



# Engage, Strive, Progress

Annual Report  
2016-2017



## ParkmontSchool

Fostering Individual Growth and  
Enthusiasm for Learning

Washington, D.C. | Grades 6-12, Co-Ed



# Parkmont School

Fostering Individual Growth and Enthusiasm for Learning

4842 Sixteenth Street, NW | Washington, DC 20011

(202) 726-0740 | [www.parkmont.org](http://www.parkmont.org)

Grades 6–12, Co-ed

**Ron McClain**

Head of School

**Nijole Gedutis**

Dean of Students

**Willa Reinhard**

School Administrator and Internship Coordinator

**Erin Lidz**

Communications Coordinator

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**Parkmont School** is a non-profit, independent school governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board, which includes the head of school, draws its members from groups of concerned stakeholders with special expertise, including current and former parents, alumni, key friends, and faculty. The Board sets school policy, oversees finances, makes decisions that shape the long-term goals of the school, and strives to maintain the philosophies, standards and quality of Parkmont.

The Parkmont School Annual Report is published by the Communications Office after each fiscal year. We have attempted to make lists of donors as accurate as possible. If any errors are found, please contact Erin Lidz, our Communications Coordinator, and accept our sincere apologies.

For more information about Parkmont School's development efforts, please contact Erin Lidz at [elidz@parkmont.org](mailto:elidz@parkmont.org) or 202-726-0740.

## **ON THE COVER**

Top left: An annual adventure to Calleva gives students a chance to work as a team, conquer fears and zip through the trees. Top right: Parkmont School's D.C. History class gets a taste of the city's Civil War past at Fort Stevens, where Lincoln once stood. Middle right: Us. Bottom left: 11th-grader Amanuel Gebregiorgis drives to the basket in a game with The Nora School.

## Annual Report 2016-2017

Dear Parkmont and Somerset Friends and Alumni,

Please find within these pages our belated Annual Report for the 2016-17 school year. It lists many of you among the numbers of individuals and institutions who've helped Parkmont and Parkmont students in the previous year. We are grateful, as always.

Parkmont students worked more than 8,000 hours at local businesses, schools, and non-profit organizations as part of our 37-year-old internship program. All of this is made possible by the generosity of placement and supervision provided by more than 60 local enterprises who partner with us and host our students.

We continued our efforts to provide year-round schooling and internship/work opportunities for our lowest-income students, along with Parkmont's traditional field trips and adventure programming for all, supported by our Annual Fund, which again topped \$50,000.

The Friends of the Parkmont Poetry Festival, the idea itself belonging to Jacqui Michel, David Weisman, and Judy Lentz, moved a step closer to helping us fully fund the Festival, long subsidized by the school in our effort to provide a collaborative and transformative literary adventure for young people from every ward in the District.

Our Memorial Funds continued their impactful work, with the John Lentz Fund helping take our staff and student team to Puerto Rico for the first time, the Popkin Fund buying a book for every Parkmont student and staff member at holiday time, and the Randy Pellaton Fund inspiring our first camping trips in a dozen years.

Last year was the end of Christy Ross's remarkable career here, which included producing more than 20 Annual Reports and leading our efforts to successfully raise more than \$3 million in Annual Fund drives and Capital Campaigns. She was here for the second half of our first 46 years, our whole history made possible by the ingenuity of our founding families, the steadfastness and creativity of several generations of staff, and our acquisition of a permanent home, courtesy of our merger with Somerset in 1991.

The support recorded here helps make it possible for us to do remarkable and energizing work on behalf of students who've often run into obstacles elsewhere. This work was the original intention of Parkmont's visionary parents in 1972 and Somerset's ambitious and idealistic staff in 1973. It's a gift that we're able to keep on giving to new families today because we've continued to have the confidence and support of our community.

Sincerely yours,



Ron McClain  
Head of School

## “Intro To Work” Evolves

**I**nternships and Parkmont School go hand in hand. And the program designed to introduce students to what it takes to succeed in a job has not stood still. The pool of workplaces deepened with new host sites that generously agreed to welcome our students to their enterprises. We’ve pushed to get internships organized earlier in the year. Feedback from students prompted new ways to make the effort more useful and fun.

The commitment for students is substantial — twice per week for high schoolers over the entire school year and once per week during the second half of the year for middle schoolers. Working closely with teachers, students learn to arrange transportation, show up to the internship site on time and navigate relationships — and still get lunch!

As students advance, they keep journals and update their resumes. They can obtain references and find paths to summer jobs. Students also are encouraged to gain a sense of place by considering the neighborhoods where they are interning and the role of the business in the community.

Reflective discussion is a constant, and group meetings were added this year to give students a chance to swap stories. Willa Reinhard, Parkmont School Administrator and Internship Coordinator, says students also get a chance to trade advice — including worst advice “to make it fun and get it out of their systems.”

Required revisions of journal entries posed a question for some students: If only the teacher and diarist see it, what’s the point of the edits? To clarify, the



Jackson Nimley, a 12th grader, aligns inventory at East City Bookshop.





Gabe Qualiana, an 11th grader, works on a display at Frager's Garden Center.

audience was expanded. Students now highlight their internships at a school gathering, presenting slides and challenges they have faced, a tough switch for some students faced with overcoming stage fright.

It isn't easy to find suitable businesses willing to participate. "It requires a lot of phone-calling," Willa says, noting that technology companies, despite the prevalence of computer devices and need for skilled technicians, can be among the more difficult to recruit. A lumberyard answered the call, making a solid fit for a cerebral student seeking manual labor as an outlet for pent-up energy. Another student, new to Parkmont, tapped a prior relationship with an auto mechanic shop to continue there as an intern. In all, the year involved 47 sites. According to Willa, "All these things are to help them understand the real-world value of their internships."



For a list of Internship Sponsors, see page 12.

## INTERNSHIP JOURNAL EXCERPTS

### Internship goals?

*"... I also need to work on making more decisions for myself. If I have a problem, I can come up with different solutions to that problem and present them to my supervisor. I can execute one of the solutions, and discuss why I did so with my supervisor. ..."*

**Nicole Sadler**

Theatre Lab

### Typical day?

*"... I have never before been able to help people adopt animals. I get to make decisions based on my relationships with the animals. I get to learn the animals' personalities and decide if they're an animal that the adopters are looking for. I love doing this, especially when it is a match. ..."*

**Isabel Pflieger**

Humane Rescue Alliance

### If I were boss?

*"... I would let programs run past 10 pm because a lot of adults and college students don't have time to make early dance classes. By having later programs, I think it would be easier to work around participants' schedules. ..."*

**Alexis Jackson-Scott**

Dance Place

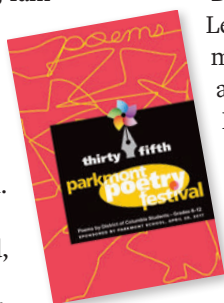


## Parkmont Poetry Festival Turns 35

The eloquence of young poets from middle and high schools across Washington, D.C., chimed in spring, as the Parkmont Poetry Festival marked its 35th year. Scores of students, family members and supporters turned out in April for the Festival Reading, held at Zion Baptist Church Fellowship Hall, located on Blagden Avenue, within sight of Parkmont School. A distinguished panel of judges — published poets Susan Scheid, Ailish Hopper, Hiram Larew and Sarah Browning — reviewed 523 poems from private, public and public charter school students, and

selected 40 winners. Among them were poems from five Parkmont School students: “Smile” by Jeff Djyoadhiningrat; “November” by Christopher Campbell; “Dear Mr. White Man” by Jason Leiva Martinez; “She is only a mirror” by Emma Schenbaum; and “Words” by Antonio Smith-Pinelo. The winning poets each received a \$40 gift certificate, a Festival T-shirt, and their work was collected in the annual Festival publication, which gave special thanks to Judy Lentz, who turned an idea to encourage youth creativity into an enduring celebration. Judy coordinated the event for 25 years and remains a committed contributor and member of the Poetry Advisory Committee.

In its fourth decade, the Festival shows



**Above:** Winning poets in the 2017 Parkmont Poetry Festival share the limelight during a reading and reception in April at Zion Baptist Church Fellowship Hall on Blagden Avenue.

the staying power of the theory behind it. “A major challenge of living, in some ways, is living with your own internal conversation,” says Festival Co-Founder and Parkmont Head of School Ron McClain. “Poetry becomes this invitation to look at that conversation and mine it for a remarkable set of treasures. Being able to use that as a platform to bring people into community with each other seemed like an incredibly great endeavor.” The Festival, coordinated since 2008 by Parkmont English teacher Kim Schraf,

has received support from the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. Parkmont remains grateful to the continuing and new supporters whose aid in-kind and in currency over the years make this special event possible. For the list of contributors, see page 11. To watch a short documentary and read the work and profiles of past winners, go to [parkmontpoetry.org](http://parkmontpoetry.org).



## Dear Puerto Rico, Thank You

**A** seven-week, 2017 upper-school Main Lesson on the History and Culture of Puerto Rico took eight students far beyond their 16th Street classroom — 1,560 miles and a time zone beyond. The spring journey to Puerto Rico added a vibrant new locale to Parkmont School’s impressive long-range

travel roster that includes the Grand Canyon, Mexico and Alaska. The students, accompanied by teachers Alex Jennison and Ethan Kuhnhehn, kept a robust pace over their week on *La Isla del Encanto*. The group strolled the old city of San Juan, rode paddleboards on the renowned surfing coast of Rincón,



A Parkmont flotilla skims the Caribbean.





**Students and teachers stroll a neighborhood in Puerto Rico.**

splashed into mountain waterfalls, hiked in the lush El Yunque rainforest, went caving in the Guajataca Reserve, rode horses along the beach and ferried to the nearby Puerto Rican island of Vieques for a night-time glass-bottomed kayak trip across a bay full of bioluminescent plankton. As part of the Main Lesson curriculum, students interviewed people along the way to gain firsthand perspectives about island history, culture and ecology, gaining understanding to help inform the writing of a course research paper. Each evening, the group gathered

for “Rose and Thorn,” a sharing of their accomplishments and struggles of the day. Growth came in many forms for students, including two who learned how to swim. In his account of the trip for *Passing Notes* (Sessions 3-5, 2017, posted at [parkmont.org](http://parkmont.org)), Ethan reported that students were “reflective, resourceful, insightful and inquisitive” and seeing them “face their fears, take responsibility and help each other overcome difficulties was special for all of us.”





# Parkmont Language Arts: Mentoring Writers

Count learning to convey ideas in writing among the more difficult exertions of going to school, particularly at a place like Parkmont, where students must produce an in-depth written petition to graduate. So helping students gain the needed skills to succeed requires an attentive and energetic approach from teachers across grade levels.

Count Kim Schraf as Parkmont's counselor-in-chief when it comes to helping students learn the craft — especially that high school rite of passage called the research paper. Kim started teaching at Parkmont in 1990, after working for a few years at Somerset School, where she inherited the Research Writing course from a departing teacher. It's a demanding class, which includes immutable due dates for papers and a college textbook that walks budding writers through the Modern Language Association format.

Students who put in the effort don't get left behind hurdles. "We're way too hands-on for that," says Kim.



Kim Schraf discusses research paper citation style with students: from left, front row, Joseph Doyle and Alexis Jackson-Scott; and back row, Gabe Qualiana, Victory Nnam and Nathan Coleman. (Photo by student Justin Wade)

The class, primarily for seniors, is a Main Lesson, two hours per day and a major element of a seven-week session. Students produce two papers, the first a practice round, with the entire class writing about the same topic, sharing resources, working through outlining, identifying authoritative sources, managing attribution, and distinguishing factual statements from argument. The work requires what can be a dramatic shift from casual methods of expression. The second paper runs longer at eight to 10 pages, where students pursue an "arguable question" of their own choosing. The second paper carries double the grading weight. Students, all along, build vocabulary, learn to use their own words to faithfully paraphrase the work of others, and head toward producing elegant, streamlined formal writing.

Sometimes underclassmen take the class and sometimes students repeat it, not necessarily because of failure but because they want to hone their skills. College goals and college standards are discussed, as well as how to get help.

It isn't all a ground game of sorting op. cit. from ibid. Sometimes Kim lets it fly, inventing ways to lighten the lesson with games to strengthen students' grasp of language mechanics. In "Parkmont Grammar Gin," she deals parts-of-speech cards to students, which they, in turn, play to elongate a sentence with words fitting the categories in their hands. The fewer cards the students are left holding, the better. Of course, as a Scrabble enthusiast, Kim allows players to challenge usage, and score if they can catch a classmate trying

to pass off a noun as an adjective.

As an adjunct theater professor at a Washington, D.C., university, Kim has a window on who has been well prepared for her course, which includes analytical writing about plays. “I learn a lot about what gets missed in high school by assessing college students’ writing.”

At Parkmont, students get to learn in the safety of a nurturing classroom,

instead of facing the fire in college. Sometimes, she hears of lessons remembered — like when she bumped into a former student and collegian who noted being “so glad that I had that course under my belt.” It’s music to a writing teacher’s ears, and, says Kim, “a great affirmation.”



## Parkmont Teacher Explorers

At the end of the 2016-17 school year, Parkmont faculty members were quick to get out in the world to recharge the batteries that energize and enrich their instruction of students. Travels included Dean of Students Nijole Gedutis’ trip to Chicago, where she caught the hit musical *Hamilton*; a week-long trek through Rocky Mountain National Park by math and



Parkmont School teacher Bridget Mullins meets Andalusian dancers.



Parkmont School teacher Mike Shoup rides camelback in the Sahara Desert.

computer teacher Sam Graul; a sweep along Spain’s Mediterranean coast by teacher Bridget Mullins; coach and teacher Matt McClain’s hike up the Peruvian Andes to reach the famed ruin of Machu Picchu; and math teacher and Upper School Advisor Mike Shoup’s voyage to Morocco.





## Thank You!

### Gifts for Current Operations

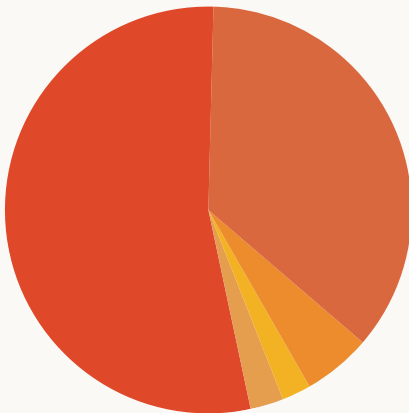
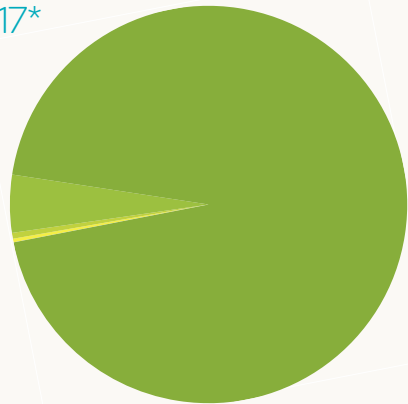
Annual Giving, Unrestricted	<b>\$51,538</b>
Annual Giving, Restricted	<b>\$3,350</b>
The Financial Aid Fund	<b>\$31,375</b>
The Internships Fund	<b>\$7,500</b>
The Parkmont Poetry Festival	<b>\$16,538</b>
<hr/>	
Total Voluntary Support	<b>\$110,301</b>

## Fiscal Year

2016-2017\*

Tuition Income	\$2,219,993
Fundraising	\$110,301
School Programs	\$11,112
Financial Income & Other	\$6,987

**Total Revenue \$2,348,393**



Instructional & Administrative	\$1,255,628
Financial Aid	\$838,402
Program & Student Activities	\$126,787
Property	\$53,975
Other Expenses	\$61,837

**Total Expenses \$2,336,629**

*\* These numbers have not been finalized by the school audit.*

## Voluntary Support

### Annual Giving \$54,888

#### Current Parkmont Families 2016-17

Lindsey Crawford  
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#### Parkmont and Somerset Alumni Families

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Christy Halvorson Ross  
Dick Roth  
Kim Schraf  
Jacqui Michel and David Weisman  
Tom and Linda Yoder

#### Corporate Giving

Combined Federal Campaign of the National  
Capital Area (\$623.76)



## Restricted Annual Funds

### Lentz Fund

(Educational Travel)

Barbara Clarke and Doug Leslie  
Ron McClain

### Pellaton Fund

(Middle School Outdoor Program)

Ron McClain  
Bob and Lynn Pellaton  
Ryrie and Kara Pellaton

### Popkin Fund

(Gift Books for Students)

Ron McClain

## Parkmont Financial Aid Fund \$31,375

The Clark-Winchcole Foundation (\$10,000)  
Anonymous Donors (\$21,375)

## The Internships Fund \$7,500

The Harry and Zoe Poole Foundation

## Poetry Festival \$16,538

Humanities Council of Washington, DC  
(\$4,000)

### Epic Poem Donors

Anna-Karin Dillard  
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### Friends of the Poetry Festival

Kelly Trippe and Steve Aitken  
Judith and Thompson Bowles  
Gigi Bradford  
Rosemary Dickerson  
Marjorie and Edward Greene  
Jenifer Hamilton  
Mariva Mata  
Joseph Ross  
Christy Halvorson Ross  
Susan Scheid  
Edwina Smith  
Angela Wilson

### In-Kind Donations to the Poetry Festival

Karen Ballotta  
Susanna Bunzel-Harris  
Nanne Davis Eliot  
Cille Kennedy  
Judy Lentz  
Laura Middleton  
Vivienne Rachman  
Melissa Ricks  
Christy Ross  
Carolyn Rosser  
Kim Schraf  
Kelly Trippe

*Poetry Festival Support continues on the next page*

## Voluntary Support

*continued from the previous page*

### Poetry Festival Volunteers

Troy Burki  
Debbie DuSault  
Nijole Gedutis  
Cille Kennedy  
Judy Lentz  
Kevin Mutschler  
Grace Nimley  
Victory Nnam  
Willa Reinhard  
Christy Ross  
Kim Schraf  
Kelly Trippe

### Sincere thanks for the hard work and dedication of our Poetry Advisory Committee

Angela Ganey  
Jean Gurman  
Cille Kennedy  
Judy Lentz  
Jacqui Michel  
Amy Waldrop  
Anne Harding Woodworth

### Gifts in Kind

American University School of Professional  
& Extended Studies  
Loie Faulkner  
Devin Kuhn  
The George Washington University  
PsyD Program  
Hogan Lovells, LLP  
Susan Pearson  
Nina Zuriff

### Internship Sponsors

Brookside Gardens  
Center for Brain and Spine  
Code for Progress  
Dance Place  
DC Scores  
District Dogs  
East City Bookshop  
Fleet Feet Sports

Frager's Garden Center  
Frugalista  
Gallihier and Huguely  
German Auto  
Highwood Theater  
Howard University Hospital  
Humane Rescue Alliance  
Humanities Council of Washington, DC  
Hung Tao Choy Mei Kung Fu  
Hydrocephalus Association  
Institute for Policy Studies  
Janney School  
Joe's Record Paradise  
Jubilee Housing  
Just Us Kids Child Development Center  
Labyrinth Games  
Lafayette Elementary School  
Largo High School — College and Career  
Development Program  
LAYC Teen Center  
Learning Ally  
Little Flower Montessori  
Mad Science  
Maryland Therapeutic Horse Center  
Middle C Music  
Mosaic Theater  
New Community For Children  
Oyster Elementary School  
Pennyworth Shop  
Raymond Monzano Auto  
Sankofa Books and Cafe  
SED Center  
Silver Cycles  
Sitar Arts Center  
Straw, Stick and Brick Deli  
Studio Grooming Salon  
Sullivan's Toy Store  
Takoma Bicycle  
Theatre Lab  
Washington Adventist Hospital; Radiation  
and Oncology Department





Parkmont School  
2017 graduates  
celebrate their  
achievement with  
faculty members.

Parkmont middle  
schoolers gather  
at the National  
Museum of African-  
American History  
and Culture on the  
National Mall.



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Please follow Parkmont School  
on Facebook. This spring we  
are launching **Parkmont Past**,  
a new Facebook group for Parkmont  
alums and staff.

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