

From the
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
Vidya Kagan



This time of year always makes me think of giving and gratitude. (Granted, I am the Director of Development, so this is *always* on my mind!) With National Philanthropy Day, Thanksgiving and Giving Tuesday all in the space of the last three weeks, it's natural at this time of year to reflect on philanthropy and gratitude.

Giving back has always been a large part of my life and is a value that my husband and I strive to instill in our kids. In addition to donating material goods, we want to show our kids that you can offer care, support, encouragement and hope, that you can strengthen a community, and, through this work, feel joy. When we lived in Boston, we volunteered for a number of organizations that had “giving” at the heart of their mission. Cradles to Crayons provides care packages for young kids whose families cannot afford school supplies and basic items; City Year provides educational support for inner-city middle school students;



and the food banks, churches and temples with which we worked provide nourishment, warmth and a sense of “wow—someone cares about me.” Through these experiences, we all gained a greater sense of gratitude, along with inspiration to continue our efforts.

These ideals are part of the fabric of Menlo School. Here, we are

fortunate to see a strong culture of philanthropy and a genuine spirit of gratitude every day: students saying thank you to their teachers, friends and teammates; parents volunteering at school events; and each member of our community expressing genuine care and support in many different ways. In my view, generosity results in gratitude, and that gratitude in turn both compels the giver to give more and motivates others to follow that example. It's a beautiful “circle of life” concept!

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At Menlo, the Annual Fund is one tangible representation of the giving and gratitude “circle of life” and has often been the key way that our community expresses its thanks to

Menlo. When all of us participate in the Annual Fund, it shows the strength and inclusive nature of our community and inspires others to give as well. And when the School's resources grow, everyone benefits. Indeed, these contributions have always played a key role in the shape and future of the School, creating opportunities, building community and fueling growth. The Menlo School we all experience today is a direct result of the dedication and generosity of many people before us.

Menlo will celebrate its Centennial in 2015. This is an ideal opportunity to appreciate and thank those who did so much for the School in the past, be grateful for what we have today, and dream big for the future. Now, it's our turn to take the reins and continue the march forward for Menlo. Maintaining a strong commitment to philanthropy and community is critical for Menlo to move to the next level and set the standard for what a premier 21st-century educational experience should be.

Let's show our excitement for what Menlo is all about and play a part in the future of this great school. Let's continue the "circle of life" for the next 100 years!

Vidya



KnightLine is published in .pdf form on the Menlo School website each month, with an email alert including a link sent to all parents. For questions, please contact Alex Perez, Director of Communications, via email at alex.perez@menloschool.org or by calling 650.330.2001 ext. 2330.

