

HAWK TALK

THE HILL TOP PREP NEWSLETTER

April 30, 2024
Issue #18



“April is fertilizer for a gardener's soul.”

Greetings from The Hill,

Our Horticultural Club students' success at this year's Philadelphia Flower Show (1st place) last month has definitely been contagious and 'seeded' our imagination in April. Our faculty, staff, and students have been out and about from one end of our campus to the other holding classes and activities outside in the warmer sunny days now that the earlier rain has subsided. They have also been cleaning up our grounds from winter's rest. The Container Garden is alive with flowers, bushes, and vegetable plants. Memorial trees we planted last year are budded and ready to burst. Flower beds have been weeded. And, hundreds of fallen branches, large and small from all of those windy, windy days here on The Hill have been gathered.

As you'll read below, it's also been a month filled with lots of field trips, athletics that brought students outside (golf, ultimate frisbee,

horseback riding, outdoors club, racquet sports), a rare Solar Eclipse, NHS Blood Drive, GLSEN Day of Silence, and larger special events such as HawXpo, Graduation Project Presentations, Spring Open House, Spring Fashion Show, and more.

As always, I welcome your feedback. Let me know your thoughts on HawkTalk, what you like and what you'd like to see.

Enjoy,

Kevin M.R. Mayne
Head of School

Field Trip Frenzy

Hill Top students learn just as much out of the classroom as they do in it. Take a peek at some of the fun and educational field trips our students have embarked on recently.

National Constitution Center

On Friday, April 5th, the 9th graders visited the National Constitution Center as part of Hill Top's celebration of Women's History Month. In addition to an extended exploration of the special exhibit, "19th Amendment: How Women Won the Vote," students had the opportunity to tour other exhibits and view Freedom Rising, a 17- minute multimedia theatrical presentation with a live actor narrating the American quest for freedom.



American Revolutionary Museum

Our 8th grade students explored the museum in Center City Philly, where they saw their class discussions reflected in the exhibits. Afterward, they had lunch at Wawa and took a walking tour of historical spots in the city, with each student



presenting a researched spot related to their Language Arts project with Ms. Garguilio on the book 'Fever 1793.'

This is a great example of Hill Top weaving interdisciplinary projects in to the curriculum.

CFSRE Forensics Lab

Ms. Kroberger's forensics class attended a workshop at CFSRE (Center for Forensic Science Research and Education) in Horsham.

The students took part in a forensic biology lab where they tested different stains left on a t-shirt to determine what substances were present and a toxicology lab where they tested unknown white powder.

They also learned a lot about the different technologies used in their lab



11th Grade Explores Millersville

Some of our 11th grade students made the trek to Millersville University for a campus tour and information session. Students



got to see all the buildings on campus and hear about Millersville from current students.

HawXpo 24 is a wrap!



Thank you to everyone who attended HawXpo and helped make the event a success! We heard so many great things about the day, but the favorites were by far the board game room, student vendors, and the create your own character station.





Delco Gives Day!



Join us for this year's inaugural Delco Gives Day!

Hosted by the Foundation of Delaware County, this 24-hour day of giving taking place May 8th - 9th is designed to increase financial support and raise awareness of nonprofit organizations doing great work in our community. This county-wide celebration of generosity, unity, and shared purpose represents a unique opportunity for the HTPS family to come together and not only support our school, but show the rest of Delaware County all about the "best kept secret" that is Hill Top Prep! Participation is the most important thing - any gift of \$10 or more counts and helps us to receive funding from the foundation.

Too excited to wait until May 8th?! You can donate today via this unique link and your donation will count toward our totals!

Delco Gives Day Donations!

Earth Day Campus Clean Up

Earth Day for Hill Top students meant giving back to the planet! The Hawks came together on Hill Top's campus and at the neighboring Ithan Valley Park to do some gardening and general clean up. Weeds were pulled, sticks collected, and flower beds

mulched. After the activities, students, faculty, and staff took to the soccer field to have a picnic lunch and take in the beauty of the nature that surrounds us here on the Hill.



Golf Simulator

We are now 'fore'-tunate enough to have a golf simulator on campus thanks to the generosity of donors.

Our golf team no longer needs to wait for fair weather or worry about stray balls—now they can perfect their swing rain or shine, all while avoiding those pesky sand traps! Whether they're seasoned pros or just getting into the swing of things, this simulator brings the fairway right to their fingertips.



PA State Tax Credit Program



Pennsylvania WORK SMART. LIVE HAPPY.

Did you pay \$3,500 or more in PA state taxes last year? Did you know that you could redirect up to 90% of that payment directly to Hill Top to help support our students?

Reach out to Julia Ott at juliaott@hilltopprep.org to learn how easy it is to support Hill Top students!

[Learn More about EITC/OTSC Donations](#)

Save the Date for Hill Top's 50th Commencement Ceremony



It's that time of the year again...graduation time! Be sure to mark your calendar's for Hill Top's 50th Commencement Ceremony to celebrate the class of 2024! This year's ceremony will take place on Wednesday, June 12th at 10am.

More information including details for graduating seniors will follow shortly.

Seniors and senior parents - be sure to check your emails!

Volunteers Needed

Spring is here and with it unfortunately... lots of weeds in our flower beds. Do you like the outdoors and have some free time? We are looking for some volunteers to help us get a head-start on our campus gardens.



Spring is also a time for refreshing things up.

While we've done lots of painting on campus, we still have areas and rooms that need a little paint touch-up.

If you have time to donate and would like to help in the garden or painting, please let us know by emailing kmayne@hilltopprep.org.

Solar Eclipse 2024

Our students were captivated by the rare spectacle of a solar eclipse, which occurred this past month. Donned with protective eclipse glasses provided by the school, students gazed in wonder and amazement of the celestial event. Earlier that day, students learned the science behind what they were witnessing in the sky.





Visionary Service Award

On April 18th, Hill Top's former Head of School, Thomas Needham received the 2023-2024 Barbara Kraus-Blackney Visionary Service Award. The award was presented at the Association of Delaware Valley Schools' Annual Board Chair/Clerk and Head of School Dinner and Dialogue event.



They celebrated his unwavering commitment and visionary leadership, his invaluable service and guidance to ADVIS and its member schools, and his broader impact and work promoting neurodiversity.

Congratulations Mr. Needham on this well-deserved honor.

Hill Top Parents' Association Wants YOU!



Are you a new parent at Hill Top? Maybe your schedule has freed up? Do you have a couple hours a month to volunteer? The Hill Top Parent Association (HTPA) wants you!

The HTPA helps with school events, fundraising, and much more! You can be as involved as your time permits. Volunteer opportunities range from planning fundraisers to being an Open House greeter to helping with gardening and painting around campus.

If you have questions or would like to get involved, please email parentsassociation@hilltopprep.org.

Join the HTPS Parent Facebook Group!

Fashion Show in The Mansion



One of our alums, Kyle Woodland, owns a production company called KWS Productions. Kyle started his company to help change stereotypes of the neurodivergent. Several months ago, he participated in a panel on postsecondary options in The Nest on campus. Through conversations had, Kyle decided to partner with us and do a fashion show here at HTPS.

The show, which had 120+ people in attendance, featured 6 area designers, dozens and dozens of models, all wearing evening dresses, streetwear, swimsuits, and more, along with a special showing of our Employability & Transition (E/T) Prom Dresses. There were runways in both the Large & Small Commons and it was the perfect venue for this event. It was a great way to heighten visibility and promote HTPS and our E/T Program. KWS also donated \$1,000 to us from the proceeds.



Summer Camp - Register TODAY!



Believe it or not, summer will still be here. Our summer program is already starting to fill up. Our camps, which run from June 24–August 2, 2024, are for grades 2–PG. This year's offerings include:

- ***NEW! Social Skills Bootcamp***
- Summer Adventures
- eSports & Technology
- Pathways to Independence (P2I)

All camps are a mixture of neurodiverse and neurotypical children, which allows for great opportunities for our students to enhance their social skills and learn behavioral modeling while meeting students from other areas of the region.

If you have any questions, or would like to register, please reach out to Brittany Weiderhold, Director of Summer Programs, at bweiderhold@hilltopprep.org.

Learn more about our



GLSEN Day of Silence

The GLSEN Day of Silence is a student-led event held annually in April. Participants take a vow of silence to raise awareness about the silencing effects of anti-LGBTQ+ bullying and discrimination in schools.

Hill Top students who opted in to participate wore badges informing teachers and other students. Alternative communication devices were given to out to ensure they were able to participate in classes and activities throughout the day.



E/T Takes on Starbucks!

Check out a group photo from E/T's field trip to Starbucks. Students read the autobiography, "How Starbucks Saved My Life" in class and then visited the Broomall store to speak with the manager about careers at Starbucks. They also enjoyed some yummy treats/beverages!



Discover Support and Success with the NSC!



Neurodiversity
Success Center
at Hill Top Preparatory School

Are you or someone you know facing challenges in making and maintaining friendships, struggling to understand social cues, staying focused, or finding motivation? The Neurodiversity Success Center (NSC) is here to help! As experts in supporting neurodiverse individuals, we provide specialized programs to the community in the PEERS® social pragmatic program, Executive Function Coaching, and college advising.



Our dedicated NSC staff works closely with students and young adults, offering personalized 1:1 or small group sessions to develop essential skills and pave the way for success and happiness. Join our PEERS® groups tailored for teens and adults, where you'll learn valuable social skills and strategies.

For more information, reach out to Mia Henry at mhenry@hilltopprep.org or visit www.hilltopprep.org/nsc.



Please refer to the school calendar for all event details and/or changes.

- May 2nd: **College Visit - University of Delaware**
- May 3rd: **In-Service, NO SCHOOL, OFFICES OPEN**
- May 3rd: **Prom!**
- May 9th: **AP Environmental Science Exam**
- May 9th: **Parent Association Meeting**
- May 13th: **AP Calculus Exam**
- May 14th: **College Visit - Drexel University**
- May 23rd: **AP Pre-Calculus Exam**
- May 23rd: **Spring Brew**
- May 24th: **Head's Holiday - NO SCHOOL, OFFICES CLOSED**
- May 27th: **Memorial Day Holiday - NO SCHOOL**
- May 31st: **Final exams begin**

Full Event
Calendar

Saturday Student Spotlights

Are you or do you know a Hill Top student who is doing some incredible things? Want to show off all their hard work? Look no further! This year, our Strategic Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Ms. Gushka, is looking for student spotlights to share with the Hill Top community and beyond. When she came to Hill Top in August, she was amazed by all that the students accomplished and wanted to create a way to spotlight them; hence, our Saturday Student Spotlights were born!

If you know a student who deserves to be spotlighted, please email kgushka@hilltopprep.org with a photo of the student participating in the event, a brief description, and any links to newspaper articles, videos, etc.

STUDENT *Spotlight*

Tyler '24 and his mom founded a Tri-Boba tea truck to provide vocational opportunities for those with autism. Read more about their yummy endeavor at the link below.

TYLER MCCORMICK '24



STUDENT *Spotlight*

Evan '24 has received the thrilling news of his acceptance to three colleges: Albright, Millersville, and York! We extend our congratulations to Evan and offer our best wishes as he navigates his college selection process and decides where he will enroll next fall!

EVAN BRODSKY '24



Alumni Corner

Each month, Hill Top math teacher Jill Lesser organizes a fun outing to a local museum, amusement park, event, etc. for our young alumni to enjoy together. If you have an idea for next month, please let her know by emailing her at jlesser@hilltopprep.org.

Remember to update your contact information to stay in touch and learn about all the exciting alumni opportunities!



**Alumni - Update Contact
Information**

Who is that on The Hill?!

Check out this unidentified photo we found in the archives! This alum looks like he was headed to the Wharton School of Business at Penn University!

Do you see yourself or any other alum you know in the photo?



Let us know who is in the picture!

Referral Program

Do you love Hill Top and want to tell others about our wonderful school? We now have a *Referral Program*. If you refer a student or family member to Hill Top and that student ends up being accepted and enrolls, you will then receive a \$250 scholarship that can be used for Fun Friday Events! To refer someone, please go to www.hilltopprep.org/referral.



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UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION TO MAKE SURE
YOU'RE CONNECTED

Did you miss a past Hawk Talk issue? Find previous
issues [here](#).



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