Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love.” - Lao Tzu

When I reflect on our family’s experience at Post Oak, this favorite quote of mine encapsulates our sons’ experience as students and our adventure as parents. Our journey began here when we relocated back to Houston from an AMI school in St. Louis, Missouri. We were welcomed with open arms by administrative staff, faculty and parents alike. It wasn’t too long before I dove right into lending a hand where needed with the various volunteer opportunities as well as meeting other moms who I still have friendships with to this day. [Redacted] was in his third year of
Lower Elementary and was in his second year of Primary. Looking back, I am reminded how each of them have enjoyed experiences that created newfound confidence, profoundness and love.

I would like to share with you a few stories.

The Post Oak School
CREATING CONFIDENCE

came home one day, near the end of his second year, very proud of the fact that he had learned who his muse was going to be the following year. His whole face lit up in excitement as he shared with me what this role would require of him and how he couldn’t wait to help his new friend adjust to his new classroom.

This story was music to my ears as we both knew that it was just a short time ago when himself was very shy and reluctant to share his feelings. In addition, he required continued support in articulating his needs with work in the classroom. My husband Cliff and I marveled at the transformation during his three year cycle with Orly Klak as she patiently worked with him, making learning fun, but challenging, honing in on his innate skills first before guiding him to skill sets that proved more difficult, allowing him speaking opportunities and reluctant to share his feelings. In his innate skills first before guiding him to skill sets that proved more difficult, allowing him speaking opportunities allowing him speaking opportunities during class performances and being not only his teacher, but his friend. The two of them gained each other’s trust and a bond were formed.

The Post Oak School
CREATING PROFUNDITY

Then there is and his experience as an Upper Elementary and Middle School student took advantage of the opportunity to participate in Montessori Model United Nations, guided by the ever-so-patient teachers Mr. and Mrs. Pinto. I witnessed a young boy coming into adolescence with questions and the fortitude to find the answers to these questions. Two years, two committees, two topics I watched him work diligently every week in preparation to understand the needs and rights of others so that he and his fellow delegates could present and debate these issues in the hopes of their resolutions being passed.

I know that it was this experience that sparked many conversations between us regarding life. One particular conversation he says, “Mom, you know I don’t understand people who talk about wanting change, because until you decide to do something about it, how can you expect change to happen?” He then went on to discuss some of the issues he felt strongly about and how he himself could see change happening if the solutions he was proposing were implemented.

The Post Oak School
CREATING LOVE:

have both loved being a part of the many volunteer initiatives at the school benefiting various local and global charities. I recall coming home one day and hearing about Malyka House, an orphanage in Uganda. I could tell that the information he had learned about this orphanage had impacted him in such a way that he now felt empowered to share what the orphanage’s needs were and support the cause. On another day, who was in Middle School at the time, arrived home and shared that earlier that morning, at his weekly volunteer assignment the little boy he had been paired with had missed him when he was absent the previous week. Said, “Mom it made me feel sad that he missed me but I also realize how much he looks forward to me spending time with him. He’s my little buddy and I look forward to spending time with him too.”

So after these wonderful Elementary and Middle School experiences, two years ago we were, at a crossroads regarding high school education. Let me take you back five years ago in a room like this at a Post Oak Parent’s Association dinner. I found myself engaged in a conversation with another parent, a Middle School teacher, and John Long, discussing how sad he would be to have to leave after Middle School experiences, two years ago. He wasn’t leaving and according to him, He wasn’t leaving and according to him, he decided on the POHS was the best fit for him. So why was there the desire to look elsewhere? Why was there a feeling that there was a school out there that would be better? I thought that maybe he would enjoy the idea of a larger environment. And so another journey began; the high school application process, a learning experience for all of us. After submitting three applications and received acceptance letters to two, he decided on his own that the POHS was the best fit for him. After submitting three applications and received acceptance letters to two, he decided on his own that the POHS was the best fit for him.

He wasn’t leaving and according to him, there were four factors that helped make this decision. Upon visiting and spending time at the high school, he felt a sense of community, an environment that is preparing him for what is the post Oak High School? Well, three years ago, as most of you are aware, the High School arrived. Middle School students and parents alike are now faced with a decision to apply out, or to stay. The Post Oak High School is now a viable option so why was there the desire to look elsewhere? Why was there a feeling that there was a school out there that would be better? I thought that maybe he would enjoy the idea of a larger environment. And so another journey began; the high school application process, a learning experience for all of us. After submitting three applications and received acceptance letters to two, he decided on his own that the POHS was the best fit for him.

He wasn’t leaving and according to him, there were four factors that helped make this decision. Upon visiting and spending time at the high school, he felt a sense of community, an environment that is preparing him for life in the real world upon graduation. Continuous collaboration with his teachers regarding his work as well as constructive feedback. Roundtable discussions with his peers on topics that are relevant to their work and presentations of new ideas based on their respective interests. A teenager who after one semester answered the question posed by me of what are the characteristics of a POHS student? ‘A student who is proactive, able to self direct and willing to be challenged.’ Listening to reminded us at his student led conference that he would like the opportunity to intern in the Medical Center resulted in support and preparation from his teachers for his interview with a cardiothoracic surgeon and secured himself a one year internship beginning next year at Memorial Herman’s Heart and Vascular Institute. It will be part of his science curriculum. And maybe the most important of all, watching the larger environment expanded right before his eyes and his own realization that he does have a busy social calendar with his peers enjoying each other outside of the classroom.

A sense of community, an environment where you can express yourself and be heard, real world experiences. Oh, and still likes Mr. Moudry, and thanks he’s a nice guy.

As you can see, our children and are both benefiting from the environment created by The Post Oak School and Cliff and I as parents our proud and thankful to be a part of this UNIQUE and wonderful community.

John Long’s remarks will appear in the next issue of The Post on Friday, October 17.
What is the Annual Fund? 
The Post Oak Fund is the name of our Annual Fund. Every year we ask to our trustees, parents, alumni, past parents, grandparents, foundations, and corporations for this essential tax-deductible support. The collected funds are then spent on a discretionary basis to improve and stabilize our school’s environment. It also allows us to respond quickly to the needs of the school not covered in our annual operating expenses. For example: upgraded classroom materials, computer equipment, or an all school intercom system.

What is the difference between the Post Oak’s Big Work Capital Campaign and the Annual Fund? Simply stated, Annual Fund gifts support stability, while Capital Campaign gifts support growth.

Post Oak’s Big Work Capital Campaign is focused on expanding and renovating our Bissonnet and Autrey campuses. Unlike many private schools that engage in on-going capital campaigns, Post Oak’s last major capital campaign happened in 2000. The Post Oak Fund is an annual request to support the school’s financial strength, stability and flexibility: providing a rainy day umbrella to protect against unexpected expenses or episodic revenue shortfalls; and to cover a variety of discretionary expenses such as additional financial aid, upgraded technology, professional development, and small renovation projects. It also allows the school to take advantage of strategic opportunities when they arise.

Why does the school expect of us? The school expects parents, as members of a non-profit organization, to pay tuition on time and to get involved. That involvement includes participation in the Annual Fund, to the extent that they are financially able. It also includes volunteering or taking part in special events sponsored by the school and supporting periodic capital campaigns.

Why do we ask for contributions in addition to what we already pay for tuition? Annual Funds are common practice among independent schools. From pre-schools to colleges, independent schools all use annual funds to help compensate for expenses not covered by tuition. In fact, over 90% of these schools operate on a tuition gap basis where the tuition is 10-25% less than total expenses. They depend entirely upon their annual funds to cover the gap for budgeted expenses. The Post Oak School is different. Guided by Independent School Management (ISM) for the past twenty years, our administration takes a very conservative approach to ensure that our critical operating expenses (salaries, utilities, benefits, maintenance, etc.) are all covered by tuition. The Annual Fund is used for continuous improvement in facilities, professional development, technology enhancements, and classroom materials. It also ensures our long term stability by building up our cash reserves needed to cover unexpected expenses. All these contributions are needed to provide our children with the best environment possible.

How much should I give? Post Oak plays a significant role in the lives of our families. We encourage you to give an amount that is meaningful for your family. We receive gifts ranging between $100-$15,000, with the average gift being approximately $1,000. The amount of your gift is known only by the school and is not shared with class captains.

Can I choose where the school spends my donations? Yes. The Post Oak Fund allows you to direct your gift in the following categories:

- Financial Aid
- Financial Sustainability (e.g. endowment)
- Capital Expenditures (e.g. building repairs)
- Professional Development (e.g. sabbatical awards, teacher training, professional conferences)
- Wherever the school needs it most

School’s funds are available to cover school costs and that means tuition can remain affordable.

My company offers a matching gifts program; would the school be interested in this program? Absolutely. Matching gifts are an easy way to double, or in some cases triple, the amount of your gift. Please submit the matching gift form from your company to the Development Office.

What exactly is the “Endowment?” About 10 years ago, several trustees worked to create the endowment and provided the seed money. Since that time, through additional gifts and foundation grants, it has grown to over $1.5 million. Unlike Post Oak Fund gifts which are spent on annual expenses, endowment gifts are restricted and the corpus remains untouched. The Board determines when endowment interest can be spent, in accordance with the Endowment Policy. As the endowment grows, more endowment money will be available to cover school costs and that means tuition can remain affordable.

Our sincere thanks to Post Oak Fund Chairs Carol & John Howenstine and Class Captains for their efforts.

Our 2014–2015 Post Oak Fund
Together We Can!

Answers to Commonly Asked Questions

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Why doesn’t the school simply charge more tuition?
If tuition were increased many families could not afford to send their children to our school. This could mean a drop in enrollment resulting in steeper tuition increases and discretionary spending cuts which would ultimately affect your child’s education. Additionally, charitable contributions would be even more difficult to obtain.

Why do we ask for 100% participation from parents, members of the board, teachers and all other employees? Post Oak also receives donations from foundations and corporations. These institutions will only consider support after they’ve seen that the people who are directly receiving the benefit from the institution have shown their commitment. 100% participation shows unquestionable support from our community.

Is it important to support all school fund raisers? Yes! Unlike so many other schools that have a multitude of fund raisers nagging you throughout the year, we have streamlined our school-wide fund raising to three efforts: Annual Fund, Annual Book Fair, and Biennial Gala. This year we are also asking for support of the Big Work Capital Campaign.

The goal is big – do small gifts really make a difference? Yes they do. All gifts are important and appreciated. If you are considering a small one time donation, please consider setting up an automatic monthly charge to your credit card as an alternative. If every family who gave $100 in the past would consider donating $25 on a monthly basis to the Post Oak Fund it would have a significant and positive impact on the campaign.

How do I need to give to be part of the Leadership Circle?
Those members are included in an Honor Roll. Donations of $3,000 or greater are recognized at the Leadership Circle level. Those members are included in an annual spring reception hosted by Post Oak Fund Chairs and parents Carol and John Howenstine.

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Memories of Sky Ranch from Mr. Pinto’s 4th graders

At Sky Ranch we did lots of fun activities while still learning. Some of my favorite activities were horseback riding, fishing, and the zip line. Everyone had a BLAST. Every day we all had different activities. Luckily, we didn’t get a single drop of rain. Sky Ranch was a wonderful experience for all of Upper Elementary and was the best field trip EVER!!!

Sky Ranch was a great place to be. Some of the activities were fishing and zip lining, which was very fast but it was fun. We also made rockets, went swimming, and went down water slides. We visited the wildlife center to see animals like a boa constrictor, and we saw a chinchilla. Another activity was ranch life, where we got to learn about ranch life in 1868 and we got to ride horses on a trail. On the trail we saw abandoned wagons and grave stones. My horse’s name was Ace and he was very easy to ride. One day we went on a time trail which was a trail leading back in time. On the trail we saw LaSalle and the Indians he traded with. At the end, we all learned our American Indian names. My name was Skipping Rock. My favorite activities were zip lining and Ranch Life!

Running Club – WOW!!!

A couple of weeks ago in running club it was raining and we weren’t able to go to the track at Episcopal High School to do our morning run. Thankfuly we have a great gym that we are able to use on bad weather days. I was thinking that running inside would be difficult for our students as it is at times when we have to stay inside. But this day was different from the start; the students came in ready to go. Our Middle School runners set the pace, as they are training for cross country, and run they did. Coach Treviño joined us and even added some great music to enjoy while we started moving. With Middle School doing their best and the music adding to our morning get-together, the younger students topped it off with their best effort of the year. I was very impressed and very happy that the rainy day did not dampen any of our spirits!

Running Club! A great place to be!
— Coach Tucker
As part of the Science curriculum, Tekoa Charter on Field 3 at 353 Crenshaw Rd, Houston, 77034.

Dr. Ott’s students are acting as cub reporters for the Houston Chronicle. The students are divided into groups, each tasked with writing a comprehensive article about the natural forces related to Earth (this week was about heat). The students edit each other’s articles to eventually prepare them for submission to the “editor in chief.”

DR. OTT’S “CUB REPORTERS”

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El concierto con Andrés Orozco Estrada

ESPAÑOL: Andrés Orozco Estrada es el nuevo Director de la sinfonía de Houston. El viernes 12 de septiembre, la Sinfónica de Houston realizó un evento abierto al público en el Teatro Miller Outdoor. Los alumnos de Post Oak High School tenían boletos para el evento que la señora Berggren les dio, nuestra especialista en música. Cuando llegamos, era evidente que la Sinfónica había planeado el debut de Andrés en profundidad, hubo una banda tocando antes del evento y hubo clases informales de baile de América del Sur, junto con numerosas cosas gratis. La participación fue increíble, teniendo mucha publicidad por el evento, no era de extrañar. ABC 13 fue la estación oficial de noticias para el evento, y grabo en vivo para que la gente en casa pudiera ver. El acto comenzó con la sinfonica tocando una pieza corta colombiana, que fue seguida por una pieza de México y luego de los Estados Unidos. Después tocaron una pieza Colombia por más tiempo, seguido por la famosa pianista venezolana Gabriela Montero, fue sensacional, ella tocó un solo improvisado durante más o menos 5 minutos, fue impresionante. En general, el concierto fue increíble, toda la orquesta tocó magníficamente y Andrés fue extraordinario. Cuando el concierto terminó un hermoso espectáculo de fuegos artificiales empezó. La noche fue un éxito absoluto.

ENGLISH: Andrés Orozco Estrada is the new head maestro of the Houston symphony. On Friday, September 12, the Houston Symphony held an event open to the public at Miller Outdoor Theater. The High School’s Spanish class was gifted tickets to the event by Ms. Berggren, our music specialist. Upon arriving it was evident that the Symphony had planned the debut of Andrés in depth. There was a live band playing before the event began and there were informal South American dance lessons, along with numerous giveaways. The turnout was incredible, considering the publicity of the event it was not surprising. ABC 13 was the official news station for the event, and it was recorded live for people at home to watch. The event began with the symphony playing a short Colombian piece, which was followed by a Mexican and then an American piece. Then a longer Colombian piece was followed by the world-renowned Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Montero, who was sensational. She then played a solo improvising for about 5 minutes—talk about impressive. Overall the performance was amazing. All of the orchestra played wonderfully and Andrés was awesome. The concert was followed by a lovely firework show. The night was an absolute hit.

Flag Football this Saturday, 10/4!

Please join our POHS athletes and their new coach Cliff McBride for the game at 10:00 a.m. as they play Telka Charter on Field 3 at 353 Crenshaw Rd, Houston, 77034.
FIELD DAY
FUN DAY!

THE POST OAK SCHOOL | 2014

Join us for this FREE family fun event!
Saturday, October 18 on the Post Oak back field.

It’s that time of year again to be outdoors in the incredible fall weather and to celebrate Post Oak’s Field Day. If you have ever attended one of our field days, you already know about all of the fun games, activities and creative mystery boxes. This year, in particular, with our theme of “Field Day, Fun Day,” we have added some new, exciting games that the entire family can enjoy, like the bungee trampoline and the velcro wall. Whether your child is in the Young Children’s Community or High School, there will be something for everyone.

Bring your friends, family and appetite, because we will also have two delicious food trucks, as well as a snowball truck that offers unique, handmade syrups crafted from real fruits and herbs. We can’t wait to see you at what will surely be one of our best Field Days yet!

~Stacey Martin & Valerie Sonsino, Field Day Chairs

FOOD TRUCKS! It wouldn’t be a true Field Day without a picnic on the playground. Bare Bowls and Koagie Hots food trucks will be on the scene.

SNOWBALL TRUCK! Like no other snowball you’ve ever had! Yeti Sunshine’s delicious snowballs are made of super-soft, finely shaved ice with unique, handmade syrups – crafted from real fruits and herbs.

BUNGEES TRAMPOLINE! Defy gravity with the amazing Bungee Trampoline! Strapped into the bungee harness, you’ll be jumping higher than ever before. Start with getting serious air, and then try your hand at some flips, twists and turns to add to the excitement. An adventure all its own!

INCREDIBLE INFLATABLES! The Titanic Slide, Rockwall and Moonwalk are all sure to be great hits!

VELCRO WALL! Get your best bounce and see how high you can stick yourself to the wall!

CLASSIC GAMES! Because classic IS cool! Come and compete in three-legged races, sack races, and much more! Listen at the event for when your age group is called.

MYSTERY BOX RAFFLE • PARTY DJ
FACE PAINTING • ARTS & CRAFTS
PAPARAZZI BOOTH • MUSICAL DOTS
BALLOON ARTISTS • INSTRUMENT PETTING ZOO!

FIELD DAY FUN DAY!
Mystery Box Themes

Desiree Brooks: Bugs and Butterflies
Sarah Moudry: City Child/Country Child
Phoebe Yeager: Family Game Night
Tamara Basham: Date Night
Danielle Dayley: World Explorer
Emily Hansen: A Day at the Zoo
Julie Pargachusetts: Famous Artists
Tamara Townsend: Let’s Build a Fun Future
Miriam Winton: Legos

Only Klick: Get Me Out of the House
Beth Smith: Lego Mania
Simean Soud: Dance Time
Anita Taj: Kids Kitchen
Debbie Nickerson: Gift Cards
Errol Pinto: Gift Cards
Maya Pinto: Soft and Plushy
Middle School: Three branches of government
High School: Gift Cards

INCREASINGLY HOT SUMMER

YUM!
Join us for a lively discussion about adolescence!

Coffee with the Middle School and High School Directors
October 8, 9:00 a.m.—Bissonnet Campus

Middle School Director Jami Sweeney and High School Director James Moudry will be discussing just what it means to be an adolescent in this stage of their educational lives. All parents welcome regardless of the age of your child(ren).

Coffee with the Elementary Director
September 24, 9:00 a.m. in the Common Room

Join Elementary Director Jeff Schneider for a discussion of topics related to the Elementary experience at Post Oak. All parents welcome regardless of the age of your child(ren).

Come Swim with the F.I.S.H.!
October 17, 9:00 a.m. in the Common Room.

Practical Life: The Foundation of the Prepared Environment

Join Families Integrating School and Home (F.I.S.H.) at their inaugural 2014-15 school year meeting. Whether you’re a newbie or a veteran, all Post Oak parents are welcome to come and share their experiences with integrating Montessori in the home.

Grandparents’ & Friends’ Days

If you would like your child’s grandparents or other relatives and friends to be invited to this year’s Grandparents’ Days (November 24 & 25), please visit www.postoakschool.org and submit their e-mail address via the link on the left menu of the home page. Please include anyone you think would like to observe and/or interact with your children in their Montessori environment. Invitations will be mailed in mid-October, and after that will be e-mailed.
SCENES from The Post Oak School

1. Upper Elementary students prepare a fajita lunch for their classmates.
2. Students paint in the style of Gustav Klimt in Lower Elementary art class.
3. Middle School students discuss how to approach their work in Microeconomy.
4. Using utensils requires great concentration in Young Children’s Community (YCC).
5. Three Lower Elementary students, completely absorbed in the triangle detective game.
6. High fives follow an impromptu multi-level soccer game after the all-school photo.
7. Primary students work together on reading definition cards.
9. Primary parents work side by side with their children on class projects for this year’s Gala.
10. A one-on-one math lesson at the High School.
11. YCC children play with origami paper boats on a rainy day.
CALENDAR

OCTOBER 5–11

Tue 10/7
High School Admission Open House
7:00 p.m.

Wed 10/8
Coffee w/ the Middle School and High School Directors
9:00 a.m. (Bissonnet Campus)

Fri 10/10
CONFERENCE DAY
Classes not in session; only students with expanded contracts attend

OCTOBER 12–18

Mon 10/13
SCHOOL CLOSED
Columbus Day
Teacher In-Service

Tue 10/14
Prospective Parent Classes begin (see schedule online)

Wed 10/15
PSAT/NMSQT for High School students
Coffee w/ the Elementary Director
9:00 a.m.

Fri 10/17
F.I.S.H. Meeting
9:00 a.m.

Sat 10/18
FIELD DAY
FUN DAY!
10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Check out our calendar online at www.postoakschool.org

NOTICE BOARD

REMINDER!
INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PICTURES
MON., OCT. 20 TO THURS., OCT. 23

Conference Registration

The online parent/teacher conference scheduling is now open. Conference days are October 10, 24 (YCC is in session on the 24th), and November 7. To sign up for a conference go to www.postoakschool.org ▶ For Parents ▶ Schedule/View a Parent-Teacher Conference and have your login information ready. If you are having problems, please contact technology director Mirna Andrade-Salgado, at technology@postoakschool.org or 281-822-8063.

Bearkat SPIRIT DAYS
SPORT YOUR POST OAK GEAR
Every Friday!

CROSS COUNTRY
OCTOBER 11 • 10:30 AM
ST. JOHN’S RAMBLE AT TC JESTER PARK
OCTOBER 14 • 4:00 PM
DOLPHIN DASH AT TC JESTER PARK

SOCCER
OCTOBER 8 • 4:15
FELD PARK VS ST. STEPHEN’S
OCTOBER 22 • 4:15
FELD PARK VS ST. STEPHEN’S
(MORE GAMES TBA)

MIDDLE SCHOOL MICROECONOMY
WILL BE SELLING WATER AT THE UPCOMING SOCCER GAMES AT FELD PARK. COME THIRSTY!

ABOUT THE POST

The Post appears every other Friday of the regular school year.

You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or a 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)
4600 Bissonnet, Bellaire, Texas 77401 • Telephone: 713-661-6688 • Fax: 713-661-4959 • www.postoakschool.org