DR. GAYNOR CELEBRATES 20 YEARS!
DEMYSTIFYING ORTON-GILLINGHAM CONSTRUCTION UPDATE
FIRST-EVER KIDS ONLY PAGE

Pursuing Passions, Discovering Dreams
WINTER 2015 | DISCOVERING DREAMS, PURSUING PassIONS

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BUILDING STRONG READERS
WITH THE ORTON-GILLINGHAM APPROACH

By Dr. Scott Geyenor, Head of School

I was recently going through some of my grandmother’s old files when I came across an article published by the Orton Society in 1969. The article was written seven years after my grandmother (Mirtam Michael) and Yvette Siegel-Hering started Stephen Geyenor School. The article by Dr. Lloyd Thompson highlights famous people throughout history who had dyslexia. Thomas Edison, Auguste Rodin and Albert Einstein are some examples of people who struggled with reading at an early age, but went on to achieve great prominence. Dr. Thompson wrote, “It has been even suggested that their recognition and acceptance of their language problem by all those men and their systematic treatment may have been an organizing factor which has given them some of the ‘edge’ they retained for later success.”

In the mid-1990’s, Dr. Samuel Orton, a neuropsychiatrist, began his research into the challenges that some children experienced with reading. Dr. Orton’s work coupled with Anna Gillingham, an educator and psychologist, led to the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach. They developed a remedial instructional approach focusing on the relationship between letters and their individual sounds through listening and kinesthetic movements. For more than 40 years, this premise research-based reading strategy has proven to be the foundational approach for helping struggling readers. Since its founding, Stephen Geyenor School has embraced this methodology with great success.

The question arises, if the OG approach is so tried and tested, why don’t more schools and teachers use it? The challenges lie in the expertise required to deliver this approach. Not only does an instructor need to be versed in the sequence and techniques of OG, but one must also have a strong understanding of the structure and history of the English language. This is essential when teaching the morphology component of OG, which is the smallest unit of meaning in language including roots, prefixes and suffixes. This is a key skill in reading and understanding higher level vocabulary.

The other essential elements of successfully teaching the OG approach are differentiated instruction and student engagement. The faculty at Stephen Geyenor School is skilled in the art of diagnostic prescriptive instruction. Simply put, within the context of a single lesson, our teachers are constantly monitoring what each student is retaining and adjusting the delivery to meet the individual needs of each student in the group. This is coupled with the ability to deliver the lesson in a multisensory and stimuli-rich way. Touching the basic mechanics of reading, spelling and writing requires students to retain a great deal of information. Our teachers rapidly move through drills, changing the modalities and using dynamic instruction to keep students engaged.

Based on all the elements that are required to teach a successful OG lesson, it is clear why this approach requires a high level of expertise for proper execution. In the hands of a skilled Geyenor teacher, the Orton-Gillingham approach builds strong readers. This is just the “edge” our students need to reach their true potential and become the next Thomas Edison or Agatha Christie.
IN 1994,
The course of Stephen Gaynor School took a turn when a young Scott Gaynor joined his grandmother, Dr. Miriam Michael, and her friend and co-founder, Ms. Yvette Siegel-Herzog, as a new staff member at the school named for his late uncle. Twenty years later, Dr. Gaynor is the head of school, having led the institution through enormous growth to become the leading special education school in New York City.

Leaning on his experience as a banker, Dr. Gaynor began his Stephen Gaynor School career in the Business Office as a Bookkeeper. He was simultaneously pursuing his Masters of Arts in Private School Leadership and later, a Doctor of Education in Organization Leadership from Columbia University. Teachers College, Ms. Siegel-Herzog marvels at all of the responsibilities Dr. Gaynor assumed, “Scott was a father, while working in a new position, studying at Columbia to pursue his Masters – all while dreaming of propelling us where we are today,” she recalls. He soon became the Director of Operations, taking over his late grandfather’s responsibilities, and subsequently, the Head of School.

But earning the trust and respect of the schools community was not easy. Dr. Gaynor recalls the reaction when his son took the reins of the school, “Scott was very young when he became Head of School. Some of the Board of Trustees Members wondered if he was up for the challenge as he hadn’t been around long enough to prove himself,” he recalls. “But when all was said and done, they agreed, ‘If Scott ever wants to leave the school, he can come work for me!’”

Dr. Gaynor’s twenty years are full of both small and large milestones - from creating the first computer-generated tuition invoice to developing a two-building campus for our student body, he has lived and breathed Stephen Gaynor School every single day, making a meaningful difference in the lives of our students.

“Throughout my years at the school, I’ve embraced the culture and it has become a part of me.”

Through Dr. Gaynor’s leadership as Head of School, there has been much growth and progress. He realized the importance of being an accredited school and took Gaynor through its very first accreditation process with the New York State Association of Independent Schools, elevating the presence of the school. After utilizing every inch of space in the small brownstone the school occupied for nearly 60 years, he determined it was time to move on and was instrumental in securing funding to construct the new facility on West 90th Street, where the schools main entrance is today. He closely collaborated with the architects to design a space to meet the unique needs of our learners - a model that has since been replicated in several mainstream and special education schools across the city.

“Some people build castles in the air. Our castles stand proud with doors open to thousands of children because of our Master Builder - Scott.” - Ms. Siegel-Herzog

Understanding the importance of reaching students earlier in their academic journey, Dr. Gaynor helped Ms. Siegel-Herzog realize her dream of opening an Early Childhood program. But he hasn’t stopped there. Through the years, Dr. Gaynor has worked to extend the co-founders’ mission to a larger audience, increasing the schools enrollment from less than 100 students when he joined to nearly 330 students today. “Being able to reach more children and families while still maintaining the integrity of the co-founders vision - helping one child at a time - is my biggest accomplishment,” he explains. In addition, he has tirelessly, on the expansion efforts into the historic Carriage House to ensure a state-of-the-art facility to support the expanding student body.

For twenty years, Dr. Gaynor has stood at the door greeting students as they enter with a smile, a handshake, a high five. His admiration for our students and respect for the faculty are evident. When asked what has brought him back to work every day for twenty years, he says with a smile, “Working with an amazing team of professional educators who bring out the best in each child.” Congratulations on 20 years, Dr. Gaynor. You bring out the best in all of us.
GAYNOR PROUDLY WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Stephen Gaynor School’s Board of Trustees is made of a diverse group of people, all of whom are passionate about helping our students reach their full potential. This school year, we are saying goodbye to five dedicated members—Susan Burris, Jo Ann Gaynor, Al Kahn, Karin Swain, and Steven Swain—who have collectively served on the Board of Trustees for nearly 50 years. These five members have seen Gaynor through tremendous growth, while helping the school remain true to its mission.

As we bid adieu to Mrs. Burris, Mrs. Gaynor, Mr. Kahn, Mrs. and Mr. Swain, we are pleased to welcome Patterson Chiewse, Jillian Neuberger, Jennifer Rich, and Hamburg Tang to Stephen Gaynor School’s Board of Trustees, all of whom bring a wealth of knowledge, experience, and, most importantly, passion.

PATTERSON CHIEWSE

Patterson Chiewse is an Audit Principal in the Financial Services Group at Aymer Amper with more than 15 years of accounting, audit, and finance experience in the securities and investment management industries. In addition, he has considerable experience providing audit and consulting services to public and private companies in technology, software, media, and telecommunications industries.

Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Chiewse was the Financial Officer for a mid-sized, private equity focused family investment office, responsible for group treasury and capital structure management, transaction diligence, financial reporting, and tax compliance.

Mr. Chiewse received his B.S. in Accounting from the University of South Africa and earned an MBA from Duke University. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA).

Mr. Chiewse currently serves as Chair of Gaynor’s Audit Committee. He and his wife, Angela, live in New York City and have three children, two of whom attend Gaynor – Ethan Darlington and Julian (Early Childhood). Their daughter Zoe attends Dalton School.

JILLIAN NEUBERGER

Jillian Neuberger is a former business executive with extensive experience as a general management executive, strategic planning and new business development. Most recently, Ms. Neuberger served as Director of Finance and Operations for the University Alliance for LifeLong Learning, an online learning venture of Princeton, Yale, Oxford, and Stanford Universities. Prior to that, she held a number of positions with The Walt Disney Company and The Walt Disney Company in Orlando so as part of the launch team for Disney’s Amardi and later moved to NY to be part of the Disney Online start-up team. She ultimately rose to Vice President and General Manager of ABC.com, Oprah.com, Oscar.com, and Disney Family.com.

She serves on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of the Children’s Museum of the Arts and on the Children’s Board of the Columbia University Medical Center. She is also Chair of the Board of the Nursery School at Holy Name for five years. In addition, Ms. Neuberger has served as an admnistrative tour guide and class parent at The Chapin School.

Ms. Neuberger received an MBA from Harvard Business School a second year business honours. She received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering in Operation Research, magna cum laude at MIT and Ph.Beta Kappa, from Princeton University.

Ms. Neuberger and her husband, Justin, live in New York City with their three daughters: Riley, 18, a third grader at Chapin School; Fya, 16, a sophmore second year at Gaynor; Fisher, 9, is in preschool at the 3rd Street Y.

JENNIFER RICH

Jennifer Sool Rich earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Special Education and Reading from Rowan College of Education.

Mrs. Rich was an Elementary School Teacher for 10 years working in renowned schools such as Christ Church Day School. The Browning School and The Francis Parker School. Following her career in education, Mrs. Rich co-founded and co-directed a political fundraising firm.

Mrs. Rich has been extremely successful as a professional fundraiser. She works as a fundraiser for former Congressman Ris Low in his campaign for United States Senate in 2012, and for the New York Republican State Committee for several years. Since 2004, Mrs. Rich has been a member of the National Committee for the Republican National Committee, she has served on its Executive Committee, and was Chair of the News and Media Subcommittee of the Republican Convention.

Mrs. Rich currently sits on the Board of Trustees of The School and serves as Chair of its Development Committee.

In addition, she serves on the Hudson River Park Advisory Council, a Trustee of Randall’s Island Park, a Trustee of the Children’s Board of the Central Park Conservancy, a Trustee of the Children’s Board of the Central Park Conservancy, and is Vice-Chair of the Women’s Board of the Central Park Conservancy.

Mrs. Rich is married to Stephen Rich and is step-mother to Alexander Rich, who attends Stephen Gaynor School and to William Rich, who attends Browning School. Jennifer’s daughter Charles, 4, is her top student second year at Gaynor; Fisher, 9, is in preschool at the 3rd Street Y.

HAMBURG TANG

Hamburg Tang graduated from Harvard College with an AB in East Asian Studies. Following Harvard, he pursued finance and served in the equity research and international institutional sales group at Brown Brothers Harriman (BBH). Consequently, Mr. Tang attended the University of Pennsylvania, where he received an MBA from the Wharton School and an MA in International Management from the Joseph Laufer Institute.

Following graduation, Mr. Tang joined the emerging China banking firm Morgan Stanley in Hong Kong, then transferred to the international money management arm of the company. The Morgan Stanley Investment Management (PMI), based in New York. Mr. Tang served as the senior emerging markets debt analyst for PMI.

After several years at PMI in New York, Mr. Tang joined PIMCO in New York City. As one of PIMCO’s Managing Directors and head of the Emerging Market Resource Group, he is responsible for managing the emerging market equity portfolios in Asia, Latin America, and Europe.

Mr. Tang and his wife, Kelly, have two children: Gabriel, Morgan and Tyler. Both Mr. and Mrs. Tang have been active participants in the Gaynor community. They have both served as volunteer and assistant volunteer in the Capital Campaign. In addition, Mr. Tang served as President of the Capital Campaign and Mrs. Tang served as President of the Bernard School, which he attended.
Watercolor Techniques Evolve into “Strokes” of Creativity

Lower School students in the classes of Ms. Fishman and Ms. Fice learned the artwork of John Singer Sargent and Vincent van Gogh while learning about primary, secondary, and opposite colors in Ms. Weinrib’s art class. They studied watercolor techniques, including dry brush and glaze (layers of color), to compose abstract and representational paintings, conveying emotions and ideas.

SO MANY GAYNOR STUDENTS ARE GIFTED ARTISTICALLY AND THRIVE WHEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN PROJECTS IN MS. RACHLINS’ ART CLASS. THOUGH MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS START THE FINE ARTS CYCLE WITH AN ASSIGNMENT, THIS SEMESTER IT WAS TO DRAW OR PAINT A SINGLE OBJECT-ORIENTED ART WORK USING PASTELS OR CRAYONS. THEY THEN MOVE ON TO A SELF-DIRECTED PIECE. THEY ARE ABLE TO CHOOSE THE MATERIAL AND SUBJECT MATTER THEY FIND PARTICULARLY COMPELLING—Which MAY INCLUDE WOOD CARVING, TRADITIONAL PAINTING, MIXED-MEDIA, CERAMICS, ETC.—AND GO ON TO CREATE WORK THEY ARE INTERESTED IN AND PASSIONATE ABOUT. PROJECTS RANGE FROM A SERIES OF LARGE ANIME DRAWINGS TO A MIXED-MEDIA MODEL OF AN AIRPORT.

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE THEIR PASSIONS, MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS CONRAD FALLON AND NOAH GREENBERG SET OUT TO CREATE AN ARCHITECTURAL MODEL OF A MODERN BUILDING. THEY RESEARCHED MANY DESIGNS, INCLUDING THOSE OF FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, AND PUT TOGETHER A SKETCH WHICH INCORPORATED THE FEATURES OF SEVERAL DIFFERENT CONCEPTS. CONRAD AND NOAH CHOSE TO USE WOOD AND PLEXIGLASS AS THEIR PRIMARY MATERIALS. IN THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS, AND BY BUILDING AND REBUILDING, THEY LEARNED ABOUT PROPORTION, SCALE, AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF FORMS. THEY WORKED SERIOUSLY AND DILIGENTLY, PROGRESSING THROUGH DIFFERENCES AND LEARNING ON COLLABORATION. IN THE END, THEY ARRIVED AT AN INCREDIBLY SOPHISTOCATED AND ORIGINAL STRUCTURE.

FOLLOWING PASSIONS, BECOMING ARCHITECTS:
Composition Simplicity & Spooky Graphic Design

Gaynor's Fine Arts Photography students acquired impressive photography and computer skills during their classes with Mr. Gaynor this fall. One lesson focused on a simple topic for a photograph: a hand. The students worked with one another to photograph a hand in front of a background, leading them to uncover the beauty within a simple composition. The classes discovered backgrounds that complement and add to the subject, allowing the simplicity of the composition to shine through the lens.

Middle School Fine Arts students created spooky book covers, while learning the impressive skills involved with graphic design. After using Canon Rebel XT SLR cameras to take pictures of various objects, Mr. Gaynor taught students from the classes of Mr. Meyer, Ms. Barnwell, Bentsen, Kasindorf, Rebocho, and Rubel the basic principles of graphic design. Working in Adobe Photoshop, students learned about page layouts, color schemes, and the personality of fonts, while they created their very own book covers with an eerie theme, Mr. Gaynor explained. “We were able to discover the balance of designing a flowing page that sends a clear message and is effective to the viewers.” It’s clear to see that our Fine Arts Photography students have gained an important skill set in this modern age of computers and design.

Building on Fundamental Music Skills: Middle Schoolers Perfect Their Craft

In the Middle School, students work to build on the foundational musical skills they’ve been taught at a younger age. Students in the classes of Ms. Borders, Larson, Morebito, and Wrobel developed their ability to participate in an ensemble by playing xylophones, pianos, and percussion instruments. After learning to play a variety of instruments to numerous songs—a challenge in itself—students closed the rotation with a brave performance for their peers.

Rhythm is Going to Get You: Lower School Students Clap it Out

The Lower School classes of Ms. Arberfeld, Buckles, Cohen, Goutain, Davis, and Michaels have been studying rhythm and how to clapping rhythmic patterns and playing various percussion instruments in Ms. Shuypp’s music class. To help foster musical creativity, they enjoyed music games aligned with this theme and worked diligently on matching pitches. To round out the fall, students sang in ensembles and practiced calculated movements with songs in an effort to prepare for their Winter Arts Festival.

Gaynor’s Youngest Musicians Work on Solos, Pitch, and Note Values

Our youngest students have been busy in Ms. Robinson’s (AKA Ms. Amelia’s) music class. Aside from preparing for their group performances in the Winter Arts Festival, students in the classes of Ms. Fazio, Geller, Hartman, Holdish, Saud, and Yeazl have been singing solos in front of their peers every day. Those brave musicians spent the fall working on ear training by matching pitch through songs and listening to music with interpretive movement and imagery. Ms. Fazio’s class also worked on learning to identify note values and recognize
Telling a Tale: Lower School Drama Performances

The Forum Theater Approach: Middle School Students “Act Out” Problems and Solutions

The Forum Theater approach, students in the classes of Ms. Borders, Larson, Morabito, and Wrobel have been working to understand problems in a community in order to determine solutions. Ms. Pinfold Moore (aka Ms. Kristen) exposed their Middle School students to Forum Theater, developed by Brazilian dramatist, Augusto Boal, as a way to foster discussion around important issues in an effort to build a stronger and more equitable community. Through this approach, students identify a variety of problems, then determine one to focus on. They develop short skits with a beginning and middle, but no ending, hence, no solution to the problem. Middle School theater students cohesively performed their skits in front of their peers and invited their audience to offer plausible solutions by participating in an improvisation with the actors.

Soccer

This fall, the Gaynor soccer team had an impressive season, as the white and green squads displayed Gaynor pride and exhibited teamwork and grit. The green squad finished in third place overall in the American International Private School League with a league record of 4-3-5. Led by a strong group of returning players and a few new additions, the team fought hard each and every game, keeping it exciting as always. The white squad also had a very strong season with a mix of both indoor and outdoor games. The team played very well during the three games hosted at Gaynor, going 3-1-1 as fellow students and teachers cheered them on. The program ended on a high note as both squads came together for a 1-0 victory in their final game of the season against The Gateway School. Coach James Molino commented on the end of the season by saying, “It will be difficult to see some of our graduating soccer players leave the program, but they should take great pride in the athletic traditions they established here at Gaynor.” He continued, “Completing self-confidence and teamwork, these players served as role models for current and future students.” Congratulations to all of our athletes on a successful season!

Volleyball

When volleyball became popular amongst a group of Gaynor students, the Athletics Department decided to organize its first competitive girls’ volleyball team. The inaugural volleyball season was extremely successful, as the pioneering players improved their athletic skills throughout the season. Coach James Molino described his respect and confidence in the burgeoning team by saying, “I could not be more proud of the coaches and players that past volleyball season, as they truly came together as a team and represented our school in a superb manner. The girls worked very hard during practice and games and demonstrated a high level of sportsmanship.”

Way to go, Gaynor Girls! We are all very proud of your first volleyball season.

Volleyball Has Arrived: Gaynor's Newest Athletic Addition Is a Hit

THE GAYNOR SOCCER TEAM DISPLAYS SCHOOL SPIRIT
Demystifying Orton-Gillingham

By Susan Shapiro, Reading Department Chair

The Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach to reading was developed in the early 20th century based on the research of neurologist Dr. Samuel T. Orton, and language therapist Anna Gillingham. It is the basis of every remedial reading program on the market to date, and in its purest form, the gold standard of remediation for students with language-based learning differences. A multi-sensory, systematic and flexible approach has always been at the core of Stephen Gaynor School’s reading program. With the help of Ms. Ann Edwards, a Fellow from the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, Gaynor recently began a school-wide initiative to sharpen teachers’ skills, build our toolbox and deepen our understanding of the layers and complexity of the English language. OG empowers our students as readers by giving them the tools to sound out the 45% of language that is phonetic and the resources to make intelligent responses to the 55% of language that must be memorized.

Reading Specialist Keri Evans, already OG-certified, felt “rejuvenated” after this summer’s professional development. This is a sentiment shared by many, as the best teachers are really life-long learners. In the Middle School, 24-year veteran Head Teacher Chris Meyer was particularly inspired by Ms. Edward’s approach to morphology (the study of the smallest units of meaning, which he feels has “great value across the curriculum, particularly in the areas of science and history.” Applying what they’ve learned through morphology, students are armed with the skills to tackle unfamiliar polysyllabic words like “subordinate” and “hydroponic.” Science Department Chair, agrees and explains. “They have a better understanding of how meaning can be found by actually pulling apart the word.” Lower School Head Teacher Michelle Fox also appreciates how our OG training permeates throughout the day by giving us a “common language to support student development.” Error analysis and questioning techniques are critical aspects of the OG approach because they allow students to understand their mistakes, internalize the reason and make the necessary correction. When a concept or rule has been taught, errors made during any class are brought to the attention of the student by asking thoughtful and familiar questions. For example, if a student confuses a vowel sound within a syllable, a teacher will prompt them with “Consommat at the end!” and the student will respond, “Makes the vowel short!” which instantly triggers the correction. Walk into any academic classroom and you might also hear a teacher cueing a student to “look between the vowels,” “say the vowel sound,” or “identify the syllable type” to help correct decoding errors.

In my own teaching, I have found “Rapid Exchange” to be a valuable tool. Students practice skills in real time, reading rapidly changing real and nonsense words, tracing the brain to act quickly, switching from long or short vowels as is required in actual reading. Rapid Exchange also helps to guide instruction by giving me an opportunity to quickly assess student skills and mastery of concepts or rules. In the hands of our skilled and dedicated staff, OG is a powerful tool that demystifies language for our students. We are thrilled to see them literally decoding the code before our eyes. We look forward to continuing to refine our OG approach with Ms. Edwards throughout the year.

TECH MOMENT

Check out Common Sense Media (https://www.commonsensemedia.org) The website provides reviews of movies, games, apps, and websites, while offering helpful hints for managing kids’ technology. Media reviews are based on age appropriateness and learning potential.

Gaynor2.0

Stephen Gaynor School’s new website is as tailored as our curriculum. The new and improved Parent Portal features personalized components that are password protected for each individual family member. Some new features include:
Gaynor Takes on the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge

This summer, the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge became a philanthropic blockbuster with a viral boom on social media outlets. The Gaynor community took on the chilly challenge to fundraise for ALS research and boost awareness of the disease. This social media-powered charitable act has raised more than $1.50 million for the ALS Association.

Dr. Gaynor took on the challenge with a little help from Ms. Singsen-Brazzog and the Gaynor Color. “This was a fun, light-hearted way to be a part of a larger cause that deserves every ounce of support,” explained Dr. Gaynor. While the challenge proved to be cold, Dr. Gaynor helped a major cause by continuing to boost awareness of ALS.

After learning about the Ice Bucket Challenge in their current events lessons, Ms. Barnwell’s Middle School class decided to take on the challenge themselves. Students collectively donated more than $200 to the local chapter of the ALS Association and supported the cause by dumping ice cold water on each other and their teachers! The challenge served as a team-building activity, while supporting a significant cause. Good job, Gaynor community!

Students Help Stock the Pantry of the NY Ronald McDonald House

For the first time ever, Stephen Gaynor School proudly participated in the Ronald McDonald House Parents’ Pantry Drive. The Ronald McDonald House is a home away from home for families around the world while their children are being treated at New York City Cancer Centers. The Gaynor community worked together to support these families by stocking the pantry with various food and personal items that they could need while staying in the NY Ronald McDonald House. By partnering with the Ronald McDonald House, Gaynor students and faculty made a huge impact on the lives of families facing pediatric cancer.

Community Service Day: Gaynor Students Give Back

Gaynor students exemplified the spirit of giving back by demonstrating good will and generosity throughout the community. During Thanksgiving week, Middle School classes participated in Gaynor’s Community Service Day in four separate philanthropic projects around the city.

The non-profit organization, Literacy Inc., organized an event for our students to visit first graders at PS 197, where they made arts and crafts and read stories together.

Additional students visited the Brooklyn Animal Resource Coalition (BARC) where they donated goods to animals in need and made new furry friends!

Other Gaynor students served a hot lunch to those in need at St. James’ Church Soup Kitchen, while another group visited the Goddard Senior Center where they socialized with residents and created holiday cards. All of these trips were incredibly rewarding, leaving many students requesting additional opportunities to allow them to give back to the community. We applaud the charitable spirit of our students and look forward to even more community service projects in the future.

Shooting Hoops for Gaynor’s CLC

The Community Learning Center (CLC) hosted its annual basketball tournament in style. This 3-on-3 basketball fundraiser is named the Jackie Long Memorial Tournament in celebration of the life of Ms. Jackie Long, Gaynor’s long-time Director of Admissions who passed away in 2012.

The CLC is a free after-school reading program for public school students in our community. This annual fundraising event is critical to ensure the program can continue to serve neighborhood students who truly need the extra support. This year, Gaynor faculty, parents, alumni, and friends came together in eight teams to compete in this tournament to support a great cause. Spectators and players enjoyed the friendly competition, while enjoying pizza, baked goods, and taking part in an exciting raffle.

After a morning of tough competition, the tournament came down to the last game, where returning team From 3 Portland matched up against the Gaynor Coaches. It was a tough match up, but From 3 Portland took the prize this year – receiving the sought after CLC trophy. With the support of our Gaynor community, we raised $4,000, making this event a huge success.

The program’s Co-Director, Ms. Aline Adlin, explained the importance of this tournament. “Year in and year out we have a core group of teams who return to compete for the win. We are so grateful to our steadfast supporters as well as our newer teams who show their spirit of the CLC,” she said. “These events make a huge difference in how many students we are able to help each year.”

Thanks to everyone who participated in this event – especially fellow Co-Directors Ms. Adlin and Ms. Evans, who worked diligently to plan this exciting tournament to support such a worthy cause.
**Apple Adventures in the EC**

This fall, the Hudson Room began an exploration into life cycles combining math, science, social studies, and cooking lessons. These EC students transformed into scientists by playing out the life cycle of apples and making observations on the parts of the fruit. Ms. Saad and Ms. Chan awakened the students’ senses by conducting apple taste tests, then helped the students make mathematical graphs to depict their favorites. Social studies took center stage as students learned about all the various places apples can be found. The Hudson Room even ventured out to a local fruit stand near Geymor to find an example. Each student had a chance to buy an apple, which they sorted by attributes, such as size and color, to round out the math lesson. In a fun finale to these lessons, the Hudson Room students used their cooking skills to create delicious applesauce.

**Geography and Culture in the Country Expo**

Mr. Glaize’s class took their geography lessons to the next level by creating their own countries. After spending time learning about culture and the many different components that mold it, like diversity, family types, occupations, customs, and celebrations, these Lower School students transformed into geographers. Utilizing their creative imaginations and knowledge of geography, students broke out into groups to create their own countries. They decided on topics such as types of families, landforms, location, food, homes, and government. To celebrate their hard work, the class invited other students, teachers, Dr. Guymer, and Ms. Siegel-Horzempa to “travel” to their countries to explore their new lands.

Every visitor left with a homemade passport stamped from countries like “Pump Land,” “Tree Land,” and “Bob Land.”

**The Pattern Train**

Mr. Getler’s Lower School students combined math studies with their artistic talents to learn more about patterns. Math Specialist Mr. Kaufman worked with the students on mathematical patterns by organizing colored cubes. Mr. Kaufman teamed up with art teacher Ms. Rachlin to create an application of the class’ work with patterns that incorporate art, creativity, and teamwork.

Each student creatively crafted his/her own train car with a black rectangle foam board and colored cubes. To complete this project, students combined train cars into one large pattern train, which they hung proudly in the hallway.

**A Flag that Symbolizes Me**

As their first end of week review project, students in Mr. Borders’ class were asked to write a descriptive paragraph explaining a flag they made in social studies that symbolizes who they are. Though their audience was meant to be a person who has not seen their flag, we shared a visual of each flag to accompany the text.

**Rehanaah Bakhsh**

9/12/14

**End of Week Review Mr. Borders**

**Symbols on My Flag**

When creating my flag there were many different ideas that I wanted to incorporate. The flag has many different symbols that represent me. For example, I grew up in New York so I made a skyscraper on my flag. Other symbols were added to represent activities I love, which include reading and dancing. I tried to make my flag look like everything was coming out of a book like my life is a story. The buildings are popping out of the book and so is everything else. The main idea of my flag is that the book is my life and I can choose whatever I want to write or do in it. The main colors I used on my flag were purple, green, blue, and red. I feel these colors tell how I’m feeling and who I am as a person. I like using calm colors like blue and green because I like relaxing. Colors like purple and red show that I sometimes make bold choices. My flag is a great way to get to know me.

**Michael Barnstein**

9/12/14

**End of Week Review Mr. Borders**

**My Flag**

My flag symbolizes me! While generating my ideas I thought that it would be a good idea to draw a peanut and draw it out because I am allergic to peanuts. Just after I started to get really good ideas I thought of my next idea. It is my first year at this school and the only one thing I don’t like about the school is the stairs, but they give me much good exercise. So I drew stairs up and down weaving in between all of my symbols and made a triangle with the stairs in the middle of the paper. Under the triangle I made a baseball, a basketball, and a basketball shoe. I like both sports and love shoes. On my flag I drew a picture of my flag and placed the American flag inside that flag. I made an American flag because I love learning history about wars such as World War I and II. I am really bad at drawing so I was really surprised when I saw my flag when it was done, it turned out outstanding. I was just so proud that the flag I made represented me just how other flags represent someone or something else.
Discovering Dreams, Pursuing Passions

F from the very beginning more than fifty years ago, Stephen Gaynor School’s mission has been to provide children with a nurturing environment in which they can grow academically, while discovering their dreams and pursuing their passions. Gaynor’s individualized and well-rounded curriculum encourages students to explore their interests in the hopes that they will discover their dreams along the way. After all, that is how the school was created.

**FOLLOWING DREAMS:**
“Dreaming is the road to reality!”
- Ms. Susan-Harles, Co-Founder and Director of Education

Stephen Gaynor School was created because of a dream our two pioneering Co-Founders, Dr. Miriam Michael and Ms. Yvette Siegel-Herzig, shared. Their passion for helping children realize their potential led to the school’s creation in 1963. Today, their dream has become a reality with a school that has touched the lives of nearly 3,000 students.

Ms. Siegel-Herzig explains the importance of pursuing her dream, “Like grains of sand or fields of rye—each one different from the other—the uniqueness of our students exemplifies their strengths and individuality to be nurtured so that they may flourish.”

Head of School Dr. Gaynor shares in the vision of our Co-Founders. He, too, took a risk and followed his dream. Twenty years ago, he left the world of banking to help motivate children to perform at their best. To Dr. Gaynor, the most valuable currency is a child’s education. “I count my success based on the smiles on children’s faces, and I get that feedback every day,” he says.

**EXPLORING PASSIONS:**
“Don’t be afraid of others’ criticism. There are so many places you could go and so many things you could do if you just follow your dreams.”
- Alaxa Klippe1, Middle School student

Since Dr. Gaynor, Dr. Michael, and Ms. Siegel-Herzig followed their dreams, Gaynor students now have the opportunity to explore their interests, boosting self-confidence and academic success. Lower School student Sam Lung and Middle School student Alexa Klippe discovered a passion for photography, which they have pursued during their time at Gaynor.

After discovering an interest in taking pictures, Sam Lung worked with photography teacher Mr. Gaynor to capture artistic moments during school trips. Sometimes, Sam hopes to be a “great photographer who takes pictures of city buildings,” and his work with Mr. Gaynor is helping him follow this dream. Similarly, Alexa Klippe1 discovered her interest in photography five years ago. She remembers, “I started playing with a camera and began to see the beauty in capturing great moments.” Alexa’s passion for photography is woven into her academic studies, as she connects her writing and poetry with her artistic images. Alexa also works with Mr. Gaynor to take pictures of school sporting events, so that she can explore her passion while perfecting her craft.

**ACHIEVING SUCCESS:**
“Don’t put your dreams on the back burner. Start pursuing your passions as early as you possibly can.”
- Wyatt Accardi, Gaynor Alumnus

With a solid educational foundation, self-confidence, and a thirst for knowledge, Gaynor alumni are armed to follow in the footsteps of our Co-Founders. Wyatt Accardi and Owen Colby, High School students and Gaynor alumni (2012), recently became entrepreneurs, creating their own company called Invasive NYC. Since starting this screen-print based clothing company in the spring of 2013, Wyatt and Owen have seen great success by focusing on minimalist, yet intricate designs. They obtained an LLC and are maintaining a profitable business—all before graduating High School.

Wyatt, a junior at Churchill, who discovered his passion for design in Gaynor’s art classes, explains the school’s role in pursuing his dreams. “Gaynor is a safe environment, like a second home, where we had creative freedom, but were also pushed to work as hard as we could,” he explains. “The teachers were very supportive and motivating, while making anything seem possible.” Wyatt is currently looking into art and design colleges.

His colleague, Owen, agrees. “Build connections with your teachers!” he advises. “They are able to talk to teachers and they allowed us to develop what we wanted to do, and learn more about ourselves.” Owen is currently a junior at the Beacon School and plans to major in economics in college, while pursuing a career in business.

“Find your passion and don’t give up.”
- Dr. Gaynor
MS. KURRE, MS. RUBEL, AND MS. YOUNG BRING ENTHUSIASM TO GAYNOR EVERY DAY

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL?
- Math

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHILDREN’S BOOK?
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

AS AN ADULT, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PASTIME?
I like to do anything active; in the summer I love to golf.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?
Chocolate

WHAT FOOD WILL YOU ABSOLUTELY NOT EAT?
Coke claw

DO YOU PREFER CATS OR DOGS? VANILLA OR CHOCOLATE?
Dog
Chocolate

IF YOU COULD MEET ANY HISTORICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD IT BE?
Jackie Robinson

TELL US ONE FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF.
I was “athlete of the year” in my High School.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL?
I loved math class a lot because I had a great teacher!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHILDREN’S BOOK?
The Day the Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt

AS AN ADULT, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PASTIME?
I love “hushing” Broadway plays.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?
Soup (my mom’s chicken soup is the best but I love any soup).

WHAT FOOD WILL YOU ABSOLUTELY NOT EAT?
Fish

DO YOU PREFER CATS OR DOGS? VANILLA OR CHOCOLATE?
Neither cats nor dogs
Vanilla

IF YOU COULD MEET ANY HISTORICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD IT BE?
Inez Gomlen

TELL US ONE FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF.
When I was in the third grade, I was “called back” to audition for Annie on Broadway, but I didn’t make it.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL?
I was a bookworm and loved math class!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHILDREN’S BOOK?
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**Apple Picking**

There is no better way to bring in the fall season than Gaynor’s annual Apple Picking Field trip! Continuing with tradition, the entire Gaynor community ventured to Demarest Farm for an exciting day of outdoor activities. Students meandered through the apple orchards and picked some of the biggest apples they had ever seen! They concluded the trip by picking out an enormous pumpkin to adorn Gaynor’s lobby for the entire fall season!

**Green, White, and Denim Day**

The Gaynor community showed off its school pride during this year’s Green and White Day! The entire school came together in a display of Gaynor spirit by wearing our school colors. To celebrate, some buddy classes worked together to create bracelets and necklaces with green and white beads. On the same day, we celebrated Lee National Denim Day. To raise money for breast cancer awareness and research, faculty and staff donated five dollars to wear jeans, while students from the seventh floor also took part in a small philanthropic bake sale. What a great day to be a member of the Gaynor community!

**Fall Fest**

The Parents’ Association put on another cheerful and fun Fall Fest this year! To celebrate the fall season, Lower School students enjoyed a festive dance party, before watching a magician perform amazing tricks with the help of Gaynor students. Abracadabra was also heard in the Early Childhood as students enjoyed a magic show before heading out on a costume parade throughout the school.

**Big Apple Circus**

The “Big top” called Gaynor students and faculty out again for the annual field trip to the Big Apple Circus. Everyone marveled at the daring trapeze artists and contortionists, while laughing at the silly clowns and alpacas. The “Metamorphosis-themed” show truly entertained and wowed our entire community!
Gaynor Community Takes Over the Ice at Annual Skate Night Event

Bundling up on the ice is a fun-filled annual tradition at Stephen Gaynor School. This November was no exception as our community took over the entire ice skating rink at Winter Village, Bryant Park. Families, friends, alumni, faculty, and even the Gaynor Gator mingled over pizza, cookies, and hot chocolate. The Manhattan skyline framed this community event, as students zoomed gracefully over the ice and laughed with friends and family.

Amongst the skating, Lower School student David Gray had a chance to ride the Zamboni (a “special experience” he says) the day after last year’s Gaynor Gala auction.

The entire Gaynor community had a magnificent time skating in the winter season at our annual Skate Night. Thanks to the Parents’ Association for sponsoring this extraordinary school event!

Masquerade Ball

Masquerade Balls are typically associated with the 15th century and involved elaborate processions celebrating events of late medieval court life. In December, Gaynor’s Middle School students created their own Masquerade Ball-themed Middle School Dance, complete with homemade decorative masks and costumes befitting any royal court.

In preparation for the ball, students from the classes of Ms. Barnwell, Bentzen, Borders, Kasdorf, Larson, Morabito, Rhobin, Rubel, Wroble, and Ms. Meyer joined forces with the Parents’ Association to transform our gymnasium into a vintage ballroom complete with balloons, decorations, and lights.

The Student Council worked extremely hard to coordinate dance committees, who planned details to ensure the night into a 15th century ball. Student Jane Crowley designed the amazing artwork featured on this year’s invitation and posters. Ball participants enjoyed a fabulous evening, playing games and feasting on pizza and cupcakes before dancing the night away. Thanks to the Parents’ Association for sponsoring this magnificent Masquerade Ball!
FOSTERING RESILIENCE
IN CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES

By Rachel Matoto, Psy.D. and Clare Cosentino, Ph.D.

Whether it is getting a poor grade on an exam, not getting picked for a sports team, or forgetting lines in the school play, the process of childhood often includes being let down, dealing with disappointment, and facing frustration. Children with learning differences (LD) experience these let-downs even more acutely than children unencumbered by LD. An important social-emotional goal for all children, particularly those with LD, is to develop a resilient mindset, which includes growing both an inner strength and optimism to deal competently with the challenges and demands of everyday life.

The concept of teaching children to become resilient comes from the Positive Psychology research of Martin Seligman and his colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania. According to Seligman, children experience both self-esteem through effort and experiencing mastery, persistence, overcoming frustration, and meeting challenges. Resilience and optimism are known to inoculate children from stress and anxiety. How can parents and educators help children develop a resilient mindset?

1. Model an optimistic and resilient mindset: Share your own struggles (particularly your own experiences of LD, if applicable) and how you overcome them. Model “sticking it out” and not giving up, help children talk out the bright side of life.

2. Help your children experience successes by identifying and reinforcing their “traits of competence” or strengths: self-worth and resilience are based on children experiencing success in areas of their lives that they and others consider important.

3. Set realistic goals: children learn to experience success when the goals set for them are within their reach.

4. Teach children to solve problems and make decisions: encourage your children to identify the problem and think about possible solutions, so they can feel empowered and in control.

5. Help your children recognize that setbacks are experiences from which to learn, as well as opportunities to practice problem solving.

6. Praise for effort and persistence rather than solely reinforcing positive outcomes and results.

7. Structure and routines offer consistency and stability, which are very important when children feel anxious and stressed. This continues to children’s lives help them get through the hard times.

8. And remember, in light of the Positive Psychology movement, humor and fun always go a long way!

Below are just some recent achievements made possible with donations to the Gaynor Fund:

- iPad program roll out
- New laptops for all teachers
- New campus WiFi System installed
- Professional development on the Orion-Gillingham approach for all faculty and staff
- Expanded roster of Afterschool Program activities
- Redesigned website
- 100% of families who requested financial assistance received tuition relief in the 2013-2014 academic year

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
Hello, Hello, Construction Site

Reminiscent of Sherri Dudley Rinker’s children’s book, Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site, cranes trucks, concrete mixers, and excavators have been spotted around Stanly Gayer School. Our construction crew has been hard at work making strides toward our rotunda walkway. Excitement is high as we approach the completion of the first phase of our school. By doing so, they’ve paid homage to our visionary co-founders and surrounding enthusiasts. Gayer’s growth and success could not have been possible without the generous support and wise counsel of our parent community.

Recognizing how current students and their families are greatly benefiting from the generosity and foresight of those before them, many in our community have donated to help fund our expansion efforts, investing in the future of our school. By doing so, they’ve paid homage to our visionary co-founders and surrounding enthusiasts.

EC Scientific Explorations in the Community Garden

On one special field trip to our local community garden, students from the Carson Tower ventured into the observational sciences on a treasure hunt for fall foliage. After learning about different types of trees and their matching leaves, these EC students ventured down the street to find some of the leaves for themselves. Using a “Leaf Hunt” map, the class searched for and found leaves in the garden.

Ms. Hartman and Ms. Sprung helped the students scientifically observe and note the different traits of the leaves, which they matched to the trees within the garden. In an exciting turn of events, the class even made a new friend, a bunny named Shadow!

Lower School Japanese Cultural Immersion

This fall, Lower School classes delved into a study on Japanese culture as part of their social studies curriculum. Students in the classes of Ms. Bernet, Ms. Shriver, and Ms. Sandier didn’t have to travel to the Far East. They expanded their knowledge with exciting field trips throughout New York City! First, students ventured to the Metropolitan Museum of Art where they explored an exhibit on Japanese kimono through the ages, allowing students to deepen their understanding of Japanese culture. After marveling at the historical attire, the students returned to school to create their very own kimono and Japanese calligraphy characters.

The cultural immersion continued as the classes of Ms. Bernet and Ms. Sandier visited a Japanese Tea House, where they discovered the ins and outs of this historical ceremony. These students not only gained a meaningful understanding of Japanese culture, they also had a wonderful time bonding with friends and making memories.

History Comes to Life: Middle School Students Travel Back to the 1700’s

In conjunction with their Revolutionary War studies, students in American History 1 classes traveled downtown to the Fraunces Tavern Museum, a famous colonial-era tavern that served as a meeting place for the Sons of Liberty and many Patriot activities. On this field trip, Ms. Bestem and Mr. Kesterson’s Middle School classes learned more about the history of New York during the Revolutionary War. Students manipulated reenactment pieces related to tavern life such as a lantern, measuring cups, and a canteen.

The most exciting part of the trip was visiting the Tavern Room, the site of George Washington’s final farewell to his generals after the Revolutionary War before heading back to his home Mount Vernon. Students took a quick trip back in time as they experienced the room as it appeared in 1783 with original objects from the time period.
Students shine in Gaynor’s first Winter Arts Festival

Stephen Gaynor School hosted its first ever Winter Arts Festival this December under the theme, “Our Journey”. In addition to the annual concert performance, this year, photography and art galleries were added, allowing even more students to showcase their artistic work. The Gaynor community crowded into the gymnasium over two evenings to celebrate our students’ shining talents.

Classes of Mr. Arbeefeld, Buckles, Cohen, Castello, Davis, Fazie, Geier, Michalson, and Zanzi participated in the first night of the Winter Art Festival. Performing songs from a variety of genres, students artistically illustrated Gaynor’s mission of helping children along life’s journey to overcome challenges and reach their full potential. Groups of students sang proudly to tunes from Rodgers’ Pippin, Fleetwood Mac, Imagine Dragons, and The Lumineers, all of which tied thematically into our students’ journeys. Poetry performances, song, and dance closed out this successful Winter Arts Festival, leaving everyone with a smile and a sense of community.

Drama Teacher Ms. Flyer-Moore, exclaimed, “We are so proud of the way all of our students rose to the challenge to create an entirely new kind of performance this year. They really stepped up to make our inaugural Winter Arts Festival an amazing success.”

Thanks to Ms. Robinson (A&A Ms. Amelio), Mr. Gaynor, Ms. Pijlar-Moore (A&A Ms. Kristen), Ms. Rachlin, Ms. Shogun, and Ms. Worsell for helping our students shine in the first Winter Arts Festival.

Can you find the Gaynor-related words?

L P D V W L E D L T O D H W P R
T I E K S S G T U H P K F A Y E
M O Z V S I A A A G P X X H O S
L N I B T Q R D L I O J Y E R P
A E L S F Q U K M N R Y O V E E
F E A Y C W O Z S E T Y Z U C C
N R U C T I C H B T U E E U T
O H D B O I E V S A N H U P T G
I J I G C N N N V K I S Y Y A N
Y M V V R R F U C S T D U T L Q
P L I Q S L V I M E Y T O X T S
Z U D T D V E A D M F R D S B U
T C N G A Y N O E O A P Q I K
P A I H O N E S T Y N C I C C S
S K Y B R I D G E G Q T T R L I
V S P X X J X I B R I G H T W C

Bright CLC Community Confident Courage Gator Gaynor Honesty Individualized Opportunity Pioneer Respect Science Fair Skate Night Skybridge
**NAME THAT GAYNOR GATOR:**

Can you identify a familiar face from Gaynor? Which of these baby pictures matches one of the below Gaynor teachers, specialists, or administrators?

1. Ms. Arbesfeld
2. Mr. Reish
3. Ms. Berman
4. Ms. Borders
5. Ms. Geller
6. Ms. Hamlisch
7. Ms. Stein

---

**GAYNOR WORD SEARCH SOLUTIONS:**

1. Ms. Arbesfeld
2. Mr. Reish
3. Ms. Berman
4. Ms. Borders
5. Ms. Geller
6. Ms. Hamlisch
7. Ms. Stein

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**SPOT THE DIFFERENCES:**

Can you spot the five differences between these two pictures of Ms. Siegel-Herzog and the Gaynor Gator?

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**Using Gaynor Skills for the Greater Good: Spotlight on Ben Gordon ('04)**

Here at Stephen Gaynor School, nothing makes us prouder than when our alumni use their education to help transform the lives of others, and that’s exactly what Ben Gordon is doing today. As a Communications Associate at GrowNYC, a hands-on non-profit which improves New York City’s quality of life through environmental programs, Gordon credits his time at Gaynor with giving him lifelong skills that will allow him to pursue any path he chooses.

“Gaynor was a really good foundation for what I needed to go on for the rest of my life,” says Gordon. “I never would have succeeded in high school, college, or professionally without the foundation I built at Gaynor. And without the experience I had at Gaynor, I wouldn’t be anywhere near the type of person I am today,” he adds.

Ben started at GrowNYC as an intern pursuing a career in Public Relations, and was soon hired as a Communications Associate, which he says wouldn’t be possible without his Gaynor teachers who taught him to read and write. “When I arrived at Gaynor, I couldn’t read whatsoever,” he says. “I was so frustrated before I get there, but the school challenged me so that when I moved on, I was reading above a lot of the other students in my new school.”

Ben recalls his fondest Gaynor memories as hanging out with his classmates, playing on the school’s basketball team, and enjoying a sleepover night at the school.
TO PARENTS OF ALUMNAE/1:

If this issue is addressed to your child who no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please notify the Development Office at 212.787.7070 ext. 1125 or alumni@stephengaynor.org with the correct mailing address. Thank you.

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TICKETS & INFORMATION AT WWW.STEPHENGAYNOR.ORG

Save the Date

Gaynor Gala 2015

Honoring Jennifer Rudolph Walsh,
Board Member at WME, oversees the Literary, Lectures, and Live Events Departments

Wednesday, March 11, 2015
From 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM

At the American Museum of Natural History