

LA JOLLA COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL MAGAZINE

# 1926

SPRING 2019







**JINGYI VIVIAN HONG '19**

LOST IN CITY

*Collage on fabric*

*Lost in City* is about the impermanence of valuable memories and identity. My work explores metropolitan environments and how they can break down a person, be indifferent and make us question who we are. This piece represents a point in my life when I discovered the unifying qualities and elements of art.

*Hong is attending the New School's Parsons School of Design in New York City in fall 2019 on a merit scholarship.*



# Nurturing Habits of Heart and Mind

**As I complete my fourth year as the head of La Jolla Country Day School, I reflect on the school in which we share immense pride.**

LJCDS has been ahead of the educational curve since 1926. The founding vision of the school was rooted in the belief that students should be free to develop their individuality, which was a radical notion in the 1920s.

More than 90 years later, LJCDS continues to uphold this ideal. Our students are intellectually adventurous individuals who challenge the status quo. They seek access to the unbounded world of knowledge.

For the advancement of humanity, we need people who possess the habits of heart and spirit of mind that are nurtured at LJCDS. Our society's enduring legacy will depend on our ability to develop educated, ethical, creative and thoughtful citizens. Evidence of great teaching is when students develop a yearning to make a difference in their local and global community.

The class of 2019 were freshmen when I started my journey at LJCDS. I am proud that this class is filled with remarkable leaders who are already making important contributions to our society. Raquel Ramirez '19 frequently travels to Tijuana to support refugees. Grant Miller '19 worked in the biomedical research lab at the University of California, San Diego, and presented his research at the University of Southern California Graduate Research Forum. Valentina Ricardo '19 created a clothing line using environmentally friendly materials. Marcus Scott '19 worked with the La Jolla Institute for Immunology to create a system that regulates the temperature of test tubes for scientific experiments. This is a small sample of this remarkable class.

I am proud to serve a community that meets each student where they are and takes them where they need to go. This educational journey enhances their lives and allows them to make meaningful contributions to society in the process. There are many reasons to be proud of LJCDS.

Thank you for your commitment to and support of this community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary W. Krahn". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gary Krahn, Ph.D.  
*Head of School*

“Our society’s enduring legacy will depend on our ability to develop educated, ethical, creative and thoughtful citizens.”

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**LA JOLLA  
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL**  
Inspiring Greatness for a Better World



EDDY VAISBERG

24

ON THE COVER: Photography by Afribuni

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# Social @LJCDS

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1  
Marie-Christine Nibagwire, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide and advocate for refugees across the globe, shared her message of surviving hate and teaching love. [f](#)  
POSTED ON DECEMBER 6, 2018

2  
Congratulations to the cast and crew of the Upper School musical *Les Misérables*! [t](#)  
POSTED ON MARCH 11, 2019

3  
Thanks to the generosity of the LJCDs community, we collected nearly 10,000 food items for the San Diego Food Bank! The items collected will help fellow San Diegans facing food insecurity. [f](#)  
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4  
Purposeful play happening on the kindergarten playground thanks to the rain. Collaboration and communication in action! [t](#)  
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5  
LJCDs welcomed grandparents and special friends to the Middle and Upper School! Thank you to all our grandparents who came from near and far to visit us on this day! [f](#)  
POSTED ON FEBRUARY 8, 2019

6  
Congratulations to the Division III Men's Basketball CIF State Champions! [t](#)  
POSTED ON MARCH 8, 2019



## REMEMBRANCE

# Butterfly Day

**On November 9, 2018, the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht (the Night of Broken Glass), the entire school gathered in the outline of a butterfly for Butterfly Day. The schoolwide initiative honored the 1.5 million children lost to the Holocaust and other genocides.**

**T**he Butterfly Project is a call-to-action through education, the arts and memorial making. It uses the lessons of the Holocaust to educate about the dangers of hatred and bigotry and cultivates empathy and social responsibility.

The community participated in schoolwide events, including painting ceramic butterflies. Students listened to readings about freedom and hope and enjoyed performances by the orchestra, choir and dancers. Leading up to Butterfly Day, teachers led age-appropriate discussions on empathy, ethics, acceptance and treating people with dignity. For the older students, they discussed the Holocaust and other examples of political and ethnic violence.

Special guests Cheryl Rattner-Price, co-founder and executive director of the Butterfly Project, and Reverend Karin Boye of Deutsche Kirche (German Church) spoke about the importance of remembering and taking responsibility for our history as we seek to create a better future for all of humanity.

“The Butterfly Project is as much about the remembrance of our past as it is about the commitment to our future,” shares LJCDS Director of the Center for Excellence in Citizenship Jonathan Shulman. “The loss of a single innocent life to political violence is a tragedy for which we, as world citizens, bear full responsibility.”

Thanks to key leaders at LJCDS, the initiative has gone international. Torrey Model United Nations introduced the





project to students around the world when they traveled to Panama in fall 2018. Additionally, Upper School English educator Amy Parish, Ph.D., helped initiate the project at a primary school in Germany.

More than 2,000 butterflies will be permanently displayed throughout campus as symbols of hope and resilience. “Each butterfly, uniquely beautiful in its own way, will forever represent the promise each individual at LJCDS has made to take a stand against hatred,” says Shulman. —**JENNIFER FOGARTY**

The LJCDS Center for Excellence in Citizenship spearheaded the schoolwide initiative, and events of the day were made possible by a generous donation from the Church family (Jeff and Linda, Nina '12, Josh '13, Rachel '16 and Jacob '17). The Nelson family (Kevin, Cindy, Shia '29 and Sam '24) also generously made a gift to allow future students, faculty and staff to participate in this ongoing initiative and contribute to the permanent displays around campus.

## BOOKSHELF

# Dignity Education

Donna Hicks, Ph.D., recognizes La Jolla Country Day School for its commitment to dignity education in her book, *Leading with Dignity: How to Create a Culture That Brings Out the Best in People*. In chapter 5, “How to Educate Future Leaders about Dignity,” Hicks highlights LJCDS educators from the Early Childhood Center to the Upper School who are committed to developing compassionate and empathetic young people of character.

Dignity is the school’s core value. Through dignity education, students learn the framework and strategies to honor their own dignity and the dignity of others, to facilitate healthy everyday interactions and improve human relationships.

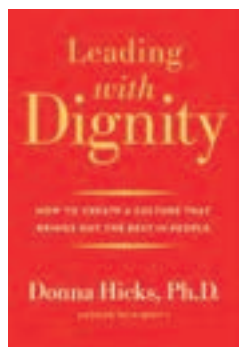
“A commitment to dignity is both a mirror and a window,” shares Head of School Gary Krahn, Ph.D. “It is a window through which we see the value within all human beings and a mirror that reflects our successes and failures to honor that dignity. We are far from perfect in our dignity work, however, we are committed to recognizing the value and vulnerability within all humans to make the world a better place.”

Hicks is an associate at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University. As a conflict resolution specialist, she has facilitated diplomatic efforts in the Middle East, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Cuba and Northern Ireland (with Archbishop Desmond Tutu). —**TIFFANY TRAN**

*“Dignity education seems to inspire these young people not just to treat everyone with recognition that they matter, but also to see their own capacity to make a difference in the world. When students develop a secure connection to their own dignity—*

*realizing their inherent value and worth—it frees them from self-doubt and the worrying question ‘Am I good enough?’ When students recognize that they are good enough, no matter what, their hearts and minds are free to explore the possibility of living a life that has meaning and purpose, making the world a more loving and accepting home for us all.”*

Excerpt from Chapter 5



“To be who you are and become what you are capable of is the only goal worth living.”

Alvin Ailey

PERSPECTIVE

# Lifelong Learning

**Julie Strong is the assistant head of Upper School for faculty and curriculum development and a science educator at La Jolla Country Day School. She also serves as chair on the board of directors of Malashock Dance.**



**A**lvin Ailey, choreographer and activist, whose piece *Revelations* is believed to be the most-viewed modern dance work in history, reminded us that “To be who you are and become what you are capable of is the only goal worth living.”

As educators, we often say we want to engender lifelong learning, but what does that mean? A few years ago, I was inspired by a La Jolla Country Day School dance teacher to embark on my own learning journey, returning to the studio after a 17-year hiatus.

I first came to dance as a ninth-grader, inspired by my high school’s venerable dance teacher, whose blend of rigorous technique and opportunity for self-expression allowed me to experience a less cerebral side of myself, inhabit my body deeply and move from instinct.

I danced extensively through college and into graduate school, but soon the pressures of lab work got to me, and I stopped. When school and work intervened, I nearly forgot my life as a dancer.

Cut to a few years ago, when I attended a dance concert at LJCDS. The teacher quoted the renowned Isadora Duncan, known as the founder of modern dance. After the performance, I shared with him my knowledge of her repertory, and he asked if I might work with the Middle School dancers. Shortly after agreeing, I went into a panic. I hadn’t danced in years. How could I possibly do this? So I did what I knew I must: I went back to class.

The ability to recall biochemical pathways and explain gravity didn’t help me remember the sequence of footwork, jumps and pliés that seemed to come easily to the other students in the class. I struggled. I stood in the middle of the room so no matter which way I turned, I could cheat by watching someone else.

I avoided looking in the mirror and instead looked at the other dancers, on whom I had 10, 20 even 30 years, wishing that my legs could extend like theirs. But after each class, I came out feeling cleansed, transformed and more alive. Gradually I realized that it was becoming easier. I turned in the wrong direction less often and was able to put the teacher’s suggestions into action. I stood in the front row, and eventually, I moved up to the advanced class. More important, every class brought moments of deep joy and the satisfaction of more thoroughly inhabiting my body.

I realized that, although my legs might not go where others’ do, the life experience I bring to the work allows me to connect with the movement in unique ways. I have learned to appreciate my limitations and celebrate my growth.

My journey in dance has been touched by a long list of mentors: my first teacher, whose spiky gray hair and bright clothing reminded me that being oneself is always in fashion; the many professors and guest artists I knew in college, whose knowledge of diverse forms of dance gave me the structured foundation from which to explore; the LJCDS faculty member who nudged me back after all those years; and my current teacher, whose skills as an educator inspire me every Saturday morning.

Many obstacles make “becom[ing] what we are capable of” a challenging endeavor, but as Ailey suggested, only through that process of constant growth, of becoming our fullest selves, can we make our fullest contribution to the world. I am deeply grateful that the seeds of lifelong learning were planted in me, and I am honored to be part of a community where we strive to nurture those seeds as they grow in our students every day.

—JULIE STRONG



“I realized that, although my legs might not go where others’ do, the life experience I bring to the work allows me to connect with the movement in unique ways. I have learned to appreciate my limitations and celebrate my growth.”

“I want [students] to walk out of my room being comfortable thinking for themselves, being critical thinkers. It sounds like this very simple thing, but to be a good critical thinker you also need to be an absorber of information. You need to be able to have read a lot and then parse it out.”

ACADEMICS

# Thinking Independently

**T**eachers don't normally encourage their students to fight, but in **Siham Gheewala's** ninth- and 10th-grade English classes, “The Fight” is one of the activities she has created to encourage her students to think

for themselves. It's not physical; this game is based on critical thinking, and it tests students' assumptions.

“They'll have conversations usually built on some kind of belief they have about the world that they aren't really questioning deeply,” shares Gheewala. A statement like “love is earned” or “we can understand the past” is written on the board, and if students agree, they move to one side of the room; if they disagree, they move to the other side. The speaker holds a ball and then passes it to hear the opposing opinion. Students get bonus points for referencing the text they've studied in class and for asking clarifying questions. Then they write about it.

“I want them to walk out of my room being comfortable thinking for themselves, being critical thinkers,” shares Gheewala. “It sounds like this very simple thing, but to be a good critical thinker you also need to be an absorber of information. You need to be able to have read a lot and then parse it out.”

Gheewala wants her students to understand that critical thinking doesn't mean one must critique everything. “It's about looking at your own assumptions, rethinking them, understanding where they come from,” she says. “It's fine if you want to hold onto them, but you should still understand where they come from.”

Growing up in Pakistan, Gheewala

attended a private British school and did not benefit from the traditional teaching methods. She vowed to search for a different approach to teaching and return to academia to make a difference.

“Traditional educational systems are set up to make us believe that we are not intelligent enough to think for ourselves,” explains Gheewala. “All over the world, I've noticed that there are people who are convinced that someone else always knows better, so they absorb certain ideas without processing them. They end up enacting things that maybe they haven't really thought through and that can be very harmful and dangerous for society.”

In summer 2019, Gheewala is hosting a critical thinking workshop in Pakistan with teachers at an adopted public school in an underserved area. “The teachers there are beautifully committed educators, but they don't know how to incite dialectic thinking because they don't practice it enough themselves,” shares Gheewala. Her goal is for the teachers to acknowledge and explore some of the contradictions in our society after reading short stories with controversial topics. “If I can get them used to a different style of teaching and facilitation than what they know as the traditional role of teacher, I'm hoping to model behaviors they might adopt or experiment with in their own classes.” —JENNIFER FOGARTY



## ATHLETICS

# Eye on the Ball

**R**yan Langborg '19 has been a starter on the varsity men's basketball team since his freshman year and a dominant force on the court ever since. Men's varsity basketball coach Ryan Meier says, "I think Ryan is the best player in San Diego," averaging 19.4 points per game. Langborg has scored 2,456 career points, which puts him in the top 8 all-time scorers in the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) San Diego section and makes him LJCDS's all-time leading scorer.

The Princeton-bound senior came to La Jolla Country Day School in eighth grade, in search of a smaller community and an academically rigorous environment. "I'm always up for a challenge," Langborg says. "That's part of the reason why I came here, and I pushed myself."

He excelled on the basketball court and in the classroom. Meier explains, "He's constantly trying to get better. He never feels that he's reached the level he wants to be playing at."

The 6-foot-4 scholar-athlete is respected by his coaches, teammates and peers for his unassuming nature, even with his incredible success. "He's such a humble kid, and you wouldn't know it by the way he fiercely competes on the court," shares Meier.

In the 2018–2019 season, the men's varsity basketball team won the CIF State Division III Championship against San Francisco University High School (67–39)—a first in LJCDS history. Langborg completed the game with 23 points and 17 rebounds. He was named the 2019 Cal-Hi Sports Division III State Player of the Year and Coastal Conference Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

Langborg describes his team as a family and LJCDS as a community where he has grown tremendously. "This has pushed me to come out of my shell, and I'm looked at as a leader," he says. Langborg leaves a legacy of humbly pursuing greatness in athletics, academics and leadership.

"You can better the environment around you and do what you can to help other people by coming out of your shell." —ELIZA JASON



"You can better the environment around you and do what you can to help other people by coming out of your shell."



## AWARDS

# Bragging Points

1926, La Jolla Country Day School's alumni magazine, earned a silver award for the fall 2017 and spring 2018 issues from the CASE District VII Awards of Excellence, sponsored by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. The Brilliance Awards, sponsored by InspiRED School Marketers, also awarded the fall 2017 issue a silver award for the design of the feature story about alumnus Evan Skowronski '87 on public health. —TIFFANY TRAN

ACCOLADES

# Coaches in the Spotlight

## Stepping Up to the Plate

**The National Federation of State High School Associations elected La Jolla Country Day School math educator and baseball coach John Edman the 2017-2018 California Coach of the Year for baseball.**

In his 20th year coaching baseball at LJCDS (and 19th as head coach), Edman has celebrated more than 300 wins and secured two Coastal League championships, one CIF championship and one CIF Open Division berth. His leadership has yielded more than 30 college and professional athletes. Currently, 11 LJCDS alumni play collegiate baseball and two play on minor league baseball teams.

Beyond the records, Edman's ultimate success lies in the impact he has had on his students' lives. "One thing I have

learned from Coach Edman that has made a huge impression on me is that you are defined as a person by what you do off the field," shares catcher Alex Steigerwald '19. "What happens on the field is great and it's fun, but your legacy will be defined by the way you handle yourself outside of the game." Steigerwald has committed to play baseball at Cornell University in the fall.

Edman is dedicated to maximizing each player's potential, helping them develop essential skills and core values

to achieve excellence on and off the field. "John is the smartest baseball coach I have ever been around," says Robert Grasso, assistant director of athletics and assistant baseball coach. "The team always comes first, and he is extremely humble. He truly cares about his players. He has high expectations and can bring out the best in all of them."



## Honoring a Legend

**Former La Jolla Country Day School coach Bill Cahoone has been named a San Diego High School Coaching Legend, presented by the San Diego Hall of Champions.**

The San Diego Hall of Champions honors retired high school coaches in the San Diego California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). Candidates for the Coaching Legends must serve a minimum of 10 years as a varsity head coach and offer a significant contribution to the game and the coaching community. Nine recipients, including Cahoone, were inducted into the class of 2018.

Cahoone retired from LJCDS in spring 2015. During his 39-year career at the school, he led 70 seasons of a varsity sport, serving as the head coach of men's and women's basketball, men's and women's golf, and softball. He was also the assistant varsity coach and junior varsity coach for the eight-man and 11-man football teams for 16 seasons. In addition to coaching Upper School students, he helped develop the physical education curriculum and taught PE to Lower and Middle School students.

Cahoone was recognized by the selection committee for his full body of work as a multisport coach and his impact on students during 44 years working in independent schools. "Coach Cahoone is the very definition of a legendary coach and physical education teacher," shared Director of Athletics Jeff Hutzler. "His knowledge of various sports and his ability to connect with young people is extraordinary. But more importantly, Coach is one of the most helpful and genuine people I have known. He always did what was best for his students and athletes."

Cahoone is the third LJCDS San Diego High School Coaching Legend, joining Director of Athletics Jeff Hutzler (2017 inductee) and the late coach Jack Wigley (2002 inductee).





“No matter what adversity you may be going through, the power ultimately belongs to you.”

Candice Wiggins '04

## Courting Excellence

**Women's basketball coach Terri Bamford is the 2019 San Diego High School Sports Association Coach of the Year.**

**B**amford is arguably one of the most prominent women's high school basketball coaches in California, coaching 40 players who went on to play in Division I and countless others in Divisions II and III and professional leagues.

She has been the head coach at LJCDS for 21 years, and her unwavering commitment to her student-athletes is unmatched. Former Stanford and WNBA player Candice Wiggins '04 considers Bamford a best friend and a second mom. “She instilled in me a lifetime of wisdom from the many life lessons she taught on and off the court,” says Wiggins. “She showed how important the personal choices you make on an individual and daily basis are. No matter what adversity you may be going through, the power ultimately belongs to you; the way you accept this is displayed through your attitude and effort.”

Point guard Te-Hina O. Paopao '20 shares, “Coach Bamford is by far the hardest-working coach. She has dedicated her life to her players and forms a connection that will last long after high school. She will do anything to put her players in a position to be successful, but she also cares about her players' lives outside of basketball.”

Bamford's impactful relationships with her players translate into greatness on the court. The stats speak for themselves: 500 wins, 142 losses, 16 league championships, 13 CIF San Diego Section championships, 12 Southern California regional championships, eight state championship finals and four state championships.

The 2018–2019 season concluded with a 22–12 record. And with a young team with one graduating senior, the future looks promising. —TIFFANY TRAN



GLOBAL EDUCATION

# Next Generation of International Leaders

**T**he Torrey Model United Nations (TorreyMUN) team traveled to Panama on a three-day trip to participate in their first international Model United Nations conference, hosted by the International School of Panama. Eight Upper School students joined delegates from around the world to engage in simulations confronting pressing global concerns. Debated topics included the Rohingya crisis in

Myanmar, the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, gender-based violence and human trafficking.

The La Jolla Country Day School delegates achieved several recognitions for their outstanding efforts: Matthew Wirtz '20, research award in the Historical Crisis Committee; Nikita Nair '20, diplomacy award for the UN Peacebuilding Committee; Sydney Strawn '20, diplomacy award for Human Rights Council; and

Lauren Ziment '20, best delegate for the UN Women's Committee.

TorreyMUN began in 2015 with five Middle School students. It has grown into an Upper School Flex Time with 30 students who desire to become better global citizens. LJCDS delegates have earned multiple awards, and the team was named in the Top 150 High School Model UN Teams in North America in 2017–2018, by Best Delegate. —JENNIFER FOGARTY



## ARTS

# Uncovering Identity Through Art

### Athlete-Artist

SINCERE' BLACKMON '19

*Several years ago, I tore my ACL. At that time, sports were my outlet to alleviate stress from my life, but after my injury, I wasn't able to find that escape. Through mental and physical rehab, I continued to recognize something was missing. Without sports, I continually tried to see where I could fit in and find ways to adapt to my new circumstances. There were several nights of thinking: "Where do I belong?" and "Where do I fit in?" I started to reflect and realize my new reality. Through conscious effort and a new perspective, I realized the impact of art.*

*Art has given me the confidence I yearned for when I had no real purpose in my life. Because I took art in Middle School, I was comfortable taking art again. During my junior year, I made a hanging installation using layers of plexiglass that represented the lives of Emmett Till, Rodney King and Philando Castile. The feedback I received about my installation changed my seriousness about art. Looking at what I created made me feel the way I felt on the playing field and the court—I was able to express myself.*

*The studio gave me the ability to focus my emotions and feelings into something immersive. This new level of immersion gave me the maturity to grow as a young man. During these past few years of art-making, I've discovered my true identity. I have developed a stronger work ethic and better attention to detail. Consequently, art has given me more confidence and also improved my social skills. This process wasn't easy, but keeping faith in myself kept me going.*



### Dance for Self

JOY LIN '19

*At a different elementary school, I took a ballroom dance class just to hang out with friends. As they were gradually dropping the class, I began to focus on improving my skills so that I could show off in front of my school and family. However, after my teacher criticized my discordant limbs, I was not confident enough to invite anyone to my performance because I was afraid of making mistakes. I then realized how I hated dancing for others.*

*So, I started to dance for myself. I found that I could communicate with my body through my natural movements to the beats of music and explored more styles and skills of choreography. I learned to improvise and make up mistakes while being indulged by the stage. I want to help people realize their desire for moving to music even though they might hate the awkward feeling at first. With dance teachers Mr. [Robert] Wagner and Ms. Nicole [Rover], the dance studio is not only a shelter from life struggles but also an escape to learn about oneself, regain confidence and pursue uniqueness.*

*Now I would still say, "I hate dancing," because it forces me to expose, empty and refill myself. It forces me to focus less on all the worries and to embrace the lifestyle worth embracing. I will continue breathing in it, living it, and growing up with it until one day I can confidently say, "I love dancing."*

A version of these speeches was given during the annual Louise Balmer Creative Recognition assembly, where students and educators in the visual and performing arts share their narratives on how art has made an impact on their lives.



PERSPECTIVE

# Investing in Refugees

MAYA BABLA APPIAH '07

**Maya Babla Appiah '07 is a senior program manager within Microsoft's Global Talent Acquisition team, where she develops strategies to recruit talent from around the world. Previously, Appiah worked at LinkedIn, where she consulted with Fortune 500 companies on their hiring strategies and supported LinkedIn's refugee program, Welcome Talent, as a volunteer. She co-chairs the City of Seattle's Immigrant and Refugee Commission and is on the Leadership Council for Upwardly Global, a national nonprofit that supports immigrants and refugees to rebuild their professional careers in the United States.**

I come from a long line of immigrants. My great-grandfather immigrated from India to Tanzania in pursuit of greater economic opportunity. My parents immigrated to the United States from Tanzania seeking that same goal. The United States once had a proud tradition of welcoming and integrating newcomers, and gratefully, my family were beneficiaries, privileged to make the choice to move to a new country. By contrast, today there are 68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, including

more than 25 million refugees and three million asylum seekers, according to the UN Refugee Agency. Yet the U.S. admits the lowest number of refugees that it has in more than four decades.

But let's not talk politics. If there's one thing that might trump values in America, it's money. Let's talk about the dollars and cents of investing in refugees.

Refugees are a great investment, with a 100 percent return rate. Investing one dollar in welcoming refugees can yield nearly two dollars in economic benefits within five

years, according to a 2016 report from the Tent Partnership for Refugees.

Still not convinced? Perhaps the best illustration of the economic impact of refugees comes in the form of prominent founders. Google co-founder Sergey Brin was a child refugee from the Soviet Union. WhatsApp co-founder Jan Koum and PayPal co-founder Max Levchin were refugees from Ukraine. These companies have created hundreds of thousands of jobs in their host country and around the world. How's that for ROI?

## The Talent Advantage

At a more micro level, employers who have invested in hiring refugees report greater retention and a robust referrals pipeline.

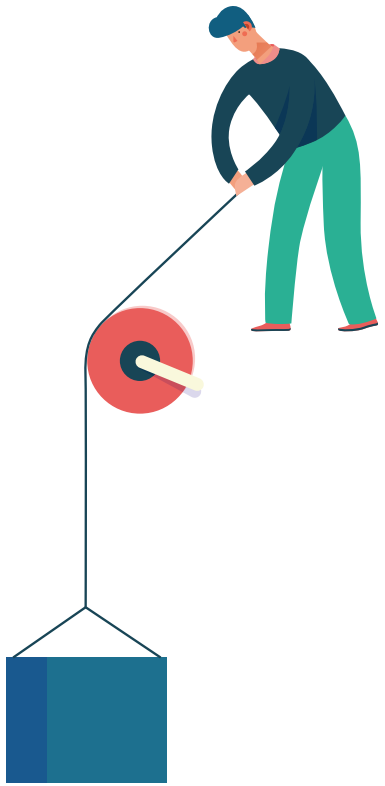
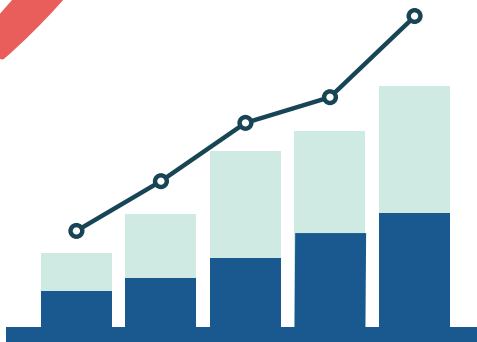
A Fiscal Policy Institute study found that refugee employee turnover rates were 7 to 15 percentage points lower than the average—an impact on a company’s bottom line that cannot be ignored. When calculated at a \$13 per hour wage rate (appropriate for the employers surveyed), that means a savings of \$5,200 per year, per worker who doesn’t have to be replaced. In addition, there are savings in recruiting costs associated with constantly hiring to replace workers.

In the talent acquisition space, referrals represent a recruitment advantage, saving employers time and money that would have been spent searching for additional qualified talent. Here, too, the upfront investment in hiring refugees pays big dividends. An employer may need to tailor their onboarding program to set their refugee employees up for success, for example, by providing language-specific training. But once they have fine-tuned that model, they are likely to find their employees are encouraging other members of their diaspora communities to apply for similar roles. When they make these referral hires, the employer is readily able to scale and replicate an inclusive onboarding experience.

It’s no wonder, then, that companies like Starbucks and Chobani have doubled down on their efforts to employ refugees. It’s the right thing to do, but it’s not all charity.



**Investing one dollar in welcoming refugees can yield nearly two dollars in economic benefits within five years.**



**45 percent of recently arrived immigrants have at least a bachelor’s degree, yet nearly 2 million college-educated immigrants and refugees are unemployed or underemployed.**

## Closing the Skills Gap

The other business problem leaders face today is the skills gap, or the gap between the supply and demand of a specific skill in a particular labor market at a point in time. While very pressing skills gaps exist today, there are many misconceptions; employers are not always accessing the total addressable market.

For example, 45 percent of recently arrived immigrants have at least a bachelor’s degree, yet nearly 2 million college-educated immigrants and refugees are unemployed or underemployed, according to data from Upwardly Global. This represents a massive pool of untapped talent. Consider the Uber driver living in Seattle or San Francisco who has a master’s degree in computer science. That person is grossly underemployed, neither meeting their full earning potential nor contributing as much as they could to the economy.

So what’s happening here? There are several barriers to entry for newcomers to the United States, but one stands out to me as the most significant. When refugees leave their homes, they leave their careers and professional networks behind. In the U.S., most white-collar jobs are found through networking. No matter how skilled you are, if you are not accustomed to the local job search process and you don’t know someone who can vouch for you or help you navigate a company’s hiring process, you’re excluded from the possibility of rebuilding your career.

Employers also have a responsibility to be inclusive in their hiring practices. This work isn’t just the job of human resources or recruiters—it’s everyone’s responsibility because we all contribute to the culture of our workplaces.

## ●●● and Beyond

The following are some inclusion strategies to consider—whether you are interested in hiring refugees or just making your company a better place to work:

- 1. Talk the talk.** Your company’s brand is reflected far before a candidate is invited to interview. The language in a job description can have a direct bearing on the types of applicants you attract. For example, phrases such as “rockstar coding skills” or “sales ninja” may be a turnoff (or just plain confusing) to those for whom English is a second language.
- 2. Language matters.** Consider an interview scenario in which a candidate is indirect about their past achievements, preferring to use language like “we” or “my team.” In some cultures, this type of language is preferred and is considered to be more polite and appropriate, in contrast to an American cultural preference toward “I” statements and individual accomplishments. Ask yourself: Are you evaluating a candidate’s ability to do the job, or how they present themselves culturally? Communication styles may vary; this is not always equivalent to poor communication skills.



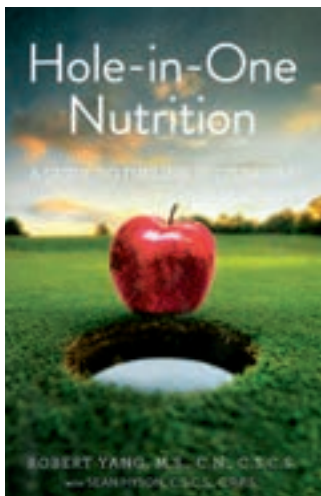
- 3. Break out.** It’s easy to fall into the same pattern of hiring those who are in your immediate or second-degree networks. If those networks are homogenous, your workplace may reflect that too. To break out, top companies have partnered with organizations such as Upwardly Global, which pairs employees with immigrant and refugee job seekers for informational interviews, mock interviews and speed networking events. In the process, employees connect personally with diverse talent, and these immigrant and refugee job seekers begin rebuilding their professional networks.

Perhaps I have a unique vantage point—as a corporate talent professional, a nonprofit champion and a public advocate for refugees and immigrants—but the business case for hiring refugees seems quite lucrative from my perspective. We have an opportunity to strengthen our companies by unlocking the tremendous potential value associated with a diverse workforce. We have an opportunity to combat some of the immense talent shortages we face and desperately need to address to stay competitive as a country. Hiring refugees? That sounds pretty American to me.



**Maya Babla Appiah '07** is a senior program manager within Microsoft’s Global Talent Acquisition team and is committed to finding creative ways to inspire positive social impact through the corporate/technology sector.

## ON THE SHELF



### Hole-in-One Nutrition: A Guide to Fueling Better Golf

By Robert Yang, M.S., C.N., C.S.C.S., with Sean Hyson, C.S.C.S., C.P.P.S.

Nutritionist **Robert Yang '90** shares how nutrition can help maximize golf performance. With an average time of four hours to complete an 18-hole course, hydration, food intake and supplements are simple performance enhancers that play a critical role in the game of golf. Yang considers nutrition to be as important as fitness. —**TIFFANY TRAN**



**Robert Yang '90** is a certified nutritionist and strength and conditioning coach. He holds a master’s degree in human nutrition from the University of Bridgeport. Yang serves on the advisory board for the Titleist Performance Institute.

*“If you’ve experimented with every driver out there, watched every instructional video, hired experts to reengineer your swing for maximum trajectory, yet you still can’t break 80, the problem probably isn’t with your golf game. It’s how you’re fueling it.”*

Excerpt from the introduction

## REUNIONS

# Celebration and Nostalgia

LJCDs hosted several opportunities in the 2018–2019 academic year for alumni, family, faculty, staff and coaches to reunite, reminisce and celebrate.



**Above:** Five-Year Reunion:  
Class of 2013 at Ballast Point  
DECEMBER 22, 2018

**Left:** Decade Reunions: Classes of 1968,  
1978, 1988, 1998 and 2008 at La Jolla  
Country Day School  
AUGUST 25, 2018

**Below:** Alumni Cross Country Run at  
“The Course” at UCSD  
NOVEMBER 22, 2018

### SAVE THE DATE

Reunions: Classes of 1969, 1979, 1989, 1994\*, 1999  
and 2009, August 24, 2019

\*25-year reunion for the class of 1994

All-Alumni Family Reunion Picnic, August 25, 2019


 [LJCDs.ORG/ALUMNI](https://www.ljcds.org/alumni)



### STAY CONNECTED

LJCDs alumni are active on Facebook and LinkedIn. Join the groups today and make connections with fellow alumni, discuss careers, network, and share your favorite memories of LJCDs.

 [Facebook.com/groups/LJCDsAlumni](https://www.facebook.com/groups/LJCDsAlumni)

 [LinkedIn.com/groups/1289217](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1289217)

●●● and Beyond

UNITED KINGDOM



START  
Dover, England

24.9 miles

FINISH  
Cap Gris-Nez

ENGLISH CHANNEL

FRANCE

“I think that a lot of people see swimming as an individual sport, but for me, it’s always been about the community.”



NOTABLE

# Making a Splash

MELANIE KAPLAN '08

For many alumni, one of the most cherished facets of their years at La Jolla Country Day School is the community. The tight bonds forged on campus transcend the boundaries of San Diego. Many surpass Southern California, some stretch from coast to coast, while others cross international borders. For lifer **Melanie Kaplan '08**, this rings true in a particularly special way. Buoyed by the friendships and foundation she built at LJCDS, she successfully swam the English Channel, from England to France, days before her class celebrated their 10-year reunion.

Swimming the English Channel had been a dream for Kaplan since Middle School. At LJCDS, she was a distance swimmer and played water polo under coach and English educator Nate Heppner. She went on to swim at Wellesley College.

Committed to fulfilling her aspiration, Kaplan left her job at an international strategic advisory firm in Washington, D.C. Then in summer 2018, she returned to California to begin training full-time. "I realized that if I was going to do it, I would have to really commit and commit in a big way," she says.

Kaplan moved to the Bay Area and trained in the Pacific Ocean, where the water temperature is akin to that of the Channel: between 55 and 60 degrees. After seven weeks of training, on August 22, 2018, Kaplan made the 21-mile trek. Despite gusting winds of up to 20 miles per hour, shifting tides and challenging eddies, she completed the journey from Shakespeare Beach in Dover, England, to Cap Gris-Nez, France. Clocking in at 13 hours and 6 minutes, she beat the average time of approximately 15 hours.

Fittingly, her deep-rooted friendships bookended her remarkable achievement.

Sophie Laing '08 visited her in Dover, England, shortly before Kaplan began her journey across the Channel. Former LJCDS classmate Morgane Renoir visited Kaplan on the English and French sides of the swim while vacationing with her family.

"I think that a lot of people see swimming as an individual sport, but for me, it's always been about the community," says Kaplan. "The incredible outpouring of support right before I swam, and then during the swim, as well as right after was unbelievable."

Though Kaplan is the 57th solo swimmer to cross the Channel in 2018, fewer people have swum the English Channel (1,500) than have summited Mount Everest (4,000), dating back to the first recorded crossing by Captain Matthew Webb in 1874.

Kaplan's journey benefited EMILY's List, a PAC that supports progressive female candidates for political office. Raising \$6,000 for the nonprofit, she emphasizes her desire for "having the swim not just have meaning for me but also to have a more global impact. I always knew that I would do it for some cause. ... Community service was a really important thing that I learned at Country Day, and it's influenced my career path in foreign policy."

Kaplan returned to Washington, D.C., last fall and started a new job in public policy for a technology company.

—KATELYN SIGETI '06

**Melanie Kaplan '08** was the 57th solo swimmer to cross the English Channel in 2018. As part of her journey, she raised \$6,000 for EMILY's List, a PAC for progressive female political candidates.



RECEIVED A VISIT FROM MY LJCDS CLASSMATE MORGANE RENOIR



ENJOYING DOVER, ENGLAND, WITH LJCDS ALUMNA SOPHIE LAING '08

## “Overheard”

I think that having a sensory-friendly production of *Les Misérables* shows how inclusive La Jolla Country Day School is and the effort that everyone is willing to put in to make it that way.

Riley Bowen '21, news article

**Our roots have been firmly established by generous families who willingly rolled up their sleeves and gave selflessly.**

Susan Nordenger, assistant head of school for development, *Country Day Connection* newsletter

**As a community, LJCDS is committed to the work of positioning adolescents with tools and resources, so they embody a sense of purpose, direction and focus in life that benefits others, rather than just the self.**

Colleen O'Boyle, assistant head of school for academic affairs, *Country Day Connection* newsletter

**I think everyone has the potential to do great things and change the world for the better. I intend to change the world.**

Katherine Bevash '27, Friends of La Jolla Libraries Fourth-Grade Essay Contest finalist

**How can we help students reach their potential, the fullness of who they are?**

Laura Tonini, Grade 3 teacher, faculty spotlight

**There's such an emphasis on speed and what math fluency means, but fluency in a language doesn't mean you speak really fast. Fluency with language means you can construct meaningful sentences and pull things together to convey meaning... Knowing  $9 \times 6 = 54$  is not fluent math—that's memorization.**

Andy D'Avanzo, Middle School math educator, faculty spotlight



**Make it  
safe to be  
vulnerable.**

Donna Hicks, author of  
*Leading with Dignity*, speaker series

Through music, we help spread joy to others within and outside of our own community, and this to me is the most important aspect in life—making people happy.

Isabel Miralles '19, arts assembly speech

**Everyone learns differently; there is no right or wrong way.**

Katey Alexander, educational therapist, news article

**If you are in clubs and organizations that you enjoy, the friends will naturally come. As long as you're being true to the things that you enjoy, you'll find friends easily in those areas.**

Alexandra Stroh '15, collegiate alumni panel

**The wonderful part of being at La Jolla Country Day School is that it is composed of forward-thinking educational leaders.**

Ryan Song, head of Middle School, *Country Day Connection* newsletter

**Be true to who you are, and you'll get to know yourself a lot better in college.**

Ian Armour '15, collegiate alumni panel

Art and working in a studio is a calming mechanism that allows me to express myself and how I feel but also allows me to be alone with my thoughts and find clarity through positivity.

Marybeth Holland '20, arts assembly speech



Photography by Afribun

A PERSONAL MBA

# REAWAKENING A GLOBAL MINDSET



A comfortable path was laid out for **Eddy Vaisberg '08**; the roadmap was clear. But Vaisberg didn't want comfort, and the type of clarity he sought could only be found by forging his own unique path.

BY MICHELLE CHOATE





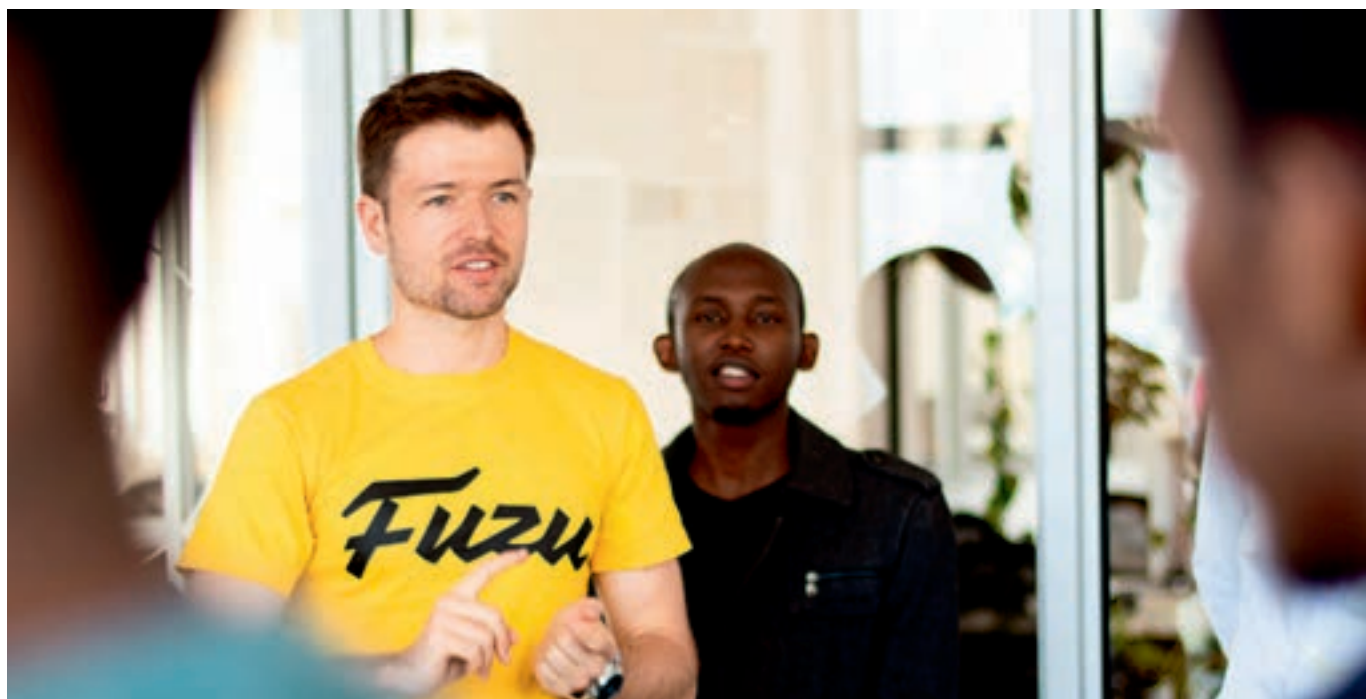
**VAISBERG GRADUATED FROM DARTMOUTH COLLEGE IN 2012** and accepted an attractive position at the renowned Boston Consulting Group (BCG). In the eyes of many, he was in an enviable position. Vaisberg spent his first five years with BCG working on projects up and down the West Coast, as well as in Australia and Europe, engaged in challenging work that enhanced his skill set. His future was virtually guaranteed: attend an MBA program financed by BCG, graduate with a nice job waiting for him back at the firm, and continue the professional trajectory that had been followed by so many.

Instead, Vaisberg opted for a more uncertain and unpredictable journey—and that has made all the difference. He now finds himself working for a seed-stage startup in Kenya and Uganda, making great progress on his more personal goals and reawakening the global mindset he had forgotten meant so much to him.

## GETTING FROM THERE TO HERE

Vaisberg currently serves as the COO of Fuzu, Ltd., the fastest-growing online career platform in Africa, with more than five million users. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, Fuzu (a Swahili verb meaning to qualify, progress, graduate, succeed) is a website that guides individuals to achieve their career ambitions. The platform has two sides: the job seeker side provides free access to more than 250 online courses and personalized guidance to help prospective employees gain the skills and professional awareness to become marketable to employers. On the employer side, Fuzu has created a way for companies to better identify potential employees through personality profiles and competency assessments.

Given the population demographics and education models in East Africa, Fuzu is providing a critical service. The greatest percentage of the population in East Africa is very young. In






Uganda, for example, the average age is 16 years old, and the population there and in other African nations is growing at a tremendous pace. Over the next 20 years, 500 million people are expected to join the workforce, most of them with a college degree. In Uganda, there are 400,000 higher-education graduates per year, but only about 100,000 jobs created each year, contributing to an unemployment rate for recent graduates of 65 percent.

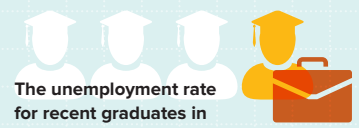
However, the lack of suitable jobs is only part of the problem. “According to the World Economic Forum, 70 percent of graduates are not employable at the point of graduation because most of them need to learn basics, like how to write a CV, how to prepare for a job interview, and how to act in a professional environment,” Vaisberg explains. “This harsh reality is the result of the educational system in countries like Kenya and Uganda being very focused on rote memorization. Graduates have very little experience with applied knowledge and creative thinking. The education provides limited career development and neither mentorship nor guidance programs to support that transition from graduation to employment.”

Essentially, Fuzu’s mission is to support hundreds of millions of junior and senior professionals who suffer from the same challenges by creating a vehicle for them to advance their careers in the face of such a skew between education and experience, supply and demand.

Where does Vaisberg fit into all this? “As COO, I am leading all Africa operations across marketing, business development, customer service and content creation,” says Vaisberg. “I am in charge of market expansion efforts and creating the detailed strategy and implementation plan to ensure the organization is well-positioned for our Series A funding round.”



Over the next 20 years, 500 million people are expected to join the workforce, most of them with a college degree.



The unemployment rate for recent graduates in Uganda is 65%. There are 400,000 higher-education graduates per year, but only 100,000 jobs created each year.



## REAWAKENING A GLOBAL MINDSET

Vaisberg didn't just leave BCG one day to fly to Africa and join Fuzu the next. Like most personal journeys, his was influenced by experiences and personal goals, which grew and changed as he did.

"I've always loved learning new things and discovering new perspectives. And when I was at LJCDS, the community service projects taught me that the world is bigger than me and the people I interact with on a daily basis," says Vaisberg. "In some ways, it probably paved the path to where I am now, spending so much time in the emerging world." But Vaisberg admits that his desire for a more global perspective was lost in the background noise during his time in college and at BCG.

A yearlong stint in Australia with BCG's Ambassador Program started to awaken that old curiosity and the desire for new perspectives. "That's where the journey started for me in terms of having a broader global mindset," says Vaisberg. "The friends I made in Australia—and while backpacking through Southeast Asia on my way back to the U.S.—were from diverse backgrounds with different life objectives and ways of thinking about life. They all had traveled quite a bit, but not just for travel's sake; they were combining travel with more meaningful experiences that enriched them in different ways."

**"I've always loved learning new things and discovering new perspectives. And when I was at LJCDS, the community service projects taught me that the world is bigger than me and the people I interact with on a daily basis."**



## UNDERGOING A “PERSONAL MBA”

Vaisberg returned to the U.S. with a plan to forgo a traditional MBA program and leave BCG for a year to travel through Africa, Southeast Asia, India and Latin America. “I love BCG. I feel it was a phenomenal launching pad for me,” says Vaisberg. “But growing up in the BCG world, you surround yourself with amazing, like-minded people. I’m sure MBA programs are filled with phenomenal people like at Dartmouth and BCG, but they’re all going to offer—for the most part—perspectives that are very similar to what I’m used to. Going out and traveling on my own and having this experience that I made for myself would introduce me to entirely different perspectives.”

He envisioned his new journey, which he referred to as his “personal MBA,” as largely consisting of travel, but also wanting to accomplish three important goals: “First, I wanted to work for a bit at a startup, because with BCG I had only been exposed to the corporate side of business. Second, I wanted to get work experience in an emerging market, because all of my prior experience was in the developed or Western world. And third, but equally significant to me, I wanted to do some spiritual development throughout that year.”

On Vaisberg’s last consulting project for BCG, he met the CEO of Fuzu. Upon leaving for Africa, Vaisberg reached out to the CEO and arranged to stop by the startup and volunteer for a while. He ended up staying with Fuzu for four months, then headed to India for four months, where he checked off some of his spiritual goals. “I did a 10-day Vipassana meditation course, which completely changed my outlook and encouraged me to open my mind as much as possible to whatever comes,” explains Vaisberg. “The experience was quite intense: 10 days of meditation, no talking, no eye contact with other people, no access to phones or books—just 10 days of you and your thoughts, 12–14 hours of meditating per day. It was absolutely transformational.”

## TO SUCCEED

When he left India, Vaisberg stopped at Fuzu for what he expected to be a short stay before heading out to his next destination, Argentina. But Vaisberg never made it to Argentina. He became Fuzu’s COO almost immediately and has been there for close to two years.

“Ultimately there were a few key things that ended up selling me on staying,” says Vaisberg. “I viewed Fuzu as a learning lab. I get to be the number two for the company, which is the perfect place for me. I’m involved with every major decision but don’t have the full weight of the company and all the stakeholders on my shoulders. By the time I joined, Fuzu was almost two years old, so I get to play a very critical role in a startup that I didn’t have to build from scratch. I also saw it as an opportunity to learn and try new things, new management and coaching tactics. I could succeed, or even fail, without all of the pressure of Fuzu being my own company.”



**“I viewed Fuzu as a learning lab. I get to be the number two for the company, which is the perfect place for me. I’m involved with every major decision but don’t have the full weight of the company and all the stakeholders on my shoulders.”**

Fuzu’s CEO also knew how to excite his adventurous young COO, offering Vaisberg the opportunity to launch the platform in Uganda on his own. “Without knowing anyone in Uganda, and without knowing how the market there worked, I got to dig in and figure it out—and experience the professional adventure I was craving,” Vaisberg says.

Vaisberg also saw Fuzu’s potential to impact millions of lives and wanted to play a role in making a positive difference. While supporting the company’s broader mission, Vaisberg felt a great responsibility to ensure the company’s future success. “Had I not stayed, the chances of the company pulling through would have been less,” Vaisberg says. “I feel a great deal of pressure to make sure the company is in a place to continue and succeed, and make the impact it has the potential to make for so many young people in Africa.”

## TO PROGRESS

Vaisberg currently works 80–90 hours a week, and he is the first to admit this is not a pace he can sustain long-term. As is his way, he is keeping his options open for the future, for his next opportunity for adventure and personal growth—but not before he accomplishes a few key things for Fuzu. “I have always seen my primary role as bringing the company from seed stage to Series A,” explains Vaisberg. “Once that is achieved, I plan to keep my options open—whether that is staying at Fuzu to help drive the next phase of growth and expansion into West Africa or finding a completely new path.”

While he’s not sure where his “personal MBA” will take him next, he is heading forward with an open mind in typical Vaisberg fashion. Whatever he ends up doing, his choices will not be influenced by what is most comfortable or traditional. “I’m looking for something exciting, something that I’ll be passionate about and where I can make a big impact,” says Vaisberg. “Of course, I would like to come closer to home at some point, but if I don’t find what I’m hoping for, I’m not married to that idea. I’ll go wherever the opportunity takes me.” ■

During the Super Bowl,  
**Jessica Laun Shaw '01**

is the one who wants everyone to pipe down, so she can hear the commercials. That's because her team at Sony Music is instrumental in providing the soundtrack to some of the biggest ad spots. This includes this year's Budweiser wind power commercial, which opens with a close-up of a Dalmatian with ears flapping, earnestly set to the Bob Dylan classic "Blowin' in the Wind."

# MUSIC

TO HER EARS

BY WENDY SIMARD





Photography by Laura Barisonzi Photography



A

**S VICE PRESIDENT OF MUSIC FOR BRANDS AND ADVERTISING,**

Shaw's commercial-licensing team of eight is tasked with being so well-versed with the vast catalog of Sony Music's

songs and artists—ranging from Beyoncé to Mark Ronson to Yo-Yo Ma to Johnny Cash and everyone in between—that they can confidently provide brands with the perfect tune to establish the intended mood for their advertisement.

The team pitches upcoming and big-name artists alike for commercial placement for traditional TV as well as digital platforms like YouTube pre-roll advertisements. The ever-shifting digital landscape keeps them on their toes. "A lot of our day is spent coming up with songs to fit a certain spot, brand or campaign, and the other part of our day is spent working with artist management, lawyers and sometimes the artists directly, negotiating the terms and best possible deals," she shares.

One of the perks of the job is interacting with talent. Shaw's team meets with new signings and organizes showcases (like a recent one with Sara Bareilles), in which an artist will perform a few songs for ad agencies and TV creatives. Occasionally, artists will write original songs or covers for commercial opportunities. "Anytime we get to be in touch with the artists and part of the creative process is really exciting."

## Harboring Musical Ambitions

W

**HEN SHAW WAS 7 YEARS OLD,** her family spent a night on their sailboat, docked near the open-air music venue Humphreys in San Diego. B.B. King was on stage that evening. Shaw remembers, "We could hear the concert, and I stayed up all night listening." Growing up, Shaw was most familiar with music

centered around The Beach Boys, Simon & Garfunkel, and The Beatles, but she became a massive B.B. King fan starting that day. Around the same time, Shaw begged her parents to buy her a saxophone, this time inspired by the animated character Lisa Simpson. They didn't go for the sax idea but agreed to rent a piano from the local music store and spring for lessons.

Shaw continued her passion for music in Middle School at LJCDS, starting with choir. She was a member of the chorus in *The Sound of Music* in seventh grade. Then in eighth grade, she played Tzeitel in *Fiddler on the Roof*. By the time she graduated, Shaw had performed in six musicals (in leading roles in two of them), sang with the a cappella group the Madrigals, and took AP Music with legendary former music teacher Keith Heldman. "I give a lot of credit to my time at LJCDS for getting me to where I am today because it was such a great environment to explore my interest in music," she says. "I was fortunate to be at a school where I had so many opportunities to be involved. I don't know if I would have stayed in touch with my musical interests if I hadn't come to Country Day."

Shaw went on to Duke University with no intention of majoring in music, but a music theory class during freshman year changed her plans. While at Duke, Shaw performed in the choir and in the a cappella group Rhythm and Blue, and was really happy. "My friends were doing 'serious' majors, and I was in the music building every day playing piano, having fun, enjoying my education. Fourteen years later, my friends laugh that I'm one of the only ones who actually uses my degree," she shares.

After graduating, she moved to New York to intern with a conductor, which led to a job in music publishing. It was there that she stumbled upon licensing—a role uniquely suited to her. Before joining Sony, Shaw served as the director of music for advertising at Universal Music Publishing Group, and before that, senior manager of strategic marketing at Warner Music Group. "I realized [licensing] was my dream job because I always wanted to work on film soundtracks. I love singing, but it was never my professional ambition to be a performer."

“I REALIZED LICENSING WAS MY DREAM JOB BECAUSE I ALWAYS WANTED TO WORK ON FILM SOUNDTRACKS. I LOVE SINGING, BUT IT WAS NEVER MY PROFESSIONAL AMBITION TO BE A PERFORMER.”

## Striking the Right Chord

**M**USIC OCCUPIES A MEANINGFUL PART of Shaw’s personal life as well. In 2007, she joined the Young New Yorkers’ Chorus (YNYC), a chamber choir of volunteer musicians in their 20s to 30s. The nonprofit’s mission is to foster the art of choral singing among young people and provide opportunities for contemporary young composers in New York City.

“I discovered YNYC serendipitously while scrolling through audition announcements for choirs in the New York City area,” shares Shaw. “Two years after graduating, I sorely missed being part of a choral ensemble.”

There, she found a unique community—and love—in the Big Apple. “We really think of ourselves as a family and community first, and so many members have found lifelong friendships in this group, not to mention relationships,” says Shaw. “It happens to be where I met my husband. He’s a fantastic singer!”

In 2010, Shaw joined the board of directors of YNYC. “It’s an organization I’m passionate about for many reasons,” she says. “I am able to invest more deeply in this organization I love so much.” She is currently serving as the board president.

Shaw and her husband, Cullen, have a 3-year-old son named Solomon, whom she says is proving to be a music lover as well. “We certainly plan to encourage music to be a big part of his life,” she says. “He likes to sing, bang on my piano and has a kid’s ukulele.” Some of his favorite songs at the moment? “Barbara Ann” by the Beach Boys and “Baba O’Riley” by The Who.

While music will always remain one of her deepest loves, she says that she sometimes needs to “clear her ears.” “Most people turn to music to unwind after work,” she says. “For me, it’s the opposite. Every day, I’m listening to new music and trying to keep up with the latest thing. When I’m left to my own devices, I listen to more of the nostalgic favorites I grew up listening to.” That, and podcasts. Lots of podcasts. ■



## Encore!

**MORE FROM THE MUSICAL MIND OF JESSICA LAUN SHAW**

### Spotify or Pandora?

Spotify

### Classical or jazz?

Both! Classical if I had to choose.

### In the car: Playlists or podcasts?

Podcasts. Right now, I’m really into “Lovett or Leave It.”

### Pink or Gaga?

Well, Pink is a Sony artist!

### The Beatles or Rolling Stones?

Love both, but The Beatles

### First concert?

Dave Matthews Band (with LJCDs friends)

### First CD purchase?

*Funky Divas*, by En Vogue

### All-time favorite band?

Radiohead

### First dance song at your wedding?

A medley! “Love Is Here to Stay,” by Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald and “Somebody to Love,” by Queen.

### Podcast recommendations?

“Lovett or Leave It,” “NPR Politics,” “Stuff You Should Know”

# Milestones\*

## ENGAGEMENTS, MARRIAGES & BIRTHS



1

**Shelley Pressman '06** married Daniel Himes on October 6, 2018, in Cooperstown, New York.

2

**Kate Wright '06** married Harry Fisher on October 21, 2018, in San Diego, California.

3

**Laura Herman '11** is engaged to Sebastian Okhovat. They plan for a September 2019 wedding.

4

**Missy Ackley '08** is engaged to Jesse Meyer. They plan for an October 2019 wedding.

### STAY CONNECTED

We want to hear from alumni! Are you celebrating a life event? Have news to share? Send us a class note. All class notes will be published online.

[LJCDS.ORG/ALUMNI](https://ljcads.org/alumni)



5  
**Amanda Gooding Weingarten '03** and husband Jason Weingarten welcomed son Trevor Nathan Weingarten on January 3, 2019.

6  
**Shayla Dinwiddie Griffard '11** married Taylor Griffard on July 7, 2018, in Oceanside, California.

7  
**Lizzie Ellison Staresnick '08** married Kevin Staresnick on July 28, 2018, in Fallbrook, California.

8  
**Tommy Edman '13** is engaged to Kristen Shiotani. They plan for an October 2019 wedding.

9  
**Nikki Fig '08** is engaged to Adam Kitain. They plan for a September 2019 wedding in Tel Aviv, Israel.

# Committing TO THE Self

ON JUNE 5, 1964,  
LA JOLLA COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL CELEBRATED  
ITS INAUGURAL CLASS  
COMPLETING THEIR STUDIES AND MOVING  
ON TO THEIR NEXT ADVENTURES.

The graduating class of 26 students listened as commencement speaker Dr. Jonas Salk, who discovered the first vaccine against paralytic polio (and founded the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla), spoke of direction and commitment.

LJCDs's first headmaster, Donald Leavenworth, told the class he "hopes that [they] have developed some appreciation and understanding of the word 'responsibility,' the responsibility each person has to their self and to their fellow human beings." Meeting the obligations we have made to ourselves, he argued, will "bring us closer to meeting them to humanity at large."

Almost 40 years after the school's founding by Louise Balmer, this first graduation signified growth, opportunity and momentum for La Jolla Country Day School. —**RAFAEL EATON**



**Above:** The class of 1964 in front of the Bishop's Chapel. Photograph taken circa 1960s.

**Right:** Commencement ceremonies in the amphitheater are a treasured tradition since 1984. Pictured: The class of 1992 and Board of Trustees President Sidney Smith Jr.





La Jolla Country Day School's first commencement program.

*"I remember discussing with Dr. Alan Gregg—a wise, wise man who had the perception to be able to see and the skill to be able to reveal—the question of changes in commitment necessitated by success. His admonition was, 'Do only that which makes your heart leap.'*

*I know of no better way to convey the personal nature of commitment, however short or sustained it may be. Contentment with self and others can be attained in no other way. If you are unhappy, you have not yet found that which makes your heart leap. Examine yourselves in the context of your own lives before you conclude that you are doomed to a fate over which you yourself have no control whatever. The remarkable effect of attitude over fact is something that needs to be discovered. It is yours for the search.*

*Life is a treasure hunt, and there is a treasure for each if he follows the inclination of his own heart, and if he uses his head to fix his heart where it wants to be fixed."*

Excerpt from commencement speech by Jonas Salk, entitled *Commitment—An Opportunity, Not a Burden*

## My Inspiration!



Cheerful thoughts bring us laughter and hope, while pessimism halts us from moving forward. I am inspired by optimism, and I lead by bringing out the best in people.

I encourage the student council team to always come to meetings with a positive mindset and an open mind. Seeing the glass half full and being open to discussions allows us to be more attentive to our community, and those in the community are more likely to contribute to the discussion of improving student well-being.

Feedback is valuable because we can better serve our student body based on student interests, thus establishing a virtuous circle of optimism.

**Yuqi Yang '19**

Former Student Council President





## Giving Back +

### Meet the McGrath Family

La Jolla Country Day School families, past and present, continue to strengthen the school by sharing their time, talent and treasure. One special family counts itself among those both past and present. Lindsey Thompson McGrath '96 and Matt McGrath '95 met as students at LJCDS. Lindsey joined the school in ninth grade, and Matt is a lifer. Now they return to LJCDS as parents of two proud Torreys—Kellen '28 and Madeleine '31.

For the McGraths, philanthropy is an integral means of showing appreciation to the community that not only helped raise them but is now part of their children's lives. "We believe that being active participants in the community helps to strengthen our character and core values," shares Matt. "These core values were taught to us at LJCDS, and now they are being taught to our children."

It's been more than 20 years since the McGraths graduated from LJCDS, but the impact of their experience remains a part of their lives. "When we look back on our lives and the paths we've traveled individually and as a family, it is clear that LJCDS provided an invaluable foundation for so much of what followed," reflects Lindsey. "We constantly lean back on the lessons, experiences and friends/mentors from LJCDS, and we feel obligated to give back as much as we can."

We extend our deepest appreciation to the McGrath family—a legacy family—not only for their generosity but for the innumerable ways they have shown their dedication to LJCDS.



### HELP US GROW OUR LEGACY FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

To learn more or make a gift, visit [www.ljcds.org/giving](http://www.ljcds.org/giving) or contact Assistant Head of School for Development Susan Nordenger at [snordenger@ljcds.org](mailto:snordenger@ljcds.org).

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