

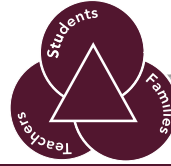


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MID-PENINSULA HIGH SCHOOL



*A community for learning,
offering students a
stimulating, nurturing,
safe environment
that empowers them
to reach their full academic
and social potential.
We work to strengthen the
relationships between the
students, their families,
and the community.*



CONNECTIONS newsletter - fall 2010





A LETTER FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL

Douglas C. Thompson, PhD

Welcome to the 2010-2011 school year! As I write this, we are in the fourth week of the semester, and the hallways still resonate with the energy of the new year—making friends, reconnecting with old friends, arranging and re-arranging schedules, remembering which days the lunch truck doesn't come—all the important details of school life. I invite you to dive right into this latest edition of Connections—it will give you at least a hint of what has been going on.

This year began with our newest "tradition," the Parent Association All-Family Barbecue. Being all together in the same place at the same time gave us an opportunity to appreciate each other and to celebrate the community we have all chosen to be part of. You can read more about the event inside.



In addition, you will find articles about another successful and well-attended Summer School, and don't forget to check out the fall sports schedule. If you are in town and available, we love visitors cheering on the Dragons.

I am especially pleased to call your attention to the article by alumna Sarah Percell, class of 2010. We are very proud of Sarah's achievements, and we love hearing about where our alumni are and what they're doing. The Mid-Pen family does not stop at High School graduation.

As always, I need to mention Mid-Pen's fundraising efforts. As Rachel explains in her article, we depend on the generosity of parents, alumni parents, and friends of the school to sustain our programs and



ensure that Mid-Pen students will continue to benefit from the flexible and unique education we can provide. Our fall Annual Drive has already begun, so please consider making as large a contribution as you can.

And don't forget to check out the save-the-date for DragonFest! Last year our annual fundraiser sold out, so don't hesitate—make plans now to attend. I encourage everyone to make this year's event even bigger!

On a more personal note, I recently had the opportunity to talk to a group of people about the work we do at Mid-Pen. In a world where stress, sleep-deprivation, and achievement anxiety are the order of the day, I continue to take pride in the fact that our students and staff work together to create a genuine "community for learning" where students are encouraged to explore, to take risks, and to find their own paths into the future. From the dedicated staff, to the supportive and appreciative parents, to the always challenging, always entertaining, never predictable students, I really do marvel every day at the blessing of being a member of this joyful community.

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- Kathy Esquivel - Senior Class
- Maripat Wilkins - Senior Class
- Janet Lee - Junior Class
- Anne Anderson - Junior Class
- Gloria Principe - Sophomore Class
- Eleanor Howe - Sophomore Class
- Andrea Thurber - Freshman Class
- Julia Lovotti - Freshman Class

HOW MID-PEN HELPED PREPARE ME FOR COLLEGE

By Sarah Percell, Alumni Class of 2010



When I came to Mid-Peninsula High School as a freshman I was so intimidated of the amount of work I had to do and the people I had to interact with. When I was asked my freshman year to write a three-page paper I practically had a nervous breakdown. I never thought that I would be writing six to seven page papers within my first month of college. All I knew my freshman year of high school was that I needed to survive and somehow make myself and the people around me proud. I can't really say when my attitude changed while I was in high school, but it went from totally scared and overwhelmed to being self confident in the choices I was making that would affect me later in my college experience. I'm not trying to say that I am totally fearless in college, but I know Mid-Pen has given me the confidence and the academic tools to help me succeed.

As my high school experience continued, I was faced with more challenges that would possibly damper my spirits in getting into a good university. One specific event I remember was getting my low SAT and ACT scores back and freaking out that colleges would only look at students test scores and not the other aspects of the individual. Many of the faculty members at Mid-Pen assured me that most schools would look at me as an individual, not as Sarah who got the horrible test scores. When I applied to Dominican University I was presented with the opportunity to write a personal essay that explained the struggles I've had to overcome and prove that I

am way more than just an insignificant test score. One of the best things about Mid-Pen was that the faculty was able to hold my hand and walk me through the essentials of being a good student. My second semester of senior year, Laurie Miller kicked me out of the nest by making me write multiple 5-6 page papers over and over again. She made me realize that I will be successful in whatever I want to do because of the hard work I did for her class and at Mid-Pen in general. She made me realize that I've done all of this before, just in smaller steps.

After the stress of college applications was over I had to just wait and see what was going to happen. This was just the worst. I hate waiting and I especially hated waiting for something as big as a college acceptance letter. After a lot of freaking out and tears that I would not get into college, I made a promise to Andrea Henderson that she would be the first person I called when I got into college. She said "Don't even put it on facebook before I know." When I got my first college acceptance letter I called Mid-Pen and screamed into the phone that yes, I had indeed gotten into college. I was so proud of myself! After numerous acceptance letters from various schools, I knew that my decision to go to Dominican University was the right one. In a way, Dominican was just like Mid-Pen in that they offer one on one attention and make certain that you will succeed.



SUMMER SCHOOL SUCCESS

By Nicola Willits, Director of Summer School

This past summer, ninety-four students attended Mid-Peninsula High School's Summer School. Some improved their conversational Spanish, while others prepared for the SATs. Some finished credits, while others previewed material. Some came to take Art, others Drama. And some students even got a head-start on the volleyball season with Mid-Pen's new varsity coach Soni Latu.

While some came to learn, others came to help. Abby DeMay, Ali Andrews, and Tyler Nunn volunteered their time to tutor their fellow students in math.

For the first time, Mid-Pen offered a class on writing essays for college applications. Ten incoming seniors worked on personal statements for their colleges of choice. The week began with a power point presentation by Dave Richardson, Mid-Pen's college advisor, on the dos and don'ts of writing college essays. Students then worked with Ben Griggs and Mid-Pen parent and former journalist Anne Anderson, on crafting their essays. Students who took the class finished the week with their essays done, or mostly done, and an additional two credits of English.

Not all of the summer school experience was confined to Mid-Pen's campus. The Art class took field trips to the Cantor Center at Stanford, to the De Young Museum and MoMA in San Francisco, to Ocean Beach to make installations in nature, and to San Francisco's Mission District for a mural walk. The Biology class went to the Exploratorium, the Tech Museum for an exhibit on the human body, and twice to the California Academy of Sciences to see both the rainforest exhibit and the aquarium.

Summer school met Monday through Thursday with an all-school barbeque each Thursday at lunch. All in all, it was a productive summer.



SAVE THE DATE FOR DRAGONFEST 2011 MARCH 18, 2011

Mid-Peninsula's annual fundraiser is a great way to support your community, so bring your friends and enjoy an evening ococktails, a 3 course meal, a silent and a live auction, and a night of dancing a great entertainment! For more information, please contact Rachel Packer, Director of Development at 650-321-1991 x 121 or Rachel@mid-pen.com.



If you have not yet signed up for eScrip, please take just two minutes to do so.

IT'S EASY TO JOIN!

Go online to www.escrip.com, and enroll using Mid-Peninsula High School Group # 10344070. If you are an existing supporter please update your account information online, otherwise your purchases won't count.

MID-PEN'S 2ND ANNUAL BBQ IS A HUGE SUCCESS!

By Lauren Newby, Development Assistant

For the second year in a row, Mid-Pen kicked off the school year with its annual all-family BBQ! On Sunday, September 19th the community came together to share delicious food, fun games and great company. There were over 175 people at this year's event including students and their siblings, parents, staff, and Trustees.

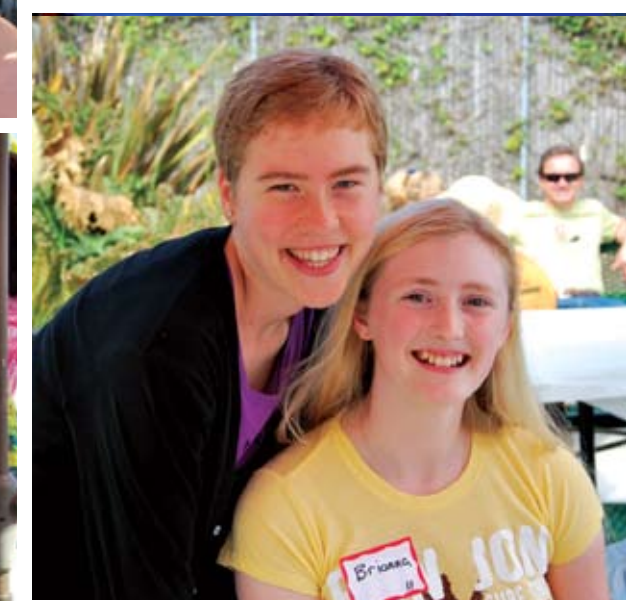
Back by popular demand, Troy and Andrea Henderson once again took charge of the BBQ! Guests enjoyed fantastic ribs, chicken, and sausage. A large variety of delicious side dishes were provided by members of the community. And even with full stomachs, people indulged in decadent treats provided by the student bake sale. Mid-Pen students baked everything from cookies to a rainbow cake and raised over \$350 for this year's prom.

For those interested in games, the BBQ had plenty to offer. Many enjoyed jumping and playing in the bounce house. Kids, and even some adults, rolled through the field in a giant hamster ball and almost everyone took a chance at dunking the Head of School, Doug Thompson!

We would like to give a special thank you to our wonderful organizers, Connie Moble-Ritter and Barbara Rains. Fun was had by all at this year's All-Family BBQ!



Head of School, Doug Thompson getting DUNKED!



WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING EVERYONE AGAIN NEXT YEAR!

ANNUAL GIVING AND FINANCIAL AID

By Rachel Packer, Director of Development

Entering my 3rd year at Mid-Peninsula High School and writing what I think is my 8th or 9th Annual Fund article for Connections, I find myself wondering how to articulate once again the significance of our Annual Fund Campaign and the appreciation we have for each and every gift that is given to the school. The donations to our Annual Fund are essential, and it is because of donors like you that Mid-Pen can sustain its programs and provide the rich and unique education that our students so desperately need.

People ask me every day, "how do you ask for money?" My simple answer is, "when it comes to Mid-Pen, it is easy." Make no mistake about it; I wouldn't be able to do my job just anywhere. Mid-Pen is truly a remarkable and extraordinary place, and it is an honor to be a part of its success.

Mid-Peninsula's Annual Fund fills the gap between our operating cost and tuition. Currently that gap is approximately \$530,000 (or about \$4,077 per family). Between our Annual Fund and DragonFest (Mid-Pen's annual fundraiser - please see the save-the-date) we hope to fill that gap. Our fundraising efforts support academic programs, faculty salaries, professional development, technology upgrades, athletics, student activities, and our financial aid program.

Currently, 34% of our families do receive some amount of financial assistance. Mid-Peninsula High School strives to serve students who need the type of individualized attention that we provide, and in doing so we have granted over \$740,000 in financial aid this year alone.

If you have not been to the Willow Road campus, I encourage you to come for a visit. See for yourself the rich, safe, and diverse community that Mid-Pen offers. Students are actually excited to learn.

Over the course of the year, I am sure you will receive a letter, a phone call, and maybe even an e-mail asking for your support of our annual giving fund. Any donation amount is important and no amount is insignificant. You can also donate online at www.mid-pen.com.

Thank you to all of our donors for your support throughout the years!



Annual Giving
Total Goal
\$400,000

JV VOLLEYBALL: A FOCUSED AND COMMITTED TEAM

By Dayna Schiessler, JV Volleyball Assistant Coach

The Mid-Peninsula High School Junior Varsity girl's volleyball team is a team with confidence, skill, good attitude and heart. Each and every player brings her own unique and wonderful personality to the team as well as their different levels of volleyball skill. There are players who have played volleyball for years and there are others who are experiencing being on a sports team for the very first time. The different levels of experience really bring everyone together as a team and help the players learn how to communicate with each other. The players teach each other different types of techniques and strategies as well as laugh, smile and support each other. The Junior Varsity has a perfect balance of learning, and working hard, and they always have a good time both in practice and at games.



The Junior Varsity girl's volleyball team practices for 2 hours every weekday and games vary but are usually once a week. Practices are filled with intense workouts, drills, scrimmages and a time to bond with team mates. When game time comes around, the girls are focused and ready to put their skills to the test.

The players have been contributing their time and effort to volleyball since the middle of summer and are still improving every single day. They have sacrificed their summer time to come into the gym, work hard on skill and improvement, get sweaty, and enjoy the sport of volleyball and their team mates. The Mid-Peninsula High School Junior Varsity girl's volleyball team is a great and exciting adventure for the girls and it's going to be a great year for volleyball at Mid-Peninsula High School.

MID-PEN'S VARSITY GIRLS: A RECORD SEASON



For the first time in the history of Mid-Pen, our lady Dragons have a chance to make it to the playoffs! With an amazing season record of 6-1, the girls continue to impress. On the court each week, the Varsity girls truly come together and play as a team. You can hear them cheering each other on during games and you can see them passing and making plays together. With a rigorous practice schedule of 2 hours each day, it's easy to see that the girls' hard work is truly paying off. These seasoned players have left their mark on Mid-Pen's athletic program and with only 3 regular season games remaining; the girls will be kicking it into high gear for their chance at the championship. We encourage you to come out and support our girls, go Dragons! For the most updated game information and results, please visit our website at www.mid-pen.com.



MID-PEN TRACK & FIELD

MID-PEN SOCCER

