The Path to Pingry

for Matt Levinson, Pingry’s 16th Head of School

KATIE JENNINGS ’06: REPORTER AT LARGE

A LESSON IN COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

RICHARD TREGASKIS ’34 ON THE FRONT LINES
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In his nearly 30 years in education—well over half in leadership positions—there is no “hat” that new Head of School Matt Levinson P ‘21 hasn’t worn. Find out why he and his family have long embraced life in a school community, what experiences have shaped him into a “truly gifted leader,” and how getting hopelessly lost in Joshua Tree National Park is, for him, all part of the journey.

30 Reporter at Large
Fresh off a year-long reporting stint in Brussels for POLITICO, and recent recipient of a prestigious business and economics reporting fellowship at Columbia, Katie Jennings ’06 shares some highlights from her ascending career, from covering Chris Christie’s administration to the byzantine politics of Brexit.

36 A Lesson in College Admissions
High school students and their parents are practically hard-wired to make assumptions about the college application process. But what happens when, in mock admission committees, they are tasked with deciding the fates of three fictitious applicants?

New Look
For the first time in over 10 years, The Pingry Review introduces a redesign—a sophisticated look meant to more effectively convey the best of Pingry. We would love to hear your thoughts on our new approach, at pingry.org/reviewsurvey
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One Pingry

AT RIGHT: Leah Mangold ’20 of the Girls’ Varsity Soccer Team, competing against Governor Livingston High School at Homecoming. Pingry won the game, 5–1.

BELOW, LEFT: Associate Director of Parent Engagement Jane Shivers Hoffman ’94, P ’26 plays cornhole at Homecoming. FACING PAGE, TOP RIGHT: Explorer-in-Residence Denis Belliveau, known for retracing Marco Polo’s journey, welcomed Homecoming guests into his yurt, where he displayed artifacts that he collected during his adventures. Earlier in the week, he taught Upper School history students about trading along the Silk Road.
One Pingry

AT RIGHT: On Pingry’s Day of Giving, Ring the Bell—Dr. John Pingry’s birthday, September 26—a student expresses gratitude to Middle School English teacher and Multicultural Teams Lead Coordinator Ms. Bria Barnes.

Below: Lower Schoolers pose on the first day of school in front of a newly-leased Pingry bus, one of two that now ferries students on the Intercampus Shuttle as well as to athletics events and field trips.
Top, left: An eighth-grade student visits the Vietnam Veterans Memorial during the Form II Trip to Washington, D.C. Top, right: Big Blue Summer campers have a ball! Middle: Upper School students collaborating in the science wing. At right: Sam Williams ’20 takes a hand-off during the Varsity Football Team’s Friday Night Lights game against Long Island Lutheran High School.
OFF TO COLLEGE: Class of 2019

The stats

| **32** | National Merit Scholarship Commended Students |
| **10** | National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists |
| **7**  | National Merit Scholarship Finalists |
| **2**  | National Merit Scholarship Winners |
| **1**  | National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholar |
| **25** | Cum Laude Society Members |
| **2**  | Presidential Scholar Candidates |
| **47** | Advanced Placement Scholars |
| **3**  | National Advanced Placement Scholars |
| **23** | Student-Athletes Headed to Division I and Division III College Athletics Programs |
| **2**  | NCAA National Letter-of-Intent Signees |
| **18** | Lifers (seniors who attended Pingry since Kindergarten) |
| **8**  | Legacies (seniors with at least one parent and/or grandparent who also graduated from Pingry) |
| **29** | Seniors who submitted arts portfolios with their college applications |
| **65** | Colleges and Universities |
On the map
The list below indicates how many members of the class have enrolled at each school.
Note: one student took a gap year.
Pingry Favorites

Big Blue Summer by the Numbers

Campers consumed...
- 120 pizzas
- 3,200 ice cream novelties
- 400 pounds of ground beef
- 3,000 chicken fingers
- 64 giant watermelons
- 36,000 assorted snacks

Food waste is composted, plastics and paper are recycled and composted.

Middle School visual arts teacher Xiomara Babilonia swam with sharks and stingrays in Belize and explored one of the largest barrier reefs in the world on a Pingry Global Education program for faculty in June. Close at hand was her notebook, in which she captured several watercolor sketches of highlight experiences—here, she soaks in the view from their boat after a full day of snorkeling.

{HEARD ON CAMPUS}

“... he listens, meets, creates a connection... we’re extraordinarily fortunate to have Matt Levinson as our new Head of School.”

— Board of Trustees Chair JEFF EDWARDS ’78, P ’12, ’14, ’18, addressing faculty and staff in August

Day of Giving

MORE THAN $700,000 RAISED

578 DONORS

Cheri-Legend!

College Counselor Cherilyn Reynolds received the Rising Professional Award from the New Jersey Association for College Admission Counseling (NJACAC). Awarded annually, the prize recognizes admission counseling professionals and NJACAC members new to the profession who exemplify excellence and dedication to serving the needs of students in the transition from high school to college. Having served as Senior Assistant Director of Admission for Rider University before joining Pingry, Mrs. Reynolds excelled as the School’s Web and Social Media Strategist in the Office of Communications for two years before transitioning to the College Counseling Office in 2017. “Her positive impact can’t be overstated. She has helped to spearhead some of our most popular new programming, like the College Case Study Night [read more on page 36]. That the Class of 2019 nicknamed her ‘Cheri-Legend’ isn’t surprising!” says Director of College Counseling Tim Lear ’92, P ’25, ’27, ’30. Read more at pingry.orgExtras.

Cheri-Legend!
What do you remember about a first day of school at Pingry?

“September 1949
—The memories flash back beyond opening day to the ‘entrance exam.’ This six-year-old sat across from [Lower School Assistant Teacher] Mrs. [Clara] Seaton as she asked a host of questions. The only memorable exercise involved staring at a page with many illustrations, turning the page over, and recalling the items from the page. The first day of school found 13 first graders (no Pingry Kindergarten in those days) in the back room of the Lower School’s converted house at 618 Westminster Avenue [in Elizabeth] with our beloved teacher, [Lower School Head] Mrs. [Helen] Wasaser. Little did we know that seven of us would spend the next 12 years together—of the other six, Robert, Paul, Peter, Richard, and Wilson would go elsewhere, and Ted graduated in ’62. We were introduced to a morning Chapel service in the large converted basement, then the bicycle shed, and finally the gate to the huge athletics field. Since Grades 1 and 2 were only half-day sessions, by noon we were homeward bound. Ah, the memories . . .” —H. David Rogers ’61

“Fun! We were the first girls to be admitted to the school. We were issued the reversible gym shirts . . . as if girls were going to be asked in the middle of a Middle School gym class to take off a shirt, turn it inside out, and put it back on. Those shirts were heavy in the hot September weather. I also remember going to the bookstore to buy a candy bar and discovering that my new classmate, Jennifer Lynn Knight, was a fellow camper from Girl Scout camp in the fourth grade. Still friends with Jenni!” —Lindsay Liotta Forness ’80, P ’11, ’14

New Friends

“Throughout the entire program, I picked up multiple skills about traveling, navigating, and even basketball, but most importantly I was able to expand my knowledge of the Chinese language, people, and culture. I was able to see a country from the inside-out for two weeks and gain a different perspective than that offered by the American media. I was able to make new friends with students from China and deepen friendships with students from Pingry. For that and much more, I am immensely grateful for the experience.” —John Paul Salvatore ’23, on the June 2019 Pingry Global Field Studies Program to China

Summer Reading

Faculty and staff have summer reading assignments, too! Each chose one title from a list of 21 books, which were proposed by various members of the community. Here are the top five selections, including a tie for the fifth-place slot:

1. All the Light We Cannot See, by Anthony Doerr
2. Killers of the Flower Moon, by David Grann
3. Faithful Place, by Tana French
4. Little Fires Everywhere, by Celeste Ng
5. iGen, by Dr. Jean M. Twenge

Player Piano, by Kurt Vonnegut

All the Light We Cannot See, by Anthony Doerr
Killers of the Flower Moon, by David Grann
Faithful Place, by Tana French
Little Fires Everywhere, by Celeste Ng
iGen, by Dr. Jean M. Twenge

Why Today’s Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy, and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood

Player Piano, by Kurt Vonnegut
Summer Fellowships

Thanks to funding by generous donors, faculty—this year, all visual arts faculty—get back into the “classroom” by traversing the globe.

**Mr. Nigel Paton P ’09**
*Upper School Visual Arts and English*

**DESTINATION:** Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada

**PURPOSE:** To study the art and culture of the First Nations, who are included in the Indigenous Americas unit of his AP Art History course. “I wanted to get to know the people who make the art, and get a closer look at their myths, their ways of life, and their environment.”

Mr. Paton visited the northern Port McNeill area and discovered a spectacular landscape and a group with strong beliefs. “Many peoples who live so close to nature, and live off the nature, have lived in the same place for millennia. They have a depth of feeling about the land. They don’t see animals as a separate species—they see themselves as coming from animals, as if they’re family members. They’re not just putting on a mask. They are becoming the animal.”

The mask in question is a “transformation mask,” a significant part of the First Nations’ culture. Carved from wood, with an outside face that opens to reveal a different inside face, these colorful masks are prominent at Potlatch festivals that take place in “meeting houses” (also known as “great houses”). These theatrical, gift-giving community events—money, blankets, and food exchange hands—include singing, dancing, and performances of myths in which people move like the animals they are representing. “The culture incorporates a vast amount of mythology,” Mr. Paton says, “and is very much ‘alive’ with rituals and traditions.”

**Mrs. Lindsay Baydin P ’26, ’29**
*Lower School Visual Arts*

**DESTINATION:** Florence, Italy

**PURPOSE:** To view artistic and architectural wonders from the Renaissance, fueling her passions for art, design, innovation, culture, and education

“As I toured the art and design of Florence, I investigated the role that art plays in society, comparing how this role is viewed and implemented in Western education, and thinking about the best ways to teach art and creative thinking, currently and in the future,” she says. “The highlight of my trip was seeing Michelangelo’s *David* at the Galleria dell’Accademia with Frank P. Nero, Director of Florida State University’s Florence Program and Art History Professor. He told the story of how *David* came to be, keeping a young student in mind—such as the students I teach at the Lower School. This inspirational experience reminded me that art is a reflection of the self and of a culture, and why art is essential in education and to humankind.”

Thanks to funding by generous donors, faculty—this year, all visual arts faculty—get back into the “classroom” by traversing the globe.

Nigel Paton P ’09 outside the Campbell River Museum. Kwakwaka’wakw artists Bill Henderson and his sons carved the totem pole, a Thunderbird Bear.

A special viewing of Michelangelo’s *David* was part of Lindsay Baydin’s fellowship.
“Art brought to life in any culture is a gift to the world, and I saw gifts aplenty.” — RUSSELL CHRISTIAN

Mr. Russell Christian

Lower School Visual Arts

DESTINATION: Morocco and Spain

PURPOSE: To observe the cultural and religious connections between Southern Spain and Northern Africa

Among the highlights: in Fez, Morocco, leather tanneries and their dyeing pits with dozens upon dozens of stone vessels filled with colored dyes; in Granada, the Alhambra, “a spectacular series of buildings that owe their survival, in part, to the American writer Washington Irving”; in Madrid, at the Prado Museum, Goya’s series of Black Paintings, Picasso’s Guernica, and other masterpieces.

“So much of what I saw was visually stunning,” Mr. Christian says. “I came away with a better understanding of the confluence of cultures in a historically volatile region, and a recognition that it may be inevitable that communities of differing belief systems will swing between rejection and harmonious accommodation, prejudice and acceptance—the Alhambra was worked on by Jewish, Muslim, and Christian craftsmen and, from afar, in these times, that seems remarkable. That said, art brought to life in any culture is a gift to the world, and I saw gifts aplenty.”
Pingry Welcomes
New Trustees, Faculty, and Staff

Trustees

Mrs. Lisa Billington P ’20, President of The Pingry School Parents’ Association (PSPA) for the 2019-20 school year, is a certified personal coach who previously taught in high schools and colleges, worked as a corporate training specialist, and owned and managed businesses focused on professional development and business consulting. Mrs. Billington is married to Courtney Billington, President of Janssen Neuroscience, and received a bachelor’s degree in Broadcast Journalism from Winthrop University and a Master’s of Education.

Mr. Alan Fournier P ’22 manages a family investment office. Most recently, he was the managing member and Founder of Pennant Capital Management, L.L.C., which he ran from 2001 to 2018. Prior to founding Pennant, Mr. Fournier was the partner responsible for global equity investments at Appaloosa Management L.P. Mr. Fournier received a B.S. in Engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology, where he graduated with honors. He serves on the KIPP New Jersey Board of Governors, formerly served as Trustee and Treasurer of Far Hills Country Day School, where he also chaired the Finance and Investment Committees, and co-established Better Education for Kids, which supports high-quality educational opportunities for children throughout New Jersey. Mr. Fournier is married to Jennifer Fournier.

Ms. Lori Halivopoulos ’78, P ’23, an active Pingry volunteer and former trustee who has received the School’s Nelson L. Carr ’24 Service Award, serves on the Pingry Alumni Association (PAA) Board and co-chairs the Nominations Committee. Previously, among many roles for Pingry, she served as PAA President, PSPA Vice President, and Co-Chair of the PSPA’s Spring Soirée. Ms. Halivopoulos is Executive Vice President and Regional Director for Marketing Communications at GfK, Germany’s largest market research institute and the world’s fifth-largest market research organization, where she is responsible for all marketing and communications for GfK in the Americas. Prior to that, she was Senior Vice President of Marketing Communications. Ms. Halivopoulos received degrees in Economics and French from Tufts University, and an M.B.A. in Marketing from New York University’s Leonard N. Stern School of Business. She is married to Brian Szepkouski, President and Founder of the international management consulting firm Szepko International.
Faculty and Staff

Mr. Amir Abiskaroon, Operations Officer for Transportation, worked previously as a bus driver at Morris Catholic High School and as a professional truck driver. At Pingry, he is a bus driver for the new group stop bus program and transports students to and from athletics events. He earned a B.S. in Computer Science at Jersey City State College.

Ms. Kathleen (Katie) Bartlett ’89, P ’22, Admission Coordinator, has worked as an English professor at several colleges, including Fairleigh Dickinson University, Montclair State University, and County College of Morris. She also has experience in the fields of marketing, copywriting, and project management. Ms. Bartlett earned a B.A. in Mathematics at Colby College and an M.F.A. in Writing at Vermont College of Fine Arts.

Mr. Shamir Bearfield, Lower School Associate Teacher, worked as a paraprofessional with students at Rahway High School and Newark Collegiate Academy prior to joining Pingry. He has coached a variety of sports, including JV and varsity track and field at Rahway High School, as well as football for various programs. He graduated from The College of William and Mary with a B.A. in American Studies.

Mr. Matthew (Matt) Composto ’13, Middle School English Teacher, is pleased to return to Pingry in a full-time teaching role this year. Last year, Mr. Composto filled in for two teachers on maternity leave, teaching Upper School Latin and Middle School math, as well as coaching various teams. Mr. Composto graduated from Brown University with a B.A. in Political Science.

Ms. Alisha Davlin, Upper School English Teacher, returns to Pingry after teaching Upper School English from 2006-2014. During the intervening years, she has been an Outside Undergraduate Admissions Reader for New York University, then opened Davlin Consulting to help students prepare for the college admissions process. Ms. Davlin received a B.A. in English, cum laude, from Tulane University, an M.F.A. in Creative Writing from New York University, and a Master’s of Education from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Mr. Roberto (Berto) De Almeida ’15, Operations Officer, returns to Pingry in a full-time capacity after holding several part-time roles at the School, including coaching soccer, basketball, and wrestling, as well as supervising the Middle School Homework Club and other projects. Mr. De Almeida is enrolled at Rutgers University, majoring in Sports Management.
New Faculty and Staff

Ms. Lisa Hartmann, Middle School Math Teacher, arrives at Pingry from The Berkeley Carroll School in Brooklyn, where she was the Middle School Math Department Chair and taught math to students in Grades 5-8. Ms. Hartmann received an A.B. in Anthropology from Princeton University and an M.S.Ed. in Elementary Education from the University of Pennsylvania.

Ms. Laura Hassert, Operations Officer for Transportation Coordination and Summer Camp Registrar, is pleased to be on board full-time after working at Pingry for several years in various roles related to Big Blue Summer camp programs. Ms. Hassert earned a B.S. in Business Management at Montclair State University.

Ms. Jessica Hoepfl, P.E. Teacher, coach, and Faculty/Staff Wellness Coordinator, arrives at Pingry from Warrenton Grade School in Oregon. Most recently, she served as Warrenton’s Middle School Athletic Director and taught P.E. to students in Grades K-3. She earned a B.S. in Physical and Health Education Teacher Education at Temple University and an M.S. in Education at Gwynedd Mercy University.

Mr. Robert Hoepfl, Basking Ridge Campus Permanent Substitute Teacher, joins Pingry from Warrenton High School in Oregon, where he served as the school’s Athletic Director, taught social studies, coached girls’ varsity basketball, and mentored several student programs. Mr. Hoepfl earned a B.A. in History at Northwest Christian University, an M.E. in Secondary Education at Grand Canyon University, and an M.S. in Educational Administration at Fort Hays State University.

Dr. Igor Jasinski, Upper School German Teacher, returns to Pingry following several years in Oaxaca, Mexico, where he worked on a doctorate. From 2009-2014, he taught German, Latin, and philosophy at Pingry. He holds a B.A. equivalent in Philosophy, German literature, and Linguistics from the University of Düsseldorf; an M.A. in Philosophy from the State University of New York at Stony Brook; and an Ed.D. in Pedagogy and Philosophy from Montclair State University.

Ms. Bridget Killian, Lower School Assistant Director of Academics, comes to Pingry from Derby Academy, where she was a reading specialist involved with the development and implementation of the school’s PreK-3 reading program. She earned a B.S. in Elementary Education at The University of Vermont and an M.Ed. in Special Education at Florida Gulf Coast University.
Ms. Haley Kost, Middle School History Teacher, joins Pingry from King’s Academy in Jordan, where she taught Upper School history, English, and economics, and coached the girls’ JV soccer and varsity basketball teams. She received a B.A. in Secondary Education from Northwestern University.

Ms. Alexandra Lasevich, Mathematics Department Chair and Upper School Math Teacher, spent more than 10 years at Princeton Day School in a variety of roles, including math teacher, Director of Community Service for the Upper School, and Upper School Leader of Accreditation. Ms. Lasevich earned a B.A. in Mathematics at the University of Rochester and an M.S. in Educational Leadership at Delaware Valley University, and is working on her dissertation for an Ed.D. from Delaware Valley University.

Mr. Matt Levinson P ’21, Pingry’s 16th Head of School, brings to the Basking Ridge and Short Hills Campuses over 25 years of leadership experience in independent schools. Read more on page 22.

Ms. Julia Martinez, Middle School Math Teacher, arrives at Pingry from St. Gerard Majella School in Paterson, New Jersey, where she taught math to students in Grades 5-8. Ms. Martinez holds a B.A. in Early Childhood Elementary Education from DeSales University.

Mrs. Anupama Menon P ’26, Middle School Computer Science Teacher, most recently taught math and information technology in the Silberman College of Business at Fairleigh Dickinson University. She received a B.S. in Computer Science, Math, and Physics from Mangalore University in India and an M.S. in Computer Science from Fitchburg State University.

Ms. Cecily Moyer, Middle School Science Teacher, joins Pingry from Mary McDowell Friends School in Brooklyn, where she taught science, math, and literacy, and co-founded the Middle School’s first track team and outdoor running club. She earned a B.S. in Biology at Haverford College and an M.S. at the University of Delaware.
New Faculty and Staff

Mr. Alex Nanfara, Summer and Auxiliary Programs Marketing and Communications Director, had a 14-year career as a creative marketing professional in New York City, which culminated in his role as an Executive Producer at Nickelodeon. He earned a B.A. in English at Franklin & Marshall College.

Mr. Joseph Napolitano, Drama Production Designer, is a multidisciplinary designer whose work has been featured on Broadway, Off-Broadway, across the U.S., and internationally. He has also worked with the Broadway League and the Broadway Green Alliance on multiple initiatives. Mr. Napolitano earned a B.A. in Theater at Rowan University.

Ms. Guadalupe Núñez, Middle School Spanish Teacher, has more than 15 years of experience teaching at several schools, including Hunter College Elementary School, Trevor Day School, and New Canaan Country School, among others. She also taught with Teach For America. Ms. Núñez earned a B.A. in International Relations and Human Resource Management at Syracuse University as well as an M.A. in Foreign Language Education at New York University.

Mr. Arden Olson, Operations Officer, spent over 45 years in publishing sales, the last 30 of which were devoted to selling electronic databases and ebooks to colleges and universities across the U.S. and Canada. At Pingry, he provides administrative support in the main building and Miller A. Bugliari ’52 Athletics Center.

Mr. John Rios, Operations Officer for Transportation, worked for 35 years in the art field, previously as an art director for Grand Union Supermarkets, prior to transitioning to transportation. He has driven buses for the Union Board of Education, the Morris-Union Jointure Company, and Barker Bus Company, for school routes, field trips, and athletics events.

Mrs. Kelly Ross, Upper School English Teacher, has worked at several schools, including Oak Knoll, where she was English Department Chairperson and an Upper School English teacher. She earned a B.A. in English at Bucknell University and an M.A. in English at Middlebury College.
Mr. Kevin Schroedter, Middle and Upper School French and Spanish Teacher, joins Pingry from Dunn School in California, where he taught French and Spanish to Upper School students. He has been active with global education programs and has accompanied students on international cultural trips and family homestays. Mr. Schroedter earned a B.A. in Political Science at Duke University and an M.A. in French at Middlebury College.

Mr. Neil Spagnuolo, Grounds Supervisor, has 33 years of experience in landscaping and ground maintenance. Since 1986, he has owned his own company, maintaining landscape features for both commercial and residential properties. He earned an associate degree in Agricultural Technology at the County College of Morris.

Mr. Brentnol Sullivan, Operations Officer, has worked as a security guard on the Basking Ridge Campus since 2018. Prior to Pingry, he worked in the same capacity at Columbia High School in Maplewood for five years. Before arriving in the U.S. from Guyana in 2009, he worked as a general duty policeman.

Mr. Paul Sykes, Operations Officer, has been part of the Pingry community since 2016, as an assistant coach for the Girls’ Varsity Soccer Team, and joins the School full-time with experience in business management, substitute teaching, athletic training, and other coaching. Mr. Sykes is a Certified Personal Trainer and earned a B.A. in Physical Education & Global Fitness and Wellness at Kean University.

Mr. Dominick Tamula, Facilities Technician, most recently worked as a Process Operator at OptoElectronics in Warren and, prior to that, as a Lab Assistant at Laboratory Corporation of America.

Mr. Saad A. Toor, Upper School History Teacher, began his teaching career in the Middle East, where he served as the Associate Department Head of Humanities at Jeddah Knowledge International School, the first International Baccalaureate Continuum School in Saudi Arabia. Mr. Toor earned both a B.A. in Political Science and an M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Connecticut as well as an M.Sc. in Modern South Asian Studies at Oxford University.
New Faculty and Staff

Dr. Zachary (Zach) Wakefield, Upper School History Teacher, spent four years as a history teacher at Virginia Episcopal School prior to joining Pingry. Dr. Wakefield earned a B.A. in History at Juniata College as well as an M.A. and Ph.D., both in History, at Auburn University.

Ms. Erin Walsh, Operations Officer, worked for several athletics-oriented organizations, including SOFIVE Soccer Centers, Global Team Events, and UK Elite Soccer, prior to joining Pingry. Ms. Walsh earned a B.S. in Business Management and Marketing at Centenary College.

Mr. Michael Wang, Upper School Mandarin Teacher, spent 18 years as a Chinese teacher at St. George’s School in Rhode Island. He taught Mandarin Chinese at all levels, including A.P. Chinese, and also coached soccer, supervised a dorm, and served as a student advisor. Mr. Wang earned a B.A. at Beijing University of Astronautics and Aeronautics.

Ms. Yifan Xu, Middle and Upper School Mandarin Teacher, arrives at Pingry from Chatham Hall, where she taught Chinese, served as a dorm advisor, and was the Director of International Programs. She earned a B.A. in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language at Beijing Language and Culture University, as well as an M.A. in Asian Studies at Binghamton University.

Mr. Zhaojun Yong, teaching Upper School math while Will LaGarde is on sabbatical, joins Pingry from The Berkeley Carroll School in Brooklyn, where he taught Upper School math. He earned a B.A. in Mathematics at New York University and an M.A. in Mathematics Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Mrs. Devan Zadrozny, Grade 3 Teacher, joins the Pingry community from Saint David’s School in New York City, where she taught Grades 1 and 2. She holds a B.S. in Elementary Education and Special Education from Saint Joseph’s University and an M.S. in Education from Bank Street College of Education.

Ms. Alana Zussman, Lower School Technology and Innovation Coordinator, arrives at Pingry from Dwight School in New York City, where she served as the Design and Technology Integrator for Grades 1-5. Ms. Zussman received a B.F.A. in Advertising Design from Syracuse University and an M.S. in Art and Design Education from Pratt Institute.

pingry.org
Read the full biographies, plus an announcement of faculty and staff in new roles, at pingry.org/extras
Faculty Awards and Chairs

With the following endowed awards, generous donors have sought to encourage excellent teaching and coaching and recognize teachers’ contributions to the School. Read more about these awards, including the individuals for whom they are named, at pingry.org/funds.

PRESENTED IN JUNE 2019

ALBERT W. BOOTH MASTER CHAIR / 2019–2020
Ms. Heather Smith P ’16 (Grades K-2 Science)
Ms. Rebecca Sullivan (Upper School Visual Arts; Experiential Education Coordinator)

THE WOODRUFF J. ENGLISH FACULTY ENDOWMENT FUND / 2019–2020
Ms. Bria Barnes (Middle School English; Multicultural Teams Lead Coordinator)
Mrs. Amelia Sarrazin (Kindergarten)

THE GREIG FAMILY ENDOWED FACULTY CHAIR / 2019–2020
Mr. Jason Murdock (Middle School History; Admission Counselor; Boys’ Varsity Basketball)

HERBERT F. HAHN JUNIOR FACULTY AWARD / 2019–2020
Mr. Davidson Barr (Upper School Mathematics and Economics)
Mr. Jeff Patten (Lower School P.E.)

SENIOR CLASS FACULTY CHAIR / 2019–2020
Ms. Julia Dunbar (Upper School History; Director of Global Education and Engagement)

E. MURRAY TODD FACULTY CHAIR / 2019–2022
Ms. Margaret Kelleher ’01 (Middle School Latin; Middle School Language Coordinator)

THE JAMES P. WHITLOCK, JR. ’60 FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND TECHNOLOGY / 2019–2020
Mrs. Donna Thau P ’17, ’20 (Middle School Math; Middle School Math Coordinator)
Looking across the bridge toward the Lower School.
Path to Pingry

Matt Levinson Becomes Pingry’s 16th Head of School

Matt Levinson P ’21 was a fast-rising New Jersey educator when, in 2007, he got an offer to head west. After a childhood and early adulthood on the East Coast—not to mention an entire professional career, until that point, spent in the Garden State—the invitation to serve in a leadership role at The Nueva School, a progressive, PreK-12 independent school for gifted learners, led his family and him to San Mateo, California. Suddenly, he was thrust into the heart of Silicon Valley at the very moment when social media and tech giants like Facebook, Twitter, and Google were reaching stratospheric success. Not surprisingly, his students’ fluency in technology was light years ahead of most of their teachers, not to mention administrators. By his own admission, it was a fish-out-of-water experience. In partnership with Nueva’s faculty and staff, systematizing the school’s approach to technology by building a 1:1 laptop program was an immediate priority. “We were building the bridge while we were crossing it,” he recalls.

Embracing culture shock and challenge, however, exemplifies Mr. Levinson’s career trajectory. (To boot, he wrote a book during his time at Nueva—From Fear to Facebook: One School’s Journey—exploring his own learning curve and the ways in which parents
“I’ve always viewed leadership through the lens of the importance of showing up, being present and visible, and helping people reach their fullest potential.”

—Matt Levinson P ’21
and teachers can successfully harness technology to help students grow.) Nueva is just one of three very different independent schools in California and Seattle where he has held leadership positions. And his experiences at these institutions, over the course of 12 successful years, make his return to the East Coast, as Pingry’s 16th Head of School—a position he assumed on July 1—that much sweeter a homecoming.

Born and raised in Bethesda, Maryland, Mr. Levinson earned a B.A. in History at Haverford College and a master’s degree in Social Studies Education at Teachers College, Columbia University before launching his career in 1993 at Princeton Day School (PDS), as a history and English teacher and multisport coach. New Jersey geography—he specifically cites navigating the vexing Somerville Circle—is gradually returning to him, like a muscle memory, he says.

He is no stranger to Pingry, either. While at PDS, he spent several summers as a teacher and one as dean for New Jersey SEEDS, founded by former Pingry Headmaster John Hanly (1987-2000). While he never met Mr. Hanly, he admired his work to launch the organization, which brings several students a year to PDS. What’s more, after Mr. Levinson assumed the role of head coach of PDS’s boys’ varsity soccer team, the first game he scheduled was against Pingry. “I knew Miller and the history of the program and wanted the boys at PDS to see the level of the team as something to emulate and aspire to,” he recalls.

Adding to his Pingry connections, he chuckles as he shares that, soon after his arrival on the Basking Ridge Campus, he walked the halls amidst a bustle of summer campers in search of a particular class photo: a close
friend of his from Haverford College, who graduated from Pingry in 1985.

The New Jersey homecoming is not only Mr. Levinson’s. His wife, Priyanthi (Pri) Alahendra, whom he met at PDS, is from Harrington Park, and has a large, extended family nearby. Including their son Sanjay and daughter Maya, who just began her junior year at Pingry, they are all, he says, excited to be closer to their family community.

The very notion of community—whether in the context of family or school—is foundational to both Mr. Levinson and his wife, who is herself a longtime educator and administrator at the elementary level. He fondly recalls the 14 years he spent at PDS, ascending from teacher, to Middle School department chair, to Upper School teacher, and finally, grade-level dean, all while coaching, at various times, soccer and basketball. Summers were spent immersed in PDS’s camp program. Building Lego villages with Kindergartners and conducting mock trials with Middle Schoolers was all in a day’s work. “Our life was centered around the school community, and it always has been,” he says. “Working in schools is not just a job, it’s about being part of a community. It’s an important part of our value system as a family, and our life.”

Despite—and perhaps because of—his love for PDS, when he was recruited by the school’s former Middle School Director, Mrs. Diane Rosenberg, who went on to become Head of School at The Nueva School in California, to be her Assistant Head of School and Middle School Director, Mr. Levinson jumped at the challenge of experiencing a far different community. A small school that had been on the brink of collapse a decade before he arrived in 2007, it was rebuilding itself rapidly, facing a growing student body, and looking to expand to a second campus. New faculty were needed, as well as someone to oversee curriculum development for a Middle School (Grades 6-8) that was incorporating Grade 5 into its division. Mrs. Rosenberg, who years earlier appointed Mr. Levinson chair of PDS’s Middle School History Department when he was only in his late 20s, felt he would be perfect for the job.

“At Nueva, he was the right person at the right time because he is a true curricular leader—he was able to energize the kids and galvanize the faculty, who, at the time, were talented but not seasoned,” she says. “We needed someone to pull them in one direction and unify them. Many of the faculty that Matt identified and hired during his time here are still among our top teachers.”

And then, there was the 1:1 laptop program. Long before other independent schools, and thanks to Silicon Valley parents who wired the campus, taught students coding, and offered training workshops to its faculty, Nueva was on the

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**Lightning Round**

**Favorite New Jersey culinary treat?**
Corn on the cob and fresh tomatoes

**Favorite subject in high school?**
History

**Most embarrassing Middle School moment?**
My first dance

**Early bird or night owl?**
Early bird

**Dogs, cats, or chickens?**
Dogs

**Sports team that will forever receive your undying allegiance?**
New York Knicks

**In my free time, I . . .**
Run, read, binge-watch Netflix, and spend time with family

**Most notable accomplishment outside of school?**
With Sanjay, completing the 2017 Seattle-to-Portland 200-mile bike ride in two days

**Favorite book?**
Any mystery written by New Jersey native Harlan Coben; and *Lincoln* by David Herbert Donald

**Most memorable trip taken?**
Road trip with my family through the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, and Zion National Parks

**I feel happiest when . . .**
I’m with my family
cutting edge of technology. Not surprisingly, it was the first Middle School in the country to adopt a 1:1 laptop program. In Mr. Levinson, Mrs. Rosenberg had found, if not a digital dynamo, a skilled leader to help implement it.

His challenge, as she explains, was to work closely with students and parents to figure out how the new program could leverage learning. And he had to do it during a time when the surface of decorum surrounding digital identity and best practices so commonplace today hadn’t even been scratched. “That’s where Matt, as a curricular leader, was really important in asking the tough questions. ‘How do you make this meaningful? What are the rules around it? How do you educate parents?’” In those days, there was a lot of trust in the technology with very few filters,” Mrs. Rosenberg says.

After a rigorous year of careful brainstorming and collaborating, he gathered Nueva’s entire Middle School in the gymnasium—about 150 kids at the time—to sign the acceptable use policy (AUP) and officially launch the program. As Mrs. Rosenberg tells it, before beginning, she and Mr. Levinson high-fived in the back of the gym, so pleased that all their hard work was coming to fruition. Just then, the Student Body President rose to voice the collective decision of the students, who disagreed with the content and bristled at not being included in the process. They all refused to sign the AUP.

“It was a complete protest,” she recalls. “Matt and I looked at each other and burst out laughing. We had literally just celebrated in the back of the room. But we had to start over.” So, over the course of several more months of lunch meetings, he worked closely with the school’s social-emotional learning teacher and brought 50 students into the mix to hammer out a new AUP that students and faculty alike could agree to. The story is revealing of how Mr. Levinson operates, says Mrs. Rosenberg. “He’s not authoritarian. He recognized that we had made a mistake—he was willing to say, you’re right, we missed a step, so let’s go back and get it right.”

Four years later, in 2011, Marin Country Day School (MCDS) was searching for an Assistant Head of School to serve its Upper School. Ms. Alahendra was already working as a Lower School teacher there, both of their children attended, and it was an hour shorter commute. The decision was an easy one, though the K-8 day school, nestled in the northern reaches of Silicon Valley, was no less fascinating and challenging an environment.

Lucinda Lee Katz, Ph.D., Head of School at MCDS during Mr. Levinson’s tenure, recalls in particular his leadership in science and technology, testament to the strides he had made since his relatively tech-naive days as a teacher at PDS. She recalls his prolific writings—by her count, 75 articles in Edutopia, Education Week, and KQED’s Mind/Shift, among other publications, while at MCDS alone—on topics ranging from digital literacy and social media to the impact of technology on social-emotional learning and brain development. He also co-led the Board of Trustees STEAM Committee. In remarks given at his farewell ceremony, Dr. Katz offered a powerful summary of his impact: “He is a star, and will lead all of us into the next decade with his wonderful thinking in this area.”

Three years after arriving at MCDS, an independent school in another exciting, dramatically evolving tech-hub reached out to him, this time to serve as Head of School. He answered the call. Becoming Head at University Prep (UPrep), a day school serving Grades 6-12 in Seattle, felt like a natural evolution in his career as an educator, he says. Of many initiatives launched during his tenure, he is most proud of spearheading the development of 35 Middle and Upper School “intensives,” experiential, interdisciplinary courses—held twice a year for three weeks each—in which local, regional, or even national and international excursions are melded with on-campus, classroom learning. Exploring East Asian culture, language, and art by traveling to and photographing life in Taiwan and collaborating with a local elementary school to learn how best to teach children science are but two examples. “Creating the intensives tapped into teacher creativity and got them working across disciplines to foster their own engagement and, in turn, student engagement,” Mr. Levinson explains. “Kids were solving authentic, real-world problems, which complemented their daily academic experience. That was just awesome to see.”

He also led the school in partnering with Global Online Academy, an online organization that connects teachers and students in global, collaborative, online learning. All in all, he says he is proud to have initiated programs that allow UPrep students to learn in ways that involve traditional classroom academics, real-world learning, and virtual learning. “Successful schools today think about the whole learning experience, and mesh all three. Together, they are key to positioning and preparing kids for their future,” he adds.

A firm believer in the importance of teaching students health and wellness skills, like any other discipline, Mr. Levinson is also pleased that, beginning with
“He’s a real educator’s educator. He loves curriculum development and is always searching and scanning the horizon for new ideas. It’s a real passion and talent of his.”

—MRS. DIANE ROSENBERG, HEAD OF SCHOOL, THE NUEVA SCHOOL

Keenly interested in the process and systems necessary to improve a school community, he also invested a great deal of time taking the temperature of UPrep’s constituents before suggesting change. His was a “here-are-some-ideas-what-do-you-think?” approach. “Matt has gifted our school community with a powerfully compelling future vision of University Prep that is shared by everyone—students, families, faculty, and staff alike,” adds Mrs. Wu. “That, to me, is the mark of a truly gifted leader, that even in his absence, the vision will continue to live because it has become the essence of our school.”

Influenced by his roots in the classroom, Mr. Levinson is known as a visible leader, whether in the hallways, on the playing fields, at drama productions, or at after-school parent events. Richard Kassissieh, Assistant Head of School for Academics and Strategic Initiatives at UPrep, remembers that he could frequently be seen greeting students and families outside of school in the morning, holding drop-in office hours for faculty and staff, eating lunch with colleagues, and welcoming students from the school newspaper into his office for an interview. At PDS and MCDS, pick-up basketball and soccer games—along with running, his favorite recreational sports—were a common occurrence, and included faculty, staff, and students alike. Mr. Levinson is also eager to walk the walk with faculty and students to
“I watched him in the hallways, and it was incredible the number of touchpoints he had with various people—students, teachers, staff, parents, fellow administrators. . . It’s rare to have a head who makes even a sixth grader feel like they’re known, but that is one of his biggest strengths.”

—SUSIE WU, MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR, UNIVERSITY PREP

better understand where programmatic change is needed, or to experience recently implemented changes first-hand.

Dr. Katz recalls that, despite not being a fan of camping, he gamely accompanied MCDS seventh graders one year on their annual, week-long outdoor education retreat to Joshua Tree National Park, where short “solo hikes,” allowing students to explore themselves beyond their traditional classroom identities, were highly encouraged. He got hopelessly lost, she says, not for one or two hours, but for the better part of a day. He ultimately found his way back and laughed with the students and faculty about his misadventure, illuminating another well-known character trait, says Dr. Katz: an endearing ability to see humor in everyday life, and to laugh at himself.

Understanding their family histories helps to explain, at least in part, the importance that both Mr. Levinson and his wife place on education. In the early 1900s, his great-grandparents immigrated to the U.S. from Russia, and his father was the first member of his family to attend college. He was admitted to Harvard in 1949—according to family lore, he returned from school one day, not yet apprised of the good news, to find his mother proudly running up and down the neighborhood streets, waving his opened acceptance letter! Excitement waned when the family realized it couldn’t afford the tuition. Ultimately, a full scholarship offer came through. “That changed the course of his life, our family’s life, really,” Mr. Levinson says. “It has had a huge impact on how I view financial aid and opportunities for kids.” For many years after his career as an attorney ended, Mr. Levinson’s father taught law at American University; to this day, he considers him his most important teacher.

Ms. Alahendra, who was born in Sri Lanka, moved to the U.S. with her parents and two sisters at the age of two for educational opportunity. Settling in northern New Jersey, her parents drove an hour and a half each way so the sisters could attend Horace Mann in the Bronx (Mr. Levinson attended public schools in Bethesda). Only in dire circumstances was she or one of her sisters permitted to miss a day of school.

With family stories that have been so formative to their own educational experiences, it is easy to under-
stand the Levinsons’ commitment to—and passion for—improving a school community for future generations. Add to that passion the sheer breadth of Mr. Levinson’s experience—in addition to teacher, coach, summer camp counselor, and an array of administrative roles, he has been part of Admission teams, handled student scheduling, and managed student services—and it’s clear that his grasp of what it takes for schools to operate successfully is profound. “I’ve seen every layer, all the innards of schools, and yet I’m always amazed at graduation time,” he says. “You appreciate just how many people it took to help a student get to that stage. It’s never a straight line. Every student has a sideways turn, needing help from a coach, a counselor, an English teacher... that’s what I love about working with kids. That’s why we exist—to help students and their families reach their potential.”

As Mr. Levinson and his family—including a new Micro Goldendoodle named Avi—settle in to Beinecke House and become acquainted with the faces and places on both the Basking Ridge and Short Hills Campuses, he looks forward to applying the lessons learned from his nearly 30 years in education. Its proximity to family aside, Pingry is an opportunity, he says, to return to the K-12 educational experience, like PDS and The Nueva School, where he can be part of educating students from the very earliest stages until their college departure. Citing its three separate divisions and two campuses, he sees in Pingry an exciting chance to nourish important, distinct identities for the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools, while at the same time growing a strong sense of all-school identity.

Mr. Levinson says his years as an undergraduate at Haverford, an Honor Code school, were formative to his development as both a person and future educator. That Pingry adheres to its own Honor Code, in which trust, respect, and personal responsibility are a shared moral compass for students, faculty, and staff, is also compelling to him. And then there’s Pingry’s 2018 Strategic Plan, whose themes of Global Education and Student Well-being resonate so closely with many of the initiatives he has undertaken at his previous schools.

Above all else, at Pingry, he is excited by the seemingly banal and, yet, most intricate of charges given to any Head of School: building community. In a video introduction posted to pingry.org just after his selection was announced, he summarized his philosophy: “People sometimes say, ‘What’s your vision for the school?’ Well, it’s not my vision, it’s our vision. It’s something we have to build together, and it has to involve everybody. So, I’m excited to work in partnership and build collaboration as a part of the culture of the school so it can excel well beyond my years here, and well into the future.”

Embracing change and rising to a challenge—whether it means carting his family across the country to dive into a new role at a new school, proposing some tough new initiatives for an institution, or addressing a student concern—seem to come naturally to Mr. Levinson. Indeed, he exemplified calm when a two-day-late moving truck, having journeyed cross-country with his family’s belongings, lost another two hours just locating the Beinecke House driveway (and even more, when it was discovered the truck couldn’t squeeze down the gravel driveway, and contents had to be ferried into the house via UHaul)! But one senses that challenge and change are, at least in part, what drive him, and why he is so motivated to help schools work in collaboration. “In schools, there are always moments of trial and difficulty, and as the Head of School, you help to hold the community in these times, as well as during the positive, uplifting, and unexpected moments. I’m always mindful of the importance of this role in my work, and helping people learn how to be better in community, together.”

A Head of School Matt Levinson P’21, Student Body President Brian Li ’20, and Honor Board Chair Emily Sanchez ’20.
She laughs about it now, but Katie Jennings ’06 didn’t find it particularly amusing when her Bureau Chief at POLITICO directed her to sit on the floor outside then-New Jersey Governor Chris Christie’s office in the State House one afternoon in June 2016, during his standoff with democratic legislators over funding for the state’s Transportation Trust Fund. Despite messages from the governor’s staff that he had gone home, Ms. Jennings and her Bureau Chief suspected that the presence of a state policeman, part of the governor’s security detail, meant he was still in the building. So, Ms. Jennings sat, waiting for him to emerge—nine hours later, he did, to announce a deal at a midnight press conference. She also remembers sitting, this time by her own choice, at her office desk for two days in Brussels in July 2018, waiting for a promised phone call from

What Drives Katie Jennings ’06?
Katie Jennings '06 (far right) moderating a panel discussion for the POLITICO event, "Big Data for Better Health: Hype or Hope?"
Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, to discuss the containment of an Ebola outbreak—and her patience was rewarded with a memorable half-hour interview.

“Being in the right place at the right time” and “persistence without being annoying,” in her words, are two of the lessons Ms. Jennings learned as a reporter during her four years with POLITICO. She spent the past year in Brussels, covering politics and health care policy in the European Union (EU), and, before that, three years covering state politics in New Jersey. During those four years, she learned much more, too—not only about reporting, and not only about the stories she covered, but also about New Jersey politics and the EU.

How did Ms. Jennings end up writing about health care, overseas, for POLITICO? It’s not a stretch to say that her trajectory began with Pingry classmates Chantal Berman ’06 and Nadine Reitman ’06 who, as Assistant Editors of The Pingry Record, asked her to join the newspaper in her junior year to continue a collaboration the trio had enjoyed in school musicals. She spent two years as a writer, copy editor, and managing editor. “It was my first time as an editor, reading other people’s work and trying to shape it,” Ms. Jennings says. “We had a wonderful faculty advisor, [then-Upper School English teacher] Dr. [Susan] Dineen, but we also had independence to write what we wanted to write.” Though Ms. Jennings joined the staff with an interest in writing and editing, her time with the Record developed her interest in reporting, “to scrutinize things and interrogate what’s happening around you.”

She hastens to mention other notable Pingry influences: biology teacher Deirdre O’Mara P ’17, ’19, ’21 and then-biology teacher Tommie Hata “were great at explaining complicated issues and helped fuel my interest in health and science”; the S.M.A.R.T. Team (Students Modeling a Research Topic) informed “how I approach interviews with researchers, to not be intimidated by the complexity of research science”; then-French teachers Kelly Jordan P ’04, ’06 and Gail Castaldo P ’00 “instilled a love of the French language and travel”; and then-Drama Department Chair Al Romano and drama teacher (now Drama Department Chair) Stephanie Romankow “taught me how to project and enunciate, which I use when I’m moderating events or making television and radio appearances.”

From the Record, she moved on to become Managing Editor of The College Hill Independent, written by students from both Brown University (where Ms. Jennings majored in Nonfiction Writing) and Rhode Island School of Design. Toward the end of her junior year, she benefited from connecting with an alumnus in a specific career field through the Pingry Alumni Association and the Office of Alumni Relations. Seeking at the time to pursue broadcast journalism, Ms. Jennings was grateful to be able to contact award-winning television producer David Gelber ’59, a Swarthmore College graduate who was working for CBS News’ 60 Minutes and had, in 2005, helped Swarthmore students launch War News Radio, a weekly radio broadcast about the Iraq war. With Mr. Gelber’s assistance and script suggestions, Ms. Jennings worked on the broadcast over the summer, producing four stories.

Leaving Brown, Ms. Jennings was unable to find a journalism job, so she spent two years working in crisis communications in New York City. Yet, this detour had a silver lining: she had access to the accounts of major health care companies right after the Affordable Care Act had been implemented—voilà, her first exposure to health policies. “I wanted to learn how to become a better reporter so that I could demystify complicated health care issues,” she says, a desire that led her to Columbia University to earn a master’s degree as a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Fellow in Health and Science Reporting at Columbia’s Journalism School (this fellowship no longer exists, but the program, the Master of Arts, remains). While in the program, thanks to a tip from two professors, she spent six
months investigating the role that a “secret” American Medical Association (AMA) committee plays in determining Medicare prices, skewing payments in favor of specialists over primary care doctors.

“That investigation made me really interested in health care,” Ms. Jennings recalls. “It is such a huge economic driver in the United States—nearly 18 percent of the GDP. One reason is because people tend to see specialists instead of primary care doctors, even though the accepted philosophy among public health professionals is that primary care doctors should be the jumping-off point for medical services. At the same time, health care is so complex. It’s really difficult for the average consumer to understand health care pricing, to understand how their insurance works, to understand billing.” Her next step: pitching the AMA story to POLITICO, who published it in August 2014 (“The Secret Committee Behind Our Soaring Health Care Costs”).

Within a year, POLITICO hired her to be a freelance writer in their New York office, and she later became a full-time health care reporter in their newly opened New Jersey bureau. “That job was a wonderful experience and a great awakening because I didn’t know anything about New Jersey politics,” she says, fondly recalling her meetings with New Jersey Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean, Jr. ‘86 in the State House.

Yet, something was nagging at her. As much as she loved working in New Jersey and was thrilled that POLITICO had welcomed her into journalism, she wanted more: to live abroad (having traveled to Paris during college), work in a bigger market, and learn about other health care systems. “When people in the U.S. talk about ‘socializing medicine,’ ‘universal health care,’ or ‘Medicare for all,’ I don’t think they really understand what these things mean or how other countries address them,” she says. Thanks to a contact from Columbia, who was working in POLITICO’s EU bureau, Ms. Jennings learned of openings for health care writers in Brussels—knowing French didn’t hurt!—and would soon come to understand a great deal about the complex inner workings of the EU.

One of her first observations would be her employer’s unique role in the world’s media landscape. “There are a lot of national publications in Europe, like Le Monde in France, whose reporters write for their publications through the lens of their home country,” she explains, “but POLITICO

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**The U.S. and EU: Major Political Differences**

“EU legislation takes so long—years—from proposal to passage, because it’s more of a consensus-building process among all these parties,” Ms. Jennings observes. “Three years are considered really fast!”

A big surprise for her in the political arena: how closely people were following American politics, such as Brett Kavanaugh’s hearings. “I was trying to immerse myself in what was happening in Europe, but even the website for one of Germany’s newspapers was live-streaming Kavanaugh! What the U.S. is doing, people are watching. What Donald Trump is tweeting, people are following.”

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**The U.S. and EU: Major Political Differences**

- Two major parties, one of which has a majority
- Comparatively easy for one party to pass legislation
- More than 10 parties, none of which has a majority
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opened this European operation because no media company was covering the EU at the EU level [reporting on laws that apply to all 28 member countries]. This has been a learning curve for politicians, lobbyists, advocacy groups, and others to understand what it means to have a publication that focuses on the EU as a whole.”

It was also a learning curve for her—her entire job changed, since she now had to write about health care at the EU level for a European audience. Good news: Many EU institutions are based in Brussels, making for easy access. Challenging news: Most health care decisions are not made at the EU level, but are left to the discretion of member countries. “The question facing me was, ‘How do I write stories that will be relevant to all of these countries?’” To overcome this obstacle, Ms. Jennings focused on issues that affect every member country and figured out “where the EU has ‘competences’—where they do get involved—and where legislation is in progress.”

Of course, Brexit is front and center. On the health care side is the issue of how Brexit would affect the supply of medications in the EU and the United Kingdom. Vaccines and drug pricing negotiations are also big concerns. “Even with measles outbreaks throughout Europe, more parents are opting out of vaccines for their children. EU officials want to be able to act, but all they can do is recommend that countries work together to improve their vaccination systems. They can’t mandate that individual countries have compulsory vaccination programs,” Ms. Jennings says. Drug pricing is a huge issue, just like in the U.S. “There have been many standoffs between national governments and drug companies because the national health systems are responsible for negotiating prices. Countries want to reduce health care spending, but also provide access to life-saving treatments. There’s a worldwide struggle for access to affordable medications.”

Immersing herself in her job in Belgium, she quickly discovered that potential interviewees take a vastly different approach to their interactions with the media. “In the U.S., it’s standard to be ‘on the record’ unless an exception is made. In the EU, many sources ask for quote reviews, but POLITICO does not allow quote reviews. So, interviews wouldn’t be agreed to, or I could only use one quote, or I could only use information ‘on background’ [no attribution].” As a last resort, if her source couldn’t be named, she could get her editor’s approval on a case-by-case basis to use information without direct attribution as long as other sources were able to corroborate.

Ms. Jennings encountered story-specific surprises, adding to the list of unexpected research from her POLITICO years in New Jersey (such as Governor Christie’s “crazy budget manipulations” toward the end of his second term to spend over $42 million of taxpayer funds to advertise “Reach NJ,” his anti-opioid campaign). One, not surprisingly, is related to the potential of Brexit. “The UK government is putting all of the responsibility on private companies to deal with citizens’ welfare, especially the supply of medicines. The government has mandated stockpiling

Living Abroad
Ms. Jennings has thrived overseas, beginning with a Pingry-run trip to France when she was a sophomore, a trip that included a family stay. During college, she studied in Paris for five months and interned at Reporters Without Borders (an international non-profit, non-governmental organization that promotes freedom of information and freedom of the press), mostly working on translations and subtitles for their video campaigns. “One of my favorite memories of being in Paris in the fall was getting my first taste of chanterelle mushrooms sold by vegetable vendors all around the city. My friends taught me how to make chanterelle mushroom risotto.”

Though some alumni might get the opportunity to live abroad if they work for companies that have international offices, Ms. Jennings declares, “You have to seek it out. You know things are going to be different while living abroad, but that’s part of the beauty of it!” She now has friends from all over Europe, and found it easy to travel on weekends. Her biggest challenge? “It’s hard to deal with bureaucracy in another country, especially in different languages. It went okay, but it can be frustrating.” On the same topic, she was amazed by “incredible” translators who break down the language barriers among all 28 EU countries. “If you’re watching any public hearing, it’s broadcast in all of the languages!”

“The question facing me was, ‘How do I write stories that will be relevant to all of these countries?’”
“...and warehousing six weeks’ worth of medications,” she says. “But there are a ton of logistical issues because certain medications cannot be stored for long periods of time, and trucks could get stuck at borders or be delayed at customs. So, the uncertainty remains whether people would be able to get their medicine. This even affects former Prime Minister Theresa May, who is diabetic and has been taking insulin provided by an EU manufacturer.”

Another surprise discovery is an example of the European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI) at work; the EU created the ECI to let citizens participate in the political process by filing petitions with the European Commission, which is responsible for proposing and enforcing legislation. Organizers have one year to collect one million signatures from at least seven EU countries in order for the Commission to acknowledge their request. In the case of one story, citizens want e-cigarettes to be treated differently than tobacco products, with fewer regulations, but the petition included representatives from vaping and tobacco companies (similar to the U.S., these companies also want fewer regulations), making it appear that “they were taking over a process meant for citizens.” However, as her February 2019 story relates (“Big Tobacco’s Push for Big Vape”), the Commission deems it permissible for individual tobacco and vaping company employees to participate in petitions in a personal capacity, with full transparency on their part. Ms. Jennings says the EU is already more restrictive about vaping than the U.S., banning all flavors so as to appear less appealing to adolescents.

Reflecting on her “scoops” in New Jersey and Europe, Ms. Jennings relishes the rush and the results, even when they might come at a cost. “I realize that everyone has an agenda—how something is phrased, a person’s job security, the sensitivity of ongoing negotiations—but it feels really good to get a scoop that an administration doesn’t want made public.” When she has information in hand, Ms. Jennings always listens to a source’s concerns, but that person doesn’t dictate her decisions. “The news always trumps someone’s personal feelings. If it’s newsworthy and people should know about it, I will publish it. Getting the information out there is more important than one relationship.”

Now, with four years at POLITICO in the rearview mirror, Ms. Jennings is back in the U.S. and back at Columbia, for the next step in her journalism career: one of 10 Knight-Bagehot Fellows in Business and Economics Reporting at Columbia University (2019-20). “POLITICO gave me a wonderful opportunity to learn and write about politics and policy, but what was missing was the business side, like how drug prices are determined.” Just like when she joined the Record 15 years ago, building her skills as a reporter remains a priority. “In so many ways, from the newspaper to biology mentors to learning French to a career connection with an alumnus, I am grateful to Pingry for positioning me for this trajectory.”
A Lesson in College Admissions

What happens when 11 of the nation’s top college admission professionals team up with Pingry parents and students in mock admission committees to decide the fate of three fictitious applicants?
NE EVENING LAST SPRING, at 7:00 p.m. sharp, nearly 300 Pingry parents and their junior-year children tucked into classrooms and conference rooms on the Basking Ridge Campus. The heady task before them was to reach consensus on the fate of three college applicants: admit one, defer one, and deny one. The destiny of Phil, Claire, and Gloria—all wide-eyed juniors, hoping for a successful verdict—rested firmly in their hands. Deliberations began; by 8:00 p.m., consensus had to be reached.
No, these were not real college admission decisions, the apotheosis of most high schoolers’ stress, and what has, for some time, been referred to as the “college arms race” (ballooning applicant pools, ever more competitive colleges, and increased anxiety for students and families). Phil, Claire, and Gloria were fictitious applicants, albeit composites of actual Pingry students. The liberal arts college to which they were all vying for a spot, Dunphy University (a whimsical nod to Modern Family), was also fabricated. But given the impact of the exercise on both Pingry parents and students, it may as well have been the real thing.

In fact, it was Pingry’s second annual College Case Study Night, a unique opportunity for Pingry families to break into small groups—parents and guardians were encouraged to separate from their child—and sit on mock admission committees with nearly a dozen deans and directors of admission from competitive colleges and universities up and down the East Coast. For the admission professionals, it was another day at the office; for Pingry students and their families, it was a rare, behind-the-scenes glimpse into the reality of college admissions.

Case study events are hardly new to the college application scene, but they are most often seen at boarding schools. Hosting one at Pingry was the brainchild of Director of College Counseling Tim Lear ’92, P ’25, ’27, ’30 and his colleagues, who were looking to inject an already robust lineup of college prep events, including a “Jump Start” program for rising seniors every June, with some more imaginative programming. As college admission events go, getting to sit on an admission committee—even if it is pretend—and judge the transcripts of three students has a way of sticking with you.

What’s more, says Mr. Lear, the event unites parents and their children during a period of adolescence that is often more emotionally charged than ever: spring of their junior year. Just ask Natalie Ladino ’20. Lamenting the competition and stress that tinge even the most benign conversations about college admissions, she appreciated the collaborative feel. “Many students and parents share the same questions, and that night, we gathered as a community to address them—the questions that many people want to avoid asking in a school setting.”

The College Case Study Night is also a unique opportunity for parents to partner in the application process in a meaningful way, to experience some of the anxiety and fear their children may be experiencing, or maybe, experience things differently altogether. “We remember the college application process from 30 years ago,” Mr. Lear points out, referring to the parent cohort, “but it has changed in just the last four years!” Lynne Pagano P ’17, ’20, who attended the event with her son Burke ’20, agrees. “I took the SAT once in 1981 with no prep whatsoever and was way more concerned with what I was wearing to the test center than about the score or the outcome. I realize it’s a far different scene now for Burke.”

In the wake of the college admission scandal last spring—in which dozens of families were found to have bribed their way to acceptance letters, often by falsifying their child’s athletic skills—the event is indeed a reminder of just how much the landscape has changed. But also, and importantly, says Mr. Lear, the event is a reminder of how much the process is still as it should be: exciting, positive, personal, and full of promise. Hearing from the deans and directors directly reminded Natalie of this, she says. “They really do consider that each student applying is an individual, and they displayed a genuine concern for applicants . . . There is no perfect candidate; there are qualities that colleges look for, but there is not one cookie-cutter kind of student.”

“Each college has a unique culture and experience, and hearing from so many different types gave me faith that there was one out there that that would be the right school for me. It took a lot of pressure off of me, knowing that I don’t have to try to fit every school.” —Dilan Bhat ’20

Ten Tips FROM THE PROS

#1 If your transcript shows a dip in grades one year, explain it, don’t complain about it.

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Thirty-seven-year veteran of the Admission Office at Villanova University—and currently its Director—Michael Gaynor begins the night at Pingry not by asking his group about Claire, Phil, or Gloria, but about Dunphy University. What is important to the institution? What are they looking for? What are they hoping to become? When the discussion turns to the applicants, props are immediately given to Phil, an unarguably high achiever with six APs under his belt (and a score of 5 on two of his three AP exams), ranging from Spanish and Calculus to Art History and Computer Science. His grades dipped his junior year, but counterpoints include a perfect SAT score in math and a dizzying number of extracurriculars, like head of the school’s Quiz Bowl team and a member of its swim and robotics teams. According to his college counselor’s report, he also has an avowed affinity for dystopian science fiction. “He’s a champion!” shouts a student. A nearby parent isn’t so convinced. “My trouble with Phil is he’s a smart kid, but you can’t tell how he connects to students or what he is going to be like in college with other students. How is this bright kid going to socially contribute to the school community?” Mr. Lear, the group’s moderator, likes the fact that Phil resists easy categorization and challenges himself with summer courses as wide-ranging as Japanese and Geology, but he lets dangle, “Who is Phil when no one is watching?”

Downstairs, Cornell Lesane, Vice President of Enrollment and Dean of Admissions at Allegheny University, leads another group, which seems largely supportive of Claire. Her essays are genuine, they argue; her transcript, while not as eye-popping as Phil’s, is nevertheless impressive (she earned a 5 on her Art History AP exam, and a combined 1460 on her SAT); her recommendations are strong. A school trip in Grade 10 to Thailand, her four-year participation in the Model U.N. Club, and a French language immersion program her junior year would make her a good fit for Dunphy, whose president—a former U.S. Ambassador—is pushing for increased global awareness. Also laudable is her initiative in seeking an internship with the Cincinnati Art Museum her senior year. Yet, a group of students sitting together advocates ardently for Phil, pointing to his more demanding course load. A parent chimes in, deadpan, “If I’m that kid, I’m sleeping three hours a night. I’d rather see fewer activities and more depth.”

Just as consensus begins to build, Graham Touhey, Form III/IV Dean of Student Life and Upper School science teacher, who is helping to moderate, makes an announcement on behalf of Dunphy’s Dean of Housing (the same announcement is made in all the breakout rooms). Common spaces sustained major damage during Homecoming weekend last year. This year in particular, Dunphy wants to identify and admit responsible community members and leaders who could potentially serve as Resident Assistants (RAs) their junior or senior year. Enter one of many frustratingly unquantifiable, unpredictable factors inherent to college admissions.

In the Upper School faculty lounge, Peaches Valdes, Dean of Admission at Hamilton College, valiantly shepherds an animated debate. Gloria’s previous work experience at ShopRite, not to mention her shadowing of an ER doctor her junior year, could make her a strong candidate for an RA position, some feel. Others think her essays were bland, and wish that she had used them to touch on her hospital experience and healthcare interest. The group is unanimous in its rejection of Phil. His essay answers were weak, dispassionate even, they argue. “I think Dunphy is his safety school,” says one parent. “He seems more like an MIT guy.”

At 8:00 p.m., all 11 groups convene in Macrae Theater to debrief. The admission professionals are arranged, panel-style, on the stage, ready to share their groups’ verdicts. Underscoring the personal, idiosyncratic, and yet purposeful nature of the admission process, their decisions are, not unexpectedly, all over the map. In fact, the outcomes reached are nearly as numerous as the groups themselves. When parents and students are given a “vote
There are 4,000 flavors out there of colleges and universities; what’s right for one student, isn’t right for another.”

—Michael Gaynor, Villanova University
wrestling with and exploring a “best fit” for Dunphy based on each candidate’s softer qualities. “Our group’s challenge was that we could see all three applicants contributing to and engaging in Dunphy, and thriving.” At its core, college admissions is an exercise in community building, explains Jess Lord, Haverford’s Dean of Admission and Financial Aid—identifying applicants who will most contribute to a school in any given year. Grades are not necessarily the leading metric.

Institutional priorities go hand-in-hand with the endeavor of community building, according to Daryl Uy, Director of Admission at Bates College. Getting into college is about how you will contribute to the school academically, yes, but also extracurricularly, socially, culturally, and personally. Mr. Uy’s committee, he says, spent time coming to terms with this reality. “This is the hardest part for families to understand because institutional priorities change every year for every institution,” he says. Recall Mr. Touhey’s announcement in committee that Dunphy is looking for promising Resident Assistants—an institutional priority that may influence admissibility that particular year, over which families have zero control or knowledge. “Maybe the school needs more dancers, more harpists for their orchestra, a soccer goalie, or more French majors. Sometimes you can be perfect and there’s nothing wrong with your application, but it comes down to what is needed that year.”

For all these reasons, Mr. Moyer is quick to drive home the following message: “This [college admission] process is not an evaluation of your self-worth; it’s much more complicated.”

“Complicated” was a message that Nitin Bhat P 20, ’23 took away from the evening. He always knew that the admission process is a holistic one, but the Case Study Night showed him the extent to which a university’s institutional needs also play a role. It’s a reality, he thinks, that may help to mitigate future disappointment. “Just because you don’t get into school X, it doesn’t imply that you are not smart or can’t compete at that university,” he says. “It really could mean that you weren’t a good ‘fit’ for what the school was looking for at that time.”

There are human beings on the opposite side of this application process...they really laugh and cry and care about the students applying and whether they would fit and thrive at the university.” —Nitin Bhat P 20, ’23

Several days before the Case Study Night, the College Counseling Office was abuzz in final preparations for a second annual event that grew considerably in sheer numbers and scope from the year before. Mr. Lear was asked what, in his mind, would make the evening a success. After all, he and his team of six counselors were about to host 11 sages of the college admission world. And Pingry families were being asked to schlep to campus for two hours on a weeknight to roleplay with them, all thanks to a recently augmented College Counseling budget that allows their office to offer such innovative programming. The stakes were not exactly low. His reply hinted at what would be a similar rallying cry among the deans and directors when they arrived at Pingry days later. “I hope that the kids and their parents leave excited about the college process—more excited and less anxious,” he says. “Kids are going to end up at great schools, and if families can leave the night a little bit more open-minded about what that list of great schools might look like, then we’ve done our jobs. If the process becomes a little more personal, a little more human, then it was a huge success.”

Here are some tips for navigating the college admissions process:

**Tip #8**
Pingry is a great school; show us how you have maximized the resources made available to you.

**Tip #9**
Try to tune out “the noise.” Your college process is uniquely yours—be proud of your decision and respect that of others.

**Tip #10**
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:
• Pick the people who know you best, regardless of your planned major.
• Consider approaching teachers with whom you’ve had a poor grade—their letters will demonstrate your resilience and ability to learn from mistakes.
• Ask at the end of your junior year.
• Don’t send us too many; we only have time to read three!
Athletics

BIG BLUE HIGHLIGHTS

For more details on the Spring 2019 season, see pingry.org/bigblueroundup
Repeating the success of its 2018 season, the Girls’ Varsity Lacrosse Team, ranked #15 in the state, defended its status as NJSIAA Central Jersey Group 1 champions. All-American Alyson Feeley ’20 recorded her 200th Pingry goal, as well as her 100th of the season alone. Allison Hosler ’19 notched her 400th career save, while Cathleen Parker ’19 marked her 100th career goal.
Runners up in the Prep A Tournament, the Boys’ Varsity Tennis Team took gold at the NJSIAA Non-Public B South Championships and captured the Skyland Conference Delaware Division title.

Angelina Mayers ’19 celebrated her 100th career hit, helping the Girls’ Varsity Softball Team (17-7) tie for the Skyland Conference Mountain Division title.
College Competition

Twenty-three Pingry graduates took their athletic skills to college teams. This group of talented student-athletes is on 18 new campuses to play 12 different sports for some of the nation’s premier college athletics programs. Two students are playing at Division I schools, which required signed national letters of intent, but many more are also playing for other top Division II and III athletics programs.

Big Blue’s 2019 graduates represent the following sports: football (3), lacrosse (6), squash (2), soccer (1), swimming (3), track & field (3), field hockey (1), softball (1), golf (2), rugby (1), wrestling (1), and crew (1). (Note that some athletes plan to play multiple sports in college.)

Congratulations to all of our graduates who will continue their sport at the next level. Go Big Blue student-athletes!

* Denotes Division 1 Letter of Intent signee

Luke Ackerman
Colgate University, LACROSSE

Jack Baulig
Kenyon College, FOOTBALL

Alisa Chokshi
Cornell University, SQUASH

Alberto Choussy
Bucknell University, SOCCER

Hanna Davis
Dartmouth College, CREW

*Oluwasolape Fakorede
Lafayette College, TRACK & FIELD/THROWING

Darlene Fung
Harvard University, SWIMMING

Michael Gallagher
Franklin & Marshall College, GOLF

Josephine Jahng
Yale University, FIELD HOCKEY

Stelio Kanaras
Bucknell University, LACROSSE

Elliott LaGorce
St. Lawrence University, LACROSSE

Olivia Lai
Wesleyan University, LACROSSE

Angelina Mayers
Bowdoin College, SOFTBALL

Leighton Mayers
Bowdoin College, SWIMMING AND RUGBY

*Grace O’Mara
Lafayette College, TRACK & FIELD/THROWING

Peter Nicoletti
Kenyon College, FOOTBALL

Cathleen Parker
United States Military Academy at West Point, LACROSSE

Christine Shao
Columbia University, GOLF

Joseph Shilts
The College of Wooster, FOOTBALL AND TRACK & FIELD

Dillon Shu
Carnegie Mellon University, SWIMMING

Brandon Spellman
Princeton, WRESTLING

Nicole Toney
Williams College, LACROSSE

Christopher Zachary
Dartmouth College, SQUASH

* Denotes Division 1 Letter of Intent signee
In the spring of 2015, among seven Pingry seniors—and three girls total—poised to continue their soccer careers in college, Tanika Roach ’15 was the only Division I National Letter-of-Intent signee. Her Big Blue tenure included numerous All-State, All-County, and All-Conference Honors, and she was a member of the 2012 Non-Public A State Championship team her sophomore year. Capping her time at Pingry, she led the team to victory at the Somerset County Championship finals her senior year with the lone, game-winning goal. Four years later, she also claims a successful tenure as a forward with the Seton Hall University Pirates. A Big East Conference player with an arduous travel schedule, she often saw airports twice a week. But ask her about Pingry memories, and she recalls them with precision and a good dose of affection.

In what ways did your Pingry soccer career prepare you for Division I competition? Both teams are in very competitive conferences, so the level of play at Pingry set me up well for what college was going to be like, having to play against Georgetown, Butler, Creighton, and Marquette, for example. The teachers I had at Pingry—who really care about student-athletes—and the academics also prepared me for college. Because I was writing so many papers and had so many tests—and was juggling school work with practice—it wasn’t any different when I got to college. There were times I would leave Pingry practices and go right to my club team practices. I wouldn’t get home until 10:00 p.m. and then I’d start homework. At Seton Hall, practices were from 7:00-9:30 a.m. my first two years, and when the coaches realized we weren’t getting enough sleep, they changed to 2:00-4:30 p.m. my junior and senior years. Sometimes, I definitely pulled all-nighters.

What Pingry memories stand out the most? Winning states [the NJSIAA Non-Public A Championship] my freshman and sophomore years. I had to sit out my freshman year because of a back injury, but I got to play in the finals against Immaculate Heart my sophomore year. I sprained my ankle the week before at a game for my club team, but I still managed to play. Also, when we won counties my senior year, and I scored the winning goal. That felt great. I remember one of my teammates jumped on me and I caught her mid-air. [Then-Head] Coach [Andrew] Egginton told me after the game that he didn’t think I wasn’t going to make the shot—he thought I shot too early!

Your experience as a Pingry student-athlete, encompassed in just one word? The best. In terms of team chemistry, there was nothing better than Pingry. Even though I was also on a club team in high school, I enjoyed playing for Pingry more than anything else. The girls I played with, like Rachel Noone ’15, I still talk to this day. Coach Egginton was always very big about making sure everything was fair for everyone, giving everyone a chance. When things didn’t go our way, he still made sure that everyone felt that he was there for us and felt included, and asked how we could do better. I had more success with Pingry than at Seton Hall, but it was always a rewarding feeling at Pingry even if we did lose. We always had each other.

Do you ever return to campus to watch the girls’ team now? Did you know they were Non-Public A Champions last fall, their first state title since you graduated? My dad follows the team more than I do! He would come to every Pingry game because he worked closer to campus, and he sends me articles about them all the time. I was thrilled to learn about their championship title from him.

After doing your Independent Senior Project (ISP) at Pingry with the New Jersey State Police, you decided to major in Criminal Justice at Seton Hall, with a double minor in Africana Studies and Social Work. What’s next? In November, I’m taking the entrance exam for the New Jersey State Police Academy, so hopefully I can look forward to starting a career in law enforcement.
“It was a spectacular goal, classic Tanika. It took something special to win the game and get us to the finals—team effort and Tanika’s effort.”

—Then-Head Coach ANDREW EGGINTON, remembering the 2014 Somerset County Quarterfinals, during which Big Blue defeated Somerville, 2–1.
On the Arts

This past spring’s Alumni Art Exhibit in the Hostetter Arts Center Gallery featured the work of sculptor and jeweler MJ Tyson ’04 and photographer Dwight Hiscano ’80, both of whom have exhibited widely and been the subject of profiles in national publications. Ms. Tyson’s work centers on the relationship between people and their possessions, and Mr. Hiscano has been photographing the American landscape for nearly four decades, particularly in New Jersey. Since the two artists’ pieces were viewed in the same space, they chose their work independently and then collaborated on the exhibit’s overall appearance.

“Since the mid-1980s, most of my landscape images have served as a statement: ‘This is a gift; it is beautiful; it should be protected.’”

— DWIGHT HISCANO ’80
“All material carries a past... It may be to our advantage—as a way of orienting ourselves in our world—to consider the cycles of creation and destruction intrinsic to the objects that surround us.”

— MJ Tyson ’04
“My proudest moments as a cellist are not really the concerts, but the process of getting to know everybody—those experiences where you’re just trying to progress and you’re with your friends in the orchestra and you’re working on a piece that’s challenging, but you help each other get through it.”

—CALEB PARK ’23

To read Caleb’s full profile, and the profiles of many other Pingry artists, visit pingry.org/artists.
As part of Big Blue Summer, Pingry Performing Arts Camp presented Finding Nemo, directed by drama teacher Alan Van Antwerp in Macrae Theater. Prior to a rehearsal, the cast participated in a warm-up exercise, “Crazy 8s.”
What inspires you about Pingry today?
The School just keeps getting better! It’s changed so much since I started at Pingry in the early ’70s. It was the first year Pingry was co-ed, and I was in eighth grade. Even since my daughters graduated in 2011 and 2013, a number of significant improvements have been made, such as block scheduling, the one-to-one laptop program, and the outcomes of the Strategic Plan. I’ve been privileged to witness so much of that change as a student, an alumna, a parent, and a trustee. The Honor Code and the excellent students supported by our incredible community have remained constant throughout the years; I admire that the changes have all come about to better educate students, both now and in the future.

What is your fondest Pingry memory?
When I was in 11th grade, I was part of an ecology class of mostly girls taught by Miller Bugliari ’52. One day, we went on a field trip to visit a sewage plant, and we had the opportunity to follow the progress of the water as it was treated and, eventually, made its way to the ocean. When we got to the beach, everyone started lying in the sand—just sunbathing and having a great time! That was a really fun day. I still have a picture with everyone lounging around, with Miller sitting up in the middle of us . . . I still tease him about that whenever I see him.

Hardest Pingry class?
I really couldn’t say! I don’t remember any nightmare classes, though many were challenging. In any case, the hardest classes are often the best. It’s easier for me to remember classes I loved. A few that come to mind are English with Peter Cowen ’66, French with Steven Feder, and AP American History with Frank Wozniak. I stay in touch with some of these teachers to this day; we recently hosted a retirement party for Peter Delman, and I speak with Steven Feder once a month, if not more. My daughter Emily is getting her Master’s degree in Eco-Criticism and Art History—I’m sure she has Peter Delman to thank for that. She’s even going to help lead a trip to Utah with Peter’s son John Crowley-Delman ’97 next summer . . . it’s incredible how deep Pingry connections can go!
support our students, strengthen our whole community, and position the School for future success. Together, we can make a real difference in the life of the School.

Visit pingry.org/give, call 908-647-5555 ext. 1284, or use the enclosed envelope to make your gift today.
Pingry in Your Neighborhood
PINGRY EVENTS HAPPENING NEAR YOU

YOU'RE INVITED

If you haven’t been receiving invitations for and updates about Pingry events, please send your email and mailing addresses to infochange@pingry.org.

Also, by sharing your business information, you will receive invitations to Pingry’s professional networking events and you may have the opportunity to speak at Career Day.

pingry.org
For more details and a full calendar, visit pingry.org/alumni.

JOIN US!

Upcoming events

Thursday, November 21
Young Alumni Holiday Party in New York City
Manhattan — 6:30 p.m.

Friday, November 29
Alumni Squash Event
Basking Ridge Campus — 3:00 p.m.

Friday, November 29
Alumni Hockey Game
Beacon Hill Club — 6:00 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE!

Spring Break in March
Pingry on the Road in Florida!
Friday, May 15 and Saturday, May 16
Reunion Weekend
Basking Ridge Campus
BOOKS, BUSINESSES, BEAUTIFUL ARTWORK, AND MORE — TAKE A PEEK AT WHAT OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS HAVE BEEN UP TO

Jeff Dawson ’95, an Executive Producer for the production company Critical Content, is Executive Producer and Editor of the TLC documentary JFK Jr. & Carolyn’s Wedding: The Lost Tapes. Through never-before-seen footage, it offers a behind-the-scenes look at JFK, Jr. and Carolyn Bessette’s secret 1996 wedding. Mr. Dawson explains that one of JFK, Jr.’s best childhood friends, Billy Noonan, was an unofficial videographer at the wedding and decided a few years ago that the time had come to share his footage.

“On the 20th anniversary of the tragic plane crash that took John, Carolyn, and her sister Lauren from us, Billy felt releasing this video could do some good. When too many people would be re-examining the negative, Billy wanted to celebrate the positive,” Mr. Dawson says. “As filmmakers, we sought to tell a story of the great people John and Carolyn were. We wanted to celebrate the incredible love they had for each other. The experience gave me a newfound respect, not just for John and Carolyn, but for the family and friends who supported them throughout their lives.”

Along with conducting interviews and directing the editing process, Mr. Dawson wrote the script that was narrated by actress Elizabeth McGovern.


Laurie Morrison Fabius ’99, a former middle school English teacher, has written her second book, Up for Air (Harry N. Abrams), about 13-year-old Annabelle who struggles in school, but is unstoppable in the pool. She’s the fastest girl on the middle school swim team, but everything changes when she’s asked to join the high school team.

“The book explores topics that many of my students were eager to read and talk about,” Ms. Fabius says, “including the social pressures of having older friends and the attention and awkwardness that can come with being an ‘early bloomer.’ When I was teaching English, I had a hard time finding books that really delved into these issues and featured 13- or 14-year-old characters.”

Vincent Morano ’94, President of Production for Phiphen Pictures, attended the Emmy Awards, where he was nominated as producer in the “Short Form Comedy or Drama Series” category for the Netflix series It’s Bruno! He is preparing to direct a documentary about a Tibetan wedding ceremony in the Zanskar region of India, deep in the Himalayan Mountains. The documentary will examine the region and culture, and the recent effects of modernization on a previously untouched society.

Hunter Stires ’15 won the U.S. Naval Institute’s 2018 General Prize Essay Contest, which invites entrants to “write to advance the professional, literary, and scientific understanding of sea power and other issues critical to national defense.” His winning entry appears in the May issue of USNI’s Proceedings magazine under the title “The South China Sea Needs a ‘Coin’ Toss,” along with a companion piece, “Why We Defend Free Seas.” Known for using speeches and essays to share his love of history when he was a Pingry student, Mr. Stires is a fellow with the John B. Hattendorf Center for Maritime Historical Research at the U.S. Naval War College, where he focuses on maritime strategy and logistics in the Western Pacific.

A graduate of Columbia University, he is an Associate at Central Gulf Lines, a division of SEACOR Holdings Inc., which provides marine transportation services.
SHARE YOUR NEWS
Submit your Class Note at pingry.org/classnotes, or mail it to Holland Sunyak ’02, Associate Director of Advancement, The Pingry School, 131 Martinsville Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920.

1948

BOB KIRKLAND celebrated his 90th birthday on June 23 at Charlie Brown’s in Chatham, NJ. His sister Tine Kirkland Graham P ’81 (wife of Jerry Graham ’52, P ’81) helped organize the party, which was attended by family members: John Thomas ’48, P ’88, GP ’13, ’15; Steve Waterbury ’49, P ’82, ’85; Miller Bugliari ’52, P ’86, ’90, ’97, GP ’20, ’24; Palmer Uhl (daughter of the late Jerry Uhl ’48); M’Liz Campbell (sister of the late Andy Campbell ’49); and other classmates’ family members. Mrs. Graham says it was an “incredible day with loving family and friends. Bob loved Pingry.”

A Historian in the Wars

“...reporting, with fidelity and brilliance, the face of combat as he saw it, at great personal risk, making a permanent and unforgettable contribution to the literature of World War II.”

Eighty-five years ago, Richard Tregaskis ’34, born and raised in Elizabeth, graduated and would go above and beyond (literally and figuratively) to report about wars, from the front lines. In 1946, he became—and still is—the School’s youngest alumnus to receive the Letter-in-Life Award, with the preceding quote appearing in his citation and reprinted in the June 1946 issue of The Pingry Review. The same year, he was the main speaker at the School’s Victory Dinner for alumni who had returned from the armed services.

Associate Editor of The Pingry Record his senior year, Mr. Tregaskis majored in English at Harvard University, where he was a member of the championship swim team, and became a reporter and feature writer for the Boston Advertiser. Upon noticing his work, the New York-based International News Service called him to New York to work the cable desk, then sent him to the Pacific as a war correspondent, the first location among many during his career; according to the History Channel’s website for the documentary WWII in HD, he was ineligible for the draft because of type 1 diabetes, so reporting on the war became his only option to be on the front lines. Mr. Tregaskis would leave an unparalleled legacy while covering numerous conflicts; in addition to World War II, he reported from Korea and Vietnam.

How did Mr. Tregaskis stand out from others who wrote about war? The words of Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.), in his Dedication to Mr. Tregaskis’s Southeast Asia: Building the Bases: The History of Construction in Southeast Asia, help answer that question. While most books until that time had
been written by either historians or those fighting in a war, "Richard Tregaskis found his extraordinary distinction in the fact that he, a professional historian, was also invariably a part of the war he chronicled. And that is why his work always has both the authenticity of gun smoke and the grace of the skilled literary craftsman." Lt. General Krulak praises Mr. Tregaskis for sharing the experiences of those fighting, and for showing his devotion to the United States.

Or consider *Black Hawk Down* author Mark Bowden in his Introduction to Mr. Tregaskis’s most well-known book, *Guadalcanal Diary* (adapted as a movie of the same title, starring Preston Foster, Lloyd Nolan, William Bendix, Richard Conte, and Anthony Quinn): "Downplaying his own extraordinary heroism, writing with great fairness and restraint, Tregaskis shaped America’s understanding of the war, and influenced every account that came after, fiction or nonfiction . . . he was less concerned with the stories of individuals than with the fate of the entire effort, on which everyone’s survival depended."

Mr. Tregaskis received the International News Service Medal of Honor for Heroic Devotion to Duty (1942-1943) and the Purple Heart (1944) after “a chunk of German shrapnel tore through his helmet and shattered his skull on November 22, 1943” (near Venafró, Italy, between Naples and Rome), as written by Flint Whitlock in his Introduction to *Invasion Diary*. He was partly paralyzed and temporarily lost the ability to speak, gaining it back by reading poetry out loud (in 1973, he died, but not while covering a war—he drowned while swimming near his home in Hawaii).

During his career, Mr. Tregaskis reported on other topics as well, such as the Chinese Civil War and American migrants who settled in Australia, and was interested in air transportation and the space program; he flew on the first flight of America’s first commercial jet, the Boeing 707 (1957), the inaugural Qantas flight to Australia (1958), and the inaugural flight of French airline TAI, to Tahiti (1960).
Class Notes

1952

MILLER BUGLIARI ‘52, ‘86, ‘90, ‘97, GP ‘20, ‘24 placed 11th on a recent NJ.com ranking, “The Top 99 New Jersey High School Coaches of All Time.” NJ.com cited his statistics as of publication: 863 wins, 22 undefeated regular seasons, 26 state titles, 27 county championships, seven-time “State Coach of the Year,” and recent inductee into the National High School Hall of Fame. “Add it all up and you have one of the greatest high school coaching resumes in New Jersey history,” they wrote.

1962

SKIP DAHLGREN writes, “Fifty years ago, on 4 July 1969, while I was posted at Kagnew Station in Asmara as an SP4 Arabic translator/interpreter, I helped lead a tour of archaeological and historical sites around Eritrea and Ethiopia, at one of which I had already spent several weeks taking part in that season’s excavation. While visiting another important site that was far off the main road and had required special permission to visit, we encountered a group of soldiers from the Eritrean Liberation Front. The resulting experience remains my most memorable Independence Day.”

HARRY MOSER, Founder and President of the Reshoring Initiative, has been named one of 25 members of the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Investment Advisory Council, which advises the Secretary of Commerce on how government policies and programs affect the United States’ ability to attract and facilitate business investments. The same week of the announcement, Harry was quoted extensively in a New York Times Business Section cover article (August 13) and interviewed on PRI’s The World (August 16). Annual reshoring of manufacturing jobs from offshore has surged from 7,000 in 2010, when Harry founded the Reshoring Initiative, reshorenw.org, to 145,000 in 2018.

1982

DR. ROB MACRAE is the new Head of School at Louisville Collegiate School. As Collegiate’s 15th Head of School, he brings more than 30 years of experience in independent school leadership, including 14 years of experience in Head of School positions at Cincinnati Country Day School and New Canaan Country School.

1988

JAY ANTONELLI, a member of Pingry’s Athletics Hall of Fame, is coaching the U.S. Greco-Roman Team in USA Wrestling’s U23 World Championships in November. Among many accolades, he has coached a World bronze medalist, one Pan American champion, and eight U.S. Open champions, and has twice received USA Wrestling “Coach of the Year” honors (1998 and 2007). Jay serves as Director of the Physical Education Department at the United States Naval Academy, where he leads the Plebe Summer Physical Education Program, serves as a martial arts instructor, and is an assistant coach of the Naval Academy Wrestling team.

DR. JENNIFER HARTSTEIN, a child psychologist, appeared on NBC’s TODAY on August 15 to discuss online bullying, social media, and advice for parents. She explained that, for adults, social media can be addictive (checking repeatedly: “did somebody else say something [about me]?”), so it’s even tougher for a developing brain to get away from that loop. Jennifer advises parents to model the correct behavior. Also, since technology enables children to hide anonymously behind a screen, sometimes creating fake accounts, she concluded, “Be online the person you want to be in real life.”

DEBORAH SITTIG-FOWLER was recognized in September by NJMom.com as an “NJMOM-preneur of the Week.” Ten years ago, she and Karen Carolonza co-founded the healthcare-focused communication firm, Green Room Communications “because we knew there were better ways for pharmaceutical and healthcare companies to tell their stories and engage with patients, doctors, and their communities to improve health,” Deborah said in an interview with NJMom.com. “Building on our experiences as former journalists, corporate executives, and moms, we saw the need for a more flexible approach to public relations. Public relations is more than ‘spin’ and persuasion; it’s about content and storytelling. Green Room Communications is a team of healthcare story masters who guide our healthcare and pharmaceutical clients to tell their stories at the right time, to the right people. We do this across many ‘channels,’ whether print, online, social media, or the intranet—as part of a holistic approach to communications.” A former television news anchor, Deborah switched to public relations to make it easier to be a mother and raise a family. When her son Cannon was diagnosed with hypophosphatasia (HPP), a rare metabolic bone condition, she wanted a connection with the pharmaceutical industry. In 2006, Deborah also founded Soft
Bones: The US Hypophosphatasia Foundation to provide information, education, and support for people living with HPP, their families, and caregivers. “Today, I wear three hats—as a mom, a healthcare communicator, and a patient advocate.” Deborah was previously honored as one of the “Top 25 Leading Women Entrepreneurs of New Jersey” and received the Boy Scouts of America’s “Woman of the Year Award” (both in 2014).

1991

DR. BON KU, Assistant Dean for Health & Design at Thomas Jefferson University, and a board-certified Emergency Medicine physician at Jefferson University Hospitals, was profiled in The Philadelphia Inquirer in September. He is one of four physicians on Chasing the Cure, a live, weekly, 90-minute television program that deals with challenging medical cases, hosted by Ann Curry and airing Thursdays on TBS and TNT. According to the article, Bon and his colleagues “review case files from patients who have struggled with daunting medical problems, often for years, without answers. The team hashes out possible diagnoses and treatments during pre-recorded segments, then meets live in the studio . . . Simultaneously, viewers submit suggestions via social media,” which are screened by an off-air staff with medical training. In the story, Bon clarifies that “we are not supplanting or taking over the care that they already have. We are simply adding more data, more expert opinions.”

1993

GRAHAM MACMILLAN has been appointed President of the Visa Foundation. According to a press release, he will develop and execute the Foundation’s impact investing and grant-making strategy in support of its mission to help low-income and financially underserved micro- and small businesses around the world. He will also oversee the Foundation’s activities addressing broader community needs and humanitarian crisis response. With 20 years of experience leading purpose-driven work in the private and public sectors with global institutions, Graham joins Visa from the Ford Foundation, where he was Senior Program Officer for Mission Investments. He serves on the Board of Directors of Village Capital and ROC USA (Resident Owned Communities).

KRISTIN SOSTOWSKI is the new President of the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL). Kristin is a Director (Partner) in the Employment and Labor Law Department of Gibbons P.C. and is Team Leader of the firm’s Higher Education practice. According to a Gibbons press release, Kristin noted in her induction speech that she ascends to...
the NAWL presidency in the year marking the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage, and reflected on how much progress American women have made—and how much remains to be done. “As NAWL’s founders have taught us, we can truly advance in this profession only when we achieve broader equality, and we must not rest until we do,” she said. In addition to her work with NAWL, Kristin has been a Trustee of the New Jersey Women Lawyers Association since 2008. Earlier this year, she was named one of New Jersey’s “Best 50 Women in Business” by NJBIZ, one of the state’s leading business news publications. Profiles in Diversity Journal also selected her for its 2019 “Women Worth Watching” issue, which recognizes women who have demonstrated high levels of leadership.

1999

LAURIE MORRISON FABIUS has written her second book. Read more on page 55.

2003

JOE DELLA ROSA is engaged to Crisanta German. They live in Los Angeles and are planning a summer 2020 wedding.

2005

JULIE JOHNSON has been named CEO of software company Armored Things, which she co-founded. The company, whose mission is to keep communities safe, uses data from various sources (such as mobile devices, security cameras, and motion sensors) and artificial intelligence to provide solutions for operational intelligence. During a 2018 interview on theCUBE (an interview show covering enterprise tech and innovation), Julie described Armored Things as “next-generation incident response . . . we sit at the intersection of physical and cyber security.” Prior to co-founding Armored Things in 2016, Julie was a venture capitalist at Qualcomm and Vice President at PIMCO.

2006

KATIE JENNINGS returned to the U.S. after spending a year covering EU politics and policy as a reporter for POLITICO, based in Brussels, Belgium. She was named a 2019-20 Knight-Bagehot Fellow in Business and Economics Reporting at Columbia University. Read more on page 30.

2007

DAN DAVIDSON married Abby Colella on March 23 at the Vero Beach Museum of Art. Pictured are Julie McMahon ’07, Josh Freedman ’07, Ted Moller ’07, Ross Millard ’07, Jenny Gorelick ’10, Sam Waterbury ’07, Dan Davidson ’07, Sam Adriance ’07, Abby Colella, Elizabeth Moore Cordani ’07, Evan Towt ’07, and Ned Adriance ’09.

2009

MAYA ARTIS participated in the cycling event “Velocity: Columbia’s Ride to End Cancer” in October. The event supports cancer research at Columbia University’s Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center.

MATT FECHTER has been named a talent agent in the Motion Pictures Division of CAA (Creative Artists Agency).

VINCENT MORANO was nominated for an Emmy Award. Read more on page 55.

JEFF DAWSON is Executive Producer for a documentary about JFK, Jr. that aired on TLC. Read more on page 55.

FRANK MORANO has joined the law firm of Argentino Family Law & Child Advocacy in Montclair, NJ, as Counsel. Argentino Law focuses on LGBT issues in family law and discrimination, among other areas. Frank is a trustee of the LGBT Rights Section of the State Bar and a member of the LGBT board of the State Theatre of New Jersey, and has been named Vice Chair of the Somerset County Bar Foundation where he volunteers with Stacey Cozewith ’97. He and his partner live in Bound Brook with their two children.
Hunter Stires ’15 with retired U.S. Navy Admiral James Stavridis who, in addition to being a past recipient of the General Prize Essay Contest, is Chair of the Board of Directors for the U.S. Naval Institute.

2015

JONATHAN BUTLER, former captain of Harvard University’s men’s lacrosse team, was named to the 2019 U.S. Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (USILA)/Warrior and New Balance Division I Scholar All-America Team. The USILA Scholar All-America Program was established in 1989 to recognize student-athletes from USILA member institutions who have distinguished themselves academically, athletically, and as citizens of their communities. Jonathan graduated from Harvard with a degree in Economics.

HUNTER STIRES won the U.S. Naval Institute’s 2018 General Prize Essay Contest. Read more on page 55.

2016

JACK CASEY, one of three captains of Notre Dame’s 2019 men’s soccer team, was profiled in The Observer, the independent newspaper serving Notre Dame, Saint Mary’s, and Holy Cross, on September 13. In the story, “Casey reflects on path to captancy, culture of teamwork, competitive edge,” he is praised for “a knack for playing the perfect assist—for the game-winning goal against Boston College in 2018. For the game-winning goal against No. 2 Syracuse in 2016. For the game-winning goal against Duke again in 2016. Propelling his teammates to excellence time and time again.” Jack appeared in 18 matches his freshman season, recorded his first career start as a sophomore (then had 19 more, one of six players to start all 20 games that season), and played in all 21 games as a junior, starting 19 of them.

2017

JESSIE McLAUGHLIN writes, “Last winter, with help of a few friends, I adapted the 1971 play Cowboy Mouth by Sam Shepard and Patti Smith, and shared it with the students and faculty of the Theatre Department at Rutgers University’s Mason Gross School of the Arts. Those who know the original play may no longer recognize it in this form. In this unique, physical adaptation, in which I take what was once a play and turn it into a dance piece (still making use of all original text), I wanted to explore the absurdity of reality as eight tangled limbs grapple with dependency, control, and what it means to be a savior. Staging this work was an exhilarating, break-neck process. I was invited to present it this past September in New York at Gibney Dance—a movement organization whose work in social justice and the uplifting of new voices I greatly admire—alongside a marvelous team of brilliantly talented performers, designers, and stage managers. It was an amazing opportunity for us to perform as part of Gibney’s POP program (Performance Opportunity Project), which serves the dance community by providing space and support to up-and-coming movement artists.” In the spring, Jessie left Rutgers after completing two years in the acting conservatory to pursue other live performance interests, but plans to return to complete an undergraduate degree. “To those Pingry artists who are scared to do what you love: find it, fight for it. It’s worth the struggle.”

2018

KASSIDY PETERSON, playing softball at MIT, was named a 2019 NFCA (National Fastpitch Coaches Association) All-America Scholar-Athlete. She contributed to a team that recorded the ninth-best cumulative GPA in Division III.

NANCY PEARLSTINE CONGER
July 6, 2019, age 73, Green Pond, NJ
Mrs. Conger served as a member of Pingry’s Board of Trustees from 1987-1999, including several years as Vice Chair. One of the early initiators to push for more socioeconomic diversity and financial aid at Pingry, she was highly respected for her candor, willingness to speak up on important issues, insights, intelligence, seriousness, and great sense of humor. Her life combined a commitment to education and public service; work in finance; and love of family. A graduate of Wheaton College Massachusetts, Mrs. Conger spent 50 years in financial services, including time at LF Rothschild; Mid-Atlantic Bank; Kidder, Peabody & Co.; and U.S. Trust Company before founding and serving as President of Ezray Investment Advisors, which became the present-day Red Hook Management of Morristown, NJ. Mrs. Conger also served for 16 years on the board of Wheaton College, including three years as Board Chair; and eight years on the board of Ursinus College, which, this past May, awarded her an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters (in absentia). At the time of her death, she was Board Chair of The Land Conservancy of New Jersey, having served on that board for six years; the Conservancy announced in June that it had dedicated its West Brook Preserve in her honor, recognizing her key role in preserving the property (West Brook is a major source of clean water for the Wanaque Reservoir). Survivors include her husband of 40 years, William Conger; three children, Dr. Ezra Jennings ’89, Ray Conger; and Abigail Conger ’05; two daughters-in-law, Alix and Hilary; two beloved granddaughters, Penelope and Cassie; brother Norman Pearlstine; and sister (Lady) Marjorie Hattersley. Mrs. Conger died after a courageous battle with bone and breast cancer.
In Memoriam

ROBERT MASON KIRKLAND, JR. ’48
September 2, 2019, age 90, Chatham, NJ
Mr. Kirkland attended Columbia University and served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. He worked for United Airlines, National State Bank, Eastern Steel Barrel, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Liberty Hall Museum. He also owned a trendy boutique, The Scene. Mr. Kirkland was predeceased by his sister Elise Kirkland Chase Steele. Survivors include his sisters Ann Mason K. Bullen and Marie Tine K. Graham; brother-in-law Jerome J. Graham, Jr.; nephew Stuart M. Graham; first cousin Joseph N. DeRaismes ’63; and many cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends. A photo from his 90th birthday party appears on page 56.

JAMES MARSHALL PORTER ’53
May 36, 2019, age 84, Falmouth, ME (formerly of Mendham, NJ)
Mr. Porter graduated from Syracuse University, studied at the Insurance Society of New York, and was a member of the U.S. Air Force Reserve. He was President and Chairman of the Holmes Agency in Summit, a firm founded by his great-grandfather Edward C. Holmes. Mr. Porter was a member of the Executive Committee of the New Jersey Association of Independent Insurance Agents, and was active in the Rotary Club of Summit-New Providence and the Suburban Chamber of Commerce. His passion for community and his concern for the well-being of young people led him to offer service to many organizations. In the Summit area, he served as Chair of the Board of the Winston School and the YMCA (leading its Capital Campaign to rebuild the facility) and as a trustee for Kent Place School; he received the YMCA’s “Shuart Reed Memorial Award” for distinguished community service (1991). He was also a founding member and past president of the Schiff Natural Lands Trust in Mendham Township, and served on the board of the Charles Emil Thenen Foundation for 25 years, providing grants to youth and families at risk. Efforts to revitalize the Newark community also held a special interest for Mr. Porter. He served as Chair of the Board of The New Jersey Historical Society, and as a board member and Co-Chair of the Greater Newark Conservancy for 17 years—he was the inaugural recipient of the Conservancy’s “Shipley Family Award for Philanthropic Endeavors” (2014). He was also a member of the founding board of The Council of New Jersey Grantmakers. Survivors include his beloved wife of 59 years, Kathry (Katie); daughter Eleanor (Elie) and son-in-law Sylvain; son James, Jr.; daughter Clara and son-in-law Daniel; five grandchildren, Thibault, Huston, Maeve, Eleanor, and Celia; brother Ralph C. Porter, Jr. (Robin) ’51 and sister-in-law the Reverend Marsue Harris; and numerous nieces and nephews. His late brother David graduated from Pingry in 1957.

DR. E. THOMAS BEHR ’58
September 11, 2019, age 79, Millington, NJ
Dr. Behr graduated from Colgate University and received a master’s degree from Middlebury College’s Bread Loaf School of English and a doctorate in English Renaissance Literature from Princeton University. He taught English and coached football and lacrosse at Pingry from 1962-1969, and humanities and theater at Newark Academy, where he created a Fine Arts Department. After leaving academia, Dr. Behr spent 30 years specializing in global leadership development and sales strategies for multinational corporations. Also an author, he wrote Eight Decades at The Pingry School: The Life & Times of Miller A. Bugliari, released at Reunion Weekend in 2015 when the School celebrated Mr. Bugliari’s 80th birthday and 800th career soccer win. Dr. Behr also wrote The Tao of Sales: The Easy Way to Sell in Tough Times and self-published three historical novels—Blood Brothers: A Novel of Courage and Treachery On the Shores of Tripoli; The Most Bold and Daring Act of the Age; and Doppelgänger: An American Spy in World War II France. He was a member of the Board of Adjustment in Long Hill Township for 20 years, serving as chair for some of that time, and was also a Planning Board member. Survivors include his wife JoAnn law Jerome J. Graham, Jr. ’52, P ’81; nephew of that time, and was also a Planning Board member. Survivors include his wife JoAnn Barber died from a difficult struggle with an aggressive form of Parkinson’s disease.

GREGORY D. HELSEL ’64
June 1, 2019, age 72, Ridgewood, NJ
Mr. Helsel graduated from Bucknell University and served as a Lieutenant (junior grade) in the U.S. Navy from 1968-1971. He participated in combat operations off the coast of Vietnam aboard the destroyer USS Nicholas (DD-49) as the ship’s gunnery officer, before serving as the Aide and Flag Lieutenant to Rear Admiral William H. Shawcross, Commander of U.S. Naval Base Subic Bay in the Philippines. After his military service, Mr. Helsel worked in commercial banking, primarily with Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company, before transitioning into a career as a Certified Financial Planner. Survivors include his son Christopher, wife Elizabeth, sister Marcia, and beloved dog Walter.

PAUL “TOD” ALLING BARBER ’64
July 13, 2019, age 73, New Providence, NJ
Mr. Barber (known professionally as “Paul” and outside of work as “Tod”) excelled scholastically at Pingry and played both soccer and lacrosse. He graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering. Mr. Barber spent over 30 years as an executive with the Paramus division of Exxon Chemical Company and concluded his managerial role with Paramus as Vice President of Worldwide Technology. His final 10 years with Paramus were spent as a key member of the litigation team. He was a lifelong tennis player and golfer and was inducted into Pingry’s Athletics Hall of Fame as a member of the 1962 Soccer Team. Survivors include his children Ryan and Kelsey; five grandchildren, Reid, Cole, Chase, Cooper, and Mason; sister Carol; and nieces Lisa, Barbara, and Tina. Mr. Barber died from a difficult struggle with an aggressive form of Parkinson’s disease.

The editorial staff makes every effort to publish an obituary for and pay tribute to the accomplishments of alumni who have passed away, based on information available as of press time. If family members, classmates, or friends would like to submit tributes, please contact Greg Waxberg ’96 at gwaxberg@pingry.org or Holland Sunyak ’02 at hsunya@pingry.org.
A Visit to the Archives

As noted in the Summer 2019 issue, Archivist Peter Blasevick is digitizing about 5,000 slides that span five decades of Pingry history, from the 1950s to the 1990s. “To our knowledge, these particular photos were developed as slides, instead of as photos,” he says. “It used to be a common practice because people gave presentations on slide projectors.” The digitization process is lengthy. “Whereas a photo is already a decent size, so scanning doesn’t take that long, a slide is so small that it must be scanned at a very high resolution, using a special scanner that handles transparencies,” he explains. One slide requires three to four minutes, so the time adds up!

Wall of Fame

Each fall, to capture the highlights of the previous school year’s athletics achievements, Archivist Peter Blasevick and David Fahey ’99, Associate Director of Operations, Safety and Strategic Initiatives, update three display cases in the Miller A. Bugliari ’52 Athletics Center—every team from all three seasons is represented by a photograph or an artifact, and often a summary of season highlights written by Senior Writer Andrea Dawson. In addition, wall graphics are updated to reflect award winners and championships (conference, county, and state), and all team photos are added to the School’s searchable Hall of Fame database (halloffame.pingry.org). Mr. Blasevick compares the process, which begins early every spring, to museum-quality work for the Pingry sports world.

Sliding Through Pingry’s Past

As noted in the Summer 2019 issue, Archivist Peter Blasevick is digitizing about 5,000 slides that span five decades of Pingry history, from the 1950s to the 1990s. “To our knowledge, these particular photos were developed as slides, instead of as photos,” he says. “It used to be a common practice because people gave presentations on slide projectors.” The digitization process is lengthy. “Whereas a photo is already a decent size, so scanning doesn’t take that long, a slide is so small that it must be scanned at a very high resolution, using a special scanner that handles transparencies,” he explains. One slide requires three to four minutes, so the time adds up!
A Final Look
Last school year, second-grade students created this mural of Alaska as part of an interdisciplinary, eight-week unit on the 49th state. Read more at pingry.org/extras.