



the CURRENT

FALL 2020

THE MAGAZINE OF CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL

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**Discovering
their world.
And how to make
their mark in it.**

When excellence is the goal of progressive education, amazing things happen. Students gain a greater level of understanding that empowers them to truly define and embrace their very greatest potential.



**CHARLES RIVER
SCHOOL**

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING, HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT.

CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL MISSION

Charles River School honors the pursuit of academic excellence and the joy of childhood. We nurture each child by igniting curiosity, encouraging creativity, and cultivating intellectual engagement. Our graduates know themselves, understand others, and shape the future of our diverse world with confidence and compassion.

CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL DIVERSITY STATEMENT

We commit ourselves to:

- **Cultivating** cultural competency and diversity throughout our curriculum, our student body, and our faculty and staff
- **Deepening** our knowledge and appreciation of the many aspects of cultural identities, in ourselves, our local communities, and globally
- **Providing** an environment and an education that equips children and adults to become successful, contributing members of a global society
- **Understanding** both historical and current implications of diversity, power, and privilege
- **Engaging** in this complex work with careful thought and enduring dedication.

And most of all, we commit ourselves to fostering a school community in which each of us is welcomed, recognized, and valued as an individual and as a member of the Charles River School family.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Gretchen Larkin

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CHARLES RIVER
SCHOOL

▲
Liam Kerr '24 strums
the ukulele during
music class this fall.



COVER STORIES

Academics: Deeper Understanding, Higher Achievement at CRS



The Pull of the Pulley Project

Leveraging library and tech literacies to design inquiry-based learning in PreKindergarten and Kindergarten

When Reading Builds Character

The fourth-grade reading curriculum combines tried-and-true practice with innovative thinking.



The Grade 6 Game Changers Project

The COVID-19 pandemic may have “changed the game,” but sixth-grade adapted and delivered a major cross-curricular project.



FEATURE

Asked and Answered Through Hands-On Learning

Understanding the “why,” makes CRS students the masters of the “what.”



FEATURE

Congratulations, Class of 2020

Despite the challenging and unexpected end to the year, we celebrated our eighth graders in style last spring.

You'll find a mix of content in this issue, including stories and photos from last fall and winter. We hope the visual reminder of our unmasked days gives our readers hope for the days to come.

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Bob Brainerd, Class of 1928: A Lifetime of Shaping the Future

ON THE COVER

Students develop a deeper understanding at Charles River School, which leads to higher achievement. The best part? It looks different in every grade, in every classroom, for every child.

SNAPSHOTS

A GLIMPSE OF OUR YEAR TOGETHER
(and together while apart)



- 1 Kindergartener Reid Apfel dances and sings along to a fall-themed song in Spanish class.
- 2 Owen Wigren '21 shows two students his robotic car, which he created for the annual seventh-grade Design Project with his partner, Ben Fogler '21.
- 3 CJ Pardo '26 submitted a photo to one of our virtual assemblies, a cooking how-to with Chef Christian Straussberger and 7/8 teacher Becca Hurd.
- 4 Casey Grimm '23 created a "Living Portrait" to represent life at home during the pandemic. The fifth-grade project was inspired by Libby Beaty, an art teacher in South Korea.
- 5 Mickie Laguerre '26 finds a spot outside for third-grade D.E.A.R. (Drop everything and read)!
- 6 It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a drone! Students gathered in the Activity Center for a special drone assembly last fall.
- 7 First graders Henry Dow and Valerie Beehr work together learning consonant sounds and letters. In-class technology helps connect our remote learners with their classmates who are on campus.

Taking Perspective

AT OUR OPENING ASSEMBLY in September, I shared the story of a clumsy fall I took while on my favorite running route through Noanet woods in August. I shouldn't have fallen; I have traveled the route countless times during the 15 years I have lived in the Dover-Sherborn community. I thought I had committed to memory every root, twist, turn, and divot; however, I was distracted that evening. I was imagining how re-opening school might look and feel in the coming weeks. Between a pandemic, an anti-racist movement unlike any our country has seen since the Civil Rights Movement (and one to which we at CRS are deeply committed), and a historic election, I was pondering the world surrounding our children and how our first days of school might feel:

I distinctly remember thinking to myself that, typically, there is boundless energy and indescribable joy that permeates the campus in the opening days of a new school year. The excitement of a fresh start, new teachers, new friends, and the promise of academic achievement usually sustain us all. Yet on that run, all I could think about was how might the promise of a new school year feel amidst so many challenges? How would we capture the very essence of the Charles River School experience? Could we commit and hold ourselves accountable to do our part to address institutional racism in a predominantly white institution? How could we still provide a joyful, child-centered learning environment amidst all the rules we had to adhere to during a pandemic?

As I gathered myself up, I turned to see why I had tripped. There it was—a heart-shaped rock that I had not noticed before. Not everyone might have seen it, but in my eyes, it was a heart. Or, maybe I simply chose to see it that way. This was quite literally the answer I had been looking for: this year would come down to perspective—how we choose to see what's in front of us, including falls, failures, and challenges. I know that may sound simplistic, but understanding and embracing different perspectives, genuinely, is the foundation upon which we would need



▲
Gretchen Larkin with
Julian Ram-Tylerbest at graduation parade

to carry ourselves through this school year and beyond. We have all experienced these last few months differently and we, adults and children alike, have various ways of approaching life because of that. This year is surely one for problem-solving, and appreciating perspective is a critical component in that. Additionally, calling upon our collective resilience and love for the CRS community will guide our understanding of others. We need to understand perspective for our community, for our teaching, learning, achievement, and for the world around us. As you browse the pages of *The Current*, read the articles, and see photographs from last year as well as some from this year, one cannot help but note the strength of our community. Taking perspective has been key to that success.

Gretchen Larkin

CRS Faculty Attend NCTM Conference

LAST FALL, six teachers attended the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Conference in Boston. Mary Walsh, Kathleen Boucher-Lavigne, Rachel Miller, Mara Weitzman, Lizz Albany, and Stephanie Smith connected with colleagues in the math education community and learned about new tools and best practices in the classroom. “We participated in some incredible workshops,” says fifth-grade teacher Rachel Miller. “The invigorating and inspirational conversations that we had as colleagues following the conference—and that we will continue to have with one another—were some of the most rewarding things to come out of this experience.”



Grade 5 Co-Teacher Rachel Miller works with Declan Casey '23 in math class.

Emily Moder '06 Talks Renewable Energy with Grade 5

ON TUESDAY, October 29, 2019, alumna Emily Moder '06 returned to the classroom as a guest speaker in Annie Kenney's fifth-grade science class. The Princeton University alumna is the Chief Operating Officer for SteamaCo, a world leader in building and maintaining efficient energy management systems. She spoke to Grade 5 about her extensive work in remote areas of Africa, where SteamaCo provides energy metering infrastructure.

Emily explained the science behind and the benefits of providing efficient energy. She was impressed with the fifth graders' knowledge of solar power and renewable energy and fielded great questions during her presentation. She credited CRS with helping her develop a love of math and science when she was a student here.

“Before I came to Charles River in sixth grade, I thought I was bad in math,” she said. “When I got here my teachers helped me to see that I wasn't bad at math at all; I just needed to adjust the way I approached math. My middle school math teacher, Mr. Walsh, explained that math required a creative mind. It didn't really matter if you got the wrong answer at first, as long as you were willing to continue working out the problems creatively. I grew to love math because of what I learned at CRS.”



Emily Moder '06 (pictured right) and Science Teacher Annie Kenney

Staying Safe with the Otter

WHILE WE KNOW that wearing a mask can help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, it can also trigger anxiety and other feelings of concern for children (and, let's face it, adults, too!). One of the best ways to help children feel better about any uncertainty is for adults to model the behavior and talk openly about any fears or concerns children may have. To that end, the Otter debuted last spring donning his PPE. Thank you to art teacher Aaron Dana for helping the Otter stay safe and adding a mask! We have been impressed with our students' flexibility and compliance with mask-wearing and other safety protocols this year.



2021-2022 Admissions Season is Underway

THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE began meeting with prospective families in September for the 2021-2022 school year. The school is offering a series of virtual events throughout the fall to introduce parents to our school, including sessions about our early childhood program, middle school grades, and Charles River School's approach to progressive education. If you have friends or family who might be interested in learning more about CRS, encourage them to visit our website, www.charlesriverschool.org, or call Kat Whitten at 508-785-8213.



Middle School Building Wins Architectural Award

FLANSBURGH ARCHITECTS was honored for their work on the middle school building at the annual Boston Society for Architecture (BOS) Awards Gala last year. Our 14,000-square-foot middle school building, completed in 2019, uses a range of spaces to support an innovative curriculum rooted in design thinking.

Counting on Our CRS Math Students

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

who participated in the MathCounts elective last year competed at the Metrowest Chapter Competition hosted by Meadowbrook School in early February 2020. Mathcounts is a national program designed to build problem-solving skills and positive attitudes about math, so students embrace challenges and expand their academic and career opportunities in the future. The CRS team, comprised of 10 students, had a strong showing at the competition, according to Mary Walsh. “Our students did a great job; they are truly a talented bunch.”

The same group of students also participated in the AMC8 mathematics contest, administered by the Mathematical Association of America. For the second year in a row, Colin Levine '20 placed in the top five percent nationally, earning an Honor Roll certificate. Top mathletes across the country participate in this annual event.

Congratulations to all of the CRS Mathcounts 2019–2020 competitors: Lilly Ehlinger '20, Lauren Hendler '22, Simon Junknelis '20, Colin Levine '20, Alex Lowitt '21, Kathrine Margulis '20, Imogene Mistry '20, MyAnh Pham '20, Adam Quackenbush '20, Vivian Sass '20, and Eva Tutin '20.

MathCounts is up and running this year, right now with the help of Zoom!



Scenes from the 2019 Climate Change Protest outside of the middle school building



Green Team Empowers Student Activists, Climate Change Protests Inform Community

THE STUDENT-LED GREEN TEAM implemented environmentally-friendly changes on campus last year and kept the CRS community informed regarding local and global environmental concerns. The students created a newspaper, “The Green Team Gazette,” and gave updates at Sharing Assemblies to make everyone aware of their initiatives. One action item: placing signs near light switches across campus to remind the community about the importance of energy conservation.

In addition to the Green Team’s important work, all students in grades 7/8 participated in a climate change protest early last year. After discussing the global crisis in class, CRS students, inspired by the work of Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg and other protests across the world, made signs and stood outside of the middle school building as cars passed by. “If there’s one thing my teachers have taught me at CRS, it’s that you should use your voice to enact change,” says Kathrine Margulis '20. “During my time here, teachers have shown me that they’re committed to this. If there’s something important happening in the world, they will make time in class so we can learn and lead.”



This is What a Scientist Looks Like

AFTER READING an article about John Herrington, a member of the Chickasaw Nation who was the first Native American person to travel to space, science teacher Annie Kenney was inspired to create a project for her students. Herrington wrote a children's book in hopes of showing children—especially Native American kids—that dreams can come true. He believed it was important for children to see themselves in stories of success. Taking inspiration from this concept, Annie created a display outside her classroom entitled “This Is What a Scientist Looks Like” depicting impactful scientists from a range of diverse backgrounds.

“I grew increasingly frustrated by the lack of posters and classroom décor available that represented the vast

diversity within the scientific community. As one person, one woman, with a single life experience, I am limited in my ability to show students the full scope of what a scientist can be on my own,” explains Annie. “But, together with fellow scientists from all walks of life, from fields ranging from biology to volcanology, and cultural backgrounds that stretch across the globe, I can show my students endless possibilities. Ultimately, I want every one of my students to walk into my room and see themselves and their fellow peers in some way—to truly believe that each of them—and each of their peers, however similar or different they may be, is a scientist in the making with the ability to change the world for the better.”

Students Connect with Senior Citizen Pen Pals

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, seventh- and eighth-grade students created Valentine's Day cards for the school's older alumni. Seventh- and eighth-grade English teacher, Leigh Hutchinson, used the opportunity to teach her students the mechanics and art of letter-writing, from construct to how to address and mail the sealed envelope. To her students' surprise, many alumni replied to the middle schoolers, sometimes with a multi-page letter reminiscing about their time at CRS in the 1940s and '50s.

When CRS students began remote learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Leigh made every effort to connect her students to the world around them by keeping tabs on the news and encouraging them to maintain a sense of community and to give back during this difficult time. Knowing many of the school's older alumni are in nursing homes without the ability to receive visits from family, she asked her students to write letters again, sharing stories and comparing experiences during this historic time. Letters were sent in mid-April and the students waited with anticipation to hear back from their alumni pen pals.

Deepening Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL has long pledged a commitment to social justice and, recently, our community has critically evaluated how well our actions match our beliefs. As educators, we see it as our responsibility to be invested in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and to empower children to go out and make changes in our world. And yet, following the murder of George Floyd last spring and after decades of violence against Black people, we ask ourselves: Is CRS doing everything it can to build an inclusive community? Are we doing enough?

The answer: **We can always do more. We can always do better.**

While we'd like to share details about the recent work around DEI on our campus, we also recognize that there is room to grow. We are committed to cultivating cultural competency and diversity and will continue to hone our curriculum and programming to reflect that commitment. Included below are some details about what CRS has done during the past 12–18 months and how we plan to do more.

In fall 2019, the faculty started the school year with a professional development workshop devoted to diversity, equity, and inclusion, led by DEI Committee Co-Chairs and CRS faculty members Lizz Albany and Elena Pereira. The workshop challenged faculty to participate in and be present for difficult conversations about addressing privilege, race, and racism in the classroom. At the end of the day, many faculty posed lingering questions like, “How do we focus on the needs of our students of color without making them feel singled out?” or “What is the best way to give students the framework they need to address issues as they arise?” Colleagues agreed to hold each other accountable as we continue to search for answers and, most importantly, put them into action.

There have been additional professional development opportunities and guest speakers related to DEI with plans to expand those resources going forward. CRS has committed to sending any faculty member of color who has expressed interest to the annual NAIS People of Color Conference each year. The national conference provides an opportunity for educators of color to share a majority experience, discuss professional and personal experiences working in independent schools, and collaborate on DEI-related programming. At last year's conference, Albany led a session entitled, “We're Still Here: Facilitating Difficult Dialogues that Include First Nations/Indigenous/Native Folx.”

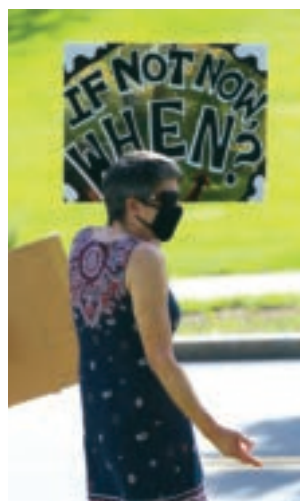
Last summer, the DEI Committee continued identifying and planning more professional development opportunities and resources for faculty. There was a virtual discussion group for the book, “Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain” by Zaretta Hammond and plans to continue a DEI-focused book club for teachers. This fall, the school virtually hosted Dr. Jennifer Bryan and Dr. Keith Hinderlie to focus on three major areas: wellness and connection, equity and inclusion, and teaching and learning. We will continue working with them throughout the year, firmly believing that in order to remain committed to this work, it is necessary to give faculty the tools they need. Dr. Hinderlie has been hosting teach-ins with our faculty focused on anti-racism, and he reminds us at the end of each session that the conversation should feel “unfinished.” It is a reminder to keep leaning in to work that still needs to be done.

Also throughout this year, Head of School Gretchen Larkin is participating in an anti-racism workshop series with other heads of school. The seven-part series is hosted by the Association of Independent Schools of New England and is a “collective opportunity to dismantle systemic racism as heads of independent schools [are] being called to lead in new ways.”

We know that students need our support as well. For the past few years, CRS has offered several affinity groups to



▲ In many classes, especially in the middle school, classroom discussions center around news, current events, and social justice issues.



Members of the CRS community gathered last spring to support Black Lives Matter and to condemn racial violence.

give students of color an opportunity to have a majority experience, connect with one another in a more intimate setting, and to give participants a space to discuss and reflect on their experiences. The Early Childhood Building (ECB) Community of Color, Grades 4 & 5 Affinity Group, and the Middle School Community of Color meet regularly throughout the year. Last summer, the school also hosted a series of virtual meetups for these groups as well as for alumni of CRS affinity groups.

In addition to including lessons and conversations about social justice in our classrooms and curriculum every day, there are important events that happen throughout the year, as well. CRS has hosted social justice workshops and several poignant assemblies as a way to move from words to action. The Identity Assembly and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Action are times when the full community participates in age- and grade-appropriate conversations, presentations, and activities.

Parents, faculty, staff, and students also came together for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Breakfast last winter and a Black Lives Matter Vigil this spring. This November, a group of CRS students also attended the virtual NAIS 2020 Middle School Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Conference. The theme of the conference was “Building Bridges to Activism: Empowered by the Past, Focused on the Future.” Attendees heard from keynote speaker and civil rights activist Ruby Nell Bridges, participated in workshops, and watched student performances.

Looking ahead, the faculty and administration remain committed to demonstrating that we are anti-racist in all that we do, both in and out of the classroom. This means that we will continue to look critically at our curriculum in order for all students to see themselves in what we teach. 🌱

Black Lives Matter Day and A Day Disrupted

ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, CRS joined in solidarity with other schools and organizations for Black Lives Matter Day to honor those who have lost their lives as a result of systemic racism as well as to celebrate those who have made notable contributions to the world. The entire school came together virtually for a moment of silence for Black lives lost to violence. Some classes also made posters to honor the accomplishments and contributions of people of color.

On Wednesday, November 4, CRS hosted a Day of Disruption in order to dive deeper into justice-related issues, including political division and processing of the election, racism, and Black Lives Matter, healing and supportive practices, etc. Students participated in read alouds, mindfulness sessions, and other activities that focused on social justice issues.

While conversations about race, racism, and violence vary according to what's developmentally appropriate for students' age and grade, our goal is to help all students engage in meaningful dialogue. It is the first step in bringing about change. 🗣️



▲ Grade 3 Co-Teacher Lizz Albany answers questions from a student after reading the children's book, *Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story of Racial Injustice*.

◀ Students across campus made posters and signs for Black Lives Matter Day.

MUNers Participate in the First Conference of 2020–2021, CRS Wins Four Awards



▲
Best Delegate
Priya Dubois '21



▲
CRS MUN Award winners, from left, Priya Dubois '21, Emery Nordahl '22, Brooke Travis '21, and Cole Miranda '23



▲
Best Delegate
Brooke Travis '21

IN EARLY OCTOBER 2020, 20 CRS students participated in the first Model United Nations conference of the year, the Global Leadership Conference (GLC). This was a no-prep, virtual conference; all students received the topic of “Indigenous Peoples’ Right to Education” ahead of time, but they were given their country assignment and resources during opening ceremonies. Students then had 30 minutes to read through the material and prepare their opening speeches.

Judi Urquhart, both the Director of Development at the National Indian Education Association and Director of Planning & Development for the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe on the Cape, spoke during opening ceremonies. She offered important information and insight about education for Indigenous students in this area to the conference’s high school and middle school participants and their advisors.

Our CRS MUNers took home four awards! Congratulations to our award recipients and to all the CRS delegates. This was a great start to official MUN season and we can’t wait to follow along this year.

COLE MIRANDA '23

Awarded Best Negotiator, representing Chile

The Committee Chair shared, “This delegate repeatedly was able to get his ideas and solutions across to the committee in a respectful and effective way. He used his skills as a leader in the breakout rooms to help create resolutions and take point.”

EMERY NORDAHL '22

Best Negotiator, representing Canada

The Committee Chair shared, “This delegate was not afraid to ask others who were not speaking as much what they thought. This delegate not only included others but also made the effort to push constructive language forward.”

PRIYA DUBOIS '21

Best Delegate, representing New Zealand

The Committee Chair shared, “This delegate was very well-rounded...demonstrated a very intricate understanding of the content in the meeting. She was the person who supplied the majority of the ideas to the students and allowed everyone’s resolutions to thrive and branch off into broad topics. Overall, she was a great leader and public speaker.”

BROOKE TRAVIS '21

Best Delegate, representing Guyana

The Committee Chair shared, “This delegate was consistently strong both in ‘mods’ and in ‘unmods.’ She was comfortable with public speaking, a clear ‘bloc’ leader, and a leader during the resolution process.”

Fall Sports 2019

The **GIRLS' SOCCER TEAM**, coached by PE Teacher Billy Beauzile, was a force to be reckoned with during their 2019–2020 season. They finished with a record of eight wins, one loss, and two ties.

The **BOYS' SOCCER TEAM**, coached by David Bobruff and Nick Young, had a tremendous 2019 season and finished with a record of seven wins, two losses, and one tie.

The **FIELD HOCKEY TEAM**, coached by CRS faculty members Kathleen Boucher-Lavigne and Jen Worthington, had a strong season with a record of four wins, four losses, and one tie.

The **CROSS COUNTRY TEAM**, coached by CRS faculty members Elena Pereira and Paul Rupprecht, showed consistent improvements throughout the season, and every runner improved their two-mile times by a considerable amount.



◀ Brianna Cardoza and Lila Rosenthal, both Class of '24, give it a final push to the finish line.



Nathan Gomes '21 ▶
makes a run against
Shady Hill.

Winter Sports 2019

The **BOYS' BLUE BASKETBALL TEAM**, coached by PE Teacher Billy Beauzile, worked hard during the 2019–2020 season and ended with a record of four wins and four losses.

The **BOYS' GOLD BASKETBALL TEAM**, coached by 7/8 Teacher Becca Hurd and staff member Zack Swale, had a strong season with a winning record of seven wins and six losses.

The **GIRLS' 6-8 BASKETBALL TEAM**, coached by CRS faculty members Elizabeth Clayton and Kathleen Boucher-Lavigne, had a winning record of 10 wins and four losses. The girls went undefeated and won the annual round-robin tournament with Dedham Country Day, Fay School, and Marie Philip School for the Deaf.



◀ Mary Cate Clayton '20
sets up a play.



Jack Murray '21 ▶
makes a move to
the basket.



◀ Olivia Colas '22 makes a strong move against two defenders.

▶ Philip Wen '24 and Emerson Hebert-Maccaro '20 take on DCD.



▶ Lucas Bain '22 stays focused in PE class.

Physical Fitness and the Benefits of Unstructured Play

"At CRS, physical fitness and athletics are an important part of our students' learning. [In a typical year,] students can begin participating in team sports in fourth grade, and middle school students participate in two seasons of sports each year. Students in younger grades are active through two weekly PE classes and two daily recesses. Unstructured play allows younger children the freedom to explore, create and discover without predetermined rules or guidelines; it fosters cognitive, physical, and social-emotional development, specifically helping children develop creativity, imagination, problem-solving abilities, and social skills."

—Director of Athletics Paul Rupprecht



▶ Lila Scanlon '26 and her classmates use core strength and focus in PE class.



◀ Ollie Gallinaro '29 plays on one of the playground's most popular features.

THROUGH ART, MUSIC, AND PERFORMING ARTS, students use creativity to build problem solving skills while learning important concepts and techniques. In line with the school's hands-on, thematic approach, the arts are often integrated with the classroom themes and subjects.

Visual Arts

Our students spent this fall creating masterpieces in our outdoor art studios. To maximize space, the school set up tents for specialist classes like art, music, and science.



▲ Jimmy McNulty '23 used shading and balance in his nature sketch.

► Our first and second graders painted pictures of animals that inspired them in some way.



Performing Arts

While we've been able to connect virtually this year, we all miss gathering in Foster Hall for live performances. These photos take us back to last year!

▶ Diya Shah '27 performs a traditional Indian dance during an assembly last fall.



▲ Our multi-grade chorus performs at a Sharing Assembly last winter.



◀ The Class of 2020 performed a show-stopping number during last spring's eighth-grade play, "Aladdin."

The Pulley Project



**By Karen Belsley Pratt,
Library and Digital Media Teacher**

Leveraging Library and Tech Literacies to Design Inquiry-based Learning in PreKindergarten and Kindergarten



IN THE CHINESE FOLKTALE “LON PO PO,” three sisters plot to get rid of a wolf who has come to the door pretending to be their grandmother. Their mother is away (visiting the grandmother, naturally), and the girls must rely on their own wits and bravery to save themselves from the fanged intruder. While this fairy tale sounds suspiciously like “Little Red Riding Hood,” the Chinese version has delicious twists and turns that distinguish it from its Western cousin: the children devise a basket and rope pulley system to lure the wolf into a tree, and it is the youngest sister whose added strength helps pull the basket up so high that on his third fall, the wolf’s heart finally “breaks into pieces.”

In a CRS library/technology mashup, “Lon Po Po” becomes not only a richly rendered version of a fairy tale, but an inspiring story of the ability of children to use their wits, collaborative skills, creativity, and independence to solve a real-world problem. Director of Academic Technology Steve Trust, Educational Technologist Harrison Simon, and I created a project mashup for our youngest students; all we needed were three very large stuffed animals, twelve rolls of colorful duct tape, scissors, 50 yards of rope, a stack of cardboard boxes, six carabiners, a cardboard hole puncher, and a 4-inch-diameter laundry pulley. With the addition of a few clamps, we were able to transform the railing of our second-floor into a pulley system.

We did not want to destroy our beloved library stuffies, Shark, Lizzie, or Ranger, or break their hearts into many pieces! Instead, we flipped the disastrous outcome of the wolf’s basket ride, and challenged our PreK/K students with a new task: in collaborative groups of three to four students, find a way to get either Lizzie, Shark, or Ranger up to the second floor of the library and down again, using our pulley-and-rope system and the materials in front of them. Each animal would need to make it safely up to the second floor via rope and pulley, be removed by a teacher and examined for any bumps or bruises, and then placed back in the transporter and lowered safely to the ground floor in order for

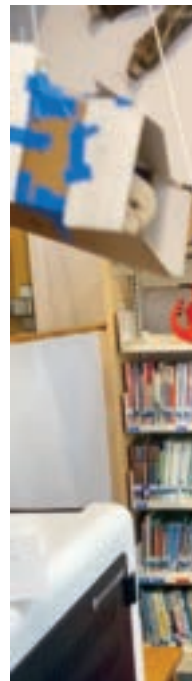
the students to complete the challenge. No animal could be taped in place, or tied to the rope itself.

Progressive “hands-on” schools like CRS embrace inquiry-based approaches like this one to boost student agency by shifting ownership and responsibility for learning from teachers to the students. Designing inquiry-based learning projects for our youngest students means applying skills and standards that address both technology and information literacies across the curriculum. In a CRS tech/library mashup, the literature itself (e.g., “Lon Po Po”) is designed to spark interest and engagement, and inspire student questions, ideas, and visions. The subsequent pulley cart challenge demands that our PreK/K students exercise *inquiry*. Can they define their task? Can they self-initiate? Can they use and synthesize information that they collect as part of the process, and participate effectively in collaborative activities? Can they monitor their own processes’ effectiveness and progress, and adapt when necessary? When something doesn’t work, can they draw on their own background knowledge, and use interaction and feedback with teachers and peers to determine their next steps? The enduring cycle of *think-create-share-grow* informs the heart of all inquiry-based learning, shifting the responsibility of making meaning from a teacher-centered process to a student-centered one.

After three weeks of work, all 12 rolls of duct tape were stripped bare, and each of six PreK/K working groups had created a “transporter” for their animal. Each group had to make multiple revisions to its carrier before finding one that worked, and the six final products revealed a wide range of solutions. Some groups required teacher scaffolding in the form of questions and observations, and stronger fingers for cutting cardboard, while others charged forward independently, with confidence and competence. But as the various transporters began to come together, the collective efforts of the students took on a rhythm and purpose. With each trial journey up to the loft, other groups stopped, watched, and put their own spin on the results. “The dog fell out because they didn’t use a seat belt. We have a seat belt.”... “The carabiner needed more tape.”... “The box tipped over so the shark fell out.” Each group’s results inspired constructive analysis and further action by other groups, leading to a community of collaborators raising the bar with every subsequent demonstration.

In both our Pulley Project and in other inquiry-based projects in the CRS community, we have seen the “share” domain of the *think-create-share-grow* cycle of inquiry take on unanticipated significance. For our students, the process of sharing results, and receiving feedback from classmates, appears to harness peer pressure in the most positive way possible.

As for Lizzie, Ranger, and Shark? You’ll be relieved to know that aside from a few remnants of duct tape, none of them suffered any lasting injuries. 🐾



THE GRADE 6 Game Changers Project

*When the COVID-19
pandemic “changed the game”
for students and educators
last spring, our sixth-grade
teachers adapted a major
cross-curricular project to
keep their students engaged
during remote learning.*





◀ Olivia Colas '22 performs at an assembly last fall. Inset: Social media influencer Sara Mora

WHEN NEWS BROKE OVER MARCH BREAK that teachers and students wouldn't return to school right away, Charles River School faculty quite literally stopped what they were doing and turned their attention to adapting curriculum for an online learning environment. They canceled vacation plans and abandoned downtime to, in a matter of days, create a framework that was academically and developmentally appropriate for the grades and ages which they taught. It was nothing short of Herculean.

Later in the spring it was announced that remote learning would continue for the remainder of the year. Sixth-grade co-teachers Sarah Thomas and Kathleen Boucher-Lavigne embraced the CRS philosophy that, despite the many challenges of this unprecedented time, students should continue to progress academically. "We knew our students were capable of moving ahead in the curriculum," says Boucher-Lavigne. "We worked with each student to identify hurdles so that we could jump over them together. In addition to online classes and assigned work, we both offered office hours over Zoom and were available to meet virtually one-on-one with students." The two worked together to create new lessons or edited existing projects to make sure they fit a virtual format.

One such project, which they named Game Changers, crossed multiple subjects, including English, math, social studies, visual and performing arts, digital media and technology. Students were asked to research a person who brought about change in their societies. Thomas and Boucher-Lavigne created a master list of people who fell into one of three categories of changing the game, so to speak, although students were not restricted to the list alone. There were those who broke color, gender, sexual orientation, or class barriers; those who inspired scientific change or advocated for animal rights or climate change; and those who fought for justice, equality, or human rights.

Pre-COVID-19, the culmination of the project was going to be a film festival to be shared with the community during an all-school assembly. Each sixth-grader was going to research, take notes, and write a biography about the person they chose. They were to create an art project that embodied their game changer's spirit for a class mural and students were going to produce a song to perform together. There was also a math component: students were asked to create four different math problems that would produce an integer. Those numerals together would reveal a date that was important to their game changer's life or work and students had to write a paragraph explaining why the mystery year was significant.

Most of the project was easily adapted for remote learning. Instead of an assembly share, Librarian and Digital Media Teacher Karen Belsley Pratt and Educational Technologist Harrison Simon helped to create a website showcasing the students' work. All communication—including writing and editing feedback – was done online. Instead of the class song for the presentation, Head of Performing Arts Mica Moellering helped each student create a soundtrack or write an original song inspired by their game-changer. Otherwise, all other components were still in play: research, writing, source checking and citing, math, art, and technology.

"There was a lot of room for choice in this project," explained Thomas. "Students picked who they wanted to research based on their own interests. If they wanted to choose someone who wasn't on our original list, they had to write a paragraph explaining why. One of our students, Olivia, was inspired by the television remake 'Party of Five,' which centers on a family dealing with deportation. She chose to research Sara Mora, an undocumented immigrant, and a spokesperson for immigration rights. Olivia was able to make a poignant connection between some of



the challenges of the pandemic and stay-at-home orders to the experience of an immigrant. In fact, Olivia reached out to Sara Mora via social media and received a response—which fueled her interest even more. It was amazing to see her so engaged and eager to talk about her project, even though we couldn't meet to discuss it in person.”

From a student wanting to explore his own Indian heritage and choosing to research Gandhi to another who was passionate about animal rights and studied Kitty Block of the Humane Society, every sixth grader's motivation and game-changer was different. At the end of the year, the website with each student's final project was shared with the community. Many parents, as well as teachers and students in other grades, commented that they went back multiple times to the site because the information was so rich and deep.

“Each part of the project mattered in different ways,” says Thomas. “I think the most important aspect was that, through their research, students got to know someone who took action and used their voice to effect change. Hopefully, it inspires our students to do the same.”

“Through their research, students got to know someone who took action and used their voice to effect change. Hopefully, it inspires our students to do the same.”

— SARAH THOMAS

Math Mystery Year— Can You Solve It?

Sixth-grade students had to create a series of math problems that would yield the numbers of an important or meaningful date in the lives of their game-changer. Lara Do Rosario '22 researched Katherine Johnson; can you solve Lara's math problem to figure out what year Freedom 7 was launched?

- **PROBLEM 1:** Katherine Johnson solved calculated flight paths for Freedom 7 and Apollo 11. What is the least common multiple of 7 and 11? Take that number and add 2, then find the digit in the one's place. The number in the one's place is the hundreds digit of the mystery year.
- **PROBLEM 2:** Katherine Johnson joined NASA in 1953 and retired in 1986. What fraction of the 1900s was she working at NASA? Now simplify that fraction. The numerator of the fraction is the thousands digit in the mystery year.
- **PROBLEM 3:** The movie *Hidden Figures* was made in 2016 and honors Katherine Johnson and two other women who worked at NASA. What is the greatest common factor of the number of main characters in the movie and the year it was produced? The hundreds digit is the tens digit in the mystery year.
- **PROBLEM 4:** Katherine Johnson won a presidential medal of freedom in 2015. Take the thousands digit of that year and divide it by the thousands digit of the mystery year, then find its reciprocal. What is the numerator of the reciprocal? That number is the ones digit of the mystery year.

ANSWER: 1961

When Reading Builds Character

PICTURE THIS: Several members of a book club lean into an ardent discussion about their latest read. They're drawing comparisons from the struggles of the main characters, who happen to be immigrants, with current news and events. They pick up on both overt and covert instances of injustice and the conversation turns to outrage about what's happening to the story's antagonist—as well as in the world around them.

While this could be a scene centered on an adult-literature bestseller, the book is “Front Desk” by children’s author Kelly Yang. The readers, who are discussing plot twists and character development while also brainstorming ways to engage in social justice and activism, are Charles River School fourth graders.

The reading curriculum in grade four helps cultivate many skill sets. Not only are students practicing active reading strategies, such as summarizing, inference, generating and asking questions, and visualization, they’re learning about the craft of writing and honing social skills.

“Literature circles have been around for a long time because they’re worthwhile; they’re not a ‘flash in the pan,’” says fourth-grade Co-Teacher Laura Mutch. “We use them as a tool to hit on so many developmental areas of growth—not only academically, but social-emotional as well. THAT is the CRS spin.”

Children request which book they’d like to read from options curated by the teachers offering a variety of reading levels and plot lines. Last winter, each group read a different book that shared similar themes: the main character was considered an outsider because of a cultural difference. Mutch and her Co-Teacher, Mara Weitzman, previewed each of the four books for the entire class so that when they did engage in a full group discussion, students could make comparisons from each book to what was happening in the world.

“These books had a lot of meat to them. They were not superficial reads,” explained Mutch. “The stories helped humanize important issues like poverty and racism. These are 10-year-olds who are able to develop deep empathy for a character in a book and then apply it to real-world scenarios. That’s what we’re looking for. Not only are they building practical skills, but they’re also learning to take responsibility for themselves, their communities, and the future. You won’t see that level of commitment from fourth-grade students at most other schools.”



Photo treatment by Jenny Mutch

Mutch and Weitzman's teaching strategy for the reading curriculum includes integrating tools to help all students succeed, regardless of their reading level. For example, Library and Digital Media Teacher Karen Belsley Pratt provided audiobooks to auditory learners so that those students could listen simultaneously as they read. Every week, each student in the reading group would rotate through a series of jobs: word wizard, connector, summarizer, visualizer, and discussion director. This ensured that book discussions remained on target.

For the most part, the co-teachers could let the group conversations carry on because each student had something to contribute according to their jobs. Mutch and Weitzman would observe and take notes on behavior and discussion, listening for cues that students were making insightful inferences and picking up on themes. At times they would ask pointed questions to redirect students if needed. "What students might not realize in the moment is that they're developing important social skills while talking about the book," says Mutch. "There is an art to having a meaningful conversation with someone else. You can't talk over someone or interrupt. You have to listen and absorb what they're saying. At CRS, our students aren't just reciting things or making announcements about what they read; they're learning to build off one another's points and counterpoints."

The full scope and sequence of the fourth-grade reading curriculum leads to valuable developmental outcomes such as building foundational skills, speaking and listening, and descriptive writing, to name a few. Perhaps one of the most important outcomes is that it helps students to see themselves as readers—which is something that will not only serve them in the classroom but throughout their lives as well. 🐼

Student Point-of-View: Insights from Fourth-Grade Reading Circles

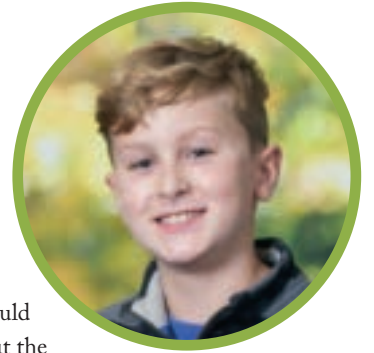
"SAVE ME A SEAT"

by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks

Nate Newmark,

on relating to the main character, Ravi

"On the first day of school at Charles River I was a bit worried that I wasn't going to make any friends. I was also stressing that the kids would think I wasn't that smart and not include me, but the second I got into the classroom everybody welcomed me and talked to me and played with me...I understood how [Ravi] felt because I felt the exact way that he did."

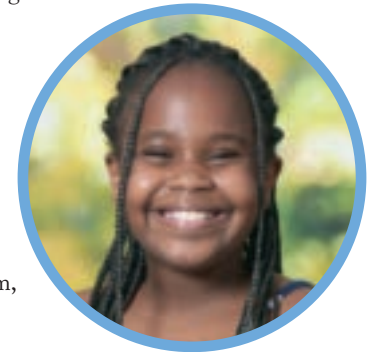


"FRONT DESK"

by Kelly Yang

Austin O'Leary, *on recognizing injustice*

"Mr. Yao decided if you were Black or if you were an immigrant, you were bad, which I think is completely unfair and wrong."



"WISHTREE"

by Katherine Applegate

Lila Kangethe,

on the main character's charm

"The animals feel comfortable with Samar because she is quiet and calm, still, and heart-warming."



"THE BOY IN THE BACK OF THE CLASS"

by Onjali Q. Raúf

Zoe Hebert-Maccaro,

on sharing the narrator's wisdom

"The narrator compares life to a jigsaw because life is complicated and hard sometimes. I agree."

Asked and Answered through

Hands-On Learning

- What do owls eat?
- How many shades of purple are there?
- How do you measure the density of a solid?
- Why does my block tower fall over when I stack too high?
- How many elastics does it take to make a pumpkin explode?
- How does a ukulele work?
- What was Ancient Greece like?

No matter the questions, Charles River School students will find the answers.

“Progressive education is a CRS tradition,” explains Head of School Gretchen Larkin. “Many people wonder what that truly means or what it looks like in our classrooms. It means that children learn about the world around them through hands-on learning. There is no better way for students to engage. And, one of the best outcomes of this approach is that, through the learning process, students understand more about themselves. They develop new interests, discover new passions, and come to know that they can do hard things. They are capable of meeting—and exceeding—challenges.”

Our students explore different angles and think through disciplines by way of real-world themes. They ask questions, hypothesize, discuss, and investigate. This often leads to more questions and the cycle continues. This has a profound effect on what they learn since they understand the “why.”





CONGRATULATIONS graduates

CLASS OF 2020





Together While Apart

*Celebrating the
Class of 2020*

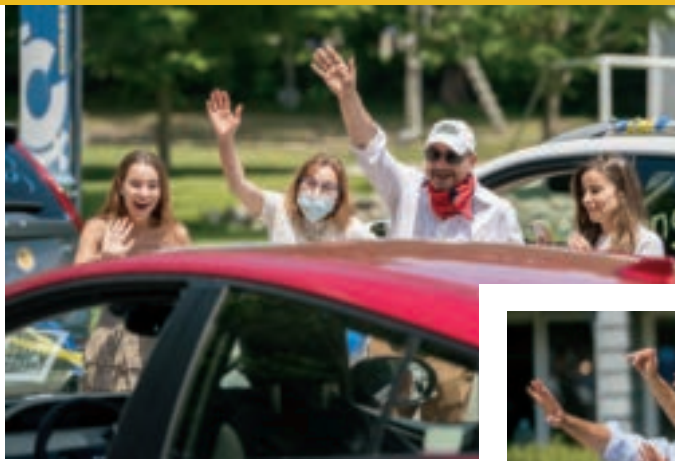


Matriculation

At CRS, curious students thrive because of our intentional cultivation of their individual academic success as well as their social-emotional development. With inspiration in and out of the classroom, our students enthusiastically apply knowledge to new situations. The best high schools are lucky to get CRS graduates.

- Boston University Academy
- Buckingham Browne & Nichols School
- Burr & Burton Academy (Vt.)
- Cambridge School of Weston
- Concord Academy
- Dana Hall School*
- Deerfield Academy
- Medfield High School
- Natick High School
- Newton North High School
- Noble and Greenough School*
- St. Paul's School (N.H.)
- Westover School (Conn.)

* Denotes more than one student matriculating to that secondary school.



Together While Apart

Celebrating the Class of 2020



ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, the community gathered—both online and safely distanced on campus—to celebrate the Class of 2020. The day started with a virtual graduation ceremony, featuring remarks from Head of School Gretchen Larkin, creative presentations from the graduates, and the class slideshow. Upper Grades Coordinator Mary Walsh also gave her traditional address to each individual student. Her words were thoughtful, personal, and heartwarming; as she spoke about each student, they each appeared live on-screen with her. It was a very special moment for all.

Later that day, graduates and their families gathered together (at a safe distance!) as the rest of the CRS community drove through campus with decorated cars and signs celebrating the class. It made for a graduation day we'll never forget.



EXCERPTS FROM MARY WALSH'S GRADUATION REMARKS



MARY CATHERINE CLAYTON: Your big heart knows no bounds. Constantly kind and compassionate, you want nothing more than for the people around you to be happy.



LILLIAN EVA EHLINGER: Confident, curious, pragmatic, and exceedingly competent, you consistently convert inspiration into excellence—as a student, as a leader, and as an artist.



MACKENZIE REMARKABLE AUGUST GAUGER: Mack, you are a ray of sunshine. Cheerful and empathetic, you gently build levity and warmth one relationship at a time.



EMERSON E. HEBERT-MACCARO: Like a lighthouse, you guide people to deeper truth with your example of upstanding conviction. Beloved by your peers, your connection with each member of the class quietly enhances cohesion in our community.



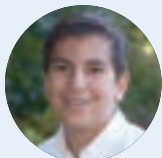
SARAH ARLENE JAMES: You make us believe in magic. You are effervescently creative, constantly fluttering between life as we know it and the mystical place we wish it could be.



SIMONAS JUSTINAS JUKNELIS: An accomplished programmer with a natural propensity for design thinking and problem solving, you have an uncanny, seemingly intuitive ability to synthesize complex concepts and anticipate novel outcomes.



COLIN LAWRENCE LEVINE: No goal is too daunting; you aim high and savor every step along your impressive trajectory of achievement. You are also a seeker who is on a valiant and endearing path to discover his deeper self in the midst of all this talent.



JESSE TOMMASO MAGNI: You are confident, inventive, well-rounded, full of life, and free-spirited. One admirer says, “His big personality shines through that radiant smile.”



KATHRINE ARIEL MARGULIS: Vivacious and joyful, your energy knows no bounds. You approach every conversation with genuine curiosity and engagement, and you extend this zeal to a plethora of academic and personal pursuits.



SYDNEY ALDEN GRACE MEYERS: The first quality almost every classmate notes about you is your perpetual kindness. This active, unselfish commitment to treating others with respect is at the root of all of your interactions.



IMOGEN VERONICA MISTRY: Ever the thoughtful observer, you carefully consider your surroundings before taking action. Once you warm up, though, your lively adventurous side emerges.



MYANH PHAM: Bold dreamer, you have high expectations for yourself and the tenacity to make them come true.



ADAM QUACKENBUSH: You are gentle, friendly, and energetic, and you habitually go out of your way to help others.



JULIAN RAM-TYLERBEST: You are a class act. You bring original, authentic ideas to the table in class discussions, and your sharp musical instincts make you an innovative composer and natural improviser on piano.



OAKLEY ROBERT ROBBINS: Optimistic, outgoing, and engaging, your amiable pizzazz delights young and old alike. You are boisterous, whimsical, empathetic, and not afraid to be wrong.



CLAIRE ANNE SALVIN: Your serene demeanor belies a tempest of creativity that swirls within your soul. Whether in vibrant, electric prose or evocative, beautiful images in visual media, you are a true artist who is driven to express your inner visions.



VIVIAN PEARL SASS: You pack a ton of personality into that petite frame. You are funny, passionate, diligent, and meme-loving, and you give the nicest compliments.



EVA ROSE TUTIN: We are in awe of your brainpower. You have the ability to not only look at both sides of an issue, but also to turn it upside down, give it a good shake, and examine what falls out.

Faculty Farewell

Thank You, Middle School Teacher and Mentor, Mary Walsh

Written by Leigh Hutchinson, Grades 7/8 English Teacher

Writing about Mary is one of the most overwhelmingly intimidating things that I have ever had to do. Capturing her on paper is almost impossible since she somehow transcends the physical. Have you ever seen how she closes her eyes and opens her mind when listening to someone who disagrees with her? Her listening persona. It is a place with no boundaries, no filters, and no ego. It exemplifies the Rumi quote, "Out beyond the ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing, there is a field, and I will meet you there." Mary's sole focus was always on her students. She was ready to meet them wherever they were and to guide them with her wisdom. Mary is an athlete, a singer, a wife, a parent, a grandparent, and one of the last few people who press their own grapes for wine. At CRS, she was an advisor, an inspiring math teacher, head of the Math-counts team, and our team leader. And, time and time again, she pulled all of that together into a reflective pedagogy that centered on the question: what is best for the students in my care at this moment. What will guide them, what will mold them, what will make them moral and strong and kind? Mary is all of those things. I can honestly say that as her team, we love her. For supporting us, for pushing us, for protecting



us, for letting us lead, and for always, always, always helping us find consensus. But mostly we love her as a friend, as someone we would spend time with even if we weren't getting paid to do so. And although Mary seemed to deal effortlessly with the nuts and bolts of running the middle school program, her focus was always on innovating—what can we do to make it better, what do the kids think, what are other schools doing, and yes, this works, but what might make it better? These are the constant pokings that you live with if you work for Mary. And it is invigorating, bonding, stretching, rewarding. Thank you, Mary, for something irreplaceable, for something that we will try to honor and live up to in our mission to be the best possible teachers that you have shown us how to be. 🐶

New Trustees



Aqueela Culbreath-Britt

Aqueela lives in Holbrook with her son, Dominic '24, and has served Charles River School as a Parents Association Communications Co-Chair and an Admissions Ambassador. Outside of CRS, Aqueela is a writer and social worker. She works as an Academic Advisor at Simmons University. Prior to her role at Simmons, Aqueela worked as a child protection worker for the Department of Children and Families where she also served as a SEIU Union Steward and LGBTQ Liaison. Additionally, she has worked extensively with marginalized populations, particularly families combating homelessness, beginning with displaced survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

Aqueela has a B.A. in Social Work from Columbia College; Master of Social Work from Simmons University; and a Master of Fine Arts with a discipline in fiction from Lesley University. Aqueela penned her first novel, "London Reign," in the late '90s, which was published in 2007 by an independent publisher in New York, NY. She is currently writing a Young Adult novel exploring social and familial dynamics, from the point of view of an African American teenage girl in foster care.



Nancy Galindo-Rodriguez

Nancy lives in Holliston, Mass., with her husband, Benny, and their two children, Zelia '23 and Joaquin '28, and is proud stepmom to Nathan and Amanda who live out of the region. Nancy has an extensive background in nonprofit management and fundraising and has worked in organizations such as Rosie's Place, Perkins School for the Blind, and Northeastern University.

As Director of Corporate Relations and Sponsorships at Suffolk University, she is charged with securing philanthropic corporate and individual support for various academic units throughout the University. She has served as a member of the University President's Strategic Planning Committee and assisted in inaugurating the University's 11th President. Nancy has a B.S. in Psychology from Bridgewater State University and a Master in Public Administration from Suffolk University.



Kristina Westerling

Kristina lives in Wellesley with her husband, Austin, and three children (Aaron, Makenze '26 and Ashley '27) and two dogs. Kristina is a professor of finance at Bentley University. Her research focuses on empirical corporate finance, particularly corporate governance, executive compensation, director compensation and banking. Prior to joining Bentley, she taught at John Hopkins University and the University of Maryland, was a business analyst at Fidelity Investments, as well as a visiting scholar at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and Federal Reserve. She is currently an associate editor of the *Journal of Business Research* and on the editorial board of the *Review of Business*.

She has previously served as the treasurer of Charles River School's parent association, sat on the board of the Junior League of Boston, was the Capital Collection Treasurer for the Washington, D.C. Junior League, and co-chaired the annual WHJWC Wellesley Marketplace fundraiser. Kristina received her BS from The University of Miami, an MBA from The College of William and Mary, as well as a Masters of Finance and PhD in Finance from The University of Maryland.

Credit: Courter Photography

New Faculty

Gabriella Carreiro

ONE/TWO CO-TEACHER



Gaby most recently taught second grade at the Countryside Elementary School in Newton, Mass. During her full-practicum there, she co-taught and planned a variety of interactive and engaging lessons for her students, including guided reading groups, writing, math, science, social studies, and social-emotional learning lessons. She also implemented responsive classroom teaching techniques and strategies, such as non-verbal communication signals, morning meetings, and positive teacher language. Prior to Countryside Elementary, Gaby worked at Brimmer and May School, Edith C. Baker Elementary School, and Angier Elementary School. She attended Boston College's Lynch School of Education, earning both her B.A. and M.Ed. in Elementary Education.

Hannah Sokol

SCHOOL COUNSELOR



Hannah has been involved with clinical social work in schools and most recently has been a clinical social worker at McLean Hospital. There, she was responsible for counseling and creating treatment plans for patients aged 5-14. She hosted weekly therapy groups with a focus on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) frameworks, as well as mindfulness, self-esteem, and social skill building, among many other responsibilities. Prior to her role at McLean, Hannah served as a school-based clinician in the Boston Public Schools and counseled middle school students to help them build coping skills and achieve goals. She also worked as the lead mental health clinician at Noble and Greenough School's Achieve Program. She oversaw the mental health needs of middle school students during the academic summer enrichment program. Hannah received her B.A. from Hamilton College and earned her Master of Social Work degree from Salem State University.

Tessa Steinert-Evoy

7/8 SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER



Tessa is finishing a master's degree at Harvard Divinity School, where she was involved with the Religious Literacy Project. Before returning to school for her Master's degree, she was a middle school history teacher at Falmouth Academy. In that role, Tessa taught and designed student-centered, discussion-based eighth-grade history and ninth-grade English courses. She emphasized core skills in reading, analyzing, and writing with clear mechanics and coherent argumentation, as well as advised students with weekly meetings. Tessa previously worked in the admission office at Boston University Academy and as a writing instructor for the FaySummer English Immersion program. In addition to her M.A., she also has her B.A. from Boston University.

Ayan Osman

PREK/K CO-TEACHER



Most recently, Ayan co-taught a combined 3/4 classroom at the Mission Hill School in Boston. Among many of her classroom techniques, she helped develop students' self-esteem by fostering critical thinking and communication skills. Prior to that role, she spent time as a Kindergarten and Pre-school teacher, where she used play-based strategies to provide diverse approaches to learning. Ayan uses curriculum to design lessons and activities, both in and out of the classroom, to promote sensory, academic, and social-emotional development. She received an AA in Early Childhood Education from Fisher College and earned her B.A. from Lesley University. She is excited to get back to an early childhood classroom!

THIS YEAR, several teachers have taken on new or additional roles in order to support students learning remotely. The remote learning team includes: Grade 3 Co-Teacher Kristin Jayne, Library and Digital Media Teacher Karen Belsley Pratt, Educational Technologist Harrison Simon, Director of Academic Technology Steve Trust, and Grade 4 Co-Teacher Mara Weitzman. While Kristin, Remote Learning Facilitator for Grades PreK-3, and Mara, Remote Learning Facilitator for Grades 4-6, are teaching remotely, we welcomed two long-term substitute teachers to their classrooms.

Sandra Annisette

GRADE 4 CO-TEACHER
LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE



Sandra recently earned her B.A. in Global Studies and Elementary Education from Lesley University. Relevant to earning her degree, she taught at the Codman Academy Charter School, the Henderson Inclusion School, and at Heath Elementary School. She also volunteered as an academic mentor at Boston Partners in Education, where she provided support in classrooms and engaged students in academic play.

Kelsey Lees

GRADE 3 CO-TEACHER
LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE



Kelsey comes to Charles River School from Nashoba Brooks School in Concord, Mass., where she served in multiple roles since 2012. There, she taught students both in person and remotely and helped create curriculum. A former instructional technologist, Kelsey has taught students and colleagues about the proper use of technology in the classroom.

Welcome

TO OUR NEWEST OTTERS

We are thrilled to welcome 44 new students to Charles River School this year! It's not easy to learn spaces and faces at a new school when everyone is social distancing and wearing masks, but our newest community members have jumped right in. You've already made our community stronger by being here.

We can't wait to see you learn this year! Here are just a few of our new students on campus this year



Caroline Webb
GRADE 6



Emerie Tull
PREK



Emma Goldman
PREK



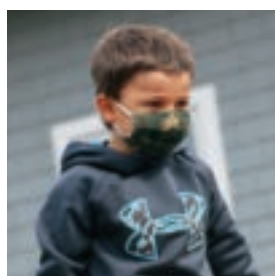
Henry Stanton
GRADE 7



Natalie McElligott
PREK



Quinn Kennedy
GRADE 5



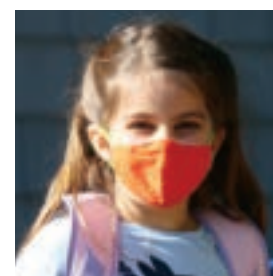
William Murphy
KINDERGARTEN



Sydney Townsend
GRADE 6



Alex Yang
GRADE 5



Arianna Lopez-Baldrich
GRADE 1



Carter Verni
GRADE 2



Claire Akeson
GRADE 7



Olivia Falotico
GRADE 1



Piper Carney
KINDERGARTEN



Tad Dow
PREK

COMMUNITY EVENTS

CRS Traditions

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING that last year's calendar looked different than it had in the past. We enjoyed several favorite fall and winter events on campus before having to move off campus last spring. That shift didn't stop the CRS community from coming together—from the safely distanced Otter Parade to the first-ever Virtual Sports Day.

Fall Fair



- 1 Lauren Hendler '22 lines up as Eric Lowitt stands by to dole out a prize.
- 2 Lila Kangethe '24 jumps with joy.
- 3 Shah Kazmirski '26 (left) and Nicholas Alborno '23 happily duel it out.
- 4 Dom Culbreath '24 takes an easy ride with a new friend
- 5 CJ Pardo '26 smiles as the magician's assistant.

Simple Meal

JUST BEFORE THANKSGIVING BREAK, students and faculty come together to share a Simple Meal in Foster Hall. It is a time to share appreciation for the CRS community.



- 1 Head of School Gretchen Larkin shares bread with Micah DePina-Holmes '22 (left) and Westy Willis '25.
- 2 Oakley Robbins '20 helps his buddy, Camilla Rosenfeldt '29.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Winter Festival

FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS, along with several alumni and former faculty, took the stage during last year's Winter Festival. One of CRS's long-standing traditions, Winter Festival celebrates the winter solstice with song, dance, and other performances.

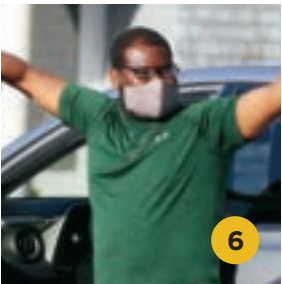
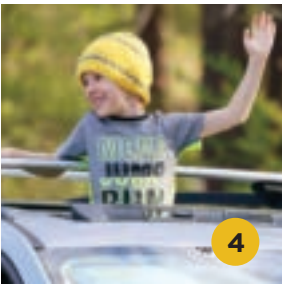
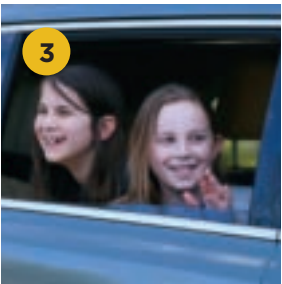
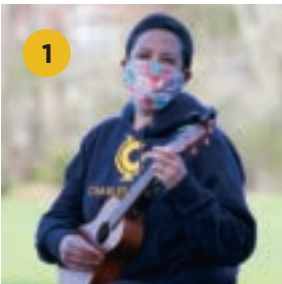


- 1 In keeping with CRS tradition, seventh and eighth graders perform with hand bells during Winter Festival.
- 2 Fifth grade performs a Morris dance.
- 3 Our youngest students perform a heartwarming song about friendly penguins.
- 4 From left, Erin Grimm, Theo Maier, and Kayla Itzkovits, all Class of 2025, perform with their third-grade class.

The Otter Parade

ONE HIGHLIGHT FROM LAST SPRING, prompted by remote learning, was the Otter Parade. Late last spring, faculty and staff lined the roads of campus to wave at students and their families. This was the first time coming together on campus after shutting down.

- 1 Head of Performing Arts Mica Moellering
- 2 Head of School Gretchen Larkin can't hide her excitement.
- 3 Nora '25 and Miranda '22 Haber
- 4 Garion Trust '27 brightens his teachers' day.
- 5 Mickie Laguerre '26 brought lots of school spirit to the parade
- 6 PE Teacher Billy Beauzile



Personal Growth through Remote Learning

By Grade 4 Co-Teacher Mara Weitzman

ACROSS THE COUNTRY, the experience of teaching students remotely has been, without a doubt, frustrating at times for teachers, students, and families. The shift from in-person to online learning was quite sudden and challenging last spring as we adopted new technologies and procedures.

At CRS, as the dust settled and we adjusted to the “new normal,” we noticed that this format created a surprising shift that was less procedural and more fundamental. We observed many of our students developing skills for independent learning at a much faster pace than we expected for their age. Because of the situation, in order to be successful, our students needed to take more personal responsibility, organize their work, manage their time, and self-advocate without the constant presence of their teachers. And, they rose to the challenge!

Using Google Classroom, Calendar, and Mail, students had to keep an eye on their schedule, show up to our synchronous meetings with a seriousness of purpose while sitting at home, usually at their kitchen tables or another room in the house where distractions might have been hard to avoid. Considering that all of this technology was new to our fourth graders, this was quite an accomplishment. Over time we saw increased participation, as well as responsible use of the technology.

When not participating in Zoom sessions, students had to manage their assignments independently. Rather than working within 45-minute blocks for specific subjects with a teacher acting as the timekeeper, our students had the freedom to decide how to organize their time and effort. Quite a departure from the daily classroom routine! We were able to give necessary support while students were developing this important skill by hosting office hours and small group check-in meetings. We watched students learn to prioritize tasks, budget their time, and track their progress—all of which are important executive function skills. As their skills improved, their sense of ownership and pride in their work also increased, as it should.

Another difference between in-person and online learning is related to the social environment of the classroom. We immediately recognized that we would have to work hard to maintain a sense of community by engaging students in online class games, small group projects, and the like. But there was a surprise benefit to working remotely for many students—the ability to self-pace and focus deeply on a task. We noticed that some students thrived with the unlimited “think time” for problem-solving, relieved of the pressure of classroom peers who shot their hands into the air instantly. These students showed



Mara Weitzman, teaching from home ▲

their real potential as learners and felt a boost to their self-esteem with each success.

We also noticed that over time most students became more comfortable seeking help and advocating for themselves, showing growth in their self-awareness and motivation. Perhaps they were willing to seek help because the tools allowed them to communicate confidentially with the teachers via email or Zoom appointments. The result was a strengthening of the bond between students and teachers.

Now that we have returned to in-person teaching, we can use the experiences of remote learning to encourage similar growth in our students by looking for new ways to give them increased freedom and responsibility, coupled with individualized support. While nothing can truly replace in-person learning, the benefits of remote learning have made us better teachers and learners. 🐶

This fall, Mara has been working from home and serving as the school's Remote Learning Facilitator for grades 4-6.

CRS 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award

Sara Remsen '04



SARA REMSEN, the 2020 recipient of the CRS Distinguished Alumni Award, is helping to bring computing power into the hands of the world's 2.5 billion frontline workers, changing how they create, access, and use knowledge on the job. She is the cofounder of the augmented reality startup, Waypoint Labs, and serves as current vice president of Vuforia Product Experience at PTC. Sara's personal mission is to advance women and girls in STEM and entrepreneurship through career advocacy and education.

Sara, Class of 2004, began her journey at Charles River School, where she pursued her passion for science. Former CRS middle school science teacher Pam Moor fondly remembers Sara's curiosity for how the world works. Sara always wanted to dig deeper, often drilling Ms. Moor with questions about science and data after class. Ms. Moor also remembers Sara's ability to engage others and is delighted to know Sara's CRS science background is a foundation for her success today. Sara described Charles River School as the "place where she developed intellectual curiosity and cross-disciplinary collaboration."

Building on her CRS education, Sara's experience at an all-girls high school gave her confidence in her belief that absolutely nothing divides women from men in learning, experience, and success in the sciences. She continued to follow her passion throughout high school and was

a biology major and digital arts minor at Dartmouth College, where she won the Neukom Institute "Seeing Science" Competition.

While pursuing a Master of Science degree in Engineering, Integrated Design & Management at MIT, Sara and her two cofounders launched Waypoint Labs after winning the MIT Reality, Virtually, Hackathon! competition in 2016. Waypoint Labs was acquired in March 2018 by PTC, an \$8 billion software company. The augmented reality product that Sara and her cofounders developed became the foundation for PTC's Vuforia Expert Capture, which closed seven customers generating \$2.3M within its first 90 days on the market. Sara's product helps industrial customers streamline operations and efficiency by creating easy-to-use, human-centered products that bring computing to the non-desk workers that the tech revolution left behind.

During the virtual presentation of this year's award, Head of School Gretchen Larkin said, "Since graduating from Charles River School, Sara has demonstrated a powerful commitment to the sciences, an avid curiosity to how technology can service better, and a passion for giving back." She also spoke about Sara's contributions to COVID-19 relief, using her software product to redesign and repurpose full-face snorkel masks for frontline workers to use as protective gear.

Last year, Sara shared her entrepreneurship journey with 20 female founders as part of the MIT Rough Draft Ventures and Silicon Valley Bank FoundHers retreats. She has also advised aspiring augmented reality entrepreneurs as part of her role as organizer of the Boston Women in XR group. 🇺🇸

The Distinguished Alumni Award is given annually to that alumnus/a who has demonstrated excellence in personal accomplishment, professional achievement, or humanitarian service; or has made and sustained, significant contributions to the school and whose efforts have built community and enhanced the lives of our students, faculty and staff.

CRS 2020 Young Alumni Award

Malik Gomes Cruz '15

WHEN MALIK GOMES CRUZ, Class of 2015, accepted the CRS Young Alumni Award during the final assembly last spring, he took the opportunity to speak directly to CRS students of color: “To all the Black and Brown students, know that your achievements are extraordinary. Always strive to do the impossible.”

During the virtual address, he also thanked his CRS teachers for cultivating a love of lifelong learning. In particular, he thanked middle school teachers Chris Raskin and Leigh Hutchinson for teaching him to be global citizen. Malik said, “While I didn’t realize at the time, I was becoming an advocate for social change. They cultivated my passion for diversity, equity, and inclusion work. Who I am is, in part, is because of Charles River School’s commitment and its dedication to forming socially aware students.”

After graduating from CRS, Malik attended Cambridge School of Weston, where he served as a dorm leader and a student leader for the Diversity Committee, Gay-Straight Alliance, Gender and Sexual Minorities, Queer People of Color, and Students Advocating for Life without Substance Abuse. He also participated in the NAIS People of Color Conference and Student Diversity Leadership Conference. During his time at CSW, Malik was closely involved in the planning and execution of numerous campus events, including Diversity Day, Social Justice Day, Culture Fest, Dance Concert, Evening of the Arts, New Student Orientation, and more.

Director of Student Programs for Equity & Inclusion at CSW, Jordan Clark, who worked with Malik on a number of projects,



describes him as a “truly strong leader at CSW.” Jordan went on to say, “The core of Malik’s skill set is his ability to listen to those around him and always be willing to adapt. He leads with an empathy that allows him to connect with people in a sincere way. I cannot wait to see how Malik continues to use his opportunities to grow and affect change in the world.”

In spring 2019, Malik was accepted to the Frederick Douglass Distinguished Scholars program at American University. As a member of this program, Malik received a full scholarship for all four years of his collegiate career. “It feels beyond surreal to win this incredible award,” Malik shares. “With the Frederick Douglass Distinguished Scholars Program, I will be able to continue my passion for social justice advocacy and leadership. The

FDDS program will provide me with the resources and connections I need to grow as a learner, student, and leader. I am extremely excited to be working with the other students in the program and esteemed faculty as I progress throughout my college years. I have been given a once in a lifetime opportunity and I plan to take advantage of it fully.”

Malik is in his sophomore year at American, where he is studying public relations and strategic communications. He has stayed active as a CRS alumnus and serves as an Admissions Ambassador.

The Young Alumni Award is presented each year at Final Assembly to that alumnus/a from the past five years who has demonstrated excellence in personal achievement or community service since leaving CRS.



Alumni Zone at the Fall Fair



The CRS Connection

Whether it was returning to campus for the Fall Fair, gathering for the annual NYC Reception in February, or sending a virtual message for Giving Day, alumni from all over the country celebrated their connection to Charles River School last year. While COVID-19 caused us to cancel some of our favorite in-person events, our community found ways to stay connected to one another. Thank you to our alumni for continuing to stay engaged with CRS; we look forward to seeing you at an event when it's safe to do so!



- 1 From left: Diya Shah '27, Emma Somol '19, Dana Lowitt '19, Head of School Gretchen Larkin, and Maddie Li '19
- 2 From left: Max Heredia, Riley Harrison, Jesse Meyerhardt, Ben Jackson, and Ian Brassard, all Class of 2019
- 3 From left: Rachael Pratt, Dana Lowitt, Emily O'Leary, Maddie Li, all Class of 2019, faculty member Julie Weeden, and Chloe Pratt '19
- 4 Fair volunteer Rob Starmer P'22 '24 celebrates a game win with (from left) Maddie Li, Emily O'Leary, Chloe Pratt, Emma Somol, and Rachael Pratt, all Class of 2019.
- 5 From left: Maddie Guiliano '18, Tori Eysie '18, and faculty member Leigh Hutchinson P'08 '12

Campus Ties



1



2



3

- 1 From left: Jillian Devaux '10, faculty member Dibby Moder P'05 '08 '10, and Genevieve Devaux '13
- 2 Riley Harrison (L) and Max Heredia, both Class of 2019, at Winter Festival
- 3 Emily Moder '06 was a guest speaker for a fifth-grade science class last fall. Turn to page 6 to read more.

NYC Meetups and Reception

From left:
Jessica
Thompson
Somol '84,
Emily Schiffer
'95, holding
her son, Julian,
Erica Hinsley
'01 and her
husband Chris
Losak, Shara
Zaval '01, and
Gretchen
Larkin.



Last winter, Head of School Gretchen Larkin visited with several alumnae living and working in NYC.



Emily Lisbon Peterson '98



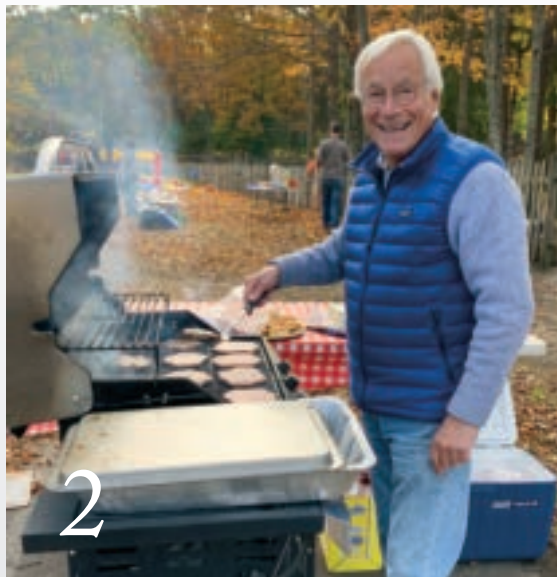
Taylor Hayes '08



Erica Hinsley '01



1



2



3

Alumni News

1940s

PAM ORR '42 P'65 '67 writes, "I am still living in Milford, Ohio, a suburb of Cincinnati. At almost the age of 90, I am healthy and happy. Experiencing the life changes brought on by COVID-19 has been challenging, but I am very grateful that so far my family is well and we are all staying in touch using Zoom. I am blessed!"

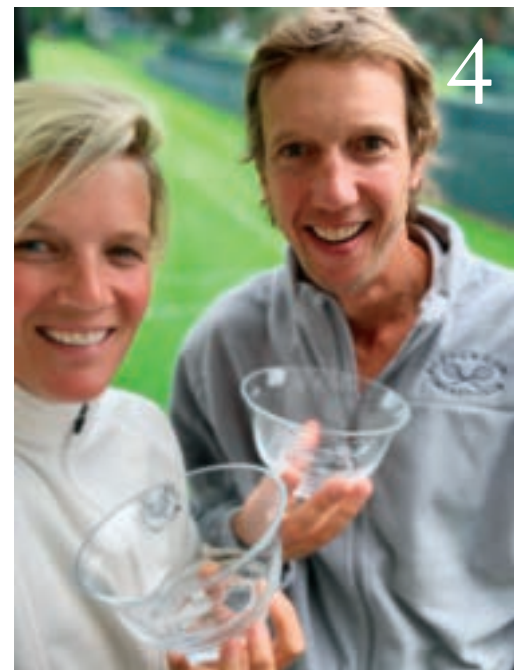
1980s

[1] PETER HOROVITZ '84 writes, "I got a new mower and cut down the field mowing time from two days to two hours. Lots of work on the tractor and with the chain-saws. I've been cutting new walking paths through our woods and having the area around the house that was hard-pack from construction tilled and hydroseeded (more grass!). We celebrated my daughter Sophia's

graduation with an on-property, socially distant luau. She said to wear what I would have worn to her live graduation. I figured we all were supposed to wear masks. We also celebrated my wife Liana's 50th. Oh yeah, we also got a new puppy!" ■ **ASHLEY EDGAR MILIKEN '84** writes, "In October 2019, I started a small company that does team culture work. We've worked with everyone from high school sports teams to teams of professionals at Dartmouth, and all with extremely positive reviews. COVID challenged us to translate our work to an online platform, and after running a few pilots, we are confident we have something pretty excellent to share with a broader audience. Check it out at www.connection-101.com." ■

CHRISTOPHER HARRIS '85 writes, "We've just moved to Fairfield, Conn., near Southport and five beaches in an ideal spot on a dead end and a lovely house. It was worth

it. And, we're not missing NYC at all!" ■ **[2] PAUL HOROVITZ P'82 '84 '87** writes, "Here I am flipping burgers at our school's Fall Festival. Betsey reminded me that my debut in this career occurred 44 years ago at our first CRS Fair. Something to be said for consistency..."



4



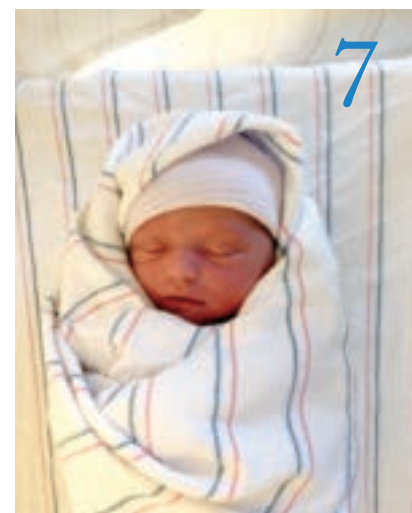
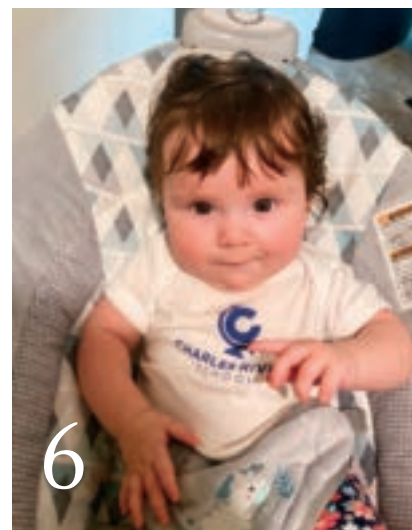
1990s

[3] WINNETT CUNNINGHAM ORDWAY '90 and **WILL WILLIS '88** spent some quality time together slope-side at Waterville Valley last winter at a U12 Alpine ski race. ■ **[4] DEB WILLIS DOWLING '94** writes, "The CRS family that plays together, stays together. I played tennis doubles with my older brother, **WILL WILLIS '88**, at the Longwood Member/Guest Mixed tournament this past September. The day was filled with intense match play, but team Willis-Dowling prevailed!" ■ **[5]** Harley, youngest daughter of **MOLLY PLUMMER COOK '95** wears her CRS gear! ■ **[6]** Louisa Janice Reed-Cain, daughter of **JULIA HARMAN CAIN '99**, was born on February 7, 2020. ■ **[7]** Congratulations to **EMILY LISBON PETERSON '98** and her husband Clark on the birth of their daughter, Kayla, on October 31, 2020!



2000s

Congratulations to **GREG KANTROWITZ '00** and his wife, Katie, on the arrival of their son, Jack Edward! ■ **ANANT SHUKLA '01** writes, "I've been responding in a local Emergency Department and clinic to help with the COVID response. It's been exhausting and challenging." ■ **MARTIN BERNARD '09** completed an internship last summer with the California Institute of Technology's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Martin writes, "I worked on creating data visualization software for climate researchers at Caltech who are working on modeling cloud behavior. So, this involved interviewing the researchers, designing a tool that would help them in their research, and then programming a working prototype with data they provided...I am actually continuing to develop the project further with them part time during this school year." ■ **[8]** Congratulations to **WILL KANTROWITZ '03** and his wife, Brittanny, on the celebration of their marriage. Also in attendance were Will's brother Greg '00 and his wife, Katie, and parents Anne and Fred Kantrowitz (all pictured).





2010s

[9] HEAD OF SCHOOL

GRETCHEN LARKIN visited with **LISA JASON P'10** during a trip to California last winter. ■ **EMMY CHEN '13** returned from a shortened exchange semester abroad in Liverpool, England, where she took classes in computer science and urban design, traveled, caught up



with friends in London, Cambridge, Stratford-Upon-Avon, and Windermere, and met international students from all corners of the world. While returning to the U.S. in March was not part of her original plan for the spring, she had the opportunity to spend the month of May as the only undergraduate in a graduate-level computational neuroscience program, working on a project titled "Using fMRI Data to Predict Autism Diagnoses with Various Machine Learning Models and Cross-Validation Methods." She spent the rest of the summer working remotely as a technical project manager with EnBW Asia Pacific, which is based in Taipei, Taiwan, and returned to McGill University in Montréal, Canada, to complete her Bachelor's degree in

Urban Systems Geography and Cognitive Science. ■ **SAM GARBER '16** co-authored an opinion piece that was published in a summer issue of the *Boston Globe*. Sam, a student at Bates College, and two classmates wrote, "It's Up to Gen Z to Chart a New Vision for the GOP." In the piece, the authors declare, "Our generation cares about climate change. We believe LGBTQ+ people should be free from discrimination. We believe immigrants help uphold the vibrant American tapestry." ■ **MELANIE CHEN '17** writes, "I was supposed to be on an orchestra tour through South Africa with the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (BPYO) for most of June, and then head back to my chamber music camp,

Affinity Alumni Reunion

This summer, a group of **alumni reconnected over Zoom** for the first Affinity Alumni Reunion. The session was co-hosted by CRCAP Associate Director Roxanne Aurisma; Simenesh Semine '13, current student at Tulane University majoring in Africana Studies; and Malik Gomes-Cruz '15, current student at American University majoring in African Diaspora.

The reunion was open to alumni who were members of a student affinity group during their time at CRS. During the virtual get-together, the group discussed current event articles responding to institutional, interpersonal, and internalized racism at predominantly white institutions (PWI). They also talked about how CRS can help prepare its current students of color to explore collective social action, navigate white spaces as well as exhibit their own personal agency and transform their spaces.

Greenwood, for the following two months. I was also looking forward to a few volleyball camps, but as you can probably guess, all of these activities were canceled.

Instead, I am currently an “Admissions Intern” at Concord Academy as well as working at a small, local business in Needham (Vita Needle Company) and at TJ Maxx in Newton. I am grateful for these opportunities and the ability to contribute something valuable during these uncertain times. I am not doing much else besides the

expected preparation for college and lots and lots of cello practicing.”

[10] Melanie Chen '17, in action on the volleyball court at CA last fall ■

[11] **MAX MEYERHARDT '17** and **HANNAH LAPIDES '18** with **CRS DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS PAUL RUPPRECHT** at a Rivers Cross-Country meet where they both competed in October 2019.

■ **MARCEL LIU '19** broke two freshman swim records at Philips Andover Academy in the 2020 swim season, one in the 100m backstroke and one in the 100m fly.



IN MEMORIAM

The Charles River School community extends its sincere condolences to the following families.

ALUMNI

ROBERT BRAINERD '28 died on May 6, 2020, from COVID-19 at the age of 104. After graduating from Harvard University in economics, Robert co-founded the Farm and City Exchange, an egalitarian economics network and served in WWII. Turn to page XX to read more about Robert's life.

FIONA RICE DAVIS '46 passed away on May 13, 2019, on Bainbridge Island, Wash. Fiona spent much of her life traveling and sailing with her husband and three children. She also enjoyed her retirement in Brooklin, Maine, where she spent time with her seven grandchildren.

LUCY CABOT SMETHURST '46 passed away on July 27, 2018, in Atlanta, Georgia. After graduating from CRS, Lucy attended Miss Porter's School, Wheaton College, and Radcliffe, where she completed her MBA. Lucy is predeceased by her brothers **Powell '43** and **Robert '50**.

PAUL TOULMIN '49 died on August 25, 2019. After CRS, Paul attended Milton Academy and Harvard College before he served in the U.S. Navy. After his service, Paul worked in the insurance industry before moving to San Francisco in the 1970s. Paul enjoyed his summers at his second home in Brooklin, Maine, where he spent time with his nieces and nephews.

VIRGINIA CABOT WOOD '37 P'76 passed away on January 3, 2020. She was predeceased by her brothers **Edmund** and **Frederick**, both members of the CRS Class of 1949, and is survived by sister, **Elizabeth '41** and daughter **Virginia '76** and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. After CRS, Chris attended Beaver Country Day School and Pine Manor, and enjoyed a career as a special education teacher in Boston before retiring.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

MARY ARMSTRONG died on May 14, 2020. Mary was an art teacher at CRS from 1975–1989, was an accomplished artist, and went on to teach at Boston College after CRS, retiring in 2018.

SALLY COOK P'77 '79, parent to **Duncan '79** and the late **Doug '77**, passed away on January 10, 2020. Sally was a PreKindergarten and Kindergarten teacher at CRS from 1974–1988. After CRS Sally enjoyed creating opportunities for the elderly in Falmouth, Mass., where she resided.

CAROLYN PURTELL P'79 '83 '85, parent to Joseph, **Gina '79**, **Greg '83**, and the late **Thomas '85**, died on October 11, 2020. Carolyn was a reading specialist at CRS from 1974–1988.

CHERYL ST. GEORGE P'95 passed away on August 17, 2019. Cheryl served on various parent committees at CRS while her daughter **Melissa '95** was a student.

A LIFETIME OF Shaping the Future

During his remarkable life, Bob Brainerd, Charles River School Class of 1928, made it a point to affect change and help others along the way. He died in May 2020 from COVID-19 at the age of 104.

BOB BRAINERD DID THINGS simply because they were the right things to do.

During WWII, he traveled to Europe to help Jews escape from Nazi-occupied Austria to the safety of France. He fought forest fires in the California mountains with an ax in order to conserve as much wood as he could. He co-founded the Farm and City Exchange, an egalitarian economics network, and started a Fair Housing Practice Committee in the city where he lived. He believed in alternative energy and was one of the first in this area to install solar panels and an efficient, on-demand hot water heater. He marched for civil rights in Washington, D.C., protested with the anti-nuclear Clamshell Alliance organization, and in his 90s, he voiced his solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement.

Yes, Brainerd was driven to do things because he believed he should, but they were anything but simple. As an activist dedicated to civil rights, peace, ecology and global democracy, he lived what Charles River School teaches its students everyday: let both inquiry and creativity drive new interests and skills, and always take responsibility for yourself, your community, and the future.

After graduating from CRS in 1928, Brainerd went on to Noble and Greenough School. He loved to learn and had dreams of attending Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) like his father, Henry, a member of the MIT Class of 1887. "My dad was a very mechanical thinker," says Brainerd's son, Dave. "He was always tinkering with things, trying to figure out how they worked. In the end, he didn't go to MIT for engineering like he had wanted, but that didn't stop him from being interested in the subject his whole life."

As an interesting note, that passion for engineering and mechanics landed him in a situation straight from the history books. Brainerd was in France when Charles Lindbergh landed after his groundbreaking flight from New York to Paris. Brainerd had the opportunity to meet Lindbergh the day after he landed and asked if he could check out the plane because he was so interested in the mechanics! Lindbergh agreed and the two talked aviation engineering all afternoon.

Brainerd attended Harvard College for pre-med and economics. After graduating, he started out in the financial sector but quickly learned that "stocks were not his thing," according to his son. After some time, he accepted a position running the Office of Grants and Contracts at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. Later, he worked in accounting at the Harvard School of Public Health. Like everything else in his life, he cared about learning through his work and helping others. After he retired, he kept that mantra and stayed active in his community until the day he died. He was an advocate for global cooperation during the pandemic; he knew it was the only way to shape the future. 🐼



Carol and Alan Lisbon



We all wish the very best for our grandchildren. So, Alan and I were thrilled when two of our grandchildren started at CRS. To know that they will receive the amazing educational experience our daughters received decades ago is so reassuring to us. There are several multigenerational students at CRS right now and we imagine we belong to a group of very happy grandparents!

On a more current note, knowing the education they are receiving during this difficult time and the commitment the leadership and staff of CRS have made to making this school year the very best it can be under extraordinary circumstances, just reaffirms what we have known for 35 years—CRS is a wonderful gift we can give our children and grandchildren.

— Carol and Alan Lisbon, parents to Amy '95 and Emily '98, and grandparents to Lilah '26 and Ethan '28



CRS THANKS CAROL AND ALAN LISBON for 34 years of consecutive giving. Please join them in supporting the Charles River School Annual Fund this year. Visit www.charlesriverschool.org/gift to make your gift today.

The CURRENT Fall 2020

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Intellectual, social, and emotional growth nurtured together. Inspiring experiences both inside and outside the classroom. The cultivation of compassion and caring coupled with strength and resourcefulness. It's balance that builds thoughtful, enthusiastic learners with a keen understanding of the world and themselves that allows them to excel at whatever they pursue.

This is the Charles River School point of view.

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING, HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT.