

HAWK TALK

THE HILL TOP PREP NEWSLETTER

January 31, 2024
Issue #15



“He who marvels at the beauty of the world in summer will find equal cause for wonder and admiration in winter.” — John Burroughs

Greetings from The Hill,

Yes, winter finally made its way to Hill Top Preparatory School this January. After a long absence, we had not one, but two back-to-back storms. Just when I thought our amazing campus couldn't look more picturesque, seeing The Mansion surrounded by a blanket of white and lined with beautiful snow-painted trees and roadways, was truly a wondrous thing to behold.

We had a great Winter Holiday Break and the beginning of January saw the completion of our Fall Semester. Building on a successful 2023, 2024 is already off to a strong start. As you will see from the myriad of activities highlighted below, we had a very busy January and there are a number of exciting events planned for the next few months. I am very thankful to our community of faculty, staff, students, families, trustees, alumni, and friends who make all of this possible.

I hope you will enjoy reading about what has transpired over the past several weeks and what is planned for the next few months. Here's to a great semester!

Enjoy the 'wonder of winter!'

Kevin M.R. Mayne
Head of School

Classroom FUN!

Hill Top teachers are some of the best around! Highlighted in this edition of Hawk Talk are some of the hands-on learning activities that our teachers have used to best help our students learn.

Mummification

Dive into Ancient Wonders with our Middle Schoolers!

Ever wondered about mummification in ancient Egypt? Our middle schoolers, led by Mr. Cohen, embarked on a hands-on journey exploring the customs of preserving the body (or in our case, a chicken from Acme) for the afterlife.



Earthquakes!

Do you recall from an earlier edition of Hawk Talk that Ms. Kroberger taught a lesson on tectonic plates using graham crackers and frosting?

Continuing on with the food theme, she had her 7th Earth Science classes design and build earthquake resistant buildings using marshmallows! They were then tested by her "earthquake." Several of the designs were indeed earthquake proof!



Strawberry DNA

Who knew science could be so yummy! Ms. Weiderhold, a middle school science teacher, guided our students on the science of DNA extraction! Students smashed and squished fresh strawberries and then

worked together to extract the DNA.



Evolution & Fossils

Ms. Weiderhold's class has been most recently learning about evolution and how fossils came to be. Fossils provide important evidence for evolution and the adaptation of plants and animals to their environments. To help students visualize how fossils were created millions of years ago, they took time to gather some items from nature around campus and make their very own!



Aero Rocks!

Do you remember when a fuel tanker crashed below a major vein of I-95? Buckley and Company, Inc. engineered and constructed a temporary fix using ultra-lightweight recycled glass aggregate to fix the collapsed bridge and get drivers back on the road quickly!

In Mr. Reilly's class, students tested these synthetic rocks which were donated by Buckley and Company, Inc. The sample of Aero Aggregates Ultra-Lightweight rocks are made from 100% recycled glass.

Hill Top students experimented with the synthetic rocks which they found out float in water, are strong, and have a high friction coefficient!



**Read more about
Aero Rocks here!**

Save the Date: HawXpo is back on April 13th!



Spread the word - all are welcome at **HawXpo!**
We look forward to seeing you in April.



Sponsor HawXpo

The **HawXpo** committee needs **YOU** to make this event even more extraordinary!

From now through March 1st, we are seeking local businesses, as well as Hill Top's Family and Friends to become one of this year's sponsors. Your support will make a significant impact on the day's success, while also furthering Hill Top's mission of providing life-changing experiences for bright and creative neurodiverse students.

**Be a HawXpo
Sponsor!**



HawXpo Tickets on sale!

Come join us for a memorable day of gaming, comics, educational programming, and family fun, all right here on The Hill. It's a fantastic opportunity for adolescents and young adults to explore their interests, enhance their social skills, and connect with others who share similar passions.

Registration is **OPEN NOW**, with proceeds benefiting the Student Enrichment Fund at [HTPS!](https://hilltopprep.org)

Current Hill Top Prep students can use promo code **STUDENT for free admission. Families of current Hill Top Prep students can use promo code **HTPS2024** to receive 50% off their household's additional tickets.*

**Get HawXpo tickets
here**



Join the Esports Tournament

Looking for a little friendly competition?
Join the Esports Tournament!

For more information, please contact
Harvey Scribner
at hscibner@hilltopprep.org

**ESports Tournament
Registration!**

Eagles Game

Remember our Philadelphia Eagles ticket raffle sponsored by the Hill Top Parents' Association?

The winner was Ms. Kroberger, who scored two tickets to the Christmas Day game vs. the New York Giants and chose to take Hill Top alum Ella F. '20 with her.

The two had a great time cheering on the birds. Check out the view they had!





PA State Tax Credit Program

What if you could choose what your tax dollars fund?

In Pennsylvania, you can!



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?

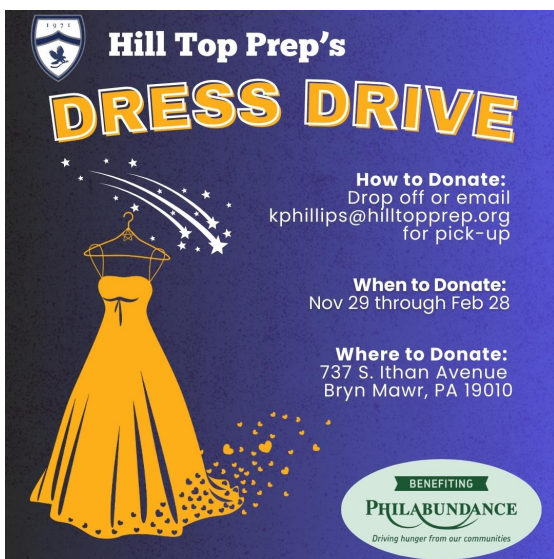
Reach out to Julia Ott at juliaott@hilltopprep.org to learn how easy it is to support Hill Top students!

Learn More about EITC/OTSC Donations

Fun Friday at Urban Air

Jumping, climbing, hanging, and flying were just part of the fun our students had this past Fun Friday at Urban Air! About 35 student took part in this month's adventure and it was so much 'flipping' fun! Many of our student overcame their fears and tackled obstacle courses and even a ride on the zip line! We are so proud!

After Urban Air, students chose a local restaurant and enjoyed dinner together.



Hill Top Prep's
DRESS DRIVE

How to Donate:
Drop off or email
kphillips@hilltopprep.org
for pick-up

When to Donate:
Nov 29 through Feb 28

Where to Donate:
737 S. Ithan Avenue
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

BENEFITING
PHILABUNDANCE
Driving hunger from our communities

E/T2 Annual Dress Drive!

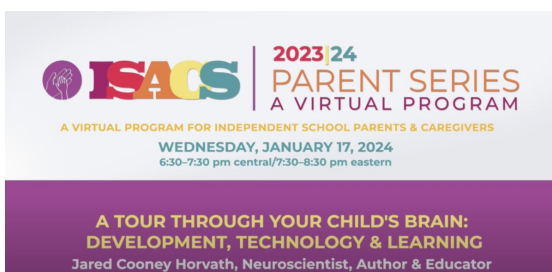
The E/T 2 class is holding their annual dress drive. Now through February 25th, they will be collecting clean, gently used, or new prom or formal dresses. Students will process, fix minor rips and tears, and prepare the dresses for sales. In the spring, the dresses will be put up for sale in the local community. All proceeds will



benefit Philabundance. Their mission is to drive hunger from our community.

If you are interested in donating, please email kphillips@hilltopprep.org for drop-off or pick-up information.

February Parent Webinar



Sign Up for Parent Webinar

As a reminder, HTPS has signed up for a year-long Parent Education Series. Offered by ADVIS and The Independent Schools Association of the Central States, these webinars cover a variety of useful topics. **The next session will be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2024**, and is titled Talking to Youth About Heated Topics. The presenter will be Rosetta Lee from Seattle Girls' School.

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.

ICYMI: HTPA Adults Only Social

It may have been wintery outside but it was warm and tropical at Hill Top Prep's Annual Parents Association Tropical Nights Adult Social. The Large Commons was transformed into a festive paradise complete with light up pink flamingos, leis, delicious food, lots of Hawaiian shirts, and inflatable palm trees.



Join the HTPS Parent Facebook Group!

E/T Students Collaborate with the Neurodiversity Employment Network

Recently, our E/T 1 students collaborated with the Neurodiversity Employment Network (NEN) to help them with signage for their event. Here's what NEN had to say about our students, their work, and the event:

"We're gearing up for tomorrow's



Neurodiversity Employment CONNECT event at Drexel University with the help of some talented students at Hill Top Preparatory School!

The Employability and Transition students, with the help of Amy Gillespie and Michelle Trusty, designed and created multiple signs for our attendees to be able to better navigate the space. There are so many wonderful designs!

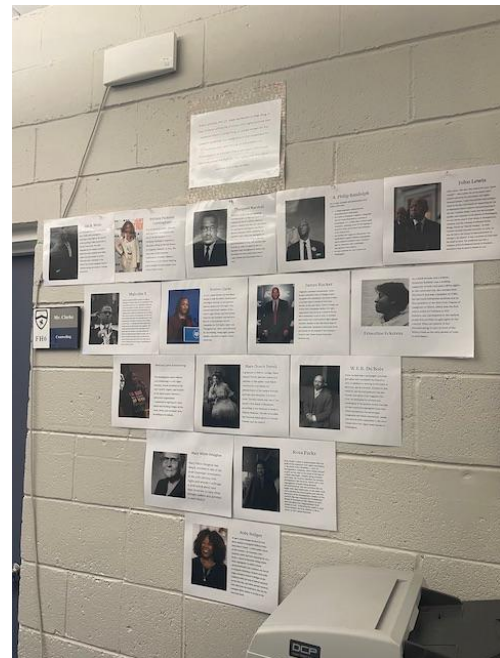
We're so grateful for their work that helps us continue our mission! Thank you, Hill Top!"

Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King and Hill Top's DEI Initiatives

This month, Ms. Fox, Mr. McGinnis, and students created a bulletin board in Fisher Hall and Linden Hall that highlights the legacy of MLK.

Additionally, there is a display in both Fisher Hall and Upper Linden that highlights American civil rights activists throughout the 20th and 21st centuries.

The Hill Top DEI committee has also solidified the Upper School 11th and 12th trip to NYC where students will either attend the musical Hamilton, a show that truly broke ground when it came to diversity, or take a guided tour that highlights works by African American artists at the Museum of Modern Art!



Philadelphia Flower Show Prep!

While the dinosaurs are hibernating



under a blanket of snow. Hill Top Horticulture is busy planning their 2024 Philadelphia Flower Show Exhibit! Keep watching for further details.

To see how our sleeping, snow covered dinosaur fits in with this year's theme, be sure to visit the Flower Show from March 3rd through March 10th.

Summer Camp!



Believe it or not, our summer program is beginning to take student registrations! Our camps, which run from June 24th–August 2nd, 2024, are for grades 2–PG. This year's offerings include:

- **NEW!** PEERS® 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, please reach out to Brittany Weiderhold, Director of Summer Programs, at bweiderhold@hilltopprep.org.

**Learn more about our
Summer Camps!**



Neurodiversity Success Center (NSC)



**Neurodiversity
Success Center**
at Hill Top Preparatory School



Do you know someone who struggles to make and keep friends and is unsure where to meet them? Maybe they have difficulty understanding if someone is laughing with or at them? Do they have difficulty staying on task and challenges with self-motivation? Will they be applying to college but have no idea where to begin?

The Neurodiversity Success Center (NSC) is the road to success for students and adults who learn differently! The NSC offers programming in PEERS[®] social pragmatic intervention, Executive Function Coaching and college advising. Our staff will work 1:1 or in small groups to help develop and strengthen the skills needed to close the door to struggles and open the door to success and happiness.

PEERS[®] groups for teens and adults are forming for January and February. Contact Mia Henry at mhenry@hilltopprep.org for more information, or visit www.hilltopprep.org/nsc.

Learn About NSC

Request More Information



- February 9th: **Academic Awards Ceremony**

- February 15th: **Upper School Student Council Winter Social**
- February 16th: **NO SCHOOL - OFFICES CLOSED**
- February 19th: **HOLIDAY - NO SCHOOL - OFFICES CLOSED**
- February 23rd: **Fun Friday at Arnold's Fun Center**
- February 29th: **Health Screenings**

**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, park, event, etc. for our young alumni to enjoy together.

Do you have an idea for the next young alumni outing? If so, email jlesser@hilltopprep.org with your

suggestion!

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



**Alumni - Update Contact
Information**

Alumni Return to Campus!



Recently, eight of our alumni trekked back up The Hill to participate in an Alumni Panel to share their college, trade school, and work journeys with our Upper School.

The exchange of insightful questions and experiences was truly inspiring! Big thanks to everyone who joined us!

Alumni, want to connect with current students? Click the button below to let us know! Let's make a meaningful impact together for our students!

Email us to get involved!

Who is that on The Hill?!

Check out this unidentified photo we found in the archives! Who are these Hill Top grads celebrating their day of achievement?

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



Let us know who is in the picture!



Dorm Update

Our dorm students spent a few days the past couple weeks sledding down campus hills, building snowmen, and having snowball fights! So much fun was had in our own little winter wonderland.

In addition to all the fun in the snow, the dorm added two new members to their community this month - Vic and Sam. With the addition of these two students, the dorm is now full! It is an exciting time in the Straff Dorm and we look forward to hearing of all the new adventures, fun, and learning our new members will have!

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.



Open House Updates

Another month, another successful open house! Thank you to all our parent and student volunteers who helped make this a success. Mark your calendars for the next one, which is on March 20, 2024.

Hill Top Prep Open House

March 20, 2024
9:30 - 11:30 AM

Come see what
Hill Top Prep can do
for your student!

737 S. Ithan Ave
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010



HILL TOP
Preparatory School
Co-ed Day School for Grades 5-12
Horizons Post-Grad Program
Boys Boarding Program



[Open House Information](#)

New Trustee: Paul Graham



Paul is the Owner, CEO, Vision Holder, and Lead Writer behind Dusk Wave Arts, an immersive multimedia art company.

When he was diagnosed with being neurodiverse at an early age, he found workarounds for his learning disabilities such as the use of technology. Being on the spectrum was his inspiration for the creation of the immersive webcomic "The Glove," bringing attention to Autism through the character of Tim, a representation of his adolescent and adult understanding of his own neural patterns as well as the complexities of it. Not only does "The Glove" highlight navigating the world while being on the spectrum, but also touches on issues such as bullying, love, family, and friendships. Paul is a graduate of Mitchell College.

Walking in a Winter Wonderland...



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Niche.com

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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