

SUMMER 2018

*The*  
**Westonian**  
*Magazine*

**LEADING  
THE WAY**

STUDENT ACTIVISM @ WESTTOWN





*The Westonian*, a magazine for alumni, parents, and friends, is published by Westtown School. Its mission is "to capture the life of the school, to celebrate the impact that our students, faculty, and alumni have on our world, and to serve as a forum for connection, exploration, and conversation." We publish issues in Winter and Summer.

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SUMMER 2018

# The Westonian Magazine

## FEATURE

# 26

## Leading the Way Student Activism at Westtown

We welcome letters to the editor. You may send them to our home address or to [westonian@westtown.edu](mailto:westonian@westtown.edu).

## CONNECT



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## BEHIND THE COVER

While each of these students has a social or political issue (sometimes many) to which they devote time and energy, together they represent the many student activists at Westtown. Shown are members of IMAGE, AWARE, the Democratic Club, as well as individuals devoted to racial justice, women's rights, and protection of the environment.

## DEPARTMENTS

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# Seeking Truth, Bringing Change



Lisa Cromley. They were not content to learn; they wanted others to learn as well. They were determined to bring to light what they had discovered. And as a result, they made me, and their other visitors, better informed global citizens.

This issue of *The Westonian* records many such episodes of education and activism by students. To spend time on our campus is to experience a student community working hard to make the world a better place. As I deepen my relationship with our remarkable school, I often marvel at how the Westtown experience impels young people to share with others the lessons they have learned, to seek change, and to practice the skills they will need as stewards and leaders of a better world.


There is something truly special about an educational community that inspires changemakers to this extent. But it is clear from even a brief visit to campus, or from any one of the pages that follow, that the root of Westtown's changemaker culture lies in the Quaker testimony of truth. Daily, in myriad ways, Westonians of all ages are called upon to listen for the still, small voice of truth, and encouraged to bring that truth into the world through action and expression.

In our busy lives, most of us don't regularly delve deep into the tough questions that are critical to the future of our global society. For example, I cannot claim to have spent much time in my life wondering: *How does it feel to be a refugee?* That is, not until recently.

In our Middle School lobby last winter, I learned more about how it feels to be a refugee than I had ever known. That day I was exposed not only to facts and figures, but also to thoughtful, informed reflections about the disorienting emotional experience of being forcibly displaced from one's home. I learned all of this by perusing websites, videos, and blogs created by Westtown sixth graders. These students had been on a journey with their dedicated teachers through fiction and nonfiction reading, a visit to a refugee resettlement group, views of war-torn Syria through virtual reality goggles, and exercises designed to bring home the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of refugees.

The most striking feature of the sixth graders' work was that the students "were remarkably passionate about sharing their learning publicly," in the words of Teacher

What's more, our program inspires students to represent not just their own truths, but the truths of others — those, like refugees, who lack the power and resources to act and speak for themselves. In class and beyond, days at Westtown are replete with conversations and projects that highlight the entrenched inequality of our society, and draw out the disenfranchised voices. Teachers Hilary Simons' and Shelagh Wilson's fourth graders research groundbreaking but marginalized historical figures like Sojourner Truth and William Still, and then embody those figures in a living history workshop. Teacher Whitney Suttell's and Emma Bracker's Peace and Justice students explore *Korematsu v. United States* and engage in discussions about how history tends to be written in a way that silences minority voices. Even in the sciences, Westtown students encounter ecological and biological phenomena that push certain voices to the margins, as in Teacher Mariska Batavia's unit on cellular functions, presented as a lesson on the devastating effects of famine. And beyond the classroom, when students discern that some of their own peers can feel silenced right here on campus on account of race or gender identity, they speak up and take action. Teachers and students alike understand that if we are to make the world a better place, questions like *how does it feel to be a refugee* must be asked, answered, and shared with the world.

Read on to see what happens in a community where students learn to listen for truth, and develop an awareness of how many people cannot advocate for their own truths. And, prepare to be inspired! 



# News from Around 'Town



PROTECT

KIDS

YOUR

NOT

YOUR

GUNS

# Four-Star Green Restaurant

Westtown School's Dining Room was recently upgraded to a 4-Star Certified Green Restaurant® by the Green Restaurant Association (GRA), a national nonprofit organization helping restaurants to become more environmentally sustainable.

Westtown's Dining Room received 303.95 GreenPoints™ on the GRA's rigorous certification scale and implemented 90 environmental steps. This highest 4-star rating is shared by only one other K-12 school in the United States, and Westtown School's Dining Room is the only GRA 4-star restaurant in Pennsylvania.

In March 2017, Westtown's Dining Room became a Level 1 Certified Green Restaurant® by reducing waste, increasing recycling, and becoming 100% Styrofoam free. Since then, the Dining Room not only has maintained its commitment to sustainable practices but also has significantly increased its efforts to reduce environmental impact. These efforts include local food sourcing, recycling and composting food waste (going from reducing waste by 50% in 2017 to 75% in 2018), providing vegetarian and vegan options, and using Energy Star appliances.

Beth Pellegrino, Westtown's Director of Food Services, and TJ Costa, Director of Sustainability, were committed to making even more changes in order to improve sustainable dining. "We looked at everything: light bulbs in the light fixtures, the paint on the walls, the type of faucets we have installed, the dishes, the napkins, the chairs, you name it!" said Pellegrino. "There is a lot more to sustainability than just buying local, even though that is something that we also do very well!" These efforts have helped Westtown School not only to significantly reduce their environmental impact, but also to connect the community to local farms, to promote diversity through food, and to provide delicious, healthy meals to the entire school community. It is yet another way that Westtown School is leading the way in the area of sustainability.



Here are some highlights of Westtown's initiatives that helped garner the GRA 4-Star rating:

- Full-scale recycling and composting program, which keeps **75%** of waste from the landfill
- Energy Star equipment, which is **30-40%** more efficient than traditional models
- No bottled water offered on site
- Purchasing Certified Organic, humanely raised, and naturally grown food; over **80%** of food served is locally sourced
- **100%** LED lighting, which uses up to **90%** less energy, lasts longer, contains no mercury, and emits fewer greenhouse gases than incandescent bulbs
- Offsetting **99%** of annual energy use with Renewable Energy Credits that support wind power production

## CHANGEMAKER PROJECTS

This year's 8th grade Big Build Changemaker Projects once again centered upon the real-world problems faced by Heritage Academy, Westtown's sister school in Ghana. Students worked in groups to design solutions to problems like access to clean water, energy/power sources, feminine hygiene, and nutrition. They talked with seniors



Watch the video at [www.westtown.edu/thewestonian!](http://www.westtown.edu/thewestonian!)

and faculty who had been to Heritage Academy for Senior Projects to collect information about resources available in Ghana. The projects culminated in the Big Build Week, in which they made prototypes of their solutions.



## THE LAST STRAW

Fourth graders launched a campaign to educate Lower School students and families about the pollution created by plastic straws. They staged fact-filled infomercials during the weekly Gathering, created visually compelling posters, distributed "NO STRAW" pledge forms, and promoted a friendly competition between the grades. By the end of their campaign, the fourth graders achieved 90% participation from faculty, students, and families in Lower School! Next up? They are planning a "Ban the Baggie" campaign to eliminate single-use plastic baggies from student lunch boxes!





## Israel/Palestine Trip

Westtown has been offering an educational trip to Israel/Palestine every year since 2010, usually as a Senior Project, though occasionally as an adult trip geared to educators and board members affiliated with Westtown and other Friends educational institutions. Under the leadership of **Melissa Graf-Evans** (Current Faculty) and **Jon Evans '73** (Former Faculty, current Trustee), 16 adults spent two weeks in March visiting Jerusalem, the Jezreel Valley, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan Valley, Jaffa/Tel Aviv, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Hebron. Participants heard voices of Palestinians and Israelis, developed relationships with local residents, and visited with human rights groups, social justice organizations, businesspeople, educators, and community activists. These annual trips also serve to maintain and strengthen Westtown's close ties to Ramallah Friends School and the Ramallah Monthly Meeting (see photo). To date, 167 Westtown-affiliated students and adults have benefited from Westtown's ongoing commitment to this powerful educational opportunity.

## Farewell, Friends

### NANCY WEIGEL

We celebrate Nancy Weigel's more than 30-year dedication to growing readers as Lower School's Reading Specialist. Nancy is a collaborator, a continual learner, deeply caring, insightful, and has a good sense of humor. She holds the child at the heart of her work. Nancy grew a garden of readers in her career at Westtown—cultivating their love of reading, honoring the effort required to become a reader, and rejoicing in their accomplishments as they unlocked the mysteries of written word. A relentless learner with a curious heart, Nancy is moving toward other adventures, and we will miss greatly her presence as a colleague.

### SUSAN TREE

After 26 years of service to our community, Susan Tree completed her final year at Westtown. As Director and Co-Director of College Counseling, Susan has shepherded countless students and families through the joys and challenges of the college process. She shaped a nationally respected College Counseling program. She and her colleagues created and taught the Junior and Senior Seminars, distinctive for their focus on the college application process. Not just an integral voice in the professional life of the school, Susan is the parent of two lifers, and the Tree family has been an engaged presence in the Westtown community. It is with tremendous appreciation and gratitude that we wish her well in her next endeavor.

### MARY BARCIO

Mary Barcio retired at the end of this school year. For well over two decades, Mary helped students navigate the shoals of Middle School academic life by helping them develop skills in organization, study habits, and persistence. Beginning her career at Westtown teaching students to sew pillows from t-shirts and make pretzels from scratch in home economics, Mary has become an invaluable member of the Middle School learning and teaching team, and she will be deeply missed. We wish her joy in her well-earned retirement!

### DEB WOOD '86

After a 15-year teaching career at Westtown, Deb Wood '86 made this year her last. Deb will be pursuing long-term service with Christian Peacemaker Teams and the Alternatives to Violence Project, both of which she has worked with during her time at Westtown. Deb's work has touched the History Department both as a classroom teacher and, more recently, as a Department Chair. She was a long-serving dorm head and dorm parent and affiliate in the residential life program, has coached soccer, volleyball, lacrosse, and swimming, staffed Work Program, and has served as a devoted advisor to many students. Deb has been a stalwart contributor to the Quaker life of the school, and we will miss her daily presence. Our thanks and appreciation to Deb.





## PARTENRSHIP WITH Meals On Wheels

We are thrilled to announce a new partnership with Meals on Wheels! The Westtown kitchen staff, along with Work Program, has begun providing meals for the Meals on Wheels (MoW) organization.

Representatives from MoW had heard about Westtown's farm-to-table initiatives, sustainable practices in the Dining Room, and our association with food recovery programs, and approached **Mitch Bernstein**, Work Program Coordinator, and **Beth Pellegrino**, Director of Kitchen Services, about a partnership.

Students began packing meals in April and pack about 90 meals per week. The food is either recovered from the Dining Room or prepped alongside other packed lunches. MoW volunteers come daily to pick up the prepared meals. Youth Ambassadors will continue to pack meals throughout the summer months and by the end of the year, Westtown will have contributed more than 3,400 meals. Students are using their work job time to participate in the program.

**3,400+**  
meals will have  
been contributed  
by Westtown  
by the end  
of the year.



**We want to hear from you!** Please send feedback in any form you choose. Address it to "Editor" and share your thoughts about any aspect of the magazine. We will do our best to publish as many letters as will fit. We may edit for space, and we'll always confirm with you what we intend to publish. Our email is [westonian@westtown.edu](mailto:westonian@westtown.edu).

## METAL MOOSE

Congratulations are in order for Westtown's robotics team, the Metal Moose, who competed in the Mid-Atlantic District Championship at Stabler Arena, Lehigh University recently and went on to the World Championships.

The Moose ran the field at Lehigh, finishing 9-3 and coming in fourth among the top 60 teams in the tri-state region. As fourth seed alliance captains,



the team made it to the final-four round, succumbing in the semi-finals to the eventual championship winning alliance.

With this performance, however, the Metal Moose once again qualified for the robotics World Championship, this year in Detroit. The World Championship features the top 10 percent of all teams in the world, of which there are over 6,000.

At the World Championships in Detroit, The Moose finished high in Darwin Division, were selected to be a member of the #1 seed alliance, and were finalists, losing the division championship in a nail-biting, tie-breaker match.



To watch the wonderful video they made for the Chairman's Award competition which describes the heart and mission of their team, visit [www.westtown.edu/thewestonian](http://www.westtown.edu/thewestonian).

## Westonian Awards

We are thrilled to announce that *The Westonian* (Winter 2017), won bronze in the Best School Magazine category, and silver (Summer 2017) in the Best Cover Design category of the Brilliance Awards sponsored by InspirED School Marketers! Judges



comments included, "This magazine deserves an award for its excellent content and graphic design...and we found the photography to be exceptional." (For Winter 2017) "Stunning visual that clearly represents the story. Beautiful photography and artistic rendering that brings to life "Global Education at Westtown." (For Summer 2017) We're proud of our hard working production team and to be in such good company with other stellar school magazines.



# Designing for the Chickens

Earlier this year, Westtown's new Director of Sustainability, **TJ Costa**, wondered about the chickens at Lower School and how kids interact with them. He asked colleagues how they could use them more in educational ways, and how the habitat could be improved.

A group of faculty, including Lower School science teacher **Bekka Schultz**, gathered to consider these questions. They decided to create a Design Thinking (DT) project so students could decide what was best for the chickens, their habitat, and the human users. "Because **Shelagh Wilson** is so invested in the chickens [she has been their unofficial keeper] and since this was a great addition to the fourth grade science curriculum, I offered their class time for this project," says Schultz.

As with any DT project, it began with building empathy. Understanding the needs of users — in this case chickens, students, and the Westtown community— is the first step in DT. Schultz took the students to the coop in the winter and they understood immediately the concerns about weather extremes and its impact on the chickens and their environment. They visited the habitat several times and took measurements of the space and temperature, and observed and recorded the chicken's behavior. Then they considered the human users. How could the chicken habitat be used by more students and the community? They met with Costa, a chicken farmer himself, to get expert advice about caring for chickens. They researched in the library and online about their growth and development, their biology, their food, water, shelter, and entertainment needs. They synthesized all of this information to discern the most important needs to be met.

The next step in DT is brainstorming. The students were divided into groups and each was asked come up with a list of

ideas to improve the habitat, the chicken's experience, and human interaction. The goal is to have students' minds free from parameters, so their initial brainstorming did not include restrictions of time and cost, for example. "One of the rules of the brainstorming process is to capture the 'wild idea' and that you can't say no to anyone's idea," says Schultz. "All the ideas were recorded and then the winnowing process began. That's when students can consider what makes an idea realistic and actionable. It's an important part of developing critical thinking skills." The groups decided to focus on temperature, water temperature, safety and condition of the habitat, entertainment, and the experience of the human user.

Concurrently, two Upper School students, **Yiheng Xie '18** and **Omelet Theeranantachai '18**, were already working on the solar panels that were installed on the coop and on putting temperature and humidity sensors in the coop as part of teacher Tom Gilbert's computer science class. They were also already working on a camera to observe the chickens. When one fourth grader suggested that a webcam would help the community observe the chickens, the seniors were enlisted to team up with the fourth graders on this project. Yiheng and Omelet visited the class to discuss what they could incorporate into their own project to support the Lower Schooler's project. The fourth graders wanted to link into the measurements the Upper Schoolers were doing on temperature and humidity. So Yiheng and Omelet designed a website with this information as well as a live camera feed. They also incorporated a coop door opener that can be activated on the site, as well as a remote operator for the fan if the coop gets too hot.

Step three in DT is prototyping. Students worked in groups in the iLab to create 3D mini-habitats that represented



their solutions. They wrote papers describing how and why they came to these solutions. Among their solutions were repairing a hole in the habitat, making the space more comfortable, creating toys for chicken entertainment (like ice cubes with fruit in the middle that chickens can peck at), mechanisms that would keep their water from freezing in the winter and regulating temperature, and how to get more students involved in their care.

Because funds were required for most solutions, the fourth graders wrote grant requests and pitched their ideas to the Team for Program and Innovation. **Joey Burns, Sean Kramer, Quinlan McLearn,** and **Melissa Freeman** presented their grant request. The Team awarded them \$200. Likewise, the Upper School students pitched their ideas and were awarded \$300. Fourth graders will now work with facilities to make the repairs with the grant money. Yiheng and Omelet have completed the website and the webcam is live.

Apart from a wonderful example of design thinking in action, this project demonstrates how effective collaborative and experiential learning is, as well as participation across divisions and ages. Schultz sums it up perfectly: "We tackled this problem very much in the spirit of Westtown. We saw a need in the community and we solved it as a community."

QUICK NOTES



**PATTERSON CUP COMES HOME!**

Westtown brings home the Patterson Cup! [1] Congratulations to all of our Westtown teams and student-athletes for winning the Patterson Cup this year! In our annual head-to-head running competition with George School, Westtown varsity and JV teams beat George School 12-11, with the final point coming from our boys track team to secure the Cup. Way to go, 'Town!

**LITTLE FREE LIBRARY**

Little Free Libraries are springing up around the country as individuals and organizations celebrate and support the love of reading. The third grade class noticed and, after researching how people get access to books in different ways, began designing a mini library for visitors to use when the schools' libraries are closed. [2] They worked on their designs in the iLab with the guidance of **Lynn Clements**, Lower School Librarian. Teacher **Claire McLearn** translated their design ideas (including the "open book" roof with a cooper book jacket) in the student woodshop with the invaluable advice and expertise of **David Jones**, recent Facilities Special Projects Manager. The little library is composed of redwood salvaged from the water tower



that once stood behind the woodshop, fir salvaged from the Coach Downey Court bleachers, copper from the woodshop roof, and Westtown walnut. Future third grade classes will have the opportunity to continually stock the library with books for the community to borrow. The Little Free Library will be placed on near the new Lower School sign in front of Lower School.

**NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS**

Congratulations to **Ethan McLearn '18**, **Wiley Mutch '18**, and **Ryan O'Donnell '18**, our National Merit Scholarship winners!

**CONGRESSIONAL AWARD**

Congratulations to **Kavi Gandhi '21**, one of the recipients of the Congressional Award Bronze Medal for his community service and volunteerism!

**DISTRICT 12 ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL**

Violinist **Heidi Suh '19** participated in the District 12 Orchestra Festival at Kennett High School. Under the direction of Maestro Michael Hall, conductor of the Kennett Symphony Orchestra and the Prince George Symphony Orchestra in BC, Canada, the nearly 100-piece ensemble represents the top high school musicians



in Philadelphia, Chester, and Delaware Counties. Heidi was selected from this elite group of musicians to go on to the Region 6 Orchestra comprised of the top musicians in 5 counties: Philadelphia, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Bucks. [3] (Heidi Suh, left, Michael Hall, center and orchestra/band teacher Robert Frazier, right.)

**CONGRATULATIONS TO...**

**Baiting Zhu '19** for his performance at the Delaware Valley Science Fair! [4] At the recent awards ceremony, he was presented with a certificate from the Mu Alpha Theta Society. He also won a partial scholarship to the University of the Sciences. In addition to these honors, he was awarded second place in the 11th grade mathematics category for his research project, "A Study of Alzheimer's in the U.S. Senior Population."

**Yewon Kayla Park '19** received two Scholastic Art and Writing Awards for Excellence in Visual Arts: a Silver Key for her "Half-Length Sculpture" and the Gold Key (the highest award) for her "Mountain Landscape." [5] The City of Philadelphia also issued a citation to Kayla for her achievement.



# Maps, Math, & Middle School

After seeing a map of Pennsylvania's 7th Congressional District, my math students asked how somebody came up with that shape. At this point, congressional redistricting and gerrymandering are becoming quite familiar to residents of states such as Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Maryland. My students, getting their first taste, were flabbergasted by what this meant about Democracy, and more than a little amused at the stupidity of adults. "We could do better than that!" said a kid in the back row. Let me tell you how my 8th graders did a better job than our illustrious legislature.

There are several publicly available Internet databases that link interactive maps with the voting precincts of Pennsylvania, their populations, and their vote totals for past elections. My students agreed on several nonpartisan approaches to grouping voting precincts into Congressional Districts, recognizing the accepted criteria for making districts: equal population, contiguous territory, and compactness. While the current Pennsylvania maps meet the first criteria, they are contiguous in letter only, with districts such as the 7th, barely more than a street wide in three separate spots, which lurches over many counties seeking to include some voters while excluding others. The third standard, compactness, was visibly not considered in making this map.

As a math class, we tried to define compactness. While a circle is the most efficient shape as a ratio of perimeter to area, it is not a good shape to use in dividing up a state as it leaves many gaps. A rectangle, or even better a square, was my students' solution. So, one group made districts as much like squares as practical. Two other groups made maps as much like rectangular grids as possible. Another tried to follow county lines, on the theory those residents already had established common interests that transcend political party. One group just clicked randomly until they had enough people in each district. Others experimented with promoting competition (our only group to use voting records), and creating multi-member districts.

My students created eight different redistricting maps. They are not perfect. We concluded that there is no mathematically perfect way to do this, but there are ways that seem reasonable and ones that do not. And, pretty much anyone can tell the difference when looking at maps across a room. The existing map plainly does not pass that test.

We suspected that looking compact and being compact were not the same thing but wanted mathematical proof. By measuring the area and perimeter of our districts and the existing ones, we could compare the districts' areas to that of a square with



Visit [www.westtown.edu/thewestonian](http://www.westtown.edu/thewestonian) to see media coverage of the project

the same perimeter, and vice versa. While the current legislature-created districts are about 45 percent as compact as a square, each of my students' creations was closer to 70 percent, with some distinctly higher. Some of our lines are still less regular than we'd like, as we followed the existing irregular voter precinct lines.

Another consideration was whether the views of Pennsylvanians were reflected in their congressional representation. In a state where Trump won by less than one percent, one would think that the U.S. Representatives would be evenly split, not the current 13-5 Republican majority. The efficiency gap takes the difference between the wasted votes for each party and divides that by total voters. The "wasted votes" are all votes for a losing candidate plus all votes above those needed to win. Thinking about a Congressional District, such as PA-2nd, where 92 percent voted for Clinton, one can visualize wasted votes. The point is, that's not an accident. But it is avoidable.

Political scientists argue that an efficiency gap over seven percent is a likely sign of gerrymandering, and unlikely to be overcome by elections over the ten-year life of the map. Pennsylvania's efficiency gap is over 14 percent. The districts my students created, in contrast, had efficiency gaps around three percent, with several groups significantly lower.

The mapmakers should have the goal of promoting democracy and equal representation for all Pennsylvanians. And if the state legislature cannot figure out how to represent its citizens, I know some great 14-year olds who already have. —Jon Kimmel, Middle School Math Teacher



Learn more  
about the Arts at  
[www.westtown.edu/arts](http://www.westtown.edu/arts)



# The Arts Gallery

Opportunities for beginners to learn the basics of the craft of art and for advanced students to hone their skills and talents abound in our art studios. Course offerings are enhanced by a host of visiting artists who come to both teach and collaborate with students using various media. Notable collaborations this year included *The Empathy Project* with artist Karen Watkins.

The gallery was home to several exhibits, including a photographic show by **Branden Eastwood '03**, and an exhibit describing the role that social change plays in the Visual and Performing Arts programs. The show, *Westtown Artists are Changemakers*, featured student work and images from performances that demonstrate a dedication to peace and justice in our world.







See more sports updates online at [www.westtown.edu/athletics](http://www.westtown.edu/athletics)



# Fields & Courts

- Boys Varsity Basketball team won their 5th consecutive FSL championship; **Cameron Reddish '18** was named a McDonald's All American
- Girls basketball team made it to the quarter finals of the state tournament, led by **Jojo Lacey '20** who earned ALL-League honors in girls basketball
- Swimmer **Sarah Murray '18** set the school record in the 200 Freestyle; **Cruz Buitron '19** holds the school & FSL records in the 100 Butterfly & the 100 Breaststroke
- Wrestling team won its first FSL championship in four years
- Pitcher **John Moldoff '18** had his 100th career hit
- Boys track & field team won the FSL Championship; **Julian Klenner '19** set the school records in the 200 & 400m; **Ethan Gadra '18** set the record in pole vault
- **Mohamed Bamba '17** was drafted 6th in the NBA Draft by the Orlando Magic





**GIRLS LACROSSE** was introduced at Westtown in 1936, with games against other schools first played two years later. This 1953-54 squad had ten returning players and four games on its schedule (including one against Swarthmore College). That year's *Amicus* noted that even if the team came up short with fewer wins than losses, "spectators will certainly have their share of excitement from watching this sometimes dangerous game."

Current-day spectators still have their share of excitement watching girls lacrosse! It is one of one of 11 sports now offered to young women at Westtown. This year's squad was young with only one senior, but Abbie Barth '20 was named All-League for the Friends Schools League. Head Coach Emma Bracker looks forward to building on the team's potential.

# 2018



# Past is Prologue



# 1954

ARCHIVAL PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY  
BROOKS, WESTTOWN SCHOOL ARCHIVES,  
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Shelagh Wilson

# In Word and Deed

STORY BY LYNETTE ASSARSSON • PHOTO BY ED CUNICELLI

**What's it like** to be a student at Westtown? To live here? To teach here? To educate children here? To be Quaker here? One could ask Shelagh Wilson '85 all of these questions, for she is the rare person who not only has experienced Westtown from all these vantage points, but also deeply understands it.

From her first Admissions tour, Wilson knew Westtown was a perfect fit for her and she enrolled in tenth grade as a boarding student. After graduating in 1985, she earned her BA in Elementary Education at Ohio University. She obtained a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a minor in Teacher Leadership from Concordia University. She has a rich professional development resume which includes National SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) Project Leadership Training, and certificates to teach mindfulness.

Wilson returned to Westtown in 1997 as a parent when her eldest daughter enrolled in Pre-K – both of her daughters are lifers. In 1999, she began her teaching career at Westtown, first teaching kindergarten, then first grade for many years, and now fourth grade. She has been a dorm parent in the past and is now a Dorm Head; co-runs the New Faculty Orientation and Mentor Program; serves as a SEED facilitator; and has served as the Lower School Faculty Clerk and Recording Clerk, on the Residential Life Committee, the Pace of Life Committee, and the Food Study Committee.

“Teaching is my calling and my passion,” says Wilson. “I believe I am making a positive contribution to the world by helping children develop a love of learning and an understanding that they can make a difference in the world.” This calling is evident when she interacts with students in her classroom or on dorm. She is a gentle guide, a steady presence, and an even-keeled instructor. Fourth grader Melissa Freeman explains, “Teacher Shelagh really wants you to understand things. She cares a lot about what we do and learn, and that's really nice.”


Wilson sees Quaker values as fundamental in her work. “My teaching philosophy is rooted in the Quaker belief that there is that of God in everyone. This leads me to create a classroom where children are treated with respect and learn that their voices matter. They also learn to respect the opinions and beliefs of others. Learning to have empathy and see things from someone else's perspective is paramount in character education.” As a lifelong Quaker, Wilson naturally establishes a learning environment that is mission centric. Embedded in her teaching are simplicity, peace, justice, and equity. “Shelagh embodies our mission because she understands at her core what it means to have this kind of education, and she believes in it fully,” says Lower School Principal Kristin Crawford.

Always interested in issues of diversity and social justice, Wilson has sought out professional development opportunities that enhance both her personal growth and her teaching. After attending The Race Institute and SEED conferences, she was eager to share what she was learning with both colleagues and parents, and to incorporate it into teaching. Marissa Colston, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, says, “She helped to lead Westtown's first SEED meeting for parents. It was a huge success. She cares deeply about our community and her leadership in SEED is a testament to that.” Crawford adds, “She engaged in the work of understanding multiculturalism and diversity; then she translated that into her classroom practice; then she taught colleagues; and then she taught parents,” says Crawford. “That is a wide range of impact.” Wilson helped modify the fourth grade curriculum to be inclusive of the experiences of people of color, to encourage students to pay attention to who is telling the stories of history, and to notice whose experiences might be missing. This has included working with Lower School Librarian Lynn Clements and fellow fourth grade teacher Hilary Simons to transform classroom libraries to reflect a wider range of voices.





Wilson's dedication isn't limited to the classroom. She is also committed to her work as a Dorm Head and as a facilitator for New Faculty Orientation. "I am honored to be part of the residential program," she says. "It was such an important part of my Westtown experience (and both my daughters'), so it is very rewarding to help maintain a robust boarding experience." Whitney Suttell '98, co-facilitator of the New Faculty Orientation, enthuses, "I love working with her! She knows how important it is that new teachers 'get' Westtown. She introduces them to Westtown's values and traditions while honoring the gifts they bring as well."

Wilson is regarded by all as an influential voice, a profoundly dedicated teacher, a caring mentor, and an exemplar of Westtown. "Shelagh epitomizes Westtown," says third grade teacher and fellow SEED leader Vicki Shelter. "Her love for Westtown is very clear to all who know her. She is a changemaker who leads by example." Indeed. 

*"Shelagh embodies our mission because she understands at her core what it means to have this kind of education, and she believes in it fully."*



*CLASS OF*

20



Please enjoy much more coverage of Commencement, including a video of the ceremony, on our website. Visit [www.westtown.edu/thewestonian](http://www.westtown.edu/thewestonian).





# 18







CLASS OF  
**2018**









CLASS OF

20  
18





Each year, seniors write a personal reflective essay. Three are selected to be read at Commencement by a faculty committee. The fourth essay is written and read by the valedictorian who is elected by seniors to speak on their behalf. These essays represent the character and intellect of our students, as well as the diversity of experiences within our community. We share their essays here.

# Graduation Essays

## YIHENG XIE

My freshman-year proctor, Leo Hochberg, once said, “You have a unique accent.” After I asked, he offered that my accent couldn’t be easily defined—it wasn’t simply Chinese or American, refined or crude. Puzzling over why, I decided to trace its origin.

Ever since I was a kid, I have been collecting snippets of my parents’ childhood, from Mom, Dad, and Grandma’s stories over the dinner table to complete this giant puzzle of where I came from. For as long as I could remember, my parents would take me to our hometown in the countryside every summer. When the asphalt highway gives way to concrete pavement, then gravel roads, and finally bumpy dirt paths, we would be back in rural Anhui and Jiangsu, where unassuming homes are scattered among canola fields and rice paddies.

When Mom was young, she would spend nights studying under the kerosene lamp, and wake up the next day with a nose filled with soot. Grandpa passed away when Mom was just finishing up middle school, and Grandma was faced with this repeatedly asked question: “Why would you send a girl to high school?” She still did, despite the pressure from the whole village. For my father, on rainy mornings, his shoes would be soaked heavy, caked with mud, and his walk to school would become a trudge. His near-empty stomach would barely provide enough energy. Somehow, they made it through, and became the first college students in their village. And these memories turned out to be a gift I wasn’t able to unwrap until later when I came to Westtown.

My parents were the first-generation immigrants in the city of Shanghai, and Shanghainese take great pride in their more refined vernacular. For me, I never learned to speak Shanghainese as a kid. Instead, I spoke a mixture of rural dialect and Mandarin—raw and inellegant. My uncouth mixture of accents felt out of place. I faced scrutiny when I answered teachers’ questions with my best-attempted Mandarin. As little as I was, I felt different, and I took note that language was the key into a community.

When I came to Westtown four years ago, the shifting of context yet again highlighted the thickness in my tone, this time in English. My accent was gritty—I brought along with me my hometown-crafted explosive consonants and extended vowels. But it was in the freshmen English course, *The Outsider in Literature*—the very role I occupied both in literature and in this foreign land—when I realized, for the first time, that my voice mattered. I wasn’t just encouraged to contribute to discussions but expected to; yet, I stumbled over my accent, messily stringing words together to share my ideas. Terribly embarrassed, I was determined to erase my awkwardness and to speak with an authentic American accent.

Luckily, I’ve been surrounded by many authentic voices. At Westtown, we gather weekly in the Meeting House in purposeful silence, which is broken only when messages are shared. Here, I’ve realized that American accents are varied just like Chinese ones. I remembered Profe Monica once shared in her Puerto Rican accent that she was choked with tears when, during the

past presidential election, her daughter asked if they would be deported. I remember Tray told an anecdote in his Tennessee accent about the generosity and the slowness back home—a lady, a stranger, who brought a tray of brownies from her house to Tray and his friends playing basketball. I remember during a late-night conversation with my roommate Jeo when he shared, in his Harlem accent, his admiration for his mother who worked three jobs to support her nine children.

Through listening closely to stories in my community, I’ve realized the authentic American accent is impossible to define, and the importance of our words lies far less in how we say them than in the meanings they hold. My primary school was a 30-minute walk away, my middle school was an hour drive, and my high school is a 14-hour plane ride. For me, growing up meant leaving home. But it turned out that it was only when I left home to go 8,000 miles away, that I have come closer to understanding both the grit and sand in my accent, and the soot and mud in my family’s shared memory—though inelegant, it reminds me of my story. At this place where my difference was valued and celebrated, I have finally unpacked the gift my parents have left me. It is a reminder, composed of my parents’ childhood memories, that grounds me, humbles me, and reminds me to defend passion with diligence.

I wish I didn’t have to wait two years before I could tell Leo that my accent really isn’t my accent after all. It is the mixture of the accents of every person I have ever talked to. I pick up small phrases and intonations from my friends and teachers, and they’ve merged to become my accent. If you think about it, it is the same with our most trivial habits as well as our most profound thoughts. When you spend more time with the people around you,

## STUDENT VOICES

you become more like them. And for the past four years, I have been picking up bits and pieces of the people around me, and before I'd notice, they had become very much a part of me.

In these last fleeting moments we share, it is at least a bit reassuring to know that I will be carrying bits and pieces of each of us as I leave. I will carry you in my accent, my habits, and the way I think. And that is fulfilling. From rural China to Westtown, I've found my accent bearing the marks people and places have left on me—it is quirkily nuanced and perfect in its imperfections. Although these marks are sometimes confusing for me and unexpected to strangers, they are my story. It is eternally growing and evolving, from the first word until the very last.

### JORDANY ROBLETO BALTAZAR

I was a young 7th grader when I saw my mom on a hospital bed. She was beaten by the endless twelve-hour shifts that she worked at multiple jobs. She was so overworked and underfed that she struggled to even smile as I walked in. She had managed to bring seven of my eight siblings to the United States from Guatemala and now worked so hard that I would wake up at six in the morning, go to bed at ten at night, and not see her at all. When I asked her, "Why do you work so much?" She always answered, "Alguien tiene que pagar la renta." Someone has to pay the rent.

Growing up, every time I heard the word "family," I became angry. I constantly thought, "Why don't I get to spend time with you, Mami?" I felt like an orphan whose only visitor came when he was asleep. I skipped classes, disobeyed teachers, and even fought a security guard once, just to get my mom called into school. I acted out to have an opportunity to see my mom, never realizing that all the hours she wasted coming to school cost us rice for a week, or delayed the purchase of "more comfortable shoes" for herself.

How would I have acted then, knowing everything I do now?

As she lay on the hospital bed, she said one small phrase that made me understand what she had been working for: "Don't end up like me." Mami never went out with friends to have a good time. She never let her back pain, arthritis, or any medical issue bring her down. Despite leaving her country after a deadly 36-year civil war, she never spread negativity and always reminded me to think on the bright side. She sacrificed time with her children in hopes that they would get an education, and one day understand why she was never there in the first place. She sacrificed too much.

After realizing what my mom had sacrificed, I was on my way home from school as I looked at my neighborhood through the M10 bus window, only to see trash and violence. I felt a sense of frustration. When I thought about my school, I pictured more of the same. I thought about my friends, those who are with us and those who fell victim to the system that never meant for them to succeed. It was at this moment that I decided I had to turn my life around. I no longer wanted to be in a dangerous neighborhood with bad friends and influences. But most importantly, I wanted to lift one less worry from my mom's shoulders.

I decided that my first priority should be to learn English. I forced myself to only speak English with my family and brushed off rude comments about my accent. I stopped watching TV in Spanish; *Curious George* became my first English-speaking friend. I borrowed English picture books from the library everyday, because I couldn't understand them otherwise. After two years, my family had to move again due to financial issues. I switched from a bilingual school in Washington heights, to an English-only public school in Harlem, and realized that I had to work even harder. It was hard, annoying, mentally frustrating, and often physically battering, but that's never stopped my mom, and I wasn't going to let it stop me.

The following school weeks, I made sure to focus in class. My teachers looked at me sideways and so did my friends. I

lost most of my friends and my social status, but for once, I didn't care. Although many teachers did not help me regain the knowledge I lost in two years, my Harlem lacrosse coaches did. And soon after my mom got out of the hospital, I became eligible to play lacrosse, and it changed my life. I knew I was not the strongest, fastest, or biggest, but nothing was getting between me and my goals—literal and figurative. I practiced longer, watched twice as much film, and converted my small little room into a weight room. Lacrosse gave me the opportunity to go to boarding school. Now, it stands to be a means by which I attain a college education, something I, an immigrant kid from Harlem, never thought possible.

But lacrosse isn't the reason I'm out of the hood. It isn't the reason I'm out of Harlem. It isn't the reason I've been able to get a better education. It isn't the reason I'm on the path to college. My mom is the reason.

I started playing lacrosse at the same time I began understanding all the sacrifices she had made for me, her work ethic, her selflessness, and her perseverance. Once I began to understand my mom, I had no choice but to put the qualities she demonstrated and instilled in me into lacrosse and everything I do. My mom is my inspiration.

Mami, I know it's been hard, but thank you for being the best mother anyone could ever have. Thank you for always being there when I cried because I hated English. Thank you for pushing me to do my homework, and laying down the law when I didn't. Thank you for waking up at four in the morning to walk me to the school so I could make the bus to go to lacrosse camps. Thanks for all the jokes and all the hugs. But most importantly, thank you for teaching me that despite all circumstances, you should always dance, always laugh, and always smile.

My dream is to fix our home back in Guatemala and have every inch personalized for my mom. She is the embodiment of hustle and hard work, and she has provided me with everything that I need. She said, "Don't end up like me," but I'm now realizing that we are more



alike than different. She had a bigger picture in mind. I have dreams too.

### NATALIE LOBACH

Two years ago, I told a family friend of mine I was planning on going to art school. “Oh, you want to be an artist?” he asked me. “Like the guy I’ve got designing a logo for my website?” “No,” I said, “I’m going to be a painter.” “You can’t really do that,” he told me. And when I asked why not, he replied, “You won’t make any money like that. I just don’t want you to starve.”

I wish people went to art museums more. I think, if they were to see the way in which art continues to thrive and move the world, they would be less inclined to tell young artists that our dreams are going to starve us. There is a strange but popular misconception that art is somehow losing relevance in our society. I am here to tell you that the importance of art is not fading. Entire periods of human history are characterized by their art, and this one will be too. Our species has not been around very long. 2.8 million years, and the first record of the development of human thought was art. The cave paintings of our earliest ancestors show an incredible reverence for the ability to tell stories and replicate one’s world with one’s own hands. The earliest expressions of spiritual and religious belief can be found in these cave paintings. Devotion to creation has not faded as our species has evolved. From the architecture of the Islamic age of enlightenment, to the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel, to the modern surrealist movement, art has been synonymous with living.

It’s one thing to know this in your mind, however, but an entirely different thing to experience this truth in person. In Barcelona, Spain, there is a museum called the Fundació Joan Miró. Two years ago, I found myself sitting in a little three-walled white room in this museum. On each wall was a white canvas with an arc of black paint carved across it. Splatters along the lower half looked like sprays of gore, and each painting had one color. A yellow circle, a red circle, and a blue circle. Sitting in

that room brought tears to my eyes. I had never felt a painting so agonizing, so loud yet so simple. The triptych is by Joan Miró, an artist who emerged out of the Dada and Surrealist movements of the late 1910s and 20s, which rejected logic as a basis of living in response to the First World War. *Hope of a Condemned Man* is Miró’s response to Francisco Franco, one of the bloodiest dictators in the history of his country.

To experience the suffering of a nation in splatters of white paint is a profound experience. Miró is a reflection of his context, influenced by the identity of his time. He is one of countless many. They fill the walls of museums and the foundations of holy sites. They can be found in Florence, in the palatial halls of the Uffizi where the Italian Renaissance is a living, breathing thing. They cluster the rooms of the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, a collection of the new and progressive of the last two centuries. And they rotate through the pristine corridors of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, a constant flux of now.

Two months ago I stood in another small white room, this time in the MoMA. Four walls this time, and on each wall hung a picture of an African American family. They smiled benevolently down at me from dinner tables, park photoshoots, family photos. *We are among you, we are around you, we are within you, you are safe* the installation exclaimed in huge red letters. I moved out of the room and through spaces filled with images of police brutality, street performance art, and thought dumps. It was a retrospective of Adrian Piper, an African American woman whose art was and continues to be an unabashed and immodest response to the dynamics of her identity in the United States.

It’s hard to scoff at the importance of art when you’re standing in the looming shadows of artists like Miró and Piper. People who have made waves, who have changed societal consciousness and fought injustice, who have sparked movements and paved the way for the young artists behind them, for people like me. Art builds upon itself. I would

“I’ve found my accent bearing the marks people and places have left on me—it is quirkily nuanced and perfect in its imperfections.”



YIHENG XIE



JORDANY ROBLETO BALTAZAR

“But lacrosse isn’t the reason I’m out of the hood ... It isn’t the reason I’m on the path to college. My mom is the reason.”



“I am here to tell you that the importance of art is not fading. Entire periods of human history are characterized by their art, and this one will be too.”



NATALIE LOBACH



MAGGIE LIND

“As the first graduating class to experience a full year in the current political climate, we must be kind to those we do not know. We must be brave in the face of fear and injustice.”

not exist here as I am without Basquiat, Dalí, and Rauschenberg. They would not have existed as they did without Picasso, Kahlo, and Matisse. Cezanne, Van Gogh, Serat. El Greco, Michaelangelo, Da Vinci. Art is a process of constant exploration and redaction, investigation and refinement. Every century, every decade, every year builds upon those that came before. Artists right now, people like Kehinde Wiley and Jenny Saville, are paving the way for the generations to come, the millennial artists and the Gen Z artists and the Gen Alpha artists.

Art is the lifeblood of humanity. It is beautiful, yes, but it is much more than that. Art reflects its environment, art is a response to life, art is a member of society. It is constantly in flux, it mutates with our time. Art is politics, and art is a refuge. It is the past, it is now, and it is the future. I do not plan on being the next Monet, or the 21st century Rembrandt, because their times are not the times we live in. I am going to be the next me, an artist shaped by my generation, by the issues of now. And I wonder, in a hundred years, what will the museums say about today?

**VALEDICTORIAN**  
**MAGGIE LIND**

Good morning, and thank you all for sharing this day with us. We are grateful to so many of you—families, friends, faculty and staff—who have provided guidance in countless ways on our journey to the Greenwood today. Through this support, we have all found our place somewhere on these 600 acres. For some of us it’s in the art studio, for others the athletic fields, the theater, the farm, or the science labs.

One of my favorite spots on campus may seem unlikely; it is tucked in the back corner of the Learning Resource Center. From the outside, it’s just an office. One door. One window. One desk and swivel chair. Teacher Kim Culcasi’s office has a particular aesthetic – twinkly lights, pillows for her visitors’ favorite spot on the floor, and a life-size painted cow descending from the drop ceiling. Though this is all greatly appreciated, it

is not the reason I am so captivated by this room. Rather, it is the hundreds of printed quotes that fill every inch of wall space that make it my home. Each day, Kim has chosen and posted a quote in her office, their meanings often dependent upon the events of the day. The eggshell walls are barely visible under the explosion of color and words, and every student, teacher, and staff member who enters absorbs them in their own way. Wisdom from sources as varied as Jane Goodall to Sufi scholars; Native American visionaries to present day poets like Nayyirah Waheed; Margaret Mead to Yoda inspire us to be our best selves, to consider that we live together in community on a planet that needs our attention, and to reach farther than we might otherwise have thought we could.

When staring up at them from my place in the corner, I am reminded of the power of words, how such arbitrary symbols aligned in the correct way can convey love, inspire change, speak truth, and alter perspectives. Words impact each of us differently. They have the ability to send chills down our spines, heat to our cheeks, or pain to our chests. Words have the historical weight of starting wars and making peace. Heartbreak, friendships, political movements, compromises, and acts of love all start with words. Our worldviews are shaped by what we have been told in history textbooks and bedtime stories alike, in gossip sessions, and English classes. Every person we know and everything we know about them is conveyed through their words and subsequent actions.


As someone who deals with anxiety, I feel that some of the words on the wall are specifically for me, whether Kim knows it or not. Georgia O’Keefe, the prolific artist who became known as the mother of American Modernism said, “I’ve been absolutely terrified every moment of my life and I’ve never let it keep me from doing a single thing that I wanted to do.” Often, I have been deterred by what others might think of me, and I know I am not alone in this. Although it might still occasionally sound shaky, as you might notice



today, I've grown to heed the advice of these wordsmiths and use my voice.

Westtown has prepared us well. Westtown has taught us the value of being kind, brave, and the absolute importance of listening. In a time of such political and global conflict—of wars and fear and what seems like weekly school shootings—it's time to implement these teachings. As the first graduating class to experience a full year immersed in the current political climate, we must be kind to those we do not know. We must be brave in the face of fear and injustice. We must listen to voices and experiences that are not our own—and we must act. Margaret Mead spoke to this when she said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." As we move on from Westtown, let us be that group of thoughtful, committed citizens.

I say this because I know we can all do better.

We cannot be silent, but we also cannot be afraid of silence. We cannot let our voices overpower those who are silenced everyday. I know that we can do this; some of us already are, while others among us are blocked by fear or complacency. Some of us need to raise our voices louder, and some of us may need to pause, stop talking, and listen. I challenge us to use what we have learned. We have the power to make change for the betterment of those who are marginalized and whose words carry too little weight, but only if we stop waiting for others to do it for us. Now is our time. 

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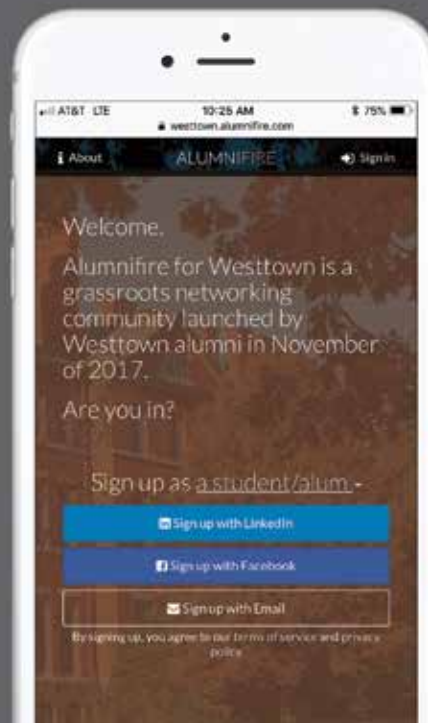
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MOOSE  
NATION

WHY BE RACIST,  
SEXIST, HOMOPHOBIC  
OR TRANSPHOBIC  
WHEN YOU COULD  
JUST BE QUIET?

FUTURE  
FEMALE

Gay

WATCHING  
WAITING  
DREAMING  
RESISTING





# LEADING THE WAY

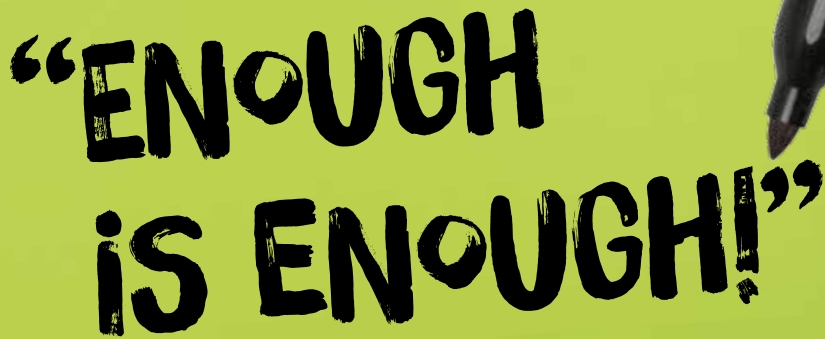
STUDENT ACTIVISM @ WESTTOWN



STORY BY  
LYNETTE ASSARSSON

PHOTOS BY  
ED CUNICELLI

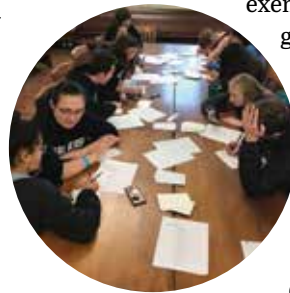




**“ENOUGH  
IS ENOUGH!”**

they chanted. Their voices rang out from the east end porch of the main building. The misty, gloomy day seemed fitting for this somber occasion. Several cameras from local television stations were trained on the students who had gathered, many holding handmade signs. As students took the microphone to speak with gravity and passion, reporters scribbled notes on their soggy pads, and faculty, staff, and administrators looked on in reverent silence and support.

As was happening at schools all across the country, students at Westtown organized this gun reform rally and vigil for the victims of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Not only did these students organize the event themselves, but also they contacted the media, invited Pennsylvania Representative Carolyn Comitta, Program Director of CEASEFIRE PA, Jeff Dempsey, and Head of School Tori Jueds to speak. At the conclusion of the rally, they gathered in the Collection Room to write letters, make phone calls to politicians, and to register eligible students to vote. It was the first of several forms of protest the students would engage in around the issue of gun control this year, including a walkout and vigil in April on the 19th anniversary of the shooting at Columbine High School. While gun control was the point of these particular demonstrations, this generation of students has issued loud cries for change on many issues. This may be the latest group of Westonians to be activists, but it isn't the first. Westtown students have been trying to change the world for many generations.



## AT THE ROOTS

Because of their foundational belief of “that of God in everyone” and their testimonies of peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship, Quakers (The Religious Society of Friends) have a long and storied history of activism and nonviolent protest. They advocate peace, individual rights, and social and environmental justice. Quakers were among the first to rebuke slavery in the United States and the United Kingdom, and the Society of Friends was the first organization to publicly denounce it and fight for its abolition. Their campaigns to abolish slavery were both loud and quiet; among the quiet protests against slavery was wearing clothes of natural coloring that had not been dyed by slaves, a protest against slave labor. Indeed, it's the reason Westtown's colors are brown and white.

As pacifists, most Quakers refused to engage in war. As early as the 18th century in England, Quakers were formally recognized as conscientious objectors. In the United States at the beginning of the World War I, Quakers and other “peace churches” were legally exempted from military service. At any given anti-war rally of the Twentieth Century, one can be sure that there were there Quakers in attendance, and to this day, many U.S. Quakers still refuse to pay the percentage of taxes used for military funding as part of their peace testimony.

Collective activism has always been part of the Quaker way of living out its tenets and various Quaker organizations promote social action and change. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was established in 1917. Their mission is to promote “lasting peace with justice, as a practical expression of faith in action...[and] nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems.” In its early days, the AFSC provided conscientious objectors alternatives to taking up arms, and it remains an active organization that focuses its energies on peacemaking, racial and social justice issues, and women's rights. Founded in



1943, Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is a nonpartisan lobby group based in Washington, DC, that works to advance the Quaker principles of peace, social justice, equality, and environmental stewardship through policy making and legislation.

Friends' testimony of equality has not only shaped their responses to slavery and civil rights, but also put them front and center in the struggle for women's rights. Quakers have actively promoted equal rights for women from the beginning. Quakerism founder George Fox and his wife, Margaret Fell, spoke and wrote passionately about the equality of women and it was Fox who ordered that women should have their own Meetings for Business so they would be on equal footing with men in their Meetings. This belief informed the construction and layout of Meeting Houses: they contain four doors so that women, men, girls, and boys would each be able to enter the house of worship as equals. Some older Meeting Houses still have pocket doors that descend from the ceiling so that women could hold their own Meetings for Business separate from men. Fox and Fell were proponents of women in ministry and the indomitable Mary Fisher (1623 – 1698) was among the first itinerant preachers to travel the world and speak to the equality of women. Equality in education was also important to Fox and early Quakers. Bryn Mawr College, founded in 1883, was established for Quaker women, and the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania was founded in 1850 to encourage women to practice medicine. (From *Quakers in the World*, author unknown). And Westtown School, founded in 1799, is the oldest, continuously operating co-educational school in the nation; Westtown's first enrollee was a girl. In 1848, famed Quaker Lucretia Mott organized the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848 and is considered one of the founders of the feminist movement. An ardent feminist, abolitionist, and social reformer, she spent her life campaigning for the marginalized.



It's no surprise that there are many of examples Westonians in history who were activists. Enoch Lewis, who taught at Westtown from 1799 to 1808, was a vocal abolitionist and his home was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Martha Coffin (1806-1875), the sister of Lucretia (Coffin) Mott, attended Westtown at age 15. Along with her sister

Above: Students at gun law reform rally/vigil in February 2018. Left inset: Student letter-writing campaign to politicians, February 2018

Lucretia, she helped organize the first Women's Rights Conference and continued to be active supporter of women's rights and abolitionism throughout her life. Her home was also a stop on the Underground Railroad. Anna Dickenson



(1842-1938) attended Westtown when she was 10 years old and became an activist at 13 when she penned an anti-slavery essay for *The Liberator*. She became a famous speaker who could draw crowds and was paid handsomely for her speeches which was highly unusual at the time.

## THE TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES

According to Westtown Archivist Mary Brooks, the first half of the twentieth century was more of a time of service than what we describe as activism, but service is, nonetheless, a form of acting on one's beliefs. "Faculty and students were involved in food programs, reconstruction, and work camps in Europe after two world wars. They also provided relief closer to home, sending needed items to communities in West Chester as well as to coal mining families in West Virginia." Brooks adds that, "This was also a time of individuals making decisions about becoming a conscientious objector rather than serving in the military, an example of taking a position and following one's own conscience."

Organized, collective student activism gained steam in the 1960s. Archived issues of Westtown's student newspaper, *The Brown and White*, are peppered with articles about marches and vigils, many of them fueled by anti-war sentiments. Some students became involved in the Civil Rights Movement and many were critical of Westtown's own lack of integration—the first black student was not admitted until 1945 and in 1968 there were still only 12 black students. From 1965 through 1972, Westtown students and faculty attended several anti-war marches and participated in various forms of peace activism.

English teacher Pat Macpherson '69 describes being a student in an era of upheaval and change. "I was a boarding student from 1966-69 which was a time of racial politics, anti-war politics, emerging feminism, and even the sexual liberation movements, so it was a very exciting time. There were younger faculty and a bunch of students who were quite fired up about protesting the Vietnam War. The school sent buses to New York in March of 1968 for the march in Manhattan, (although we



weren't able to get in!) Macpherson emphasizes that it seemed to be a given that Westtown and its students would have an anti-war position, although many students and conservative older faculty were not vocal opponents nor did they participate in marches and in the politics. On a personal level, Macpherson became interested in the work of the Students for Democratic Society (SDS), and eventually founded a chapter at Westtown. The school sanctioned the formation of an SDS chapter and permitted the SDS to arrange for a college friend of Macpherson who was a member to come talk to students. "SDS came to talk about what the group was," says Macpherson. "They explained that the SDS was mainly concerned with racial and economic inequality and their relationship to one another. They found a real audience here—I think people wanted to be identified as 'among the barricades.'"

"The Vietnam War was very much on our minds when I was a student in the late 60s and early 70s," says Judy Asselin '71. "When the United States invaded Cambodia, my cousin, Bruce Terrell, who was a year ahead of me, organized a fast. The plan was to ask the school to donate the cost of the food not eaten to peace efforts. It was all we felt we could do as young high school

Above: Pat Macpherson '69 and Don Macpherson '68 at anti-war rally in Philadelphia, 1969. Inset right: student calling session for gun law reform, February 2018

students not yet old enough to vote. There was often a table in Central for petition signing and postcard writing to political leaders. There was this understood culture at Westtown that as educated, influential citizens, it was up to each and every one of us to voice our convictions."

In the 1980s, student activism began to center on anti-nuclear protests and the pro-choice movement. About 15 percent of the Westtown student body attended one of the largest (until that time) pro-choice marches in the spring of 1989. Student-run clubs have always provided activist outlets for students and the clubs of the late 80s, as do many current clubs, focused on social consciousness and political awareness, including the student-of-color group, SUMA (Students United for Minority Awareness) which was created for students to openly discuss racism and racial issues both at Westtown and nationally. Also active in those years were the Amnesty International Club, Students United for Peace, and in 1988, the Atalanta club was formed to "provide a forum for a discussion of gender issues." (Kirby Lunger, *The Brown and White*, December 1, 1988).



In October of 1995 more than 850,000 African American men attended Million Man March to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 and to pledge to a revitalized commitment to racial justice. A group of male and female students wanted to attend but, citing the explicit call of organizers that the march was intended for black males, the school did not allow girls to attend. It was an unpopular decision, and the girls who were banned from attending were "up early to protest as students and faculty departed the school." (Elvin Wells and Kafayat Alli-Galogun, *The Brown and White*, December 1, 1995.)

In the twenty-first century, climate change and environmental justice has been a topic of great concern to students. The Green Coalition, a student-run environmental club, was formed about seven years ago to encourage and increase sustainability practices at Westtown as well as to raise awareness about environmental issues both in and beyond the school. A group of students and faculty, including advisor Judy Asselin '71, attended the 2012 Climate Change March in Washington.

As the issue of police brutality boiled up in the nation, the Black Lives Matter movement gained momentum nationally and on campus. A large group of students and faculty, including then Head of School John Baird, attended the Justice for All march in Washington, DC, in December of 2014, which was organized to draw attention to BLM and racial injustice. The national debate between "Black Lives Matter" and "All Lives Matter" continued and in 2016 made its way to Westtown as well. Controversy sparked by comments on the Opinion Board carried on to dorm rooms, into classrooms, and even into Meeting for Worship. Westtown faculty responded, as they often do, by making time for discussion—this time by holding town hall-type meetings on dorm, a called Meeting for Worship, and a Meeting for Business to address conflict within the community.

Emotions were high on campus after the election of Donald Trump. Students

and faculty participated in the Women's March in January 2017. Westtown sent three buses filled with about 150 people to the Women's March in Washington, DC, to advocate for women's and human rights, for protecting access to health-care, and to send a general message that Trump's campaign rhetoric was not acceptable.

These are but a few examples of student activism over the past several decades. Activism is cyclical and often reflects what's happening on the national political stage. It also depends on the makeup and personality of the student body. Which brings us today: what's happening now?

### THE BEAT GOES ON

This last school year was unique because of the swell of student-led activism on a national level. School gun violence in particular has prompted students to become more politically involved than they have been for quite some time; that activism has spilled into voter activism. The political climate of the country is one of unrest and turmoil, and students have been responding by leading the charge in racial and social justice issues as well.

In February, students staged a walk-out from Meeting for Worship. It was

sponsored by students in the newly formed IMAGE (Intersectional Minorities Against Growing Exclusion), a group formed to draw attention to the treatment of marginalized groups in the school—students of color, girls, and the LGBTQ community. As member and Co-Student Body President KC Miller '18 says, "We decided on Meeting for Worship because a lot of minority students and a lot of politically active students see their politics and opinions as an extension of their spirituality and their religious identity. We saw the Meeting House as an important space for everyone to be heard." While the IMAGE group is made up of about 16 regular attendees, about two thirds of the student body participated in the walkout, making their point boldly. They gathered themselves in the South Room to have an alternative Meeting for Worship. In the moment the walkout felt shocking to some faculty, perhaps even a violation of a sacred space. They gathered together to process, discern, and discuss. Senior Class Dean and religion teacher Kevin Eppler said, "To me, [the Meeting House] is exactly the space for this. This is where we grapple these issues. And what did kids do? They walked out. In silence. They didn't destroy a thing. And they went to have a Meeting for Worship! They didn't go get bagels." Other faculty encouraged



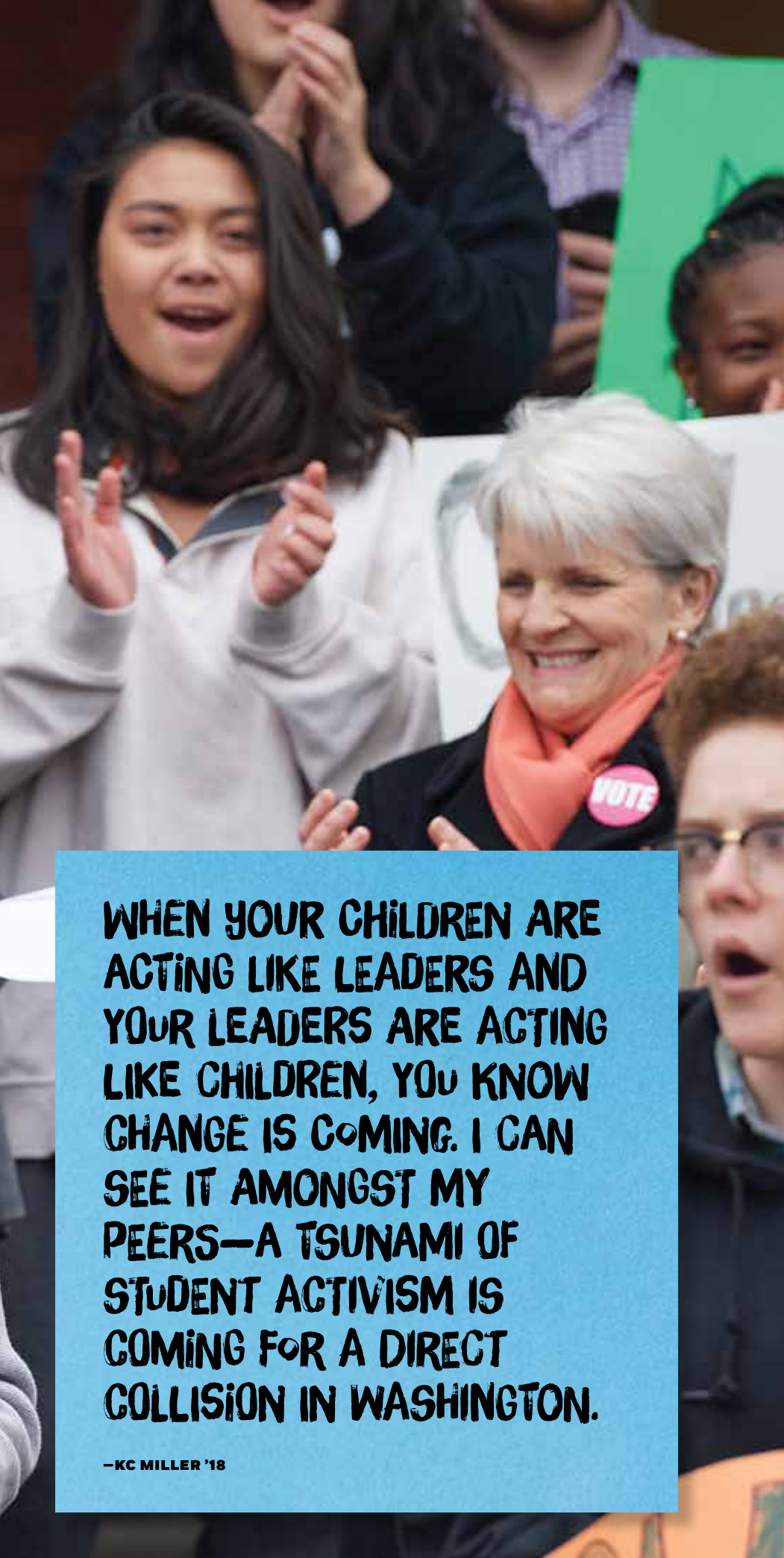
**THERE WAS THIS UNDERSTOOD CULTURE AT WESTTOWN THAT AS EDUCATED, INFLUENTIAL CITIZENS, IT WAS UP TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US TO VOICE OUR CONVICTIONS.**

—JUDY ASSELIN '71









Left: Co-Student Body President KC Miller '18 at gun law reform rally in February 2018

**WHEN YOUR CHILDREN ARE ACTING LIKE LEADERS AND YOUR LEADERS ARE ACTING LIKE CHILDREN, YOU KNOW CHANGE IS COMING. I CAN SEE IT AMONGST MY PEERS—A TSUNAMI OF STUDENT ACTIVISM IS COMING FOR A DIRECT COLLISION IN WASHINGTON.**

—KC MILLER '18

listening to the messages the students needed them to hear. Still, some teachers had anxiety about it. But as Head of School Tori Jueds noted in her Alumni Day address, “That anxiety was a good sign. It is incredibly important that we bear allegiance to our central traditions — and nothing is more central than Meeting for Worship. But if our reaction as a community had stopped there — if, in our alarm, we had dug in our heels and refused to engage with the students who walked out, we would have done a great disservice to those young people and to our traditions.”

The walkout spurred meetings and conversations with faculty, administration, and students. The students in IMAGE were encouraged by the positive responses they received from faculty. Julia Castillo '19 said, “Almost immediately I started receiving a lot of lovely emails from teachers applauding what we did, saying things like ‘I’m with you if you need anything.’ And we started meeting with administrators right away. The response from the school was very positive and encouraging.” The student response has been more mixed and some of the IMAGE members remain frustrated with the climate. “Sometimes people think, ‘Well, we’re Westtown. We’re in this special community. [Hurtful things] don’t happen here.’ Yes, we are in this special community, but that’s not how it works!” says Sahmara Spence Rogers '20. “Things are not just how they seem, they are not black and white. It’s not racist/not racist, sexist/not sexist. There’s a huge grey area and we exist in this grey area. We need you to understand and open your eyes to see this.”

Student clubs remain a starting point and outlet for activism. IMAGE was formed as a way to bring together Rainbow Club and SOCA (Students of Color Association) for intersectional conversations about bias and discrimination; the Democratic Club was established a few years ago, but has existed in various forms over the years at Westtown;





Left: Signs of the times: sign from gun rally in 2018; Westtown student sign from silent peace vigil in support of ending the war in Vietnam, Washington, DC, May 1972. Inset right: 4th grade letter writers

**WE DON'T HOPE THEY'RE ALL GOING TO BE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS. BUT WE DO HOPE THAT THEY BECOME ACTIVE CITIZENS WHO WILL STAND UP FOR SOMETHING THEY BELIEVE IN.**

**—KRISTIN CRAWFORD, LOWER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

and the Green Coalition continues its work on environmental issues. Marissa Colston, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, along with Class Deans in the Upper School, have also created affinity groups for students to have avenues for discussion on topics specific to their peers.

The anti-gun rally in late February was organized by a cross-section of the students in these clubs, and many of them are activists in several arenas. Sabrina Schoenborn '20 had a major role in planning the anti-gun rally. Schoenborn is head of the Democratic Club, and founder of The Girl Narrative, a website that promotes the stories of strong girls and young women as one method to combat sexism and gender typing. She also happens to be a member of the Winchester rifle family, which spurred her interest in speaking at the rally. "I am part of the Winchester rifle

family and even though it's not a modern gun company, it started everything. It started the mass production of the repeating rifle. Sometimes people will refer to the Winchester rifle during certain gun conversations, and I wanted to clear my family's name, to be explicit that this was not our intent, that guns were to be used in this very specific way. People are taking that out of context and bringing it to their own argument, which isn't right. I felt like giving my perspective [at the rally] was really important." Schoenborn describes Westtown as being quite different from her previous school and appreciates an environment in which student voices are encouraged and activism is applauded. "I have received so much support from this community as an activist. Coming from a public school, this was really an incredible experience. I came from an extraordinary school, but having this

kind of open political conversation and open discussions about diversity is something that I was never exposed to."

### **EDUCATING WITH INTEGRITY**

At a school, activism can be a touchy subject, fraught as it is with political implications. It also often signifies taking sides on a controversial issue. It rubs up against convention, norms, the status quo, and institutions. Should a school encourage activism? Does a school that encourages activism tacitly support "sides" of political and social arguments? What is the role of teachers in a politically divisive environment?

At Westtown, Quakers' history of nonviolent protest informs how we educate our students today. Our mission as a Quaker school is not only to uphold the values of peace, equality, integrity, and community but also—as we repeat often—to *educate and inspire our students to become leaders and stewards of a better world*. These are not simply the words from our Mission Statement, they are the tent poles under which we try to create a learning environment that encourages students to find their voices, fosters civic engagement, and helps students understand that they can be agents of change.

In the Lower School, much of the curriculum centers around learning about the experiences of others and building empathy. Empathy is a foundational aspect of advocacy. Building empathy fosters more personal understanding of local and global problems. Students are asked often to consider what is important to them, encouraged to express themselves, and are provided a learning environment in which they feel safe asking questions and exploring topics. Lower School Principal Kristin Crawford says it's about "cultivating the habits of activism," by giving them age appropriate ways to practice these habits. "Our hope that our graduates take



an active role in their citizenship doesn't begin when they are graduates. Our work with them begins when they are young," she says. "From the beginning, we give them opportunities to see that they can have an impact on their communities. That happens in the classroom where they begin to take action in small ways, in the community of West Chester where they might do service or visit organizations that help communities, or even out in the world, like the second graders' fundraising campaign to save the coral reefs." She adds, "The challenge of being a school like ours where student activism is a key part, is letting kids find their own place of activism without influencing them. We don't hope they're all going to be liberal Democrats. But we do hope that they become active citizens who will stand up for something they believe in."

One example of teaching these habits is the letter-writing unit in fourth grade. Teachers Hillary Simons and Shelagh Wilson did not tell students what to write about nor to whom they should write, but asked them to consider social topics that were important to them by talking to family members, considering personal experience, or doing research. The teachers guided them in how to construct an informative and persuasive letter, how to find addresses, how to address and send them. Many students wrote about topical concerns such as health care, gun law reform, animal rights, transgender rights, and the gender pay gap. Caleb Leibowitz wrote to his state representative about universal health care and support for a plan like Canada's because of his family's experience with costly medical bills. "I chose to write about social health care because the prices are insane. [Medical] bills are a big problem for families." Dylan Zahm wrote to Pennsylvania Senator Bob Casey regarding his concern about gun control and universal background checks. "I am very concerned about who is allowed to get guns. It is devastating after all these shootings. Only people who are responsible and don't have criminal records or mental illness or are not underage should be allowed to purchase guns. There

needs to be universal background checks." Payton Myers-Corp was most concerned about the issue of equal pay. She says that knowing that women are paid less is upsetting. "I wrote to Donald Trump about equal pay because women do the same stuff as men but still don't get equal pay." These fourth graders say that they enjoyed the project because it made them feel they had a voice, and because they were able to express themselves about subjects that are important to them. "Yes, this was a class assignment, but we all felt strongly about our topics anyway," says Leibowitz. Zahm adds, "Our letters are important. We wrote them for very serious matters. And we wanted the people we wrote to think kids had a voice, too."

Specific curricula geared toward civic engagement increases in the Middle School and messages that students can have an impact on the world around them are emphasized. Because Middle School is a time of self discovery and change, teachers focus on identity as groundwork for some of these projects and assignments, and as foundation for discovering what moves and inspires them. Some of these lessons are imparted in the seventh grade Think. Care. Act. project. English teacher Abby Lausch says, "Our social curriculum in seventh grade centers around identity, having kids ask themselves *Who am I?* We ask them: *What are some labels you would give yourself, What are labels others put on you?* We have students consider what their affinities and talents are, then we ask them to consider what they feel passionate about. Students start to think about where the needs of their community or society intersects with what they are passionate about. So ideally, their service project at the end of the year is a culmination of all those things." The individual projects range from sponsoring a clothing drive to working in a food bank to volunteering at an animal shelter.



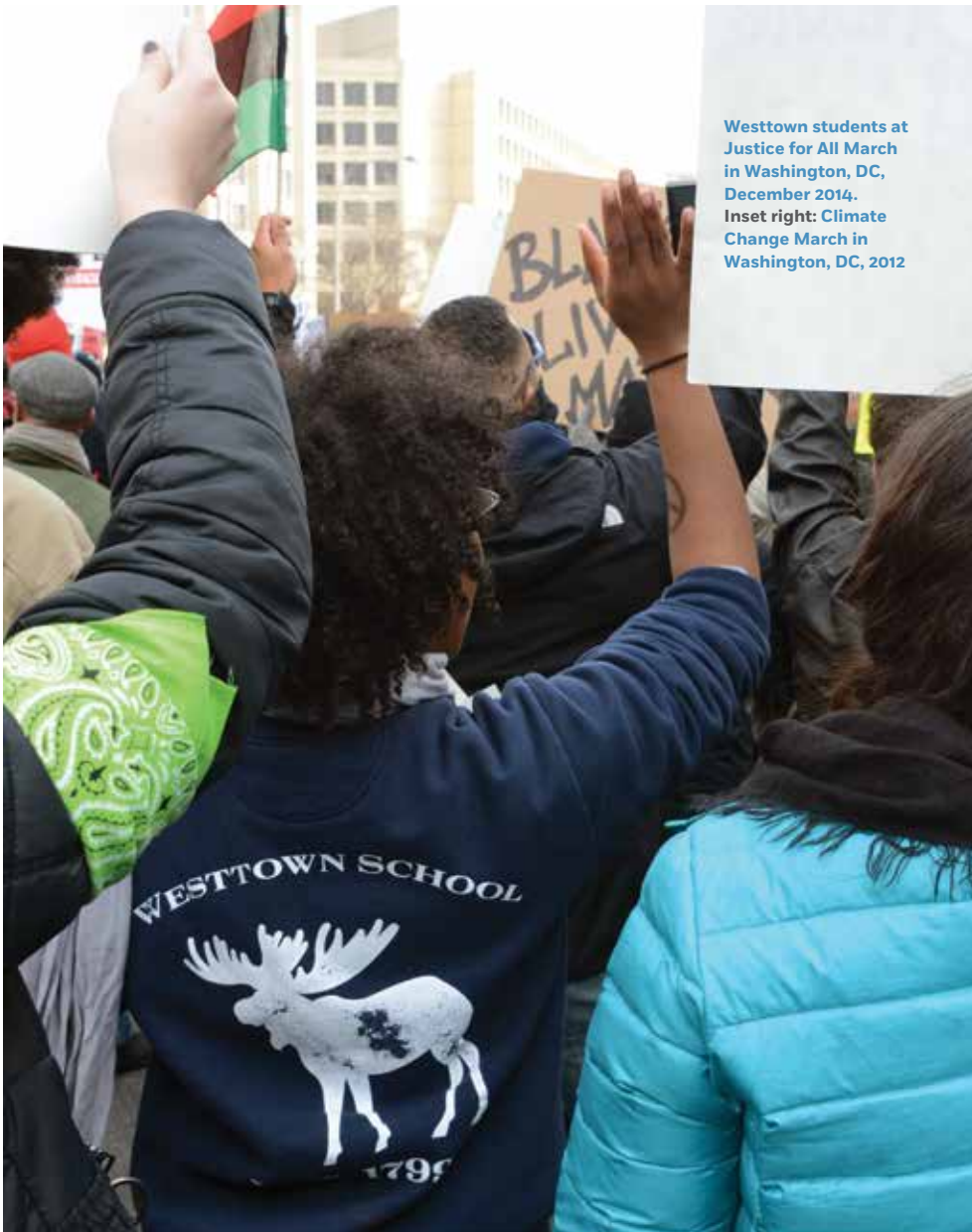
As Lausch notes, the students are still young, so there are some limitations on what they can do or feel comfortable doing, but part of the curriculum is practicing skills for how to engage. "We cover things like how to make a phone call to an organization. How to work through awkward moments you might encounter on the phone or in an interview. We go over the skills you need to interact with different kinds of people and organizations. We are trying to give them the tool kit they will need not only for this kind of project, but also for being engaged citizens in the future," she says.

Another focus in seventh grade is injustice. The Injustice Project is designed to help students build empathy and to understand other's experiences. "We encouraged students to think about who suffers injustice, to identify groups who tend to experience it, and then choose someone who's experienced injustice to interview," says Lausch. "Then they write a piece in which they create a character who has experienced similar things and write from that person's perspective. The point is that they take what they've learned from these interviews and put themselves in the other's shoes." A project like this

gives students who feel political a chance to really engage and those who are not political a non-textbook way of learning about injustice.

Middle Schoolers are often at wildly different points of development, so the level of political and social involvement also varies wildly. Teachers recognize this and meet students where they are, creating avenues for kids who want to engage in topical conversations, and space for those who don't. The MOOSE (Many Optimistic Open-minded Supporters of Equality) group, led by Middle School teachers Carrie Timmins and John Fernandez, meets once a week. It is a forum for discussion about a variety of topics that center around equality. Timmins says that the group is student directed and this year they had a series of





Westtown students at Justice for All March in Washington, DC, December 2014.  
Inset right: Climate Change March in Washington, DC, 2012



town-talk-like events that were well attended. The students who choose to get involved in MOOSE are those who tend to be socially and politically active, but at one of their meetings this year, about 30 students attended to talk about the “take a knee” controversy, many of whom don’t regularly attend. Timmins says that, “It was great to see so many students who were interested in debating the topic. And it wasn’t just students saying, ‘We agree with Colin Kaepernick and the athletes who kneel,’ there were also kids expressing, ‘I don’t know which is right!’ or, ‘I think we should stand during the anthem.’ So all sides were heard.” The MOOSE group has also sponsored town talks around racism and LGBTQ rights, and one specifically to talk about transgender bathrooms. Timmins says that this forum is an important step in their development of ideas about causes that are important to them. “We’re providing a way for them to explore which is really important because the next level is sticking your neck out for a cause.” Timmins echoes Lausch that understanding identity and having confidence are precursors to students’ ability to engage. “They need to have confidence about their identity and they need confidence to effectively communicate a message to a larger group. I think we do this part well, helping them understand themselves first.”

The student clerks, who are leaders in the Middle School, engage in more visible activism, and also help to insure the inclusion of different voices. Activism around gun law reform also arose in the Middle School this year. Students wanted to participate in the school walkout, but in their own way. The clerks were mindful that there were not unified voices on the subject and that there were students who were not interested in participating either because they disagreed, or because they weren’t sure how they felt about the issue. So faculty gave them an alternative. “We don’t want to foist anything on kids, or push an agenda. So kids who didn’t want to participate went to a classroom with a teacher and they talked about standing



aside when actions don't match your values, and what it feels like," said Timmins. Lausch adds, "We are really clear that we don't want to give our political opinions, but that doesn't mean we can't share the values that are aligned with Quaker values. As a Quaker school, we do pick sides on certain issues. But we also give options. For the anti-gun rally, kids had a choice about whether to participate. Some kids went to the rally and the kids who stayed back wrote to a representative or participated in discussions. The message we give is that it's important to be involved and to express your opinion. You don't have to be involved in the same way others are, but you should still be involved. You should still share your ideas."

In the Upper School, there are many course offerings that explore topics of social and environmental justice through the Quaker lens that help students to learn about movements in history that affected change, expose them to diverse voices and stories, and require them to become engaged citizens. Peace and Justice, which is the beginning history course, examines "factors of organized intolerance and methods of social change" that have been used to counter intolerance and injustice, and studies systems that infringe upon human rights. Schoenborn says, "Peace and Justice was the most extraordinary class I've ever taken, by far. That class has truly changed me and the way that I look at the world, in that it has challenged me to look at different perspectives."

Upper level English courses and electives offer powerful experiences in hearing and understanding diverse voices. Nonfiction Writing 2: Black Identity & Society explores race, identity, and social justice through black literature, providing students the opportunity to "bravely engage in the consideration of the multidimensional experiences of blacks in America." One of the contemporary fiction courses explores immigration narratives of writers from around the globe; a literature elective covers multiple perspectives from the Vietnam

Conflict. The religion department pays special attention to the beliefs and practices of Quakerism, strives to develop ethical citizenship, and provides special focus on social justice movements based in faith. Courses such as Nonviolence and Social Change; Religion, Resistance, and Revolution; and Environmental Justice make up the distinctive and unique religion electives. They center on both the history of social justice movements, and the intersection of faith, values, and uprising. The titles of the courses themselves are unmistakable signs that Westtown School's curriculum is borne out of our mission. They might also appear to more politically conservative eyes as having a liberal agenda. While they may have bias, however, the coursework is not designed to influence political positions, but rather to compel students to research, discuss, challenge, and discover their own conclusions and opinions. These courses are seminar style so discussion and debate are embedded in the format. Kevin Eppler, Class Dean and Religion Teacher, says that in his Environmental Justice class students are steeped in research and



**HELPING STUDENTS DISCOVER WHAT MOVES THEM, URGING THEM TO ARTICULATE THEIR BELIEFS, CULTIVATING THEIR CONFIDENCE, AND IMPELLING THEM TO FIND THE COURAGE TO ACT ON THEIR CONVICTIONS IS CENTRAL TO OUR MISSION.**

required to be fluent in the issues they discuss and able to argue both sides of an argument. He says, "I ask the kids, 'What is the current Administration's policy on the Dakota Access Pipeline? On the Keystone Pipeline? What are the effects of these pipelines? What does it do to the Earth?' We also talk about the fact that the Obama Administration supported hydraulic fracturing, for example. So I ask a lot of questions and

I expect students to go about seeking the answers." Eppler adds, "The title of the course gives away its bias—students know that this course is not going to be pro-fracking. But they'd better know why people are pro-fracking because a lot of people are."

The Visual and Performing Arts offers Theater and Social Change, the highest level theater course, which was added last year. Department Chair Will Addis explains, "We created the Theater for Social Change course in which we explore theater that is created to bring about some sort of action. We also look at theater that has created social change unintentionally, like a play called *Waiting for Lefty* which was written about strikes and then people ran out of the theater



# #LOVETHY NEIGHBOR (NO EXCEPTIONS)

and started to call for strikes. So we talk about theater in this way, about building in collaboration, and brainstorm ideas. In this course, students need to make it all happen themselves—they have to write it, stage, it produce it. Last year, the opinion board was really hot so they came up with the idea of a living opinion board. All opinion board pieces for the last 25 years are in the Westtown Archives, so they went and they read them. They also conducted interviews and read old issues of *The Brown and White* [Westtown's student newspaper]. They created monologues out of these archived pieces and it was really good, powerful work. The school responded to it really well." This year, the kids wanted to explore the concept of meta theater so the class wrote a play about kids who want to write a play about a social justice topic, but can't focus because of the rate at which new problems arise. "This class meets after Meeting for Worship, so they would come into class buzzing about the topic of the day," says Addis. "They came up with this idea because every time they sat down to focus on one issue, something else comes and knocks it aside and demands attention. And that's what the play ended up being. It was exciting to watch."

While there are robust examples of curriculum reflecting mission, some of our student activists are pointing out where curriculum is lacking, especially the texts used in U.S. History which many believe whitewash American history and exclude important voices. "We do have a variety of very specific classes that address diversity and activism," says



KC Miller '18, "so my criticism is toward required history and English courses, because the electives are amazing. But if you don't take them, you aren't hearing those voices." Jady Williams '21 says that in spite of Westtown's aspiration toward inclusivity in curriculum, "we're not quite there yet. The U.S. History books leave out certain people." Addis offers that Westtown can be slow to change because, "Westtown has always been better at a lot of things than other schools. We've been better at inclusivity, we've been better at listening, even better at giving students voices. But there are some places where students are saying that it's just not good enough and they don't want to wait anymore. I think that's a good thing." Teachers are listening and have begun to consider the textbooks used in U.S. History and to evaluate the literature choices in English 9.

Students say that their involvement in social and political issues is critical and they are passionate about affecting change. And even as they can be critical of Westtown, they agree that the culture of the school is one that facilitates discussion and is supportive of challenge and difficult conversations. "There is huge difference between other schools and Westtown," says Alexis Rogers '21. "At my old school, if we would try to talk about these topics, let alone stage a walkout or plan a gun rally, that would be looked down upon very much. Westtown does support you when you express yourself, it supports activism, and it does help start conversations."

Initiating these conversations, helping students discover what moves them, urging them to articulate their beliefs, cultivating their confidence, and impelling them to find the courage to act on their convictions is central to our mission, but it is not a perfect nor always smooth



Inset left: Student walkout and silent vigil in remembrance of Columbine shooting, South Lawn, April 2018. Inset right: Sabrina Schoenborn '20

endeavor. Even Quaker institutions like Westtown can find themselves struggling to keep up with the times, to honor the values and voices of all and can, quite frankly, get it wrong sometimes. In today's highly charged and divisive political environment, much is made, rightly so, of teachers not taking sides, of not imparting their own political leanings. This is a sometimes difficult line to toe. As an institution that adheres to the values of Quakerism, Westtown—and by extension many Westonians—has distinct and strong opinions about guns, war, and equality that are firmly based in its spiritual foundation and practice. So how do we impart and teach our values without taking sides?

By teaching students to seek and discern truth, by helping them to discover and use their own voices, and by conveying the lesson that those voices and action can influence change. As Tori Jueds said at the anti-gun rally, "I am exceedingly proud to stand here with students of Westtown School, proud that it was students who conceived, organized, and are carrying out this most important public action. I am inexpressibly proud of a school community that exhorts its young people to step up and take action where they see injustice." And so are we. In these turbulent times, listening to the voices of students and letting them lead the way is the way forward. **W**

# MOVING FORWARD (ALWAYS)



# Westtown Fund

2017 - 2018

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The Westtown Fund directly supports the work of our students and their teachers. Because of your generous gifts this year, our students are engaged in a wide range of extraordinary learning opportunities in and outside of the classroom, on and off campus, and across the globe. Thank you for helping us to fulfill our mission to prepare our graduates to be stewards and leaders of a better world.







W  
SCHOOL

MOOSE  
NATION

MOOSE  
NATION

WHY BE RACIST,  
SEXIST, HOMOPHOBIC  
OR TRANSPHOBIC  
WHEN YOU COULD  
JUST BE QUIET?

FUTURE  
FEMALE

Gay

WATCHING  
WAITING  
DREAMING  
RESISTING





# LEADING THE WAY

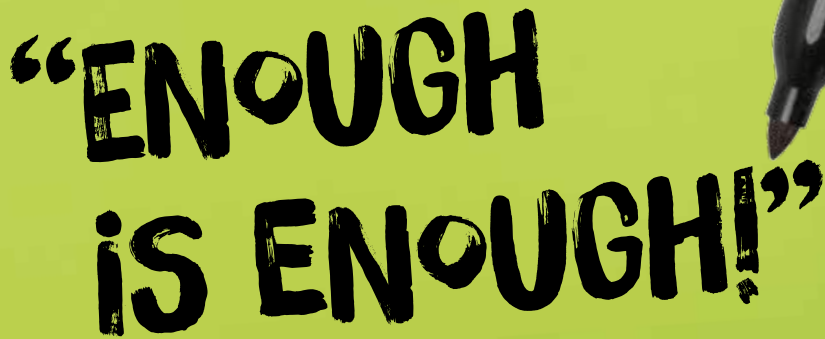
STUDENT ACTIVISM @ WESTTOWN



STORY BY  
LYNETTE ASSARSSON

PHOTOS BY  
ED CUNICELLI

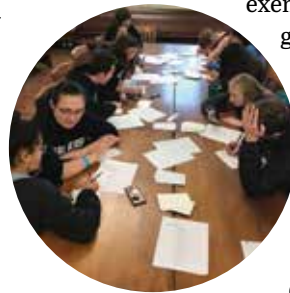




**“ENOUGH  
IS ENOUGH!”**

they chanted. Their voices rang out from the east end porch of the main building. The misty, gloomy day seemed fitting for this somber occasion. Several cameras from local television stations were trained on the students who had gathered, many holding handmade signs. As students took the microphone to speak with gravity and passion, reporters scribbled notes on their soggy pads, and faculty, staff, and administrators looked on in reverent silence and support.

As was happening at schools all across the country, students at Westtown organized this gun reform rally and vigil for the victims of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Not only did these students organize the event themselves, but also they contacted the media, invited Pennsylvania Representative Carolyn Comitta, Program Director of CEASEFIRE PA, Jeff Dempsey, and Head of School Tori Jueds to speak. At the conclusion of the rally, they gathered in the Collection Room to write letters, make phone calls to politicians, and to register eligible students to vote. It was the first of several forms of protest the students would engage in around the issue of gun control this year, including a walkout and vigil in April on the 19th anniversary of the shooting at Columbine High School. While gun control was the point of these particular demonstrations, this generation of students has issued loud cries for change on many issues. This may be the latest group of Westonians to be activists, but it isn't the first. Westtown students have been trying to change the world for many generations.



## AT THE ROOTS

Because of their foundational belief of “that of God in everyone” and their testimonies of peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship, Quakers (The Religious Society of Friends) have a long and storied history of activism and nonviolent protest. They advocate peace, individual rights, and social and environmental justice. Quakers were among the first to rebuke slavery in the United States and the United Kingdom, and the Society of Friends was the first organization to publicly denounce it and fight for its abolition. Their campaigns to abolish slavery were both loud and quiet; among the quiet protests against slavery was wearing clothes of natural coloring that had not been dyed by slaves, a protest against slave labor. Indeed, it's the reason Westtown's colors are brown and white.

As pacifists, most Quakers refused to engage in war. As early as the 18th century in England, Quakers were formally recognized as conscientious objectors. In the United States at the beginning of the World War I, Quakers and other “peace churches” were legally exempted from military service. At any given anti-war rally of the Twentieth Century, one can be sure that there were there Quakers in attendance, and to this day, many U.S. Quakers still refuse to pay the percentage of taxes used for military funding as part of their peace testimony.

Collective activism has always been part of the Quaker way of living out its tenets and various Quaker organizations promote social action and change. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was established in 1917. Their mission is to promote “lasting peace with justice, as a practical expression of faith in action...[and] nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems.” In its early days, the AFSC provided conscientious objectors alternatives to taking up arms, and it remains an active organization that focuses its energies on peacemaking, racial and social justice issues, and women's rights. Founded in



1943, Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is a nonpartisan lobby group based in Washington, DC, that works to advance the Quaker principles of peace, social justice, equality, and environmental stewardship through policy making and legislation.

Friends' testimony of equality has not only shaped their responses to slavery and civil rights, but also put them front and center in the struggle for women's rights. Quakers have actively promoted equal rights for women from the beginning. Quakerism founder George Fox and his wife, Margaret Fell, spoke and wrote passionately about the equality of women and it was Fox who ordered that women should have their own Meetings for Business so they would be on equal footing with men in their Meetings. This belief informed the construction and layout of Meeting Houses: they contain four doors so that women, men, girls, and boys would each be able to enter the house of worship as equals. Some older Meeting Houses still have pocket doors that descend from the ceiling so that women could hold their own Meetings for Business separate from men. Fox and Fell were proponents of women in ministry and the indomitable Mary Fisher (1623 – 1698) was among the first itinerant preachers to travel the world and speak to the equality of women. Equality in education was also important to Fox and early Quakers. Bryn Mawr College, founded in 1883, was established for Quaker women, and the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania was founded in 1850 to encourage women to practice medicine. (From *Quakers in the World*, author unknown). And Westtown School, founded in 1799, is the oldest, continuously operating co-educational school in the nation; Westtown's first enrollee was a girl. In 1848, famed Quaker Lucretia Mott organized the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848 and is considered one of the founders of the feminist movement. An ardent feminist, abolitionist, and social reformer, she spent her life campaigning for the marginalized.



It's no surprise that there are many of examples Westonians in history who were activists. Enoch Lewis, who taught at Westtown from 1799 to 1808, was a vocal abolitionist and his home was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Martha Coffin (1806-1875), the sister of Lucretia (Coffin) Mott, attended Westtown at age 15. Along with her sister

Above: Students at gun law reform rally/vigil in February 2018. Left inset: Student letter-writing campaign to politicians, February 2018

Lucretia, she helped organize the first Women's Rights Conference and continued to be active supporter of women's rights and abolitionism throughout her life. Her home was also a stop on the Underground Railroad. Anna Dickenson



(1842-1938) attended Westtown when she was 10 years old and became an activist at 13 when she penned an anti-slavery essay for *The Liberator*. She became a famous speaker who could draw crowds and was paid handsomely for her speeches which was highly unusual at the time.

## THE TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES

According to Westtown Archivist Mary Brooks, the first half of the twentieth century was more of a time of service than what we describe as activism, but service is, nonetheless, a form of acting on one's beliefs. "Faculty and students were involved in food programs, reconstruction, and work camps in Europe after two world wars. They also provided relief closer to home, sending needed items to communities in West Chester as well as to coal mining families in West Virginia." Brooks adds that, "This was also a time of individuals making decisions about becoming a conscientious objector rather than serving in the military, an example of taking a position and following one's own conscience."

Organized, collective student activism gained steam in the 1960s. Archived issues of Westtown's student newspaper, *The Brown and White*, are peppered with articles about marches and vigils, many of them fueled by anti-war sentiments. Some students became involved in the Civil Rights Movement and many were critical of Westtown's own lack of integration—the first black student was not admitted until 1945 and in 1968 there were still only 12 black students. From 1965 through 1972, Westtown students and faculty attended several anti-war marches and participated in various forms of peace activism.

English teacher Pat Macpherson '69 describes being a student in an era of upheaval and change. "I was a boarding student from 1966-69 which was a time of racial politics, anti-war politics, emerging feminism, and even the sexual liberation movements, so it was a very exciting time. There were younger faculty and a bunch of students who were quite fired up about protesting the Vietnam War. The school sent buses to New York in March of 1968 for the march in Manhattan, (although we



were't able to get in!) Macpherson emphasizes that it seemed to be a given that Westtown and its students would have an anti-war position, although many students and conservative older faculty were not vocal opponents nor did they participate in marches and in the politics. On a personal level, Macpherson became interested in the work of the Students for Democratic Society (SDS), and eventually founded a chapter at Westtown. The school sanctioned the formation of an SDS chapter and permitted the SDS to arrange for a college friend of Macpherson who was a member to come talk to students. "SDS came to talk about what the group was," says Macpherson. "They explained that the SDS was mainly concerned with racial and economic inequality and their relationship to one another. They found a real audience here—I think people wanted to be identified as 'among the barricades.'"

"The Vietnam War was very much on our minds when I was a student in the late 60s and early 70s," says Judy Asselin '71. "When the United States invaded Cambodia, my cousin, Bruce Terrell, who was a year ahead of me, organized a fast. The plan was to ask the school to donate the cost of the food not eaten to peace efforts. It was all we felt we could do as young high school

Above: Pat Macpherson '69 and Don Macpherson '68 at anti-war rally in Philadelphia, 1969. Inset right: student calling session for gun law reform, February 2018

students not yet old enough to vote. There was often a table in Central for petition signing and postcard writing to political leaders. There was this understood culture at Westtown that as educated, influential citizens, it was up to each and every one of us to voice our convictions."

In the 1980s, student activism began to center on anti-nuclear protests and the pro-choice movement. About 15 percent of the Westtown student body attended one of the largest (until that time) pro-choice marches in the spring of 1989. Student-run clubs have always provided activist outlets for students and the clubs of the late 80s, as do many current clubs, focused on social consciousness and political awareness, including the student-of-color group, SUMA (Students United for Minority Awareness) which was created for students to openly discuss racism and racial issues both at Westtown and nationally. Also active in those years were the Amnesty International Club, Students United for Peace, and in 1988, the Atalanta club was formed to "provide a forum for a discussion of gender issues." (Kirby Lunger, *The Brown and White*, December 1, 1988).



In October of 1995 more than 850,000 African American men attended Million Man March to pledge to a revitalized commitment to racial justice. A group of male and female students wanted to attend but, citing the explicit call of organizers that the march was intended for black males, the school did not allow girls to attend. It was an unpopular decision, and the girls who were banned from attending were “up early to protest as students and faculty departed the school.” (Elvin Wells and Kafayat Alli-Galogun, *The Brown and White*, December 1, 1995.)

In the twenty-first century, climate change and environmental justice has been a topic of great concern to students. The Green Coalition, a student-run environmental club, was formed about seven years ago to encourage and increase sustainability practices at Westtown as well as to raise awareness about environmental issues both in and beyond the school. A group of students and faculty, including advisor Judy Asselin '71, attended the 2012 Climate Change March in Washington.

As the issue of police brutality boiled up in the nation, the Black Lives Matter movement gained momentum nationally and on campus. A large group of students and faculty, including then Head of School John Baird, attended the Justice for All march in Washington, DC, in December of 2014, which was organized to draw attention to BLM and racial injustice. The national debate between “Black Lives Matter” and “All Lives Matter” continued and in 2016 made its way to Westtown as well. Controversy sparked by comments on the Opinion Board carried on to dorm rooms, into classrooms, and even into Meeting for Worship. Westtown faculty responded, as they often do, by making time for discussion—this time by holding town hall-type meetings on dorm, a called Meeting for Worship, and a Meeting for Business to address conflict within the community.

Emotions were high on campus after the election of Donald Trump. Students and faculty participated in

the Women's March in January 2017. Westtown sent three buses filled with about 150 people to the Women's March in Washington, DC, to advocate for women's and human rights, for protecting access to healthcare, and to send a general message that Trump's campaign rhetoric was not acceptable.

These are but a few examples of student activism over the past several decades. Activism is cyclical and often reflects what's happening on the national political stage. It also depends on the makeup and personality of the student body. Which brings us today: what's happening now?

### THE BEAT GOES ON

This last school year was unique because of the swell of student-led activism on a national level. School gun violence in particular has prompted students to become more politically involved than they have been for quite some time; that activism has spilled into voter activism. The political climate of the country is one of unrest and turmoil, and students have been responding by leading the charge in racial and social justice issues as well.

In February, students staged a walk-out from Meeting for Worship. It was sponsored by students in the newly

formed IMAGE (Intersectional Minorities Against Growing Exclusion), a group formed to draw attention to the treatment of marginalized groups in the school—students of color, girls, and the LGBTQ community. As member and Co-Student Body President KC Miller '18 says, “We decided on Meeting for Worship because a lot of minority students and a lot of politically active students see their politics and opinions as an extension of their spirituality and their religious identity. We saw the Meeting House as an important space for everyone to be heard.” While the IMAGE group is made up of about 16 regular attenders, about two thirds of the student body participated in the walkout, making their point boldly. They gathered themselves in the South Room to have an alternative Meeting for Worship. In the moment the walkout felt shocking to some faculty, perhaps even a violation of a sacred space. They gathered together to process, discern, and discuss. Senior Class Dean and religion teacher Kevin Eppler said, “To me, [the Meeting House] is exactly the space for this.

This is where we grapple these issues. And what did kids do? They walked out. In silence. They didn't destroy a thing. And they went to have a Meeting for Worship! They didn't go get bagels.” Other faculty encouraged



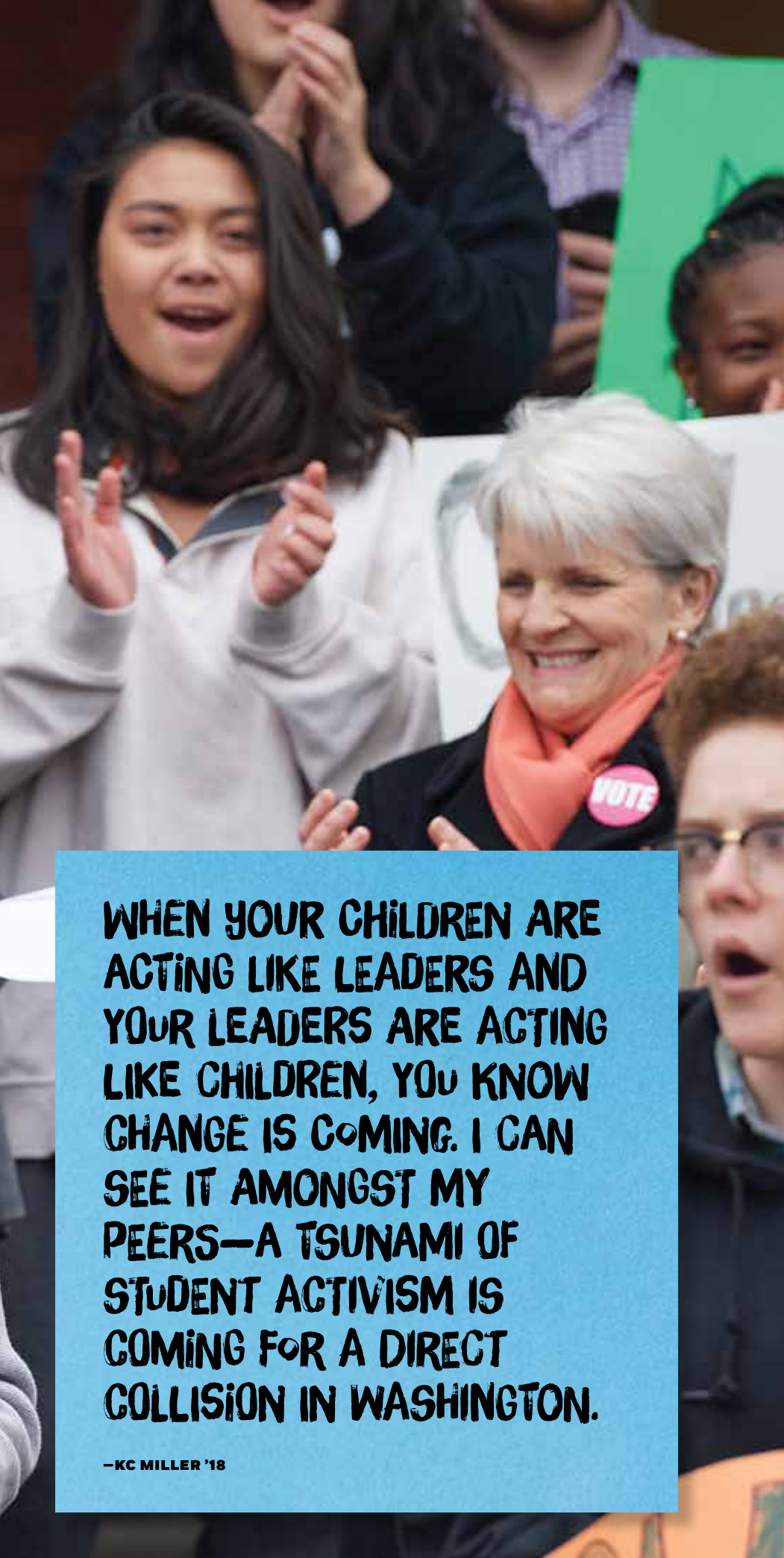
**THERE WAS THIS UNDERSTOOD CULTURE AT WESTTOWN THAT AS EDUCATED, INFLUENTIAL CITIZENS, IT WAS UP TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US TO VOICE OUR CONVICTIONS.**

—JUDY ASSELIN '71









Left: Co-Student Body President KC Miller '18 at gun law reform rally in February 2018

**WHEN YOUR CHILDREN ARE ACTING LIKE LEADERS AND YOUR LEADERS ARE ACTING LIKE CHILDREN, YOU KNOW CHANGE IS COMING. I CAN SEE IT AMONGST MY PEERS—A TSUNAMI OF STUDENT ACTIVISM IS COMING FOR A DIRECT COLLISION IN WASHINGTON.**

—KC MILLER '18

listening to the messages the students needed them to hear. Still, some teachers had anxiety about it. But as Head of School Tori Jueds noted in her Alumni Day address, “That anxiety was a good sign. It is incredibly important that we bear allegiance to our central traditions — and nothing is more central than Meeting for Worship. But if our reaction as a community had stopped there — if, in our alarm, we had dug in our heels and refused to engage with the students who walked out, we would have done a great disservice to those young people and to our traditions.”

The walkout spurred meetings and conversations with faculty, administration, and students. The students in IMAGE were encouraged by the positive responses they received from faculty. Julia Castillo '19 said, “Almost immediately I started receiving a lot of lovely emails from teachers applauding what we did, saying things like ‘I’m with you if you need anything.’ And we started meeting with administrators right away. The response from the school was very positive and encouraging.” The student response has been more mixed and some of the IMAGE members remain frustrated with the climate. “Sometimes people think, ‘Well, we’re Westtown. We’re in this special community. [Hurtful things] don’t happen here.’ Yes, we are in this special community, but that’s not how it works!” says Sahmara Spence Rogers '20. “Things are not just how they seem, they are not black and white. It’s not racist/not racist, sexist/not sexist. There’s a huge grey area and we exist in this grey area. We need you to understand and open your eyes to see this.”

Student clubs remain a starting point and outlet for activism. IMAGE was formed as a way to bring together Rainbow Club and SOCA (Students of Color Association) for intersectional conversations about bias and discrimination; the Democratic Club was established a few years ago, but has existed in various forms over the years at Westtown;





Left: Signs of the times: sign from gun rally in 2018; Westtown student sign from silent peace vigil in support of ending the war in Vietnam, Washington, DC, May 1972 Inset right: 4th grade letter writers

**WE DON'T HOPE THEY'RE ALL GOING TO BE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS. BUT WE DO HOPE THAT THEY BECOME ACTIVE CITIZENS WHO WILL STAND UP FOR SOMETHING THEY BELIEVE IN.**

**—KRISTIN CRAWFORD, LOWER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

and the Green Coalition continues its work on environmental issues. Marissa Colston, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, along with Class Deans in the Upper School, have also created affinity groups for students to have avenues for discussion on topics specific to their peers.

The anti-gun rally in late February was organized by a cross-section of the students in these clubs, and many of them are activists in several arenas. Sabrina Schoenborn '20 had a major role in planning the anti-gun rally. Schoenborn is head of the Democratic Club, and founder of The Girl Narrative, a website that promotes the stories of strong girls and young women as one method to combat sexism and gender typing. She also happens to be a member of the Winchester rifle family, which spurred her interest in speaking at the rally. "I am part of the Winchester rifle

family and even though it's not a modern gun company, it started everything. It started the mass production of the repeating rifle. Sometimes people will refer to the Winchester rifle during certain gun conversations, and I wanted to clear my family's name, to be explicit that this was not our intent, that guns were to be used in this very specific way. People are taking that out of context and bringing it to their own argument, which isn't right. I felt like giving my perspective [at the rally] was really important." Schoenborn describes Westtown as being quite different from her previous school and appreciates an environment in which student voices are encouraged and activism is applauded. "I have received so much support from this community as an activist. Coming from a public school, this was really an incredible experience. I came from an extraordinary school, but having this

kind of open political conversation and open discussions about diversity is something that I was never exposed to."

### **EDUCATING WITH INTEGRITY**

At a school, activism can be a touchy subject, fraught as it is with political implications. It also often signifies taking sides on a controversial issue. It rubs up against convention, norms, the status quo, and institutions. Should a school encourage activism? Does a school that encourages activism tacitly support "sides" of political and social arguments? What is the role of teachers in a politically divisive environment?

At Westtown, Quakers' history of nonviolent protest informs how we educate our students today. Our mission as a Quaker school is not only to uphold the values of peace, equality, integrity, and community but also—as we repeat often—to *educate and inspire our students to become leaders and stewards of a better world*. These are not simply the words from our Mission Statement, they are the tent poles under which we try to create a learning environment that encourages students to find their voices, fosters civic engagement, and helps students understand that they can be agents of change.

In the Lower School, much of the curriculum centers around learning about the experiences of others and building empathy. Empathy is a foundational aspect of advocacy. Building empathy fosters more personal understanding of local and global problems. Students are asked often to consider what is important to them, encouraged to express themselves, and are provided a learning environment in which they feel safe asking questions and exploring topics. Lower School Principal Kristin Crawford says it's about "cultivating the habits of activism," by giving them age appropriate ways to practice these habits. "Our hope that our graduates take



an active role in their citizenship doesn't begin when they are graduates. Our work with them begins when they are young," she says. "From the beginning, we give them opportunities to see that they can have an impact on their communities. That happens in the classroom where they begin to take action in small ways, in the community of West Chester where they might do service or visit organizations that help communities, or even out in the world, like the second graders' fundraising campaign to save the coral reefs." She adds, "The challenge of being a school like ours where student activism is a key part, is letting kids find their own place of activism without influencing them. We don't hope they're all going to be liberal Democrats. But we do hope that they become active citizens who will stand up for something they believe in."

One example of teaching these habits is the letter-writing unit in fourth grade. Teachers Hillary Simons and Shelagh Wilson did not tell students what to write about nor to whom they should write, but asked them to consider social topics that were important to them by talking to family members, considering personal experience, or doing research. The teachers guided them in how to construct an informative and persuasive letter, how to find addresses, how to address and send them. Many students wrote about topical concerns such as health care, gun law reform, animal rights, transgender rights, and the gender pay gap. Caleb Leibowitz wrote to his state representative about universal health care and support for a plan like Canada's because of his family's experience with costly medical bills. "I chose to write about social health care because the prices are insane. [Medical] bills are a big problem for families." Dylan Zahm wrote to Pennsylvania Senator Bob Casey regarding his concern about gun control and universal background checks. "I am very concerned about who is allowed to get guns. It is devastating after all these shootings. Only people who are responsible and don't have criminal records or mental illness or are not underage should be allowed to purchase guns. There

needs to be universal background checks." Payton Myers-Corp was most concerned about the issue of equal pay. She says that knowing that women are paid less is upsetting. "I wrote to Donald Trump about equal pay because women do the same stuff as men but still don't get equal pay." These fourth graders say that they enjoyed the project because it made them feel they had a voice, and because they were able to express themselves about subjects that are important to them. "Yes, this was a class assignment, but we all felt strongly about our topics anyway," says Leibowitz. Zahm adds, "Our letters are important. We wrote them for very serious matters. And we wanted the people we wrote to think kids had a voice, too."

Specific curricula geared toward civic engagement increases in the Middle School and messages that students can have an impact on the world around them are emphasized. Because Middle School is a time of self discovery and change, teachers focus on identity as groundwork for some of these projects and assignments, and as foundation for discovering what moves and inspires them. Some of these lessons are imparted in the seventh grade Think. Care. Act. project. English teacher Abby Lausch says, "Our social curriculum in seventh grade centers around identity, having kids ask themselves *Who am I?* We ask them: *What are some labels you would give yourself, What are labels others put on you?* We have students consider what their affinities and talents are, then we ask them to consider what they feel passionate about. Students start to think about where the needs of their community or society intersects with what they are passionate about. So ideally, their service project at the end of the year is a culmination of all those things." The individual projects range from sponsoring a clothing drive to working in a food bank to volunteering at an animal shelter.



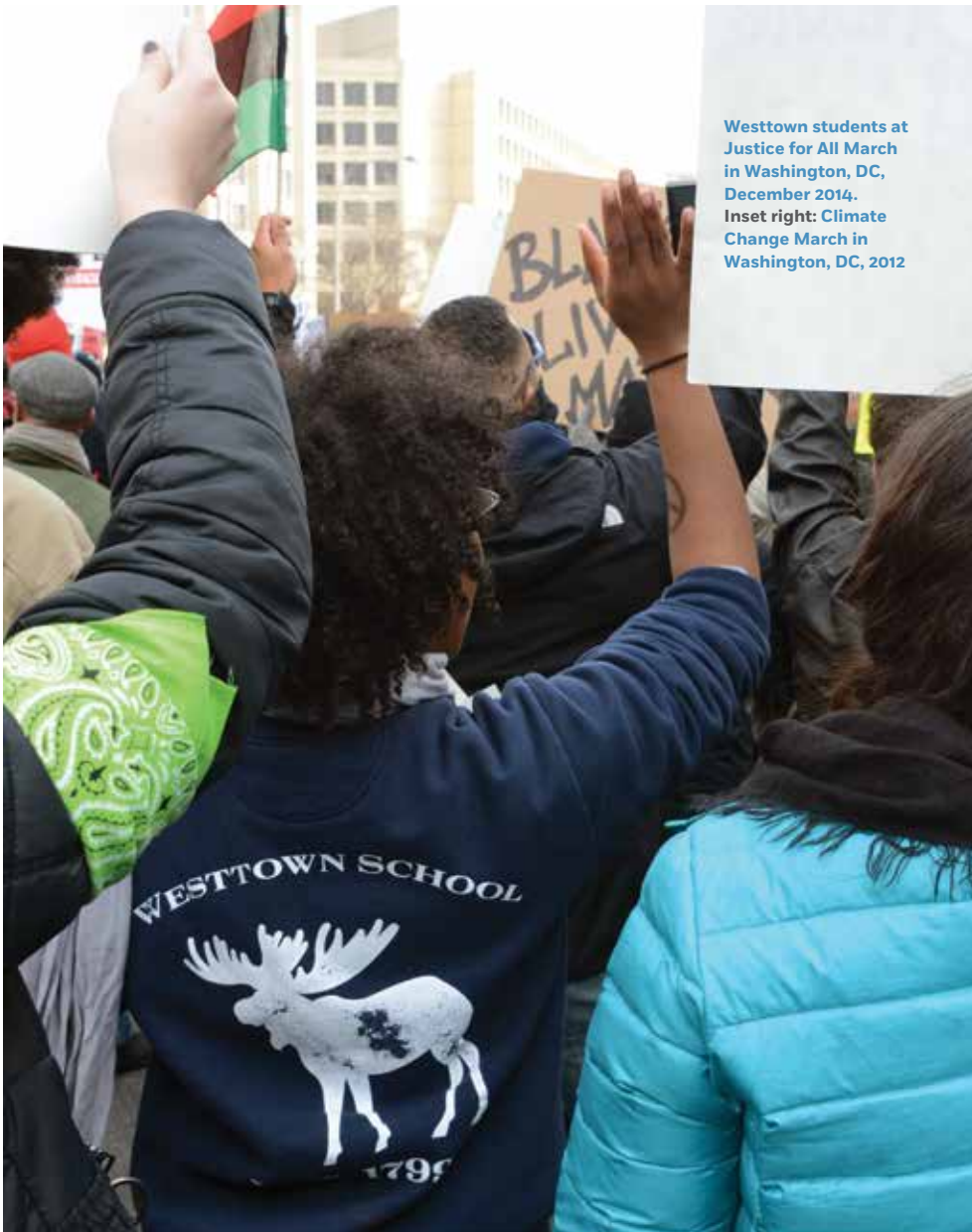
As Lausch notes, the students are still young, so there are some limitations on what they can do or feel comfortable doing, but part of the curriculum is practicing skills for how to engage. "We cover things like how to make a phone call to an organization. How to work through awkward moments you might encounter on the phone or in an interview. We go over the skills you need to interact with different kinds of people and organizations. We are trying to give them the tool kit they will need not only for this kind of project, but also for being engaged citizens in the future," she says.

Another focus in seventh grade is injustice. The Injustice Project is designed to help students build empathy and to understand other's experiences. "We encouraged students to think about who suffers injustice, to identify groups who tend to experience it, and then choose someone who's experienced injustice to interview," says Lausch. "Then they write a piece in which they create a character who has experienced similar things and write from that person's perspective. The point is that they take what they've learned from these interviews and put themselves in the other's shoes." A project like this

gives students who feel political a chance to really engage and those who are not political a non-textbook way of learning about injustice.

Middle Schoolers are often at wildly different points of development, so the level of political and social involvement also varies wildly. Teachers recognize this and meet students where they are, creating avenues for kids who want to engage in topical conversations, and space for those who don't. The MOOSE (Many Optimistic Open-minded Supporters of Equality) group, led by Middle School teachers Carrie Timmins and John Fernandez, meets once a week. It is a forum for discussion about a variety of topics that center around equality. Timmins says that the group is student directed and this year they had a series of





Westtown students at Justice for All March in Washington, DC, December 2014.  
Inset right: Climate Change March in Washington, DC, 2012



town-talk-like events that were well attended. The students who choose to get involved in MOOSE are those who tend to be socially and politically active, but at one of their meetings this year, about 30 students attended to talk about the “take a knee” controversy, many of whom don’t regularly attend. Timmins says that, “It was great to see so many students who were interested in debating the topic. And it wasn’t just students saying, ‘We agree with Colin Kaepernick and the athletes who kneel,’ there were also kids expressing, ‘I don’t know which is right!’ or, ‘I think we should stand during the anthem.’ So all sides were heard.” The MOOSE group has also sponsored town talks around racism and LGBTQ rights, and one specifically to talk about transgender bathrooms. Timmins says that this forum is an important step in their development of ideas about causes that are important to them. “We’re providing a way for them to explore which is really important because the next level is sticking your neck out for a cause.” Timmins echoes Lausch that understanding identity and having confidence are precursors to students’ ability to engage. “They need to have confidence about their identity and they need confidence to effectively communicate a message to a larger group. I think we do this part well, helping them understand themselves first.”

The student clerks, who are leaders in the Middle School, engage in more visible activism, and also help to insure the inclusion of different voices. Activism around gun law reform also arose in the Middle School this year. Students wanted to participate in the school walkout, but in their own way. The clerks were mindful that there were not unified voices on the subject and that there were students who were not interested in participating either because they disagreed, or because they weren’t sure how they felt about the issue. So faculty gave them an alternative. “We don’t want to foist anything on kids, or push an agenda. So kids who didn’t want to participate went to a classroom with a teacher and they talked about standing



aside when actions don't match your values, and what it feels like," said Timmins. Lausch adds, "We are really clear that we don't want to give our political opinions, but that doesn't mean we can't share the values that are aligned with Quaker values. As a Quaker school, we do pick sides on certain issues. But we also give options. For the anti-gun rally, kids had a choice about whether to participate. Some kids went to the rally and the kids who stayed back wrote to a representative or participated in discussions. The message we give is that it's important to be involved and to express your opinion. You don't have to be involved in the same way others are, but you should still be involved. You should still share your ideas."

In the Upper School, there are many course offerings that explore topics of social and environmental justice through the Quaker lens that help students to learn about movements in history that affected change, expose them to diverse voices and stories, and require them to become engaged citizens. Peace and Justice, which is the beginning history course, examines "factors of organized intolerance and methods of social change" that have been used to counter intolerance and injustice, and studies systems that infringe upon human rights. Schoenborn says, "Peace and Justice was the most extraordinary class I've ever taken, by far. That class has truly changed me and the way that I look at the world, in that it has challenged me to look at different perspectives."

Upper level English courses and electives offer powerful experiences in hearing and understanding diverse voices. Nonfiction Writing 2: Black Identity & Society explores race, identity, and social justice through black literature, providing students the opportunity to "bravely engage in the consideration of the multidimensional experiences of blacks in America." One of the contemporary fiction courses explores immigration narratives of writers from around the globe; a literature elective covers multiple perspectives from the Vietnam

Conflict. The religion department pays special attention to the beliefs and practices of Quakerism, strives to develop ethical citizenship, and provides special focus on social justice movements based in faith. Courses such as Nonviolence and Social Change; Religion, Resistance, and Revolution; and Environmental Justice make up the distinctive and unique religion electives. They center on both the history of social justice movements, and the intersection of faith, values, and uprising. The titles of the courses themselves are unmistakable signs that Westtown School's curriculum is borne out of our mission. They might also appear to more politically conservative eyes as having a liberal agenda. While they may have bias, however, the coursework is not designed to influence political positions, but rather to compel students to research, discuss, challenge, and discover their own conclusions and opinions. These courses are seminar style so discussion and debate are embedded in the format. Kevin Eppler, Class Dean and Religion Teacher, says that in his Environmental Justice class students are steeped in research and



**HELPING STUDENTS DISCOVER WHAT MOVES THEM, URGING THEM TO ARTICULATE THEIR BELIEFS, CULTIVATING THEIR CONFIDENCE, AND IMPELLING THEM TO FIND THE COURAGE TO ACT ON THEIR CONVICTIONS IS CENTRAL TO OUR MISSION.**

required to be fluent in the issues they discuss and able to argue both sides of an argument. He says, "I ask the kids, 'What is the current Administration's policy on the Dakota Access Pipeline? On the Keystone Pipeline? What are the effects of these pipelines? What does it do to the Earth?' We also talk about the fact that the Obama Administration supported hydraulic fracturing, for example. So I ask a lot of questions and

I expect students to go about seeking the answers." Eppler adds, "The title of the course gives away its bias—students know that this course is not going to be pro-fracking. But they'd better know why people are pro-fracking because a lot of people are."

The Visual and Performing Arts offers Theater and Social Change, the highest level theater course, which was added last year. Department Chair Will Addis explains, "We created the Theater for Social Change course in which we explore theater that is created to bring about some sort of action. We also look at theater that has created social change unintentionally, like a play called *Waiting for Lefty* which was written about strikes and then people ran out of the theater



# #LOVETHY NEIGHBOR (NO EXCEPTIONS)

and started to call for strikes. So we talk about theater in this way, about building in collaboration, and brainstorm ideas. In this course, students need to make it all happen themselves—they have to write it, stage, it produce it. Last year, the opinion board was really hot so they came up with the idea of a living opinion board. All opinion board pieces for the last 25 years are in the Westtown Archives, so they went and they read them. They also conducted interviews and read old issues of *The Brown and White* [Westtown's student newspaper]. They created monologues out of these archived pieces and it was really good, powerful work. The school responded to it really well." This year, the kids wanted to explore the concept of meta theater so the class wrote a play about kids who want to write a play about a social justice topic, but can't focus because of the rate at which new problems arise. "This class meets after Meeting for Worship, so they would come into class buzzing about the topic of the day," says Addis. "They came up with this idea because every time they sat down to focus on one issue, something else comes and knocks it aside and demands attention. And that's what the play ended up being. It was exciting to watch."

While there are robust examples of curriculum reflecting mission, some of our student activists are pointing out where curriculum is lacking, especially the texts used in U.S. History which many believe whitewash American history and exclude important voices. "We do have a variety of very specific classes that address diversity and activism," says



KC Miller '18, "so my criticism is toward required history and English courses, because the electives are amazing. But if you don't take them, you aren't hearing those voices." Jady Williams '21 says that in spite of Westtown's aspiration toward inclusivity in curriculum, "we're not quite there yet. The U.S. History books leave out certain people." Addis offers that Westtown can be slow to change because, "Westtown has always been better at a lot of things than other schools. We've been better at inclusivity, we've been better at listening, even better at giving students voices. But there are some places where students are saying that it's just not good enough and they don't want to wait anymore. I think that's a good thing." Teachers are listening and have begun to consider the textbooks used in U.S. History and to evaluate the literature choices in English 9.

Students say that their involvement in social and political issues is critical and they are passionate about affecting change. And even as they can be critical of Westtown, they agree that the culture of the school is one that facilitates discussion and is supportive of challenge and difficult conversations. "There is huge difference between other schools and Westtown," says Alexis Rogers '21. "At my old school, if we would try to talk about these topics, let alone stage a walkout or plan a gun rally, that would be looked down upon very much. Westtown does support you when you express yourself, it supports activism, and it does help start conversations."

Initiating these conversations, helping students discover what moves them, urging them to articulate their beliefs, cultivating their confidence, and impelling them to find the courage to act on their convictions is central to our mission, but it is not a perfect nor always smooth



Inset left: Student walkout and silent vigil in remembrance of Columbine shooting, South Lawn, April 2018. Inset right: Sabrina Schoenborn '20

endeavor. Even Quaker institutions like Westtown can find themselves struggling to keep up with the times, to honor the values and voices of all and can, quite frankly, get it wrong sometimes. In today's highly charged and divisive political environment, much is made, rightly so, of teachers not taking sides, of not imparting their own political leanings. This is a sometimes difficult line to toe. As an institution that adheres to the values of Quakerism, Westtown—and by extension many Westonians—has distinct and strong opinions about guns, war, and equality that are firmly based in its spiritual foundation and practice. So how do we impart and teach our values without taking sides?

By teaching students to seek and discern truth, by helping them to discover and use their own voices, and by conveying the lesson that those voices and action can influence change. As Tori Jueds said at the anti-gun rally, "I am exceedingly proud to stand here with students of Westtown School, proud that it was students who conceived, organized, and are carrying out this most important public action. I am inexpressibly proud of a school community that exhorts its young people to step up and take action where they see injustice." And so are we. In these turbulent times, listening to the voices of students and letting them lead the way is the way forward. **W**

# MOVING FORWARD (ALWAYS)



# Westtown Fund

2017 - 2018

## THANK YOU

The Westtown Fund directly supports the work of our students and their teachers. Because of your generous gifts this year, our students are engaged in a wide range of extraordinary learning opportunities in and outside of the classroom, on and off campus, and across the globe. Thank you for helping us to fulfill our mission to prepare our graduates to be stewards and leaders of a better world.

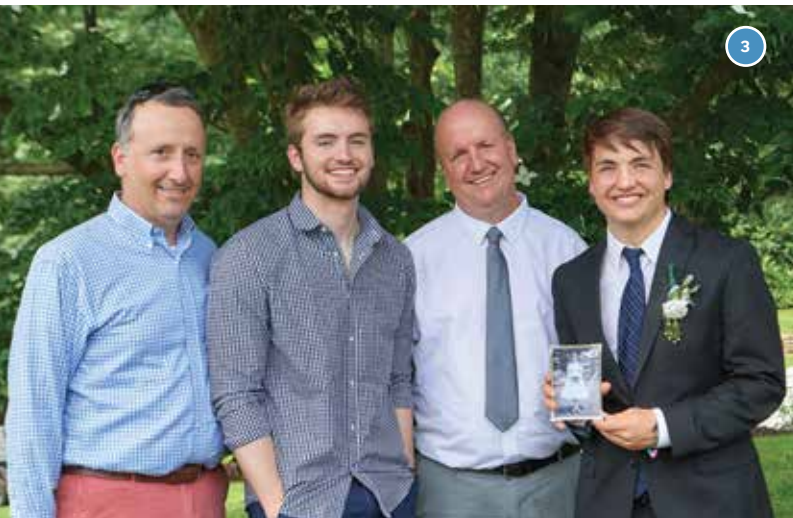




ALL IN THE FAMILY







3



4



5

# All in the Family

**(1) HAMMOND**

Charles H. Hammond '87, Charles Tray Hammond '18, Deion Hammond '21

**(2) ANGELL**

Peter Baldwin '83, Paxton Angell '18, Amy Grillo '82, Julia Grillo Angell

**(3) BREAM**

Kent Bream '86, Christopher Bream '15, Kevin Bream '82, Cameron Bream '18 (In the held photo: Carolyn Cooper '59, Cameron's paternal grandmother, on her Westtown graduation day.)

**(4) BUTLER-ROBERTS**

Alec Butler-Roberts '18, Nina Butler-Roberts '90

**(5) FERNANDEZ**

John Fernandez (CF), Lillian Fernandez '18

**(6) HARRISON**

Bruce Harrison '81, Anna Harrison '18, Lisa Cromley (CF), David Harrison '13

**(7) DEAR**

Carter Dear '18, Anna Harrison van Arkel '54, Rosalie Dear '16, Marc Dear (CF). Not pictured Marion Dear '83 (CF)

**(8) CULCASI**

Ian Culcasi '12, Patrick Culcasi '18, Kim Culcasi (CF), Rob Culcasi, James Culcasi '14

**(9) SCHAFER**

Beth Stoner, Max Stoner, Chris Schafer, Chuck Schafer, Margery Burson Schafer '76, Tim Schafer '18, Nancy Summers '59, Robin Nevitt '49, Liz Burson, Audrey Nevitt, Martin Yespy, Bruce Burson '75, Becky Burson (Past generations: Margery F. Morgan (Nevitt) 1916, Dorothy Morgan (Summers) '27, Joanne (Nevitt) Burson '47, Thomas Burson '68, William Burson '73)

**(10) ROOSA**

Daelan Roosa '18, Kathryn Swartz Roosa '81, Donald Swartz '55, Barbara Lynn Murphy '82

**(11) ABBOTT**

Ellen Jensen Abbott (CF), Jane Abbott '18, Will Abbott '14

**(12) MCLEAR**

Claire McLearn (CF), Quinlan McLearn '26, Ethan McLearn '18, Evelyn McLearn '20, Rob McLearn (BOT)

**(13) TIEN**

Julian Tien '18, Caroline Tien '16, David Tien '73



8



10



13



# Barry Hogenauer '73

## It Started Here

STORY BY KARL VELA '03 • PHOTO BY ED CUNICELLI

**Lifer**, faculty brat, and dedicated alumnus Barry Hogenauer '73 embodies the true dichotomy of an adventurous Westonian spirit: the drive to reach far and wide to pursue one's passions while remaining grounded in a close-knit and loving community. As classmate Jon Evans '73 put it during his remarks on Alumni Day, Westtown teaches its students "to grow roots and wings." There is perhaps no stronger example than Barry.

The Hogenauer family arrived at Westtown in 1950 when Gene Hogenauer, Barry's father, came to teach Latin and German and coach tennis. His mother, Mary, tutored students and worked in the Archives. Since his youngest days, Barry and his siblings, Alice Hogenauer Lade '57, Dan Hogenauer '59, Margaret Hogenauer McCormick '61, and Sam Hogenauer '64, have called Westtown home. He was a joy to faculty and students alike, known for his creativity and adventurous spirit.

Since graduating in 1973, Barry has pursued a phenomenally successful career as a cameraman and tech manager, covering some of the world's most prestigious events. He has tech managed seven Olympic Games and won eight Emmy Awards for his work covering events like the World Series, Super Bowl, Stanley Cup Finals, Kentucky Derby, X Games, President Reagan's Inauguration, Kennedy Center Honors, Newport Jazz Festival, 29 Masters Golf Tournaments, and concerts for artists including the Rolling Stones, U2, and Paul Simon.

As Barry explained in his Keynote address at the Alumni Association Annual Meeting on this past Alumni Day, "Westtown is my foundation, as it is for many others sitting here, in many different ways. My career in television started here - I just didn't know it at the time. My father was an inspiration for my photography. He taught German and Latin but he was also the photographer that helped with the hobby [former Westtown term for club] that met in Industrial Hall, and he built a photography darkroom in our house. How I fell into television is too long a story to tell, however, an important part of why it worked out for me was because of my drama teacher here at Westtown, Hugh Cronister.

"Hugh was fond of sayings accompanied by pictures and cartoons he had posted on the bulletin board. There was one

saying that really caught my attention, and that was, 'There are no small roles, only small actors.' I started by freelancing, working as a utility and gopher doing many different things. No matter what it was, I dove into that role whether it was driving trucks or delivering a cold soda to a producer. That was an important part of why I was able to have the opportunities I did."

Barry went on to share how through humble dedication he was able to further his career as a crew member on camera teams capturing major horse racing and Nascar events before securing more consistent work as a tech manager and cameraman. Through every job, Barry embraced and upheld the importance of dedication and community he discovered at Westtown.

"One of my favorite camera positions is here [displays picture of himself hanging out of a helicopter with a camera]. This is on a helicopter with a pilot out of Denver. The assignment was to cover a bike race that went from California all the way to Boulder, Colorado. On day one we got beauty shots. We flew over San Francisco, Alcatraz, and we even flew under the Golden Gate Bridge, which was very special. On day two, the front of the helicopter lit up like a Christmas tree. Red lights, green lights, alarms going off, and then the pilot said 'We're going down!' I rolled on my back the best I could and he took us into a dive. Now, the engine did not fail, but you could have fooled me as we bounced into a field that contained a number of concerned cows.

"Technology has moved on. [Displays picture of a drone]. This is a drone. Drones are quiet, safe, inexpensive, and they can shoot better video than I ever could. I have finally gotten over the fact that I have been replaced by a toy.

"Later on, ESPN called me and wanted to know if we would work on a new project called the X Games. My event would be called the 'Street Luge.' Take a skateboard, make it longer and wider, get lazy, lay down on it, and run the street. Some sport! This a good time for a disclaimer: when I say 'we' I am referring to a team of people, producers, directors, cameramen, tape operators, video shaders, sound operators, and critical utilities.




I was along riding coattails and the challenge was to cover an event that had never been seen before. We really made it up as we went along. Many people had ideas on how to get this done, so we listened to everybody, weighed the pros and cons, and finally just experimented.

“One idea we had was to get a utility to hold a small camera on a stick above the riders. Sound like we used GoPro’s? This predated them by seventeen years. Four days of experimentation and practice and through many other innovations and we had earned an Emmy for Technical Achievement.

“One of the utilities who operated that shot went on to work for Nascar and he now mounts the in-car cameras for all the race cars. One of my managers when on to work in the Olympic division at NBC Sports and he took me along to be tech manager for seven Olympics.”

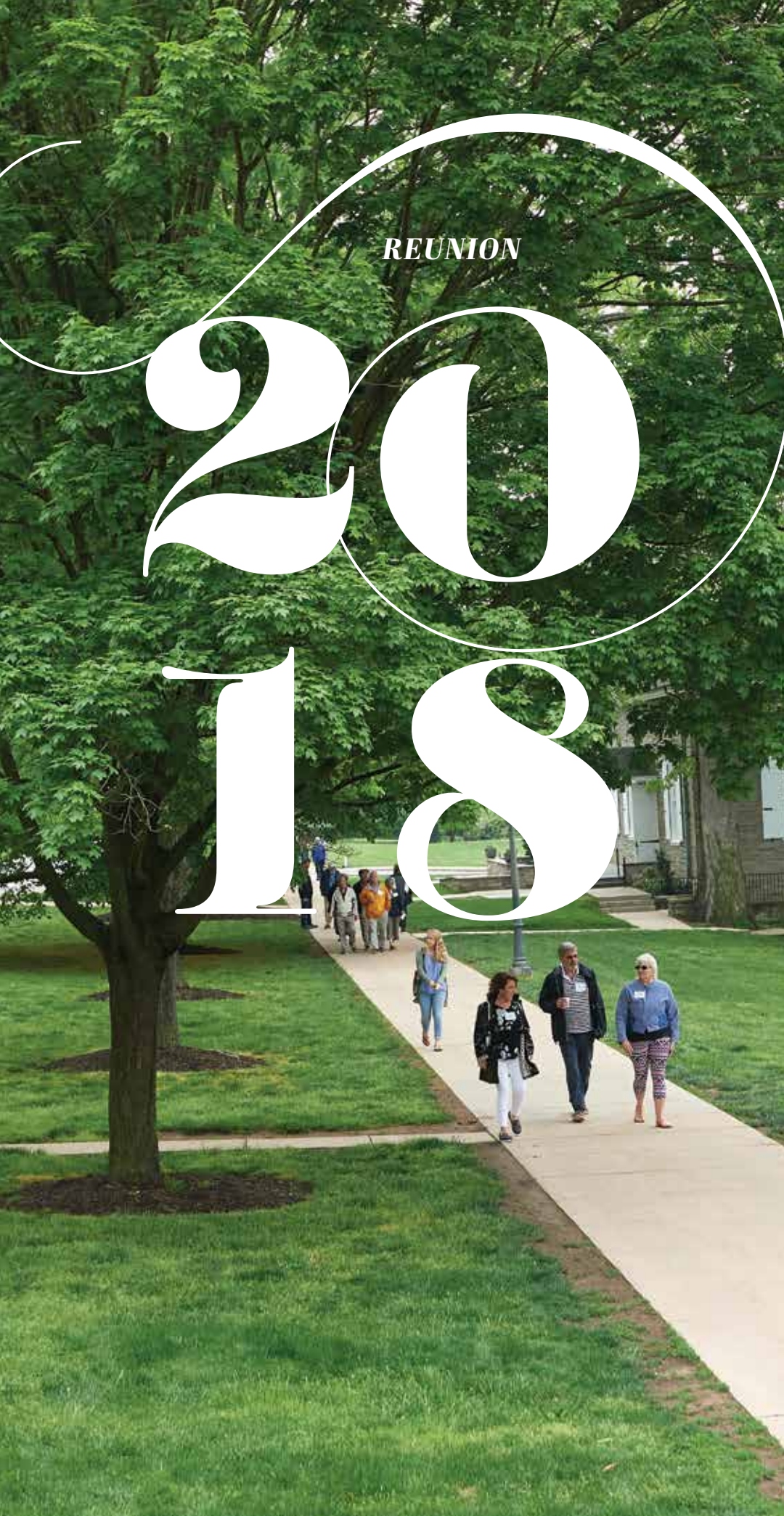
However, even as Barry’s career carried him across the globe to televise some of the most fantastic events in recent history, he never failed to stay grounded in the Westtown community that was so near and dear to him. Westtown forever remained a constant source of inspiration and joy in his work.

“Some of my favorite moments were covering the World Series with my classmates and my best friends: Pat Comerford ’73, David Cronister ’73, Joe Strode ’73, and Milo Titone ’73. Five years later while working for Major League Baseball, I was able to hire my brother, Dan. Not long after, Dan and I were standing in the Yankees clubhouse right after they had won the World Series. David Wells, one of the pitchers, walked in with a jeroboam of champagne (that’s equivalent to four bottles) and it was cranked. The only other person in the locker room at that point was George Steinbrenner. ‘Gee, should I douse George Steinbrenner, or these two guys?’ David must have thought to himself. Well he trashed us. He emptied the entire bottle of champagne on us. So if getting a shower of champagne was ever on my bucket list, it is now off it.”

In all the myriad places Barry’s fascinating career has taken him, he never drifted far from his Westtown friends and family in body or in spirit. For Barry, the Westtown community has been, and always will be, home. 







REUNION

2018

50th

## Stepping Stones

*Class of 1968*

BY TOM SCHEFFEY AND  
RACHEL TRUEBLOOD

**It started** with just a trickle of class stalwarts at the Brandywine River Museum late Thursday afternoon, a sunny Chester County day. The Wyeth paintings, too, were like old friends. At dinner later at John and Vickie Manning's Pocopson farm, more and more classmates dribbled in. The inspiring views included grazing horses and their rare semi-albino (leucistic) hawk perched in a distant tree.

On Friday morning, we first gathered in the South Room for coffee and displays of old photos dating back to Lower School, and then attended Upper School classes on macro-economics, WWI, dystopian literature and more—all most illuminating. Next, we were treated to a delicious lunch in the Dining Room with some students and faculty.

Instead of memorializing the most valuable athletes in the main building halls, new plaques now herald the top scholars, and fresh displays show who got into which college. Plenty of wall space is given to recognizing athletics in the vast new gym. The dorms, with sky-beds, encourage individualistic décor and expression. Posters offer



crisis help for drugs and information about consent. The Greenwood amphitheater is unchanged and timelessly classic, and the lake has been restored with a handsome new dam. Many of us thoroughly enjoyed a scrumptious Benefactor's Tea with the vibrant new Head of School, Tori Jueds, in the impressive new Science Center building in mid-afternoon.

At the Friday night gathering at Susan and Peter Temple's barn, waves of sherbet-colored Adirondack chairs invited endless conversations as more and more old friends showed up amid constant new eruptions of recognition and glee. Superb food sustained us. Thanks to the 190-page reunion book, most people were easy to recognize. An ecstatic evening!

On Saturday morning, the main event was the Annual Meeting in the Barton-Test Theater. When younger reunion classes were asked to stand, their ranks were sometimes thin; but when it came to 1968, it seemed the whole center of the auditorium stood up. Rachel Trueblood and Jessie Cocks, who both do improv comedy, presented the \$250,000 class gift, which emphasized financial aid and faculty support. They'd forgotten to have a big cardboard check or other tangible symbol created to pass to the Head of School. Instead, Rachel improvised with an airline baggage claim stub and Jessie sang a Native American chant of blessing.

Tori Jueds, clad in her signature knee-high boots, wowed the Annual Meeting crowd. She explained how, earlier that year, the school had dealt with a walkout during Meeting for Worship, when students left en masse on grounds that minority voices weren't heard. The response wasn't a crackdown



of command and control. Instead, intensive listening ensued in the practice of "deep democracy." Things healed. In a daring and unexpected a cappella moment, Tori belted out the powerful refrain from Pat Benatar's "We Belong:"

*We belong to the light, we belong to the thunder*

*We belong to the sound of the words we've both fallen under*

*Whatever we deny or embrace for worse or for better*

*We belong, we belong, we belong together...*

As we arose to leave at the end, Nick Schatzki exclaimed: "I've got to move here. I've got to teach drama here. I want to die here!"

The Cabin was reserved for the 50th reunion class, and an elegant lunch was abuzz with conversation—often almost too loud. At the fireplace end, a large screen showed the 1968 Earl Fowler film that centered on *The Tempest* and Westtown as its own enchanted island. Louise Briggs Andrew and Garry Brinton hooked up a Zoom video call for distant classmates to call in for a chat, and we were joined by Barbara Webster in Massachusetts, Nelson Lindley in California, and Scott Frazier in Montana. Mike Kent's

daughters Libby and Maria appeared unexpectedly and were adopted by the class over the course of the weekend.

In the afternoon, the lake was open for canoeing and a student robotics team exhibition drew a small crowd near the Belfry. Several of us thoroughly enjoyed special exhibits displayed in the Archives. Then people melted away until dinner (no doubt for their naps).

A fabulous Saturday dinner was again at the Temple's barn and a dramatic thunder & lightning downpour made the gathering that much more intimate. Delicious salmon! Rachel Trueblood, Stephen Benfey, Nick Schatzki, Jessie Cocks, Susie MacDonnell, and (Teacher) Carolyn Lee treated the group to an unparalleled comedy show recalling and lambasting our notorious time at Westtown.

At Sunday breakfast in the Cabin, Westtown chefs outdid themselves with a sumptuous buffet, followed by a thoughtful and tender Meeting for Worship. One theme arose from the idea that stepping stones on a path sometimes bear inscriptions. If the school had such a path, what thoughts would we pass along to future Westonians? Many also expressed how deeply we feel gratitude for the school and for one another, from our unique year. W





REUNION

# 2018

SNAPSHOTS

With over 750 alumni, families, and guests in attendance, Westtown's campus was bustling with excitement and energy as Westonians from all over the world came together to celebrate reunions, friendships, and a profound connection to Westtown. Highlights included a packed theater for the Alumni Association Annual Meeting, a symposium in the Science Center, a robotics demonstration outside the Belfry, and much more! Thank you to all our alumni who made that weekend such a special time for our entire community.









# Class Notes

Class Notes are compiled by the Alumni Office. The submission deadline for this issue was June 19, 2018; information received after that date will appear in the next issue of *The Westonian*.

## 1938 Marion Darnell Fuson and Lucretia Wood

**Evans** celebrated Alumni Day on campus. Lifelong friends, Marion and Lu were delighted to represent their class at its 80th reunion!

**1940** Ann Holmes '68 writes, "Please tell the faculty and staff at Westtown that my mom loved Westtown with a passion. She kept every issue of the *Westonian* with her. Westtown was a major factor in her life and she spoke about Westtown all the time." **Isabel Johnson Morrison**, a descendant of Danville's founder, passed away peacefully on Saturday morning, March 10, 2018, at Emmanuel Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation in Danville, Pennsylvania. The daughter of Edward Francis and Emma Polk Johnson, she was born April 1, 1923, at the Geisinger Memorial Hospital. She always delighted in saying she was an "April Fool!" Isabel's beloved husband, Samuel S. Morrison, preceded her in death in 2014. She is survived by her four daughters, and

spouses, Ann Holmes '68 and husband, Tod; Isabel Morrison and husband, Taylor Runner; Elizabeth Richie; and Joan Dailey, and husband, Ralph. She is survived by many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Isabel was a lifetime resident of Riverside and attended Riverside School; then attended one grade at the Villa Sacred Heart Grammar School and two more grades at St. Cyril

Academy prior to attending Westtown. In her 50th Reunion Westtown book, Isabel wrote of her life. "After preparing for the business world at Katherine Gibbs, Boston, I married John Burke, a Marine Lieutenant. I saw him off to the South Pacific from California and returned home to Danville. My accounting skills



were tested at the local electric company for a few months. The devastating news of his death on Iwo Jima arrived at the office." Returning to Boston, she worked at the Massachusetts General Hospital. That was where she was introduced to a young medical student, Sam Morrison, who was going to be doing his internship at the Geisinger in Danville. Unsure of her future, overcome by summer heat, and experiencing love at first sight, she returned to Danville and found a job at Geisinger. The two lovebirds were married in Grove Presbyterian Church in November of 1948. In 1949, they departed for Sapporo, Japan, as Sam was called to duty as an Army surgeon and he soon went on to serve in the Korean War. Isabel remained in Japan until the birth of her first daughter, Ann. She then returned to Danville. After Sam's return, they moved to Rochester, Minnesota, where Sam did an internship at the Mayo Clinic and Isabel delivered two more babies, daughters, Isabel and Elizabeth. From Minnesota, they moved on to Washington, D.C. for two years where Sam practiced pediatrics at the Washington Clinic. In 1956, they returned to their beloved Danville where Sam began his career at Geisinger. In 1960, Isabel delivered her fourth daughter, Joan. Isabel was a devoted wife, mother,

"granny," and daughter. She was also a fond friend to many of the good folk of Danville. She was an active lifetime member of the Grove Presbyterian Church and volunteered at the Riverside Elementary School. She was a member of the Geisinger Auxiliary, the Montour County Historical Society, and Daughters of the American Revolution. Music was one of Isabel's great delights and Rodgers and Hammerstein, opera and such, were like a film score playing in the background at the Morrison household. She always claimed that she could not sing, but she could. Her family remembers her lovingly for her subtle sense of humor, kind nature, and sweetly supportive easy going spirit.

**1941 Robin Dana Willits, Ph.D.**, age 94, passed away on Saturday, September 30th, 2017, in Exeter, New Hampshire. He was formerly Associate Dean and Professor of the Whittemore School of Business, now the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire. He was the co-author of the successful textbook, *Effective Behavior in Organizations*, by Cohen, Fink, Gadon and Willits. After retiring in 1990, Professor Willits taught part time and volunteered for hospice. A lifelong



SUBMIT A CLASS NOTE...

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**E-Mail:**  
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**Online:**  
westtown.edu/classnotes

We look forward to hearing from you!





Quaker, Professor Willits was an active member of the Dover Friends Meeting in Dover, New Hampshire, where he served different leadership roles including counseling prisoners on alternative methods to cope with violence. He was president of the Strafford Guidance Center in New Hampshire. He continued to ski into his 80s, and had a lifelong interest in the Mt. Washington area. He was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Westtown in 1941. He was a pilot of a B-17 bomber in World War II, flying thirty-four missions from England over Germany. He married Lydia Stokes Willits, from Moorestown, New Jersey, the mother of his children. He received two degrees in 1949—an AB in Physics from Middlebury College, and a BS in Engineering from MIT. He started his career as an industrial engineer at Eastman Kodak, gained more experience as a manager at General Control, in Boston, Massachusetts, and later at Raytheon. He developed new skills, such as learning public speaking by joining Toastmasters. In his forties, he earned his Ph.D. in organizational behavior from MIT in 1965. As a professor at UNH he was involved in changing the focus of the Whittemore School of Business with less emphasis on accounting and more emphasis on managerial skills and the understanding of organizational behavior. A sabbatical year and a Fulbright

award allowed him to live and teach in Sri Lanka and test his ideas in a place where the culture was quite different. In the early 1980s he installed solar panels that generated hot water well before this practice reached much public awareness. He is survived by two sons, Roy C. Willits and wife, Arlene of Clarksburg, New Jersey, and Thomas R. Willits and wife, Nancy Wheeler, of Northampton, Massachusetts; three granddaughters, Lindsay Fogg-Willits, Nina Wheeler Roberts, and Nicole Wormell Bryant; and eight great grandchildren. He is also survived by his second wife, Phyllis Killam-Abell, and stepdaughter, Susan Abell and his nieces, Barbara Hayden Fitts, Catherine Austin Fitts, Nancy Deren, Thalia Venerable, and his nephew, Michael Fitts.

**1943 Gerry Williams** writes, “Our 75th! Nine were heard from; six were present: Ted Brinton, Sylvia Taylor Fen (from Nebraska), Diana Lassen Harrison, Barbara Jones Parker (from Massachusetts), Martin Trueblood, and myself. We heard from David Brown, Betty Baer Lewis, and Barbara James Stonestrom (whose 93rd birthday was on Alumni Day!). Except for Martin Trueblood, those present gathered at Crosslands with Ted as our host for a social time and dinner.”

● **Adelaide (Mikell) Pollock Kooker** passed away Saturday, December 9, 2017 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Mikell was 93 years old and a longtime resident of Carlsbad until the death of her sweetheart and husband of 65 years, Fred Kooker. Trading in her ocean for the Rocky Mountains, she resided in Colorado Springs to be close to family members for the past eight and a half years until her passing. She was an avid reader, attending Westtown prior to completing nurses training. Mikell was a Coronary/Intensive Care Nurse for the most of her life, working in hospitals in Colorado Springs and Orange County. Mikell also volunteered at the Encinitas Hospital, Newcomer’s Club, and belonged to the Daughters of the British Empire. She and Fred were members of the Solana Beach Presbyterian Church. They had a son, Frederick M. Kooker of Hawaii, daughters Robin Riddle of Colorado Springs and Kristi Cross of Minden, Nevada, and two grandchildren, Kelly and Lindsey Riddle. Mikell will be missed by all. ● **Denis Brown** writes, “It seems a long time since I graduated in 1943, but I have been back to the school for Alumni Weekend two or three times since then and it has always been a great pleasure to do so. Westtown was a valued part of my life and I remember with pleasure and gratitude how a number of English children were taken in during the war period and made us so very welcome. Since ’43 I trained as an architect and town planner. I have been working in the public sector including sixteen years as the head of departments in two London boroughs plus a spell as Chief Architect and Town Planner for the Nigerian capital city of Abuja. For the last thirty years my wife and I have been running a small private practice in London, which continues. My family has grown and is still growing. I now have six children, eight grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.”

**1944 F. Raymond Jenkins, Jr.** of Upper Saranac Lake died on Wednesday, January 10, 2018 at Elderwood Uihlein Living Center, Lake Placid, New York. He was born March 4,





1925 in Richmond, Indiana. He is the brother of David Jenkins '55 and the father of Daniel Jenkins '70, Victoria Jenkins '72, and Carol Jenkins Blackmore '76. He was predeceased by his wife, M. Victoria "Dickie" Jenkins who was a former faculty member at Westtown.

**1945** **Virgil Lang Evans** of Carlisle, passed away on Thursday, January 4, 2018 at his home. He was born on February 12, 1927 in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, and was a son of the late Isaac R. '09 and Kathryn (Lang) Evans '20. Virgil graduated from Westtown and then earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Temple University. He was a U.S. Army veteran of WWII. Virgil retired after 25 years as a 7th thru 12th grade Art teacher with Susquenita High School in Duncannon, Pennsylvania. He was a member of the Upper Dublin Friends Meeting in Ambler and enjoyed sculpting, ceramics, and painting, as well as performing and volunteering with the high school and community theaters. He is survived by his wife of more than sixty years, Carolyn M. (Clark) Evans; two sons; Morgan (wife, Mary Ann) Evans of Newville and Mark (wife, Mercene) Evans of Newport; two daughters, Stephany Evans of New York City and Elizabeth Evans of Norristown; one brother, Wilbur

Evans '51 of Ocean City, NJ; and four grandchildren, one great-granddaughter, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by one brother, Isaac R. Evans, Jr. '42. ● **Anne Grimes Askew** of Woodland, North Carolina, passed away peacefully on Monday, March 26, 2018 at the home of her daughter Laura Askew Wolfe. Anne grew up in Georgia and Woodland and after graduating from Westtown, returned to her home state. She attended North Carolina College for Women (University of North Carolina Greensboro) and graduated with a degree in interior design. Anne married Bill Askew, the love of her life, in 1950, eventually settling in Wilson, North Carolina, until their move to Memphis, Tennessee, in 1964. In 1972 Anne and Bill returned to North Carolina, where they lived in Wilson and Woodland. Devotion to public service defined Anne's life as she worked for the welfare department in Wilson and was head of the adoptive child division in Memphis until returning to North Carolina. She served as a deacon at both their church in Memphis and in the Woodland Baptist Church, where she was also a board member and Sunday school teacher for over thirty years. While in Woodland, she returned for a time to her love of design in both building new homes and restoring older ones as well as consulting on interior design. Anne was preceded in death by her

husband, William Linwood Askew Jr.; her mother, Sibyl Jessup Grimes '17; her father, John Henderson Grimes; and her brother, John Henderson Grimes Jr. '49. She is survived by her son, William (Lin) Linwood Askew III, and his wife, Sally, of Memphis, Tennessee; her daughter, Laura Askew Wolfe, and her husband Tom, of Wake Forest; five grandchildren: Will Askew, Charles Askew, Thomas Wolfe, Sawyer Wolfe, and Anna Wolfe; and three great grandchildren: William Askew, James Askew, and Ellery Anne Askew. In addition, she leaves her loving niece Vicki Grimes of Four Oaks; her nephew, John Grimes and his wife Donna of Roanoke Rapids, as well as great-nieces and nephews who all loved "Mommy Anne."

**1947** **Marilyn 'Les' (White) Best** of Coatesville, Pennsylvania, passed away on August 12, 2014, after a battle with cancer, which she fought with a positive attitude and iron will. She died peacefully at home in the care of her family and friends. She was 84. Marilyn grew up in Westtown and was married to Harry "Pete" Best for 45 years, until his passing in 1993. Together they raised four children: Harry "Skip" Best, Tom Best, and Jenny Best, all of Chester County, and Becky Best Hays of Boise, Idaho. They owned L&P Stables, a gentleman's farm where they raised thoroughbred horses. She was also a loving and proud grandmother to Sarah, Zach and David Best, and Jake Hays. She received both her bachelor's and master's degrees in education from West Chester University and taught in West Chester area elementary schools for 24 years until she retired in 1995. She then pursued her passion for travel, exploring Central America, Australia, Egypt, Kenya, Europe, and Russia in addition to several trips across North America. Later she shifted her focus to quilting, writing, and going to the movies as well as spending time on the Chesapeake Bay with family and friends. Marilyn will be remembered as an open-hearted and caring person with a strong spirit and love of nature. Marilyn is the sister of Joyce White Briner '43



and Nancy White Henke '39 and the aunt to Allison White Petruzzelli '72. She is predeceased by her brothers Christopher White '50 and Daniel White '45, along with her sister-in-law Hoy White (FF), and her nephew Kenneth White '69.

**1948** **Ann Edgar Miller** writes, "I would have loved to see the rest of our 'remainders' at our 70th Reunion, but I have been using a walker for about five years now, and travel is difficult. Scott turned 91 on March 15th, and I recently turned 87. We have been wonderfully blessed by our four children, eight grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. Sixty-eight years married!" ● **Nell Brown Edwards**, 85, widow of William David Edwards Sr., passed away December 17, 2015 at her home surrounded by her family. Nell was a native of Murfreesboro, North Carolina and was a daughter of the late William Northcott Brown and Beatrice Smith Brown and was also predeceased by a sister, Jane Evans '42 and a brother, Jay Brown. A daughter of a Quaker clergyman, Nell attended Roanoke Chowan Community College Nursing School after graduating from Westtown. Left to cherish her memory are two daughters, Lollie Carolyn Edwards and Bonnie Glover; husband Mark and three sons, William David Edwards Jr. and wife Tina, Jonathan Brown Edwards, and Jody Edwin Edwards and wife Cathy; cousins Edwin P. Brown '52 and Dorothy Shoffner '58; fourteen grandchildren, seven great grandchildren, and her canine companion, Dolly. ● **Robert Silmon Chase, Ph.D.**, 87 of Lansdale, Pennsylvania, formerly of Easton, Pennsylvania, passed away on Friday, March 30, 2018, at Lansdale-Abington Hospital. Born on June 9, 1930 in Glenside, Pennsylvania, he was the son of the late Eleanor (Walter) and Robert S. Chase Sr. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Haverford College after graduating from Westtown. He later served on both school Boards and earned a master's degree from the University of Arkansas in Zoology and a Ph.D. in Biology from Bryn Mawr College. He was

a Professor of Biology at Lafayette College, serving as Head of the Department of Biology, Dean of the College, Provost and Dean of the Faculty before retiring as the Charles A. Dana Professor of Biology. He was a licensed private pilot who built and flew his own plane and a ham-radio operator who received an Amateur Radio License, Extra Class. He also enjoyed birding, astronomy, and shop work. He retired to Brittany Pointe Estates, Lansdale, Pennsylvania, in 2007 where he served as treasurer, vice-president, and president of the Residents Association. He was a very active member of Brittany Pointe Estates where his work ethic and many skills made substantial contributions. He and his wife, Barbara, received the Residents of the Year Award in 2017. He is survived by his wife Barbara (Yost) Stewart; four children and their spouses: David Chase, Peter Chase '77 and his wife, Debra Ashton-Chase of Easton, Susan Nye '78 and husband E. Darby Nye of Arlington, VA, Jonathan Chase '82 and his wife Lori Chase of Whitehall, Pennsylvania; two step-sons: Dr. Russell Stewart and his wife Dr. Anne Stewart of Morgantown, West Virginia, Douglas Stewart and his wife Elizabeth Stewart of Birdsboro, Pennsylvania; eight grandchildren; three step-grandchildren, and two step-great-grandchildren.

**1950** **Helen Steere Horn** passed away on April 29, 2018 in Athens, Ohio. Helen was born April 11, 1932 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Dorothy and Douglas Steere of Haverford, Pennsylvania. She was preceded in death by her husband, David, of over 50 years. She is survived by her sister, Anne Steere Nash '52 of Newton, Massachusetts; her daughter, Becky (Douglas) Ferguson of Albany, Ohio, and her grandchildren, Andrea and Eric Ferguson. After living in Europe and Africa, Helen moved with David to a farm in New Marshfield. They donated their farm to become the Woodcock Nature Preserve. She recently settled happily in Athens. Helen was a lifelong member of the Religious Society of Friends. She led workshops using the arts and small group

sharing at Pendle Hill. She helped to found the Quaker Meeting in Athens now located in Chauncey, Ohio. Helen received her BA in history from, a MEd from Radcliffe College, and an MA in counseling from Ohio University. She taught in Boston, Chicago, and at Alexander High School. She was a peace and justice activist, a community counselor, and an oral historian. There is a video featuring her interviews and stories of women in local mining towns, *The Other Half Speaks: Reminiscences of Athens Co. Coal Town Women, 1900-1950* that won a 1991 award from the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums. A prolific poet, her poems often express the resonance she felt between things in the natural world and her inner experience; many of her poems have been published. For over 20 years she had been part of a monthly writers and artists group and facilitated an Inner Journey Writing Group for over a decade. She has also been a song leader. She was known by many for her kindness and generosity.

**1951** **Ronnie Petersen** writes, "We came to Florida for two weeks vacation to escape the cold New England winter. Unfortunately my husband, Bob, broke his hip and required emergency surgery with hip replacement. He is doing well post operatively. I was hospitalized for six months for micro CVA with very difficult to control seizures. I have been gradually getting better. Unfortunately, I was unable to go to the last class reunion. It is unlikely that I will be able to come to future ones. My years at Westtown were very happy ones. It helped start me on my career in medicine which was very fulfilling. I have many happy memories of my two years at Westtown."

**1952** **Barbara L. Blauth** passed away peacefully on January 10, 2018 surrounded by her loving husband, Allan, and close family. Barbara was a longtime resident of Solebury, Pennsylvania and recently moved to Foulkeways in Gwynedd. She grew up in Mercerville, New Jersey,





and graduated from Westtown before studying art history at Ursinus College and the University of Pennsylvania. She worked as a floral designer in Hopewell and Yardley, and later as office manager for 35 years at Allan's architectural firm in Lambertville. Barbara loved nature and being outdoors. She found great pleasure working in her garden, watching birds, and enjoying family ski trips and beach vacations. She enjoyed the arts and had a passion for creative design, which was reflected in her home and garden. Creating beautiful needlework was a favorite pastime for many years. Above all she adored being with family and friends, always greeting with a smile, always generous and kind. She will be forever dearly missed by all who knew her. She is survived by her husband Allan and their daughters, Brenda and Andrea, and their families. ● **David Francis Sutton** was born in Jerusalem on October 11, 1934, and died peacefully in New Bedford, Massachusetts, on March 17, 2018. In between, he lived an event-filled life. Raised in Amman, Jordan, he came to the United States and attended Princeton University and Harvard Business School after graduating from Westtown. He held management positions at a variety of organizations, including Aramco, Singer Co., International Paper, Spencer Stuart, and American Medical International Hospital. He also served as director of The Matheny School, a school for children and adults with developmental disabilities in Peapack, New Jersey. He loved

his family and was proud of his children and grandchildren. When his children were young, he was often found at the sidelines, coaching or cheering them on. To each of them, he left a gentle spirit, a motivation to help others, a sense of imagination and idealism, and an ability to see the best in people. He gave his family a deep, lifelong appreciation for the outdoors and, above all, the mountains. He was preceded in death by his parents, James and Phyllis Wright Sutton; a sister, Patience Hajj '46; his sisters' husbands, Amin Hajj and Gordon Loos; a daughter, Heather Elizabeth; and cousin Robert Sutton '47. He is survived by his sister, Marilyn Loos '49; cousin David C. Sutton '51; and his children Jeffrey Sutton (Peggy), Craig Sutton (Susan), Stephen Sutton, Matthew Sutton, Amy Sterndale (Christian), Sean Sutton (Stacy), and Colin Sutton. Also surviving him are eight grandchildren: Katie, Nathaniel, Tommy, John, Danny, Margaret, Oliver, and Caroline and one on the way, as well as many nieces and nephews.

**1953** "Our 65th was fun, congenial, and well choreographed, thanks to the excellent planning of our reunion committee: Marsie Hawkinson, Janet Henderson, Char Gosselink, and Terry Engeman. On Friday evening, twenty five of us from as far away as California and Canada gathered on the porch of the guesthouse at Crosslands for a delightful buffet supper. While gazing out at the fields and woods

we reminisced and caught up on recent events in our lives: trips, new homes, new artificial joints, grandchildren, downsizing, and great-grandchildren. Later, a deputation went across campus to visit a chipper Charlie Thompson. Lively discussion ensued regarding golf handicaps and other relevant matters. On Saturday at the Annual Alumni Meeting (where we sudden ancients were seated surprisingly close to the front for roll call), we enjoyed an entertaining and enlightening program. Of particular note was the thoughtful talk by new Head of School Tori Jueds. Lunch in the Dining Room and a class picture followed. We then dispersed to visit various venues of our own choosing: the art gallery, dorms, etc. and, at least in one case, classmates sitting on a bench on the South Lawn. At our class dinner in a restaurant, messages were read from those far flung or unable to attend: Helen Borkent in Holland, Laura Kesel in Montana, and Sushila Stubbs in Florida. Afterwards, we pulled our chairs into a large oval and each had a moment to speak about something meaningful in our lives, current circumstances, and those no longer with us. That was it! Just like the Class of '53, it was wonderful."—**Kit Fairchild** ● **Felicia Forsythe Humer** passed away on Monday, October 23, 2017, at the Masonic Village in Sewickley, Pennsylvania. Born March 2, 1935, she was the daughter of the late John E. Forsythe '23 and Margaret Longaker Forsythe, and the widow of Philip W. Humer. After graduating from Westtown, she attended Swarthmore College until 1957 and then Bryn Mawr College School of Social Work. She was a retired social worker for the Montgomery County Board of Assistance, Norristown, Pennsylvania, where she worked for 35 years. She was a member of Pittsburgh Friends Meeting, having been born and raised a Quaker. Surviving are her two daughters, Alice Foulkes-Garcia '79, of Bordentown, New Jersey, and Anne M. Foulkes (Paul J. Steliotes), of Sewickley; her stepdaughter, Kathleen Ries (Paul), of Mechanicsburg; and six grandchildren, Sara Shankavaram (Vamsi), of Jersey City, New Jersey, Emily Forsythe Steliotes, of



San Francisco, California, Caroline Anne Steliotes, of Sewickley, Timothy Ries, of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, Jonathan Ries, of Manayunk, Pennsylvania; and David Ries, also of Mechanicsburg Pennsylvania. In addition to her parents, Felicia was predeceased by her sister, Alice Mary Forsythe Seymour '56; her stepdaughter, Jean Ringgold; and her stepson, Richard Humer. Felicia loved her children and grandchildren, and delighted in their successes and accomplishments. She was an accomplished pianist, and enjoyed singing in a number of chorus groups throughout her life. She was passionate about serving those in need, including volunteering at church food pantries and at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, tutoring first graders at Osborne and Edgeworth elementary schools, and volunteering at the Sewickley Valley YMCA. She was an extraordinary mother to her two beloved daughters, Alice and Anne, whom she raised alone after she was divorced from her first husband in 1963. ● **M. Joyce (Jo) Lower**, of South Hadley, Massachusetts passed away on February 18, 2018, dying peacefully in the comfort of her home and with her loving spouse and a dear friend at her side. Born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, on June 5, 1935 to George Graffley Lower and Emily Hallauer Lower, both teachers, Jo spent many of her childhood summers in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, where her parents were active with the Children's Science School and the Marine Biological Laboratories. Her high-energy love of science, the ocean, and the mountains full of snow was a thread woven throughout her life—as a child exploring tidal pools with her father, as a sailing instructor on Martha's Vineyard, as a much-loved science teacher at Northampton High School for 32 years, as an expert skier and instructor, and as a person who dove with abandon into life. An accomplished athlete in many sports, Jo earned four varsity letters in each year of Upper School at Westtown School, and at Bucknell University, where Jo earned her BS in Biology ('57) and was a member of Kappa Delta sorority. Jo

moved to Northampton, Massachusetts in 1960 to teach science at the high school and she began to volunteer on ski patrol at Berkshire Snow Basin. She became the first female elected to the National Ski Patrol Board, and later became a ski instructor at Mt. Tom, teaching skiing to young children and adults for two decades. Jo's shoes will still be found at Tuckerman Ravine on Mt. Washington, where she left them before skiing down decades ago. Her many students will still remember her challenging them to learn, leaping onto a chair to make a point, and telling them that she didn't care if they wore only long underwear to school as long as they would come and learn and be themselves. After retiring from teaching at Northampton High School, Jo earned the nickname "St. Jo" due to her love of animals. A true dog whisperer, she would drive her Jeep throughout the Pioneer Valley to pick up eight or more dogs of all sizes and breeds and then walk them on woodland trails, fully in control via only verbal commands. In the last year, as her health diminished, she delighted in looking out the window, watching cardinals, hairy woodpeckers, goldfinches, and other birds at the feeder in the backyard, with a dog pressed by her side. Jo is survived by her devoted spouse of 25 years, Joanna Brown, and a loving extended family: her brother, George Lower, and his spouse, Nancy Lower; her sister-in-law Susan Bell; her nieces and nephews (and spouses) who always thought of her as the "cool" Aunt Cheryl Lower, George Bell (Cedrine), Charla Lower, Gordon Bell (Bethany White), Emily Lower, Cindy Weber, Doug Bell (Joan Marie), and Elizabeth Lavenue (Myra); and grand-nieces and nephews Erin Coonahan, Anastasia White, Alison Bell, Tolson Bell, Catherine Bell, Charlotte Bell, Owen Coonahan, Aria Lavenue, Lucie Bell, Emilie Bell, Mitchell Coonahan, Shea Bell, Guillaume Bell, Claire Lavenue, and Elena Bell. She is also survived by her close friends Georganne Greene and Andrea Kandel and their daughter, Annie Kandel, Dr. Nora Wilcox, Janey Gordon, Andrea Reber, Professor Emeritus and the Reverend Gloria G. Lomax, Almaneta Lee,

## IN MEMORIAM .....

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|---|--|
| <b>1939</b><br><b>Margaret Skillman Woyski</b><br>March 10, 2018      | <b>1953</b><br><b>Felicia Forsythe Humer</b><br>October 23, 2017                 |
| <b>1940</b><br><b>Isabel Johnson Morrison</b><br>March 10, 2018       | <b>M. Joyce Lower</b><br>February 18, 2018                                       |
| <b>1941</b><br><b>Robin Dana Willits, Ph.D.</b><br>September 30, 2017 | <b>1956</b><br><b>E. Sue Montgomery Lynch</b><br>April 3, 2018                   |
| <b>1943</b><br><b>Adelaide Pollock Kooker</b><br>December 9, 2017     | <b>1958</b><br><b>Edward W. Anderson</b><br>January 8, 2015                      |
| <b>1944</b><br><b>F. Raymond Jenkins</b><br>January 10, 2018          | <b>Jeffrey Blanchford</b><br>September 28, 2017                                  |
| <b>1945</b><br><b>Anne Grimes Askew</b><br>March 26, 2018             | <b>Peggy Kahoe Fowler</b><br>August 9, 2017                                      |
| <b>Virgil Evans</b><br>January 4, 2018                                | <b>Robert Gorham</b><br>December 16, 2017  |
| <b>1947</b><br><b>Marilyn 'Les' (White) Best</b><br>August 12, 2014   | <b>1961</b><br><b>William Baker</b><br>March 27, 2018                            |
| <b>1948</b><br><b>Robert Chase</b><br>March 30, 2018                  | <b>Norman Passmore</b><br>May 9, 2018  |
| <b>Nell Brown Edwards</b><br>December 17, 2015                        | <b>1965</b><br><b>Jacqueline Evans Elmore</b><br>May 17, 2018                    |
| <b>1950</b><br><b>Helen Steere Horn</b><br>April 29, 2018             | <b>1968</b><br><b>David M. Buyoucos</b><br>June 2, 2002                          |
| <b>1952</b><br><b>Barbara Miller Blauth</b><br>January 10, 2018       | <b>1972</b><br><b>A. Louis Staton</b><br>February 6, 2018                        |
| <b>David Francis Sutton</b><br>March 17, 2018                         | <b>1974</b><br><b>James Yarnall</b><br>January 26, 2018                          |
|   | <b>2012</b><br><b>Cherylyn Alderfer</b><br>May 14, 2018                          |
|   | <b>Former Faculty/Staff</b><br><b>Carol Ticknor Gilligan</b><br>January 19, 2018 |



## CLASS NOTES

Bob and Dorothy Green, Ted and Nancy Kurtz, Jack and Priscilla Finn, Deedie Steele, Leslie Dubinsky and Carol Ranzel-Wallace, Michael Sugerman, Jampa Latso, Emmanuel Morales, and Maiko Otake Nauroth. Jo was predeceased by her sister, Jeanne Bell, and her brother-in-law, Guy Bell. Jo was grateful to have belonged to the Unitarian Society of Northampton for nearly 30 years. It was in that supportive community where she met her spouse, Joanna, and in which their Ceremony of Union was held and witnessed by 130 relatives and friends in 1996. In 2004, when same-gender marriage became legal in Massachusetts, they immediately applied for and received their marriage license, 12 years after they had made their life-commitment to each other.

**1956** **E. Sue Montgomery Lynch** died peacefully after a long illness on April 3, 2018. She was born in 1937 in New Haven, Connecticut to Roger and Jean Montgomery. She grew up in Madison, Connecticut and spent every summer of her childhood and youth in Hadlyme, Connecticut with her grandparents. She graduated from Westtown and Connecticut College. She moved to her farm on East Street in Sharon in 1966 when she married her husband, John Lynch, and has lived there since. She resided part-time in Manhattan and Jackson, Wyoming, during those years. She raised her children in Sharon, Connecticut and was a longtime member of the Sharon Woman's Club and the Sharon Country Club. Most importantly, she loved her family and her dogs very much. Sue is survived by her husband, John; her two sons, Jake of Hong Kong and Michael of Sharon; their wives, Tiffany and Carol; and her grandchildren, Anna Lee and Conrad. She is also survived by her two step-daughters, Mybl and Elizabeth and a host of extended family and friends.

**1958** Thanks to Mary Ann Baker Wagner and her 1958 family email list, we're never really



out of touch. We share our news and opinions, holding each other in the light and feeling—well, connected. But the contacts always ramp up as we approach a reunion year, and 2017 was no exception. Mary Ann, Dotty May Brown Shoffner, and Gretel Klempner White spent a September day together, and started laying plans for our 60th along with Mary Alice Brown James. Soon, a reunion committee was at work. The result was yet another gathering of information about our 62 remaining classmates, a spiffy booklet to share with everyone, and a most respectable reunion gift (65% participation), culminating in a lively weekend together again. Having enjoyed many reunion-Friday evenings at Mary Alice's house in the past, we just naturally transitioned to the Kendal Farmhouse and its inviting back patio for hoagies and other treats. Twenty-three of us sat out under the old pines, continuing good conversations and welcoming spouses/significant others and grown-up offspring. It was a lovely evening! On Saturday, bolstered by more classmates, we enjoyed the WAA annual meeting, standing to cheer ourselves and the other classes, laughing at Bob Batley's clever foolishness, delighting in Barry Hogenauer's story, and listening raptly as Tori Jueds evoked a future Westtown that fully reflects the diversity of our planet.

Lunch in the Dining Room was a delicious treat, as was the chance to visit with other "old scholars" before heading to the Science Center and elsewhere on campus for symposia, games, walks, and more conversations. The evening found us back in Kennett Square at the Wagners' for libations and snacks before one of Crossland's famous buffet dinners at Ellerslie House. We were joined by members of Sam's class of 1957—Peter and Juliet Lane, Hugh and Kate McLean, Joan Silver Ewing, Betty Nesbitt Robinson—and Ben James '59, getting pointers for next year. Pete brought his fiddle, so he and Sam Allen could play some old-time tunes for us—another longtime tradition for our two classes. Although a thunderstorm interrupted dining on the deck, we enjoyed the food and drink and each other with gusto and cheerful noise. Again, our conversation threads flowed and wove their ways around us, binding us even more closely together. We shared news good and bad, recalled absent and departed classmates, and reminded ourselves of what mattered in the fifties and what matters now. As a special treat, Tori Jueds dropped in to visit and congratulate us, sharing the joy of being part of Westtown. The good feelings carried us to the Meeting House on Sunday morning, where Alonzo Smith shared that his work for criminal-justice



reform, and now for the new Poor People's Campaign, is rooted in his Westtown experience, along with exemplars like David Hartsough. Throughout the weekend, we were missing some classmates we'd hoped could attend: Nancy and Don Naragon, Judith Blair Santiago, Emily Kennedy, David and Jan Hartsough, Alfreda Meyers, Katherine Raiford Smith, Van Warner, and Dan and Cathy Rie. And, most sadly, Ellen Zook Moreland, whose husband Ford passed away on April 10.

—**Beth Lane Morrison** ● **Peggy Kahoe Fowler** passed away on August 9, 2017. The daughter of the late Walter and Mildred Hawxhurst Kahoe, Peggy was born in Springfield, Ohio, July 8, 1940. After her family's move to the Philadelphia area when she was two years old, Peggy started full days of school at The School in Rose Valley, including woodshop. Graduating from there she went on to George School and from there to Earlham College, finishing her formal education with a master's degree in history from the University of Chicago. On her mother's side, she traced her genealogy back to Charlemagne and England's King Edward III, while her father was proudly Irish. Her fondest childhood memories were her twelve years at Singing Eagle Lodge (SEL), an eight-week girls summer camp on Squam Lake, New Hampshire. SEL closed in 1966, and in 1973 she was the initiating and organizing force behind a huge camp reunion. Out of that Singing Eagle Lodge was reborn and continues to this day as a two-week girls camp. In 1970, she and her husband moved from New York City to 100 beautiful acres in the Oneonta area. Their daughter Celeste was born in 1971. While Celeste attended St. Mary's School, Peggy served as a volunteer in the office, ran the rummage sale, and eventually became president of the PTO. After Celeste graduated from St. Mary's, Peggy's volunteer efforts turned to the Orpheus Theatre. Eventually, she became a paid member of the office staff, handling most of the administrative duties. Thanks to her organizational and fiscal talents, Orpheus had money in the bank when

she left, a rare thing for a small nonprofit arts organization. Following daughter Celeste's untimely death in 2004, Peggy threw her energies into volunteering for Habitat for Humanity of Otsego County (HFHOC), working on 11 of the 33 houses the organization has built since 1989. While still building, she became HFHOC's office manager and was elected treasurer, never missing a chance to save money for the organization. She excelled at spotting a mistake on a bill or a typo in a deed or report. At the worksite that eye for detail was a thorn in the side of her fellow volunteers. When she pointed out, say, a poorly spackled joint in the wallboard, Building Committee Chair Bruce Downie might grumble, "Margaret, go sit in your car!" before making sure it was fixed. Also in 2004, she and her husband took up hiking sections of the Appalachian Trail, completing almost 500 miles of it through parts of Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire. In 1984 and '85, she and her husband completed the General Clinton Canoe Regatta 70-mile endurance race in their canoe, the Little Red Caboose. Starting in college, Peggy raised untold generations of guppy fish and later enjoyed the companionship of two dogs, a cat, her husband, and many friends. Books were a big part of her life and she read about one a week, more than 3,000 in all. She was particularly fascinated by Robin Hood, in print, on film, and TV. She edited and re-typed her husband's 50 plus books, most of them written before the days of personal computers. Through her tireless volunteer efforts, superb organizational skills, and thoughtful, generous acts, she touched innumerable lives and brightened the world. Because she preferred the background, people often underestimated her in spite of her demure manner and Quaker upbringing. She very much enjoyed a good laugh, an occasional beer, and was heard to come out occasionally with a four-letter expletive. She is survived by her husband of 47 years, Dennis. ● **Edward W. Anderson** passed away on January 8, 2015. Edward was born on April 3, 1940



The Class of '58 and friends enjoying the Kendal Farmhouse patio during their 60th Reunion

and was a resident of Toms River, New Jersey. ● **Jeffrey Blanchford** passed away on September 28, 2017. Per his wife June's phone conversations with Ruth Engler and Mary Ann Wagner, Jeff fought his brain cancer to the end. ● **Robert Benning Gorham** passed away on Saturday, December 16, 2017. He was married to the late Louise Ann "Louann" Clark of Mill City, Pennsylvania, for 49 years prior to her death in 2015. Born Jan. 12, 1940, in Brooklyn, NY, he was the youngest son of the late Victor and Ann Gorham. Robert grew up in Brooklyn, which to Bob that meant handball, the Brooklyn Dodgers, and jazz clubs. His summers were spent in Wiscasset, Maine. Music was an integral part of his life from the beginning. A student and member of the St. Thomas Choir School, the choir performed on national radio syndication most Sundays and holidays. Upon graduation from St. Thomas Choir School, he then attended Westtown and afterwards graduated from Adelphi Academy, Brooklyn, New York. Jazz was a lifelong passion. While at Adelphi Academy, he was a union card musician for the vibraphone and played with a few notable jazz musicians at the Village Vanguard and several "hole-in-the-wall" gigs in San Francisco. To his experience at Westtown, he proudly said they "weren't ready for him yet." At Adelphi, he was particularly fond of his time with his friends on the soccer field and in the hockey rink. Bob received several offers to play at the collegiate level for his athletic pursuits. Bob eventually entered the Marine Corps where his language skills and the gift of gab got him accepted into the Foreign Language Institute in

## CLASS NOTES

Monterey, CA. He served the remainder of his six years in the military putting his Russian language skills to work interpreting for military dignitaries and diplomats. While serving his country, he fell in love with Louann saying, “one look at those dark brown eyes and I was hooked.” After the military, Bob and Louann moved to Mill City, Pennsylvania, with Bob deciding to continue his studies at the University of Scranton, where he obtained a business degree and a minor in philosophy. To anyone that would listen, he was much more interested in talking philosophy. After graduating Bob worked in banking, sales, and most notably with one of his oldest and dearest friends, Burdette “Dep” Avery. He later retired from the Postal Service serving for over 20 years. He was a member of the Falls/Lake Winola Lions Club, and active in placing the honorary flags on military graves for Memorial Day recognition. Bob measured his life in time spent through conversations with loved ones and friends. Over the course of 77 years, Bob’s conversations were as varied as his company. A typical Saturday morning started with an intimate talk with his wife, Louann, over a cup of tea, then ‘office hours’ at the local pub where he ‘held court’ talking over politics and sports, and finally finished with dinner preparation at home discussing jazz with one of his four children. Bob was preceded in death by his loving wife, Louann; brother, Don Gorham ’55; and grandson, Xavier Robert Gorham, along with Robert’s mother, Anne Benning Gorham ’22. Bob’s conversations will be deeply missed by his surviving four children and five grandchildren, Luke and wife, Ann; granddaughters Sarah and Emily, New Milford, Pennsylvania; Josh and Miranda, Seattle, Washington; Jessica and plus one, John, grandson Greyson, Nairobi, Kenya; and Victor and wife, Tina; and grandchildren, Sophia and Liam, Lake Winola, Pennsylvania. He is survived by his older brother, Bruce Gorham, Belton, South Carolina, and his multiple friends with whom he had side-bar conversations along the way.

**1961** **William Russell Baker Jr.** passed away on 27 March 2018 at age 74. He was born on June 22nd, 1943 in High Point, North Carolina, to Bill Baker Sr. and Gwendolyn Clark Baker, and attended Upper School at Westtown. Bill went to Syracuse University, graduating in 1965. He continued to Duke University, University of Pennsylvania, and State University of New York at Albany, and back to Syracuse University, earning his graduate degree. In 1968, Bill began teaching English and Film Studies at Schalmont High School in Schenectady County NY, where he became a much-loved instructor and was awarded Teacher of the Year in 1991, 1996, and 1997. Among other achievements, Bill championed reform of the grading system to a portfolio based system. He was loved by students and other faculty for his passionate instruction and unconventional methods. Bill and his second wife, Judy, relocated to Ogunquit, Maine, in 1998, where they worked in the York Public School system until retirement in 2012. In 2013, Bill began working with the Ogunquit Conservation Commission and championed a campaign to ban chemical pesticide use within town limits. The ban was approved in 2015, making Ogunquit the second municipality in the United States to have such a law. Since then, interest has grown in neighboring communities to adopt similar ordinances. He served as the Ogunquit Conservation Commission chair, from June of that year until his death. Bill Baker is survived by his wife, Judy Baker; son Joshua Baker; daughter Caitlin Baker; step-son Andrew Gerhan; step-grandson Miles Westfall; sister Mary Ann Wagner ’58; brother in-law Samuel Wagner ’57; three nephews, Samuel Wagner ’84, Thomas W. Wagner ’85, and Michael C. Wagner ’88 along with their families and many cousins. Bill is predeceased by his step-daughter Lisa Gerhan. Throughout his life, Bill cherished music and literature, engaging in both in many ways and filling the lives of loved ones with song, prose, and laughter. ● **Norman Passmore** passed away on May 9, 2018 in Beebe Hospital in Lewes, Delaware. Norman grew up on a farm in

southern Pennsylvania. He was an exceptional math student at Westtown and went on to graduate from Swarthmore College. He received his master’s and doctoral degrees from the University of Delaware. He briefly taught math at the Tatnall School in northern Delaware and completed his career teaching math at the University of Delaware, Southern Extension, in Georgetown, Delaware. He loved playing the cello and earlier in his life enjoyed running and skiing. He is survived by a sister, Ruth P. Thomson ’57; a brother-in-law, Roger Thomson; and a nephew, Roger Thomson Jr. Norman will be deeply missed by his family and friends.

**1962** **Samuel Ashby Sholl** writes, “In January, 2018, I traveled to New Zealand for a 2000 mile, two-week motorcycle tour. Some impressive sites included the Milford Sound, Fox Glacier (viewed from a helicopter), temperate rain forests bordering the Tasman Sea, Arthur’s Pass, and a movie set (Hobbiton) used in *Lord of the Rings*. I was also presented with an award for having participated in my fifth world motorcycle tour with the Edelweiss Touring Company. It was a splendid exposure to New Zealand and well worth the 20+ hour travel time to get there. More detail can be found at: [amotorcyclistsdiary.blogspot.com](http://amotorcyclistsdiary.blogspot.com).”

**1963** The Class of 1963 gathered Friday night at the Mendenhall Inn for a buffet supper and some congenial time renewing our friendships. We had a glowing report from the small group that spent a day on Thursday visiting Quaker student and staff organizations at Westtown. They were impressed with the students’ eloquent statements about Quakerism at Westtown. We also heard brief reports regarding the class gift fund and the Mervin Hutton Fund, which just got underway with the letter from John Emmons and Susie Montgomery Trotter. Saturday morning after the Alumni Meeting (keynote from Barry Hogenauer and an excellent address from the





Head of School) we had lunch together in the Dining Room before spreading across a grey, damp campus to sample the programs offered and to continue conversations. At 4:00 p.m. we gathered in a Memorial Meeting for Worship, remembering classmates who have passed away. Saturday night we gathered in the Farmhouse at Kendal for a simple buffet. Some of us braved an approaching storm and ate outside on the patio and the rest of us balanced our plates on our laps and ate inside. After the pie, we gathered around Susie at a keyboard to join in singing songs we remembered from the sixties. On Sunday, the weather overwhelmed our plans for an afternoon at the lake, but Meeting for Worship in the Girls' End Collecting Room and lunch in the Dining Room went on as planned. Thirty-three of our classmates attended part or all of the weekend, and the weather didn't dampen our enthusiasm for renewing friendships and exploring Westtown anew. —**Tim James**

**1965** **Jacqueline (Jill) Weaver Evans Elmore**, 70, of DeRossett, Tennessee, passed away on May 17, 2018 at the Cookeville Regional Medical Center. She had battled health issues over the years following a serious auto accident in 1981 and in recent years became increasingly frail. After a fall in her home, she was taken to CRMC where she received palliative care. Born June 4, 1947 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,

Jill was the oldest of Jonathan Evans and Bette (Weaver) Evans Halverstadt's six children. Her parents moved to Pleasant Hill, Tennessee shortly after her birth and a few years later settled in Crossville, Tennessee, where Jill spent most of her childhood. She graduated from Westtown School in 1965. She got her L.P.N. certification at Tennessee Area Vocational-Tech School in 1971, and she earned a B.S. in Nursing from University of Tennessee in 1978. Jill was known among family and friends as having a kind, loving, sensitive heart with selfless concern for others. She cared for many in the Coronary Care Unit of Cumberland Medical Center, Crossville, Tennessee; Cookeville General Hospital, Cookeville, Tennessee; Baptist Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee; and worked with relentless tender care in the Vanderbilt Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. As an educator, she nurtured creativity and environmental stewardship in young children at Community Friends School in Crossville. She loved playing the piano and enjoyed writing poetry and creative short stories in her youth. Jill was an avid gardener, known for sharing her bountiful harvests with friends and neighbors, always with a warm smile. Her passion for nature and the outdoors was embodied in the natural beauty she created and maintained with her devoted husband and architect, Phil Elmore, at their home in De Rossett, a wooded lot where they married in 1978. Jill's quiet loving spirit will be missed.

## Gifts for Tax Credit

The Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program

**What it is:** Provide significant financial aid to Westtown students and receive a tax credit for as much as 90% of the value of the gift in Pennsylvania State taxes.

**How it works:** Make a gift to Westtown School through the Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program and your business can redirect its Pennsylvania tax dollars to Westtown to support financial aid.

Tax credits are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and businesses must complete a quick, single-page application each year to contribute.

- Tax credits are given for 75% of your business' contribution, up to a maximum of \$750,000 annually.
- A business that agrees to make a contribution to Westtown School for two consecutive tax years may receive a tax credit equal to 90% of its contribution.

**For more information**, contact *Courtney Tyus* at [Tyus@westtown.edu](mailto:Tyus@westtown.edu)

**THANK YOU to our 21 donors who supported students by contributing \$361,000 toward financial aid through the EITC program this year!**

Her bright light will shine on in everyone and everything she has touched along her journey. ● Jill is survived by her mother Elizabeth (Bette) Halverstadt Evans; husband Philip Elmore; siblings Thomas P. Evans '66, Anna Beesley '68, and Arthur C. Evans '76, Bruce E. Evans '75, David L. Evans '72; aunt Lucretia Evans '38; cousins Deborah S. Evans '78, Rebecca Marvil '76, Cynthia Trueblood '74, and Jonathan W. Evans '73; nephews Christopher H.



Carol Savery-Frederick '67 with classmate Brad Fears '67 after officiating the wedding of Brad's daughter, Sarah, to Peter Venditti

Beesley '02, Jonathan T. Evans '00; and nieces Brooke E. Beesley '98 and Coventry R. Evans '96.

**1967** **Carol Savery-Frederick** writes, "I had the amazing privilege of being invited by Brad Fears '67 and his wife, Becky, to be the officiant at the wedding of their daughter, Sarah, and Peter Venditti on May 12th (yes, that was Alumni Day) at Blithewold Mansion in Bristol, Rhode Island. Hence, my absence from Alumni Day at Westtown. The outdoor wedding itself happened to take place under umbrellas, but this didn't bother the beautiful couple or dampen the celebratory mood. The rain, Mother Nature's blessing, stopped almost immediately after the ceremony, just in time for the nearby tented reception. We all dried out very quickly and looked none the worse for the wet wedding. It was a great party for all. I also finally got to meet all of Brad's and Becky's kids and grandkids whom I've been hearing about for the past many decades at our Alumni Day gatherings. I was honored and delighted to be included, and enjoyed sharing this special day with the wonderful family and friends of Brad's daughter and new son-in-law."

**1968** **David M. Buyoucos** died June 2, 2002, at his home in Aiken, South Carolina. He was the son of the late James V. Buyoucos and the late Katheryn Dowd. After attending Westtown, he graduated from Ithaca High School and attended

Tompkins-Cortland Community College. An excellent horseman, he worked with horses throughout his life, and was for many years employed at horse farms and racetracks throughout the United States. His gentle and generous nature earned him the love of many friends.

**1970** **Mary Oliver Brown** writes, "I have been a widow for 17 years since the death of my husband Otis Brown Jr. My first grandchild, a girl, was born on June 8, 2017, to my older son Otis Brown III and his wife Laura Lea Brown. They reside in Austin, Texas. They named their baby daughter Emma Simone Brown. I am still employed at the Horizon House in Philadelphia as a Peer Support Specialist and this year I am celebrating my 65th birthday. Writing is my passion. I'm working on a memoir entitled *ROSES* and two new volumes of poetry which I hope to publish this year. My best wishes to all the members of the Class of 1970."

**1972** **A. Louis Staton Jr.** was born April 26, 1955 in Bronx, New York. He attended Peter Pan Nursery School, Minnie S. Graham Elementary School in Mount Vernon, New York, then Westtown, before attending Swarthmore College. His exceptional intelligence resulted in Louis skipping a grade in elementary school. Louis was an extremely gifted writer, singer, dancer, and actor who worked briefly on and off Broadway and at An Evening Dinner Theatre in Westchester New York, and at his mother's Mount Vernon Fine Arts Cultural Center's Open Cage Theatre. These gifts came naturally from his mother, Parthenia Milner Staton (Tina Sattin), and his father, Alonzo Louis Lee Staton Sr. (Lonnie Sattin), both accomplished and internationally acclaimed actors and singers. Louis had an amazing ability to write both lyrics and music at the same time. He wrote at least seven musicals and 76 songs. He not only wrote the scripts, music, and lyrics but also did the choreography and costume design. Gene Kelly and Sidney Poitier both were driven to visit the Mount Vernon

Fine Arts Cultural Center's Open Cage Theatre production of *Haverly/Everly*. They were so impressed that they made plans to turn it into a film. Ossie Davis was so impressed with Louis' talent and especially a children's musical called *The Lions' Party* that they did the narration. Louis taught himself the guitar and keyboards to facilitate his song writing. Louis wrote the script, music, and lyrics for the musicals: *A Mid-Semester Night's Dream*, *Morley*, *Fleas*, *Haverly/Everly*, *Black Gold*, *The Sheik of Skardamy*, and *The Lion's Party*. In high school, Louis starred in many plays including *Ruddigore* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and did revival type "rock-in-roll" reviews for student entertainment. For all of his life, Louis enjoyed musical comedies and bringing laughter to others. He performed dramatic pieces as well, but his greatest joy came from musical comedies. His favorite performer was Gene Kelly and his favorite television musical was Gene Kelly's *Singin' in the Rain*. He even started a Facebook page called the Gene Kelly Fan Club. Past employment included working as an instructor and resident writer/director at the Mount Vernon Fine Arts Cultural Center, at the Mount Vernon Post Office, Aramark, Minico, Mastercard, as a freelance computer specialist, and in solar panel sales. Louis' athletic activities included soccer, basketball, swimming, ping pong, squash, and frisbee. He seemed to glide with strength and ease across the field and was also a force to be reckoned with in ping pong. Louis struggled with and overcame many challenges in his life with astounding resilience, and passed away quietly in his apartment in Yonkers, New York, on February 6, 2018. He died unexpectedly but peacefully of natural causes. He had a personal passion for helping the homeless and others less fortunate than most and had a dream of creating a way to feed the homeless and provide shelter in a less impersonal and dangerous manner than exists in most places. He also came up with a plan that he presented to city government. Louis was the beloved son of Parthenia Milner Staton and is survived by his daughter, Dominique Elise Staton;





Guests at the reception at Ramallah Friends School hosted by Jon Evans '73 and Melissa Graf-Evans

his father, Alonzo Louis Lee Staton Sr.; and his sister Parthenia Staton Izzard '71 and her husband John E. Izzard Jr., as well as many cousins. ● **Lynn Hubbard** and her husband Stephen are now retired and have relocated to Medford, Oregon.

**1973** When you are planning an outdoor reunion lunch, it's best to have a weatherman negotiating the details. Fritz Cooper held the rain and tornadoes at bay so our class picture was not a sea of yellow rain slickers with upside-down food trucks in the background. Other classmates have also been brightening their corners of the world, such as Barry Hogenauer working in tech management of everything from the Olympics to the XGames. In his keynote speech he conveyed particular affection for his work to inspire future generations. Jon Evans, outgoing Clerk of Westtown's Board of Trustees, reports that Westtown, despite the declining allure of boarding schools,

is on the upswing. We appreciate Jon's distinguished service on the Board and offer many thanks to him and his wife Melissa Graf-Evans for a terrific time on Saturday night. Emily Wood Crofoot was able to join a Skype call that evening from New Zealand where her family sustainably produces meat and wool. We also thank Pat and Kiki Comerford for providing comradery, charcuterie, and an elegant backdrop for Friday's soiree. There were new beginnings, endings, and the in-between: Jenny Lohrke Christensen has downsized and moved to Ridgefield, CT, thankfully retaining her husband. Other people on the move include Jim Nicholson who moved to Hershey, PA, Laurie Snyder to Savannah, GA, and soon a retired Trish Cope will begin a permanent vacation, formerly known as the golden years. Dana Jones reports that life in Cape May is a retiree's dream but if Cape May doesn't suit, one should ask Bill McCrory about his vacation rental business. Alternatively,



Photo boards from the reception at Ramallah Friends School featuring students from Ramallah and the region who have spent a year at Westtown

Bruce Richardson can regale you with his thoughts on the Civil War Battlefields that he toured driving from Michigan to Westtown in his first reunion in 45 years. ● No one seems to have slowed down with Kathe Pickard Harbour, Bill Winslow, and others chasing after grandchildren. Jennie Plummer Rice is curling, gardening, and quilting. David Tien continues to collect antiques spurned by millennials. Sally Burlingham Frank recommends a visit to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, dedicated to the legacy of enslaved African American people. Mary Yerkes Adams (also a grandmother) is still running a small dairy farm, a challenge in an era of dairy farm consolidation. The tornado warning put the kibosh on Larry Moulton's plans to skydive into the class picture, but there's always 2023. Liz Gilbert Osterman hasn't taken up skydiving yet but reports yoga, biking, and dressage as retirement activities. Everyone enjoyed discussing Joe Strode and other shikers (wrong place, wrong time equals unable to attend the reunion). Finally, calm descended when Marcia Hepps, who shares the practice of yoga with veterans to help with post-traumatic



Carol Beer Benson '73 visiting Emily Wood Crowfoot '73 at her home in Castlepoint, New Zealand



stress syndrome, appeared. —**Patty Sheetz** ● **Jon Evans** and **Melissa Graf-Evans** write, “Hello, all! It was such a pleasure seeing those of you who were able to come to yesterday’s reception at Ramallah Friends School celebrating the many years of connection and exchange between Westtown and RFS students and families. [On page 59] are three photos: one from the gathering and two collages featuring (almost) all of the students from Ramallah and the region who have spent a year at Westtown. We so value this relationship between RFS and Westtown and look forward to future gatherings to reconnect and continue to enjoy and reflect on our 25+ years of shared experiences. ● **Emily Wood Crofoot** writes, “Carol Beer Benson '73 and her husband bicycled the length of the North Island of New Zealand and we enjoyed having them stay with us at Castlepoint.”

**1974** **James Biddle Yarnall** passed away at his home on January 26, 2018 while recovering from a recent major surgery. Born in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, he was the son of James B. Yarnall '44 and Phyllis (Aspen) Yarnall, both deceased. He was raised in suburban Philadelphia and attended Friends Central School, then Westtown and, finally graduated from Radnor High School. He was active in many sports including soccer, karate, tennis, and skiing. He was an avid musician and began playing guitar in high school

bands; later performing professionally. He graduated from New England College with a BA in Psychology in 1980. He studied Psychological Services at the graduate level at the University of Pennsylvania. For much of his career, Jim was a behavior specialist and helped many patients young and old within an institutional setting. He particularly liked working with young patients because “many of them cure themselves over time.” In addition to consulting work in psychiatric services, he led a group home for teens. Later in his career he drew on his interest in technology, electronics, and gadgets as a manager for Radio Shack. After retirement, Jim found time to pursue his interests in music, golf, boating, hiking, and traveling in the White Mountains with friends and family. Jim is survived by many wonderful cousins; his brother, Steve; sister-in-law, Libby Mapes Yarnall; cousin, John R. James '55; and devoted nieces Sidney, Ellie, and Rebecca; all of Villanova, Pennsylvania. ● **Julie Young Russell** will be moving to West Hartford, Connecticut, in the summer of 2018. She and her husband are moving there in order to be near her grandchildren and are looking forward to being nearer to the many east coasters.

**1978** The Class of 1978 arrived from great distances (Mercedes Kronfeld Jordan from the Bay Area and Betsy Carlson from the state of Washington won the farthest-traveled

prizes) and from nearby for our 40th Reunion, first gathering Friday evening at the gracious Chadds Ford home of Holly Harper and her husband Rick Tuttle '79. On Saturday, we convened in greater numbers under the tent in Raiford Field for lunch and then a class photo that put all other reunion classes to shame with its elegance, sophistication, and good cheer. In the evening, as rain threatened, we met at the lovely Chester Springs home of Jeannie Spackman and her husband John Hall. Jeannie is technically the class of '79 but is an honorary member of many more, including the Class of '78. We were joined by a pleasing number of members of the Class of '77, '79, and '80 for a truly special and warm time as folks gazed into faces not seen in many years. Tanya Reiner English and John Doan provided musical entertainment, and one of the songs sung by Tanya was notable for its unbridled flirtatiousness. John deployed two different guitars and was amiably masterful, as ever. Listening to all the conversations of the gatherings, one could sense that the current watchword for our class was *transition*: people were changing jobs, downshifting, retiring, seeing children graduate or get married, moving, riding horses again (in one case), or otherwise finding the way forward to the next version of their lives. The evening was poignant and lovely and full of hope. We who gathered missed every single one of our classmates who could not make it and we swore up and



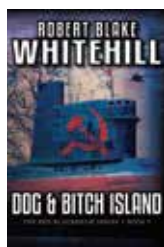


Tim Miller '78 in a performance with The Metropolitan Opera in New York City

down to all come back for our 50th. — **Colin Harrison** ● **Tim Miller** writes, “I am sorry that the end of the Metropolitan Opera season will prevent me from coming to Alumni Day! Hard to believe that I have been singing in the chorus full time for fourteen years already. Let me know if you’re in New York City and I’ll give you a backstage tour!”

## 1980 **Robert Blake**

**Whitehill** writes, “April 1, 2018, sees the publication of the fifth Ben Blackshaw thriller entitled *Dog & Bitch Island*. My bride Mary, son Beau (age eight), and I still lurk around Montclair, New Jersey, and welcome a chance to see Westtown folks passing through the New York City area.”



**1983** The class of 1983 had an excellent weekend for our 35th Reunion. Festivities kicked off Friday night at the on-campus home of Nathan and Jane Bohn. It was a beautiful evening on their deck, looking over the lake, and Nathan led a couple of guided tours to see the eagle’s nest at the lake. For the lazier folks, one of the eagles obligingly flew by at least once. After the gathering at the Bohn’s, a group had a late dinner in West Chester at Limoncello and then proceeded to a local inn where several classmates were staying. They enjoyed a nice late evening of fellowship with a bonfire and a rain shower. Saturday on campus, we had a great turnout under the tent at lunchtime, and, thankfully, it didn’t rain! We also enjoyed the various activities available,



The Class of 1983 celebrating their 35th Reunion at the Radley Run Country Club



CLASS OF  
**'83**



CLASS OF  
**'88**

including tours of the impressive new Science Building and the renovated (and nicely furnished) dorms. The skylights on the third floor dorms are great! Saturday evening, we gathered at Radley Run Country Club, as has become our tradition, and we had a wonderful

evening of catching up and dancing to 80s music. Many thanks go to Sheran Honneyman and Betsy Pinsky, who organized the weekend! —**Kirstie Wills**

**1988** Members of the Class of 1988 gathered over



## CLASS NOTES



CLASS OF  
**'93**



CLASS OF  
**'98**

the weekend and enjoyed catching up on both Friday evening and Saturday. A big 'thank you' to Amy Taylor Brooks and her family, who hosted us at their home for dinner on a stormy Saturday evening. Before Alumni Weekend, efforts were made to reach out to everyone in our class, but many of us no longer have updated contact information on file with the Alumni Office. Several of us reconnected during phone and email conversations as part of the reunion outreach, and it would be great to be more up to date and in touch with the class as a whole. On Saturday, a small group of classmates met in the Westtown meetinghouse to remember classmates we have lost in the last few years, and reflect on our Westtown experience thirty years ago and where we are now in our just-about-midlife lives. It was interesting to reflect

on the different paths that brought us to the school, and how our experiences there impacted our work and outlook on life today. Here's to hoping more of us are able to gather for the 35th!—**Class of 1988 30th Reunion Committee**

**1993** The class of 1993 enjoyed a fun-filled 25th reunion weekend, with approximately 20 classmates joining for some or all of the festivities. We kicked things off with a pleasant evening at McKenzie's brewpub in Glen Mills sharing tales old and new, and having a laugh about dorm hijinks and other Westtown antics. The main event got underway on Saturday, with a few folks gathering for the Alumni Association Annual Meeting and many more assembling for lunch on Raiford Field. It was great to meet spouses and



Linn Watson Secreto '96 and Jay Batley '79 at the Dipsea Race in Mill Valley, CA

children, and to continue to hear about what everyone is up to these days. Saturday afternoon provided a nice chance to wander the campus, enjoy old photos in the South Room, and gawk at the new Science Building and the renovated Belfry. We assembled Saturday evening under a tent in the beer garden at Longwood Gardens for dinner, drinks, and mingling, and we were entertained by the salsa band and then by the (blissfully short-lived) thunderstorm with torrential rain. Those who remained until the end of the evening enjoyed a tour of the amazing flora and architecture of the Conservatory. All in all, it was a very enjoyable weekend spent catching up on a quarter century (!) of our lives, and generally finding that old bonds remain and new ones are possible. Thank you very much to all those who attended, and to the reunion committee for organizing everything!—**Class of 1993 25th Reunion Committee**

**1996** Jay Batley '79 and Linn Watson Secreto '96 ran into each other (not literally!) at the Dipsea Race in the Bay Area in June. You never know who you will meet when you wear your Westtown gear!

**1998** Around 40 members of the class of 1998 gathered throughout Alumni Weekend. The festivities started Friday night at Levante Brewing, and continued Saturday with lunch at the school and a walk around Westtown Lake, looking





for the spot where our dear classmate Alex Von Marko's ashes were scattered. The gorgeous weather allowed classmates, their partners, and the many kids in attendance to canoe, go on hayrides, do the "Long" run, and check out the beautiful campus. Saturday night we had about 65 people at Milestone Events in West Chester (owned by the family of classmate LeAnna Hallman) for food and reminiscing. Charlotte (Kenworthy) Parry-Okeden came all the way from Australia, and several classmates brought new babies. Laurel Swan, Chavon Bunch (Fort), Chuck Dudas, Leigh James Castanos, and Amanda Forte Lawson all brought little ones and there were at least a dozen toddlers and older kids running around and having a blast. Looking forward to 2023! **—Guli Fager**

**2003** The Class of 2003 had a great turnout on campus for our 15th Reunion, with many good friends reconnecting, meeting the new additions to families, and celebrating our friendships and relationship to Westtown. We were delighted to see our classmate Branden Eastwood's work hanging in the Art Gallery alongside some very impressive student artists. There was lots of fun had on campus including a pick-up basketball game in the fieldhouse, canoeing on the lake, and a stroll through the Art Center and Science Center. Saturday evening brought more great time together as our class was hosted at the home of Sarah Brewer-Clarius and her family. We were also joined by Rebeca Fomich, Class of 2020, who will be joining the Westtown community as a Junior in the Fall. Sarah



Alison Doub Hepworth '07 after completing her PhD at Penn State University

taught Rebecca at Cumberland County Community College and has been a tremendous advocate for her and supported her application to Westtown. That evening's gathering was a fantastic celebration, complete with a delicious selection of beer brewed by Scott Broussard, and a living room photo booth set up by Margot Cavin. **—Karl Vela**

**2007** **Allison Doub Hepworth** completed her PhD at Penn State University in Human Development and Family Studies with minors in Information Sciences and Technology and Nutritional Sciences. Her research explores how individuals find and apply information that impacts health behavior. She will join the University of Maryland School of Social Work in August 2018 as a postdoctoral fellow in early childhood prevention research.

**2008** Over 60 members of the Class of 2008 gathered for our 10th Reunion. Classmates traveled from all over the United States, including California, Colorado, Maine, and Florida. Some flew in from overseas, including Germany, Indonesia, and Denmark. We began our epic reunion by meeting at the Ram's Head bar in West Chester. Over drinks, popcorn, and wings, the Class of 2008 finally had the opportunity to catch up (and admire some new grey hairs), and the weekend was off to a perfect start. The following morning a small group of '08ers got up early enough to attend

## CLASS NOTES

the 10 a.m. Meeting for Worship, and as the morning progressed more and more classmates began to show up. We kept running into each other; encounters in Main Hall, at the Science Center, at the lake and on the Granolithic caused our numbers to swell until we finally all met outside of the Athletic Center for a lunch with Tom Woodward and other legendary Westtown teachers. That afternoon was filled with reminiscing, canoe rides, and frisbee. In the evening, the entire class and many members of surrounding classes met at Robert Roche's house for a long and fantastic night of music, dancing, swimming, eating, laughing, and eventually sleeping in tents on the lawn. No amount of rain, lightning, or grey hairs could hold back the Class of 2008. As the weekend finished, many of us gathered for breakfast and agreed on the reason we have so much fun together—we all feel like a true family. We may not wait another 10 years to have such a good time!—**Robert Roche**

**2012** **Cherylyn Nicole Alderfer**, 24, recently of Durango, Colorado, passed away on the afternoon of May 11, 2018. Cherylyn lost the battle with depression following recovery from a traumatic brain injury last year. Born November 15, 1993 in Denver, Colorado, she grew up in Pennsylvania with her father, Brent Alderfer, step-mother, Deirdre Alderfer and younger siblings, Aiden (13), Andrew (10), Aleesia (8) and Adeline Alderfer (5). She is also survived by paternal grandmother, Gladys (Henning) Alderfer, Souderton, Pennsylvania, and two twin brothers, Lucas and Andre Greve (30), of Denver, Colorado. She was preceded in death by her mother, Cheryl D. Neufeld in 1995. Cherylyn graduated from Westtown in 2012, and received her bachelor's degree in eco-philosophy from Colorado College in 2016. She completed an exchange semester in Costa Rica in high school and service trips throughout her life to Bangladesh, Middle East, and Tanzania, Africa. Following college, she worked for two



seasons at Soaring Treetop Adventures of Durango, Colorado, and co-taught special needs children at the local public school. Cherylyn had a passion for the outdoors and the beauty of nature and cycles of life. She hiked and camped, and enjoyed learning and teaching about trees and ecosystems, with a special affection for birds. She enjoyed music and dance, and created and enjoyed poetry, crafts and photography, particularly of the outdoors. She treasured strong friendships and family who remember her peaceful spirit and quick laugh.

**2013** For our 5th Reunion, we spent the first couple hours walking up and down the halls of the Main Hall and going up on dorm to see our old rooms. After having tea in the the new science building and introducing ourselves to Westtown's new Head of School, Tori Jueds, we all gathered in a classroom of the Science Center to talk as we would've on weekends at Westtown. Later that night, we all went to David Harrison's house in West Chester to eat, chat, and play games; including one popular game led by Emma Merrick which involved writing superlatives, picking them from a bowl at random, and passing them to the classmate we thought it represented most.—**Justin Vogel**

## FACULTY/STAFF

**Carol Ticknor Gilligan** passed away on Friday, January 19, 2018. Carol began work at Westtown as a Middle School classroom and Leapfrog substitute in the spring of 2002. In the summer of 2003, she took on extra responsibilities as the school's first Director of Summer Programs, researching and envisioning programming possibilities. Carol launched the Summer Programs in 2004. In the fall of 2004 she became assistant coach of Middle School girls field hockey and in the spring of 2007 became assistant coach of Middle School girls lacrosse. She left Westtown in 2007. Then Head of School John Baird said of Carol's work, "As Director of Summer Programs, she was a strong and articulate advocate of the program and its clear and thorough overseer." He also cited her enthusiastic work with teams' representation of Friends schools athletics.



# From the Archives



# 1935

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962), active in social reform movements before and during her time as First Lady, visited Westtown School in April 1935 as part of an American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) meeting. Pictured here with Westtown Head of School James Walker (left), and Clarence E. Pickett, Executive Secretary of AFSC (right), Roosevelt gave three talks during her few hours at Westtown, including one delivered by radio broadcast to a national audience. When addressing the students, the First Lady noted, "You will soon be voting citizens ... you have a great opportunity to begin to form your own opinions, and to start molding your own ideas for the future."





WESTTOWN SCHOOL

975 Westtown Road | West Chester | Pennsylvania 19382

# Save the Date

**September 22**

Westtown FallFest and Alumni Soccer Game

**September 27**

Shoemaker Lecture: Kevin Roose '05

**October 21**

All-School Open House

**November 29**

Shoemaker Lecture: Emily Carris '00

