

# MSPA US Meeting

January 10, 2018 (8:50 am - 10:10 am)

## Welcome! Be True to Your School

Mary Pinkus, US Co-President

Mary wanted to review her two resolutions from the beginning of the school year. The first resolution was practice an “attitude of gratitude.” The administration has been hearing back from the faculty about how much they appreciate your notes of gratitude. Keep it up! The second resolution was to have more fun. So, Mary and Alli and the rest of the MSPA Council led the parents in a rendition of the Beach Boys “Be True to Your School.”

## Updates

Than Healy, Head of School

When it rained this week, we learned that the new Commons can hold the entire school.

He thanked John Schafer and Matt Mettillie for two wonderful presentations from recent alums on arts recruitment for college and gap years.

He enjoyed the basketball game this week with Sacred Heart. We won, and there was enormous community support.

Menlo has started hiring for next year. Menlo is attracting applicants with its strong reputation. For example, Menlo had eight spectacular semi-finalists for the Athletic Director position come to Menlo this weekend; Than would be happy with any of them.

## Student Alumni Panel

John Schafer, Upper School Director

The meaning of success for Menlo is not college acceptances or GPAs. It is that the school graduates students who are prepared and curious. They take advantage of the opportunities offered them in school and in life.

He then introduced a panel of recent alums, who exemplify this: Sophie White, Ben Rosenblatt, Jessica Houghton, Charlie Roth, James Thygesen, Vishnu Priya Veerina.

*What would you do differently at Menlo if you knew then what you know now?*

- Take classes I was interested in, not classes I thought I should take
- Take classes outside my comfort zone
- Branch out into different clubs/activities

*Did Menlo prepare you well for college?*

- Menlo prepares you well academically
  - But college is still challenging if you are doing your best work
  - The STEM classes at Menlo prepare you for college lab courses
- Menlo does not prepare you for the unstructured time of college

*What is your advice to parents about the college process?*

- Let your kid take the classes they want and run their own college process
- Taking a gap year is a great idea because you learn how to care for yourself and you learn time management

*What is your most challenging class?*

- Statistical Inference
- Business Law
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- My biggest class because I couldn't talk to the professor, even during office hours
- Best advice: pick your class based on the teacher

*Can you talk about transferring?*

Charlie Roth transferred from an all-business school to a more general university because he realized that he wasn't interested in the business curriculum. It was hard because he had to go through another college application process and retake many of his core classes. He was able to adjust socially because of rugby; the social adjustment can also be hard. He is glad he did it.

*How can parents help with social adjustment?*

- Encourage your child to take an easier load so that they have time to make friends first semester
- Check in regularly, even if your child doesn't respond
- Make sure that they go to the college meetups before school starts
- Expect that your child will be down for part of college; lots of kids go through a period of depression
- Let them know it's unlikely they will meet their best friend on the first day of school

*Can you reflect on a low moment or loss of confidence at Menlo and how parents should react to those?*

- When my grades suffered junior year because I took too many AP classes, I needed to know that bad grades won't alter my entire life and that taking on a challenge can pay off in other ways
- Dwelling on a bad grade is the worst thing you can do

John reflected that each of these kids was going to a different college and having a different experience but that all of them were enjoying themselves and challenging themselves.

## Hard Day's Knight

Kim Guthrie and Jill Layman, Auction Co-Chairs, and Katherine Kelly, Director of Alumni Giving and Engagement

The auction is March 24th. After playing a British word game, they asked for auction donations. They are looking for:

- Vacation packages
- Sporting event tickets
- Hosting a party
- Wine
- Unique experiences, like backstage passes or tours of places not open to the public
- Count-Me-In parties

In addition, please email them or go to the auction webpage if you have additional ideas. The deadline for donating is February 15th.

## Twelfth Night and Oliver

Steven Minning, Director of Creative Arts

The two remaining drama productions are *Twelfth Night* and *Oliver*. *Twelfth Night* will be a funny tale of mistaken identity and gender-bending, set on an island in the 1950's. *Oliver* will be an all-school musical with separate auditions and rehearsals. As the play gets closer, the two casts will join together.

## Parent Ed Conference

Tina Crisci, Co-Chair of the Parent Ed Conference

The conference is on “Parenting in a World of Mixed Messages.” The keynote speaker will be Richard Weissbourd from Harvard. The other speakers will be Ana Homayoun on social media and Jonathan Scott on substance abuse.

## FLIK Food Service

Tony Lapolla, Dean of Students; Terumi Neufeld, District Manager of FLIK; Michael Sheets, Director of Dining Services; Mark Geiss, Regional Chef for the West Coast; Danielle Beck, West Coast Registered Dietitian; Alexia Watson, Catering Manager  
FLIK is named after a man in the company who advocated fresh, simple food.

To see the upcoming menu, go to the “my school dining” website, where you can see three weeks in advance.

They have made some changes based on the comments they have gotten back, such as adding extra locations for utensils and toasters. They are still working on making the replacement meals (ones delivered to lunch meetings) better.

Twenty percent of the meals served are vegetarian. The vegetarian mains and sides are on their own station.

In developing the menu, FLIK went through two six-week rounds to see how much was eaten of each option. They got rid of the unpopular meals and are now running four-week cycles. Parents agreed that their kids love the food.

The snackbar is open from 7:30 to 10 and then again from 1:30 to 4.

The new catering menu is up on the Menlo website with new choices and new pricing. A parent attested that a catered dinner she attended was delicious.

All leftovers are donated to Chefs to End Hunger, which feed the homeless in San Francisco.