

URBAN ACADEMY

ROAR

NOVEMBER 2024



developing the
**.creative
innovators**
of tomorrow

ANNUAL GIVING

turning
generosity into
opportunity



Every contribution counts!



Donate Today
www.urbanacademy.ca/donate

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Rarely do we get the opportunity to pause and reflect on our history while simultaneously looking ahead with excitement to the future. Creating Urban Academy's first magazine was a gift in that sense, offering a chance to do just that over the past few months. From reconnecting with a UA alum who offered many reminders of where we have been, to learning about the exciting plans that will unfold in the months ahead, this process has been a powerful reminder of just how far Urban Academy has come.

As Editor of **Urban Academy Roar**, I find myself continually inspired by good stories. Stories of why people do what they do, what drives their passions and their desire to become changemakers in the world. I hope that as you turn the pages of this magazine, you will find those stories alongside images of smiling, hopeful, and accomplished students. Equally meaningful are the words from staff and parents who go above and beyond because they believe in the shared vision of what we're creating together.

I hope these stories will pull back the curtain a little for you. Just as we encourage our students to ask, 'Why?' and 'What's next?,' we believe these stories will help answer some of those questions for you. In these pages, you'll discover narratives of innovation, achievement, entrepreneurship, and connection—proof that Urban Academy is more than just a school. It's our hope that this first issue captures the essence of the UA spirit.

Also included is our Annual Report, written by our UA Board of Directors. It reflects the accomplishments of this past school year while offering insight into the course we have plotted. Their work underscores that UA is not only a school—it's a community. A place where we come together to learn, inspire, and make a difference, each in our own way. While this magazine can't contain all the stories we have to tell, it's a great start. I hope it fills you with pride and excitement for where we have been and where we are going—just as creating it did for me.



Warmly,
SONJA KENNEDY / Editor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1** Letter From the Editor
- 2** UA Student Leaders
- 4** Outdoor Education
- 6** Technology
- 8** Vision in Motion
- 9** Junior School Feature
- 10** Middle School Feature
- 12** Senior School Feature
- 14** Alumni Feature
- 16** Athletics Feature
- 18** Q&A With the Principals
- 20** Inspired by Community
- 22** Celebrating Our Grads
- 23** 2023/24 Student Awards
- 25** Post-Secondary Planning
- 26** The Global Classroom
- 28** CAIS Accreditation

2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT

- 30** Board Chair's Report
- 31** Head of School's Report
- 32** A Year of UA Student Achievements
- 34** Financial Report
- 35** Board Governance Report
- 35** Board Development Report
- 36** Facilities Report
- 38** Advancement Report

40 Important Dates

EDITOR SONJA KENNEDY
DESIGN TRAVIS SALAZAR

URBAN ACADEMY

466 Rousseau Street
New Westminster BC V3L 3R3
Canada

T: 604 524 2211

E: admin@urbanacademy.ca

www.urbanacademy.ca



QUIET STRENGTH AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

SONJA KENNEDY / *Editor*

At Urban Academy, student leadership emerges not just from titles but far more typically through initiative, teamwork, and an innate desire to make a difference. Many UA students embody these qualities, but two have been gracious to share their leadership journey with us: Rayah, Grade 10 and Cindy, Grade 12. Both students demonstrate a quiet yet powerful approach to leadership. Through their dedication to athletics, academics, the arts and student life, it is clear that they are leaving an indelible mark on the school community.

RAYAH, GRADE 10

Rayah, who began her educational journey at UA in Kindergarten, exemplifies leadership through action. For her, being a leader means stepping up, charting her own path, and wanting to help make the school she cares about, a better place for all.

Rayah's leadership began to take root through her involvement in athletics. She manages UA's Lions Instagram account, curating content for the community. "I saw the account wasn't as active as it could be, so I stepped in. It's been fun to watch it grow." Rayah also plays a vital role behind the scenes in other sports, handling stats and organizing scorekeepers for volleyball and basketball. A tall order with the number of games growing exponentially. This year she has taken on scheduling all student scorekeepers. Although not directly asked, she again saw a need and filled it. She shared the importance of reaching out to peers, getting buy-in, following up and taking on the responsibility to ensure that all games run smoothly, stepping in when needed.

Rayah acknowledges the importance of having Mr. Twaites, UA Athletic Director, trust her to take on these roles. "He's the teacher I am closest with I would say, so it has been great to be able to know that he has faith in me to take these things on." Mr. Twaites is grateful for her initiative adding that "Rayah is passionate about creating a meaningful experience for everyone involved in sports. She's more than just a supporter, she is always behind the scenes making sure everything runs smoothly."

Stepping up to help out wasn't always Rayah's first instinct though. "Before putting myself out there, I used to care a lot

about what other people thought," Rayah explains. "But now, I just focus on helping out, no matter what. I realize that people care less than you think they do, so it's really important to do what you think is right." This level of insight is one that even some adults continue to strive for.

Her influence extends beyond the gym. As a Student Ambassador, Rayah welcomes new students and guests to the school, eager to show them the things that make UA special to her. "Rayah's leadership began with athletics, but she has since become a trusted resource across various school activities," says Ms. Marsh. "Whether it's helping coach Grade 5–7 track and field or leading her house team with enthusiasm, she is always ready to contribute."

She also has an astute awareness about how to get things done. She shows initiative, plants the seed of ideas (spirit week may be on the way), knows who to talk to to get things rolling, and understands the importance of stepping out in courage. "I'm just not afraid to ask, to see things that could be even better, to make a plan and give it a try." A true Canadian child, she quotes our hockey great, Wayne Gretzky, adding "you miss 100% of the shots you don't take," I think about that all the time, it's always worth trying."

Rayah's leadership style is subtle yet effective. She doesn't seek the spotlight but enjoys motivating others. "I'm not loud about it. I don't pretend to know more than anyone else, I'm just here to help." Throughout the interview, it became evident the care she has for her school, at one time, point blank asking her "You must love this place," and with a shy smile, she emphatically agreed.



Rayah (Grade 10) and Cindy (Grade 12)

CINDY, GRADE 12

Newer along the UA Student trajectory is Cindy who joined UA last year in Grade 11. Not taking long to jump in, she led UA's Business Club last year at the Prosper Business Conference, as well as Green Team initiatives, and stepped up to MC assemblies.

This year, she's doubling down on her efforts, continuing to lead the Business Club but also making plans for the Green Team, leading environmental initiatives like sharing the children's storybook she has written on climate change herself with UA's younger students, and preparing for school-wide Earth Week activities. She has also been shoulder-tapped to write a grant application to receive government funding for the garden project next door planned for the spring. Ms. Marsh reflects on Cindy with pride: "as a new student last year, she quickly distinguished herself as a leader. She's been instrumental in revitalizing the Green Team and is always looking for ways to support and inspire her peers. She truly leads by example."

Cindy views leadership as a balance of guiding, motivating, and as she so aptly puts it, "harmonizing voices." A dedicated academic and active participant in extracurriculars, Cindy

steps into leadership roles naturally, recognizing the value of collaboration. For her, leadership is about serving others and bringing out the best in her peers. "I think everyone is born to be a leader," she says. "But no leader can succeed alone. It's important to collaborate, listen, and work well with others."

In the Performing Arts, Cindy is the Wind Ensemble's Assistant Director and Percussion Leader. "Cindy's initiative is incredible," says Mrs. Kilpatrick, "she goes above and beyond to help her peers. Whether it's checking in with others or creating how-to videos for band members who may be facing a challenge, Cindy makes sure everyone feels supported." A student who keeps her feet firmly planted in the present, but keeps an eye to the future, she is keenly aware that by encouraging others, she paves the way for them to do the same for others—multiplying her efforts and impacting the wider student body.

Cindy's vision of leadership is forward-thinking. She believes in leaving a legacy that serves future students. An incredibly helpful and valuable vision for a JK to Grade 12 school!

Both Rayah and Cindy demonstrate that leadership at UA is not about holding a title or being in the spotlight. Instead, it's about stepping up, collaborating, and making an impact. Both students speak gratefully about the opportunities they have had, with a recognition that there are younger eyes watching and learning from them, proving that leadership is about service, empathy, and the willingness to step up when it matters most.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE! LESSONS YOU WON'T FIND IN A CLASSROOM

CLARE MANIFOLD / *Outdoor Education Lead 4–9*

There is something powerful about the growth that occurs when we step out of our comfort zones to try something new. New experiences open up worlds of possibilities, expanding our understanding of both ourselves and the world around us. While students who grow up in the city develop skills that help them thrive in that environment, a well-rounded education offers opportunities to explore entirely different ways of being.

This year at Urban Academy, outdoor education is taking center stage in the middle school. We are intentional about this timing because the middle school years are critical for developing a child's self-esteem. Facing and overcoming new challenges during this period helps students build confidence, which then translates to many other areas of their learning and lives.

To kick off the program, Grades 6 and 7 ventured to Gibsons Farm this fall for an immersive, hands-on experience. Students interacted with animals, learning how to care for them while gaining a deeper understanding of the work involved in sustaining a farm. After harvesting crops and preparing dinner from their spoils, they practiced using hand tools and even learned how to start and maintain a fire—valuable skills that many experienced for the first time. The goal of such excursions is for students to leave with not only a greater appreciation for where their food comes from, but also practical knowledge and skills to apply in their everyday lives. (Plus, they had a great time!)

In June, students in Grades 4 through 8 will participate in various outdoor camps along the West Coast. Each camp offers unique opportunities for team-building, outdoor skills training, and environmental stewardship. While some students may have had these kinds of experiences with their families, these trips offer new, intentional opportunities that they likely won't encounter elsewhere. They consistently step out of their comfort zones,

collaborate with peers, and deepen their relationship with the natural world.

In addition to tangible skills, outdoor education fosters self-sufficiency, problem-solving, and teamwork in ways that a traditional classroom cannot replicate. By spending time in natural environments, students engage in learning that is tactile, immediate, and grounded in real-world experiences. For anyone who has spent time in nature, we also know that it can promote resilience. Navigating challenges—whether it's caring for animals or building something with their hands—helps students develop confidence and perseverance. These experiences teach them to approach problem-solving creatively and collaboratively.

What stands out most about Urban Academy students during these experiences is their growth in responsibility and curiosity. They embrace the opportunity to care for the world around them and often return from these trips with a deeper sense of stewardship and appreciation for the environment. Whether learning about sustainable farming at Gibsons or mountain biking in Squamish, students develop a richer connection to the world.

Over the years, we've seen students so profoundly impacted by outdoor education that it influenced their choice of study and post-secondary plans. They value the opportunity to glimpse what's possible in a future career or field of study. Witnessing students embrace these experiences with such vigour reinforces what we know to be true: outdoor education does much more than enrich academic learning. It helps shape well-rounded, thoughtful individuals who value their environment and begin to understand the interdependence between nature and society.





BUILDING FUTURE-READY STUDENTS: THE ED TECH WAY

ASHLEY BAYLES / Ed Tech Coach

DOUG MCQUIGGAN / Ed Tech Coach

Preparing students for the future means equipping them with essential skills to navigate a rapidly evolving digital world. Leading this initiative are two dedicated Ed Tech Coaches: Mr. McQuiggan (Kindergarten–Grade 5), and Ms. Bayles (Grades 6–12). Together, they ensure that both teachers and students are ready to leverage technology to enhance learning, build tech literacy, and become innovative thinkers.

Though Mr. McQuiggan and Ms. Bayles work with different age groups, their collaboration is crucial. Each coach brings a unique set of skills to the table, but they work together to create a cohesive learning experience for all students. Their goal is clear: by the time students reach Grade 9, they should be well-versed in a range of digital skills. This is achieved through a carefully developed scope and sequence, which ensures that skills are built upon year after year, allowing for a seamless progression.

At UA, it is important to distinguish between Educational Technology (Ed Tech) and Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies (ADST). While ADST predominantly focuses on the design cycle—where students work through projects involving design, creation, and reflection—Ed Tech encompasses a broader spectrum of skills. Ed Tech Coaches ensure that teachers and students are not only proficient in technology but also using it in ways that enhance learning.

In the early years, the focus is on building foundational skills. Mr. McQuiggan, for example, recently worked with Grade 1 students using Ozobots and Beebots—tools that teach early coding, problem-solving skills and computational thinking. Grade 2 students use Book Creator, an app that introduces them to digital publishing. It teaches them how to layout content, choose colours, and design pages—a first step towards more advanced presentation skills they'll develop later. In Kindergarten through Grade 3, students explore tech through iPad apps like Kodable, Scratch & Scratch Jr., and Seesaw, growing their digital confidence in a way that feels like play but is laying the groundwork for more complex learning to come.

Grade 4 and 5 students continue to grow their tech skills. Robotics is part of their exploration rotation, in which they begin coding with Edisons, programmable robots. They then move on to SPIKE robotics, which incorporates the LEGO platform.



“Ed Tech Coaches ensure that teachers and students are not only proficient in technology but also using it in ways that enhance learning.”





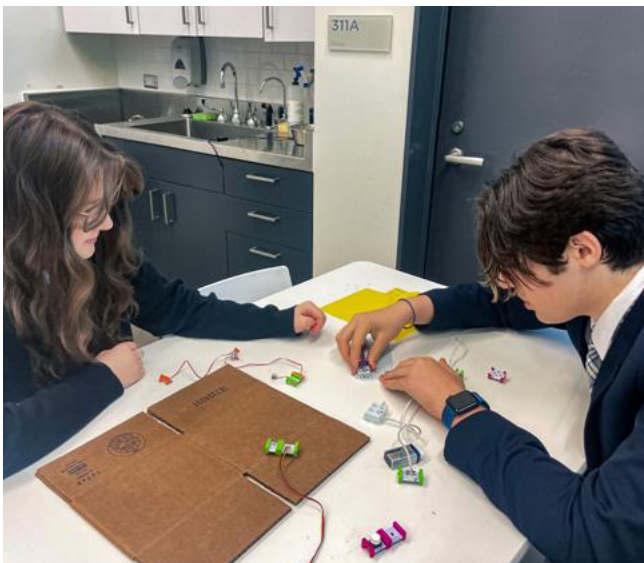
Additionally, students learn to use Google Workspace, mastering Google Classroom and Google Drive to manage their work and collaborate with peers. By Grades 6 and 7, students further integrate technology into their explorations, and through courses like Photography 7, they continue to develop tech skills alongside ADST-based design projects. Joining a Robotics Team also becomes an option, providing competition opportunities for students interested in pursuing deeper knowledge in robotics and engineering.

In Grades 8 and 9, students dive deeper into more specialized areas of technology. Here, Ed Tech and ADST come together, as students take on challenges like 3D printing, coding, and robotics engineering. These hands-on projects push them to apply their tech skills in creative and practical ways. In addition to the design challenges, students become more familiar with executive functioning tools in advisory classes, where they learn how to manage their Google Calendar and Drive, helping them organize their workloads and prioritize tasks.



For students in Grades 9-12, the focus shifts to more advanced technologies, such as Glowforge laser cutting and the Cricut die cutter. Elective courses in Technology Explorations, Robotics & Engineering, and AP Computer Science Principles offer them a chance to take ownership of their learning, bringing their creativity and problem-solving abilities to the next level.

UA is intentional about empowering students with the skills and confidence to excel in the digital age. It begins with the thoughtful work of Ed Tech Coaches and staff who ensure that students leave UA not just prepared—but ready to innovate. With this strong foundation, students are equipped to thrive in a world where technology and creativity go hand in hand.



BRINGING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN TO LIFE

KATE BEGENT-CONNORS / *Board Chair*

MIKE SLINGER / *Head of School*

In a world where predicting the future is increasingly challenging due to the rapid pace of technological and social advances, UA is positioning itself to meet the needs of an ever-evolving world. Therefore, the school's future must be one of adaptability, innovation, and community. With careers likely to change faster than ever, the focus is not on teaching specific skills but on teaching students *how* to learn. This adaptability is critical as future graduates will need the capacity for flexible thinking and the ability to adjust to new challenges. That's why UA emphasizes experiential education, giving students a breadth of experiences rather than a narrow focus, ensuring they try a variety of activities and subjects to determine what they're passionate about and what they are not. This approach is rooted in the belief that ***Educating for Tomorrow*** requires a strong sense of community and teamwork, alongside the ability to think critically and creatively.

Another core principle of UA's strategy is empowering students to be changemakers. This year, introducing Community Connections 8/9 Course allows students to make a difference for causes and initiatives they care about. It enables students to seek out injustices and learn about how they can improve society. By instilling this mindset and experience, students not only develop passions for various causes but also learn how to contribute to meaningful change, no matter where they find themselves.

Although UA shares many values and aspirations with their independent school peers, what sets us apart is our relative youth. Founded in 2001 and opening the current building on Rousseau Street in 2019, UA's nature is that of agility and responsiveness to modern educational needs. As such, we are often described as 'spry' and likely why 'the Entrepreneurial Spirit' is the value that our families connect with most! It is our youth that enables us to adapt quickly to changing demands and opportunities, with new programs and courses being expanded regularly to enhance the educational experience



for students across all grades. We have thoughtfully and purposely transitioned from a small school to a medium-sized one, successfully preserving the close-knit community that has always been our hallmark. Students, parents, and staff alike are deeply interconnected, and we continue to prioritize this sense of belonging.

Looking forward, UA is planning for steady, strategic growth. Our current facility design allows for a student population of 520 (from a current 430), with double cohorts from Kindergarten through Grade 12—a capacity we are gradually approaching. As we grow, UA will bring on additional staff, including specialized teachers in various subjects, to meet the demands of a larger student body. This growth also means that we must carefully consider how to make the best use of our physical space as the demand for specialized spaces like the gym, makerspace and theatre increases significantly. The Urban Academy community will need to tap into its entrepreneurial spirit in order to ensure our facilities continue to meet the needs of our growing population and evolving programs.

As we adapt and expand, the values that have defined UA will remain steadfast. The sense of community, the collaboration between students, parents, and staff, and the feeling of interconnectedness across the entire school are all aspects we will preserve. We are committed to ensuring that the school retains the UA trademarks of close relationships and a strong sense of belonging. We also take pride in remaining accessible to a broad range of families and continue to explore ways to expand financial aid and scholarships to support this inclusivity.

Finally, as we look to the future, we remain deeply appreciative of the community members who have helped build UA into the thriving school it is today. Their efforts have laid the foundation for our continued success. It is now, our community of today, that needs to work together to create a legacy for current and future generations of UA students. With a focus on adaptability, community, and a forward-thinking mindset, Urban Academy is well-positioned to meet the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

CREATING CONNECTIONS: A COLLABORATIVE JOURNEY

AMY MORRELL / *Junior School Facilitator*

As any parent of young children knows, Junior School students make an incredible amount of progress from September to June. As the months pass, students become more independent and develop a better understanding of expected behaviours. For UA Kindergarten students, this might look like practicing their hallway transitions with care and respect. For Grade 2 students, it could be independently learning what it means to be an ‘upstander’—a good friend and classmate who helps resolve conflicts.

There is intentionality in teaching that supports students as they grow and are ready to learn more complex skills and concepts. A key feature that enriches their learning environment and sets UA apart from other schools is our transdisciplinary model of education. It may sound like a bit of educational jargon, but it means that homeroom and specialist teachers work closely together, integrating subjects and skills across disciplines. This collaboration encourages students to connect different areas of knowledge and apply them to real-world issues—much like they will be challenged to do as adults.

These experiences vary by age. For example, as part of their Unit of Inquiry, Urban Academy Grade 3 students explore how diverse cultures and values impact the collective well-being of their community as a whole. Students then work with their Health & Wellness Teacher to understand the importance of their own well-being and discover practices they can use to promote healthy habits as well as support the well-being of others.

This kind of planning between staff can span subject areas, making learning more engaging and building a deeper understanding of any given concept. In this example, not only do students come to understand the importance of societal well-being, but they also learn how they, as individuals, can contribute to it. These collaborative efforts between homeroom and specialist teachers foster critical thinking, creativity, and social-emotional learning.

Outdoor experiences are also paramount to the development of younger children and play a key role in our transdisciplinary model. Time in nature is essential, helping students develop physical, social, and cognitive skills in a relaxed but ever-changing environment. When students of different ages come together, it promotes collaboration, leadership, and social skills as younger students learn from older peers and build confidence through interaction.



“...planning between staff can span subject areas, making learning more engaging and building a deeper understanding of any given concept.”



Each grade in the Junior School has regular nature walk afternoons to allow for these experiences, while the entire Junior School takes part in outdoor activities like Fall Activity Day at Hume Park. This event is a wonderful opportunity for Kindergarten to Grade 3 students to learn and play together, building the foundational skills and relationships that will support their future success both academically and socially.

This transdisciplinary approach is what enables students to go from remembering and reciting to knowing and understanding. It also allows students to grow essential academic skills but with the learning required to become well-rounded individuals. By integrating learning across subjects and creating meaningful connections between the classroom and the world beyond, they develop the tools to think critically and thrive.



BUILDING CONFIDENCE & CONNECTION IN MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS

CLARE MANIFOLD / *Middle School Facilitator*

At Urban Academy, our Grades 4–7 Middle School Program constitutes some very dynamic years. Walking through the third floor brings with it vibrancy, activity, sound (some may call it noise) and an incredible amount of life! Much like the 8–12 year olds you are familiar with, there are always exciting and new things happening in Middle School.

One key unique feature of the UA Middle School Program is the platoon model, where each grade level benefits from two core teachers who share responsibility for teaching different subjects. This system allows teachers to focus more deeply on their areas of expertise while building strong relationships with students. It also helps students experience the transition from a homeroom structure to the rotating classes of Senior School in a more supportive and manageable way. Students thrive with this focused attention, as teachers collaborate to better understand individual learning styles, strengths, and areas for growth.

These are crucial years in which students become increasingly more independent. Whether that is moving between classrooms or choosing their own extracurriculars, UA students are challenged to take charge of their learning and school experience. With extracurriculars (robotics, art, drama, Lego, or athletics, to name a few) that appeal



“Walking through the third floor brings with it vibrancy, activity, sound (some may call it noise) and an incredible amount of life!”





to most students, middle schoolers are able to explore new interests or pursue a passion. As educators we often see them try, maybe fail, and possibly fall in love with a new skill or talent they have discovered. Whether it is a positive or not-so-positive experience, it gives them the confidence to try new things and take an active role in their learning, a skill needed for life ahead in Senior School.

These are also key years for fostering a sense of responsibility and having students take ownership of their learning. Teachers help guide them in setting goals, managing time, and developing critical thinking skills that really start to emerge in these years. We see students stepping up, both academically and socially, as they build the confidence to tackle challenges and collaborate with peers. As they take on new responsibilities, they develop their own skills of agency and leadership, both characteristics that will equip them for academic and personal success.

A highlight this year has been the 'social zone' at recess and lunch breaks. This unique space allows students in Grades 4–7

to hang out, read books, play board games, and socialize as larger cross-grade groups. As a smaller school, Urban Academy has been intentional about offering opportunities for students to build connections with other students outside their age groups. This is why you will also notice the Explorations Rotation spanning Grades 4 & 5, Grades 6 & 7—and then Advisory classes spanning Grades 8 & 9 and Grades 10–12 respectively. Creating opportunities for wider social circles offers more opportunities for personal growth and development.

Overall, the Middle School Program is designed to guide students through a critical phase of development with intention and care while building bonds with teachers. It is a place where students are encouraged to take risks, explore their interests, and develop into confident, independent learners. We are fortunate as their teachers, to be able to witness this every day. As they transition through these vibrant years, students are empowered to take charge of their own learning, build meaningful connections with their peers, and cultivate the skills needed for success in Senior School and beyond.

BETWEEN CHILDHOOD AND ADULthood: A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY

EMILY MARSH / Senior School Facilitator

When I thought about what to write for this article, I wavered between sharing all of the incredible experiences and opportunities our students have, and offering what is perhaps some unique insight into UA's Senior School. Because unique insights are just that—unique—I have opted to do just that, as I know program information can be found elsewhere.

I have been asked several times why I chose to teach high school. If you had asked me this question when I started my career, I would have said it was because I wanted to share my passion for Math and Science with an age group who could appreciate its complexity. However, as I expanded my experiences with youth and deepened my understanding of their development, my answer to that question has changed significantly.

As adults, it can feel natural to make quick assumptions about teenagers. We see it all the time in movies, on social media, and even in memes and satirical videos. What can easily be forgotten or overlooked is that these years are some of the most challenging to navigate, and a time when a lot is expected of each child. They are juggling academic pressures, social dynamics and personal growth, all while trying to figure out who they are and make decisions that could ultimately determine where they fit into this world. It is easy to overlook the struggles they face and the resilience they are forced to develop during these formative years.

For a moment, think about a 13-year-old compared to an 18-year-old. The changes that occur over those five years are truly remarkable—emotional, physical, and psychological transformations happen at an incredible pace. During this time, having a trusted adult for support is crucial, whether that person is a parent, friend, or in some cases, a teacher. So when I think about why I work in the UA Senior School today, my answer is a lot simpler: to make a positive impact on at least one student's day, every day, in the hopes that I can help make these years just a little bit easier.

By the time students reach Senior School, they are no longer children, but not quite adults either. This space in between offers an intense opportunity for growth. They are starting to figure out who they are, what they care about, and how they fit into the



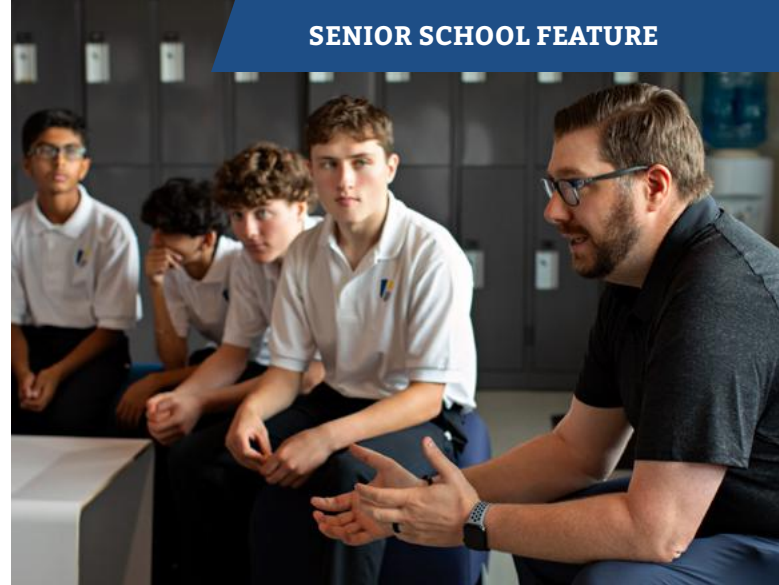
"...to make a positive impact on at least one student's day, every day, in the hopes that I can help make these years just a little bit easier."





world. I have had the privilege of witnessing this transformation year after year, and seeing students go from shy, unsure, and disconnected, to confident leaders with strong connections, a vision for their future and a path to get there. I honestly believe that this is the beauty of what is taking place over the 5 critical years in UA's Senior School.

What excites me most is watching students find their voice as they develop the confidence to express their ideas and opinions. They are also learning how to solve problems on their own which, as we know, comes with its fair share of 'learning experiences' or, more accurately, 'mistakes.' It is all part of the process. Teenagers naturally take risks and test boundaries, and through this exploration (and occasional error) they build the independence and resilience that will serve them well in adulthood.

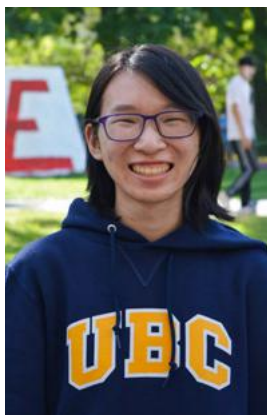


One of the most fulfilling aspects of teaching is the relationships we are able to build with students and the growth we witness. It is an incredible feeling to see a student walk across the stage at graduation. In many ways, it feels like crossing the finish line of a marathon—one we didn't fully realize we had signed up for! Although we are not their parents, the pride we have for each of our graduates is something we feel deeply honoured to share. It is not lost on me that this is a privilege we have as a smaller school—that these relationships are not only possible, but commonplace.

Working with Senior students is both a challenge and a privilege. They are navigating one of the most transformative periods of their lives. As educators, we have the incredible opportunity, along with their parents, to guide them through it. Whether it's helping them master a complex subject, providing support during a tough moment, or simply being there to listen, we are not just teaching—we are contributing to the shaping of who they are becoming. Watching these young individuals evolve is the greatest reward. It reminds us that education is not just about academics; it's about growth, connection, and preparing students for the world ahead. We are proud to be a part of that journey, and we're deeply invested in helping each student reach their full potential, one step at a time.



STAGE TO STEM: URBAN ACADEMY ALUMNI INNOVATING OUR TOMORROW



An interview with Annie Wei (UA Class of 2020)

SONJA KENNEDY / Editor

In June of 2020, Annie Wei walked across the stage as the only graduate from Urban Academy that year, a unique event that she was able to experience amidst the challenges of the pandemic when graduation ceremonies were sidelined. Now, as she nears graduation from the University of British Columbia's Mechatronics Program (a blend of mechanical, electrical and computer engineering), Annie reflects on the lasting impact of her time at UA, where she started as a Grade 2 student and grew into a confident, accomplished young woman.

Annie's memories of Urban Academy are filled with moments of connection—whether through the arts, close-knit community events, or cross-grade friendships. “One of my most memorable experiences was the show choir trip to Disneyland,” she recalls. “It gave me the chance to connect with students from other grades, and I still talk about it with my university friends.” The trip, which happened just before the COVID-19 pandemic, has become one of her cherished memories, allowing her opportunities to foster bonds across ages and beyond academics.

UA's small-school environment gave her the flexibility and support to excel. Though classes were small, she never felt alone in her journey, crediting teachers like Ms. Herman for her readiness in challenging subjects like calculus. “The strong foundation I built at UA prepared me for university-level courses,” she explains, noting how her understanding of complex math concepts made the transition to UBC smoother.

Reflecting on the teachers and mentors who shaped her path, Annie recalls Ms. Brooke and Ms. Kilpatrick, who encouraged her to explore behind-the-scenes roles in both theatre production and music. “I'm not huge on getting on stage, but I loved being a stage manager,” Annie says. “Ms. Brooke gave me many opportunities to manage productions, and that's where I found joy in putting everything together.” These



experiences taught her the value of collaboration, a skill that has proven essential in her current work with the UBC Thunderbots, a robotics competition team.

As part of the UBC Thunderbots, Annie applied her knowledge in mechatronics to help the team place 4th in Division B of the Small Size League at the 2023 RoboCup competition in France. She sees direct connections between the collaborative spirit at UA and the teamwork required in her university projects. "I was always encouraged to push beyond my comfort zone, whether in theatre or Model UN. That spirit of trying something new has stuck with me throughout university."

Annie's career path in mechatronics has her working at the intersection of innovation and practicality. Having always felt like she was able to try new things and connect her learning, she has had the confidence to pursue this multidisciplinary field. "At school, if there was something you wanted to try, you'd get the chance," she reflects, noting the variety of experiences in which she was able to participate.

While her academics catapulted her down the path of a successful engineering degree, she credits many of the 'extras' she was exposed to—stage management, show choir, volleyball, MUN and learning to conduct the Junior Band as a Grade 12 student—for fuelling her current passions. "I love musicals, because of the musical theatre I got to do—that's my side hobby. I started a group chat with some friends I took to see some musicals so now, even if I can't go to a production, my friends might get a group together to go—I feel like I did that, my impact on my friend group is to get them exposed to and excited about the arts!" She also credits those extras with her ability to feel comfortable public speaking, working with a diverse group of students, and building her very valuable transferable skills.



A valuable lesson that she still carries with her is the value of mentorship and cross-grade connections. "The mentorship and companionship I received from older students is something I want to pay forward." She fondly remembers being supported and encouraged by older peers and now offers guidance to younger UBC students in her program, helping them navigate the challenges of university—paying it forward.

Having completed two Co-Op terms—and gaining experience in mechanical and electrical engineering, as well as project management—Annie is excited to enter the workforce upon graduating in Spring 2025. Ultimately, she defines a successful career as one that is meaningful to her, where she enjoys the work and can build positive relationships with colleagues. Hearing Annie speak about her experiences, I have no doubt that she will find the success she is seeking.

As Annie Wei looks to the future, she embodies the core of Urban Academy's vision of educating for tomorrow. Whether through her work in robotics, her commitment to mentorship, or her dedication to finding meaningful and innovative ways to apply her engineering skills, Annie is a true testament to the lasting impact of a well-rounded educational program.

Her advice to current students? "Look ahead and think about what you want from your future. It doesn't have to be scary—try everything, even the things that seem daunting. You might find you love it, and those experiences will shape who you become."



THE HEART OF A LION: THE RISE OF UA ATHLETICS

MIKE TWAITES / *Athletic Director*

On any given day before or after school, the Lions' Den comes alive with players of all ages. Some are burgeoning athletes with years of training, while others are newly discovering a passion for sport. Together, they build their skills, balancing a love for the game with a healthy competitive spirit. Regardless of age, sport, or skill level, one thing is clear: Athletics at Urban Academy has seen significant growth over the past few years.

This surge in popularity and participation has created a sense of excitement, with students joining not just for competition but for the camaraderie and fun of playing alongside friends. These experiences create lasting memories, both on and off the court, strengthening bonds within the school community. The growing participation and success of UA's athletic teams reflects not only an increasing number of opportunities but also a deep commitment from staff, parents, and even grandparent volunteer coaches. With many members of the UA community stepping up to share their experience and expertise, an increasingly robust Athletics program has emerged.

Participation in Athletics offers students more than physical exercise. Whether defending space, protecting a net, scoring points, or encouraging teammates from the sidelines, students learn the importance of working together to achieve common goals. Practice is crucial, as it's where athletes hone their skills and develop the cohesion needed for success: through these sessions, students quickly realize that individual efforts contribute to a larger team dynamic, where each player's role is essential.

Basketball is a prime example of UA Athletics' growth. In 2017, there were no teams at UA, but by the 2023/24 season, participation had soared to 84 students across various age groups. The 2024/25 season has seen about 90 students register to participate. In addition to increased participation, the school-wide appreciation for basketball has skyrocketed, fanned by the spirited Junior Boys games, culminating in a UA-hosted tournament last spring where students of all ages were able to emphatically cheer on the UA Lions! The trend of increased participation extends across other sports as well, with 35–40 students joining cross-country and track and field each season, 25 players on two soccer teams, and 30–35 athletes participating in ultimate frisbee.

UA's Senior School teams, competing in the Greater Vancouver Independent School Athletic Association (GVISAA), have also made strides. They've qualified for playoffs and achieved success in various sports, including volleyball where they've placed third, and track and field and aquatics, with students qualifying for provincials. As



participation increases, so too does the level of competition, and UA's teams are rising to meet these challenges.

One of last year's standout achievements came from the UA Upper Middle Girls' Basketball Team. Comprised of athletes in Grades 5, 6, and 7, the team competed all year at the Grade 7 level, finishing second in their year-end tournament—a remarkable feat considering most of their competition consisted of older students. I'm pleased to report that this year, with the increase in numbers, we have separate teams for Grade 5 Girls and Grade 6/7 Girls.

We have also seen other UA teams step up and work together to play against more seasoned or older teams and come through it with greater grit, skill and determination than they had before. This is all part of the steps it takes to grow a program. Occasionally students have to work together to face adversity, but these experiences are never a loss. For those who have been part of the 'building' of a program, team or even company or organization, the rewards do come, occasionally right away and other times in hindsight, but these opportunities are never for naught. For the 2024/25 year, there is excitement about continuing this upward trajectory. The goal is to see UA teams not only compete at higher levels but also begin to bring home championships. The hope is to see banners proudly displayed in the gym, showcasing the success of our Lions athletes.

Much of this progress is fuelled by the support of parents and families. Their involvement—whether coaching, cheering from the sidelines, driving to and from games, or contributing in other ways—has been invaluable to the growth of UA Athletics. The enthusiasm of our families helps create an environment where students feel supported and motivated to do their best.

As the Athletics program continues to expand, one of the greatest lessons comes from the athletes themselves. They consistently demonstrate resilience in moments of both victory and challenge. In earlier years, when success was more elusive, students never wavered. They approached every game with smiles and determination, which has contributed to the program's steady growth. This blend of competitive spirit and sportsmanship has become the UA Lions brand—a brand that, as members of the Urban Academy community, we can all be proud of.



INNOVATIONS & LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION



BRENDA BALL
Principal



KHATEREH DADAR
Associate Principal

As education continues to evolve, schools are adapting to meet new challenges and opportunities, and are integrating new advancements in the field. In this Q&A, Ms. Ball and Ms. Dadar, UA's Principals, discuss recent changes and explore how UA is integrating those advances. They also share what they are most looking forward to in the coming year.

How is education in the Junior School changing, and how is Urban Academy keeping pace?

Ms. Dadar: *One significant shift we've seen in Education Theory in recent years is in how early literacy is taught. The advances in the science of reading have brought attention to the importance of structured early literacy lessons. Research shows that children benefit from explicit, systematic phonics instruction, as well as a focus on phonemic awareness. We have adopted the Ufli Foundations program, developed by the University of Florida Literacy Institute, which is designed to support early reading by focusing on foundational skills like fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This shift ensures that our Junior School students are developing strong literacy skills that are backed by the latest research in education, cognitive psychology and neuroscience.*

Can you tell us more about how Senior Students are graded, and how parents can track their progress?

Ms. Ball: *Standards-based grading is an exciting development. Instead of traditional letter grades, we're using a system that measures student progress against specific learning objectives. The MySchool Gradebook helps teachers and Grade 8-12 students track progress in a clear and accessible way, offering more meaningful and regular feedback. Having a common language around learning standards allows students and parents to understand exactly what is expected and where growth is needed. It's a more transparent and supportive way to approach assessment. It also helps students learn responsibility and independence as they review their progress themselves.*

What is an opportunity we are maximizing at UA?

Ms. Dadar: *One thing that is a significant opportunity is our urban environment. We embrace the fact that our students are learning in the heart of a city. This gives them access to cultural, academic, and professional opportunities that aren't always available in more suburban or rural settings. It's amazing how many field trips are accessible to us by hopping on the Skytrain, and—new this year—our Activity Bus. We see this as the future of education—students engaging with the city and learning from its diverse experiences.*

What is happening that is new at UA, that parents may not yet know about?

Ms. Ball: One of the key areas we're focusing on is building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities. This involves more than just integrating Indigenous content into the curriculum—it's about practicing patience and reflection, and taking the time to honour processes that strengthen those relationships. We're learning that meaningful change requires both deep engagement and a long-term commitment to relationship-building. This is good life learning: that connection and reflection are important aspects of all of our relationships.

Can you share some innovative new programs currently happening at UA?

Ms. Ball: We're always exploring new ways to connect our students to the world around them. One program we're really proud of is **Community Connections 8 & 9**, which brings students into direct contact with the community through service learning and civic engagement projects. This fosters a sense of responsibility and empowerment, and it helps students understand their role in contributing to society. We have two hands: one for helping ourselves, and one for helping others. This course keeps students actively engaged, recognizing where they can and how they can contribute to the greater good.

Our **Explorations Program for Grades 4–7** is another area where we're pushing boundaries. Students are given time to explore topics outside of their core subjects—things like design, technology, media communications, robotics, and global citizenship. It gives them a chance to engage deeply in areas they're passionate about, as well as areas that underpin a future-focused education.

Outdoor learning is also expanding, with the **Yukon Grade 8/9 Trip** offering students a chance to experience outdoor education in an incredibly unique environment. The exposure to wilderness and experiential learning opportunities are something we're excited to keep building on. The recent **Grade 6/7 Gibsons Farm** trip also offered an experience like no other for our upper middle students!

Ms. Dadar: Keeping with the theme of literacy, and with the support of our UA Ed Tech Coaches, we have integrated additional technology and tech tools into our literacy education and Units of Inquiry. By combining technology with Language Arts, students expand their skills in both, and this helps to keep learning engaging and fun. As we continue to innovate year after year, and our staff bring new ideas and opportunities to the table, learning becomes enriched and more impactful for our students.

What are you most excited about at UA?

Ms. Dadar: More field trip opportunities with the newly acquired Activity Bus! We aim to use public transit whenever possible, but not all destinations are accessible by public transit. Experiential learning is an integral part of the transdisciplinary model we have adopted in Junior school. More field trips mean more authentic learning experiences, and more opportunities to learn from the experts in the field.

Ms. Ball: The thing I'm most excited about is seeing teachers and students fully embracing the language and values from our Profile of the Graduate (page 24). This is the foundation of everything we do at UA—preparing students to be changemakers, collaborators, and critical thinkers. Watching our community internalize this vision is incredibly rewarding. Every day, we see it reflected in classrooms, projects, and how students interact with one another.



A STORY OF PASSION AND RELATIONSHIPS

An Interview With Tina Parmar, PAX Chair
SONJA KENNEDY / Editor

*“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”
 ~Winston Churchill*

These words perfectly capture the ethos that drives Tina Parmar, now in her third year as the PAX (Parent Auxiliary) Chair at Urban Academy and the proud mother of two daughters in Grades 5 and 7. Her journey as a volunteer is a testament to the transformative power of community engagement, both for herself and for the school she loves.



Tina's passion for volunteering goes beyond personal growth and fulfillment. For her, volunteering is about modelling positive values like empathy, social responsibility, and the importance of giving back. “I have seen it again and again, parents who volunteer strengthen their relationship with their children, and also set an example of contributing to the community,” she says. In a world that can often feel divided, Tina believes that coming together as a community is more important than ever. “At the end of the day, we all want the same thing for our children: to have a positive experience. Volunteering brings us back to that common goal.”

Tina's journey with Urban Academy began in an unexpected way. Initially intimidated by the idea of joining PAX, she started small by organizing a bake sale. “It was a one-off event at first, but with the support from PAX, it grew from there.” Eventually, she felt confident enough to join PAX and has been a driving force ever since.

What inspired Tina to take on more responsibility? Her daughters. “They were so excited about school and loved it so much that I knew I wanted to support that,” she recalls. Their enthusiasm for Urban Academy motivated her to dive deeper into her volunteer role. “Even if they weren't so excited, I still would have gotten involved because I feel so blessed by the positive experience we've had at UA.”

As PAX Chair, Tina's role is to foster collaboration between the school and parents, enhancing the experience for all students. From planning events to supporting other parents in leadership roles, Tina takes pride in helping build a sense of community. “I love how the PAX at UA is set up,” she says. “It's not just about fundraising, but about creating a spirit of community and making sure everyone feels included.”

The tangible results of her work are rewarding—seeing funds raised for things like the gym floor covering, a tinkercart, supporting school programs and the garden spaces coming next door this year. She is able to see that students benefit directly from PAX initiatives. But what really resonates with Tina are the intangibles: “When kids see their parents at school, helping with an event, you can see the pride in their eyes. I know my kids are proud of me, and it's exciting for them to see me there.”

Tina recalls one particularly memorable moment: “During our Breakfast with Santa event, I took a deep breath and looked around. The place was bustling—people were eating, chatting, and the whole community was together. Those moments are what it's all about—bringing people together.”

Of course, there have been challenges along the way, but Tina sees them as opportunities for growth. As a volunteer, she's developed invaluable leadership and multitasking skills, as well



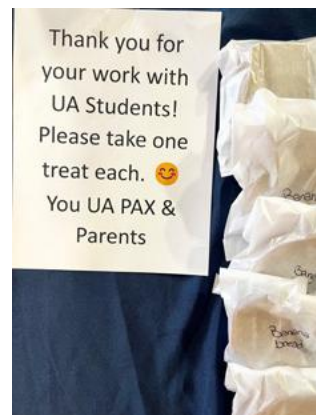
as deeper connections with other parents, staff, and students. "It's been one of the best experiences of my life," she reflects. "I've grown so much, and I know I'll miss this role when it's over."

Tina's role as PAX Chair has also allowed her to overcome her own personal barriers. "I was introverted and shy as a child, but this experience has pushed me out of my comfort zone. It's helped me build confidence and develop stronger communication skills." Through her work with PAX, Tina has not only strengthened her leadership skills but has also created lasting relationships with the UA community.

Looking ahead, Tina is excited about continuing to contribute to the evolving landscape of Urban Academy. "Our school experience deepens year after year, with more opportunities for students in athletics, extracurriculars, and leadership. The physical space is expanding too, and it's exciting to see how far we've come." One of the upcoming events she's most excited about is the Carnival. "It's going to be a great way to bring families together, and I can't wait to see what the team creates, it is going to be incredible!" Mark your calendars for March 8, 2025 for UA's first Carnival!

Tina is quick to acknowledge that her work wouldn't be possible without the support of others. She gives special thanks to Zakkiya, her PAX Vice-Chair, and Lana, who leads the Used Uniform store and Hot Lunch program. "Both of these parents have gone above and beyond to bring so many PAX initiatives to life, and I couldn't do it without them," she says. "We also have a creative, collaborative and hard-working PAX Committee who bring their ideas and passion for the school to our meetings to add, change and grow 'friendraising' and fundraising opportunities. UA is fortunate to have such committed parents."

For those who are considering getting involved in volunteering at Urban Academy, Tina offers some simple advice: "Just reach out. We'll find a space for everyone, and we want to make sure new families feel welcome. It's important that volunteering feels accessible and fun—and when you're alongside your children, the impact is even greater."



URBAN ACADEMY

CLASS OF 2024

In June, Urban Academy proudly celebrated the achievements of our 13 graduates comprising the Graduating Class of 2024. Each of these incredible students demonstrated exceptional dedication and hard work throughout their journey with regard to academics, extracurriculars and personal growth. As they have now embarked on their next chapters, it is clear that their diverse interests and talents have set them on promising paths. Urban Academy is exceptionally proud that all of our students were accepted by one of their top two choices for post-secondary schools, which reflects not only their commitment but also the strong support from our school community.

The array of interests within our student body is impressive, with graduates diving into areas such as Architectural Design, Health Sciences, Business, Computer Sciences, Creative Writing, and Film Studies. This variety not only showcases the unique talents of each student but also reflects the rich educational environment fostered at UA. Their hard work and determination have prepared them for success in a dynamic and ever-changing world, and we are excited to see the contributions they will make in their chosen fields. Congratulations Class of 2024!


**SPIRIT OF
URBAN ACADEMY**

Riana Bhimani


**THE CHERYLE BEAUMONT
ACHIEVEMENT SCHOLARSHIP**

Sophie Marsolais


**RECOGNITION OF
LEGACY STUDENTS**

Sophie Marsolais (Gr. 3), Lucy Shu (Gr. 1), Casey Bell (K), Kaede Wardley (K), Sam Brooke (JK)



OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN LEADERSHIP AWARD

Middle School: Rayhan Amirall
Senior School: Kaede Wardley



FINE & PERFORMING ARTS AWARD

Middle School: Kirith Parmar
Senior School: Kaede Wardley & Sam Brooke



LIONS' PRIDE ATHLETIC AWARD

Middle School: Hanna Kolesniak & Jeffrey Xia
Senior School: Prisha Kumar & Matthew Terepocki Grant



ANNUAL HOUSE LEADERS

Winning House: Sappers
House Leaders: Alisa Sodol & Anya Ali Mulzet



THINKER

They can think critically, collaboratively and creatively. They seek the deeper meaning of issues that arise and connect ideas to understand and be solutions-oriented to complex problems that emerge in a constantly changing world.

INNOVATIVE

They embrace uncertainty and complexity. They are intellectual explorers who are action-oriented and reflect continuously. They display mental resilience by being agile in response to change and adapting positively to adversity.

COURAGEOUS

They are open-minded, curious, and willing to take intellectual risks and accept challenges. They push beyond their comfort zones and know that, through challenges, comes growth, courage, and resilience.



PROFILE OF AN URBAN ACADEMY GRADUATE

COMPASSIONATE

They intentionally show grace, patience, respect, and empathy in their interactions with others. Through listening, accountability and service they are driven to improve their school, local and global communities as caring members.

BALANCED

They understand the importance of academic, physical, mental and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and for others. They have varied interests that offer a strong foundation in supporting their future goals and endeavours.

PRINCIPLED

They act with integrity, honesty, and forethought. They have a strong sense of justice and a moral compass that guides their independent decision-making.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE

They validate and celebrate a diversity of cultures, languages, and life experiences. They are open-minded and understand multiple perspectives exist and as a result, are willing to grow, learn and relearn. They actively ensure all cultures and voices are uplifted.

BRINGING THE FUTURE INTO FOCUS

DAVID GOW / *Academic & University Counsellor*

A question often posed to students in Grades 10–12 is, “What are you doing after graduation?” While some students are passionate about their post-secondary goals, others aren't quite sure yet. However, one thing is certain: Urban Academy students have been exploring their options for years, considering schools, weighing the possibilities, and sometimes even pondering how far they may venture from the family home and neighbourhood they know best.

As the 2024/25 academic year unfolds, UA students continue to strategically plan their paths toward post-secondary education. Whether aiming high for stretch schools or ensuring solid fallback options, students are encouraged to apply to at least three post-secondary institutions: a stretch school, a competitive school, and a safe option. However, many UA students apply to even more, a testament to their ambition and motivation to reach their goals. For those considering international schools, planning starts as early as Grade 9 or 10 to accommodate the additional requirements these institutions may have. Early planning is critical, particularly for more complex international applications.

In the spring of Grade 10, UA's Academic Advisor, Mr. Gow, begins meeting with students and their parents to map out course selections for the final two years of high school and discuss post-secondary strategies. These early conversations ensure families are informed and students are on track with the prerequisites needed for their chosen paths. Students in Grades 10 and 11 receive course selection options in January and February, while Grade 8 and 9 students receive theirs in March, providing ample time to thoughtfully consider each academic step.

Academic advising at UA goes beyond course selection, with Mr. Gow providing guidance on application timelines, open houses, and scholarship opportunities. He guides students

through the research and application process, which can vary greatly depending on the country or region students are exploring, whether it's applying to schools across provinces or internationally in the US or Europe. Early applications, often completed by the fall of Grade 12, are common for students aiming for early acceptances, while others may opt for later deadlines that extend into winter or spring.

Successful post-secondary planning begins well before Grade 12. Families and students need to be aware of key factors that could affect future applications. For example, many Canadian universities require a second language up to Grade 11, which must be completed as a full course, not just challenged through an exam. Completing 30 hours of work or volunteer experience is another essential requirement for graduation. It's also important for students to check whether their target post-secondary institutions recognize the specific AP courses they plan to take.

UA also provides valuable opportunities for students to learn about potential careers by inviting expert parents and professionals into the school to share their real-world experiences. These talks often inspire students and shape their understanding of various career paths. Additionally, the Grade 12 capstone project allows students to take a deep dive into the career area that most interests them, offering hands-on experience and deeper insight into their future fields.

A growing trend of note that is impacting all university applicants is the increasing competitiveness of post-secondary applications, particularly in specialized programs such as STEM, which continue to rise in popularity. This means that, alongside academic performance, students must present a well-rounded profile that includes extracurricular involvement, leadership experience, and volunteer work.

Through careful planning, strategic application processes, intentional guidance, and by starting early, students are equipped to face the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in their post-secondary journeys and beyond. So next time you would like to ask a student “What are your plans for post-secondary?” a more reflective question to pose would be “What are all the things that are helping guide and prepare you for your post-secondary plans?” I believe that that question will provide you with a far more insightful answer!

CULTURAL TRIPS FOR TOMORROW'S LEADERS

MIKE TWAITES / *Student Life Coordinator*

A regular theme at Urban Academy is the value of learning beyond classroom walls. We see this growth through optional cultural travel experiences for Senior students, designed to broaden perspectives and expose them to new cultures and environments they might not encounter in their family travels.



GRADES 8 & 9

For students in Grades 8 and 9, our travel program alternates between two exciting experiences across Canada. In Year 1, students head to Québec to participate in the world-renowned Québec City Carnival. This trip offers outdoor winter activities like sledding and tubing, while also providing a deep dive into Québec's rich history and culture. Students use their French language skills as they explore Old Québec's charm, visit the Huron Village, and tour Montréal.

In Year 2, students experience the wild beauty of Canada's Yukon Territory on a winter trip. This authentic 'True North' trip introduces them to the First Peoples of the Yukon, the history of the Gold Rush, and life off the grid. Highlights include dog sledding, witnessing the Northern Lights, and understanding the challenges and realities of living in one of Canada's most remote regions.



GRADES 10-12

For older students in Grades 10–12, the world becomes their classroom. UA offers international trips on a rotating three-year cycle, with Year 1 focusing on the Americas, Year 2 on Asia, and Year 3 on Europe and Africa.

Last year, students ventured to Japan, where they immersed themselves in the country's unique blend of ancient traditions and modern innovations. From the vibrant streets of Tokyo to the serene temples of Kyoto, students explored the cultural richness Japan has to offer. Highlights of the trip included a ride on the famous Bullet Train, visiting Mount Fuji, exploring the Nara Deer Park, and wandering through the bustling Kuromon Fish Market.

This spring, our focus turns to Europe, where students will visit Spain and Portugal. The trip provides a blend of urban and rural experiences, allowing students to compare life in cities like Madrid and Lisbon with that of small, traditional villages. A Flamenco evening and tours of historic sites are just a few of the cultural experiences awaiting them, along with opportunities to learn about the diverse history of the Iberian Peninsula.



PLAN FOR 2025/26

Next year, Grades 8 and 9 will return to Québec, while Grades 10–12 will embark on an exciting new journey within the Americas. The destination is still being finalized, but it promises to offer enriching experiences that inspire curiosity and foster global citizenship.



CONNECTED THROUGH LEARNING

Travel destinations are carefully selected through a collaborative process involving staff who consider curricular connections, world events, and unique cultural opportunities. Staff chaperones propose ideas based on their interests, backgrounds, language skills, and relevant experience. After reviewing feasibility, a final location is chosen.

One of the most rewarding aspects of these travel experiences is the way they bring students together. Students who might not interact daily at school often form new friendships through shared adventures. Experiencing new cultures, tackling challenges, and creating lasting memories strengthen bonds that carry into their school lives.

These trips provide opportunities for students to experience parts of the world they might not otherwise visit. These journeys are not just vacations—they are immersive educational experiences that foster independence, resilience, empathy, and global awareness—qualities that are more important than ever.

CAIS ACCREDITATION IN ACTION

MIKE SLINGER / *Head of School*

Urban Academy is approaching an important milestone: moving from a 'CAIS Applicant School' to, hopefully, a fully 'CAIS Accredited School.' This rigorous three-year process, which has strengthened every facet of UA's teaching and operations, will culminate in a peer review visit at the end of January 2025.

Canadian Accredited Independent Schools (CAIS) is a prestigious community of about 100 independent schools across Canada, all committed to high standards in education and continuous improvement. CAIS provides member schools with leadership training, research, and international benchmarks of educational excellence. Urban Academy's journey toward CAIS accreditation began in the spring of 2022 when the school applied for candidacy and was accepted as a CAIS Candidate School.

Since then, UA's leadership, Board, and staff have been diligently working through the 12 CAIS Standards, which range from Finance and Governance to Academic Programs and Learning Environments. Each standard offers an opportunity for reflection and improvement, leading to a comprehensive self-study that evaluates how the school operates, what drives decisions, and what can be refined. This in-depth process includes hundreds of pages of evidence—financial reports, student achievement

data, strategic plans, and more—supporting the self-study work undertaken by the entire community, from the Board of Directors to nearly every staff member.

In late January, Urban Academy will welcome a team of ten educational leaders, including Heads of School, Principals, and Directors from other CAIS schools from across Canada, who will review the self-study findings. During their visit, they will meet with UA staff, parent representatives, students, and even alumni. Their goal is to identify areas of commendation, where Urban Academy excels, and areas of recommendation, where there is room for further growth.

This self-study process has been invaluable, aligning with Urban Academy's Strategic Plan pillars of creating a healthy, future-focused organization and ensuring that excellence in teaching and learning benefits every member of the community. By reflecting deeply on our practices and embracing opportunities for improvement, we reinforce our commitment to the ongoing growth of our school.

A special thanks goes to Mme. Dumortier, who has tirelessly led the self-study efforts, ensuring a meaningful and productive experience for all involved. We look forward to sharing the outcome of Urban Academy's CAIS candidacy this spring.



2023/24

ANNUAL REPORT



BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT GUIDING A YEAR OF PROGRESS AND VISION



As I reflect on the past year at Urban Academy, I am filled with gratitude for the contributions of our entire community.

The dedication of staff, students and families has been visible to me and the entire Board throughout 2023/24. Mr Slinger, his leadership team, and our teachers and staff have worked tirelessly to create a positive learning experience for our students that supported them, challenged them and empowered them to step into their futures with confidence. Students of all ages have inspired me with their creativity, kindness and courage to stand up for their values and each other. Families and friends of UA have generously donated time and money. This includes the hardworking PAX and Gala Committees, financial donations that funded critical resources and programs, and the support networks that run after hours when times are tough.

For the Board, we took a strategic breath this 2023/24 school year. UA has emerged from a period of rapid growth and successful capital projects, all while resiliently weathering a global pandemic. Our priority was ensuring that governance practices were matured and enhanced in tandem with the school's operational growth so that we could step into this new chapter from a solid foundation. Advances were made in right-sizing our risk management practice, implementing budgeting and forecasting tools, developing procedures and policies and reshaping board processes and governance. We took time for strategic dialogue, evaluated how to measure and chart our success, and established a new practice of annual goal setting to align our work with the Strategic Plan, mission, vision and values.

This focus also helped prepare us for CAIS accreditation, another key priority over the past year. There is great excitement as we move through this cycle and I am thankful for the CAIS benefits we already enjoy including a collaborative national network of schools and boards, a standardized framework for continuous growth, and education and training opportunities.

This year, we said farewell and thank you to a dedicated member of the board and able Treasurer, Hui Chye Gregoire. I'm grateful for her leadership, particularly on strategic initiatives that improved

our long-range financial planning and risk assessment capabilities. A warm welcome to Iain Evans, who joined us this year.

I look forward to working with our entire team of talented and dedicated board members as we head into a new school year.

Kate Begent-Connors

KATE BEGENT-CONNORS

Board Chair

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023/24

Kate Begent-Connors, Chair
Steve Chen, Vice Chair
Joanne Ward, Secretary
Hui Chye Grégoire, Treasurer
Wade Carson
Iain Evans
Sunny Ghataurah
Kimberly Grant
Karim Merali
Hafeez Merani
Harry Parmar

HEAD OF SCHOOL'S REPORT A YEAR OF GROWTH AND MILESTONES



As we look back on another successful year at Urban Academy, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your continued support. This first edition of the *Urban Academy Roar* showcases our achievements and how your contributions have shaped the school while also looking to the future.

A significant focus of the last year was implementing Urban Academy's new strategic plan, which is a critical part of our ongoing commitment to continual school improvement. Developed through months of engagement with faculty, parents, and students, the plan guides our decision-making and resource allocation, ensuring we continue to meet the needs of our students and community for years to come. It focuses on creating a robust educational experience for our students which will help them grow and develop each year toward the characteristics outlined in our Profile of a Graduate.

Academic Success. Our staff continue to provide high-end instruction in the classroom environment that stretches student understanding, encourages a sense of belonging and makes space for the entrepreneurial spirit. Our continued commitment to academic excellence is demonstrated in the addition of Advanced Placement (AP) courses in our Grad Years Program (Grades 10-12), which increases opportunities in their post-secondary journeys. This past year saw our largest graduating class all successfully transition to post-secondary schools, 30% of grads being offered scholarships.

Extracurricular Expansion. Sports teams energized the gym, turning it into a lively 'Lions' Den' packed with cheering crowds. Performing Arts students continued to "wow" the audiences at concerts and shows. Newly formed Robotics Clubs and expanded Business Clubs took on lives of their own with even more opportunities for our students to shine. Events like our Winter Showcase at the Massey Theatre and our Lion's Invitational Basketball Tournament brought our community together, celebrating the diverse talents of our students.

Experiential Education. Students in Grades 8 and 9 went to Quebec for a week of cultural immersion through our French program, and Grades 10-12 students travelled to Japan on a cultural trip that provided students with a valuable global perspective. The growth

of these programs reflects the dedication of our faculty and staff, ensuring all UA students have enriching opportunities beyond the classroom.

Strength of Community. We continued to have exceptional levels of volunteerism from our families. Dedicated parents supported us with their gift of time by serving as Board members, in PAX and Gala committees, acting as class parents, presenting to a class through the Community Talent Database, and more. Strong parent participation reinforces bonds among students, parents, alumni, and staff. Initiatives like the Terry Fox Run and Community Clean-Up foster empathy and leadership in students. I encourage everyone to stay involved—your participation is vital to maintaining the strong sense of community developed at UA.

As I reflect, it's clear that we are on this journey together—parents, students, and staff. I invite you to continue supporting Urban Academy's vision of Educating for Tomorrow. Together, we are creating a lasting impact on our students and leaving a legacy for so many who will follow in the years ahead.

Mike Slinger

MIKE SLINGER
Head of School

A YEAR OF UA STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Reflecting on a year of student achievement across our JK–Grade 12 community is no small task. Does one focus on individual accolades, program growth, or breakout initiatives that may speak to one cohort or area of interest? What a fortunate position to be in, to have so many wonderful highlights to select from.

The 2023/24 school year has been a remarkable journey, filled with countless opportunities for students to showcase their abilities. At times, it felt like there were wonderful stories of growth and success from every grade level and area of opportunity. From coaching and mentoring to excelling in arts and athletics, our students have risen to every challenge with enthusiasm and dedication. For many of us who have been part of the UA journey, it felt like each new success was a gift, a testament to the strong foundation that has been built. The most encouraging part of this journey is that ultimately, it is the students who are able to benefit the most.



LEADERSHIP

One of the most exciting developments this year has been the number of students interested in, and applying to, the broad spectrum of student leadership opportunities. UA students have taken on roles as coaches, referees in athletics, and assistant directors in the performing arts. These positions have allowed them to develop leadership skills and gain valuable experience in their areas of interest. In addition, our older students have embraced the role of buddy mentors, guiding and supporting younger students as they navigate UA. A key area where they stretch their leadership muscles is that of the house teams. This year saw all of our K–Grade 3 students also being put into their own house team which was a very exciting time for our junior school and enhanced our school spirit!

PERFORMING ARTS

The performing arts were also able to shine brightly over the course of the 2023/24 school year. The UA winter concerts and spring arts showcases brought together students of all ages, with performances that left audiences in awe. The production of Newsies was particularly memorable, displaying the immense talent and hard work of our students. The newly formed UA Improv Team made waves by winning their competition right off the bat, signalling a bright future for this budding group of performers.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

UA's commitment to experiential learning was evident through our extensive field study programs. These opportunities allowed students to step outside the classroom and apply their knowledge to real-life situations, reinforcing the importance of their academic studies. Whether exploring nature, engaging in community service, or participating in cultural exchanges, our students have gained invaluable insights that will stay with them for years to come.



ROBOTICS

Robotics teams saw a phenomenal uptake in interest, as 74 students from Grades 4–7 took part in after-school robotics teams and competitions. Often when there is such extreme interest and excitement in a specific area, school leadership views this as a signal to invest further resources and energy in areas of high student interest. Due to this ‘robotics phenomenon,’ a robotics course has been integrated into the Grade 4/5 Exploration Rotation for all students in the 2024/25 school year so that every student can be involved. Grades 6/7 will continue to have optional robotics teams for those many students who are interested. This responsiveness to student enthusiasm exemplifies UA's commitment to evolving with the needs of its students.

ATHLETICS

An area of growing student interest is that of athletics. Over the 2023/24 school year, UA experienced tremendous growth with students participating in volleyball, track and field, swimming, cross-country, ultimate, badminton, and basketball. Our athletes performed admirably, earning accolades in basketball, volleyball, swimming, cross-country running, and track and field. We were also represented admirably at the provincial championships in track and swimming, which have added a gleaming touch to the new UA trophy case. We are proud of our students and the successes they are seeing in athletics!

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

In addition to athletics, our Grade 4–8 students embarked on overnight camps, learning outdoor survival skills and enjoying fun educational experiences throughout British Columbia. These camps challenged our students and offered some new experiences—especially for our Grade 8's who had the opportunity to spend one of their camp nights sleeping under the stars in beautiful Strathcona Park.

MODEL UN

UA's commitment to academic excellence was further demonstrated through our students' participation in Model UN, where they achieved significant recognition. Winning the prestigious Cynthia Lee Memorial Award at the VYMUN conference at UBC was a testament to their growing influence in the MUN community. Across two conferences, UA students garnered numerous awards, showcasing their diplomatic skills and intellectual depth.



PARENT SPEAKERS

This past year, we also saw a record number of parent speakers connecting with UA students. These guest speakers shared their professional expertise, personal experiences, and cultural knowledge, enriching students' understanding of the world and inspiring them to pursue their passions. Already at the start of the 2024/25 school year, parent experts have again committed to sharing their skills. Indeed we benefit from families who allow our learners to be inspired by their community.

CLASS OF 2024

Finally, we are incredibly proud of our graduating class, who have been accepted into one of their top two post-secondary institutions of choice. As they prepare to make their mark on the world, we are confident that they will continue to contribute positively to society, carrying the values and education they have gained at UA.

FINAL REFLECTION

There are so many more accomplishments that could be shared, especially in the area of student achievement, but we will allow our

readers to pursue the rest of the *Urban Academy Roar* to hear about what other achievements may be. As we reflect on these accomplishments, we are filled with pride for our students' talent, dedication, and leadership. The coming year holds even more potential, and we look forward to witnessing their continued growth.

MIKE SLINGER

Head of School

FINANCIAL REPORT

STABILITY AND PROGRESS

The 2023/24 school year marked a period of stability after many years of change. This stability has provided a strong foundation while we continue to experience growth and advancements. I extend my heartfelt thanks to our teachers, school leadership, staff, parents, and students for their dedication and contributions to a successful year. Our strong community is a testament to the collective efforts of each member, and I am proud to be a part of it.

The financial foundation of the school remains robust. Our revenue streams include enrolment, tuition, government grants, and community donations. Increased enrolment and donations have enabled us to further invest in our educational programs, activities, and facilities.

This year, we saw our net assets grow from \$2,672,692 as of June 30, 2023, to \$3,143,463 by June 30, 2024. Donations also increased, allowing us to fund new projects such as the installation of the new security system. Additionally, we successfully rented a house for school use, providing valuable extra space for our programs.

A significant highlight of the year was our ongoing work towards CAIS (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools) accreditation.

This important process has involved comprehensive evaluations and enhancements to ensure that our school meets the highest standards of educational excellence. The efforts toward accreditation will help us further improve our practices and demonstrate our commitment to quality education.

As I step down from the Board, I want to extend my gratitude to my fellow board members and all who supported me during my tenure. Working alongside such dedicated individuals has been a privilege.

Looking ahead, we must continue to plan and invest strategically for the future. We will align our long-term financial plans with the new strategic plan developed by the Board and Staff. As the school approaches its capacity, we will adjust our financial strategies to prepare for future needs.

In conclusion, our community remains exceptional, and I look forward to another successful school year.

HUI CHYE GREGOIRE

Finance Committee Chair (2023/24 School Year)



BOARD GOVERNANCE REPORT

Governance is more than just the act or process of overseeing the control and direction of an organization; it refers to the structures, systems, processes and practices that an organization has designed and put into place to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and the monitoring and mitigation of its key risks.

The role of the Urban Academy Governance Committee is to assist the Board of Directors in fulfilling its governance responsibilities, and to provide the Board of Directors with the information necessary to ensure good governance is always being practiced. This includes keeping the Board of Directors apprised of Societies Act and other legislative changes that

affect the school; reviewing and advising on society bylaws and board policies; and reviewing and advising on potential risks to the school from the Board of Directors' perspective.

During the 2023/24 school year, the Governance Committee continued to support the Board with Urban Academy's Canadian Accredited Independent Schools (CAIS) application through the review and revision of several existing and new policies as well as advising on areas where good governance could be enhanced.

KIMBERLY L. GRANT

Governance Committee Chair

BOARD DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Highlights of key accomplishments from the past year and an outline of goals for the future. Our efforts have focused on enhancing the Board's effectiveness and ensuring it is equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to govern effectively.

Accomplishments:

1. **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Survey:** We successfully executed a comprehensive survey to assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our Board members. The insights gained from this survey have been instrumental in identifying strengths and areas for development, allowing us to better align Board roles with members' expertise.
2. **Board Education:** We provided targeted educational sessions aimed at increasing Board members' understanding of key governance issues, educational trends, and best practices. These sessions have been well-received and have contributed to enhanced strategic decision-making.

Goals for the Upcoming Year: Our primary goal is to improve succession planning practices. We aim to establish a robust framework to identify and mentor future Board leaders, ensuring the continuity of governance excellence at Urban Academy.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Hui-Chy Gregoire for her two years of dedicated service and to Karim Merali for his exceptional six-year tenure. Their contributions have been invaluable, and without their input, Urban Academy would not be where it is today.

HAFEEZ MERANI

Board Development Committee Chair

FACILITIES REPORT

BUILDING FOR TOMORROW

The 2023/24 school year has been a remarkable period of growth for Urban Academy, not only in academics and programming but also in the physical expansion and enhancement of our campus. With a commitment to providing an environment that inspires learning, fosters community, and empowers students, we have made significant updates to our facilities, ensuring that our space grows alongside them.

In September 2023, we proudly opened the **4th-floor playground**, an exciting new addition that was inaugurated by our graduating class of 2024. This space has quickly become a favourite among students, offering a fun, dynamic area for play and socializing. To complement the updates on our top two floors, new furniture was added, with classroom and common area furnishings thoughtfully selected to create environments that are comfortable, collaborative, and conducive to learning.

In the spring, we expanded even further by leasing the Rousseau House next door. This has given our students access to additional outdoor play space, including a sports court that has become a popular spot for recreation and friendly competition. Alongside this, Urban Academy has secured the right of first refusal on two adjacent houses, positioning us for potential future expansion when the opportunity arises.

Our athletic department has also seen considerable growth over the past year, and several improvements were made to support our student-athletes. Lockers were installed in the changerooms to provide more storage for those involved in athletics. Additionally, we upgraded the gym with new flooring mats and an array of fresh Lions gear to further enhance school spirit. In the lobby, a new trophy case now proudly displays the

UA facilities at work





growing collection of certificates, medals, and trophies earned by our students in various sports and activities.

To celebrate our school's identity, we have transformed several pillars and walls throughout the campus with Urban Academy branding, including the legacy list of our graduates, prominently displayed in the 4th-floor landing. This visual representation of school spirit serves as a reminder of the community's achievements and the path our students and families are on.

In our Junior Kindergarten area, an innovative redesign was completed with the opening of a wall, allowing the space to be used as one large area or easily transitioned into two smaller spaces depending on the needs of the day. Additionally, to support our eco-conscious students and staff who bike or scooter to school, we built a storage cage in the garage for secure parking.

Further enhancements last year included a newly built resource space on the second floor of the Jr. School, created by adding a wall to carve out a dedicated area for focused learning support. Finally, our Sr. Art Students contributed their own creativity to the campus, designing and painting two murals in the stairwells and another in the underground parking lot. These vibrant additions serve as a testament to the artistic talent within our community and provide colourful, inspiring visual elements throughout the school.

Urban Academy's commitment to continuous improvement is evident in these facility updates. Each change was thoughtfully implemented to enhance the learning environment, strengthen community ties, meet student needs and empower our students as they grow and succeed. As we continue to evolve, our campus remains a reflection of our values—an inspiring space that is truly built for tomorrow.

DYLAN HAYDEN

IT & Infrastructure Manager



ADVANCEMENT REPORT EMPOWERED TO CONTRIBUTE

2023/24, once again saw the Urban Academy community generously give over \$211,000 to the school's advancement initiatives. The following outlines how funds were raised—and spent this past year.

The quest for an activity bus to support field study, athletics and other student initiatives in the 'Let's Get Some Wheels Annual Appeal' raised just over \$135,647. These funds in addition to some of our 2023 Gala revenue allowed for us to reach our \$175,000 goal. Thank you to the families who contributed to this initiative by donating directly and by contributing Parent Equity Units. We are looking forward to having our activity bus arrive this school year!

We also received \$35,800 in restricted donations toward science, robotics and athletics initiatives. These donations have allowed us to make improvements to the program in each of those areas. Thank you to the families who have invested where their passions lie. The students appreciate it!

The Gala this year, led by Chair Raji Dhillon, took on a new look as it was switched up in response to parent request to try something a little bit different. Thank you to the Gala Committee for all the work to pull this event off! And, thank you to our sponsors Piva Modern Italian, The Pastry Portal and MNP LLP for their support! The Night in Monte Carlo (at Urban Academy) was a great community event that was held in our gym. The event raised approximately \$40,000 which was put toward securing the rental property next door to UA. Hosting the gala in the UA gym gave us the chance to learn how to run an event

of that scale in our own facility—an experience we're excited to build on this year with Urban Academy's first Carnival!

UA's PAX is running like a well-oiled machine led by Tina Parmar (Chair) and Zakkiya Janmohammed (Vice Chair) with a wonderful group of PAX members who are not only running wonderful community-building events but also services for UA parents such as hot lunch and used uniform sales. Thank you to Lana Vijay for her leadership of those two programs. UA parents appreciate them both immensely! With some new events and increased hot lunch services, UA's PAX raised \$26,398 (up from \$19,000 the previous year) and these funds have been allocated to the updates and outdoor space improvements to the property next door to Urban Academy. Thank you PAX for your work this year!

A new addition to UA's events this year was the UA Golf Social, hosted early in September. Despite the liquid sunshine, we had a great turnout and participants had a fantastic time. Thank you to Jeremy Bekar and Karim Esmail for starting off this wonderful annual event.

As you can see, with the over \$211,000 raised this past year, we have been able to invest in the growth of the school, and the experiences of all of our students due to the generosity of our families. Thank you for contributing in this way, we couldn't do it without you!

SONJA KENNEDY

Director of Development

THANK YOU TO OUR GALA SPONSORS



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Community Leaders \$10,000+
Community Innovators \$5,000–9,999
Community Builders \$2,000–4,999
Community Creators \$1,000–1,999
Community Stewards \$300–999

Community Leaders: \$10,000 +

Dernisky/Galler Family
 Khaira Family
 Lewin Family
 Parmar Family

Community Innovators: \$5,000–\$9,999

Aitken/Hall Family
 Banihashemi Family
 Begent-Connors Family
 Carson Family
 Chen/Wu Family
 Cui/Liang Family
 Ghataurah Family
 Jessa Family
 Johnston Family
 Kennedy Family
 Tabesh Family
 Tang/Zhang Family
 Xie/Peng Family
 Zhang/Liu Family
 Anonymous (1)

Community Builders: \$2,000–\$4,999

Grant/McCartney Family
 Halstead Family
 Li Family
 McKenzie Family
 Mottahed Family
 Qi/Luo Family
 Vezmarovic Family
 Ward Family
 Xu/Xie Family
 Anonymous (2)

Community Creators: \$1,000–\$1,999

Bains Family
 Bolton/Sanderson Family
 Chau/Wong Family
 Dhillon/Bir Family
 Emelyanov Family
 Ly-Sit Family
 Mann/Saini Family
 Moss Family
 Shuang/Zhang Family
 Smith/Langran Family
 Sun/Zhang Family
 Terepocki Grant Family
 Wang/Downie Family
 Weslowski Family
 Yeum/Lee Family
 Yu/Wang Family
 Anonymous (2)

Community Stewards: \$300–\$999

Aspinall Family
 Barden/Voyce Family
 Bates Family
 Bayles Family
 Bhatia Family
 Cao/Zhang Family
 Chan/Wong Family
 Chui/Li Family
 Datu Family
 Dosanjh Family
 Gao/Zhang Family
 Gill/Mahadevan Family
 Guo/Xia Family
 Hamilton Family
 Hirani/Kaderali Family
 Huang/Lo Family
 Hung/Pejovic Family
 Jomori/Walsh Family
 Kanji Family
 Kirk Family
 Laga Family
 Marsolais Family
 Morgan/Knapp Family
 Morriss Family
 Osborne/Robertson Family
 Panjer/Anginer Family
 Samji/Merani Family
 Slinger Family
 Wang/Ni Family
 Wu/Huang Family
 Xiao/Liang Family
 Yang/Dai Family
 Yao/Chow Family
 Yin Family
 Anonymous (7)

*“Thank you to all of the parents who have led the
 multitudes of initiatives big and small.”*

UPCOMING AT UA

2024		
DECEMBER	18 Wednesday	Winter Concert (Grades 1-12), Massey Theatre
	20 Friday	Last Day of School Before Winter Break
	Winter Break: Monday, December 23–Friday, January 10	
2025		
JANUARY	13 Monday	First Day of School After Winter Break
FEBRUARY	12 Wednesday	JK/K Concert, 4pm UA Cheryle Beaumont Theatre
	14 Friday	Pro-D Day (No classes, OOSC open)
	17 Monday	Family Day Holiday (School closed)
MARCH	8 Saturday	Urban Academy Carnival, 11am–3pm
	14 Friday	Last Day of School Before Spring Break
	Spring Break: Monday, March 17–Friday, March 28	
APRIL	31 Monday	First Day of School After Spring Break
	18 Friday	Good Friday (School closed)
	21 Monday	Easter Monday (School closed)
	22 Tuesday	Pro-D Day (No classes, OOSC open)
MAY	30 Wednesday	Spring Arts Showcase (Grades 6–12), Michael J Fox Theatre
	3 Saturday	Urban Academy After Dark Soirée, Parent Event
	16 Friday	Pro-D Day (No classes, OOSC open)
	19 Monday	Victoria Day (School closed)
JUNE	22 Thursday	Spring Band Concert (Grades 6–12), Michael J. Fox Theatre
	17 Tuesday	Commencement, Urban Academy
	18 Wednesday	Graduation Dinner Celebration
	20 Friday	All School Year-end Assembly, Awards & Step-Ups
		Last Day of School Before Summer Break (Early dismissal)



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

PAX PRESENTS
THE URBAN ACADEMY
CARNIVAL

Saturday, March 8, 2025



*Invite Your
Friends and Family*

GAMES • ENTERTAINMENT • FOOD • SILENT AUCTION & MORE!

COME FOR A DAY OF FAMILY-FUN AND HELP MAKE A
DIFFERENCE IN OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

VISION

- + educating for tomorrow

MISSION

- + connected through learning
- + inspired by community
- + empowered to contribute

VALUES

- + future-focused education
- + belonging
- + entrepreneurial spirit
- + changemaking