

southwest FOUNDATION news

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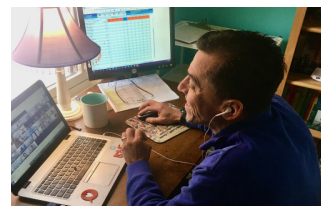
Teachers Showcase Ingenuity During Distance Learning



Reid Wixson conducts orchestra class virtually from an empty band room on Oct. 23.

If you peruse the International Baccalaureate website, you'll find three bullet points about how the programme helps students ask challenging questions, think critically and develop research skills. Surely, these are important for a global education, but the page fails to mention the missing bullet point - incredibly gifted and dedicated teachers.

At Southwest High School, these exist in spades. From the beloved former English teacher Sara Sexton to many Teacher of the Year recipients, quality teaching spills out of classrooms into bustling hallways at Southwest. However, this year classrooms have moved virtual and the hallways are empty as Distance Learning became the new normal.



Jose Fresco leads his spanish classes from home, using a mix of technology to engage his students.

If you peer into Spanish teacher Jose Fresco's Google classroom, you'll find that student engagement remains high. "He keeps all the students involved and builds community in the class by allowing his students to connect with one another. He helps create a comfortable new normal out of the given situation with this pandemic" remarks Junior Naomi Rivera. "In Language classes you have to in-

"I want them to collaborate because they are so isolated."

teract with the kids. You have to talk. It's not like math or science where you can be given a formula" says Fresco. He knows students may be tardy because of connection issues but always asks why there are late recalling how former Principal Bill Smith told staff, "When they come late and you don't say anything, it shows you don't care about them." Like his colleagues, Fresco cares about his students. Music teacher Reid Wixson echoes

the issues with technology sharing that he must provide support for an infinite variety of devices. Dance teacher Erin Brown felt similarly stating, "It took until MEA weekend for classes to really hit their stride." And Biology teacher Theresa Rumppe shared, "Lab

"Students record simultaneously to the same project and hear each other in real time."

days are brutal for me because you are teaching where to click." She'll often have students share their screens so she can troubleshoot along with them.

Travel down the virtual hallway to Jodi Marker-Perelman's ASL class and you'll find her teaching students in the first half of class, and then they'll work on assignments while she is available for assistance over Google Meet. She prefers to have her students work in class instead of piling on homework and more screen time. While district policy doesn't require students to have their camera's on, she does for her classes. "ASL is a visual language and I need to see they have the correct signs and facial expressions" she states. She utilizes the breakout room feature so students can practice conversations in small groups, as she pops in each group to see their progress.

The breakout rooms has been instrumental for Wixson's band and orchestra sections. He has really embraced the technology using the 'present' feature to display sheet music that each student will then play aloud by alternating measures. Perhaps the most impressive component of Wixson's virtual teaching is the use of Soundtrap, a cloud-based collaborative recording studio platform. "Students record simultaneously to the same project and hear each other in real time. They also learn to control the EQ and balance, a skill they wouldn't [normally] get" he says.

In Brown's Dance Company 3, students use the chat feature to comment on their classmates work. "The peer feedback (*Cont p.4*)

GIVE TO THE MAX: Nov 19

The Southwest Foundation needs your financial support now more than ever! We fund critical needs of the school that benefit all students like AVID, IB & AP Test scholarships, ACT Prep and student groups. No gift is too big or too small to make an impact. Donate on Nov. 19 at southwestfoundation.org or by scanning this QR code.



From Our Chair



"When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves."
-Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning

Adam Barrett, '00 At the core of Southwest High School and the International Baccalaureate, is a challenge to shift individual perception and see the world from multiple angles. The quote offered above, is from a book we read in our First Year IB English class. The synopsis; a prisoner of a Nazi Concentration Camp, details his method of survival. He identified a purpose in life to feel positive about, and then immersively imagined that outcome. Collectively, we face nothing similar to Frankl's experiences however, many of us face challenges that are quickly taking a vice-grip on life.

COVID is impacting health, finances and posing tremendous obstacles for all involved

with education and learning. Increased crime has a very real impact on our sense of security, trust and community. Political discourse hits us from every angle with a vengeance. Our trust in many systems is waning. Safety for our Black, Indigenous and People of Color is clearly an element of our social contract that is being ignored.

It can all seem so hopeless.

If we use history and experiences as our guide however, we may find opportunity to change ourselves and then, everything around us.

The Southwest Foundation, with our administration, staff, teachers and students as our lead, remain committed to building-up our community members. This year, we continue to invest your contributions into programs, scholarships for IB and AP tests and graduates, student organizations and other teacher/admin identified supports with an emphasis on equity.

While we need to raise money for the school to maintain essential services, we understand that many families are struggling. If unable to contribute, we ask that you join us and reflect

on how we can collectively help our neighbors and repair our community.

We all do better when we all do better.

As the year progresses, we will work in close collaboration with Dr. Littles-Butler and her team to identify where investments will have the greatest positive impact for our students. We have agreed to host a grand "Welcome Back" embrace when the school's doors are opened once again. We continue to identify community initiatives and partnerships that not only create immediate opportunity for our Southwest Family but also, serve as a positive example.

We are committed to our students and their future. Together, we will get through these challenges and emerge stronger.

"For success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side-effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself or as the by-product of one's surrender to a person other than oneself." - Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning

Strength and Love, -Adam

Kyoko French Named National Teacher of the Year

Open the book on Kyoko French's thirty years at Southwest and you'll find a rich history since she founded the program. From teaching six levels (with multiple levels in the same hour), holding countless field trips, supervising foreign-exchange programs and leading trips to Japan, she may be Southwest's most energetic teacher.

Long-time colleague Brian Meyer has seen her tireless efforts to engage all her students. "She knows and loves her students and gives everything to their expe-

rience with Japanese language and culture" he says. This feeling of appreciation is felt by her students as well. Sophomore Azaya Basford-Hammond describes her 'Sensei' as, "One of the most hardworking and dedicated teachers. She cares so much about her work and her students and will do anything to make sure we have the highest level of education."

To earn this prestigious honor, recipients must excel in: quality and innovative teaching, service to the profession and to the community, participation in professional development activities, and advocacy for their program and Japanese language education as a whole." French embodies all of that, but also just loves teaching as Basford-Hammond states, "She is constantly smiling, which makes us feel so welcome in her class." Perhaps Theatre teacher Margaret Berg said it best, "She is one of the nicest people and greatest teachers I have ever known."



Kyoko French and last year's foreign exchange students pose after visiting with Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey and Councilwoman Linea Palmisano in the Spring, 2020.

SW by the #s

SW is the largest school in the district, with approximately **1,915** enrolled.

Students speak **30** different languages.

78% of 2020 grads attended a four-year college/university, and another **12%** enrolled at a community college.

8 Nationally Board-Certified teachers.

90% of students take one or more advanced academic course.

1,000 students participate in **28** athletic programs with **3.5** average GPA.

The class of 2021 has **40** IB Diploma and **20** Career certificate candidates.

67 advanced academic courses offered.

1,175 college credits earned last year by **321** students through concurrent enrollment in 2020.

1,500 IB and AP exams given annually.

90 students in Unified Club, named Special Olympics championship school.

125 in Spring musical that earns 'Overall Outstanding Awards' by Hennepin Theatre Trusts' Spotlight program.

Girls Soccer Finish Strong Season On and Off Field

The Southwest Girls Varsity Soccer team advanced to the section 6AA final against Wayzata on October 24th before ultimately falling short to the hosting Trojans, culminating an outstanding season. On their way to the section final, the ladies won dramatic one goal games against St. Louis Park and Cretin Derham Hall.

The team earned acclaim from the Star Tribune in a September 25th article for **“Word got out and other schools started following Southwest’s lead.”**

Varsity players look on as teammate Grace Korsbon (Senior) proudly displays the Silver Cup after beating Washburn 2-0 on Sep. 29.



The Varsity Team after their victory against Cretin Derham Hall at Sectionals on Oct. 22.

their approach to fixtures against other City Conference opponents who were unable to field competitive lineups. The team eschewed an opportunity to pad their stats in exchange for a chance to build a greater sense of community between Minneapolis City Conference opponents. Word got out and other schools started following Southwest’s lead. The Girls’ beyond-their-years approach was not lost on Athletic Director Rob Hollway: “Our girls Soccer team is filled with rockstars. They compete and have fun.

“I don’t think any team is scarier than a team that believes it can beat anybody.”

Combine that with their confidence - they will play anybody, at any place at any time. As a result, I think our girls then exude that confidence & fun in their play. I don’t think any team is scarier than a team that believes it can beat anybody. Our girls are fun to watch! Coach (Sean) Baker and Coach (Patrick) Strauss are two of the best soccer coaches in the State. Fundamentally they are elite, they both coach club and always get our team to play at a level that competes for a Sectional Championship. But in my opinion, what makes these guys so special is the life lessons they teach that are far greater than soccer.”

The Southwest Foundation congratulates the team on a great season on and off the pitch.

SW Athletic Hall of Fame Team Up with SW Foundation

The Southwest Athletic Hall of Fame (SWAHOF) was founded in 2014 and has since held annual induction ceremonies, honoring numerous alumni who have excelled in athletics while at Southwest, after they graduated, or both. Both organizations strive to: promote diversity and equity, work towards connecting alumni to the terrific things presently happening at Southwest, and connect current students to the school’s rich history. While the SWAHOF will become a subsidiary of the Southwest Foundation (SWF) it will largely maintain its operational autonomy.

About the merger Principal Littles-Butler says, “As a high school and college athlete, I know the positive power and purpose found in organized sports. If we’re able to combine that energy with Southwest alumni as role models, our entire community will benefit.”

She adds, “The SWF is the perfect organization to expand the success and impact of the Athletic Hall of Fame.” Dan Froehlich (‘75), Head Southwest Women’s Basketball Coach, founding SWAHOF committee member and current SWF board member remarks, “Under the direction of our HOF committee chair, Jeff Rotsch (‘68), the SWAHOF has made great strides in connecting both alumni and students to proud moments in Southwest athletic history. We look forward to strengthening those connections with this partnership.” SWF Chair Adam Barrett sees

great value in this venture stating, “The SWF most clearly serves our current students with the injection of capital into academic and experiential programs, including athletics and arts. Our mission also includes the functional responsibility of maintaining a circle around alumni and delivering a positive atmosphere to the community. Combining members and networks will only expand the success of our very important work.”

Visit swwhshof.com to view all of the individuals and teams inducted and to nominate an athlete.

Alumni Corner

U of M Associate Professor **Ryan Langlois** (‘01) who runs a research laboratory which is currently focusing on the body’s immune response to virus infections, like COVID-19.

Hema Patel (‘19) who was featured in ‘Indian Country Today’ sharing how she defies stereotypes and engages with her cultures as an indigenous student at Yale University.

Mimi Kol-Balfour (‘20) who was the first recipient of the Minnesota Vikings’ George Floyd Legacy Scholarship.

Musician **Dessa** (‘99) who recorded with the MN Orchestra for a virtual performance.

Adam Johnson (‘00) who was recently profiled on Fox 9’s, “Voices For Change” for using his art to amplify social justice issues.

Peyton D’Emanuele (‘20) & **Elle Niebuhr** (‘20) who were recognized as All-American Swimmers by the National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association.

Our very own “Distinguished Alumna,” **Dr. Betsee Parker** (‘69) who is playing an active role in rebuilding from COVID-19’s global impact, lending her voice in a committee formed by United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed to save lives and protect livelihoods.

To share an alumni update, please email us at info@southwestfoundation.org.

Southwest KUDOS

Senior **Silvia Miller** & Juniors **Allison Han-ka**, **Peter Lindholm**, **Gracia Zachman** & **Ian Lee** for being selected to the All National Guitar Ensemble. Seniors **Saunder Strong** & **Adam Hognlund** were chosen as alternates for the All-National Honors Modern Band.

Senior **Amiah Tyler** who made a moving YouTube video in the aftermath of the George Floyd killing that has been widely shared.

SW Mountain Biking Team for performing at a level that would have had them ranked first in state under a normal season.

Junior **Owen Lindseth** who earned all sections honors at the 6AA Cross Country Championship. Junior **Isabel Wyatt** & Freshman **Sam Scott** won 5k races at the City Conferences.

All the **SW students** who participated in Homecoming activities the week of Nov 2-6.

SW Middle Years Program Coordinator **Jocelyn Lovick** for being featured on a Kare11 story about her work as a holistic health coach for 'House of Sol.'

The near 100 students who served as election judges on Nov 3rd.

Football coach **Joshua Zoucha** for being featured in two recent Star Tribune articles.

Boys Soccer Senior **Ramzi Ouro-Akondo** named a Star Tribune Athlete-of-the-Week.

Graphics Art Teacher **Brittany Spears** who was featured in a KARE11 story about how storefront murals has been an inspiration for her art, in the wake of George Floyd's killing.

Cyber-Seniors Tech Mentors **Reese Michaelson** & **Nayan Narula**, (and '20 graduates **Isaac Rinkleff-Duma** & **Tim Whisler**) whose work was written-up in the Star Tribune!

Senior **Vera Guzman**, Juniors **Grace Lindquist** & **Wren Carter** for representing SW in The National Japan Bowl (language competition). Senior **Josephine Spanier** who was named a 2020 Japanese Global Classmate.

Athletic Update

Dear Laker Fans,

COVID19 has changed everything about Southwest Athletics this past Spring and Fall - just how it has changed your lives, too. Amidst all of this unforeseen change and uncertainty, I've felt one overwhelming emotion: PRIDE!

PRIDE in our Student Athletes: this pandemic has been heart-breaking for our Spring athletes. COVID19 cancelled their season. Yet, they found a way to preserve & and graduate. Currently, our Fall athletes have made the best of a reduced season and late start all while maintaining a positive

attitude! I am proud of our student athletes and the resiliency and gratitude they show everyday.

PRIDE in our Coaching Staff: our coaching staff has adjusted and implemented new guidelines prioritizing player safety. Coaches have completely rewritten training programs and practice structures. Our coaching staff has led by example and creatively found ways to train and prepare our student athletes for success amidst a pandemic!

PRIDE in our Laker Community: we understand our no spectators policy has been difficult. But I am grateful for our Booster Clubs live streaming efforts and the respect our fans have shown by staying home, wearing masks and supporting our teams virtual-

ly! Our collective efforts have mitigated risk and provided opportunity for our student athletes. THANK YOU!

Special thanks to our administration and the Dr. Betsee Parker Grant Committee for their continued financial support. Just yesterday this generous committee approved an equipment grant to support our girls hockey team that we wouldn't otherwise be able to fund. While these last few months have been difficult - I have a tremendous amount of PRIDE in our student athletes, coaching staff and Laker Nation.

Please wish us a safe and healthy winter! Thanks again for all your support.

GO LAKERS!

~Robert Hollway, Director of Athletics



Using the studio's mirrors, Erin Brown's dancers see the view from behind her, as they would in-person.

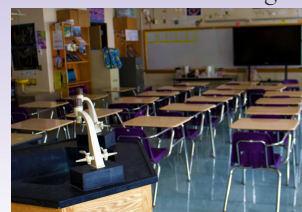
(From p.1) shows that we are all in this together" she explains.

Brown alternates teaching from a cleared-out space in her basement, to the studio at school where she'll make instructional videos, as the mirrors make it easier for students. "It is a totally different animal trying to learn the movements in a 2D format."

To prepare for fall, she took a class in July on Dance film as a genre, and now her students are learning cinematography techniques and editing to enhance their own choreography. After solo projects, they'll move to virtual duets. "I want them to collaborate because they are so isolated" she says. Junior Dance Company 3 member Bella Power, who has been dancing since she was three, welcomes the dance film unit. "It's a new form I've never done, its chal-

lenging. They're so many more things you have to think about. What location? How do we want to film? I'm exciting to be doing it" she says. The films will be showcased in a virtual January concert.

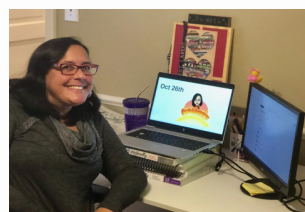
Principal Littles-Butler shared in a recent email that "Nothing will stop us from trying to reach and teach all students." Across core classes, electives and beyond teachers are working tirelessly to make Distance Learning successful. English Language Learner Coordinator Linea Hempel deValdez highlighted how the Biology team created a Foundations level Google Classroom for



Theresa Rumppe's Biology lab sits empty as students work at home during Distance Learning.

students on Individual Education Plans and new English Learners. Some teachers are relying on active websites, like Special Education teacher Sammy Nelson, and even the counselors are scheduling appointments on their virtual office pages (avatars and all).

It remains unknown when students will return to in-person school, but through tremendous commitments, teachers have ensured that all students will continue learning amidst the pandemic, and proved that a successful classroom can exist wherever a Southwest High School teacher does.



Jodi Mark-er-Perelman prepares her ASL lessons before welcoming thirty students on Oct. 26.



The Southwest Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to work with Southwest High School and its alumni to create an exceptional educational experience for all Southwest students. The Foundation raises money to support academic, athletic and artistic opportunities for students and to provide scholarships to graduating seniors.

There are many opportunities to become involved with and support the Southwest Foundation. We are currently seeking volunteers, additional board members and a new Treasurer. To learn more or to donate, visit SouthwestFoundation.org.

2020-2021 Board Members

- Adam Barrett '00, Chair
- Una Edwardson, current parent
- Dan Froehlich '75, Dir. of Alumni Engagement, staff and graduate parent
- Bradley Idelkope, '03
- Allison Krueger, current parent
- Dave Premack '04, Communications
- Paul Roach '88, Treasurer
- Gwen Spurgat, current parent

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