



# WELLSPRINGS FRIENDS SCHOOL

“THE LITTLE SCHOOL WITH THE BIG HEART”

Autumn, 2019

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*Wellsprings Friends School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. EIN 93-1123932*

## Friday Electives Build Real World Skills Auto Repair with Gen Schaack



Friday morning electives found a group of students in an auto repair class titled **Auto Correct** with **Gen Schaack**. Adventures included a trip to the junk yard for used car parts. “I was showing the students how they can lessen environmental impact by getting recycled parts from the junk yard.” (Gen Schaack)

## Thank You To Our Volunteer Teachers!



During our first term this school year, **Pearl Wolfe** and **Kate Barkley** taught an engaging class titled **Social Protest and Change**, focusing on feminism and the women’s rights movement. **Bill Goldsmith**, another volunteer teacher, guided students on a journey through “**Family Folklore: Exploring Your Roots**.” Thank you **Kate, Pearl and Bill** for your time and talent!

## Wetlands Restoration Project

BEFORE



AFTER



On October 11th, a crew of 61 employees from a company in Harrisburg spent the entire day clearing out the wetlands behind the school. The purpose was two-fold: one, to remove invasive vegetation and excessive saplings, allowing natural restoration; two, to remove debris left behind by transients and campers. The latter is a concern we have had for years, and we are thrilled that an enormous amount of debris has been removed, and there are very clear, open sight lines throughout. Our long-term plan is to integrate the wetlands across the curriculum from science to art to writing to service projects. To be able to access the wetlands in all weather, we will be constructing a boardwalk and a raised covered classroom with the Long Tom Watershed Council assisting in the planning and grant seeking. We are very grateful to Sarah Whitney of the Long Tom Watershed Council who guided this undertaking, as well as the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Wellsprings volunteers and donors, all of whom together made this exciting environmental project possible. Especially exciting is that the educational benefits of the restored wetlands will benefit current and future Wellsprings students!

# To the 2019 Wellsprings Graduating Class

## By Hannah Feingold, Wellsprings Alumna Class of 2006

*Editor's note: Due to space limitations, this is a very truncated version of Hannah's humorous and wise commencement address that will still, we hope, manage to touch you.*

Before coming to speak to you, I asked other people in my life to think about the lessons they wish they'd learned earlier on. I got some really, really bad advice - age is no guarantee of wisdom. But I did come up with five things that I really wish I had known thirteen years ago, when I sat in those exact chairs in this exact building.

### 1. It's so, so important to take time to feel good about your accomplishments.

You're here today because you did something really hard. I think there's no harder stage of life than being a teenager. You see technological and cultural changes come about firsthand, and often understand them better than people older than you because it's happening in a language you speak, but nobody realizes the value of your insight. Being here today is a really big achievement, and you deserve to feel really, really good about yourselves.

### 2. Goals are fluid.

There's this beautiful Sylvia Plath analogy where she describes the paths she might take in life spreading out in front of her like the branches of a fig tree. If you have a fig tree's worth of goals, a step along any branch is a step in the right direction. Even if you're not sure where you're going yet, any step you take in your life is going to take you closer to whatever's next as long as you maintain space in yourself to be open to it. Sometimes you have to take a step back and try something else. Except now, you've learned something from your experience and you're going to be better prepared for the next choice you make.

### 3: Every version of being a person is really, really hard and we should cut each other a little more slack.

Because our experience of others' inner lives is such a small

fraction of our knowledge of our own, it's really easy to forget that every other person is living a life as complicated and challenging as we are. [Culturally today,] we're learning to be a little more open, a little more raw. I think, in recognizing that, that we're also learning to forgive each other a little more gracefully when somebody slips up. In that respect, you all have such an advantage as you embark on your next step...because you're coming from Wellsprings, which is built on recognizing and celebrating the most honest parts of every one of you.

### 4. There are countless types of privilege in this world, just as there are countless types of adversity, and you'll find yourself on either side of that coin many, many times throughout your life.

It takes a lot of courage and strength to speak when you're in a position of adversity, but it also takes a lot of courage and strength to listen when you're in a position of privilege. And we all have to learn to do both.

I have one final piece of advice for you, and I cannot stress this one enough.

### 5. Fights over how to load the dishwasher ruin relationships.

The laughter you're hearing? That's the laughter of a room full of people looking back on a million fights over the same thing. There will come a time when you live with a partner, or a friend, or a roommate, and they will have ideas about how to load the dishwasher, and those ideas will be wrong. I invite you, class of 2019, to break this horrible cliché and let go of all your feelings about the dishwasher now.

You have worked really, really hard to be here, and you deserve new and interesting problems. They're waiting for you. Welcome to your next step. It's challenging, and complicated, and exciting...and I really, really hope you like figs.

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## In Memory of Sam Smith Wellsprings Volunteer Teacher

Sam volunteered in Bob's classes from 2001-2012 teaching math to the advanced kids as well as geometric shapes. He was open minded, accepting, kind and smart and was a huge influence on Bob's teaching style.



## Alumna Laura Hopkins Rocks in Blackwater Holylight

Alum Laura Hopkins plays guitar in the all female metal psych band, Blackwater Holylight. They have been touring nationally and you can catch them in Eugene on December 6 at WOW Hall.





## Wellsprings Friends School Graduating Class of 2019

*Miranda, Jordin, Gaven, Ian, Brandon, Caleb, Sophie  
Aiden, Kenzie, Noah, Jack, Alyssa, Dalia*

### Graduation words from WFS teachers:

**Aiden McKinney** - "Aiden is more confident in her interactions with her peers and with strangers and attributes this to our tight-knit community. Her biggest passion is baking and has a vision of making the world a sweeter place to live, one cupcake at a time." -*Chanci*

**Alyssa Crawford** - "Alyssa has become one of my best students in government class. She learned how to channel her passion for a variety of issues into well-reasoned arguments, with supporting evidence." -*Paul*

**Brandon Hastings** - "I see Brandon as the self-appointed Sheriff of Wellsprings. When there was a disturbance of the peace, students would call for Brandon's assistance in bringing order to the situation." -*Paul*

**Caleb Rands** - "Caleb has a love of lists and heavy metal music. Lunchtime conversations won't be the same without him." -*Bob*

**Dalia Hamide** - "What is remarkable about Dalia is her loyalty and commitment to family and her love of math worksheets." -*Bob*

**Gaven Carpenter** - "We have all been lucky to have Gaven in our lives. He is the type of person that leaves a lasting impression in anyone fortunate enough to get to know him." -*Brad*

**Ian Stouder** - "Ian has always demonstrated his care for others and the community. He has learned to trust in himself, to love himself more." -*Gen*

**Jack Giddens** - "When I asked him what he thought the ways in which he changed were, his response was simple: 'How have I not changed?'" -*Gen*

**Jordin Wood** - "A Renaissance man seeks to develop skills in all areas of knowledge, social and physical development and the arts. They strive to be a well-rounded individual. I see that type of man when I look at Jordin." -*Paul*

**Kenzie Brennan** - "Before Wellsprings, Kenzie described herself as shy but all the little things about being part of the Wellsprings community helped her open up and share more of herself with those around her. My favorite thing she shares now is her beautiful singing voice." -*Chanci*

**Miranda Gustafson** - "Miranda is driven and always applies herself fully to everything she does, which is saying a lot because she has many interests. Dance is her biggest passion, but she is an amazing actor, and has an impeccable eye for detail, which I discovered when she took Figure Drawing." -*Chanci*

**Noah Steinhoff** - "I believe that what he has experienced has helped transform him into someone capable of great compassion with a level of understanding and perspective he didn't have before." -*Brad*

**Sophie Brouse-Schmidt** - "Sophie moved here from across country and handled it with understanding and maturity. Positivity like hers is rare in high schoolers and even more rare in the ones that wear as much black as Sophie." -*Brad*

## WELLSPRINGS FRIENDS SCHOOL 8th Annual Toast 'N' Roast

On October 16, we held our annual honoring and gentle ribbing of two local community figures. This year we toasted and roasted **Dan Bryant**, Minister at First Christian Church in Eugene as well as Executive Director of SquareOne housing project, and **Kitty Piercy**, homeless advocate and former Eugene Mayor.

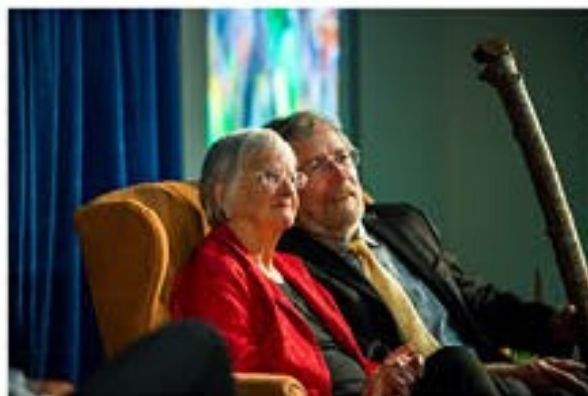
The event took place at Lane Community College Center for Meeting and Learning and featured guest chef **Ib Hamide** of Café Soriah and LCC chef, **Tim Hill**.

**Storm Kennedy** again guided the proceedings as our emcee. Teacher **Bob Schlichting's** band, **Fuzz**, provided music before and during dinner.

Alumna speaker **Ayashe (Ruiz) Buenrostro**, spoke about the influence Wellsprings had on her life and how what she learned that continues to guide her. She was then joined on stage by **Jordan Valadez** (alumnus) **Kenzie Brennan** (graduating student), **Adam John** (current student), **Katie Misik** (current parent), **Pearl Wolfe** (former parent) and **Chanci Herer** (teacher) voicing what Wellsprings means to them. It was a beautiful and moving moment demonstrating how many lives are touched by the work that happens at the Little School with the Big Heart.

The evening concluded with a funny and touching roast of Kitty by **Cheryl Crumbley** and **Dave Funk**. Followed by the duo of **Paul Neville** and **Tony Corcoran** roasting Dan with an original script in the style of the comedy skit "The 2000 year old man" by **Carl Reiner** and **Mel Brooks**.

The evening was not only fun but raised awareness of our mission and work with teenagers. Over \$55,000 was raised to support our operations. Thank you to all who contributed before, during and after the Toast 'N' Roast. Your support helps us go further in creating a safe maturing place where young people can grow and learn.



### *Fundraising Corner - Grant Good News*

*Wellsprings Friends School was recently awarded a grant from Braemar Charitable Trust for \$2500 to purchase new books for the school library! In addition WFS has access to grant money from the Oregon Department of Education to enhance the STEM program over the next two years. We are excited to continue boosting our materials and curriculum.*