Mastery Learning:
Truly knowing our students as learners and individuals

Summer 2021
FEATURE
4 Mastery Learning: Truly knowing our students as learners and individuals

CAMPUS LIFE
30 Student Accomplishments
32 Commencement
38 Arts
40 Athletics

COMMUNITY IMPACT
44 Awards
46 Alumni Center
48 Advancement
50 Board Welcome and Thanks
53 Parents’ Association Connection
54 Fair Play
56 College Matriculation
Dear Hawken Community,

In my end-of-year video message to Hawken’s parents, I conveyed my gratitude to Hawken parents for the important role they played as we navigated a year that began with a tremendous amount of trepidation, anxiety, and dread and, thankfully, ended with a refreshing dose of hope, light, and energy.

In spite of having to process the intersection of a global pandemic, a polarizing election, social unrest, and a revival of a movement toward civil rights all in the same year, the Hawken community came together and accomplished a lot. We were open for most of the year. We educated our students. We got clubs and sports and activities up and running, albeit reconfigured. How? Because we worked together, focusing on partnership grounded in appreciation, flexibility, and tolerance.

Ironically, the pandemic accelerated our progress in one of the most critical efforts: truly knowing students as individuals and learners (principle #1 in Hawken’s Purpose, Promise, and Principles). Out of necessity, our teachers became equipped with the essential tools required to innovate and problem solve; they amped up their knowledge and effective use of technology; and as a result, they quickly achieved facility with software platforms that support individualized pacing and learning. These areas of growth will help teachers take mastery learning to a new level at Hawken.

Hawken’s movement toward a more personalized approach to teaching and learning is so important that we made it the focus of this issue’s feature article. While it offers a mere overview, highlighting some of the work that is being done in our divisions and on our campuses, I hope that it will provide some insight into the reasoning behind this shift and offer a glimpse into where we are at this juncture in our journey.

Hawken’s accomplishments this past year prove that there is always opportunity, even in a crisis. But it takes a community like ours to find it and run with it. I am so very proud to be able to lead such a community, and I look forward to our eventual return to the full and robust Hawken experience, unrestrained by the limitations imposed by the pandemic. That time is coming, and the enthusiasm is palpable.

Sincerely,

D. Scott Looney
Head of School
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Mastery Learning:
Truly knowing our students as learners and individuals

“Nature does not develop the child’s faculties according to a general plan; and when men attempt to educate children en masse, and irrespective of the discrimination which nature has made in each individual of the group, their efforts must necessarily be futile. In this thought may be found an explanation of mediocrity.”

James Hawken, circa 1920
In the summer of 2014, I wrote an article for the Review entitled *The Future for Education: Why Hawken Has to Lead* to highlight the pressing need for schools to shift from an outdated educational model, one designed in the image of industrial production, to a more authentic and individualized model that would connect our students to the challenges and opportunities in the real world. I argued that if we were to be true to our mission of preparing students for an ever-changing world, we must move beyond the one-size-fits-all approach to education – and that Hawken was uniquely positioned to take the lead in this effort.

It should come as no surprise, then, that we have spent recent years pivoting toward a new model of education – one that takes into account society’s current, evolving culture of innovation and globalization as well as the deepening research on human brain development and how students learn. That research underscores the fact that all students have the capacity to learn and persist to mastery, albeit via different paths and at varying paces; that students respond differently to different styles of teaching; that intrinsic motivation is a critical part of authentic, lasting learning; and that learning by doing is far more effective than learning passively. Yet in spite of that evidentiary research, the industrialized approach to education continues to dominate our educational institutions – most likely because making such a large shift feels risky. But we now know that the status quo around traditional, industrial education is the higher risk.

Teachers and administrators at Hawken have been actively engaged in transformational work in recent years, redefining our pedagogy to pivot toward more individualized, personalized, and hands-on approaches. If we claim to “*truly know our students as individuals and learners*” as we state in our guiding document, Hawken’s Purpose, Promise, and Principles, and if we know that not all students learn in the same way or at the same pace, then it is our duty to ensure that all students maximize their true potential. The industrial model of education, clearly and simply, does not achieve this goal.

In this feature article, teachers and administrators highlight some of their efforts as we continue to make the shift toward more meaningful, relevant, and effective approaches to teaching and learning. It is a work in progress, but it is important work that must be done in order to be true to our mission and principles.

D. Scott Looney
Head of School
Mastery Learning: Individualizing the Journey

- Individualized pace
- Individualized paths
- Teaching is differentiated to the unique needs and possibilities of each child
- Honoring individual identity and our shared humanity is a core element
- Intentional focus on promoting a culture of belonging

Honoring the Uniqueness of Each Child

- Iterative persistence to depth and excellence (depth over breadth)
- Agile design of quality work products
- High standards expressed as competencies in all aspects of a child's life (knowledge, skills, healthy habits, character traits)
- Assessment of learning tied to core competencies
- Anywhere, anytime learning: evidence of learning from outside of the classroom honored (co-curriculars, work, home, etc.)

Persisting to Mastery: Meeting High Standards

- Feedback to students designed to foster self-efficacy
- Feedback to students is timely, specific, kind, individualized, and praises effort over ability
- Teachers as facilitators of learning, not gatekeepers of knowledge
- Teachers are coaches, not judges
- Overall approach to student growth is strengths-based
- Developing social-emotional skills (SEL) is a core element

Teaching a Growth Mindset: Developing Agency

- Learner-centered: Students have authentic choice and a voice in their learning
- Student work has meaningful connections to and applications in the real world
- Public demonstrations of learning are used to enhance the quality of student work
- The answer to the question: “Why do I need to learn this?” is known to the student

Making Learning Meaningful
Lower School
Toddler - Grade 5

Students come to us full of ideas, curiosities, questions, and passions. We don’t have to give those things to them. Because we know that children do better when they feel seen, appreciated, and valued, a big part of our job is to make sure that we understand them, to let them know that their ideas matter, and to guide them in using those ideas, questions, and passions to lay the foundation for future learning and growth.

Courtney Martin
Lower School Director

Varied Pace

Early Childhood Director Mary Beth Hilborn notes, “Every child has a unique learning landscape that is shaped by the amount of time it takes to receive, interpret, and act upon any information received. Truly knowing students as learners and individuals requires teachers to observe their students carefully to discover each child’s learning pace and rhythm.” That’s why teachers and administrators focus on designing curriculum that allows for differentiation of pace, with some students accelerating while others stay put to deepen understanding. In this way, they avoid the two main problems with the traditional, industrial model with a fixed pace for everyone: boredom and frustration. “We know that most students can master most things, if given more time,” the directors explain. “We also know that asking them to do work that feels repetitive after they have already mastered something is the path to boredom and disengagement. Making the learning goal the fixed constant with pace becoming the independent variable, often in the form of project- or problem-based work, can support an individualized approach that enables students time to dig deeper, make connections to prior experiences, accelerate or iterate, and demonstrate their best work.”
Mary Beth Hilborn adds, “Because children are more invested in topics or ideas that they are inherently interested in and excited by, choice and voice are a focus even in the early years. During our daily ‘investigation time’ in Early Childhood, teachers guide students to think independently by helping them identify and voice their interests; they then encourage students to actively explore those interests without a prescriptive agenda from the teacher. Instead, teachers observe and record emerging interests and develop opportunities for students to deepen and broaden their experiences within those areas of interest.

As students move into Lower School, teachers introduce topics of study and focus on knowledge, skill development, and practice, while simultaneously allowing students to select a sub-topic that is meaningful and interesting to them. For example, Martin explains, “All students may be conducting nonfiction research, but exploring different topics of their choosing. Or they may all be writing ‘how-to’ books, but about different processes based on the individual child’s interests or areas of expertise.”
Time

The Lower School schedule is intentionally designed to include large blocks of uninterrupted time to support interdisciplinary work, problem-based learning opportunities, and unstructured time for investigation and exploration. There is also time built in for meetings, morning exercise, play, and rest and/or quiet time, which are equally as important as academic time in a child’s day. All of these endeavors, the teachers explain, aid them in their efforts to truly know our students as learners and individuals.

Martin shares that one of the most misguided ideas in education is the importance of teaching for understanding as opposed to teaching for coverage (i.e. a vast content area). “For students to develop creative and critical thinking skills – problem solving, concept development, deduction and induction, conflict resolution, moral and ethical reasoning, analysis, etc. – we have to give them time to delve more deeply into the complexity of a single topic, not just skim the surface.” The longer time blocks built into Hawken’s schedule do just that. They enable students to dig more deeply into the subject matter, thereby strengthening their core skills and knowledge.

At Hawken, this deeper dive happens when students are invited to select an area of interest within a topic. After an initial introduction to a topic, students find an area to investigate and then share their learning with one another. In second grade, for example, students are invited to practice research skills by selecting a country of interest and an area to focus on within that country – sports in India, architecture in Italy, etc. With this approach, students are still exposed to a significant amount of content knowledge but also have time to practice problem-solving skills like reasoning and analysis, concept development, and conflict resolution.
Social-Emotional Learning

Studies have shown that the development of basic social-emotional skills – interpersonal skills, self-control, and taking initiative – lay the foundation for future academic success and personal fulfillment. The emotional center of the brain, it turns out, is essential to the growth and development of the other “intellectual” parts of the brain. Three tools used at Hawken to build that foundation and to truly know students include:

- **Hawken’s Developmental Continuum**, which specifically highlights this type of learning. In the early years from preschool through grade 2, the social-emotional domain focuses on growth in awareness: naming of personal feelings, noticing feelings of others, and responding to those feelings. In grade 3-5, the primary focus is on the development of emotional regulation and social interaction.

- **The RULER program**, developed by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, which focuses on five skills of emotional intelligence: recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing, and regulating emotions. Students across grade levels use the mood meter to identify, label, and manage emotions throughout the day.

- **Responsive Classroom**, an approach to teaching and learning that places equal importance on the social and academic curriculum and focuses on five social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-regulation. Responsive classroom is present in every aspect of teaching and learning. From the respectful language in which teachers are trained to talk with students, to the intentional and inclusive tone of the Morning Message that greets children each day, to the ways in which challenges (social and academic) are met with proactive and thoughtful prompting of problem-solving, Responsive Classroom creates an environment in which value of and advocacy for others and self creates a culture in which children feel seen and heard.

“Education, therefore, must begin with a psychological insight into the child’s capacities, interests, and habits.”

John Dewey
Assessment and Achievement Strategies

Hilborn explains that in Early Childhood, daily anecdotal teacher observations connected to Hawken's Developmental Continuum note progress in all areas of development. In the Lower School, Martin notes, performance-based assessments with rubrics are used to determine mastery or competency of content knowledge, skills, and general understanding of big ideas or concepts. Photos, videos, teacher notes, annotated student work, and other such artifacts are then tied directly to the standards and competencies represented in Hawken's Developmental Continuum.

Hawken teachers use many kinds of assessment, but the most common types of assessments used to support personalized learning for each child are:

- **Pre-assessments** to develop and differentiate curriculum to meet students' personal needs. This can include observation of specific activities and tasks that allow a teacher to better understand where a student's current knowledge, strengths, and challenges may fall.

- **Formative assessments** to check in with students for understanding and misconceptions to determine adjustments to curriculum to meet students' changing needs. While there are a variety of formative assessment tools, a few examples include student interviews, anecdotal observations, and "exit tickets."

- **Summative assessments** to allow students to share their level of competency/mastery of knowledge, skills, and general understandings of big ideas at the completion of a specific topic or content area. Performance-based assessments are primarily used in Lower School to assess student learning. Post-assessments are also utilized to note growth in a particular unit of study.

- **Self-reflection** to allow students to reflect on their learning, acknowledge areas of strength, and set goals for improvement moving forward. This may include a student reflecting upon artifacts from a project or exploration while responding to questions that prompt articulation of their process and learning.
Problem-based learning

Problem-based learning often involves exploring a subject through an open-ended question regarding a real-world problem; it also reinforces the collaborative process where students work together to research and offer multiple solutions to address and solve the problem presented to them.

Prekindergarten students who were acclimating to a new room that did not offer consistent access to the playground mud kitchen (a class favorite) decided that they wanted to create their own for the outdoor area off of their new classroom.

Through careful observation and examination of the current mud kitchens, they collectively thought through what they liked about the models and brainstormed aspects they would like to improve. Utilizing the Innovation Lab, they each created prototypes, presented them to one another, and then worked with a teacher to translate their collective ideas into a sketch and ultimately a software design. After researching types of wood and deciding on a final design, they began construction under careful supervision, participating in all aspects of the building, from the cutting of wood to the placement of hardware. Their final product solved the “problem” they had faced, resulting in a creation that represented their collective thinking.

Mary Beth Hilborn

A few years ago, a group of second grade students noticed that the lost and found area was overflowing and becoming quite an eyesore.

That class decided to solve that problem by engaging in a design thinking process using the question, “How might we help the Lower School students to keep track of their things and find items they have lost?” Then, using a design thinking template, students tapped into their users, Lower School students and administrators, and engaged their empathy skills to design with their users’ needs in mind. Once a plan was made, the students worked with Nick DiGiorgio in the fabrication lab to eventually create a final prototype. As a result, the Lost and Found became an important staple that we use every day, making it easier for lost items to be organized so that they can easily be found.

Courtney Martin
Middle School
Grade 6 - 8

Hawken’s Middle School faculty strive to truly know students and curate a curriculum that is varied and individualized. Our aim is to help create an immersive personalized learning experience that utilizes design thinking, promotes individual pace, and develops content knowledge and skills. We also focus on personal and interpersonal health, because when students are healthy and feel safe, they are more available for learning, connection, and engagement.

Michelle Harris
Middle School Director

Pace

Harris speaks specifically to the importance of individual pacing in the Middle School, noting, “Our students bring a distinct perspective, preference, and pace for how they demonstrate understanding and mastery. Students may prefer to process information silently or aloud, in group discussions or a quiet setting, by reading, listening, or using a hands-on approach. Regardless of preference, we meet students where they are by giving them a broad range of opportunities to demonstrate competencies.”
Choice and Voice: Curiosity, Interest, and Passion

When students are given a choice, they tend to be more invested in both the process and outcome. At Hawken Middle School, students develop a unique schedule driven by their curiosity, interests, and passion.

- **Core Courses** - Humanities, mathematics, and science serve as a foundation for developing and refining essential skills and competencies. Faculty engage in ongoing research to develop curricular content to create numerous opportunities for personalized learning. Middle School faculty actively cultivate learning spaces and opportunities to elicit student ideas, support iterative thinking, and help students develop evidence-based explanations for their discoveries.

- **Electives** - Harris explains, “One of the hallmarks of the Middle School is our distinctive, comprehensive, and innovative electives program. Whether students have a newfound interest in the works of Shakespeare or a deep connection to the nuances of computer design, we want students to experience elective options that move them. Students can explore new topics or go deep into a discipline or interest.”

- **Interdisciplinary engagement** - “Research, writing, and presenting a fictional short story based on an historical event requires a complex set of skills including creative storytelling, detailed analysis, and a careful exploration of historical and literary detail,” Harris notes. “Students in 7th grade have the opportunity to integrate a significant event from the past with a set of characters from their imagination for a seamless integration of fiction and reality. The short story unit in 7th grade is a powerful opportunity for students to combine several disciplines into a single literary experience.”

Insights

The week before spring break, students enjoy Insights, a week-long immersive experience that allows students across all grade levels to have a memorable shared experience that takes place across the greater Cleveland area.

Cleveland’s rich history, vibrant neighborhoods, and cultural traditions serve as an ideal backdrop to explore essential questions and develop students’ strengths and interests. Our faculty serve as mentors, facilitators, and partners in a dynamic learning process. Students are placed at the center of the Insights experience, and focus on essential questions about entrepreneurship, our identities, music and visual art, or applying design thinking to solve a problem. From exploring the nuances of business development and menu models with restaurateurs to daily field trips to photograph Cleveland, its people and places, our Insights classes build a distinctive set of skills and create robust and lasting connections to our greater Cleveland community.
Social-Emotional Learning

Harris explains why social-emotional skill development is essential throughout the Middle School experience. “We work to know students as individuals and learners. We also know that emotions cause shifts in decision-making, attention, learning, and memory. Our creative advisory program, Advisory, Connect, & Engage (A.C.E.), incorporates year-long essential questions that allow for deep exploration and engagement about self and others. We also use Yale University’s RULER program as a foundation for social-emotional learning to elevate our awareness of emotions and our ability to regulate engagement with others, while practicing empathy and compassion.”

Last year’s A.C.E. theme was What to do with a difference? Students and faculty partnered with guest speakers and explored concepts such as growth mindset for cultural competency, team building, the neuroscience of bias, and equity vs. equality.

Real-World, Problem-based Learning

Our Community Engagement program enables students to learn more about their personal relationship with members of their local communities as well as their capacity for serving others. Harris addresses how teachers promote community engagement in the Middle School: “About four times per year, each grade-level advisory connects with an organization in the community to address an identified need, deepen relationships, improve outcomes, and allow for mutual reciprocity. Student-driven community engagement is a hallmark of the Middle School experience, from fundraisers to presentations, and a process that allows students to teach, model, and lead our community.”

Harris cites another example of student engagement beyond the classroom: “Hawken is a proud Facing History partner and the powerful Choosing to Participate program is a hallmark of our 8th grade experience. Our curriculum elevates individual responsibility and students’ responsibility as global citizens.”
Doorways

As Middle Schoolers navigate numerous academic and co-curricular experiences, one of the most storied and anticipated is the Doorways experience. There are many curriculum-based trips, and Harris asserts that “Doorways serves as a unique, immersive culminating experience that is powerful, positive, and often transformative in regard to their academic, personal, and social development. Different settings offer different opportunities for learning, growth, and development. Students in 6th grade visit Colonial Williamsburg; 7th graders travel to Washington, DC; and 8th graders backpack through the boroughs of New York City. The curricular and social-emotional basis for each trip stems from current academic content, grade-level Essential Questions, and our social-emotional theme and programming.”

Measuring Achievement: Assessment Strategies

Harris points out that in order for meaningful growth to occur, students need timely, differentiated support and feedback, which can take several forms. “We place students at the center of our assessment strategies, which are varied, nuanced, and dynamic. Our assessment practices incorporate ongoing feedback, summative and formative measures, and opportunities to monitor and measure student growth. They also demonstrate mastery by creating authentic experiences for students to share their knowledge and skills through presentations and lab or research reports. We also place high value on practice and refinement of skills in a way that gives priority to individualized pace. In mathematics, for example, we utilize a ‘check-in’ process that has the feel of a simple quiz but serves the broader purpose of measuring competency of a targeted group of skills over time. Students may manifest high levels of competency for some skills and emerging competencies for others. For skills that require additional practice, students may take time to refine their knowledge and take another ‘check-in.’ This process allows students to focus on their pacing while honing individual skills and goals at a pace that best serves that student’s academic needs.”

“What any person in the world can learn, almost all persons in the world can learn if provided with appropriate prior and current conditions of learning.”

Benjamin Bloom
Birchwood School’s Talent Development Model supports a practical classroom application of the master/apprentice approach – an approach that enlightens classroom practices and informs how we mentor children. While we do not have the luxury of providing exclusive 1:1 mentorship, we utilize a combination of small class sizes and subject specialists who act as master teachers to personalize learning for every student.

Our Talent Development model supports our belief that if each child is given the opportunity to develop his or her talents to the highest level of ability, some will reach extraordinary levels of achievement. Every student will, at the very least, experience meaningful intellectual and character growth, including how to manage successes and failures and how to find lifelong enjoyment and appreciation for all disciplines, no matter what their level of achievement.

Chuck and Helene Debelak
Birchwood School Founders

For a more detailed explanation of Birchwood’s mastery learning and its various components, including the role of professional development, visit hawken.edu/BirchwoodMasteryLearning.

“Education is not an affair of ‘telling’ and being told, but an active and constructive process.”

John Dewey
Subject Specialists

Birchwood School is not organized by grade-level classrooms but rather by academic disciplines and “subject specialists,” Birchwood’s version of the master teacher. In this model, teachers teach only one subject, not four or five as is typical in many elementary schools, enabling them to remain unencumbered by having to teach subjects in which they have little interest or deep knowledge. Debelak explains, “The mentor-teacher is thus better able to inspire love and enthusiasm for learning while accommodating a wide range of student abilities. Also, because our subject specialists instruct the same students over a four-year period, they gain even further perspective observing the child’s development over time. These insights help teachers individualize their work.”

The Success Cycle

While many schools boast small class sizes, most do not use this advantage to intentionally personalize and individualize learning as Birchwood does. Debelak notes, “This low student to subject specialist ratio enables teachers to find the “sweet spot” of a child’s learning and be keenly aware of each child’s progress, daily if possible. We ask teachers to ask the following questions as they relate to each child in the classroom: What is the appropriate content? What is optimum pacing? What is the instructional level that keeps the child engaged and progressing as opposed to bored or frustrated, resulting in an aversion to learning? If a teacher can identify the ideal level for growth of a child through assessments, that child will develop competencies and enjoy learning.”

The Success Cycle is built around the premise that all knowledge is based upon previous knowledge. Debelak points out that “the objective of this piece of the Talent Development Model is to minimize the time between instruction, pupil performance, assessment, and re-teaching if necessary. The shorter the time lapse in this cycle, the greater will be student learning. This timely interaction can only happen with a low student to teacher ratio, which can minimize teacher reliance on tests (which can cut short a student’s path to mastery) and allow for more timely assessment practices that can enable accelerated learning.”
Student Choice in Grades 6-8

Middle School students thrive when offered opportunities to explore content more deeply or more broadly according to interest and aptitude. Birchwood personalizes this experience by providing opportunities for students to do this within each subject area. Debelak cites some examples: “In our social studies History Day program, students pursue topics of interest through primary and secondary research, and after a five-month process of study, present their work in one of six different mediums. In science, students select research projects in early fall and follow a scientific research process that mirrors that of the professional scientist. Upon completion of our in-school science night, students enter advanced science competitions sponsored locally and statewide. In mathematics, according to ability, interest, and agency, students may select their pacing for middle school mathematics. They also have the option of participating in our after school and weekend math clubs which hone their problem solving skills and prepares them for math competitions. In writing, students may choose to prepare and submit their creative and expository essays to a variety of writing forums through which they gain real-world practice in the writing process and can have their work recognized by domain experts.”

An Eclectic Approach to Pedagogy and Materials

In the process of identifying learning pathways for each child, Birchwood teachers have the freedom to select materials and approaches that best support each student’s success. Debelak maintains, “If we are interested in the growth of all children, the school cannot lock teachers into a generalized, commercial program for math or writing or reading. The materials and technology must match how children learn. For example, some learners grasp concepts quickly and need to spend more time wrestling with content through analysis and synthesis. More open-ended assignments which require a strong knowledge base and individual agency to explore complex tasks may be best suited to these students. Other learners require a more methodical approach to mastering content and thinking skills. These children may need more direct instruction, including a tight feedback loop that provides timely assessment and reassignment while offering the teacher opportunity to encourage and inspire.”
The Mastery School of Hawken
Grades 9 - 12

The point of the Mastery School is to maximize individual growth for every student. What individual growth looks like for each student is going to be different, and it’s going to happen at different paces. When schools try to make learning happen at a fixed pace, you end up with a system that is about ranking and sorting and deciding who are the winners and who are the losers. It’s not designed to support every student and their needs.

Mastery learning puts the focus on what you have learned and how thoroughly you have mastered something, not how quickly you got there. The whole concept and construct of mastery crediting is targeted at exactly this. Students present their work for evaluation when they’re ready. They choose which portfolios of work to present and when they have done enough work to earn a mastery credit. The credits don’t have time stamps, and it’s not a race.

Julia Griffin
Director of the Mastery School of Hawken
Agency and Empowerment

Griffin explains, “A student’s job at the Mastery School is to design a personalized path to learning and mastery – so that’s a pretty profound level of choice.” That’s why she prefers to use terms like “agency” and “empowerment” over the word “choice.” She goes on to clarify, “It’s not a free-range experience where you show up and you do whatever you want to do, because the structures and challenges and feedback that we have built into the process won’t allow for that. There is a structured mentoring teaching model that provides very intentional support to make sure students stretch themselves, setting goals that take them beyond their current strengths.”

Student voice is woven into virtually every aspect of how the Mastery School is being built, and it continues to grow and evolve using principles of agile design and iteration. Griffin notes, “We do that in partnership with students, asking for their reflections and input and feedback about their learning experience. Did they feel challenged? Did they feel supported? Those are really important questions.”

Social-Emotional Learning

“There is no good way to separate academic and social-emotional learning,” Griffin asserts. “In the words of cognitive neuroscientist Mary Helen Immordino-Yang, it is literally neurobiologically impossible to think deeply about something we don’t care about, and it’s been scientifically proven that we learn best when our emotions are engaged.” She goes on to explain that social and emotional development is completely integrated with cognitive development, and she is convinced it’s every bit as essential. “For example, so much of our work in the Macros sector of our program is project-focused and team-based, so students need to work with others in order to work through the idea, plan, and solution. That requires some relatively sophisticated skills, including how to navigate conflict, ask for what you need and offer support.” She adds that when students reflect on their learning in the first semester at the Mastery School, it’s often the social-emotional growth that they highlight, because that’s something most schools typically overlook.
Mastery School, continued

Problem-based Learning

The Mastery School has been designed in partnership with the Korda Institute for Teaching, which uses a methodology where students learn academic content and skills while working on challenges with community partners. One of those key skills that differentiates the program at the Mastery School is creative problem-solving, a skill that Griffin acknowledges is overlooked in most schools. “And yet creative problem solving is essentially a version of the scientific method used by entrepreneurs and all sorts of professionals in the real world,” she notes. “Students might go through a series of iterations that don’t work in the process of defining the problem, understanding the people whom the problem affects, developing a solution hypothesis, and testing their solution for validations. But eventually they get to a solution that does work.” And through the entirety of the problem-solving process, both failures and successes, a lot of academic learning is happening – learning that has purpose and meaning and therefore is not quickly forgotten.

Authentic Assessment

The Mastery School is built entirely around authentic forms of assessment, both formative and summative. Griffin recalls a time when Head of School Scott Looney asked the whole Hawken faculty, referring to Hawken’s first Principle: “Do you really know your students as learners and individuals, and if not, what gets in the way?” Julia reflects, “In many places, time definitely gets in the way, but I also think that the system of judgment and grading is a huge thing that gets in the way. It creates relationships between adults and students that are much more about compliance, about figuring out what the teacher wants, more than about actually being known and seen for who you are. That’s why we’ve designed the Mastery School from the ground up to keep things from getting in the way of the crucial work of knowing each student.”

At the Mastery School, instead of grades, students earn Mastery Credits – an essential component of the Mastery Transcript developed by the Mastery Transcript Consortium – through presenting evidence that demonstrates their skills, knowledge, and abilities. In other words, Mastery Credits demonstrate what students really know and are able to do in a way that grades simply cannot.

“If we are successful in our efforts to transform the way we educate and assess students, I believe that when we look back 20 to 30 years from now, the Mastery Transcript Consortium will be seen as a catalyst to that movement.”

Kedra Ishop
Vice President for Enrollment Management
University of Southern California
On the way to earning their credits, students get feedback designed to help them persist to mastery. Formative feedback, Griffin emphasizes, is “what we do absolutely every day, whether it’s through intentionally-crafted reflection questions or giving teacher and peer feedback on student work through what we call ‘pin-ups’ or ‘share-outs.’ Our teachers spend a lot of time figuring out what students know and what they need next.” Formative assessments, she explains, are a critical piece of learning, whereas summative assessments mark a student’s progress at the end of a segment or challenge through, for example, final presentations of students’ solutions to their community partner or “Celebrations of Learning,” which happen at certain intervals throughout the year.

Time

The schedule at the Mastery School is designed to support personalization and truly knowing students. The majority of a student’s week is built around academic blocks called Micros and Macros, which support problem- and project-based inquiry. But the schedule design intentionally includes time for Wayfinding, which provides one-on-one time with a student’s mentor along with small group conversations to explore topics like identity and self-knowledge, social and ethical decision-making, and eventually, as students get older, given topics like financial literacy, the college search and application process, and other life skills. Griffin underscores the importance of this time, commenting, “Wayfinding is an important way we get to really know our students, and they tell us that those one-on-one wayfinding experiences are one of the ways they feel most seen and known.”
Upper School
Grades 9 - 12

At the Upper School, we are working to create common experiences typically desired by high school students everywhere – experiences that create a sense of community, spirit, camaraderie – while balancing those experiences with opportunities to truly know our students as learners and to meet their academic, social, and emotional goals and needs. We want to meet each individual where they are and help them move and progress towards the goals that make the most sense for them as unique thinkers and learners.

Suzette Dyer
Upper School Director

Pace

In Hawken’s Upper School, “more” and “faster” don’t necessarily equate to smarter or better, so teachers are working to develop a curriculum that offers more individualization. Faculty use common planning time to design courses that enable students to work at a pace that better suits their learning styles and is less bound to simply the covering of content. Dyer explains, “We do still have time-bound courses at the Upper School, so students do have a window within which they have to perform, but we still try to individualize pace by giving students time to practice and practice again until they reach proficiency or mastery.”

Real-World, Problem-Based Learning

When students are not limited to 50- or 80-minute classes, they are able to delve much deeper into any given topic. Adding an experiential component makes learning even more authentic and meaningful. Project- or problem-based learning engages students in real-world experiences and builds essential skills – self-management, collaboration, responsible decision-making, authentic partnership-building, perseverance, and more. Examples of Hawken classes that are grounded in this approach include:

Outsiders: As Hawken’s course catalog notes, “Outsiders is a course for adventurous juniors and seniors who are curious about the environment, aren’t afraid to get wet, and like the idea of putting the scientific and the literary together. In this three-block course, students earn both an English and a biology credit as they study field biology along with literature of the wilderness. In addition to reading a broad range of authors, students develop personal, analytical, and creative writing skills; learn the fundamentals of biology and connect the concepts of natural selection, genetics, speciation, and urban ecology; and practice wilderness
hard skills including navigation, shelter building, and fire building. As part of the final assessment for the class, students prepare for and complete Wilderness First Responder certification.

**Radiolab:** Students in the Radiolab Intensive are introduced to the world of audio storytelling during this three-week immersion class, where they learn the value of documenting history by engaging with citizens from different parts of Cleveland. After exploring essential questions about both the craft and content of storytelling and honing their interviewing, editing, teamwork, and other related skills, students worked in small groups to create and produce audio segments patterned after the award winning WNYC podcast. Instead of traditional assessments, students are evaluated on their growth and ability to go out into the community to get material, work and rework it, and bring it together in the editing process. Even the teachers acknowledge that this work “takes a lot of discipline, resilience, and positivity in the face of challenge.”

**The Identity Project:** This Intensive class explores the seemingly simple question “Who are you?” But the teacher asserts, “There is nothing simple about you, or me, or the society in which we live.” Students explore how social identities – particularly race, ethnicity, and class – were created and how they influence our individual and communal experiences. Students are given time and guidance to dissect who they are as individuals as well as who we are as a school community, city, and nation. In addition to exploring the diverse city of Cleveland, students attend the National Association of Independent Schools Annual Student Diversity Leadership Conference, where they meet with peers from across the nation to engage personally and intellectually with these topics.

**Quantitative Reasoning (QR):** This class enables students to explore mathematics far beyond the sequential algebra/trig/calculus courses that dominate traditional high schools. Because independent learning and research are at the core of QR’s goals, classes tend to be less structured to give students room to investigate interesting problems, patterns, and underlying mathematics. QR students learn not only how to calculate statistics, but to communicate the relevance of patterns; many have earned national awards for their data visualizations. Projects are 100% student-selected investigations that culminate in a research paper and student presentations. For this spring’s final assessment, students explored the elegance of origami Fujimoto cubes, unexpected patterns in Mobius strip dissections, generalizations of the Towers of Hanoi, irregular tilings of a plane with Penrose tiles, and the strange fractals that occupy the spaces between one, two, and three dimensions.
Social-Emotional Learning

Under the guidance of Upper School Director Suzette Dyer, faculty have begun to redesign the advisory experience to align with goals for social-emotional pedagogy in order to further enable personalization and truly knowing our students. This new curriculum will follow students’ development and enable one-on-one coaching and advocacy with an advisor, who will follow them through all four years of high school. Advisor curricular content will focus on:

**9th grade:** Identifying an academic path that is appropriate for them and will be challenged to really think about goal setting and how to persist toward those goals.

**10th grade:** Being a strong and integral member of the community – not just the Hawken community but the greater Cleveland community and beyond. What and how can each individual contribute?

**11th grade:** Balancing passions, skills, and talents in the context of time management, self-care, and good choices to ensure each student is able to perform to the best of their ability in all spaces.

**12th grade:** Exploring what the transition from high school to college will require of each individual in terms of personal responsibility – taking care of oneself academically, socially, emotionally, financially; how to be a good roommate; and how to go about choosing a good college fit.
College Counseling

In keeping with Hawken’s philosophy of personalized learning, the college process is intentionally designed to be student-centered and student-driven. When students are empowered to take the lead, they reap the rewards of authentic self-discovery; the ability to clearly articulate their goals; and the independence, confidence, and resilience to lead lives of consequence.

Director of College Counseling Renee Bischoff explains, “As counselors, we strive to personalize the process for each student by immersing ourselves in the life of the school, establishing a strong rapport with students and teachers, and developing a thorough knowledge of class offerings. We work particularly hard to get to know each student in an effort to understand and appreciate his or her talents, interests, and goals. This knowledge and personal interaction helps to ensure that every student grows as both a scholar and a citizen, ready to embrace all of the experiences and opportunities college has to offer.”

“The college counseling office provided me with the perfect balance of guidance and freedom; my counselor listened to me talk for hours on end and gave me advice when necessary, but always left the important decisions to me. With the help of the counselors, I was able to achieve my goal, and I couldn’t be happier with the outcome.”

Hawken student
Assessment and Achievement Strategies

“When we talk about 21st century skills, it’s no longer so much about what you know, it’s also what you can do with what you know,” says Rick Tate, assistant director of the Upper School for teaching and learning. The Upper School is thus moving away from traditional forms of assessment and standardized ranking systems as much as possible, choosing instead to have students show what they know and demonstrate their individual strengths through creating a tangible work product of some sort. Tate cites an example from the Language Department: “We’ve just finished a training on Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), an internationally recognized certificate that measures students’ progress and oral competence. This offers opportunities for students to better demonstrate where they are in their language development – what content areas they can navigate as opposed to nit-picky things like verb conjugation.”

Math teacher David Gillespie ’89 points to another example, where students are given more than one chance to show mastery of a micro-concept if needed. It’s not “Well, you didn’t get that, so let’s just move on,” but rather, “Let’s help you keep building upon what you have.” He adds, “Instead of percentage grades on assessments, teachers report students’ level of proficiency in each of the concepts covered by that assessment. When interim and semester letter grades are calculated based on the number of concepts in which the student has achieved mastery, later assessments carry more weight, and early work that was building toward fluency doesn’t affect the final grade.”
Conclusion by D. Scott Looney

We are striving to create more meaningful, lasting lessons as we move away from the concept that time is fixed and achievement is variable; away from the viewpoint that school is a game to win; away from the mindset that talent is reserved for the few; and away from a disconnect between learning and passion that so many students have experienced under the industrial model of education. We are on that path, and the progress has been invigorating for administrators, teachers, students, and parents alike. But we have only just begun.

Personalized approaches to education, designed to match each student’s strengths, needs, and interests, supports an iterative process that enables students to fail and try again as they persist to mastery. Hawken teachers and administrators continue to find ways to create an individualized pace and path for each student; to give them choices and a voice; to ensure that learning is meaningful and connected to real-world problems so that students feel a sense of agency and purpose; to make learning and assessments as authentic and constructive as they can be; and to create an environment of belonging, inclusion, and collaboration to support academic success. These approaches not only bolster analytical and creative thinking; they also strengthen the character and intellect of our students.

It will clearly take time for Hawken to fully move away from the worst parts of the industrial production model of education and personalize the journey for students in all divisions and programs. There is much more work to be done as we move away from short-term memory learning, assessed by the regurgitation on command of knowledge soon-to-be largely forgotten – a paradigm designed in the 19th century when performing repetitive tasks that required a library of content knowledge held in your brain made sense. While globalization and technology have brought about change in most areas of our lives, education has changed stunningly little in over 140 years. It is well past time to bring forth a new, better model, and Hawken School is in position to lead the way, to be a school that helps to redefine “school.” And the better model we are building is based on a concept known as Mastery Learning.
Four Seniors Nominated for Presidential Scholar Program

Congratulations to Hawken seniors Ben Cohen, Adithya Kalyanam, Soren Palencik, and Raymond Tao on being invited to apply for the prestigious Presidential Scholar program.

Nominations are based on test scores, and nominated students are invited to submit an extensive application including essays and recommendations for consideration to be named as a scholar. If selected, scholars are invited to Washington, DC for celebrations and activities that culminate in a medal ceremony.

Speech and Debate Team Wins State Championship and Shines at National Tournament

The Hawken Speech & Debate Team has done it again, winning the team state championship at the 2021 Ohio Speech & Debate Association State Tournament. This is Hawken’s third state championship in the last six years.

Special congratulations to Molly Xiao ’21 on an individual state championship in International Extemporaneous Speaking, to Krishna Sanaka ’21 on being individual state runner-up in United States Extemporaneous Speaking, and to our policy team of Mira Getrost ’21 and Valerie Laurianti ’21 for individual state runners-up in Policy Debate, and to Coach Becca Marks, finalist in the 2021 Linda Miller Award for excellence in her first five years of coaching and winner of the 2021 Equity and Inclusion Award for her DEIJ work with the OSDA.

At the online 2021 Speech and Debate National Tournament, team accomplishments included being named both a School of Excellence (top 20 out of 1400+ schools) in Debate and a School of Honor (top 40 out of 1400+ schools) in Speech. Highlights of individual accomplishments, among others, included: Allie Dettelbach ’21, 4th place Speaker Award in Lincoln Douglas and 5th place finish in Lincoln Douglas; Praveen Kumar ’22, top 30 in United States Extemp; Abhi Chundru ’23, semi-finalist in Congressional Debate - House; Madi Wayt ’21 and Krishna Mukunda ’21, who broke to elimination rounds in Public Forum; and Destynn Keuchel ’22, who broke to elimination rounds in Extemporaneous Debate.
Soren Palencik ’21 won the championship at the City Club of Cleveland’s 2021 High School Debate Tournament.

Wilson Ha ’21 won Playhouse Square’s 2021 Dazzle Award for Best Actor for his performance in Hawken’s COVID-safe live-stream musical Songs for a New World by Jason Robert Brown.

Aniyah Nelson ’21 was named a Gates Scholar, one of 300 selected from a pool of nearly 35,000 applicants across the nation.

Adithya Kalyanam ’21 placed 8th in the nation in the NACLO Invitational Round, earning him a spot on the 8-member USA team in the 2021 International Linguistics Olympiad.

Ethan Khorana ’24, a student at the Mastery School of Hawken, won the Princeton Prize in Race Relations for 2021.

David Ricci ’21 was named an award winner at the Global Online Academy Catalyst Conference; Sweta Balaji ’21 received a GOA Citation.

Zoe Jones ’22 was chosen as winner of the 2021 Geauga County Bar Association’s Law Day Essay Contest.

Kynnedy Smith ’21 was recognized by numerous scholarship programs this past academic year. Not only was she a recipient of The Coca Cola Scholarship, which has an acceptance rate of only .15%, but she has also been selected as a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation semifinalist and an Elks National Most Valuable Student Scholarship quarter-finalist. In addition, she received The Future Leaders of Technology scholarship and was named a Horatio Alger Scholar, an honor that comes with a $25,000 scholarship.

Destynn Keuchel ’22 was one of five students selected for the Scholar-Chessplayer Award by the United States Chess Federation. This $3,000 award recognizes high school seniors and juniors who excel in academics, chess, and leadership.

Hawken Students Win Awards at 2021 Science and Engineering Fair

Congratulations to our Hawken School scientists on their tremendous presentations at the 2021 Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSF). The following students received notable commendation for their excellent work: Franny Connors ’22, Christopher Gerace ’22, Destynn Keuchel ’22, Praveen Kumar ’22, Kadee Lui ’22, Ryan McMullen ’21, Mayah Piunno ’22, Julianna Pollard ’22, and John Shin ’23.
Commencement 2021 Celebrating the Moment
Commencement 2021 Celebrating the Moment
Congratulations 8th & 5th grade!

8th Grade Moving Up | Hawken School

8th Grade Moving Up | Birchwood School

5th Grade Moving Up | Hawken School
Students, families, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends... be part of a weekend full of special activities!

**HawkFest 2021**

**September 24 & 25**

Gates Mills Campus

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**Friday, September 24**

**Community Cookout**

Sponsored by the Parents' Association

5:00 - 7:00 pm

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**Under the Lights**

7:00 pm

Cheer on the Hawks as they take on the Brooklyn Hurricanes! Special halftime activities include the introduction of the Class of 2021 Athletics Hall of Fame inductees and Distinguished Alumni Award recipients.

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**Show Your Hawken Pride**

Check out all of the new Hawken spirit wear!

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More details to follow:

hawken.edu/hawkfest2021
Hawk Arts Spring 2021

1st grade mushroom houses

2nd grade fairytale creature doors

Kindergarten butterflies

2nd grade Pablo Picasso inspired collages

Valerie Laurianti ’21

Leo Dejelo ’33

Grace Birch ’22

Pedro Chiesa ’22

Valerie Laurianti ’21

Parker O’Keefe ’23

Gabriela Montero ’22

Leo Dejelo ’33

Valerie Laurianti ’21

Parker O’Keefe ’23

Gabriela Montero ’22

Leo Dejelo ’33

Valerie Laurianti ’21

Parker O’Keefe ’23

Gabriela Montero ’22

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Parker O’Keefe ’23

Gabriela Montero ’22

Leo Dejelo ’33

Valerie Laurianti ’21

Parker O’Keefe ’23

Gabriela Montero ’22

Leo Dejelo ’33

Valerie Laurianti ’21

Parker O’Keefe ’23

Gabriela Montero ’22

Leo Dejelo ’33
Songs for a New World

Music Production and Technology intensive

Middle School Chorus

Middle School Musical

Lower School Musical

Preschool music

5th grade strings

5th grade strings

6th grade band

Middle School Chorus

Music Production and Technology intensive

Music Production and Technology intensive
CONGRATULATIONS HAWKEN SWIMMING AND DIVING 2021

When both our girls and boys swim teams won a state title in 2017, it had only happened 24 times ever in OHSAA history that a school won both a girls and boys title in the same sport. Congratulations to the girls and boys swim teams on winning the OHSAA Division II state title once again in the same year, making it the 25th time ever in OHSAA history. It was the girls program’s 31st overall title and their 23rd consecutive title. The boys state swim title gives them their 4th title in program history.

Angus Williams ’21 was the first-ever Hawken state diving champion. Ariana Khan ’21 also had great success and placed 5th overall for girls diving.

Individual Division II State Titles Girls Swimming:
Jess Eden ’22 – 200 yard individual medley
Tori Culotta ’22 – 500 yard freestyle
Sydney Bare ’21 – 100 yard breaststroke
Maggie Mallett ’22, Ella Gilson ’21, Chloe Katz ’21, Jessica Eden ’22 – 400 yard freestyle relay

Individual Division II State Titles Boys Swimming:
Angus Williams ’21 – diving
Connor Brown ’21, Will Dietz ’22, Michael Butler ’21, Alex Podrez ’21 – 400 yard freestyle relay
BOYS BASKETBALL
Their 5-15 record does not show the growth and fight that our boys basketball team had this season. They battled hard through every game, and most of their losses came down to the final shot. Captain Shin Ng ‘21 was honored with an All-District Honorable Mention as well as 2nd Team All-CVC. Dominic Johnson ‘23 earned a 1st Team All-CVC award.

WRESTLING
Patrick Reineke ‘22 (113 lbs) was honored as a Division III OHSAA All-Ohio wrestler for finishing 7th overall at states. He is now a two-time All-Ohio wrestler. During his amazing state run, Reineke was the district and sectional champion and had his 100th career victory. Jacob Hlifka ‘22 and Jay Doyle ‘21 also wrestled great this year and were district qualifiers.

GIRLS BASKETBALL
The 2020-21 girls basketball team went 15-2 that led them to a record year. They went undefeated in CVC play to win the CVC Chagrin Division title as well as the OHSAA Division II sectional title on a deep run into the state playoffs. The team was led by All-Ohio Honorable Mention Makayla White ‘22. White also was awarded 2nd Team All-District and 1st Team All-CVC. Captain Gabi Cicerini ‘21 and Julianna Pollard ‘22 received All-District Honorable Mention and 1st Team CVC for their impactful contributions to the team.
Spring Athletics 2021

TRACK & FIELD
The girls 2021 track & field team placed sixth overall at the Division II state meet as well as placing third in regionals and first in districts; they also won the CVC Valley Division. CVC Valley Division MVP and All-Ohio Makayla White ’22 placed second in the 200m and fourth in the 100m at the state meet. Ella Gilson ’21 placed fourth in the 1600m and third in the 3200m at the state meet, earning her All-Ohio recognition. The girls 4x800m team (Ella Gilson ’21, Juliana Metz ’21, Lena Sylvan ’21, and Leila Metres ’24) placed eighth at the state meet, earning them all All-Ohio recognition.

The boys 2021 track & field team won the CVC Valley Division and sent the 4x100m team (Jordan Harrison ’22, Destynn Keuchel ’22, Andrew Bukovnik ’22, and Samuel Pan ’23) to states, where they placed fifth and earned All-Ohio recognition. Harrison also was a state qualifier in the 100m.

GIRLS LACROSSE
The team were Region 6 runners-up (which is the elite 8 for the state) and had an overall record of 13-4, including big wins over rivals Hathaway Brown, Laurel, and Magnificat and two wins over perennial powerhouse Chagrin Falls. Captain Heather Arslanian ’21 capped off an amazing lacrosse career for the Hawks, breaking the career goals record with 182. For her efforts, she earned All-Ohio and All-Region 1st Team. Sabina Straunnieks ’23 earned 2nd Team All-Region and team captain Katie Gretter ’21 earned Honorable Mention All-Region.

BOYS LACROSSE
The team made it to the region semifinals and had an 11-6 record this season. Captain Josh Lombardo ’22 earned 3rd Team All-Ohio and 1st Team All-Region for his play at midfield. Captain Ethan Tecson ’22 and Jackson Goldberg ’22 earned Honorable Mention All-Ohio and 1st Team All-Region. Captains Sean Ross ’21 and Faris Danan ’21 earned 2nd Team All-Region, as did Shin Ng ’21.
BASEBALL
The baseball team had a record season with a 21-6 overall record, won sectionals, and advanced to the district semi-finals. Dom Brancel ’23 tied two school records in season RBIs (36) and doubles (12). Brancel also earned All-District and CVC 1st Team honors. Devin Anthony ’22 earned 1st Team All-District and a CVC award for his outstanding play in the outfield. Infield play by Khalil Suggs ’22 garnered him 2nd Team CVC.

SOFTBALL
The softball team had their most successful season in recent history with a record 9-8, beating Laurel in the state playoffs and having over six players earning Chagrin Valley Conference honors. Anna Ricci ’22, Captain Ava Kaufman ’21, Callia Holland ’23, and Augusta Halle ’24 all earned 1st Team CVC honors.

BOYS TENNIS
The team won sectionals, where they earned first and second place in both singles and doubles. Doubles team Jared Crider ’21 and Berend Diderich ’24 placed fourth in districts and were state qualifiers.

CONGRATULATIONS TO HAWKEN ATHLETES
The following students are athletes from the Class of 2021 who intend to play at the college by which they were recruited.

Sydney Bare
United States Naval Academy, Swimming

Lindy Bobrow
Lehigh University, Soccer

Connor Brown
Denison University, Swimming

Michael Butler
Case Western Reserve University, Swimming

Michael Gilbert
Hobart William Smith College, Rowing

Ella Gilson
Harvard University, Cross Country/Track

Chloe Katz
Middlebury College, Swimming

Arianna Khan
Emory University, Diving

Juliana Metz
The Ohio State University, Cross Country/Track

Alex Podrez
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Swimming

Claire Pophal
The Ohio State University, Swimming

Angus Williams
Boston College, Diving

Saechow Yap
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Squash
Tedric "Ted" B. Bryan ’86
Soccer, Basketball, Baseball

A Strong Award and Old Board Award winner as well as the first Hawken athlete to play in a post-season All-Star game in three sports, Ted Bryan was a stand-out athlete and leader in soccer, basketball, and baseball. A three-year varsity starter, Bryan still currently holds the basketball school records in steals in a single game (11), steals in a season (120), and steals over his career (345), helping lead the team to the only undefeated season in Hawken history. As a captain his senior season on the soccer team, he led the team in scoring (18 goals) and earned first-team All-Northeast Ohio and first-team News-Herald All-Star. During his four years of starting and two years as a captain for the baseball team, he broke records for home runs in a single season (4), home runs in a career (8), RBI’s in a career, and assists in a single season, which also earned him the team’s offensive MVP award.

Mary Toomey Clyde ’79
Volleyball, Basketball, Track, Softball

The first female 12-time letter winner in Hawken School history, Mary Toomey Clyde pioneered girls athletics at Hawken in just its second year of co-education in 1975. The volleyball Old Board Award Winner and captain in 1978, she once recorded 12 consecutive aces in a single game. A three-year starter for the basketball team, Toomey Clyde earned first team All-ESC honors and recorded a career game-high of 21 points. Despite an arm injury her freshman year, she participated in track and qualified for the state tournament as a member of the mile relay. A three-year starting centerfielder in softball, she tallied the most team runs, walks, doubles, and hits in 1977 while holding a career batting average of .459. She earned the Carter Award for her outstanding athletic achievements. She and her daughter, Kennedy Clyde ’12, were the first Legacy Old Board winners in any sport.

Matthew C. Koren ’03
Football, Lacrosse

A football Old Board Award winner and an All-Ohio honoree, Matthew Koren tallied 4,014 career rushing yards, most all-time in Hawken football history. Koren is in the top 10 of the Hawken football record book in 15 categories. In addition to career rushing yards, he is the school record holder for touchdowns in a game (6), all-purpose yards in a game (509), and rushing touchdowns in a season (26) and career (59). In 2001, he came just 32 yards short of breaking the single season rushing record set by OJ McDuffie ’88. Koren was named a member of the News-Herald All-Decade Football Team in 2010. He was also a member of the Hawken Boys Lacrosse program, which won their sole Division III state championship in 2002. Due to the fact that he and his brothers Ray ’01 and Greg ’07 consistently won the Hustle Award for maximum effort over the course of a decade of play, it was eventually renamed the Koren Award for all three Koren brothers.

John A. Leathers ’72
Football, Baseball

As a captain of the Hawken football team, John Leathers earned All-Independent First Team and Most Valuable Player honors and was a member of the Plain Dealer Dream Team. In his senior year, Leathers amassed 946 yards rushing in only nine games, averaging seven yards per carry. He scored 92 points that season, second most in eastern suburb scoring. He was named the Old Board Award winner for football and baseball in 1971-72 and served as a team captain for both teams. Leathers maintained a batting average of .456 during his baseball career and was named All-Independent First Team and a member of the Plain Dealer Dream Team. Leathers was a 4-year letterman in football at Western Kentucky University, where he was 1st Team All-Ohio Valley Conference his senior year. His accomplishments, along with his leadership and high character, helped Leathers earn a spot on the Hawken Wall of Fame.
Kathy Ko Chin ’76
Carl N. Holmes Award

The daughter of immigrants from China, Kathy Ko Chin’s 40-year career has been committed to building community institutions that contribute to a just and multiracial society. Prior to starting Jasper Inclusion Advisors in February 2021, she served as President and CEO of the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum for over a decade. In that role, she influenced policy, mobilized communities and strengthened organizations to improve the health of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Her extraordinary contributions to health equity and social justice led the American Public Health Association to honor her with the prestigious Helen Rodriguez-Trias Social Justice Award in 2020. From 2014 to 2017, she served as a member of President Barack Obama’s Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Dr. David A. Geller ’81
Richard W. Day Award

Dr. David Geller is the Richard L. Simmons Professor of Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and Director of the UPMC Liver Cancer Center. As a hepatobiliary surgical oncologist, his clinical interests center on the evaluation and management of patients with liver cancers. He has pioneered laparoscopic liver resection surgery. He has active research grants from the NIH, and is also the principal investigator on industry-sponsored clinical trials for liver cancer.

Matthew A. Salerno ’92
Fair Play Award

Before he joined the Case Western Reserve University’s faculty in 2018 as a lawyering skills lecturer, Matthew spent almost 20 years in private practice focusing primarily on business restructuring and corporate counseling. He has experience in a wide variety of industries, including manufacturing, health care, cosmetics, real estate, finance, sports and entertainment, and more.

About the Athletics Hall of Fame

The Hawken School Athletics Hall of Fame proudly honors these individuals who have significantly impacted our athletic programs and demonstrated the highest standards of character, leadership, sportsmanship, and Fair Play.

About the Distinguished Alumni Awards

The Distinguished Alumni Award honorees represent a select group of members of the Hawken community who embody the spirit of Fair Play and whose character reflects Hawken’s motto, “That the better self shall prevail and each generation introduce its successor to a higher plane of life.”
This year, the Alumni Board has focused on connectivity, as we have not been able to meet in person. One of our main accomplishments was the start of the Alumni Association Speaker Series, which to date has showcased Cleveland’s vibrant culture. Our first Zoom event was with Greater Cleveland Sports Commission and Destination Cleveland’s CEO David Gilbert focusing on the 2021 NFL draft, which was held in Cleveland in April. Our second presentation focused on the arts in Cleveland, with panelists Andre Gremillet (Cleveland Orchestra), Greg Harris (Rock and Roll Hall of Fame), and Chris Ronayne (University Circle). Our goal is to create educational opportunities for the Hawken community that will create connections with alumni coast to coast.

The best part about being a member of the Alumni Board is seeing the amazing things that Hawken students are doing. From the inception of the Philanthropy Leadership Board, to the energetic work of Hawken’s Alpha Company on the Veterans Memorial, to the success of our sports and speech & debate teams, to their thought provoking participation in DEIJ initiatives, our students continue to amaze me. When we as alumni give to the Hawken Fund, we help support the next generation of thinkers and leaders.

I would like to thank Oge Anoliefo ’08, Richard Bole ’60, Julie Roth Namy ’88, and Benjamin Vodila ’99, who have completed their terms as Board Members of the Hawken School Alumni Board and appreciate their years of service to the school and Alumni Association. We also welcome Taylor Davis ’10 as the newest Alumni Board Member.

I look forward to seeing many of you at Homecoming & Reunion Weekend, September 24 - 26, where we will be celebrating many milestones (especially those reunion classes ending in 0, 1, 5, and 6) and honoring our Athletics Hall of Fame inductees and Alumni Award recipients.

Josiah
Josiah Haas ’99
President of the Alumni Board
alumni@hawken.edu

Save the date!

Hawken Homecoming & Reunion Weekend
September 24 - 26, 2021
To RSVP, visit hawken.edu/reunion2021
HawkForce 2021

HawkForce 2021, our summer internship program for college-age alumni, opened in late January, when college-age alumni were invited to submit applications. Eleven Cleveland-based companies offered to partner with Hawken in this third year of the program. HawkForce offered 18 different internships with 31 college-age alumni submitting 79 applications. Internships were in the following areas: accounting, finance, clinical research, human resources, information technology, software, video production, marketing, and customer service. Thirteen young alumni were placed with six companies. Feedback from the interns has been very positive this summer – Helen Kovac ’17 reported that she was offered a full-time position two weeks into her internship.

Advancement & Alumni Office Updates

There were changes within the Advancement and Alumni Offices this spring. We welcomed Christina “CJ” Marshall Musser ’04 as director of alumni relations and chief administrator of Lake Erie Silver Dolphins and Ohio Tide; and Janet Katzin ’09 as the new advancement coordinator. Bobby Mallett ’93 assumed new responsibilities within our office as director of business development and athletics advancement. This now brings the number of alumni working in the Advancement Office to five.

In Memoriam

Remembering Fellow Alumni, Faculty, Staff, Parents, and Trustees

Glenn R. Brown, Jr.
Adam Chenoweth
Michael A. Clegg ’53
Dr. James A. Doull, Jr. ’42
Martin W. Feller ’65
Elisabeth Gibans ’80
Scott B. Hayes, Jr. ’71
Vicki Kennedy (Koeblitz)
Edward C. Pembroke III ’92
Leigh H. Perkins ’43
Betsy J. Rippner ’79
P. K. Saha
Dana E. Stokes ’72
Robert Tupta
David Wasserstrom ’85
Peter C. Wykoff ’48

Please visit www.hawken.edu/InMemoriamSummer2021 to read their obituaries.
philos + anthropos

2020-2021 Hawken Fund Results
The Hawken community raised $1,587,213 for the 2020-2021 Hawken Fund, setting a new School record. We look forward to recognizing every donor who made this year’s annual fund a success in the 2020-2021 Impact Report, landing in mailboxes later this summer.

Until that time, we want to extend our gratitude to the many people who made a gift over the past year. Operating in a hybrid-learning model for this entire academic year changed the needs of the School dramatically. We’re deeply thankful that the full Hawken community – alumni, parents, grandparents, faculty, staff, family, and friends – rose to the challenge.

Thank you for embodying the spirit of philanthropy this year and sharing your love for Hawken in such an impactful way.

phi·lan·thro·py
/φλανθρόπη/  (noun)

Broadly defined as love for each other. The word is derived from the Greek words "philos," which means loving and "anthropos," which means humankind.

Planned Giving
Over the last two years, we welcomed 15 new members to The Sheffield Society, Hawken’s planned giving society, bringing our total number of living members to nearly 125. Since the beginning of the Lincoln Family Challenge, 29 members of the Hawken community have stepped forward, generating $5.8 million of new future gifts to the School. Given the possibility of estate taxes being increased and estate and gift tax exemptions being lowered with a new Congress over the next few years, we encourage you to seek advice from your financial advisor.

Planned giving is an activity that supports Hawken’s mission and allows the School to provide resources to create new programs that enrich the lives of our students and faculty. There is no better way to leave a legacy gift to institutions you care about than through your estate.

For more information, please visit our website at www.hawken.edu/plannedgiving or contact Jeffrey M. Biggar ’68, co-director of advancement, at 440.423.2084 or biggar@hawken.edu.
Save the date!

WE ARE HAWKEN

DAY OF GIVING

11.9.21

Join the Hawken community on Tuesday, November 9 as we come together on our first Day of Giving. We Are Hawken, a 24-hour online community-wide fundraising event for the Hawken Fund, is an opportunity for alumni, families, employees, and friends to come together to celebrate everything that makes Hawken great. On November 9, let’s share our Hawken pride and make an impact for the students, faculty, and programs we care about. More details to come!
Hawken Welcomes New Member to the Board of Trustees

Hawken is proud to announce the election of Hawken parent Sundaram (Naga) Nagarajan to the Board of Trustees. As a group, the board sets policy for the school and shares an important fiduciary responsibility. Trustees also act as stewards of the School and serve as ambassadors of the Hawken mission.

Naga is president, chief executive officer, and director at Nordson Corp. He joined Nordson in 2019 following a 23-year career with Illinois Tool Works Inc., a Fortune 200 company. He most recently was the executive vice president, Automotive OEM Segment, a $3.3 billion business at Illinois Tool Works Inc. Naga is a member of the board of directors of Sonoco Products Company and an advisory board member of IACS. He is past trustee of Hobart Institute of Welding Technology, former trustee of AWS Foundation Inc., and former co-chair of Illinois Tool Works Inc’s National United Way Campaign.

Naga holds a BS degree from South Gujarat University, India; an MBA from Wright State University, Ohio; and an MS and PhD in materials science from Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama.

Naga and his wife Anna are the parents of Hawken student Vikas ‘28.

Hawken Welcomes New Members to the Visiting Committee

Hawken is proud to announce the appointment of the following individuals to the Visiting Committee of the Board of Trustees. Members of the Visiting Committee are well-respected volunteer leaders who have a wide array of talent and experiences throughout the global community. They work collaboratively with the Board to ensure the long-term strategic development of the School.

Nate Baker ’10 is the founder and CEO of digital closing platform Qualia, overseeing strategic vision for the company and executing its mission to provide a seamless real estate closing process for all transaction participants. Since founding the company in 2015, Nate and his team have expanded Qualia’s platform and services to all 50 states and scaled to over 450 employees. On track to become the real estate industry’s default closing transaction platform, over 500,000 real estate professionals use Qualia to deliver a seamless, secure, and differentiated closing experience for their clients. Nate is also the founder and chairman of Fractal, a technology business that builds vertical software companies and is systematically modernizing hundreds of industries with cloud software. Nate has been recognized as Inc Magazine’s prestigious 30 Under 30 Rising Stars and Forbes 30 Under 30. Under Nate’s leadership, Qualia’s offices in San Francisco and Austin have been recognized as “Top Places to Work” and the company has been named as one of Forbes’ Best Startup Employers.

Nate resides in Austin, TX.
Kathy Ko Chin ’76 was the first Asian American woman to graduate from Hawken School. She is a strategic advisor to those in philanthropy and nonprofits. Most recently, she served as president and CEO of the Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum for over a decade. The daughter of immigrants from China, Kathy’s 40-year career has been committed to building community institutions that contribute to a just and multiracial society, which led the American Public Health Association to honor her with the Helen Rodriguez-Trias Social Justice Award in 2020.

As a leader in Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA, NH, and PI) communities, Kathy co-led a national network, Action for Health Justice, which assisted 1 million AA, NH, and PIs in obtaining Affordable Care Act healthcare coverage. Kathy has served on and chaired the boards of numerous nonprofit organizations, including public financing initiatives such as Blue Cross of California’s Investment in a Healthy California Program, the Cal-Mortgage program, and Catholic Healthcare West’s Investment Committee, as well as Public Health Institute, California Pan-Ethnic Health Network, and Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation. She joined The Kresge Foundation Board of Trustees in 2017.

Kathy and her husband Douglas reside in Oakland, CA.

Jessica Fusco ’99, a Hawken Lifer, is the director of operations and compliance for Wheelhouse Cannabis Co., located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Wheelhouse is a brand-new cannabis cultivation and processing facility owned by Hawken alumni Chase Horsburgh ’99 and Sam Lincoln ’09. Prior to joining the team at Wheelhouse, Jessica spent 17 years with Telepictures Productions/Warner Bros. producing a variety of television shows. Most recently, Jessica served as the executive in charge of production for TMZ Studios in Los Angeles, CA. She was responsible for three daily television shows (TMZ on TV, TMZ Live, and TMZ Sports), three websites (TMZ.com, TMZsports.com, and Toofab.com), and the TMZ Bus Tour.

Jessica recently relocated to northern Michigan and currently resides in the Les Cheneaux Islands.

Arthur E. Haynes, Sr. ’86, vice president North American sales detection at Tecan-US, is a published scientist, and a commercial business leader in the biotech and diagnostics space. He has conducted scientific seminars at prestigious institutions around the world, including Cleveland Clinic, Mayo Clinic, Curie Institute (Paris, France), University College London, and Karolinska Institute (Stockholm, Sweden). He is co-founder and former executive board member of Leica Biosystems’ Black Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion, as well as a member of Leica’s President’s Council on Diversity and Inclusion. He is also co-founder, vice president, and treasurer of the Helen Haynes/William and Shirley Edwards Family Foundation. In 2020, Arthur and his wife, Joi Edwards-Haynes, established The Artie Haynes ’86 Endowment for African American Students at the Mastery School of Hawken.

Artie and Joi reside in Plano, TX.
Kirk J. Nahra ’80 is a partner with WilmerHale in Washington, DC, where he co-chairs the Global Cybersecurity and Privacy Practice. He teaches health care privacy and security law and information privacy law at the Washington College of Law. He is an adjunct professor at Case Western Reserve University Law School and the University of Maine Law School. He also serves as a fellow with the Cordell Institute for Policy in Medicine and Law at Washington University in St. Louis and as a fellow with the Institute for Critical Infrastructure Technology.

Kirk lives in Chevy Chase, MD with his wife Margit and (occasionally) his son Joseph and daughter Alia.

Diane Nahra Pelkey ’85 is vice president of communications at Chewy. With more than 25 years of experience as a senior media strategist and communications executive, Diane has built and led communications programs, advised executive leaders, and managed the reputations of leading global brands and agencies. She began her career with Reebok as communications manager and was quickly promoted to senior manager. She moved to an agency role and was account director at Cone Communications in Boston. She went back to Reebok from 2002 to 2007, where she was director of global brand public relations. In 2007, she joined Under Armour as vice president of global communications and entertainment and was named senior vice president in 2015. While at Under Armour, she built out the company’s communications functions, established the brand voice, managed CEO communications, and organized international tours for their sponsored athletes. Diane was the longest-tenured female executive at the company when she departed. She has been featured on PRWeek’s 2015 and 2016 Power Lists and named as one of The Daily Record’s Most Influential Marylanders in 2017.

Diane and her husband Stuart and children reside in Sparks, MD.

Marcus D. Teague ’88 is the principal at Pro Payment Solutions, Inc., a technology firm that provides infrastructure support to organizations implementing changes in programs and projects. Before founding PPS, Inc., Marcus served as director, executive account manager with Total Systems Acquiring Solutions. He also served as vice president for The Royal Bank of Scotland, where he managed the domestic and international sales efforts in the southeast United States. Marcus is an alumnus of the A Better Chance Program, INROADS, and Denison University, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in economics. He earned his MBA from Franklin University. Marcus has served as a board member on many non-profits and has volunteered with various youth programs. He is the father of five young ladies and has one grandson.

He and his wife Nikki reside in Atlanta, GA.

Daniel E. Waldman ’93 is a partner in the International Department of the law firm Seyfarth Shaw, LLP, based in New York and San Francisco. Dan represents some of the world’s best-known companies in their most sophisticated international workforce structure matters on every continent of the planet and in space. Since starting his career in Silicon Valley, Dan has remained active with technology and life science start-up companies both in the San Francisco Bay area as well as in New York City. Dan has acted as a founder, board member, advisor, and investor to countless early and later-stage companies.

Dan, his wife Nicole, and his children, Leila and Lucas, live in Larchmont, NY.

Hawken Thanks Its Volunteer Leadership Rotating Off of the Board of Trustees

Wynne Dusenbury Odell ’76 has served as a member of the Visiting Committee since 2019.

Natalie Ronayne served first as a member of the Birchwood School of Hawken Board of Trustees and then was elected a Hawken trustee in 2016.
During Teacher Appreciation Week, the Parents’ Association provided the faculty and staff with a delicious lunch prepared by Barrio Food Truck.

The 12th grade CPC representatives organized a special Cinco de Mayo celebration luncheon for the senior class and passed out cookies to the Class of 2021 to celebrate College T-Shirt Day.

Parents and 8th grade students attended an end-of-year gathering to celebrate the Class of 2025. They were treated to food trucks, games, a disc jockey, and a surprise color run at the end of the evening.

Vanessa Andrich and Rachel Gerritsen organized Hawken PALOOZA, a fun-filled school day for Lower School students with a scavenger hunt, themed raffle baskets, tie-dying, a cookout provided by Sage, relay races, obstacle courses, and much more.

At the end of the year, Amy Rand Goldberg ’91 (left) was honored with the President’s Award for her outstanding volunteerism. She has been a parent volunteer since 2016 and chair of the Hawks Nest spirit store. Amy’s creative ideas were seen at many events, including pop-up shops on and off campus. She is the mother of Stella ’22, Molly ’24, and Liza ’27.

The Parents’ Association purchased 10 new resin composite picnic tables for the Gates Mills campus. Thank you!

The class of 2021 was treated to custom Hawken jerseys as a special gift for this years Mask-A-Rade Prom at First Energy Stadium.

Thank you to Emily Pollard and our parent volunteers who placed a congratulatory sign in each graduate’s yard during Commencement. Congratulations, Class of 2021.
As President-elect John F. Kennedy wisely remarked just before taking office, “Of those to whom much is given, much is required.” We of the Hawken community are very fortunate. We benefit from a superior education, a vast array of life experiences, and a thoughtful exposure to the social, economic, and political issues of our day. Thus equipped, it is our duty to “give back.” We must “pay it forward.”

Through a concerted effort at service, we can make our world better – through pro-bono legal counsel, equality and social justice work, or in the United States military. Within the Hawken community, numerous graduates, faculty members, and family members have served our great nation in the military, some sacrificing their lives in its defense. It is fitting that we will now be able to honor our veterans in a visible way, through the new Veterans Memorial.

The Veterans Memorial not only serves as a tribute to those who have gone before us, but it can teach successive generations of Hawken students about our military, its values, and the importance of service. While each branch of the military espouses slightly different core values, all resonate with Hawken's creed of Fair Play – ideas of selflessness, commitment, and choosing the harder right. For example, the Marines’ core values are Honor, Courage, and Commitment. Marines are taught to embody ethical and moral behavior, to abide by an unfailing code of integrity, and to deeply respect human dignity. Marines lead by example and adhere to a high standard of personal conduct, especially when under pressure or stress. Marines are known for their professionalism, dedication, and self-discipline.
In addition to embracing these core values, the military cultivates professional leaders, equipping members with tools they can later apply in other facets of life, from business, to politics, to raising a family. For example, every Marine works to personify 14 leadership traits – “JJ DID TIE BUCKLE” – justice, judgment, dependability, integrity, decisiveness, tact, initiative, endurance, bearing, unselfishness, courage, knowledge, loyalty, and enthusiasm. Through working to master these attributes, leaders earn the respect and confidence of subordinates so they can operate effectively as a unit. Here, too, Hawken’s desire to build future leaders aligns well with the precepts of our military. Hawken School is itself a leader in the community, as exemplified by its commitments to service learning and community engagement; character development; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. That Hawken’s founding principle of Fair Play still endures today demonstrates this institutional commitment to teaching and doing what is right.

The Veterans Memorial Planning Committee has worked for two years to bring about a monument that appropriately honors the military service and sacrifices of the Hawken community. Currently under construction at the Gates Mills campus, this beautiful memorial will be completed this summer and dedicated in the fall. My hope is that students, faculty, staff, and families will visit this space regularly in the coming years to reflect on Hawken’s veterans, the value of military service to our country, and the parallels to our motto of Fair Play.

Lt Col Lindsay Nelson Lehtinen, USMC
Hawken Class of 1997
American University of Paris
Baldwin Wallace
Barnard College
Belmont University (2)
Boston College
Boston University
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Case Western Reserve University (9)
College of Charleston
College of Holy Cross
College of William and Mary
Colorado College
Columbia College Chicago
Columbia University
Cornell University
Denison University (3)
Emory University (3)
Gap Year
Georgia Institute of Technology
Hamilton College
Harvard University
Hobart William Smith Colleges
Howard University (2)
Indiana University
Ithaca College (2)
John Carroll University
Johns Hopkins University
Kalamazoo College
Lehigh University
Loyola Marymount University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2)
Miami University (3)
Michigan State University
Middlebury College
New York University (2)
North Carolina State University
Northeastern University (3)
Northwestern University (2)
Ohio State University (9)
Ohio University (4)
Purdue University (3)
Reed College
Savannah College of Art and Design
Sierra Nevada College
Smith College
Southern Methodist University
St. Louis University
Stanford University
Syracuse University (3)
Tufts University
Union College
United States Naval Academy
University of California Los Angeles (5)
University of Cincinnati - Blue Ash
University of Cincinnati (4)
University of Dayton (2)
University of Denver
University of Kentucky
University of Miami (2)
University of Michigan
University of Missouri - Columbia
University of Pennsylvania (2)
University of Pittsburgh
University of Richmond
University of Southern California (2)
University of St. Andrews
University of Vermont
University of Wisconsin - Madison (2)
Wake Forest University
Washington University in St. Louis (4)
Wittenberg University
Yale University (2)
Calling all alumni!

All alumni are welcome to join us for homecoming. Specific reunions will be held for the following classes:

- 1970
- 1971
- 1975
- 1976
- 1980
- 1981
- 1985
- 1986
- 1990
- 1991
- 1995
- 1996
- 2000
- 2001
- 2005
- 2006
- 2010
- 2011
- 2015
- 2016

To RSVP, visit hawken.edu/reunion2021