



CA

SUMMER 2024

CONCORD ACADEMY MAGAZINE

Muchos Méxicos

CA faculty
create a new
interdisciplinary
bilingual class



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CONCORD ACADEMY MAGAZINE

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Muchos Méxicos

Inspired by a student, a new interdisciplinary bilingual class at CA is collaborative in every respect

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CA students in
Mexico City's
historic center.

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Mulan figurine



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MISSION

We are a community animated by love of learning,
diverse and striving for equity, with common trust
as our foundation.

Honoring each individual, we challenge and expand
our understanding of ourselves and the world through
purposeful collaboration and creative engagement.

We cultivate empathy, integrity, and responsibility
to build a more just and sustainable future.





A LETTER FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL **HENRY FAIRFAX**

TEAM GREEN,

Each time an issue of *Concord Academy Magazine* comes out, I'm struck by how much happens at CA, both here on campus and through our alums who are living this school's legacy in the world. It's much more than can fill these pages, but seeing so many moments from the past semester collected here is clarifying. Themes begin to emerge: the usual ones of creativity and collaboration, empathy and love of learning, but also quieter threads that have run through our community in the last several months.

Two of them are risk-taking and vulnerability, which are really two sides of the same coin. Both actor and filmmaker **Caitlin FitzGerald '02** (page 29), this year's Hall Fellow, and investigative journalist **Alexandra Berzon '97** (page 4), who spoke at Commencement, talked about imposter syndrome. They shared how, in different ways, they turned this supposed liability into a strength, not by projecting confidence when they didn't feel it but by recognizing it as a shared human experience, acknowledging what they didn't know, and showing up authentically.

This magazine's cover story takes a close look at an academic exercise in risk-taking and vulnerability here at CA (page 18). The Muchos Méxicos course faculty members **Carmen Welton** and **Jeff Richey** put together in response to a student's proposal for a bilingual, interdisciplinary class about Mexican history gets to the heart of what makes CA a unique living and learning laboratory. You'll hear from educators who are walking the walk, not just talking the talk—who were willing to be changed through their collaboration and to learn in front of, and with, their students—and from students who learned that their perspectives and voices matter.

I wish you a restful or adventurous summer, whichever you're aiming for. Here at CA, we're forging ahead with detailed strategic planning to operationalize the strategic priorities we shared this spring. We're also making great progress on the Centennial Arts Center (page 26) thanks to the incredible support of this community (page 24). In just a few short months, we'll welcome our new and returning students, faculty, and staff. I can't wait.

Go Green!
Henry

campus



CONGRATULATIONS

Class of 2024!

The Concord Academy community gathered on the beautiful sunny morning of May 24 to celebrate the school's newest graduates. **Jennifer Pline P'13 '15**, co-president of CA's Board of Trustees, called these "energetic and rambunctious," "tenacious and fierce" students who entered high school during the pandemic "tradition-bearers and tradition-makers." Head of School **Henry Fairfax** assured them their "resilience in times of adversity" will set them apart.

Jessie Ma '24, student head of school, reminded her classmates to care for themselves so that they can continue to care for our world. "What CA has taught me is the importance of integrity—what it means to stay true to ... your core values and identity," she said. "Stay committed to who you are, and let that guide your path."

CONFIDENT HUMILITY

Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist **Alexandra Berzon '97** gave the Commencement address. Considering the "imposter syndrome" she has experienced, she shared that self-questioning has been essential to her pursuit of truth throughout her career. In her 20s, she broke her first investigative story, into the deaths of construction workers on the Las Vegas Strip. Berzon said it was through "not-knowing, and by knowing that I didn't know" that she stumbled onto a crucial piece of evidence that revealed lax enforcement of workplace safety regulations had cost their lives. She urged the class of 2024 to approach life with "confident humility," using the tools of responsible inquiry and commitment to seeking justice that CA has instilled in them.

LEARN MORE
Read more and watch
the ceremony at
[concordacademy.org/
commencement-2024](https://concordacademy.org/commencement-2024).

PHOTOS: MICHAEL DWYER AND NICHOLAS PFOSI



"The very best investigative reporters, the ones I most admire, are fundamentally truth seekers."

ALEXANDRA BERZON '97





COMMENCEMENT 2024



Curating Concord's History

Museum exhibition showcases CA student research

When the Concord Museum unveiled its special exhibition *What Makes History?* in April, many CA families attended the opening, eager to see the didactics, or educational materials, students from **Kim Frederick's** Tour Guide U.S. public history course had created. Through the lenses of object collecting, preservation, and storytelling, the exhibition explores local historical narratives and their connections to national and international history. The objects on display—items made in Middlesex County and global treasures collected in Concord, Mass.—include chairs, textiles, card cases, and timepieces. *What Makes History?* invites visitors to ponder why these particular artifacts were preserved for posterity.

At the opening, Reed Gochberg, the museum's associate curator and director of exhibitions, thanked the CA students. "One of the goals of the project was to think about history itself as a process," Gochberg said. "We're thinking here about the objects that are on exhibit and being collected and how we continue to reinterpret them. All of the work you have been doing is so central to that process."

Frederick commended her students' dedication to distilling history into concise, impactful descriptions. Given the state of civic engagement in the country, she said at the event, "telling our stories couldn't be more important right now."

For their part, class partners **Micah St. George '25** and **Abbie Deng '25** researched the 100th anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord. Drawing on information from the National Park Service, books on Concord, websites of local historic places, and additional scholarship, they wrote a label for a souvenir fan from the centennial. On it, they asked visitors how they would remember Concord on a fan and what they would choose to commemorate.

Gabriel Wexler '25 and **Andrew Antonopoulos '25** transcribed a handwritten notebook about the historic homes of Concord from the 1960s created by Rita Fitzgerald



Clockwise from top left: Elspeth Yeh '24 talks about her research at the Concord Museum exhibition opening. Students examine artifacts from the museum's collection. CA history teacher Kim Frederick speaks at the opening.

Conant, a volunteer for the Concord Antiquarian Society and the town of Concord. Many of the buildings Conant described on tours still exist, including CA's own Bradford and Phelps houses. As they worked with Jessica Desany Ganong, collections director and registrar, to decipher Fitzgerald's writing, they came to understand how Concord's history was presented more than 60 years ago. They also, Gabriel says, "gained a new appreciation for the skill needed to decode and uncover historical texts."

This latest in a series of partnerships between Concord Academy and the Concord Museum speaks to the power of collaboration, inquiry, and shared exploration. Through their contributions to the exhibition, students learned to engage with and interpret the public's understanding of the past.

— Vanessa De Zorzi

SEE THE EXHIBITION
What Makes History? is on display at the Concord Museum until August 18.

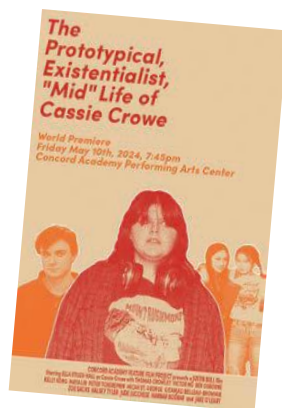
World Premiere

Sixth Feature from CA Films

The most recent feature-length CA film production, a surrealist comedy called *The Prototypical, Existentialist, "Mid" Life of Cassie Crowe*, had its world premiere at a red-carpet screening in the Performing Arts Center on May 10. As Cassie (**Ella Stiles-Hall '24**) returns to high school after a semester-long suspension, she is determined to hide her past transgressions and win the lead in the school play, only to have a wild cast of friends and foes wreak havoc on her plans.

Every other year, students working with film teacher **Justin Bull P'25** in the yearlong course The Feature Film Project devote themselves to the craft of movie-making. This year, students studied acting for the camera, developed characters, and collectively conceptualized a story. Bull finalized the script over Thanksgiving break, then the class filmed at Concord Academy and the local Peabody Middle School during the winter athletics season.

Students in the course played all the roles, alongside one professional actor (Victor Ng). Assistant Head for Student Life **Grant Hightower P'26**, English teacher **Andrew Stevens**, and Student Life Office assistant **Jackie Decareau** also made memorable cameos. Students served in key crew positions behind the cameras, and in post-production in the spring the Cutting the Feature class, taught by **Ben Stumpf '88**, helped edit the film. This labor of love is now making the rounds for film festival consideration.



Above: A poster for CA's newest feature film. Below: A still from the film



BUSINESS SPEAKER SERIES

ENTERPRISING ALUMS

This spring, CA's student-led Business Club, established in 2021, heard from three alums during its Business Speaker Series. Excited by the opportunity to connect with CA students, they shared their experiences moving organizations forward and offered some advice.

"I try to always be in service of my team. Business is about helping people advance their careers, advance their projects, and be the best that they can be."

LAYTH MADI '96

Madi is a senior vice president and director of development and operations at Lendlease, a real estate development firm that prioritizes sustainability. He is spearheading the largest geothermal residential project in New York State.

"Lean into leadership at CA. It's a skill that you can take with you forever."

LINDSAY KOLOWICH COX '09

As vice president and chief of staff to the CEO, Kolowich Cox drives strategy, operations, and strategic communications for Practice Better, a software company that serves health and wellness professionals.

"The three main takeaways from my experience [at CA] are the world-class education, the understanding that supportive individuals exist ... to aid in your growth, and the necessity of embracing them."

VERNARD LOCKHART '04

Lockhart, the associate director of internship and leadership development at Northwestern Mutual, builds equitable internship programs and fosters diversity among financial planning leaders.

Faculty and Staff Retirements

Concord Academy bid farewell to departing faculty and staff this spring, including these longtime educators and members of the CA community.



MAX HALL
SCIENCE FACULTY

During his 21 years at CA, science teacher **Max Hall** taught chemistry, physics, Earth science, engineering, advanced physics, creative computing, and general life skills. He also served as beloved faculty advisor to the Dreamers, Engineers, Mathematicians, and Overt Nerds (DEMONs) club, among many other roles. Hall joined the faculty in 1998, staying nine years before leaving for five to work as an

engineer. “But it didn’t take,” he said in his final chapel talk in May. “I knew at some visceral level that I was undercooked and needed to get back into this oven.” So in 2012, to the CA community’s delight, he returned.

“Max is, quite literally, one of the best humans,” says **Will Tucker**, head of the Science Department. “He leads with empathy and compassion and goes above and beyond whatever you ask of him. He’s a thoughtful listener, a great counselor, and an uproariously funny person.”

Approaching problems from multiple angles, Hall helped students escape fixed mindsets and push themselves to grow. Tucker says, “Max has a great ability to know when the training wheels can come off and the student can run free with their new skill.” The fact that Hall combines the qualities of an inspiring teacher, excellent listener, trusted colleague and advocate, and uniter of humor and wisdom in a “steady and humble personage,” Tucker adds, makes him “irreplaceable.”

Not one to sit idle—he spent more than a decade designing and building an amphibious vehicle in his free time—Hall looks forward to finishing construction of a longtime passion project: an electrical conditioner that can connect any generator to any battery system.

In his chapel talk, Hall also spoke about “the infinity of ways that this community invites, and cajoles, and woos, and makes space for, and smooths the path to being not just ourselves, but our best selves.” He showed us how.

KEM MOREHEAD
MATHEMATICS FACULTY

Whether you considered her “levelheaded,” “forthright,” or simply “Zen,” math teacher **Kem Morehead** left her mark on CA over 18 years through her distinctive presence. “It was a breath of fresh air to have conversations with her,” says **Jessica Kuh P’27**, head of the Mathematics Department. Kuh says even students slow to warm up to Morehead’s thoughtful and straightforward style recognized that “her directness showed respect for their growing autonomy and belief in their ability to rise to the occasion.” (Morehead’s test-day brownies and lemon squares are also legendary.)



Pictured from left to right, Max Hall, Kem Morehead, and Sue Sauer.

For Morehead, who came to CA in 2007, teaching math has been a vehicle for helping students learn to persevere when things don't come easily, advocate for themselves, and become more independent. One of her greatest strengths as a teacher, Kuh says, is showing students "how to bring out the best in themselves and accomplish more than they thought they could."

An activist for the environment and LGBTQ+, women's, and animal rights, Morehead engages with optimism. "Kem's approach is to keep fighting and not give in to hopelessness, which students found empowering," Kuh says.

Morehead and her wife, **Kim Crawford Harvie**, spent 16 years as devoted house faculty members in Hobson House. Many students attended services at the Arlington Street Church in Boston, a Unitarian Universalist community inclusive of all faith traditions, where Crawford Harvie is senior minister; the class of 2013 chose Crawford Harvie to speak at their Commencement. The couple also led epic school trips to the Grand Canyon, Yosemite National Park, and the Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah.

"Kem and Kim have the biggest hearts on campus!" says **Annie Bailey P'25 '27**, director of residential life. "They've been so caring for everyone, always. They have helped this community in good times and tough times, and they'll truly be missed."



SUE SAUER

REGISTRAR AND STUDENT INFORMATION MANAGER

During the 30 years she supported Concord Academy, **Sue Sauer** helped the school weather a tremendous paper-to-digital transformation while focusing squarely on the people she was on campus to support. "I have loved my time here, and the students and adults are what make CA the wonderful place that it is," she says.

When Sauer came to CA in May 1994, she worked as an assistant to the Business Office and headmaster as well as the National Coalition of Girls' Schools. As an administrative assistant, she soon began supporting the Academic Office and many of the busiest administrators on campus: the dean of faculty, the dean of students, and the director of studies. In 2001, she became the registrar. It was a less visible job, but an essential one. Some of her myriad responsibilities included GPA calculations, international student visa support, the creation and

maintenance of learning management systems, and job permitting. No student could enroll at CA or receive a diploma without Sauer. She also made major contributions to CA's Gender Equity Task Force and liaised with the NCAA and the federal Student and Exchange Visitor Program. For many years, she also advised students—and she loved baking treats for her advisees.

Counselor and longtime CA staff member **Jeff Desjarlais** grew close with Sauer after he started at CA in 1999, when they worked together in the Student Life Office. "She has a rare combination of abilities," he says. "For someone to be so incredibly intelligent and analytical and also so relational seems counterintuitive, but that's Sue." He adds that her excitement about the natural world, whether over a rock she discovered or a photo of a fox her wildlife camera captured overnight, was infectious.

In retirement, Sauer plans to stay active. She's looking forward to traveling, adding to her substantial rock collection, swimming, hiking, fishing, and occasionally, she says, "being lazy."

Chemistry for Change

CA science teacher writes green textbooks for all

Will Tucker, head of CA's Science Department, aims to demystify science education and make chemistry accessible to learners of all backgrounds. To that end, he has written two open-access textbooks focusing on general and organic chemistry, to be published this summer by Taylor & Francis. He has also prioritized sustainability in their content as well as their distribution format.

When Tucker came to Concord Academy in 2018, he started tailoring his teaching approach by piecing together resources that included textbook chapters, article scans, and his own original writing. Inspired by his students' curiosity "to know more about the subject than is being presented," he says, he eventually decided to write his own books.

Tucker envisioned a learning resource that was cheaper and easier to access than a typical textbook. With support from the Academic Office, he secured a grant from the Concord Academy Class of 1972 Green Seed Fund to publish his books online and make them free for students and educators around the globe.

Chemistry: Energy, Matter, and Change will be published in July; *Organic Chemistry: Structure, Function, and Practice*, in August.

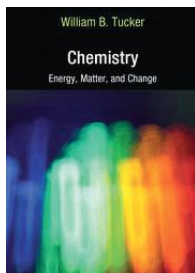
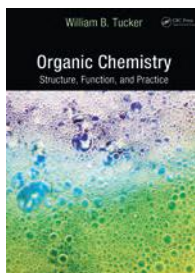
In both books, Tucker emphasizes green chemistry best practices, such as preventing waste and minimizing harm to people and the environment. He also promotes safety, the design of safer chemicals and energy-efficient processes, the use of renewable resources, and pollution prevention.

Tucker presents complex information in intuitive, easy-to-understand ways: Experiments and questions appear alongside relevant instructional material, facilitating direct comparisons and foregrounding problem-solving. His books provide ample hands-on learning activities, including one of Tucker's favorite experiments, inspired by Ernest Rutherford's gold foil experiment, which introduces atomic theory by having students throw pingpong balls through a frame and calculate the deflection rate. Tucker also emphasizes transparency in research, citing sources to provide avenues for further exploration.

Tucker asked **Jake Klineman '25** to help review the general chemistry volume from a student perspective. "Will's trust in my chemistry ability has truly changed the way I think about chemistry and myself," Jake says. "He has single-handedly made me a better scientist and a better person."

Tucker says the experience has made him a better chemist, too: "I think much more deeply about my field."

—Vanessa De Zorzi



CAMUN delegates in CA's Performing Arts Center.

CAMUN XX

This spring, CA students hosted close to 200 participants from 20 high schools across New England at CAMUN XX, the 20th Concord Academy Model United Nations conference. They ran the event from start to finish; Secretary-General **Irene Zheng '24** began preparing shortly after CAMUN 2023.

Daniel Xu '25 chaired the Iranian Hostage Crisis Committee and reported on the conference for CA's student newspaper, *The Centipede*. In his article, he celebrated CAMUN for its role each year in bringing together "a group of individuals who grow that much closer to each other through a joint effort to embrace the outside world."

SUSTAINABILITY SPOTLIGHT

GETTING SMART

This year, science teacher **Chris Labosier** became CA's sustainability coordinator, collaborating with the Sustainability Committee and the community to reduce the school's environmental impact. "Much like education, sustainability is inherently future-focused," Labosier says. "We have to envision a better future and actively take meaningful and deliberate steps forward."

Steps taken in 2023–24:

- A Green Revolving Fund grant supported a proposal by **Xander Grossman '26** to install remote-controlled smart outlets in the Main School Building, the Math and Arts Center, and Aloian and Belknap houses to reduce energy consumption.
- **Mick McSorley P'27**, director of operations, organized drone-assisted thermal imaging scans to pinpoint heat loss areas within school buildings.
- The Environmental Co-Heads have been crafting a sustainability dashboard that will launch in 2024–25. Funded by the Class of 1972 Green Seed Fund, it will measure progress toward reducing CA's climate impact and emissions.

LEARN MORE

Read about the smart outlets at concordacademy.org/smart.

ONE-OF-A-KIND SENIOR PROJECTS

This spring, 38 12th graders completed senior projects. Here's a sampling of these self-designed, faculty-supported explorations:

Chiara Wanandi '24 created a historical cookbook highlighting Chinese immigrant culinary traditions in the U.S. and Southeast Asia.

Mohammed Mustakim '24 prototyped an escape room experience that connects smell sensors to virtual reality headsets to assist with brain rehabilitation.

Jessie Ma '24 combined her passions for dance and innovation to create a wristband that generates music based on the wearer's dance movements, using motion-capture technology.

Yehjin Hwang '24 examined how narratives across literary genres perpetuate gender stereotypes and biases; in five original oil paintings, she cast female characters in a more equitable light.

Theo Von Gottberg '24 and **Jasper Perlis '24** explored the potential of hydrogen as a sustainable energy source in fuel cells and renewable energy systems.

Ben Bartlett '24 presents his senior project on song-writing and production in one of the squash courts in the SHAC.



SPOKEN WORD

Inspiration from campus speakers

“Sometimes awful things become beautiful because of their form.”

CAMMY THOMAS

Former faculty member, in conversation with fellow poets Soren Stockman '07 and Chessie Normile '09

Read more at concordacademy.org/poets.

“It’s important to see the humanity of everyone, especially those with whom we disagree most vehemently.”

SA'ED ATSHAN

Chair of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at Swarthmore College, in conversation with Karen Ross, associate professor of conflict resolution at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

Read more at concordacademy.org/peace.

“Treat others the way you want to be treated.”

MAGDA BADER

Holocaust survivor and educator

Read more at concordacademy.org/bader.

ADAPTABILITY

Concord Academy students are adapting to an ever-changing world. Your gift to the Annual Fund helps CA develop and nurture the creativity, versatility, and resilience they'll need to succeed.

You can champion CA's transformational education by “subscribing to CA” with a monthly or yearly recurring gift. It's an easy, convenient, and sustainable way to make a long-term investment in today's students.

It's easy to donate today:

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Concord, MA 01742

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



VISUAL ARTS

SPRING ART SHOW

Student artwork in many mediums was on display in the Ransome Room at the end of the 2023–24 school year.

1. A student views a fiber arts hanging by **Johan Perez-Lemus '27** at the art show opening in May.

2. Ceramic sculpture by **Audrey Hemenway '27**.

3. Silver gelatin print by **Alec Nieuwenhuizen '24**

4. Ceramic vase by **Ella Connolly '25**.

5. Fiber arts fruit bowl by **Aleta Sandoski '27**.

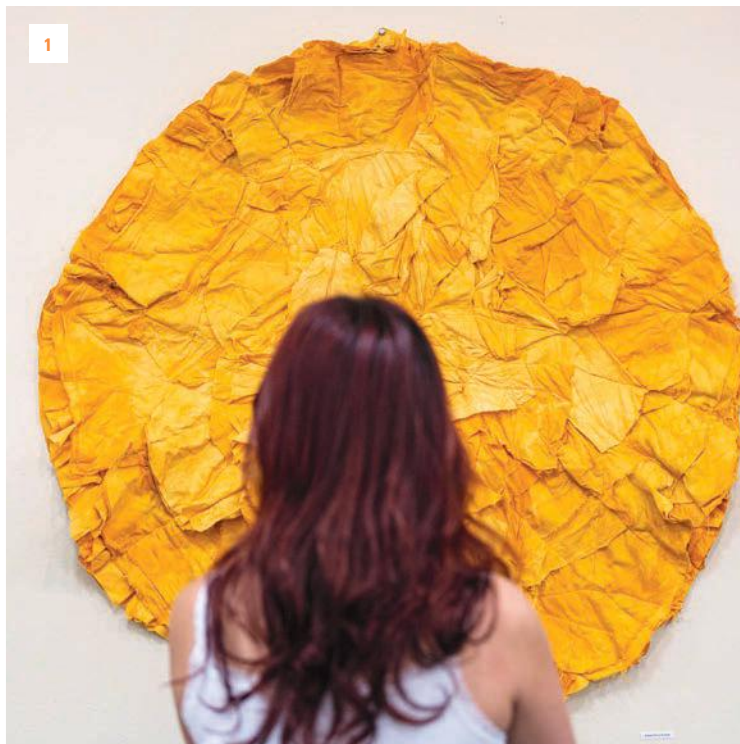
6. Monoprint by **Anja E. Westra '24**.

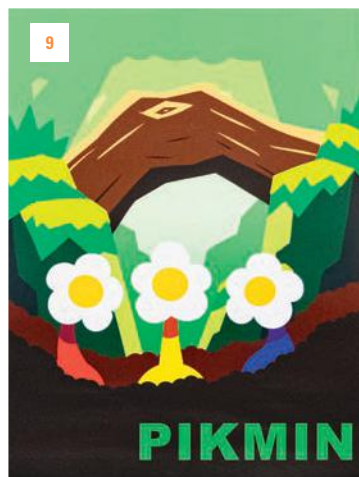
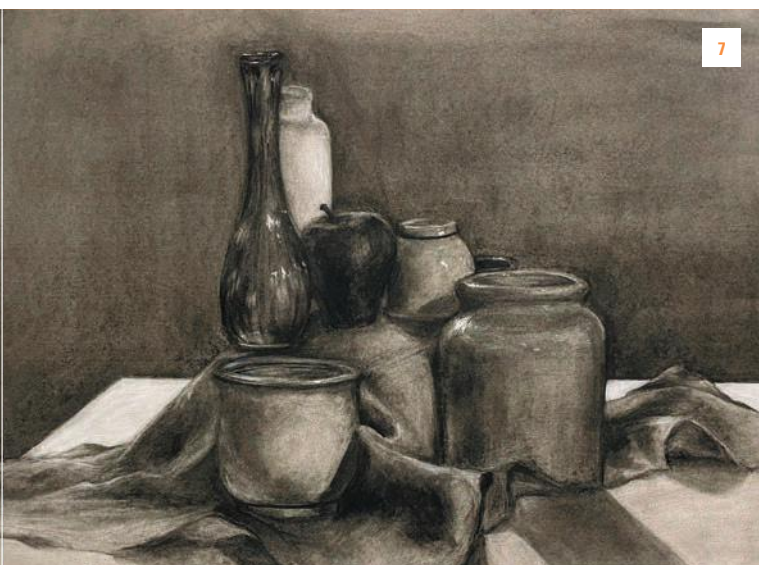
7. Charcoal drawing by **Pearl Yu '26**.

8. Quilt-inspired tapestry by **Izzy Wood '25**.

9. Graphic design by **Armaney Salcedo '24**.

10. Self-portrait by **Asher Gallardo '25** in ink wash and graphite.





Desert Rhythms

Composer-in-residence writes for
Chameleon Chamber Players

Concord Academy's Chamber Music Concert on May 5 included the world premiere of *Paisajes del Desierto* by 2024 composer-in-residence Láura Macias. The Sonoran Desert inspired her three-movement piece for the Chameleon Chamber Players' nine student musicians.

Macias composed for their unusual instrumentation: winds, strings, and piano four hands. She wrote three short, related sections, the first for winds and piano, the second for strings and piano, and the third for the entire ensemble.

"The students were challenged to explore new sounds, innovative techniques, changing meters, and unexpected harmonies," says **Andra Dix**, director of chamber music and orchestra and coordinator of the individual music instruction program at CA. "Breathy sounds evoke the wind, harmonics imitate animal noises, and key clicks represent the scurrying of scorpions."

Writing for two pianists on one grand piano, Macias says she wondered, "What if the other pianist helps out with extended techniques?" In the piece, one pianist plays on the keyboard while the other holds down strings beneath the open cover. Macias says she had fun experimenting on her piano at home with her 8-year-old son, creating a distinctive plucking sound using his ukulele pick.

Over the spring semester, the students and Dix rehearsed with Macias to learn and further develop her composition. "I usually like to work with the performers," Macias says. "I write stylistically for each instrument, and I care how they feel about playing that way—if they have fun, it's better."

The performance was synchronized with a backdrop of desert images and artwork. For Macias, the collaboration was a chance to exercise creativity and celebrate her heritage by referencing popular dance rhythms from northern Mexico.

Dix found the collaboration rewarding. "Rarely does a musician have the opportunity to perform a piece composed specifically for them," she says. "Playing newly composed music is a transformative experience."

Láura Macias, CA's 2024
composer-in-residence.



PERFORMING ARTS

STAGING SHAKESPEARE

Directed by theater teacher **Shelley Bolman P'27**, CA's February 2024 production of *Twelfth Night* was a vibrant musical adaptation of the classic Shakespearean tale of love and mistaken identity.

LEARN MORE

Read about the production at concordacademy.org/twelfth-night.



ATHLETICS

Go Green!

Over the 2023–24 winter and spring seasons, several CA sports teams won Eastern Independent League (EIL) championships and competed with distinction in the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC) championships.

The **all-gender varsity wrestling** team pulled out a thrilling come-from-behind win in the EIL championship—the program’s second league title in the past three years.

Girls varsity basketball had a breakout season, starting with 14 consecutive wins, finishing 16–4 overall, and nearly upsetting the No. 2 seed in the EIL tournament in the first bid in recent program history.

On the **Alpine ski** team, **Boris Liu ‘27** was named skier of the year in the Central Massachusetts Ski League.

The **girls and boys varsity squash** teams brought home NEPSAC tournament runner-up trophies.

Boys varsity tennis captured the EIL championship for the third consecutive year. Poised to battle for the NEPSAC title, the team was named co-champ, with Kents Hill School, when weather forced a cancellation of the championship match.

Kefan Cui ‘25 was selected the NEPSAC co-player of the year.

Girls varsity tennis continued a run of excellence by earning its eighth consecutive NEPSAC tournament bid.

Track and field had its most successful season in program history: Both the boys and girls teams posted undefeated regular season records, the boys captured the program’s first EIL championship, and the girls finished second for the second year in a row. In addition, 13 CA athletes earned All-NEPSAC honors.



CA swept Bancroft in five contests in the third annual Spring Cup.





LEARN MORE
Keep up to date at
concordacademy.org/athletics.





Muchos Méxicos

Inspired by a student, a new interdisciplinary bilingual class at CA is collaborative in every respect



STORY BY
HEIDI KOELZ

TRIP PHOTOS BY
ANA TOPOLEANU



On a chilly spring afternoon at Concord Academy, students in **Carmen Welton** and **Jeffrey Richey's** Muchos México course discussed recent events in a warmer clime.

They considered the roots of current conflicts, using terms such as *los derechos* (rights) and *la rabia* (rage). They learned why March 8, International Women's Day, is an occasion not for celebration but for collective grief and activism in Latin America, where demonstrations against gender-based violence have rolled through many cities in recent years. They discussed sociological concepts around inequality—*la misoginia internalizada*, *el dolor generacional* (internalized misogyny, intergenerational trauma).

In twos and threes, the students examined photographs of graffiti on a concrete barrier in Mexico City, taken during a CA trip just weeks earlier. They jotted notes on their desks in dry-erase marker as they discussed the spray-painted slogans. Then Welton, a Spanish teacher, charted their inferences on a whiteboard.



Above: Carmen Welton (left), Spanish teacher and head of CA's Modern and Classical Languages Department, and Jeffrey Richey, history teacher, lead a discussion in their Muchos México class. **Facing page:** CA students visit an orchard in the agricultural region of Nayarit state in Mexico with Welton and Richey.

"*Los reclamamos*," she said. "Grievances. How do you define that word in English?"

Students called out responses: complaints, issues with something.

"Something specific," Welton clarified. "To me, it implies an expectation from an institution."

"Or a society, or a culture," Richey, a history teacher, added.

"Perhaps something you have the right to expect will be fixed," Welton said.

The teachers' easy classroom exchange resulted from intensive cooperation over the previous year. Welton and Richey created Muchos México with Department X funding from the Faculty Leadership Endowed Fund, an initiative of the Centennial Campaign for Concord Academy. Department X fosters professional development through cross-disciplinary exchange, supporting new curricula and experiential learning.

"To know at every stage that you're encouraged and supported and have complete intellectual freedom" to work on the course is meaningful, says Richey, who also advises Alianza, CA's Latinx affinity group.

He and Welton planned the cross-listed Spanish and history course in fall 2023. They created a framework that will allow either of them to offer the course in the future, and they made the most of the one-time chance to pilot it together this spring.

Throughout the semester, they traded off instruction fluidly—sometimes reinforcing one another, sometimes countering from a different perspective, always thinking together on the spot along with students. They established conceptual frameworks, then asked students to wonder about them and to interrogate artifacts and texts, including songs, news stories, and scholarly articles. While many readings were in English, students posted on discussion boards in Spanish, the language they spoke in class more than 80% of the time. They switched to English only if they

struggled to express an abstraction, an option that let them communicate more complex ideas than they'd be able to in a typical language class.

Anni Taylor '24, whose parents are Argentine and Puerto Rican, found expressing herself in “Spanglish” comforting; she says her comprehension is stronger than her spoken Spanish. “I just felt like I was talking at home,” she says. “Nobody’s going to judge me. Being able to speak Spanish to practice it but not be pressured to dumb down ideas to make them understandable was refreshing.”

In a typical advanced language class, Anni says, sometimes students “have really good ideas they don’t always know how to bring forward.” In *Muchos Méxicos*, by contrast, the focus was less on getting the language right than on holding meaningful discussion.

Using Spanish words for cultural ideas that don’t have exact English equivalents was a benefit, Anni says. For example, students learned about the *muxe*, a group the Zapotec people of modern-day Oaxaca, Mexico, historically considered a third gender.

As the course’s title suggests, students began to see many Mexicos as they explored the stories of often-marginalized people foregrounded by three guiding themes: Indigeneities, inequalities, and revolutions. “It was like an amalgamation of a bunch of different subjects and classes, which made it so much more engaging,” Anni says.

Just as important to her was seeing Welton and Richey navigate different approaches to topics and classroom policies. She says she learned from their willingness to disagree and to show they didn’t have everything figured out.

Other students shared similar sentiments. “They could be in the middle of teaching something and you could tell they were learning from each other,” says **Yehjin Hwang '24**. “It was amazing to watch how deliberate they were with every step.”

Yehjin was enthusiastic about this experimental melding of disciplines. Richey introduced more lectures and



“Interdisciplinarity was one of our top goals. Sometimes we had radically different attitudes toward a specific thing, and students noticed that’s allowed.”

JEFFREY RICHEY, HISTORY TEACHER

class discussions than are typical of a Spanish class, she says, and compared with most history classes, “the things we talked about were a lot more personally meaningful.”

To her surprise, the oral assessment (*el artefacto*) after the first unit was one of her favorite activities. From a list of 10 terms, the teachers asked students to explain two concepts they had discussed in the course and how they related to each other. “It ended up being a very cool way to explore,” Yehjin says. “I let my thoughts wander, and I ended up talking about my heritage and drew parallels between maize as a staple food in Mexico and Korean kimchi.”

Later, students gave slide presentations. While oral assignments are common in language classes, Richey says the format is gaining momentum in other disciplines at CA. The *artefactos* allowed students to take on the role of teachers while the teachers assessed their linguistic and analytical syntheses.

The class is also notable because the idea originated with a student. When **Anghelo Chavira Barrera '24** enrolled as a 9th grader at Concord Academy, he was impressed by the range of history electives but disappointed that none focused on his home country, Mexico. Born in the United States but raised in Mexico City, he wanted CA students



Above: In Bucerías, Mexico, CA students learned about the cultural importance of cacao at Planeta Cacao.
Right: CA students began their March trip in Mexico City.

to better understand his culture. After hearing peers express stereotypical assumptions about Mexican immigrants, Anghelo says he wanted to “leave a legacy” at CA by helping his peers investigate Mexican identity.

He initially proposed a conference; it didn’t work out. But in his junior year, Richey’s first at CA and Welton’s first as head of the Modern and Classical Languages Department, Anghelo approached Welton with his idea for a class taught in Spanish on the history of Mexico. She recognized a need that dovetailed with her experiences with other students, and she connected with Richey.

Using Anghelo’s idea as a springboard, they envisioned linking autobiography to academic study, and they saw that by reflecting on their disciplines’ priorities and teaching practices, they could cover new pedagogical ground and ultimately share their experience with their CA colleagues.

After the school approved their Department X application, Richey and Welton met weekly. Anghelo was frequently included as well. The three share Mexican heritage, and they often held their planning sessions in Spanish.

“It was the first time I saw people really excited about this idea,” Anghelo



says. “CA faculty-student connections are amazing, and we really bonded over heritage and language. We had common trust without even knowing each other.”

In fall 2023, Anghelo completed a departmental study with Richey, researching the history of Mexican emigration from the 1980s through the 2000s. For his senior project, which both Richey and Welton advised, Anghelo interviewed Latin American immigrants to the U.S. to gather their stories of perseverance in the face of adversity.

Though he hadn’t previously taken a Spanish course at CA (a native speaker, he instead studied Mandarin), he enrolled in Muchos Méxicos this spring, wanting to see it come to fruition. And though he was familiar with Mexican history, the class gave him a chance to reconsider from a scholarly perspective the cultural narratives he had learned in childhood.

Take the controversial figure of La Malinche, a 16th-century Nahua woman who aided the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire, interpreting for, advising, and becoming a consort to the conquistador Hernán Cortés. “Growing up, I heard her bashed as a traitor, someone who betrayed her people for her own interests,” Anghelo says. “But this course pushed me to reconsider her story from a less biased standpoint, to see the whole context—what were her conditions, what were her options.”

Anghelo takes pride in having modeled what’s possible for an ardent CA student interested in collaborating with faculty. “I want people to remember that a student started this,” he says, and he hopes the course continues.

“We were grateful to Anghelo for recognizing this need for both the content and the interdisciplinary approach,” Welton says.

Over spring break in March, Welton and Richey led a CA trip to Mexico for 10 Spanish-language students. Many of them belonged to Alianza, and two were enrolled in Mucho Méxicos. They started in Mexico City's historic center, where they observed evidence of Tenochtitlan, the former Aztec Empire capital that was built on an island in Lake Texcoco. Mexico's capital now occupies the entire lake basin. Afterward, they traveled to Bucerías, on the Pacific coast. Nearby they met and spoke with several artisans, including weavers, potters, and chocolate makers, as well as farmers and local high school students.

"We wanted students to encounter the human side of Mexico, to access the lived experience and vibrant culture in a different part of the country than most U.S. visitors go," Richey says.

He and Welton worked with Human Connections, a travel organization that empowers local communities by fostering conversations with visitors that increase understanding and shift perspectives. It was important to the CA teachers that the experience was not a typical service or cultural immersion trip.

"What was so powerful about it was how we honored the fact that people all over the world have important stories to tell, and that we're interested in and value the full breadth and depth of human experience," Welton says.

Students embraced the encounters. "There was a lot more critical thinking and conversation than I expected, which I loved," says **Noah Garcia '24**, Alianza co-head and a student in Muchos Méxicos. The trip was one of his first outside the United States, though he had visited family in Puerto Rico.

He particularly enjoyed eating at a farm-to-table restaurant in Bucerías with a friend who shares his Latin American heritage. "We both took a bite and started crying," he says. "The taste was so familiar." It got him thinking about growing up in the Bronx,

in New York, where diverse Latin American cultures have mixed—and how the flavor of his meal had become familiar.

Every evening before dinner, the group discussed the interactions they'd had that day. A theme that emerged was what it means to have privilege. Over and over, the people the group met expressed their sense of being privileged to do what they do. Students began asking if *el privilegio* has the same connotations in Spanish as in English.

Welton says she explained that the root concept is identical: feeling fortunate, enriched, vibrant, and fulfilled. "There are so many ways to have privilege," she says. "It was powerful to get to this place of recognizing that when we talk about privilege at CA, we're actually talking about a narrow slice of what that entails."

For Noah, who had never considered himself privileged, the question lingered. "It made me think about how talking about privilege, in the way I usually hear, can separate us," he says.

Kai Feingold '24 also carried this inquiry back to the Muchos Méxicos class after the trip. "We got to listen to a lot of people's experiences without interjecting or imposing ourselves," Kai says. "Everyone who goes to CA should know how privileged they are, but if you think you're privileged, as in better than others, you won't learn anything."

For her part, Welton recognizes "the privilege of being able to adapt to student interest and excitement" that teachers have at CA, and the special circumstance that allowed her and Richey to teach together, not simply in parallel, to create an organic professional development experience.

"Interdisciplinarity was one of our top goals," Richey says. "Sometimes we had radically different attitudes toward a specific thing, and students noticed that's allowed." The class worked, Richey says, because he and Welton "hold each other in high regard, and we both felt pressure not to let each other down."

Welton adds that, by exploring and reconciling their pedagogical differences, "we practiced trust every day." And both found themselves changing.

Welton says the experiment with a bilingual classroom "lessened my sense of distrust of using English in strategic ways."

"We were constantly negotiating that fluidity between languages based on where we could extract the most meaning," she says. "There's a valuable skill, in and of itself, that students are gaining." It's also an experience truer to the way people who speak multiple languages communicate.

Richey says he felt empowered, even recognizing times he reached his own "language ceiling"—he began to use Spanish more often in his other history courses. "I'm less afraid now to admit my limitations," he says. "I wanted students to see that modeled as well."

Working interdisciplinarily, he says, "requires a sacrifice of ego and vulnerability." He wouldn't have it any other way: "I've learned what CA is through this partnership." 🌱



Anghelo Chavira Barrera '24 speaks during a Muchos Méxicos class discussion.

Celebrating Growth, Cultivating Giving

Blumenthal siblings spearhead vital support for CA

THE CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE

DEX AND CONNIE
BLUMENTHAL PLEDGED

\$50,000

FOR EVERY

25

DONORS TO BOTH THE
ANNUAL FUND AND THE
CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN
DURING THE 2023–24
SCHOOL YEAR UP TO

\$250,000.

THEIR GIFT SPURRED
PARTICIPATION THAT
FAR EXCEEDED
THE CHALLENGE'S GOAL OF

125

DONORS:

447

DONORS STEPPED UP, RAISING

\$1,158,235

TO SUPPORT CA TODAY
AND INTO THE FUTURE.

Dex Blumenthal '11 and his sister, **Connie Blumenthal '15**, both came to Concord Academy with a passion for the arts and a desire to learn new things. They found a supportive community where creativity and self-expression were encouraged and celebrated.

Dex cherished the camaraderie he experienced at CA. During the tumultuous time of adolescence, "CA was a haven where I felt safe to be myself and explore who I might become," he says. "And I saw that all around me. Everyone was learning who they were, in a place where it felt safe to do so."

He says teachers, staff, and mentors were crucial to his development: "CA is brimming with adults who nurture and support students, who create an environment where mistakes are learning experiences and everyone is continually striving to be better. By leaning into their values and passions, they provided a road map for living an authentic life."

Dex learned from his peers as well. "The school's diverse student body and curriculum exposed me to a multitude of perspectives and ways of thinking," he says. Chapel talks, in particular, left a lasting impression: "They encouraged self-expression and respect for others' views." The desire he developed to "find the story" from multiple angles influenced his work in advertising and his recent decision to pursue an MBA.

The year after Dex graduated, Connie arrived on campus. CA nurtured her passion for dance. "When I was quite young, I started dancing at the Boston Ballet," she says. "CA made a huge impact on my progress and furthered my growth and love for dance."

The school's diverse curriculum and supportive faculty shaped Connie's view of the world and prepared her to move meaningfully through it, she says: "There were so many great teachers—I can't choose just one." She continued to study the arts in college, and for the past decade, she has engaged in art-related work.

As she considers how she might focus more on the outdoors, Connie is grateful for the encouragement she received at CA to explore new interests. "Now, as I think about a change in the direction of my career, I realize that in some ways CA reinforced the idea that you should follow your passions," she says. "I am confident to try new things."

Both Connie and Dex feel profound gratitude for how CA has shaped their lives. They learned about giving by example, they say, as it has always been important to their family. Choosing CA for their philanthropic focus "really was a no-brainer," Connie says. "CA made such an impact on us, and it is a way for us to repay the favor."

"We've come to really appreciate how much transformative action in the world around us relies on support from engaged community members," Dex adds. That's why they decided to sponsor a giving challenge to encourage others to support CA. They pledged \$50,000 for every 25 donors who supported both the Annual Fund, to meet current need, and the Centennial Campaign, to commit to CA's future—up to a total of \$250,000.

The Centennial Challenge provided significant financial support and galvanized the CA community to new levels of giving. The Blumenthals' generosity, magnified by the participation of many others, will ensure that students can continue to experience the same opportunities and support that were transformative for them. Connie and Dex hope to inspire their peers and future generations to cultivate a culture of giving that honors the lasting value of a CA education and sustains CA's extraordinary community.



We did it!

Building CA's Future Together

As the Centennial Campaign nears its close, we're grateful to all the members of this community who have invested in the program and promise of Concord Academy. We look forward to sharing final tallies soon for both campaign priorities: building the Centennial Arts Center and strengthening CA's endowment. In the meantime, we're thrilled that the new art center, while still under construction, has already begun contributing to the student experience.

concordacademy.org/campaign

AS OF JUNE 20, 2024,
CONCORD ACADEMY
EXCEEDED THE

\$25

MILLION+

GOAL FOR
THE CENTENNIAL
ARTS CENTER, WITH

\$26.3

MILLION

RAISED.

Thank You!



On April 22, the Topics in Engineering: Architectural Design Concepts, Processes, and Technologies class took a hard-hat site tour with its architects, learning about the design process, local permitting considerations, and architectural modeling.



Students had a chance this spring to sign a beam that will be installed in the new arts center.



alums



CONNECTING CA ALUMS

CA Spirit

As my term as president of Concord Academy Alum Association comes to a close, I have been reflecting on the remarkable journey I've had. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve in this position, work alongside such dedicated individuals, and witness how the spirit of CA endures in our alums. I welcome **Natalie Krajcir '02**, who is assuming this important role of connector and advocate for our global community.

Over the past two years, we've seen our community thrive and evolve, with each member contributing unique talents, experiences, and passions. From engaging in the Centennial Celebration, memorable reunions, and regional events to supporting current students through mentorship programs and more, our collective efforts have strengthened our bonds as proud graduates of Concord Academy.

Thank you for the trust and support you placed in me during my tenure. Together, we've faced challenges, leaned into difficult and productive conversations, celebrated achievements, and fostered a sense of belonging that transcends time and distance. CA has had a profound impact on our lives throughout the decades. To have had a role in the enduring legacy of this great school is something I'll forever cherish.

I am honored to continue to serve as a trustee on CA's Board. I do so with profound optimism for the school's future. With dedicated leadership and the continued engagement of alums, educators, families, and community members, I am confident that we will uphold the mission and vision that distinguish us as a highly regarded learning community.

I'm grateful for the memories we've shared and the connections we've formed during my presidency. I wish you all continued peace, happiness, and prosperity. See you around!

With gratitude,

Trelane Clark '92, P'22

*Past President, Concord Academy Alum Association
Trustee*



CONCORD ACADEMY ALUM ASSOCIATION

Everyone who attended Concord Academy is automatically a member of the Alum Association, which fosters lifelong connections between Concord Academy and its extended community. The association facilitates meaningful opportunities to preserve and promote a love of learning, service to others, and a commitment to diverse perspectives and backgrounds. Through involvement in the life of the school, within the community, and through service to the greater world, the association strives to renew and affirm the core values instilled while at CA.

MISSION-CRITICAL

The Annual Fund supports every facet of the CA experience, every day. With a modest endowment relative to peer schools, Concord Academy depends each year on more than \$3 million in contributions to deliver all that makes CA unique—student clubs, one-on-one advising, the Academic Support Center, Community Weekends, campus bikes, visiting artists and speakers, and so much more.

You can have a big impact by making a leadership gift and sustaining your commitment for the next four years. Will you become a champion of a CA education?



IT'S EASY TO DONATE TODAY:

Give online at
concordacademy.org/give

or mail a check—please indicate how to split your gift between the Annual Fund and the campaign:

Concord Academy
166 Main Street
Concord, MA 01742



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

HALL FELLOW

Caitlin FitzGerald '02

Caitlin FitzGerald '02 is an old hand at performing on stage and for the camera, but when the actor and filmmaker was invited to speak at Concord Academy as the 2024 Hall Fellow, she felt intimidated. “Because I am in the business of feelings, I tend to forensically examine my own,” she said at CA on April 19. The sensation she identified was familiar from high school: imposter syndrome. A consummate storyteller, FitzGerald transformed her insight into a captivating narrative about her career and sage advice about the importance of hard work, stepping into discomfort, and following what you love.

FitzGerald is known for her roles in the television series *Masters of Sex*, *Sweetbitter*, *Inventing Anna*, and *Succession*, among other performances. She also co-wrote and starred in the narrative feature *Like the Water* and directed two short films, *The Girl with the Jacket* and *Mrs. Drake*, for which she was awarded best director at the Milwaukee Short Film Festival and which was nominated for best film at the NBCUniversal Short Cuts Festival.

When she came to CA in 10th grade from Camden, Maine, FitzGerald said, she felt “out of my league.” On top of intellectual insecurity, she struggled to be cool in a decade when apathy was on trend. “Good or bad, my feelings were always at a 10,” she said.

Theater became her refuge. “Blessedly, there was a place here where big feelings were encouraged—nay, celebrated,” FitzGerald said. “A place where anyone could belong and where I felt like I was truly good at something, or even if I wasn’t, I loved it enough that it didn’t matter.”

She found her footing academically too. Again and again, she said, she has been grateful for discovering her capacity “to work hard, harder than I knew I could, harder than I thought I was capable of.”

FitzGerald had always dreamed of moving to New York to become an actor. She attended New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, then studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in



Caitlin FitzGerald '02 at CA.

London. When she returned to New York, she struggled to find roles and began working in restaurants, “humbled and strengthened” by the experience, she said.

Her early career had many ups and downs. Just as she landed a big break—the lead in *Romeo and Juliet*—at a small stage company in California, FitzGerald’s agent dropped her. She waitressed again, played twins on *Law & Order: SVU*, and got a movie role as Meryl Streep’s daughter. Still, she was living audition to audition. Then indie director Ed Burns recruited her for a low-budget, improvisational film. FitzGerald says the experience was life-changing: She learned “no one was the gatekeeper of my artistry but me.”

She began turning toward friends’ creative projects and thinking about what she could make. The shift in perspective made a difference. Auditions seemed less dire. She booked one TV show that led to the next.

Acting continues to teach and challenge her, and she defines success as an internal feeling of accomplishment. Each time FitzGerald thinks she can’t do something, she said, “I walk through the crucible of my fear, and I am changed and enlarged.” Pain, discomfort, anger, and despair, she added, “often mean you’re exactly where you should be.”

“You cannot be an imposter in your own life,” FitzGerald said. “Everything that happens to you belongs to you. It’s part of your own artistry and storytelling and story.”

For six decades, Concord Academy has awarded the Hall Fellow Endowed Lectureship to distinguished individuals who exemplify CA’s mission and values.

Reunion and Alum Weekend

Around 200 alums from across generations returned to Concord Academy to reconnect and celebrate class milestones throughout a beautiful weekend, June 7–9. Among many opportunities to enjoy food, music, and conversation and engage in activities and tours on campus and in town, a mini-class on interpreting sacred texts gave alums a taste of academic life at CA today. At the Alum Association Assembly, Head of School **Henry Fairfax** and Board of Trustees Co-Presidents **Jen Burleigh '85** and **Jennifer Pline P'13 '15** presented community feedback from the strategic planning process and reviewed strategic priorities the school will further develop this summer. Alums voted to change the association's bylaws to include gender-inclusive terminology and elect a new slate of officers. As always, the weekend offered occasions for honoring and remembering life-long friendships.

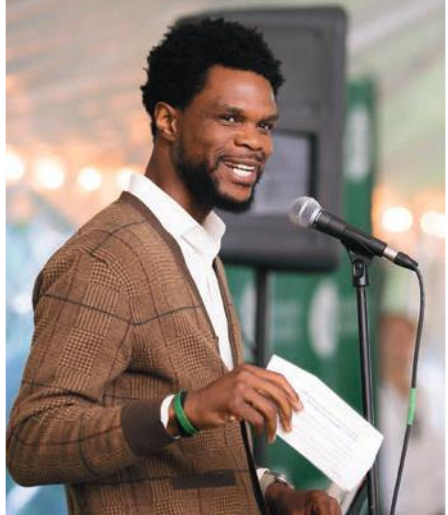
Navigating the Creative Process

In conversation with fellow alums, publisher **Susan Knopf '74** teased out fascinating throughlines between her industry, academia, Hollywood, and the performing arts during a panel discussion. For **Anne Dowd '74**, an archaeologist, writer, and program manager with the National Park Service, anthropology unites her love for science and creativity. In her line of work, Academy Award-winning film producer **Sarah Pillsbury '69** treasures getting “involved with so many people's minds.” And **Lesley Koenig '74**, a commissioner for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, shared how her capacious memory and facility with languages helped her succeed in her previous 37-year-long career directing operas, including more than 40 at the Metropolitan Opera.

LEARN MORE

See photos and read more about the 2024 Reunion and Alum Weekend at concordacademy.org/reunion-24.





REUNION 2024



A Prosecutor Promotes Compassion

In Philadelphia, Adam Geer '99 aims to build common trust in public safety

Recently appointed Philadelphia's first chief public safety director, **Adam Geer '99** now faces the challenge of restoring public confidence in local law enforcement. It's a charge he's undertaking guided by values he embraced as a student at Concord Academy.

Geer still remembers his first impressions of CA when he arrived on campus in the mid-1990s. "What really pulled me in was the kindness," he says. "I sensed an openness to thought, to ideas, to people. Even at 14, I knew how important that was to me."

Among the first things Geer noticed while touring CA was schoolwide support of the LGBTQ+ community. Although it isn't one with which he personally identifies, the culture of inclusivity resonated with the young African American teen from upstate New York. "Knowing you are in that environment makes you feel safer in a lot of other areas too," he says.

Though the mostly white student body was not without its inherent biases, Geer found in CA a place for self-expression. "I sported an Afro and wore a dashiki," he says. "At the same time, I had friends with indoor pools in their homes. Sharing cultural and racial differences prepared me for a future navigating a professional realm that is mostly non-POC [people of color], and those skills have allowed me to advance in my career more easily and successfully."

At Temple University Beasley School of Law, many of his classmates were laser-focused on large corporate law firms and the salaries they offer, but Geer says his exposure to equity and fairness at CA engendered in him a wish to serve the public, and he went to work for the district attorney's

office. He became Philadelphia's assistant district attorney, then the deputy inspector general for public safety.

"CA's adherence to common trust policies formed my perspective on justice," he says. "One reason I had a successful career as a prosecutor was that defendants, defense attorneys, judges, juries—they could all sense my genuine compassion and my respect for the process. Whether defendants were found guilty or acquitted, they felt they had been treated fairly." Having occasionally broken the rules back at CA, Geer says he knew firsthand that an approach focused on empathy rather than blame could make an enormous difference in someone's self-perception and future behavior.

As Philadelphia's chief public safety director, Geer is charged with improving the city's response to crime by coordinating agencies and resources, including police, firefighters, prisons, and emergency services, with a mission to improve public trust in the way local law enforcement carries out its work. Underlying these efforts is the quest to address the racial divisions with which many cities have struggled, especially in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement.

"People in places like Philadelphia have a fraught relationship with law enforcement," Geer says. "A lot of repair work needs to be done between police and the communities they serve. And there are many ways we are trying to build that trust. We need to have police forces that reflect the population with which they work. We need to do a better job of recruiting and removing barriers to people of color for careers in law enforcement. Police departments need to be empowered to see themselves as guardians as opposed to warriors."

Along with intangible tasks such as building trust and promoting compassion, material changes need to be made as well, Geer says. He cites an example from earlier in his career, when he was deputy inspector of public safety and a constituent told him about a grandmother who had to clean her own grandson's blood off the sidewalk after a shooting took place. Geer pursued the issue, and as a result, he says, "Philadelphia is the first major city in the country to publicly fund the cleaning of crime scenes in public spaces."



That's a matter of compassion, but it also influences how a rising generation of young people experience city life. "Children walking to school will no longer be subject to the trauma of stepping over pools of blood," he says. "The fact that I was a part of this one small change brings me incredible joy."

Looking ahead to what he hopes to accomplish in his current role, Geer sees three major benchmarks for success: "I would like young men and women of color to feel that they have been

instilled with coping skills or tools for the trauma they are experiencing. From a policy standpoint, we need successful advocacy to implement sensible gun legislation. Finally, we need more recreational opportunities and workforce development programs for our young people. We can't police our way out of the problems faced by cities like Philadelphia. But strategies like this will help us get closer to where we need to be."

— *Nancy Shohet West '84*

Adam Geer '99.

2024 JOAN SHAW HERMAN AWARD

Richard Read '75

Richard Read '75 is the first journalist to receive CA's annual Joan Shaw Herman Award for Distinguished Service. Referencing today's fragmented and polarized media, **Betsy Green '91**, chair of the selection committee, commended Read's "dedication to responsible journalism and journalistic integrity" when she presented the honor on May 10 at Concord Academy.

During his 40-year newspaper career, Read reported from all seven continents and more than 60 countries. He won two Pulitzer Prizes, journalism's highest honor, that speak to the impact a reporter can have: one for explaining Asia's financial crisis in the 1990s by following a container of french fries from a Northwest U.S. farm to a Singapore McDonald's, and the other, with three of his colleagues at *The Oregonian*, for exposing abuses by U.S. immigration officials.

"I was really lucky," Read says. "Somehow I discovered my passion early and stuck with it." He got his start at the CA student newspaper, *The Centipede*. In the tumultuous early 1970s, he modeled himself on journalists such as **Anthony Lewis P'76**, Seymour Hersh, Bob Woodward, and Carl Bernstein. He recalled a major scoop his friend **David Duffy '75** landed for *The Centipede* that detailed financial mismanagement attributed to a school trustee and resulting faculty layoffs, as well as his own outspoken editorial.

After graduating from Amherst College, Read began his newspaper career in Portland, Ore., at *The Oregonian*, where he covered breaking news and science and began doing investigative journalism. But he had always dreamed of being a foreign correspondent.

On a Henry Luce Foundation fellowship, he moved to Bangkok to write for *The Nation*, an English-language newspaper. Then Read freelanced in Tokyo until he convinced *The Oregonian* to open a bureau there. As a Tokyo-based foreign correspondent, he reported from North Korea, covered the war in Cambodia, and chronicled the economic opening of Russia and Vietnam.

Read finished his career as *The Los Angeles Times* bureau chief in Seattle, covering protests



and riots there and in Portland as well as the rise of the Proud Boys and other far-right organizations. During the pandemic, he broke the story of a superspreader event among choral singers that helped convince U.S. health officials that COVID-19 is transmitted through the air.

He retired in 2021 but continues to work as a freelance writer and on documentary films.

"The fact that so many newspapers are going out of business is beyond alarming," Read says. "It's hard to watch, and it's a threat to democracy." But he finds promise in a range of publication models—the digital adaptation of global leaders such as *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, hyper-local newspapers that still attract advertisers, and independent nonprofits such as ProPublica and The Marshall Project.

Read also sees value in AI as a tool for compiling information in seconds, such as graphs that previously required a laborious collaborative process with the newsroom art department. He doesn't see journalists being replaced anytime soon: "We will always need a person on the ground out there, observing, interviewing, trying to get facts."

LEARN MORE

Read more about Read and watch his speech at concordacademy.org/read.

Established in 1976 in honor of **Joan Shaw Herman '46**, an artist and advocate for people with disabilities, the Joan Shaw Herman Award for Distinguished Service is the only prize Concord Academy bestows. Given annually to an alum in recognition of service to others, the honor testifies to the global impact of CA's mission.

CA NEAR YOU

Following last year's Centennial Celebration, Concord Academy has been keeping community connections alive. We've engaged with CA alums on campus, online, and in several regional hubs where our graduates live.

During the 2023–24 school year, nearly

500

ALUMS
participated in

11

CA EVENTS
virtually, on campus,
and in Boston,
New York, and D.C.

JOIN US

Watch for future events in your area. In the 2024–25 school year, CA will host gatherings in New York and Chicago, and in 2025–26 we'll head to the West Coast.

Meisha Newman '94 and Zoe Coopridier Randol '94 at a D.C. regional gathering.

The Concord Academy Young Alum Community (CAYAC) was also active.

17

YOUNG ALUMS
attended

3

CAYAC college **GATHERINGS** at Wesleyan, Brown, and Columbia University/Barnard College, and more than

85

YOUNG ALUMS
attended

3

CAYAC regional **GATHERINGS** in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.



Right: Derrick White of the Boston Celtics at CA. **Inset:** Tom First '85, P'18 '20 '23.

A Different Kind of Pop

If you grew up outside New England, you might know soda as “pop.” But Culture Pop, the latest venture from **Tom First '85, P'18 '20 '23**, co-founder of Nantucket Nectars, has little in common with sugary root beer or cola. Instead, it's a probiotic soda flavored with organic fruit juice and herbs that is billed as “fruity, fizzy, gutsy.” Flavors include ginger lemon and turmeric, watermelon and lime, and black cherry.

Concord Academy became part of Culture Pop's story on April 13, when brand ambassador Derrick White, point guard for the Boston Celtics, shot a commercial in CA's gym. And **Inigo Hare '24** had the chance to pick up some skills as a production assistant.

NEED A LOCATION?

Consider CA for a film shoot or an event. Contact rentals@concordacadem.org.

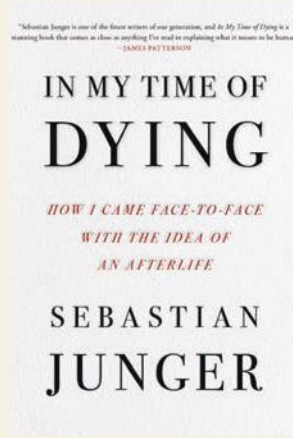


Creative Types



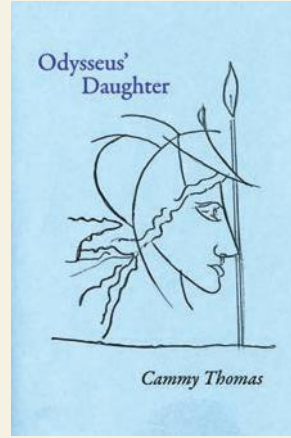
A Good Life
Frederica Steinberg '54
Damianos Publishing, 2024

For over 60 years, Steinberg and her husband, Arthur, shared a life filled with love, family, and abundant joy. Following his heartbreaking loss to dementia, Steinberg turned to poetry to reckon with her grief. In documenting their lives, from their newlywed stage to the emotional journey of caretaking, Steinberg finds healing in putting into words the moments of a good life.



In My Time of Dying: How I Came Face-to-Face with the Idea of an Afterlife
Sebastian Junger '80
Simon & Schuster, 2024

Following a harrowing trip to the emergency room, Junger examines his mortality and embarks on a quest to answer the most human of questions: What happens in the space between living and dying? Through personal observation and journalistic research, Junger reflects on near-death experiences and wrestles with the mystery of consciousness.



Odysseus' Daughter
Cammy Thomas,
former faculty
Parkman Press, 2024

Thomas draws on many years of teaching *The Odyssey* by giving voice to characters from Homer's epic who offer different perspectives on the hero's journey. We hear from his devoted Penelope, the innocent Nausicaa, the vengeful Scylla, and the loyal traveling companions who do not make it home. The poet also weaves in members of her own family who, like Odysseus, lose their way or boldly face the challenges set before them in their quest to return home.

FILMS

Desire Lines
Eugene Sun Park '96,
producer
Full Spectrum Features, 2024

Blending personal interviews, archival materials, and narrative fiction to explore the history of transmasculine sexuality, this hybrid feature film won the NEXT Special Jury Award at Sundance.



Winner
Susanna Fogel '98,
director
Big Beach, 2024

This biopic about former NSA translator-turned-whistleblower Reality Winner premiered at the Sundance Film Festival.



ALBUM

Pine Tree Flyers
Katie McNally '08,
Emily Troll, Owen Marshall, and Neil Pearlman
Acadia Recording Company, 2024

The self-titled debut album from the Maine-based Pine Tree Flyers shines new light on traditional New England music.

Then & Now



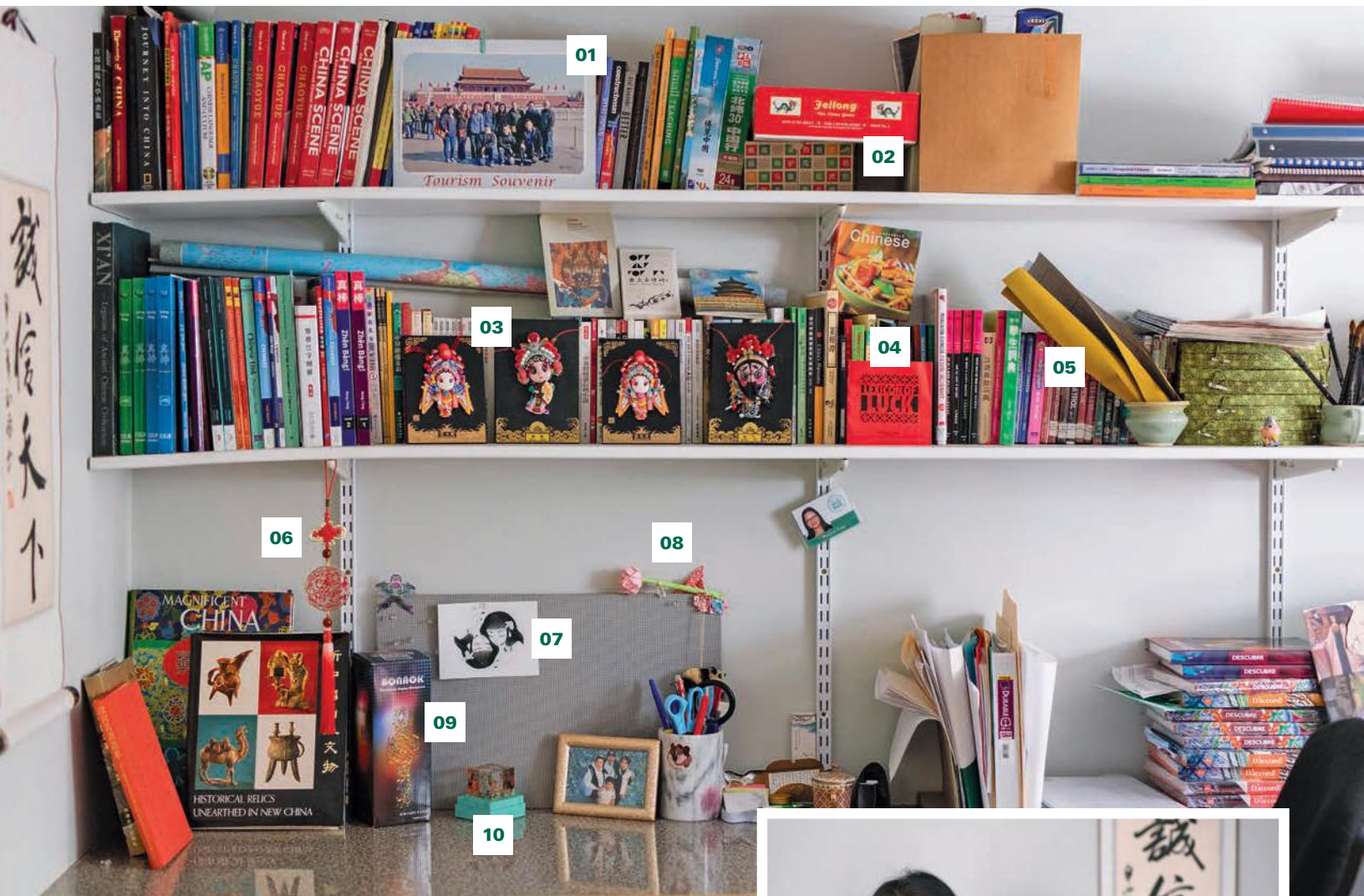
THEN: Julia Terry '59 and Henrietta Briggs Cosentino '59 refine busts in an art class.

3D Arts

The visual arts are thriving at CA, and clay remains a multifaceted expressive medium for students. See page 12 for more artwork from this semester.



NOW: CA students work on abstract sculptures in the ceramics studio.



WENJUN KUAI P'27, MANDARIN TEACHER

01. Group photo: History teacher **Ed Rafferty P'19 '21** and I took eight students on CA's first trip to China in 2012.

02. "Flying Dragon" Game: My students love the trivia in this Chinese cultural game.

03. Four figurines: From traditional Beijing opera—Mulan is the one on the left.

04. Lexicon of Luck: A gift from the Ginsburg family. **Joanna Fung P'16 '17 '23** brought it to me from Hong Kong, thinking I'd use it in class with my students during the Lunar New Year time.

05. Magic paper and brushes: My students make their own ink and practice calligraphy on these reusable sheets.

06. Paper cutting: My Zodiac sign, the monkey.

07. Black-and-white art: By my advisee **Isabel Li '24**.

08. Origami: **Chiara Wanandi '24** made these for me over the past three years, and I collected them.

09. Microphone in box: For my Mandarin 1 and 2 students to sing karaoke.



10. Paperweight: My first advanced Mandarin elective students gave me this when they graduated, 10 years ago.

11. Scroll: It says "common trust" Librarian Martha Kennedy gave it to me in 2010 when I started the Mandarin program at CA.





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