September - October 2025 | Issue #162

GayParent LGBTQ

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parentmag.com



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parents league of new york
NAIS National Association of Independent Schools
FISNA
AFSA

MAGIC



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Sure, we have amazing academics and brilliant teachers who absolutely love what they do (and they are a big part of our secret sauce). But wait until you see the choices outside the classroom. Athletics, performing arts, clubs, business and entrepreneurship, debate ... the list goes on and on. And when kids try something new and a passion is ignited, that is where the magic happens.

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Informational Fair & Panel Discussion
LGBTQ+ Families Connect: The Independent School Experience
Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 6pm – 7:30pm
The Packer Collegiate Institute | RSVP: admissions@packer.edu



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www.themontessorischools.org

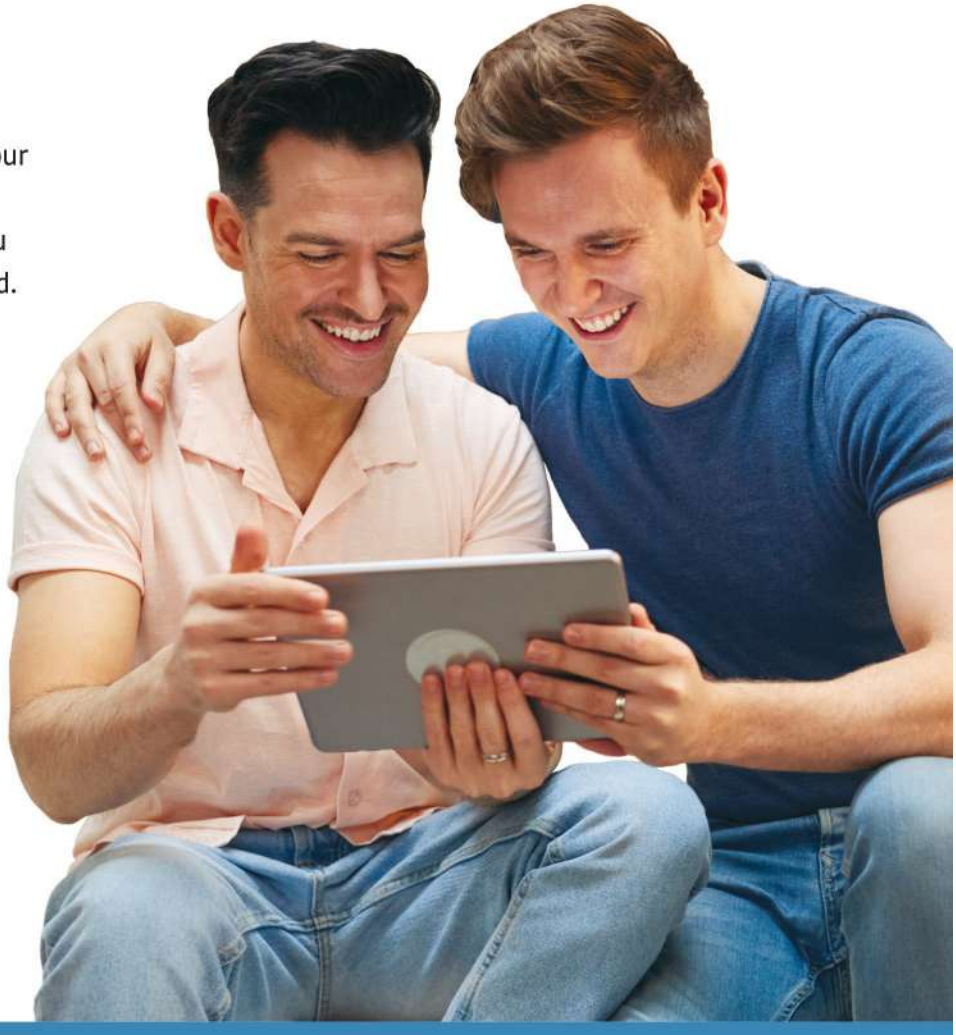


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- Preimplantation Genetic Testing
- Embryo Freezing
- Egg Freezing
- Donor Egg and Donor Sperm Services
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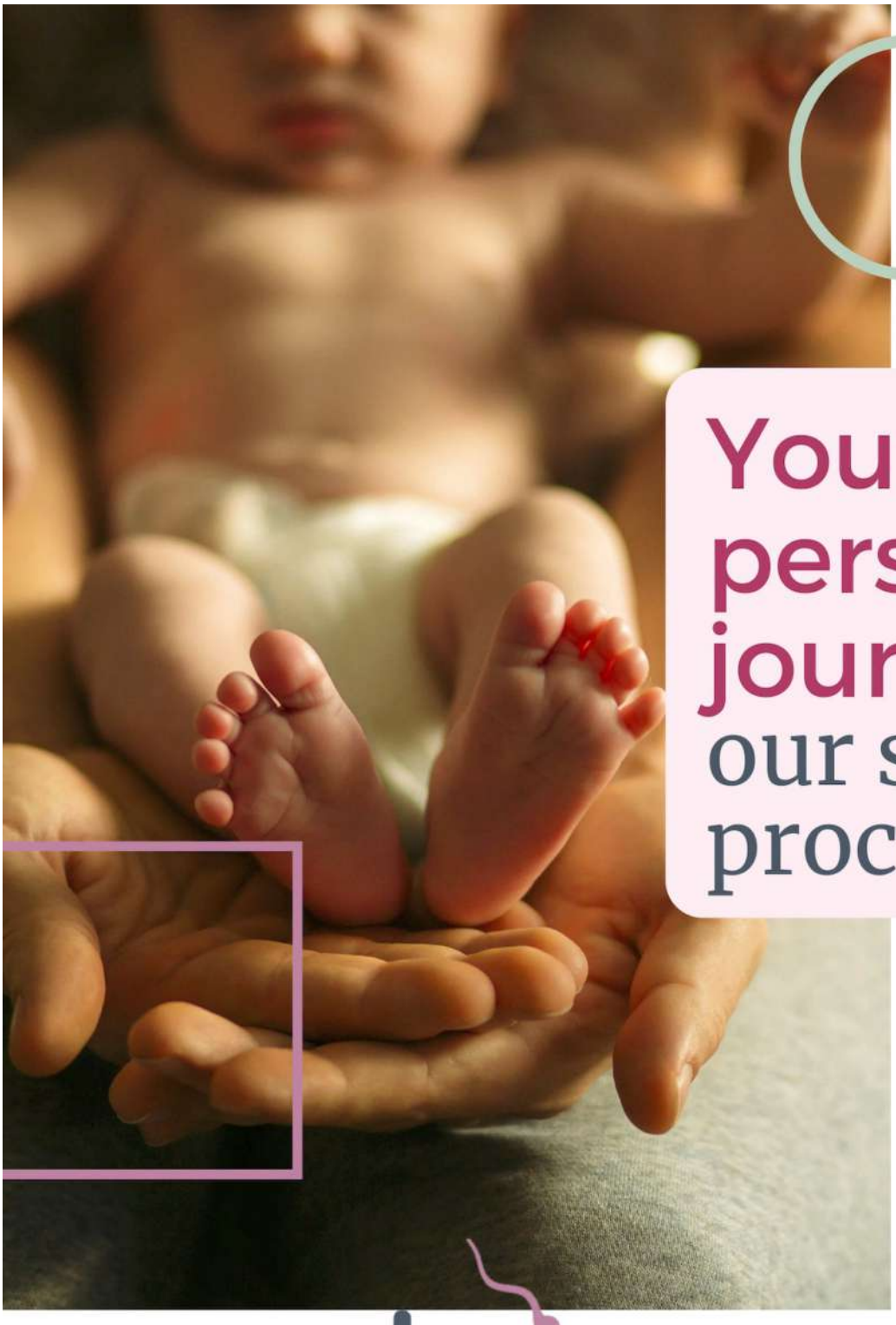
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ValleyHealth.com/Fertility

Valley Health System

www.valleyhealth.com/fertility



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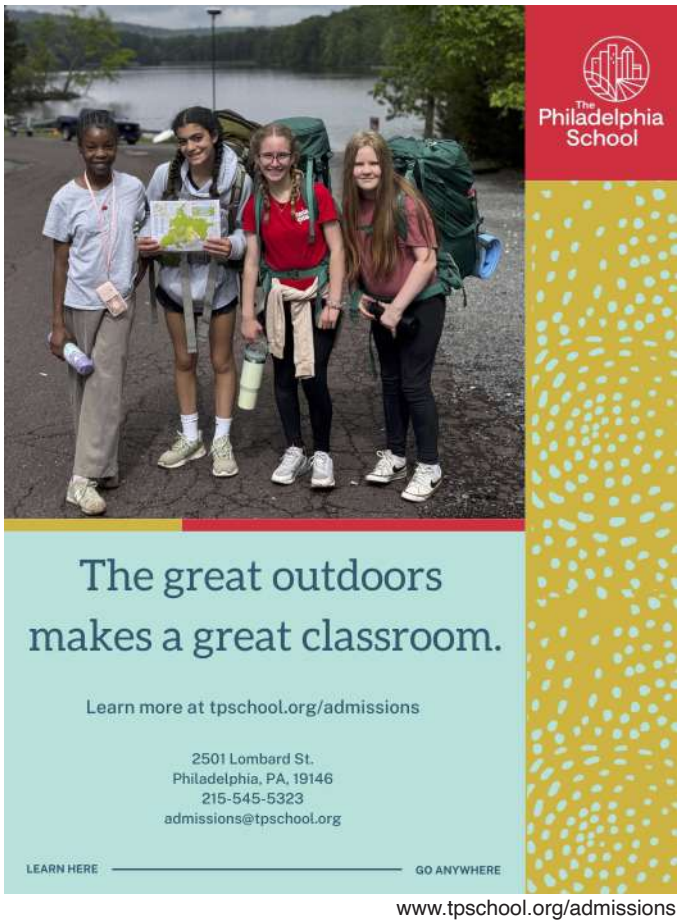


Scan the QR Code to schedule a tour today!

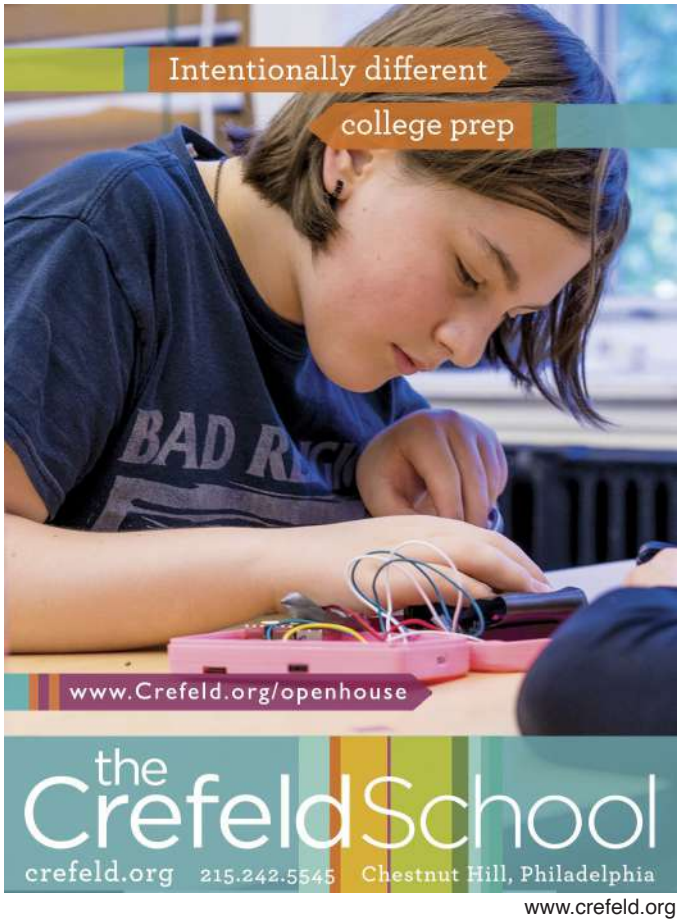
5200 N Ashland Ave
Chicago, IL 60640
773-465-2662

www.chicagowaldorf.org

chicago waldorf school



www.tpschool.org/admissions



www.crefeld.org

Gay Parent LGBTQ MAGAZINE
September-October 2025 issue #162

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Feedback from our social media audience. - page **11**

27th Annual Gay Parent Magazine LGBTQ Friendly Independent Schools Directory -
Included are over 150 schools, ranging from nursery to college and after school. Listed by state, the list includes schools for students with learning differences, bilingual schools, all girls or all boys, boarding, and religious schools. - page **12**

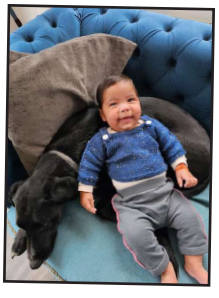


GPM New Facebook Page Campaign -
At the end of June, Gay Parent Magazine's Facebook (GPM) page was compromised and forced off line by people unsupportive of LGBTs. GPM has started a campaign to rebuild and redirect its Facebook audience. We're asking our supporters to help by following our new page, Gay Parent Magazine-original. - page **26**



Beyond the Rainbow: Navigating School Choices for Our ADHD Son -
Amy Murphy writes about the different schools she investigated for her son diagnosed with ADHD and entering kindergarten. - page **27**

ADVERTISER SPOTLIGHT: Garden School, Queens, New York City - Garden School, an independent Nursery through Grade 12 school in Jackson Heights, Queens, fosters a learning environment where students are encouraged to explore their varied interests and develop into well-rounded individuals.- page **42**



Living with an Adult Son Who Has a Traumatic Brain Injury - In 2010, Renée J. Lukas' son Tucker crashed into the side of a house on a snowmobile and suffered a brain injury. Renée writes about how Tucker is doing since the accident. - page **45**

Becoming Dad at 49: How I Built a Family My Way - New York dad Kevin Zoback became a single parent to twins at age 49. - page **58**

London Dads, Pasan and Damian - We venture across the pond to feature a young family just outside of London. Meet Pasan and Damian and their twins Liko and River. - page **67**

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Cover photo courtesy of Lewmini Photography and Pasan and Damian. Photos this page, top to bottom, photo courtesy Kevin Zoback and Lewmini Photography and Pasan and Damian.

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Two wonderful recommendations on our new Facebook page Gay Parent Magazine-original.



@gayparentmagazine This issue is packed with heart, resilience, and real queer family joy. From pro athletes turned podcasters to A'Jay's powerful journey — it's the kind of representation we need more of. Just gave it a read and I'm so grateful this exists for our community. I'd love to keep seeing what you're up to!

- pihguesthouse

(via Instagram)

We love to hear from you. Send us your feature requests, photos, and comments by email at gayparentmag@gmail. Follow our new Facebook page, Gay Parent Magazine-original, Instagram, Threads, Tumblr, Bluesky, and X. ▼



www.sprucestreetschool.org



https://school.bankstreet.edu/



www.eb.org

27th Annual Gay Parent Magazine Independent Schools Directory

Welcome to our 27th Annual Private Schools Directory where we highlight our advertising independent schools ranging from preschool to college. Most are co-ed but a few schools are all girls or all boys. Most are day schools but also include boarding. Some schools indicated are for students with learning differences, teach language immersion or are religious.

The schools are located in California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington. Contact information for each school is listed alphabetically by state. Links listed are for reference only, click on the link located below their display ads. Visit our web site at www.gayparentmag.com to read short descriptions of some of the schools.

CALIFORNIA

Alta Vista School
450 Somerset St.
San Francisco, CA 94134
415-467-3700
Middle School
2558 Mission St.
San Franciso, CA 94110
415-510-8492
www.altavistaschool.org
Junior K - 8th grade
See ad on page 71

Brentwood School
K - 6th grade
12001 Sunset Blvd.
310-471-1041
7th - 12th grade
100 S. Barrington Pl.
310-476-9633
Los Angeles, CA 90049
www.bwscampus.com
See ad on page 35

The Carey School
One Carey School Lane
San Mateo, CA 94403
650-345-8205
www.careyschool.org
Preschool - 5th grade
See ad on page 48

Cathedral School for Boys
1275 Sacramento St.
San Francisco, CA 94108
415-771-6600
www.cathedralschool.net
K - 8th grade, boys school
See ad on page 41

The Center for Early Education
563 N. Alfred St.
West Hollywood, CA 90048
323-651-0707
www.centerforearlyeducation.org
Toddler - 6th grade
See ad on page 44

Charles Armstrong School
1405 Solana Dr.
Belmont, CA 94002
650-592-7570
www.charlesarmstrong.org
2nd - 8th grade, for students with dyslexia and related learning differences.
See ad on page 40

Convent & Stuart Hall Schools of the Sacred Heart - San Francisco
2222 Broadway
San Francisco, CA 94115
415-563-2900
www.sacredsf.org
K - 12th grade, educates boys and girls, separately and together.
See ad on page 67

Crestview Preparatory School
140 Foothill Blvd.
La Canada, CA 91011
818-952-0925
www.crestviewprep.org
K - 6th grade
See ad on page 25

Echo Horizon School
3430 McManus Ave.
Culver City, CA 90232
310-838-2442
www.echohorizon.org
Pre-K - 6th grade
See ad on page 56

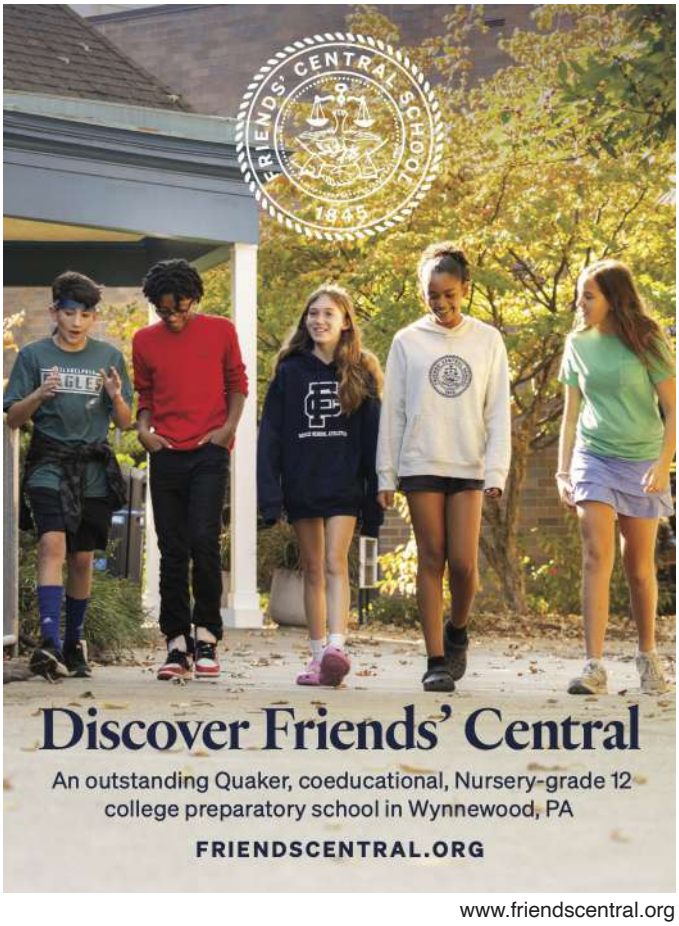
Ecole Bilingue de Berkeley
Elementary Campus
1009 Heinz Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94710
510-549-3867
Middle School Campus
901 Grayson St.
Berkeley, CA 94710
510-549-2851
www.eb.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 11

Escuela Bilingüe Internacional
PreK - 1st grade
410 Alcatraz Ave.
Oakland, CA 94609
510-653-3324
2nd - 8th grade
4550 San Pablo Ave.
Emeryville, CA 94608
510-652-7094
www.ebinternacional.org
See ad on page 65

German International School of Silicon Valley
310 Easy St.
Mountain View, CA 94043
Preschool – Grade 8 (Grade 9 added in 2026/27)
117 Diamond St.
(Castro/Eureka Valley)
650-254-0748
www.gissv.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 64

The Harker School
500 Saratoga Ave.
San Jose, CA 95129
408-249-2510
www.harker.org
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 3

Hilldale School
79 Florence St.
Daly City, CA 94014
650-756-4737
www.hilldaleschool.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 74



www.friendscentral.org



www.marymcdowell.org

Hollywood Schoolhouse
1233 N. McCadden Pl.
Hollywood, CA 90038
323-465-1320
www.hshla.org
Preschool - 6th grade
See ad on page 56

International School of Los Angeles
1105 W. Riverside Dr.
Burbank, CA 91506
818-994-2961
www.internationalschool.la
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 31

The Internal School of San Francisco
Main Building
150 Oak St.
San Francisco, CA 94102
415-558-2000
Maternelle
1155 Page St.
San Francisco, CA 94117
415-231-5733
www.internationalsf.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 36

Julia Morgan School for Girls
5000 MacArthur Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94619
510-632-6000
www.juliamorganschool.org
6th - 8th grade, girls school
See ad on page 49

Lycée Français de San Francisco
Ashbury Campus
Preschool - 5th grade
755 Ashbury St.
San Francisco, CA 94117
Sausalito Campus
610 Coloma St.
Sausalito, CA 94965
Ortega Campus
Middle + High School
1201 Ortega St.
San Francisco, CA 94122
415-661-5232
www.lelycee.org
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 53

Millennium School
245 Valencia St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-992-8520
www.millenniumschool.org
6th - 8th grade
See ad on page 24

Park Century School
3939 Landmark St.
Culver City, CA 90232
310-979-2184
www.parkcenturyschool.org
K - 8th grade, serves students diagnosed with language-based learning differences such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and ADHD
See ad on page 59

Presidio Knolls School
250 10th St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-202-0770
www.presidioknolls.org
Preschool - 8th grade, Mandarin immersion school.
See ad on page 33

Prospect Sierra
Elementary
2060 Tapscott Ave.
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510-809-9036
Middle School
960 Avis Dr.
El Cerrito, CA 94530
510-809-9000
www.prospectsierra.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 57

PS1 Pluralistic School One
1225 Broadway
Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-394-1313 x107
www.psone.org
K - 6th grade
See ad on page 20

The Quarry Lane School
Dublin East Campus
Lower, Middle,
& Upper School
2nd - 12th grade
6363 Tassajara Rd.
Dublin, CA 94568
925-829-8000
Dublin West Campus
Lower School
age 2 - 2nd grade
5600 Scarlett Dr.
Dublin, CA 94568
925-466-3100
Pleasanton West Campus
Lower School
age 2 - Preschool
4444B Black Ave.
Pleasanton, CA 94566
925-462-6300
Pleasanton East Campus
Lower School
age 18 months - 2nd grade
3750 Boulder St.
Pleasanton, CA 94566
925-846-9400
www.quarrylane.org
age 18 months - 12th grade
See ad on page 57

The Saklan School
1678 School St.
Moraga, CA 94556
925-376-7900
www.saklan.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 49

Sterne School
838 Kearny St.
San Francisco, CA 94108
415-922-6081
www.sterneschool.org
4th - 12th grade
See ad on page 55

Town School for Boys
2750 Jackson St.
San Francisco, CA 94115
415-921-3747
www.townschool.com
K - 8th grade, boys school
See ad on page 69

Trinity School
2650 Sandhill Rd.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
650-854-0288
www.trinity-mp.org
age 2 - 5th grade
See ad on page 49

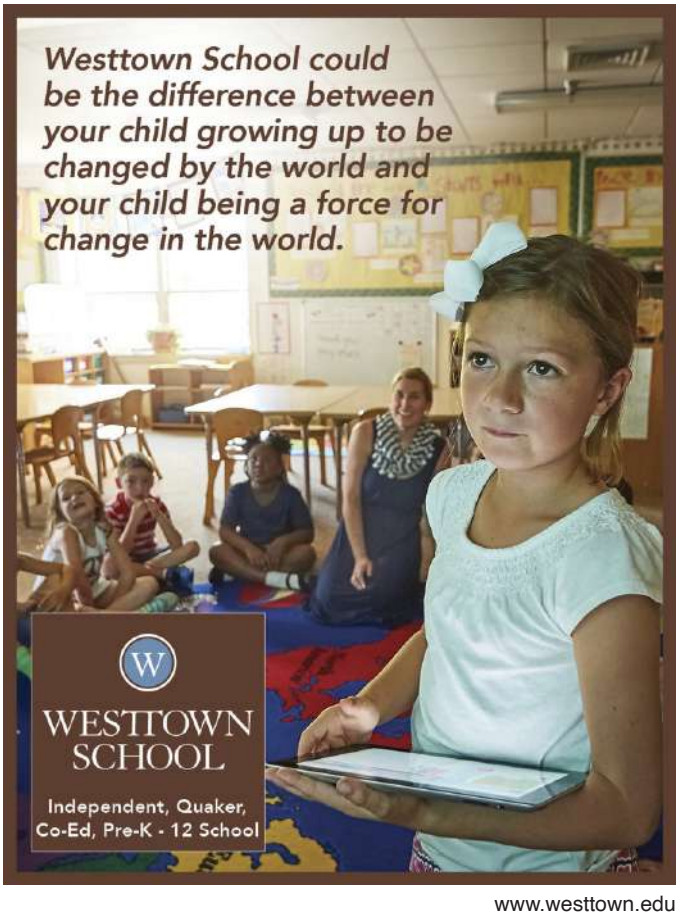
Valley Montessori School
1273 N. Livermore Ave.
Livermore, CA 94551
925-455-8021
www.vmschool.org
age 18 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 31

The Webb Schools
1175 W. Baseline Rd.
Claremont, CA 91711
909-626-3587
www.webb.org
9th - 12th grade, day and boarding school
See ad on page 38

The Willows Community School
8509 Higuera St.
Culver City, CA 90232
310-815-0411
www.thewillows.org
DK - 8th grade
See ad on page 41



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www.westtown.edu



www.tenacrecds.org/explore

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www.Montclaircoop.org

www.montclaircoop.org

Independent Schools continued from page 13

Winston Preparatory School
Marin County:
1 Saint Vincent Dr.
San Rafael, CA 94903
415-993-5533
Transitions SF:
360 9th Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94118
415-766-2395
www.winstonprep.edu
4th - 12th grade, for students with learning differences
See ad on page 15

COLORADO

Bixby School
4760 Table Mesa Dr.
Boulder, CO 80305
303-494-7508
www.bixbyschool.org
Preschool - 5th grade
See ad on page 61

CONNECTICUT

Rectory School
528 Pomfret St.
Pomfret, CT 06258
860-963-6740
www.rectoryschool.org
K - 9th grade, day and boarding school
See ad on page 25

Winston Preparatory School
57 West Rocks Rd.
Norwalk, CT 06851
203-229-0465
www.winstonprep.edu
4th - 12th grade, for students with learning differences
See ad on page 15

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Aidan Montessori School
2700 27th St. NW
Washington DC 20008
202-387-2700
www.aidanschool.org
age 18 months - 6th grade
See ad on page 19

The Lab School of Washington
4759 Reservoir Rd. NW
Washington, DC 20007
202-965-6600
www.labschool.org
1st - 12th grade, for students with language based learning differences.
See ad on page 57

Lowell School
1640 Kalmia Rd. NW
Washington DC 20012
202-577-2000
www.lowellschool.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 70

National Presbyterian School
4121 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20016
202-537-7500
www.nps-dc.org
age 3 - 6th grade
See ad on page 41

St. Albans School
Mount St. Alban
Washington DC 20016
202-537-6435
www.stalbansschool.org
4th - 12th grade, boys school
See ad on page 43

FLORIDA

The Vanguard School
22000 US Highway 27
Lake Wales, FL 33859
863-676-6091
www.vanguardschool.org
6th - 12th grade, individualized education for students who learn differently.
See ad on page 31

ILLINOIS

The Ancona School
4770 S. Dorchester Ave.
Chicago, IL 60615
773-924-2356
www.anconaschool.org
Primary - 8th grade
See ad on page 37

Baker Demonstration School
201 Sheridan Rd.
Wilmette, IL 60091
847-425-5800
www.bakerdemschool.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 66

Beacon Academy
1574 Sherman Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201
224-999-1177
www.beaconacademy.org
9th - 12th grade
See ad on page 35

Bennett Day School
955 W. Grand Ave.
Chicago, IL 60642
312-236-6388
www.bennettday.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 24

Chiaravalle Montessori School
425 Dempster St.
Evanston, IL 60201
847-864-2190
www.chiaravalle.org
age 16 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 54

Chicago Waldorf School
5200 N. Ashland Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
773-465-2662
www.chicagowaldorf.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 9

Council Oak Montessori School
2521 Grove St.
Blue Island, IL 60406
708-926-9720
www.counciloakmontessori.org
Infant - 8th grade
See ad on page 34

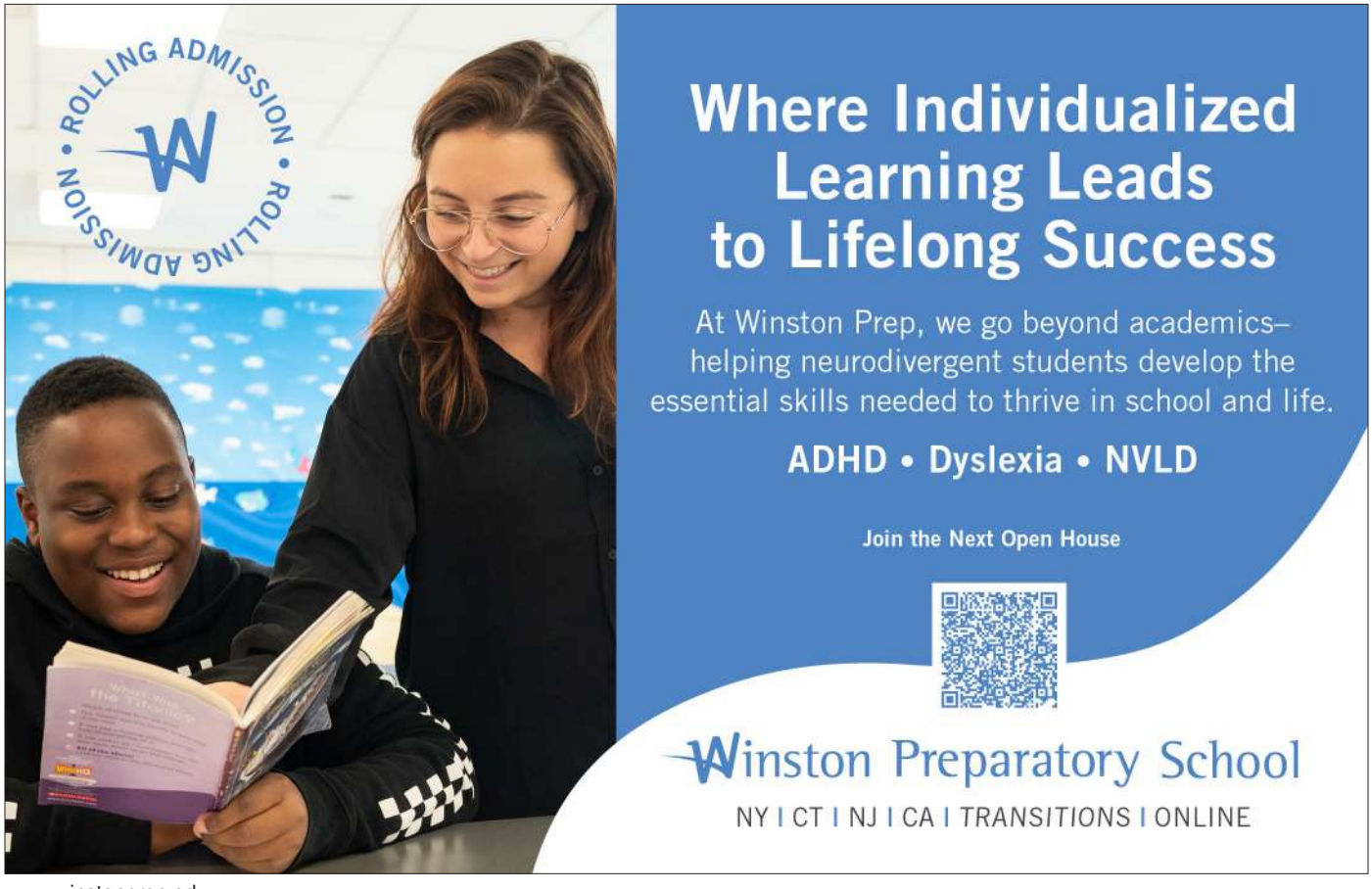
Frances W. Parker School
330 W. Webster Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614
773-797-5107
www.fwparker.org
Junior K - 12th grade
See ad on page 60

German International School Chicago
1726 W. Berteau Ave.
Chicago, IL 60613
773-880-8812
www.germanschoolchicago.com
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 32

Lake Forest Country Day School
145 S. Green Bay Rd.
Lake Forest, IL 60045
847-234-2350
www.lfcds.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 22

Lycée Français de Chicago
1929 W. Wilson Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
773-665-0066
www.lfc.world
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 25





www.winstonprep.edu

Near North Montessori School
1434 West Division St.
Chicago, IL 60642
773-269-6230
www.nnms.org
age 6 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 31

MARYLAND

Barrie School
13500 Layhill Rd.
Silver Spring, MD 20906
301-576-2800
www.barrie.org
age 3 months - 12th grade
See ad on page 58

The GreenMount School
501 W. 30th St.
Baltimore, MD 21211
410-235-6295
www.greenmountschool.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 50

The Nora School
955 Sligo Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-495-6672
www.nora-school.org
9th -12th grade
See ad on page 14

MASSACHUSETTS

Bard College at Simon's Rock
https://simons-rock.edu/
Bard Academy
https://bardacademy.simons-rock.edu/
84 Alford Rd.
Great Barrington, MA 01230
413-644-4400
residential college for 11th or 12th graders
See ads on page 28

Bay Farm Montessori Academy
145 Loring St.
Duxbury, MA 02332
781-934-7101
www.bfarm.org
age 12 months - 8th grade
See ad on page 27

Cambridge Friends School
5 Cadbury Rd
Cambridge, MA 02140
617-354-3880
www.cambridgefriendsschool.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 55

Charles River School
6 Old Meadow Rd.
Dover, MA 02030
508-785-0068
www.charlesriverschool.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 62

The Chestnut Hill School
428 Hammond St.
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467
617-566-4394
www.tchs.org
age 3 - 6th grade
See ad on page 60

Dedham Country Day School
90 Sandy Valley Rd.
Dedham, MA 02026
781-329-0850
www.dedhamcountryday.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 26

Derby Academy
56 Burditt Ave.
Hingham, MA 02043
781-749-0746
www.derbyacademy.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 52

German International School Boston
Upper Campus
57 Holton St.
Boston, MA 02134
617-783-2600
Lower Campus
387 Western Ave.
Boston, MA 02135
617-779-7393
www.gisbos.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 46

Hands-On Montessori School
12 Creeden St.
Mansfield, MA 02048
508-339-HOMS (4667)
www.homontessori.com
age 18 months - 6th grade
See ad on page 54

Milton Academy
170 Centre St.
Milton, MA 02186
617-898-1798
www.milton.edu
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 49

The Rashi School
8000 Great Meadow Rd.
Dedham, MA 02026
www.rashi.org
781-355-7317
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 52

Tenacre Country Day School
78 Benvenue St.
Wellesley, MA 02482
781-235-2282
www.tenacrecds.org
Pre-K - 6th grade
See ad on page 13

Thacher Montessori School
1425 Blue Hill Ave.
Milton, MA 02186
617-361-2552
www.thacherschool.org
Toddler - 8th grade
See ad on page 64

Wellan Montessori School
80 Crescent Ave.
Newton Centre, MA 02459
617-969-4488
www.wellan.org
Toddler - 8th grade
See ad on page 39

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor Academy
1153 Oak Valley Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
734-747-6641
www.annarboracademy.org
K - 13th grade, for students with learning differences and disabilities.
See ad on page 61

NEW JERSEY

The Craig School
Lower/Middle School
10 Tower Hill Rd.
Mountain Lakes, NJ 07046
High School
25 Changebridge Rd.
Montville, NJ 07045
973-334-1234
www.craigschool.org
2nd - 12th grade, for students who learn differently.
See ad on page 25

The Elisabeth Morrow School
435 Lydecker St.
Englewood, NJ 07631
201-568-5566
www.elisabethmorrow.org
age 2 - 8th grade
See ad on page 55

continued on page 18

Great kids *Going places*

"MFS has been my second home for 15 years – a safe space to grow, to challenge myself, and to become the person I am today."
– Sarah Huynh '25

1785
MFS Moorestown Friends School
Age 3 through Grade 12
Meet great kids like Sarah at an upcoming Open House:
Sunday, October 12, 2 p.m.
Thursday, November 6, 9 a.m.
(Classes in Session)
For more information or to RSVP, call (856) 914-4426, or visit www.mfriends.org.

Hometown: Moorestown

Activities/Honors: Varsity Fencing - Captain; Varsity Tennis - Captain and All-South Jersey Doubles; NJSIAA Scholar Athlete Award; National Chinese Honor Society, Cum Laude Society; Operation Smile Club President, Environmental Committee Clerk, Admissions Ambassador; Strings Ensemble (Cello); MFS Theater Actor; Model UN - 3x Outstanding Delegate; Global Leadership Summit Germany Delegate; Cathedral Kitchen Volunteer; East Asian Affinity Group Facilitator; Peer Tutor

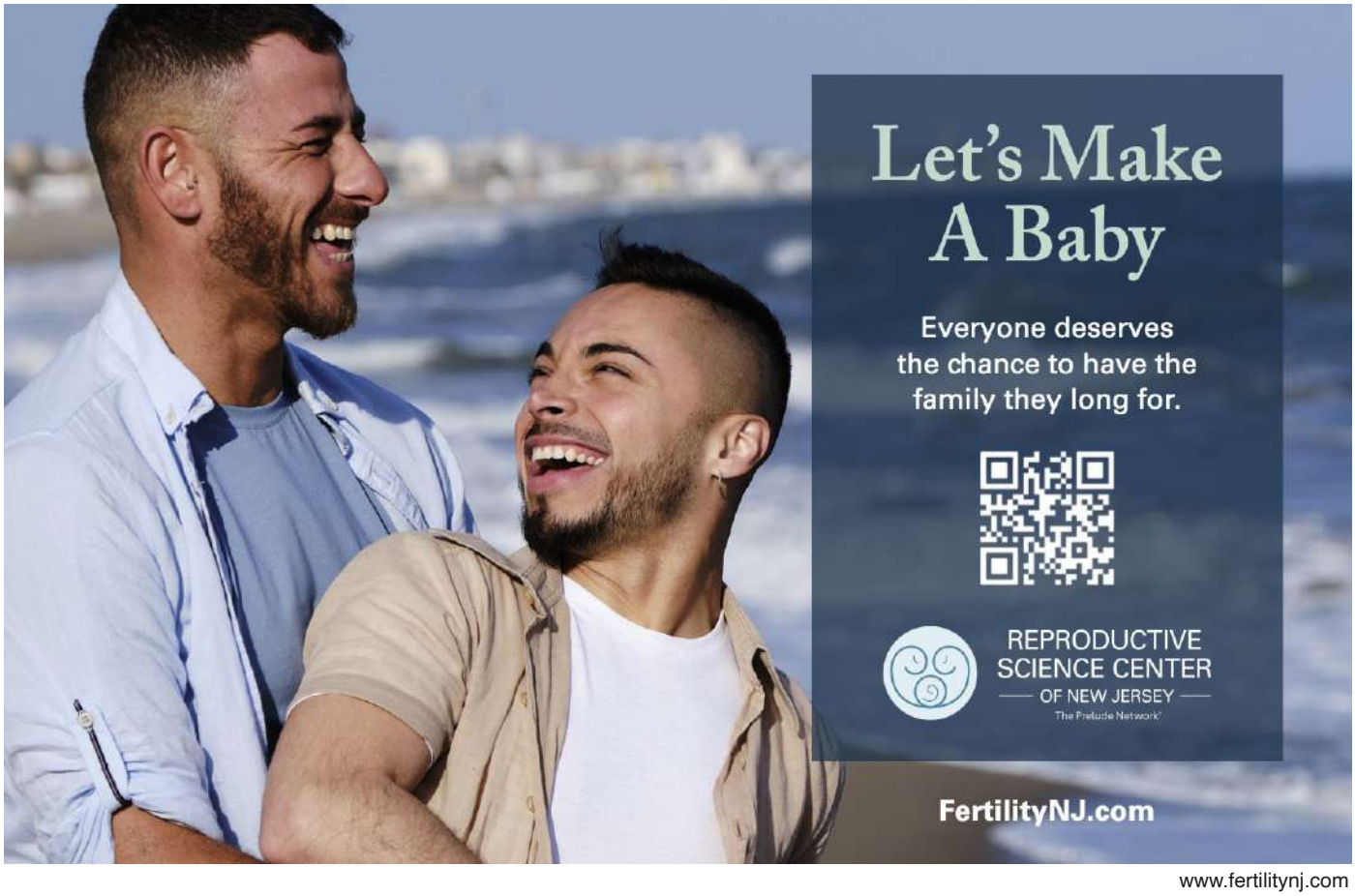
Memorable Academic Project:
Designing an after school Environmental Club for MFS Lower School students

Senior Internship:
Cooper University Hospital

College: Vassar College



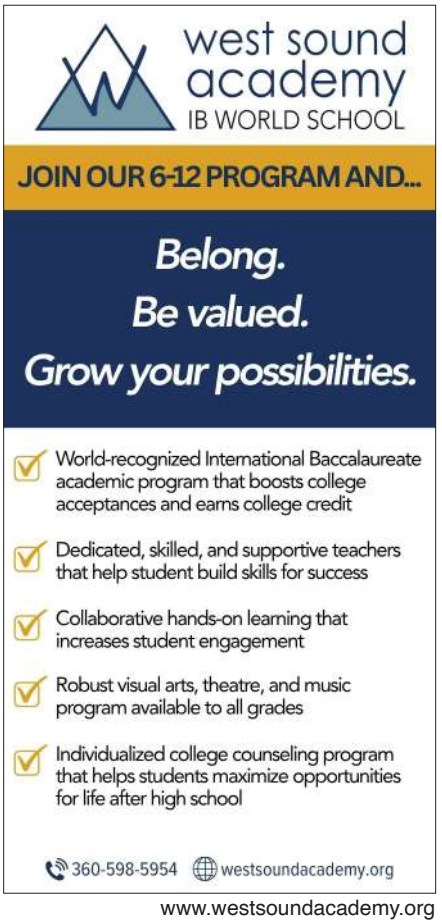
www.mfriends.org



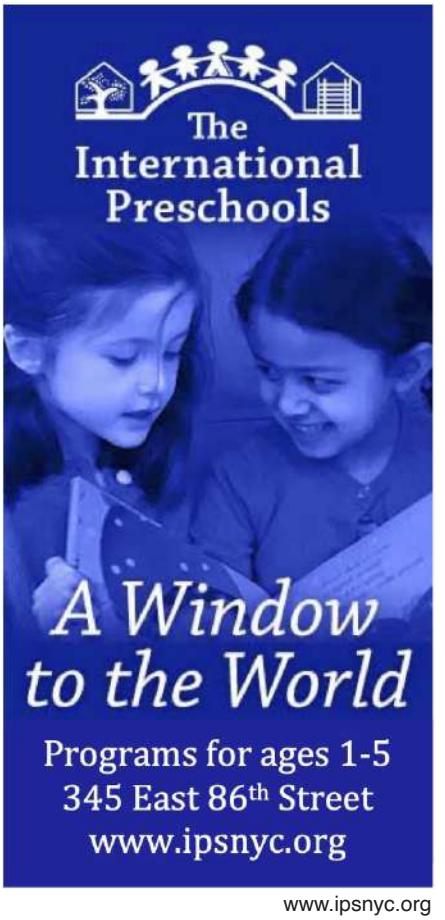
www.fertilitynj.com



www.congressionalschool.org



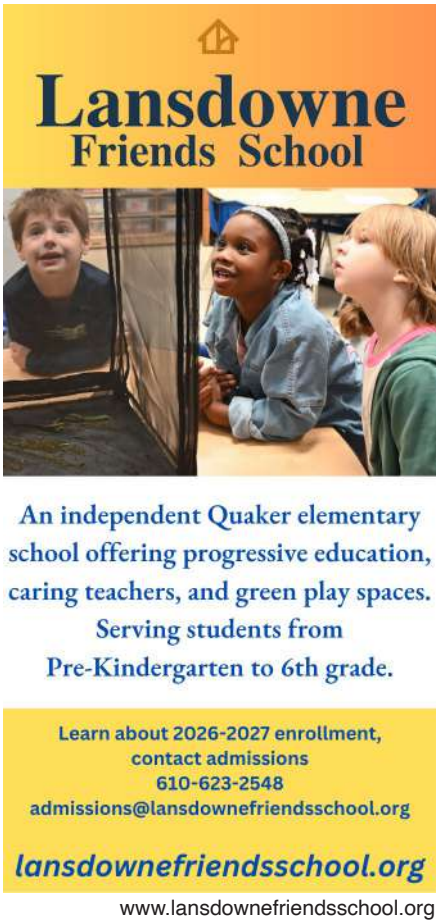
www.westsoundacademy.org



www.ipsnyc.org



www.stthomasschool.org



www.lansdownefriendsschool.org

Independent Schools continued from page 16

Montclair Cooperative School
65 Chestnut St.
Montclair, NJ 07044
973-783-4955
www.montclaircoop.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 14

Moorestown Friends School
110 E. Main St.
Moorestown, NJ 08057
856-914-4426
www.mfriends.org
age 3 - 12th grade
See ad on page 16

Ranney School
235 Hope Rd.
Tinton Falls, NJ 07724
732-542-4777
www.ranneyschool.org
age 3 - 12th grade
See ad on page 4

Tessa International School
720 Monroe St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030
201-755-5585
www.tessais.org
Elementary & Early Childhood - Pre-K 2 - 5th grade, Spanish, French, and Mandarin bilingual school.
See ad on page 41

Westfield Friends School
2201 Riverton Rd.
Cinnaminson, NJ 08077
856-829-0895
www.westfieldfriends.org
Preschool 2 - 8th grade
See ad on page 43

Winston Preparatory School
901 Route 10 East
Whippany, NJ 07981
973-500-6480
4th - 12th grade, for students with learning differences
See ad on page 15

NEW YORK

The Allen-Stevenson School
132 E. 78th St.
New York, NY 10075
212-288-6710
www.allen-stevenson.org
K - 8th grade, boys school
See ad on page 57

Bank Street School for Children
610 W. 112th St.
New York, NY 10025
212-875-4433
school.bankstreet.edu
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 11

Barrow Street Nursery School
27 Barrow St.
New York, NY 10014
212-242-4140
www.barrowstreetnursery-school.org
ages 19 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 46

The Brick Church School
62 E. 92nd St.
New York, NY 10128
212-289-5683
www.brickchurchschool.org
ages 2 - 6 yrs.
See ad on page 30

Brooklyn Friends School
375 Pearl St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-852-1029
www.brooklynfriends.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 58

Brooklyn Heights Synagogue Preschool
131 Remsen St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-522-2070 x131
www.bhsbrooklyn.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 29

The Cathedral School of St. John the Divine
1047 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY 10025
212-316-7500
www.cathedralnyc.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 72

Central Park Montessori School
1 W. 91st St.
New York, NY 10024
212-595-2000
www.twinparks.org
ages 3 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 20

The Chapin School
100 East End Ave.
New York, NY 10028
212-744-2335
www.chapin.edu
K - 12th grade, girls school
See ad on page 64

City and Country School
146 West 13th St.
New York, NY 10011
212-242-7802
www.cityandcountry.org
age 2 - 8th grade
See ad on page 71

The Dalton School
K - 3rd grade
53 E. 91st St.
New York, NY 10128
4th - Dalton E. & PE Center
200 E. 87th St.
New York, NY 10128
4th - 12th grade
108 E. 89th St.
New York, NY 10128
212-423-5200
www.dalton.org
See ad on page 66

The École
Elementary & Middle School Building
115 E. 22nd St.
New York, NY 10010
Maternelle Building
206 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10010
646-410-2238
www.theecole.org
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 2

The First Presbyterian Church Nursery School
12 W. 12th St.
New York, NY 10011
212-691-3432
www.fpcns.org
ages 2 - 5.3 yrs.
See ad on page 20

French-American School of New York
Pre & Lower School
111 Larchmont Ave.
Larchmont, NY 10538
Middle School
145 New St.
Mamaroneck, NY 10543
High School
320 East Boston Post Rd.
Mamaroneck, NY 10543
914-240-0401
www.fasny.org
Nursery - 12th grade
See ad on page 23

Garden School
33-16 79th St.
Jackson Heights, NY 11372
718-335-6363
www.gardenschool.org
Nursery - 12th grade
See ad on page 29

The Hewitt School
45 E. 75th St.
New York, NY 10021
212-288-1919
www.hewittschool.org
K - 12th grade, girls school
See ad on page 52

The International Preschools
345 E. 86th St.
New York, NY 10028
212-371-8604
www.ipsnyc.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 18

Kennedy International School
(formerly Lyceum Kennedy French American School)
225 E. 43rd St.
New York, NY 10017
212-681-1877
www.kennedyinternational.org
Pre-K 3 - 12th grade
See ad on page 40

The Kew-Forest School
119-17 Union Turnpike
Forest Hills, NY 11375
718-268-4667
www.kewforest.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 59

KoKo NYC
Afterschool and summer workshops
Mailing address
257 17th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11215
info@kokonyc.org
www.kokonyc.org
All ages
See ad on page 35

The Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church Day School
921 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10021
212-288-9638
www.mapcds.org
ages 4 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 44

Mary McDowell Friends School
Elementary School
20 Bergen St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-625-3939
Middle School
133-135 Summit St.
Brooklyn, NY 11231
718-625-3939
Upper School
23 Sidney Pl.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-855-0141
www.marymcdowell.org
K - 12th grade, school for students with learning challenges.
See ad on page 12

The Masters School
49 Clinton Ave.
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
914-479-6420
www.mastersny.org
5th - 12th grade, day and boarding school.
See ad on page 21

The Montessori Schools Flatiron & Soho
Flatiron Campus
5 W. 22nd St.
New York, NY 10010
212-633-0600
SoHo Campus
75 Sullivan St.
New York, NY 10012
212-226-3800
www.themontessorischools.org
ages 2 yrs. - 6 yrs. Flatiron
ages 18 months - 6 yrs. SoHo
See ad on page 6

Oakwood Friends School
22 Spackenkill Rd.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
845-462-4200
www.oakwoodfriends.org
6th - 12th grade, day and boarding school.
See ad on page 70

Packer Collegiate School
170 Joralemon St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-250-0200
www.packer.edu
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 5

The Parkside School
48 W. 74th St.
New York, NY 10023
212-721-8888
www.parksideschool.org
K - 5th grade, for students with language-based learning challenges and disabilities.
See ad on page 63

Park West Montessori School
435 Central Park West
New York, NY 10025
212-678-6072
www.twinparks.org
ages 3 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 20

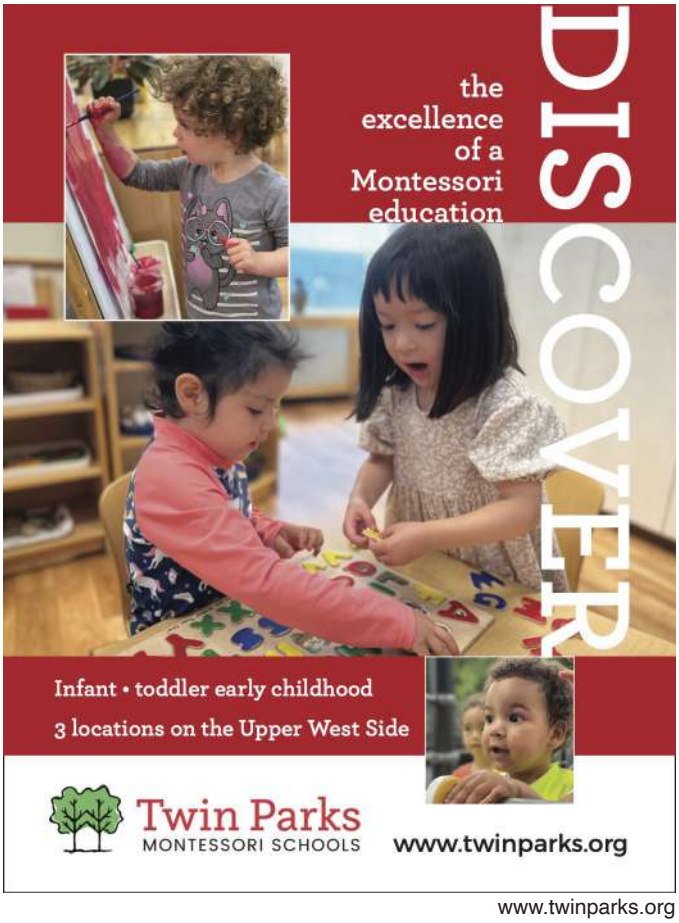
continued on page 21



www.aidanschool.org



www.tandemfs.org



www.twinparks.org



www.east-hill-farm.com

The First Presbyterian Church NURSERY SCHOOL

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12 West 12th Street, New York, NY 10011
212.691.3432 | **www.fpcns.org**
www.fpcns.org



www.psone.org

Independent Schools continued from page 19

The Play Group Theater
One North Broadway
White Plains, NY 10601
914-946-4433
www.playgroup.org
age 4 - teen, theatre for children and teens
See ad on page 32

Plymouth Church School
75 Hicks St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-624-9385
www.plymouthchurchschool.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 34

Poly Prep
Lower School
Park Slope Campus
50 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn, NY 11215
718-768-1103
Middle/Upper Schools
Dyker Heights Campus
1 Poly Prep Dr.
Brooklyn, NY 11228
718-836-9800
www.polyprep.org
Nursery - 12th grade
See ad on page 38

Professional Children's School
132 W. 60th St.
New York, NY 10023
212-582-3115
www.pcs-nyc.org
4th - 12th grade, geared toward working and aspiring child actors and dancers.
See ad on page 55

Pusteblume International Preschool
244 W. 14th St.
New York, NY 10011
212-206-1137
www.pusteblumenyc.org
ages 2 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 26

Riverside Montessori School
202 Riverside Dr.
New York, NY 10025
212-665-1600
www.twinparks.org
ages 3 months - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 20

Ross School
18 Goodfriend Dr.
East Hampton, NY 11937
637-907-5400
www.ross.org
Nursery - 12th grade, day and boarding school
See ad on page 74

Rye Country Day School
Cedar St.
Rye, NY 10580
914-925-4513
www.ryecountryday.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 31

Saint Ann's School
129 Pierrepont St.
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-522-1660
www.saintannsny.org
Preschool - 12th grade
See ad on page 44

St. Hilda's & St. Hugh's School
619 W. 11th St.
New York, NY 10025
212-932-1980
www.sthildas.org
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 64

Village Community School
272 W. 10th St.
New York, NY 10014
212-691-5146
www.vcsnyc.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 31

West Side Montessori School
309 W. 92nd St.
New York, NY 10025
212-662-8000
www.wsmsnyc.org
ages 2 - 6 yrs.
See ad on page 31

The Williamsburg Neighborhood Nursery School
54 South Second St.
Brooklyn, NY 11249
718-782-4181
www.wnns.org
ages 2 - 4 yrs.
See ad on page 31

Winston Preparatory School
126 W. 17th St.
New York, NY 10011
212-496-8400
Transitions:
240 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016
646-869-4600
Long Island:
30 Deforest Rd.
Dix Hills, NY 11746
631-779-2400
www.winstonprep.edu
4th - 12th grade, for students with learning differences
See ad on page 15

PENNSYLVANIA

Benchmark School
2107 N. Providence Rd.
Media, PA 19063
610-565-3741
www.benchmarkschool.org
1st - 8th grade, for students with learning differences.
See ad on page 39

Buckingham Friends School
5684 York Rd.
PO Box 159
Lahaska, PA 18931
215-794-7491
www.bfs.org
K - 8th grade
See ad on page 60

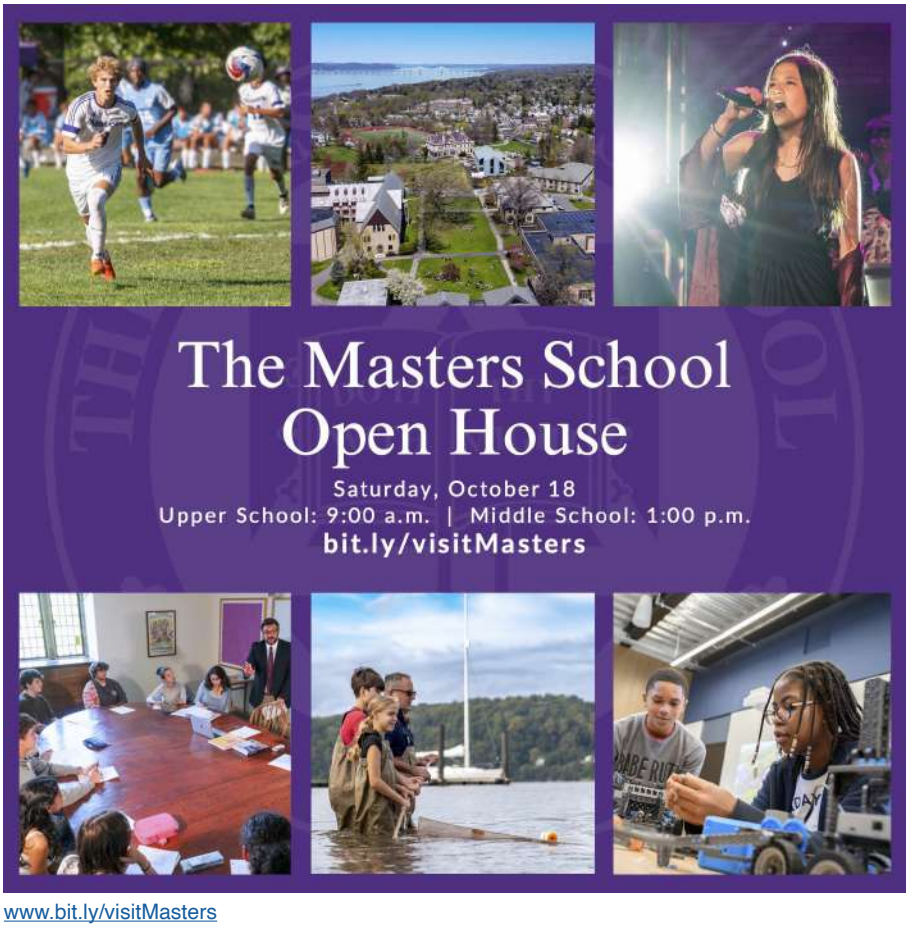
The Crefeld School
8836 Crefeld St.
Philadelphia, PA 19118
215-242-5545
www.crefeld.org
7th - 12th grade
See ad on page 10

Delaware Valley Friends School
19 E. Central Ave.
Paoli, PA 19301
610-640-4150
www.dvfriends.org
1st - 12th grade
See ad on page 32

Friends' Central School
1101 City Ave.
Wynnewood, PA 19096
610-649-7440
www.friendscentral.org
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 12

Friends School Haverford
851 Buck Lane
Haverford, PA 19041
610-642-2334
www.friendshaverford.org
Nursery - 5th grade
See ad on page 46

George School
1690 Newtown Langhorne Rd.
Newtown, PA 18940
215-579-6500
www.georgeschol.org
9th - 12th grade, day and boarding school
See ad on page 53



www.bit.ly/visitMasters



www.barkeradoptionfoundation.org

Germantown Academy
340 Morris Rd.
Fort Washington, PA 19034
267-405-7070
www.germantownacademy.net
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 42

Germantown Friends School
Main Campus
31 W. Coulter St.
Philadelphia, PA 19144
Center City
The Curtis Center
601 Walnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215-951-2345
www.germantownfriends.org
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 50

Greene Towne Montessori School
2121 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-563-6368
www.gtms.org
Toddler, Pre-K, Kindergarten
See ad on page 27

Gwynedd Friends School
1101 Dekalb Pike
North Wales, PA 19454
215-699-5392
www.gwyneddfriendsschool.org
age 2 - 6 yrs.
See ad on page 72

The Haverford School
450 Lancaster Ave.
Haverford, PA19041
www.haverford.org
Pre-K - 12th grade, boys school
See ad on page 51

Lansdowne Friends School
110 N. Lansdowne Ave.
Lansdowne, PA 19050
610-623-2548
www.lansdownefriendsschool.org
Pre-K - 6th grade
See ad on page 18

Media-Providence School
125 W. 3rd St.
Media, PA 19063
610-565-1960
www.mpfs.org
age 3 - 8th grade
See ad on page 39

Newtown Friends School
1450 Newtown Langhorne Rd.
Newtown, PA 18940
215-968-2225
www.newtownfriends.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 68

The Philadelphia School
2501 Lombard St.
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215-545-5323
www.tpschool.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 10

Plymouth Meeting Friends School
2150 Butler Pike
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462
610-828-2288
www.pmfs1780.org
age 3 - 6th grade
See ad on page 69

River Valley Waldorf School
1395 Bridgeton Hill Rd.
Upper Black Eddy, PA 18972
610-982-5606
www.rivervalleyschool.org
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 49

Susquehanna Waldorf School
15 W. Walnut St.
Marietta, PA 17547
717-426-4506
www.susquehannawaldorf.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 52

The Waldorf School of Philadelphia
6000 Wayne Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215-248-1662
www.phillywaldorf.com
Pre-K - 8th grade
See ad on page 36

Westtown School
975 Westtown Rd.
West Chester, PA 19382
610-399-0123
www.westtown.edu
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 13

William Penn Charter School
3000 West School House Lane
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215-844-3460
www.penncharter.com
Pre-K - 12th grade
See ad on page 73

RHODE ISLAND

Gordon School
45 Maxfield Ave.
East Providence, RI 02914
401-434-3833
www.gordonschool.org
Nursery - 8th grade
See ad on page 43

VIRGINIA

Burgundy Farm Country Day School
3700 Burgundy Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22303
703-329-6968
www.burgundyfarm.org
JK - 8th grade
See ad on page 43

The Congressional School
3229 Sleepy Hollow Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042
703-533-1064
www.congressionalschool.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 17

Montessori School of Northern Virginia
Hillbrook Campus
6820 Pacific Lane
Annandale, VA 22003
703-256-9577
Valleybrook Campus
3433 Rose Lane
Falls Church, VA 22042
703-992-0255
Sleepy Hollow Campus
3435 Sleepy Hollow Rd.
Falls Church, VA 22042
571-294-4769
www.msnv.org
ages 2 - 12 yrs.
See ad on page 38

St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School
Lower School
400 Fontaine St.
Alexandria, VA 22302
Middle School
4401 W. Braddock Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22304
Upper School
1000 St. Stephen's Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22304
703-212-2705
www.sssas.org
age 3 - 12th grade
See ad on page 32

The Sycamore School
1550 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 300
Arlington, VA 22209
703-717-5360
www.thesycamoreschoolva.org
5th - 12th grade
See ad on page 33

Tandem Friends School
279 Tandem Lane
Charlottesville, VA 22902
434-951-9314
www.tandemfs.org
5th - 12th grade
See ad on page 19

continued on page 24



www.lfcds.org/admission

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www.pacificinvitro.com • e-mail: info@pacificinvitro.com

www.pacificinvitro.com

Independent Schools continued from page 22

WASHINGTON

Bellevue Montessori School
2411 112th Ave. NE
Bellevue, WA. 98004
425-454-7439
www.bellmontessori.com
ages 18 months - 12 yrs.
See ad on page 47

Bertschi School
2227 10th Ave. East
Seattle, WA 98102
206-324-5476
www.bertschi.org
Pre-K - 5th grade
See ad on page 14

Billings Middle School
12351 8th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98125
206-547-4614
www.billingsmiddleschool.org
6th - 8th grade
See ad on page 48

The Bush School
3400 E. Harrison St.
Seattle, WA 98112
206-322-7978
www.bush.edu
K - 12th grade
See ad on page 48

Epiphany School
3611 E. Denny Way
Seattle, WA 98122
206-323-9011
www.epiphanyschool.org
Pre-K - 5th grade
See ad on page 65

The Jewish Day School
15749 NE 4th St.
Bellevue, WA 98008
425-460-0200
www.jds.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 45

The Kineo School
7525 132nd Ave. NE
Kirkland, WA 98033
425-394-9378
www.kineoschool.org
K - 5th grade
See ad on page 35

The Little School
2812 116th Ave. NE
Bellevue, WA 98004
425-827-8708
www.thelittleschool.org
Preschool - 5th grade
See ad on page 47

The Meridian School
4649 Sunnyside Ave N,
Suite 242
Seattle, WA 98103
206-632-7154
www.meridianschool.edu
Pre-K - 5th grade
See ad on page 62

New Discovery School
7219 Roosevelt Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115
206-447-2377
www.newdiscoveryschool.org
ages 3 - 5 yrs.
See ad on page 31

Puget Sound Community School
660 S. Dearborn St.
Seattle, WA 98122
206-324-4350
www.pscs.org
6th - 12th grade
See ad on page 68

Soundview School
6515 196th St. SW
Lynnwood, WA 98036
425-778-8572
www.soundview.org
Preschool - 8th grade
See ad on page 30

Spruce Street School
914 Virginia St.
Seattle, WA 98101
206-621-9211
www.sprucestreetschool.org
K - 5th grade
See ad on page 11

St. Thomas School
8300 NE 12th St.
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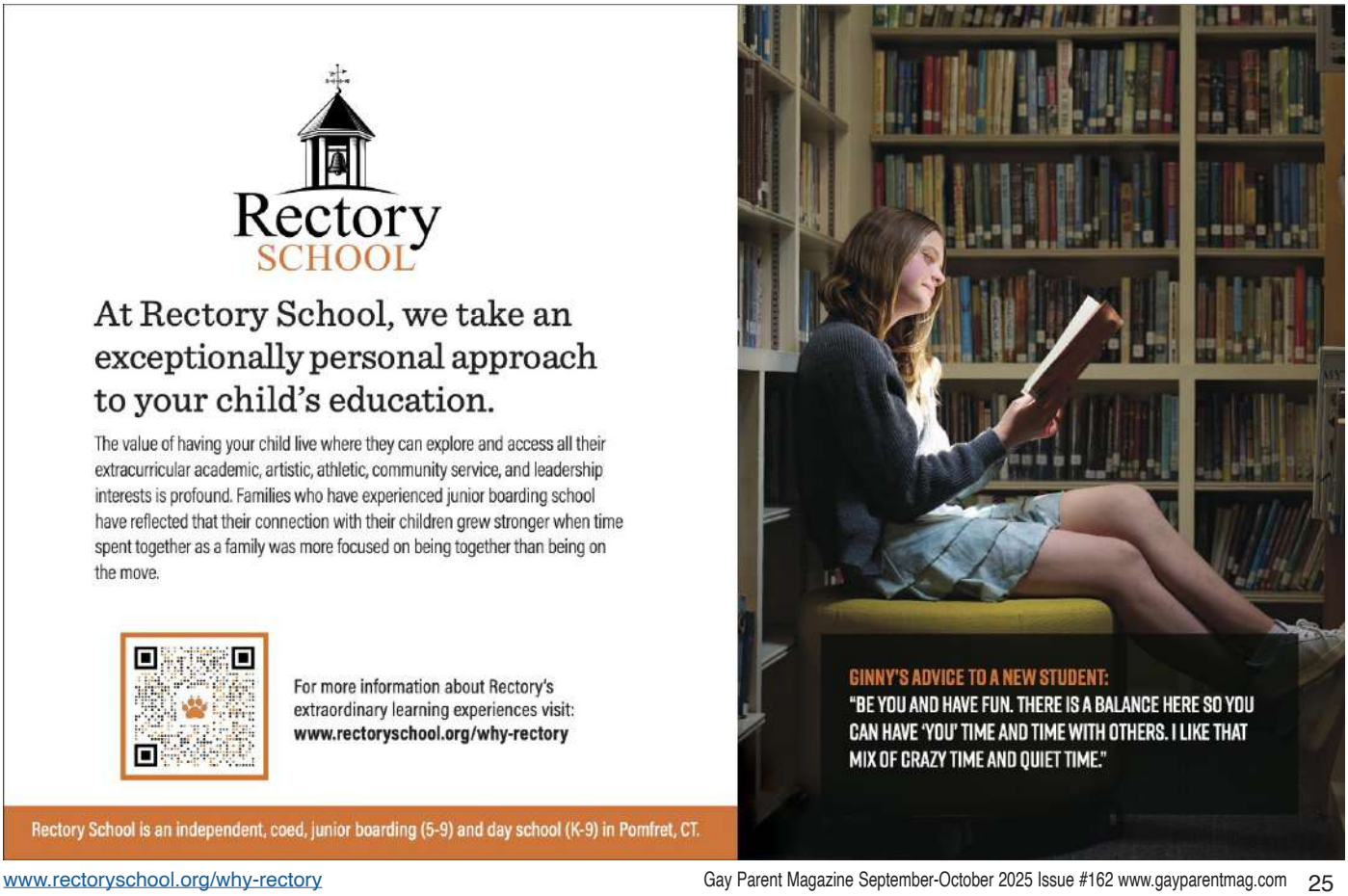
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Gay Parent Magazine New Facebook Rebuild Campaign

At the end of June 2025 Gay Parent Magazine's Facebook (GPM) page was compromised and forced offline. "We have strong reason to believe our Facebook page hacking was politically motivated. We were targeted by people who don't support LGBTQ parents," says Angeline Acain, Gay Parent Magazine publisher and editor.



Earlier this year, not long after the current government administration was installed, Gay Parent Magazine's Facebook page was attacked by trolls posting hateful comments at LGBTQ parents. After weeks of reporting the hateful comments, blocking trolls, and limiting who could comment, the hateful rhetoric eventually stopped.

Gay Parent Magazine is issuing a warning to other LGBTQs and LGBTQ organizations about being targeted. Says, Acain, "In this attack, bad actors posed as liberal podcast hosts and invited me to be a guest saying the podcast would be live streamed on their Facebook page. They then hacked into Gay Parent Magazine's Facebook page and removed all of our followers. The next thing I knew our Facebook page was gone." Another LGBTQ publication, The Washington Blade was similarly attacked.

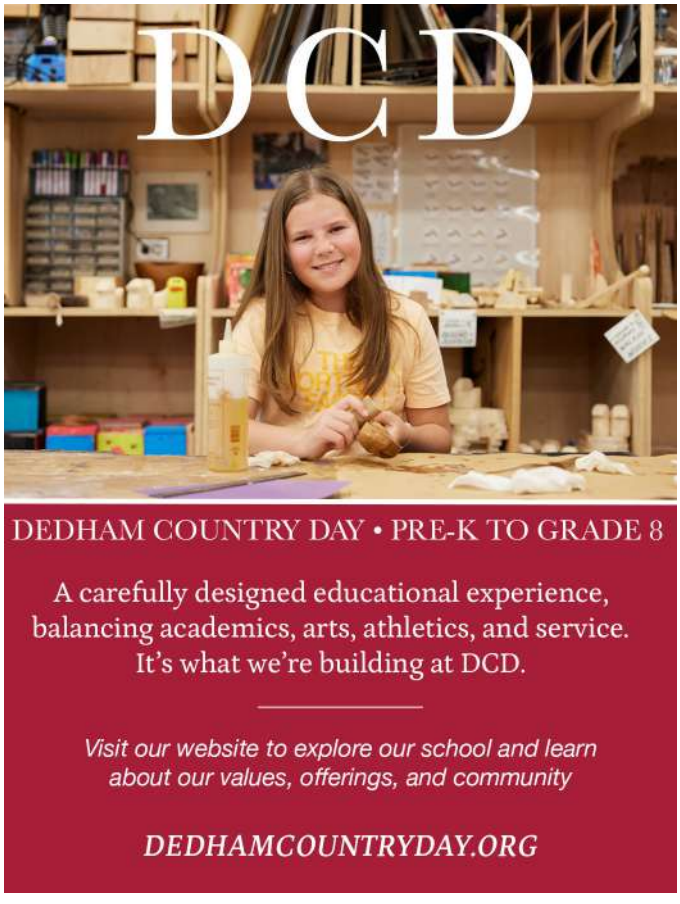
In response, Gay Parent Magazine has built a new page called, Gay Parent Magazine-original and is in the process of rebuilding and redirecting their audience to the new page. Gay Parent Magazine's first Facebook page had over 30,000 followers and five star rating reviews before it was hacked. Says Acain, "We are starting a campaign to rebuild and redirect our audience to our new page and are asking the community for assistance. Please help us rebuild by following our new page, writing a review and spreading the word. We are grateful for any support."

Click on this link, http://bit.ly/4lDO6Jq, Gay Parent Magazine-original to follow and share, our new Facebook page. A screenshot of GPM's new Facebook page is in this article.

Launched in 1998, Gay Parent Magazine is a leader in LGBTQ parenting resources. Gay Parent Magazine provides the LGBTQ community entertainment, information and resources for family building and nurturing. For more information, visit www.gayparentmag.com or email gayparentmag@gmail.com. ▼



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Beyond the Rainbow: Navigating School Choices for Our ADHD Son

By Amy Murphy

Sending your child to kindergarten is a milestone, a bittersweet mix of pride and nostalgia. For our family, this milestone felt particularly significant, layered with unique challenges. My wife, Ali, and I, like many families, navigate the joys and chaos of parenthood – laughter, bedtime stories, and the inevitable meltdowns. But our family also shines with a distinct color in the rainbow: Ali is a transgender woman. Our path to parenthood, and now to kindergarten, has been about embracing our authentic selves. Finding the right school for our son, Trey, meant more than just a good curriculum. We needed a place where he would be celebrated for who he is, a place where our vibrant family would be welcomed.

Trey, our energetic, curious, and wonderfully creative little guy, also has ADHD. Navigating the world with ADHD can be like trying to catch lightning – brilliant flashes of insight coupled with moments of frustration. Finding a school that understood Trey's unique needs, that could nurture his strengths and support his challenges, was our priority.

Our kindergarten search was a journey – a winding road of open houses, deadlines, and countless tours. It tested our patience, our resolve, and sometimes, our sanity. But through it all, we learned invaluable lessons about advocacy, persistence, and the profound importance of truly knowing your child and fighting for what they deserve.



Left to right, the author, Amy Murphy, son Trey, and wife Ali.

continued on page 30



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Navigating School Choices for Our ADHD Son continued from page 27

This is our story – a quest that took us beyond the rainbow and into the heart of what family truly means.



The Public School Puzzle

Navigating the public school system felt like solving a puzzle with missing pieces. Florida schools receive letter grades, A through F, based on factors like test scores and graduation rates. While meant to reflect school quality, this system oversimplifies complex realities. A single letter can't capture a school's culture, teacher dedication, or individual student needs. It's crucial to look beyond the grade.

Our zoned school had a "C" rating. While a "C" doesn't necessarily mean "bad," we worried about its ability to support Trey's ADHD. Children with ADHD often learn differently, sometimes struggling with focus and organization. They need specialized teaching, patience, and understanding. We feared a large, potentially under-resourced public school might struggle to give Trey the individual attention he needed. The "C" rating wasn't the sole issue; it was the underlying factors—large classes and limited resources—that gave us pause. Trey needed an environment celebrating his strengths while supporting his challenges. Public school, with its limitations, felt like a gamble we couldn't take with his early education.

The Choice Program Maze

With public school no longer an option, we explored the Palm Beach County School Choice program. This program boasts an impressive selection of specialized programs within the public school system, ranging from arts and language immersion to science and engineering—a real opportunity for families to match their child's interests and talents with a focused curriculum. However, navigating the application process felt like entering a complex maze.

For kindergarten, the process starts earlier than for other grades. October requires applying for a student ID number, a seemingly minor step that's actually essential. This ID application can take *continued on page 33*



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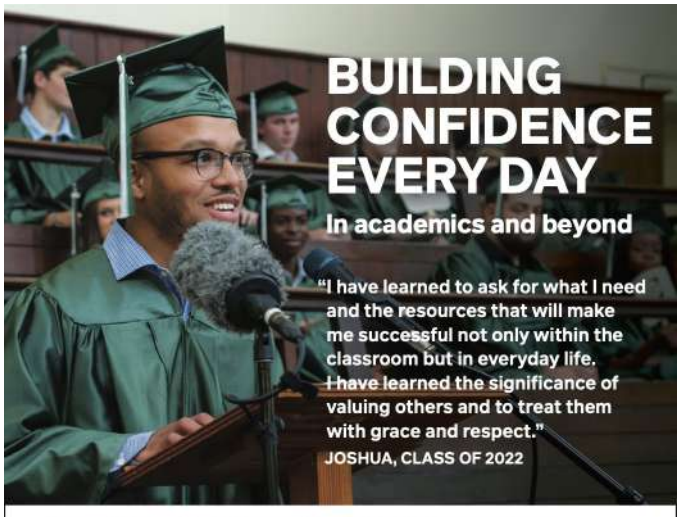
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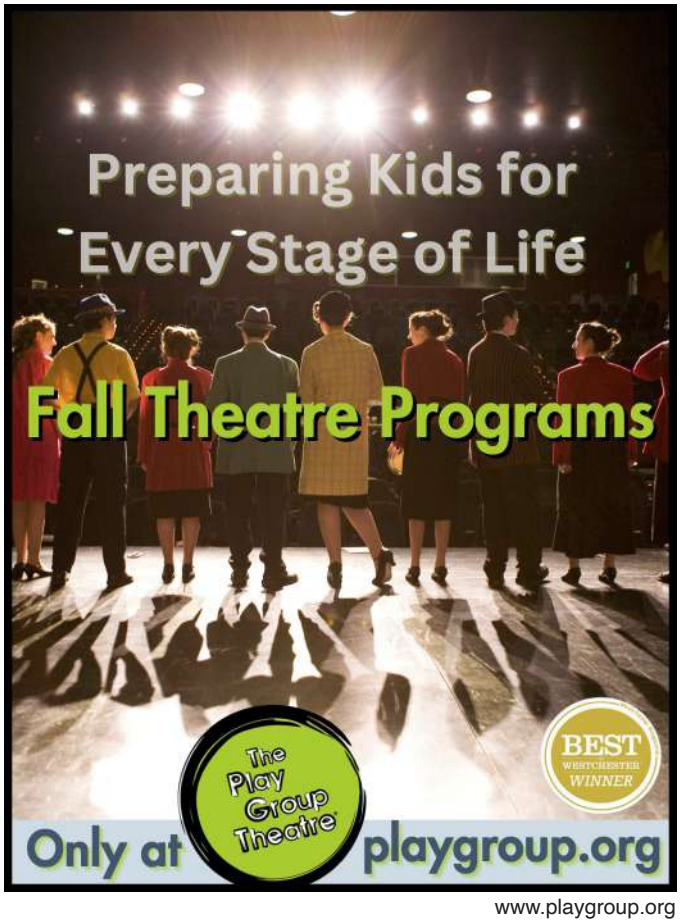


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Navigating School Choices for Our ADHD Son continued from page 30


Trey

weeks, emphasizing the need for early organization. January then marks the opening of the application window for the specific choice programs. The sheer number of options felt both exciting and overwhelming. Our son, Trey, thrives on hands-on activities. He loves building, dismantling (and occasionally reassembling!), and exploring how things function. The engineering programs, emphasizing design, problem-solving, and tinkering, immediately captured our attention. We chose two engineering schools as our top choices, hopeful Trey could immerse himself in a curriculum that ignited his passion. We pictured him building robots, designing bridges, and exploring the world with renewed purpose.

Unfortunately, the Choice program is incredibly competitive. Many families seek these limited spots, and selection occurs via lottery. While designed for fairness, the lottery system can be incredibly frustrating. We dedicated ourselves to the applications, envisioning Trey flourishing in an engineering-focused environment. We imagined his excitement and growth. But by late March, we received the dreaded news: Trey wasn't selected for either program. Disappointment hit hard. Uncertainty about his kindergarten future loomed. It felt like another obstacle in our already challenging search, a stark reminder that finding the right fit for Trey wouldn't be easy. The lottery, while intended to be equitable, left us feeling helpless and wondering about our next move.

The Private School Search: A Whirlwind of Tours

The private school search became a whirlwind of tours, a blur of classrooms and introductions. With Ali's demanding work schedule, I often navigated this part of the journey solo, armed with a notebook and a growing sense of desperation. Each school offered something unique, but



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the search for the right *fit* felt like a constant balancing act.

My first tour was *Christian School*, a lovely school. I immediately felt a sense of warmth and welcome, and could picture Trey happy and thriving in that environment. About midway through the tour, I asked the question that had been weighing on my mind: "Is the school LGBTQIA+ friendly?" The response was initially positive, "Oh yes! We have many same-sex couples who send their children here." Relieved, I shared that my wife is a transgender woman. The atmosphere shifted abruptly. The next sentence was delivered in a noticeably higher pitch, "Oh yeah, umm, I'm not sure, I think there's something in the manual about that." The tour continued, but the air had changed. Unsurprisingly, I never received a follow-up call.

...**"Is the school LGBTQIA+ friendly?" The response was initially positive, "Oh yes! We have many same-sex couples who send their children here." Relieved, I shared that my wife is a transgender woman. The atmosphere shifted abruptly. The next sentence was delivered in a noticeably higher pitch, "Oh yeah, umm, I'm not sure, I think there's something in the manual about that." The tour continued, but the air had changed. Unsurprisingly, I never received a follow-up call.**

The next school on our list was *Premier School*. The facilities were state-of-the-art, the teachers seemed top-notch, and the overall impression was one of excellence. It felt like any child who attended this school would be set up for success. We were seriously considering it, despite the eye-watering $30,000 annual tuition (not including extras like uniforms, materials, trips, and after-school activities). Fate intervened in the form of a dinner with friends whose son was attending preschool there. When I asked about their experience, their response was sobering. They wouldn't be sending their son back. They described a culture of a competitive atmosphere that bordered on obsessive. They even shared a story about a little girl in their son's class who was being pulled out of school early every day for tutoring to prepare for the kindergarten entrance exam. It was clear that this environment wouldn't be a fit for our family.

My tour of *Gifted School* was a breath of fresh air. The Head of School couldn't have been more welcoming. She assured me that our family, in all its uniqueness, would be embraced. She em-

continued on page 37



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Navigating School Choices for Our ADHD Son continued from page 34

phasized the school's commitment to creating a nurturing and inclusive learning environment, where acceptance was a core value. I left feeling hopeful. Trey was invited to spend two days at the school – one to observe his interactions with other children, and another for an academic assessment. Trey is incredibly social, so I wasn't worried about the first part. And with his recent stellar score on the Star Early Literacy Assessment (ranking in the 99th percentile with a 1.5 grade equivalent), I felt confident about the academic assessment as well. However, something went awry during Trey's assessment. The teacher's feedback was disheartening: "He knows his letters, but not the sounds. He was inattentive, uninterested, and needed constant prompting. He made noises during group time and wouldn't make eye contact." Trey wasn't invited to apply. While I was initially devastated, I later realized this was a blessing. The school wasn't equipped to understand or support a child with ADHD.


Trey

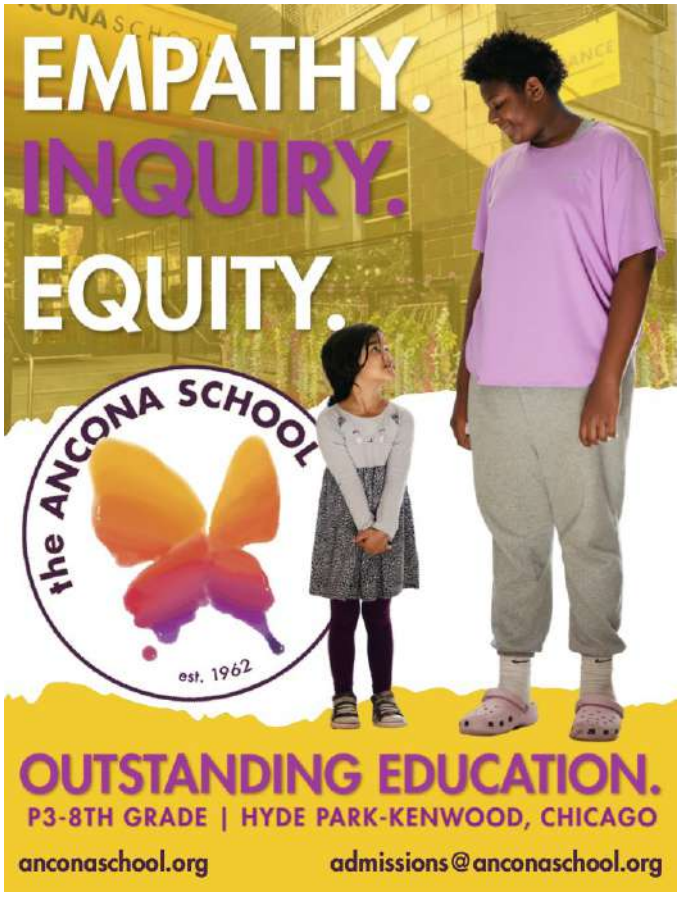
With kindergarten fast approaching, panic began to set in. As a backup, I enrolled Trey in the local Charter School. However, during orientation, a teacher's comment about stop signs being trapezoids (when they are octagons), confused Trey and raised concerns about the school's academic rigor. It felt like the search needed to continue.

Finding the Right Fit:
A Sense of Belonging

Growing increasingly anxious, I explored other options, including Montessori schools. One I toured felt too small and informal. Then, I ran into a friend who had found success for her own son with ADHD at Turtle River Montessori. She urged me to check it out. Cautiously optimistic, I scheduled a tour. From the moment I walked in, it felt different. The atmosphere was warm and inviting. Trey had a 30-minute meeting with the kindergarten teacher. He was nervous and hesitant, standing to the side of the classroom. The teacher, with remarkable intuition, simply asked, "Trey, would you prefer to stand?



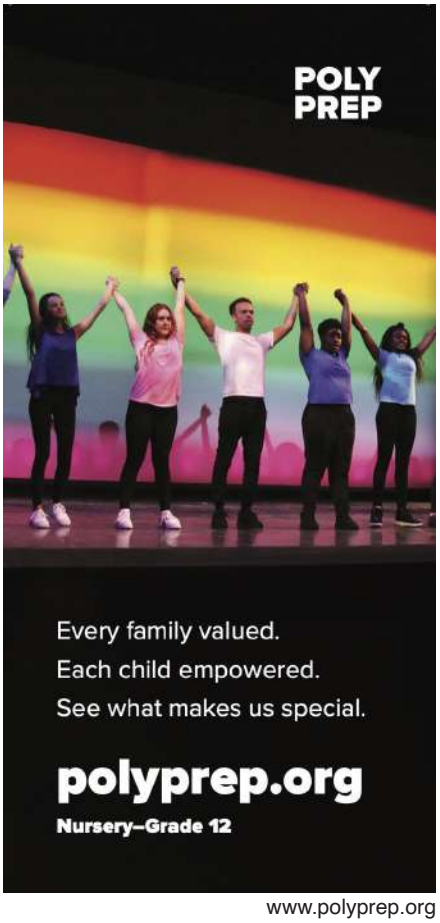
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It's totally okay if you stand." That simple acknowledgment of his needs made all the difference. He visibly relaxed. I left them to their 30 minutes, and Trey returned the following day for a full day with the other children. On the way home, he was unusually chatty, asking if he could go back to that school. A few days later, we received the call: Turtle River Montessori would be delighted to have Trey join their community. Relief washed over me, along with a few tears of joy. After months of searching, we had finally found a place where our son, our family, would be accepted and celebrated.

Advice for Other Parents

Finding the right school is a marathon, especially for LGBTQIA+ families and parents of children with special needs. But remember, you are your child's greatest advocate, and the right fit is out there. Here's some advice from our journey:

- Start early! The school search takes time. Begin researching well in advance, particularly for choice programs or private schools with early deadlines.
- Advocate fiercely. You know your child best. Clearly articulate their strengths, challenges, and learning style. Ask tough questions and push for necessary accommodations.
- Trust your gut. Visit schools, talk to teachers, and observe the atmosphere. Does it feel welcoming and inclusive? Are teachers genuinely invested? If something feels wrong, don't ignore it.
- Explore all options. Consider public, private, charter, and even homeschooling. Each has pros and cons. Be open to possibilities.
- Connect with other parents, especially in LGBTQIA+ or special needs communities. They offer invaluable insights and support. Sharing experiences lessens the isolation.
- Remember, it's about *fit*. The "best" school on paper might not be best for your child. Prioritize a place where your child feels safe, accepted, and celebrated. A place where they can learn, grow, and thrive.

The search can be challenging, but it's an investment in your child's future. Be informed, persistent, and trust your instincts. You *will* find a place where your child flourishes and your family belongs. ▼

Amy Murphy! Now there's a name synonymous with breaking rules and going against the grain. A couple of years ago, she ditched the traditional career path and stability of a government job to chase her dreams of becoming a publish author. Talk about a plot twist worthy of a bestseller! Her story was recently shared in the London Digest, graced the cover of the Los Angeles Tribune, and featured in NYC Independent as well as Seattle Independent. Her story is simple, it is about defying convention and celebrating the power of love.

Amy embraced her wife Ali's (formerly Alan) journey through transition, challenging societal expectations and redefining the concept of "happily ever after." This experience ignited a passion to empower others. Amy uses her writing and coaching to bridge the gap for cis partners of transgender individuals, offering support and fostering understanding within the LGBTQ+ community.

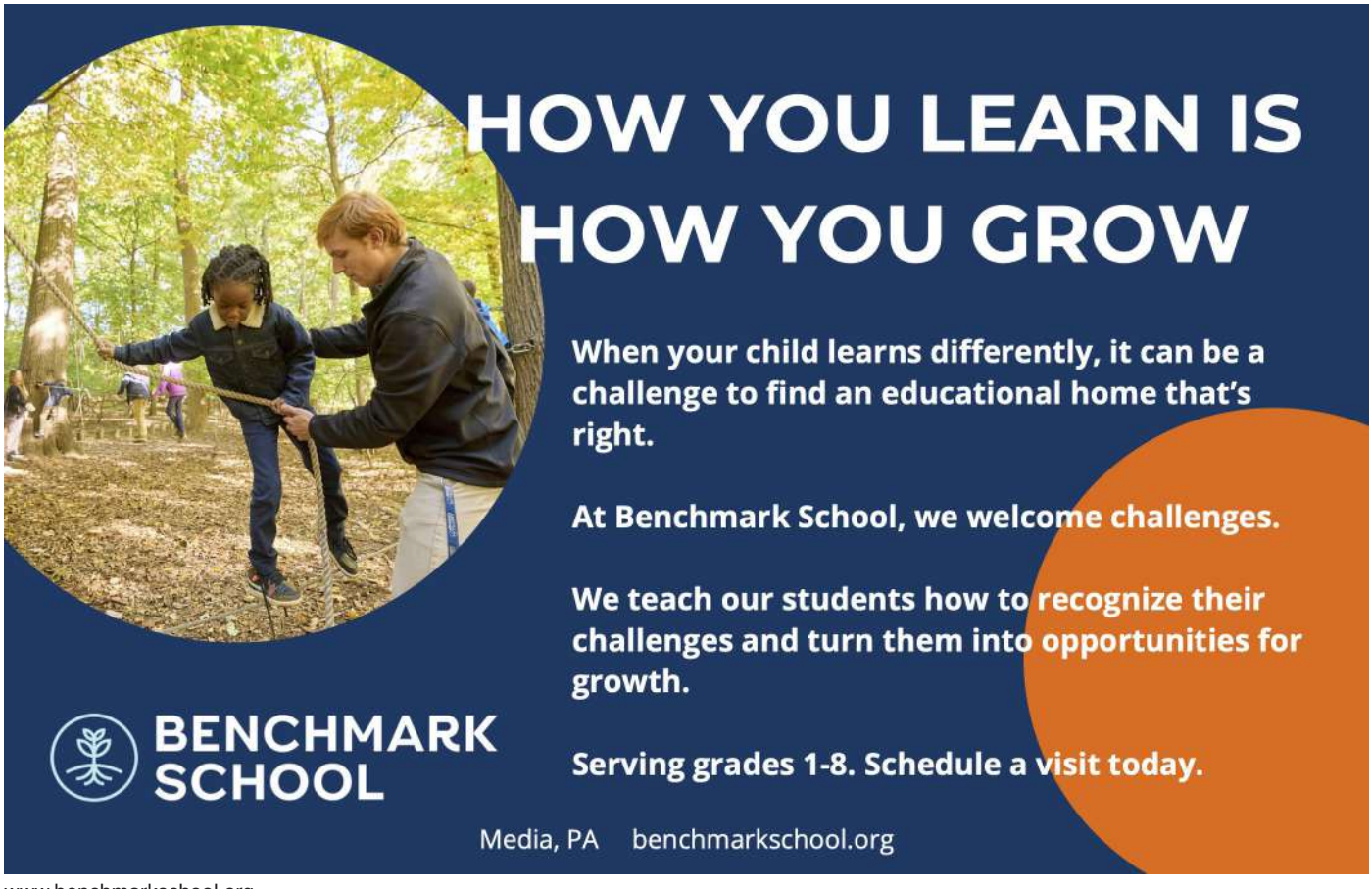
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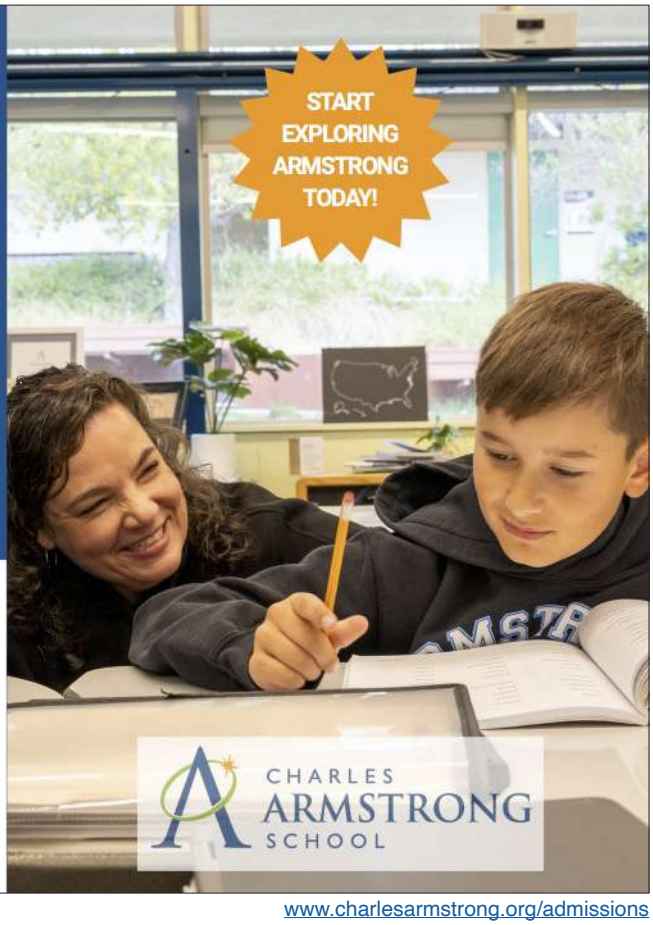
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continued from page 42

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Living with an Adult Son Who Has a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

by Renée J. Lukas

On January 2, 2010, the world stopped. It was one of those snow-covered, quiet days, except for the snowmobiles rumbling across the frozen lake near our house.

Our oldest son Tucker, age 13 at the time, was on a snowmobile and crashed into the side of a house going 40+ mph when he accidentally accelerated. My partner and I were having lunch when the phone rang. All I heard her say was, "Which one? Is he dead?" Her voice was odd.

We raced out to the snowy area where it happened. I stood knee-deep in the snow, as my partner ran around the corner of the house to view the scene. A quick thinking EMT packed snow around Tucker's head to prevent swelling in his brain, but the odds weren't good. No one wanted to tell us, but we knew there were doubts as to whether or not he'd make it. Because of bad weather, they weren't able to airlift him to the hospital. I remember my partner and I in the car, closely hugging the back of a speeding ambulance all the way to the hospital. We were in full-on adrenaline, survival mode. I don't remember anything we said to each other on the way there.

At the time, gay marriage wasn't legal, but we were partners in every sense. We waited and prayed together. Because Tucker is my partner's son from her previous marriage to a man, only she and Tucker's father were allowed to stay in the private room to hear what the doctor had to say about *continued on page 48*



Tucker, the author's son.

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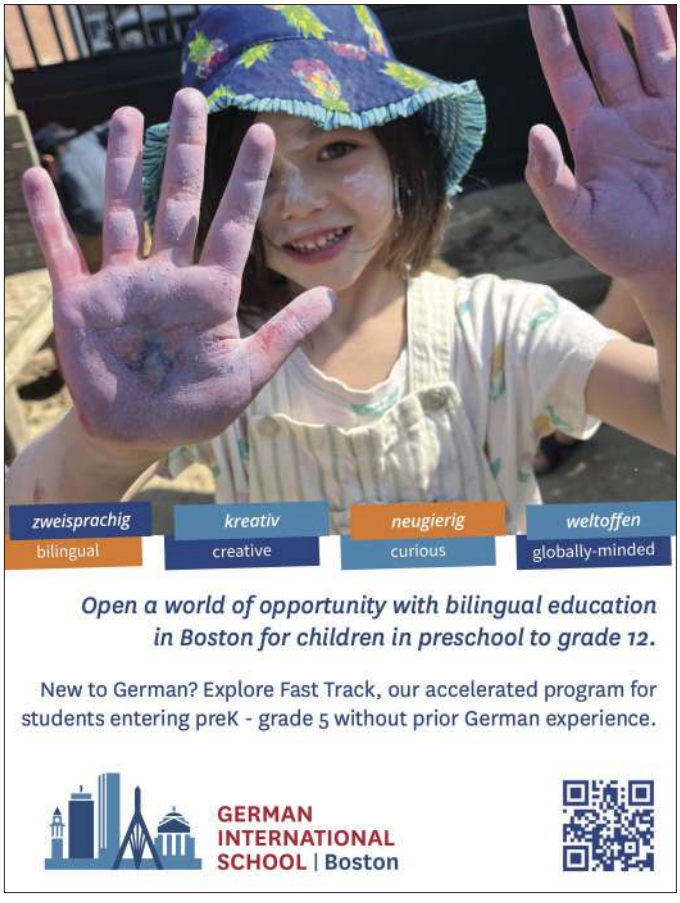
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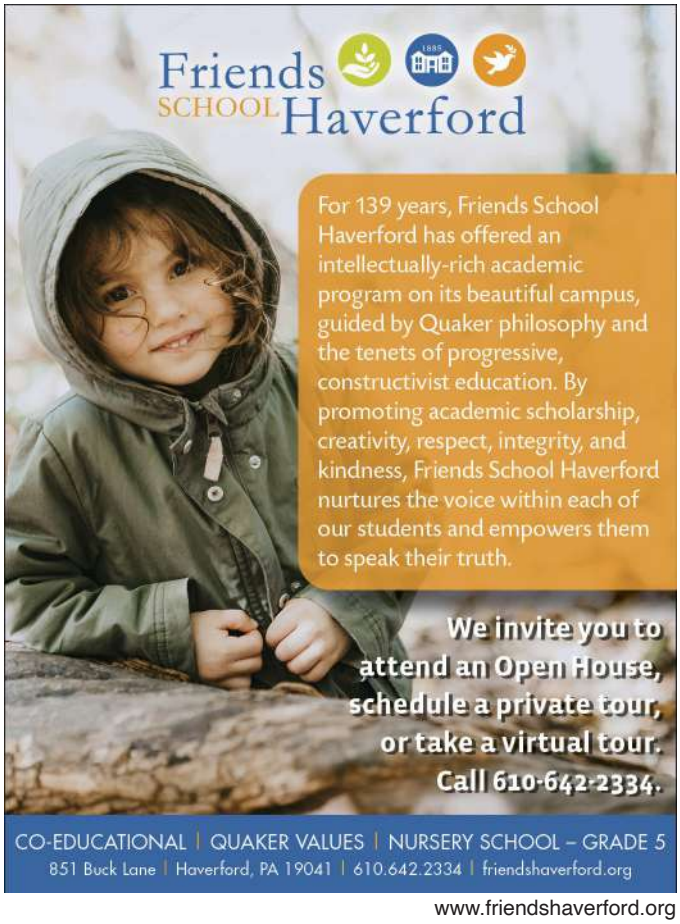
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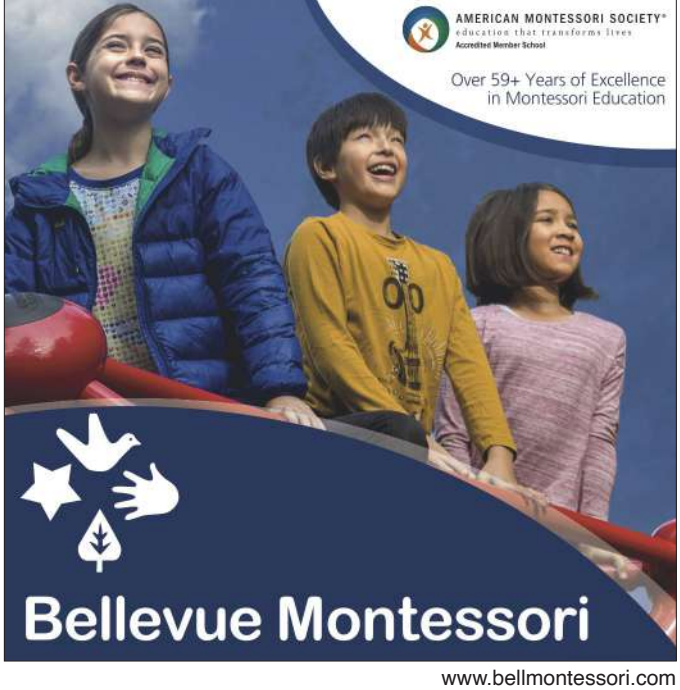
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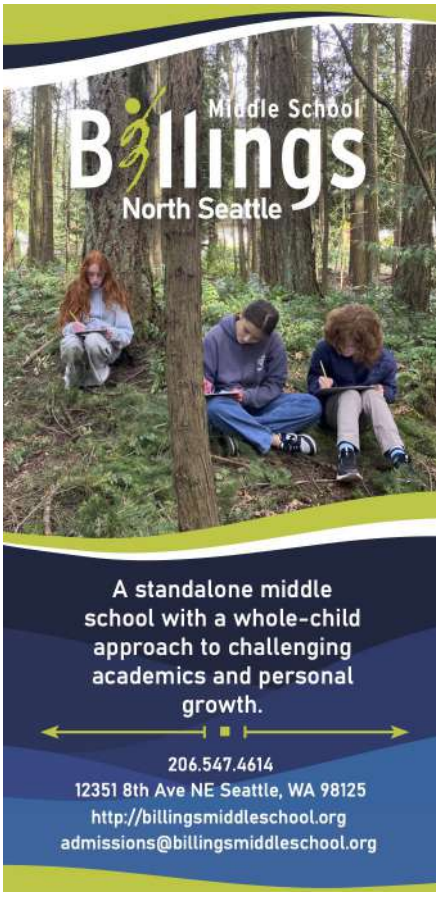
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Tramatic Brain Injury
continued from page 45

the severity of Tucker's condition. I had to wait outside in the hall, wondering what was being said and knowing that I couldn't console her if the worst had come to pass. It was the longest several minutes of my life.

They put Tucker in an artificially induced coma and monitored his condition. We watched him lying motionless in the ICU for weeks.

We learned that Tucker had suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury, or TBI.

Fast forward to the rehab hospital where he had to relearn how to swallow, speak, walk, even write his name. We played so many card games I'm now triggered whenever someone mentions *Uno* or *Four King's Corner.* Before Tucker's speech improved, he'd use a letter board, and, when asked how he was feeling, would sometimes spell out words I can't repeat here. Throughout it all, his sense of humor was not only intact, but sharp as ever. We took that as a good sign of his cognitive abilities. The physical prognosis was a bit dimmer. He came home in a wheelchair, and a physical therapist told us it was unlikely he'd ever walk again.

A few years later, Tucker graduated from high school and walked up the aisle himself to sit with his class and receive his diploma.

Today, at age 28, Tucker continues to walk. He has a part-time job and frequently helps me with my technical computer problems. He's an intelligent, funny, sensitive and very perceptive human being. He often notices when I or my now wife is in a bad mood without a word being spoken. He has a high degree of emotional intelligence beyond most people I know. His sense of humor and biting sarcasm are legendary among his co-workers at work. I think he gets away with some unfiltered comments because of what happened to him, and Tucker wouldn't have it any other way. Instead of avoiding talking about the accident, he leans into it, sometimes joking that now he can do whatever he wants because he's "already cheated death once". Technically,

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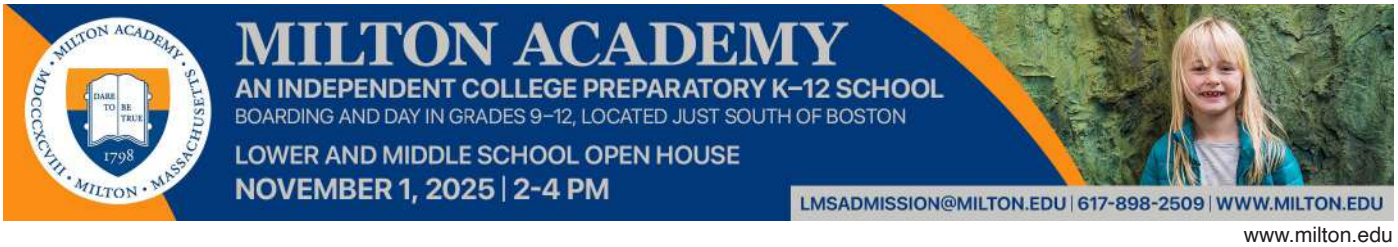
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Tramatic Brain Injury
continued from page 48

Tucker has cheated death twice, if you count the stormy night when a tree fell through his bedroom and barely missed his head. It's hard to argue with someone about doing something for their safety when they remind you how death has eluded them.

Tucker doesn't care if his story inspires people—and if he does care, he won't tell you.

Aside from his labored speech and a zig-zagging sort of walk, you might not realize that anything happened. But it did. A TBI is something you're reminded of every day. It's not like a broken leg that heals. Or a disease that's cured. It's with him, and us, every day.

For Tucker, the TBI mostly affected his frontal lobe, which controls judgment, decision making and motivation, among other things. For this reason, he's not really concerned with his health or safety. He goes to doctors' appointments grudgingly.

After getting his ears cleaned out, we asked how he felt.

"It's good and bad," he said. "Good, but also bad because now I can hear you and Mom."

When the laughter subsides, his mother and I know we're living in a judgmental world, and we know he's being judged even more because of his accident. Sometimes we try to get out ahead of that, yet sometimes it's best to leave it alone. We walk a fine line between letting him be a young adult who will make his own mistakes and knowing when to step in.

This is the toughest part of being parents of someone with a TBI. No TBI is the exact same—the brain is still super mysterious, so what affects one person may not affect another. As a parent, you have to learn what things are being exaggerated and what is the truth. You have to learn how to nudge someone who insists they "don't care" about virtually everything. And you have to not internalize the negativity of the person with the TBI. Not easy tasks.

I asked Tucker what it was like living with two lesbian moms. "Well," he



The author, Renée J. Lukas (far right), with her wife and two sons.

said, "you love and respect me, so that's all I care about. It was weird at first when I was eleven, and my mom was crying, telling me she was gay. So she likes girls, I thought. So do I!" He saw it as something they had in common. He also liked that living with two women has helped him get the female perspective when it comes to dating.

Like many young men his age, online dating is the most prevalent way to connect—even more so with Tucker, because he doesn't drive. Aside from work, there aren't many situations where he might meet women organically. My wife and I worry about whether the online world will make him feel more isolated, as we both grew up in a time when you had no choice but to pick up the phone.

On the Internet, people can be cowardly and simply ghost you instead of responding. Tucker has had his share of heartbreaks, as well as some surprising connections.

When he first put his profile online, he said, "Must be okay with LGBTQ people." I asked him why this was on his list of non-negotiables.

"I feel like I'm an ally," he said. "I don't want someone to be uncomfortable around my family. No tension. Because you guys are just people. I never understood people's issues with it."

Tucker is very astute, and he believes it's because of his high school days. "When I came back to school in a wheelchair," he says, "I was invisible to most people. Because people don't know you're there, you see and hear a lot, so you get in-tune with things."

Navigating resources has been especially challenging for his mother and me. This is because Tucker's TBI is somewhere in the middle—not severe enough that he can't work part-time, but impactful enough that he still needs help with many daily tasks. We try to meet him where he is with most situations—sometimes it's the right thing, sometimes not. We know we don't have all the answers.

Most people don't want to be defined by a single event. But sometimes I think the accident does define Tucker, because it's given him a sin-

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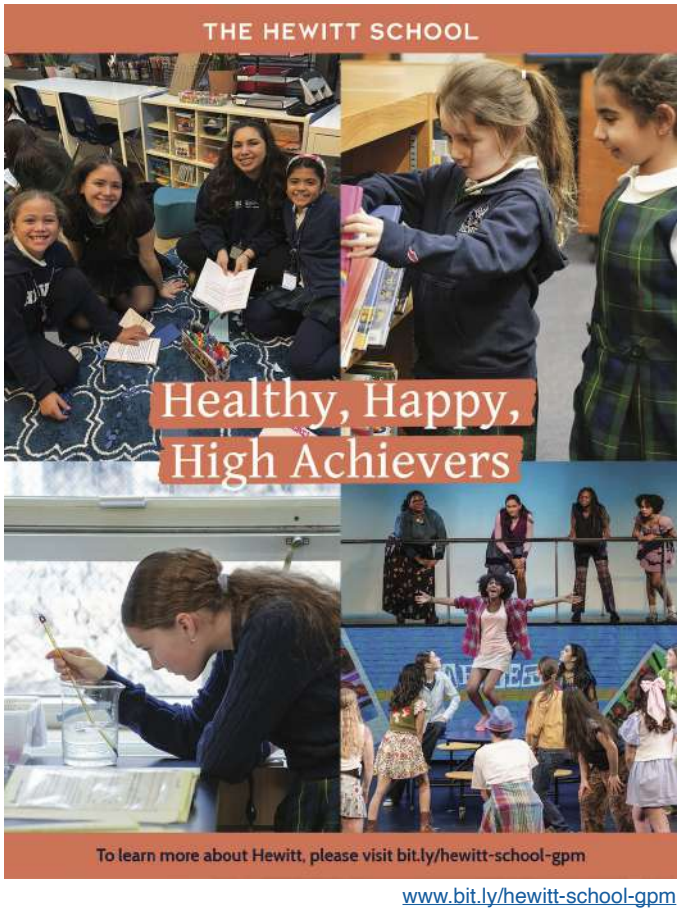
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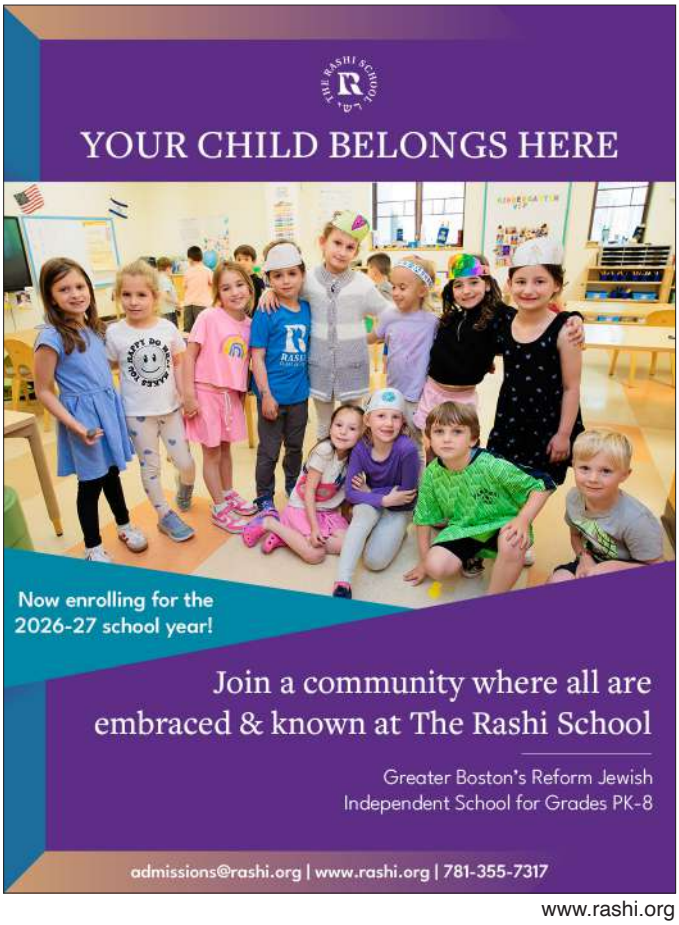
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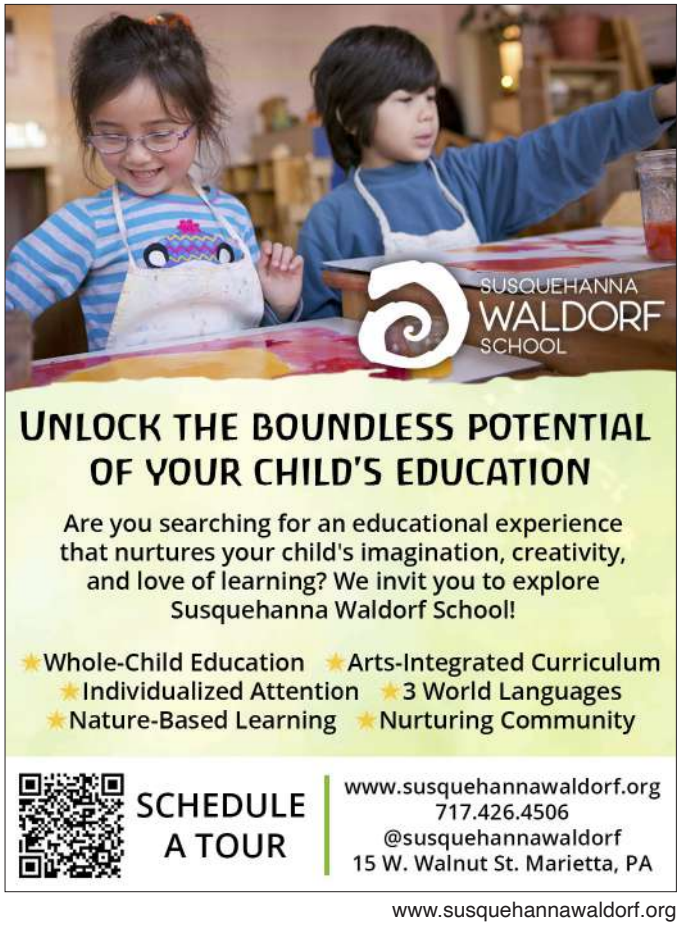
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Tramatic Brain Injury
continued from page 51



gular outlook that he may not have otherwise had. It's shaped so much of what he believes and how he lives his life. As parents, it's hard to let him make his own mistakes, as it would be with any son or daughter. Only with Tucker, the mistakes are often directly connected to his injury, and the desire to protect him can outweigh everything else.

When asked about his accident and how it affected his outlook on life, Tucker says, "That saying, you never know what you have 'til it's gone. I really feel that. I took walking and sports for granted." And since the accident, others' demands are the last on his list of priorities. "Now I don't care about things other people want from me," Tucker says. "I got a second chance, so I'm going to live my life *my* way."

As parents, we try to let him do that as much as we can and hope for the best. ▼

Renée J. Lukas is the author of five novels (Bella Books) and a screenwriter. She teaches screenwriting courses and talks about movies to anyone who will listen. She lives in Massachusetts with her wife and two sons.

Photos courtesy of Renée J. Lukas

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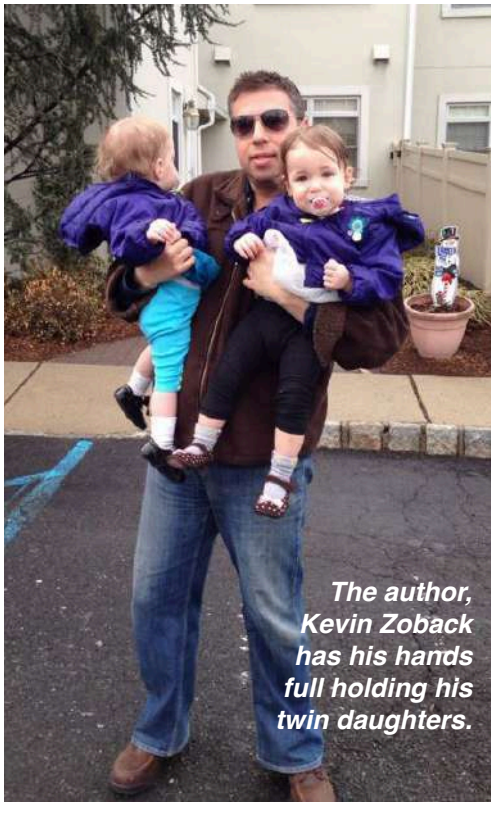
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Becoming Dad at 49: How I Built a Family My Way

By Kevin Zoback

I grew up in New Rochelle, New York — a classic suburban kid of the '70s. Think Beatles on the record player, bikes with banana seats, Tang in the fridge, and one rotary phone in the kitchen for the whole family. My friends and I had a "club," which was mostly an excuse to boss around the younger kids and hold fake meetings in tree forts. Dinner was often Swanson TV dinners or noodles with cottage cheese, eaten in front of Gilligan's Island or The Munsters — assuming I could get the TV away from my brother Eric, who insisted on Star Trek. Spoiler: I usually lost.

I had a big imagination and an even bigger mouth, which, in hindsight, made media and sales a natural path for me. After college, I moved to the Upper West Side and dove headfirst into New York City life — chasing opportunity by day and losing myself in the nightlife after hours. I hit every club worth hitting: Limelight, Sound Factory, Palladium, The Saint, Splash, Champs, and of course, Studio 54 — yes, even in the '80s version. I once danced near Diana Ross and saw Bianca Jagger glide through like she owned the place. Back then, that kind of magic felt normal.



The author, Kevin Zoback has his hands full holding his twin daughters.

By day, I was building a career in radio and advertising. Over time, I climbed into executive roles at ABC Radio, iHeartMedia (working with talent such as Ryan Seacrest) and was the first sales managers hired at XM Radio as an early pioneer to help launch satellite service, eventually working with Howard

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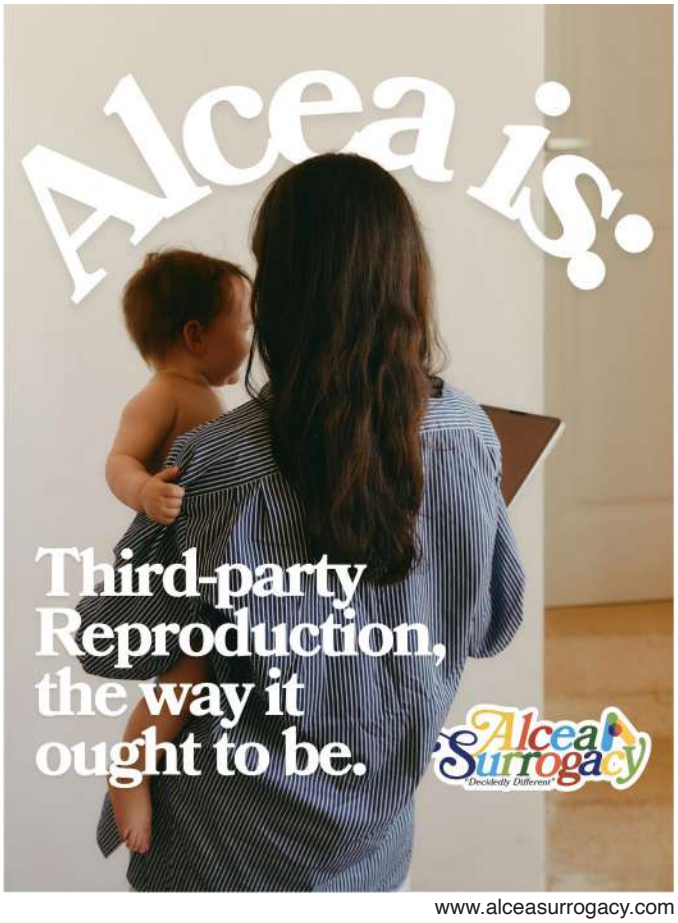
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Becoming Dad at 49
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Kevin Zoback with his children when they were little.

Stern. There were pitch meetings, strategy sessions, client lunches at the Waldorf, and sales summits in places like Disney and Texas. It was fast-paced, relentless, and — for a while — thrilling.

But eventually, the sparkle wore off. I was tired. Burned out. And despite the success, I hadn't met the right partner, hadn't started a family, and something inside me kept saying: Is this it? I didn't want to look back one day with regret. I didn't want the only legacy I left to be advertising campaigns and good stories from bars that no longer existed.

So, at 49, I stopped waiting. I decided to become a father — on my own — through surrogacy.

It wasn't a quick decision, and it wasn't easy. But it was the most clear-headed one I'd ever made.

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tiny dixie cup in a dimly lit room and magazines I won't get into! And not long after, I became the father of twin girls. Two perfect, wild, funny little humans who changed my life in ways no job or club or city ever could.

Now, at 62, I'm raising those girls — who are now 13 — in suburban New Jersey. My life looks nothing like it did before. I swapped boardrooms for PTA meetings. Power lunches for pancake breakfasts. After-hours drinks for Target runs and soccer practice. I've gone from dancing in clubs next to disco royalty to binge-watching Friends while folding laundry, navigating teen moods, and awkward conversations about body changes. (They just got their periods. I'm still recovering.)

Is it overwhelming sometimes? Absolutely. But it's also hilarious, honest, and filled with so much love I can barely stand it.

One of the most unexpected chapters in our story came years after the girls were born. I had always wondered about the egg donor — who she was, what she was like, whether she was okay. That quiet wondering eventually turned into a mission. I searched high and low. And after years of trying, I finally found her.

She was living in Connecticut with her wife. We met, we talked, and something clicked. What could've been strange or uncomfortable be-





Top and bottom: Early photos of Kevin with his children.

came...easy. Natural. Human. She met the girls, and to everyone's surprise — especially theirs — we all became friends. That connection added something we didn't know we needed. And now, she's part of our extended world in a way that feels honest and unforced.

We're a real family — maybe not the textbook version, but one built on trust, humor, and showing up for each other every day.

We travel together — Lake George, the beaches of Florida, the California coast. We laugh a lot. We yell sometimes too. We have traditions now: pancake Sundays, back-to-school shopping chaos, late-night reruns, and walks with Oreo, our loyal Border Collie who somehow tolerates all of us.

I'm not going to sugarcoat it: doing this solo has been hard. There were moments — especially early on — when I wondered if I had made a mistake. Could I really do this on my own? Would I be enough?

But those questions faded once I held them in my arms. The fears





On left, early photo of Kevin with his children. Right photo of Kevin's daughters, Nicole (left) and Sarah.

didn't vanish, but they stopped mattering. I just kept showing up. That's the secret, I think. It's not about doing it perfectly — it's about doing it consistently. Being there. Over and over. Even when you're tired. Even when you're unsure. Even when they're yelling about TikTok and rolling their eyes at your music.

We live in a fairly traditional community, and while people might notice that I'm a single dad without a partner, no one's ever made us feel out of place. And more importantly, my girls have never been treated differently. Still, I sometimes think about relocating to a more open-minded, diverse area — somewhere that embraces nontraditional families a little more freely. Maybe one day.

For now, I'm just doing my best to raise two *continued on page 65*

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Becoming Dad at 49
continued from page 63

confident, kind, smart (and occasionally savage) teenagers — and trying to stay fit enough to keep up with them. Fitness and health have been a huge part of my life too, especially now. If I'm not taking care of myself, how can I take care of them?

So, what's the takeaway in all of this?

It's this: Life doesn't always follow the timeline or script you expect. And that's okay. You can build a life — and a family — in your own way, on your own terms. Whether you're 29 or 49, whether you're partnered or not, whether your path is "typical" or totally uncharted, none of that matters as much as simply deciding to begin.

For me, becoming a dad wasn't just about having kids — it was about becoming the person I always wanted to be. It didn't happen when I was 25, or even 35. It happened when I was ready.

And if you've got something in your heart — whether it's parenthood or a dream you've shelved for too long — don't wait for perfect conditions. There's no such thing.

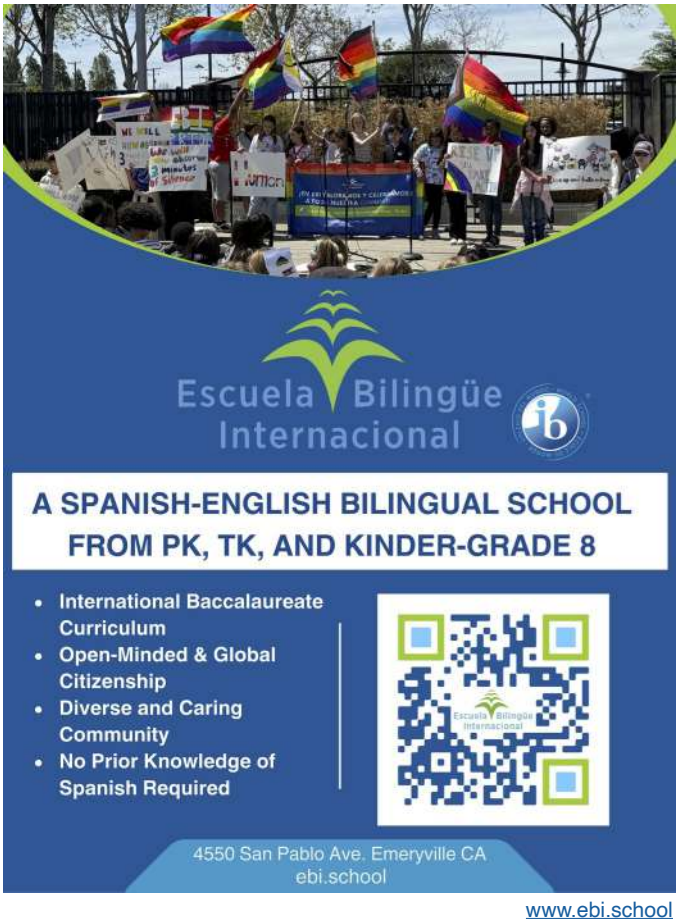
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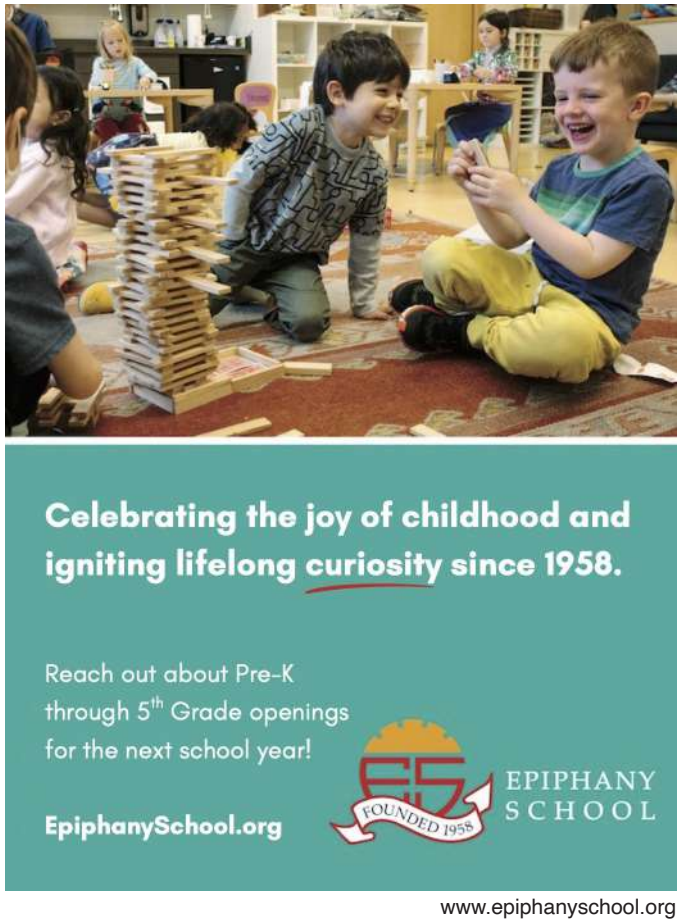
Photo of Kevin's children with their egg donor (middle).

Kevin Zoback is a writer, former media executive, and single gay dad of twin teenage daughters. After becoming a father through surrogacy at 49, he now shares his journey of parenting, reinvention, and reconnecting with the anonymous egg donor who helped create his family—13 years later. His upcoming memoir, Single Dad, Double Trouble*, explores fatherhood, identity, and building a life outside the mold.*

Photos courtesy of Kevin Zoback



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London Educators and Parents to Twins, Damian and Pasan

By Gary Hurtubise

This month, we venture across the pond to visit a young family just outside of London, England – dads Damian and Pasan, and their newborn twins, Liko and River.

Damian was born in West Yorkshire, in the north of England, "in a very green, rather quiet valley-town called Holmfirth."

His extended family members were all very close, with aunts, uncles, and siblings living just a short journey away.

Damian knew he was gay when he was around 12 or 13. He plucked up the courage to tell his best friend at age 14; "she gave me a big hug and told me I was awesome!" Once he got to Sixth Form (a senior high school just for grades 11's and 12's), he realized he'd arrived at a place where he could "just *be* out, rather than come out."



Pasan holding Liko (left) and Damian holding River.

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Damian became the first in his family to attend university right after his 'A Levels' (the equivalent of a high school diploma in the States), where he first studied engineering.

Meanwhile, Pasan grew up with his three siblings much further to the east, in Colombo, the bustling capital city of Sri Lanka, south of India.

His father ran his own book-printing business, which provided the family with enough resources to allow the children to go overseas for post-secondary schooling.

When his time came, Pasan chose to get his undergraduate degree from Nottingham University, following that up with a Master's in Management at St Andrew's University in Scotland.



River and Liko.

Pasan describes his sexuality as a phasing-in. "I don't remember thinking, 'oh, I'm gay;' I just went with the flow." His first relationship was while in the UK at university. "I came out to my parents on my 22nd birthday, because I knew they *couldn't* get mad at me on my birthday!"

"They were just happy it wasn't something more serious or sinister," he says.

Pasan's passion steered him towards teaching, and eventually found himself checking out the PhD of education program at historic Cambridge University.

Fate arranged for Pasan and Damian to meet at this point in their stories, as Damian was in Cambridge himself, finishing his final year of a Master's in Engineering.

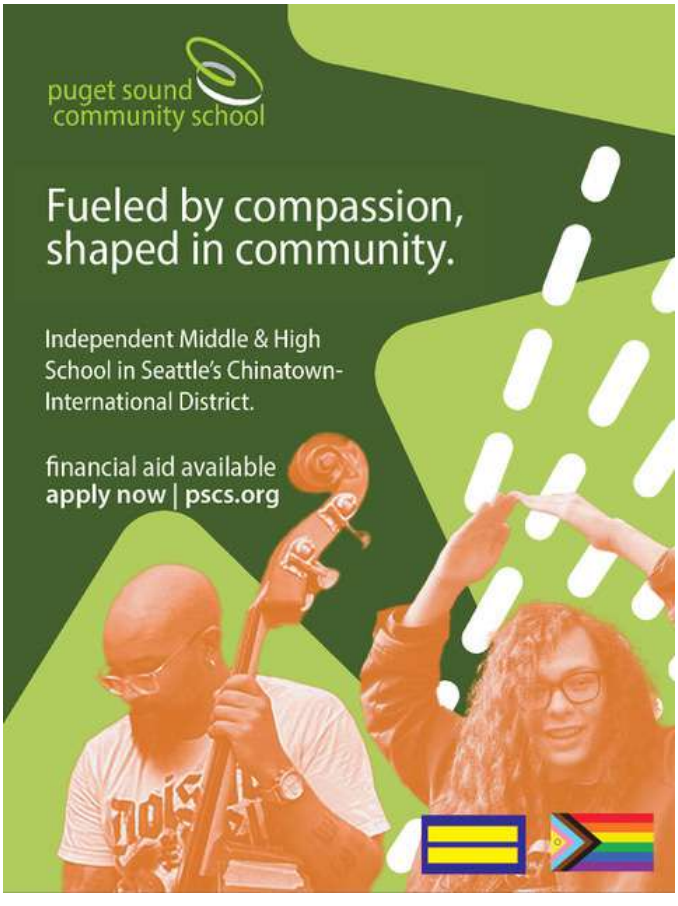
A chance encounter at The Flying Pig Pub one night led to a drink, then another, and by the time the night was over, the pair realized how well they were getting along.

There was the small matter of the men being in different cities, however – Pasan was still living in London, and Damian was mere months away from finishing school and moving north where he'd been offered a job with Rolls Royce.

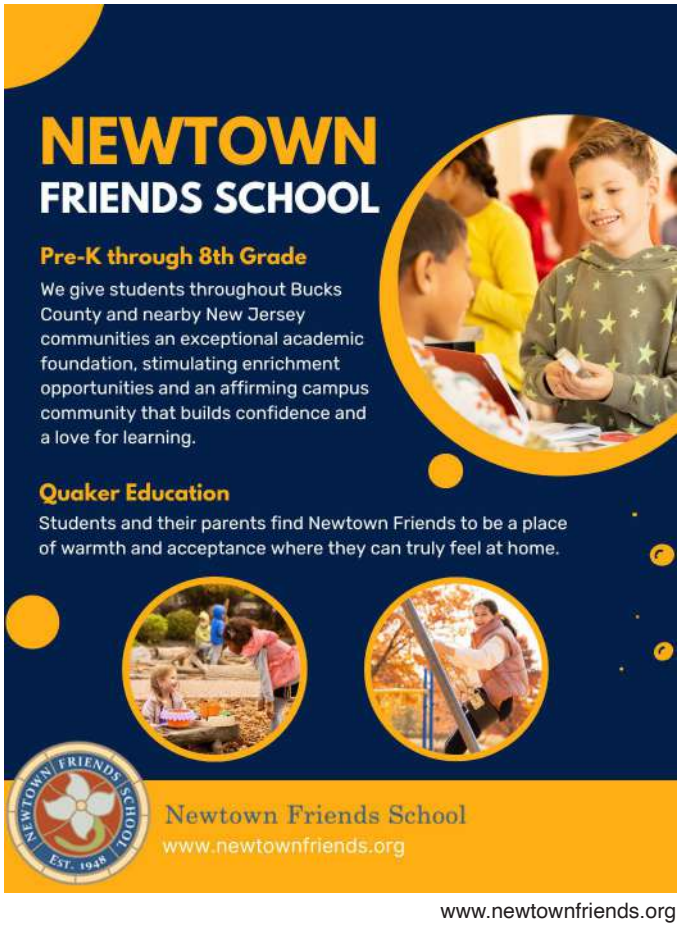
A few months later, fate decided to intervene once again, when Damian was offered a role in London instead, which he jumped to accept.

Now both in London, their relationship kicked off properly, and a short time after that, Damian even caught the teaching bug from Pasan, giving up his brand-new corporate career to become a math teacher.

The couple were married in 2017 and spent the next few years moving around the London area, making gradual upgrades from their original joint studio apartment.



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Today, Damian is a mathematics department head and Pasan an assistant principal, though both are taking time off so they can spend time with their newborns.

When it came to family planning, the two men came to the discussion with different preconceptions and ideas.

"For a very long time, I never considered surrogacy as a route to having children," Damian states. "In fact, I thought the only option was adoption, and even then, I don't think I thought I was destined for children."

Explaining further, he adds, "I think growing up in the time and geography that I did, I wasn't led to believe that someone like me could ever have children.

Damian admits this way of thinking stuck with him for many years, even well-into his time in university. "When being asked if I would have children, I answered, 'I probably wouldn't, as it wouldn't be fair on the



The family with their pets.

children to grow up in this society with two gay parents.'"

"I look back at that version of myself now and want to slap him! Everyone has the right to be a parent! Provided they love and protect their children, it does not matter what hate there is outside of their unit. It does not matter what society wants from you or wants you to be, we must be ambassadors and show hate who is boss."

For Pasan, growing his family through surrogacy was always important. He wanted his children to share either his or Damian's DNA.

"We did briefly research adoption," he admits. "Several of our heterosexual and homosexual couple friends were at various stages in the process, but little progress was being made."

"One couple were told they were unlikely to be accepted as future parents unless one of them was prepared to give up their job and be at home all of the time with their future child – who would likely



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River (left) and Liko.



have very particular needs."

That same couple was eventually counselled to explore surrogacy, which Pasan and Damian decided to pursue as well, from the get-go.

"We started our surrogacy journey about five years ago," Damian explains, "joining different organisations in the UK, hoping to find someone who might be our surrogate."

"We attended socials in person and online but never seemed to be getting any closer to feeling that tap on the shoulder from a potential surrogate."

Surrogacy socials were a way for intended parents to mingle with potential surrogates, the couple was told; they soon discovered that the ratio of surrogates to prospective parents at any event was abysmal.

"It's very tricky because, in the UK, you are not allowed to pay anyone to be a surrogate (other than expenses) so there aren't that many people who are willing to do it!"

At first, the two men thought it was great meeting people in similar positions and with similar dreams. Before long, however, socials started to become very repetitive and increasingly disheartening.

"I remember leaving one social after speaking to a lady who had been going with her husband almost every week for the past 10 years," Damian retells. "She told us that, at some point very soon, she needed to cut her losses and accept that she would not be a mother – it was just too draining, and she needed this to no longer be the way she spent her every weekend."

"This was someone who we had gotten to know well at our local social and she was brilliant – super fun, gorgeous and with real brilliant energy – I still cannot believe that in ten years, no one offered to be her



www.cityandcountry.org or www.cityandcountry.org/nygayparents



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surrogate."

"…but selfishly on that day," Damian admits, "I was thinking about us and thinking that if no one had approached *her* in ten years, what chance did we have?

It was then that the couple started seriously considering another option: over-seas surrogacy – something they always knew was an option, albeit a relatively expensive one.

The couple's first realization about international surrogacy was that, "it's a mine field!"

"There are lots of organisations out there: some which are genuine, some which mean well but lack experience, and some that are just out to steal from the vulnerable!"

An acquaintance of theirs introduced them to the World Centre of Baby (WCOB) – an organization that he himself had used successfully to have children. "He spoke with us about what the process looked like and what we might expect if we were to take the international surrogacy route, and from there, things moved very fast!"

In October 2023, the couple had their initial call with WCOB, during which all their questions were answered, and they were talked through a potential timeline.

By December, the couple were on their way to the Mediterranean island nation of Cyprus to deposit a sample and run some tests.

"We selected our egg donor in January of 2024 and were informed that we had healthy embryos in February."

"By March, we were matched with a surrogate and heard news of our successful (twin!) pregnancy in April. We felt very looked-after throughout the entire process, with lots of communication about how the twins were developing.

Nine months later, the couple flew to Cyprus again, arriving at midnight of New Year's Eve, "just in time to see the fireworks!"

They ran around for a couple of days, buying those last few essentials they were not able to bring with them (a cot being one of them), then settled down to await the birth of their kids.

Liko and her brother River were born just before 10:00 AM on the 3rd of January.

"We then needed to go through the formalities of getting their

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passports before we could all come home as a family," Damian explains next.

"We experienced a few delays, but that was purely down to sloppy work at the UK passport office and nothing really to do with the fact that our children were born through surrogacy," Damian says.

The 'few delays' translates to the couple and their two newborns having to spend *almost two months* in Cyprus while the situation got sorted out.

Their story briefly made international headlines, and drew the attention of a far-right political party from the south of the island nation, which demanded an explanation for the incident, since the law in the Greek (southern) part of Cyprus does not permit same-sex couples to become parents through surrogacy.

Despite all this, the couple were able to see the silver lining in their 'passport snafu' – "it was actually very nice to have had all that time together."


River

They also had time to get to know the twins' surrogate mother during this time.

"For obvious reasons, she is one of our favourite people in the world, having literally made our dreams come true!"

"She took us around the area she had been living at over the past nine months," Damian retells, "introducing us to the friends she had made. She showed us her apartment, and it was wonderful to see how well she had been looked after throughout the pregnancy."

"What was really special was hearing how much she valued the experience of being a surrogate. She believed it to be a noble experience; to help complete a family."

The couple also appreciated how their financial investment in the process went – in part – towards helping their surrogate. "Her payment allowed her to buy a house out-right for her family – something she would never have been able to do otherwise," Damian reveals.

The young family made it back to the UK in early March – none the worse for wear, and ready to get on with the business of raising babies.

"We have had a blast," they insist, "…despite some sleepless nights."

"Every tantrum, every dirty nappy and every feedless-feed is an awesome reminder that we are two proud parents!"

"Regardless of whether you are a homosexual or a heterosexual couple, make sure you are both working as a team. Raising a



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baby is hard work, and therefore when the workload such as feeding is shared, you will not feel the exhaustion!"

"But more importantly – enjoy every second! You wanted to be a parent, and now you are! Enjoy the easy bits as well as the tough, loud bits; it's so worth it!"

As new LGBTQ+ parents, Pasan and Damian have also taken note of a few things. "We are still very much in the minority as parents, and the world needs some tweaking in order to make what is already a tricky process just a little kinder."

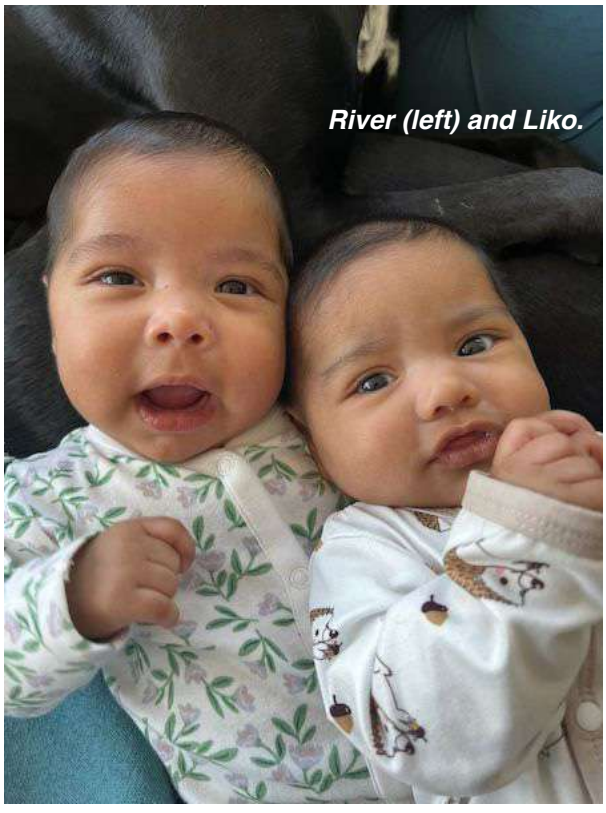
"Whilst walking through Heathrow Airport, a steward directing people saw us each with a baby strapped to our tummies and gave us a genuine warm smile but then shouted, 'Where's mum?'" There was no malice intended, but it was a sign that we still have a long way to go as a society before we are seen as people who might have children.

The two men are quick to state that both their employers have been very accommodating, while noting that the process to request parental leave is not straightforward. "HR processes and forms are not set up for two same-sex parents, so navigating leave was tricky."

"Even simple forms like those for shared parental leave refer to 'the mother' and assume that one parent has given birth which makes it impossible to complete. It is shocking that in the modern world, that paternity leave is still shocking!"

In an attempt to be more visible as same-sex parents, and as parents with a surrogacy story, the couple have created the online profile 'Dads2wins'; they post videos to Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and Youtube about their experiences as a young family.

"There were a lot of scams out there; we want to help others in the same position we were before having children."



River (left) and Liko.

Further to that, it was also important for Pasan to share his story to people in Sri



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Pasan and Damian with their twins.

Lanka, as it is still a criminal offense to be LGBTQ+ there. "I want to be present for that community and make them feel like they can be the best versions of themselves."

To learn more about Liko, River, Pasan and Damian, follow them @ Dads2wins. ▼

Gary Hurtubise lives in Eastern Ontario with his husband Trevor, their two sons Noah & Meo, and their two yellow labs. Gary attended the Royal Military College of Canada and served in the Royal Canadian Navy before becoming a high school physics teacher, and part time Ghostwriter. Gary finds time to write during those odd moments between life: at 4:30 in the morning, on long road-trips with the kids, while back-country camping, and when he should be doing his share of the chores.

Photos courtesy of Lewmini Photograpy and Pasan and Damian.

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