

VIEWS

2016

Indian Mountain School



Artwork by Marilyn Fang '18

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Save the Dates

February 2, 2017

ART SHOW RECEPTION

IMS Student Center

February 3, 2017

BENEFIT GALA

The White Hart Inn

Friday, May 19, 2017

ALUMNI DAY

Tour Campus

Visit Classes

IMS Athletic Contests

Evening Cocktail

Reception

Board of Trustees

Maria P. Horn P '12 '14 '16 *President*

Justin C. Vagliano '89, P '14 '20 *Vice President*

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Dylan Mattes '93

Elyse Harney Morris

Samuel F. Posey Jr. P '97 '01

Justin Royce '96

Christopher Sanger '86, P '18 '20

John Tonelli P '16 '20 '22

Darren Winston P '19 '20

Cover Photos: James Kamp



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The View from Becket House

When I began my teaching career at IMS in 1999, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Like many young teachers in independent schools, I decided to try out teaching following my college graduation. I was lured by the fact that I could coach, live on campus, and work in a dorm. Immediately, I fell in love with this school and began to develop an equal passion for the teaching profession. Nearly eighteen years and many administrative roles later, I continue to love being an educator. To quote John Barth, “There is chalk dust on the sleeve of my soul.”

This is a really exciting time to be a teacher. We are beginning to understand so much more about the brain and what learning is and is not. Last year at IMS, we embarked on a yearlong study of the brain. The study reinforced many of our institutional practices, but also inspired us to take a closer look at other aspects of our teaching, programs, and curriculum.

One thing is clear: the bedrock of our success is, and has been, in the strong connections between our teachers and students. The best learning happens in a community and in relationship with one another. I recently had the pleasure of meeting with a group of Upper School students as part of our strategic planning focus groups. When asked what they would not want to see changed at IMS, they all pointed to the positive relationships they have with their teachers. Without exception, each student in the meeting noted the active support they receive and the multiple settings in which they interact with caring adults. I know this is true for students in all three divisions.

The significant impact of these quality relationships is supported by research. “Students must feel safe and emotionally engaged before much learning occurs, supporting what most educators intuitively know—positive relationships with teachers are critical to student success.” (Goodwin 2014) This



is true because of the importance of mentoring relationships, but it is also because of the conditions created in the brain when students feel safe and connected. These relationships are crucial for learning because emotional safety and a positive mindset are fundamental to the acquisition of new knowledge.

As we move forward with our strategic planning and curriculum review, we are focusing on several key areas, all of which are informed by our learning about the brain. As you will read in this edition of the *Views*, there is much we can learn from research to inform how we revise and enhance our program. Teachers are looking for greater opportunities for collaborative learning that is student centered and student driven. We are incorporating more contemporary problem solving into our coursework to ensure students engage with material that is meaningful and relevant to them. We are assessing our teaching spaces and facilities to be sure that we have space for kids to move and work together. And lastly, we are reviewing the school day with an eye towards a new schedule on the Upper Campus, requiring fewer cognitive transitions, making sure we prioritize depth over breadth, and reshaping homework policies and practices.

The teachers at IMS are actively engaged in this learning and study of the brain. The ideas that have come from our discussions so far have been energizing, challenging, and re-affirming. In one of my favorite books for

new teachers, *The First Days of School*, there is a great headline that reads, “If you dare to teach, you must dare to learn.” There is no better way to sum up the magic and wonder of teaching.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jody Reilly Soja".

Jody Reilly Soja
Head of School

This is a really exciting time to be a teacher. We are beginning to understand so much more about the brain and what learning is and is not.

Commencement 2016



The Indian Mountain School community gathered on a glorious day, Friday, June 10, to celebrate the end of another eventful school year. Two former Heads of School, C. Dary Dunham and Mark A. Devey, joined us for the 93rd graduation ceremony in what Head of School Jody Reilly Soja described as, “a year full of change” both for the graduating class and for the school at large.

Excerpts from Jody Reilly Soja’s commencement remarks:



Charles Darwin wrote, “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptive to change.” As you prepare to head off into the world and leave our Mountain, you will continue to face changes. Based on what I know of you, you will not only survive through these changes, you will thrive.

I send you off today with a challenge. I challenge you to not only manage change, but to be an agent of change. This year the Lower School theme was “Changemakers.” What is a changemaker? Not just someone who can adapt to change, and thrive in it, but someone who sees the necessity for change and pushes for it...

People who push for change make us better.

You have not just accepted leadership positions, you have asked for and thought about how those roles can be improved and enhanced. You have looked for ways that things can be done better. You have also understood that small acts of service can bring about change in powerful, though subtle, ways. They can shift a culture.

*I encourage you to look for opportunities to inspire change and challenge others to do the same. This is one way to live a **life through service**. Lech Walesa, the 1983 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize commented, “the thing that lies at the foundation of positive change, the way I see it, is service to a fellow human being.” We have such change-makers in our midst.*

2015-2016 Gifts to Indian Mountain School



View from the Development Office

Dear IMS Community:

Thank you all for supporting Indian Mountain School. In the pages that follow, you will see the names of our generous donors from the school year 2015-2016. These donors have made gifts ranging in size, from \$1 to over \$100,000. Each gift represents a vote of confidence in Indian Mountain, its future, and the future of our students.

I'd like to offer a personal thank you as well. About halfway through my first year as Director of Advancement, I began to see how truly phenomenal IMS is and knew that it was the school for my daughter, Emma. Now that she is here and thriving, I am even more committed to the idea of helping to make the Indian Mountain experience the best that it can be for its current and future students. One of the ways I can do that is through fundraising.

At IMS, fundraising is essential to fulfilling our mission. We are incredibly grateful for the philanthropic contributions we receive in support of our operating budget, professional development opportunities for our faculty members, financial aid, and facility upgrades and improvements. In order to make

our tuition rates more affordable, we rely on the generosity of our community. You may not be aware of the gap that exists between the tuition charged per student and the actual per student cost of an IMS education. This gap must be covered annually, and our Annual Fund plays a critical role in filling this gap.

I encourage you to remain involved: visit our campus and our website, attend IMS events, and contact me with any question you might have about our advancement efforts.

Warmly,

Kelly Baxter Spitz

Kelly Baxter Spitz

Director of Advancement

kelly_baxterspitz@indianmountain.org

P.S. We do everything possible to ensure our listing is accurate; if you do not see your name or we have listed you incorrectly, please let me know.



Art Teacher Amy Jenkins worked with her pre-kindergarten through sixth grade students to interpret Flemish paintings from the 1500s and create, with found items, their own portraits of the emerging merchant and upper classes. They fashioned and taped together paper towel rolls, coffee filters, and squares of fabric for the photo sitting and explored contemporary artists such as Nina Katchadourian for inspiration. To see more of these gorgeous Dutch-inspired masterpieces, visit indianmountain.org.

Head of School's Circle \$5,000 - \$9,999

Mr. and Mrs. Allan J. Anderson GP'18'20
Mr. and Mrs. James Brewer P'16
Mr. Michael Culver and Ms. Michele Browne P'18'21
Mr. Peter Douglas and Ms. Ulrika Ekman P'16
Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Heidenreich P'17
Mr. Jeffrey M. Gulnac '61 and Mrs. Carmen Gulnac
Mr. James D. Kennedy IV '02
Mr. Yuseoung Kim and Mrs. Seunghyun Yoo P'16
Mr. and Mrs. William McKelvy P'13
Mrs. Katharine d. Sanger P'18'20
The Per and Astrid Heidenreich Family Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Justin C. Vagliano '89 P'14'20
Ms. Hong Xu P'16
Mr. Feng Zhang and Ms. Huan Mi P'18

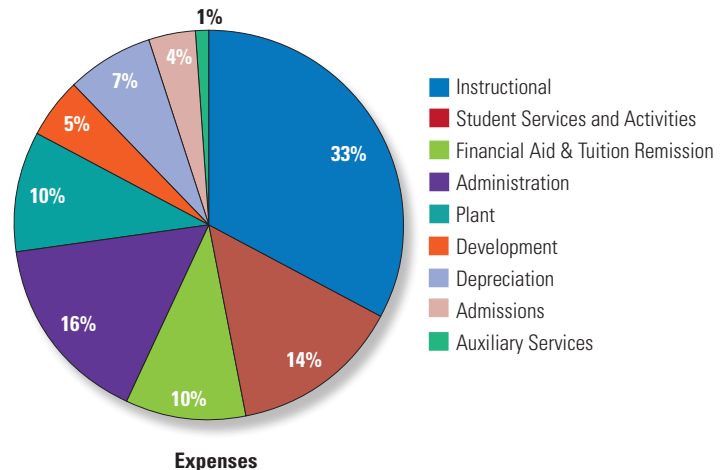
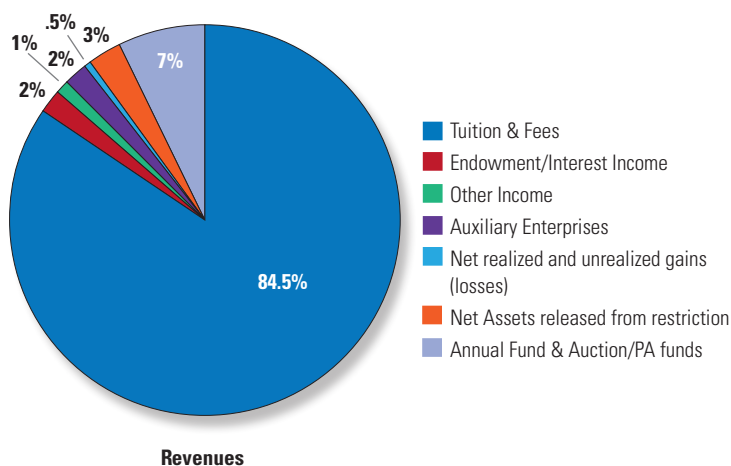
Becket Society \$2,500 - \$4,999

Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Allen '91
Mr. Jeongseok An and Mrs. Misun Lim P'17
Mr. and Mrs. Miguel W. de Braganca '65 P'01
Mr. and Mrs. Jake M. Lynch '83
Mr. and Mrs. Bryan K. McCoy P'12'15
Joan Mills GP'20'22
Mr. Raymond Nimrod and Ms. Marika Lindholm P'19'19'20
Ms. Jessica A. Palmer and Mr. Andre J. Melief P'02
Mr. and Mrs. C. Lee Quaintance P'14'16
Mr. and Rev. Martin Sankey P'16
Mr. and Mrs. James Simpson P'18'21
Mrs. Jody Reilly Soja and Mr. Kevin Soja P'22'24
The Deane A. and John D. Gilliam Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. John Tonelli P'16'20'22
Woodard Family Foundation

Mountain Club \$1,000 - \$2,499

Anonymous (1)
Mr. Brian G. Adams '99
Mr. D. Sean Adams '01
Mrs. Leora Armstrong P'20'21
Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Badenhausen GP'08'12'15
Mr. William T. Bartholomay '66
Mrs. Ellen Ivey Bates GP'11'13
Mr. Bruce A. Bauman '53
Capt. James M. Bell, Jr. '83
Ms. Marion D. Bell P'83'86
Mr. G. Andrea Botta P'12'16
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Byrnes GP'24'26
Mr. Anthony R. Caferio '97
Mr. Jesse H. Caferio '98
Mr. Cesar Canavati and Mrs. Ana Paula Arocha P'17
Mr. and Mrs. Drew J. Casertano P'98'01'06

Financial Summary by Allocation for 2015-2016 School Year



(continued)



Indian Mountain School has begun an inclusive and inspired strategic planning process to ensure the future strength of our school. This process will help us articulate our collective vision for IMS and establish strategic priorities for the next five years.

2015			2016			
August	September	Fall	January	March	Spring	June
IMS Mission and Goals exercise with faculty and staff	IMS Mission and Goals exercise with Alumni Advisory Council and Board of Trustees	Small group brainstorming	Contracted consulting firm: Greenwich Leadership Partners (GLP) and joined the Strategic Planning Institute (SPI) collective of five schools engaged in strategic planning.	Professional Development: faculty and trustees viewed <i>Most Likely to Succeed</i> film followed by facilitated discussion on future of education	Surveyed faculty and staff, current parents, students, and alumni	Board of Trustees activity The first meeting of the SPI attended by an IMS cohort consisting of Maria Horn, president of the Board of Trustees; Justin Vagliano '89, current parent and trustee; Chriffo Sanger '86, current parent and trustee; Cheryl Sleboda, chief financial officer; Sarah Breakell, sixth grade math and science teacher, coach, and dorm affiliate; and Jody Soja, head of school.

Why Strategic Planning?

Having just completed our CAIS Self Study for reaccreditation and looking forward to the school's centennial celebration in 2022, we are in a perfect position to look to our future in a thoughtful way. The process will:

- ▶ Assure that we align practice and values
- ▶ Reaffirm our values to then inform policy and program decisions (admissions, hiring, behavioral expectations, curriculum, pedagogy)
- ▶ Help us to make intentional/strategic decisions
- ▶ Help us tell our story
- ▶ Keep us focused on best practices, changing landscape of education, and future professional needs

Alongside the Strategic Plan, which is about the people and the programs at IMS, we will also complete a Campus Master Plan that will assess our facilities and plan for future enhancements.

Below is our timeline for this important work.

We also invite all of you to share your thoughts and ideas about the values, vision, and mission for IMS by emailing us at strategic_plan@indianmountain.org. We look forward to hearing your ideas about the future of IMS.



2016

Summer	August	September	October	Fall	November	December
<p>IMS cohort reviewed and synthesized all the information gathered, noting the most commonly held values for our school and students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Drafted a Portrait of an IMS graduate ▶ Compiled a list of principles 	<p>Strategic Planning Committee formed.</p> <p>18 participants, including current and past parents, faculty, alumni, and trustees</p>	<p>Strategic Planning Committee Meeting</p>	<p>Focus groups for current families, alumni, and faculty and staff</p>	<p>Focus groups for students.</p> <p>Begin sharing draft of 5-Year Vision Statement with IMS community for feedback</p>	<p>2nd SPI meeting</p>	<p>Strategic Planning Committee Meeting</p>

(continued)



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