



Thistle[®] TALK

Thriveability:
Strategic design
guides uncharted future



Winchester Thurston School

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Dr. Anne Fay Named Director of Upper School

Earlier this year, WT announced the appointment of Dr. Anne Fay as Director of Upper School, effective July 1, 2019. Dr. Fay had been serving as Interim Director.

In a process that attracted more than 30 applicants nationwide and spanned nearly five months, Dr. Fay's broad and deep experience in researching how students learn and in training faculty, along with her work in the interim role, impressed faculty, students, parents, administrators, and staff.

Prior to serving as Interim Director, Dr. Fay served as WT's Director of eLearning where she worked with faculty on the thoughtful integration of technology tools into the curriculum.

"With this appointment, and the strength of the rest of the WT Leadership Team, I am confident that WT is well-positioned to develop the structures that will allow us to continue to be agile and effective as we guide our students through an ever-changing path to becoming vibrant, engaged citizens of the world," said Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech. "As WT develops its next strategic plan, Anne's voice will be instrumental in helping craft a plan where both our students and our institution thrive."

Dr. Fay holds a Ph.D. in psychology with distinction from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a B.A. in psychology with honors from York University, Ontario, Canada. She also completed post-doctoral positions at Carnegie Mellon University and as a McDonnell Foundation Post-Doctoral Research Fellow for Cognitive Studies in Educational Practice.

Dr. Fay is a WT alumnae parent of Fay Blelloch '16 and Siena Blelloch '18.

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School Mission

Winchester Thurston School actively engages each student in a challenging and inspiring learning process that develops the mind, motivates the passion to achieve, and cultivates the character to serve.

Core Values

We activate our Mission by creating a learning environment that promotes and instills appreciation for these five Core Values: Community, Empathy, Equity and Inclusion, Integrity, Intellectual Courage.

Equity and Inclusion Statement

As a means to fulfill our credo, "Think also of the comfort and the rights of others," Winchester Thurston will be an inclusive community and will pursue the social and pedagogical benefits that diversity brings. We will place the highest value on enabling students to understand their own cultural identity and those of others. It is our moral imperative to be courageous and intentional in promoting understanding, addressing bias, identifying and honoring qualities of justice, respecting multiple perspectives and contributions, and valuing the dignity of all.

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Thriveability: WT parent and founder of Expii, Dr. Po-Shen Loh, shares his love of mathematics with fifth grade students and their visiting friends from Peking University Elementary School.

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On the cover: Third grade student Zora Rose



Scott D. Fech

Evolving WT's Future

On a cold, snowy January weekend, our Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership Team converged on our North Campus to begin charting the course for WT's next chapter—to focus on what we might do differently and how we would grow our thinking. But with WT's many successes in recent years, why should we do anything differently? It seems to be working after all. Enrollment demand is at an all-time high, alumnae/i and parent engagement is tremendous (thank you!), we are the envy of many other independent schools, and we have a nationally recognized academic program in City as Our CampusSM. So why change?

I cannot count the number of times in my first year as Head of School that I have been asked, "So what changes are needed at WT?" I've been challenging myself, and those with whom I partner in this work, to reframe this question to one that sees our direction as an evolution. We will not be jettisoning all of the things that have brought us to this moment. Instead, we need to rise to new levels by enhancing all that we do. [See this issue's cover story on "Thriveability" (page 3) for more details on where we're headed.]

We can never forget that WT exists, first and foremost, as a center for teaching and learning. The work we do in our classrooms and programs every day transforms lives

and lays the groundwork for successful futures. Sure, we teach math, science, language arts, social studies, arts, and so much more. And we know that we must continue to evolve our teaching and curriculum to adapt to our rapidly changing world. For example, years ago, teaching computer science meant typing skills and word processing. Now it's computer science "literacy" that's taught—and not just for the curious few, but for all students in all divisions. And next year, our students will have an opportunity to engage in a machine learning course that will bring together complex computer science skills, social studies research, and problem solving. [See page 13.]

As we evaluate and plan for the future, we need to build a curriculum that is adaptable to the demands of the world around us and truly prepares students for career pathways that might not yet exist.

Our focus does not lie solely on the academic realm, though. Since our founding, WT has been committed to helping students become good human beings who make a positive impact on their communities. As we challenge our students and one another to "Think also...", we know

As we challenge our students and one another to "Think also...", we know that evolving our work around diversity, equity, and inclusion will be critical for success.

that evolving our work around diversity, equity, and inclusion will be critical for success. Students must learn about their own identities and the identities of those they encounter. Our equity and inclusion statement calls us "to be courageous and intentional in promoting understanding, addressing bias, identifying and honoring qualities of justice, respecting multiple perspectives and contributions, and valuing the dignity of all." And with all that has been happening around us—here in Pittsburgh, nationally, and internationally—never has

this work been more important than today. [See page 7 to learn more about the building blocks we have in place for this work.]

As we come to the close of our 132nd year, I am joyfully optimistic for WT's future. I can only imagine the pride our founders, Misses Mitchell and Thurston, would feel to see how the school they founded so long ago is not only surviving but thriving. Your continued support and engagement is critical to us ensuring that, as we continue down this pathway of excellence, we evolve WT's future for the next century and beyond.



Kindergarten students at the City Campus work with Allison Popieski of Attack Theatre to understand movement and senses in a way that helps them to explore their surroundings and practice WT's core values.

Thriveability:

Strategic Thinking About Learning and Leadership

Artificial intelligence. Quantum computing. The ubiquity of content and information. These are just some of the chief components of the changing landscape of society at large—a landscape transforming more rapidly and radically than ever before. Winchester Thurston, with its long-established focus on community-based and project-based learning, is intrinsically positioned to address the ensuing challenges as they relate to teaching and learning.

“Today, education is about how to use information that traditionally has been contained just to the classroom,” offers Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech. “A model of segmented skills in each discipline isn’t the way the world works anymore. Most jobs today require us to think across the spectrum of disciplines. To prepare students to enter into our super collaborative, interconnected world, we need to mirror that world within the school.”

The Overall Lens of the Student Experience

The milieu Fech describes dovetails with thriveability, an approach to thinking strategically about learning and leadership developed by Stephanie Rogen and her group, Greenwich Leadership Partners (GLP). Rogen, who literally wrote the book on thriveability, *Creating Schools That Thrive*, says, “Thriveability is about the present tense, the relentless attention to a meaningful learning experience for all.” Comprising that experience, notes GLP partner and research scientist Dr. Sarah Goldin, is “the school’s culture, climate, facilities, pedagogy, all wrapped into one, but not separable. It’s not a checklist of buckets of things to attend to; it’s the overall lens of the learning experience.”

Last January, GLP led a retreat where WT’s Board and leadership team discussed the changing needs of today’s and tomorrow’s learners, and explored



Students in Urban Research and Design, a year-long course that investigates issues of urban development, studied areas in the Homewood and North Point Breeze neighborhoods this year. They presented their final projects at Homewood's community workspace, The Shop, so that members of the Homewood community could attend and provide feedback.



An important part of the Middle School experience includes an interdisciplinary trip to Washington, D.C. in eighth grade that focuses on curriculum in English, Social Studies, and Science. Here, Tiago Alfonso Wells studies human evolution at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

how different approaches to teaching and learning help students acquire the skills needed in the future workforce. Two pivotal conceptual shifts—from sustainability to thriveability, and strategic planning to strategic design—guided the process.

“My own thinking was challenged to consider not sustainability but thriveability. Sustainability implies simply maintenance of the good things that are currently happening,” explains Fech. “But thriveability? Well that means figuring out how to take our work to the next level and beyond. That sounds much more exciting to me!”

He specifies that while school leaders address issues with finite answers—like space (“we need more flexibility to allow for multiple kinds of learning experiences”), building the endowment, and having available more financial aid—they must simultaneously plan for adaptive needs with no clear-cut solution.

“Strategic design thinking inspires untold possibilities,” Fech muses. “For example, two teachers have developed a machine learning class, an unlikely marriage of computer science and social studies. Who would ever have thought of that ten years ago? This is what our partners, GLP, are challenging us to do—to think more adaptively. A traditional strategic plan generally plans the next three to five years. We want to be more nimble and adaptable. We want to continue to adapt

our approach to learning based on the interests and curiosities of our students, and not have a prescribed curriculum in place where we say, ‘this is what you need to know.’”

A Different Way of ‘Doing School’

“What we’re doing is creating the conditions for success,” emphasizes Fech. He envisions a future that includes “opportunities in place-based learning, where students can learn in diverse environments; creating spaces within a schedule to allow organic learning opportunities to happen; applying a foreign language in another country as part of an extended immersive learning experience; and non-traditional ways of earning credit, like doing internships around a particular profession or within a discipline.”

What’s more, he adds: “We don’t need to limit learning to a certain period of the day or week. Learning can transcend that.”

In other words, says Assistant Head for Educational Strategy Adam Nye, “We have been doing very creative work, but we are doing it within a traditional school model. It is time to evolve that model to allow us to continue to innovate in the way we engage our students. It will be an evolution of how we have ‘done school,’ which will be a challenging, but essential process.”

Essential, asserts Rogen, because the accelerated pace of technology and content

creation means that the future is one where learning is continuous, and simply absorbing content will no longer be enough. Students need to know “... how to find content, what to do with it, how to interrogate it, and how to make connections across lots of other things so that they can be inventive and innovative and creative.” And teachers? Their knowledge of content enables them to “understand where the connections are so that the learning is anchored, authentic, and real.”

Also important, underscores Goldin, are the social-emotional skills necessary to navigate this changing world: how to collaborate, empathize, and relate to people who are different, working across cultures and time zones. “It’s not enough to be a citizen in just your community,” she says. “Understanding what it means to be a citizen now is broader, and those core values-based, character-based skill sets that relate to emotional intelligence have to be broadened in order to adapt to a global world.”

WT’s Vision for An Uncharted, Unlimited Future

Since January, school leaders have worked steadily to develop a strategic design process that will serve as a guide to an uncharted, unlimited future, while articulating WT’s strategic vision that will guide this process. Led by Nye, this effort begins by learning from parents, students, employees, and alumnae/i through focus groups, interviews, and surveys; maintaining an open dialogue with faculty; researching emerging educational trends; engaging universities and community leaders in conversation; and looking to other schools as inspiration. The vision won’t be completed until this fall, but Fech offers a preview now:

“I think what we’re going to see are three areas of focus that will be in service of each other: pedagogy; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and the student experience. Encompassing all of this will be specifics regarding our beliefs about teaching and learning. Once we clearly define these beliefs, then I think the strategic design process will unfold from there.

“I’ve heard it said that we’re not called to do all the good in the world—only the good that we can do,” he reflects, before enthusiastically imagining the kind of experience the design could facilitate.

“What would happen if students were studying architecture in geometry, and simultaneously discussing poverty, cultural change, and community action? Wouldn’t it make sense that they would then spend six weeks working at Habitat for Humanity—where geometry makes a difference, ensuring the wall is



Eighth grader Ryan Valenty explains the map that illustrated the journey of survivors of the Holocaust that the eighth graders studied during the Holocaust Project Showcase, the culminating event in a trimester-long interdisciplinary study of the impact of the Holocaust.

straight and level, and the impact on the family and the community makes a difference that we can’t even begin to measure? It’s exciting to think about using our learning to give back—and understanding that we haven’t left content behind at all. In fact, we’re using it in a real and meaningful context.”

Even as WT continues to evolve, there is one thing that will never change, Fech vows, without missing a beat. “The values. The notion of ‘think also of the comfort and the rights of others’ and ‘gentle in manner, strong in deed.’ These are things that will be pervasive, that will inform the kind of work we do within our classroom and how we interact with one another. The care that we have for one another within the community, the care that we have for our outside community in which we live: all of that will feel very much the same.”



North Campus Pre-Kindergarten students (L-R) Mira Holloway, Ethan Holloway, and Barrett Wood enjoy a morning exploring the wonders of nature. This “Forest Four” exploration happens each Day Four in the six-day schedule and provides opportunities for students to observe, communicate, work cooperatively, problem solve, and take appropriate risks.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Walking Hand-in-Hand

Director of Equity and Inclusion Diane Nichols is leading the work—and the way—of WT’s growing emphasis on equity and inclusion.

“Working within the framework of competencies, curriculum, and composition, we are building a solid infrastructure,” says Nichols. “We’re developing programs, policies, and coursework that will institutionalize equity and inclusion practices throughout the school in both the near-term and far into the future.”

Key to this work is an emphasis on identifying diversity. “As a school, we have struggled to acknowledge our diversity and to gather the data to understand it,” reflects Nichols. “There is a need for us to openly engage in conversation around who’s in the room, and how individuals identify themselves. A quantifiable

understanding of our diversity will ensure that the equity and inclusion structures we design are effective. Equity, inclusion, and diversity need to walk hand-in-hand.”

Nichols has developed a structure that fortifies all three. “The goal is now to standardize them so that they simply become a natural part of who we are,” declares Nichols.

The central components include:

Equity and Inclusion Liaison Positions

These are the eyes and ears on the ground level, the people working directly within different spaces, departments, and divisions, with teams and students, in the day-to-day experiences around how diversity, equity, and inclusion are showing up.

Professional Development Three-Year Rotation

Over the next three years, faculty and staff will participate in workshops, training

sessions, and discussions to standardize expectations around expertise, knowledge, and skill-building in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Topics will include understanding socialization around identity, looking at equitable practices in the classroom, and developing culturally responsive teaching and learning.

Student, Parent, and Employee Equity and Inclusion Committees

Individuals desiring to more actively help implement the equity and inclusion statement, and enhance the life and experiences of a particular WT constituency, can join groups involved in an array of mechanisms such as book discussions.

Affinity Programming

Whether students, parents, or employees, opportunities will be created for underrepresented or marginalized members of the community—such as LGBTQ, African American, or parents of students with learning differences—to come together for meetings, social gatherings, or guest speakers. Here, they can connect to support and affirm one another, and educate the larger community.

PK-12 Curriculum Review

An assessment is ongoing of the ways in which diversity, equity, and inclusion practices are showing up in the curriculum, and in the day-to-day learning experiences for students. This may include reviewing the ways teachers manage their classrooms, or challenging people to think about cultural norms and how they support and affirm learning for all.



Student portfolios provide valuable reflection time. Each month, students select work that they are proud of, write captions for photos showing active learning, and reflect on what they learned. Here, North Campus second grade students share their portfolios with each other.

Third Grade students Lola Fox (L) and Rohan Sadashiv (R) work together to program the Finch Robot to navigate different paths.



Computer Science Literacy: Becoming Capable and Comfortable

Spiraling from Kindergarten through grade 12, WT's computer science curriculum systematically exposes all students to the discipline in ways that foster engagement, promote mastery, and inspire the application of computer science principles in all classes—from history to science, and language arts to fine arts.

“Computer science is a form of literacy—one with which all students should feel capable and comfortable,” declares David Nassar, Computer Science Department Chair. “Our intention is that, by practicing these skills in age-appropriate ways from a young age, our students

have the tools they need to tackle any problem they want to solve in an efficient and systematic way.”

Lower School: 4 Cs + Plenty of Play = 100% Computer Science

Beginning in Lower School, the foundation for computer literacy is built upon “the four Cs of 21st century learning: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication,” says Rebecca Farrand, Lower School City Campus Computer Science teacher. “When planning lessons, I think of the statistic I’ve learned that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a new synapse in the brain—unless it is

done with play, in which case it takes between ten to 20 repetitions.”

For Kindergarteners and first graders, that means the goal is *unplugged*: learning computer science without screens. Instead, concepts like algorithms and sequencing, and then loops and conditional statements, are introduced through hands-on activities featuring Kibo Robots, Code and Go Mice, and Hopscotch Coding—the tactile natures of which “have students moving around the room, building with blocks, and making robots dance, all the while learning to solve problems,” says Nassar. “Removing screens from these first experiences with computer science enables students to see computer science for what it really is: an opportunity to learn to problem solve, rather than simply an opportunity to learn to program.”

Kibo, born of decades of early child development research, introduces robotics and coding through imaginative, hands-on play, says Farrand. “Students work in teams learning how to take turns and sequence the robot to complete different tasks. They learn that sequencing matters, then they build on that to learn about conditional statements. By first grade they are able to direct their robot to perform certain functions.”

Even familiar, everyday objects can instill computer science skills during unplugged lessons, shares Lower School North Campus Science teacher Brock Perkins. “Pairs of students were challenged to create a gumdrop and toothpick tower that could hold the weight of a book for more than ten seconds. The students had to work together to design and redesign their towers several times before they were successful. We’ve called upon this lesson on frustration and persistence many times when it has been particularly tricky to successfully complete an online coding challenge.”

The results are remarkable, says Kate Weber, North Campus Instructional Technology Specialist. “I’ve noticed a change in the language of our youngest students. To hear Kindergarten and first grade students talk so casually about programming, frustration, and persistence in other contexts during the school day—that’s when you know what you’re teaching is making an impact! To be literate in this kind of language is so important, not only for the sake of computer science,

but also because it is so applicable to so many other areas of life. I think computer science and STEM, in general, has made it more acceptable to make mistakes and get a little messy in order to solve a problem.”

“It’s just something in which anyone can excel.”

Screens are introduced gradually in the second grade, when students learn about specific topics during unplugged activities, then apply that knowledge to a program on Chromebooks. Through the program Scratch, students use a block-based coding language to create animations. In third and fourth grades, code.org teaches additional computer science principles, and explorations in robotics take flight via Pittsburgh’s BirdBrain Technologies. BirdBrain’s Finch and Hummingbird robots mix imagination and electronics to inspire wildly creative projects where students write, tell stories, dress robots as characters, and animate favorite scenes—all while absorbing the engineering design process.

“Fifth graders review concepts they’ve learned previously—including algorithms, sequencing, loops, conditional statements, and functions—while



Eighth graders Nadia Moore (L) and Helen Zhang (R) help each other determine the best layout for their Arduino circuit project.

incorporating the concept of variables,” says Farrand. “And, with this strong foundation, we introduce Codesters, a program where students begin to learn the computer science language Python.”

Computer science has become so fully integrated into the everyday at WT that it’s become almost ordinary, observes Weber—and that’s a good thing. “It’s just something that everyone learns and in which anyone can excel. It’s refreshing to work with students



Kindergarten students Nikos Mouchtaris (L) and Raaga Guruswami (R) work collaboratively with Kibo Robots to practice sequencing.

who don't see computer science as something 'special,' because to them it is just part of their learning."

Middle School: Create, Interact, Apply

With this full integration into the Lower School experience, students enter Middle School better prepared than ever before, observes Dave Piemme, Middle School Computer Science teacher. "I see confidence and independence in the sixth graders. They are ready—and eager—to take on new content."

The Middle School curriculum is strategized to continue building skills, with each year emphasizing a specific aspect of computer science: Learning to Create in the sixth grade, Learning to Interact in the seventh grade, and Learning to Apply in the eighth grade.

While all sixth and seventh graders use Javascript to code for the screen, the different designations mean that each grade's focus is unique. And by eighth grade, students are ready to tackle a new challenge:

Arduino programming. "This is not the exact coding they have done the past two years, but they can apply their knowledge of coding to a new language. Arduino is also physical computing, where students build and program hardware circuits to do certain tasks," Piemme explains.

Another Middle School option is RAPID Lab (for Research, Application, Prototype, Inquiry, Design), an interdisciplinary elective that empowers students to determine and direct their own work as they investigate scientific principles, create inventions, and design solutions to real-world problems.

Quite simply, says Piemme, "The computer science curriculum in the Middle School provides the necessary foundation for success in the Upper School."



Together, seventh graders Jaromit Lozano (L) and Christian Zhu (R) develop a web application using Javascript code.



At the North Campus, fourth grade students collaborate with Kindergarten students to write code for their Finch robot to navigate through a “Minotaur’s Labyrinth.” (L-R) Fourth graders Gabe Schwartz and Omar Awais, and Kindergarten students Amia Pearman and Emerild Mims-Green

Upper School: Challenge, Stimulation, Inspiration—and College Preparation

In the Upper School, coursework ranges from entry-to college-level, beginning with an applied approach to computer science in courses like Computer Science for Math and Science, Computer Science for Humanities, and Computer Science for Art and Music. “With this approach,” asserts Nassar, “we are expressing to students right out of the gate that computer science is not a siloed discipline.”

Kate Sickler, a CMU-degreed chemical engineer-turned-Upper School Computer Science teacher, says this applied approach—which allows students some choice over how they design their projects—is important because it reinforces that computer science is for everyone, at any level; that there are myriad ways to learn about it; and that it is applicable everywhere.

Sickler’s engineering background rooted her in problem solving. “Breaking down a large problem into smaller steps based on a set of requirements is what I was taught to do,” she remarks. “This gives me the skills to teach students how to think logically about a problem.”

Her experience also allows her to relate personally to students new to computer science, or who may be struggling. “I was once that student who did not understand anything in my first computer science class and I wanted to quit and give up,” admits Sickler. “And yet here we are.”

For students who are passionate about the discipline for its own sake, or want to pursue it—or other STEM related disciplines—as a career, high level courses like Algorithm Design and Computer Science Innovations

Students Inspired to Fuel Faculty Innovation

For their senior class gift, the Class of 2019 is contributing to the WTeachers Inspire Fund—a newly created fund that further enhances WT’s ability to fuel innovative ideas such as the Machine Learning class described further on page 13.

This gesture honors the educational legacy the class carries forward, and supports the continuation of remarkable work here at WT where, every day, students apply their learning to real-world problems. Whether developing a dispenser for lifesaving cholera medication, or creating a direct-feedback rehabilitation mat to assist physical therapy, they are vigorously supported and inspired to act on their passions by outstanding faculty, state of the art resources, their own accumulated knowledge and, now, by the WTeachers Inspire Fund.

Perhaps a student requires specialized equipment to obtain more conclusive results from an experiment, or a teacher needs training in a new facet of an existing course; the WTeachers Inspire Fund—named by students to honor the teachers who inspire them daily—can swiftly provide funds to meet those needs. Because many ideas depend on immediate action for viability, the fund can mean the difference between an imaginative idea that remains just that, or one that goes on to become a profound learning experience with potential to impact not only the WT community, but the world.



Sophomores Babita Heystek (L) and Jada Lyde (R) work together in Computer Science for the Humanities.

provide equal measures of challenge, stimulation, inspiration, and college preparation.

“Two students in our project-based course, Computer Science Innovations, are building tools with Virtual Reality (VR) technology that can benefit users in novel ways,” says Nassar. “One student is creating a multi-variable calculus tutor to enable students to visualize mathematics in a new way. Another student is developing a VR experience which can help users that must undergo painful medical procedures to utilize his product in lieu of pharmaceutical intervention.”

Never Static, Always Evolving

From its unplugged beginnings through culmination in cutting edge, college-level courses, Nassar is gratified to see computer science in play across all divisions and disciplines.

“Our department is *never* static. We have the ability to continually evolve how students learn and keep them excited about it. By teaching computer science to all of our students we are providing the tools to give them equal opportunities in nearly every facet of their lives.”



Sophomores Niam Noaman (L) and Jack Keane-Lizano (R) collaborate on a project, modeling how software development teams work collectively to solve problems.

Breaking New Ground:

Integrating Computer Science and Social Studies

Machine learning detects credit card fraud by recognizing unusual spending patterns, curates Netflix recommendations based on viewing history and, by identifying symptoms, can even inform a medical diagnosis. It's seemingly everywhere, and next year—in a trailblazing new course integrating computer science and social studies—eligible juniors and seniors will learn machine learning techniques while examining its social and ethical implications.

someone's speech or Tweets to determine political affiliation, or patterns in human trafficking to help stop the problem," recalls Nassar. "The more we discussed it, the better it looked."

Students will examine problems of interest to them by tackling sets of big data, generously made available through partnerships with CMU and other local experts. Big data is more than just a collection of lots of information. (Think of Google's ability to predict one's search before typing is complete, or all



Mike Naragon and Dave Nassar

"Artificial intelligence has the potential to act as a modern-day steam engine pushing the country in new directions," says Dr. Michael Naragon, History Department Chair, of the advances driving what's been dubbed the Fourth Industrial Revolution. "Deciding how we want to integrate technology into our daily lives requires deep thought and reflection. We want to ensure that our choices actually enhance people's lives, promote greater equity, and further the public good."

The Machine Learning course is a WT first, both because it was co-developed by Naragon and Computer Science Department Chair David Nassar, and because it will be co-taught. The idea grew organically as conversations between Naragon and Nassar revealed common themes covered in otherwise separate classrooms.

"Mike immediately came up with many possibilities: for example, recognizing patterns in

of the data necessary to teach an automobile to be autonomous.) According to Nassar, "We now not only have the ability to store all of this data, but we are also able to compute with it, and this is at the heart of many applications of machine learning. With our new ability to analyze this data we can better understand patterns of human behavior and choice."

The course's impact on students will be practical, philosophical, and far-reaching. But even as Machine Learning breaks new ground at WT, it does so while following an established path, asserts Naragon. "In the end, a WT education has always relied on mastery of foundational knowledge and disciplines not as the sole end but as a vehicle for deeper inquiry and understanding. This course—while unique in its organization and approach—fits quite well alongside the creative and deeply powerful courses taught by our colleagues."



An Evening Under the Big Top was a spectacular success with more than 360 attendees, 81 silent auction items, five live auction items, juggling and dancing, and, most importantly, an amazing core of parent volunteers giving countless hours.

The result? \$90,000 raised in support of financial aid – making a WT education available to students who would otherwise be unable to attend.

“The WT community continues to inspire me. Through hard work (and a whole lot of fun!) we came together to support the very real need of raising financial aid dollars. This dedication allows us to be true to our Mission and to continue our work to create a truly inclusive community. I am so grateful to everyone who made this evening possible.”

–Dr. Scott D. Fech, Head of School



Scott Fech and Rick Soria



Jared and Kelly Knickelbein and Melissa Fann



Jacky Melhem Nasr and John Nasr



Desiree Jennings, Diane Nichols, Theresa Fox, and Melissa Vecchi



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Jay and Dee Johnson



Jim Devaty and
Stephen Miller



John Stenson with Yolanda and Jerome Frank



Kelly Hanna Riley '91 and
Patrick Riley



Live Painting with Cue Perry



Thatcher and Penny Montgomery
and Sean Montgomery



Stephen and Mimi
Cooper



Don Michel and
Tracey Schwartz



Phyllis Coontz, Elaine Bellin, and
Janet Harrison Kuzmishin '87



Henry Posner III, Scott Fech, Ida Posner '08, and Anne Molloy



John and Mary Lee Stenson



O'Ryan the O'Mazing
with MaryJean Rusak and
Chuck Lupariello



Isis Chatman, Gisele Fetterman, Rose Molder, and
Randi Coffey '78



MaryJean Rusak and
Daniel Sadowski



Elizabeth Friedman '12, Randi Coffey '78,
Erin Wisniewski, and Kimberly Blaney

Special thanks to the 2019 Benefit Committee Chairs:

MaryJean Rusak
Benefit Chair

Heather Brooks
Auction Sub-Committee Chair

Yolanda Frank
Host Sub-Committee Chair

Kate Underwood Herron
*Volunteer Sub-Committee
Chair*

Penny Montgomery and
Mary Lee Stenson
*Food, Entertainment, and
Decorations Sub-Committee
Co-Chairs*

ICYMI*

Experience a taste of some of the great things happening at WT! Be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and visit winchesterthurston.org to keep up-to-date.



Senior Tyler Perry (center) and junior Igor Karusewicz (right)

Boys Basketball Earns First Section Championship in School History

For the first time in school history, the Bears earned the WPIAL Boys Basketball Section Championship and a spot in the Class 2A quarterfinals, and for the second consecutive year, Dusan Krivokapic, Class of 2019, received all-section recognition. The team also earned the distinction of being named the *TribLive High School Sports Network* Boys Basketball team of the week in February.

**In Case You Missed It*



Learning Culture through Pierogi-making

As part of third grade's year-long study of the history and culture of Pittsburgh, students gathered at the North Campus to learn pierogi-making from Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech.



Keeping WT Traditions Alive at

May Day

Kindergarten students and their eighth grade buddies celebrated May Day, a long-standing WT tradition, with a maypole dance and song program, including a performance of the "WT Marching Song."



Precision and Timing on Stage in Upper School Winter Play,

Rumors

Upper School students put on three fantastic and hilarious performances of this year's winter play, *Rumors*, a farce by Neil Simon.

WT Student is First **Girl to Win** State Math Competition

Seventh grader Vivian Loh won the MATHCOUNTS State Championship. Vivian is the first girl to win the Pennsylvania title in the organization's 36-year history!



(L-R) First graders Jayce Burnett and Lila Shah with Director of Lower School City Campus Nancy Rogers

Putting the **Engineering** Process to Work

Lower School City Campus students put their understanding of the engineering process to the test in the second "Nerdy Derby." In partnership with Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse, students designed and constructed downhill vehicles using reclaimed materials and tested their vehicles at this culminating activity for Engineering Week.



Sixth grader Aniyah Woods

Sharing Identity

through Graphic Stories

Sixth grade English students worked with the Pittsburgh Center for Arts and Media as part of City as Our Campus to turn their fictional graphic stories, focused on elements of identity and how it impacts the stories we tell, into animated stop motion videos.



Inspired by the Carnegie International

Students in all divisions at both campuses created artwork inspired by the *Carnegie International 57th Edition*. The WT exhibition, including works ranging from installation sculpture to drawing and painting, spilled out of the Art Gallery to fill the hallways of Molloy Posner Hall. It was enjoyed by the entire WT community and even received a special visit from Ingrid Schaffner, curator of the *Carnegie International*.



Sophomore Eliot Herron

Tapescape: Building Installation Art from...

Packing Tape?

Upper School Sculpture students and Visual Arts teacher Mary Martin '88 helped create TapeScape 3.0 at Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. Designed by Eric Lennartson, TapeScape 3.0 is an indoor climbing, sliding, rolling landscape made from packing tape. This art installation and play area offers an unexpected and delightful use of a common material.



Members of the Parents Association at Pi Day

Community Building at **Pi Day**

Parents Association volunteers provided tasty pies to enhance WT's Pi Day celebrations, which included the annual Pi Day Digit Recitation and pie-eating contests.



Helping the Plight of Pollinators with **Motel Six Legs**

Sixth grade science students visited the North Campus to collaborate with students there on "Motel Six Legs"—a project to make pollinator houses for solitary-nesting bees.



Second grader Tommy Ritchey with his device made from three random objects

Family Fun and **Hands-on** Learning at STEAM Night

The North Campus hosted a Family Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) Night. Families tested their problem solving, invention, and creativity. Various challenges involved constructing a catapult to launch a paint-soaked cotton ball, building a tall straw tower to support a ball, creating an aluminum boat to hold the most pennies, designing a transportation tool to feed the WT Bear, and inventing a device from three random objects.

Commencement 2019



"If you ever feel you are losing your way, know you can always come home to WT for our commitment to you goes well beyond today. Although you will no longer be in our hallways, you will always remain in our hearts."

—DR. SCOTT D. FECH, HEAD OF SCHOOL

The 59 members of the Class of 2019 were encouraged to appreciate the opportunities given to them, continue to be changemakers, and embrace challenges as the WT community celebrated the school's 132nd Commencement exercises on June 6, 2019.

Student speakers Nadine Oury, Andrew 'Drew' Fingeret, and Meredith Warden were joined by Board President Dr. Jennifer Gonzalez McComb '89 and Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech in addressing the students and their guests.

WINCHESTER THURSTON SCHOOL CLASS OF 2019

Mirisa Alfonso Wells
Gabriel Batista
Isaac Tzvi Berman
Sofia L. Borrero
Akiliann Ngozi Bray
Owen R. Brelsford*
Elinor Danielle Caballero
David Michael Canavan
Katharine S. Chaillet
Nicholas Sion Chreky*
Patrick J. Costa*
Joseph Creiman
Kian Sayer Delaney
Jacob Richard Dumaine-Schutz
Andrew David Fingeret

Elliott Isay Harrison*✿
Ilana Hollifield
Maya Husni*
Evie Jin
Xavier J. Johnson
Griffin King*
Dusan Krivokapic
Trevor K. Leong*
Emma B. Levine*
Derek Jiaping Li 李嘉平
Yuelong Li 李越隆
Yiduo Liao 廖一多
Jonathan Garrett Littmann*
Matthew J. Lupariello*
Sepheha S. Mann

Ian A. McGough*
Elizabeth Morgen Merritt
Mason Hughes Miller
Mo Lynn Moeslein
AJ Molder*
Sena Noaman
Daniel Rose O'Malley
Nadine 浩欣 Oury
Tyler Carlos Perry
Jake Harrison Rabner ✿
Isana Neeta Raja*
Jack R. Robinson
Rachel Louise Sadeh
Kevin Salipante
Daniela Maria Schafer

Justin Arjun Seth*
Daniella Hannah Shear
Stephanie J. Shugerman ✿
Megan Kimberly Sullivan
Sifan Tao 陶思凡
Zihe Catherine Tian 田子禾
Jafar Salaam Turner*✿
Christina Vlachos
Meredith Joy Warden
M. Romon Washington II
Jonathan Patrick Wittig
Hannah Woo
Jacob W. Yousem
Kayla Mei Zemek*

*WT Lifer ✿ Legacy



Elliott Isay Harrison with his family and grandmother Rosanne Isay Harrison '56

"I recently received the invitation for my 30th Reunion. The invitation states 'We look forward to looking back with you.' I invite you to remember to look backwards and recall the people who helped you to get where you are."

—DR. JENNIFER GONZALEZ McCOMB '89, BOARD PRESIDENT



(L-R) Director of Upper School Dr. Anne Fay, Scott Feh, Meredith Warden, Drew Fingeret, Nadine Oury, Jennifer Gonzalez McComb '89



Mary A. Graham Mitchell awardee Derek Jiaping Li receiving his diploma

"Being at Winchester Thurston has, without a doubt, not only enabled me to fully see just how wonderful learning is, but also to appreciate the power of an environment that is extraordinarily conducive to learning in its many forms."

—MEREDITH WARDEN



Faculty member Mary Martin '88 (R) presents her son Jafar Salaam Turner (L) with his diploma.



Mirisa Alfonso Wells



(L-R) Rose, AJ, and David Molder



M. Romon Washington II and his family

"...enthusiasm and leadership contributes to the way [the Class of 2019] faces every problem. We do not passively sit back and accept things as they are, we lead changes ourselves."

—NADINE OURY, PRESIDENT, STUDENT COUNCIL



Faculty member Lynn Horton (R) presents her daughter Mo Lynn Moeslein (L) with her diploma.



Students thanking their parents as part of the graduation ceremony

Excellence Honored

The Emily E. Dorrance award for a student whose conduct, interaction, and leadership best demonstrates the school credo, Think also of the comfort and the rights of others, given by friends of the Dorrance family

Nadine 浩欣 Oury

The Mary A. Campbell award for outstanding scholarship, given by Katherine Houston Rush

Daniela Maria Schafer

The Mary A. Graham Mitchell award for character, personality, loyalty, and scholarship

Derek Jiaping Li 李嘉平

The Alice M. Thurston award for integrity, courageous leadership, and service

Isaac Tzvi Berman

The Ruth S. Gamsby award for citizenship, kindness, and courteous helpfulness, given by the Daniel F. Mullane family

Elizabeth Morgen Merritt

The Nina Wadhwa Student Council award for a student who best exemplifies Gentle in Manner, Strong in Deed, endowed by the Wadhwa family

Katharine S. Chaillet

The Jane L. Scarborough Award for teaching excellence

Callie DiSabato



THISTLETALK GOES DIGITAL

Get a full gallery of photos from graduation at winchesterthurston.org/digitalthistle

Alums in Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. had the opportunity to meet members of the Advancement team and Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech. Alums shared stories of WT's transformative influence on their lives, lifelong friendships forged, and their pride in the current state of the school.

CHIGAGO AS OUR CAMPUS

In October, Dr. Scott Fech and Director of Finance David Wollam attended the INDEX (Independent School Data Exchange) Annual Meeting. Scott's husband Rick Soria, son Beckett, and Director of Alumnae/i Relations Amiena Mahsoob joined him for a lunch at The Gage to meet area alumnae.



(Back Row, L-R) David Wollam, Susan Morrow '84, Amiena Mahsoob, Kathryn 'Katie' Maser Belviso '99, Jean Silvestri '72, Scott Fech, Rick Soria (holding son Beckett); (Front Row, L-R) Margery 'Margie' Kamin Feitler '82, Suzie Desai A'91, Lauren Raphael '87

LOS ANGELES AS OUR CAMPUS

Gretchen Larson Maslanka '83 and Trustee Andrew Santelli '00 hosted a Your City as Our Campus event at the iconic Hollywood restaurant Smoke House to coincide with Dr. Scott Fech's travel to Long Beach, California for the annual National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Conference.



(Back Row, L-R) Ming Ting, Shirley Lin '00, Director of Advancement Monica Manes Gay, Amy Hirschman Solomon '99; (Middle Row, L-R) Scott Fech (standing), Lionel Levine '06, Jackie Ryczek, Lucinda 'Cindy' Cyert Steffes '69, Gretchen Larson Maslanka '83; (Front Row, L-R) Blake Reading '10, Consuelo 'Connie' Staisey Woodhead '66, William 'Will' Farnsworth '15, Gene Steffes

PHILADELPHIA AS OUR CAMPUS



(Counterclockwise) Natalie Kaufman Levant '49, Linda Welsh, Christopher Bloh, Gaynelle Peebles Bloh '88, Max Rogow '16, Fay Blleloch '16, Olivia Carb '07, Brea Heidelberg '02, Kristopher 'Kris' Pepper '08, Sophie Burkholder '16, Tamir Frank '16, Amiena Mahsoob, Andrew Wickerham '06, Scott Fech, Michelle Wion Chitty, and Hallie Levant

Brea Heidelberg '02, Andrew Wickerham '06, and Tamir Frank '16 hosted the Your City as Our Campus event at Porta Philadelphia in Center City. They were joined by Associate Director of Advancement Michelle Wion Chitty and Director of Alumnae/i Relations Amiena Mahsoob, who were in Philadelphia for the CASE-NAIS Conference, and by Dr. Scott Fech.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AS OUR CAMPUS



(Back Row, L-R) Monica Manes Gay, Natalie Adams '13, Rosalie Daniels '13, Don Michael 'Don Mike' Mendoza '06, Alexander Chreky '14, Jack Stein '12, Lauren Ober '96, Scott Fech; (Front Row, L-R) Shari Baruth '83, Laurie Bushkoff '83, Anna-Stina Ericson '44, Britta Ericson Chambers '41, Josephine 'Josie' Podolsky '84, Joy Titus-Young '92, Madeline 'Maddie' Glackin '18, Sarah Rackoff '99, and Amiena Mahsoob

Dr. Scott Fech attended a meeting with members of EAB (Education Advisory Board) in Washington, D.C. Director of Advancement Monica Manes Gay and Director of Alumnae/i Relations Amiena Mahsoob joined him for an evening with area alums. Joy Titus-Young '92, Lauren Ober '96, and Madeline 'Maddie' Glackin '18 hosted the event at Busboys and Poets.

WT'S YOUNG ALUMS

WT's young alums are doing amazing things in Pittsburgh, across the country, and around the world. Recently, many of them reconnected at WT for four special events.



(Back Row, L-R) Khalipha Misawa '10, Gabriel Isaacson '12, Inaya Stephenson '10, Chris Mensah, Michael Larson-Edwards '04, Middle School Soccer Coach Petros Neofotistos, Director of Athletics Kevin Miller, Callie Gropp '03, Anne 'Annie' Alexander Tritsch '09, Director of Alumnae/i Relations Amiena Mahsoob; (Middle Row, L-R) Director of Security Al Hall, Reed Frischman '11, Dane Brody '02; (Front Row, L-R) Randon Bopp '13, Keilyn Walden, Rebecca 'Becca' Greenhouse '12, Emily Onorato '12, Track/Cross Country Coach Bruce Frey, Geoffrey 'Geoff' Cohen '17

YOUNG ALUM BASKETBALL GAME

For the first time, alums gathered for a casual basketball game at WT. Afterwards, they met at Urban Tap to watch the NCAA Final Tournament. The game was hosted by former college basketball player and WT Basketball Coach Jimyse Brown '10 and WT Lacrosse Coach Randon Bopp '13.



(L-R) Jimyse Brown '10, Inaya Stephenson '10, and Bruce Frey



Becca Greenhouse '12 (L) and Dane Brody '02 (R)



THISTLETALK GOES DIGITAL

Get more news, photos, and fun at winchesterthurston.org/digitalthistle

ANNUAL HOME FROM COLLEGE LUNCHEON

Current college students were invited back to the City Campus just before Winter Break to reconnect with Upper School students, faculty, and staff. This year, a panel of these alums shared their college experiences with current WT seniors.



THE MON VALLEY MEDIUM DEBUT



Alec Silberblatt '08 debuted his latest show at WT this past February. The one-person show, *The Mon Valley Medium*, was written by Alec and directed by Moira O'Sullivan. The show explores a local Pittsburgh man's struggles with guilt, revenge, and redemption. Nearly 100 guests enjoyed the performance of this darkly comedic murder mystery set in the hills of the Mon Valley. All proceeds from the evening helped benefit WT's Performing Arts Department.

NATHANIEL WINSCHER '14 MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES



Head of School Dr. Scott D. Fech (L)
with Kate Stainton (R)



(L-R) History Department Chair Dr. Michael Naragon,
Kate Stainton, and Dr. Rob Ruck

Monday, April 15 marked the inaugural event of the Nathaniel Winschel '14 Memorial Lecture Series. The series, established by Nate's mother, Kate Stainton, and funded by generous donors, honors Nate by sharing his passion for history. This first lecture featured historian and WT alumnus parent Dr. Rob Ruck from the University of Pittsburgh. He spoke about how people use sport to tell a collective story about who they are—to themselves and the world.



Miss Mitchell Society

In 2002, Winchester Thurston created the Miss Mitchell Society to thank and recognize the many generous donors whose bequests and planned gifts continue to expand the vision of founder Dr. Mary A. Graham Mitchell.

Including Winchester Thurston in your will or trust, or adding WT as a beneficiary of an insurance policy, IRA, or 401(k), is a smart way to provide future tax savings while making a sizable impact. And, every planned giving donor becomes a member of the Miss Mitchell Society—membership requires no particular gift or bequest amount.

If you have made a provision for WT in your estate plans, we would love to welcome you as a member of the Miss Mitchell Society. For more information, or to let us know of your intentions, please contact Monica Manes Gay, Director of Advancement, at gaym@winchesterthurston.org or 412-578-3746.



Miss Mitchell Society Members

WT salutes the generosity and support of this very special group of alumnae/i and friends. Following are the current living members of our community who have remembered WT in their estate planning.

Betsy Aiken '72	Anna-Stina Ericson '44	Gretchen Larson	Henry Posner III
Suzanne LeClere	Robert I. Glimcher	Maslanka '83	Kathy Zillweger
Barley '52	Barbara Graves-	Marga Matheny '64	Putnam '71
Loretta Lobes Benec '88	Poller '93	Patricia L. Maykuth '69	Susan Criepp
Barbara Abney Bolger '52	Rosanne Isay	Beverlee Simboli	Santa-Cruz '60
Kathleen W. Buechel	Harrison '56	McFadden '55	Jennifer M. Scanlon
Joan Clark Davis '65	Kathryn W. Kruse '58	Kathleen L. Metinko '91	Sheen Sehgal '89
Judith Rohrer Davis '57	Elsa Limbach	Frances P. Minno	Allyson Baird Sveda '84
Judith Ellenbogen '58	Louise Baldrige	Bee Jee Epstine	Gaylen Westfall,
Justine Diebold	Lytle '51	Morrison '56	Honorary Alumna
Englert '59	Carole Oswald	Eileen Mauclair	Carol Spear Williams '57
	Markus '57	Muse '61	

Please visit www.winchesterthurston.org/missmitchell for the complete list.



**WHEN THEIR DREAMS
COME TRUE,
IT'LL ALL BE PARTLY
THANKS TO YOU.**

Learning has real allure here at WT. It's a fun, creative, immersive experience. It's tapping into imagination, learning new ways to communicate, taking risks, and working with teachers who care for the well-being of each student.

Cultivate a love of learning with a WT Fund gift; large or small, every gift counts.

Visit winchesterthurston.org/gift, or contact Michelle Wion Chitty at 412-578-3748 or wionm@winchesterthurston.org.

THE WT  FUND

This message was inspired by this year's Upper School Musical, *Avenue Q School Edition*, a thought-provoking parody of Sesame Street.

Know the story behind one of the Reunion year photos? Contact Amiena Mahsoob at mahsooba@winchesterthurston.org.

1944 75th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1944: We'd love to hear your memories of the library in the Fifth Avenue building.

1949 70th Reunion Year

1952
Barbara Abney Bolger writes, "Looking forward to a cruise at the end of April visiting Celtic Lands and some D-Day sites with the Mt. Holyoke Alumnae Association. Dwight David Eisenhower II will be with us for that part of the trip. It will feel different, going alone, after all the wonderful trips Don and I shared. Also looking forward to the arrival of a grandson in August, courtesy of Megan and John! My children and grandchildren are planning a weekend celebration for my 85th birthday in May. It pays to grow old: I was recruited to play an old lady in a Reader's Theater production of *Marjorie Prime* at our library!"

Jean MacIntyre shared, "I am in my second year as the Chair of the Canadian Federation of University Women, Edmonton Academic Awards Fund. This registered Canadian charity offers bursary assistance and graduate scholarships at the University of Alberta to women in need."

1953
Elisabeth 'Betsy' Riddle Ruderfer writes, "Emil and I are taking our 11-year-old grandson, Eli, to the Normandy Beaches in June. It is the 75th anniversary of D-Day. Eli is very interested in World War II history, and we look forward to a memorable experience. I am fortunate to have found a way to pay tribute to American history through a regular 'gig' singing the great old songs of the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's with a local band."



Betsy Riddle Ruderfer performing with The Roger Barbour Jazz Group

1954 65th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1954: Recognize this photo? Share the classmates and story captured here.

Sally Helsel Price noted, "Sadly, I report that my dear husband of 60 years passed away in April 2017. He was always an interesting partner and travel companion on our many journeys."

1959 60th Reunion Year

Rachel 'Gay' Knake Haines shared, "I have enjoyed travel and visits over the past few years with **Polly Brandt Lechner** and **Carolyn 'Lyn' Clark Pegg**. I work with my therapy dog in the 12th District Court system in the tri-county area, which is challenging, but extremely rewarding work. I spend as much time as possible with my two handsome grandsons when they're home from college. In a strange stroke of luck, I can spend time with St. Croix friends who have relocated to my area!"

Carolyn 'Lyn' Clark Pegg writes, "Hey 59ers! Our 60th Reunion is coming up this fall. Any chance we could have a gathering like 10 years ago?"

1964 55th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1964: We'd love to hear about your science education at WT.

1965

Susan 'Susie' MacMichael Zuntini shared, "This June I'll be coming to Boston for my 50th Wellesley graduation Reunion. Hopefully I'll see other WT Wellesley grads. I'll be staying in the dormitory sharing a room with an old friend. This winter I skied in Georgia, of all places! Tbilissi was a fascinating place, and so inexpensive, but with wonderful food and wine. The Caucasus Mountains are over 5,000 meters and lift prices are 13 euros a day!"



Susie MacMichael Zuntini and her husband Franco in Tbilissi, Georgia

1966

Nancy Matheny Rabner shared, "I have accepted the milestone I just passed, but in my mind I am still sunbathing in the WT driveway at lunch with my aluminum foil reflector with the girls. I am the mother of two beautiful daughters and nanny to five perfect grandchildren. I am happy writing and owning my own small business. Lifetimes have passed, but I still love WT!"

Kristin Langley is still volunteering at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, working with the resident sea turtles. She shares, "It brings me such joy to see how each of these disabled animals have such distinct personalities and bring a smile to everyone who meets them."



Kristin feeding a reindeer in Finland

1967

Congratulations to **Wendy Newstetter** who was honored with the National Academy of Engineering Gordon Prize for 2018. This prize recognizes leaders in academia for the development of new educational approaches to engineering education.

Sarah Irvin Riling has had an exciting year. She traveled to Spain with her daughter, took a trip to Norway and Germany, and completed a bucket-list trip to the Amazon and Machu Picchu. To top it off, she celebrated her daughter's wedding and also became a grandmother.



Sarah Irvin Riling's granddaughter Emerson Lee

1969

50th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1969: Who was your mascot in this photo?

Lucinda 'Cindy' Cyert Steffes

and her husband of 47 years have retired in Scottsdale, AZ. Their retirement travel so far has included trips to the Galapagos Islands, Kauai, and Costa Rica. In the fall they will go to Croatia and Greece. She shared, "Had a great time meeting with other alums at the West Coast get-together. I was so impressed with the recent WT grads! Accepting boys was a great decision. I loved meeting Scott Fech! I am confident he will be a great leader for WT."



Cindy Cyert Steffes in the Galapagos Islands

1970

Helen Berkman Habbert

writes, "Our daughters are now scattered from San Francisco to Chicago to Miami. None are likely to return to Cincinnati, so we're planning a move to Sarasota in late 2019. I'll be retiring after almost 40 years of consulting with public and nonprofit organizations, mostly in the areas of health and social

services or public education, while my husband, John, will continue to work remotely and part-time with start-up tech companies. We're looking forward to better weather and, most importantly, more frequent visits with our grandchild. Not sure if I'm more excited or terrified by this big change, but it seems like a good time to mix things up a little! Also looking forward to celebrating our 50th reunion with a big class turnout in 2020!"



Helen Berkman Habbert and her husband, John, with their grandson

1971

National Geographic photographer **Lynn Johnson** photographed the aftermath of the Tree of Life synagogue shooting in Squirrel Hill. Her photos and reflection on documenting this tragedy in her hometown can be found on *National Geographic's* website.

1972

Betsy Aiken shares, "From time to time **Sue Hunter** and I have the pleasure of meeting up for fun and adventure. I'm now working for the Westmoreland Land Trust, conserving open space in Westmoreland County. It is with humor and fond memories that I look back upon my years at WT."

1974

45th Reunion Year



Are they or aren't they? Class of 1974: Please share the names of classmates and the story behind this photo.

1977

Adrienne Statti accepted a Project Manager position at CTI Clinical Trials and Consulting in Covington, KY (across the river from Cincinnati) and moved to Northern Kentucky in January 2019. CTI specializes in rare disease and oncology research.

1979

40th Reunion Year



Class of 1979: Please help us to identify classmates in this photo by emailing Amiena Mahsoob at mahsooba@winchesterthurston.org.

1983

Edith Raphael Brotman had her second book published. *The Art of Being Present: Mindfulness Meditation for Work and Life* follows her first book *Mussar Yoga*.

1984 35th Reunion Year



Class of 1984: What a cast and crew! Please share your memories of Jacques Brel.

1988
Congratulations to **Heather Gaines** who is moving to Beachwood, OH to become the Housing Choice Voucher Program Director for Cuyahoga Metro Housing Authority.

1989 30th Reunion Year



Class of 1989 Thistledown staff: Do you have any great photos you could share for the Reunion slideshow?

1990
Tanya Duerstein Diable A'90 served as a mentor to Research Science students who were designing a prosthetic device for a dog. Tanya is the founder of Joey's Paw, a nonprofit organization that provides prosthetics for dogs throughout the country.



(L-R) Seniors Matt Lupariello, Jafar Turner, and Kian Delaney with Tanya Duerstein Diable (center, with dog)

1994 25th Reunion Year

Ian Gould began 2019 by touring in Europe with a new play *Shooter* about the intersection of toxic masculinity and gun violence. He is currently playing the title role in a workshop of Shakespeare's *Richard II* in NYC and directing *The Winter's Tale* with the students in the graduating class of the Stella Adler Studio of Acting.



Ian Gould as Richard in a workshop reading of Richard II



Class of 1994: What's the story behind this professional photo?

1995
Christopher 'Chris' Stigler has become a Principal at Blackney Hayes Architects. The Philadelphia-based Architecture and Engineering firm has been in business for 31 years with a focus in educational, multi-family residential, hospitality, healthcare, and corporate markets. Chris has served as the Director of Quality Control and is looking forward to expanding his role as Principal and growing the firm.

1996
Like most of the rest of her Class of '96, **Lauren Ober** recently turned 40 (Happy Birthday, y'all!). In her 40th year, Lauren took lots of pictures of her dog, bought

a condo, and lost her job. She is now the host of *Spectacular Failures*, a podcast from American Public Media. It drops in June. Check it out! Lauren lives in D.C. with her aforementioned animal. Say hi!: @oberandout or oberandout.com

Amy Guccione Wintersteen is married with three children (Tatum, 11; Morrison, 9; and Jeremy, 2), and is living in Newport, RI.



Amy Guccione Wintersteen and family showing their sports loyalties (L-R): Jeremy Wintersteen, Morrison MacMillan, Tatum MacMillan, Amy Wintersteen, and Jeremy Wintersteen, Jr.

1999 20th Reunion Year



What are you up to now?

Brandilyn 'Brandi' Dumas was recently elevated to shareholder at Greenberg Traurig, LLP in New York City. Brandi focuses her practice on commercial real estate transactions, including borrower- and lender-side financings, acquisitions and dispositions, and development, with respect to a variety of asset types.

2000
Jason Shavers played a starring role as Monty Price in the world premiere of *Game On*, a simulated game show, at Greer Cabaret Theater.



Jason Shavers as Monty Price in Game On

2001
Congratulations to **Cassandra 'Cassy' Richards Davis** and her husband, Anthony, on the birth of their first child Anthony James Davis, Jr.



Cassy Richards Davis with her newborn

Shannon Lindemer Garcia writes, "After being a stay-at-home mom for four years, I've decided to go back to school at the University of Arizona to major in Psychology and minor in Healthcare and Sciences. Once I graduate in 2021, I hope to continue my education focusing on Psychoneuroimmunology. Our four-year old son, Mateo, is in preschool where he is in full immersion Spanish and also learns Farsi and Hebrew. He loves it and teaches us new words every day! Our two-year old daughter, Stella, will be starting preschool in the fall, but in the meantime she loves hanging out with her puppies. My husband, David, is an assistant professor at the University of Arizona in Health Promotion Sciences. We love living in Tucson and always welcome visitors."

Richard 'Rich' Homann was recently married to Nicole St. Jean at the Castle Hill Inn in Newport, RI. They currently reside in Washington, D.C. with a furry feline roommate and a little one on the way.



Rich Homann and Nicole St. Jean at their wedding at the Castle Hill Inn

Kristen Maser Michaels was recently named the Director of For Good PGH, a non-profit that works to advocate inclusion and inspire kindness through its own unique initiatives and by facilitating partnerships. Kristen is also the co-founder of Free Store Wilksburg, in Wilksburg, PA that serves neighbors in need.

2003

Callie Gropp gave a Lightning Talk at the 2019 One Health, One Planet Symposium at Phipps Conservatory on *Art in the Garden* and *Surviving to Thriving*, two programs she and her sister **Emily Gropp Carlson '99** run to support the intentional development of resilience in youth. Throughout both of these programs, WT educators and families have been involved in multiple ways.



Callie Gropp speaking at the 2019 One Health, One Planet Symposium

Ronee Penoi is now an Associate Producer with Octopus Theatricals. Ronee is a 2016 Theater Communications Group (TCG) Rising Leader of Color and was also selected to join the third cohort for The Association of Performing Arts Professionals' (APAP) Arts Leadership Program, Leadership Fellows Program (LFP). Ronee had her NYC producing debut recently at the world-famous BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music) for the New Wave Festival with Phantom Limbs' *Falling Out*. Additionally, Ronee is writing a new musical, *The Carlisle Project*, which has already received recognition and its first developmental premiere at Dartmouth University. Ronee and **Ilana 'Loni' Ransom Toeplitz '05** are still best friends and attended each other's premieres this past November in New York City.

2004

15th Reunion Year

2005



Class of 2004: What was the occasion for this photo?

Ilana 'Loni' Ransom Toeplitz was selected from more than 170 applicants for the prestigious Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation's Mike Ockrent Fellowship, which put her on Tony Award-Winner Casey Nicholaw's creative team for the new Broadway musical *The Prom*. This is Ilana's second Broadway show, following the Tony-Nominated revival of *Violet* starring Sutton Foster (2014). *The Prom* opened in November to rave reviews, and was nominated for seven Tony Awards. This year, you can find Ilana scattered across

the country directing and choreographing productions of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Piano Slam*, and the workshop of a new musical, *Living Over the Rainbow*. Ilana always includes "Proud Pittsburgh native" in her Playbill bios. You can follow Ilana on the following channels: www.IlanaDirects.com, @IlanaRanToe



Loni Ransom Toeplitz on Broadway

2008

Eric Schuman writes, "After graduating from film school two years ago, I've had my first film released theatrically, a documentary I edited titled *Combat Obscura*. Last year a short I made, *Proxy*, premiered on NoBudge.com, and I've been developing it into a feature film. If you have Spielberg's number, hit me up!"



Eric Schuman's film *Combat Obscura*

2009

10th Reunion Year



A little nostalgia to inspire you to join your classmates in Reunion planning.

2012

After receiving her Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration from George Washington University, **Rebecca 'Becca' Greenhouse** taught English as a Second Language (ESL) to high school students in Omegna, Italy for three months. She taught through Greenheart Travel, lived with a host family, and traveled throughout Europe.



Becca Greenhouse (Center) with her ESL students in Italy

Congratulations to **Gabriel 'Gabe' Isaacson** who has graduated from the joint M.B.A./J.D. program from the Carnegie Mellon University Tepper School of Business and University of Pittsburgh School of Law. He will be joining McKinsey & Company in the Pittsburgh office.

2014 5th Reunion Year



Class of 2014: Share your memories of Pi Day.

Kayla Goldstein is currently teaching English as a Second Language in Moscow.

2018

Yijia Chen traveled to Beijing during his winter break from the University of California at Berkeley to research deep

learning to develop lossless compression algorithms of data that are more efficient than the current ones.

Joseph 'Joey' Scapellato had the opportunity to debate against conservative commentator Ben Shapiro on the University of Pittsburgh's campus in front of thousands of other attendees in person and online.



Joey Scapellato debating Ben Shapiro

Stellar former WT Faculty **Linda Brown, Joan Franklin, Ruth Grant, and Debbie Reaves** taught literally hundreds of WT students over their many years at both the City and North campuses. Remember them and the many intellectual journeys you took together? In the fall of 2018, they held a mini-reunion in Colorado where Debbie and Ruth now live, and the stories flowed for days! Here are some things they have been involved in after their careers at WT: Both Linda and Joan taught and supervised future teachers at the University of Pittsburgh; Linda developed programs and exhibits at the Carnegie Science Center; Debbie was a devoted CASA advocate and tutor to many students; and Ruth became a naturalist with California and Colorado environmental

centers. Each has traveled the world, spent wonderful untold hours with their children and grandchildren, read scores of great books, been involved in artistic projects, community service and political activities, and kept up with innumerable friends. They would enjoy hearing from the widespread WT community—where are YOU now? What are you up to?



Former faculty get-together: (Front Row) Debbie Reaves (Back Row, L-R) Joan Franklin, Linda Brown, and Ruth Grant

IN MEMORIAM

The following members of the WT community will be missed by their classmates, friends, students, and colleagues. We offer sincere condolences to their families.

Mary Lou Kountz Groover '39
Ruth Weimer Tillar '41
Janet Donaldson Gilmore '43
Jane 'Bonnie' Gordon Haynes '43
Nancy Walton Follansbee '46
Eleanor Hewitt Rushworth '47
Frances 'Fran' Blasdel Hubbell '55

Alexandra 'Alex' Brittain Knox '59
Joyce Griffith Butler '64
Katherine 'Kat' Tynberg '67
Alexander 'Alex' Joseph Zerby A'17
Paulette Durst, former faculty member

Connect with us.

Check out our newly reimagined online spaces:

- **LinkedIn** is now the place to share stories, find fellow alums, and engage in dialogue: [linkedin.com/school/winchester-thurston-school](https://www.linkedin.com/school/winchester-thurston-school).
- The WTAlums **Facebook** page and class year groups are being retired. You can follow all that's happening today at WT at [facebook.com/winchesterthurston](https://www.facebook.com/winchesterthurston).
- Visit the **WT website** to access the directory, update your profile, submit a class note, and learn about upcoming events.

We're eager to help share your stories and facilitate connections!



Service Learning Expands Hearts and Minds

During Spring Break 2019, 12 Upper School students traveled to Arizona to participate in a Global Service Learning Program in the Navajo Nation. They were led by WT's Program Partner Amizade on a journey that left a permanent mark on their minds and hearts. During the five-day experience, the students learned about Navajo life and culture, worked on community-led service projects, and explored the natural beauty of the area. The experience was a perfect blend of physical, emotional, and cerebral activities all designed to support student learning, growth, and reflection, and to develop a desire to engage and act.



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REUNION 2019

OCTOBER 4 AND 5

Save the Date

All class years are invited to join us on campus for Reunion 2019. Class years ending in 4's and 9's have their own Class Parties, too. Join the planning for your class by contacting Amiena Mahsoob at mahsooba@winchesterthurston.org or calling 412-578-7511.

winchesterthurston.org/reunion