

**PACE Happenings** ...Continued from page 1.

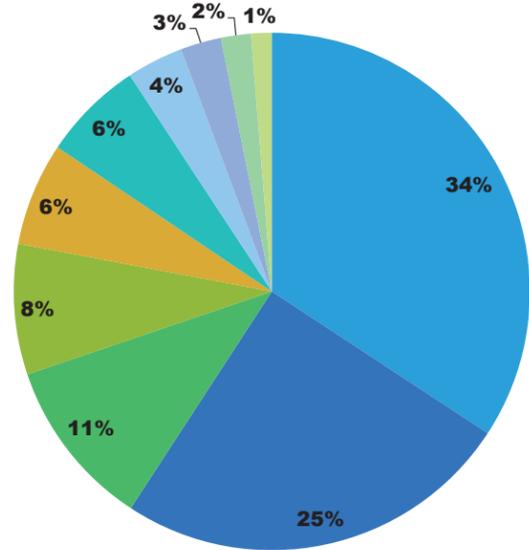
Ms. Connie Loggins, whom all PACE families know or currently will, as the knowledgeable, wise, and phenomenally effective counselor for all PACE students, keeps many reference materials in her office, including SAT and ACT prep books, and materials exploring the many different types of colleges and universities. Ms. Loggins also brings in Paul Kanarek, CEO of Princeton Review to speak each year to our junior parents about the college choice and application process. If knowledge is truly power, Ms. Loggins provides a virtual army to help our students in every way to be successful in their college quest. PPSG directly funds many of her efforts to maintain a library of information and pays for the parent education speakers.

PPSG funds the college aides who help the teachers with their myriad tasks, including keeping a current and accurate chemical inventory, setting up labs, photocopying, recording homework, or whatever our teachers need to be maximally effective with their students. Formerly the school funded college aides for the program, but that ended in 2008. PPSG has paid for conferences and professional development for our teachers, funded technology and science equipment, awarded scholarships to our seniors for college, funded science events such as rocket launches and catapult contests, provided for extra clerical hours during the impossibly busy recruitment season, paid for the printing of brochures, as well as this Harebrain, and so much more.

PACE could not achieve these results without the support of the PACE parents whose members work on a strictly volunteer basis providing for this program. The worrisome truth is that donations are currently far below what was the norm prior to the recession. Because many of our parents have requested guidance in the amount of their donation, PPSG has historically suggested that families provide \$150 per PACE student per year. Some families have donated more and we are immensely grateful for their generosity. These families have told us that they felt they were getting the equivalent of an expensive private school experience in a public school and because they were financially able to contribute more, they were happy to do so in order to see PACE continue at its extraordinarily high level. Other families simply are not in a position to contribute as much as the suggested donation and have instead donated small monthly amounts. Far more important than the amount is the spirit of the gift and the knowledge that what PACE endeavors to provide cannot be funded entirely by the district and depends upon the support of our parents.

We are proud to be part of the PACE family, proud of the fine efforts of our teachers, and prouder yet of the amazing accomplishments of our students. Please consider a gift, in any amount, tax deductible, to the PACE Parent Support Group. Their website accepts credit and debit card donations, and donation envelopes are always available in the PACE office. You can be certain that your contribution will be a charitable gift that directly and one hundred percent effects your children's education in PACE.

**PPSG Expenditures 2015-2016\***



- College Aides in Classrooms
- Senior Scholarships
- Summer Math Programs
- Summer Counseling
- Supplemental AP Review Hours & Training
- Parent Education, Newsletter & Website
- English Grading Sub Days
- Solar Boat Team Grant
- Senior Field Trip & Activities
- Textbooks, Classroom & Office Supplies

\*For fiscal year 9/1/15-8/31/16, including some expenses from prior fiscal year that were retroactively paid.



**PACE Parent Support Group Board**

- |                     |                     |                                    |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
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- Website & Online Donations **www.paceparent.org**
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**PACE Happenings**

Dr. Michelle Aberle  
PACE Facilitator



It's wonderful to be with all of you once again as we enter academic year 2016-2017! We are off to a great start. There are a few significant changes I would like to relay and then discuss a matter of great importance, our booster club and the tremendous support it gives to the program. First to the changes. Our PACE clerk Daisy Grundhauser left Poly for another clerical position. We all enjoyed Daisy and her efforts and we were extremely sorry to see her leave. I am happy to report that this cloud has a shiny, silver lining. Our new clerk, Cindy Stuart, is absolutely wonderful in every way. She hails originally from Alberta, Canada and comes to us by way of Seattle. We are extraordinarily happy and lucky to have her! Sharp, funny, ready and willing to do any and all asked of her, as well as much that we have not yet thought to ask, Cindy is a keeper! Be sure to stop by the office and introduce yourself.

We started our year with a successful 9th grade summer bridge orientation at which about 100 of our new 9th graders were introduced to our faculty and to a few first year PACE activities. Another change made last spring involves our loss of Ms. Tamara Araya, our 9th grade physics teacher, whom we will sorely miss. But in PACE fashion of making lemon meringue pie out of lemons, we are elated that Mr. Jason Manack, who has taught AP Environmental Science at Poly for the past 18 years, agreed to take on our freshman class. AP Environmental Science is tailor-made for a first year PACE science course since its curriculum includes foundational content of all the other sciences. This course dovetails with the curricular plan through which Mr. Jeff Montooth guides the students for their Project ECHO and C-Span projects. Understanding the interrelatedness of our physical, political, social, and moral spheres in this country is the aim of our entire 9th grade core. Rounding out this tremendously collaborative group of 9th grade teachers are Ms. Kim Floto and Ms. Vicky Resner, in English and math, respectively. They will be contributing to these projects and guiding the students during their classes as well. I am impressed by the energy and creativity of this group and genuinely honored to be working with this talented team.

We have heard repeatedly from students and families how much the students gain from their participation in both Project ECHO and in C-Span Student Cam Project, which brings me to the second item I want to discuss in this space. Our students' ability to work on these projects so successfully is due in no small part to the set of Mac Book Pro laptop computers that the PACE Parent Support Group purchased for our 9th grade. PPSG has done so much for the program through the years that it is difficult to imagine how we could continue to sustain the level of excellence that characterizes a PACE education without their unflagging support. Computers are only one of many, many ways that the PPSG has supported and enhanced the tremendous effect of our teachers' efforts. For those of you that are not familiar with PPSG, I would like to inform you of just a few of their activities on our behalf. Through PPSG, PACE is able to provide many hours of AP Review sessions beyond what the district provides, enabling our students to master content with fewer instructional hours than what can reasonably be provided by the regular school year's class time.

*Continued on page 4...*

**What is PPSG?**

Brigitte Bigham, President  
PACE Parent Support Group

Welcome to another year of PACE! As a parent of a senior and a freshman I can say that I have survived three years and I am looking forward to starting another four. Will it be much different for my freshman? Probably not, however, she has had the benefit of witnessing her sister overcome the challenges of a rigorous schedule and ambitious goals. I hope that this will make her transition easier. Thank you to my daughter Elizabeth for paving the path for your sister. As a parent, I know that I am blessed to have my daughters supported by amazing PACE teachers and administrative staff. Thank you to Dr. Aberle, Connie Loggins, our new PACE administrative assistant Cindy Stuart and all of our teachers for your ongoing support and dedication to our students.

If you are new to PACE then you may not be familiar with the PACE Parent Support Group (PPSG). Our primary purpose is to provide supplemental financial support to the PACE program and we are readily available to lend a helping hand to the PACE office when called upon. PPSG is similar to a booster club. We are a non-profit corporation, file taxes every year and adhere to our bylaws. We consist of a seven member board and meet once a month approximately eight times a year. We discuss and set an annual PACE budget with Dr. Aberle. We beg for your donations to support PACE and smile when checks arrive in the mail. We produce and distribute this Harebrain newsletter three times a year. During the second semester we coordinate the scholarship application process and have the pleasure of handing out approximately \$20,000 in scholarships at the PACE senior fieldtrip. This year we will create a new website to help keep you updated, providing an improved means of communication. We recently added a board position and member to help us accomplish this goal. Our first PACE Parent Tailgate was held in September and will have hosted a second by the time you read this. In prior years PPSG hosted Parent Education Meetings and we plan to host another event this year and are open to guest speaker suggestions. At this time, the best way to reach us is by email at [paceparent@gmail.com](mailto:paceparent@gmail.com).

Please read the enclosed donation request letter which will highlight our budget for the year. These expenses are not covered by LBUSD and solely rely on your donations. Thank you in advance for your generous support to PACE.

## Reflections from PPSG Scholarship Winners 2016

### Caitlin Crahan, University of Notre Dame

In my first three weeks at Notre Dame, it rained more than it has in the last three years back home. I spent the first rainy night wandering campus in my socks, without an umbrella, too full of adrenaline to care how wet I got. Notre Dame differs from Poly in many respects besides the weather: instead of getting up for zero period, I start class at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays; I regularly find our nun, Sister Mary, patrolling the halls at 2:00 a.m. on the weekends; and I've met people from all over the world with all kinds of interests. But as much as college is different from high school, I'm lucky enough to already feel at home here, and I credit my ease of adapting to my PACE experiences. Although reading Descartes took a little getting used to, I felt completely prepared for my chemistry and calculus 3 classes thanks to the rigors of PACE. The many papers and timed essays assigned for my theology, philosophy, and international relations classes are far less intimidating than they would be had I not completed four years of PACE English and history. I am so grateful for the study skills I developed in my time at Poly—they help me work efficiently through the pre-test library marathons. My academic preparedness was the least of my worries starting college, and I can say with confidence that PACE trained me to handle anything. It's not all studying and homework, too! I'm a member of the Notre Dame Chorale, and our raucous after-rehearsal dinners on Mondays and Wednesdays last until the dining hall staff forcibly ejects us. I took 92nd place in intramural cross country (amazing, I know, I'm so proud) and I'm trying to enjoy the nice running weather while it lasts! From Netflix nights, debate watches, and 3:00 a.m. brownie baking, to touchdown pushups and running through the fountains before home games, I've had so many adventures and met really great people. I'm so lucky to have landed at Notre Dame, and so grateful to my teachers and peers at Poly for preparing me to take advantage of the many opportunities here. I'm really excited for the next four years!



### Erin Osman, Brown University



At this point you've probably heard a lot about how PACE is successful at preparing you for the academic rigor of university education, and although I'm only six weeks into my collegiate career, I can confidently say that it's true. The academic transition has been as smooth as I could ever have hoped it to be; the workload is manageable and I am confident in my ability to think and discuss at the level demanded of me by my professors and my peers. Much of that confidence I credit to the core knowledge and academic skills emphasized by PACE, but equally as valuable to me was learning to handle the stresses of rigorous academics. I remember the long, grueling nights of sophomore year, when seemingly endless lit reviews and SMOs kept me up until the wee hours of the morning, and the daily struggle of junior year to motivate myself to read both Euro books. I remember the overwhelming insanity of senior year, between trying to write the perfect common app essay, finish work for multiple AP classes, and actually enjoy being a senior. I remember many days when it seemed like school had finally won, when it had clobbered me, and my confidence too. Believe me, I remember those days. And I am grateful for them. Those days taught me more about how to be a successful student than any AP class, because I learned about myself and my limits. I learned how to recognize when life was getting to be too stressful and overwhelming, and I learned how to lean on my support system, my parents, my friends, and my teachers, to help me get through it. From then on, when I faltered, I didn't falter quite as much, and each time I learned a little more about how to take care of myself and get myself through the tough times. Now I am 3,000 miles away from my support system, but when times get tough, even

beyond academics, I know that I can take care of myself. The transition into college is an emotional roller coaster; it's fun and exciting, but it's also confusing and overwhelming. However, PACE taught me the skills to be able to navigate that roller coaster, without letting my academics suffer. Now, as I approach the halfway point in the semester (and the joys of midterm season), I am getting a handle on college life and enjoying the opportunities and adventures it provides.

### Miriam Melendez, University of California at Berkeley

After graduating from Poly PACE and continuing my studies at Cal I knew I had a hard and enriching journey ahead of me. Cal is known for having one of the best engineering programs in the nation, so I expected the classes to be difficult, but what I expected and what I actually experienced were completely different. Once I arrived on campus, the first thing I realized was that I was cold! The sun was out, everyone was in a t-shirt and jeans and I was freezing with two sweaters on. I learned later that this was a normal, perfect day in the Bay Area. Then, on the first day, when we were taken on a tour of the gorgeous campus, I realized how lucky I was to be there. The campus is a relic of vintage mixed with modernity and it is astounding how the two can be blended together so flawlessly along with the nature and fearless squirrels. Coming to this university was like living a dream that my parents had never even imagined. Once classes began, I realized that the beauty hid the inevitable difficulties of the school. Unlike high school, it would take a lot more effort to get a good grade and actually learn in class. Luckily, because of PACE, I understood that the work ethic in each class would determine the grades. During my Poly years, I learned to manage my time between the intense workload from school, sports, and a social life, so that when I arrived on campus, the transition was manageable and I seemed to adapt quicker than most of my peers. The teachers in PACE also created a realistic college environment in their classrooms that when I got to Berkeley, it seemed like I had been a college student for ages. The advice I received from all the teachers and our wonderful counselor has continued to inspire me during my time here so far. All in all, PACE gave me the tools to be prepared for my college career, and with the guidance and support of the faculty at Poly, I am forever motivated and inspired to be successful here at Berkeley. Thank you to Poly and to PACE for providing me with such a memorable and life changing high school experience. Once a Jackrabbit, always a Jackrabbit!



### Trevor Rose, Southern Methodist University

College can be one of the best experiences of your life if you go in with an open mind and put yourself out there. I'm taking an assortment of classes to figure out what I'd like to eventually pick for a major. I'm also taking more credits than what is recommended for a freshman to take and I attribute my ability to do so to PACE. The workload and expectations in PACE classes are very similar to the way college courses are structured. The APUSH readings and AP Euro readings prepared me for the many chapters that you are expected to read to fill in the gaps and learn the material the professors won't lecture about. The support from the teachers in PACE has helped me to expect the same from my college professors. The same relationships can be built by going to the professor's office hours. If something is giving me difficulty and trouble, for the most part I have found them willing to help get to the root of the issue. SMU has offered us so many opportunities to learn from the best of the best by bringing in guest speakers. I am looking forward to attending Bryan Stevenson's lecture, author of the common reading book this year Just Mercy. College also offers many non-academic opportunities to take advantage of.

*Continued on page 3...*

## Social Media: Friend or Foe?

Ms. Connie Loggins  
PACE Counselor



In a world that is driven by technology and social media, it should come as no surprise that colleges and universities may have your information at their fingertips. I have attended multiple college conferences and have been informed that while looking at a student's social media page is not necessarily standard practice for admission officers, it often becomes a part of the evaluation process. I caution students to portray only the image that represents who they are, along with their honorable interests and passions. I have included an excerpt from an article that I found interesting and informative that reinforces the message I have conveyed over the years.

*Be Facebook Savvy in the College Admissions Process*  
<https://www.blog.ivywise.com/blog-0/bid/100591/Using-Facebook-in-the-College-Admissions-Process>. October 12, 2011.

"In a recent survey conducted by Kaplan Test Prep, it was revealed that nearly a quarter of college admissions officers have used Facebook or other social media or networking sites to research a college applicant. In addition, 20 percent of admissions officers admitted to "Googling" applicants. While colleges don't spend time regularly trolling Facebook and checking out your wall, if you think you're secure because you've adjusted your privacy settings, you need to think again! While admissions officers are generally not creating fake profiles or searching for individual students, one admissions representative from an Ivy League university said that his office receives a number of anonymous Facebook and Google "tips" each year, and he is obligated to check them out. On at least one occasion, an offer of admission was actually revoked as a result.

How can you keep this from happening to you? Honestly evaluate your profile. Think about whether you want one of your grandparents (yes, really—a grandparent) to see the content you've got on there. Or how about the teacher who's writing your college recommendation? If it doesn't pass that test, then you need to get rid of it. The good news is, you can use Facebook to your advantage in the college admissions process. Blogs, Facebook, and Twitter are all about expressing who you are, which is exactly what admissions committees want to see in your resumes and essays. So go ahead and share interesting and relevant articles with your followers or friends, upload your music or photos of your artwork. In addition, many colleges have Facebook pages and Twitter feeds and this can be a great way to learn more about and engage with a school. Read and follow publications or writers that interest you and schools that are on your college list.

Here are some more Dos and Don'ts from the expert counselors at IvyWise:

#### Do – Know who your friends are:

Only accept requests from people you know in real life. A few years ago, a group of New Jersey high school students conducted an experiment where they created a fake student profile and tried to "friend" students in the school. By the end of the experiment, almost 60 percent of the students had accepted the friend request from this made up student, and another 55 people had tried to friend her directly! Most of these students didn't realize that by friending someone they didn't actually know, they had given an anonymous Facebook user access to all of their online information. Remember—even friends and "frenemies" can take screenshots and email them to admissions officers.

#### Don't – Create a fake persona:

Changing your name to avoid being found in search results

doesn't work, as the people who are your existing friends are the often ones sending info. Also, don't "like" things and alter your profile in the hopes of impressing an admissions officer. Don't say you're a fan of Mozart if you prefer Lady Gaga. Don't say you prefer artsy indie documentaries if you are an action adventure fan. Remember, it's hard to lie about your love for philosophy, when everyone on your friends list knows you really prefer Marvel.

#### Do – Use Facebook as an organizational tool:

As you go through high school, use your profile to track achievements, jobs, internships, clubs, sports, goals, interests, and even favorite books. Applications for schools like Columbia and Stanford ask students to list the books they have recently read, and social networks can be a great way to keep track of this. Likewise, it may be difficult to remember every volunteer, sport, or club outing you've attended, but if you upload photos of events or tag yourself in photos that others have taken, you can use those as reminders when you start building your resume.

#### Don't – Let others control your online presence:

Untag yourself from any questionable photos. Then talk to the person that posted and ask him or her to take it down or crop/remove you from the photo. Even photos where you are not tagged can be sent to an admissions office! Of course, it's best to not engage in any behavior that may result in a questionable photo. Use private messages for any conversations that might not pass the grandparent test and let your friends know about this new policy. Likewise, don't post anything on their wall that you wouldn't want their grandparents to see."

In conclusion, I admonish you to read all of the above very carefully and conduct yourself accordingly. Sharing the above article with you is not meant to frighten you, but to remind you of the importance of being aware of how you may be perceived in the minds of those who are in a position to approve or deny you to join their student body or a position in their company.

## PACE Tailgates This Year

by Bonnie McCarthy, PPSG Vice President

The Pace Parent Support Group hosted its first tailgate for parents and alumni in the Veteran's Stadium parking lot prior to the Poly-Wilson game last September. New PACE parents and program veterans mingled beneath banner-strewn canopies to share hot dogs, chips and chatter about the high school year to come. Catching up with old friends and meeting new ones turned out to be so much fun, we're going to do it again! By the time you read this we will have held our second one on November 4th for the Poly-Milikan game. It's a great way to get to know one another, have some fun and cheer on our Jackrabbits. Go, Poly!

### Trevor Rose ... Continued from page 2.

I joined the SMU Novice Rowing team which is a program built to teach amateur rowers how to row with the intention that we will be put on varsity second semester. I've been given the chance to become a D1 athlete, which just shows the amazing opportunities that college can provide you with. I almost didn't do it because I doubted my ability to juggle everything. Putting myself out there put me in a position to find a new sport I'm now passionate about. It has also provided me a team of other freshman girls that have become a great support in transitioning into a completely new life in college. I look forward to meeting more people and rushing in the spring with some of my teammates. PACE prepared me well for classes. There was less of a transition because the classes weren't as much of a shock, which gave me more time to throw myself into something new and find a great group of automatic friends.