

TERRA FIRMA

A STUDENT MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2024



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A Garden of Talent



PROVIDENCE

CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Terra Firma, solid ground, represents a metaphor for the vision and mission of Providence. We seek to teach and train young men and women to reach their highest potential in truth and character, to cultivate minds “well-made” not simply “well-filled,” from this solid foundation. Rooted in Scripture, students prepare to go forth in service to God and man.

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COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

overcoming obstacles and embracing growth

Ryan Evans, Headmaster



We often speak about maturity and growth observed between the sophomore year and where we sit today. Let's take a trip down memory lane when these students were sophomores. In early October we received a call from Lakeside Bible Camp that a chair had been broken during our fall retreat. Some sleuthing revealed said broken chair occurred in the sophomore boys' cabin. Because we use such events as discipleship opportunities, I gathered the sophomore boys and asked for input on what happened. On a Post-It Note they were asked to list three things: name, level of involvement on a 1-5 scale, 5 being most responsible, and any narrative commentary.

Here are the results, and I directly quote:

- 2 I watched from my bed which was in the corner.
- 4 It [the chair] was on the drawer and I accidentally knocked it into the drawer and it fell.
- 2 I knew what happened - sort of - but did not touch it.
- 4 I encouraged the chair to be broken.
- 2 I saw the chair fall. I never said anything or touched it.
- 1 I didn't even know a chair was broken.

This toxic brew of denial, obfuscation, and feigned innocence would make proud even the most hardened criminal. As humorous as this is, there is a point: these young men – and women, have - by the grace of God and the commitment of each other, their parents, and their teachers – matured into more Christ-like people. That road toward sanctification must necessarily come through trials and obstacles that often seem daunting to overcome. God shapes and molds us into His image through the work of the Spirit, and it is a joy to witness the changes.

Anyone who attended the senior thesis presentations walked away impressed by the maturity, the wisdom, the deftness of phrase, the confidence in demeanor. But what is most encouraging is the infusion of biblical thinking in their argumentation, their desire to defend their position from a distinctly Christian viewpoint. Whether inclusion in schools, appearance-based competitions, treatment of the elderly, women in combat, or modern church music, these seniors embodied the idea that Paul addresses to the Corinthians when he called them to take every thought captive to Christ, to destroy arguments and every lofty opinion against the knowledge of God.

Contrast this with a recent poll that revealed nearly half of evangelical Christians believe in some form of new age spiritualism, whether it's reincarnation, astrology, or psychic readings. Such is the state of the evangelical mind: we struggle to divide truth from error, even in its most basic form.

Author Harry Blamires wrote in his classic book, *The Christian Mind*, that the modern Christian has succumbed to secularization. "He may accept religion – its morality, its worship, its spiritual culture, but he rejects the religious view of life, the view which sees all earthly issues within the context of the eternal." Sound familiar? This was written in 1963.

To partake in meaningful debate and cultural engagement, a necessary condition must exist. Blamires writes, "There is something before the Christian dialogue, and that is the Christian mind – a mind trained, informed, equipped to handle data of secular controversy within a framework of reference which is constructed of Christian presuppositions. The Christian mind is the prerequisite of Christian thinking. And Christian thinking is the prerequisite of Christian acting."

Our ultimate goal at Providence is not compelling speech, rhetorical winsomeness, and an impressive transcript for college admissions. Our desire through all our activities – academics, athletics, house system, protocol, drama, music – is to cultivate affections, to train the mind and soul to love what is lovely and to pursue those things that are honorable and praiseworthy. And to put those into practice as you love your neighbor as yourself. As one author writes, “The end of education is not thinking; it is acting. It is not just knowing what to do; it is doing it. The sublime premise of a classical education asserts that right thinking will lead to right, if not righteous, acting.” Virtues like honor, courage, humility, kindness, and gratitude must not be passive ruminations but actions lived out in daily life.

The Scriptures say as much. Our Lord said that every tree is known by its fruit. James tells us, “Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.” Faith and works; thinking and acting. Two sides to the same coin.

So go bear fruit. Preserve the fundamentals and use God’s Word as your compass. Walk in the works that God prepared in advance for you. If you break a chair, own it when you do. May Christ sustain you and perfect you as you commence this next phase of life. He is faithful and He will surely do it.

EMBODYING INTEGRITY AND FAITH

Providence seniors leave a strong legacy

Judah MacGillivray

Providence seniors exemplify the young men and women the school strives to cultivate. Leading the student body with integrity and setting an example of godliness, these students have strengthened the already firm foundation of Providence’s education. Whether acting in drama, competing in sports, or conversing in the hallways, the seniors embody the core virtues the school aims to instill in its students.

Balancing a variety of activities, including a senior thesis, they demonstrate the ability to manage multiple responsibilities while upholding the school’s core values. As they transition to the next chapter of their lives, Providence seniors are well-equipped to represent their faith and approach any situation wholeheartedly.

House Council President Josiah Hansen remarks, “Providence has provided me with a strong, non-conforming Christian foundation. It has taught me not just what to think, but how to think. Through Providence, I understand what a strong young man should look like, and how they should go about their lives.”

With a strong foundation of faith and a commitment to serving others, these graduates are poised to make a positive impact in their communities and beyond, embodying the true essence of what it means to be a Providence student.

GRADUATING CLASS OF 2024



Madelyn Alford



Hollis Bontrager



Evan Graham



Josiah Hansen



Beau Kowalick



Adeo Lambright



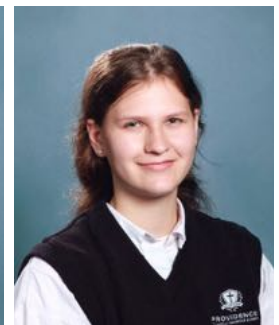
Austin Pierce



Kylea Small



Gabriella Walsh



Sadie Zlab

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

introducing three new teachers to the Providence community

Sydney Owens



Mrs. Judit Szepessy
4th Grade

Mrs. Szepessy is a fourth-grade teacher at Providence. Originally from Hungary, she moved here from Canada last year. When asked what is one thing she found excellent about Providence, she declared, “All the staff and faculty are absolutely dedicated to the school.” Mrs. Szepessy appreciates the faithfulness the school has in educating its students. She was also asked about one way in which she strives to grow her students in excellence. She responded by saying that she “maintains high standards in the classroom.” She has truly enjoyed her past year being able to serve Providence.



Mr. Chan Pedersen
Secondary

Mr. Pedersen is also from Canada, but now lives in Everett. He teaches 7th Bible, 8th History, Journalism, and works with the marketing and drama departments as well. He remarked, “There are many things that I find excellent here, the most notable to me is how committed Providence is to genuinely pursuing Christ in all aspects of the school community.” He also said with regards to excellence, “I try to encourage students to step out of their comfort zone...because that’s how you get better. Excellence doesn’t appear out of a vacuum. It’s built little by little over time.” Mr. Pedersen has loved being able to make sure his students take risks and grow not only academically, but in all other aspects of their lives.



Miss Kristina Berger
Grammar Music &
Secondary

Miss Berger is from the Bay area of California and came to Washington when she was thirteen. She teaches grammar school music and 9th grade history. One way she finds Providence excellent is through how “discipleship and Godly love are woven into every aspect of education at Providence.” When asked how she strives to grow her students in excellence, she says, “I believe that excellence in any discipline includes finding life lessons in all that we do. The way we think, study, process, fail, succeed, and thrive all hold small lessons that guide students towards excellence and a deeper appreciation and understanding of God’s amazing plans for Providence students.” She is extremely grateful to be a part of the noble task that is educating students in a godly way.



MATH TEAM TRIUMPHS

middle school math team wins North Puget Sound MathCounts competition

Emily Xin

The Providence Math Team has achieved a record third place in Math Madness, a national on-line competition, outcompeting larger schools across the country. Math Madness is connected to the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) and American Mathematics Competitions (AMC) presenting an extremely difficult variety of math problems including statistics, probability, algebra, number theory, geometry, and calculus.

Another competition, MathCounts, saw our middle-school math team take first place in the North Puget Sound chapter competition, qualifying them for the state championships where they placed seventh overall. Jonathan Zuo and Lucas Kim broke the top 40% of individual competitors, placing third and eleventh respectively.

Participants dedication to the Math Team illustrates the diligent and hard-working nature Providence

seeks to cultivate in their students. Mrs. Walsh, the leader of Math Club, recounts her experience as coach saying, “This is my 4th year working with the middle school and high school teams...both groups were a lot of fun to spend time with. I love their enthusiasm!”

Mrs. Walsh hopes to build on their success, “Next year we hope to expand the competitions to include Mustang Math for the middle school team.”

A TOUCH OF CLASS

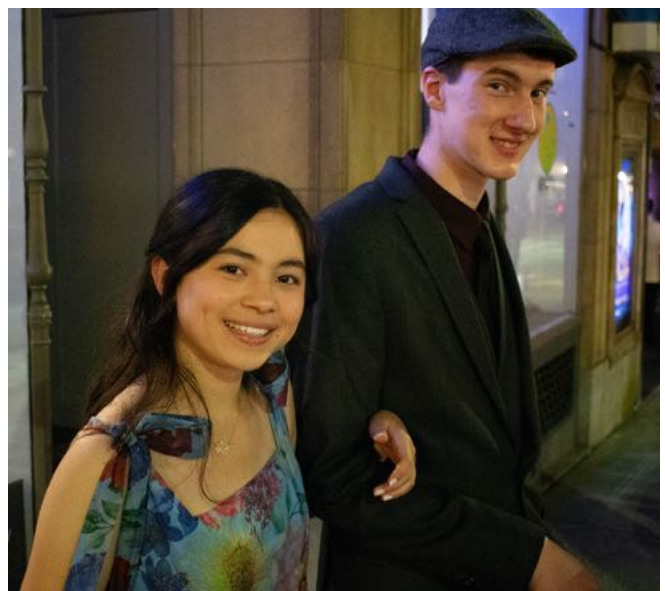
Providence high schoolers celebrate protocol in Seattle

Shiloh Bezzam

Each year, Providence high schoolers eagerly anticipate Protocol, a cherished tradition. It serves as an essential event in training up high school men and women to respect and honor one another, embodying sophistication, cultural immersion, and fellowship.

Before the night commences, these young men and women attend training sessions that instruct students in proper etiquette. Young men learn

to esteem young ladies with courtesy and regard, while young women are taught how to dress and act in a way honorable to Christ and demonstrate respect for the young man. Protocol is a formal event that beholds young students dressed in proper attire as they build camaraderie with their peers and immerse themselves in an evening with cultural enrichment.



This January, freshmen and sophomores began the night with luxury as they gathered for dinner at Fogo de Chao. Following this dinner, students ventured to the Taproot Theater to watch a captivating performance of *Christmas at Pemberley*. Meanwhile, in April, juniors and seniors dined at Daniel's Broiler in downtown Seattle in a more lavish setting. Afterward, they attended a spectacular rendition of

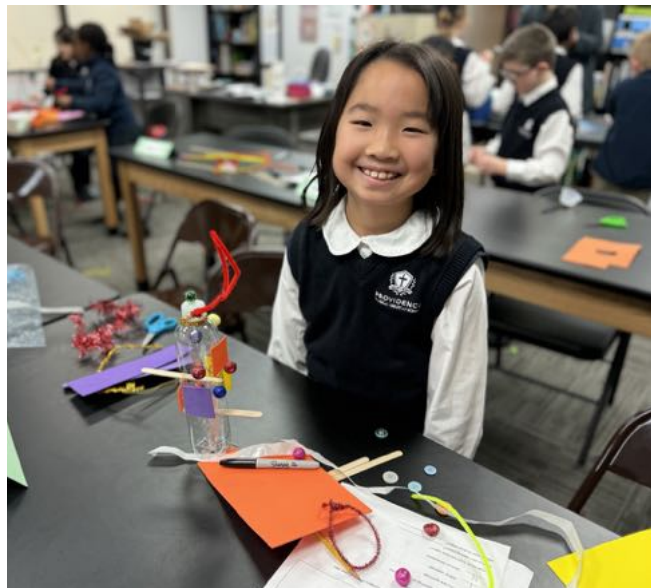
the timeless tale of *Aladdin* at the Paramount Theater.

Protocol is a celebration of civility and excellence set against the background of a formal event. As lights twinkle throughout the city, high school students of Providence spend quality time with their friends, participating in an unforgettable night.



GRAMMAR LIFE





*Thanks to God's gracious provision
and the generosity of our community,
our Steadfast capital campaign
is hitting strong momentum!*

*We are boldly pressing ahead to
raise funds to complete the land purchase
so we can begin building a beautiful
and permanent home for Providence.
Thank you for your prayerful, ongoing
support of the new Providence campus.*

- Ryan Evans, Headmaster



Steadfast
PROVIDENCE
CAPITAL
CAMPAIGN



We're delighted to share that we are 76% of the way to our Phase I goal, and hope to raise the remaining 24% (\$698,671) in gifts and pledges by September 1, 2025.

Please consider giving and help us spread the word: www.pccs.org/steadfast



For more information email steadfast@pccs.org



CULTIVATING KINDNESS

the impact of BASICS and flings

Emily Xin

In line with the virtues that Providence aims to cultivate, BASICS and Flings provide perfect opportunities to foster kindness and respect. BASICS, which stands for Brothers and Sisters in Christ, are evening events dedicated to spending time with like-minded peers. Additionally, Flings offer a variety of fun activities outside of school, such as visiting Bob's Corn Maze, ice skating, and attending baseball games.

Both BASICS and Flings allow students to integrate into the community and enjoy companionship beyond the classroom. Odessa Kaufman, head of Student Activities, describes her experience leading BASICS and Flings as, “a lot of coordination, time, energy, and patience.” Odessa’s careful planning and leadership made this year’s Family Ball a fun and beautiful night with lovely decor and complimentary food.

Odessa describes Family Ball as an “amazing event to share with both grammar and secondary and their families. Events such as the Family Ball and BASICS are completely student planned and run. While planning events and juggling school can become chaotic and overwhelming, the results are extremely rewarding.”

Providence applauds, recognizes, and cultivates students like Odessa for their diligence and willingness to serve others with a kind heart.



ENGAGING WITH HISTORY

The Classical Christian League brings Latin learning to life at Providence

Greyson Elliott

A staple of the Latin learning community at Providence is the Classical Christian League. Students can grow in knowledge of the language and Christ, all while playing fun Latin themed games. Many of the competitions are favorites of 9th grader Blake Cressey who had this to say. "It was really fun. I really enjoyed the game of capture the shield. I really recommend others go next year as it will not disappoint." Other attendees included Fiona Stellman and Calvin Mowat; both had a great time. Calvin would recommend other students attend, saying, "Yeah, it's pretty fire."

Overall, the CCL is a very enjoyable time and any students. A staple of the Latin learning community at Providence is the Classical Christian League (CCL). This interschool competition offers students the opportunity to grow in their understanding of Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman culture by engaging in fun, Latin-themed games.

Many of the competitions are favorites among students, including 9th grader Blake Cressey, who shared his enthusiasm: "It was really fun. I really enjoyed the game of capture the shield. I highly recommend others attend next year; it will not disappoint."

The CCL provides a unique opportunity to experience and engage with Western history and any students who have been considering joining should certainly try it out.





GROWING TOGETHER

building skills and character over spring sports

Sophia Sykes

Spring sports offer a wealth of opportunities for students of all ages to actively engage and excel in athletics. A student does not need to start as an excellent player to participate, and spring sports provide chances for both grammar and secondary to excel in sports like lacrosse and track. Providence also partners with Cedar Park Christian allowing students to participate in sports that Providence does not currently provide such as baseball, softball, and golf. This gives the opportunity for students at both schools to grow friendships and skills by playing a sport with students other than their classmates. Odessa Kaufman, a Providence student, plays softball at Cedar Park and has made strong connections with her teammates, “In my sophomore and junior year of playing, I made amazing friends...and truly connected with my teammates.”

The coaches at Providence encourage players to improve students’ athletic abilities, but Mr. Nathan Morris, Director of Athletics at Providence, called out the importance of building strong Christian character, “Our spring sports... teach kids to work hard, be diligent, be respectful of our opponents, be kind to others, encourage one another, work together with others, to be considerate of and to serve one another in love.”

The 13-man lacrosse team, coached by Mathew Morris, earned a respectable 4-4 record playing against tough competition. The high school track team enjoyed a successful season, with twelve athletes advancing to districts, and nine moving on to regionals. Three high school students advanced to the state track championships in Yakima. Freshman Kate Bredenberg took 4th place in the 300m Hurdles. Junior Sophie Day took 11th place in the 800m (and set a school record). Senior Hollis Bontrager took 2nd place in the Shot Put and 12th place in the Discus. Congratulations Kate, Sophie, and Hollis!

RUNNING FOR A FUTURE

Providence's Jog-A-Thon
raises over \$60k for the
Steadfast Capital Campaign

Judah MacGillivray

Every year, Providence hosts an event aptly dubbed the Jog-A-Thon, in which grammar students run laps around the field to raise money for the school. Students find donors to sponsor them as they see how many laps they can do in an hour, collecting wristbands for each lap they complete.

Jog-A-Thon brings the entire school together, providing an opportunity for the younger Providence generation to bond with the older. High-schoolers dress up and make class-themed wagons to give tired students a ride around the field, while middle schoolers hand out water and run alongside the grammar children. Faculty and staff participate as well, encouraging students and celebrating their victories.

This years event raised money for the Steadfast Capital Campaign, raising \$66,000 for the new school campus.





HOUSE SPIRIT SOARS

the journey to the 2024 House Cup wraps for the year

Greyson Elliott

The end of the school year brought a single question to every secondary student's mind, "Will Heorot retain the coveted House Cup for yet another year?"

Spanning the entire school year from retreat to Field Day, house competitions galvanize students into building tight bonds with housemates and scoring points for their house.

Secondary Retreat, an annual four-day trip, kicks off house competitions with flag football, beach volleyball, crafts, and skits. These competitions are favorites of the student body with 11th grader Blake Tibbetts saying, "I especially loved working with my house on the skits."

Several other school-wide events also pit house against house. On Reformation Day, medieval merriment abounded. Amongst all the creative costumes, there were several house competitions. Roman Forum, a trivia-based game day featuring Latin themed activities, offers another opportunity to score house points while the annual Mystery Bowl tests students' ability to identify breakfast cereals to win points for their respective houses. Pendragon proved to be true connoisseurs of cereal, securing a landslide victory.

Two other tournaments provided opportunities for house points. Whiffle ball was a particular hit among students with ninth grader Judah MacGillivray declaring, "Whiffle ball is the best house competition in years!" An epic kickball tournament caps off the school year and is the final opportunity to earn house points.

In the end, Heorot once again pulled off the championship win for 2024! Congratulations on winning the House Cup and to all the other houses for another fantastic year of competition!





A GARDEN OF TALENT

creative and technical excellence on full display

A highlight of the school year is the annual high school musical. Helmed by Mrs. Robin Hilt, this year's production of *The Secret Garden* was a resounding success, showcasing exceptional talent and technical prowess. This technically demanding show featured a breakout performance by 7th grade student Verona Bontrager, who captivated the audience with her talent. Josiah Hansen delivered a stellar performance in his final appearance with the school and leaves a legacy of dedication and commitment to excellence that will continue for years to come. The hard work of dozens of students, faculty, and parent volunteers resulted in an unforgettable theatrical experience.







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