

# MISS HALL'S SCHOOL

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ARTWORK BY  
Carrie Zhou '24

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**“MISS HALL’S HAS GIVEN ME SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE MY PASSIONS AND MY IDENTITY, PUT IDEAS INTO ACTION, AND MAKE OBJECTS THAT ARE NEAR AND DEAR TO MY HEART.”**

—School Vice President Truc Hoang '22



FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



**COVER ART**  
“Safe and Sound” by Carrie Zhou '24  
made for Studio Art II.



## CONTINUOUS REIMAGINING & YOU

**FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, WE'VE BEEN** forced to reimagine school as we knew it.

In response to the global pandemic, in 2020 we innovated a radical new academic schedule and taught every single class twice, to reach students learning in many time zones, without compromising in-person or online learning. Returning in full this year to Holmes Road, we have constantly adjusted protocols to keep everyone healthy and safe, have reinvented beloved traditions for the current moment, and have found new ways to connect as a community. Thanks to our nimble faculty and dedicated staff, learning never stopped at Miss Hall's.

The genuine enthusiasm for being together that has always been characteristic of MHS is particularly motivating now. That enthusiasm generates energy, and that energy, in turn, sparks amazing things that happen here each day. Those amazing things come in many forms: projects, advocacy, and initiatives that take shape when students from 24 countries dig deep into their learning to pursue their passions and turn bold ideas into action.

This issue of the *Miss Hall's Magazine* spotlights the incredible projects and transformation taking place inside and outside of today's classrooms. With Horizons in its 28th (!) year, girls' leadership, experiential learning, and service to the common good are flourishing. You will also learn about our highest-level Hallmark


courses, passion projects of our talented faculty, that advance 21st century thinking.

Of course, this kind of whole-student teaching is nothing new at Miss Hall's. Jim Ervin was an excellent Math and Geology Teacher and his enthusiasm for tennis and skiing energized a generation of well-rounded student athletes. Such is the power of a dynamic educator, and Miss Hall's past and present is known for dynamic, passionate educators.

In a few weeks, we will graduate the Class of 2022, 48 bold and creative contributors to the common good. Once again, a fully on-campus Commencement offers opportunities to reflect on accomplishments and growth and look ahead to a future shaped by our graduates.

On the cusp of the 125th year of Miss Hall's School, the shared commitment to our mission and the undeniable belief that the work we do here matters are stronger than ever. In the coming months, we will invite you to be part of the visioning for our next 125 years. This is what intentional, continuous reimagining of girl-centered education looks like — it's what we do, and we cannot do it without you.

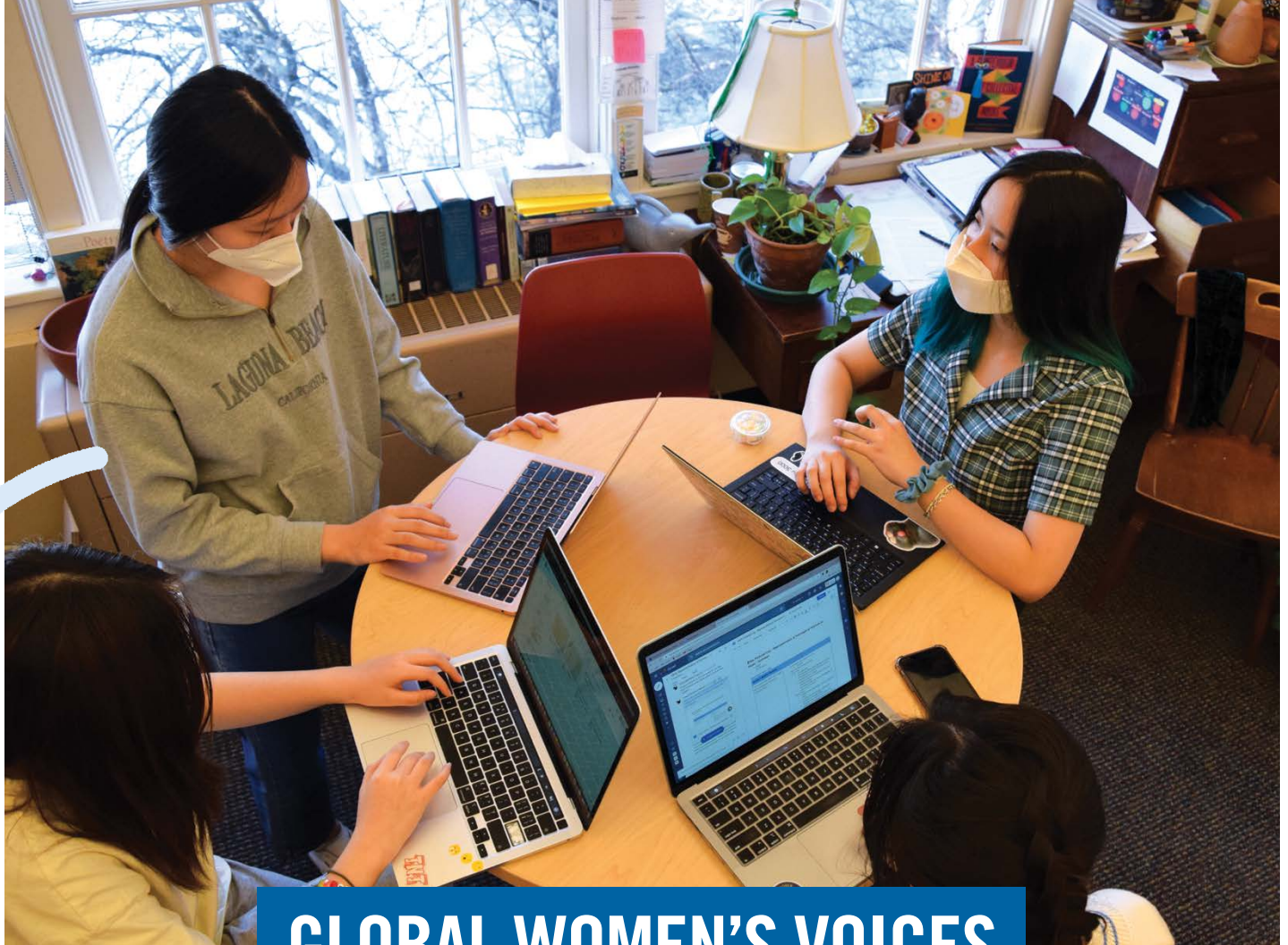
With gratitude,



Head of School Julia Heaton with Trustee Emeritus Lee Auchincloss Link '61 at the Museum of Modern Art during an Expressive Arts trip to New York with Hallmark Art Intensive and Hallmark History of Art students in April 2022.

# PASSION PROJECTS

Students — and adults! — dig  
deep into projects that spotlight  
the strength of the MHS  
academic program



## GLOBAL WOMEN'S VOICES

### CHOOSING THEIR SENIOR HORIZONS PROJECT,

Kathleen Nguyen '22 and Phuong Tran '22 wanted to pair their passion for lifting women's voices with helping students find theirs.

The solution was "Blossom 11," a monthly podcast created to do both while also bringing awareness to issues of gender inequality from a global perspective. To tackle the initiative, they enlisted ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) II students, who have embraced the opportunity to speak up and share their perspectives.

Kathleen and Phuong mentor the Blossom crew, which includes Amber Feng '25, Ivy He '23, Jacey Li '23, Vy Nguyen '23, Craye Yan '24, Lily Yao '24, Ruby Yao '25, and Jessica Zhu '24. The team meets weekly to brainstorm topics, refine ideas, develop interview questions, outline episodes, and record the podcasts. They interview peers and MHS adults, collecting as many perspectives as possible, while also sharing their own viewpoints.

For their first podcast in January, Blossom 11 explored beauty standards. "The goal was to provide a more diverse

understanding of beauty standards by collecting perspectives from different countries, ages, cultural backgrounds, and experiences to paint a diverse picture of beauty: what it is, how it affects our society, and how its definition is constantly evolving," explains Phuong.

Episode 2 discussed women's education, its history, and why it matters. Episodes 3 and 4 tackle the Representation of Women in Music & Media.

"The overall focus is on women's representation and women's voices, with a concentration on global perspectives," notes Kathleen. "The idea grew out of projects that tie into the ESOL class, and we thought that doing a podcast would provide students with practical application of vocabulary and grammar and help them develop confidence in their language skills."

You can find Blossom 11 podcasts on Spotify. You can also follow them on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/blossom11.podcast/>.

Be on the lookout for future episodes! •



# PASSION PROJECTS



## DIVERSITY IN PUBLISHING

**REBECCA DONTJE '22 HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BIG READER. EARLY ON,** Rebecca noticed that many books she read, typically young adult, or “YA” novels, featured similar plots and characters. She also noticed a lack of diversity.

“The point of YA is to show teenagers that what they are experiencing is normal and to give them a place to escape,” Rebecca explains. “I grew up in a predominantly white area, and if I had books with more diversity, it would have given me a place to see myself.”

Rebecca decided to research the publishing industry and its lack of diversity for her Hallmark Humanities Seminar project. The full-year course allows students to dive deep into project-based research about a chosen topic. With an interest in entering publishing after college, Rebecca jumped into the project.

“I have learned a lot about how the publishing industry has affected and continues to affect what books are released to the public,” she explains. “About 85 percent of publishers identify as white, and publishers decide how authors are marketed, typically white authors to the general population and authors of color to a specific demographic. I also found that a lot of books with people of color focus on the negative aspects of identity — police brutality or racism — and not as much on celebrating the identity or sharing normal, everyday things.”

The seminar culminates with students sharing their expertise with the MHS community. Rebecca will be ready.

“The end goal is helping people learn and expand their list of books and authors they read,” she says, adding that tackling such a sizeable project — developing a thesis, taking effective notes, and organizing multiple sources, then making sense of them six months later — has her prepared for college and the publishing field. “It also made me more determined to get into the industry and make some type of change.” •





# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP PROJECT

## EVERY OTHER FRIDAY MORNING, AN AMBITIOUS GROUP

of 9th and 10th graders settles into a Thompson Humanities Wing classroom and gets to work. That's not unusual by any stretch, except this ambitious bunch includes students on two continents.

The Global Citizenship Project connects students from Miss Hall's School and the Gashora Girls Academy of Science and Technology in Rwanda (GGAST). Together, they have been working to address issues of teen pregnancy and reproductive health in a Rwandan community.

"We want to provide these young girls with the necessary tools and information needed to be leaders and also empowered advocates for their own health," explains Idalis De Jesus '25, one of the MHS participants. The group also includes Inyene Bell '25, Cora Ma '24, Lily McDonald '25, Chloe Muellers '25, Ivette Solis '25, and Eden Zuckerman-Hood '24. There are 10 Gashora students participating.

Together, the students are developing informative and accessible booklets that cover topics such as safe sex, consent, and reproductive health. Each booklet includes medical resources, illustrations, stories from young women, and news about women's health. The booklets will be translated into Kinyarwanda, the native language of Rwanda, as well as French and English, which are widely spoken in the country.

Partnering with GGAST provides important local insight, while ensuring the booklets are culturally appropriate. Every other week, the teams connect via Zoom, catching up on progress since their last meeting and setting goals for their next meeting. They also get to know more about each other, an aspect that has been especially valuable.

"I really enjoy communicating with people across the world every two weeks or so," explained Lily. "I wanted to try something new, and I thought this was something that would benefit other communities outside of my own. I never thought I'd be working with people across the world, and that is 100% what I have enjoyed the most."

Cora noted that she valued the process of discovering the project as it unfolded. "This is an amazing process to experience, and it made me realize that when you are starting something, it is good to just head toward it and do it, and not be afraid of not knowing what to do at first."

The students from Gashora have also leaped at the opportunity to collaborate with peers a world away. "I have enjoyed working together as a team to collaborate, plan meetings, and impact someone's life," noted one student. "We get to know people on the other side of the world we didn't know, and now we are friends. We enjoy the way we are working to help these teenagers." •



# PASSION PROJECTS



## THE ANCIENT WORLD

### LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT CHAIR DR. SARAH NIX

spends at least part of every day in the ancient world — first or second century Rome or fifth century BCE Greece.

“I have devoted my professional career to the language and cultures of the ancient Roman and Greek worlds, but there is a lot more out there,” says Dr. Nix, who has turned that passion into a new upper-level elective. “Civilizations of Imperial China and Rome” makes its debut at MHS this fall.

The course was partially inspired by student interest in learning about Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the diaspora. Further inspiration came from Dr. Nix’s own fascination with ancient culture and civilizations, and the course presents an opportunity to explore two of them together, rather than in isolation.

The course asks the essential question: How do we know what we know about peoples who lived more than 2,000 years ago? The first semester will explore ancient China

through the Han Dynasty. The second will look at the height of ancient Roman civilization, a period corresponding to the Han Dynasty.

“We will work on building the skills of a historian to analyze and interpret historical evidence,” Dr. Nix adds. And, as with many of her courses, Dr. Nix will lay out topics and evidence the class will explore, but leave space to explore student interests.

Dr. Nix traces her passion for the ancient world to junior-year Latin in high school. “The teacher said, ‘Something, something, something Rome,’” Dr. Nix recalls. “Before that, a teacher had never put a place and a time to the language, which was spoken by millions of people, and with that, a whole new world opened up to me. I remember thinking, ‘I want to know more,’ and I’m still fascinated by the Romans, to be honest.” •





### EMILY AND EMILY WEREN'T READY TO LET HATCHERY GO.

They participated last year with the on-campus Horizons site, which offered juniors the opportunity to hone their entrepreneurial and business savvy by selling handmade crafts created by Miss Hall's students. When they learned that the site was not expected to return for 2021-22, they took matters into their own hands.

They turned it into a club, leading a team that mentors student makers and helps them bring their products to market. Club members help with everything from brainstorming product ideas to overseeing sales, hosting one each semester.

"I really liked Arty Party freshman year," says Emily L., referring to the 9th-grade Horizons project in which students made and sold crafts to support philanthropic causes. "Hatchery was the 11th-grade version of Arty Party, but it

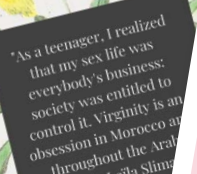
wasn't going to be a Horizons site this year. We still wanted to make things, and I enjoyed learning about the business side of the work, too, so we decided to make it a club."

During the first semester, Hatch Club members mentored twenty student makers who created cards, jewelry, clothing, and more, selling them at a Fall Marketplace. The group also works closely with Ellie Kreischer, the Elizabeth Gatchell Klein Expressive Arts Chair, who helped launch the Hatchery and Arty Party initiatives.

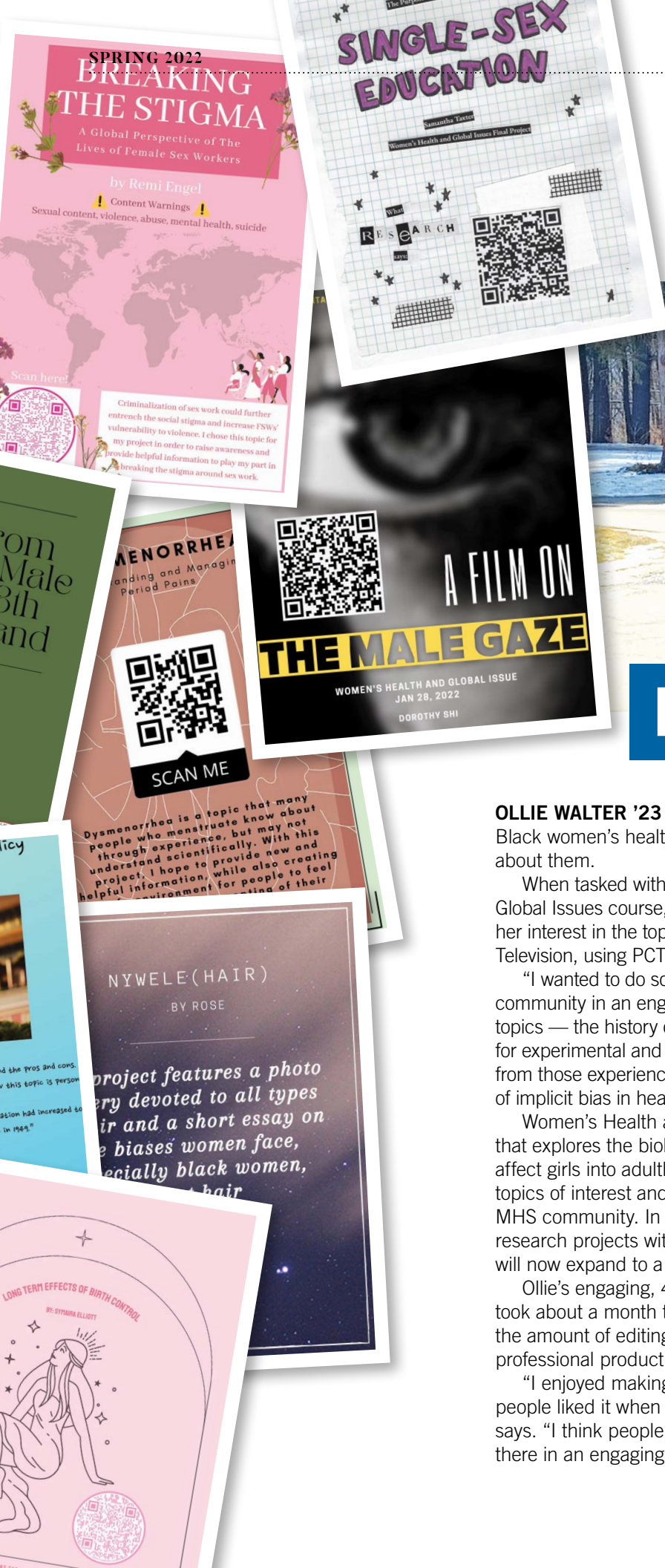
"I was excited to do it, because I like brainstorming and making things," says Emily G., who, like Emily L., has enjoyed learning the ins and outs of taking a product from concept to marketplace. "I started last year knowing absolutely nothing about the entrepreneurial process, and now I feel like I can do it, and the level of growth in that respect has been amazing." •



For April, integrating the Horizons and BCC experiences made each more rewarding. “I learned a lot about myself, what makes me happy, and what makes other people happy,” she said. “The class made me value Horizons that much more, because I learned the science behind helping people, and that made me realize I want to do even more.” •







Some of the projects from the Women's Health and Global Issues class.



## BIAS IN HEALTHCARE

**OLLIE WALTER '23 HAS SEEN FIRST-HAND THE LACK OF REGARD FOR** Black women's health and wellness, as well as the stereotypes many hold about them.

When tasked with developing a research project for her Women's Health & Global Issues course, Ollie knew the direction to take. Ultimately, she combined her interest in the topic with her Horizons internship at Pittsfield Community Television, using PCTV's studios to record a podcast on the subject.

"I wanted to do something that would present this information to the community in an engaging way," says Ollie, whose podcast explores four main topics — the history of medicine and the reliance on Black women and slaves for experimental and nonconsensual medical experiments; how stereotypes from those experiences carry through into healthcare today; the consequences of implicit bias in healthcare; and what can be done and is being done about it.

Women's Health and Global Issues is a semester-long, upper-level elective that explores the biological, cultural, social, economic, and political issues that affect girls into adulthood. During the course, students are asked to research topics of interest and present their findings to peers and, at times, to the MHS community. In January, students in the class shared their first-semester research projects with students and faculty via Zoom. Good news, the course will now expand to a full year elective in 2022-2023.

Ollie's engaging, 40-minute podcast, which features classmate Sophia '22, took about a month to produce, Ollie notes. One of the biggest challenges was the amount of editing and polishing after recording that went into making a professional production.

"I enjoyed making the podcast and listening to it, and I'm happy that people liked it when it came out and that they learned something from it," she says. "I think people enjoy that format, and you can get a lot of information out there in an engaging way." •



# PASSION PROJECTS



## CONTRIBUYENDO AL BIEN COMÚN

**ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS ABOUT LEARNING A** language is putting it to practical use.

When Director of Horizons Erica Washburn approached Spanish Teacher Ana Cristina Velez, asking if students would be interested in doing translations for the community, Sra. Velez took the idea to her Hallmark Spanish class. The students jumped at the opportunity, offering the service to their Horizons internships.

“What a resource,” says Sra. Velez. “This is very helpful to people in the community, so they can have information and be aware of things in their native language. We want to continue offering this service through the Hallmark Class in the future.”

Students spent the first semester continuing their study of Spanish literature, grammar, geography, and culture. They went to work on the translations during the second semester, with Sra. Velez dividing the class into teams: Ruby McDonald '22 and Sienna Trask '22; Rose Aloo '22, Randi McGeary '22, and Samantha Taxter '22; and Cailyn Tetteh '22 and Olivia Kick-Nalepa '22.

The students' first project was translating informational pamphlets from the Berkshire County District Attorney's Office, where Cailyn interns with the Community Outreach Coordinator. The brochures cover topics such as teen dating

violence, how to identify sexual exploitation, and information about the office's Juvenile Justice Program, a diversion program for youthful offenders.

“What I enjoyed most was reading the translations back to myself and seeing how closely they matched the English text,” says Cailyn. “Though I've been taking Spanish for a while, I am not yet fluent, so it was fun to think of different combinations of things I already knew to recreate the English text, and then read it back and see that I had gotten my meaning across correctly.”

Students particularly enjoyed collaborating to create useful materials for the community. The class is looking for other places it can offer similar help, such as translating Commencement programs and invitations or being a resource to the Admissions Office, possibly providing tours to prospective students and families.

For Sra. Velez, there is magic in seeing the students put their skills to practical use while in service to the larger community. “The students, all seniors, showed a lot of energy, growth, and enthusiasm during the process,” she adds. “That's the ultimate goal for any teacher. It's a fabulous way to finish their Spanish careers at Miss Hall's.” •





**AS AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT, MHS SCIENCE** Teacher Kennedy Raimer was fascinated by earthworms and how they dug their tunnels through the soil.

Kennedy also spent her childhood hiking, kayaking, and camping with her family. While majoring in Biology in college, she took an Environmental Studies class and turned her interest in the natural world into a double major and a career teaching science.

“That’s when I learned how to take a passion for being outside and using it to do something impactful,” explains Kennedy, who launched a Horizons initiative this year to give MHS students a similar experience. Each week, she leads six members of the Environmental Action and Research Team out and about on the Miss Hall’s campus and beyond to dig into the environment around them.

“I thought it would be meaningful for students with these interests to be out in the field,” adds Kennedy, whose college experience included an internship with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. “I wanted our students to have that authentic experience of what it’s like to be an environmental researcher.”

The juniors and seniors have rolled up their sleeves to conduct water testing, soil sampling, and tree identification on the MHS campus. They’ve done salamander studies, clearing

leaves from a patch in the MHS woods, laying down a sheet of plywood, then returning in subsequent weeks to inspect under the boards for salamanders, measure them, and record the species.

They’ve researched the Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive species highly destructive to ash trees, and explored areas in Berkshire county that have different histories of land use, visiting Natural Bridge State Park in North Adams. They’ve also compared the biology of the manmade pond at MHS with a natural pond at Pittsfield State Forest.

Along the way, they have worked on independent research projects. One student tackled more in-depth salamander research, comparing soil samples with salamander populations on campus. Another worked to calculate the MHS carbon footprint. A third studied differences in plant growth using compost vs. natural soil, while another student conducted a forest diversity study, identifying the trees on campus and using wildlife cameras to determine the species in the forest.

“We’re outside pretty much each week,” Kennedy adds. “I want to get students outside and introduce them to all different things they can do and then how they can use their research and results to make a difference.” •

# PASSION PROJECTS



**KEELY O'GORMAN '22 KNOWS SHE CAN'T SOLVE THE** problem of homelessness on her own, but she knows she can take action in her own Miss Hall's way to help improve others' lives.

That's why this year she reprised Bags of Hope, an initiative launched during the 2020-21 school year to provide reusable shopping bags filled with toiletries to residents in Pittsfield's emergency winter shelter. Last year, Keely partnered with classmates Neylan Johnson, Rory Benson, and Sophia Sandoval in the MAPS (Mira's Alliance for Philanthropic Sustainability) Horizons site. This year, it was her independent senior Horizons project.

"The biggest difference is that last year we weren't able to set up collection boxes, so it was mostly cash donations," totaling more than \$700, says Keely, who then purchased the toiletries that were donated. "This year, I wanted to do a drive with collection boxes and donations that were not monetary. That way, anyone could participate."

Contributors dropped off bags — backpacks and bags with straps (they are easier to carry!) work best — and toiletries in collection boxes set up in the Ferguson Sun Room.

Keely delivered them in March to Pittsfield's Barton's Crossing emergency shelter.

The idea for Bags of Hope took shape when Keely, as a junior, was volunteering with MAPS, an MHS student-led group that educates and fundraises within the MHS community and beyond to promote sustainable philanthropy locally and around the world.

"Just driving around with my mom and seeing so many people on the sides of the street asking for money or being homeless really got me thinking about what I could do," she recalls. "Everyone needs toiletries, and they can be expensive. And, there are a lot of food drives, so I thought I would collect toiletries. Bags seemed a good way to do that, and I thought this project would be a good fit for MAPS."

Keely envisions the effort becoming an annual one for MAPS and/or Horizons. "It really fits with what Miss Hall's does with philanthropy," she says. "It's local. It's something that can be done every year, and it's needed. Ideally, we wouldn't have as many homeless people, but I cannot change that on my own, so I chose this as something that could help improve peoples' lives." •





## STEEPED IN TRADITION

### WHEN TACKLING FINAL PROJECTS FOR TWO

Expressive Arts classes, Truc Hoang '22 decided to bring a bit of home to MHS, her home for the last four years.

"I wanted to do something that had a lot of meaning for me and my identity," explains Truc, who is from Hanoi. "Tea is a big part of my family culture. My grandparents drink it every day; it's a ritual for them, and I was taught the basics of how they do it."

For her Hallmark Art Intensive class — a yearlong course in which students create concept-driven work, culminating in a solo show — Truc created 18 ceramic teapots, with two cups to go with each teapot. For her Garment & Textile Design course — a semester-long course that introduces students to fashion concepts and how to create clothing — Truc designed and made from scratch a traditional Vietnamese *áo dài*, a long shirt worn on formal occasions.

During a May 11 exhibit for Hallmark Art, Truc brought both projects together. She recreated her family's tea ceremony, complete with green tea she brought to MHS from Vietnam. She also included traditional snacks — *bánh đậu*

*xanh*, small pastries made from bean powder — that her grandparents usually eat while enjoying their tea.

"Seeing my work come together has been really satisfying," notes Truc, who found herself returning to the ceramics studio this year for the first time since ninth grade. "I hadn't made anything since then, but I made variety of bowls and plates for my Gallery class in the fall, then took on the challenge of making new type of work with the teapots, which are much more difficult because there are many pieces to them — the body, lid, spout, and handle."

The projects are a fitting culmination to Truc's experience at MHS, where she has been an active member of the community, serving this year as the School's Vice President.

"Throughout my time at Miss Hall's, I've had the opportunity to explore myself, my identity, and my background and learn the importance of authenticity," she explains. "I have been encouraged by my teachers and friends to share about my culture and where I come from, and this project is a very meaningful way for me to do that with the community." •

# COLLEGE PREP 2.0

Hallmark courses offer  
21st century skills for  
college and beyond

## **WHEN STUDENTS LEAVE ELLIE KREISCHER'S HALLMARK**

Art Intensive class, they do so with a portfolio that showcases their talents as artists and spotlights their stories as creators.

Students in the Hallmark Humanities Seminar will have researched and analyzed primary sources, engaged with experts, and worked independently to see a months-long project through from concept to public presentation. Students in the Hallmark Biotechnology, Environmental Science, and Inorganic Chemistry classes, meanwhile, will come away with hands-on laboratory and learning experiences gained while exploring relevant current fields.

Perhaps most importantly, students in each of these classes — and all MHS Hallmark courses — will have learned alongside expert faculty who are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and intensely committed to sharing that knowledge with students.

“When I look back at my education, nothing is more powerful than being in a class with a teacher who is truly passionate about what they are teaching and when they are mentoring you through challenging material,” notes Dean of Academics and Faculty Lisa Alberti '73. “For me, it was (longtime MHS Math Teacher) Jim Ervin [see page 34 about the passing of this beloved faculty member] and his love of geology. He was a great math teacher, but when he taught geology, he came alive and shared his passion in a way that made me love that subject forever.”





Such is the hallmark of the Miss Hall's Hallmark courses. Now in their third year, these forward-thinking, upper-level classes offer students personalized, in-depth, and sustained inquiry, and allow teachers to bring their expertise into the classroom and teach beyond the test. They also expose students to advanced work in independent research, in-depth analysis, and critical-thinking, skills sought by colleges and universities in prospective students.

Interdisciplinary and inquiry-based, the classes have supplanted Advanced Placement (AP) classes as the most challenging courses in the MHS academic program, and the reception from students, faculty — and colleges — has been overwhelmingly positive.

"We have found students to be incredibly engaged and incredibly willing to put the hours of work into the course, just because it means so much to them," says Dean Alberti. "Our faculty have responded enthusiastically because it allows them to teach subjects they love to teach, and the success of the Hallmark experience is also something that speaks very well to our colleges, because they can see that if a student can handle the rigors of a Hallmark class and **that level of independence, they'll be prepared for a similar experience in college.**"

Indeed, how colleges would perceive the transition from Advanced Placement to Hallmark courses was the subject of considerable discussion within and beyond MHS in

Students in Dr. Liza Burbank's Hallmark History of American Advertising, a year-long course that tackles a subject that is ever-present in our lives, yet seldom analyzed.

# COLLEGE PREP 2.0

Our Hallmark  
courses are  
designed with  
years of research.

conversations dating to at least 2016, if not earlier. Extensive research went into the decision, notes Director of Academic Counseling Sarah Virden, whose hats at MHS have included two decades as a college counselor.

“For many years prior to beginning our Hallmark program, we had been working closely with our college partners with what we were planning for our curriculum, and we were not surprised to learn that our partners were very excited and interested in our plans,” explains Ms. Virden.

“We determined we could provide advanced, rigorous courses that would better prepare students with the skills they will need in college,” adds Dean Alberti. “Our Hallmark courses are designed with years of research on our part and looking at the academic skills, the habits of mind — the ability to work independently, to conduct in-depth research, and to engage with challenging materials — that students need as a stepping-stone to their college experience.”

Director of College Counseling Courtney Hatch Blauvelt concurs.

“Colleges expect students to have done interdisciplinary, collaborative, project-based work, which is what Hallmark courses — and all our upper-level electives — offer,” notes Ms. Hatch Blauvelt, who worked in college financial aid before joining Miss Hall’s in 2017, and who continues to work closely with admissions officers across colleges and universities.

The student experience paints that picture. Take Hallmark Art Intensive, for example. The course is designed for students who are ready to make a leap from working off assignments from a teacher to concept-driven art-making practices that advance their work as artists.

“The portfolios that students are making in Hallmark Art tell their story on their college applications,” notes Ms. Kreischer, the Elizabeth Gatchell Klein Chair of the Expressive Arts Department. “This is work that’s so meaningful to them, because they made it for reasons that aren’t just to check a box or get a ‘5’ on an AP portfolio. They made it because they care about it.”

Likewise, students in the Hallmark Humanities seminar will have engaged in advanced-level research into a chosen topic of interest. Dr. Alexander is the History Department Chair and co-teaches the Hallmark Humanities seminar with English Teacher Rebecca Cook-Dubin. He draws a comparison to a course he used to teach, AP U.S. History.

“That course is very content-driven; it’s a very 20th century course,” he explains. “It was developed in a time when information was not democratized, so a content-based class had merit, because that was the way you learned the material. With the Information Revolution, that’s become irrelevant. Leaving behind AP has allowed me to offer a Hallmark Renaissance in Italy class.”

This new Hallmark class is inspired by Dr. Alexander’s doctoral work on 15th-century court cases, while also exploring the cultural explosion between the 14th and 16th centuries.

The 2022-23 course catalog includes 16 Hallmark classes and 25 Upper Level Electives. Together, these challenging courses offer MHS students opportunities to design an academic path that suits their interests and puts them on a path for success in college. Hallmark Environmental Science





is one of four new Hallmark courses next year. Calculus II, Women's History, and Dr. Alexander's Renaissance Italy class are the others.

Moving beyond the AP curriculum enabled the Science Department to bring to the forefront course offerings that allow for deep dives into relevant current topics both in its Hallmark and Upper Level elective offerings, notes Department Chair Donna Daigle.

"We were able to disengage from a curriculum dictated by an outside source, and as an instructor, it really opens up the world — the sky's the limit," notes Ms. Daigle. "When we made this shift, it really opened up the capacity for us to teach from our passions and bring that to our students in a way unavailable to us when teaching based on the AP standards."

A great example is Hallmark Environmental Science, being taught next year by Science Teacher Kennedy Raimer. [See page 11 for more on Kennedy's passion for the natural world!]

"That is a class that is focused on the local environment, our local ecosystem," adds Ms. Daigle, who previously taught AP Environmental Science. "Kennedy has been an advocate for more field work, and it's really her passion. What she brings as an expert in the field is invaluable."

Students in Science Teacher Jennifer LaForest's Hallmark Inorganic Chemistry class recently completed a project

James Brooke, former reporter, bureau chief, and foreign correspondent for *The New York Times*, visited the Global Affairs Seminar in April.



Biology students at work in Perkins Pond.

in which they built 3-D models, researched a particular drug's impact on society, then produced posters to illustrate their findings. Ms. Daigle introduced her Women's Health and Global Issues class a decade ago. She noticed, while teaching Anatomy & Physiology previously, that much of the study materials were based on the "average" male body.

"There is so much going on in the world about women's health, and I thought that at an all-girl school, it was an opportunity for us to explore this topic in a course," she adds. "I saw an opportunity and pursued it, and to have that autonomy as an educator to come up with an idea and pursue it is something I really value about Miss Hall's."

With the development of Hallmark Courses, Ms. Hatch Blauvelt notes, however, that the goal for students should not be to "stack" as many Hallmark classes as possible into their course load. Rather, colleges prefer to see a student who carefully chooses courses based on academic interest and strengths.

That journey begins in the 9th and 10th grades, with Foundational Courses that provide skills — research, writing, and analysis — that lay the groundwork for success in upper-level coursework. As students emerge from the sophomore experience, they meet with Ms. Virden and Ms. Hatch Blauvelt, in coordination with classroom teachers, advisors, and parents, to set their academic path for the junior and senior years and beyond.



Upper Level Electives — yearlong and semester classes — and Hallmark courses offer a voice and choice in that path, which is individualized for each MHS student.

Academic engagement is high in all of the classes, which provide in-depth study and complement what students are going to be asked to engage in when they get to college.

“Colleges want to see students who have taken a variety of courses,” Ms. Hatch Blauvelt explains. “They don’t expect someone to specialize in high school. They want to know that a student has all of the foundational skills and those higher-level skills of being able to work independently, to do in-depth research, and engage with challenging materials, so that they can specialize when they get to college. Hallmark and Horizons, that’s how our students stand out, not by stacking up exams and tests.”

“Our focus is on preparing students for their future — for college and beyond,” Dean Alberti adds. “We are committed to teaching them to be strong, sturdy learners so that when they head off to whatever environment they are going into, they have strong self-knowledge and are able to navigate the ups and downs they will inevitably encounter.”

Students learn to dig into research, explore multiple sources, and analyze those sources. They work independently, while also collaborating with other students, and they engage with a higher level of content. Many of the courses also seek to make connections with outside experts and organizations that further broaden the student experience. Faculty, meanwhile, have the ability to dive deep into topics and tailor their curriculum.

“You get the deepest engagement when students get to ask questions that can drive their learning, and that’s what you can do in these courses,” Dean Alberti adds.

Students in Hallmark History of Art, for example, took advantage of cultural offerings in the Berkshires, visiting several museums. “I saw how incredibly well-prepared our students are,” notes Dean Alberti, who made the trips with them. “If you are studying art history, you need to learn the vocabulary of art analysis and practice those skills, and you need to see the art. That will set them up to take Art History in college.”

Dean Alberti is particularly proud that courses are listed in more than one department, breaking down pillars between departments and helping students see how learning is connected across disciplines. The Humanities Seminar counts toward an English or History credit, for example, and History of Art as an Expressive Arts or History credit.

As Hallmarks head into their fourth year, she is excited to see the direction they take and how they further evolve. To date, they have been an unqualified success, with students and faculty enthusiastic about the change.

“These classes are rigorous, they are exciting, they are dynamic, and they are an opportunity for faculty to share their expertise with students,” notes Dean Alberti. “Our academic program is designed, and our courses are created, to teach the skills, cover the material, and provide the knowledge so that students will be prepared to flourish in college and beyond.” •

## HALLMARK COURSES

*Courses are designed by faculty at the intersection of their expertise and student passion.*

**2022–2023:** Art Intensive, Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, Biotechnology, Calculus, Calculus II, Creative Writing, Environmental Science, French, History of Art, Humanities Seminar, Inorganic Chemistry, Latin, Literature, Renaissance in Italy, Spanish, Statistics, Women’s History

**2021–2022:** Art Intensive, Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, Biotechnology, Calculus, Creative Writing, Ethics of Literature, French, History of American Advertising, History of Art, Humanities Seminar, Inorganic Chemistry, Latin, Law, Linear Algebra, Spanish, Statistics



"Blue in Nature," by Yifei Yang '22





Untitled by Juliana Mills '24



# SOPHOMORE HORIZONS

## 10th-Grade Horizons Experience Helps Set the Path for Future Passions

By Samantha Taxter '22  
Horizons Media Team Intern

### MUCH LIKE THE FOUNDATIONAL ACADEMIC

experience of the 9th and 10th grades prepares students for their paths of study during the junior and senior years, sophomore Horizons prepares them for stepping out on their own and pursuing projects of interest in subsequent years. In groups, students are able to exercise their voice and their vision as they work toward a final goal. Later in the year, they delve into personalized individual and group projects designed to make a positive impact in the local community and the world.

Envisioning the sophomore experience, Director of Horizons Erica Washburn wanted students to celebrate the reward of their own thoughtful planning and teamwork throughout this unique year. "When we were planning the tenth-grade program, I wanted it to be an authentic, project-based experience that the students could co-create," Ms. Washburn explained in a recent interview. "I think it's important for students to feel like they are developing skills in a way that is working toward something real."

Real-life projects are present in all areas of what the sophomores accomplished this year. Trips to local museums and farms — part of planning for the annual Harvest Luncheon while learning about local indigenous cultures — immersed students in the community that surrounds the School. Students also offered their services to organizations that positively impact the Berkshires area. By participating



in harvesting and other work, and by planning events for the schoolwide community, sophomores gained an understanding of what it takes to contribute to the common good.

Sophomore year also takes into consideration the individual interests of the students, Ms. Washburn noted. In addition to careful planning by the Horizons team and associated faculty, the program allows students to make decisions and self-select into some activities. In preparation for a whole new world of experiences during junior and senior year, sophomores are given a chance to delve into their own interests and engage in what is most intriguing to them. "In tenth grade, we definitely want to offer more choice so that students are engaged in experiences that feel relevant to them," Ms. Washburn added.

Planning for the fall Harvest Luncheon, for example, Ms. Washburn oversaw the work of groups that organized according to the students' own passions, such as working on the menu or developing the educational program, but students largely determined direction and details. "We allowed students to self-select into those groups, and we provided guidelines for things that needed to get done, but we allowed students to decide how they got done." These developing skills of independence and drive encourage sophomores to look ahead toward the academic opportunities and possibilities of Hallmark-level classes.

Members of the class have their own positive input as well. Class President Naomi Hopkins '24 agreed that the Horizons





experience is an opportunity to discover new talents and interests. “Through workshops and collaboration, I’ve learned about who I am as a leader and a teammate,” she shared. Classmates used the experience to get to know each other, but also to learn more about themselves as individuals.

As spring approached, the sophomores shifted their focus toward contributing to the common good. Students worked on independent “Empowered Changemaker” projects using the skills they developed in the first half of the year. Students choose a cause or issue of importance to them, then devise a meaningful action in response. In this way, students are both informed about local and global issues, while also feeling empowered to do something to positively impact them. They also set goals that centered around community service, social entrepreneurship, activism, or any cause important to them and the world that surrounds MHS.

The sophomore Horizons experience is a year that enhances the skills necessary to become a strong-willed contributor to the Miss Hall’s School mission. When students can explore their interests and excel both socially and academically, each Wednesday morning is a step closer to changing the world. •

#### A SAMPLING OF EMPOWERED CHANGEMAKER PROJECTS

- » Juliana Mills and Hanna Heaton-Wellenstein are providing childcare for kids aged 0-4, so parents can attend ESOL classes at Jewish Family Services.
- » Najma Yusuf is organizing a petition in support of Somaliland's independence.
- » Several students are running food, clothing, toy, and art supply drives for local organizations, including Berkshire Bounty, Western Mass Labor Action, the Elizabeth Freeman Center, and Berkshire Kids Place. Ruby Hauck, Alida Perri, Maddie Tillem, Leora Cook-Dubin, Daniela Labori Boix, Zoe Ozawa, Nat Williams-Jack, Oumou Sidibe, and Diana Calle.
- » Welmerly Maria, Lily Yao, Ella Tawes, and Naomi Wager are working to reduce food waste at MHS and are collaborating with BEAT (the Berkshire Environmental Action Team) to educate the local community about environmental issues.

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**FACULTY PROFILE**

# EMILY PULFER- TERINO '97 AND THE FORMATIVE POWER OF WRITING

By Liz Kulze

## **EMILY PULFER-TERINO WAS A BOARDING STUDENT AT**

Miss Hall's when she went to see her then English Teacher, Michelle Gillett, give a public reading of her poetry. Gillett, who taught at MHS from 1984 to 1995, was an award-winning poet, an artist, and an advocate for women in the arts, and she published several books, prior to her passing in 2015.

"She was a big inspiration," Emily says. "It was amazing to have a working poet as my English teacher."

Flash-forward years later, and Emily has followed in Ms. Gillett's footsteps, teaching courses in Literature and Creative Writing at MHS and regularly publishing her own poetry in various literary journals. She is also the faculty-founder and advisor for *Girls Right the World*, an online literary journal celebrating female-identified writers and artists and edited by MHS students. The journal, which Emily founded in 2015 with students Alicia Bravo '16 and Anna Ngo '16, has expanded to have a global reach.

It's her passion for voice and personal expression that ultimately led Emily to pursue a career in Creative Writing, both as a poet and as a teacher. After graduating from MHS at just age 16, she went on to study Literature and Creative Writing at Sarah Lawrence College and ultimately earned an M.F.A. in Poetry from Syracuse University. Afterward, she planned to teach at the college level, but when she returned to MHS for her 10-year reunion, she learned the School was looking for an English Teacher. "I applied for an interview a







few days after the reunion,” says Emily, who is now in her fifteenth year at MHS. “It was really intimidating, because I was applying for a job with my old teachers!”

Miss Hall’s has evolved a lot since that time, as has the place of Creative Writing in academics, both nationally and in the MHS community. Though there were no Creative Writing course offerings when Emily first began teaching, she and Phoebe Goodhue Milliken ’37 English Department Chair Julie Schutzman were instrumental in advocating for its inclusion in the Academic Program, first as an elective in 2011 and, most recently, as a Hallmark Course, now in its second year.

“Reimagining Creative Writing as a Hallmark Course has really helped signal that it’s a serious enterprise,” Emily says. “Writing can be fun, but it can also be very serious and critical. A lot of the skills and faculties that are brought to bear in essay writing, critical analysis, and research are also integral to Creative Writing.”

In the course, students develop their voices through the study and writing of poetry, spoken word pieces, short stories, nonfiction, and experimental forms. There is also a collaborative element, as students workshop each other’s work, learning how to give and receive feedback in order to help imagine opportunities for revision.

In a recent class, students read from love or anti-poems they were working on, while their peers responded by shouting out what moved them or what they thought was working well. “I

appreciate the shifting perspectives,” one student said. “I like the use of repetition and internal rhyme,” said another.

Emily notes that there’s a unique inclusiveness inherent to a Creative Writing classroom, as it provides opportunities for students who love to talk, but also for those who are more reticent — but have a lot to say.

“There’s a particular way in which students transform in a Creative Writing class that feels really exciting and individualized,” she explains, before noting the role Creative Writing also plays in helping to establish connection and community.

This was especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when teachers and students were forced to embrace remote learning. During a time when many students were left feeling isolated, the English Department made the decision to offer more opportunities for Creative Writing in all of their courses, in order to best support students both academically and emotionally.

It was a time that reminded Emily of the curative value of personal expression and the importance of making space for student voice. “It was a refuge,” Emily says, of her Creative Writing class during the pandemic. “The empathy born of sharing people’s personal stories made our classroom a wonderful space.” •

# WINTER AND SPRING AT MISS HALL'S



ABOVE: Students who stayed on campus during Spring Break had the chance to visit several colleges, including Columbia University (above); TOP: In March, our students put up a brilliant production of *Mary Poppins*; RIGHT: The International Student Alliance kicked off their annual holiday greetings and performances with students showcasing the flags of their home countries.







ABOVE: Varsity lacrosse taking on Hoosac School April 30 at home; LEFT: The Big Pond behind the Cross Athletic Center was a hopping place to be on weekends, when students and adults took advantage of perfect conditions for ice-skating; BELOW: On April 8, twenty-four students in the Hallmark Art Intensive and Hallmark History of Art classes traveled to New York City for a special tour of the Museum of Modern Art and to visit art galleries in Chelsea.







ABOVE: Early spring study break in the Quad; RIGHT: Students worked with Ms. Rutledge to organize an April 23 Earth Day rally in downtown Pittsfield's Park Square; BOTTOM: Deans Lima Jones, McClellan, and Alberti enjoying strawberries and ice cream on founder Mira Hall's birthday, April 21.





# SCHOLARSHIP CLUB LAUNCHES

Supporting students (and families) in the quest to pay for college



## DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE COUNSELING COURTNEY HATCH

Blauvelt regularly uses her expertise to provide a personalized college search experience for MHS students.

This year, she also used her expertise to help interested students find ways to help pay for their post-Miss Hall's education. Ms. H launched the MHS "Scholarship Club," providing time each week for students to research and work on scholarship applications.

"Every year, students have told me that they wanted more guidance on scholarships," Ms. H noted, but between busy school days and the work required for the college search and application processes, finding the time for researching and applying for scholarships can be a challenge.

So, she set aside blocks of time spread out over six weeks to offer students a time specifically for scholarship guidance. The sessions are open to 10th, 11th, and 12th graders, and offered during lunch, "What I Need" (WIN), and X blocks, providing opportunities to dig into the work.

"Generally, students who are successful in scholarship applications have an adult presence helping them navigate the process and be accountable for completing application requirements and meeting deadlines, so I try to provide that for our students," she says. "The goal is to give them dedicated space and time to do the work to find the right scholarships for them and to apply for them."

Because there is no central database or website with

scholarship information, there is a lot of work involved in determining which scholarships a student might even be eligible for, notes Ms. H, though she maintains and shares a detailed list of opportunities she has compiled through the years.

"I don't really teach or lead during Scholarship Club time," she adds. "It's more answering questions and being in the background and helping students narrow their search, prioritize which opportunities they might pursue, and navigate application requirements for particular scholarships."

Fernanda Morais Laroca '23 decided to drop in on the Club on the recommendation of her roommate. "Ms. H showed us how to search for scholarship opportunities, and she provided us with more online tools for doing that," says Fer. "It was also really helpful to learn more about the timeline to apply for scholarships. I would advise everyone to go, even if they don't really plan on looking for scholarships, because all of the advice and tools we learned were really helpful to other parts of the college process."

"There's a myth that if you go to a private high school, you don't get to apply for scholarships, and that's not necessarily the case," she says. "There are opportunities out there for students in independent schools, and it's a matter of having the time and support to research and follow through on those opportunities." •



# SUE LOVELL RETIRING

**A Serious Teacher Who  
Embraces Fun in the Classroom**



## TEACHING SCIENCE, SUE LOVELL EXPLAINS, IS FUN. IT

stands to reason then, that learning science should be fun. Three decades of Sue's students would likely agree.

Come June, however, Sue's fun in the classroom comes to an end. She will retire and wrap up 31 years at MHS and 32 overall as an educator.

"I was teaching at a school in New York State, but it was temporary, for a teacher on maternity leave," Sue says of her path to Miss Hall's. "One day, a teacher who lived near Pittsfield saw an ad in *The Berkshire Eagle*, and she brought it in to me, and I applied. The rest is history."

Sue joined MHS in 1991 and guestimates she has taught some 20 different courses — AP Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, and Physics, and among them. This year, for the first time, she taught math, adding Algebra I to her resume, proof that she's always game for tackling something new.

Chair of the Science Department from 1996 to 2016, Sue was a campus resident for about 12 years and has served on countless MHS committees. She has been a member of several visiting committees for NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) accreditations, and, for several years, has graded Advanced Placement Biology essays for the College Board.

In 2019, she was the recipient of the Paternotte Family Travel Grant, traveling to the Galapagos Islands. There, she followed in the footsteps of Charles Darwin, studying biodiversity in the face of climate change, invasive species, and ecosystem decay.

"That was the trip of a lifetime," she says. "I had been talking about it for years and to have that opportunity was amazing."

Something else Sue talked about for years was the need for a new science building on campus. It was a mission she took on shortly after the School completed the Anne Meyer Cross '37 Athletic Center and the Humes Euston Hall Library in 2001.

"Between that time and until we built Linn Hall, it was constant," Sue notes of her advocacy. "In fact, I became pretty irritating to Jeannie and Jenny," she adds, referencing former Head of School Jeannie Norris and former Dean of Students and Assistant Head of School Jenny Chandler. Along the way, Sue has also been an advocate for on-campus housing.

Both were realized with the 2016 opening of Linn Hall and the new residence hall. "I'm almost glad we did not get the building in 2000 because it would already be outdated by now," Sue admits. "Now, we have a building that's really built for the future."

It's that ever-changing nature of science that appeals to Sue.

"The biology we taught in 1991 isn't anything like the biology we're teaching today," she explains. "Back then, it was plants and animals. Now, it's DNA and biotechnology."

How science is taught has also changed.

"Thirty years ago, it was a lot of lecturing, notes on the

board, and testing based on those notes and the textbook," she adds. "We had 'lab days' with specific labs that supported the notes on the board. Now, it's much more organic. Instead of labs designed to get to a certain solution, they are much more open-ended, inquiry-based projects. We also use a lot more technology, which is great for all different kinds of learners, and we don't have 'lab days' anymore. Every day is fun-in-the-classroom day."

The fun is amplified by Sue's enthusiasm for teaching 9th-graders, which she has done from the get-go at MHS.

"They make so much progress in one year," she explains. "It's exciting to see, and it's fun to be a part of, and they're also pretty funny, both when they mean to be and when they don't mean to be. They're energetic, and they can be challenging. It's not all unicorns and rainbows."

For years, one of Sue's favorite projects was examining the Holmes Road and Williams Street intersection down the road from MHS with her 9th grade Physics students.

"We'd take measurements and record the timing of the stoplight, how long it took to stop, and the speed on the road," Sue explains. "We would run the physics, and prove it was an unsafe intersection. We sent the mayor of Pittsfield a letter every year, and it was 10 years before we got a response. Then they fixed the intersection, so we couldn't do that

experiment anymore."

But, for every successful experiment, there are plenty of others that don't go as expected — and that's the whole point, explains Sue.

"Labs don't work out all the time, because things that are supposed to happen in a perfect physics model don't happen in real life," she says. "That's part of learning. If everything worked perfectly every time, that's no fun. What's the fun in that?"

In retirement, Sue plans to do a lot of reading (science fiction, no doubt), traveling to visit her 12 grandchildren, spending more time with family — daughter Melissa is a nurse in Berkshire County and sons Joe and Mike are both lawyers in Florida — and doing some political activism. She would also like to return to London, which she first visited on MHS school trips in the '90s.

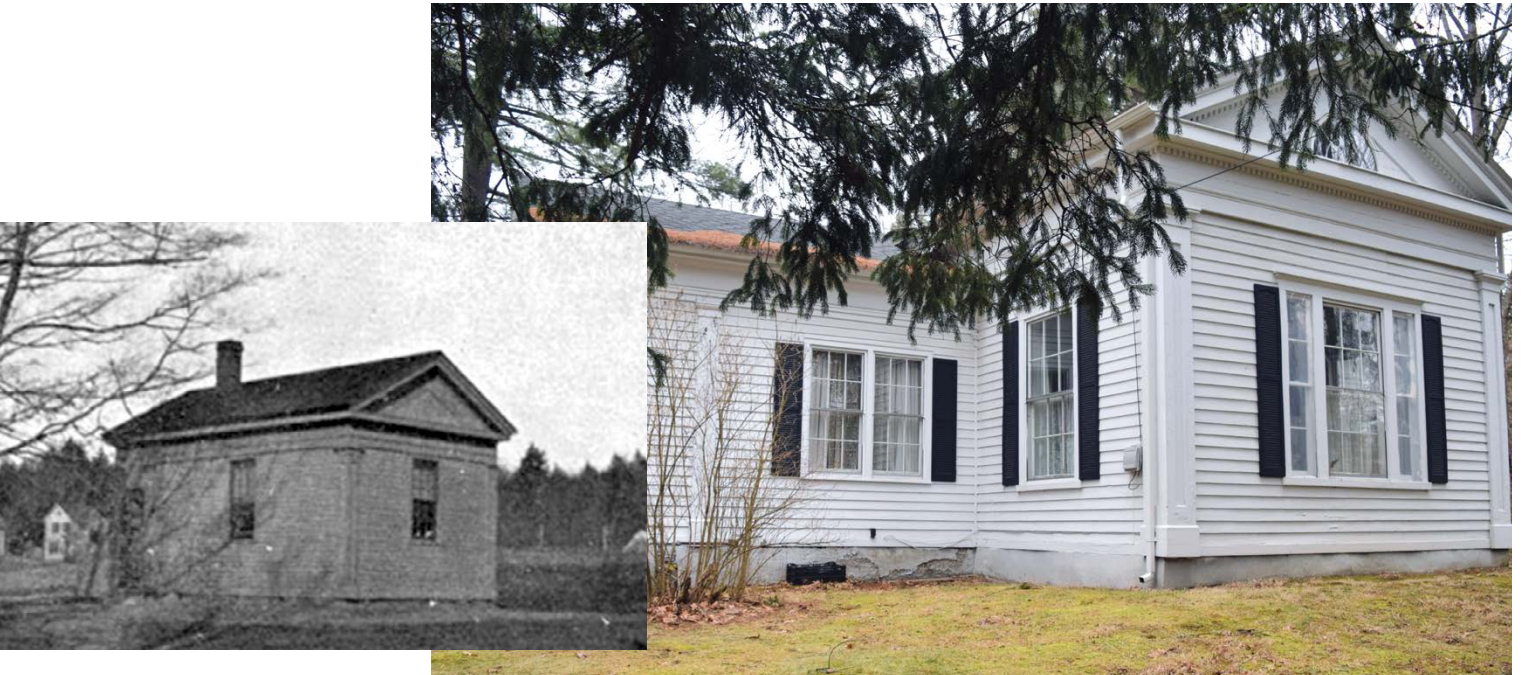
Looking back on her career, Sue appreciates the opportunity to be a part of the MHS community. "One of the things I have most enjoyed over the years are my colleagues, both teaching and non-teaching," she notes. "They have been a remarkably professional, fun, and dedicated bunch of adults to work with."

And, of course, she will miss the students.

"What I like most about teaching is interaction with the kids," she adds. "Science teachers have the best toys, and we play with those toys while learning science concepts, and I enjoy the 'a-ha' moments. For me, teaching is fun." •

**Back then, it was  
plants and animals.  
Now, it's DNA and  
biotechnology.**

# HOLMES ROAD HISTORY



**IN 1849, DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, SR. THE** noted essayist, poet, and father of Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr, built a home on his estate, Canoe Meadow, across the road from what is now Miss Hall's School. Dr. Holmes summered there for about seven years, and the property was later renamed "Holmesdale" by subsequent owners.

In her 1907 book, *Old Paths and Legend of the New England Border: Connecticut, Deerfield, Berkshire*, Katharine M. Abbott includes this footnote:

"'Holmesdale' is now the estate of Mr. William Pollock. Dr. Holmes' study is a part of a building on the 'Meadow Farm' of the late Colonel Walter Cutting."

The Pollocks owned Holmesdale in the late 1800s/early 1900s. After Col. Cutting's death in 1907, Meadow Farm was sold to Mira Hall, who moved her school to the property in 1909. The "old school" burned in 1923 and was replaced with the Main Building we know today.

The Abbott footnote caught our eye years ago, raising the questions: What and where was the Holmes study? Did it still exist?

Last summer, Louise Brown, of Salisbury, Connecticut, sent the School a photo album kept by her aunt, Martha Birnie Farmer, MHS Class of 1911. The album includes

photos from the 1909-10 and 1910-11 school years, the School's earliest on Holmes Road. One photo was captioned: "Holmes Study." Finally, a reference!

Among our records was an article and photograph about the former Holmes School, part of which is today's Gate House, to the right of the main entrance to the School.

Mira Hall bought the one-room schoolhouse in 1911 for \$600 from the city of Pittsfield, according to an article by Diana Fetter De Villafranca '51, in Spring 1977 Miss Hall's Bulletin. The schoolhouse was called Temple Cottage until 1924, when it was named the Gate House. It was remodeled in 1925 and two bedrooms added in 1959. During the years it has been used as the "Chemistry House," Admissions Office, for cooking classes, and, most recently, as faculty housing.

Looking closely at the photo, some features stand out: the recessed door in the back corner, the chimney toward the back of the house, the distinctive corners, and the horizontal bands of trim. All pretty similar to the Holmes Study! And, Hill House and the Benton-Erdman Arts Barn are visible in the background, indicating the photo was taken from Holmes Road, about where the main driveway is now.

The mystery of the Holmes Study appears to be solved! •



# REMEMBERING KAREN CANFIELD BORDER



**FORMER HISTORY TEACHER KAREN CANFIELD BORDER, Ph.D.** — Miss Canfield during her tenure at MHS — passed away February 12 after a long illness.

Dr. Border taught at Miss Hall's from 1964 to 1970 and went on to teach History and Anthropology at Berkshire Community College for forty years and was known for helping many of her female students be admitted to the most competitive colleges.

Among her many notable accomplishments, she was among the first group of women admitted to graduate study at Harvard University, and she successfully sued the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education for gender discrimination in pay, winning the largest sex-equity settlement in academic history, according to her obituary in *The Berkshire Eagle*.

As word of her death reached the MHS community, many of "Miss Canfield's" former students shared their reflections —

## **MARTHA NEUBERT '67**

She was also among my most memorable professors. [Reading her obituary] I know why even more clearly! So fortunate to have such an amazing woman cross our paths!

## **GRETCHEN KNOWLTON '67**

"Miss Canfield" is probably one of very few teachers whom I remember. Her classes on Russian and Chinese history encouraged my interest in world history. What would she think of Russia today I wonder?? I wish I had had more time and opportunity to know and grow with her; she was only 6 years older than we are. What a blessing to have known her, if only for a short time.

## **BRIGITTE SMOOKLER MARS '70**

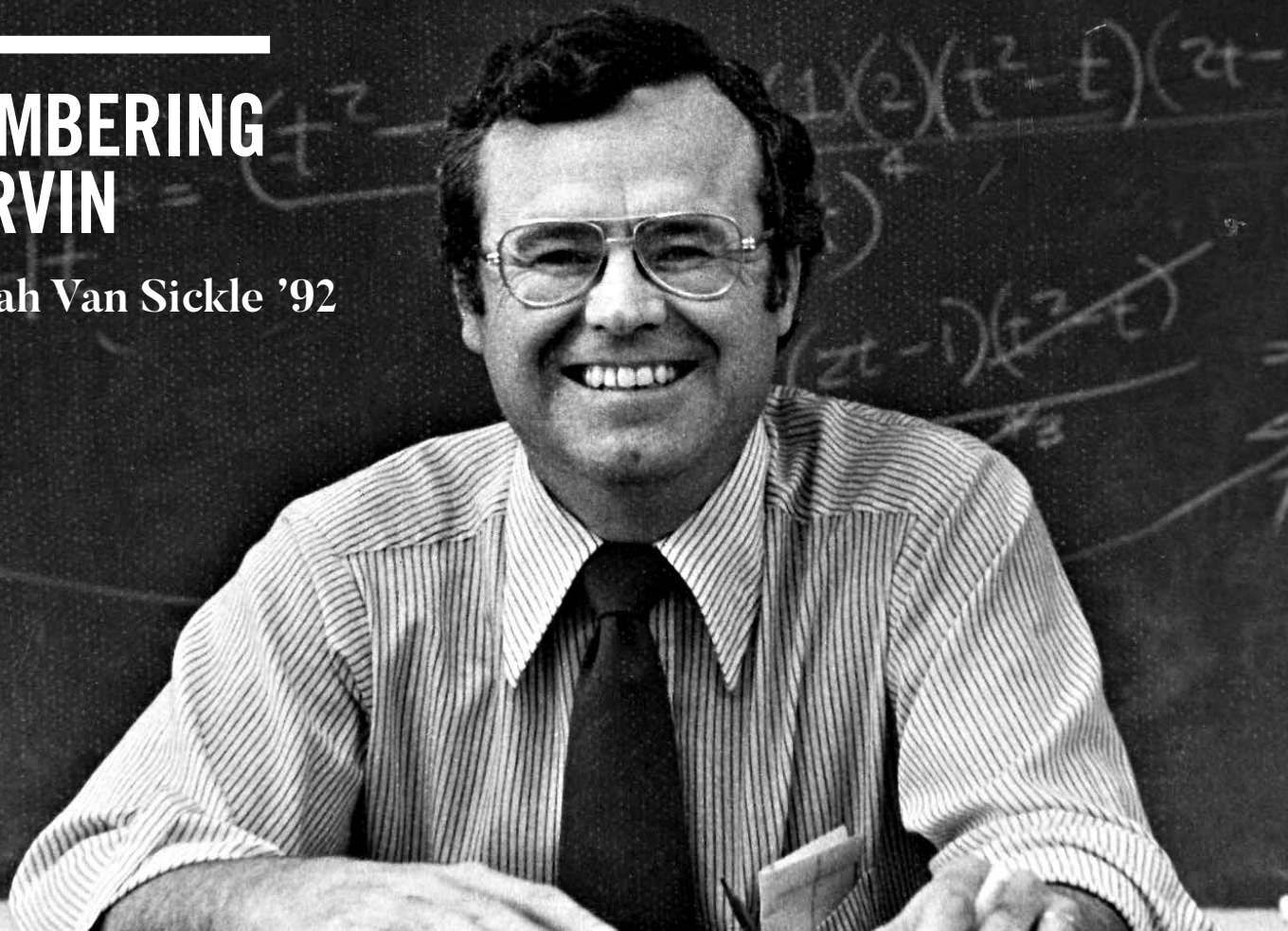
Ms. Canfield was such an inspiration to me! I always hold dear in my heart that because of her I was able to write books. Bless her on her spirit journey.

## **LYNNE ECKARDT '70**

Ms. Canfield also had a wicked sense of humor. I'll never forget her comments on my American History report. I was forever running late to her class (which was my first of the day). Under comments she wrote: '... Lynne does a good job blah, blah, blah BUT is 11:00AM really too early for her to get out of bed!?' My parents particularly enjoyed it and, of course, I caught hell. She was a fantastic person and one of the best teachers I ever had. I have no doubt she'll be missed by many.

# REMEMBERING JIM ERVIN

by Hannah Van Sickle '92



**WHEN JIM ERVIN ARRIVED AT MISS HALL'S SCHOOL** in the fall of 1968, he came with worlds of experience beneath his belt. A native of the Sooner State, he earned a pair of degrees in geology from Oklahoma State University and the University of Oklahoma before working as a geophysicist for Standard Oil and serving as a 1st Lieutenant for the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Missile Battalion. He was a scant decade out of college when recruited to MHS from the all-boys Berkshire School by Headmaster Richard McLain to teach science and math, famously frustrating subjects for adolescents — and historically taught by men — to girls. He was more than up to the challenge.

"I never thought for a moment that girls were not equal to boys — in math or in any subject," he told his daughter Jamison last fall. During his 30-year tenure, despite the myriad hats Mr. Ervin wore and the tremendous change he witnessed, an unwavering belief in his students remained. Recently, when asked which of his many roles was most fulfilling, his answer was equally stalwart. "Definitely teaching. It was my life's passion. When I was teaching, I never felt like I was working."

"JKE" — as Mr. Ervin was affectionately known — employed humor, a wide smile, and endless patience to facilitate his students' success in the classroom. (As for the eponymous initials? The middle stands for Kirk, an old Scottish name meaning church, and Mr. Ervin was part of

a very long line of Scottish Ervins — dating back more than a thousand years!) His classroom door was forever open, offering early-morning extra help and half-points earned back for anyone who cared to join him in the wee hours. Mr. Ervin's students likely recall nightly homework, daily five-minute quizzes, and tests returned — folded in half lengthwise — only after an "achievement graph" had been drawn on the chalkboard and discussed. When a score dipped dangerously low, he pointed out why (careless mistakes, rushing); when he saw success, he looked to foster it — no matter the arena.

His time at schools with competitive athletic programs inspired Mr. Ervin, with the support of Director of Athletics Madge Buerger, to launch the tennis program at MHS.

Not unlike his staunch belief in girls' academic abilities, Mr. Ervin chased the idea that MHS athletes could compete — and they did. Tennis quickly became a prime sport. Building on a firm academic reputation, Mr. Ervin saw competitive sports as a way to get the School's name out there. "Athletics seemed to be the route to take," he said, adding, "the academics were in place." It was during this time that, in a nod to Wimbledon, the tradition of strawberries and cream post father-daughter tennis tournaments took shape.

During his tenure at MHS, Mr. Ervin taught math, geology and physics; served as Assistant Head of School (1981-1989) and Mathematics Department Chair; and coached varsity tennis for 14 years. In 1994, the Miss Hall's School



Mathematics prize, awarded annually at Commencement, was renamed The James K. Ervin Mathematics Prize.

"The thirty years I spent [at MHS] were probably my best years, and I loved every single student, faculty member and Trustee who dedicated themselves to the School," Mr. Ervin said at the September 2016 Groundbreaking and Donor Appreciation Dinner for Linn Hall, home to the School's Mathematics, Science, and Engineering Departments and the Horizons program. Today, a math classroom in the multidisciplinary building bears his name.

In his retirement, Mr. Ervin pursued his passion for art, nature and sports. He began painting and carving native New England fish, served on the Bourne Arts Council, volunteered as a water quality monitor in Eel Pond in Bourne, Massachusetts, and took up softball.

Still, Mr. Ervin's first love was family. He and his wife Judi, an MHS nurse from 1971–1974 (who predeceased her husband in 2014), met on a blind date when he was in the army, and they never looked back. The Ervins were married for 56 years and have three daughters: Jennifer Fimbel '79, Jamison Ervin, and Jessica Stankus; they also have five grandchildren.

Jim Ervin left his mark at Miss Hall's in myriad ways. In the classroom, his kindness was matched by high expectations. Outside of the classroom, he was an

*Many of Jim's former students and colleagues shared their reflections.*

#### **RACHEL GUNSBERG BHATIA '97**

Hearing the news today that our MHS community lost another amazing educator from my years broke my heart. We need more Mr. Ervin's in this world. You inspired every single student, Mr. Ervin, and will always be beloved by your Miss Hall's family. Sending your daughters so much love and our condolences.

#### **HILLARY SEED POLEDNIK '85**

We had a nice connection, and this was also due to Jim also being my tennis coach. He spent weekday afternoons, not to mention Saturdays, driving MHS tennis girls all around the Berkshires for tennis meets. Now that's dedication. He never once complained about the endless driving to our tennis games that took up all his weekend time. He always cheered us on and loved to see MHS girls win. He also supported us even if we lost. Jim had a great sense of humor, and we would often share stories and laugh hysterically on the drive to the tennis matches. He always felt more like family for me, and I liked and respected him greatly. I would pop into his office during the day to chat, ask a question, and make him laugh.

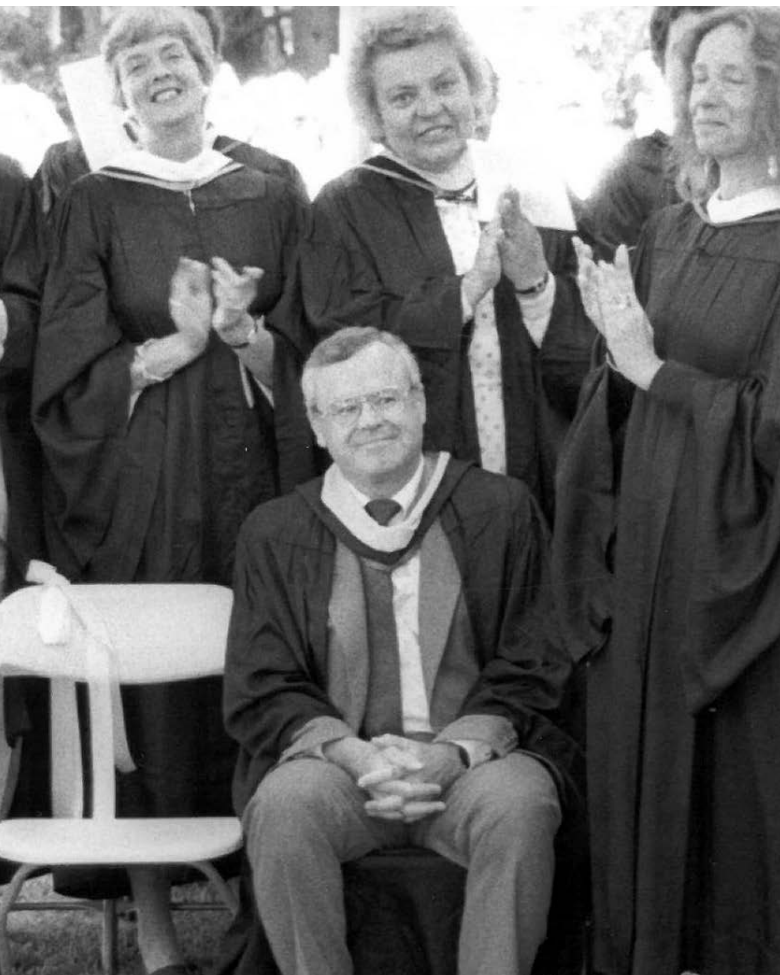
Jim and I have kept in good touch and our close relationship through the years exemplifies the true meaning of his work as a teacher. This sums it up for me: "Sometimes you don't remember what a teacher says to you in 1985, but you will always remember how they treated you and made you feel." And that feeling of happiness and unwavering support, I carry to this day. Jim will always be a special teacher in my heart.

#### **VÉRONIQUE DE LA BRUYERE '75**

Mr. Ervin is why I became a teacher and have been for 36 years. He gave me the power to have some confidence in myself academically. I truly feel blessed to have known him.

*See more reflections at:*

[www.missfalls.org/stories/remembering-jim-ervin](http://www.missfalls.org/stories/remembering-jim-ervin)



advisor and mentor to many who made a difference in the lives of his students.

This May, it is perhaps the Class of 1972 — of which Jim and Judi Ervin were honorary members — that will feel his absence most acutely. “The class of 1972 was the first class at Miss Hall’s that I taught from start to finish,” Mr. Ervin shared through his daughter. “Although every year was wonderful, the class of 1972 always held a special place for Judi and me.”

Mr. Ervin passed away peacefully on Tuesday, March 1. He had been living with his daughter Jennifer ’79 in New York and recently moved into a care facility in Vermont, near daughter Jamie. During his decades as an educator, Mr. Ervin never lost his genuine enthusiasm for teaching or working with young people, and Miss Hall’s alumnae from the ’60s to through the ’90s regularly cite his lasting influence as a teacher, coach, and mentor in their lives.

Not long ago, Mr. Ervin assured Jennifer that he “had a great life and regretted nothing.” He found joy in encouraging students every day during his thirty years at MHS and will be remembered for his sharp wit, abiding sense of humor, and generosity of spirit. He requested, shortly before his death, that well-wishers undertake an act of kindness and generosity in his memory — a fitting way to pay it forward, in the spirit of JKE. •



## THE JAMES K. ERVIN TENNIS COMPLEX





### WITH THE PASSING OF JIM ERVIN, OUR COMMUNITY IS

eager to honor his three decades of service to Miss Hall's — not only inside the math classroom, but also as a coach, geology teacher, Assistant Head of School, and mentor to many.

With high expectations, boundless encouragement, and a commitment to access and support for all students, Jim insisted on academic rigor and believed that the transformation of students' lives should be grounded in warmth, support, and respect. He believed passionately in the power of tennis to build friendships, community, teamwork, a sense of personal achievement, and mental fortitude for all who play.

With the blessing of his family, we seek to establish the James K. Ervin Tennis Complex at Miss Hall's School. At Miss

Hall's, girl-centered athletics are powerful and life-enhancing. Participation in sports builds confidence, resilience, and determination — the hallmarks of Miss Hall's graduates. Any student can learn tennis, even with no prior experience or athletic ability, making it exceedingly accessible. In fact, tennis has been a fixture at MHS since the first courts were built in 1926. We are thrilled to prioritize this new project, supporting our students and honoring the memory of this incredible teacher and friend.

More than \$700,000 has been raised toward the \$1.1M cost of the project — we must have all funding in hand before we are able to break ground. If you would like to help this project become a reality, please contact [advancement@misshalls.org](mailto:advancement@misshalls.org).



Selections from *On the Line*, a senior ceramics show by Kathryn Barrett '22



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Dear viewer,

If you had one shot to make something amazing and everything was on the line, would you crack under the pressure or rise to the challenge and do something nobody's ever done before? I don't know about you, but I would make more pots.

*On the Line* could be a mantra for my senior year: I've broken my friend group once (almost twice), I've applied to and gotten rejected from my dream schools, lost a relative, and said goodbye to my mentor. But most of all, I've discovered my values, had fun, put myself out there, made my opinions heard, and pushed myself to grow more than I ever have before.

Last year, I never believed I could have a senior show. What you see today is a culmination of my ceramics career at Miss Hall's and has three different themes: majolica work, linear designs, and marbled clay pieces (which came out of the kiln yesterday!) Throughout the process I worked with three different types of clay (porcelain, stoneware, and red clay), and I got better at making jars and thin necked vases, and I learned how to make juicers and doughnuts. Like me, each piece has its own story with a unique set of challenges and triumphs. Each part of a piece is important from the inside and the outside to the bottom and the lid. Wouldn't it be weird if this black and white vase had a purple bottom? I think so too, and trust me, I've made that mistake many times before.

Herb Brooks, the coach of the 1980 US Olympic hockey team once said: You don't have enough talent to win on talent alone. If you take away one thing from my show, I hope you remember to take risks, have fun, make friends with failure, live life at your own pace, and rise to meet every challenge. That's how miracles happen.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Barrett '22

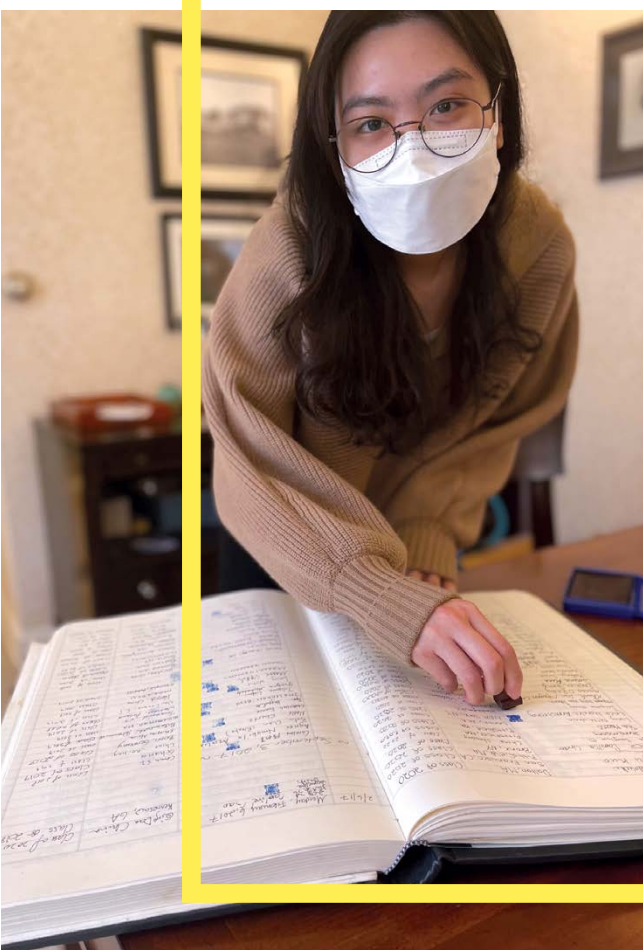


## YOU ARE INVITED!

On the eve of graduation, every MHS senior places a stamp by their name in the Book of the School to mark the transition from student to alum. Not everyone has had the opportunity to make their mark, especially members of the Class of 2020, who graduated via Zoom due to the pandemic.

Many have been dropping by to do so, including (above, starting second from left) Bethany Song, Annie Yuan, Nancy Gao, and Melody Cai — accompanied by Brooke Chen '19 — and (far left) Stacey Nguyen.

All alums have an open invitation to come to campus anytime to stamp the Book of the School. Please contact Lynelle Weaver, Manager of Alumnae Relations & Advancement Partnerships, at [lweaver@misshalls.org](mailto:lweaver@misshalls.org) to arrange your visit!





# MILESTONES

## Deaths

Doris Archer Winters '40, former Trustee  
 Priscilla Platt Hooke '42  
 Mary "Betts" Dickason King '42  
 Peggy Irwin Jewett '44  
 Evelyn Steele Barrett '50  
 Gertrude Corcoran Merchant '50  
 Josephine Brown Emery '51  
 Hazel Bryan Tracy '53  
 Nancy Hubbard '65  
 Alexandra Moore-Ede '05  
 Karen Canfield Border, former faculty  
 Peter deCordova, former Trustee  
 James K. Ervin, former faculty  
 Carol Polidoro, former staff  
 Mark Selkowitz, former Trustee  
 Molly Stevenson, former faculty  
 Kathleen Walton, former staff

## In Sympathy

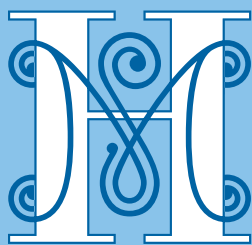
Leslie Guy Connery '47 on the death of her husband Donald  
 Carol Selkowitz Greenburg '52 on the death of her brother Mark Selkowitz  
 Sandra Roe Smith '56 on the death of her husband Richey Smith  
 Vicky Mitchell Whitaker '56 on the death of her husband Chaloner "Chal" Whitaker, Jr.  
 Carla Higbie Stroh '57 on the death of her grandson Christopher R.W.D. Stroh  
 Judy Selkowitz '62 on the death of her brother Mark Selkowitz  
 Louise Hamlin '67 on the death of her husband Gary Lenhart  
 Susan Holland '67 on the death of her husband Tony Ickes  
 Christina Evans '68 on the death of her husband William Evans  
 Susan Johnston '70 and cousin Bunny Watts '54  
 Davy Davidson '71 on the death of David Rowland, her ex-husband and father to her son Ben  
 Katherine Parker Vogel '71 on the death of her mother, Thelma (Perras) Parker  
 Debra deCordova MacLeod '80 on the death of her father former Trustee Peter deCordova  
 Susan Lupien '87 on the death of her father William Lupien  
 Judy Kittredge Anderson '88 on the death of mother-in-law Nancy Bates Anderson  
 Jessica Nadeau Tomov '01 on the death of her brother Joseph Nadeau  
 Hannah Bartini Casucci '07 on the death of her grandfather Elvin Bartini and her mother Heather Bartini  
 Maggie Meisberger '15 on the death of her grandfather Raymond Meisberger  
 Hallie Novak '15 on the death of her grandmother Margaret Barbour  
 Cecilia Reynolds '15 on the death of her father Dr. John Reynolds

In memory of Nancy Hubbard '65, sister of Cynthia Hubbard '67, and cousin of Josie Sentner '62, Trustee Nan Brewster Paternotte '65, Peggy Peterson Anderson '67, and Trustee Anne Peterson Conolly '70.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONNECT WITH YOUR CLASS REPRESENTATIVE(S), OR  
 WANT TO SEND US YOUR CLASS NOTES FOR A FUTURE MAGAZINE, PLEASE EMAIL US AT  
 ALUMNAE@MISSHALLS.ORG.**

The Advancement Office at Miss Hall's School retains the right to edit content included in Class Notes. When you submit news, please be aware that information may have to be edited in order to follow format and fit space requirements. **Thank you.**





# MISS HALL'S SCHOOL

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# HERITAGE SOCIETY

In the fall of 1995, Miss Hall's School announced the establishment of the Heritage Society to honor alumnae and friends who have remembered the School by bequest in their estate plans, or who have made life income gifts.

New members added between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 listed in italics.

## CO-CHAIRS

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## SALLY GOOCH PAYNTER '51

**THANKS TO A CAREER IN TEXTBOOK PUBLISHING,** Sally Gooch Paynter '51 maintains a respect for educational institutions — and a motivation for their support — as they guide our children into today's often chaotic world. Seven decades after graduating from Miss Hall's, she also offers fellow alums a primer for joining the Heritage Society.

"I have watched Miss Hall's grow larger, physically and philosophically, from its mission in 1951 into the modern school it is today," says Sally, citing the impetus behind naming MHS as a beneficiary of her IRA. "It was a different school in a different time when I was there."

Sally continues to be impressed by the rigorous MHS curriculum, "including such interdisciplinary opportunities as the Hallmark courses taught with originality and enthusiasm." A recent virtual Master Class with Science Department Chair Donna Daigle and her Women's Health and Global Issues course revealed students tackling a "sophisticated, modern problem, one usually falling outside the purview of a high school curriculum but indeed relevant to the world the students will be entering."

That's why Sally supports Miss Hall's, both as a member of the Heritage Society and Every Year Club. "The School is growing and changing and keeping up, preparing young women for the world where they will thrive and be effective," she says. "I think it's a very good way to invest one's money and interests." •

*For information about the Heritage Society, please contact Director of Advancement Merritt Colaizzi, at 413-395-7065.*





**MISS  
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