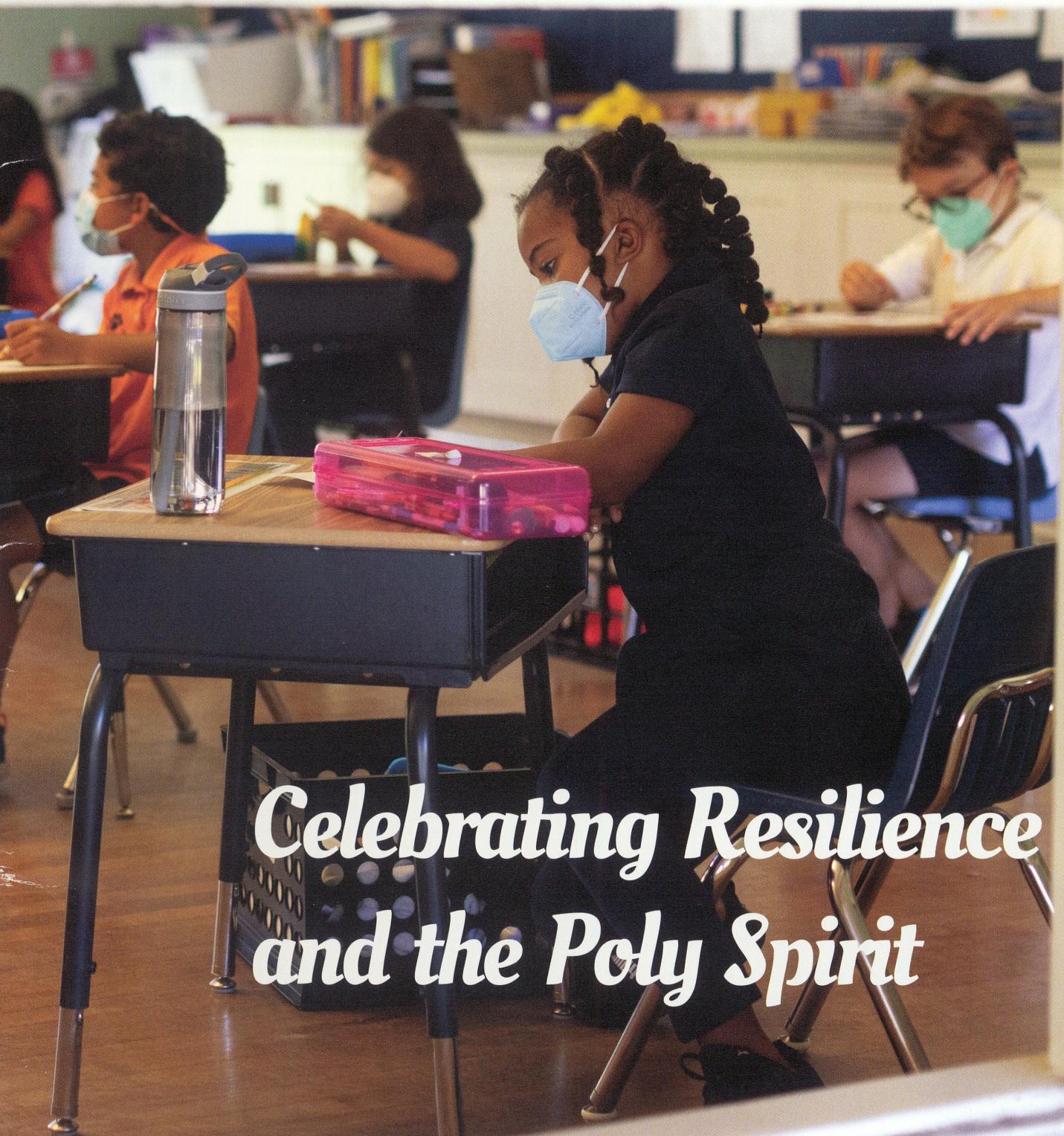




POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL

2020-2021

# OAKTREE TIMES



*Celebrating Resilience  
and the Poly Spirit*



Lower School teacher Jaclyn Ryan teaching her first grade class geography.

Cover Image: First-graders enjoy the prescient thinking of architect Myron Hunt and his open air classrooms.

# OAKTREE TIMES

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# OAKTREE TIMES

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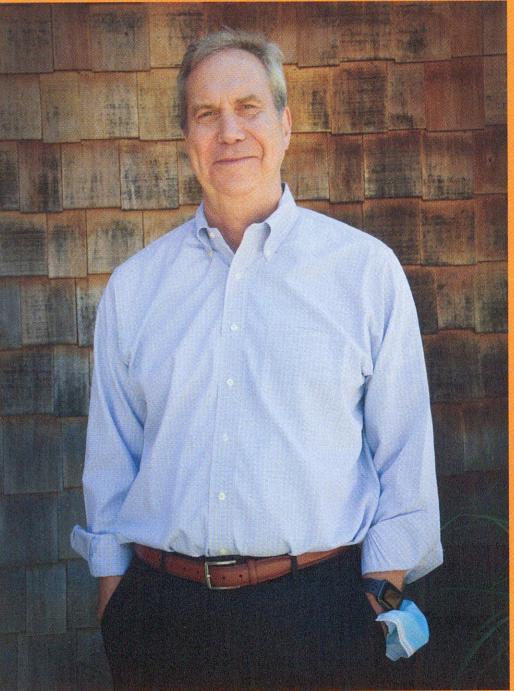
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# A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



Over the last year, we have relied more than ever on assorted communication tools to keep us connected while adhering to the varied health guidelines that framed our lives. Zoom meetings and webinars, novel at first, filled some of the void we felt, but video calls created an odd formality and quickly lost their charm. Staring at our screens for too long in isolation did little to build a sense of a shared mission or our role in contributing to the challenges before us. Still, our community was hungry for connection and focus regardless of these unprecedented times—we would expect nothing less from each other and ourselves.

This issue of *OakTree Times* captures a snapshot of what has transpired over the last six months. You will read about moments of joy and exhilaration, heartbreak and reflection, heroism and loyalty. We honor several colleagues who have worked at Poly for nearly a combined 100 years, and we introduce three new leadership team members. While none of these stories singularly define us, the vivid mosaic they create weaves a familiar pattern of our community's strength, depth, and generosity.

Enjoy a few minutes with us as you read these pages. We have missed seeing all of you in person, but that time will come. For now, it is essential for all of us to recognize how lucky we are to be part of a historic community committed to the vigor of intellectual curiosity and the humble understanding that there is still more to learn and to celebrate.



John W. Bracker  
**Head of School**

*Photos Left: Kindergarten students enjoy riding tricycles.*

*Seniors in Mr. Fletcher's advisory returned to campus for distanced meetings twice a month in the fall.*

*Mrs. Reece-Jackson demonstrates a technique to Finley P '29 in the outdoor classroom.*

# POLY MILESTONES

## 5 YEARS

Kate Austin  
Veronica Covarrubias  
Jennifer Fleischer  
Kathy Ford  
Jacklyn Clark  
Sarah Grogan  
Patricia Levin  
Mandy Madnikoff  
Stephanie Monteleone  
Heather Sweet  
Nicole Taylor

## 10 YEARS

Jenine Almahdi  
Gary Almonte  
Russell Buchanan  
Oscar Cervantes  
Mimi Chiu  
Michelle Feynman  
Laura Fleming  
Jack Prater  
Thomas Sale  
Aquila Winslow

## 15 YEARS

Barbara Bishop  
Rosa Puma Torres  
Katie Ward  
John Yen '89

## 20 YEARS

Thomas Allard  
Guillermo Moreno

## 25 YEARS



### SUSAN MARCHANT

"Students and parents are warmly welcomed everyday at North Campus reception by Susan as she provides direction, delivers forgotten lunch boxes, and cares for younger students awaiting late-arriving parents at day's end. Susan's passion and talent for flower arrangements and arts and crafts can be seen throughout the year as she contributes to a variety of events and art classes."

— *Keith Huysoon, Chief Financial Officer*

## 30 YEARS



### SUSAN BARTOW

"I learned early on when I came to Poly that Susan is very good at identifying the learning needs of students to whom she gives each her full attention. From being a teacher, to advisor, to an environmental advocate, she puts her full self into what she does at Poly. I would like to congratulate Susan for 30 years of teaching at Poly, and thank her for always serving the needs of our students."

— *Pat Gray, Middle School Director*



### CYNTHIA CRASS

"Cynthia keeps the trains running. She is organized, planful, and always willing to lend a hand. She knows this place inside and out, and shows up with innovative ideas to support our students to make Poly better. When you want an expert opinion, you go to Cynthia to get her perspective. Cynthia is a treasured resource everywhere!"

— *Jennifer Fleischer, Upper School Director*



### KEVIN JONES

"We applaud the determination and effort you have demonstrated during your 30 years at Poly. We look forward to seeing all the great things we know you will accomplish in the upcoming years."

— *Dale Rasmussen, Operations Director*



## CHERYL SCHEIDEMANTLE

“Cheryl inspires her students to strive for excellence, whether it’s practicing ‘Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star’ or a piece from one of the great masters! When she is conducting her students, it is an amazing sight—these young musicians rise to each occasion by displaying their talents, and the joy on their faces at the end of each performance tells the story of how this inspiring teacher motivates her students to be the best they can be...and enjoy the experience at the same time!”

— Paula Martin, Lower School Director



## LAURIANNE WILLIAMS

“Laurianne loves Poly, loves the students, and knows how to bring the fun. She totally gets how tough school and life can be from our kids’ perspective and wants students to also see Poly as a place for entertainment, enjoyment, and connection. She is known for her open office, her always ready ear to listen, and her out-of-the-box ideas to make our students’ lives better (and sweeter). She warms hearts and fills bellies every chance she gets!”

— Jennifer Fleischer, Upper School Director

## 35 YEARS

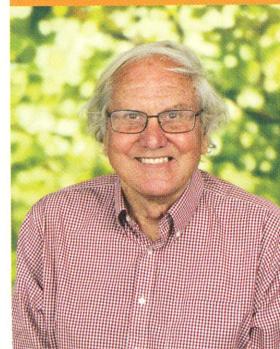


## CHARLENE BEERMAN

“Charlene’s contributions to our community are as bold as she is humble, and as a teacher and a coach, she sees potential in all of her students and players, holding the bar still for some and raising it for others. While her calm demeanor may not signal the type of competitor that she is, it would be a mistake to underestimate her competitive spirit and high expectations for our program.”

— John Bracker, Head of School

## 40 YEARS



## GREG FELDMETH

“The impact of Greg’s 40-year tenure at Poly has been far and wide. As a teacher, he has challenged our students to broaden their perspectives and deepen their understanding of historical forces and ethical questions. And, as a colleague, he has inspired and guided more than a generation of teachers to honor the promise of our mission and to embrace the enormous responsibility of what it means to be a teacher.”

— John Bracker, Head of School

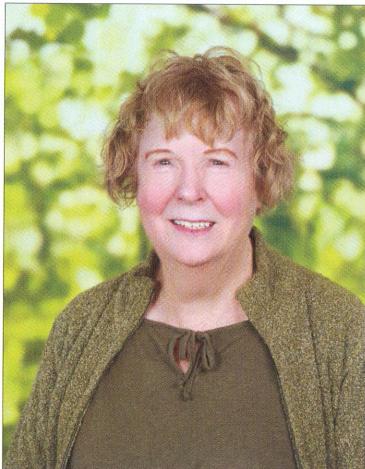
## BRAD HALL

“For 40 years, Brad has impacted students from ages 5-18, always stressing with his classes and teams the values of sportsmanship, integrity, and kindness. He reminds students to ‘do the right thing,’ making them better people, while making Poly a better place. Thank you for your dedication to Poly!”

— Steve Beerman, Athletics Director



# NEW BEGINNINGS



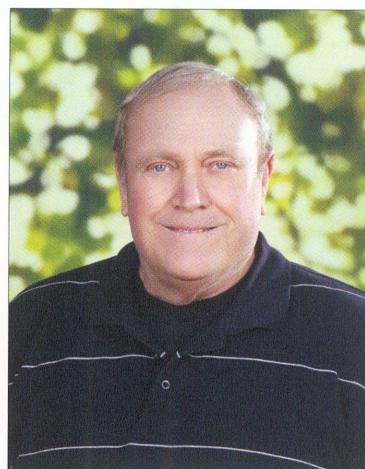
## MALORIE WIEBE

After 37 years at Poly and an overall teaching career that spans more than 50 years at every level from elementary school through college, Malorie Wiebe has decided to spend more time with her children and grandchildren. Malorie has impacted Poly in immeasurable ways that have included Computer Education (her first position here), teaching in all three divisions, serving as Math Department co-chair, mentoring 17 Teaching Fellows, and serving as an inaugural member of the Head's Advisory Committee. Malorie has touched the lives of many at Poly, and we wish her well.



## GRACE HAMILTON

This will be Grace Hamilton's last year at Poly. Grace joined the Poly community in 1987. She held many roles, including the Upper School English Coordinator, director of the Writer's Center, advisor to Poly's SLAM Team, and English and Creative Writing teacher. She also served as the Upper School Director from 1999-2006 and was the first advisor to Poly's Gay-Straight Alliance. A leader of several GIP trips, a teacher at Partnership For Success!, and a mentor to many, Grace's impact on Poly, students, and faculty alike, has been profound.



## WAYNE ELLIS

It is truly an end of an era as we bid farewell to Wayne Ellis, who came to Poly in 1987, where his brother, Chuck Ellis (Poly's then Athletic Director), hired him to take over the baseball program. As Wayne once stated, "baseball was my first love and passion." Under Wayne's leadership, Poly benefited by winning the Prep League Championship 25 out of 27 seasons and a state record 19 years in a row. Wayne retired from coaching baseball in 2014 and has remained an integral part of the Physical Education program at Poly. Wayne will be missed by students, fellow coaches, parents, and the Poly community for his warmth, deep commitment to the craft of coaching, and for his loyalty to his students, colleagues, and players. We wish Wayne the very best in his future endeavors and spending time with his grandchildren.



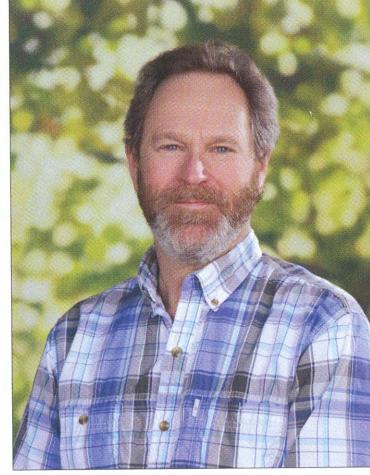
## LISA CARAGHER

After 32 years at Poly, Lisa Caragher will begin a new adventure at the end of the school year. During her Poly tenure, she has been the chair for Physical Education, coached, and served as the test coordinator for the College Board SAT, AP, and ISEE exams. Lisa was instrumental in establishing the badminton program at Poly in 1991. Her coaching duties included volleyball and soccer for the Middle School program and badminton for the Upper School program. Lisa's passion for physical education made her beloved at Poly by her students, colleagues, parents, and the entire community.



## LINDA BABCOCK

Linda Babcock came to Poly in 2000 as a part-time employee maintaining the Raiser's Edge database for the development office. It did not take long for all to notice that she was a database guru who worked her magic over the years, mastering multiple software programs and platforms along the way. Currently, Linda leads the gift entry process effort and pulls data for the Report of Giving and the *OakTree Times*. Linda has been instrumental in building and maintaining the accuracy of the Advancement database from her start at Poly. Her colleagues will deeply miss her, but we know she is ready to take on this next chapter of her life, and we wish her nothing but the best.



## MICHAEL BABCOCK '76

Before joining Poly in 2003, Michael Babcock worked in the entertainment industry that included television, music, and film. His passion for film has led to his leading workshops at the Sundance Institute, and he has been a guest speaker at UCLA and USC. Michael has a deeply rooted history with Poly as a former alum from the class of 1976. During his tenure, he helped create the Film Production classes, taught the Intermediate and Advanced Film Production classes, and partnered with the Film History class. Recently, Michael has played a role in helping resurrect and reimagine the Senior Projects Program. Michael will be missed, but we know that his love for film and entertainment will always have a place in his future.

# NEW BEGINNINGS (CONT...)



## BARBARA BOHR

Since coming to Poly 17 years ago, Barbara Bohr has worn many hats in the Facilities Department. She served as operations coordinator and, most recently, events coordinator. Barbara took great pride in providing the best event experience ranging from coffee service, to the Poly Pet and Hobby Show, and ultimately Commencement. As a Diversity Cohort member, she shared a critical perspective that had been missing from the discussions as an operations staff member. Barbara will be missed, but we know she will be busy spending quality time with her children and grandchildren.



## AMY DAVIDSON '77

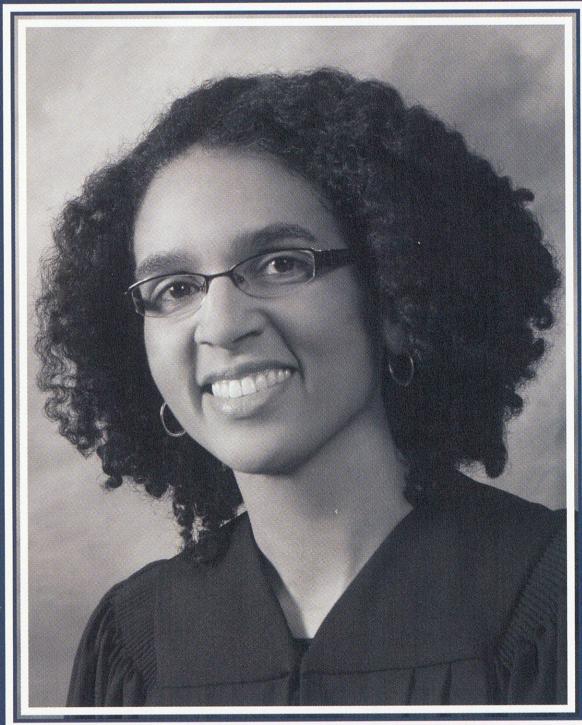
A student at Poly from pre-k to fourth grade, Amy Davidson returned to Poly as a Hixon Intern in 2006 and began her teaching career in 2007. After earning a bachelor's degree in economics from Stanford, Amy worked in the banking industry for 10 years. She later began her teaching career by completing a state license in early childhood education and a California teaching credential. Amy was an invaluable assistant teacher in our kindergarten, first, second, and, most recently, as a lead teacher in the fourth grade starting in the 2017-2018 school year. Never one to seek the spotlight, Amy has touched the lives of many students and colleagues alike.



## ROSA PUMA TORRES

Rosa Puma Torres came to Poly in 2006 initially as a substitute teacher for Spanish in both the Upper and Lower Schools. Before joining us, Rosa was a full-time Spanish teacher for La Canada High School and taught at the university and community college level. A passionate and empathic educator, Rosa is a life-long Spanish instructor and has aided in the design and implementation of curriculum at all levels during her career. While at Poly, she has also served as the World Languages department co-chair, FCC co-chair, and the Middle School DEI committee member. More recently, Rosa took a lead role in coordinating the burgeoning Middle School human development program, coordinating curriculum across all three grade levels. Rosa's devotion to her students and the community's care has profoundly impacted many, and she will be missed by us all.

# POLY'S DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD



**Leondra R. Kruger '93**

Poly is thrilled to announce that the Honorable Leondra R. Kruger '93, who currently serves on the Supreme Court of California, will be recognized with the 2020 Distinguished Alumni of the Year award. While campus health and safety measures in response to the pandemic prevented Justice Kruger from visiting Poly this spring, the campus looks forward to welcoming her back when circumstances allow.

Poly alumni belong to a community filled with strong leaders and innovative minds that have contributed great success to many different professions and walks of life. Each year, the Distinguished Alumni Award is presented by the Alumni Association to an alumnus or alumna whose life and work embodies the school's commitment to intellect, integrity, service to others, and respect for the world beyond.

The award was established by former Head of School John Bergen. To nominate a Poly alumnus or alumna for the Distinguished Alumni Award, please contact the Alumni Office at [alumni@polytechnic.org](mailto:alumni@polytechnic.org).



new Leaders



ship at

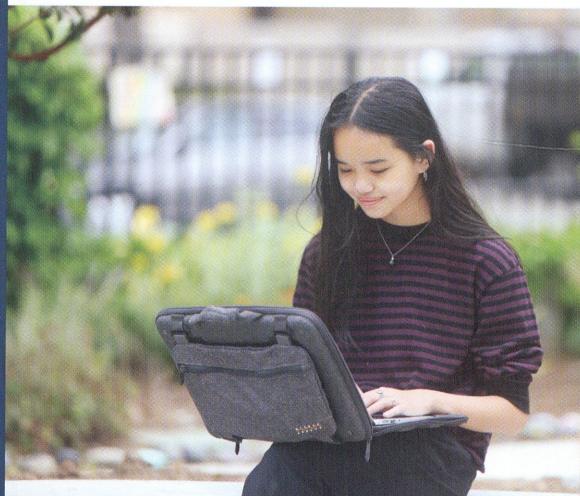
Poly is excited to announce the appointment of three new leadership positions: Dr. Ara Brown, Upper School Director; Dr. Michaela Mares-Tamayo '99, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and Meredith B. Robbins, Chief Advancement Officer. Each individual was interviewed by a member of the student body, faculty, or staff that relates to their position for the *OakTree Times*. Ara spoke with rising freshman Alena T. '25, Michaela spoke with Donor Relations and Strategic Advancement Communications Manager Suzanne Khazaal, and Meredith spoke with Upper School World Languages teacher and Global Initiatives Program Co-Coordinator Ann Diederich. Read on for our interviews with them.

Poly

# DR. ARA BROWN

## UPPER SCHOOL DIRECTOR

To celebrate Dr. Ara Brown's appointment as Poly's new Upper School director, rising freshman Alena T. '25 interviewed him over Zoom ahead of his cross-country move from Washington D.C. Ara currently serves as the head of Whittle School and Studios' Upper School, and brings with him experience teaching at both the high school and college level, as well as student-focused administrative roles. Ara and Alena will both be newcomers to the Upper School next year, and their interview together strengthened Ara's desire to lean on Poly students to inform him in his new role. Read on for their interview together.



Rising freshman Alena T. '25 interviewed Dr. Brown ahead of his cross-country move to Poly as the new Upper School Director.



**Alena T.: In what ways has your education prepared you for this role?**

**Dr. Ara Brown:** I went to a public school in Philadelphia. I had a couple of teachers who really believed in me and created opportunities for me, even though I was at a public school that wasn't well funded. My principal, for example, was one of the individuals that really saw something in me and gave me an opportunity to take free classes at one of the private colleges in Philadelphia. We didn't have advanced classes at my school, so he wanted to make sure that I had access to that.

I went to a small college outside of Philadelphia called Ursinus College. The teachers knew my name, and I did research and was published as an undergrad. Even though I was not donating millions of dollars back to the school, I still had very personal relationships. I think that really influenced me as an educator, that it was really important for me to get to know my students to make sure that I'm providing access to a multitude of opportunities.

**Alena: What is your connection to Poly?**

**Ara:** Poly has a very strong national reputation so I've become familiar with Poly in several different ways. One way was as a teacher with Global Online Academy

(GOA) when I was working in Michigan. I taught a psychology course with GOA and actually created another psychology course that still exists today. I was floored by Poly students, not just by their academic ability but really your humbleness. Poly is not pretentious, you really engage with other students and have a desire to learn. As an educator that's the best thing in a world.

Another way is by meeting impressive faculty at conferences as well. Your former head of school Debbie Reed is internationally known, there's no question about that. She definitely has a strong presence within the independent school world and Mr. Bracker too. I have followed his career from the East Coast over to the West Coast. I'm very excited to work at a school like Poly and to work under and alongside great leadership.

**Alena:** Yes, I was at Poly when Ms. Reed was head. I've been at Poly since kindergarten.

**Ara:** That's great! So you are going to be a lifer.

**Alena:** That's true!

**Ara:** So you're probably the first person I need to talk to when I actually get to campus so I can get an inside scoop on all the divisions.

**Alena:** I'd be happy to! Can you tell us about your vision for the Upper School?

**Ara:** Great question! I don't want to come off as flippant, but it's to be able to continue the great work that's already taking place in the Upper School. It's really important for me to listen, understand the existing culture, and get a better idea of what the students and the faculty really want to get out of the Upper School experience and make sure that it continues to be a clear continuation of the great work that has taken place.

I'll be honest and say that there's some programs that I'm really excited about including GIP and Partnership for Success! I'm also really excited about how Poly is reimagining A.P. and honors classes and changing the format so it's more thematic—it's more in-depth and you're not beholden to an external exam. It's really important for me to make sure that I'm listening to the people in the community and having these conversations so I have a better understanding of the needs of the institution.

**Alena:** I'm certainly looking forward to experiencing what you have in mind for the Upper School.

**Ara:** One of the things that I'll say is that I am very student-centered. That probably is because of the attention that I received throughout my time and education, the fact that my teachers and professors and administrators cared about me so, in turn, I really care about my students. So hearing directly from you and building the program together is something that I'm really excited about.

**Alena:** That sounds great! In what ways, do you hope to connect with the Poly community?

**Ara:** You have to be present, and you can't do that if you're always in your office or if the door is closed. No one knows what the fall is going to look like. I'm hoping, you know, that we're in person in some capacity and we're able to share space, not just half a grade at a time, but a considerable mass, so I think being present,

asking questions, and listening to stories and not having any preconceived notions.

I really want to think about the school as a whole. Again, we're in a unique opportunity where there are three divisions, but at the end of the day, it's really one school, despite when you started at Poly. I want to make sure that I continue to keep that connection and legacy alive.

**Alena:** You've talked a lot about a sense of community and listening to everyone. What Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives do you want to support or promote as Upper School director?

**Ara:** DEI work is something that is very near and dear to me. The work that I've done in my dissertation was around DEI work. I was the first diversity director at the first school that I worked at. It has very much been a part of every position, every job, every institution where I've worked so I don't see it as separate from anything that I'm doing. I'm really excited that Poly hired a director of DEI, and that we will be starting together. I want to make sure that we are addressing the concerns of all members of the community, whether that be parents, students, faculty, staff, alumni, or administrators.

**Alena:** I love DEI work a lot, too. I went to the Pollyanna conference hosted by Harvard-Westlake with keynote speaker Baratunde Thurston.

**Ara:** He's an East Coaster! He went to school in D.C., and I had the opportunity to hear him speak as well. He is so engaging! How large was the conference?

**Alena:** It was over 20 schools. It was a pretty large conference, but it was really great and was the highlight of my year.

**Ara:** We have to look at how we can take that experience and replicate it because clearly it was transformative. I remember being a participant in conferences like that. You might be the person I have to tap to help me create that for others, since you've had such a great experience.

**Alena:** I'd love that! Excited to see you on campus next year!

# DR. MICHAELA MARES-TAMAYO '99

## DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

As Dr. Michaela Mares-Tamayo '99 transitioned from her position as the Director of Student Equity at Pasadena City College into her new role as Poly's Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in July, Donor Relations and Communications Manager Suzanne Khazaal interviewed Michaela over Zoom to learn more about her full-circle journey at Poly and what she hopes to achieve in her new role. After graduating from Poly, Michaela earned bachelor's degrees in Ethnic Studies and Chicano Studies from UC Berkeley. She later received a master's degree in Mexican-American Studies from Cal State LA before earning a Ph.D. in Education from UCLA. Read on for their interview together.

**Suzanne Khazaal:** Can you please share a little bit about your past position at Pasadena City College (PCC) and involvement in DEI work?

**Dr. Michaela Mares-Tamayo:** I was very honored to be the first Director of Student Equity at PCC. I came into a college that had worked really hard to lay some of the groundwork for equity-minded practice and policy change, and improved campus climate and learning experience for students. I view my work there over the past four years as a connective tissue for all of these amazing activities and people and efforts that had been happening. The equity-minded piece is central to what I've been doing, and it's also allowed me to work with folks and provide them with resources and a sounding board to think about how it is we identify value—to uplift the diverse experiences our students bring and be very intentional about understanding what it means to make more inclusive learning and communal spaces.

**Suzanne:** What inspired you to pursue work in this field?

**Michaela:** Absolutely my family. My grandparents were not afforded the opportunity to pursue their own educational pursuits. It was precisely because of their racial background, immigrant status, and socioeconomic class position. They instilled in my



*Dr. Michaela Mares-Tamayo '99, Poly's inaugural director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.*

parents the importance of pursuing education as a way to create better life opportunities for themselves. Both of my parents, as first-generation college students, had incredibly difficult and also extremely resilient experiences navigating the educational pipeline. For me and my little brother, also a Poly alum, it was never really a question if we were going to college, but where. It was expected that we would use our privileges and training to make something better than what our family had experienced or things we experienced ourselves.

**Suzanne:** In what ways has your education prepared you for this role?

**Michaela:** I think being able to pursue my undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees—all with Ethnic Studies as an undercurrent through them—has provided me with an extremely solid theoretical foundation that is so important for us to be able to get into the space of practical applications. If we do things without fully

understanding how we got here in the first place or what it is we need to be aware of in terms of engaging in discussions around DEI and potential power imbalances that may exist between communities and all those related matters, we're going to be significantly less effective in whatever it is that we try to do.

**Suzanne:** You graduated from Poly in 1999 when familiarity with DEI work was much different. What was your experience like on campus?

**Michaela:** My experience had an equal amount of highlights as it did very deep challenges, and so I truly appreciated the champions that I had throughout Middle and Upper School who saw me exactly for who I was in all of my experiences and my identities—not just as a Poly student, but as a Chicana, as a daughter of educators, as one of very few Latino students in either the Middle or Upper School as a whole, and as someone who deeply cared about issues of social justice and community. For those teachers and staff members who were able to recognize that intersectional experience that I was living, I will forever be indebted to them.

It was really hard knowing that I felt most connected and most comfortable in my own skin during the summer when the Skills Enrichment Program was going on, which is now known as Partnership for Success. Summer was a highlight for me and my little brother because we worked with students who came from the Pasadena Unified School District and essentially were like the students we had gone to elementary school with.

**Suzanne:** What contributions would you like to make to DEI work at Poly?

**Michaela:** I want to contribute a sense of connection in DEI work, both in terms of connecting the efforts and the people who are already doing the work and have laid so much of the groundwork that allows me to come in and contribute to it. It's really important for me to be a connecting force across those efforts and to also connect with more people who have either an interest, a need and/or responsibility to be a part of the DEI work. Contributing that connection is critical because everyone has a responsibility to promote equity and inclusion in our policies, and our practices. On the most basic level, it's about who we communicate with, how we communicate with them about the work that we do, and what we

communicate in terms of the centrality of DEI to our school's excellence as a whole. I have the ability to connect my scholarly background and professional work in a way that's engaging. I have experienced Poly as a Student of Color and also know the strong sense of community that characterizes Poly. I would like for us to be very intentional about continuously defining community in ways that are welcoming to all of our students and families.

**Suzanne:** Awareness, education, and acceptance of others is largely impacted by the way we are raised at home. How do you envision broadening perspectives and acceptance on campus, in the classrooms and among your peers?

**Michaela:** Our parents and families are really key to broadening perspectives and acceptance. I can remember in my own experience very warm welcomes I received from families who were from different racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds than mine. And what a difference that made for me to feel like I had a space at the school, even if others didn't always think so or didn't communicate as such.

Without those parents, some of whom were trustees at the time, it would've made for a difficult experience for myself as someone who was not in the majority at the school. Being at Poly now, in this new role, it is really important that we have a strong set of learning opportunities for our parents and families to experience and engage in along the way. There's so much power in dialogue and learning from peers: for parents to speak to their neighbors, people in their social circles, and others whom they enjoy spending time with about their own journey in learning more and being supporters around DEI. I feel a responsibility to provide space for parents and community members to access those tools and learning opportunities; have discussions that I can help guide; and equip them to have those conversations on their own—both with their children and students, but most importantly with each other. That is going to help us become the school we want to be and that our students deserve.

# MEREDITH B. ROBBINS

## CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

To welcome Meredith Robbins as Poly's new Chief Advancement Officer, Upper School World Languages teacher and Global Initiatives Program Co-Coordinator Ann Diederich interviewed her to learn more about her vision for fundraising and Poly community engagement, including academic collaborations. Meredith brings with her 19 years of Advancement experience that began in the arts and has expanded to include K-12 schools and higher education with positions at Columbia University, the School of American Ballet, Caltech, and California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), among other organizations. The Advancement team at Poly works closely with the global programs as well as other initiatives. Read on for their interview together.

**Ann Diederich:** Can you share a brief bio of your time before Poly?

**Meredith B. Robbins:** Sure! I got my start in advancement at Glimmerglass Opera in Upstate New York in a fellowship after my undergraduate degree. In that brief summer interlude, I learned I had a passion for helping donors tell their stories, and then linking donor passion with institute or school priorities.

Most recently, I was at CalArts, which is a college based in Santa Clarita that's focused on raising artists and voices in dialogue and discourse. Prior to CalArts I was at Caltech, Poly's neighbor, focused on student affairs work which included everything from scholarships and fellowships, to community outreach programs. I think back often to my time at the School of American Ballet (SAB) at Lincoln Center, located in the heart of Manhattan, where I first had the privilege to lead a team. SAB is an incredible institution, every student from 5-19 years old focuses on becoming dancers on the global stage. Throughout my career I've attempted to answer the question, "What can my contribution to young people and education be?" And I choose to contribute by leading a fundraising team.

**Ann:** What are you most looking forward to at Poly?

**Meredith:** I came to Poly to be part of the community, and because I have a passion for education. My dad grew up in Pasadena in the 1950s, and it feels full circle that now my husband, our little boy, and I call Pasadena home. At Poly, I have the great gift of leading a wonderful team. There is also the opportunity to partner with extraordinary teachers, John Bracker, alumni, parents, staff, and the Board to bring Poly to the next stage of success. I feel so honored to be part of the community going forward.

**Ann:** What do you hope to achieve in your new role as the Chief Advancement Officer?

**Meredith:** The word "Advancement" can mean many things, but it's really about engaging those who love the school—or who could love the school—and about fundraising to support the school's needs. My main goal is to increase the impact of Advancement at Poly, and to ensure a high quality of experience for those who "give back" to Poly in whatever way that they choose. For some this might be volunteering, or participating in Reunion, and for others this might mean making a contribution. Others might choose to include Poly in their will in order to leave a legacy. The areas of opportunity that Advancement can provide are really broad, and yet specific to each person. The scope and intersectionality of the work are what makes it so enriching.

Some of this work will be focused on envisioning Poly's next fundraising Campaign, in partnership with John Bracker and the Board. It's been over 10 years since Poly's previous campaign. Together, we will consider how increased support for scholarships, faculty, and health and wellness, as well as athletics, can best impact our students and broader community, and then welcome members of the community into that process. Our work in DEI will also be central to this process. Every gift, from \$10 to \$100 million, is meaningful. All gifts bring value to Poly.



Jifer Godwin Minto '21

Meredith B. Robbins is Poly's new Chief Advancement Officer.

**Ann:** What are some of the highlights of collaborating with students and faculty in your former roles?

**Meredith:** I've been so fortunate to work with so many wonderful individuals in my career, including faculty, students, and donors, that it's really hard to pick! But for me it goes back to two themes: helping a donor tell their story and have impact, and helping to create sustainable and positive change. The very best engagement and fundraising work comes through collaboration! And it's a goal of mine to teach and support a team to do the same.

**Ann:** Parent organizations such as Global Initiatives Alliance, the Panther Club, and the Parent Association work a lot with the Advancement office. How do you hope to partner with the parent community at Poly, and perhaps with those particular organizations?

**Meredith:** I look forward to learning more about our parent organizations at Poly, and to meeting all of the parents who participate! My first task is to listen and learn, and then to say thank you! Parents are the lifeblood of Poly and are invested in so many ways. The Advancement team is fortunate to be surrounded by many dedicated parents, and in that I hope that we will find new ways to partner in the future.

**Ann:** This school is unique in that it provides a learning experience for all. How do you feel the Advancement office can also participate in this learning community as educators? How would you like to see it evolve?

**Meredith:** As someone who considers themselves to be a life-long learner, that definitely appeals to me! In the first few weeks I was here, I asked the Advancement team to fill out a 'Who are We' questionnaire. One of the questions was 'In what way are you impacting the community?' I was floored and excited to read the dozens of ways the Advancement team members currently contribute outside of their regular work days. This includes teaching a class to Upper School students, serving on committees, advising students, creating new clubs, volunteering for carpool duty, contributing to certain classes and activities—the list goes on! While we are Advancement professionals and our first job is to do our work expertly, we are also members of the community. I only wish to uphold that. For me, I'm searching for how I will contribute. How can I best serve the Poly community?

**Ann:** The Advancement office is in its fourth year of partnership with the Global Scholars project in overseeing students in the grant writing process. How do you envision the Advancement office furthering this type of work?

**Meredith:** The very best thing the Advancement team can do at Poly is to consider the generosity of the donors who have so supported the school or who have the capacity and inclination to support the school, to genuinely nurture these relationships, and to say thank you in ways that donors find meaningful. The same goes for alumni who wish to engage with one another, and to the broader community as well. One of Poly's real strengths is its collaborative nature. I only wish for Advancement to continue playing a role in that collaboration, with teachers, programs, students, and others, and then to introduce alumni and friends into the work as well. There's so much more that we can do together!

*Elements of GIP are generously funded by a gift from an anonymous donor.*

# Walking with Grace

On January 18, Head of School John Bracker announced that this would be Grace Hamilton's last year at Poly. With more than 30 years of profoundly impacting the lives of students and those around her, Grace decided that it was time to retire. While the Poly community experienced mixed emotions upon hearing the news, many were excited to learn of her future plans to hike the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). However, just 10 days later Grace was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia.

"When I learned the diagnosis on the 28th of January, I had absolutely no anger," said Grace. "I think walking through rather than against is extremely powerful. You can do one day at a time and some days part of that trek is going to be really hot and you're going to go straight uphill, and the next day it will be beautiful."

Grace's journey over the past six months has been one of resilience. Grace's family and the Poly

Community sprung into action to support her. A website to collect electronic messages of support for Grace circulated in the Poly community, and some submitted letters and mementos dating from the very beginning of Grace's career. One alum sent a hand-painted landscape of the PCT to help Grace keep her ultimate goal in mind while another sent her four guidebooks about hiking the PCT.

When Grace's immediate family learned that none were a perfect blood stem cell match, Director of Health Service Marcy Kwitny and Upper School Dean of Student Activities Laurianne Williams organized a "Be The Match" drive for an unrelated donor. Though it was raining the day of the drive, nearly 30 donors showed up to campus to swab their cheeks to see if they were a match. So far, over 150 people have registered in Grace's name as part of the registry.



On a phone call with Grace, she shared that she is extremely aware of her privilege as a white woman looking for a donor. Her odds of getting a donor were 77 percent. Were she African American, it would be closer to 23 percent according to the registry. A big part of her desire to host the “Be The Match” drive was to raise awareness and build up the donor base for underrepresented populations seeking a match.

Grace recently learned the wonderful news that not only does she have a match, but she has three perfect matches. “I didn’t realize how much anxiety I was carrying about this until I received the call. It won’t be easy, but I am going to come through this, and I will be cured.”

As she continues through her journey of healing, her thoughts are not far from Coco J. ’23, who has also been battling cancer. Grace taught Coco’s mother at Poly and sent her prayers to her. Coco recently had a bone marrow transplant with positive results. Grace calls her an extraordinarily strong young woman and hopes that her treatment will be done soon.

Throughout this process, Grace remains focused on her ultimate goal of hiking the PCT. She is especially grateful for the trails she has hiked with Poly students on outdoor education trips and loves being able to share her love of hiking.

“I do want to express gratitude for the career I’ve had at Poly. I’ve been able to wear so many different hats and attend conferences and trips that have been life-changing. Now that I’m retired and looking back, this has been a dream career for me, and I’ve been extraordinarily lucky.”

To register as a donor, visit  
[join.bethematch.org/hikewithgrace](https://join.bethematch.org/hikewithgrace)



# MAINTAINING THE POLY EXPERIENCE FROM HOME

Back in the early days of the pandemic, when connecting via Zoom was just a twinkle in the eye for most teachers, Poly's Technology department was already ramping up licenses for the school to use the platform. When Poly's campus officially closed in March 2020 amid rising cases of coronavirus, the Technology and Ed Tech teams were tasked with the herculean task to pivot in-person instruction to distance learning within a matter of days.

"Teachers have my number on speed dial, and we frequently jump on Zoom to talk through obstacles they're facing and brainstorm solutions," said Lower School Technology Integration Specialist Sarah Nua. "Many lessons that the teachers were used to doing

in the classroom had to be reimagined, so I provide them with ideas and resources to help shift their lesson to a virtual-friendly version."

Technology teams were in constant communication in order to best support faculty, staff, students, and families with all things related to technology. Tools including Google Classroom (classroom management), Bitmoji (illustrated classrooms and cartoon personas), and Kahoot! (interactive quizzes) became part of the equation for online learning, improving participation, and morale.

Six hundred school-provided devices were loaned to students including iPads and Macbook Airs. Those facing Wi-Fi connectivity issues at home were equipped with

The Poly Tech Team: (left to right) Jill del Mar, John Yen '89, Patrick Carpenter, Ryan Katsuyama '90, Cyril Hicks '16, Beverly Goldin, and Farid Hernandez.

Also pictured on laptop: Lower School Technology Integration Specialist Sara Nua.



hotspots. The school has also upgraded Wi-Fi on campus to support increased bandwidth. As comfort with distance teaching grew, so did demands for devices to support lessons.

"We created sessions for teachers to try out equipment on campus," said Director of Technology John Yen '89. "Teachers bring their content to the foray, and we help create solutions in partnership with them. There are many creative aspects in our solutions."

When in-person instruction resumed for the Lower School in November 2020, second-grade teacher Marylisa Boghosian was finding her voice very hoarse at the end of her teaching day distanced from students and wearing a mask. Technology equipped her with a headset and microphone attached to portable speakers like fitness instructors might use. Now, many teachers on campus use the same setup.

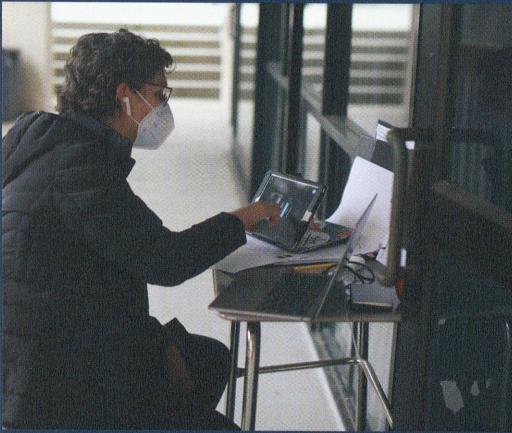


Second-grade teacher Marylisa Boghosian pictured with her tech-provided headset.

Technology also anticipated the needs of hybrid teaching and outdoor Wi-Fi access. Internet connectivity has been made available in every green and outside space, including streaming 4K video from outside of the gym and on the field.

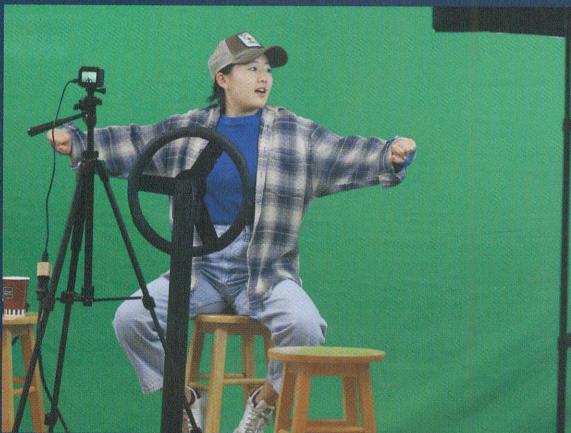
"My hope is that some of the things we've implemented for distance learning sticks," said Middle School Technology Integration Specialist Kelly Ward. "The knowledge base that Middle School teachers have gained is unbelievable. They've raised the bar for everybody regarding using technology and finding tools. The amount they've learned is beneficial for all."

# The Evolution

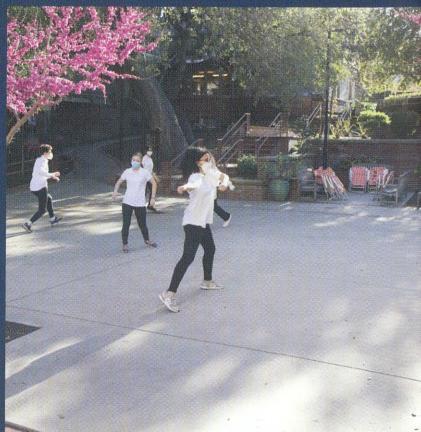


Above: 9/10 Dean, 9th-grade Coordinator, and Performing Arts Instructor Cynthia Crass, and Tori K. '21 put technology to the test.

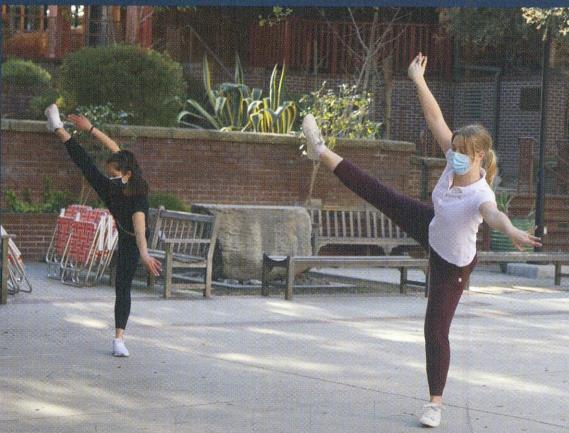
Below: K-12 Performing Arts Department Chair Tiffany La Barbera-Palmer remotely records a performance from outside the dance studio.



## of the Musical:



## From Zoom Room to Black Box



To watch Poly's recent Performing Arts productions visit Poly's YouTube channel.

Performing Arts Instructor Danielle Pigneri works with dancers on McWilliams Courtyard.



When students were sent home at the advent of coronavirus in March 2020, the Spring Musical was already underway. Students and performing arts faculty had spent months preparing for the premier of *Fiddler on the Roof*, only to have to completely rethink the musical for distance learning. Ultimately, the musical debuted on YouTube with a mix of recorded rehearsals and original rehearsal footage to the delight of the Poly community. It showed that despite the pause on in-person instruction, the creativity of Poly shone through.

"The students were happy to do something that felt like a group activity even though we weren't together," said 9th/10th grade Dean, 9th-grade Coordinator, and Performing Arts Instructor Cynthia Crass, about the first remote production. "Performing Arts gives kids something else to do that's not schoolwork or staring at the screen. If you're on Zoom doing something creative it's a different kind of Zoom than listening to a lecture."

The musical has been a bright spot for all of us."

When it came time for the fall production, students and faculty knew this performance would be completely remote. It took the brainpower of all to find a way to bring to life the original work of alumni and stitch it together in a way that is both engaging and takes full use of the technology available.

"With the remote musicals there is a lot of creativity and ideas and you get to put your own stamp on it," said Tori K. '21. "With the fall production it was an original production and we heard everyone's ideas. It was open-ended. Try something new! Film at a park! There was a lot more broad creativity even though we had to work within certain parameters."

*Awakenings* premiered on YouTube in December and has garnered more than 1,000 views with original scenes, poems, and music by alumni; the fall production also included several public domain pieces. The winter production *Connections* followed in February of this year with all original material by current Poly students.

For some students, the opportunity to record a remote musical proved an engaging challenge. "I got the opportunity to direct a play which was an interesting experience," said Dylan H. '21. "We all kind of got to be our own key grips and videographers. It's a very unique set of skills that a lot of us now have access to."

Students and performing arts faculty took a collective breath when it was announced that limited in-person rehearsals would be allowed under the latest hybrid-learning rules. Once again, the department had to rethink its creative processes to take advantage of this in-person time.

Students now have the opportunity to rehearse and record in Poly's black box theater and dance studio with faculty connected to their session through Zoom. The students can record multiple takes in front of a green screen with input from directors

**Try something new! Film at a park! There was a lot more broad creativity even though we had to work within certain parameters."**

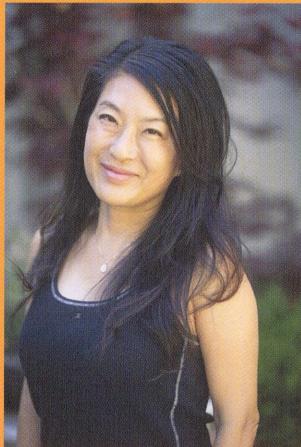


who control the GoPro camera through their phone. Ensemble dancers have begun to rehearse and film outdoors. Pit orchestra is now practicing together indoors as none of the student members play a wind instrument. It will be the first time some students have had the opportunity to play together.

"The whole experience has been very interesting because it is closer to an in-person musical but also farther because we come back to campus week by week," said Caroline P. '22. "It's really nice to be with everyone and share a sense of fulfillment being together."

# Powering the POLY FUND

With the generous support of the Poly community, Poly's Advancement team raised almost \$500,000 during Poly Giving Day, which supports the Poly Fund. Held on April 7, nearly 500 alumni, parents, grandparents, teachers, staff, trustees, and Poly friends participated as volunteers and donors. Thank you to all who contributed! The *OakTree Times* spoke with two impactful volunteers who helped make Poly Giving Day a success.



Jean Shim, Poly parent and Founder of SHIMFILMS.

## What does the Poly Fund mean to you?

It meant talking to a lot of parents and fundraising in one of the most difficult years for our community. There were many hardships, such as not being able to go back to school, and every person was grateful to give what they could and grateful toward the fundraisers. The community stepped up and to see that was a gracious and overwhelming feeling. They told us thank you so much for doing this, and for helping families at school and doing what we could.

## Why have you decided to support it?

I loved all the matching gifts that we were trying to raise. It's kind of a nice feeling for that day knowing all of us are working together for the community. We were all working together for a goal. When we started to see the ticker go up it was really fun. I'm all about community, and it's what makes me feel alive. That day, particularly, you felt that.

## How were you able to connect with the Poly Community through volunteering?

In a time where we all miss human connection so deeply, I found Poly Giving Day to be the perfect antidote. Fueled by the perfect reason to reach out to classmates I had spent a lifetime with but had eventually lost touch, I was truly enlivened by the reconnections I made.

## Do you plan to continue volunteering in the future?

While I was a student, I delighted in the many volunteer opportunities provided by the school, eventually leading me to take on the role of Girls Service League President. To this day, I credit my idea of community and desire to give back to the many important lessons I learned at Poly. I look forward to continuing to volunteer in a meaningful way for many years to come.



Chelsea Cannell Briggs '00, on-air personality.

THE POLY FUND



THANK YOU

FOR YOUR GIFT TO POLY

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PASADENA CA 91106-4099

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HERE  
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PLACE

# THANK YOU, ESSENTIAL WORKERS!

*Please note this list was submitted by Poly community members and is not necessarily an exhaustive list of all of our essential workers.*

ADAM READHEAD '94	ERNESTO LICON	MARK MARTIN
ALEXIS KOROSTOFF RIEBER '01	GAIL SILVER '76	MATTHIEU DECLERCK
ALISON SONNENSCHEIN '10	GEORGE HORNG '93	MELINDA B. WELCH
AMIT SURA '00	GIANCARLO DIMASSA '92	MELISSA DOYLE
ANNEMARIE FANSELAU	GUSTAVO MENDEZ '03	MORGAN KAIL-ACKERMAN '16
ANNIE HUANG	HEATHER TINDALL READHEAD '94	NICHOLAS RODRIGUEZ '70
ASHISH PATEL	HOLLY RIOUX '99	PETER KOETTERS '86
BAHAREH FATHI & SHAHRIAR PARVIZPOUR	JASON NAGATA '04	PHILIP HAMILTON '05
BERNARD KIM	JEAN-CLAUDE HENRY	PRATIMA GUPTA '92
BEVERLY CHEN LEE	JEAN-PHILIPPE AND BARBARA AVOUAC	RONALD OLAH
BHUVAN MARTIN	JEFFREY NICKERSON '01	ROSHANAK EFTEKHARI
BRANDON LEW	JESSICA (DAMASCO) JAMES '06	SAMANTHA COLLINS '16
BRECKEN ARMSTRONG '95	JILLIAN NICKERSON '05	SARA BURGESS '70
BRIAN LEE	JOAN BEHESHTI	SARALEE STEINER '10
BRIAN VENERABLE '83	JULIAN CARDENAS '20	SARAH KUEHN GERHARDT '93
BRITTNEY DECLERCK '98	JULIE YANG	SCOTT COLLINS '82
BRODERICK LEAKS	KAREN KIM	SCOTT GASPARD '87
BROOKE CHANDRASOMA	KATHERINE KIDDE '00	SEAN KY
CALVIN HWANG '93	KIM BICKELL '93	SHAHIN CHANDRASOMA '95
CATHELINE DEL MAR	KLEINE JASON DEL MAR	SHANNON THYNE '85
CATHY CARTER	KRIKOR KALINDJIAN	SHARON CU '03
CODY RUEDA FLORES	KURT HONG	SHELLEY CARDER '81
CYNTHIA LEAKS	KYLIE KISHI '20	SHELLY GAMBARDELLA
DANIEL HALSTED '18	LEO DAMASCO '97	STEPHEN SHIH
DAPHNE STEWART	LEONARD KIM '84	SYLVIE ANDREWS '98
DEVON MIKELS	LESLIE KOROSTOFF '88	TOM BAKALY '82
DIKU MANDAVIA	LIZ KIDDE '01	YING-YING GO
ELBONY HENDERSON	LOYDA PEREZ	
ERIN SHIH	MANI BEHESHTI	

## DONOR CLUBS

Donor clubs have been established to recognize those who make significant gifts to Poly. Each club reflects total giving to the school during a fiscal year including corporate matching gifts.

<b>1907</b>	\$1,907
<b>Head of School</b>	\$5,000
<b>Orange Grove</b>	\$10,000
<b>Virginia Pease</b>	\$15,000
<b>Willis Stork</b>	\$25,000
<b>Founders</b>	\$50,000
<b>Centennial</b>	\$100,000
<b>Oak Tree Society</b>	20+ years of giving
<b>Grace Henley Society</b>	Planned giving

## THERE'S A STORY BEHIND EVERY GIFT

Tell us what inspired you to make this gift.

## UPDATE US!

Any updates you would like to share?

You have my permission to share my story.

FY22 OTTSUMMER



POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL

Enclosed is my check payable to Polytechnic School.

I am making a pledge. Remind me on \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_.

Please charge my:

One-time gift

Monthly charge

Yearly charge

I would like to make a gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Designated to:

Poly Fund     Other \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is in honor/memory of \_\_\_\_\_

My company will match my gift.

Employer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me about volunteering for the Poly Fund.

Please contact me about making a planned gift such as a bequest, trust, or IRA.

I have already included Poly in my estate plan.

I would like my gift to be anonymous.

CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

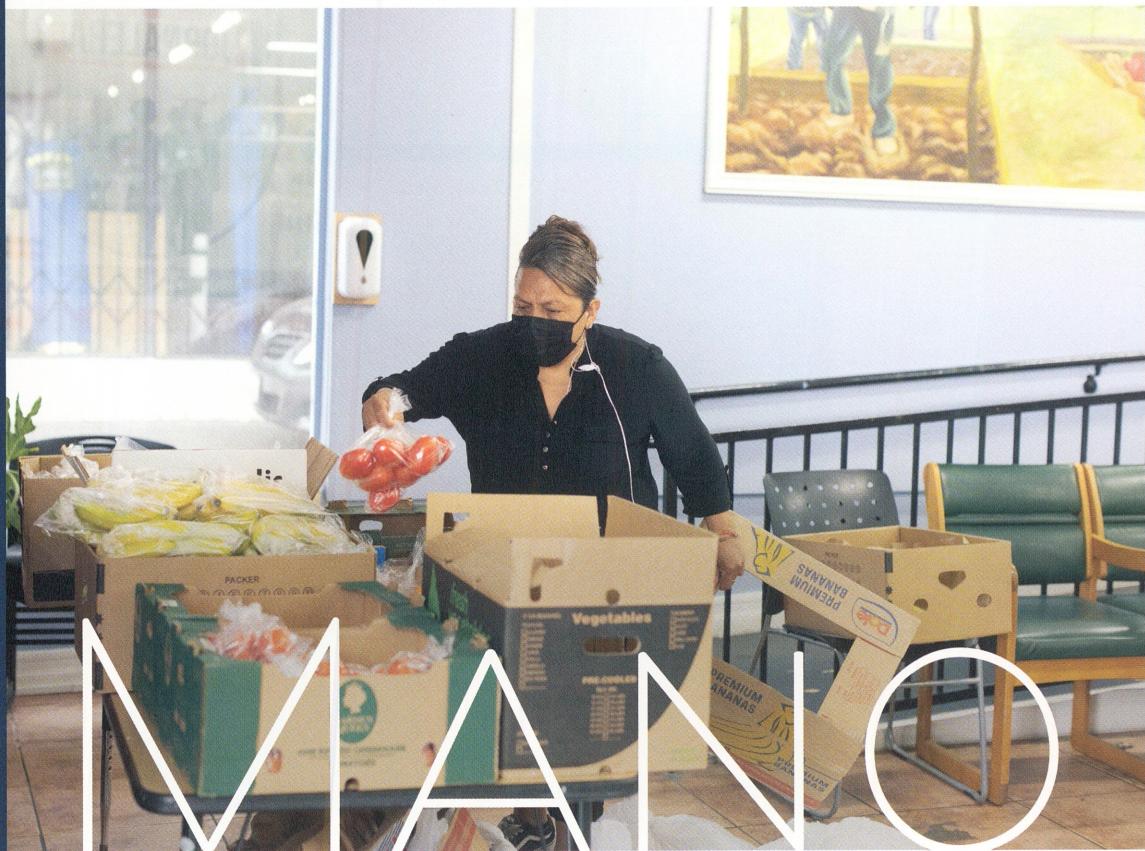
EXP DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME ON CARD \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

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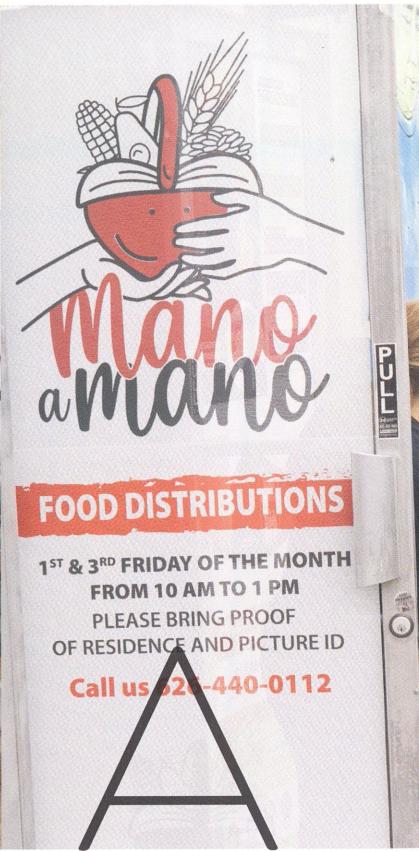
Give online at [polytechnic.org/give](http://polytechnic.org/give) • 626.396.6347 • [giving@polytechnic.org](mailto:giving@polytechnic.org) • Poly's fiscal year ends June 30



Staff at Pasadena Community Job Center prepare for a food pick-up event in May. Mano a Mano is a partnership between multiple organizations and churches that delivers food to hundreds of families across the Pasadena area.

Often when we think of essential workers, those who are doctors, nurses, firefighters, and others come to mind. Those who work as day laborers may be overlooked. Day laborers provide essential services such as construction, infrastructure, agriculture, and manufacturing. Jornaleros (day laborers) experienced a sharp drop-off in demand for their services at the start of the pandemic, leaving them without income to support themselves and families during an international health crisis.

Poly and the Pasadena Community Job Center on North Lake Avenue have long partnered in community engagement projects. The center provides a safe space for jornaleros to wait for jobs as well as training, food, and a cultural hub for its primarily Mexican constituents. Luis Valentán, director of the job center, alerted Poly's Community Student Engagement Coordinator Renée Larios to the ballooning needs of the center. Poly assisted the job center as it pivoted to become a food bank for struggling day laborers. Within the first month, 400 families were fed.



When Renée asked why the job center didn't seek support from other food banks, she learned that the jornalero community has a special diet including traditional Latin American foods including maseca (tortilla dough), rice, beans, and meat or other proteins. The organizers wanted to honor workers with food they are used to eating. "This is important to us to show love and connection with workers and families during the pandemic," organizers told Renée.

Poly students also participated in the "Mano a Mano" project to support all essential workers. Cynthia Garcia-Macedonio's Spanish IV class, with some trepidation, began phone banking for the job center to share news with jornaleros about food and supply availability including masks, hand sanitizer, and child care products. Students from the class were briefed with a script and began cold-calling constituents using their learned Spanish.

"This experience reshaped the way I saw the class and learning Spanish as a whole by showing me the

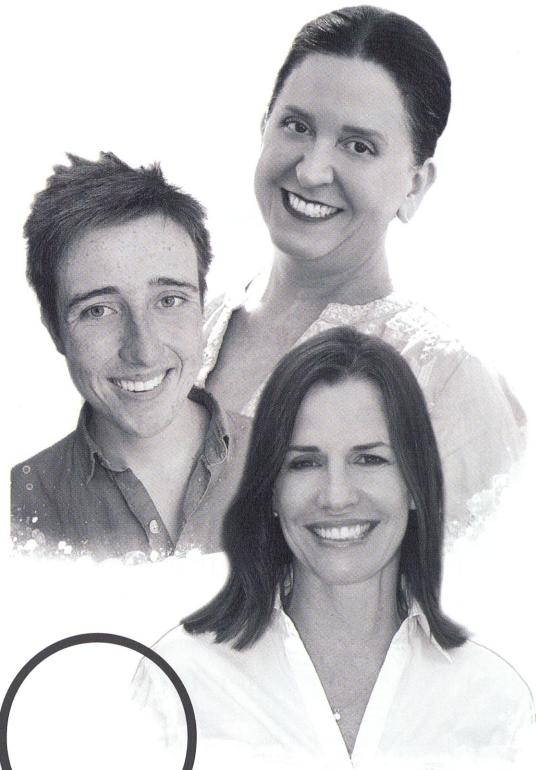
impact I could have on the lives of other people by speaking their native language," said Finnegan K. '21. "I remember how nervous I was as the phone rang on my first call. In the 10 minutes on the phone, I did not speak perfectly, but the person on the other end understood me and appreciated my efforts. I remember how we both connected over our fears about the pandemic. As I was about to hang up, she told me how grateful she was that I worked to speak to her in Spanish."

The "Mano a Mano" project was meaningful to Poly students as Doña Cynthia's class looks into

# MANO

different perspectives across South and Central America, as well as in the U.S. According to Cynthia, what often happens in language class is students learn how to travel and order food, but Spanish IV is far from that with a focus on social justice and equity. The project also made students consider the lives of essential workers who may not have as much visibility in our community.

"The project allowed students to build empathy and humanize essential workers who are invisible," said Cynthia. "Understanding these people have lives, and that they are not coming to build the American dream, but that they are running away from nightmares in their own countries, has been very impactful. Being bilingual can help connect communities and give voice to people who don't have one."



Cynthia Garcia-Macedonio, Upper School Spanish; Finnegan K. '21; and Student Community Engagement Program Coordinator Renée Larios.

**I did not speak perfectly, but the person on the other end understood me and appreciated my efforts. I remember how we both connected over our fears about the pandemic.**

# POLY STANDS TOGETHER

Last January, Poly's Admission team welcomed prospective families to learn about the values we honor and uphold throughout every student's time at Poly. "Stronger Together: Diversity and Inclusive Community at Poly" is an event that allows applicant families to experience life at Poly and learn more about our definition of community. Poly hopes to partner with new families to create a safe, equitable, and anti-racist learning community together.

STRONGER TOGETHER:  
Diversity and Inclusive Community

POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL | January 30, 2021

Welcome from Lisa Wu, Director of Enrollment and John Bracker, Head of School and Faculty DEI Committee Presentations | **Join Us Now**

Need help during the event?  
Please contact us at [admission@polytechnic.org](mailto:admission@polytechnic.org) or call us at (626) 396-6320.

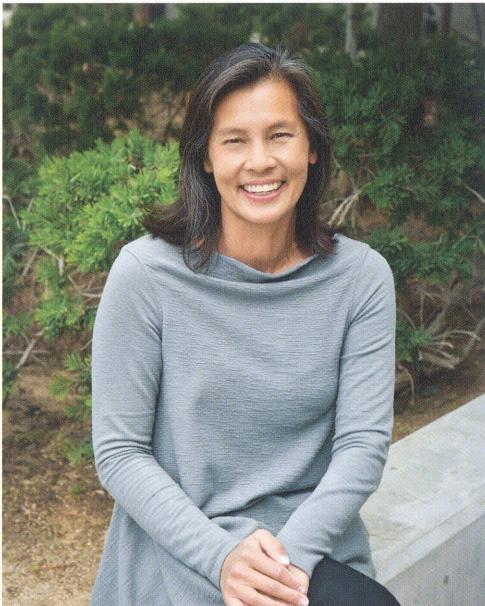
STRONGER TOGETHER:  
Diversity and Inclusive Community

**Introducing Dr. Michaela Mares-Tamayo, '99**  
Inaugural Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Go to Student Panel at 2:25 p.m.

A screen capture of the virtual Stronger Together event. Participants were able to watch panel discussions and join in group discussions with other families at the event.

"Stronger Together is an invitation for families to join us in the important work of creating inclusive communities, celebrating differences and similarities, and knowing that this work is never done and that we need everyone at the table," said Director of Enrollment and Strategic Communications Lisa Wu. "What we are sharing is not some package tied with a bow but a commitment that Poly is evolving with respect to DEI."



Director of Enrollment and Strategic Communications Lisa Wu.

Poly is the only independent school in the Pasadena area that hosts such an event, with the intention that all Poly families feel a sense of belonging through affinity spaces and embrace a diversity of ideas and experiences. The comprehensive program called on the voices of over 60 community members, including affinity group leaders, faculty and staff, and students and parents, who spoke with conviction and passion about Poly's inclusive community.

This is the second year the Admission department has hosted the event, previously named Better Together. This year the title Stronger Together shows how Poly is evolving and moving towards the community we aspire to have. With COVID safety measures, the event looked different from last year's 600-person attendance in Garland Theater. This year, community members spoke openly about their experiences at Poly using a virtual platform.

"I came into Poly from an Armenian preschool, and I did not know anyone when I arrived. I felt anxious to meet people and make friends, and I was scared that I would never make friends," Gregory P. '25 shared with applicant families. "When I got to meet the other students and faculty I was surprised. I made friends my first week. The Poly community opened up to me, and I was welcomed by all."

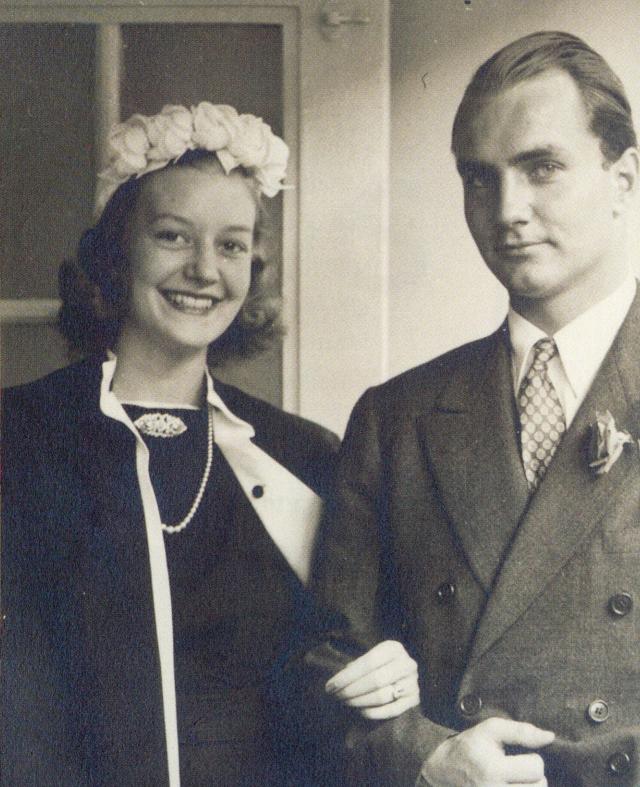
Student panelists during drop-in sessions are encouraged to speak freely and nothing is rehearsed ahead of the event. What results is a free-flowing and authentic conversation among those in attendance. Next year, Poly hopes to share more in terms of affinity spaces, parent education, and a reflection of where we started and what we have built up to.



Gregory P. '25 shared about his experience at Poly during the event.

**"The Poly community opened up to me, and I was welcomed by all."**

"I hope that our guests feel that we are sincerely committed to advancing DEI in both institutional initiatives and within our academic programs," said Wu. "If you do choose Poly, DEI is a community priority and we hope you will join us in the work. This is core and central to the Poly experience and the role of the family in our community."



# Paying Homage to the Legacy of *Adelaide Hixon*

Sassy, funny, opinionated, thoughtful, intelligent, kind, and generous: these are the words ascribed to Adelaide Finkbine Hixon from those who knew her closely. Adelaide was born on May 31, 1918 and moved from Iowa to Pasadena at the age of 1, living a full century in Pasadena until Nov. 6, 2019.

From an early age, Adelaide was always interested in liberal values and humanitarian efforts and committed much of her time to community service. In 1938, Adelaide wed Alexander "Alec" Hixon, a Poly alumnus class of 1930.

"She always said early childhood education is her most important issue and she was dedicated to that right from the beginning, unwaveringly," said Dylan Hixon, grandson of Adelaide, and son of Alexander "Lex" Hixon '56, who predeceased his parents in 1995.

Adelaide and Alec moved to Africa when he accepted a position for the United Nations development program, aiding developing countries, first in Accra, Ghana, and a second post in the Western Pacific. Through world travels and global encounters, Adelaide and Alec introduced their children to other cultures, people, and experiences, further enhancing their philanthropic work and journeys ahead. Throughout her life, she was dedicated to educating herself and others on global and local disparities.

"She always supported me in my endeavors. I'm most grateful to her, and nearly reduced to tears as a result of her participation with me in my big philanthropy focus. I'll carry that support forever," as her son, Andrew "Ando" '67 reminisced about his mother's generous and sympathetic nature, establishing an endowment in support of his organization, Wings of America, a running initiative for Native American youth.

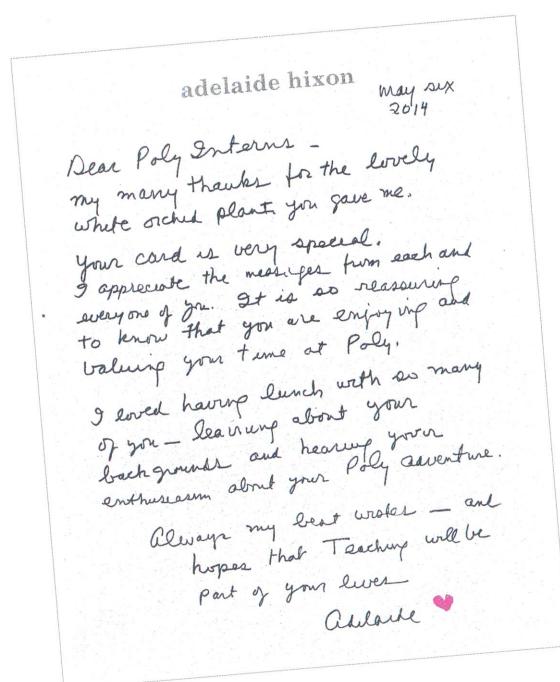
Photo left: Lower School teacher Katie Currin makes a point to Adelaide Hixon in 2014 as then-Hixon intern Bordeaux Martin looks on. Mr. Martin is now a beloved second-grade teacher at Poly.

Photo right: Adelaide and Alec on a ship en route to their honeymoon destination in Europe.

Adelaide spent an approximate decade dedicated to educating herself and others on global and local disparities. "She was so smart, so ahead of her time and her generation. This was a woman who supported Planned Parenthood long before the conversation of women's rights was as prevalent in our generation," said Diane Binney, current Poly parent and former Director of Development at Poly. "She wasn't someone who boasted about the things she did. At the memorial service, a lot of her family members were not aware of the level of involvement she had in the community."

Adelaide and Alec dedicated their lives to supporting schools and colleges. Together, they established the Center for Urban Ecology, an endowed chair and scholarships for African students, the Center for Sustainable Environmental Design, a professorship in the humanities, and a writing center to assist engineers and scientists.

In 2000, Adelaide and Alec endowed a teacher intern program at Poly in conjunction with Pasadena Community College (PCC). Every year, Adelaide would come to campus to meet the Hixon interns. She loved being on campus, seeing the students, and watching the teachers and interns lead classes. Adelaide was known for warmly greeting interns and sending them handwritten notes, always signing her name with a pink heart.



Adelaide also established the Edward Finkbine '39 endowment fund in memory of her brother Edward, a Poly alum who died in 1944 in combat during WWII at the Battle of the Bulge. The fund provides scholarship funding for students who would not be able to attend Poly because of background, finances, or geography.



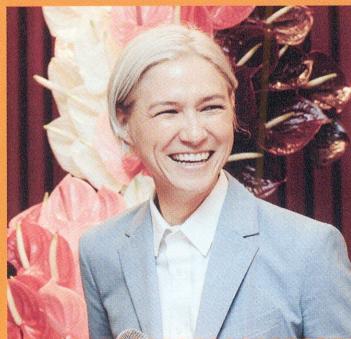
Above (left to right): Adelaide and Alec attend a Poly reception at the Caltech campus. Adelaide and Alec Hixon with their sons Alexander "Lex" and Anthony "Tono" at their home in 1947.

Photo left: One of the many thoughtful, handwritten notes Adelaide penned to the Hixon interns.

"Adelaide wanted the interns and students to come from diverse backgrounds, ethnically, culturally, and racially," shares Diane. "Most teachers were Caucasian at the time, and she wanted to broaden diversity on campus." Through their philanthropic contributions and innovation, Adelaide and Alec broadened resources and access for equity and inclusion, in Pasadena and across the nation.

Adelaide was predeceased by Alec in 2001, who also served on Poly's Board of Trustees from 1953-1967. They are survived by their sons, Andrew "Ando" Hixon '67 and Anthony "Tono" Hixon '62; seven grandchildren including Alexandra Ballard '80; and 12 great-grandchildren.

# VIRTUAL ALUMNI SPEAKER SERIES



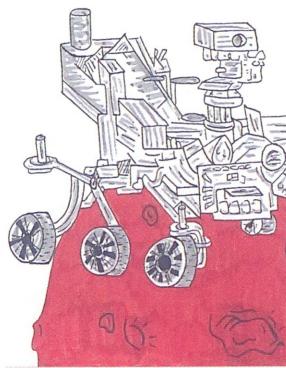
*Virtual Alumni speakers: Matt Smith '03, Alec Berg '87, Blythe Haaga Parker '01, Mae Petra-Wong '05, Minnie Ingersoll '94, and Dana Fujiko Heatherton '02*

This year provided a unique opportunity to connect with alumni through the Virtual Alumni Speaker Series, hosted by the Alumni team in the Office of Advancement and the Alumni Board Network Committee. The series provided exclusive access to learning opportunities and connections with alumni and the greater Poly community.

"This past year saw lots of adaptation across the Poly Alumni Board, but the Network Committee had to adapt particularly aggressively," said John Coogan '07, co-chair of the Alumni Board Network Committee. "Fortunately, moving online afforded us more flexibility in the type of Alumni speakers we could host, as well as the makeup of the audience.

It's no secret that Poly alums tend to scatter across the globe soon after graduating, but with virtual programming it should still be easy for them to engage with the Poly Alumni community, no matter where they live."

The series kicked off last December, featuring Matt Smith '03, an engineer at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) since 2014. He was the flight director on the Mars Perseverance Mission and a member of the team responsible for designing,



*Illustrations by Hannah K. '23.*

building, and testing the rover. February marked the conclusion of the historic Perseverance mission.

"The seven minutes of descent is the moment of truth, waiting anxiously for the rover to significantly reduce speed and land safely," Matt said. "When we get to the end of the cruise, we get to the descent entry landing—getting the spacecraft from space, safely on the surface of Mars. We go from 12,000 mph to two mph."

Matt said his summer internship at JPL and learning on the job proved to be the most informative. He also found his Poly education and team skills to be greatly beneficial. "Being at JPL is definitely a huge team environment. You interact with a lot of people from different backgrounds—being able to work cohesively is really important and I feel like that's something I learned at Poly through my different activities."

Writer, producer, and director, Alec Berg '87 shared the breakthroughs, struggles, and memorable moments of his successful career as he reflected on his time working on sets including *Seinfeld*, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, *Silicon Valley*, and his current show, *Barry*, during his session moderated by



director and producer, Blythe Haaga Parker '01, last January.

Alec shared that he and his writing partner moved to L.A. after graduating from Harvard and prepared a few T.V. show scripts as samples to pitch, in hopes of becoming T.V. show writers. Eventually, Alec and his writing partner successfully sold a freelance script they wrote to Tom Gammill and Max Pross.

Alec shared that his English teachers at Poly were influential in his writing career, "They were all pretty awesome, but I gotta say, Jim Parkman was probably the guy that I learned the most from that I use in terms of creativity and being open."

In April, the committee hosted Women in Technology, a panel discussion featuring Poly

alumnae in the tech industry, moderated by Minnie Ingersoll '94, investor and host of *L.A. Venture Podcast*.

"I think it is a fantastic time to be an entrepreneur and I think it's great to be female and entrepreneurial. But I'm not sure I would have said the same

thing 10 years ago or even five years ago. I think a lot has changed for the better and I'm hopeful that the progress will continue," said Minnie. "I'm also

hopeful about our ability to affect the trajectory for women in tech."

Panelists included Dana Fujiko Heatherton '02, head of operations and strategy at Gig Car Share and named Top 20 Most Influential Women in Mobility, and Mae Petra-Wong '05, CEO at Marcel for Art.

"At a startup, you have to wear many hats and feel confident entering the unknown. Having that practice early in life at Poly and exposure to so many different disciplines makes me appreciate even more all the opportunity we had at this school," said Dana.

Mae explained, "There is no single roadmap for being in the entrepreneurial space. You've got to have high levels of curiosity, an innate, almost compulsive drive to make something or some experience better than it is today, smart people around you to teach you things you don't understand, and of course a little bit of crazy to pursue something no one else has before."

Although we missed seeing everyone in person, this virtual pivot opened up unique opportunities to host speakers with limited schedules and new faces in the audience. "While we're certainly excited to get back to doing in-person events, these virtual events will remain an important tool for us to engage a broader swath of the alumni community," said John of the Alumni Board Network Committee.

# Reconciliation & Restoration for a Brighter Tomorrow

Poly recently hosted eight virtual reconciliation forums for Poly's Black, Latinx, Jewish, Muslim, LGBTQ+, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and South Asian community members. Poly's investment in reconciliation work began in the summer of 2020 in response to the @dear\_Poly posts and racial reckoning that was happening across the country. The reconciliation forums have prompted ongoing conversations for Poly to begin addressing these issues. The stories shared on @dear\_Poly brought to light experiences of racism, bias, and discrimination that wounded and rippled through generations of Poly students, alumni, faculty, staff, and parents.

The forums, open to current and former faculty and staff, alumni, and Upper School students, were organized by the Alumni team in the Office of Advancement in collaboration with Dr. Camille Gear Rich, current Poly parent and the associate provost of diversity and inclusion, and professor of law and sociology at USC.

"The purpose of the forums is to ensure each student or former student at Poly that has experienced harm knows that someone is listening, cares, is actively searching for solutions and that there's a structure in place that can ensure change," said Dr. Rich.

According to Dr. Rich, the forums are intended to achieve three things. A witnessing to the experiences and harms BIPOC people and marginalized groups have suffered and to end the era of invisibility. Secondly, the group setting creates a community

for people to feel less isolated and can talk to others who have shared, similar experiences and discuss how they've managed it. The community piece is both emotionally supportive but it's also about holding the institution accountable for the things that have occurred. Lastly, the forums are restorative. To learn from the information shared during the forums and addressing the issues and coming up with solutions.



Dr. Camille Gear Rich.

"We found that Poly had tried to fix particular things and has taken recognition of certain types of problems, particularly with curriculum—and that in the space where one old problem originally existed, a new one

popped up. It wasn't the same long history of the same injury over time. It's the understanding that helps institutions to know you can try to address the problem but your solutions may create problems of its own, and that's the nature of working in DEI," said Dr. Rich. "By tracking things and looking at the reforms and the attempts to address, we gain insight as to where it might go in the future—what has worked in the past and what hasn't. And how we can make use of the voices in our community with their ideas on how to address the harms that they've expe-

rienced. It's three separate things that are supposed to happen in this calling together of people who've had similar related experiences at Poly and hosting these different forums."

Each forum has provided an opportunity for Poly to hear first-hand from alumni, students, faculty, and staff, uncover and address the issues that have afflicted marginalized community members. Attendees from all backgrounds exchanged stories, supported each other, and took part in bringing about change for future generations of Poly students and community members. The reconciliation forums created an opportunity and space for the Poly community to feel empowered and connected, exchanging their struggles with others facing similar issues, and engaging in dialogue so that Poly can begin to address issues marginalized groups face.

As one of the first openly LGBTQ+ students at Poly and co-leader of the newly formed Pride Alumni Affinity Group, Jayzen Patria '91 recently attended Poly's LGBTQ+ reconciliation forum.

"Most people on these calls can share traumatic experiences," said Jayzen. "I know for myself, part of attending the reconciliation sessions was reconciling some really negative feelings that I have about Poly as an institution, and reconciling that with the great privileges I received as a result of being associated with an institution like Poly, including the level of education, the level of access to the arts and technology and things that would not have occurred had I not gone there."



Jayzen Patria '91

Jayzen has been back to campus several times since graduating 30 years ago to speak to students, connect with faculty and staff, attend events, and shares that he has noticed an evolution since his days as a student at Poly. "So many alumni went to Poly at a time where they either didn't feel comfortable being open

about themselves, or they were not at a point of true awareness and self-acceptance of that, or felt tremendous pressure as a result of the Poly community and broader Pasadena society not be able to be authentically who they are and how that can impact other things like college and careers," said Jayzen. "I think a lot of people feel the benefit of the reconcili-

I think a lot of people feel the benefit of the reconciliation sessions is feeling acknowledged.

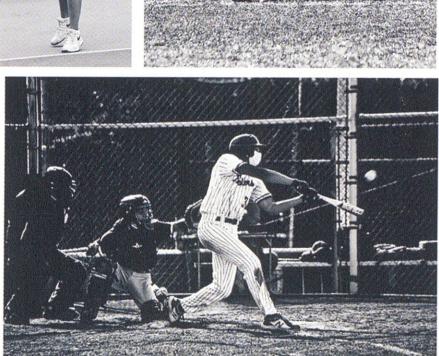
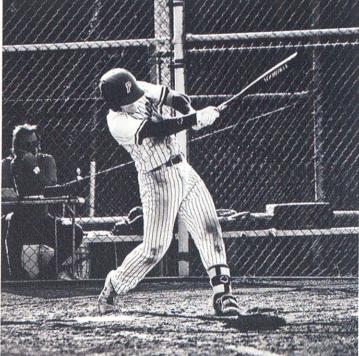
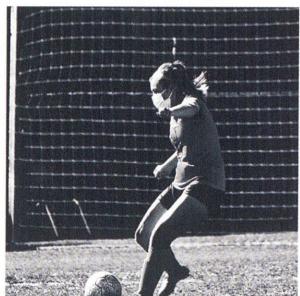
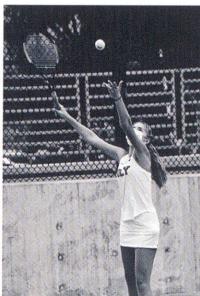
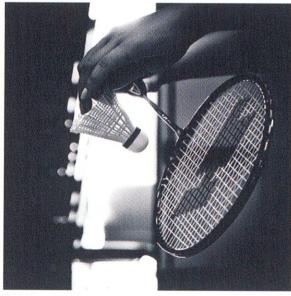
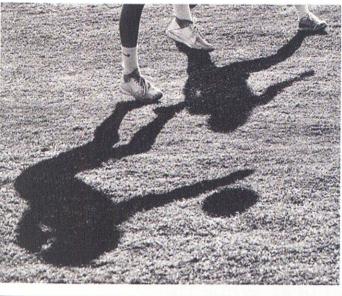
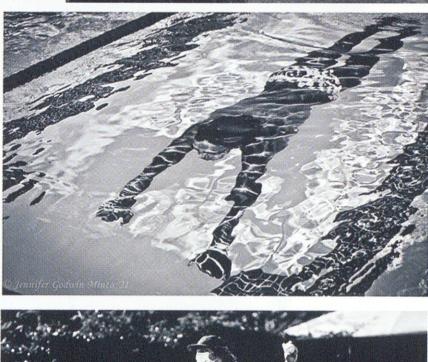
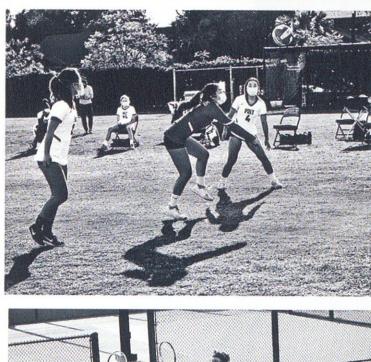
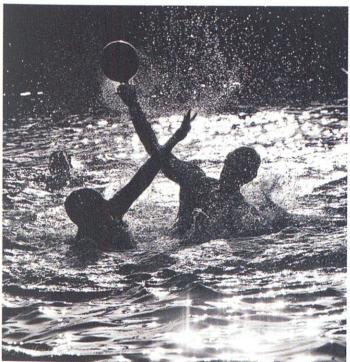
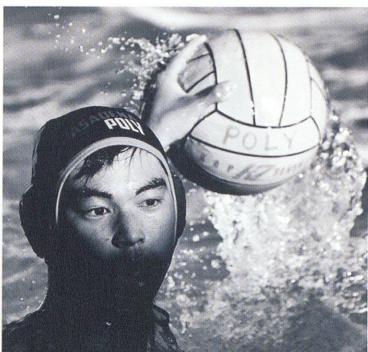
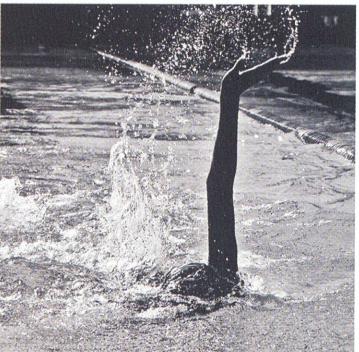
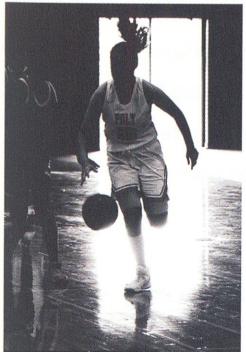
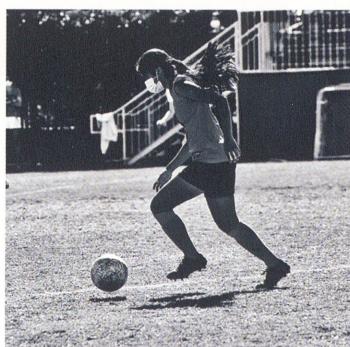
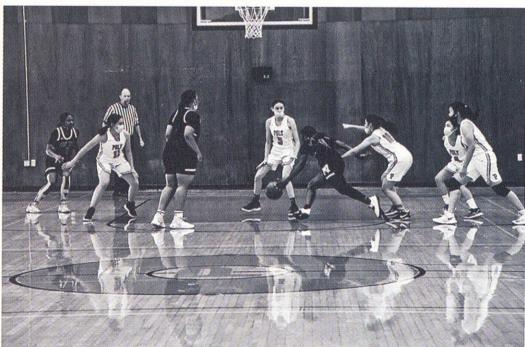
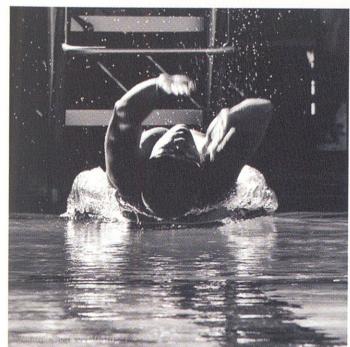
ation sessions is feeling acknowledged. It's also very refreshing to see faculty and staff that self-identify as members of the community, are comfortable, known, and accepted and serve as role models for current students because that certainly did not exist at least when I was a student at Poly."

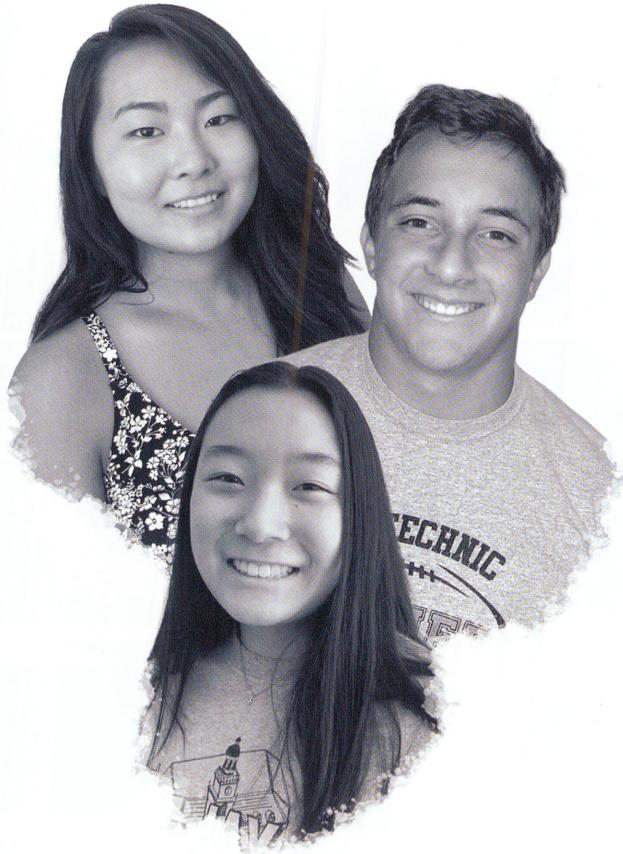
Jayzen explained, people who are LGBTQ+ can feel they are unseen at times. "Most people in the LGBTQ+ community are invisible. The big value of having an alumni affinity group is bringing visibility to that. You can't be something that you can't see. You can't see if someone is LGBTQ+ when someone shares Class Notes or something in the *OakTree Times*, unless they disclose it," he said.

The forums are just one of the many ways Poly plans to continue to expand its DEI efforts on campus (and virtually) to build on a more equitable and inclusive environment for all. For alumni, the newly formed Alumni Affinity Group Program brings together alumni from all groups and backgrounds to connect with each other and support and mentor current students while continuing to engage in conversations to ensure all community members are accepted and fully themselves at Poly.

# A SEASON UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Athletics experienced a shortened training and competition period for fall sports—but that hasn't prevented student-athletes from making the most of their season including football and girls soccer competing in the Rose Bowl. Water polo competed and trained as a coed sport for the first time since 1997, and volleyball played outdoors for the first time. For seniors, the shortened schedule has proved disappointing, but coaches and athletes celebrate their accomplishments nonetheless. Read on for insight into senior athletes' last season and the ways that they've made it work in a season unlike any other.





Poly student-athletes Audrey K., Jake S., and Debbie H.

## AUDREY K. '21

### GIRLS WATER POLO

"I think there's a little bit of anticipation going into it just because no one really knew how we were going to have water polo in times of coronavirus. Especially because, with our sport, it's very contact-heavy, and it's water and you can't wear masks. But, honestly, this season was actually a really big bonding experience for our teams even though it was shorter. I got to know a lot more of my teammates, and also we got to know the boys teams a lot better. Because we recognized how precious what we were given, it made it a lot more meaningful to us, especially for us seniors."

## JAKE S. '21

### FOOTBALL

"The scrimmage we had against South Pasadena was a memorable moment because it was a game that we could actually show off what we've been working on the past couple of months. Looking at the freshmen in their scrimmage too, they were probably one of the best groups of freshmen I've seen play in a while because they were all working in unison and they all knew what they were doing because they've had months of training."

## DEBBIE H. '21

### GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

"Playing in the middle of the football field for our first game was something I'll never forget. I didn't expect a game, first of all, and then having our game outside, on the football field, while the football team was practicing was so unexpected. At the same time, it was the best thing that could have happened. I also want to give props to Poly for organizing everything and even allowing us to have a 'season' for our first two games. Gathering everybody to be a part of a season that was so different than anything I could have imagined."

## CAROLINE K. '21

### GIRLS WATER POLO

"There's always something fun about being a girl on a coed team and going against gender stereotypes. You really connect with your team. I really felt like the guys were starting to trust me and that I could do all the things that they also could. And I was just as impactful as a member. You sometimes feel super alone during this time, and you forget what it's like to have people be there for you. Because of that, practice was something I looked forward to and wanted to do every day."

## DAVID M. '21

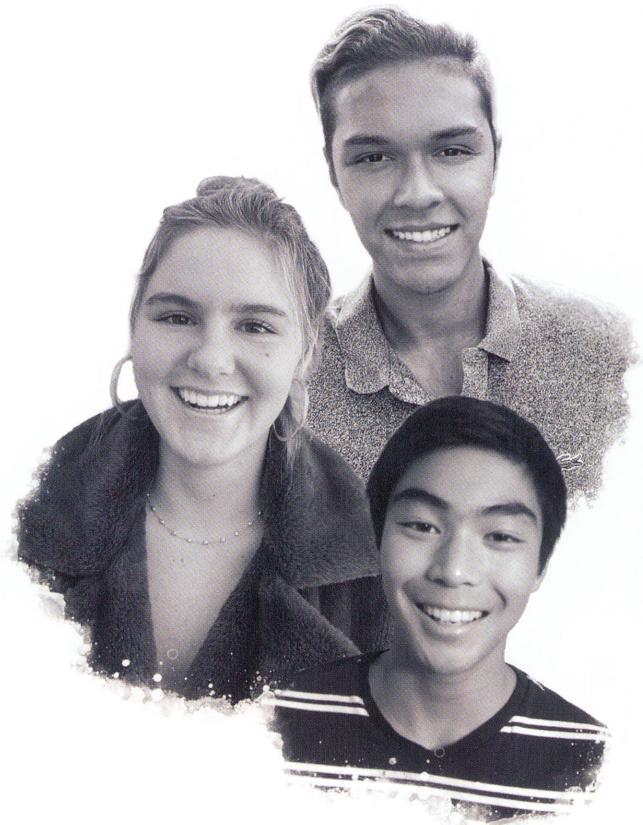
### FOOTBALL

"Walking through the tunnel at the Rose Bowl and entering the stadium is something I'll never forget. Even though it wasn't part of the game, it was probably the coolest thing I've ever done. I was thinking about all the history that's gone on there and how many great athletes, even legendary athletes, have walked through those same tunnels and have played on that same field. Being able to share that same space with them, especially since I don't consider myself a high-level football player, was pretty crazy. I would have never thought I'd be able to do that with any sport."

## SEAN Z. '21

### BOYS WATER POLO

"This isn't how I pictured my senior season playing out. None of us did when we were freshmen. We all had our dreams and visions of what it would look like and it wasn't this. But even so, I was just appreciating every moment of it. And, I mean, this was the last game I will ever play as a Poly water polo player. Even though it was super tiring and things didn't turn out the way we wanted it to, we adapted and overcame those challenges. It was a very good culmination of four years of hard work and effort and I really appreciated my coach."



*Poly student-athletes Caroline K., David M., and Sean Z.*



# lucianne phillips

What do you want to be when you grow up?—Outrageously happy.



## A HELPING HAND

Interview With Lucianne Phillips '71 During Her 50th Reunion Year

Lucianne Phillips '71 celebrates her 50-year reunion and a career in disaster relief amid a pandemic that has tested us all. Though reunions were celebrated virtually this year, the class of '71 is eager and excited at the prospect of celebrating in person next year alongside the classes of '70 and '72. The *OakTree Times* interviewed Lucianne from her home in Portland to celebrate a storied career of international aid with the Red Cross and Peace Corps that brought her around the world to Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean—a career she attributes to learning that took place at Poly. Read on for our interview with her.

**What inspires you to help others and play such a big role in assisting in disasters around the world?**

In most work that we do everyday at home or in our jobs, we're either planning for the future or reporting on the past. With disaster relief it's very here and now—it either works or it doesn't, and you need to change to make sure it works.

My first disaster was my senior year at Poly. That year, a bridge in the 210 Freeway under construction collapsed and took workers down with it. There was a big rescue operation to get survivors out. We provided food for rescuers, sparking my interest in

emergency response. I also helped out with the Rose Parade for 15 years working on the Red Cross first-aid stations, and one year I helped out at the Rose Bowl Game.

**In what ways did Poly prepare you for a career in international aid?** Certainly, the language training was huge. I started at Poly in the second grade learning French and took French all the way through. My mother was a native Spanish speaker and during my junior and senior years, I took Spanish once I had completed my requirements in French.

There was also an emphasis on English classes and how to research topics. Thanks to Poly, I know how to research and find the information needed and write about it well. In history, we also studied different parts of the world. Smaller classes allowed for greater interaction with teachers and the ability to relate to others.

**In your career, what have you learned about resiliency in the face of a disaster?** If it works, keep doing it, and if it doesn't, change it! I look for every approach to find a solution and look for alternative solutions. If the direct approach doesn't work, can you do something else about it?

In sociological studies of a disaster there are phases you go through. There is incredible altruism and heroism you encounter in disaster. I worked on some Midwest floods and these farmers went three years without a crop. They said to help others before themselves. There was also a Native American tribe in north Washington state where over a thousand electrical poles were destroyed. The members put on a huge potluck to support their community. The American spirit is a lot of self-reliance and community sharing. Disaster survivors show great resilience and identity, and the American public is very generous to help out.

**What are the ways we can learn from COVID-19 and the historical events that we have faced this year?** When we study disasters, pandemic was always on the list but we always said that's not going

to happen—but it has. If we had a big earthquake tomorrow we would lose a lot of our communication, the internet would go down, electricity would go off, pipes would break. The homestay we have gone through with quarantine has tested and helped us practice our own survivor skills and ingenuity. In disasters like earthquakes, floods, or fires we have more solace being able to come together but with the pandemic we have to stay apart. It is testing our ability to cope and deal with challenges confronting us by finding creative solutions.

**What are some of the ways you have remained engaged in your former work during retirement?** There is a program called Map Your Neighborhood that was invented in Washington state. It provides emergency management of your neighborhood by helping neighbors born out of the Oakland fires. A lot of us don't know our neighbors and this program has helped neighbors get to know each other and compare information for disaster relief. It's getting back-to-basics by getting to know your neighbors so you can help each other out.

**What does your 50-year reunion mean to you?** Over the years, a group of us has always enjoyed seeing each other at Poly reunions. Naturally, we're disappointed that a face-to-face meeting won't be possible this year, but we're actually pretty excited about getting together with classes ahead and below us. One year, one of the five-year reunions didn't happen, and we were able to see the class right after us.

My education at Poly opened many doors. It gave me the ability to communicate and hold world views. A lot of skills came out of my Poly education, and I have continued to support Poly financially. I hope my classmates will join me in support of continuing quality education.

# CLASS NOTES

Poly welcomes your Class Notes! Please submit your news to [classnotes@polytechnic.org](mailto:classnotes@polytechnic.org). Preference will be given to Class Notes that come from primary sources, and submissions may be edited due to space constraints. Thank you for your understanding, and for reading along with us!

## SUSAN M. DAVIS '49

On the cusp of my 86<sup>th</sup> year...I'm still here!!!



## GWENDOLYN GARLAND BABCOCK '50

Gwen hosted a reunion on Zoom. "We graduated from ninth grade at Poly on June 9, 1950. (Left to Right: Cynthia Berne '50, Gwen Babcock '50, Mark Neuman '50, Martha Toppin '50, Sally Karste '50, and Bill Fleetwood '50). It was fun!"

## MARGARET CRAIG COWDEN '55

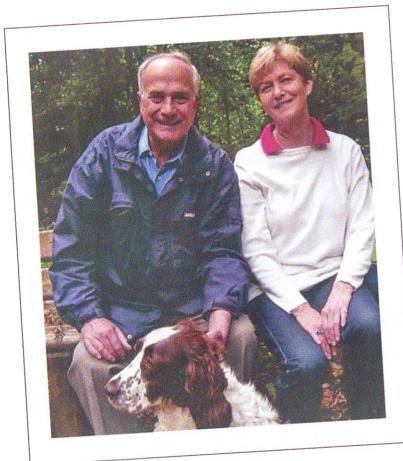
Forever grateful for my Poly days.

## SARAH MAGE KELLER '55

Such a tough year for so many. I'm lucky to still be playing golf and Bridge. Family and friends mean everything, as we head into 2021.

## CHRISTOPHER N. WILMANS '58

All good wishes to my class of 1958, and I hope to hear news. We are traveling locally! And nothing to fear!



## CHRIS HENZE & SHANA GOSS '58

In 1966, after completing two years of Peace Corps service in Ivory Coast, I sought a French teaching position at the Polytechnic School in Pasadena. "Sorry, Chris," said headmaster Willis Stork, "But I've already filled the French teacher position. Would you accept junior high English, 7th grade?" I did, expecting I would dislike the French teacher he had already hired.

Before the start of the school year, the Storks hosted an afternoon reception for the faculty on their patio. I turned my head and saw a beautiful creature dressed in a Hawaiian muumuu with a lei around her neck, gracefully crossing the patio. Yes, she was the new French teacher, Shana Goss. Being a little backward about going forward, it was some months before I asked her for a date. When I did, a little tyke at school asked me why I was talking to Ms. Goss in French. "So you won't understand," I replied. That did it. Word spread like wildfire around the school that Mr. Henze loves Ms. Goss.

After joining the Foreign Service in 1967, I wrestled more and more with what to do about Shana. Go off to my preferred first posting in Africa, leaving her behind in California? 'Are you crazy?' I asked myself. 'You won't find anyone who comes close to her there.' We married in 1968 in Pasadena.

## EDWARD D. JONES '63

Edward founded CAPHI, Inc. in 2017 to build SaaS platforms for healthcare providers to manage HIPAA Safeguard and Emergency Preparedness data and documents. In 2021, our CAIPHI EP Testing subsidiary begins infectious disease testing and reporting in the Seattle, Washington area.

## NANCY G. YOUNG '70

Sorry to have missed our 50th reunion. But did visit **Lisa Martin Ferguson '70** in Lewiston, Michigan this fall. Wonderful to remember all the school memories and classmates.

## DEBBIE KING DONAHUE '73

What a year 2020 was! After multiple postponements, my youngest daughter finally got married. It was a smaller crowd than expected but we were honored to have both of my brothers **Andy King '69** and **Mike King '70** attend!

## MARK H. RAPAPORT '73

I moved to the University of Utah to be the inaugural CEO of the Huntsman Mental Health Institute. The goal of the Institute is to challenge and transform psychiatry and mental health.

Please note: The editorial staff gives preference to those class notes that come from primary sources. We may edit class notes due to space considerations and occasionally for clarity. Unfortunately we do not have the resources to fact-check class note entries, and therefore we cannot be liable for inaccurate or false information that may inadvertently find its way into a class note. Thank you for your understanding. To submit a classnote, send an email to [classnotes@polytechnic.org](mailto:classnotes@polytechnic.org)

# IN Memoriam

We extend our condolences to the families and friends of those listed below and hope this section assists those who wish to honor their Poly classmates and friends. Poly publishes obituaries as space allows when we receive notice that an alumni has died. If we have neglected to list someone, please send us their biographical information, which we will print in a subsequent issue. Please note, the listings reflected below were received by May 1, 2021.

## NANCY HEINZ RUSSELL '36

November 6, 2020

Nancy H. Russell was born in Pittsburgh, PA to Sara Moller Young and Clifford Stanton Heinz, raised with brother **Clifford Heinz, Jr. '34** and sister **Dorothy Heinz Barkely '39**. An omnipresent maternal love guided her philanthropy and her talented passion for entertaining. Nancy commanded life and those around her to "hang loose." She has left us with full hearts. She lived with love, and is survived by two daughters, four grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, numerous godchildren, four long-term loving caregivers, and two foundations for children.

## VIRGINIA MAY SULLIVAN '36

February 17, 2017, Keswick, Virginia

Virginia M. Sullivan was born in Pasadena, CA, on June 26, 1921 to Margaret Mortenson and Ernest Crawford May. Virginia graduated from the Katharine Branson School in Ross, CA after four years, preceded by a year at a boarding school in British Columbia, and graduated in 1943 from Stanford University where she majored in history and played competitive tennis. That summer, she met and married Richard Donald Sullivan. He was a member of the Air Force for 25 years and a decorated pilot. She was an avid gardener and lover of nature, an exceedingly skillful fisherman, as well as a supporter of many civic causes. She is the sister of **Nancy Elizabeth May '38** and is survived by her two daughters, five grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

## AUDREY STEELE BURNAND '37

June 27, 2020

## MARY WEST BAKER '37

October 5, 2019, Berkeley, California

Mary D. Baker was born in Pasadena, CA to Donald and Hildreth Markham West. She attended Pomona College where she made many lifelong friends and met her future husband, James A. Baker, who was in the U.S. Army pre-meteorology program. They were married October 11, 1946 and moved to Berkeley, CA where Mr. Baker enrolled in the graduate program in mathematics. Mary enjoyed life to the fullest and loved hiking, rock climbing, sailing, tennis, bridge, playing the piano, cooking, gardening, travelling, and especially being with friends and family.

## GARRETTSON "GARRY" DULIN '38

January 20, 2020, Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Born September 2, 1923 in Pasadena, CA, Garrettson "Garry" Dulin spent many of his summers working on a cattle ranch outside of San Diego, CA. It was there he developed a love for horses, the outdoors, and the cowboy. After graduating from UCLA with a degree in economics, and a stint in the Army, Garry began a career in banking. He worked in New York City for 10 years before accepting a job with the U.S. State Department during the Kennedy Administration. He and his family lived in Tunisia and Morocco during that time. His time in North Africa was extremely rewarding as he and his late artist wife Jane developed many friendships in the international community which they maintained throughout their lives. After the assignments, Garry returned to banking and moved his family to San Francisco and worked for Bank of America. Garry and Jane moved to Steamboat, CO in 1979 and immediately became avid members and supporters of the local arts community. A former board member and president of the San Francisco Ballet, Garry was well equipped and eager to share his experience, expertise, and fundraising skills with the growing Arts Council.

Garry is the brother of **Ethlyn Ware '37** and **Bob Dulin '43**. He is the uncle of **Cinnie Herr '78**, **Jim Dulin '76**, and **Ken Dulin '80**. He is the great-uncle of **Molly Dulin '09**.

## CAMERON D. JONES '39

January 23, 2018, Clinton, Arkansas

Cameron D. Jones was born March 27, 1924 in Jackson, Ohio to the late Harold A. and Betty Davis Jones. Cameron served in the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946. He retired from the University of Arkansas, where he was a professor of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. He held a PhD in Language Arts and a Bachelor of Arts in Physics; he was proficient in Spanish, French, and Portuguese. Cameron held various positions over the years, such as a fencing master, Project Engineer for Aerospace, and manager of the Agricultural Land Development Company in Mexico where he obtained his pilot's license. Cameron was an avid reader, sailor, carpenter, and winemaker. Left to cherish his memory is his wife, Kathryn Trahan Jones, children, Harold L., Christian W., Kathleen C., Alexandra S., one grandchild, several friends, and family members.

## DIANA PROCTOR CALLERY '39

September 6, 2020, San Marino, California

Diana P. Callery is remembered for her piercing intellect, joy of learning, her hospitality, and prodigious volunteer career. She and **John Boyle Callery Jr. '48** were married 52 years until his death in 1999. They loved sailing and visiting Catalina Island. Her warmth, wit, and energy will be missed. Her family, friends, and community were foremost in Diana's life. Diana died peacefully at home, surrounded by family. She was 95 years old. She is survived by four children, **Charles Callery '67**, **Amy Davidson '77**, **Pauline Endicott '74**, and **Victoria Blayney '69**, 12 grandchildren including **Maggie Blayney '01** and **Carrie Blayney '03**, and six great-grandchildren. She is the step-sister of **Billy Proctor '34** and **Jane Hogan '47**.

## HANNAH GRIFFITH BRADLEY '42

August 22, 2020, Carpinteria, California

Hannah Griffith Bradley passed away August 22, 2020 in her Carpinteria CA home surrounded by her daughters **Sarah Bradley '71**, **Kathy Bradley '73**, and **Liz Bradley '76**. Born to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Griffith in Pasadena, CA, she attended and forever valued, Polytechnic School, Ethel Walker School, and Smith College. She married Wilson Bradley Jr. Her leadership, intellect, work ethic, and sense of humor helped shape her family's vision of life's possibilities. Hannah believed strongly in contributing to one's community and was involved with many philanthropic and volunteer activities including the Pasadena Day Nursery, Huntington Botanical Gardens, Los Angeles Arboretum, Caltech, and Polytechnic School, to name a few. She was a teacher and leader, serving as the first woman to chair the Polytechnic School Board of Trustees and president of the California Arboretum Foundation. She was also an avid gardener and was a long-time member of the Pasadena Garden club, as well as docent at the Huntington Gardens. Her garden was featured on many garden tours and won numerous awards. Hannah is the sister of **Jim Griffith '50** and **Dick Griffith '41**, and step-sister of **Rosie Jones '45**, and **Joseph Tilt '45**. She is survived by her brother, Jim, her daughters, and five grandchildren.

## JOAN ALLEN FUNK '42

## ANN MOULTON ELLIOTT '43

November 26, 2020, Warren, Rhode Island

Ann M. Elliott was born on April 26, 1928 to Francis and Gladys Moulton, of Pasadena, CA. Her formative years were spent in Pasadena, where Ann attended Polytechnic School. In high school, Ann went to boarding school at the Katherine Branson School (KBS) in Ross, CA. She graduated from KBS in 1946 and went east to Smith College, graduating in 1950 with a bachelor's degree in English and a passion for the English language. Her children fondly remember being corrected on their grammar on many

occasions. Ann met her husband, Jack Elliott, soon after graduating from college and they were married in Pasadena, CA on February 23, 1951. Ann was a devoted mother to her four children, full of love and ready with a kind word. She also had a wonderfully sharp sense of humor that will be remembered with a smile. Ann is survived by her four children and seven grandchildren.

## VIRGINIA DESURVILLE MULLER '44

March 18, 2021, San Marino, California

Virginia (Ginny) Madeleine deSurville Muller passed in her sleep with her loving husband, George, by her side. Born June 21, 1929, to Emile and Helen (Sutherland) deSurville in San Francisco, CA, Ginny, to all who knew her, was the kindest and most caring of individuals. She touched the lives of all that knew her. Ginny and George were married in 1954 after meeting on a double date by their mutual friend. What a prophetic "date" that was! During their 67 years of marriage, they raised three daughters. Ginny was totally dedicated to her children and to her husband in all aspects of their lives. She attended Polytechnic School and was a graduate of Westridge School for Girls in Pasadena, CA and Mount Vernon College in Washington, DC. She spent all of her married life in Pasadena and Santa Barbara. She was active in the Pasadena Junior League, Pasadena Guild of Children's Hospital and Villa Esperanza. She is survived by her husband; George Muller, sister; **Mary deSurville McDuffie '38**, three children and six grandchildren. She is predeceased by her brother **Richard deSurville '46**. Ginny is the aunt of **Cynthia McDuffie Camm '71**.

## CYNTHIA CRONKHITE JONES '47

October 12, 2020, Pasadena, California

Cynthia C. Jones was born on December 4, 1932 in Pasadena, CA. Her parents were Elizabeth Jennison and Gordon Fellows Cronkhite. She attended Polytechnic School from preschool to ninth grade. Cynthia went to Westover School in Connecticut for 10th grade but talked her mother into returning to

Westridge School for 11th and 12th grade because she missed her horse. For college, she returned to the East Coast to attend Briarcliff College, where she completed an associate degree in applied science. On December 18, 1952 she married Richard W. Jones, after he proposed to her on the pier in Oceanside, CA. Her greatest joy in life were her children. She is the mother of **Dede Smith '74**, **Cynthia Thatcher '78**, and **Michael Jones '73**. The highlight of every summer at St. Malo was the arrival of her sister **Ann Dudley Goldblatt '54**, with husband Stan Goldblatt, and their children. She was a champion of social justice and peace and was derided in one book as a "limousine liberal," a title which she wore as a badge of honor. Cynthia is also the sister of **Alison Keith '44** and **Betsy Morphy '46**.

### JOHN "ERICK" MACK '47

**June 16, 2020, Palo Alto, California**

John "Erick" Mack was the oldest sibling to **Peter Hawley Mack '49** and **Laurie Mack McBride '54**, spending his childhood in Pasadena and Guatemala where his father ran the family coffee business. Erick attended Polytechnic School, Phillips Academy-Andover High school, and received a bachelor and master degree in geology from Stanford University. He was on Stanford's 1952 Rose Bowl team. He lived in the Zeta Psi Fraternity with his parrot Pedro Malo, famous for colorful vocabulary. Erick met Margaret Diane Dickson at Stanford, marrying in 1956. They lived their first year in Japan where Erick served in the Navy as a Lieutenant JG. They moved to Guatemala and had their first child **John Erick Mack III '77**, then moved to Australia for six years where they welcomed their children **Carter Dickson Mack '80**, **Laurie Mack Rohrbach '83**, and **Peter Mack '88**. Returning to the U.S. in 1967, great tragedy struck when Diane and Erick's brother Peter was killed in a car accident. Years later, Erick married his longtime friend **Marion Macfarland Worthington '47**, spending 21 years in Palo Alto enjoying family,

friends, Stanford events, and world travel. Erick's career flourished at Union Oil/Unocal for over 40 years. He started as a field geologist in the jungles in Guatemala and rose to a senior executive in oil and gas, and geothermal energy. In the 1960s, he led the first major oil discovery in Australia. Erick was the chairman of the Circum-Pacific Council for Energy and Mineral Resources, a U.S. government and industry partnership to improve science in the energy and mineral resources field. Erick is the nephew of **Adelaide Perrin '19** and **Chile Mack '19**.

### DIANNE DUNCKEL FOX '50

**July 29, 2020, Palm Desert, California**

### JAMES S. "JIM" MILLER '50

**January 25, 2017, Healdsburg, California**

Born in Pasadena, CA on June 6, 1935, to **Morris Barnes '17** and **Alice Stewart Miller '25**, James S. "Jim" Miller was a 54-year resident of Alexander Valley, CA. Jim was an accomplished poet, a generous philanthropist, and a long-time wine grape grower. His greatest passion was open water swimming in the San Francisco Bay. He is survived by his brother, Barney Miller, his sister **Alice Henry '52**, his children, and grandchildren.

### JEAN THACKER '50

**September 2020**

Jean is the sister of **Sally McCormick '44**, cousin of **Michael Thacker '51**, and **Lisa Bemis '45**.

### WILLIAM H. HAZE '50

**December 19, 2020, Lafayette, California**

### EDWARD R. CHILCOTT '51

**Coronado, California, March 21, 2020**

## TERRY BENNETT '53

**September 30, 2019, Portsmouth, New Hampshire**

Born in Los Angeles, CA, on July 6, 1938, Terry Bennett was the son of Dr. Terry C. and Blanche Stover Bennett. His academic promise was identified early at Polytechnic School, and he went on to major in zoology at the University of Southern California, with the intent to follow in his physician father's footsteps. His medical board examination scores revealed an astounding intellect, prompting his adviser to encourage Terry to take a break from working toward a pre-med degree, and spend his senior year studying art, culture, and the German language at university in Vienna, Austria. Upon his return, Terry was accepted at Harvard Medical School on a full-merit scholarship. Years later, after his service to the country as a National Health Service Officer providing medical care to Peace Corps volunteers in Morocco and to residents of a Navajo reservation in New Mexico, he furthered his education by returning to Harvard School of Public Health for a master's degree in public health. Terry is the brother of **Cynthia de Beixedon '55**, **Diane Bedford '51**, **Jill Polsby '57**, and **Timothy Bennett '62**. He is the uncle of **Dan Polsby '92**.

## HEATHER GOSS '56

**January 3, 2021, Sisters, Oregon**

Born and raised in Pasadena, CA, Heather Goss was the eldest of four daughters of **Norman Leffingwell Goss '30** and Jean Armour Ericson. After graduating from Westridge School, Heather devoted her life to music and food. She started a successful catering business, Heather's Affairs, and later opened two restaurants, The Gourmet Goose and The Heather. She was president of the Orange County Philharmonic, served on the Corona Del Mar Baroque Music Festival's board for many years, and served on the Newport Harbor Lutheran Church's council, where she also sang in the choir. In 1990, she joined the Vox Feminae singing group and toured with them in Europe. Heather found joy in the great outdoors,

hiking, and biking the California coast. She is the sister of **Briar Cornuelle '65**, **Devon Buffett '63**, **Shana Henze '58**, and step-sister of **Allyn Wallace '74**, and **Thomas Goss '77**.

## SUZANNE DUVAL '69

**April 7, 2020, Santa Cruz, California**

Suzanne Duval passed away on April 7, 2020. For most of her adult life, she resided in Santa Cruz, CA where she gave private voice lessons from her home studio, worked in the music department of Cabrillo College, served as music director for various organizations, and performed with a variety of musical groups. She had a master's degree in vocal performance from San Jose State University and a bachelor's from UC Santa Cruz. Suzanne loved to travel the world and backpack, often returning to the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Her legacy will live on in the communities she built around her passion for music and the joy she found in sharing song with everyone around her. Suzanne is survived by her sister **Lorrie Duval '72**, brother Gene Duval, extended family, and friends.

## JOHN E. "JT" THOMAS '69

**May 16, 2020, Thousand Oaks, California**

Among the many things John E. "JT" Thomas loves were family, friends, food, wine, The Eagles, big parties, vacations in the tropics, Twix Bars, his hot tub, James Taylor, nice cars, loud music, expensive clothing, and When Harry Met Sally—not necessarily in that order. He was a talented wine marketer and hospitality specialist. He was a great storyteller, was also great at cooking, spoiling his dogs, outdoor grilling, and was especially generous in giving to others. He adored his wife Cindy and had nothing but love in his heart for his children. He is the son of **William Thomas '33** and the nephew of **Dudley Thomas '35**.

## ALEXANDER C. GRAY '97

**August 5, 2020, San Luis Obispo, California**

# FROM THE POLY ARCHIVES



*Poly students in 1916 taking advantage of the outdoor spaces.*

Polytechnic School, in its storied 114 year history, has persevered through two epidemics. The first, the Spanish Flu of 1918, and the second Influenza Epidemic in 1928—just 10 years apart. Using primary sources from the Poly Archives we can see similarities from those times to the pandemic today.

Documents from 1918 show that the school was closed “because the trustees are convinced from the best advice obtainable that the risk involved in assembling the children outweighs the value of regular school activities.”

A second letter from Principal Grace Henley in 1919 relating to the pandemic details the reopening of the school and that students and faculty must wear “six thicknesses of close-meshed gauze.”

A two-page report to the Board of Trustees dated 1928 conveys that the school was once again closed based on the advice of school doctors. Grace Henley remained head of school and also mentioned Ms. Taylor, who oversaw the children’s health, bringing to mind Director of Health Services Marcy Kwitny, RN.

Also worth noting, George Reeves '29, the actor who portrayed Superman from 1952–1958, was a student at Poly during the Influenza Pandemic.

“At the first assurance of safety for the children and teachers, the regular sessions will be resumed,” said Henley in a 1918 letter. As we return to campus this fall, the previous pandemics Poly has experienced and our community’s enduring ability to persevere are not far from our hearts and minds.

**A Special Thank You:** We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to 13 members of the Board of Trustees for their generosity and commitment to donating more than \$43,000 to provide KN95 and high-performing surgical-grade face masks through the end of the school year for all students, faculty, and staff. Thank you for prioritizing the health and safety of the Poly community.



Middle School History teacher Katie Ward and students from the Class of 2027 put the finishing touches on this year's Rome display. As part of their studies, sixth grade students recreate buildings to scale. When all the buildings come to Poly they are placed on a layout of the city, and students present their structures to their classmates.

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