



Family Tree

2018

A magazine for the extended family of Ojai Valley School



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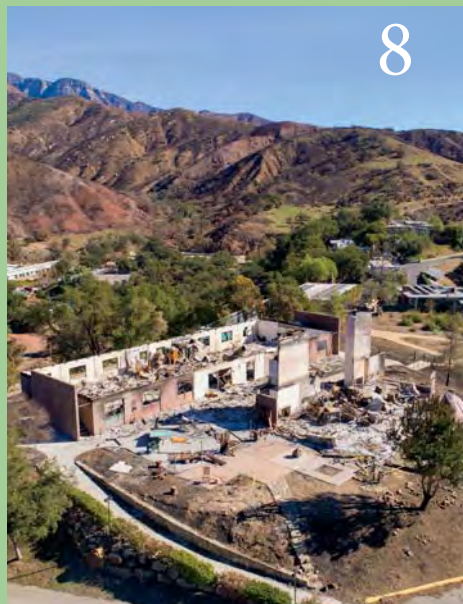
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8



WHAT WE FOUND

Post-Thomas Fire feature by
Avery Colborn (L16, U20)

4 From the Archives

5 Message from
the President

6 Campaign Update

11 Bridging the Gap

12 2018 Gala & Auction

16 Upper Campus Head
of School Message

16 Senior Bios

22 Upper Campus
Major Awards

14



GRADUATION 2018

Upper & Lower Campus
photos, awards & more

24 Upper Campus
Graduation Photos

26 Lower Campus Head
of School Message

27 Lower Campus
Major Awards

28 Lower Campus
Graduation Photos

30 Carol Hall-Mounsey
& Craig Floyd Profiles

33 Poetry Contest &
Journalism Competition

34 Outdoor
Education Update

36 Equestrians in
Portugal

37 Baseball &
Performing Arts

42



ME, YOU AND PERU

by Catherine Larkin (L18, U22)
and Lilli Trompke (U19)

38 Hands on the
Land Grant

39 College News

46 Neil Marcus Profile

48 Pons Dinner

49 Senior-to-Alumni
Dinner

50 Alumni Weekend
Photos

53 Founder's Alumni
Award: Tony Thacher

54 Alumni Notes

59 In Memoriam



Ojai Valley School dedicated the Grace Hobson Smith House on May 13, 1967.

FROM THE ARCHIVES — REMEMBERING GRACE HOBSON SMITH HOUSE

By Tracy Wilson, Director of Admission and Advancement

In the spring of 1967, Ojai Valley School dedicated a gleaming new building at its fledgling high school campus: the Grace Hobson Smith House.

Perched at the westernmost edge of campus, on a hillside once carpeted with sagebrush, the two-story dormitory for girls was named for beloved benefactor Grace Hobson Smith, mother and grandmother of OVS graduates. The dorm embraced the modern mid-century architectural style of the time with its flat roof, concrete-block façade, large glass windows, and common area that blended the indoors with the outdoors.

The new dorm matched the OVS philosophy, embracing the scenic beauty of the Ojai Valley with its expansive views.

In *A Thread to Hold, The Story of Ojai Valley School*, by Patricia Fry, alumnus Leslie Jones (U67) described the dorm as follows: "The building was beautiful, the rooms were convenient, the bathrooms were big enough to accommodate ten girls at once, more or less, and the downstairs common room with its kitchenette was perfect for Sunday brunch or a Saturday night movie, a fashion show or a girls-only party."

In those early days at the Upper Campus, students were challenged academically, socially, and personally. They were pioneers of a young high school, and they developed a closeness and camaraderie that, for many, continues to this day.

"The life was sometimes difficult," Ms. Jones recalled, "sometimes exasperating, often fun and almost always interesting and certainly, finally, wholly satisfying."

In the past 50 years, roughly 2,000 resident girls have lived in Grace Hobson

Smith House. Thirty-six residents evacuated on the evening of December 4, 2017, as the Thomas Fire threatened. The next morning the fire destroyed the dorm, and other buildings on campus.

The loss of Grace Hobson Smith House devastated alumni and current students.

"It's hard to believe that this place, the home of so many people I love so dearly is gone without warning and without mercy," junior Lilli Trompke (U19) wrote in the days after the fire. "I wish I could have taken more. I wish I could've taken the entire dorm."

Today, the dusty hillside where Grace Hobson Smith House stood is cleared of debris and ready for the next chapter in OVS history. Architect Frederick Fisher and his team are working at high speed to finish schematic designs for a new dorm, plans for a new academic center to replace the burned Lucila Arango Science and Technology Center, as well as a new Student Commons. Resident girls will live in temporary dorms, nicknamed "The Village," on campus for the coming year.

Joy Lazo and Lew Dowdy, parents of rising senior Wendy Lazo-Dowdy (L15, U19), were among the 200-plus volunteers who helped set up The Village and prep the campus before the start of the second semester in January. Wendy later participated in two vision workshops with the architects, who have sought feedback from students,

parents, alumni and faculty members.

"Rebuilding in the aftermath of the Thomas Fire, the OVS community has become even stronger and more close-knit than it already was," the Lazo-Dowdys wrote in a recent email. "Because it is truly 'more about the people than the buildings,' OVS has risen like the proverbial phoenix and is launching our daughter into a soaring future. We couldn't be more grateful."

Rising senior Caroline Morrow (L15, U19) echoed the sentiments of alumna Leslie Jones in an article she wrote or the student newspaper, *On The Hill*, after the fire.

"The most important thing about OVS is the relentlessly united community," she wrote. "All the memories that I thought I'd lost are still here. For even though the quant brick building that held my life for the past two and half years is gone, the relationships and laughs I had there will never burn away."



In 1968, the girls' softball team, with Coach Sharyle Call, took a group picture in front of the new dorm.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

An oak tree grows to a certain point, and then nothing visibly happens. It appears dormant. But what we can't see is that the root system is reaching down, pulling in nutrients and establishing a healthy footing before we see its foliage begin.

Right now, Ojai Valley School, like the oak tree that serves as its symbol, is putting down roots and building a solid base in anticipation of new growth that soon will be visible for all to see.

This growth will be most evident at the Upper Campus where in the coming year we will rebuild the academic and residential buildings that were destroyed in the Thomas Fire. We will rebuild better than before, and take the opportunity to simultaneously construct the long-awaited Student Commons, a two-story dining hall, kitchen and library complex that will be second to none.

In the aftermath of the devastating Thomas Fire, we have the rare opportunity to rebuild in a manner that accentuates our identity, our connection to the outdoors, and our sense of community, while also innovating and enhancing our academic, co-curricular and residential programs, thus elevating OVS to a leadership position among independent schools globally.

But opportunities are only realized by taking action – and I'm thrilled to report that we are now on our way thanks to the generous gift of \$1 million to our rebuilding campaign by the Aramont Foundation.

Alumna and past parent Lucila Arango (U84), as trustee of the Foundation, stepped forward this summer and secured this lead gift to inspire others to join in our campaign and to ensure that our dormitory, science and technology center, and commons are built together to truly create a new heart and hub of campus life. (Learn about Luci and her support of OVS in an article in the forthcoming issue of our Family Tree magazine, or click here for the online version.)

Los Angeles-based architect Fred Fisher, a current parent, and his architectural team are developing designs for the new Aramont Science and Technology Center, the Grace Hobson Smith House dormitory, and the new Student Commons. Those designs will be shared in September and we will have updates and exciting plans to share throughout the fall.

For now, I encourage all our alumni, past parents, new parents, students and faculty to join in our campaign to rebuild. Volunteer. Make a donation or a multi-year pledge. Or learn more about the RESTORE RENEW REBUILD effort by contacting our Development Office at (805) 646-1423 or through the new



campaign website at www.campaign.ovs.org.

I also invite you to join us on September 21 for a benefit concert at the Upper Campus featuring Marley's Ghost, the folk band of alumnus Ed Littlefield (U67), also a longtime and generous supporter of OVS. The concert will be held in the Carl S. Cooper Amphitheater and celebrate our past, present, and future.

In the resilient spirit of OVS, the entire school community near and far made a commitment to reopen after the fire and continue the academic program from right where it was interrupted. This determination was strongly supported by an immediate outpouring of generous contributions from alumni of every era, as well as parents and friends.

Our oak tree is ready to sprout new branches and foliage thanks to the generosity of our OVS family! we look forward to working together to provide an even better student experience for generations to come!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hall-Mounsey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael J. Hall-Mounsey
President/CEO

Campaign Update



Thomas Fire Rebuild

By Tracy Wilson
Director of Admission and Advancement

The Aramont Foundation has donated \$1 million dollars to support the visionary plans to rebuild the Upper Campus after the devastating Thomas Fire. Alumna and former parent Lucila Arango (U84), as trustee of foundation, was instrumental in bringing about the donation.

The December fire destroyed her namesake The Lucila Arango Science and Technology Center as well as Grace Hobson Smith House, the girls' dormitory where Ms. Arango lived as a high school student. The loss of both buildings devastated students, faculty, and alumni — including Ms. Arango, who felt compelled to step forward and help launch the rebuilding campaign.

"When the fire happened it was a time for many of us to really evaluate what the school meant to us," Ms.

Arango said. "It was a home to so many of us and to see it burned to ground was really devastating.

"For me, the school changed my life, and changed my kids' lives," she continued, "and I wanted to do what I could to rebuild." "OVS changes student's lives, including my children's and mine. I wanted to do what I could to help rebuild, so future students can get the benefit of the OVS experience."

Ms. Arango and her family's The Aramont Foundation have been longtime supporters of the school. They were lead donors to the science and technology center build in 2004, and are now once again stepping forward to provide students with a spacious, modern, and innovative academic classroom complex that will support its burgeoning science and technology curriculum.



The Restore Renew Rebuild Campaign for Ojai Valley School is underway! In the coming year, we hope to secure the lead gifts and pledges to fund restoration of two signature buildings devastated by the Thomas Fire and pave the way for a new Student Commons to expand and improve facilities at the Upper Campus.

From the ashes of the fire, we will rebuild in a way that is more sustainable and architecturally cohesive — giving students modern academic, residential and dining facilities that celebrate the spirit of innovation and love of the outdoors that sets Ojai Valley School apart.

Learn more at campaign.ovs.org

"We want to rebuild as fast as we can and get it right for the students of the future," said school President/CEO Michael J. Hall-Mounsey. "This will happen, and this gift is just magnificent. It's confident, it's bold."

As envisioned, The Aramont Foundation Science and Technology Center, as it will be known, will house new laboratories for chemistry, biology, and physics. There will also be a dedicated Makerspace and robotics lab, a lecture hall, seminar room, two computer labs, a media arts studio, and courtyard, as well as dedicated faculty workspace and lab preparation area.

The Aramont Center will be rebuilt on the site of the former headmaster's residence, directly south of Wallace Burr Hall, creating a central academic corridor that will become the heart of the campus. The head's house will be relocated to the east end of campus.

At the same time, the school plans to rebuild Grace Hobson Smith House in the footprint of the former dorm to house up to 52 residents. The new dorm complex will provide resident students with modern, comfortable housing that embraces the school's connection to the outdoors,

with a modest expansion of housing units for students and resident staff.

The campaign will also pave the way for the Student Commons, a new two-story dining hall and student center that will create — for the first time — a place for the entire student body to gather for meals and special events. The Commons will include a kitchen and server, indoor and outdoor dining areas, and a mezzanine student lounge. It will also include a second-story library and business center with expansive views of the Ojai Valley.

With support from the Aramont Foundation and other donors, the school aims to begin construction during the 2019-2020 school year.

All three building projects are being designed by architect Frederick Fisher, a current OVS parent, and his partners. The team is moving quickly to complete a building plan that is environmentally and architecturally cohesive — giving students modern academic, residential and dining facilities that celebrate the spirit of innovation and love of the outdoors that set Ojai Valley School apart.

Ms. Arango participated in one of the spring visioning workshops that Fisher's team led at the high school

to gather input from students, teachers, alumni and parents. She said she was impressed with Mr. Fisher and the care being taken to rebuild in a way that embraces the school's character, tradition, and programs.

"I think Fred Fisher is brilliant," she said, "I'm very happy to see that school and the Board [of Trustees] is going with his design. He is really going to carry a vision for the school."

Ms. Arango moved to Ojai in 2006. Her two sons, Paul (U11) and Evan (L08, U11) both attended OVS. Paul now works in the tech field, developing video games and web comics. Evan is pursuing a law degree at UCLA.

Ms. Arango served for nearly a decade on the OVS Board of Trustees. She was also among the nearly 200 volunteers who came out on January 5 and 6 to prepare the campus to reopen for the start of the second semester. Both avid rock climbers, she and Evan spent the day scaling the steep hillside south of Burr Hall to plant new landscaping and beautify the campus before students returned.

"I loved that," she said of the work days. "It's about feeling part of the school, and the land, volunteering — and getting your hands dirty."

WHAT WE FOUND

By Avery Colborn (L16, U20)

IN MID-MAY, OVS past parent and current development associate Jane McClenahan walked into the Admissions Office with a gift: a small, green-framed piece of paper, its edges ragged and charred.

Mrs. McClenahan and her daughter, Laurinda (L84, U88), found the paper scrap at the Upper Campus while walking to lunch on one of the January volunteer work days organized to prepare the school for reopening following the devastation wrought by the Thomas Fire.

From afar, the paper appeared torched, insignificant.

But remarkably, upon closer inspection, it turned out to be so much more. Inscribed on the potato-shaped paper, in silver lettering that somehow remained untouched by flames, was the end of a verse from the first book of Corinthians in the Bible: "...these three but the greatest of these is love."

The full verse concludes what is commonly known as the Love Chapter in Corinthians: "And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

The scrap of paper, framed by Mrs. McClenahan, now sits on the desk of OVS Director of Advancement and Admission Tracy Wilson, who is on the frontlines of the campaign to rebuild the Upper Campus.

"When we think of what we lost," Ms. Wilson said, "how incredible is it that this testament to the gift of love was one of the small items that survived."

More than half a year has passed since the Thomas Fire tore through the Ojai Valley, leaving devastation and loss in its wake. The blaze would grow to



become one of the largest wildfires in California history and destroy more than 1,000 structures — including the science and technology center and the girls' dorm at Upper Campus.

But even with all of the destruction, much managed to survive — mementos of what was and what remains, many of which have presented themselves in various, sometimes baffling ways.

Below the hill, some of what survived was turned into art.

As the Thomas Fire breached the perimeter of the Upper Campus and started doing damage, the flames burned so hot that pieces of machinery were liquefied and transformed into rivers of shiny metal.

As those pieces cooled and hardened, they became emblems of a sort, a testament to what was and what remained. They were also quite beautiful, and several pieces are now displayed throughout both campuses, including a large silver hunk of what was previously part of a lawn mower that now graces the entrance to the new walkway that connects the pool and the amphitheater at the Upper Campus.

On top of the hill, even more was discovered. Take the Peace Bench, for example.

The senior gift from the Class of 1971, the thick, wooden bench — decorated with carvings and a cut out of a peace sign — rested only a few feet from the girls' dorm, overlooking the oak-studded valley. The girls' dorm burned at temperatures well over 1,000 degrees, but somehow the bench escaped unscathed.

The same goes for the sign on Grace Hobson Smith House. The sign hung near the entrance to the girls' dorm, directly on the brick wall that formed the east perimeter of the building. The fire incinerated almost everything, but the sign came through untouched.

"There are things that survived that absolutely shouldn't have survived," said Head of School Craig Floyd (U83) as he recalled what was left after the fire. "And for whatever stroke of luck, they're still here."

The ceramics studio, or at least some of what was inside of it, proved to be another unexpected survivor. Even though the fire tore straight through the building, artwork from both stu-



dents and faculty was found singed, but undamaged.

Spanish teacher Gretchen Stevens had several ceramic pieces in the works at the studio when the flames swept through.

"I lost a lot of things in the fire, so I was resigned to this idea that there was nothing but loss," Ms. Stevens said. "When the news came that these things survived, especially knowing that the fire actually touched the bowls, I was happy, incredibly happy."

Ceramics teacher Jody Cooper (L71,

U74) said it made sense some of the work survived. Many of those pieces had already been bisque fired in the kiln at 1,960 degrees, so it stood to reason that they would make it through another round of flames. Anything that had not previously been fired, however, was lost.

What did surprise Mrs. Cooper was her discovery that an item of much more sentimental and personal value to her had also survived: black outlined images of dancing bears that represented her son's favorite band, the Grateful Dead.

"My son is a 'Deadhead,'" Mrs. Cooper explained, "and he is passing on his love for their music to everyone he can, including Finley [Nate's son], by playing it all the time."

Before the fire, Mrs. Cooper had used the images of the bears as a design to make plates for Nate, Finley, and their friends who share the same love for the Grateful Dead. But since they were printed on paper, and kept in the ceramics studio, it was likely they would have burned.

Miraculously they survived with little damage, only sustaining burn marks around the edges of the pages. They were later found by Assistant Head of School Laurel Colborn, who framed and gifted them back to Mrs. Cooper.

One more miracle unfolded. On a pole outside of the front office, the American flag flew during the fire and in the days afterward. After returning to campus to assess the damage, Mr. Floyd saw the flag — torn, scorched and knotted — waving proudly, even protectively over the hill. It was reminiscent of a previous tragic event in history.

"The flag at OVS, much like the one the firefighters found and put up at the Twin Towers on 9/11, is a real testament to the spirit of our community," Mr. Floyd recalled. "To see how torn up that thing is, and partially singed and braided, you just realized how terrible that day was. But to see it still standing there, it was pretty inspirational."

The charred flag now resides in Mr. Floyd's office, waiting to be framed, alongside the Grace Hobson Smith sign, which will find a new home in the rebuilt girls' dorm.

Drawings, lawn mowers, a flag, a bench, a sign — they are everyday items that have taken on poignant meaning in the wake of the Thomas Fire and serve as symbols of how the school itself survived.

"Enough burned to make us take stock of everything, enough survived to allow us to stay open and do what we did," Mr. Floyd said. "That's pretty impressive."

And just like the scrap of paper, with faith, hope and love, we're still standing — stronger than ever.



Lost and found: Mrs. McClenahan holds the scrap of paper she found at the Upper Campus in early January. In the midst of hundreds of volunteers working so hard to get the campus ready for students to return, it became a powerful metaphor representing the possibility of good coming from tragedy.



BRIDGING THE GAP

By Caroline Morrow (L15, U19)

EIGHTH GRADERS BUILD NEW BRIDGE, ONE-SCHOOL SPIRIT, WITH 2018 CLASS GIFT

On June 1, graduating seniors at Ojai Valley School each crossed a monumental bridge between their high school days and the wider world that awaited them.

But before they shook hands with Upper Campus Head of School Craig Floyd and received their diplomas, they each crossed a different bridge to get there: a newly constructed footbridge connecting the pool area to the amphitheater stage.

The new bridge was largely constructed by eighth graders from the Lower Campus as part of a project proposed by the Eighth Grade Committee, a group that puts on dances and facilitates the class gift every year in conjunction with Lower Campus Head of School Gary Gartrell.

After the Thomas Fire destroyed the previous bridge, members of the Eighth Grade Committee thought a new bridge would be a perfect contribution to the Upper Campus.

"We chose [this project] because it would be helpful to the Upper Campus," said Eighth Grade Committee member Alex Alvarez, who will attend the Upper Campus next year. "It symbolizes the bridge from middle to high school and unites the campuses, reminding us that we are one school."

In order for the project to come to fruition, many people had to work together to make it happen. Mr. Gartrell first had to ask Mr. Floyd if this project was something the eighth graders could do. Then,

they need help constructing it.

Santiago Soriano, a member of the maintenance crew, was kind enough to help create the foundation, installing the framework and constructing the stairway.

That made the work easier for the eighth graders, who on Wednesdays during the spring came up in different groups to finish off construction. While it might seem like a small feat to some, the work the eighth graders put in holds much deeper meaning.

"It means a lot that they're thinking of the Upper Campus," Mr. Floyd said. "The past several years we've done a lot of work to try to build that one school relationship. To have the eighth grade want to become more involved with things that happen up here is huge."

Their work was showcased on June

1 when the senior class began their graduation procession by walking down the steps of the newly finalized bridge, as some of the eighth graders who helped build the bridge sat watching in the audience.

The bridge will stand as a symbol of strength and unity between the OVS campuses, and many of the eighth graders, who will be returning as freshmen in the fall, will see their hard work proudly displayed for years to come.

"Seeing the seniors walk down the bridge made me feel like I contributed to the campus that I will be attending next year," Alex Alvarez said. "It also made me excited for my future at the Upper Campus because I know in 2022 I will get to walk across the bridge I built with my eighth grade class."





Gala Raises Funds for Capital Campaign to Rebuild Upper Campus

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the more than 200 alumni, parents, faculty and friends who attended our 5th annual OVS Gala and Auction. Together, we raised more than \$121,000 and launched our Campaign for Ojai Valley School following the devastating Thomas Fire. Thank you to all the participants who raised their paddles in support of rebuilding the Grace Hobson Smith House, the Lucila Arango Science and Technology Center, along with the new Student Commons. Contributions to the auction's Fund-a-Need alone raised \$85,300.

With a pink sunset stretching across the valley, it was a beautiful night to gather with friends and support the school. We would also like to again extend our gratitude to our guests of honor: Tony McHale (L79), Captain, Ventura County Fire De-

partment; Anthony Williams, Assistant Chief, Los Angeles County Fire Department; and John McNeil, Division Chief, Ventura County Fire Department.

They were more than first responders. From the moment the fire broke out, they were our eyes and ears to what was happening – communicating with us about how best to protect the students and the campus. Our community, including our horses, were safely evacuated and out of harm's way when the fire swept up the canyon, and if not for their leadership and the valiant efforts of their agencies and fire crews, we would have suffered far greater damage.

Our sincere thanks for a wonderful community event and campaign kick-off! Mark your calendars for the 6th Annual Gala on May 4, 2019.



Clockwise from top left: OVS President/CEO Michael Hall-Mounsey recognized honored guests, firefighters John McNeil, Tony McHale (L79), and Anthony Williams; The statue of a horse was erected in honor of the firefighters and all the volunteers who helped restore the campus after the fire; Current parent Michael Nostrant, left, gets a cheer from the crowd after winning in hard-fought live auction item; The Gala concluded with dancing under the stars; Current parent Sun Tong; Lower Campus Head of School Gary Gartrell with past parent Nancy Marcus.

Go OVS!



Class of 2018





Head of School Message

By Craig Floyd — *Head of School, Upper Campus*

Thirty-five years ago, I stood on this stage giving the welcome speech for my graduation. The year was 1983 and I do not remember much from that graduation except for some of what Headmaster Dok Smith (L62, U65) said about me. In regards to winning the Robert G. Cooper Headmaster's Award, which recognizes the senior who showed the most growth during his or her senior year, jokingly he said: "He did grow a few inches this year." On a more serious note, before presenting my diploma, he dramatically recounted the final out pitched that baseball season.

At that time, I never thought my life journey would lead me back to this stage, to be standing here today addressing you at my first graduation as Head of School.

A year ago, my youngest son, who was a soon-to-be graduating senior, asked if I had any pictures from my younger years of camping at OVS. I knew just the box where those pictures were stored, and together, as we sifted through those memories, we came across a scrapbook from my senior year at OVS. In the scrapbook was my welcome speech from graduation. As I read it, I realized how much is still the same 35 years later. In my speech, I referred to the OVS community as a family that supports one another, endures through challenges, and celebrates its successes. While I did not remember that speech until that day I found it, the feelings I held as a student still resonate today.

In March 2015, I was appointed to be the next Head of School of the Upper Campus. That spring, I decided to begin writing my first graduation speech as I realized it would be best not to procrastinate. The idea that came to mind was how today is a day of change, yet how so little has changed of the core values of this school we love so much.

The students at OVS are like brothers and sisters to each other. The teachers serve as parents, or aunts and uncles. This is as true today as it was when I was a student. And like me, the students behind me have grown up during their time here at OVS, some starting as pre-kindergartners at Lower Campus. They have sup-

ported one another, endured through challenges, and celebrated successes. They are now ready for a change from OVS, which starts today. The school philosophy embraces educating the whole child. The school has done that for these students.

This past year they have gone camping, studied, competed on the sports field, studied, performed on stage, created beautiful art, completed the college application process, studied, and prepared for this day. But while they prepared for much, these seniors learned what is perhaps one of life's most valuable lessons: you can't prepare for everything.

No one was fully prepared for the impact that the Thomas Fire would have on this campus. The OVS community rallied around the recovery effort. One goal was to re-open school without impacting programs. Another goal was to ensure this class of seniors would graduate in this amphitheater. Through the volunteerism of current students, faculty, parents, the Board of Trustees, alumni, and friends of the school, those goals have been reached.

In the aftermath of the fire, these students have shown great resilience, demonstrating leadership for their younger peers, and exemplifying grit and determination to make the second semester a time of learning, exploration and fun. The Upper Campus is where these seniors made memories, and while facilities will change through the rebuilding process, they will still be able to call OVS home when they leave this stage.

If there is one thing I know about this group behind me, it is that they are ready. They have learned the academic and life skills to be successful in college, and beyond. They know how to manage their time, do their laundry, get involved in their community, advocate for themselves, and make smart choices. They are prepared, they have the tools, and they have each other.

What will never change is that these students will always be part of our family; they will always be connected to each other, even if they no longer see each other or talk to each other every day. I know this, because, like you, I left this stage after graduation, but the relationships I made at OVS have stayed with me and I'm confident they will for you as well.



Celeste Addison - University of San Francisco

In so many ways, Celeste is just hitting her stride as a student in the classroom and of the world at large. She did plenty with her time at Ojai Valley School: loyal member of the knitting club and fierce defender on the soccer pitch. Dedicated restorer of Channel Islands habitat and proud keeper of the Veteran's Day tradition of planting American flags at the local cemetery. She is a budding filmmaker (you must see her Capstone project, a hilarious rendition of life in an OVS classroom) and award-winning Spanish and AP Environmental Science student. But for Celeste, you get the feeling that high school was just the warm up, and that the main act is about to unfold in the Bay Area and the world beyond the hill where she worked and played these past four years. She is poised to take on all that comes her way, having developed clarity of purpose and a true understanding of what it takes to get the job done.

Senior Bios

Clara Addison - Cal Lutheran University

There's a true activist - a titanic life changer - emerging from this diminutive but dynamic graduate. Maybe that is because of the wide world Clara has been exposed to in her extensive travels, or maybe it's due to her innate curiosity for figuring out why the world works as it does. Whatever the reason, you get the sense from Clara that she is driven by a moral imperative: that there is a clear right and a clear wrong, and that we should all be striving to do what is just. She wrote about this ideology in her college essay, lamenting the loss of her native Mayan culture and the need for people - especially those, like her, born elsewhere and raised in this land of plenty - to connect with their roots. She gushed about this ideal after having just watched, at her sister's college graduation, farm worker activist Dolores Huerta take the stage and champion the rights of immigrants and the poor and people of color. In that speech, Huerta asked the audience: Who has the power to make change? Clara knows the answer to the question and there's no doubt change will begin with her.



Joy Campbell - UCLA

Of all the lessons Joy learned in her time on The Hill, perhaps the greatest can be summed up by one of her favorite characters in her beloved Harry Potter series. With Voldemort's return in the Goblet of Fire, Hagrid tells Harry: "What's comin' will come, an' we'll meet it when it does." And so it came at Joy these past four years, challenges she could not have imagined when she started as a freshman. Tough courses to be sure, but she handled those as we expected, putting in work and unleashing a keen intellect that was recognized on graduation day when she was named the outstanding scholar of the senior class. But the challenges came in other ways as well. On the cross country course and the soccer pitch. On long backpacking trips and in nerve-wracking presentations such as her senior Capstone project. In journalism competitions and in the chaos of the college application process, which produced acceptances in great numbers from so many top-flight schools. Joy attacked it all with the cunning of her favorite heroine, Harry Potter's Hermione, working hard while being unapologetically herself. And through it all, she reminded us that fearing the future only harms our present.



Liam Castagna - UC Santa Barbara

With the soul of an artist, the heart of an athlete and the brainpower of a brain surgeon, Liam could very well be the most versatile student in the senior class. He was a workhorse in the classroom, taking nearly a dozen honors and Advanced Placement classes in everything from Biology to Statistics. He was an outstanding athlete, making mighty contributions to the soccer program while also developing individual interests in swimming, lifeguarding and resistance training, putting in hours in the gym to improve body and mind. He helped launch a garage band at the Upper Campus, fueled by the adrenaline rush of live performance. And, on the other end of the spectrum, he dedicated himself to his artwork, spending hours in the solitary practice of applying paint to canvas. But mostly, Liam was a contributor, the kind of student who needed no invitation to get involved. When the pool needed a new heater, Liam organized a swim-a-thon to raise money for the project. When a fellow student set out to raise money to sink wells in drought-ravaged Africa, Liam donated hand-painted holiday notecards to help the cause. Liam's time at OVS was marked by a sense of purpose and a generosity of spirit.



Sunny Chang - Boston University

Sunny was selected by her peers to represent the Senior Class and they couldn't have chosen a better advocate. In her time at Ojai Valley School, Sunny emerged as a compelling spokeswoman for justice and equity in so many arenas, and those ideals guided her work in the classroom and in her school community. In short, Sunny was a doer. Whether it was serving as founding member of the robotics team or an all-important scoring runner for the CIF-qualifying cross country squad, she checked in and did the one thing we ask all OVS students to do - show up and do your best. Sunny's excellence was recognized in many ways. She won several year-end awards in subjects as confounding as Calculus and Computer Science. And in her senior year, the Society of Women Engineers recognized her on a national stage for her impressive accomplishments in the fields of engineering and technology. But perhaps it was her more insular work, her worldview expressed through the lens of a camera, that was most impressive about Sunny's connection to community. A ubiquitous presence at all events OVS, Sunny delivered frame after frame of insight and impression, helping us celebrate the best of who we are.





Sam Desmond - Salt Lake Community College

When the Thomas Fire ravaged the Upper Campus, destroying signature buildings and crucial facilities, Sam didn't wait around to be asked how he could help. He just showed up, rolled up his shirtsleeves and got to work. That's Sam in a nutshell. Incredibly kind and unfailingly generous, he stepped forward to work over the course of a weekend with a small army of volunteers to prepare for the reopening of school for the second semester, barely a month after the blaze. No one who knows Sam well would be surprised by his actions. Really, he is all heart. He demonstrated this on the cross country course, working harder than most to earn a spot on the varsity team that qualified, for the first time in more than a decade, to run at CIF. He demonstrated this in the classroom, where he challenged himself to take tough Advanced Placement and honors classes, not to pad his academic resume but because the courses held answers to questions that had long concerned this deep thinker. Again, that's Sam in a nutshell. He leads by example, valuing honesty and integrity, friendship and community.



Leila Giannetti - George Washington University

Leila could become anything she wants. On graduation day, the Head of School noted, she could easily become a lawyer. Her performance as the best attorney at the year-end mock trial certainly proved that, and anyone who has ever engaged in argument with Leila would certainly second that emotion. In addition to her world-class intellect, Leila possesses singular focus, unflagging determination and boundless talent. You could imagine Leila in a lab coat interpreting the human genome sequence. Or on Broadway belting out show tunes - or at the UN brokering world peace. For some, these accolades would be so much hyperbole. But not so for Leila. In her years at the Upper Campus, she blazed a wide and true path, starring in every musical, taking on multiple leadership positions, and pursuing a program of study aimed at quenching and fueling her academic curiosity. But of all that stands out about Leila, we are particularly drawn to these two anecdotes. When the girls' soccer team was going to be forced to fold for lack of players, Leila recruited athletes to bring the team back to life. And when our high school could not offer girls' softball, Leila simply decided she would play baseball with the boys, matching them hit-for-hit. That's who she is: a go-getter extraordinaire and a model student who always gave her all.



Emma Gustafson - New York University

In her final story for her beloved journalism program, Emma wrote about all of her "lasts." The last time she sat in the library with her friends. The last time she rode her horse. Her last time overseeing the journalism class as editor-in-chief. What she failed to mention, however, was the lasting impression she made at the Upper Campus, especially as a student journalist. A gifted, purposeful writer, Emma crafted an amazing tale over the past four years, emerging as a student leader and a top-notch equestrian during her high school days. But it was in the newsroom where she truly found her voice. In her senior year, Emma served as editor-in-chief of the award-winning OVS journalism crew, overseeing a small team of writers that racked up top prizes in writing competitions, including trophies for the website she managed almost single-handedly during her final year at OVS. Beyond that leadership role, Emma developed a flair for the written word, penning powerful columns on rallies against gun violence and the rebuilding effort at the Upper Campus in the wake of the Thomas Fire. She exercised this gift freely and forcefully during her time at the Upper Campus, and now she is ready to share it with the wider audience that awaits her off the hill. How lucky they are.



Wendy Hang - Boston University

Wendy is wicked smart. As she heads off to college in Boston, she should grow accustomed to the Beantown vernacular, and she should understand how that term applies to her. Arriving to the Upper Campus as a sophomore, Wendy emerged as one of our most curious and accomplished learners, earning perfect grades in all classes during her OVS stay. What's most impressive is that when she first arrived as a student from her native China, her English skills were so shaky she said she could barely understand what her teachers were saying. So, typical of Wendy, she worked through the summer, volunteering at a nonprofit charity to improve her English skills. And it worked. She took and aced a half-dozen AP courses - three of those in her senior year - and participated fully in every facet of OVS life. She was a student leader, a devoted volleyball player, and captain of the OVS robotics team. But it was her devotion to service where Wendy made her biggest mark. If there were laps to walk to raise money to fight cancer or tea to serve at The Ojai tennis tournament or animals to befriend at the local Humane Society shelter, Wendy could be counted on to show up and volunteer her services. And that tells you all you need to know.

Senior Bios

Ellen Hou - Savannah College of Art and Design

Ellen was the first senior to earn a college acceptance, getting her first offer of admission in late October. Many more acceptances would follow, but in the end Ellen decided to attend the school that was the first to ask. That the offer came so quickly is not surprising. For it's likely that SCAD saw in Ellen what we all have known for the past four years: she has a remarkable gift for expression of all kinds. She is a soulful and innovative artist, honored in her junior year as the AP Art Student of the Year. She's a bold and curious adventurer, one who truly connected to the OVS philosophy that holds that the outdoors is merely an extension of the classroom. In her junior year, she was awarded the J.B. Close Award for demonstrating excellence in outdoor education. She was also in her junior year winner of the Sandy Ballou Award for excellence in the equestrian program, the activity that became one of her great loves at the Upper Campus, so much so that a big part of her college choice was about finding the place that would allow her to continue to ride. Talented and motivated, Ellen did not waste time talking about what she did well - she let her actions do all the speaking for her.



Andrew Meng - Southern Methodist University

It would be easy to think of Andrew as simply a basketball player. And to be sure, his dedication to that sport and to his teammates was impressive. He played all four years on the varsity squad, and when he wanted to build in extra practice and bonding time for the players, he organized and essentially coached a practice team that worked out during the fall sports season. He recounts as one of his favorite memories the time he got to spend the summer before his senior year serving as the official translator for basketball legend Shaquille O'Neal as he traveled the Shanghai and Hangzhou regions of China. But to focus on Andrew as a "basketball guy" is to miss the much larger qualities of this jovial and endearing young man. There is perhaps no member of the senior class who made greater strides academically, rising from a young, unfocused freshman to a curious student deeply invested in making the most of his classroom experiences. He made friends easily and was at ease poking fun at himself - we won't soon forget the pillows he handed out in honor of his birthday featuring Andrew in full frame. He's got skills on the court, but he also has developed a new set that will allow him to meet any challenge.



Usmon Mirzoaliev - Hult International Business School

There are the two Usmons. There is the Usmon who is tough as nails, the kid who was one of the top amateur boxers in his native Tajikistan and the one who tracks down opposing soccer players with the precision of a jungle cat. Then there is the other Usmon, the one who plugged into his school community and drew as much voltage as he could. That second Usmon took leadership roles at the school, including serving as the Student Council's athletic representative, captain of the soccer team and dorm representative. He threw himself into community service projects and focused his academic work on meeting his long-term goal of becoming involved in politics or diplomacy in his home country. In that area Usmon appears to have found his academic sweet spot. Teachers note his ability and willingness to add great perspective and definitive opinions to discussions of the world at large, helping to break down cultural barriers and clear up misconceptions about those who emigrate from different parts of the world. Certainly, his worldview will continue to be an asset as he moves toward his goals



Kase Skillern - UC Berkeley

Brilliant in the classroom, a leader in the school community, a tenacious, driven athlete. Kase cut a wide swath in his time on the hill, throwing himself into all things OVS with the urgency of a man quickly running out of time. Indeed, you'd be hard pressed to find a graduate who gave more of himself to the school over the past four years. When major school facilities were destroyed by the Thomas Fire, Kase was among the first to volunteer to help rebuild. When students were needed to walk laps to raise money for cancer awareness, Kase stepped forward to lend his strength and stamina. When runners were needed to help bolster the cross country team, Kase demonstrated just what kind of athlete he is by playing two sports in one season, while helping his fellow runners achieve their first post-season CIF berth in more than a decade. But for all those accolades, it is perhaps a quality not so readily apparent that set Kase apart: the size of his heart. Kase in the end is simply a good guy, the kind of student who goes out of his way to help a peer carry a heavy pack on a long hike or a teacher juggling one too many books. We can think of few qualities more valuable or more true to the OVS spirit.





Jacob Tadlock - Whittier College

Jacob possessed the kind of leadership skills that make him stand out among his peers, leading our school in his senior year as Student Body president, a dorm prefect and a key member of our Leadership Council. In the school garden, on the cross country course, on the student government campaign trail, on outdoor excursions, and in the dorm, his resume served as a testament to his love for his school community, but it also was evidence of the curiosity and commitment he infused into so many of the tasks he took on. Take, for example, the hard weeks and months of focused preparation he put into shaping himself into the best runner on the cross country team, becoming through determined effort its true heart and leader, leading the Spuds to their first post-season CIF berth in many years. So driven was Jacob by this passion for running that he took it upon himself in his junior year to train for and run a full marathon. In the same way, as a student leader he served as the heart and soul for our campus, rallying the troops to complete community service projects and to squeeze the most they could out of their days on the hill. That's exactly what he did and we were the better for it.



Philip Trompke - UC Santa Cruz

He appears to be so gentle. And really, he is. But way down deep, beneath that quiet, serene exterior, is a student, roboticist and athlete blessed with grit and brimming with talent. On a soccer pitch or robotics lab or a golf course, Philip represented all we expect from an OVS student - someone who shows up and gives his best. Someone who if he falls short, gets up and tries again. He is a student who truly experiences all facets of his education, whether they take place in a classroom or at a backcountry campsite. So well liked was Philip that his peers chose him to represent the senior class, and he helped hold together his peers when they struggled to get to the finish line in completing their Senior Project. While he grew up in his native Germany an avid outdoorsman, especially when it came to skiing, he developed as an OVS student a love for the ocean, and he plans to earn his college degree in marine science, an obtainable goal given his focus and determination.



Evan Wang - UC Riverside

He's a strong man - quite literally. That's because Evan could be found most days working out in the gym (and when the gym was replaced with a biology lab after the Thomas Fire, working out poolside), pursuing some ideal of the human form only he could see. Indeed, Evan dedicated his senior Capstone project to that pursuit, explaining to his audience the benefits of weightlifting and conditioning. But that's only one side of Evan, an important one to be sure, but the one that is most obvious. Scratch a bit underneath the surface and you'll find a young man who has grown so incredibly much as a student. Arriving to the Upper Campus as an ESL student, Evan emerged as a curious and accomplished learner, taking an array of Advanced Placement classes that focused on his interest in math and the sciences. He was quick to volunteer when others needed a hand, manning a booth at Ojai day and dedicating a morning at the Ojai Music Festival to teach younger students how to play musical instruments. Evan had a quiet confidence about him, but he was the perfect example of still waters running deep.



Peter Weckerle - Hult International Business School

Animated, gregarious, and self-assured, Peter is full of spirit, opinions, and conversation. And true to his outgoing nature, there is no corner of the OVS experience he left untouched. Student Government? Check. Dorm prefect? Check. Athlete, scholar and community service volunteer? Check, check, check! If OVS had an "I Love OVS" club, Peter could very well be its president. In the classroom, Peter discovered that he had a mind for business, and he is excited for his college studies and internships to pursue a career in that field. But if you really want to know about Peter's character, you needed to look no further than the soccer pitch, a sport he loved and sought to master. He played hard, but he played fair. He was as quick to make a run toward the goal as he was to extend a hand to a competitor who had hit the ground. That was Peter's story at OVS. He found his passions and then dedicated himself to mastering those. It might be fair to say that none of us saw this level of character and leadership coming when Peter arrived as a sophomore. But now it's hard to imagine OVS without it.

Senior Bios

Albee Xu - UC Santa Barbara

Her teachers described Albee as conscientious, bright, funny, enthusiastic, and engaged – and a quiet, powerful leader who let her actions speak for themselves. Whether it was a chorale piece she was trying to perfect, a hard-hit backhand on the tennis court she was scrambling to return, or a challenging essay prompt she was working hard to dissect, she was fastidious in her work from start to finish. Chosen through a rigorous vetting process to be a member of the student leadership council, Albee demonstrated a calm and quiet leadership in the dorms and on campus. And she wasn't afraid to push herself academically, including at the end of the year when she took a lead role as a defense attorney in the mock trial. Albee is incredibly nice, 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 Albee distinguished herself and assured a future that is bright and full of promise.



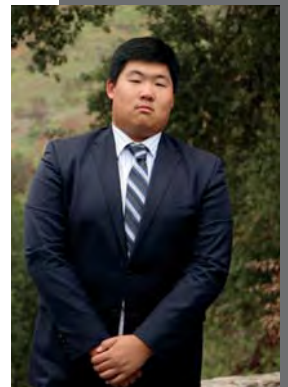
Shotaro Yamamura - Santa Monica City College

Mr. Baseball. That's how so many know him. And why not? He dedicated so much of his time on the hill to perfecting this craft, digging in and becoming a mainstay at second base. He was a key member of the team that this year earned a perfect league record and helped the Spuds secure their first league championship in baseball in many years. Add to that, Shotaro led the entire Omega League in runs scored, an amazing accomplishment for the lead-off hitter. But to think of Shotaro only in terms of baseball would be to overlook how much he grew and how much he learned during his OVS journey. Quiet, even shy, by nature, Shotaro showed up at the Upper Campus with some reluctance to get up and speak in front of a crowd. But that changed dramatically over the years, most evidenced by his senior Capstone project where he spoke forcefully and passionately about his attempts to teach himself Korean. But it's the "why" behind that project that was most impressive. Shotaro had made so many good friends over the years, and so many of those from Korea, that he wanted to learn the language so that he could visit them in their home country. A good friend to all, Shotaro's wide smile will be missed.



Tony Yang - Franklin and Marshall College

During his four years at the Upper Campus, Tony grew from a reserved, introspective student to a zealous participant who realized his potential to have a positive impact on his school community, and on the world at large. He emerged as a curious and tenacious learner, taking Advanced Placement courses in physics, statistics and calculus. And he bloomed as a public speaker, as evidenced by his senior Capstone presentation on the plight of endangered Orangutans due to palm oil extraction. Tony knows about this firsthand, having spent a summer break working with the great apes in Indonesia. But it was outside of the classroom, on the sports field, where this gentle giant demonstrated his greatest growth. He decided early on in his high school career to try sports that were new to him, immersing himself in the culture of baseball and cross country and lacrosse. If asked, Tony would downplay his skill level in those sports, but don't be fooled. He rose to the challenge of hitting a fastball and cradling a lacrosse ball and completing a three mile course, and he emerged as a favorite among his peers (and fans!) simply for the effort he put forth to excel in these areas.



Jenny Zhang - Savannah College of Art and Design (Hong Kong)

Jenny lives an authentic life, remaining true to herself at all times. And that can't be easy given how many versions of her "self" there are. There's the soulful, talented artist, the one who loved working with fabrics and who designed her own prom dress in her senior year (that was the focus of her senior Capstone project). There's the curious, tenacious student, the one who excelled in Advanced Placement courses in everything from physics to psychology, and who came to understand the intrinsic value of learning for the sake of learning. There was the tough-as-nails athlete, the one who played volleyball and ran cross country. Fun fact: she gave up volleyball her senior year to help her fellow cross country runners earn a post-season CIF berth. And then there was the performer, the actor and dancer seemingly drawn to the spotlight, the one who could be counted on to support every musical performance, no matter how big or small. In every one of these endeavors, there was no half way with Jenny, no hemming and hawing about how much effort would be required on her part. It was all in with Jenny, a life at OVS made up of meaningful moments, and we know with certainty that there are many more ahead.



Major Awards

WALLACE BURR AWARD

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

Max Wu



ROBERT G. COOPER AWARD

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

Jacob Tadlock, Leila Giannetti

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.

Joy Campbell



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.

Kase Skillern



CARL S. COOPER AWARD

Recognizes the underclass student, or students, for their leadership and character. It is an award that neither dwells in the past nor predicts the future. It honors the individuals for who they are, here and now.

Lilli Trompke, Max Wu

DOROTHY BURR LITERARY AWARD

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

Wendy Lazo-Dowdy

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

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

Olivia Brown, Nolan Colborn

J.B. CLOSE AWARD

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

Aaron Wolf

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.

Jaclyn Sersland, Ivy Sun



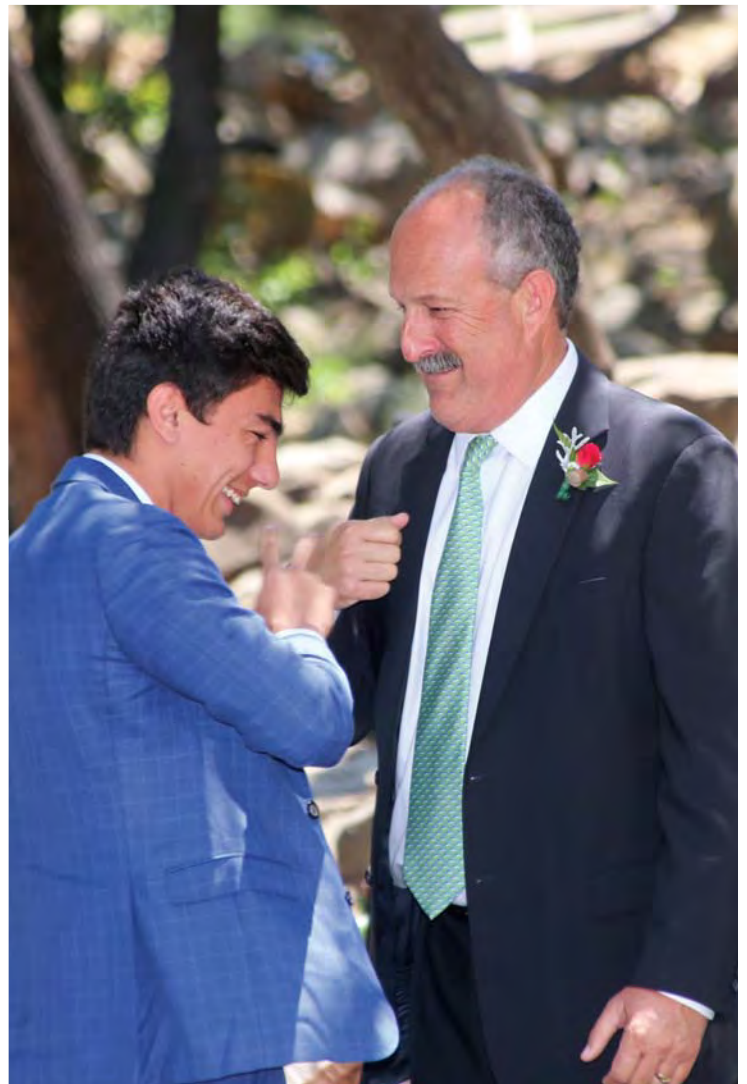
Even if you are buzzing with excitement to leave, take a moment to say thank you. For the past couple of years, or several, or even more like a decade for some, OVS has defined who we are, it has been a constant in our lives - the people sitting next to us on this stage have been our constants and now we have to say goodbye to the place, the people, and everything else.

- **Jacob Tadlock (L14, U18)**



They're not gone per se - we can always come back and say hello, but it will be different. Today we are saying goodbye to what OVS is to us now, what it has been for the past years, to seeing these teachers, these friends everyday. So thank you OVS, thank you friends, family, thank you classmates. I am so proud to be here with you, thank you teachers for the foundations you have helped us lay.

- Joy Campbell (L14, U18)



HEAD OF SCHOOL MESSAGE



By Gary Gartrell
Head of School, Lower Campus

In any educational institution, it is all too easy to focus on the grades and the mass of knowledge being passed on to students and forget the fact that as educators we often learn as much from our students as they learn from us. Recognizing that the arrow points both ways keeps us fresh as educators and makes every class, every encounter, an open dialogue between teacher and student. In recognition of this dynamic, which is the epitome of the OVS experience, I would like to share ten things I have learned from and about the graduating class of Lower 2018:

Number One: The quietest students have as much to say as the loudest. There are extroverts and introverts in every class, but in this class, they each found their voice and made themselves heard. I hope half of you continue to speak up and value your ideas; I hope the other half find an acceptable indoor voice.

Number Two: You don't have to be perfect, and it's okay to be goofy. This class doesn't fear being different (these are the things you learn after five days in the wilderness with them). They are not afraid to put themselves on stage; in fact,

they welcome it. I hope you will live boldly, be original, and let your goofiness guide you. The fear is just background noise when you are as loud as this class. Continue to be exactly who you are, even as you change and grow.

Number Three: Make the most of the tough situations — they will define you. When the Thomas Fire hit, they were flexible amid evacuations and uncertainty, and they pitched in to help. With the play, so many kids came down with the same bug and lost their voices, but the show went on, and they created some of the best on-stage moments in OVS history.

Number Four: Ask questions, even when there are no immediate answers, and don't be satisfied with the status quo. This class took on the challenging issues of our times, and they were not afraid to make their opinions known and to follow their instincts. I hope you will continue to ask the tough questions: of yourselves, of each other, and of the world at large.

Number Five: Look for opportunities to be inspired. From Nic and Hayden joining the Lake Casitas Rowing Club after reading *Boys in the Boat*, to Beckett performing for the community every Monday, to CatieJo receiving an honorable mention in the Ventura County poetry contest, to the ESL students making the leap into mainstream language arts, to the science fair participants trying to catch up with the schedule after the fire — so many of you went the extra distance. I hope you will continue to seek out challenges.

Number Six: There is a value in forgiveness and giving each other a clean slate and a pass. A number of you came up against the hard edges of fact and reason, and there were repercussions, and it wasn't easy. But as a class, you rallied and gave each other a second chance. I hope you will continue to see the

best in each other and be generous and forgiving with all of the rest of us who are still not yet perfect.

Number Seven: When you are confident in yourself, and your peers are confident in you, these two things feed on each other and you are more open to going big, accepting criticism, and going even bigger the next time. This class is confident, maybe even overconfident in most venues. This is not necessarily a bad thing. Being free from self-doubt is a gift and a skill. Keep practicing.

Number Eight: Imagine yourselves in someone else's shoes. Always. This class read *"To Kill a Mockingbird"* and understood the message about change and empathy. I saw the questions and results of your Socratic seminar and was awed. When you read the history textbooks in high school, I hope you will stop and try to figure out where you fit into the story and imagine yourselves in other people's lives.

Number Nine: The Value of Play. Don't just read, or write, or sing, or act for work — do it for pleasure. Let music guide you as much as math; let art guide as much as language arts. But above all, be creative and flexible. Some of the best moments this year were unscripted. I was fortunate to be there for some of them.

Number Ten: Be original. Just because someone did it before you, doesn't mean you need to repeat it. This year's 8th Grade Committee came up with more new ideas for events than any group that preceded them. I hope, as part of this class but also as individuals, you will continue to break the mold, drop the mic, and bring your elders along with you.

In OVS history, this school year will always be connected to the Thomas fire. For me, it will also be connected to this class what I learned from all of you.

Major Awards

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

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

Hayden Houseman



MICHAEL J. HALL-MOUNSEY AWARD

Honors the boarding student who has consistently served as an outstanding role model for his or her peers and who has demonstrated initiative, leadership, and responsibility.

Vicki Fei, Angelo Scotto



PAUL PITTMAN AWARD

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

Charlotte Sedlak, Alexandra Alvarez



MICHAEL D. HERMES AWARD

Given to the most outstanding eighth-grade student athletes.

Ryan Farrell, Vicky Fei



J.B. CLOSE AWARD

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

Joshua Taft



HEAD OF SCHOOL AWARD

Given for the significant contributions an eighth grader, or eighth graders, have made during their years at Lower Campus.

Haruka Hahn, Violet Ruby, Catherine Larkin





As we move on to the next branch of our lives, and leave behind the amazing things that we have been so lucky to have here, we will be able to use our super powers and not only survive high school, but thrive and find new passions and interests. Although we may lose our favorite teachers, classrooms, weekend trips, dodge ball champion titles, and much more, we will still have our memories.

- Alex Alvarez (L18)





Looking back over this year, you can see the growth within our class. We have teamed up to accomplish great things for each other and the OVS community as a whole. We have all learned to use our toolbox of ideas while working on these projects to better our community and ourselves.

- **Hayden Houseman (L18)**



Carol Hall-Mounsey

By Joy Campbell (L14, U18)

After more than a quarter century of minding the shelves at the Van Patten Library, Lower Campus librarian Carol Hall-Mounsey has closed the book on a long and distinguished career.

Well loved for her gentle nature and soothing storytelling voice, Mrs. Hall-Mounsey left a lasting mark on the library she tended with such care, most recently overseeing a complete remodel of a space that has been so warm and welcoming for generations of OVS students.

However, while she served as librarian for most of her 36 years at the Lower Campus, that's not where she began her OVS career.

Mrs. Hall-Mounsey taught many of the lower grades, serving as an elementary coordinator, an art teacher, a middle school English teacher, and an ESL teacher before finally becoming the school librarian when her husband, current OVS President/CEO Mike Hall-Mounsey, became head of the Lower Campus in the fall of 1989.

"She is a lifelong educator," Lower Campus Head of School Gary Gartrell said. "Carol has dedicated her career to the tradition and importance of reading and literacy."

Mrs. Hall-Mounsey has always been a reader. She can remember her grandmother reading to her when she was a child and how enchanted she was with the power of story. In her years as a librarian she sought to pass that feeling on to the students.

"The absolute best, it is a reward really, is a first grader — or an eighth grader finding that special book that lights them up," Mrs. Hall-Mounsey said. "They come back with that reading bug and to me that is such a wonderful thing. It is terrific that I helped them do that."

Mrs. Hall-Mounsey has not only helped students find the books they seek, she has orchestrated massive improvements to the library itself, working to update and diversify its collection of books and oversee renovation of the library to make it an even more welcoming space.

Under her watch, the Van Patten Library was recently remodeled to include new doors, windows, lighting, book-cases and improved heating and air conditioning. Sturdy old library tables and chairs were refinished and repaired, and comfortable seating — including a loveseat, armchairs, low tables and seating for primary students — were added.

With the renovation done, Mrs. Hall-Mounsey felt her goals for the Van Patten Library were complete. Mr. Gartrell then approached her with a request: to record her reading her favorite picture book aloud. This recording is now pre-



served in the library.

The recording is a parallel to one made by Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen — the school's first principal and a master storyteller — which will serve as an homage to Mrs. Hall-Mounsey's unforgettable time as librarian. True to Mrs. Hall-Mounsey's love for good storytelling and education, the book she chose was *The Teddy Bear*, by David McPhail, which teaches kindness and understanding.

Although she will return to Lower Campus as a guest storyteller, it is undeniable that the Van Patten Library will not be the same without her daily presence. That said, she plans to continue to help behind the scenes and her teachings will live on in the students and teachers she has read to, helped find books for, and taught through the process.

"Carol's storytelling and passion for literature has instilled in so many students that a book can bring your imagination to life," said Mr. Gartrell, "no matter what your age."

Craig Floyd



By Caroline Morrow (L15, U19)

It's 8:10 a.m. and the Upper Campus students, as well as all the staff and faculty, are crammed into the cafeteria, their raincoats and umbrellas rustling as they shuffle in.

It's the first day of the second semester and 34 days since the devastating Thomas Fire. Head of School Craig Floyd (U83) stands in front of the group, solemn, wholly uncharacteristic of the usually jovial man. With the rain beating down behind them, the student body looked on intently as their headmaster cleared his throat and began to speak.

"You are returning to a school that is not skipping a beat," he told the gathering. "We are committed to providing the same programs, activities, and everything we have done prior to December 4. We have made that commitment and now it's your turn to step up and live up to your commitment to the school."

As he continued, Mr. Floyd started

to tear up, his voice catching every so often. But his speech wasn't one of loss. Instead, he spoke of recovery, the strength of the school and the resilience of its students and teachers.

When Mr. Floyd ascended into his current position at the start of the 2017-2018 school year, he expected change. Change from the 28 years under the previous headmaster. Change from the humble office he had as assistant head of school to the coveted head's office, complete with a conference table, a mini fridge stocked with Pepsi, and the gorgeous view of the hills surrounding campus.

But no amount of training could prepare him for the trials he would face in his first year.

Within the first months of the semester, he had already presided over a flurry of disciplinary actions involving students and he was juggling the

demands of accommodating 42 new students, some of whom were being housed at the Lower Campus as renovation of Hermes Dorm (formerly Bristol House) was being completed.

But his biggest test came on December 4, when the Thomas Fire forced the evacuation of students, resident staff, horses, and his own family from the Upper Campus. The fire would go on to destroy the Grace Hobson Smith House girls' dormitory and the Lucila Arango Science and Technology Center. It caused extensive damage to other areas of campus as well, and presented an enormous administrative challenge for how to manage final exams and then reopen the campus in time for the second semester.

But Mr. Floyd refused to let the fire destroy his passion for the school.

"Being a student here and having [this school] be a part of [my] life for so long, it was very emotional,"

Mr. Floyd recalled about his initial reaction right after the fire. "I came up here on my own on Wednesday and cried. Those first few times we had Milk and Crackers I partially teared up because it is so important [to me]."

Mr. Floyd first came to the Upper Campus in the fall of 1979 as a wide-eyed freshman. He was in love with all things outdoors and took every opportunity to camp and play sports, joining the baseball and soccer teams.

By the time he had graduated in the summer of 1983, he had memories that would last a lifetime. But his graduation didn't end his OVS story. After studying at various colleges, he travelled to New Zealand to play professional fastpitch softball for two and a half years before returning to OVS as a dorm parent and coach.

It was during the summer of 1992, while working as a camp counselor, that Mr. Floyd saw Michele Whipple for the first time in years.

"Over the course of the next seven days we spent a lot of time together and got to know each other and started dating," Mr. Floyd said. "Three weeks later, we got engaged and eight months later we got married. We've been married for 25 years."

The couple moved to Northern California and started a family, raising sons Connor and Gavin (both are OVS graduates now in college). After a string of business ventures, the Floyds returned once again to OVS in the fall of 2006 as dorm parents. Mrs. Floyd taught Spanish and Mr. Floyd supervised the resident program and athletics. While focused on residential life, Mr. Floyd embraced a range of experiences that included running summer programs, working in the development office, and teaching economics. Deeply committed to the school, he sought the role of Headmaster when Mr. Cooper announced he would retire.

"Having known Coop for so long and in different roles, he is like my



Mr. Floyd in the 1979 OVS yearbook as a freshman.

second father. I could see myself being at OVS for the rest of my life. I wanted to make sure that some of the traditions and history of OVS would continue on," Mr. Floyd said.

With the Thomas Fire now behind him, Mr. Floyd is looking to the future, whether that be joining in meetings with architects about the future building projects or asking students for their input on how to improve the campus.

It is truly an era of change. With all that has happened since the fire, whether it be the possible threats of flooding or disciplinary issues, Mr. Floyd takes it all in stride.

"He has had more challenges in six months than most people get in a decade, if not a lifetime," said Michael Hall-Mounsey, the school's president and CEO. "He'll be [headmaster] during an era of

massive improvements."

When Mr. Floyd concluded his speech on that rainy morning of January 8, one thing was clear. He was thankful for the combined efforts of the students, faculty, and all the unseen and unnamed players — including hundreds of parents, alums and friends of OVS — who helped get the school back on its feet.

Through tears, he comforted the students with his heart-felt, dedicated words. His speech was the much-needed beacon of hope that the student body needed to have their school feel like home once again.

"It would have been easy to walk away a month ago," he told those at the early January meeting. "But no, we made that commitment to be here today. For that, I say thank you."

Morrow wins Ojai Valley Poetry Contest

JUNIOR CAROLINE MORROW (L15) won the first Ojai Valley Student Poetry Contest, organized by the Ventura Arts Council and the Ojai Poetry Series, while three other OVS students were also honored.

The Ojai Poetry Series hosts monthly poetry readings. The series was founded by Assistant Head of School Crystal Davis and retired College Counselor Judith Oberlander, both long-time English teachers at the Upper Campus.

When they realized the surge of coffee house poetry readings in Ojai had dwindled, they decided to save the tradition. Last fall, the series drew the attention of the Ventura Arts Council, which teamed up with Ms. Davis and Ms. Oberlander to create the Ojai Valley Student Poetry Contest. The winners' reading ceremony was held in the Ojai Library, where the Ojai Poetry Series also takes place.

Schools across the Ojai Valley entered, with 32 participants in total. From those, three OVS juniors — Caroline, Lilli Trompke and Conway Gilbreth (L15) — as well as eighth-grader Catherine Larkin (L18) gained admiration



from the judges. Lilli placed second, and Catherine and Conway were each awarded an honorable mention.

Both Ms. Davis and Ms. Oberlander are immensely proud of how much the importance of poetry has grown within the community.

"Putting [your poetry] out there to be validated by other people is really risky," Ms. Davis said. "But it is only at the expense of great risk that we grow, and we get the confidence, and we sing louder, and write more."

OVS rakes in awards at journalism competition



Ojai Valley School took seven student journalists to the Tri-County Journalism Educators' Association competition and came away with seven awards, including a second place finish for Best Newspaper Website. This is the fifth year the OVS program has been recognized as among the best in Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

Individual award winners included second place showings for Avery Colborn (L16, U20) in news writing and senior Joy Campbell (L14, U18) in editorial writing, and third place finishes for Caroline Morrow (L15, U19) in feature writing and Caspian Ellis (L16, U20) for feature photography.

The OVS journalism program also earned an honorable mention in the Sweepstakes category and an honorable mention in the Best Newspaper category for an issue devoted to the effects and recovery efforts of the Thomas Fire, which tore through the Upper Campus and destroyed several buildings, including the classroom where the journalism students met and produced their award-winning digital and print publications.





OVS Outdoors

OUTDOOR EDUCATION is woven into the school experience at OVS from the beginning of the academic year to the very end. Our middle school and elementary students participated in spring camping trips in late April and mid-May, including some rigorous backpacking adventures for the 7th and 8th graders in the Sespe Wilderness area. Sixth graders concluded their yearlong study of the Ventura River watershed. The 2nd grade class camped at Lake Casitas and students took time to reflect on their experiences in the outdoors with journal writing and sketching assignments.

The day before promotions, the kindergarten class ventured to Rose Valley Falls for its traditional Boney Bean hike through the waterfall. And at the high school, students took trips

to the Kern River, Santa Rosa Island at the Channel Islands National Park, Mount Pinos, Joshua Tree National Park, and Canyonlands National Park. Adventures abound in this red-rock region, where millions of years of erosion from wind and water have created slot canyons, natural arches and a climbing and a bouldering wonderland.

Ojai Valley School offers one of the most comprehensive outdoor education programs of any independent school, engaging students in grades PK-12 in environmental studies and exploration of the stunning mountains, canyons, deserts, and beaches in the West. As we strive to develop the intellectual and personal growth of all of our students, Outdoor Education is a core part of that experience and tradition for the school.



Equine Abroad



Our high school equestrians traveled to Portugal last spring, which provided a wonderful opportunity to experience dressage on highly trained Lusitanos in the most amazing setting imaginable. The equestrian center, Quinta do Rol, is part of a much larger ranch set amid rolling green hills that grows apples, citrus and wine grapes.

"The facility, the horses, instructors and accommodations were superb and every rider came away from the experience having learned and experienced new things, from learning to canter, flying changes, tempi changes, piaffe, passage to an exhilarating ride on the beach," said Equestrian Director Stephanie Gustafson.

Students Ivy Sun, Sharon Ye, Cici Feng, Lico Chan, and Morgan Dreier toured extensively in the region,

visiting royal palaces, monasteries and charming fishing villages. They finished the trip visiting Sintra and Lisbon.

With only a week to prepare after Spring Break, our combined middle and high school equestrian teams hit the ground running for the annual two-day Pony Club Mega Rally in Los Angeles. The riders were judged both on their riding and stable management. Evaluated for their tack room organization and cleanliness, the judge's comment was "perfection." The first day of jumping was a bit less than perfect, but the riders discussed what went wrong and managed those issues on the second day of jumping with clean rounds. Overall, OVS finished in fourth place. The team finished second in Horse Management.

Baseball Scores League Championship



For the first time in many years, the OVS boys' baseball team has been crowned league champions. In only their second year in the Omega League, the team finished undefeated, racking up 10 consecutive wins in league play. While the team had some massive victories and narrow ones, the players showed toughness, resilience and sportsmanship throughout every game.

"The team improved a lot throughout the season and with every game we got more confident, and that translated to our playing," said junior co-captain Nolan Colborn (L15). "This season has been really fun, and I'm looking forward to see how far we can go next year."

Some season highlights included two home runs from Nolan and Niklas Weckerle, and a perfect game pitched by sophomore Tyler Davis (L16). Freshman Adrian Ortiz led the league in RBIs and senior Shotaro Yamamura (U18) led the league in runs scored.

At the end of each season, Omega League coaches discuss highlights and recognize top players. Adding to their list of accolades, Adrian and Shotaro were voted First Team All-League, while freshman Derek Mendoza was voted to the Second Team. Tyler and Nolan were named the league's co-MVPs.

With the team only losing one starting player next season, the boys look forward to developing their skills and adding to their success in the future.

"I am optimistic about next year," head coach Doug Colborn said. "We know what we're capable of, and we also know what we need to do to improve."

PERFORMING ARTS

OVS students staged two colorful and complex musical productions this year, starting with a flawless performance of "Beauty and the Beast" by the high school students and concluding with the middle school production of "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang." The cast and crew of both shows dazzled audiences with vibrant dance numbers, strong vocal performances, and elaborate costumes and sets — including a flying car!



OVS Awarded Federal Grant for Restoration, Environmental Education

For a third consecutive year, Ojai Valley School, in partnership with the Channel Islands National Park, has been awarded a federal grant that will allow students to access the islands for environmental education and restoration projects.

The \$3,810 Hands on the Land grant is part of a national effort to connect students, teachers, and volunteers with public lands and waterways. The school will use the funds to access the islands and use them as living laboratories for environmental monitoring and restoration, broadening the focus on place-based education and conservation programs.

The award, funded by the National Environmental Education Foundation, continues collaborative efforts between OVS and the National Park Service. Last year, 93 students in grades 4-12 benefitted from the grant, which paid for travel costs to and from Anacapa

and Santa Cruz islands. Once there, students worked on-site in nurseries, planted native species, removed invasive vegetation, and compiled plant restoration data.

"Stewardship of our environment is a key feature of an OVS education," said Technology and Sustainability Director John Wickenhaeuser. "Through our partnership with Channel Islands National Park, we have the opportunity to work directly with top wildlife biologists while participating in important, achievable habitat restoration efforts on the Channel Islands."

OVS was awarded the state's top honor for environmental excellence in education last year in recognition of its commitment to sustainability. The school was one of seven independent schools statewide to be named a California Green Ribbon School, receiving Gold Level recognition, the state's highest designation.





FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

By Jaclyn Sersland (U19)

Fittingly, the email came during journalism. It was the email that Emma Gustafson (L14, U18), senior leader of the OVS journalism program, had waited for since March, the one that would tell her whether she had been taken off the waitlist and admitted to NYU.

The girls' dorm lounge, where journalism students were watching a movie, fell silent as Emma debated whether to read the email and find out the course of her future. Finally she opened it. And the room erupted in screams.

After months of waiting, Emma learned in early May that she had beat the odds and had been admitted into NYU's class of 2022, where she will study Media, Culture, and Communication.

"When I found out I was waitlisted, I was alone in the barn, and, honestly, I was crushed," Emma recalled about receiving the initial news from NYU about her waitlist status. "But when I learned I was admitted, I was with the whole journalism class and we were jumping

up and screaming and hugging and there was so much love and support in that room. I'm so glad that was where I was and who I was surrounded by when I found out. I wouldn't have had it any other way."

Similar stories abound for the Class of 2018. This year's seniors sent out approximately 170 applications and received 87 acceptances, according to College Counselor Fred Alvarez. More than half of that group applied Early Decision and Early Action, an increase in the number of students who have done so in previous years. The graduating seniors will scatter across the country as they attend schools in Austin, Berkeley, Boston, San Francisco, Savannah, and Washington D.C.

"I'm incredibly proud of this year's class, and they should be awfully proud of themselves," Mr. Alvarez said. "They are racing off into the next chapter of their lives, and every one of them is well prepared to do so. I can't wait to hear

all about their adventures as college students."

For some OVS students, like Emma, choosing the school where they wanted to spend the next four years of their life was one of the easiest decisions they have ever made.

For others, like Joy Campbell (L14, U18), the process consisted of weeks deciding where to apply, avoiding applications, anxiety, and eventually making the big decision.

Joy knew she wanted to go to college on the West Coast, but that only narrowed her list down to ten schools. With the University of California applications due November 30, she clicked the submission button late into the night of November 29.

There were still several applications waiting to be completed when the Thomas Fire forced her and her family to evacuate Ojai in early December, causing a delay in the application process. With just days to apply, and with 2,000

words to write, Joy spent day and night typing away until they were all done.

"Applying to colleges was really nerve wracking because it was taking a step toward something that was completely unknown to me, it was a huge commitment," Joy said. "Once the application was out of my hands, it wasn't even really up to me, and that really scared me."

Joy earned admission to almost every school to which she applied, including UC Berkeley, UCLA and the prestigious College of Creative Studies at UC Santa Barbara.

She finally decided to join the Bruins. Location, cost, and majors were all important factors in her decision, but UCLA ended up being the perfect match for her.

For Leila Giannetti (L14, U18), the application process was far easier. Leila spent three summers at college programs in Washington D.C., started preparing for the ACT in her sophomore year, and before the common application was even available, she knew her top choice: George Washington University.

She had fallen in love with everything about the school, from the location to how perfect it was for her interests in international politics. That motivated her to apply Early Decision, taking part in the nationwide trend that has an increasing number of students taking advantage of early application opportunities during the college application process. By the beginning of senior year, her application was ready to submit, weeks before the Early Decision deadline.

Several other seniors made their college choices early, and there seems to be a trend this year of students heading off to college in pairs.

Wendy Hang (U18) was accepted Early Decision to Boston University and she will be joined there by Sunny Chang (L14, U18). Two students — Jenny Zhang (L14, U18), and Ellen Hou (U18) — will attend the Savannah College of Art and Design, however Jenny is headed to the Hong Kong campus while Ellen will attend the main campus in Georgia. Liam Castagna (U18) and Albee Xu (U18) will enroll at UC Santa Barbara, while Peter Weckerle (U18) and Usmon Mirzooliev (U18) are off to pursue their entrepreneurial passions at the Hult International Business School.

"At OVS, we talk all the time about the importance of finding the 'right fit' school for our graduates," Mr. Alvarez said. "I think the members of the Class of 2018 exemplify that ideal."



CLASS OF 2018 COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

*matriculations noted in bold

Boston University (2)

California College of the Arts

California Lutheran University

California Polytechnic University,
Pomona

California Polytechnic University,
San Luis Obispo

CSU Channel Islands

CSU Fresno

CSU Monterey Bay

CSU San Diego

Carroll College

Chapman University

Colorado State University

Denison University

DePauw University

Eckerd College

Emerson College

Franklin & Marshall College

George Washington University

Hampshire College

Hult International School of Business (2)

Lawrence University

LIM College (Laboratory Institute of Merchandising)

Loyola Marymount University

Massachusetts College of Art and Design

New York University

Occidental College

Otis College of Art and Design

Pennsylvania State University

Pepperdine University

Pratt Institute

UC Berkeley

UC Davis

UCLA

UC Merced

UC Riverside

UC San Diego

UC Santa Barbara (2)

UC Santa Cruz

University of Illinois

University of La Verne

University of Oregon

University of the Pacific

University of Pittsburgh

University of Puget Sound

University of Redlands

University of Rhode Island

University of San Diego

University of San Francisco

University of Washington

Saint Mary's College of California

Savannah College of Art and Design

Savannah College of Art and Design, Hong Kong

School of Visual Arts

Southern Methodist University

The College of Wooster

The Evergreen State College

The Ohio State University

Washington State University

Wheaton College

Whittier College

COME TO OVS
SEE THE WORLD





GLOBAL TRAVEL gives students opportunities to learn about world history and cultures, use their foreign language skills, develop new bonds of friendship, and participate in meaningful community service projects.

This past year, middle and high school students participated on separate trips to Peru – but shared common experiences as they navigated the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu and explored the traditional markets of Lima and Cusco.

“The point of international travel at this age is to expose the students to new ways of living, thinking, and learning to love adventure,” said Mike Mahon, Assistant Head of School at the Lower Campus.

Mahon, history teacher John Rowan, and learning center teacher Christel Rogero led the middle school trip to Peru in April. Mahon also led a spring trip to Iceland in 2017. These trips, he said, provide hands-on educational opportunities and bring students together in ways educators often cannot accomplish in a classroom.

“When you get middle school kids outside of their comfort zones, they abandon their social hierarchies and are more open to bonding with new peers,” he said. “The relationships they form through experience and adventure continue when we return to campus and the entire student body benefits from the new value they

find in each other. The experience extends to the student-teacher relationship as well. It is impossible to hike the Inca trail or a glacier in Iceland and not be forever reminded of the people you shared those experiences with. I’ll never see another picture of Machu Picchu without reflecting back on this group of students. I hope they feel the same.”

Spanish teacher Gretchen Stevens organized the high school Peru trip to give students an opportunity to explore a country far beyond their borders. She said her students are more familiar with Mexico, Costa Rica, and Spain, but not many get the opportunity to travel to South America. She and co-leader Brad Weidlich, who teaches English at Upper Campus, also included a community service component on their trip, which many students said was among their most meaningful experiences.

OVS has offered global travel experiences for students for decades. Recent trips have expanded to include equestrian trips to Ireland and Portugal, as well as college tours to the East Coast. Each trip provides students with character-building lessons, whether it’s resilience developed by managing from the unforeseen fiascos that can happen on trips or the extension of their outdoor, college-prep or equestrian interests.

By Catherine Larkin (L18, U22)

Looking back at my time at the Lower Campus, there were so many amazing experiences. But going on trips with my teachers and classmates was definitely a highlight of my time in middle school. The camping and backpacking trips every year are a major part of the OVS experience, but there were also trips like the 8th grade trip to Washington DC and the international trips to Iceland and Peru.

For me, the Peru trip was definitely a life-changing experience. It opened my eyes to different cultures, people, and ways of living. Some of the main parts of the trip that really changed me were the markets, Machu Picchu, and watching women dye Alpaca fur.

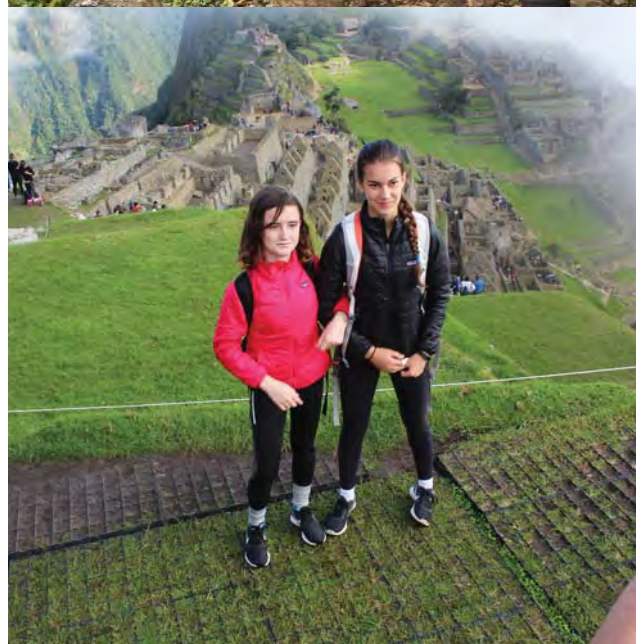
Something we did frequently in Peru was we visited traditional markets. They are places where multiple generations of women sell crafts, food, clothes, and woven blankets. It was amazing to see these items being made traditionally by families and passed down by great-grandmothers to children who were right there watching. We saw and experienced a different way of living that we had never seen before – a calm, controlled, and historic way of living. Seeing and talking with these people really got me thinking about the busy and hectic lifestyle back at home and how different it is from here.

Another part of the trip to Peru that had a big impact on me was hiking Machu Picchu. Before I even went to Peru I knew that traveling to this historical place was definitely a “bucket list” item. Getting to visit such a special place was incredible, but sharing it with my friends and teachers from school was truly an extraordinary experience! It really reminded me how lucky I am to go to a school that gives me the opportunity to experience a bucket list adventure like this. And although the hike to the top of Machu Picchu was hard, the view and the feeling of accomplishment I got at the top made the whole climb worthwhile.

The third extraordinary thing that I experienced in Peru was the traditional dying of Alpaca fur done by a group of Peruvian women. They showed us first how they wash the fur with a special plant to make it white. Then they walked us through the multiple objects they use to make their dyes, including leaves, flowers, berries, and small bugs. As I watched the woman ranging from ages 16 to 72 turn the white fur into beautifully colored yarn, it made me think about how much we take for granted.

There are so many things about Lower Campus that were special to me, and now I am off to Upper Campus where I will have four more equally exciting and interesting years. But the memories of my Lower Campus trips will stick with me as I start my next great adventure called high school.

Top: Lilli Trompke and other student volunteers plant flowers.
Center: OVS high school students make their way to Machu Picchu.
Bottom: Middle schoolers Catherine Larkin and India Getty-Pruss pose in front of the ruins at Machu Picchu



By Lilli Trompke (U19)

While most students were excited to sleep in the morning after Prom, 13 students, including myself, and two teachers took off on a weeklong adventure to Peru. A 4,000-mile-long flight later, we stepped out of the plane into an overwhelmingly humid airport and fell straight into our hotel beds to rest before another long, exciting day.

The next morning at breakfast I actually realized we were actually in Peru, so far away from anywhere I've ever been before. I looked out the window, eyeing the distant, foggy landscape and unfinished houses. That first day, we got on a bus to explore Lima – a truly beautiful city that doesn't hide anything. Ranging from fancy hotels by the sea, to absolute poverty on the hills, you see it all, and you appreciate it all. As one of our guides said, "People in Peru don't have money, they have love."

After a Peruvian lunch, consisting of chicken, cold veggies, and "Inca Kola" (an amazing, dangerously yellow soda) we made our way back to the bus, trying to dodge the street vendors that spotted our group of easily convincing tourists.

One of the museums we visited was about native history, and our anticipation for the Incan ruins we were going to visit grew as we walked through the exhibits.

The next morning, like a group of sleepy zombies, we checked our bags and got on another plane that landed 11,000 feet higher in Cusco.

Endlessly reaching hills covered in emerald green forests, speckled with red and grey houses, stretched under the morning fog as far as you could see. We made our way through the heavy traffic to our hotel. In the afternoon, a local guide took us to different ancient ruins around Cusco. I don't think I will ever forget the vastness and pure perfection of the first temple we saw. Built on top of a mountain, to be close to the gods, it was created out of up to 80-ton rocks, all perfectly carved and stacked to fit into each other precisely, and all built by manpower of a marvelous civilization.

After buying ponchos and blankets and about 50 llama key chains, we ended our day in a typical restaurant, where we all tried cuy, roasted guinea pig. While it surely wasn't my favorite, it was worth trying. The next morning, we left Cusco for the Sacred Valley of the Inca. In awe, we jaunted through the mountains with ancient overgrown terraces and tips so high they were frosted with snow. Every town we passed had packs of the happiest stray dogs I have

ever seen in my life, and llamas and alpacas everywhere.

The next morning, I swear you could almost smell the anticipation in the air as we took the bus up to the entrance to Machu Picchu. We followed our guide up the trail, still a little out of breath from the altitude, but in amazement of the scenery surrounding us. From the first glance of Machu Picchu, I was completely mesmerized. It was just like I imagined it to be, and so much more significant. It was so sophisticated, so thoroughly thought through, so unbelievably beautiful. Terraces stood all around those perfect temples and highly advanced science buildings – all seemingly in the middle of nowhere. In the afternoon, we took the hike up to the Sun Gate. It was a 1,000-foot elevation gain, and with the already high altitude it was quite a challenge. But as everything on this trip, it was worth the work.

When we saw rain clouds building in the distance, we began making our way back to the bus. One last time I looked around at all the people marching in and out of the gates. They were all just as lucky as me.

The next morning was the first time we got to sleep in, and we all needed it. Well rested, we spent the morning at the plaza, and then took our plane back to Lima. I felt a little nostalgic when I peered through the window looking over Cusco for a final beautiful view. But I am sure that I will come back one day, at least, I really hope so.

The last two days of the trip in Lima may have been the most memorable of all. During that time, we didn't visit museums or explore ancient ruins. Instead, we got to know the poor parts of Peru.

The first day, we volunteered to renovate a kindergarten – a single classroom with brightly colored walls and toys inside, surrounded by dusty hills. We planted flowers, restored the garden, and painted fences and walls. The leaders cooked us a delicious lunch. We ate and talked and laughed. It was an experience so different from anything I've ever done before, and in spite of the metal spikes and broken glass topping the walls all around, I felt so welcomed there. When we left, we thanked them, over and over, and they thanked us, over and over.

The next day, we went to a market to buy food for local families. It was barely anything, but to a mother with twelve young children, it meant so much. We talked and laughed, as if we were a family.

People in Peru don't call each other friends, they call each other brothers and sisters, and we were lucky enough to be a part of that for some time.

1 ALUM

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

The most severely disabled person in the world has an intelligence and humanity so precious that a society of highly advanced robots would travel billions of light years through space and spend trillions of dollars in order to consult with her for the briefest moment.

— Neil Marcus



Photo by Gary Ivanek

"I'VE BEEN DESCRIBED AS SAVAGELY TWISTED, paralyzed, tortured, afflicted, and horribly disfigured," observes Neil Marcus (L 68, U71) exasperatedly. He's having none of it. With the fierce twinkle in his eye his OVS schoolmates well remember, Neil offers his own self-description: a "fantastic spastic mime, creatively endowed with disability."

That's more like it. While it's true that since age eight Neil has had a medical condition — dystonia musculorum deformans, a rare neuromuscular disease that affects muscles and speech — the most notable fact is that Neil has overcome, in rather spectacular fashion, the various challenges his condition has presented.

He figures things out. And he shows others how to do that. It's a useful skill.

The youngest of five children, Neil was born in Scarsdale, New York, in 1954. He has fond and vivid memories of his earliest days: "I loved the winters there; loved sledding down our long, icy driveway and ice-skating on our pool and on nearby ponds... We had lots of apple trees on our land [The family lived on a large property adjacent to a forest], caterpillars that spun cocoons, and fireflies at night." His family, which was close and loving, enjoyed camping — And fun! "There were always things of interest going on," he remembers. "Brothers playing with butterflies and electronics, backyard science experiments that went Boom, sisters who floated colored oil paints in tubs of water to make designs on floated paper, lots of origami."

Neil was an observant and curious child, a thinker from the get-go. One time when he was age 5, he woke up his entire family in the middle of the night with an urgent query: "What holds the stars up?"

To help Neil's father recover from tuberculosis, the Marcus family relocated to Ojai in 1960. Neil was intrigued with the change of scene. "California seemed like pioneer territory replete with tarantulas and snakes and lizards and rugged terrain," he said. Neil started as a fourth-grade day student at OVS, having by then already been diagnosed with dystonia. The disease progressed quickly, and Neil underwent three cyro-surgeries over a five-year period. He lived on campus for his three final years at OVS, jetting around the Upper Campus in a golf cart, and graduating in 1971 as class valedictorian.

After traveling alone to Laos and white-water rafting in Utah, Neil hitchhiked all the way from Ojai to Bellingham, Washington, where he attended Fairhaven College. He moved to Berkeley in 1980 and joined other activists there to raise awareness and to advocate for accommodations disabled people needed to function successfully in an environment and society that was, at best, misinformed if not outright ignorant about what those needs might be.

Meanwhile, he was writing up a storm. Storm Reading, his best-known work, is a two-act, autobiographical play that Neil wrote with his brother Roger's collaboration. Neil and Roger played the starring roles. Michael Douglas took a keen interest in Neil and arranged for an invitation-only per-

formance of the play at the Doolittle Theater in Hollywood.

Between 1983 and 1996, Neil and his brother took Storm Reading on the road, starting at the Access Theater in Santa Barbara and eventually winding up at the historic Ford Theater as well as at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., where Michael Douglas joined them on stage and performed excerpts. In all, there were 300 performances of Storm Reading at theaters, colleges, high schools, and elementary schools throughout the U.S. (including Hawaii and Alaska) and in England as well as in Canada. Storm Reading is smart, poignant, and funny; it both splendidly entertains and educates. Not surprisingly, it won a number of accolades, including the Outstanding Achievement in Play Writing Award from the U.N. Society of Writers, the Critics' Choice Award, and Drama-Logue Magazine's Best Leading Actor and Best Ensemble Awards.

Among the duly impressed audience members was Anthony Edwards, one of the stars of ER, a top-rated TV show at the time. He wound up making a documentary film featuring Neil and his play. Some years later, he contacted Neil and asked him to appear on an episode of ER that Edwards was directing. Neil agreed to be cast as a disabled genius rushed to the hospital after having been injured by a hit-and-run driver.

In recent years, Neil has performed in the Bay Area and

has traveled to Europe and Australia. He has also served as a guest lecturer on arts and disability, and he has co-taught a class at UC Berkeley entitled "Disability and Digital Storytelling." In 2009, he collaborated with

Petra Kuppers, a disability culture activist and Associate Professor of English, Theater, Dance, and Women Studies at the University of Michigan, to produce a book entitled Cripple Poetics: A Love Story. Two years later, Neil published Special Effects: Advancements in Neurology, which documents the early days of the disability rights movement and provides a window into California zine culture of the 1980s. He is currently preparing for a return performance of Storm Reading.

Neil's dystonia does not define him; it's merely a condition he has. He said: "It affects the muscles in my body. They do not follow my command; they follow their own. I don't want to dwell on having dystonia. I have a life to live. I have a heart and soul. I have a passion for living."

Toward that end, Neil has become a traveler, a teacher, a writer, actor, dancer, philosopher, visual artist and disability rights activist. Although he takes issue with the very notion of "disability," and with the word "disabled," he acquiesces to its use as a kind of placeholder, until another, more apt word comes along. He has become convinced that "disability is an art." The art of life, perhaps. And of love. His mastery of that art is apparent through his attitude and his impressive accomplishments.

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of Storm Reading, there will be a performance of Neil's play at the Lobero Theater in Santa Barbara at 7 p.m. on September 21.

*He has become convinced
that disability is an art*



Pons Dinner



This year marked the 23rd 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.

This year, alumni guest speaker Miles Munding-Becker (L09, U13), reflected on the ways OVS inspired him to pursue a degree in environmental science and then explore the world. He also shared with the students and faculty members in attendance how the relationships he formed at OVS have continued to shape his life.

"My introduction to this community began as a 3-year-old in Mrs. Gartrell's Tator Tot class," he said. "I do not remember clear moments from my childhood at OVS, but I do remember the clear theme of love and appreciation for one another. This was a theme that continued throughout my education. Over my years at OVS I made my first friends, my first best friends and my first lifelong friends. I've had teachers turned to mentors turned to friends. I have leaned on the people within this community through hard times, and have been on

the receiving end of a hug and sound advice many times."

At the University of Redlands, Miles, who was actively involved in outdoor education at OVS, became a trip leader for the university's outdoor programs. He went on to study dendroclimatology in the Amazon, worked with farmers in Iceland, hiked the Black Forest in Germany, and hitchhiked through the southern tip of Chile. "I have brushed along the tips of mountains and I have spent nights under stars so bright that you can't help but to question the vastness of the universe," he said. "When I reflect on these opportunities, I attribute them to the values I developed throughout my education at OVS."

Miles also shared some advice with the students: Immerse yourself in a community; be an individual; do not define yourself by your mistakes, but learn from them; take a class on sustainability or environmental science; and, lastly, try to sit down once a week with friends and build a tradition together.

"Personally, I suggest playing Settlers of Catan," he said with a grin. "For those of you who don't know Settlers of Catan, it's an epic board game."

Senior-to-Alumni Dinner



THANK YOU to alumna Emmy Addison (L10, U14) for speaking to our graduates at the annual Senior-to-Alumni dinner! Emmy, who just graduated from Pitzer College with a bachelor's degree in Classics, told the college-bound seniors: "You're about to have the greatest adventure of your lives. Enjoy it!"

Upper Campus teacher Fred Alvarez, who taught Emmy in Humanities, AP World History and Journalism, told the seniors that she had lived an extraordinary life since she left Ojai Valley School. Indeed, Emmy has traveled extensively, studied classics

abroad in England, and earned her degree with an emphasis in archeology. Her future plans include graduate school with an eye toward a PhD.

When she started in college, Emmy said she felt like she was "heads and tails more prepared than everyone else." She told the graduating seniors to take time to appreciate all the skills they've learned at Upper Campus, and to not be shy about making friends, approaching professors, or joining clubs. Thank you Emmy!

Thank you to everyone who came out to the Alumni Baseball game in May! It was a great day - both alumni and students played their hearts out and, in our book, that's a win for everyone!



OVS ON INSTAGRAM



Attention OVS alumni! You can now follow the latest campus news, past school pictures, and views from the Ojai Valley on Instagram! [@ojai_valley_school_alumni](https://www.instagram.com/ojai_valley_school_alumni)

WELCOME OUR NEW ALUMNI RELATIONS ASSOCIATE



Please join us in welcoming our new Alumni Relations Associate, Wendy Tremiti. Wendy will serve as a key member of our Advancement Team, managing alumni social media, planning events, assisting with fundraising, and most importantly ensuring that we sustain a robust alumni relations program! Wendy and her husband, Philip, live in Ojai with their three children. Wendy's experience in business, event planning, and her love of Ojai Valley School make her a great match. Please share your ideas, insights, and alumni connections with Wendy at alumni@ovs.org

ALUMNI WEEKEND



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR ALUMNI WEEKEND 2019



It's not too early to begin thinking about the 2019 Alumni Weekend, June 7-9! We're looking for a few good men and women to join the Reunion Committee to help plan next year's activities and round up classmates. Classes ending in "fours" and "nines" will be celebrating their milestone reunions, but as always, all classes are encouraged to attend. To become a Class Agent or to assist with the reunion, please contact us at alumni@ovs.org or call (805) 640-2578.

1 Carol Hall-Mounsey,
Nancy Novak, and
Michael Hall-Mounsey.

2 Thanks to Winn Gillette (L65,
U68) for this beautiful picture
of the Scotch Broom blooming
along Highway 33.

3 Teresa Smith, Dana DeYoung,
Craig Floyd (U83), Carl
Cooper (L64, U68) and Leola
Roberts (L72).

4 Alumni enjoyed clear skies
and great company as they
hikes into the Sespe Wilderness
with trail leader and longtime
English teacher Crystal Davis.

5 Amir Podoswa (U15) and
Paloma Spencer (L07, U11)
take a selfie at the dinner.



ALUMNI WEEKEND



6 John Wickenhaeuser, Rob Davis (L81, U88), Jess Brolin (L87, U91) and Ben Cassidy (L11, U15).



7 Nate (L91, U95) and Caitlin Cooper (L97) with their son, Finley.



8 Chelsey Carroll (U10), Lindsey Hanselman (U12) and Craig Floyd (U83).



9 Tracy Fryer (U93) with classmate and husband John DeNault IV (L89, U93).

Tony Thacher Named Recipient of Founder's Alumni Award

In recognition of his civic leadership and dedication to the broader Ojai Valley community, Ojai Valley School is proud to recognize Tony Thacher (L55) as the recipient of the 2018 Founder's Alumni Award.

The Founder's Alumni Award was created in 2011 to honor an OVS alum whose achievements exemplify the values endorsed in the school's motto, *Integer Vitae*, meaning wholeness of life, symmetry of life, and soundness of life.

The school presented Tony with the award during the 2018 Alumni Weekend at Lower Campus. In attendance were members of the Thacher family spanning three generations — a legacy he noted in an eloquent acceptance speech beneath the Wallace Burr Pergola.

"This 'valley surrounded by mountains' has been home to my family for more than six score years; and since this school's founding, a vast cohort of OVS teachers and staff have put up with four generations of us rooting and rasting around this lovely nurturing place," he said. "Indeed, next fall Anne and I will have four grand-progeny in attendance — Celeste in elementary, Mariana and Oliver in middle and Andrew at Upper. I'm sure that's not a record, but perhaps, starting with my mother at the Bristol School, we can claim to have more vertical feet of family at OVS as our record."

A longtime Ojai Valley rancher, Tony's numerous service roles earned him the distinction of being named an Ojai Living Treasure in 2015. He has served as a member of the Rotary Club of Ojai for more than 40 years and has served as club president. One of the projects dear to him was the club's scholarship program, which has supported numerous students in their dreams of attending college.

Tony has also dedicated his time and talents to serve on the board of Monica Ros School and as board president of the Ojai Valley Museum. He played a key leadership role in organizing events in celebration of the city's 100th anniversary last year — and involved Ojai Valley School in the historical celebration in Libbey Park.

An iconic figure in Ventura County agriculture, specifically citrus and avocado production, Tony has served on the Advisory Council of the nonprofit CREW, which won the Governor's Award for Environmental and Economic Leadership.

In accepting the Founder's Alumni Award, Tony reflected on his early years as a student at OVS and, demonstrating his genuine humility, talked about the service of others who stepped forward to help the school following the devastating Thomas Fire.

"OVS is made up not only of buildings, but of generations of caring people — people who poured forth and in less than a month righted the ship and patched the holes," he said. "The valley motto was #OJAI STRONG and it was never more evident than at OVS."



Top: Tony Thacher (L55) with the Founder's Alumni Award. Bottom: Several generations of the Thacher family were in attendance to watch Tony receive his award.

Lower 1935

1 Prof. Barbara B. Smith visited with OVS President/CEO Michael J. Hall-Mounsey and his wife, Carol, in June while they were visiting alumni in Hawaii. At age 98, Barbara is as sharp as ever. Professor Emeritus of Music at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Barbara has been a seminal figure at the university as well as the arts and cultural community in Hawaii and beyond. Although she retired from the University in 1982, she actively contributes to the field of ethnomusicology nationally and she remains passionate about introducing young people to the rich tapestry of non-Western music through live performance. She continues to provide counsel and grant support to OVS in support of non-Western music education. Thank you Barbara!

Lower 1952

Stephen Bauman wanted to set the record straight that he attended OVS in 1946 and 1947 in the 3rd and 4th grades and the summer in between. He writes: "The dorm housemother was Mrs. Schreiber. I remember this distinctly because the school got rid of the '37 or '38 Buick (with screeching fan belt) and replaced it with a brand new '46 Ford Woody Wagon."

Lower 1953

Jerri (Batson) Prenzlow: I was very saddened to read of John Callendar's passing. She writes: "He and I were second cousins. My grandmother Hazel Campbell Patterson Stuart was the younger sister of Ada Campbell Patterson who must have married a Callendar."

Lower 1957

Linda Federhart Scott also shared her memories of classmate John Callendar (L57), reflections on her favorite teacher at Lower, and the Thomas Fire. She writes: "I was sorry to learn of the death of my good friend, John Callendar, in the bulletin recently. He always had a smile on his face and spoke to everyone with a kind 'Hi.'"

"My favorite teacher was and will always be within my heart, Mr. Wickenhaeuser. He even made an impression upon my husband when they met many years ago. At the time, I did not realize what a great impression he made on me and upon my life in general. I know that he made the same impression to many other students over his many years in Ojai. Rest assured if you had some German heritage you may or may not know of, his deep voice, inflection and sincerity often sent trembles into one's body... then so did my husband's uncle, who was also German, to me during our first meeting as well as our daughter many years later!

"I cannot imagine just how devastated the Upper Campus and surrounding area was by the fires; we have a grandson and his wife currently stationed at Pt. Mugu, so there was some major concern there, I know Mr. Cooper, Mr. Hall-Mounsey, staff and students, reading from the latest Alumni Notes, stood aghast as the fire proceeded into the area. Many things we can and do control, 'Mother Nature' is not one of them. Plans and preparation notwithstanding, unexpected happens. So much history; tangible has been lost, memories and photos remain etched within us all."

"My husband and I retired from

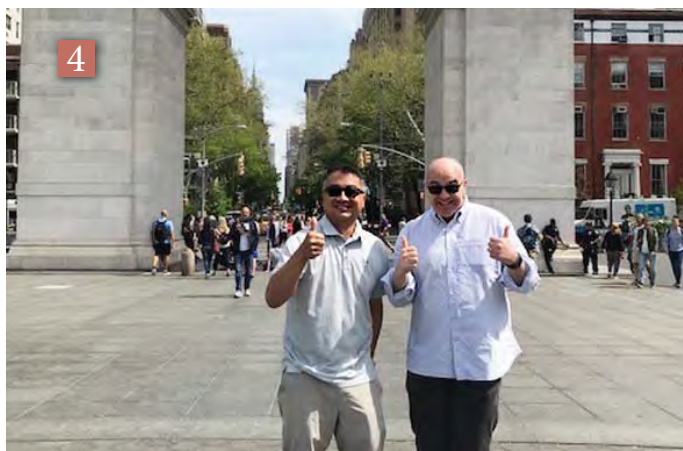
the U.S. Navy after 32 years of progression from E-1 to CWO4; could not go any further at China Lake, CA in 1990. During this time, we have two children, Eric and Shannon, who have both grown and are successful in their careers. We moved back to Florida in 2002 to Palm Coast; then a nice little coastal town south of St. Augustine. Then the building boom hit with our current population hovering around 100,000; so much for small towns. I am still active with my association to the Navy Wives Club of America and other civic local involvements.

"I am looking forward to seeing classmates and others at the next reunion in June."

Lower 1958

Joyce Murray "I am retired from my work providing occupational therapy to residents in skilled nursing facilities, though I still work on-call. The rest of my time is spent volunteering at the Botanical Gardens of the Ozarks in horticultural projects and helping out in the Butterfly House where work is going on to educate people about the endangered monarchs where numbers have decreased by 80% in the last 20 years."

Hester Palmquist writes: "I am so grateful for my OVS experience! I don't know how my mother, as a single, working parent was able to afford sending me to OVS, It must have been due to either financial aid or perhaps my grandmother assisting financially. And I think it might have saved me from an otherwise dire fate as my best friend prior to my coming to OVS became a member of the (Charles) Manson family and I wonder at



times if this could have happened to me as well, had my mother not chosen to take me out of the public junior high school I was attending and send me to OVS!"

It's worth noting that Hester's note was submitted along with a donation – Hester aptly earmarked the donation for financial aid.

Lower 1999

Sarah Gates (see U03)

Lower 2001

Jason Goldman (see U05)

Lower 2004

3 John-Clark Levin was part of the winning team representing St John's College Cambridge

on the BBC's quiz show University Challenge. Their win made national news! The show has been running since 1962 and is notorious for featuring incredibly difficult questions and a rather fierce host, Jeremy Paxman. John-Clark is studying for a PhD after graduating from Harvard, and was previously on Jeopardy! He is pictured in the center with his teammates.

Lower 2008

Gunnar Helman (see U12)

Gavin Silver (see U12)

Lower 2011

Sarah Silver (see U15)

Claire Wickenhaeuser (see U15)

Emmy Addison (see U14)

Sophia Wu (see U14)

Upper 1987

4 Web Wang met classmate **Eric Swenson (U87)** and his family while his daughter was in NYC attending the Young Investors Society Stock Pitch Competition. "Eric and his wife were so kind to take us around NYU for a tour as there were none available as they were all booked," Web said. "It was great to reconnect and meet his wife where they met at NYU. This is where I left Eric when he was on his NYU interview in that red building behind 31 years ago while we toured colleges during our senior year. Great memories and friend." Pictured are Web and Eric at Washington Square in NYC.



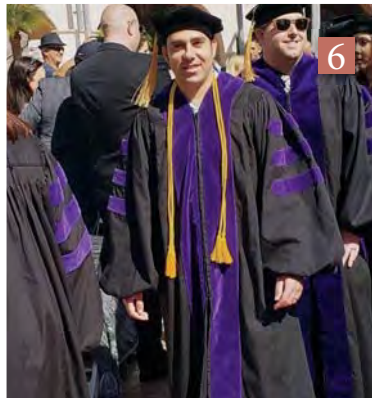
Upper 1988

Julie (Zweig) Fishman writes: "My favorite memory: One dark night, standing behind the classrooms facing the hill full of brush above the soccer field, Tony Trutanich (L83, U87) made his body ready for a cartwheel, looked at us and smiled and proceeded to cartwheel into the brush down the hill! Luckily he was fine, but what was he thinking? I also remember feeling loved and accepted so quickly. It was the best year of my youth by far."

Upper 1994

5 Tomoko (Seino) Hotema helped organize our Alumni gathering in Honolulu, Hawaii in June.

Here she is pictured with Carol and Michael Hall-Mounsey and her son, Raven. Tomoko also assisted with the Thomas Fire recovery efforts, rallying support from alumni. Thank you!

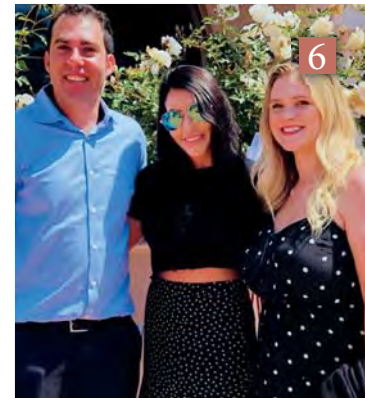


Upper 2003

Sarah Gates married her husband, Ryan Bunter, on April 15. The ceremony took place at Santa Barbara City College and the reception was at the Riviera Mansion in Santa Barbara. The theme of their wedding was The Princess Bride, so of course the officiate was dressed as The Impressive Clergyman (voice included). Lisa and John Boyd performed the music for the ceremony.

The Friday after their ceremony, Sarah and Ryan left on a two-and-a-half week honeymoon to Italy where they visited Rome, Venice, Florence, San Vincenzo, Pisa, Lucca, Naples, and Pompeii! They had a wonderful time and plan to continue to travel to Europe in the years ahead.

They are in the process of buying a house and are greatly enjoying married life. Sarah is continuing to be successful as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. Ryan is a successful Art and Marketing Director at a company in Westlake Village. She has launched her



private practice website: sarahbuntermft.com as well as expanding her practice to Thousand Oaks as of July. Her website was designed by Ryan!

Upper 2005

6 Congratulations to **Jason Goldman** who graduated from Ventura School of Law with Highest Honors and delivered the Valedictorian Speech. Jason is pictured with his sister and his wife, Liz White (L01, U05).

Upper 2012

7 Gunnar Helman has received a Master of Arts Degree in Sport Management from the University of San Francisco. He recently started a position as Inside Sales Associate for AEG Worldwide, the world's leading sports and live entertainment company. Gunnar is also concurrently a Team Member in Premium Hospitality for a second season with the Los Angeles Dodgers. The photo was taken at the USF College of Arts and



Sciences Commencement in May. Pictured are Gunnar, his mother, Lorie, his brother, Hunter (L06, U10), and his father, Andy, a member of the OVS Board of Trustees.

Gavin Silver is now a Foreign exchange analyst with Northern Trust in Tempe, Arizona.

Upper 2014

8 Emmy Addison graduated from Pitzer College with a degree in Classics. She plans to attend graduate school and pursue a PhD. Emmy served as the guest speaker at the annual Senior-to-Alumni dinner in May, which was particularly special because her younger sisters, Clara and Celeste, were in the graduating Class of 2018!

Grant Spencer graduated from Columbia University in New York City in May. He majored in Neuroscience with a minor in East Asian Studies, with an emphasis on Korea. In late June, Grant

started doing research at Boston Children's Hospital where he will spend the next two years and during that time he will apply to medical school. He is enjoying his work and living in Boston.

Sophia Wu graduated from Johns Hopkins University in May. She plans to continue her studies there for an additional year in a master's program – and she just got engaged! Congratulations Sophia!

Upper 2015

Daphne Psaledakis is interning this summer at the Reuters News Agency in Washington, D.C., gaining valuable foreign policy reporting experience that she hopes will eventually lead to a job as a foreign political correspondent.

"I fully expect that the internship is going to be challenging, but I'm looking forward to the challenge because I know I will learn a lot from it," said Daphne, who will be a senior this coming school year at the University of Missouri.



Daphne was introduced to journalism as a sophomore at the Upper Campus, where she began writing for the award-winning school newspaper, *On The Hill*. By the time she was a junior she knew she wanted to study journalism in college. In her senior year, she served as editor-in-chief of the high school paper.

At the University of Missouri, Daphne writes for a local student-run newspaper, the *Columbia Missourian*, which she said has taught her how to cover breaking news, how to develop story ideas and journalism ethics.

Sarah Silver is finishing her third year at ASU and just turned 21.

9 Masaki Takamatsu might be a mechanical engineering major at Loyola Marymount University, but he is making his mark as an entrepreneur, most recently becoming director of product development for Bristl Science, which has dedicated itself to building a better toothbrush.

Masaki took home the top prize at a school-sponsored "new idea"



pitch competition, working with a fellow student to create a prototype skateboard brake. That was his first step into the entrepreneurial world and served to connect him to the director of entrepreneurship at LMU. Fast forward a few years and Masaki is racing down the entrepreneurial road.

He has taken two entrepreneur classes while pursuing his degree in mechanical engineering and has added experience in e-commerce and Amazon to his repertoire, creating a product — a card holder that sticks to your phone — that has sold on Amazon since 2016. He has also played around with what's called Dropshipping with the e-commerce platform Shopify.

But recently, Masaki has shifted his entrepreneurial focus to the big leagues.

Last October, his entrepreneur professor at LMU approached him with a proposition: could he help establish a Korean toothbrush company here in the US? Masaki quickly reprioritized his other projects and climbed onboard as co-founder of the company, Bristl Science, on March 26 launched a Kickstarter campaign that within hours reached its fundraising goal. The Kickstarter campaign is still active, with the company continuing to accept pre-orders. Contact our Alumni Office if you want

more information to connect with Masaki and his product!



10 Claire Wickenhaeuser is working for the National Park Service as an interpretive ranger at the Channel Islands National Park headquarters in Ventura. Claire, who started as a parks service volunteer, is taking a six-month break from her college studies in environmental science to work full-time as a seasonal ranger.

In May, she welcomed a familiar group of students: eight OVS kindergartners (pictured) who ventured to the park headquarters to learn about the unique ecosystems of the Channel Islands. She has also toured visiting OVS summer camp students.

Lewis John Carlino, Jr. (L80, U84)

On February 11, Lewis John Carlino died peacefully at his father's home on Whidbey Island, Washington. He was 52.

Lewis, or L.J. as his OVS schoolmates knew him, was born in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, on December 15, 1965 to Lewis John Carlino, Sr, and his wife, Natelle. The family then made its home on a farm in Washington New Jersey, and would include two daughters, Vone' and Alessa, before Natelle relocated to Ojai when Lewis was ten.

Lewis attended OVS from the sixth grade through high school, graduating from the Upper Campus in 1984 as valedictorian of his class. He subsequently moved to Los Angeles, where he worked at Creative Artists Agency as a script analyst while pursuing his passion for music and writing. He later continued this work for Robert Chartoff Productions.

In 1988, Lewis suffered a devastating spinal fracture. The doctors told him he would never regain full use of his hands and would always require live-in care. Lewis delightfully proved their dire predictions wrong. That same year, he was blessed with the birth of a son. Though wheelchair bound, he lived independently for the rest of his life.

In 1993, Lewis traveled throughout Europe, staying for a time at the Amaravati Monastery in England. He had, for many years by then, developed a great interest in Buddhism.

Lewis' creativity took many forms: he painted, he sang, he mastered instruments, he recorded albums, wrote screenplays, music, and poetry. Friend Tim Newhart (U85) made this observation about him: "Lewis was known to be a talented musician and gifted writer; however, to be all those things, he also had to be a keen listener. And so when you spoke to Lewis, you knew he was always present and mindful about what was being said. It was just one of his many gifts."

Dubbed by some who knew him as "the Ferris Bueller of Ojai," Lewis had a wonderful community of devoted friends, who loved him for his original and outrageous humor, for his uncanny ability to transform himself into any character he chose, for his beautiful musical compositions, and for his unwavering commitment to seek truth through his spiritual practice. Also, and chiefly, they loved him for his great compassion and kindness. He was a force of nature and a repository of delight.

He left this message for those who knew and loved him:

The form is gone now. It had a name we knew as Lewis. It had eyes that saw into ours and a mouth that smiled and spoke concepts we shared to create this world we both agreed on. But now that form is gone, and all you may think you have is memory; and that may indeed be true. But I have a feeling it's a bit more grandiose, a tad more phenomenal than that. You experienced Lewis in vibrations. Vibrations of interests, sadness, understanding and misunderstandings, love, laughter, thought, emotion and the flesh. All of those pure vibrations at different frequencies. So when you use your Memory-Feeling-Center, on what frequency do you remember Lewis? Whatever it may be, it will not be wrong. It will be the most honest and thorough indicator of what he was and quite possibly, still is.

Lewis is survived by his son, Duncan O'Bryan; granddaughter, June Alice; sister, Alessa; father, Lew; and mother, Natelle.



G. Stanley Hatch, Jr. (L59)

OVS recently learned that Stan Hatch Jr., who attended OVS for eighth and ninth grades as a member of the Class of 1959, succumbed to cancer on June 17, 2017. He was 72.

After Stan graduated, his family moved to Omaha, Nebraska, and Stan went off to New Hampshire to board at St. Paul's School. He then attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Once he completed his degree at Vanderbilt in 1967, Stan did a stint in the Army, spending one year of his service in Vietnam at the height of that war. As he put it, "I was very lucky to be a map poster at Division Headquarters instead of out in the bush."

Stan came back to California after his military service was finished, and he earned his MBA at Long Beach State. He married in 1973. He and his wife, Marlene, raised their two children in Irvine. After working for a short while as a salesman, Stan was hired by the Franchise Tax Board. He became a CPA and ended up working for the FzTB for 32 years, starting in collections, moving into audit, and finally serving as a special investigator (his actual job title was "special agent"). He said that last post — which involved writing and executing search warrants, interviewing witnesses, taking cases to the district attorney and testifying in court — "was the most fun."

Once the children were grown, Marlene and Stan made their post-retirement home in La Quinta and made frequent trips to Dana Point, where they camped at the beach in a motor home. In Stan's spare time, he enjoyed skiing, camping, and traveling with his family, which had come to include grandchildren.

Stan is survived by his wife of 45 years, Marlene; by his daughter, Beth; son, Joe; and by his three grandchildren. Memorial donations in Stan's name may be made to the American Cancer Society.





Rev. Dr. David Andrew Kille, Lower '64

The Rev. D. Andrew Kille, who was a writer, teacher, editor, musician, preacher, biblical scholar, and interfaith activist, passed away on June 30, 2018.

Andy, as he was known by his schoolmates at OVS, lived in Ventura for the first 10 years of his life. After his family moved to Ojai in 1960, he was enrolled at OVS, where his grandparents worked. He transferred to Thacher for his high school years, graduating in 1967. At Stanford, where he was majoring in English literature, he met the woman who would become his wife. Pamela and Andy married in 1972, the year after he had completed his undergraduate degree.

Andy was ordained at the American Baptist Seminary of the West in Berkeley in 1975. Over the next several years, he served at the First Baptist Church of Palo Alto, the Seminary Intern at Memorial Church at Stanford University, and at Grace Baptist Church in San Jose.

In 1997, Andy received a Ph.D. in psychology and the Bible from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. He was, by then, part of a movement to renew psychologically-informed ways of reading the Bible. For several years, Andy served as chair of the Psychology and Biblical Studies Unit of the Society of Biblical Studies.

Five years after completing his Ph.D., Andy created Interfaith Space, developing opportunities for interfaith dialogues, shared sacred

space, and communications among interfaith groups in Santa Clara County and surrounding areas. Together with other like projects, Interfaith Space helped bring about the designation of Partner City by the Parliament of the World's Religions. Andy became a founding member and first chair of the Silicon Valley Interreligious Council. He was well-known and highly regarded in interfaith circles around the Bay Area and beyond.

In 2008, Andy became the editor of "The Bible Workbench" (now "Reading Between the Lines"), a study resource for individuals and groups, that uses open-ended questions to engage people deeply with Scriptural readings.

Andy cherished the outdoors and spent many weekends hiking and backpacking throughout the Sierras and Cascades. His last trip was into the Sespe Canyon with members of his Thacher class who had gotten together to celebrate their 50th reunion.

He also loved music. In addition to playing guitar, Andy composed songs. He led congregational music at St. Phillips Episcopal Church for 15 years and sang with the Sunnyvale Singers Community Chorus for 30 years.

Andy is survived by his wife, Pamela; his sons, Jabin (Michelle) and Russell; grandson, Hart; father, David W. Kille; sisters Laurel and Beth Buhler; and nephew Davey Frew (Rosie).

Donations in Andy's memory may be sent to: The Educational Center, P.O. Box 11892, Charlotte, North Carolina 28220, or to the Silicon Valley Interreligious Council (SiVIC), c/o Joy-Ellen Lipsky, 183 Goldenrain Dr., San Jose, CA 95111.

IN MEMORIAM

Celia Montgomery

Celia Montgomery, who joined the Development Office staff at OVS five years ago as the Database and Annual Giving Manager, died on August 5. She was 62.

Celia was born in Salinas, California. Her family moved to Ojai when Celia was twelve years old. She graduated from Nordhoff High School and then Ventura College. While attending VC, Celia developed a close friendship with Sharon Montgomery, the two sharing rides to and from their college classes.

Eventually, Celia would marry Sharon's brother, Duane. The couple had three children. Celia loved being a wife and mother, and she devoted her life to the family during the children's early years. Her devotion was evident in the way she extended herself: coaching their soccer teams (despite the fact that Celia herself had never played soccer), volunteering at their schools, and doing what they, not she, most liked to do — going to the beach and camping.

Celia had a wide range of talents and interests. What she most loved to do recreationally included sewing, cooking, dancing, playing the slot machines, working crossword puzzles, and drawing.

Once her children were grown, Celia returned to college to finish her degree at California State College, Northridge. She worked at Thomas Aquinas College and at The Thacher School before joining the staff at OVS. All of us who worked with Celia remember her helpfulness, her upbeat personality, and her unfailing kindness. She is greatly missed.

Celia is survived by Duane, her husband of 43 years; her sons Jared (Erika) and Ryan; her daughter, Melissa; her brother, Tony Christopher; her sisters, Editha O'Neill and Stella Vandegrift; and her granddaughters, Nia and Abbey.

The family has requested that those wishing to make a memorial donation in Celia's name do so to their favorite charity.



David Michael Tomkins (U65)

Michael (which he preferred to be called from age 5) was born in Chicago 72 years ago. When he was still a toddler, the family moved to Pacific Palisades, California, where Michael spent the rest of his childhood. He was active in sports and in Boy Scouts, eventually becoming an Eagle Scout. He overcame a learning disability and learned to read at age 8 with the help and support of his family and a special tutor. Michael went on to become a voracious reader and prolific writer.

Michael attended Paul Revere Jr. High School and Pacific Palisades High for his freshman year. He spent his summers playing sports and surfing. His parents thought he'd do better academically in a boarding school; hence, a skeptical Michael started at OVS as a sophomore the first year there was a dorm at OVS's Upper Campus. (The boys were bused down to Lower for classes in those days.) Michael fit in perfectly, as it turned out. He became a beloved and popular member of Upper's first graduating class and was fully involved in campus life. He served as president of the Lettermen's Club and was the varsity soccer captain. In addition, he was on the varsity basketball and baseball teams; he played touch football, and he was a member of the fledgling tennis club. Michael also wrote for the school paper, *The Observer*, and he played a role in the spring play his senior year.

He made friendships at OVS that lasted a lifetime, among them with his then dorm father, Mike Hermes (L53), who loved him like a son. The two stayed in touch until Mike died in 2011. His widow, Liz, came to know Michael as "boundlessly generous and unfailingly kind. Also, as hilariously funny. He was larger than life," she said. "So very sweet, yet salty!"

Classmate Kirk Warren (L62, U65) made this observation about the friend he misses: "Mike looked you in the eye when you were talking to him. He wanted to connect. A skilled practitioner of sarcastic wit, he loved to laugh and to make you laugh along with him."

After graduating from OVS, Michael earned a degree in political science from Cal Western University and, in 1969, finished a law degree at the University of Minnesota Law School in St. Paul, Minnesota. Immediately following law school, he worked for Ralph Nader to promote Native American welfare and rights.

Michael passed the Washington State bar exam in 1973, after having relocated to Seattle. Only 30% of applicants passed the bar in Washington State that year. Despite his impressive accomplishment, Michael was unable to find a firm that would hire him, so he ended up opening his own practice. His first book, *Trial and Error* (1981), is

a semi-autobiographical novel that chronicles those early years of his law career, during which time Michael's only law partner was his St. Bernard, Prosser. He would eventually have a flourishing practice and be voted Washington's Funniest Lawyer on account of the legal advice he dispensed on a local radio show.

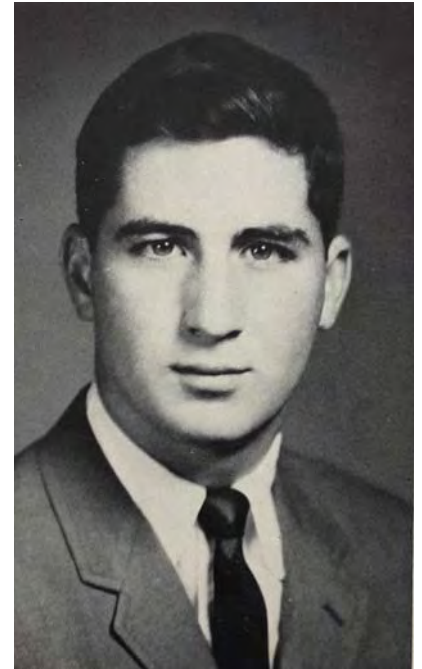
In 1983, he met Margie Rennie at a houseboat party on Lake Union. From that time on, they were inseparable. A great team. Margie worked with Michael in his law practice and on multiple business projects. They married in 1990 in Cape Town, South Africa. Four years later, Kaysee-Li, who would become their adored daughter, was born in Guangzhou, China.

Michael loved traveling. In addition to South Africa, destinations included China, Belize, Brazil, and Mexico, where he helped facilitate adoptions.

Mike's next publication, a novel, was *The 30-Hit Season* (2001), wherein a middle-aged attorney dreams he gets 30 hits off of major league pitchers, which helps the Seattle Mariners win The World Series. In 2006, Tomkins published a fable entitle *The World Below*. It is a story of conservation in a changing underwater world. Clive Cussler, who wrote the forward to his remarkable book, describes it as "an absorbing tale of lovable underwater creatures...an exquisitely illustrated and magnificently written story that will become a classic of children's literature."

Among Michael's clients over the years were those who held strong, activist-driven opinions about the environment. Michael himself was also committed to this cause, and he teamed up with Greenpeace, arranging for a share of the profits from the sale of *The World Below* to go to that organization.

Michael is survived by his wife, Margie Rennie; their daughter, Kaysee-Li Tomkins; his brother, Richard Tomkins; brothers-in-law, Edward (Jeannie) Rennie, and Michael Rennie; sister-in-law Barbara (Donald) Bernard; and several nieces and nephews.





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