Progress!

BIG WORK HAS REACHED
51% PARENT PARTICIPATION

ANSWER THE CALL AND
HELP US REACH 100%
Phone-a-thon happens
Monday, May 11
BIG WORK NEEDS YOU

STRONG PARENT PARTICIPATION

FUNDS RAISED TO DATE

GOAL $8,000,000

$7,000,000

$6,000,000

$5,000,000

$4,000,000

$3,000,000

$2,000,000

$1,000,000

$5,950,000

CURRENT PARENT PARTICIPATION

GOAL 100%

51%

PLEASE HELP US REACH 100%

IT’S EASY TO CONTRIBUTE

Look for the Big Work link in the sidebar of our homepage

Send an email to development@postoakschool.org

Thank you to the TRIBBLE FAMILY for their generous matching gift for High School support of Big Work.

60% OF OUR HIGH SCHOOL FAMILIES HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO BIG WORK.
Thank You Big Work Contributors to Date!
We have 51% parent participation to date—please help us reach 100%

**PARENTS & FRIENDS**

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Shonali and Rakesh Agrawal
Kay Allen
Nancy and John Almon
Marcela Beltran-Alvarez and Gus Alvarez
Anonymous (3)
Frank Apollo
Terri and Chris Armstrong
Elenir and Rony Avritscher
Jessica and Darrell Barger
Mario Beltran
Louise and Henry Bergeron
Jeannine and David Bergt
Mary Birk
Vivian and Henry Blum
Beverly Bontrager
Greg Borski and Phillip Bowden
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Harold Malveaux
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continued on next page
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Our sincere thanks to all our contributors. In case of errors or omissions in the above list, please accept our apologies and contact Christina Kopanidis-Cantu, Development Director.
It is time to announce new Post Oak Parent Association (POPA) Leadership. Our selection process has gone back to bringing in two new chairs at the same time rather than in alternating years.

FIRST, WITH THANKS.
Suzan Samuels has served as POPA Co-Chair for the past two years. She has generated strong volunteerism, coordinated friendly and productive coffee workdays, added levelheaded clarity to any and all POPA discussions, and given us her great humor and warmth. She is a terrific person to know and an excellent person to have on your team. Paula Mey has served as POPA Co-Chair for one year. Paula brings amazing talents and energy to any job she signs up for. Her analytical and strategic perspectives have had a tremendous impact on a number of Post Oak’s projects, most recently the Big Work Capital Campaign and The Post Oak Fund. Paula’s willingness to get both hands on the horns of a project and wrangle it to the ground is unmatched by any other person I know. It has been a true pleasure working with both Paula and Suzan and I thank them for their commitment to Post Oak and for their exceptional POPA Leadership!

SECOND, WELCOME!
Our 2015–2017 POPA Chairs are Stacey Martin and Alison Wong. Stacey has been with Post Oak since 2006 and currently has two daughters in Lower Elementary. She co-chaired Field Day last year, has been a room parent, a hardworking volunteer on all recent Galas, and has helped out in variety of ways around the school. Alison, a former Post Oak student, is a mother of two Primary-aged children and has been part of our parent community since 2011. She co-chaired the POPA Dinner this year and has been a hard-working volunteer on the capital campaign. Both Stacey and Alison bring the right skills, friendly attitudes, and a strong commitment to this leadership position. If you don’t already, get to know them!

Please extend your thanks to Paula and Suzan and congratulations to Stacey and Alison.

—Christina Kopanidis-Cantu, Development Director

Thank You
Ice Cream Social
FRIDAY, MAY 15
3:30–4:30 P.M. IN THE PLAYGROUND GARDEN

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS! Let us say thank you for all the volunteer efforts big and small that happened throughout this year. Post Oak parents, grandparents, and friends are the best volunteers around!
Many Thanks to All Our
Event Chairs and Annual Fund Class Captains!

**EVENT CHAIRS**
- **POPA CHAIRS**
  - Paula Mey & Suzan Samuels
- **POPA DINNER**
  - Jennifer Chavis & Alison Wong

**FIELD DAY CHAIRS**
- Stacey Martin & Valerie Sonsino

**BOOK FAIR CHAIRS**
- Huma Manal & Zeenath Selvakumar

**POST OAK FUND CHAIRS**
- Carol and John Howenstine

**GALA CHAIRS**
- Laura Citardi & Whitney Walsh

**GALA UNDERWRITING CHAIRS**
- Jessica Gregg & Farrell Saunders

**GALA AUCTION CHAIRS**
- Jenny Mohr & Stelli Parsapour

**GALA AUCTION DISPLAY CHAIRS**
- Amy Kirchner, Jamie Lee, & Aaron Parazette

**GALA DECORATIONS CHAIR**
- Ariana Smetana

**GALA FUN COMMITTEE CHAIRS**
- Jenny Marshall & Erin Stus

**GALA DONE IN A DAY CHAIR**
- Valerie Sonsino

**GALA CLASS PROJECTS CHAIRS**
- Jane Greenberg & Kim Yates

**GALA AUCTION DATA**
- Kelly Hill

**GALA MYSTERY BOXES**
- Julie Styles

**ANNUAL FUND CLASS CAPTAINS**

**TAMARA BASHAM**
- Jackie Phillpott

**DEIDRE BROOKS**
- Steve Douglas and Lisa Heyden

**DANIELLE DALSEY**
- Todd Parsapour

**EMILY HANSEN**
- Gina Fertitta

**ORLY KLUK**
- Julie Styles

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**
- Mario and Janet Kapusta

**SARAH MOUDRY**
- Samantha Wykoff

**DEBBIE NICKERSON**
- Stephan Kinsella

**JULIE PARRAGUIRRE**
- Mayuri Patel

**ERROL PINTO**
- Abbe Forman

**MAYA PINTO**
- Suzan Samuels

**BETH SMITH**
- Shelley Quillin

**SIMRAN SOOD**
- Kim Yates

**ANITA TAJ MAHMOOD**
- Diana Ayala

**TAMARA TOWNSEND**
- Carmen Dikmen

**MIRIAM WINTON**
- Evelyn Su-McCain

**PHOEBE YEAGER**
- Catherine Than

**9TH GRADE**
- Holly and Greg Han

**10TH GRADE**
- Stan Watowich

**11TH GRADE**
- Regina Mellinger
Below is a letter from Tammy Jones to Mirani Smith, Early Childhood Director.

Garrett will graduate with the IB in June and his predicted grades are quite high. He received an offer from all five schools to which he applied (conditional upon his final IB scores), but it looks like his first choice is the University of Edinburgh in Scotland where he will pursue a Humanities degree with a focus in History. He plays basketball and rugby, where he was the captain of both teams for two years as well as MVP for, well, I think every year he played. He spent one spring break volunteering in a children’s hospital in Rabat where he was the designated translator (French) for our group! And he spent a week building houses in Romania for Habitat for Humanity in the dead of winter last year. He speaks French and German really well. He has handled the pressure of the IB program so well. He spends time with his friends and his family, is adamant about healthy eating habits (thank you Post Oak!) and religious about exercise.

I looked up the definition of Montessori education and came across this: “The Montessori method of teaching aims for the fullest possible development of the whole child, ultimately preparing him for life’s many rich experiences.” That has certainly proved to be the case with Garrett. First, the move to Geneva, which was so hard on him. He cried for weeks every night and David and I wondered if we had made a huge mistake. Even after several months, we weren’t at all certain that he could manage the mandatory class trip and his teacher reserved a room for me to be nearby just in case. She also broke the “no phone calls” rules to allow him to call me after he arrived. He was still much the little guy who would stand in your classroom doorway every morning waiting on you to come and guide him in. But, he survived the trip and the move. The transition to Germany was easier and he has just absolutely thrived here—class trips every year, sporting events in other countries several times a year, traveling to Abu Dhabi as a sophomore to deliver a speech on Afghanistan girls and the drug trade, leading our family’s volunteer effort in a children’s hospital in Rabat…. He has been fortunate to already have had many rich life experiences and I credit Post Oak for preparing him—this shy, anxious, insecure, wound way too tight child—to embrace those experiences as they come. I often remember a moment I’m sure John Long has forgotten, when I had to come to school to tell Garrett about a change of plans and he didn’t handle change well, to say the least. I don’t remember the specifics, but I remember John squatting down on Garrett’s level and saying in his ever so calm Montessori voice something to the effect of: Garrett, sometimes things just don’t go as planned and it is OK not to like it when that happens, but then you have to move on and accept that it has happened. I’m sure John was more eloquent, but that moment still resonates with me.

Oh, Mirani, you would be so proud. He has really blossomed into a good guy. So confident. And so kind. He is the first to take up for the underdog. To talk to and include those not part of the popular crowd. To immediately stop anything that smacks of picking on the little guy on his sports teams. Just does not happen on his watch. And he is a real leader not just on his basketball and rugby teams, but among his peers at school, too. So many of these traits, I trace directly back to the Montessori classroom where no one was allowed to be teased as weird or to be left out. Where differences were applauded and explored. Those values resonate especially in an international school.

I think attending Post Oak instilled in Garrett a love, literally, a love of learning. A sincere intellectual curiosity. I have continued on page 9
What Colleges Say about the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Program

The Post Oak School is authorized as an IB World School to offer the IB Diploma Program for grades 11 and 12. IB Schools share a common philosophy—a commitment to high quality, challenging, international education that The Post Oak School believes is important for our students.

Assembled by Amanda Phelps-Smith, Post Oak High School College Counselor

Bath University "The IB diploma program is such good preparation for college. We know it's the most rigorous program you can take." —Andy Hovman, Head of International Office

Brown University "I don't think there is anyone who does not respect the I.B." —Pamela Ott, Admissions Officer

Bucknell University "Among highly selective college deans there is general agreement, save some nuance, that IB coursework bestows on an applicant a highly motivated, academically ambitious halo." —William Conley, Vice president for Enrollment Management

University of California "...In short, what is in the program of IB, the emphasis on the linkages between the disciplines being studied ... are excellent indicators to us that the student has done the work that we require ... the student will bring a lot to the institution. IB students exhibit evidence of determination, tenacity, motivation, and all these qualities are very valued by all of us as we do our selection for admission." —Admissions Representative

Claremont McKenna College "For many years, we have considered the full IB Diploma to be the "gold standard." It just doesn't get any tougher. Unlike an AP program, in which students who can pick and choose which AP courses to take, sometimes based on playing to their strengths and avoiding their weaknesses, the full IB diploma is consistent, coherent, rigorous, and takes two full years to complete. It takes a tremendous amount of intellectual effort and academic commitment." —Richard Vos, Vice President/Dean of Admission

College of William and Mary "The rigor of the IB Diploma requirement meets our recommendation for the strongest high school preparation possible...in sum, the IB diploma candidate who has met the challenge successfully receives strong consideration from the William and Mary admission committee." —Allison Jesse, Former Associate Director of Undergraduate Admission

Connecticut College "Connecticut College highly values the IB program as it prepares students for the liberal arts in ways that few secondary school curriculums can. The TOK class's interdisciplinary approach is a prime example of the kind of work students will be expected to do on most college campuses today. In addition, colleges and American universities highly value community service, another important component of the IB curriculum. Students who have graduated from schools with the IB curriculum are extremely well prepared when they arrive on our campus." —Martha Merrill, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid

Duke University "One of the advantages of an IB curriculum is its structure and quality. It is a coordinated program, well established, well known and well respected. We know the quality of IB courses, and we think IB curriculum is terrific." —Christoph Guttentag, Director of Undergraduate Admission

Harvard University "The IB is well known to us for excellent preparations. Success in an IB program correlates well with success at Harvard. We are always pleased to see the credentials of the IB Diploma Program in the transcript." —Marilyn McGrath Lewis, Director of Undergraduate Admission

Massachusetts Institute of Technology "Send us prepared students a la IB ... it is the best high school prep curriculum an American school can offer." —Director of Admissions

University of Michigan "A transcript that reveals a student's enrollment in
POHS Student in CAMH Exhibition

The 8% by [Anonymous]

Installation/Sculpture, 6’ x 2’ x 2’3”, made in 2015

The 8%: Why do we marginalize and push people to the boundaries of society so far that they feel as though their only option is death? This piece poses that very question. Eight percent of all teenagers between the ages of 15 and 19 attempt suicide. As if floating in mid-air, 300 roses, a symbol of love, have been suspended by thin, invisible wire. The majority of these roses are fake, silk roses, which represent how one must be artificial at times to survive in this world. However 24, or 8% of all the roses, are real roses, which will wilt and die over time. Similar to these 24 roses are the 8% of teenagers that attempt suicide, slowly dying as days pass, only to finally fall from grace onto the cold, unforgiving floor.

Alumni Spotlight

continuing from page 7

conversations with him now about history and politics and philosophy and am astounded at the depth of his reasoning—especially for a jock :) And with this comes the desire to take the harder path, choose the challenging subjects, try for the more difficult problems... And he has not always “succeeded.” But, because success in Montessori school is more about effort and process, I think he sees lack of success a bit differently. For example, Math is really hard for him but he declined to take the easier IB math course and, even though it will most likely be his lowest score, we are so proud of him for “gutting” it out, putting his head down and doing his best, knowing that the result will not be a top mark, but happy with his effort and with what he has learned. I think one of the best things Post Oak did for him was to prepare him to “fail” and to get back up because getting up, trying again, going a different route, learning from the experience are valued so much more than the result (like I need to tell you about Montessori!)

Thank you for indulging my stream of consciousness. I am quite nostalgic these days and make no pretense of objectivity.

I hope you are well and happy. Please give our very best regards to all our old friends at Post Oak.
There's no shortage of fear mongering about technology and our young people. A quick search on Google News for “Instagram teen” reveals headlines such as “Akron teen robbed... by man he met on Instagram” and “Teen shot at party advertised on Instagram.” The message here is clear: “The sky is falling! Snapchat/Facebook/Instagram are to blame!”

Increasingly, our lives as adults are mediated by technology and it’s hard to imagine it being any different for our children. So, how can we get beyond the headlines and understand, as parents, the role of technology in our children’s lives?

In “It’s Complicated,” scholar Danah Boyd presents the findings of 166 interviews conducted with teens from 2007 to 2010. Boyd goes to high school football games and into schools and homes and to better understand teenagers and technology today. Her conclusion: teenagers today are motivated by the same things they were motivated by in previous generations—the desire to hang out and connect with their friends and to find their place in society. Instead of connecting at the mall, teenagers connect on Instagram. Instead of spending hours talking on the phone, teenagers text and Snapchat. While academic, I find Boyd’s writings on online privacy, bullying and safety accessible and highly credible, both thanks to her conversations with teenagers.

And in “A Teenager’s View on Social Media,” Andrew Watts shares the teen perspective on different social media sites including:

- **Snapchat** (“where we can really be ourselves while being attached to our social identity”)
- **Facebook** (like “an awkward family dinner party we can’t really leave”)
- **Instagram** (“by far the most used social media outlet for my age group”)

This piece is great for adults to gain an understanding of the role of each of these different social media services.

How to read: Download a free PDF copy of “It’s Complicated” here: [http://www.danah.org/books/ItsComplicated.pdf](http://www.danah.org/books/ItsComplicated.pdf). Also, Danah Boyd has some great interviews on YouTube, here’s one: [http://youtu.be/9QKeq5WyGkA](http://youtu.be/9QKeq5WyGkA). For Andrew’s piece, just google the title. You can also find this article and these links on my blog: [http://rake.sh/](http://rake.sh/).
by Coach Tucker

On Wednesday April 29, student athletes, administration, faculty and families gathered together in the gym to celebrate our sports year. Beck’s Prime catered the affair with burgers, chicken sandwiches and hotdogs. By the look of it I believe we had at least 130 in attendance.

After eating, the program started with Coach Tucker welcoming the guests along with the Bearkats and our younger Intramural athletes. Coach Cliff McBride was introduced as our speaker. Cliff has been working with Post Oak High School students this year, who were also in attendance. Cliff gave a brief history of his athletic life and the things that motivated him as an athlete and now as a coach. He spoke of never giving up and always doing your best no matter the outcome.

After Cliff spoke it was time to present medals to all of our student athletes as they came up front and Coach Trevino placed them around their neck. The medal had on it the sports we competed in this year, cross country, basketball, volleyball and soccer. The big moment for all came with the presentation of the annual Bearkat Heart Award. This year brought some positive change in our program as we were able to field teams for both girls and boys for the first time. With that being established we decided to give out two Heart Awards, one for the girls and one for the boys. The girl’s winner was [female name] and the boy’s winner was [male name], two well deserving student athletes! 
International Baccalaureate courses serves notice to the admissions officer that the applicant is someone who accepts rather than avoids educational challenges. Further, a successful IB student will enroll at Michigan with some advantages over students who have taken less intensive programs...” — Cliff Sjogren, former Director of Admissions

Princeton University “The IB is a first rate program, one we are familiar with, and it prepares students well for a university like ours.” — Director of Undergraduate Admissions

Sarah Lawrence College “In our minds, there is no more challenging curriculum than the IB curriculum. Not only does it prepare students for a demanding college program, but the IB curriculum also inculcates in students a love of learning and an understanding of the truly interdisciplinary nature of education. Instead of working on each subject in a vacuum, IB students are shown how each of their classes connects both with the other classes and with the world around them. At Sarah Lawrence College, we are very cautious about granting advanced standing credit for any course work that is done before a student enters college. In the case of students who are completing the full IB diploma, however, we are willing to grant students an entire year’s worth of credit due to the intensely rigorous nature of the program. Unlike the AP curriculum, which is often done piecemeal, students enrolling in the full IB diploma are receiving a comprehensive and challenging education, which is unlike any other. I only wish that my stepson had the opportunity to be part of this curriculum.” — Thyra L. Briggs, Dean of Enrollment

Vanderbilt University “I have always been a supporter of the International Baccalaureate. It is a thoughtful and genuinely intellectual curriculum with an unusually high degree of integrity and connectedness. There is no other curriculum anywhere that does a superior job of both educating students and inspiring a true and broad-based love of learning.” — William Shain, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions

Virginia Tech “... IB students who attended Virginia Tech as freshmen significantly outperformed all other freshmen, including students who had taken Advanced Placement courses.” — Dr. Eugene Carson

RESOURCES:
1. http://www.dwight.edu/collegeguidance/ibtestamonials
2. AASA: The School Superintendents Association
4. CJ Carnacchio, The Oxford Leader
Spanish Market Day Brings Aid

by Maya Pinto, Upper Elementary Teacher

On Tuesday, April 28, 2015, the common area was abuzz with treats and delicacies, gifts to honor all the senses! Twelve stalls, each with their own wares, offered temptations for the pleasure of the students of Lower and Upper Elementary and the Middle School.

There was a wide variety of choices: art and books, toys and crafts, jewelry, a cafeteria, a bakery and a cake shop, pizza, ice cream and cold flavored milk, a florist, cookies, a chocolate shop and even a flea market stall, El Elefante Blanco. Each attracted eager, enthusiastic customers! You could find “deals” everywhere! But the condition was, you had to converse with the shopkeepers in Spanish!

This was the annual Spanish Market Day, a fundraiser charity, organized and conducted by the senior students of UE-1. Phrases such as, “¿Cuánto cuesta?” or, “Por favor yo quiero” as also, “Buenos días” and a polite “Muchas gracias” were heard floating in the air. Every so often someone would lapse into English, and a helpless giggle would follow unless the Policía was alerted—Andy Walsh in his Coast Guard uniform would hand the English speaker a fine card which would cost a dollar to be excused!

Irma Alarcon, our untiring Spanish teacher sped around the market, cheerfully helping, encouraging and inquiring, “¿Qué necesita?” to guide students if they were bewildered.

All done in a day, though tiring, our venture was incredibly successful! The students enjoyed themselves immensely and donated $2534 to the victims of the massive earthquake in Nepal. We are grateful to all the parents, faculty and to the administration for supporting us in the creation of this wonderful memory for all. Congratulations and Felicitaces! ☞

Gentle reminder…

Gala & Annual Fund pledges due

All Gala and Annual Fund pledges are due by Friday, May 29. Thank you!

Please contact Christina Cantu in the Development Office if you have any questions.
1–2. Activities such as preparing food and handling blocks help develop fine motor skills in the Young Children’s Community.

3. A YCC class gathers together for snack.

4–6. Activities in Primary further the building of fine motor skills as well as a sense of community and responsibility.

7. Sweeping the sidewalk in preparation for his friends to join later for play.

8–9. Students working on mathematics and Spanish in Lower Elementary.

10. Upper Elementary students work on systems of the human body.

11. High School students prepare for Earth Day debates.
### CALENDAR

**MAY 10–16**

- **Mon 5/11**
  - Big Work Phone-a-Thon
    - Answer the call and help us reach 100% parent participation!
    - 6–8 p.m.

- **Tue 5/12**
  - MMUN Night (Bissonnet)
    - 5:30–7 p.m.

- **Wed 5/13**
  - New Elementary Parent Gathering (Bissonnet Campus)
    - Lower Elementary 6:30–7:15 p.m.
    - Upper Elementary 7:15–8 p.m.

- **Thu 5/14**
  - New Primary Parent Gathering (Bissonnet Campus)
    - 7 p.m.

- **Fri 5/15**
  - F.I.S.H. Meeting
    - 9–10 a.m.
  - POPA Volunteer Appreciation Ice Cream Social
    - 3:30–4:30 p.m.

**MAY 17–23**

- **Mon 5/18**
  - HMI Information Gathering Session (Bissonnet Campus)
    - 7 p.m.

- **Tue 5/19**
  - BBQ for HS Parents (Autrey Campus)
    - 6–9 p.m.

- **Wed 5/20**
  - Elementary After-Care Basketball Game
    - 4:45–6 p.m.

- **Thu 5/21**
  - New MS Parent Gathering (Bissonnet Campus)
    - 7 p.m.
  - New Young Children’s Community Parent Gathering (Bissonnet Campus)
    - 7 p.m.

- **Fri 5/22**
  - Spring ASEP ends

### NOTICE BOARD

**Seeking Nanny for the Summer**

A Houston-based HMI trainee is in search of a nanny for her two children aged 5 years and 6 months while she completes training from June 29–August 7. Please email info@hmitusa.org with recommendations.

**Nanny Available for Fall**

Our bilingual (Spanish/English) nanny will be available as of August. She requires a minimum of 40 hours and is very flexible and accommodating with her availability. She is punctual, reliable, honest, a great driver and has an excellent work ethic. I highly recommend her particularly for busy working parents. She has never missed a day for illness and has been willing to accommodate a 5 a.m. arrival time three times per week—never late. She drives my kids to school/activities, does laundry, food shopping, some food prep and errands for me. She keeps things very neat but not heavy cleaning. She is willing to speak only Spanish with kids. Raiza is seeking a long-term position. Please contact me if you are interested: Jennifer Wheler.

---

**F O U N D !**

**LUNCH BOXES, JACKETS, SWEATERS, AND MORE…**

in the lost & found by the front entrance.

**Please retrieve any items by Friday, May 29. Left over items will be donated to charity.**

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**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 Elaine Schweizer (elaineschweizer@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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