It’s summer and that means it’s time to catch up on all the latest news from Post Oak Alumni. Some are headed off to college, others are beginning new careers, traveling, or pursuing their hobbies and passions.

To all former Post Oak students, whether you graduated, or attended only in your early years, you’re our alumni and we’d love to hear from you! If you don’t see your friends, ask them to connect on our website at www.postoakschool.org/postoak/alumni.asp or contact jessicajackson@postoakschool.org.

Class of 1982

Daniel Marchione

Daniel Marchione is the Head of School at the Trinity School of Midland. He received his Masters of Education from Endicott College in Beverly Massachusetts in 2004. He became a lifelong learner because of Post Oak and his experience inspired him to pursue a career in the education field. Aside from Watermelon Day at the end of school, Daniel’s fa-
Kirby McCool is currently living in Houston where she dedicates most of her time and energy towards her two children. Kirby started at Post Oak when she was only 18 months and continued here through the 8th grade. Because of her experience she has incorporated Montessori values into the lives of her own children.

CLASS OF 1999

Caroline Sharp
Caroline continues to branch out into multiple areas of endeavor. She has acted on stage, in a web series, and is a member of the Screen Actors Guild. She is recording audio books, and has gotten involved in the graphic novel world. In her free time she is a Trivia host for a local radio show and volunteers at local animal shelters. She is a big fan of the Houston Texans and always keeps the team’s “Never Say Die” attitude. She is a dedicated Houstonian and is involved in many volunteer projects throughout the city. She continues to develop her acting career in L.A., and looks forward to returning to Houston in the new year.

CLASS OF 2001

Amelinda (Melanson) Hendrickx
Amelinda is still working as a mechanical engineer at Aagard in Alexandria, MN. Following her wedding last September, she and her husband, Jake Hendrickx, moved to a country house on 14 acres of river front property outside of Fergus Falls, MN. Her growing expertise with gardening has led to more and more food preservation, from jams and jellies to sauce and salsa, and canned vegetables. She and Jake have also become very active in the rental house business, acquiring 5 houses in less than 2 years, renovating them and renting them out. She is also involved in all the usual parenting duties for Jake’s four children, who spend every other week with Jake and Amelinda. She is also a frequent traveler, having recently visited Germany and the Czech Republic. I’m also looking into going to grad school for my Masters in Public Health. I have been performing as a well-site geologist after graduating from the University of Texas’s Geology program and has now turned his attention to learning the business side of the oil and gas industry.

Brittany Fondren
I’m still working at Cornerstone, which is going well. I have started writing grant requests in addition to my other responsibilities. I have not traveled recently but there may be some trips coming up in my future, possibly to Germany and the Czech Republic. I’m also looking into going to grad school for my Masters in Public Health. I have not performed or published anything, although I did write and record a song for fun.

I suppose the most noteworthy thing that happened recently was I crashed my bike and broke my collar bone which required surgery, although I’m not sure if that is the best thing to include in the alumni newsletter!

I also ran the Houston marathon in January and have signed up to run it again next year.

William Wafer
After graduating from Syracuse University in 2011, William Wafer moved to Los Angeles where he is now working as a post-production editor. His impressive work speaks volumes about his ability to diligently work until the product is finished. Some of his projects include acting as lead editor on Fullscreen’s cover of Ne-Yo’s “So Sick” by Max Schneider and Sam Tsui as well as editing the music video for “Still in Love” by Devon James.

Nick Hetherington
I am still with the Longhorn Network and was recently promoted to Associate Producer. We are excited for the upcoming football season with the new coaching regime; we will start coverage from the first football practice August 4th. I am currently in San Miguel de Allende with my family taking an 8-day vacation. My family has been coming to this city for over 20 years; it truly is our home away from home.

CLASS OF 2003

Sam Boyar
Sam Boyar is pursuing an energy-focused MBA at the Rice University Jones Graduate School of Business. Sam is interning this summer at ConocoPhillips, where he is evaluating global company assets in the Investment Appraisal group. Sam spent more than two years in the oil patches of East Texas as a well site geologist after graduating from the University of Texas’s Geology program and has now turned his attention to learning the business side of the oil and gas industry.
**CLASS OF 2004**

**Will Duin**
Will Duin is living in Charleston, South Carolina. He recently bought a new house, and likes to spend his time fishing. His favorite memory of Post Oak is playing sports with Coach Tucker. He believes that Montessori goes into much further detail by working more one on one with students.

**Jennie Kamin**
The latest update I have is that I recently moved to Los Angeles from New Orleans in further pursuit of a career in acting/filmmaking. As a result of tax incentives, Louisiana is home to a booming film economy. This last year, I worked on some great projects, including “Artists Die Best in Black” with Malcolm McDowell.

**Becky Bereswill**
Post Oak alumna Becky Bereswill as Elsa in Disney on Ice’s “Frozen”

**CLASS OF 2005**

**Allison Bereswill**
Allison Bereswill received a Master’s degree in Accounting at Southern Methodist University. She is working as a CPA, and is thankful to the Montessori method for fostering her independence. She says, “In a Montessori School, a student has to choose what work to do and use time management to get everything done.”

**Bethany Sharp**
Bethany graduated from Boston University last year, and is now working as a graphic artist for Simple Truth in Chicago, IL. She also sings with an a cappella group, which includes writing and arranging music, as well as performing in various concerts and competitions. Bethany treasures her memories from Blackwood and believes Post Oak fostered her independence. She says, “In a Montessori School, a student has to choose what work to do and use time management to get everything done.”

**Christina Moser**
For the last two years I’ve been living in Austin, Texas and working as a graphic designer. My first job after graduating college was as a production artist at an ad agency, but for the last year or so I have been working on my own as a freelance graphic designer. This past winter, some friends and I started a drawing collective called Weekly. As a creative outlet, and every week each of us creates an image to post to Instagram (@weekly) by the end of the week. My next adventure will be picking up and moving to Ithaca, New York this August, where I’ll be ready to take on new challenges and experiences.

**Joe Anthony Martinez**
Joe Anthony Martinez has the long term goal of becoming a research scientist and double major in psychology and biology. Joe Anthony has two B.S. degrees in Physics and Chemistry. He is the first person to play this role. As Montessori students we are fostered an appreciation for the “big picture”. As Montessori students we are studying Cell and Tissue Engineering. I recently finished a microgravity research project with NASA this past January. The team I was a part of looked at how water freezes in zero gravity in order to design and implement a supplemental heat rejection system that is water based for the next generation of spacecraft. This summer I am taking a couple of classes at the University of Houston and have done some shadowing with a pulmonologist at M.D. Anderson. In early August I plan on heading back to Austin to start working in a research lab at UT. My long term goal is to go to graduate school, either to study medicine or continuing with cell and tissue engineering or both by applying to an M.D./PhD program. This fall I plan on applying to be part of a bike team here at UT that rides from Austin, Texas to Anchorage, Alaska to raise money for cancer research. Post Oak helped me foster an appreciation for the “big picture”. As Montessori students we are...
I've really enjoyed myself!

Nikhil Schneider

Nikhil is a rising junior at University of Houston where he is majoring in Environmental Science and continues to participate in the Honors College. He is working for the UH Outdoor Program and plans to take more of leadership role there next year, leading bicycle rides and climbing events. He rode the MS150 this past Spring for the first time since being a part of the Post Oak Pedalers.

Nikhil is spending the summer in the Austin area, living with his uncle and learning to make Indian food with his grandmother. He is employed as a lifeguard through the local recreational center and is connecting with friends from POS as well as his former childhood school, Community Montessori School (some of whom he had not seen since he was 9 years old). Nikhil has been enjoying rediscovering his former hometown as a young adult and appreciating all of the outdoor activities that Austin has to offer (especially rock climbing).

CLASS OF 2010

Karis Barker

Karis will be a freshman at UC Irvine in the fall where she will be studying Biological sciences. She recently graduated Magna Cum Laude from Episcopal High School. She is focused on acclimating to college, and feels that the independence, punctuality, and time management skills she attained from Post Oak will undoubtedly help her in that process.

Amelia Eskridge

Amelia will be attending SMU in the fall. She was also admitted to Trinity, Elon, Lafayette, Pepperdine, Rhodes, and Santa Clara. She chose SMU to join the Lyle School of Engineering, which offers a program under which she will also finish with an MBA. Time permitting, she’d like to minor in Spanish and Voice, two passions she has had since her days at Post Oak. She has had Spanish classes every year since Infant Community, and singing has been a big part of her high school life. She was selected a soprano in the All-State Choir as a sophomore, junior, and senior, and was in many musical theater performances, including both The Sound of Music and Shrek as a senior.

Avery Peters

I recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Episcopal High School, and I’m excited to be attending the University of Richmond in the fall. I am still unsure what I will be majoring in, but I am leaning towards Political Science or International Studies. This past year I was a member of National Honor Society, a member of the Student Senate, and a Student of Service (S.O.S) project leader. I am looking forward to meeting new people in college, and living in a place where it will snow in the winter! One of my favorite memories is the time we would spend getting ready for Cinco de Mayo, and how every year the dances would get a little more advanced. Post Oak really taught me how to use my time wisely and get everything done, while still being able to spend time on my interests and hobbies.

Daniel Sanders

Daniel graduated from St. Thomas High School in May. He is working for a builder of large apartment complexes and will begin school at Texas State University in San Marcos in August.

John Henry Styles

John Henry Styles is excited to be attending Stanford University in the fall, and is planning on studying Environmental Engineering. He was recently selected in the 36th round of the MLB draft by the Washington Nationals. Besides playing baseball, he really enjoys traveling, and is planning on making the most of his last full summer in Houston. He believes that Post Oak inspired the work ethic that has carried him up to this point.

Allison Wastro

I am beginning my first year at the University of California Santa Barbara in the fall, and I am planning to study physics. In the short term I am excited about getting through my freshman year of college, but in the long term I aim to get a PhD in physics. I have Post Oak to thank for my love of physics. Post Oak, unlike other traditional schools, never snuffs out a child’s innate desire to learn. Because of this, I love knowing how and why things happen in our universe... physics allows you to explore and learn from the world around you, which, to me, is the heart of every Montessori classroom.

CLASS OF 2011

Benjamin Brenner

Benjamin is entering his senior year at Carnegie Vanguard High School. He is in Debate and Engineering club, and is planning to apply to Rice, Harvey Mudd, Colorado School of Mines, Northwestern, and University of Texas. He is spending the summer working in a research laboratory at Baylor College of Medicine.

Rachael Levy

Rachael is a rising senior at Kinkaid. She is a member of the Spanish Honor Society, and won an award at the end of her junior year for her work in her Spanish class. Rachael participated in the ISAS Arts Festival in Houston and won an award for the sculptures she created as part of her independent study. She recently started her second internship with a city planner in Houston, a career path she finds interesting.

Amy Pascoe

Amy Pascoe will begin her senior year at Kinkaid this fall. She is a member of the Community Service Council at Kinkaid, and will be chairing their 2015 Special Olympics Bocce Ball Tournament with her fellow Post Oak alumn, Elise Peters.

Emily Paul

Emily Paul, a rising senior at Kinkaid, discovered a passion for medicine while in high school. She co-founded the Health and Fitness Club at Kinkaid and has had the opportunity to shadow several surgeons in the Houston area. Post Oak taught her to not let her age prevent her from pursuing her dreams and to think outside the box. She is particularly excited about welcoming an exchange student from Finland who will be staying with her for a year.

Elise Peters

Elise Peters is a rising senior at Kinkaid where she is a member of the French Honor Society and Dance Company. She ranked nationally amongst top 5 rankings in the National French Contest. She also attended the VASE art competition for printmaking, where she placed in the highest regional division with a perfect score. She received a Gold Key in printmaking at the regional Scholastic Art Competition. Although her hobbies include dance and visual arts, she is currently focused on college applications, focusing mainly on schools in the northeast. Elise feels as though Post Oak really helped her to become a leader within and outside of the classroom. She will be co-chairing Kinkaid’s 2015 Special Olympics Bocce Ball Tournament with her fellow Post Oak alum, Amy Pascoe.

Thomas Rasor

Thomas Rasor is a rising senior at Episcopal High School. He plays volleyball and is a member of ETV, a moviemaking club at EHS. His interests include rock climbing.
Juliana Schneider
This past year I won 3rd place in the cross country SPC (championship meet), and received the best sportsmanship award in the sport. I was awarded with Best in Show for a self-portrait in the fall semester school art show, silver key award in the Scholastic Art Competition, second place in the University of Houston Art Competition, and volunteered with the Students Conservation Association group throughout the school year. Over the summer I will be traveling to Washington State to work with the same program and am working at a vet’s office as a technician. I look forward to the upcoming cross country season and school year.

CLASS OF 2012
Samantha Pulaski
Samantha Pulaski will be a junior at Episcopal High School this fall where she is involved in both dance and community service. She is interested in sailing so that she can one day sail around the Caribbean. She loves to travel and recently went to New Zealand. She attributes her time at Post Oak to fostering her leadership qualities, maturity, and passion for participating in community service.

CLASS OF 2013
Grace Kaplow
Grace Kaplow will begin her sophomore year at St. Agnes in the fall. She is grateful for the way she learned to actively study and absorb information at Post Oak, which helped her to make the Honor Roll (by receiving all A’s) her first year of high school. She is going to camp this summer, and will continue her ice skating.

Carson Parente
Carson Parente will be a 10th grader at Westchester this fall, and will be attending summer camp this summer. Carson is working hard to attain his goal of becoming a National Merit Scholar while in high school. He wants to someday get a job in the sciences, especially physics. His favorite memory of Post Oak was his Middle School trip to Washington D.C. He believes Post Oak taught him to be more open to learning which allowed for more opportunities and experiences.

Natalia and Julian Salgado
Natalia and Julian Salgado are rising seniors at Bellaire High School where they will continue their Pre-AP and AP courses. The two of them just returned from Brazil where they attended two World Cup matches, Argentina vs. Bosnia and Belgium vs. Russia. During the two weeks in Brazil, Julian had the opportunity to train and play soccer with other players from all over the world. Natalia and Julian enjoyed experiencing the unique Brazilian culture and it was an experience of a lifetime. Julian plays soccer for his high school.

Matthew Sanders
Matthew just returned from a trip to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil where he attended soccer camp and was fortunate to see several World Cup games. He plays soccer for Awoy International School and the Houston Express. He will begin his sophomore year at Awoy in the fall.

OTHER ALUMNI
Payal Chana
Payal and her husband, Manny, are celebrating the recent birth of their daughter, Dia Chana. Dia was born on June 12, 2014. In addition to being an alumna, Payal is also a Post Oak parent. Her son is in Primary.

Will and Sam Geer
Exciting news in the Geer household! Will Geer just graduated from the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music and Sam Geer (’02) recently got engaged!

Sara Llanas
I will be starting a new position in July with Emerge-HISD (Houston Independent School District). Emerge is a program that prepares talented HISD students from under-served communities to successfully attend and graduate from Ivy League and other top-tier universities. I will be an Academic Program Manager. meaning that I will be responsible for running the Emerge program at a few HISD schools. I am very excited about this new position and feel that it will benefit me greatly!

Ben Sanders
After graduating from St. Thomas High School, Ben spent the summer working in Warsaw, Poland. While there, he traveled to Germany, France, and Holland. He is currently working in construction and will begin his second year at Texas A&M in August.

Chloe Wood
I am now settled in the Bay Area and have officially switched fields! In July I’m starting as an Associate at Jump Associates, an innovation consultancy that helps companies create new products or enter new markets. This is my dream job at my dream company so I’m excited to get started! ☺
New Roles & New Faces in Faculty

This fall, we will welcome the following faculty and administrators to Post Oak. Join us on Tuesday, August 19th for a welcome reception at the school. Details will be emailed to you later in the summer.

HIGH SCHOOL
Jamie Lee will be joining the high school faculty this fall, working alongside James Quillin in the history and social sciences disciplines. Jamie previously worked on the high school planning during the 2011-2012 school year before a relocation for her husband’s job took her away from Houston. This year, following her return to Houston, Jamie played a role with the high school during J-Term, working with Dr. Quillin and traveling with him and twelve students to Jamaica for service work and anthropological study.

Dr. Lee’s credentials are an outstanding match for our growing high school program. She earned an MA and PhD in sociology from the University of Texas at Austin. Beyond her academic preparation, Dr. Lee has leadership experience in both business and social action. For five years she was president of a successful software company, and as a graduate student, founded a non-profit organization to help Central American women by providing technological training. She is fluent in Spanish and is also the mother of two girls who are elementary students at Post Oak.

Benjamin Preston will also join the high school faculty this fall, teaching mathematics along with Mr. Grisbee as well as an upper level economics course. A native New Zealander, Mr. Preston comes to Post Oak with twenty years’ experience in global investment banking, working in Australia, South Africa, and England. He is also a Montessori parent; his two sons attend St. Stephen’s Episcopalian School here in Houston. Mr. Preston has a Master of Teaching degree from Rice University and carries himself with the strong authenticity that high school students are looking for in their teachers.

This summer, James Quillin began a new role as Upper Level Coordinator at the high school. In this role, James is responsible for the development of the upper level (grades 11 and 12) curriculum. As a part of this role, he serves as IB Diploma Program Coordinator. We are excited about this growth in the high school program. The final two years of the high school program are full of culminating work, consolidating ideas, and direct preparations for college and beyond. We know that support of students during this time is vital and creating this position within the high school division is appropriate to help students meet their goals. James brings the needed attention, support, and expertise to coordinate the curriculum of students final two years at Post Oak. He will continue to work as a part of the high school faculty, teaching the upper level history class and coordinating the Theory of Knowledge course.

In the meantime, we continue to interview candidates to fill two positions for the fall. Our staffing plan for the high school calls for the addition of a college counselor this year, and we are in the process of interviewing candidates. We are also looking to hire a visual arts instructor to succeed Richard Williams, who worked with us very successfully for the past two years.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
Jami Sweeney’s appointment as middle school director has been affirmed. In addition to his duties as director, he will also teach science in the middle school. Mr. Sweeney relocated to Houston last year to join Post Oak as the school’s librarian. He brings a rich background to his new position. In addition to AMI Montessori training and teaching experience at both primary and elementary levels, he has a BS in cell biology and M.Ed.’s in special education and early childhood special education. He has taught middle school and high school science, and coached soccer and volleyball at a college preparatory school. In addition, Mr. Sweeney has administrative experience, serving as the head of school at a Montessori charter school. His two older children are students at TCU, his youngest is an elementary student here at Post Oak.

Courtney Vance is joining Post Oak to teach language arts and humanities. Ms. Vance has an MFA in creative writing from UT Austin and a BA in comparative studies from Stanford. She has published work in numerous magazines and journals, served as the fiction editor of a literary magazine, and received recognition for her writing. As an instructor she has worked with gifted students as well as with high school and middle school second-language learners. Ms. Vance and other middle school faculty have been busy at work already, making plans for the upcoming year.

PRIMARY
There will be two new assistants joining Dinah Chettri’s team in primary home environment this year. Katherine Guani Nava will be one of them. Ms. Nava’s education includes a BS in international trade from Universidad de la Salle Bajo in her native Mexico, and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Houston. Ms. Nava has experience working with children as a CCE teacher and as an au pair. Fluent in both Spanish and English, she brings great enthusiasm to her work as she launches her career as a teacher.

In the meantime, we are interviewing candidates for a second new assistant to join the team in primary home environment. We will miss Norma Paulin, who worked at Post Oak as a primary assistant for more than twenty years, as well as Maurien Caron who was with us just last year.

SPECIALIST
Finally, Ninfa Bridges will join us as a Spanish specialist. She has a bachelor’s degree in middle grades education from Escuela Normal Superior de la Laguna in Durango, Mexico and a bachelor’s degree in primary education from National Pedagogic University in Coahuila, Mexico. In addition, she has an AMS Montessori training for both lower and upper elementary. She brings more than twenty years’ experience as a Montessori classroom teacher and as a Spanish instructor in California and Texas.

We welcome a very talented group of staff to the Post Oak faculty.
Houston Montessori Institute Having a Successful Summer

by Larry Quade, HMI Director of Training

The Houston Montessori Institute, a branch of the Post Oak School, is in the second summer of the first AMI Primary training course. Trainees represent six nations as well as the United States, and three states in addition to Texas. Classes are held at the Post Oak High School in the Museum District. Five of the trainees are working concurrently on a Master’s degree from Loyola University Maryland.

Trainees Larry Quade and Mirani Smith are presenting language and math for Primary children. At the end of this session the majority of academic presentations will be finished. During the upcoming school year the trainees will practice-teach in Montessori schools and complete their many assignments. June 2015 will see the completion of training. Association Montessori Internationale (AMI)-administered examinations, and the awarding of the international diplomas. Thereafter, another class of AMI Montessori teachers will move out across the globe in service to the world’s children.

An unseen and unsung host of supporters contribute to the success of Montessori training at HMI. Many of them work within the Post Oak School, and many work outside. The success of the HMI mission rests upon a broad foundation.

The Houston Montessori Institute is currently in session and we invite you to visit us two ways:

Come in for our OPEN HOUSE JULY 22 5:30 P.M.

Come in to OBSERVE FIRST-HAND (by appointment)

We invite you to join us for our upcoming Open House event, where we will be sharing details about the next AMI Primary Training Course which starts June 29, 2015. Appointments for observation can also be made at any time by contacting miranismith@hmiusa.org.

Post Oak Eighth Graders Move Up!

For a link to the full video, email jessicajackson@postoakschool.org
Independence Day Celebration

Scenes from Summer at Post Oak

The Post Oak Fund
Together We Can!

Post Oak’s environment, professional development, facilities, technology enhancements—all are supported by your gift to the annual fund. It takes everyone working together to maintain the level of excellence you expect from Post Oak.

Be one of the first to make your annual fund contribution! And thanks to those who have already donated!

Post Oak Fund month starts October 1. Donations for the 2014-15 school year can now be made online.

Volunteers are needed!

Come hear about how you can help at the school and at events! The Volunteer Coffee will be held at the home of Post Oak Gala Co-Chair Whitney Walsh. Please call the front desk for directions.

Friday, Sept. 5 at 8:45 a.m.
**NOTICE BOARD**

**SCHOOL YEAR INFORMATION**

In just a few weeks, we will send out a mailing with your new school calendar.

At the beginning of August, you will also receive an email with links to forms, the handbook, ASEP and other items for the new school year.

To find out the school start date for your child(ren), see the guide on the Post Oak homepage, left menu options.

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**POST OAK COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY**

Watch your email next week for a short Post Oak communications survey that will be sent to all current Post Oak families.

Your response is helpful and appreciated!

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**LANDS’ END**

Show Your Spirit! The Post Oak School’s logos are available at Lands’ End for embroidery or printing on your purchases. If you would like to show your Post Oak spirit by wearing clothing with either the school logo or the Bearkats logo, contact Lands’ End School Division directly at 1-800-469-2222 or online at landsend.com. Post Oak’s preferred school number is 900115890.

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**ABOUT THE POST**

*The Post* is distributed via email every other Friday of the regular school year.

You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or view the PDF version online.

Submit letters, articles, or photos in electronic form by 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before publication to Communications Coordinator Elisa Schmidt (elisaschmidt@postoakschool.org). If publication is on a Thursday due to school closure on Friday, then the deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the preceding Monday.

THE POST OAK SCHOOL was founded in 1963 and accredited by both the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS)

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