

Buckingham Browne & Nichols

The Link

October 2008

Spotlight Article

Faculty Travel Grants Provide Summer Adventures

Every summer BB&N faculty take to the world in a variety of fascinating endeavors and trips made possible by School funded travel grants. These grants are given out annually by the Board of Trustees in order provide teachers with well deserved resources to travel and explore areas of interest which they might not otherwise be able to do. Check out where this year's five travel grant recipients explored this summer:

Upper School Math Teacher Mark Fidler:

This summer, my son Bailey '03 and I biked across the country, from Anacortes, Washington to Westerly, Rhode Island. We were on the road for 48 days, riding for 47 of them, and we covered just over 3,600 miles at an average of 77 miles per day. We camped about half the nights, staying in motels when rain threatened or if the Celtics were playing against the Lakers in the NBA Finals. Riding through the Northern Cascades was the hardest and most beautiful part of the trip, with the people of Montana and North Dakota the friendliest.

Along the way, we stayed with Ward Ghory (former Upper School Director) in Milwaukee, Zeke Faux '03 and Garret Leahy '03 in Brooklyn, NY, and with a good friend of Karen Wyon's in Wolf Point, Montana. It was an amazing experience and we will never look at a US map the same again!

Upper School English Teacher Sharon Hamilton:

Thanks to a BB&N travel grant, I enjoyed the trip of a lifetime: a ten-day theater and music tour in London. Some of the highlights were five varied and beautifully acted plays, including The Merry Wives of Windsor at the new Globe Theater; a musical version of Brief Encounter, interspersed with songs by Noel Coward and scenes from the vintage film, staged in the same theater where the movie opened; and a gripping new play from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Black Watch, set alternately in a pool room in Perth and a battlefield in Iraq. We also heard two wonderful concerts, one by the Academy of Ancient Music played on authentic period instruments, took backstage tours of the National Theatre and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, and visited Hampton Court Palace, the Tate Britain, and the British Museum. It was a full-immersion, fascinating time, capped by warm reunions with long-time friends who are native Londoners.

Middle School History Teacher Angus Means:

*With the 7th graders studying Latin America and my recent contact with Latin America reading *Motorcycle Diaries* by Ernesto Guevara, I was inspired and eager to visit Peru and experience three distinct regions within the country.*

The most amazing part of the trip was the eight days spent hiking in the Andes Mountains providing a chance to visit two of the three lost Incan cities—Choquequirao (aka the “Cradle of Gold”), and Machu Picchu. The 105 km hike was arduous at times, filled with a lot of elevation change and tall steps at times, but rewarded me with some amazing views.

The three week trip was the most time I have ever spent out of the country and the grant gave me a chance to see a place that I would have never encountered otherwise. I am grateful to BB&N for such an amazing opportunity to experience a place that is filled with such fascinating hidden treasures. Everything from the scenery to the culture along with the people I met along the way, left lasting impressions and memories that I will take with me for a lifetime.

Middle School Science Teacher Wendy Svatek:

Located on the mid-Atlantic ridge, Iceland has some of the most varied geological conditions and formations in the world. It is well known for the Sagas, snow, and endless winter nights, but the summer brings 20-hour days and many opportunities for outdoor adventure. Additionally, Iceland is an independent European nation, with proud people who understand the value of and need for their natural resources. In Iceland, with its natural beauty, there is an avid awareness of the environment and man's place within it—from the turf-covered farmhouses in use for 1,100 years to the more recent geothermal plants which supply 89 percent of Icelandic households with hot water and heat.

Thanks to the generosity of a BBN Summer Travel grant, I was able to have a first-rate adventure; camping, hiking, and exploring this unique country, all the while learning about Icelandic way of life. With a few weeks in this seemingly distant land, I had the opportunity to drive the Ring Road around Iceland, exploring the fjords and glaciers along the way. Highlights of my trip included walking on glaciers, kayaking in the North Atlantic, hiking on Grimsey Island in the Arctic Circle, touring a geothermal plant, and viewing puffins and the graceful wild Icelandic horses.

Lower School Woodworking Teacher Candida Monteith:

My Summer Travel Grant made it possible to return to Southwestern France—an area with the greatest concentration of Romanesque sculpture art in its original location—and to pursue these sculptures in a systematic way, taking pictures to use in my classroom.

Because the Romanesque churches were so far apart, and often in out of the way places, we made this into a road trip, picnicking our way through France and stopping whenever we saw a farmer's market. This was delightful! For three weeks we lived in small Medieval towns, discovering exciting art and driving through some of the most beautiful countryside on earth—fields of grapes, sunflowers, wheat, and corn, all dotted with white cows and ducks, and of course Medieval towers and turrets that appeared seemingly out of nowhere.

Curiously, some of the sculptures created by these eleventh and twelfth century carvers seemed reminiscent of many beloved creatures in children's literature, and I'm looking forward to using these terrific images with my students in sculpture classes.

Inside The Classroom: Portrait Study with Eric Hudson

How many of you spend longer than five minutes looking at a painting when you're in an art gallery?" Middle School teacher Eric Hudson asks his seventh grade class.

The response is just what he expects: not a single hand goes up.

"My parents do that all the time," offers one student, "and it's *soooo* annoying!"

Most everyone laughs, but Hudson has found his opening for the day's lesson.

"What's the point of doing something like that?" he asks rhetorically. "The longer they look, the more they will see.

"In the next few weeks, you too are going to be looking at paintings for a long time, and seeing what details come out of it."

Lots of art classes study paintings, of course – but Hudson doesn't teach art. His subject is seventh grade English. What do Van Gogh and Renoir have to do with reading and writing? As Hudson explains, if he can teach students to recognize the subtle details and themes of master paintings, it will be that much easier for his class to spot them in works of literature.

"In seventh grade we start with studying art because it gets the kids to start to think critically about what they read," Hudson says. "The Lower School does a really good job of getting them to *love* reading, but they still struggle with *thinking* about what they're reading."

The Portrait Study, developed by English Department Head Betsy Canaday, has been a core aspect of the Middle School English curriculum for almost 20 years. For three weeks, students study portraits, landscapes, and still life-paintings, learning the difference between observation, inference, and analysis. Next, they apply the same skills they've learned to reading short stories.

“They see something in a book and I'll say ‘Well the author put that there on purpose,’ and they'll be like, ‘No, they didn't. It was an accident!’” Hudson says. “The portrait study really gets them to start thinking about the choices that an author makes. By the end of seventh grade they are able to read something and see patterns and ideas, as well as recognize symbols.”

At the end of the three weeks, students travel to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, where they pick a painting they like, study it intensely, and write an original story based on their observations.

Today's lesson, though, is still early in the process. Motioning to the back wall of the classroom, adorned with various portraits such as Barack Obama and John McCain, and landscapes of the ocean and countryside, Hudson asks each student to explain why the artwork they picked from a newspaper, magazine or book for homework is a good example of a landscape, portrait, or a still life.

“This is a portrait because it shows her face and zooms in on her head,” says Bunnard Phan.

“The focus is on the human,” Hudson repeats. “Good, go put it on the board.”

Another student, Matt Epstein, places his picture on the “landscape” side of the board.

“So my landscape is a landscape because it's A) zoomed out, B) there's a horizon, and C) it's nature,” says Epstein.

Next, it's onto a masterpiece, a painting titled *Woman in a Fur Hat*, by early 20th century Boston artist Gretchen W. Rodgers. After asking his students to study the work in silence, Hudson goes around the room and asks what they've come up with.

Observations, he explains, are step one. “After that, you are going to make inferences—educated guesses on what's happening.” The final step in dissecting a painting, he continues, is analysis.

“Do you know what analysis is?” he asks a student.

“Why it’s important?” she tentatively answers.

“Exactly!” says Hudson. “Why is this thing here? Why is this important? Why did the artist put this in the painting?”

“Why,” Hudson finishes, tying the lesson to literature, “did the author put this in the book?”

Hudson, who is in his third year teaching Middle School English after obtaining a master’s in Spanish Literature from Berkeley, says that while studying portraits can be intense at times, it is a critical component of reading comprehension.

“By the time we get to the third week they are like, ‘Oh my God, I can’t do any more observations. I can’t look at anymore art!’ he laughs. “Then they read the stories and they see how much richer their interpretations are. You can really see them become surprised by what they’re saying.”

56th Bivouac Offers New Course on Sustainable Agriculture

Homemade apple crisp is one of Bivouac’s best rewards. But this year’s crop of BB&N freshman had to work extra hard for it.

After picking their apples at a local farm—part of a new lesson in sustainable agriculture—students returned to camp to cook. But none of the ovens worked.

“We had to steam the apples and pan fry the crisps over an open outdoor fire,” said Upper School teacher Joe Horning. “It started to rain that afternoon, so we cooked for three hours through the rain in order to ensure that each of the 16 squads had a full, 9x12 inch pan of apple crisp.”

For 56 years, groups of BB&N freshman have spent 12 days in the New Hampshire woods during September retreats at Bivouac, forming bonds as they cut firewood, cook food, dig latrines and garbage pits, and set up their own shelter. The program has endured so long because of the lifelong lessons and class unity it fosters.

This year, sustainable agriculture was added to the mix. Upper School teachers Horning, Margot Caso, and Leila Evans's new *Field to Table* course had students trekking to orchards and farms, where they picked fruits and vegetables and heard farmers talk about the concerted efforts they take to avoid damaging the ecosystem while sustaining the long-term life of their fields.

In the afternoon, the students returned home to prepare the basil, garlic, summer squash, carrots, onions, potatoes, or apples they picked for the night's main dish.

"If we're successful, we've helped cultivate not just a taste for fresh, local fruits and vegetables, but an awareness of sustainable agriculture and a pride among the students in collectively harvesting and preparing their own food," Horning said.

Students also learned how their families can buy "farm shares" of weekly produce baskets from local growers as part of a class on Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs.

They spent the rest of their time at Bivouac much like the students who've passed before them; conquering high-rope courses; finding their way in the woods with map and compass; and jumping into the lake at 7 a.m. for refreshing—but near freezing—swim.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a New York Times article on sustainable agriculture

[CLICK HERE](#) for a Bivouac photo gallery

[CLICK HERE](#) for a PDF the *Field to Table* course menu

Talented New Faculty and Staff Join BB&N

BB&N welcomes the following faculty and staff for the 2008-2009 year:

Kim Gold, *All School Coordinator of Psychological and Learning Support Services*

Kim comes to us from Wayland High School where she was the Department Head for Special Education, servicing over 150 students on their IEP's. Prior, she was the Special Education Liaison at Wayland and a teacher at the Perkins School for the Blind.

Sean Bennett, *Upper School Administrative Assistant-Receptionist*

Sean is an Edward F. Albee Playwriting Fellow, and is a core member of the John F. Kennedy Center Playwriting Intensive in Washington, DC. His play about the Iraq war, *Bring 'Em On!*, recently concluded a six-week engagement in New York.

Gustavo Carrera, *Upper School History*

Gustavo joins BB&N from the Riverdale Country Day School where he was a history teacher for both middle and high school students. He also served as MS Academic Dept. Coordinator, Upper School Diversity Coordinator and Admissions interviewer. Gustavo also speaks several languages.

Diane Giardi, *Upper School Ceramics Teacher*

Diane brings to BB&N over 17 years of experience in ceramics and art history. She has been Assistant Professor/Dept. Head, visual art faculty and Head of Ceramics at various institutions, including colleges and private schools. As an artist who has presented at national shows throughout the east coast, she has won numerous awards for her work in ceramics.

Carolyn Girod, *Upper School Math*

Carolyn started her career at Phillips Andover Academy where she was a teaching fellow. Her next assignment was working for the Outward Bound program as group leader. Carolyn then worked for the University of New Hampshire as a teaching assistant for under graduate students. The last two years she has taught at the Lawrenceville School in New Jersey.

Luna Greenwood, *Upper School Library Assistant*

Luna's previously served as the Head Children's Librarian at the Hudson Public Library. While there, she planned and organized all programs for children, including "Lunatunes" sing-alongs and "Playing with Shakespeare."

Daniel Janes, *Upper School Science*

Dan has over 11 publications to his name and numerous papers that he has presented or has been invited to present. He has an extensive and varied background in both science and education, including teaching high school biology in Ecuador. He has done a lot of research in genetics, and has built relationships with the Museum of Comparative Zoology, the Broad Institute, and the Bauer Center for Genome.

Manmeet Kaur, *Upper School Math*

Manmeet has over eight years experience teaching math to high school students both in the United States as well as in Tanzania. Most recently she taught for the "upward bound" program Project ACHIEVE working with student from inner city.

Melissa Van Beuren King, *Upper School Biology Teacher*

Melissa comes to us from Miss Porter School in Farmington, Conn, where she was high school teacher of biology and environmental science as well as a coach for the varsity ice and field hockey teams.

Lucy LaVallee, *Upper School Russian Teacher*

Lucy comes to BB&N after working as a teacher assistant for autistic students in the Weymouth public school system. Her prior experience was as a translator for a summer camp working with children of Chernobyl, and she has worked in the department of mental health at Bryantville elementary school.

Rachel Riemer, *Upper School Physics*

Rachel has taught for 13 years. The past four years she has taught at the GANN Academy where she held positions as Director of Special Programs, Dean of Senior Class, and Classroom Teacher. She has also taught at the Boston University Academy, Harvard University, and the Kinkaid School.

Joel Sweetser, *Upper School Science*

Joel has been teaching Chemistry courses—including Forensic Science—for eight years. While teaching, Joel was concurrently dormitory head and athletic coach for three sports.

Richard Chang, *Middle School Math Teacher*

Richard is no stranger to BB&N, having previously taught math classes here for three years. Now in his 13th year of teaching, his last assignment was as a middle school math teacher in the Braintree public school system. Richard has also taught and coached sports at the Fay School and worked on several summer enrichment programs.

Michael Ewins, *Middle School Science Teacher*

Michael taught at the St. John's College High School as a Physics and Astronomy teacher where he developed an audio and video podcast as a teaching tool. While at St. John's, he also coached field hockey and rugby. Michael is an avid traveler to South America, Asia, and Africa, and he also speaks several languages.

Svetlana Grinshpan, *Middle School Academic Technology Specialist*

Svetlana was Director of Academic Technology for Shady Hill School where she provided leadership and strategic planning for over 70 teachers and 500 students. She helped develop a three-year technology leadership program for students at Lesley College and UMASS Boston.

Youssef Talha, *Middle School French Teacher*

Youssef recently worked at the Fessenden School as a Spanish teacher and grade 7 Dean. He also worked at the Berlitz Language Center teaching Arabic. Youssef is currently coaching volleyball and soccer at BB&N, and is involved in several community based programs. He is fluent in four languages.

Kwok Wong, *Middle School Technical Support*

Kwok started at BB&N at the Middle School as a technology support consultant before being hired full-time. He has over ten years experience working with computers and network systems. His previous position was working as a personal computer technician at the Max Group Corporation in Woburn, Massachusetts.

Ellie Cowen, *Lower School Math*

Ellie Cowen will be teaching fifth and sixth grade math in the Brick Building this year. She has a Masters from our Lesley Intern Program and an undergraduate degree in Math and English from Williams College.

Christina Dello Russo, *Lower School Beginners*

Christina returns to BB&N as a Beginners teacher with Rania Melki, after being a Kindergarten and First Grade teacher at the Lesley Ellis School in Arlington. Christina was an assistant teacher in the Kindergarten at BB&N for two years, and was an apprentice teacher in the Lesley Masters Program at Shady Hill School in Cambridge.

Ben Goldhaber, *Lower School Kindergarten*

Ben Goldhaber will teach Kindergarten with Maria Barton this year following his internship on the Lower School campus last year where he taught first and third grades. Ben graduated from our own Lesley Intern Program, and has also worked for the Teach for America program.

Bethany Greene, *Lower School Kindergarten*

Bethany Greene comes to us from the Wellesley Public School system where she taught Kindergarten at the Fiske School. She received her undergraduate degree from Duke University and her M.Ed. from Lesley University.

Sharon Mathieu, *Lower School Grade 6 Homeroom/Social Studies*

Sharon Mathieu comes to us from Beaver Country Day School where she had been teaching a variety of subjects to 7th and 8th graders for eight years. Most recently, she taught in the History Department.

Berhane Zerome, *Grade 6 Homeroom/Mathematics*

Berhane Zerome comes to us from The Cambridge Friends School where he taught sixth grade math and science for eight years. Berhane has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Asmara and a Masters degree in Education from Harvard.

Walter Klinke, *Annual Fund Assistant for Alumni/ae Giving*

Walter has worked in various educational, sales, and entertainment-related areas and has lived in many different locales including Boston, New Hampshire, New York, Florida, and Sydney, Australia. For a point in time, acting was his main pursuit but he has since focused primarily on education as his main area of interest.

Andrea Martinez, *Alumni/ae Assistant*

Andrea comes to us from Harvard University, where she was the Manager of Fringe Benefits and Account and Reporting. While at Harvard, she was responsible for keeping track of employee benefits and pension plans. Her previous assignments at Harvard included Coordinator, Fringe Benefits and Accounting Assistant for Fringe Benefits.

Richard Wills, *Annual Fund Assistant*

In his spare time, Richard has a passion for theater which has led him from acting to writing and directing. Richard wrote and directed five plays and three musicals in theaters in both Manchester and in Connecticut.

Keeping You Up to Date

An Evening in Celebration: November 1

The Greater Boston Alumni/ae Association cordially invites you to An Evening in Celebration of our 2008 Retired Faculty Members. In honor of their many years of service to BB&N, the evening will feature speakers, memories, food, cocktails, and of course, the wonderful faculty.

Nine legendary BB&N teachers will be feted: Byron Bowman, Armen Dedekian, Dan Farber, John Graham, Yelva Joseph, Linda Kaufman, Al Rossiter, Roger Stacey, and Tom Ware.

Saturday, November 1, 2008

--Cocktail Reception: 6:00 p.m.

--Dinner and Program: 7:00 p.m.

--Nicholas Athletic Center, Upper School Campus at Gerry's Landing Road.

For additional information please contact the Alumni/ae Affairs Office at events@bbns.org.

Garai Wins Statewide Science Competition

This past year three BB&N students submitted posters to the [Massachusetts Society for Medical Research](#) statewide competition. One student, Elizabeth Garai '11, was awarded first place in the High School division for her poster titled, "Effect of Azedra on Neuroendocrine Tumors." She received a certificate and a \$500 cash award for her winning submission.

The purpose of the competition is to recognize those students who can demonstrate superior understanding of the scientific process and the benefits of biomedical research to human and animal health, and who can artfully communicate that understanding in writing and presentation.

The competition, which ran from January through April 2008, invited middle and high school students to compete and be judged by a panel of biomedical professionals from a range of research institutions throughout the Commonwealth.

1929 Crew Oar Gets a Makeover

This past summer a piece of BB&N history was restored in anticipation of an important milestone. 2009 will mark the 80th anniversary of the BB&N crew victory at the world renowned Royal Henley Regatta in England, and in preparation Woodworking teacher Paul Ruhlmann spent some time this summer restoring the 1929 Henley Oar used in the winning race.

"It was a lot of work for him and he did a beautiful job," said Coach and Faculty member Peter Fiore '76. "The oar may be the oldest surviving memorabilia here from the old Browne & Nichols School."

Student Health & Wellness Policies

As daylight starts to grow shorter and we all start to spend more and more time indoors, it's a good time for BB&N families to reacquaint themselves with the School's Student Health & Wellness Policies. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the policies (they're also published in the Student Handbook, pages 138-148).

Among the policies is an explanation of BB&N's Head Injury Policy, which requires all Middle and Upper School students to take a baseline ImpACT test. ImpACT is a research-based software tool utilized to evaluate recovery after a concussion. Please be aware that any students in Grades 7-12 for whom the School does not yet have a baseline test, have been contacted this week to set up a test by October 15. If you have any questions about the test, please call Kathy Gruning, head athletic trainer, at 617-800-2239.

Ninth Grade Parent Dessert

Watching a slideshow of their children away at Bivouac, Grade Nine parents enjoyed a wide array of treats as a warm welcome to the Upper School. [CLICK HERE](#) for a photo gallery.

Juniors and Parents Learn About Substance Abuse

The Upper School once again served host to Jeff Wolfsberg and Associates for a week of substance abuse education and discussion. Wolfsberg and his colleagues met for two days with juniors in both breakout discussion groups and lecture sessions before hosting an evening session with both students and parents.

“This proactive approach drug and alcohol awareness is a very effective way of communicating the dangers to students in a manner that really reaches them,” said Upper School Counselor Doug Neuman, who helped to organize the week-long program.

Kim Gold Arrives to Serve in New All-School Role

Kim Gold has been named the All-School Coordinator of Psychological and Learning Support Services, a new position created through a process for curriculum review.

“My charge in year one is to help coordinate, through grade level by grade level, the support systems that are in place for our students,” Gold says. “There are already support systems in place on all three campuses, so my job is to be a resource as well as to refine the current services and the specific needs of each campus.”

According to Charlie Ruopp, Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs, three years ago Joel Monell convened a committee to look at BB&N student support systems and identified several areas of need. One of the most important findings was the need for a position that would coordinate student support services across all three campuses.

“With Kim’s unique background in both public and private teaching and leadership positions, as well as her high energy, she has already begun to make much needed adjustments to our program,” Ruopp says.

NEASC Parent Survey on the Way!

As you may already know, BB&N is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges [NEASC]. Every ten years, BB&N must undergo a very thorough self-study process in order to renew its accreditation. The self-study is a great opportunity for BB&N to do a candid self-evaluation and to measure itself against the NEASC Standards for Accreditation. As part of the self-study, schools are asked to survey parents about their experience with the school. The result of this important survey is compiled and given to the self-study committees to help inform their discussions. In the upcoming week, parents will be sent a link to an online survey. We would appreciate it if every family takes the survey to ensure that the parent voice is included in the self-study report. The School thanks you in advance for your help and support!

Middle School Kicks Off Year with...Ice Cream!

The Middle School Ice Cream Social once again marked the start of the School year, giving students and parents a chance to catch up with old friends and enjoy make-your-own sundaes.

BB&N Students Garner Many Foreign Language Awards

Many BB&N Students won awards last year in the Foreign Language field including Andrew Miller-Smith. Miller Smith, pictured above, received a medal and diploma, along with books, for winning a writing contest organized by the French Consulate and the Anti-Defamation League about Louis Malle's film *Au revoir les enfants*. Please [CLICK HERE](#) for a PDF of the 2007-08 Award Winners.

Lower School Music Teachers Perform at Tanglewood

This summer two of BB&N's Lower School teachers took to the stage at the famous Tanglewood Music Center in Lenox, Massachusetts. Debbie Slade and Ada Park Snider both sang in concerts from the same stage so often populated by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and summer favorite, James Taylor.

Their music teacher group *Patschwork* also made some waves when it led the opening session for the Northeast District Society for General Music Conference in May. *Patschwork* will be presenting and performing again this November. For more information please email [Debbie Slade](mailto:Debbie.Slade@bbn.edu).

South Asian Parent Alliance Forms

BB&N is pleased to announce the formation of the BB&N South Asian Parents Alliance, also known as SAPA. SAPA's mission is to help BB&N gain a competitive advantage in its quest for the best students, faculty, and staff by providing resources that will engender and support a more global view. It is hoped that the resources possessed by the South Asian parent community at BB&N and the extended South Asian diaspora will support and promote the mission. The formation of this alliance addresses a perceived need for aid in community building, facilitates assimilation for this unique group, as well as providing an opportunity for this group to 'give back' to the BB&N community. South Asia comprises Bangladesh, the British Indian Ocean Territory, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, but membership is open to all BB&N parents.

Co-chairs [Babi Mitra](#) and [Mina Paul](#) have announced that the first meeting will be held on October 6 at 7:00 pm at the Upper School Community Room. All are invited!

Financial Aid Offered for SAT Prep Course

In a welcome new development, students who receive financial aid at BB&N will now qualify for a reduction in the cost of SAT preparation courses offered by Summit Educational Group, Inc. In addition, the courses will now be offered on campus, giving students access to a convenient, in-house preparation option. The next course offered is for BB&N juniors preparing for the December 6th SAT. Summit's SAT preparation course balances skill reinforcement and test-taking strategies, providing a comprehensive test preparation program. The 12-session course consists of an initial diagnostic test, eight instructional sessions, and three full-length practice tests. All questions and concerns regarding the Summit course should be referred directly to Summit Educational Group at 1-800-MY TUTOR.

Class of 2009 and Parents Launch into Senior Year

Held annually as an opportunity to foster excitement for senior year and bring the class together, this year's Senior Parent Dinner featured warm remarks about the class of 2009 from both parents and faculty.

Head of School Rebecca T. Upham commented on how the Class of 2009 embodies one of the School's most important mottos: kindness.

"These Seniors have looked out for each other, and will lead the School with remarkable grace and presence, especially during difficult times," Upham said.

It was nostalgia that reigned supreme for Upper School Director Jack Knapp, who noted that this is the very first class he has seen progress all the way through the Upper School during his three-year tenure.

"My first Bivouac was their first Bivouac," he recalled. "I have taught many of you over these past four years and you are truly a wonderful group of kids. Your list of accomplishments is virtually endless, and we are very proud. Enjoy your leadership."

Senior Parents Tod Beaty, Amy Sassoon, and Debbie Shalom spoke briefly about the Senior Parents' Gift (hyperlink to article about SPG on Gift page) and introduced the 24 other parents who have volunteered for this year's Gift Committee.

Seniors Philippe Panico and Emily Leinbach then took the stage, encouraging support for the Senior Class Gift which will raise funds for either faculty compensation or financial aid. The evening concluded with a trip down memory lane, as Seniors enjoyed a slideshow featuring pictures of themselves at BB&N over the years. [CLICK HERE](#) for a photo gallery.

Dean '07 Published in American Chemical Society Journal

Lindsey Dean '07 has been listed as an author on a paper published in an American Chemical Society journal. The paper describes work she contributed to during her Senior Project internship in esteemed MIT professor Robert Langer's (P'09, '12) lab focusing on biotechnology and materials research. Dean began her research while enrolled in BB&N's Current Topics and Research in Science and Technology course during its 2006-07 pilot year.

“This is a wonderful reflection on how highly regarded her contributions were in the lab and a significant achievement for her, as most science students do not generate ‘publishable’ work until they are in graduate school,” said Upper School Science Department Chair Leah Cataldo.

Dr. Langer, who has just been awarded the 2008 [Millennium Technology Prize](#), is one of 13 Institute Professors—the highest honor awarded to a faculty member—at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has written approximately 1,000 articles and has more than 600 issued or pending patents worldwide that have been licensed or sublicensed to over 200 pharmaceutical, chemical, biotechnology and medical device companies.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the full text of the paper.

Campus Voices

Lower School

Sue Scarborough

Director, Lower School

When I was a child, getting to sleep on the night before school started took some doing. I would get my clothes all set to put on in the morning, set my cereal bowl on the table along with my spoon and banana, and carefully plan my schedule for the morning – what time to set the alarm, eat my breakfast, and walk out the front door – all leading up to my arrival at school. Even with all that planning, I barely slept a wink!

Well, in many ways, this year my preparation for school was very similar, except that instead of planning my arrival to school, I was planning for the arrival of the sixth graders and the new structure of the sixth grade program. I felt all the excitement and anticipation of when I was a child – even a sleepless night before the first day!

Following careful review and consideration over the past few years and a lot of planning this summer, we have designed a program for the sixth grade that reflects this model:

- Regular block schedule;
- Each homeroom teacher teaches one subject (Language Arts, Social Studies and Math) in which he/she specializes;
- Specialists will continue to teach Science, Math, French and Spanish, Music, Art, PE and Information Science;
- Grades will be given along with comments during the second term.

There are many benefits to our new structure:

- It will significantly aid 6th graders' eventual transition to the Middle School. In addition, we're confident that 6th graders who have been at the Lower School campus for one-to-seven years will welcome this new program as an appealing "step up."
- Pedagogically and developmentally, it is beneficial for 6th graders to have exposure to several teachers during the course of the day.
- Students will be learning every subject in the Grade 6 curriculum under the tutelage of a teacher who is a subject area specialist.
- It provides the School more options for grouping students within math classes.
- And it's not just the students who will benefit. The new program also will enhance the ability for teachers in BB&N's 6th and 7th grades to build stronger bridges—curricular and otherwise—between the two grades.

This new model will enhance the changes we have made to our sixth grade program, which include the addition of Spanish as a second language option, the Camp Hulbert leadership experience, the Puberty Program, Peer Lunches, Intramural Athletics Program, and a regular Community Time.

And my sleepless night before the first of day of school was for naught, since our sixth graders and the sixth grade teachers seem truly to be enjoying their school days. With the program enhancements, in addition to our established core components, our sixth grade experience will be one of exceptional quality and scope. So, we are off on an exciting sixth grade year!

Middle School
Mary Dolbear
Director, Middle School

I am always struck by the transformations that occur over the summer months. As our community comes together in the beginning of September, it is a joy to make both note

and sense of these shifts. With the time away, our students change and grow and our faculty, program, and space receive much anticipated renewal as well.

Some of these transformations at the Sparks Street campus appear to come quickly; our campus has been buzzing these past few weeks. A quiet empty building that can feel like an abandoned space is miraculously converted within just a few days into a swirl of energy and movement with an incredible cacophony of voices. The beginning of September stirs up such a range of emotions for everyone—a new 7th grader entering BB&N for the first time, a veteran faculty member welcoming a new set of faces, a new BB&N parent, or a returning 8th grader.... The school year cycle provides us all an opportunity to mark the passage of time, and thanks to the summer months, focus and perspective are renewed and crisp each fall for everyone.

The anticipation of the opening day keeps us all on our toes. At the Middle School, a faculty team collaborated over the summer to plan the various orientation and community building activities for our first weeks. The arrival of our audience was quickly obvious; the impressive piles of new backpacks and lunch containers became an undeniable visual reminder that our new student body was present and ready for action. The newly created mountain contained such a range of bright new colors, styles, and patterns and the vibrant mosaic set the upbeat tone for everyone.

At the Middle School level, the transformations in our students can be remarkable over the summer months. As is often the case with parents, daily interactions throughout the year make the obvious growth less visible, but in September, when the Middle School faculty see the return of our former 7th grade students, we are often amazed by the newly found 8th graders. These students carry themselves differently; they are familiar with the program, faculty, and space. They have often grown several inches, jumped a few shirt sizes and benefited from unique summer experiences that increased confidence even more. Many students come back with a real twinkle in their eye and it's a true pleasure to see.

As the BB&N campus with just two grades, we have a unique cycle. Students are new one year and the following year they are leaders; there is no place to hide. This is a powerful and effective format for this age group. We look forward to our newly discovered voices stepping up in a range of arenas as they try out opportunities for leadership. At Sparks Street, we also often talk about the advantages of being the smallest campus. Space may be an ongoing challenge, but our size allows us to quickly get to know each other and become a community that much faster.

That said, upon reflection last year, our faculty realized that in spite of our size, the two grades tended to be quite separate in program as well as space. One of the transformations to our Program this year can be seen in our community building goal through the introduction of the integrated Advisory blocks. We have matched 7th and 8th

grade homerooms so that there are structured opportunities for students to get to know one another across grade levels and we have changed the traffic flow by reallocating some space. These shifts may seem subtle, but they are meaningful. Among other things, they create more leadership opportunities for all those with twinkles in their eyes and more....

It's a remarkable group of people who come together each day each year to create our Middle School community and we look forward to a wonderful year ahead.

Upper School
Jack Knapp
Director, Upper School

To put it mildly, this has not exactly been the September that we expected in the Upper School. Amidst the enthusiasm surrounding new programs, new teachers, new students, and the excitement of reconnecting with friends and colleagues to share the experiences of summer, Zack's medical emergency has lent a sobering note to the joyousness of a new school year. (*Please note: we refer to Zack by first name only out of respect for his confidentiality in respect to readers outside the BB&N community.*) Yet this crisis has also reaffirmed the BB&N community in our basic humaneness, reminding us all of what is truly important in the way we live. It is a lesson that echoes and reechoes across campus in so many ways, spoken and unspoken.

From the moment on that Friday night when I received the telephone call that Zack was in a coma and being helicoptered to Boston Medical, the outpouring of love and support for him has been exquisite. So many vignettes flash before me: Coach Papas addressing the football team the next morning, the huge card signed by virtually every student, parents who have organized such useful help, Ben Madsen and Tom Leith singing and playing in assembly, and the moving words spoken by students at the Sunday support meeting. In mentioning these few episodes, I do not want to diminish the kindnesses and generosity of so many others. To all there seems to be a unifying theme: we live together, celebrate triumphs together, and support each other in times of trial. This togetherness defines us and gives the school a special meaning and sense of purpose. If Zack was and is a test of our purpose, my grade for BB&N is and will be A+ as time goes on.

The irony, of course, is what Zack will say when I can sit down with him and share the experiences of the last few weeks at school. He'll give me that quizzical look that we all know so well and say something about being embarrassed that he has been the center of so much attention. Then he will probably shake his head and say "But you shouldn't be surprised, that's what this school is all about, that's why I love you guys so much." Words to live by.

All School
Rebecca T. Upham
Head of School

It has been a busy opening of the school year for all of us at BB&N – students, families, staff, and faculty. One of the things keeping us particularly busy this year is our preparation for next year’s accreditation visit by NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges.) The first step of the accreditation process is an internal and comprehensive self-study. Each member of the faculty serves on one of 15 different committees to review all major areas of school structure and function (such as mission, enrollment, program, experience of the students, and resources to support the program, to cite just a few examples).

As part of the opening faculty meeting in early September, teachers discussed Daniel Pink’s book, *A Whole New Mind*. In the book, Pink makes a case for the growing importance of skills and functions that are right-brain based. Among the many attributes on which he focuses are creative problem-solving skills, especially across discipline boundaries; the telling of stories, especially as it is associated with the creation of meaning; and the importance of empathy in understanding situations and people far outside one’s usual sphere.

It made for some interesting and lively discussion about what this means – or doesn’t mean – for us as professionals and for BB&N as a School. Some faculty members felt confident that BB&N already taught “right-brain” skills effectively and that we as teachers spend a lot of time thinking about how to stimulate right-brain thinking and how to balance it with teaching fundamental left-brain skills (such as grammar, geography, and formulas). Others expressed a concern that we focus too much on left-brain thinking and feel constrained by what colleges and parents may look for in the program. The debate was a lively one, and I found it to be emblematic of a faculty that is engaged, dynamic, and thoughtful—not only about the craft of teaching but also about shaping the lives of students.

With the opening day of School, teachers’ thoughts turned from the theoretical to the real. What they teach matters. But how they connect and encourage and guide our students matters even more. During these first few weeks, I often hear our teachers talk about their classes and their students. Their commitment to excellence can’t be measured in the events of any one day but in the arc of the year, as students try, succeed, occasionally fall short, and always grow.

Much like the students in their classrooms, BB&N teachers are just as actively engaged in a never-ending process of learning and growth. Whether it’s through professional development opportunities, travel taken to enrich their teaching (see the faculty travel grant story in this issue of *The Link* for one example), or vital contributions to institutional efforts such as the E.E. Ford Achievement Study or reaccreditation, BB&N

faculty members contribute mightily to the School's well being—not only during the times when class is in session but at moments before, after, and in between.

The campus directors and I are proud of the men and women who teach at our three campuses. These are top-notch educators who are not content to settle on the comfortable or familiar approach to their mission, but instead are committed to honing their craft and improving the experience they impart to their students day by day, week by week, and year after year.

I know with certainty—no matter which side of my brain I use to analyze it!—that BB&N and every one of its 985 students are very much the beneficiaries of this culture within our faculty.

I hope you all enjoy a happy, productive, and rewarding year!

Giving Update

A BB&N Annual Fund Primer

WHO: Parents, Alumni/ae, Past Parents, Grandparents, Faculty, Staff, and Friends

WHAT: The BB&N Annual Fund

WHEN: 2008-2009 School Year

WHERE: Throughout the BB&N community, near and far

WHY: It's all about the **GAP**...that is, the **GAP** between tuition dollars and the actual cost of educating each student. The BB&N Annual Fund exists to fill that **GAP** and meet the annual financial needs of the school. This year the **GAP** is \$6,680 per student.

HOW: Through the tireless efforts of an army of Parents, Alumni/ae, Past Parents, Grandparents, Faculty, Staff, and Friends, all working together to reach out, on all levels, to all constituencies, to ask for support of what is of greatest value to all of us...education and our children.

This year, the BB&N Annual Fund goal is \$2.450 million dollars, which will fill the **GAP** and guarantee our continued commitment to Financial Aid, Professional

Development, Technology, Faculty Compensation, Academic Programs, Arts, and Athletics. In the end, the Annual Fund plays a crucial role in continuing the tradition of excellence that all have come to expect from a BB&N education.

As we prepare to kickoff the 2008-2009 BB&N Annual Fund, kindly consider joining our outreach effort and inquiring about ways to become involved. We welcome your enthusiasm on behalf of BB&N.

Kindly contact Jo-Ann Lovejoy, Director of Annual Giving 617-800-2723 or email jo-ann_lovejoy@bbns.org for further information and to learn more about ways in which you may volunteer.

Senior Parents Kick Off Gift Campaign

Senior Parents' Gift Co-Chairs Tod Beaty, Amy Sassoon, and Debbie Shalom were delighted to announce at the annual Senior Student/Parent Dinner in September that 24 other Senior parents have volunteered to join them in seeking support for this year's Senior Parents' Gift—the largest gift committee ever. This record level of volunteer participation is evidence of the gratitude that so many parents feel for the BB&N education their children have received, and their willingness to give back to the School with their time and financial support.

A survey of parents in the class about how they would like their gift designated showed nearly equal votes to create an endowed fund to support faculty compensation and financial aid, so this year's gift will be split between these two high priorities of the Opening Minds Campaign.

Referring specifically to the support for faculty, Tod Beaty reminded parents in his remarks that “BB&N teachers, coaches, and advisors have taught our children about integrity, responsibility, leadership, accountability, and compassion. And there's also my favorite—how to conceive of, and reach for, their personal best.

“Between now and when we call you, take a moment to reflect back upon those many character-building, extremely valuable, teachable moments...Contemplate your gift ahead of time, and when we call you, make the best pledge you can!”