

Thistle TALK

WT'S
WINNING
WAYS

Winchester Thurston School

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2016-2017

Jennifer Gonzalez McComb '89

President

Cindy Akers Gerber

Vice President

Paul Rosenblatt

Vice President

Dusty Elias Kirk

Treasurer

Kerry Bron '84

Secretary

Gary J. Niels

Head of School

Kristen A. Burns

Manny Cahouet-Rotondi

Simin Yazdgerdi Curtis

Robert I. Glimcher

Rosanne Isay Harrison '56,
Emeritus

Elizabeth S. Hurtt '74, *Emeritus*

Janet Harrison Kuzmishin '87

Kenneth M. Lehn

Elsa Limbach

Carole Oswald Markus '57,
Emeritus

Kathleen L. Metinko '91

David L. Porges

Henry Posner III, *Emeritus*

Martin E. Powell

Kelly Hanna Riley '91

MaryJean Rusak

Sharon Semenza

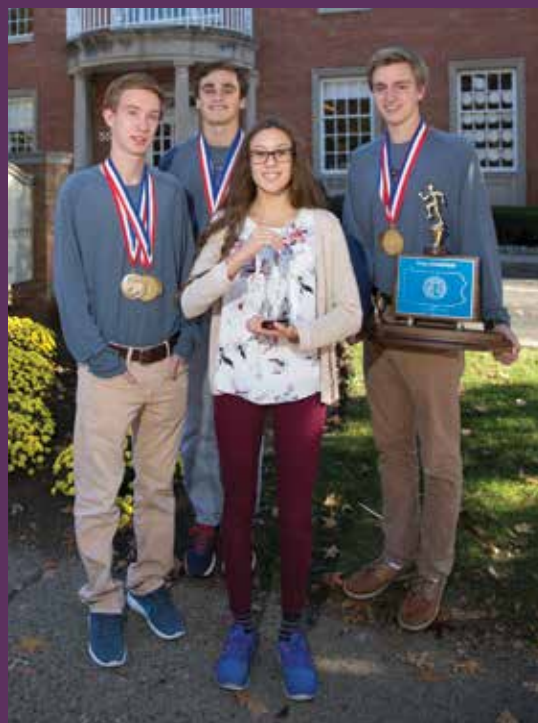
Kurt C. Small

Christine M. Stone

Philip T. Sweeney

Jane Arensberg Thompson '57,
Emeritus

Jian-Gang (Jimmy) Zhu



Aria Eppinger, Broadcom MASTERS Champion, flanked by Cross Country Champions (L – R) Ben Littmann, Shaun Hay, and Tristan Forsythe.

On Our Cover

At WT, students excel in all aspects of life – they are artists, scholars, athletes, technologists, and humanitarians. On our cover we proudly salute two different achievements which define this broad range of interest, passion, and success.

Freshman Aria Eppinger is the recipient of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Award for Health Advancement in the Broadcom MASTERS national science competition. This award was presented for her work completed in Middle School and presented at the 2016 Upper School STEM Symposium. Broadcom MASTERS is the premier science and engineering competition for middle school students in the nation. You can learn more about Aria's project at www.winchesterthurston.org/aria.

Seniors Ben Littmann and Shaun Hay, and junior Tristan Forsythe are members of WT's State Champion Cross Country team. This was the team's second state championship in three years. They also won the Cross Country WPIAL championship for the first time in school history. See page 14 for more about this championship season.

We proudly salute these students!

Thistle TALK MAGAZINE

Volume 43 • Number 2 Winter 2016

ThistleTalk is published by Winchester Thurston School for alumnae/i, parents, students, and friends of the school. Letters and suggestions are welcome.

Editorial Team

Nancy-Rose Netchi, Director of Marketing and Communications

Linsey McDaniel A'96, Director of Alumnae/i Relations

Contributors

Kathleen Bishop

Michelle Wion Chitty

Jason Cohn

Dave DeNoma

Robin DeNoma

Maura Farrell

Alaina Ferry '10

Ashley Harper

Emily Mente

Renee Rosensteel

Jane Schilling

Printing

Broudy Printing

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: Critical Thinking, Integrity, Empathy, Community, and Diversity.

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.

Winchester Thurston School
555 Morewood Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

North Hills Campus at WT
4225 Middle Road
Allison Park, PA 15101

412-578-7500

www.winchesterthurston.org

ThistleTalk content represents opinions, ideas, and perspectives of the authors that are not necessarily those of the Trustees or Administration of Winchester Thurston School. The editors reserve the right to accept, reject, or edit any content submitted for publication in *ThistleTalk*.

Winchester Thurston School is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools and is accredited by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools.

Winchester Thurston School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, or disability in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, financial aid programs, and athletics or other school-administered programs.

Copyright © 2016 Winchester Thurston School.
All Rights Reserved.



Upper School students Tristan Forsythe (L) and Toni Dumitriu (R) practice their Spanish conversational skills with students visiting from South America through Amizade, a local fair trade learning organization. Programs like this are one of many ways that WT students are able to broaden their cultural lens.

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL | Gary J. Niels

wt smart	2
wt community	7
wt sports	12
Alumnae/i News	14
wt impact	16
Class Notes	22
	26

Features



Fostering a Culture of Well-Being 3

Q&A with Diane Nichols, Director of Equity and Inclusion 5



THISTLETALK GOES DIGITAL

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



How should we be evaluated?

An important question students ask teachers is, “How will I be evaluated?” The same question is worth asking about Winchester Thurston School. How will WT be evaluated or better yet, how should we be evaluated?

One evaluative instrument is **demand**. For a number of years following the Recession of 2008, independent schools nationwide experienced a decline in enrollment. It could be said that this reflected a decline in demand. This has not been the case at Winchester Thurston. WT opened school this year with the highest enrollment in the history of the school: 685 students! In fact, this is our ninth year of record enrollment.

If **standardized tests** are what they claim to be—an instrument to measure academic achievement and skills—then presumably student performance on the tests are another way to evaluate a school. Once again, WT students score remarkably well. On the ERB tests that we administer in grades 4-8, the median WT student score was a significant 35 points above the national norms in reading and 42 points above the national norms in mathematics. On the SAT, which we benchmark against 35 other outstanding independent schools, the median score of the middle 50% of the Class of 2016 was fifth highest in reading, sixth highest in writing, and seventh highest in mathematics.

Still I hear that some families evaluate schools on their **college placement** lists. Ninety-eight percent of the Class of 2016 was accepted into colleges that were ranked by Barron’s as Most Competitive, Highly Competitive, or Very Competitive. Better yet, 58% of the Class of 2016 was admitted to the Most Competitive colleges and universities. Our admit rate to the Ivy League colleges this past year was


an extraordinary 13% compared to the average admit rate to Ivy League Colleges of between 6% and 7%.

Finally, one of the most important instruments to evaluate a school is **customer satisfaction**. This is one of the reasons we have participated in the National Association of Independent Schools’ (NAIS) Parent Satisfaction Survey. The culminating questions in the survey ask parents to rate their overall satisfaction with the school, and to report how likely they are to recommend our school to others. On average, 83% of parents in the national benchmark group reported satisfaction, which I am told is a remarkably high number. Well, at Winchester Thurston School 89% of our parents not only expressed satisfaction, but would recommend our school to other families.

Certainly these are a few ways in which some people may evaluate Winchester Thurston School. However, I would like to suggest that these instruments alone are too shortsighted. The measure of our performance as a school is less quantitative than it is qualitative. It is in the quality of our graduates’ lives. It is in whether our graduates are productive and good citizens. It is in whether they are evolving into good human beings. Not long ago a WT graduate summed up her time at WT in the following remarkable reflection:

“I can truly say that over the past four years I have been affected by Newton, by Plato, and even by Thoreau, but they didn’t give me knowledge, they gave me facts. As a wise man once said, ‘facts you can read in a book’ and I have, and I appreciate them, but it’s not what made me grow, what made we want to change, what made me knowledgeable. Knowledge for me and the knowledge that (our school) has taught me and of which I am truly grateful is how to consider myself credible.”

I do not discount the importance of metrics and quantifiable measures of performance. However, I think the greatest value of a Winchester Thurston education is qualitative and long-term, as this graduate so beautifully expressed.

A young girl with dark hair in a ponytail is hugging a large, brown, fuzzy bear mascot. The bear has a friendly face with black eyes and a black nose. The background is slightly blurred, showing a parking lot with cars.

The WT Bear gives a warm welcome to Pre-Kindergarten student Sophie Ma on the first day of school.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING

As Winchester Thurston developed the strategic priorities for *A Smart Future 2018*, the faculty, administration, and board have wrestled with important questions: What does it mean to be an equitable and inclusive school? What does it mean to have strong moral character? How are the forces in our culture shaping our students' minds and hearts, and how are the pressures and stresses in our society affecting their resilience and health? These questions have now converged into a vision to *foster a culture of well-being* at WT through a focus on three key areas: equity and inclusion, moral life, and student wellness.

"There is an overall realization at our school, and at other schools around the nation, that we need to dedicate more time and resources to the overall well-being of students," says

Head of School Gary Niels. "Students can't learn where there's 'noise'—whether it's the distraction of relationships, internal tension, or things they are struggling with at home or with friends. Those factors impact learning. Historically, schools have spent 98% of their time on academic curriculum and 2% of their time on paying attention to the lives of students as a whole. That balance needs to change."

The Well-Being Initiative aims to enhance the WT student experience. It evolved from many different angles: a committee of faculty and administrators gathered feedback on school climate from the WT community; input from renowned educational leaders like Dr. Thomas Lickona, a national expert on moral life in schools, informed the initiative's moral life component; and *Making Caring Common*, a project of the

Harvard Graduate School of Education that promotes caring, inclusive school communities was also a resource.

Equity and Inclusion

“In the Equity and Inclusion area, there was a growing realization that students from such a variety of backgrounds bring their own cultural lens to the school. It is naïve for us to assume that all will understand each other,” explains Niels.

The need for cross-cultural understanding has grown right along with WT’s nine straight years of record enrollment; last year, Niels decided that it was time to bring in a dedicated expert to move equity and inclusion work from a grassroots effort to one that WT embraces institutionally. After a national

politicians get ahead not by espousing their positions, but by personally attacking their opponents, then it seems acceptable to young people to behave this way as well,” says Niels. “‘Manners’ is a very old-fashioned term, but the characteristics of ‘good’ manners enable young people to lead fulfilled lives: looking people in the eye, shaking their hand, greeting them, using their names, holding doors,” reflects Niels. “All of these common courtesies in our society seem to be eroding.”

By drawing upon the very foundation of WT—its credo, *Think also of the comfort and the rights of others*—the Moral Life component seeks to counteract such negative influences and in fact replace them with positive values, like empathy, humility, respect, and honesty, and to rely on lessons instilled



in the Lower School’s use of Responsive Classroom and the Middle School’s Developmental Designs program. In addition, Middle School students own the responsibility to create a caring community by writing and signing a shared moral charter. “The Well-Being Initiative is an ‘exclamation point’ to these efforts,” says Niels. “They set the stage for young adults to take on the greater responsibility and freedom of the Upper School with the strength and fortitude they need against myriad social pressures.”

search, WT hired Diane Nichols as its first Director of Equity and Inclusion. [See Q&A with Diane Nichols on page 5.]

Part of Nichols’s mission is to work with the community to develop a shared vision and language about equity and inclusion, so that they can begin to talk openly about what it means to be equitable and inclusive, to understand each other’s identities, and to agree to the value of this work. “How do you tell other peoples’ stories, or bring other peoples’ stories into the room, and why is that important?” asks Nichols.

Some of those stories come to light in a new ninth grade Multiculturalism course designed to instill greater cultural awareness and understanding. Nichols teaches a section, as do Dr. Josh Andy and History Department Chair Dr. Mike Naragon, who designed the course to help students “... understand the historical and social forces shaping their identities and opportunities, so that they will aspire to create and sustain a multicultural America stripped bare of structural inequity and grounded instead in a more inclusive understanding of democracy.”

Moral Life

The Moral Life component grew from the school’s concerns about the effects of modern culture on children. “When young people observe that adults verbally degrade one another and

Student Wellness

Students also acquire *practical* tools, particularly with respect to Student Wellness. Mindfulness, an age-old practice that can improve attention and focus, increase empathy and emotional regulation, and combat stress, anxiety, and depression, leads the way. “There are clear positive medical and psychological impacts to the practice of meditation and mindfulness,” states Niels.

The school’s drug and alcohol education program has also expanded, and Upper School Dean of Students Matt Bachner reports that the ninth grade seminar, designed to help students transition from Middle School to Upper School, affords other opportunities to put wellness into practice. Running each trimester during the freshman study hall block, the seminar seeks to empower students with information about adolescent health and with skills to navigate peer relationships.

Looking Forward

“The Well-Being Initiative is an emerging program that we will continue to evaluate and improve,” notes Niels. “I look forward to watching all of this unfold and to continue to discuss the challenges that WT students are facing and how we might best equip and encourage them along the way.”



Q&A with Diane Nichols, Director of Equity and Inclusion

Diane Nichols is WT's first Director of Equity and Inclusion. She served in the same role for four years at Worcester Academy in Worcester, Massachusetts and for 17 years at Hathaway Brown School in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Nichols is a Licensed Counselor with a B.A. in Psychology and a M.Ed. in Community Counseling, and she recently completed a certification in Organizational Leadership from UMass Dartmouth. Nichols is a trainer for the Anti-Defamation League's World of Difference Institute, a faculty member for the National Association of Independent Schools' (NAIS) Student Diversity Leadership Conference, and a founding faculty member of the National Diversity Practitioners Institute. Nichols has taught AP psychology, health & wellness, and several diversity seminar electives for middle and upper school students, and was a contributing author to the NAIS publication, *Diversity Work in Independent Schools, the Practice and the Practitioner*.

Q: Why is it important for a school to identify someone whose focus is on equity and inclusion?

A: We have created laws and expectations that overt acts of discrimination and bias are not tolerated. But laws do not change hearts and minds—we are continually fighting to erase old tapes and to unlearn biased behavior—to see, value, and affirm multiple identities and experiences. It is important that someone, working within a structure of support, is responsible for

exploring, identifying, and assessing ways in which we are providing access and opportunities for each of our students.

I like to describe the Director of Equity & Inclusion as the pea under the mattress, from the children's book, *The Princess and the Pea*. The roles and responsibilities of the position are designed to create a level of discomfort within an institution—reminding us to question what we are doing, how we are doing it, and who are we

hearing, supporting, and speaking to in our programs, policies, and curriculum. To be inclusive and equitable in our practices, we must remain aware of our own cultural context and that of those we serve and interact with daily.

Q: How did you begin your work in equity and inclusion?

A: The “work” is an ever-evolving journey in a world of human difference. I recall waking up one day in college and realizing that my sense of “normal” was being challenged by the inequities that continue to plague our society today. I wanted to make a difference in the lives of our youth and began my professional journey as a Licensed Counselor. I have always been interested in the stories of the “other.” I entered the independent school world as a student diversity coordinator, a position designed to support the student experience, particularly for African American and low-income students.

Q: Why is it important to talk about equity and inclusion?

A: The demographics of our world, country, communities, and schools are continually changing. As educators and humans, we must develop and teach the competencies and skills needed to be culturally responsive and aware. Our students must be equipped with the

“Our students must be equipped with the competencies needed to navigate, interact, and engage effectively in a world of human difference.”

competencies needed to navigate, interact, and engage effectively in a world of human difference. This requires more than acquiring intellectual knowledge, it includes personal and practical application in our classrooms, our homes, and in daily interactions across cultures.

Q: Do the benefits of equity and inclusion extend beyond school?

A: Understanding issues of diversity and equity is no longer a choice. We are diverse; it is quantifiable, visible, and invisible. As the world flattens, our students are moving into a diverse and global experience daily. We used to play with our neighbors, those who appeared to have similar backgrounds, stories, values, and experiences. Today students have opportunities to engage with diverse individuals more and more. Those who don’t have a level of comfort and competency in engaging across different cultures will be at a disadvantage in the college process and the work force. We need to challenge ourselves to engage around difference, which should result in our understanding the structures and experiences that demonstrate the value, or lack of, placed on our identities. I tell our students in independent schools, “Don’t sit in sameness and miss the opportunities to develop the skills and competencies needed to navigate a diverse world experience. Those opportunities are available in your classrooms, clubs, curriculum, and your friendships. Don’t miss this!”

THE EQUITY & INCLUSION TOOL KIT

During her 20-plus years as a leader in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion, Diane Nichols has amassed a wealth of knowledge, experience, and expertise. When asked to describe the necessary tools for creating an equitable and inclusive culture, Nichols identified the following as must-haves:

curiosity

a willingness to lean into discomfort

facilitation skills on how to manage difficult conversations

knowing when to stop and reflect, because “...not everything has to be done in the moment. When it gets to crossing the discomfort zone into the danger zone, it’s o.k. to stop it and reflect and say, ‘we’re going to sit on this and we’re going to come back to it. I don’t know how to manage this right now or talk about it because it’s uncomfortable for me and, I’m sure, for others, so let me do some homework and come back to it.’”

allowing yourself not to know

a strong sense of self and your own definition of normal. “I’d say this is the biggest thing,” declares Nichols.

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE

EXPLORING SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH SCIENCE FICTION

Minorities forced to be the first to colonize Mars. Athletes facing discrimination based on arbitrary physical traits. A world ruled by an oppressive religious organization. In Callie DiSabato's new Language Arts unit, these student-created science fiction scenarios are turning eighth graders into social justice activists through writing.

"Science fiction is a natural fit with social justice," declares DiSabato. "I have been blown away by story ideas that students have developed. One who is from South Korea is writing about North Korean oppression and is creating a story world that mirrors the familiar, but is not our own. Another is writing about freedom of speech, and has crafted a world in which noise in all forms is violently oppressed. Still another is writing about the right to an education...in a world where all education takes place underground."

DiSabato designed the unit around *Octavia's Brood*, an anthology of science fiction stories paying tribute to Octavia E. Butler, often referred to as "the grande dame of science fiction." Butler's work is rooted in social justice and explores themes including race, class, gender, love, inequality, and oppression. The



During the planning stage, eighth grader Lily Jerome (R) describes her story concept to Ms. DiSabato (L).

stories in *Octavia's Brood* serve as mentor texts for DiSabato's students who identify qualities that make up the genre and the techniques that the authors use to deliver their message.

The unit complements students' work on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Social Studies—and the culminating research and presentation project—by providing another lens through which to examine social justice.

"Students work with the understanding that good science fiction speaks to the possible, gives a warning, and reflects something about our own humanity," DiSabato remarks, noting that the unit builds on previously taught skills like character building, plot and scene development, and writing 3D stories.

The idea to combine social justice with science fiction emerged

last year during a writing workshop led by WT parent and writer Deesha Philyaw. It was solidified after DiSabato's journey to Poland last summer with Classrooms without Borders to learn more about the Holocaust, another key component of the eighth grade curriculum.

"I took *Octavia's Brood* with me," she recalls. "I found it to be a valuable tool for decompressing after intensive and heavy days visiting sites that included Treblinka, Majdanek, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Escaping into fiction, but fiction that addressed what we were seeing and learning about in a personal and historical context, was valuable to me."

"Butler's work revolves around the theme of change," DiSabato continues. "This idea is not just important when facing large scale horrors like the Holocaust, but also when presented with small opportunities for change. I want students to see themselves as agents for change, and to realize that they, like Butler, are responsible for 'planting the seeds of change.'"



Eighth graders Max Dunham (L) and Joe Molder (R) share their story ideas and respond to one another in writing during a Silent Chat at the beginning of class.



Second graders compare their leaf identification results during Science Day at the North Hills Campus. (L-R) Amiel Robinson (City Campus), Joya Nasr (City Campus), and Carly Hoover (North Hills Campus).



Third graders take inspiration from the work of landscape painter Ron Donoughe whose work was on display at the City Campus Art Gallery. (L-R) Sachi Pathak (City Campus), Will Nury (North Hills Campus), Alex Betancourt-Jones (City Campus), Thea Siegel (North Hills Campus); (Foreground): Niko Frazzini (North Hills Campus).



Third graders work on their Plein Air sketches at the City Campus after learning about the process from visiting landscape painter Ron Donoughe. (L-R) James Harrison (City Campus) and Harlow Greenwald (City Campus).

EMBRACING THE DUAL EXPERIENCE

WT Lower School students have the best of both worlds: the urban setting of City Campus, percolating with easy access to Pittsburgh's top educational, cultural, historical, and medical resources, and its country counterpart—the North Hills Campus—a verdant jewel of seven rolling acres, a spring-fed pond, natural playground, and ribbons of walking and hiking trails. While cross-campus collaborations have

Lower School. Teachers collaborate on units of study which allows for a greater exchange of ideas and for the opportunity to tap into faculty passions and areas of expertise.”

From Science Day, in which City Campus students join peers on the North Hills Campus for environmental studies, to the Pittsburgh Unit whisking students to Point State Park, the Heinz History Center, and points in between, to

Our CampusSM opportunities and partnerships, and City teachers are finding ways to incorporate the outdoor classrooms into their collaborations.”

In addition to an increased frequency of collaborations, curricular alignment between campuses has been fortified, and even transformed, note Rogers and Vennes, pointing to the Pittsburgh Unit, a third-grade cornerstone, as an example. Teachers Theresa Fox, Connie Martin, and Amy Skelly worked last summer to revamp and expand the unit to a year-long program.

Collaborations like this have not only boosted camaraderie among faculty; they are resulting in blossoming friendships among students, facilitating a natural transition to Middle School.

“Pulling the grades together gives students more options for academic lessons and discussions, and for friends,” notes Vennes.

“They are now seeing themselves more as WT students instead of North versus City students, and they are joining in activities together outside of school.”

“Each year the experiences have increased in depth and breadth,” adds Rogers. “By embracing the Dual Experience, we’ve opened up tremendous possibilities for both learning and friendship.”



Third graders from both campuses visit Point State Park as part of the year-long Pittsburgh Unit. (L-R) Anna Vasiliev (North Hills Campus), North Hills Campus parent and alumna Jil Stifel '96, Thea Siegel (North Hills Campus), Julie Aneja (City Campus), Una Shen (City Campus), Sachi Pathak (City Campus), Leyeti Ward (City Campus).

long enriched the experiential, hands-on learning that defines a WT education, those opportunities reached new heights when the current strategic plan formalized this Dual Experience.

“We have made a commitment to embrace the possibilities of what two distinct campuses can do to enhance the curriculum, pedagogy, and quality of the Lower School experience,” says Nancy Rogers, Director of Lower School. “It builds community and creates a stronger, more cohesive

an art collaboration at the City Campus giving all students direct access to artist Ron Donoughe and his paintings on view in the Main Building's Gallery, the Dual Experience has infused each grade with a plethora of projects and activities—and palpable enthusiasm.

“Cross-campus collaborations have virtually exploded, from eight during the 2012-2013 school year to 61 last year,” reports Laurie Vennes, North Hills Campus Director. “North teachers are tapping into City as

DREAMING BIG WITH 3D BIOPRINTERS

Thanks to WT's recent acquisition of three 3D bioprinters, students are now performing scientific experiments with the same cutting-edge technology used by hospitals and major research centers to create organs, generate tissue, and reproduce noses and ears.

"Students can take experiments beyond anything they could ever do normally," declares Dr. Lynn Horton, Upper School biology and chemistry teacher.

Traditional 3D printers—a WT staple for several years—strictly print plastics; 3D bioprinters print liquid or semi-solid biological materials such as cells, gelatin, and nutrient solutions. AP Biology students have already experimented with enzyme function, printing out enzymes and measuring reactions to varying factors—like different temperatures and chemicals—through resulting color changes. Future experiments will test the function of algae and photosynthesis, and will explore factors that affect bacterial growth.

"The strength of the 3D bioprinter is that it can mimic what we do normally in the lab, but in a more precise and repeatable manner," Horton



Seniors Sabrina Evoy (L) and Sara Fierstein (R) load samples onto the 3D bioprinter.

explains. "For a student to reproduce an experiment 5-10 times would take too long, yet the 3D bioprinter can produce those results in a matter of minutes. This allows a student to make adjustments to the experiment easily for more in-depth inquiry-based experimentation."

Not having to set up an experiment also gives students more time to investigate its background and related concepts, to think about ways to change it, and to wonder—and act on—"what if." Moreover, the 3D bioprinter's speed, repeatability, and reproducibility allow students to apply statistics to an experiment. "Normally, repeating an experiment once or twice is all we have time for, but the 3D bioprinter can be programmed to repeat the experiment multiple times, which amplifies the experiment—and the experience—through the application of statistical analysis. Now it's absolutely natural for our AP Biology and AP Statistics classes to work hand in hand."

Students are also encouraged to develop their own research projects

using 3D bioprinters. Senior Sabrina Evoy is advancing her work on drug delivery, including improved controlled release, targeted delivery, and solubility enhancement, advancements that ideally would increase the efficacy of particular drugs. Sara Fierstein, also a senior, is utilizing both the 3D bioprinter and the traditional 3D printer to research bio scaffolding, and how to help cells scaffold into organs or grow on bone structure.

"Students are getting hands-on experience, and can invent experiments, on these printers which will make it much easier to advance to the next level, whether that's an internship, or a summer job in a university research lab," enthuses Horton who, along with Department Chair Graig Marx, is responsible for bringing 3D bioprinters to WT. "Professors are going to look at our students and say, 'You've done what? In high school?' I am so excited by the possibilities. Our students can dream big!"



The data resulting from the experiment are photographed then quantified through ImageJ, an open platform for software image analysis.

"Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world.
Today I am wise, so I am changing myself."

—Jalaluddin Rumi

Are you wiser than a fifth grader?

In conjunction with Reunion Weekend, the City Campus fifth grade hosted a coffee for the Class of 1966. Students interviewed members of this 50th reunion class and learned about their experiences at WT and about what the opportunity of a WT education has meant in their lives. In follow up, the class participated in a conversation about philanthropy with the Advancement Office staff. The following quotes are just a few of the responses they shared. The Class of 2024 is wise, indeed.



Talia Balk

ON EDUCATION:

"Education is about more than learning,
it is about life and character."

"I look at the alumnae we met and think,
'Wow, what great people WT creates!'"



Julia Finke

ON GIVING:

"Giving is connected to empathy.
You pretend you are someone else and think,
'What do I want? What do I need?'"



Ainsley Bigler

"You can give of your time and that
ties in with talent. If you want to give
your time you can give your talent
with your specific skills."



Eddie Monaco

ON IMPACT:

"WT is like a saying I know,
'If you tie a bundle of sticks together
you can't break them, but if you
have just one stick you can.'"



Nikou Nourbakhsh

wt community

Families strolling in the sunshine enjoying homemade treats. The rhythmic beat of the blacksmith's hammer and the spontaneous sounds of delight from children. Live music, long fall shadows, and laughter. It was a beautiful day for WT's annual Applefest. A long-standing tradition of the Parents Association, Applefest showcases the North Hills Campus at WT. This year more than 800 people from the WT community and beyond attended. Highlights included a bluegrass band, spinner, beekeeper, cooper, petting zoo, hayrides, and of course, apples! A crowd favorite was Bear Cub Story Time hosted by alumna Abby Robinson Foster '03 and the Young Alum Leadership Circle. Special thanks to Co-Chairs Angie Hubbard and Jenny Reddy, to the Planning Committee for their leadership and dedication, and to each of the volunteers.



APPLEFEST 2016



"I really enjoy being part of the school's impact on students."

FINDING THE BENEFIT IN VOLUNTEERING

Through more than seven years of active participation in the WT Parents Association (PA), Gretchen Busquets, mother of junior Marisa and freshman Talia, has shown how deeply she embodies the PA's hallmarks of community, camaraderie, and commitment. She has served as a room parent, as the North Hills Campus division coordinator, and as the Parents Association President. And this year, Gretchen reprises her role as Chair of the WT Benefit—the school's biennial fundraising event.

"I really enjoy being part of the school's impact on students," remarks Busquets. "Having a deeper relationship with the administrators and teachers as well as with the entire parent community gives me the unique opportunity to work towards the common goal of making WT the best place possible for kids to grow, learn, and prepare for their future."

This year's Benefit will be held on Friday, March 10, 2017 at the Hard Rock Café in Station Square. Past Benefits have attracted hundreds of people to celebrate and support the school's work, and the 2015 Benefit, *Pure Imagination* raised more than \$75,000. These funds are directed to the WT Fund which supports financial aid and specific programmatic needs not covered by tuition alone.

"Aside from the money that is raised, the spirit and camaraderie which come from the year-long planning process are infectious," notes Busquets. "I couldn't wait to jump back into a leadership role for this year's event and once again feel that sense of being a part of something so much bigger than any one person."

The whole community is buzzing with excitement for the event; it brings both campuses and all divisions together for an evening of WT spirit and pride."

This year, Busquets hopes to extend the reach of the benefit and to involve as many WT families as possible. With the leadership of the committee chairs, Gretchen believes this will be the most far-reaching Benefit yet. All parents, alumnae/i, and friends of WT are invited to join the planning and to attend the event.

"Whether through the planning process or attending the event itself, I hope that we will have record participation and attendance. Everyone leads such busy lives, and sometimes it is difficult to find time or ways to connect with each other. I hope that this event provides a fun opportunity for all WT families to do just that."

If you are interested in participating in this year's Benefit, contact Gretchen Busquets at busquetsg@winchesterthurston.org.



Miguel and Gretchen Busquets
at the 2015 Benefit, *Pure Imagination*



2017 WT BENEFIT

FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2017
HARD ROCK CAFÉ
STATION SQUARE, PITTSBURGH
winchesterthurston.org/benefit

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Event Chair – Gretchen Busquets
Auction – Charlene Leeper
Food & Décor – MaryJean Rusak
Host Committee – Yolanda Frank
Sponsorship – Heather Brooks
Volunteer – Amy Weiner Caplan A'95

PASSION AT PLAY: FALL ATHLETICS

From WPIAL playoffs and a PIAA State Championship, to standout individual performances and the foundation for future triumphs, it was another impressive fall athletics season at WT. In the spirit of the second Athletics Hall of Fame induction honoring inspirational WT athletes and athletics contributors, the Bears played with passion and determination.

"In the words of Hall of Fame inductee Kimberly Farinet-Sailer '87, WT athletes 'jumped into their passion with both feet' this fall," said Director of Athletics Kevin Miller. "It was exciting to see where this dedication carried the Bears. Whether participating in a state championship or working through a rebuilding season, our athletes understand the importance of playing with passion. I'm proud that the athletics program plays a role in cultivating this characteristic which will serve the Bears off the field and beyond WT."

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY IS STATE CHAMPION

For the second time in WT history, the Boys Cross Country team won the PIAA State Championship, scoring 62 points in a convincing win. With an in-section record of 9-0, the team also won the AA Section 5 Championship and the Class A WPIAL Championship. Senior Ben Littmann marked a first for the team, earning the Individual Champion honor at the WPIAL Championship. Junior Tristan Forsythe and senior Shaun Hay finished second and third respectively in that race.



Foreground (L-R) Freshmen Sean Heintzleman and Scott Routledge, and senior Shaun Hay; Background (L-R) Sophomores Jack Robinson and Danny Sentner

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER GOES TO STATES

Girls Cross Country had a challenging season, ending with a 2-7 record. Despite this, the team is delighted for sophomore Daniela Schafer who qualified for states and finished 65th out of 217 runners. The team looks ahead, hoping to make strides in the 2017 season.



Sophomore Daniela Schafer crosses the finish line at the WPIAL Championship.

GOLF BUILDS THE FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

Although the Bears fought valiantly, it was a tough season on the course for the golf team. The team ended the season with a record of 2-10. WT's defeat of Summit Academy was a highlight of the season. Justin Seth impressively qualified for the AA WPIAL playoffs as a sophomore. "The team worked to hone their game play this season and to build the foundation for future success," said head coach David Hallas.



Sophomore Justin Seth



Junior Emma Francis

FIELD HOCKEY EARNS SIXTH CONSECUTIVE PLAYOFF APPEARANCE

For the sixth consecutive year, the Field Hockey team secured a WPIAL Section A playoff spot. Despite a defeat in a tough first-round game against Ellis, head coach Bill Fitch is extremely proud of the team's performance this season. "We started the season with high hopes and saw those hopes come to fruition," said Fitch. "Our returning players stepped up to lead by example for the newer players. Though we will be losing two key seniors, our returning players will make for a promising 2017 season."

GIRLS SOCCER: IMPRESSIVE DEBUT ON THE VARSITY STAGE

Building on the success of last year's soccer club, the Girls Soccer team made an impressive debut in their first season playing as an independent varsity team. Led by head coach Parus Nischal '13 and assistant coach and science faculty member Lynn Horton, the determined players turned their dream of an independent Girls Soccer team into reality and finished the 2016 season with a winning record of 7-6-1. "This was an incredibly successful season," said Horton. "From our wins over Carrick, Ellis, Eden Christian, and Obama (at Highmark Stadium in front of a huge WT crowd), to how we learned and bounced back from some tough losses, the girls were always supportive of one another and truly exemplified the spirit of 'team.' We have a strong case to be accepted into the WPIAL next year, and we hope to be going to the WPIAL playoffs next year."



Senior Cherisse Tompkins



Senior Roshni Nischal

GIRLS TENNIS MAKES PLAYOFF APPEARANCES

Building from the success of the 2015 season, the Girls Tennis team finished with a record of 6-4 and secured spots in the WPIAL Singles, Doubles, and Team Tournaments. For the second consecutive year, Emma Famili advanced to the first round of the Singles Tournament. She was also a AA Section runner up. Emma and fellow senior Roshni Nischal represented WT in the first round of the Doubles Tournament and fell to Neshannock, and at the Team Tournament, the team lost in a tough match against Knoch.

BOYS SOCCER REBUILDS WITH FRESH TALENT

After 11 senior soccer players graduated last year, eight freshmen joined the Bears on the field this fall. The Bears played many hard-fought games lost by slim margins and narrowly missed making it to the playoffs. They ended the season with a 5-6-1 record of in-section play. Senior Nathaniel Hull and juniors Elliot Hare and Arthur Barelli received All Section Honors, and junior Daniel Plaut received an All Section Honorable Mention. "The team was plagued by injuries throughout the season, which provided younger players with the opportunity to gain some valuable experience. We'll miss the senior leadership of captains Jack Waters and Nathaniel Hull, but look forward to what the 2017 season has to offer," noted coach Adam Brownold.



Junior Donovan Moore



Senior Nate Kurzawa (second from left) with team members from Steel City Rowing at the Head of the Welland.

CREW ROWS TO VICTORY

After a successful appearance at the Midwest Junior Rowing Championships in May 2016, with four top five finishes, the Bears continued to row their way to victory. This fall, the Bears competed at the Head of Welland in Welland, ON, the Head of the Schuylkill in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the Head of the Occoquan in Fairfax Station, Virginia. Highlights include a first place and second place finish at the Head of the Welland and three boats with WT rowers finishing in first place at the fall 2016 scrimmage at Steel City Rowing Club.



THE HONORABLE BEARS

Winchester Thurston welcomed its second class of honorable bears to the Athletics Hall of Fame on Friday, October 7.



(L - R) Head of School Gary J. Niels with Hall of Fame inductees: national figure skater Kimberly Farinet-Sailer '87; Junior Olympic skier, cross country medalist, and all-around athlete Jonathan 'Gil' Kross '05; championship tennis player Daniel 'DJ' Goldblum '11; educator and visionary Gaylen Faller Westfall, Honorary Alumna; and pioneering soccer and lacrosse player and coach Sierra Laventure-Volz '05; and Director of Athletics Kevin Miller.

Hall of Fame Inductee and keynote speaker Kimberly Farinet-Sailer '87 developed her stand-out athletic abilities at WT but discovered her love for the physicality, mental challenge, and competition of ice skating as an adult. Sharing some of the big lessons she learned from diving into a new sport, Kimberly encouraged students to:

- Be open to find that thing that will be your passion, that thing that truly inspires you ... when you find it, explore it, experience it thoroughly, jump in with both feet!
- Trust in those who know you and believe in you—that will start the ball rolling.
- Listen to those who went before you, those who can teach you.
- Just because you close a door doesn't mean it's locked forever. Over time your perspective may change. Let yourself reconsider your options.
- Enjoy your success but be a good sport. How you handle yourself after you compete says a lot about who you are.



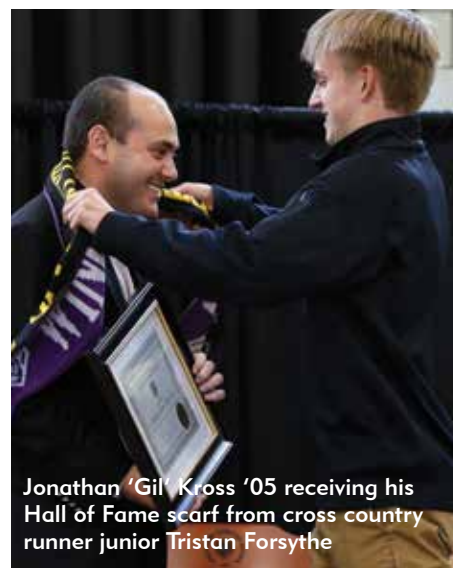
Kimberly Farinet-Sailer '87



Gary J. Niels and Daniel 'DJ' Goldblum '11



Gaylen Faller Westfall, Honorary Alumna and three-sport athlete junior Ayanna Townsend



Jonathan 'Gil' Kross '05 receiving his Hall of Fame scarf from cross country runner junior Tristan Forsythe



Sierra Laventure-Volz '05 (far left) with members of the varsity Girls Soccer team



Celebrating their 50th Reunion at the Cocktail Reception (L-R) Mary McSorley '66, Sally Mars Carey '66, Nancy Matheny Rabner '66, and Dale Spear Garson '66.

REUNION 2016

Alums from all over the world came back to WT October 7 and 8 for a Reunion weekend filled with opportunities to reconnect. From the heartwarming luncheon honoring the spirited Class of 1966, to a Social Justice Panel at which alumnae/i discussed with students ways that WT alums “think also,” to the recognition of some of our most Honorable Bears at the Athletics Hall of Fame and the WT Classic Games, there was something for everyone.



Director of Upper School Kristen Klein (L) and Head of School Gary J. Niels (R) talk with alums attending the Reunion Luncheon about how WT is holistically focusing on well-being.



THISTLETALK GOES DIGITAL

Get a full gallery of photos from Reunion 2016 at winchesterthurston.org/digitalthistle



Members of the Class of 2006 at the Cocktail Reception (L-R) Ashleigh Parker, Don Michael Mendoza, and Lily Steiner Enders (far right) with her husband Jordan (middle).



Alums with the Boys and Girls Soccer Teams before taking the field.



(L-R) Junior Isel Pollock, Sophie Burkholder '16 and Hall of Fame Inductee Sierra Laventure-Volz '06 during the Classic Games.



(L-R) WT head soccer coach Adam Brownold with Classic Games MVPs Pamela Shugerman '80 and David Curtis '11, and Director of Athletics Kevin Miller.

SAVE THE DATE FOR REUNION 2017

We look forward to seeing you at Reunion 2017, October 13 and 14.

2017 is a big year for the Classes of 1937, 1942, 1947, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007 and 2012.

Help with your class celebration! Volunteer ideas for how to mark the occasion, get involved with the plans, or call classmates. Email Linsey McDaniel A'96 at mcdaniell@winchesterthurston.org or call 412-578-7511.

PATHWAYS TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social Justice: noun \ sō-sh l j s-t s\ the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within a society



Social Justice Panel (L-R) Student moderator junior Ross Tedder, Colin DePaor '96, Alisha B. Wormsley '96, Lynn Johnson '71, Vicki Erenstein ya Toivo '66, student moderator senior Roshni Nischal, Sara Elinoff Acker '76

At a student assembly during Reunion weekend, WT alumnae/i shared the many ways that they “think also of the comfort and the rights of others” through work that promotes social justice.

“In college, I had the opportunity to be in a radical community of people trying to fight against apartheid and institutional racism. It really challenged me. What happened for me as I started to really learn about both racial and gender issues, about the culture of my identity, was very personal. As a society, we’ve taken private violence and we’ve exposed it. We’ve named it. That is a historical anomaly. One of the most amazing things of this generation is that we’re facing a problem that is vast and it’s global and as we name it we can challenge it and we’re blasting it apart.”

SARA ELINOFF ACKER '76,
*psychotherapist, author, training
facilitator, program innovator*



THISTLETALK GOES DIGITAL

Get a full gallery of photos from the Social Justice Panel discussion at winchesterthurston.org/digitalthistle

“Working with non-profits, I like to be a part of the solution in some way. I like feeling as though I’m helping exceptional organizations in the arts and education think about the things that they need in order to accomplish their work.

Seeing how scary the news can be as my young son tries to understand injustice, I’ve realized that what I can pass on to him is that we need to be clear on

our values. We can be strong together. How we treat other people matters. How he treats his friend in first grade, matters.”

COLIN DEPAOR '96,
*organizational strategist, nonprofit
development consultant*



“We can’t operate on fear. If we all really, truly, love and respect ourselves, everyone is going to feel loved and respected. As that happens for everyone, it’s going to show. There is something called “self-care” and it’s really radical and really important. I don’t call

myself a social justice artist or an activist. It’s about being who I am, and knowing what I want to give to the world.”

ALISHA B. WORMSLEY '96,
*interdisciplinary artist, teacher,
community oriented cultural
producer*

“Anybody, in any career, if they have values that have to do with promoting social justice, they can bring them to where they are, in any area ... I made a conscious choice to align myself with people who are struggling. I chose to represent trade unions because I wanted to help workers but it’s about what I did in my spare time, after work, at lunchtime, in the mornings at 4:00 a.m., and on weekends that makes me an activist.

You have to start somewhere with any issue. I don’t believe that individuals change history. People working together, preferably working together in very large movements and numbers do.”

VICKI ERENSTEIN YA TOIVO '66,
*activist and Special Advisor to the Namibian
Minister of Labour and Social Welfare (L),
with student moderator senior Roshni Nischal (R)*



“We are the media. You and all of us can use communication different ways. Are you going to sit in front of a screen and make your selections in life, set your professional course and determine your mission based on what you see on that screen, or are you going to experience life? That’s really the question. Are you going to do the art? Are you going to help the non-profit? Are you going to fight for people you know have been wronged?

You are obligated to be a witness in this world. If you choose not to do that, change will never happen.”

LYNN JOHNSON '71,
*renowned photojournalist, National
Geographic Fellow, and professor*

The Fundamental Role of Education

“I understand the access that it affords.”



Brandilyn Dumas '99

Real Estate Attorney, Greenberg Traurig, New York City Office

Higher education: B.A., *cum laude*, Duke University; M.S.T. Fordham University; J.D. New York University School of Law

Volunteering: Past Board Member, National Summer Learning Organization; Trustee, Harlem Link Charter School

Supporting WT: Morewood Giving Club Member, and Financial Aid Endowment donor

Q: How did you end up going to WT?

A: I was in a public school in Pittsburgh, and although I did well academically, I muddled through sixth grade. It really wasn't a place that was supporting my needs. I remember having a counselor who came up to me in the hallway one day and said, "You don't belong in this school." She made me take a test to go to Winchester Thurston and I was fortunate to receive a partial scholarship to enter WT in seventh grade. The rest is history.

Q: What did you know about WT at that point and how was it when you arrived?

A: I actually didn't know about WT before the counselor demanded that I take that test! I was nervous about catching up and to some extent fitting in, coming

from the neighborhoods I grew up in. I did know I wanted to do well. What WT students had done in sixth grade was very different from what I had done in sixth grade, but I received the support and the quality teaching that helped me to catch up.

Q: How did WT prepare you?

A: More than the rigor that prepared me for all of the academic environments I have been in, WT shaped my independent thinking. I was an educator with Teach for America right out of college. Thinking back about my student experience at WT, I remember it being the type of environment that, as a teacher, I aspired to create. I experienced self-directed learning that has allowed me to make meaning out of information myself rather than it being given to me.

The scope of options open to me would have been dramatically different had I not attended a quality school, one that emphasizes both culture and learning.

Q: What are some of your most meaningful school memories?

A: I have so many! I was one of the few kids who didn't have resources like a computer at home and when I had to type up a project after school in the library, Ms. Bitterolf stayed around to help. I enjoyed the out-of-classroom experiences in addition to the classes; I did every single school musical from seventh to twelfth grade and that was always a highlight of my year. It helped me craft my identity as an adult.

Q: You clearly place a lot of importance on education. What would you like to tell people about that?

A: Because of the fundamental role that education played in my life, I understand the access that it affords. There isn't anything like it. The scope of options open to me would have been dramatically different had I not attended a quality school, one that emphasizes both culture and learning. I want those experiences for other kids and try to think of ways to contribute my slice to that effort. I prioritize my giving and service to support education.

Q: What are some of your proudest accomplishments?

A: Helping my 22-year old brother (born the year I started school at WT) navigate college is shaping up to be

one of my proudest accomplishments. He's a great kid but he wasn't especially excited about college when he got there. My experiences helped me articulate how essential education is in opening doors. Being able to convey that to him changed his outcome.

I'm also really proud to have been selected into NYU's competitive scholarship program for students who are the first in the family to pursue a graduate or professional degree. The space Winchester provided for me to be an extrovert blossomed into leadership, the primary selection criteria.

Q: You're a member of the WT Fund's Morewood Giving Club, and have given generously to support an endowed fund for financial aid. Why do you choose to give to WT?

A: There are so many other kids like myself who, given the resources and opportunity, could flourish at WT. I want to do my part to make sure the resources for that are there. If I didn't go to WT I believe my set of circumstances would be different. I am incredibly fortunate for the opportunity I was given and to the extent I can, I want to make opportunities available for others. Someone made me a priority and said, "We don't want that kid to not attend this school." I'm still deeply touched by that today.

Financial Aid at WT

In 2016-2017

\$2.9 million dollars
awarded

224 students



33% of the
student body

26 students received
transformational
financial aid, covering
90% or more of the
cost of a WT education.

You can join Brandilyn as a member of a WT Fund Leadership Giving Club.



Leadership
Society

\$25,000+

Thistle Club

\$15,000+

Founder's Club

\$10,000+

2nd Century
Club

\$5,000+

1887 Club

\$2,500+

Portal Club

\$1,500+

Fifth Avenue
Club

\$1,000+

Morewood Club

\$500+

Kiltie Club

\$250+

Visit www.winchesterthurston.org/giving/wtfund to learn more about WT Fund Giving Clubs or contact Michelle Wion Chitty at wionm@winchesterthurston.org or 412-578-3748.

Celebrate Legacies: The 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 Ashley Harper, Director of Advancement, at harpera@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.

Suzanne LeClere Barley '52
Loretta Lobes Benec '88
Barbara Abney Bolger '52
Kathleen W. Buechel
Marion Montgomery
Colbourne '52
Judith Rohrer Davis '57
Justine Diebold Englert '59
Anna-Stina Ericson '44
Robert I. Glimcher
Barbara Graves-Poller '93
Rosanne Isay Harrison '56
Eugene S. Kerber

Elsa Limbach
Louise Baldridge Lytle '51
Carole Oswald Markus '57
Gretchen Larson
Maslanka '83
Marga Matheny '64
Pat Maykuth '69
Beverlee Simboli
McFadden '55
J. Sherman McLaughlin,
Honorary Alumnus
Kathleen L. Metinko '91
Frances P. Minno

Bee Jee Epstine Morrison '56
Henry Posner III
Kathy Zillweger Putnam '71
Susan Cripie Santa-Cruz '60
Jennifer M. Scanlon
Sheen Sehgal '89
Molly Cannon Stevenson '72
Allyson Baird Sveda '84
Ruth Weimer Tillar '41
Gaylen Faller Westfall,
Honorary Alumna
Carol Spear Williams '57



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



TODAY'S DONORS FUEL TOMORROW'S LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Every WT Fund gift benefits every student by bridging the gap between tuition and the actual cost of an engaging education. As today's donors, we promote faculty development, help produce musicals and plays, and immerse young minds in the languages and cultures of our world. We outfit classrooms with advanced technology and we boost pride in our athletics program.

Demonstrate your belief in education with a gift to the 2016-2017 WT Fund today.

GIVE TODAY AT
GIVE.WINCHESTERTHURSTON.ORG/THISTLE
or contact Michelle Wion Chitty
WT Parent of Octavia, Class of 2024
Associate Director of Advancement
412-578-3748
wionm@winchesterthurston.org



class notes

1941

Ruth Weimer Tillar attended her 76th William and Mary Homecoming in the fall!

1952

65th Reunion Year

Dr. Jean MacIntyre writes, "Living as I do in Alberta, Canada, I don't see or hear from classmates often, except for **Barbara Abney Bolger** who regularly sends me a Christmas letter. My Bryn Mawr class endowed a scholarship with, to date, something approaching \$600,000 and I have recently been going on alumnae trips, the most recent in October to Provence, last year to the southwest provinces, and the year before that to Iceland. I'm also sponsoring a girl for secondary school in Tanzania through the Canadian Harambee Education Society (CHES), which has over the past 35 years put over 1,000 girls through school who, without this, would have married as teenagers and lived in poverty. A similar organization, founded in

the U.S. but based in Kenya, is Akili Dada."

1953

Elisabeth 'Betsy' Riddle Ruderfer writes, "I'm so sorry to have missed Reunion again! Emil and I have sold our home in Washington, D.C. and are on our way to settling in Pittsburgh. We haven't found a home there as yet and are roosting at our little mountain house, "High Hopes", until we do. Located remotely in the Tuscarora Range in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, we must drive down off of the mountain every day for the newspapers, mail, and groceries. While very beautiful in the fall, we are, needless to say, hoping for a mild winter! I hope everybody is well and thriving and I hope to see old friends when we finally get settled.

1954

Darin Geise Snyder sends greetings to her classmates and hopes they are doing

well. Darin is still busy with various activities including being co-president of the Bay Village Community Council. Her grandchildren are growing up and one will graduate next June in California.

1955

Elizabeth Forstall Keen writes she and her husband Don, "continue to enjoy this good Florida life! We keep busy playing on the golf course and volunteering many hours in our church's food pantry. We just returned from an adventure thru Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia."

1957

60th Reunion Year

Jane Sachs Radoff writes, "I am happy, fulfilled and still living in Henderson, Nevada. My three daughters and three of four grandchildren all live here, so I see them often. I have been retired as Vice President from Wynn Design and Development since 2005, the year after my husband passed

away. I am busy painting with alcohol inks and acrylics, making jewelry, felting, playing the Uke since my hands will no longer stretch enough to play the guitar, going to Pilates and Gyrotonic, knitting, reading voraciously, enjoying an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute class, and doing lunch with friends, a treat now that I am retired, and traveling often. I am going to change my "escaping-the-summer-heat" destination this coming year by giving up Sun Valley, Idaho for Bellingham, Washington, a beautiful, artsy community. I am looking forward to it. The last time I was in Pittsburgh to visit my sister, **Nan Sachs Solow '61**, I ate lunch and gabbed with **Janie Arensberg Thompson, Nancy Seip Krot, Carole Oswald Marcus, and Rosanne Isay Harrison '56**. I had a wonderful lunch with **Sally Guy Stone-Worsing** less than a year before she passed. I stay in touch with **Harriet Adler Feldman**. All is well here in the desert southwest and I welcome any visitors to Las Vegas."



Members of the Class of 1957. Recognize this photo? Contact us at alum@winchesterthurston.org with the classmates and story captured here.

1962

55th Reunion Year



Members of the Class of 1962. Recognize this photo? Contact us at alum@winchesterthurston.org with the classmates and story captured here.

1966



Members of the Class of 1966 at their 50th Reunion (front row left to right) Kristin Langley, Margaret 'Peggy' Swinston-Rivera, Judith 'Judy' Uptegraff Spaeth, Judy Stern Parkhurst, Sally Mars Carey, Martha 'Marsie' Lynn Berg, Lindsay Yates, Christine Crawford, (middle row left to right) Lenore 'Muff' Mardis-McClintock, Nancy Taylor Parrish, Margaret 'Meg' Gezon Meltz, Consuelo 'Connie' Staisey Woodhead, Kathleen 'Kathy' Hepburn MacLean, Martha Hunter, Susan McGowan, Susan Whitmer Craft (back row left to right) Mary McSorley, Margaret 'Mimi' Keck, Ann Haber Schelbe, Martha Jane 'MJ' Nims Valent, Linda Frank Ruth, Marilyn Mercer, Elizabeth 'Betty' McCrady King, Vicki Erenstein ya Toivo, Anne Parkin Pierpont, Susan Cohen Myrick



Members of the Class of 1967. Recognize this photo? Contact us at alum@winchesterthurston.org with your classmates' names.

1971

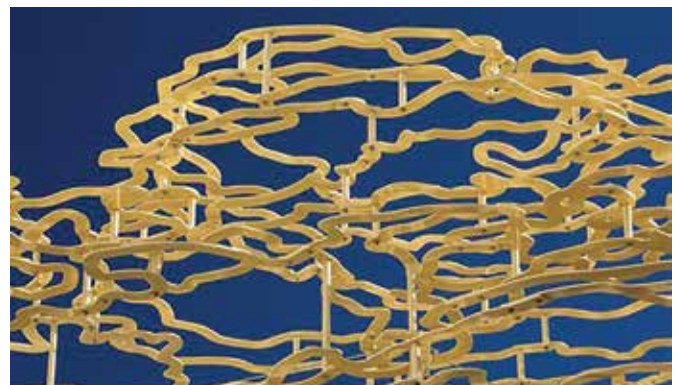
Paula Becker Vito writes, "After being voted the first in the class to get married, I actually might have been. Denny and I celebrated 43 years of marriage this June and moved into our retirement home on the Wye River in Maryland. Still sailing the Chesapeake Bay, and caring for a 46-year-old wooden boat, we enjoy our children and grand doggies on the water's edge. I retired from teaching middle school art after 23 years and enjoy creative monthly gatherings with art friends, reading one great book each month,

horticulture activities and ornithology. All the best to the women of the Class of '71.

Americans for the Arts recognized **Catherine Widgery** for Outstanding Public Arts Projects of 2015. Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education, honored 38 outstanding public arts projects created in 2015 through the Public Art Network Year in Review program, the only national program that specifically recognizes the most compelling public art.

Widgery's work was chosen from 260 entries across the country. Inspired by the natural environment, *Passing Storms*, which consists of

two sculptural components, *Rain* and *Cloud*, portrays the changing weather as metaphor for unpredictable and shifting states of mind.



Cloud, a structural component paired with the linear *Rain* to form Catherine Widgery's *Passing Storms* installation

1972

45th Reunion Year



Seen at graduation, 1972. Recognize this photo? Contact us at alum@winchesterthurston.org with the story captured here.

Pittsburgh this summer and especially my stop at 'dear old WT'! I played the tourist and rediscovered the beauty, tradition, art, and magnificent cuisine that makes Pittsburgh the gem it is. On the next visit I hope to stay long enough to catch up with my classmates. Back in Houston, Texas I'm enjoying my work as a Realtor with Sotheby's International Realty."



Susan Whitacre '74 visiting the pillared portals of WT

1974

Eleanor Agnew married the love of her life, Ron Hansen, on October 8, 2016. They live near Lake Michigan in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Ron is gainfully retired and Eleanor works with families of children

with disabilities helping them understand special education.

Heidi Kanterman Freedman writes, "It's been a very busy 2016! My daughter, Hillary and her husband Dan welcomed a son, Carter, in July. He joins his

sister, Madelyn who is almost three. My son, Andrew, was married on September 25 to Krystie Bellandi. Our family keeps growing!"

Susan Whitacre writes, "I so enjoyed my visit to fabulous

1976



Members of the Class of 1976 at the Reunion 2016 Cocktail Reception (L-R) Beth Beegle Miller, Karen Hughes, Claire Blume Thomas, Candace Zillweger, Virginia O'Riley, Louise Ketchum, Bahra McConnel Fisher, Susan Davis Claus, Lisa Whitcomb Capra, Lynn Snyderman, Kathleen Scott Gallagher, Mary Odom, Julia Marous Straut, Sara Elinoff Acker

1977

40th Reunion Year

Cindy Deskins just started a new online business selling beautiful handmade soaps. Cindy writes, "It's a passion and hobby-turned-e-store, and I'm having a blast! Take a look at www.luxindasoap.com. I'm already looking forward to our class' 40th reunion in 2017!"

1978

Amy Kamin continues as the CEO of EndyMed Medical, Inc. in New York City. As announced in *Women's Wear Daily*, the company's home beauty tool NEWA was launched this holiday season at Bergdorf Goodman and Neiman Marcus stores across the country. Amy writes, "My daughter Sydney graduated from George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs and she was named Editor of *The Daily Front Row Fashion Magazine*. My son Mitchell is in seventh grade at The Birch Wathen School."

1982

35th Reunion Year

1986

Gretchen Biesecker writes, "I left City Year at the end of July 2015 and started my own business. It's going great! I'm learning a lot and get to work with a lot of different kinds of non-profits now. One of my clients is the Massachusetts state commission for AmeriCorps. I'm helping them build program evaluation capacities among all twenty-three of the state's AmeriCorps programs. If you get curious, you can check out my website, www.beeskneesdata.com."

1987

30th Reunion Year

Two exciting things happened for **Kimberly Farinet-Sailer** in 2016. She won the National Championship U.S. Figure Skating Masters Pairs and got inducted into the WT Athletics Hall of Fame!



Meenekshi 'Meena' Bose '87, Chair of Presidential Studies at Hofstra University, appearing on CNN to share commentary on the recent election

1990

Amy Katz Leaman is the proud parent of a WT student. Amy writes, "our son is a member of the Class of 2028,

and he absolutely adores first grade. I never thought I would be both an associate alumna and part of a legacy family as well!"

1991



Members of the class of 1991 at the Reunion 2016 Cocktail Reception (L-R) Beth Finkel Cramer, Hilary Lloyd Prosser, Alunda Grzybek Edmonds, Heather Humphries Henkel

1992

35th Reunion Year



Class of 1992 at their graduation



Members of the Class of 1982. Recognize this photo? Contact us at alum@winchesterthurston.org with the classmates and story captured here.

1993

Zakia Redd Williams and her husband Troy welcomed baby Tia Azara Williams to the world in June. Zakia and her family live in the Washington D.C. area where she is Deputy Program Area Director of Youth Development at Child Trends.



Tia Azara Williams

1994

Erin Herward Thurston completed her first full marathon, the Marine Corps Marathon, in October. Erin writes, "It was one of the most challenging things I have ever done, but I am so proud to have persevered and finished."



Erin Herward Thurston '94

1995

Tiffany Sizemore-Thompson joined Duquesne Law as an assistant clinical professor to launch the Juvenile Defender Clinic and plan an Education Law Clinic. Prior to joining Duquesne Law, Tiffany was the Deputy Director for the Juvenile Division at the Office of the Public Defender in Allegheny County, where she served for over two years. As

Deputy, Tiffany wrote and implemented new practice standards across the juvenile division.



Tiffany Sizemore-Thompson '95

Jonathan Mahone, known as Chaka Mandla Mhambi Mpeanaji, and his wife are touring and winning recognition with their hip hop band, Riders Against the Storm.



Riders Against the Storm at Circuit of the Americas

1996



Members of the class of 1996 at the Reunion 2016 Cocktail Reception (L-R) Anjali Sachdeva, Tiffany Baxendell Bridge, Laurel Shaw Randi, Kate Thorsen, Ariel Koros Grassi, Debbie Swerdlow Kramer

1997

20th Reunion Year

Sarah Zeitler writes, "In 2017 we will have our 20th high school reunion. Let's get as many of us back together as we can to celebrate and reminisce!"



Members of the Class of 1997

1998

Toby McChesney is now the Senior Assistant Dean of Graduate Programs for Santa Clara University's Leavey School of Business. He oversees admissions, program management, and career services for 450 M.B.A. and

M.S. students. Toby will also be teaching undergraduate courses in Business Communications. Santa Clara is the Jesuit University of Silicon Valley and is the first university established in the state of California.

1999

Amy Hirschman Solomon and her husband Jonathan welcomed their adorable baby boy Samson Henry Solomon into the world on Sunday, October 9. Amy writes, "We are all doing well and I'm adjusting to life as a new mom."



Jonathan, Amy, and Samson Henry

2000

Touted in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* as "the endearing **Jason Shavers**," Jason played The Mute in the Pittsburgh Public Theater's "fresh-take" staging of *The Fantasticks* which ran at the O'Reilly Theater through October.



Jason Shavers '00 (C) playing The Mute in *The Fantasticks*

2001

Alec Karakatsanis received the "Responsible Leadership 2016 Emerging Leadership" award from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs' Johnson Institute. Alec was recognized for his remarkable work in pursuit of justice for persons who have been ignored or, worse, systematically disadvantaged under the current justice system. He is the co-founder of non-profit

Equal Justice Under Law and recently started a new organization, Civil Rights Corps. Civil Rights Corps is dedicated to challenging systemic injustice in the American legal system by engaging in advocacy and public education. Specializing in innovative, systemic civil rights litigation, their goal is to re-sensitize the legal system and our culture at large to injustices and brutality that are currently accepted in the criminal system. Alec's groundbreaking work continues to be covered in major news outlets and he was named a 2016 Public Justice Trial Lawyer of the Year for his efforts to eliminate unjust money bail systems.

2002

15th Reunion Year

Steele Tyler Filipek is a creator, producer, and writer of the comedy, adventure, mystery show *Radio Room*. *Radio Room* is a series of audio dramas presented by some of NYC's top young talent in its first season on 94.3 WBMB and available on Soundcloud, iTunes, and at www.radioroomshow.com. Filipek is an award-winning writer of fiction, comedy, screenplays, teleplays, comic books, and video games. In addition, in his role as Executive Editor at Starlight Runner Entertainment, he has produced or created transmedia content for such franchises as Halo, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Men in Black, Pirates of the Caribbean, Dexter, and more.

2003

Beth Hoffman is working at The Center for Research on Media, Technology, and Health (CRMTH), conducting research investigating associations between media messages, technological innovations, and health outcomes. CRMTH is part of the schools of the Health Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh and is affiliated with the Pitt Health Policy Institute. Recent collaborators with CRMTH include physician Ryan McGarry of the hit CBS television show *Code Black*.



Beth Hoffman '03 (R) with *Code Black* executive producer Ryan McGarry, M.D. (C) and CRMTH Director Brian A. Primack, M.D., Ph.D. (L)

2005



New York based artists Emily Cordes '05 and Ilana Toeplitz '05 posing for a picture to send to their beloved performing arts teacher Mrs. Barbara Holmes. Emily is a stage, film, and new media actress, and Ilana is a director and choreographer selected for the Drama League Leo Schull New Musicals Directing Fellowship in 2016.

2006



Hannah Stember '06 (second from right), Public Relations Manager for the Best Friends Animal Society in New York City on the set of NBC's *TODAY* Show.



Members of the class of 2006 at the Reunion 2016 Cocktail Reception (seated left to right) Molly Carter, Lily Steiner Enders, Alisa Beverley, Nikhil Singh (standing left to right) Sunil Narla, Ashleigh Parker, Patrice Alexander Alaquiva, Don Michael Mendoza, David Allan, Emily Hoffman, Eliza Kuhn, David Chancellor

2007

10th Reunion Year

Katharine Bartlett writes, "I am enjoying my fourth year working for Boeing Defense, Space and Security as a Quality Engineer in St. Charles, Missouri. I've been busy inspecting assemblies and parts for various programs including the QF-16 Full Scale Aerial Target and the first two brand-new aircraft for the T-X Competition. I also support the F/A-18 Super Hornet, F-15 Strike Eagle, P-8 Poseidon, E-3 Sentry, VC-25 (Air Force One) and the KC-46 and KC-135 Tankers. When I'm

not climbing all over airplane parts, I enjoy woodturning and building things in my home workshop as well as a plethora of fiber arts such as knitting, spinning yarn, weaving, dyeing, and sewing. I live with my boyfriend Sean in a historic home; we have one "baby" a 2005 Lotus Elise named "Ambrosia."



First two brand-new aircraft for Boeing's T-X Competition

2008

Friends and family gathered in Connecticut in September for the wedding of **Nikolay 'Niki' Karagyzov** and Christine Petrus.



(L-R) Angel Karagyzov '10, the groom's brother; their mother, **Ani Romanova**; **Nikolay Karagyzov '08**; and WT trustee **Elsa Limbach**, aunt of Angel and Niki (and mother of **Karolina Karagyzova '16**)

2009

Sarah Hillman joins classmate **Annie Alexander** in working with students at WT. Sarah is coaching Middle School Field Hockey and Lacrosse. Annie is the Program Coordinator as well as the North Hills Campus Summer Camp Director.

2010

Jimyse Brown completed her graduate program in the United Kingdom and is back in Pittsburgh where she recently began teaching Physical Education at WT!

Alaina Ferry is the new voice of the Winchester Thurston School Facebook page! She started last summer as the Marketing and Communications Associate where she does digital communications and supports internal and external communications and publications.

2011

Sally Loevner joined WT this fall as a Kindergarten Assistant Teacher. For a City as Our Campus study, her class took a trip to the Loevner's 130-acre family owned farm in Allison Park, Goat Rodeo Farm & Dairy.



Members of the Class of 2011 at the Reunion Cocktail Reception (seated left to right) Hallie Goldstein, Samantha Wanko, Dayna Scott, (standing left to right) Daniel 'DJ' Goldblum, Ben Steiner, George Epitropoulos

2012

5th Reunion Year

Michael Curry recently moved to Berkeley, California and is currently working at Berkeley Repertory Theatre as the 2016-2017 Education Fellow.

Emily Onorato is the new Assistant to the Director of Athletics at WT. Emily graduated from Penn State in 2016 and, after working as a counselor for WT's summer camp for the past four years, she became an After School Program Assistant, and Substitute Teacher before stepping into her role in the Athletics Department.

2013

Parus Nischal has been the WT girls Upper School head soccer coach for the past two years, leading the club team in 2015 to a 4-1-1 record and the new varsity team in 2016 to a 7-6-1 record.



Coach Nischal '13 with the Girls Soccer team at Highmark Stadium

2015

William Farnsworth writes, "Over the summer I ended up sitting next to classmate **Adam Cohen** on a flight from LAX to Pittsburgh. It was great to catch up over the five-hour flight. Both of us had great freshmen years, me at USC studying film, and Adam at Cornell studying hospitality."

Lucas Rosenblatt developed and launched a successful food delivery app at Brown University.

2016

Carrie Mannino is enjoying freshman year at Yale where she assistant directed and ran sound in the booth for Henry IV this past fall.



Carrie Mannino '16 enjoying an impromptu photo shoot while working tech for an all-female production of Henry IV

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.

Margaret Laird Anderson '31
Virginia Koch Daugherty '31
Leaugeay Stevenson Berman '34
Marjorie Vilsack Propst '35
Virginia Ditges '38
Mary Jane Harter Forker '38
Mary Lou Armstrong Mele '38
Dorothy O'Brien Mitchel '38
Betty Jackson Cornell '39
Sally Jacob Kuhn '39
Elizabeth Wright Anderson '45
Susan Williams Godinez '45
Glenda Heilman '45

Caroline O'Nan '52
Jane Cancelliere Whitehead '55
Sara Miller Gingras '60
Patricia Pool '65
Deborah Johnstone Gautschi '66
Fae Rubenstein '68
Peter Buongiorno '07
Ruth Donnelly Egler, Honorary Alumna, former trustee
Bernice J. Davis, former Kindergarten teacher
Linet J. Feigel, former math teacher and academic support teacher

Alumnae/i Connections



Did you know that you can follow all of the latest updates on WT's Facebook page? Be a WT ambassador—"like" us! Continue posting comments to all of your friends at facebook.com/wtalums, tag Winchester Thurston Alums when you remember dear old WT, and be a part of alum Groups.



Make the most of your LinkedIn profile. Add WT to your LinkedIn profile and look under My Network to see who else in your profession or town is connected to the Winchester Thurston Alumni Network.



Visit www.winchesthurthurston.org/alum to find friends and contacts through the Alumnae/i Directory, update your alum profile, submit a Class Note, and learn about upcoming events.

Celebrating the WT Legacy



For so many families, the WT experience spans generations. Pictured here are alumnae/i and their children or grandchildren who are currently enrolled at WT. We celebrate their passion and are honored by their commitment!



Are you an alum considering WT for your child? Contact Brooks Follansbee, Director of Admission and Enrollment, to learn how WT has preserved its place as one of the premier independent schools in the nation by building on the traditions you remember. Email admission@winchesterthurston.org or call 412-578-7518.



Pictured:

1. Ben (grade 12), Eli (grade 10), and Thomas (grade 6) Harrison with their cousins, Rachel (grade 8) and Sam (grade 6) Kuzmishin, Rachel and Sam's mother, Janet Harrison-Kuzmishin '87, and all five children's grandmother, Rosanne Isay Harrison '56
2. Paco Esparza-McQuiston (grade 5) with his mother, Chloe McQuiston '96, and grandmother, Linnea Pearson McQuiston '69
3. Hanna (grade 11) and Liam (grade 6) Riley with their mother, Kelly Hanna Riley '91
4. George Dickson (Kindergarten – North Hills Campus) with his mother, Anne D'Appolonia Dickson A'99 and grandmother, Eileen Maclair D'Appolonia Muse '61
5. Jafar (grade 10), Asma'u (grade 8), and Nur (grade 6) Turner with their mother, Mary Martin '88
6. Stephanie Shugerman (grade 10) with her mother, Pamela Shugerman '80
7. Maddie Glackin (grade 11)
8. Henry (grade 5 – North Hills Campus) and Sam (grade 2 – North Hills Campus) McComb with their mother, Jennifer Gonzalez McComb '89
9. Austin Lenhardt-Barley (grade 4 – North Hills Campus) with his grandmother, Suzanne LeClere Barley '52
10. Margee (grade 6) and Maeve (grade 4) Dever with their mother, Julie Tarasevich Dever '85
11. Harrison Gropp (Kindergarten) with his mother, Callie Gropp '03
12. Ian Leaman (grade 1) with his mother, Amy Leaman A'90
13. Harlow Crane (grade 1) with her mother, Josselyn Shamos Crane A'00
14. Amiel Robinson (grade 2) with her mother, Linsey McDaniel A'96

Unable to join us for the photo:

- Ava Caplan (Kindergarten) and her mother, Amy Weiner Caplan A'95
- Joey A. Davis (grade 6) and her mother, Ellen Berkman Davis '84
- Mary Succop Dickson '57, grandmother of George Dickson (Kindergarten – North Hills Campus)
- Amy Manion Glackin '88, mother of Maddie Glackin (grade 11)
- Ben Grossman (grade 9) and his grandmother, Ellen Falk Hirsch '46
- Thea Siegel (grade 3 – North Hills Campus) with her mother, Jil Stifel '96



Winchester Thurston School
555 Morewood Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
www.winchesterthurston.org

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 145



Your City as Our Campus.

Looking for a WT connection in your city?
Watch out for an alumnae/i event in these
areas in 2017. If you'll be nearby please
join us. We look forward to seeing you.

San Francisco, California
January 19, 2017

Austin, Texas
January 21, 2017

Naples, Florida
February 4, 2017

Washington D.C.
and **Baltimore**, Maryland
March 3, 2017

With questions and for more details
contact Linsey McDaniel A'96 at
mcdaniell@winchesterthurston.org
or 412-578-7511.