (L02, U06). Not Pictured, but also working camp, were Jay Inman (L13) and Claire Wickenhaeuser (L11, U15).

Alumni Games

Thank you to all the alumni who participated in the spring baseball and lacrosse alumni games. It was great fun to see so many Spuds turn out at the Upper Campus. The baseball game produced some fun family storylines. Alum Rob Davis (L84, U88) faced his son, pitcher Tyler Davis (L16), on the mound. Connor Floyd (L11, U15) played for the alumni against younger brother Gavin Floyd (L13, U17) and with his dad, Craig Floyd (U83), who coached baseball this spring.

Parker Colborn (L05, U09) also faced his younger brother, Nolan Colborn (L15), and sister, Avery Colborn (L16), who both played on the 2017 baseball team. Their dad, OVS math teacher and baseball coach Doug Colborn, played for the alumni alongside Max Wheeler (L06, U10), Shaun Davis (L89, U94), Arya Torab (L04, U08) and the father-son duo of baseball coach John Wickenhaeuser and former Spud player James Wickenhaeuser (L06, U10).

The lacrosse game also drew alumni back to campus, including Cole Zellner (L12, U16), Richard Christensen (L94, U98) and Henry Mooney (L08, U12), who traveled from South Africa to play in the game! Thanks to Coach Brad Weidlich who played in both the baseball and lacrosse games. We look forward to next year!!



2017 Founder's Alumni Award Recipients: The Cass Sisters



Nicky (left) and Liza (holding photo of their sister Julie) accepting the Founder's Alumni Award from committee member Scott Eicher (L65, U68).

The Founder's Alumni Award was created to honor Ojai Valley School alumni—in this case alumnae – whose achievements exemplify the values contained in the school's motto, *Integer Vitae*, meaning “wholeness of life, symmetry of life, soundness of life, and therefore, poise and strength of life.”

Ojai Valley School is pleased to announce that the recipients of the 2017 Founder's Alumni Award are the Cass Sisters –Nicky, Julie and Liza – who attended Ojai Valley School from the mid-1950s to their ninth grade graduations in 1958, 1960 and 1961, respectively, and whose contributions have benefitted numerous students over the years.

The Cass sisters, who believed in the school's principles of developing character and strength to accomplish “nothing less than your best,” established the Salimbaceous Trust as a legacy of their mother, Gina Kruzic Wilcox, who in her lifetime anonymously financed several young women who had “dreams, schemes, and promise of achieving their goals.”

For two decades, the Salimbaceous Trust provided anonymous grants to help OVS girls pursue their passions and talents. The Cass sisters believed

that too often money stood in the way of girls achieving their potential, so each year they funded grants intended to help girls make their dreams a reality. They named it Salimbaceous, a word coined to describe the coming together of people and resources to keep young women on track.

The grants allowed numerous middle and high school girls, who were nominated by the faculty to be recipients of the awards, to pursue their passions in art, music, literature, technology, and science.

As Salimbaceous trustees, the Cass sisters, including sister Julie, now deceased, remained anonymous to the school community. The female recipients who benefitted from their grants never knew the identity of the generous women who supported them and who so passionately believed in the importance of supporting young girls with dreams.

In 2015-16, Nicky and Liza decided to close the trust and made a significant restricted gift of securities to Ojai Valley School valued at more than \$320,695. The gift will continue to fund small grant awards, but it will also be used for annual scholarships, academic and co-curricular programs, as well as capital projects that

benefit girls, including recent improvements to the girls' dormitory at Lower Campus.

"It shows a wonderful, consistent, long-standing support for OVS and the student experience," President/CEO Michael J. Hall-Mounsey said. "They've been loyal donors with a clear mission and many, many students have benefitted from their generosity and vision."

Katie (Clifford) Jeffrey (L99, U03), a member of the Founder's Alumni Association committee, said the Cass sisters' philanthropy speaks to the heart of OVS's mission of providing a quality, well-rounded education for all. She added: "It seems appropriate to coincide the revealing of the donors behind the Trust with honoring them with this award."

The Cass sisters have long demonstrated a passion for social justice and a commitment to progressive education.

Nicky Cass graduated from ninth grade at Lower School in 1958 and went on to a career as a business administrator, finishing in New York City where she acquired an MBA and raised her son. Now retired, she continues not-for-profit volunteer work.

Julie Two Cass moved on from OVS to several careers, raised two sons, and wound up in Atlanta as a minister in the Metropolitan Community Church. She was the musical sister, as well, and in her graduating year from International Theological Center, she joined their chorus at Super Bowl half time behind Whitney Houston. Julie died in 2012.

Liza Cass White, a 1961 Lower Campus alumna, went on to the Katherine Branson School and California State University Northridge, where she was later honored for establishing the first department-based chapter of the CSUN Alumni Association. After retiring from Language and Speech Associates, her private speech therapy practice, Liza continued to be active in the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles, serving as President for four years. Liza served for three years as a contributing member on the OVS Founder's Alumni Award Committee, where she worked closely with Bob Koster (L53) and Malory Taylor, OVS Associate Director of Alumni Relations, to establish and review nomination guidelines and processes.

Liza served on the OVS Board of Trustees from 2012 to 2016, and remains a dedicated volunteer. Liza and her husband, Stuart, a professor emeritus of the UCLA Dental School, live in Westwood.

In recognition of their understanding of the values contained in the Ojai Valley School motto, *Integer Vitae*, and translating that understanding into meaningful action to benefit young OVS women like themselves, Ojai Valley School is honored to present the Founder's Alumni Award for 2017 to the Cass Sisters.

To submit your nomination for the Founder's Alumni Award for future consideration, please contact the alumni office, submit the nomination form in this issue of Family Tree, or go online to www.ovs.org/FAA.

Founder's Alumni Award

Deadline for nominations: January 31, 2018

Nominations are welcomed and encouraged. The final selection will be made by the President, after consultation with the Founder's Alumni Award Committee and Heads of School. The Founder's Alumni Award will be presented at the 2018 Alumni Weekend Celebration.

*In recognition of the school's centennial, the Founder's Alumni Award was created to honor an Ojai Valley School alum whose achievements exemplify the values endorsed in the school's motto, *Integer Vitae*, meaning wholeness of life, symmetry of life, soundness of life, therefore, poise and strength of life.*

The Founder's Alumni Award Recipient will have demonstrated good character, respect for other people, a balance of accomplishments at a level that has a positive and broad impact, whose achievement(s) is/are significant within a profession, career, vocation, or service.

The Founder's Alum will have achieved distinction in one or more of the following ways:

- Serving his or her local, national and/or global community in an outstanding fashion
- Demonstrating extraordinary commitment to making the world a better place through the promotion of education, diversity, and environmental stewardship
- Ensuring the sustainability of the school through various forms of engagement and support

Please include as much information, such as web links and articles, so that your nominee has the committee's full consideration.

NAME OF NOMINEE: _____

YOUR NAME: _____

Please describe his or her significant achievement(s): _____

In what ways does this alum exemplify the principles of OVS? _____

Is he/she connected with the school and/or his/her classmates? If yes, how so? _____

ALUMNI WEEKEND



1. Melissa Thyoneus (U71), Mike Ross (L69, U72), Andrew Knight (L72, U75), Michi Thacker (U72), Paul McCandless (U71), Jody Cooper (L71, U74), Felicity Van Runkle (L69, U72), and Catherine Sharkey (U72)



2. Mike Fry (U74), Bill Burke (U73), Oscar Kornblatt (U73), Joseph McKinney (L70, U73), Jimmy Cooper (L70, U73), and Andrew Knight (L72, U75)



Thanks to our dedicated class agents – and the nearly 300 alumni and guests who returned to campus – the 2017 Alumni Weekend was a resounding success. As many of you are aware, this reunion was particularly noteworthy as we paid tribute to Carl S. Cooper over the course of three days. Carl retired as Head of School in June after 47 years at the school. The tribute video that was showcased at the Main Event Dinner is now available on our website at www.ovs.org/aw. A special thanks to alumna Tomoko (Seino) Hotema (U94) for her live vocal performance with John and Lisa Boyd, which accompanied the Saturday showing of the video.

If you would like to help gather your classmates for next year's Alumni Weekend, please let us know!

The 2018 Alumni Weekend, June 8-10, will be hosted at Lower Campus.

Please contact us at alumni@ovs.org or 805-640-2578

3. Jason Coudray (L00, U04) and his fiancé Emily Maine, Ben Davis (U05), and Sarah (Biggs) Voorhees (L03, U07) and her husband, Cory Voorhees.

4. Spencer Garrett (L62, U65), Melissa Theonyus (U71), Marjorie Maurer-Gemkow (U72), and Kirk Warren (L62, U65).

5. Liza Cass White (L61), Julia Fowler Westerfield (L61), and Nicholas Cass (L58)

6. Jason (L01, U05) and Liz (White) Goldman (U05).



7. Michael J. Hall-Mounsey, Duncan Wallace, and Frank Keith

8. Nancy Dreier (U86), Karleen (Hunt) Basch (U87), and Hillary French (U87)

9. Megan (Cooper) Keelan (L92, U96), Taylor Downey Alber (L93, U97), Sinead McHugh (L92, U96), and Shelby (Dees) Brown (L92, U96)

10. Connor Floyd (L11, U15) and Craig Floyd (U83)

11. Christian Elberfeld (L76, U80) and Catherine "Happie" (Kinnan) Tallia (L73, U77)

12



13



14



12. Family and friends joined for a rousing game of soccer!

13. Craig Floyd (U83), Nathan Cooper (L91, U95), Carl Cooper (L64, U68), and Tyson York

14. Ashley Lowengrub (L81, U85), Chris Martinov (L80, U84), and Susan (Billups) Scoggin (U82)

15



16



17



18



15. Cooper Hefner (U09) and Scarlett Byrne, John Boyd, Jody Cooper (L71, U74), Jeremy Crisafulli (L05, U09), and Lisa Boyd.

16. Members of Class of Upper 2007: Iris Torres, Tessa Ente, Rosanna Wang, Lachlan Dunn, and Angela Lee, who visited the OVS reunion from Shanghai!

17. Equestrian Director Stephanie Gustafson and Jen Konz staffing the pony rides

18. Keith Carradine (U67) and his wife, Hayley; Bill Wilmer (L55) and his wife, Sue.

STAY C·O·N·N·E·C·T·E·D

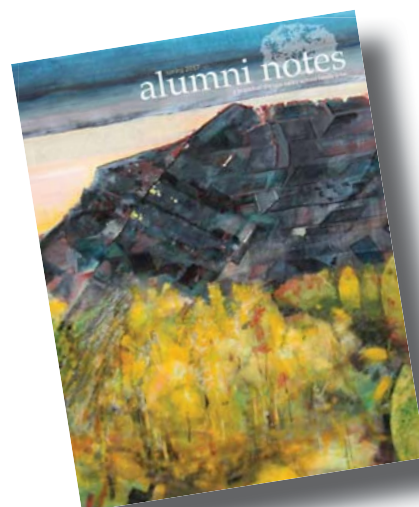
Don't be a stranger! OVS invites alumni to stay connected with the school and their classmates. Attend events, share news through Alumni Notes, and more.



OVS EVENTS

2018 Alumni Weekend

If you would like to help gather your classmates for next year's Alumni Weekend, or host a regional alumni event in the coming year, please let us know! The 2018 Alumni Weekend, June 8-10, will be hosted at Lower Campus.



SEDONA RETREAT

A big OVS thank you to Fanny "Casey" Case (L61) for organizing the Sedona Retreat for the past 25 years. The next Sedona-OVS Retreat is July 12-14, 2019! The group had so much fun this time that they decided to meet again in 2 years rather than their traditional 4 years. The more, the merrier! Contact the Alumni Office or Fanny for more information.



ALUMNI NOTES

There are more than 5,300 OVS alumni around the world, making a difference in their families, careers, and communities.

We want to celebrate alumni achievements and milestones, such as marriages, new additions to family, promotions, business ventures, trips and vacations – and anything else you'd like to share with the OVS Family! Submit your Alumni Note by December 31 for our next publication.

OVS SOCIAL MEDIA

Your journey may have taken you across the country and around the globe, but you're never more than a click away from the OVS Alumni Association and your alumni network! Connect with us online to get the latest OVS news and upcoming events.

Facebook.com/ovsalum
Instagram.com/ojaivalleyschool
LinkedIn: OVS Alumni Networking Group
www.ovs.org/social



UPDATE YOUR PROFILE

Have you moved or changed your contact information recently? Help us maintain an accurate alumni database by contacting us with your new information. Email alumni@ovs.org or visit www.ovs.org/alumni and navigate to the "Update Your Profile" page.

Contact Form

☒ Send a copy to my email address

SEND

alumni notes



Lower 1953

1 **Bob Koster** reports that he and his wife, Cici, had a splendid time at the Alumni Weekend gathering. Bob shared the following memory from his time as a student: "I was asleep in my upper bunk in the boys' dorm when the Tehachapi Earthquake struck at 4:52 AM on July 21, 1952. Our beds were double bunks, one above the other. A whole row of them. They started to sway from side to side quite widely. I hung on to the corners of the bunk and kept from falling off. Climbing down was not possible. For a time it looked like the bunks would collapse like a row of dominoes, but that did not happen. The entire building was shaking for maybe 20 seconds, but it seemed like 20 hours. The building was quaking awfully and creaking and groaning, but it held. A few pictures fell off the walls. There was deadly silence when the shaking stopped. We could hear some of the younger kids crying. One youngster, quite unfazed by the quake,

was running around the dorm yelling, 'It's an eruption from Mars! It's an eruption from Mars!'

"We calmed down somewhat, then went outside to count heads and make sure we were all safe. We also used the lower bunks for the rest of the night, since there were aftershocks for the next few hours. Later, we saw some startling photos of downtown Tehachapi with crumbled buildings, twisted railroad tracks, and other post-quake sights. The strange thing was that the most exciting night of our summer camp at OVS was arranged by neither Mr. Burr nor Mr. Cooper. Not to my knowledge, anyway."

Lower 1955

2 We just received the following from **Bill Wilmer**, an alum as well as a former teacher and dorm parent at the Upper Campus: "The OVS reunion was just fantastic! Seeing the students

who graduated in 1967 was really special for Sue and me. I taught them [Spanish], and Sue and I jointly parented them as their dorm parents. Knowing our past students today as both adults and peers makes recalling our lives together in that wonderful age of the 1960s very emotional and almost spiritual. The constant in every OVS reunion seems always to be the admission by each and all of us that there could never have been a more wonderful experience growing up than the OVS experience that flows through each of our memories. We were very lucky people to be part of OVS in those golden days.

"Sue and I returned to Mountain Ranch with all that OVS energy to begin getting ready for our five-week summer RV trailer through Idaho and to Montana. We selected Montana as a destination so we could visit close friends in and near Bozeman as part of the trip. One of those is Tim Crawford (L54), who was a friend at OVS and also at Midland where we both went to high school."



"To prepare for that trip, we have had to complete four critical projects. We exchanged 16 batteries in our grid-tied house solar system, replaced a burned solar panel which was discovered after the battery replacements, re-roofed the RV trailer roof with elastomer liquid roof, and upgraded the solar panels on the trailer solar system. In addition, we spent too much time getting rid of some mice that invaded the trailer and built several nests throughout it.

"Our very wet winter stimulated much plant and animal reproduction and activity here in Calaveras County. That included increased rattlesnake activity, as they enjoyed much good food. A large one bit our dog twice in the throat, and we were lucky to get her to an emergency vet quickly because that saved her life. She is doing well now and waiting for our trailer trip to Montana."

Lower 1957

We were delighted to hear from **Jerry Beatty**, who wrote the following: "I went to OVS in the 50s. The Coopers were a great family and were so much a part of my life. I used to go to their house to watch my dad's show weekly as back then there were no TVs in the dorms. I got to see Carl Cooper grow up. Enjoy your retirement, Carl!"

Lower 1958

3 Valerie Tucker, who attended OVS for the 3rd grade in 1951-52, paid us a visit in April. Her late sister was a 5th grader. Both are in the 1952 school photo.

Lower 1959

Congratulations to **John Berggruen** on his long-standing success with the iconic Berggruen Gallery in San Francisco. An article that ran in the The San Francisco Chronicle notes Berggruen began selling prints in the 1970s and quickly became the Bay Area's most prominent art dealer.

His relocated and reconceived gallery opened at the beginning of the year and is now close to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. It occupies a 10,000 square-foot building at the corner of Howard and Hawthorne Streets. Visit it when you're in San Fran.

Lower 1961

Julia Fowler Westerfield reports as follows: "Son Chris is doing great in Wisconsin; he's a real estate agent now. He also works construction and as a favorite waiter at a fancy "dinner house" (as they called it in WI). Gerry and I are plugging along, he with two jobs and me with my knitting business, "Charmed Scarves." All's well. I so appreciate OVS down through the generations! Keep up the good work, and cheers to Carl!!"

Lower 1962

Susan (O'Malley) St. John (see U65)

Lower 1969

Alison (Jones) Woods (see U72)

Lower 1972

Johnny Suggs (see U75)

Lower 1966

Beth Pfeiffer (see U69)

ATTENTION: We welcome your updates anytime! Alumni news received by December 31, 2017 will be published in the next issue of *Alumni Notes* magazine. You may submit your updates to:

Office of Alumni Relations: Mail: 723 El Paseo Road, Ojai, CA 93023 Email: alumni@ovs.org • www.ovs.org/alumni.

4



Lower 1993

Hannah (Pepper) Attwood is living in Queensland, Australia with her husband John and three children, Eloise, Hunter, and Sadie. Hannah is currently volunteering in the archives department of Hunter's high school (which starts at 7th grade).

Lower 1994

Dana Rice (see U98)

Lower 1999

4 Troy Pollet, and his wife, Jessica, attended this year's OVS Gala with his mother, Sally. Troy and Jessica live in Sherman Oaks with their two-year-old baby, Andie. They have another baby girl on the way, due in late August. Troy works as a commercial real estate broker, for CBRE, and Jessica is an attorney at the law firm, Buckley Sandler.

If you would like to get in touch with a classmate, please contact the Alumni Office at alumni@ovs.org or 805-640-2578.

Lower 2008

Henry Mooney (see U12)

Lower 2011

Claire Wickenhaeuser (see U15)

Upper 1965

Here's the latest from **Susan (O'Malley) St. John**: "My book, *Mad Mischief*, has just been published, and I am having someone schedule book signings throughout the summer. I hope you will go to the website madmischief.com to learn more, download the first chapter, and watch a brief film."

Upper 1969

It was lovely to hear from **Beth Pfeiffer**, who sent us this update: "I've now moved [from Boston] to Southwest Harbor, Maine, the beloved summer home of my mother's family. My new husband, John, and I love living by the shore all year long. We travel a lot to see family and friends and, hopefully, next fall will be in Ojai. I want to show John my childhood environs and introduce him to friends in Ojai. Hope everyone is well at OVS!"

Upper 1971

"I retired after having moved to Bend in Central Oregon," writes **Carole Ekker**, who makes a nice offer: "My retirement project was to design and build my dream house on 7 ½ acres of riverfront property. Come visit me at 3 Dog Ranch!"

Upper 1972

Things are looking up for **Marjorie Maurer-Gemkow**, who writes this: "My husband Ed and I recently retired after selling our general contracting business on South Whidbey Island, WA, just in time, since I developed a heart issue at 62 years young. (Thankfully, I am recovered now).

"We just returned from a celebratory trip to the Galapagos Islands which was the trip of a lifetime.

Our first grandchild was born in November of 2016, so I'm looking forward to lots of Grammy time.

We plan to stay on south Whidbey Island and enjoy our place without working! We also have a year of travel planned – two months of which will advance our R.V. along our planned route to visit all the National Parks. This year we tour Texas."

It was nice to see **Alison (Jones) Woods** at Alumni Weekend, who updated us as follows: "In 2014, I moved to Los Angeles to pursue my art career. I curated a show titled *FUtopia* with local curator Kio Griffin which we plan to export to different cities. I am currently a part of Durden and Ray Gallery in Los Angeles. My work will be shown in Berlin and Brisbane, Australia this September."



Upper 1974

5 Maine Governor Paul LePage awarded Marine Patrol Specialist and OVS alum **Corrie Roberts** a medal for her courageous efforts after a lobster boat captain had a heart attack, which sent his boat into a tailspin in the Penobscot Bay back in October of 2015. The 40-foot lobster boat, with no one at the wheel, was moving in circles at a high rate of speed off the Rockland side of Owls Head Lighthouse, near Shag Rock. Corrie's partner, Sergeant Matt Talbot, was the wheelman who pulled up to the spinning lobster boat in choppy waters while Corrie was able to jump onto the other vessel and power it down before the boat smashed into the rocky shores. Well done, Corrie!

Steve Rowland sends this message to Carl Cooper: "Congratulations on a splendid career. Thanks for all of the skills you taught me on the soccer field and the life lessons you taught me off the field. I am a better man for having met you. I hope I provided you with some lasting positive memories. Wish I could be there to celebrate with you. If you find yourself out Florida way, look me up."

Johnny Suggs called our office during Alumni Weekend to wish all of his classmates well. He is living in Hisperia, California, and hasn't visited the school since he graduated. He would love to reconnect with former classmates.

Upper 1976

Lauri Williams sent in this kind message on Alumni Day: "I could not be there today but am sending all my love to Carl and Jody Cooper. I am so lucky to have been to OVS and known both of you. I wish you all the joy you deserve in this next chapter in your lives together. Thank you and thank you, OVS, for all you have done for me. And, again, thank you, Carl, for a lifetime of service to all of us who have been lucky enough to have crossed your path."

Upper 1979

6 This was the first time I had visited OVS since around 1984," writes **Lavinia (Baumhoff) Baker**, "but since it was Carl's last year, and I recently moved back to California after 25 years, I had to make it to this alumni weekend. It was mind-blowing to stay in the girls' dorm and magical to see that view again!

"Seeing Carl, Jody, Jimmy, and Mr. Dinkins was wonderful. I can't believe how much Megan looks like Jody! I especially enjoyed hanging out with Kelly Somers. Hiking and catching up with Willie Sterba was fun. I was touched to see Scott McDonald. It made me think of when Kelly, Sue Laufer, Scott and others would sing the Elton John, Bernie Taupin song, 'Friends.' To me, it was an end-of-the-year anthem. (If you don't know that song, it's available on YouTube).

"Thanks to Malory and all the OVS staff for a wonderful weekend."

Upper 1987

This moving testimonial came in from **Dr. Hillary A. French, PsyD**: "Interesting enough, I asked to go to boarding school. I knew internally that I would not be able to escape what surrounded me in my peer group; such as substance use, low grades/motivation, and parental opposition. I wasn't there yet, but I was headed there. What I didn't realize at that time was that I didn't just need great school; I needed someone to believe in me, someone who would see the woman I could become and who could foster my potential. That was Carl Cooper.

"As my history teacher, Carl pushed me academically; knowing I had a keen ability to excel when I saw myself as a below average student. As a soccer coach, he saw my skills as a player and leader, and made me the captain of the girls' team when I didn't feel worthy or good enough.

"As assistant headmaster, he held me accountable, even when I resisted that. This was particularly true when he had a list of about 20 students who had been sneaking out to smoke cigarettes. He told the student body that he had a list of names of those involved and that those who came in and admitted it would have fewer consequences. No one knew if for sure we were on Carl's 'so-called' list. There was much debate about whether we should turn ourselves in and what the consequences of that would be. What if he didn't even have such a list? Yet I knew what I had to do--what I felt obligated to do--and what was the right choice for me.



"I walked into Carl's office and admitted I was one of the smoking crew. I remember how anxious I was. He was quiet for a bit, smiled, looked up, and then said, 'I know, Hillary, and I also knew you would come in and admit it.'"

"What I know now is that Carl saw a potential in me that I didn't see in myself. He saw this young lady before him, struggling with low self-worth and deep insecurities, and he took ample opportunities to teach her that she was a strong, smart, capable person. I can honestly say that Carl has been the most influential person in my life. He was tough on me because he knew I had it in me to do well. It is Carl who paved my path, allowing me to be where I am today, 30 years later.

"As a clinical psychologist, I specialize in at-risk teens, many of whom remind me of myself at that age. I can only hope that I, too, can make the same impact on these teens' lives as Coop has made on mine. I am beyond grateful for what you gave to me, Carl; I always will be. Thank you for believing in me, when I didn't believe in myself."

7 Kareleen (Hunt) Basch is a maternal health advocate and co-founder of www.wearemothergood.org, which helps moms overcome birth trauma. After attending Alumni Weekend, she sent OVS the following note:

"What a beautiful weekend and tribute to Mr. Carl Cooper. Mr. Cooper, thank you so much for being a motivating, encouraging parent and a teacher to us all. For those who were unable to attend, it was quite an auspicious familial event. It was truly heartwarming to see my classmates, Eric Swenson (so thrilled you flew out from NY!), Hillary French, Weber Wang, Tamar (Wyman) Swan, Nan Davis, Rob Davis, and Nancy Drier. To the newer alumni: after your ten-year reunion, you will realize time does go by in a blink of an eye.

"Craig Floyd, congratulations on your new position. I am sure your first year will be amazingly prosperous! It was wonderful to see so many former/staff members, such as Lisa and John Boyd, Mr. Andersen, Mr. Dinkins, Mrs. Oberlander, Ms. Erica Thuro, and many others. My husband, Andrew, my son, and twin girls enjoyed the horses, the leap of faith, and the ropes course. It was such an honor to be your class rep with Weber Wang. I had such a fabulous catching up with all of you, whether via email or phone.

"Thank you again for an inspirational weekend! To Mr. Cooper: enjoy your retirement!"

Upper 1989

Matt Weiss was recently promoted to Senior VP of Sales at OtterBox. He and his wife, Amy, still live in southern California with their kids, Cameron (17), Delaney (14) and Griffin (8). When they aren't supporting their kids in their adventures, Matt and Amy enjoy traveling as a family and spending time in Mammoth, where all three kids have raced on the ski team.

"Congratulations to Mr. Cooper on an amazing career!" writes Matt.

Upper 1998

Congratulations to **Dana Rice** on the birth of her second child, a daughter named Laila Truvillia, who was born on March 21 of this year.

Dana and family live in Hayward. She works for an insurance company nearby in San Mateo.

Upper 2000

Dumi J Mhlanga stays quite busy but wanted to reach out to Carl Cooper on the occasion of his retirement. She writes this: "First and foremost, I would like to thank you, Mr. Cooper, and the OVS family not only for providing me with an unmatched life experience during my time there, but also for exceeding expectations to help me when my life turned upside down during my senior year.

"It is because of that support that I was able to come back from the brink of the abyss I'd found myself in and positively impact the lives of countless other youths.

"As a professional youth worker, I've specialized in working with children for more than a decade now. I have worked as a mentor/life coach as well as built and run Re:charge Youth, one of the most successful youth projects in The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (where I currently reside) in England. I am also currently the manager of a busy arts centre and am currently negotiating my first Hollywood film production deal for one of my screenplays. One of the UK's top book agents is interested in representing me as an author.

"I share with young people my passion for the arts and am currently running a project called Digi Den, where I teach multimedia in workshop-style sessions. These young people are able to work individually or in groups on projects of their choosing ranging from stop motion, green screen filming, podcasting, comic-book making, and many other options.

"My years at OVS have their place among my happiest memories, and I often find myself talking about how happy I'd be to do what I do now, there (at Upper or Lower)."



Patrick Staffler expressed heartfelt appreciation for Carl Cooper. He reminisced about the lessons his former headmaster had taught him:

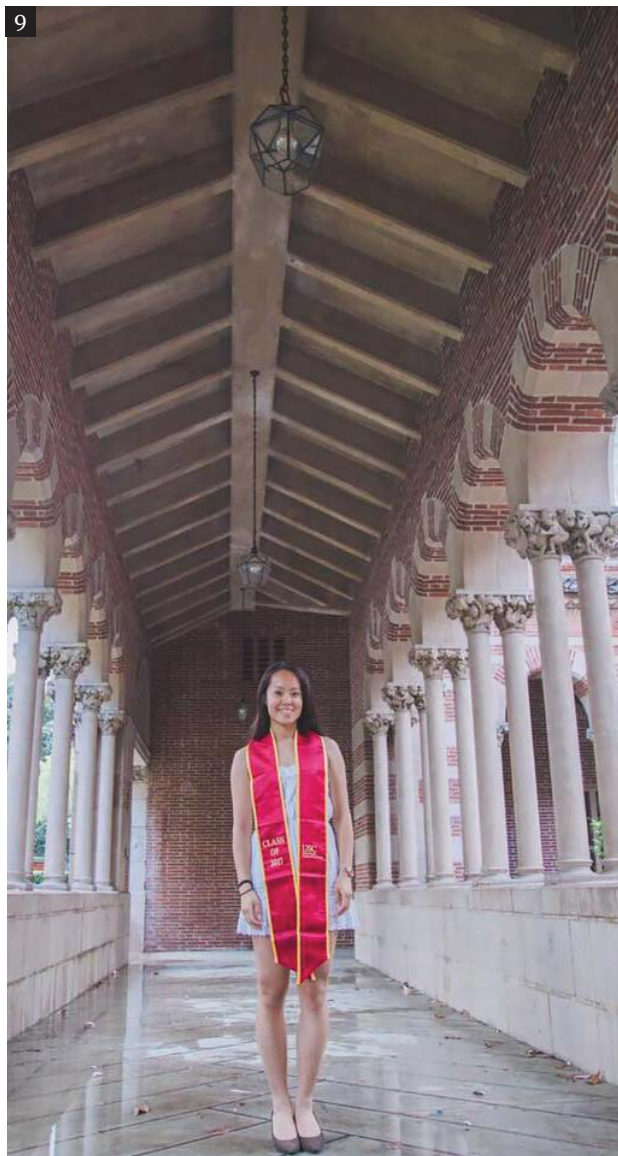
"[Mr. Cooper taught me] there isn't just one answer to this adventure that we are on, and that, instead of assuming there can only be one way, why not challenge that notion to see how far we can reach? He wanted me to take more risks than the path most often travelled offered.

"Being open, being aware, and allowing ourselves the opportunity to have additional questions was and is the goal. Mr. Cooper always supported the spirit that allowed students to work as a collective group, but he never lost sight of our individuality. The goal was to build upon who we were and what we thought in order to maximize our potential. It was as if he knew what was inside each of us but needed to help us see it in our own way.

"Carl, you have created a legacy. You deserve the utmost credit for what you have accomplished, and I am honored to have shared some of those years with you. I want to wish you a very happy retirement and send you congratulations for all you have done for me and countless others. I wish you and Jody the very best wherever your own adventures may lead you. Without a doubt, your impact on OVS will be everlasting. I am grateful for all you have done to help me shape my life and who I am. The truth is that I can't ever thank you enough. My very best to you, Carl."

Upper 2006

Congratulations to **Koji Horota**, who graduated with a Ph.D. in bioengineering from the University of California, Riverside, Bourns College of Engineering.



Upper 2007

8 The class of 2007 celebrated their 10-year class reunion at Alumni Weekend this past June. Pictured are **Rosanna Wang** (right) and her guest Danielle (left) and **Tessa Ente** (center). Rosanna marveled, "We used to come here during high school all the time and I can't believe it's been 10 years since graduation!! Time flies, so be sure to enjoy every moment!"

Upper 2012

9 **Reika Kijima** (see page 52)

10 **Henry Mooney** will be submitting the final draft of his master's thesis at the end of August, then moving back to California in October. Henry is studying Renewable Energy at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.



Upper 2013

11 Polina Dermenzhi recently received her degree in Hotel Management at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She is currently a Manager in Training at The Beverly Hills Hotel.

12 Congratulations to **Taylor Aronow**, who recently graduated from Chapman University with honors and got a bachelor's degree in integrated educational studies with a double minor in disability studies and leadership studies and an emphasis in early childhood development. Taylor will be pursuing a master's degree in leadership development at Chapman.

13 Well done, **William Yuan**, who recently graduated from Northeastern University with a bachelor's degree in business administration. "Through four years studying, I have finished dual concentrations: 1) Entrepreneurship and New Venture Management, and 2) Management Information System," explains William. He will be starting a master's program at JHU, studying Healthcare Management."

14 Congratulations to **Miles Munding-Becker** (L09, U13) and **Jesse Clapoff** (L09, U13) for their recent graduation from the University of Redlands. Jesse graduated with a BA in Economics and landed a job with RT Specialty, which is a wholesale insurance company. Miles studied Environmental Science and is currently backpacking through Europe.

Upper 2015

15 Iris Hou recently transferred to Irvine Valley College and is studying marketing, Spanish, and digital design.

16 Claire Wickenhaeuser is pursuing a degree in geology and environmental science that took her rock hunting in Hawaii, Colorado and California this past year. She recently started volunteering at the Channel Islands National Park Visitors Center in Ventura, where she enjoys leading tide pool talks and working with the park rangers. She is currently teaching two earth science classes, Project Wild and Going Green, at OVS Summer Camp. They call her Miss Wick, and describe her as "thoughtful, intelligent and adventurous!"



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If your son/daughter no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please notify the Alumni Office of his/her new mailing address at (805) 640-2578 or alumni@ovs.org



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OVS GALA AND AUCTION

Thank you to the alumni, parents, grandparents, and friends of OVS who attended the 4th annual OVS Gala and Auction. It is with sincere appreciation that we thank you for your generous support, your community spirit, and your positive regard for the value of the quality education at Ojai Valley School.

Mark your calendars for the 5th Annual Gala and Auction on May 5, 2018!

