



**November 25, 2024  
Issue #23**

*"Being grateful does not mean that everything is necessarily good.  
It just means that you can accept it as a gift."*

*-Roy T. Bennett*



*Pictured: Meridian Bank representative presenting check to Head of School, CFO, and Hill Top students. Meridian Bank participates in our [EITC tax credit program](#). To learn more how you or your business can support Hill Top AND receive a generous tax credit, click [here!](#)*

Greetings from The Hill,

We are officially in the holiday season. Although judging by some of the decorations in stores that appeared early in September, we were already there! As we move swiftly towards Thanksgiving during these uncertain and chaotic times, the above quotation seems quite fitting. Appreciating what we do have doesn't change a situation or negate other feelings we may have. It merely means we can value the positive things that are in our lives.

Here at HTPS, we have much for which to be thankful. We have a compelling mission and the state of our school is strong. Our community of faculty and staff, board members, and families are caring and committed, while our alumni are inspiring and our students are bright and creative. Every day here on The Hill is truly a gift.

I hope you enjoy reading about the wonderful programs, events, and happenings this past month. As Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Hanukkah approach, please consider

putting HTPS at the top of your holiday gift list. As a small school, we stretch our dollars far. However, there are always things we 'wish' we had – so below you will find our [Holiday Wish List](#). If you can purchase one of these items for the school or are able to contribute to this fall's Annual Fund we would be very, very grateful.

With much gratitude and thanks,



Kevin M.R. Mayne  
Head of School

## Amazon Wish List

As Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Hanukkah draw near, we invite you to consider making Hill Top students a part of your holiday giving list.

Being a small school, we're experts at stretching every dollar to maximize impact. However, there are still items we 'wish' we had to enhance our students' experiences.

Below, you'll find our Holiday Wish List, and if you're able to gift one of these items, we would be deeply grateful.

Your generosity helps make a difference for our entire Hill Top community!



## Amazon Wish List

*In addition to these items which range from \$10 - \$900, Hill Top is also in great need of new school vans, gym bleachers, a new gym sound system, kitchen equipment, Esports equipment, and other larger items. If you have the resources and are able to assist with any of these items, please reach out to Mr. Mayne at [kmayne@hilltopprep.org](mailto:kmayne@hilltopprep.org).*

## Your Philanthropy in Action!

Our dedicated supporters believe in the transformative power of people who not only think differently, but who also problem-solve and lead in unique ways. Thanks to their generosity, Hill Top Preparatory

School is able to provide innovative academic programs, personalized support services, and life-changing opportunities for neurodiverse learners.

It is our mission, and privilege, to celebrate our students' differences, harness their unique gifts, and equip them with the skills to successfully navigate the world. With heartfelt appreciation, we extend our sincerest thanks to each and every one of our supporters for their unwavering commitment to championing the potential of these neurodiverse individuals. Together, we are preparing Hill Top students to authentically be themselves, and thrive, while contributing to the creation of a better world around them.



Check out some of what has been happening here on The Hill, thanks to the contributions of supporters like YOU!

**See Your Dollars in Action!**

## **Classroom Fun!**



In Ms. Kroberger's Forensics class, students got hands-on with fingerprinting! They inked their own prints and explored the unique patterns on their fingers—loops, whorls, and arches.

Ms. Weiderhold's class ventured to the on campus bamboo forest and found spots to complete their nature journals.



# Employability & Transition (E/T) Updates

Our Employability & Transition 2 (E/T 2) students have been out in the community twice a week, gaining real-world experience at internships like an assisted living facility and an elementary school. They're taking on projects, reporting to supervisors, and building essential workplace skills—all in supportive environments that set them up for success.

Additionally, it's now Dress Drive season! Our E/T 2 students are leading this annual project from start to finish—designing flyers, managing pickups, sorting donations, and even repairing dresses. They're collecting new or gently used prom dresses to sell this spring for just \$10–\$20, with proceeds supporting the American Red Cross Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Have a dress to donate? Email [kphillips@hilltopprep.org](mailto:kphillips@hilltopprep.org) or DM us to coordinate drop-off. Pickups can also be arranged.

Thank you for supporting this amazing student-led initiative!



This annual drive is led by Matt Tyson, Ms. Gushka's partner, who began it 18 years ago after receiving a life-saving liver transplant at CHOP when he was 11. Matt and his family remember the joy and comfort these gifts brought him during a difficult time and are committed to bringing that same joy to others.

If you have any questions, please check out the Facebook page linked below, email Matt at [mtys95@aol.com](mailto:mtys95@aol.com), or stop by Ms. Gushka's office.

The logo for Hill Top Preparatory School's HawXpo 2025. It features the school's name at the top, followed by "HAWXPO" in large, stylized letters with a large orange "X" in the center. Below this is the year "2025" in large, stylized numbers, with a shield emblem containing the year "1971" and a bird in flight positioned between the "0" and "2".

*Save the Date:*  
*March 29, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

This exciting, free event is made possible by the generosity of our corporate sponsors. Their support

attend HawXpo at no cost!

Grab your family and friends and get ready for a day of gaming.

***Don't wait! Tickets are free, but registration is required.***

Esports tournament at HawXpo is open to all skill levels—and it's completely FREE to participate!

***Act fast! Spots are limited and filled on a first-come, first-served basis.***

doesn't just bring HawXpo to life—it helps fuel Hill Top's mission year-round through impactful philanthropic contributions.

***Click the button to let us know you are interested in making an impact.***

## ***Percie's Path: Student & Alumni Vendors***

### **Reserve Student/Alumni Vendor Table**

Are you a current student or alumnus with creations to showcase and sell? HawXpo is the perfect opportunity to share your talent! We're now accepting reservations for student and alumni vendors.

Vendor tables are completely FREE, but space is limited, so be sure to reserve yours today.

Have questions? Email Ms. Gushka at [kgushka@hilltopprep.org](mailto:kgushka@hilltopprep.org) or stop by her office (LM 2) during mentor or lunch periods.

Don't wait—sign-ups close on March 3, 2025!

## **Fall Athletics Ceremony**

Student gathered in the gym during activity period to celebrate and acknowledge Hill Top's student athletes in the fall sports of horseback riding, fitness club, soccer, and cross country. Congratulations to all on their achievements!



# Celebrating Hill Top Milestones

As we reflect on November, the month of gratitude, we are especially thankful for our incredible faculty and staff. This week, we proudly celebrated those reaching 5, 10, 15, and even 20 years of dedication to Hill Top. Your unwavering commitment and passion make our community shine brighter every day.

Thank you for all you do!



*5+ years*



*15+ years*



*10+ years*



*20+ years*

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## Hill Top Parents' Association Wants YOU!



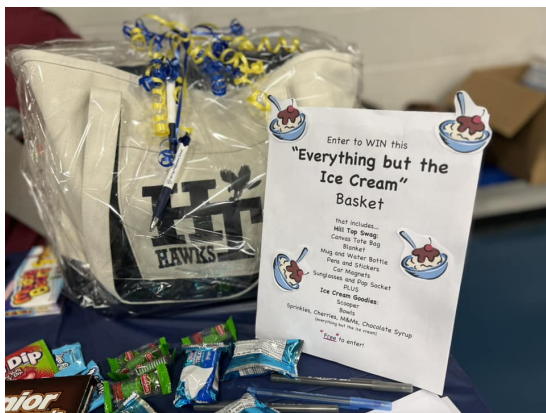
Are you a new parent to Hill Top? Maybe your schedule freed up? Do you only have a couple hours a month to volunteer? In any situation, The Hill Top Parent Association (HTPA) wants you!

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

If you have questions or would like to get involved, please email [parentsassociation@hilltopprep.org](mailto:parentsassociation@hilltopprep.org).

Join the HTPS Parent Facebook Group!

## Parent Association's Ice Cream Bingo



B-4...N-43...G-59...BINGO!!!

Our Parents' Association hosted their annual Ice Cream Bingo. The event saw an impressive attendance over over 60 people, with everyone delighting in the array of ice cream and sweets available.

This is an example of the fun & FREE events our Parents' Association puts on each and every year for our students.

Thank you HTPA!

## New Board Member: Haynes Young '95

Join us in welcoming our new board member, Haynes Young '95!

Haynes is a results-oriented leader with over 25 years of progressive experience in operations management, client services, and behavioral health. As Founder and President of Addison House, he has spearheaded innovative programs supporting men in recovery from mental health and substance use disorders. His career includes impactful roles at Pinkerton Global Screening Solutions, where he directed large teams and managed complex service operations. Haynes graduated from Hill Top in 1995 and studied Business at the University of Vermont.



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## Fun Friday: The Movies



This month's Fun Friday took our students on a cinematic adventure to see Red One! Starring Dwayne Johnson as a tough E.L.F. (Extremely Large and Formidable) operative, the film follows him and a skilled tracker on a mission to save Santa Claus from a group of villains.

Students enjoyed classic movie snacks—popcorn, candy, slushies, and nachos—while cheering on the heroes and wondering if Christmas would be saved in time!



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

Have you heard about Hill Top's new Neurodiversity Success Center (NSC)?

While Hill Top students already receive support like Social-Emotional Learning (PEERS), Executive Function Coaching, and College Advising during the regular school day, the NSC offers these services as additional, supplemental support for those who may need extra help outside of school hours.



The NSC is also open to neurodiverse adolescents, young adults, and adults across the Main Line and greater Philadelphia area who do not attend Hill Top.

[Current Hill Top students receive a 25% discount!](#)

For more information or to enroll, contact Mia Henry, Coordinator of the Neurodiversity Success Center, at [mhenry@hilltopprep.org](mailto:mhenry@hilltopprep.org) or visit [www.hilltopprep.org/nsc](http://www.hilltopprep.org/nsc).

[Learn About NSC](#)

[Request More Information](#)



- **December 3rd - Toy Drive Deadline**
- **December 3rd - Giving Tuesday**
- **December 4th & 5th - E/T 1 Holiday Pop-Up Shop**
- **December 11th - HTPA Meeting & Admissions Open House**
- **December 18th - Faculty & Staff Holiday Party**
- **December 19th - Thrilling Thursday (Fun Friday!)**
- **December 20th - Half Day; NOON DISMISSAL**
- **December 23rd~January 3rd - Winter Break; SCHOOL & OFFICES CLOSED**
- **January 6th - Classes Resume**

[Full Event Calendar](#)

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## Alumni Corner

Each month, Ms. Lesser organizes fun outings for our young alumni to enjoy, including visits to local museums, parks, and events. This month's event is bowling! Be sure to check back for the next Hawk Talk for a recap!

Don't forget to update your contact

information to stay informed about all the upcoming alumni opportunities!



## Alumni - Update Contact Information

## Dorm Update

November kept the dorm bustling with activity!

Students enjoyed a fun-filled outing to the bowling alley, then tested their skills at a local arcade. To close out the month, they came together for a Thanksgiving dinner.

This impressive feast was entirely planned, prepared, and cooked by our dorm students, showcasing the valuable life skills they've been developing throughout the year.



# Fall Open House

The last of our three Fall Open Houses will be held on December 11th from 9:30am to 11:30am. This is a great way for those not currently in our community to come on campus and see what a special place Hill Top is! Please share this with anyone you think could benefit from learning about Hill Top.

## Open House Information



Review us on  
Facebook

Review us on  
Google

Review us on  
Niche.com

**UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE  
CONNECTED**

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



**HILL TOP**  
Preparatory School

Serving Neurodiverse Students Grades 5 - 12

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