



HAWK TALK

Newsletter

September 30, 2024
Issue #21



"There is a time in late September when the leaves are still green, and the days are still warm, but somehow you know that it is all about to end, as if summer was holding its breath, and when it let it out again, it would be autumn."

-Sharyn McCrumb

Greetings from The Hill!

Autumn has definitely arrived on campus – both in terms of the date when we officially switched from summer to fall and also weather and foliage-wise. After a very successful school year and a robust and busy summer, our campus is once again changing from shades of green to reds, oranges, and gold. Our hallways and classrooms are bursting with the sounds of new and returning students. Enrollment is at a high. Four weeks into the fall semester and life on The Hill has been busy as you will see by all the activities in this issue of *Hawk Talk*.

Our theme this year is titled, *Strengthening Our Core* – this means not only strengthening our infrastructure and curriculum, but also our health and well-being. During the summer months, we did quite a bit of campus renovation and program enhancement. These were projects designed to improve safety, aesthetics, functionality, and preparation. From new campus signage to new doors, new Middle School furniture, painting, a golf simulator, a new space for Horizons to accommodate its growth, establishment of a Wellness Room, implementation of a mindfulness program into our Social Emotional Learning Program, adjusting our

class schedule, yoga classes for our faculty, a new stage barrier, and more. We have also begun the early stages of putting the second floor on Fisher Hall, the Upper School. Construction will begin this spring – a huge and exciting step for us.

But our work isn't done. We want to keep advancing Hill Top as the leader in educating neurodiverse learners on the Main Line. When we were founded 50+ years ago by Dr. Elissa Fisher, we were ahead of our time. Our founder recognized that students learn differently and that social emotional components were important aspects of the learning process. Fast forward to now, our compelling mission comes alive every day. But in order to thrive, we must constantly reinvent ourselves. It is definitely a 'season for change.' To continue to excel and be at the forefront, we need YOUR help. When our Annual Fall Appeal Letter arrives in your mailbox, please consider donating and investing in Hill Top at whatever level works for you. Together, we can continue to make a difference.

Here's to a great autumn and start of another wonderful school year.

All the best,



Kevin M.R. Mayne
Head of School

First Day of School

It was all smiles and fist bumps for the first day of the 2024-2025 school year! Head of School, Mr. Mayne, greeted students as they stepped on campus. Did you know that he greets students daily as they arrive? Be sure to say hello or give a wave when you see him.





New Family Night



On the Wednesday evening before school started, new students and their families gathered at Hill Top for New Family Night. Parents and guardians met with department heads to learn more about the daily expectations at Hill Top, while their students participated in a schedule walk-through led by current student ambassadors. Welcome to the Hill, Hawks!

Confluence 2024

On the first Friday of each school year, Hill Top kicks off with our annual Confluence event, a time for students and faculty to come together as a community. "Confluence" means merging or coming together. The day is designed to reunite us after the summer, and starting the year in a fun and social way. With a mix of structured and unstructured activities, our students and faculty get to know each other, building the foundation for positive relationships.

This year's Confluence featured a school-wide rock-paper-scissor battle, capture the flag, sports, arts and crafts, swimming, and other team-building activities. It's a Hill Top tradition that everyone looks forward to each year. The day is always full of fun, and it's the perfect way to kick off the school year, giving students a chance to connect with their peers and teachers.

A special part of the day involved everyone—students, faculty, and staff—forming small groups and working together to create a sidewalk chalk piece of art that showed the Spirit of the Hawk - Courage, Perseverance, Service, and Leadership.

Check out all the photos from the day below and on our socials, and don't forget to follow us for updates on all our events!

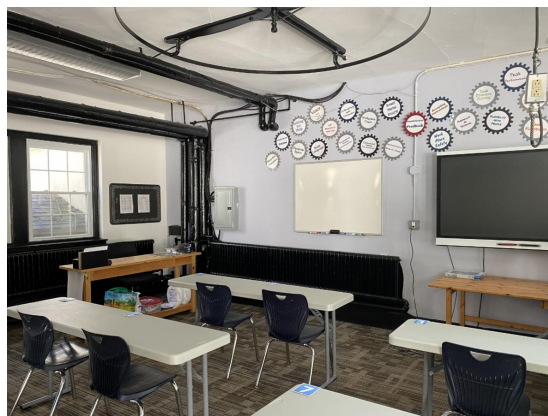
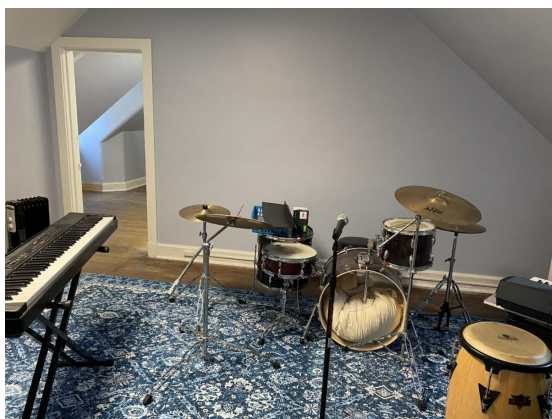


Summer Renovations

While summer usually is a quieter time on the Hill, this summer, it was buzzing! Various campus improvement projects were completed including: updated campus signage, refreshed classroom spaces and furniture, a new, safer gymnasium stage barrier and Carriage House doors, Employability and Transition (E/T) room improvements, an updated Horizons and House Band spaces, and supplies and programming for the Wellness Room.

All of these updates have been made possible by generous donors!





Special thanks to alumni Haynes Young '95 for donating the *Inner Explorer Program* for our Mindfulness and Wellness programming in our new wellness room space.

Field Trip Fun!



Hellerick's Farm

Our 8th grade students had an exciting field trip to Hellerick's Family Farm, where they explored the Aerial Adventure Park, pumpkin fields, learned about agriculture and sustainability, and so much more. The hands-on experiences challenged them to work together, making it a fun day filled with fresh air and teamwork!



Crystal Caves

Our 9th grade students visited Crystal Caves in Kutztown, PA. They explored the wonders of geology firsthand. This field trip helped deepen their curiosity and connect classroom learning with the natural world.



Back to School Cookout



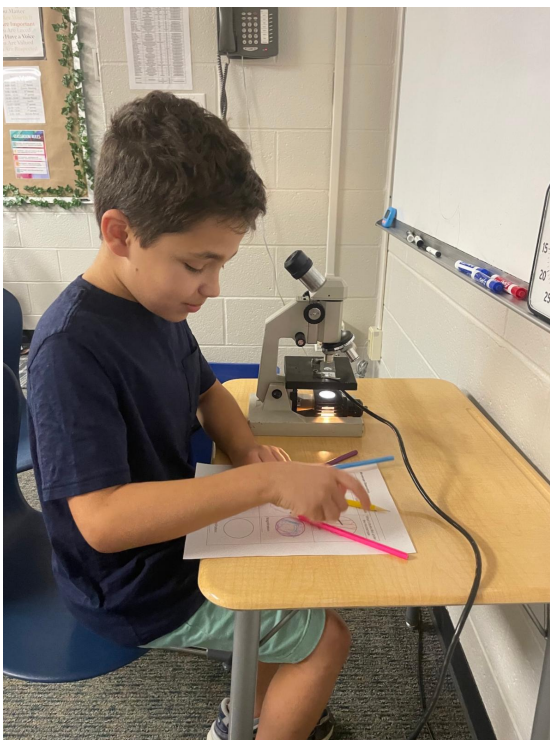


Our annual Back to School Cookout was a tremendous success! Each September, instead of a formal, traditional meet the teacher night, Hill Top Prep hosts a cookout for families to come enjoy great food, mingle with teachers and staff, and cheer on students playing in the action packed faculty/staff vs. student soccer game.

This year was no different. The evening began with a competitive soccer game, which the students came out on top! After the game concluded, spectators and players alike flocked to the patio for some yummy burgers, hotdogs, beyond burgers, and more! No one left with an empty stomach. During this time and for the remainder of the evening, parents and guardians were able to mingle with their student's teachers, learn about their classrooms, and what to expect for the year.

Classroom Fun!

Ms. Weiderhold's science classes have been off to a great start! Utilizing the recently refreshed science lab on campus, our students completed the following:



Our 6th grade life science students started the year by getting familiar with microscopes and learning how to use them to view specimens.

Bio 1 students designed and conducted their own experiments on Alka Seltzer tablets and their various properties.



Bio 2 students completed a 'rainbows lab,' practicing chemical measurement with graduated cylinders and following proper lab safety procedures.

Thrill on the Hill

LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER!

Hill Top's annual 5k and walk will be on Saturday, October 5th beginning at 9am. To purchase tickets and/or donate to the event, scan the QR code or click the register button below!

Register for Thrill on Hill

A promotional graphic for the 'Thrill on the Hill' 5K Challenge. The top half features a photograph of three young men wearing purple event t-shirts. The bottom half is a dark blue banner with the event logo, a QR code, and text in yellow and white. The text includes the event name, date, time, and a list of activities.

THRILL ON THE HILL
5K CHALLENGE

CAN YOU CONQUER THE HILL?!

5K CHALLENGE & 1.5M WALK

10/05/2024 | 9:00 AM

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF FUN INCLUDING
A 5K RACE, 1.5M WALK, RAFFLES,
REFRESHMENTS, AND AN ALUMNI GATHERING!

College Visit



This month, we welcomed our first college visit of the year! A representative from Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) met with interested students in the Nest to share more about their programs. We're fortunate to have so many incredible colleges visit Hill Top and engage with our students. More visits are scheduled throughout the year, so if there's a specific school you're interested in, stay tuned for upcoming announcements!

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.

Head of School's Parent Breakfast

Mr. Mayne, our Head of School, hosted a breakfast at his home, on our beautiful campus. It was a delightful morning filled with warm



conversations, freshly brewed coffee, and an array of scrumptious pastries that left everyone with smiles on their faces!

This gathering was more than just a meal; it was a chance for both new and returning parents and guardians to connect, forge new friendships, and strengthening existing bonds within our close-knit Hill Top community.



The atmosphere was buzzing with positive energy and the joy of building connections. It's moments like these that remind us of the strong sense of community that defines Hill Top Prep.

Join the HTPS Parent Facebook Group!

National Honor Society Tapping Ceremony

Recently, four students were 'tapped' into Hill Top Prep's chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS). An NHS Tapping Ceremony is the process of notifying an individual that they have been selected for membership into the society.

Congratulations to Owen Y., Maynard WB., Liam, and Kerian B.
The NHS Induction Ceremony will be held on Tuesday, October 1st.





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 or visit www.hilltopprep.org/nsc.



[Learn About NSC](#)

[Request More Information](#)



- **October 1st** - National Honor Society Induction
- **October 3rd** - Rosh Hashanah; NO SCHOOL & OFFICES CLOSED!
- **October 5th** - Thrill on the Hill!
- **October 9th** - HTPA Meeting & Admissions Open House
- **October 14th** - Head's Holiday; NO SCHOOL & OFFICES CLOSED!
- **October 16th** - Unity Day; Wear Orange!
- **October 18th** - Fun Friday
- **October 19th** - Ice Cream Bingo
- **October 25th** - Middle School Halloween Spooktacular

Full Event Calendar

9/11 Remembrance



In honor of the heroes of 9/11, Hill Top student Ryan R. assisted Mr. Woodcock in a solemn ceremony to lower the flag to half-staff. This gesture was a powerful reminder of the importance of unity, service, and remembrance in our community. We are proud of Ryan and all students who continue to uphold the values we hold dear at Hill Top.

Alumni Corner

To wrap up summer, Hill Top young alumni took their first-ever overnight trip to Baltimore, led by faculty member Ms. Lesser. The group explored the National Aquarium, navigated public transportation, and created lasting memories.

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.

Remember to update your contact



information to stay in touch and learn about all the exciting alumni opportunities!

Alumni - Update Contact Information



Dorm Update

Our dorm students moved in earlier this month and have been settling in and learning how to navigate community living with the help of Mx. Lew and Mr. Livingstone. While living in the dorm, they will gain invaluable skills that will help them succeed this school year and beyond.

Fall Open House

The first of our Fall Open Houses will be held on October 9th 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 will anyone you think could benefit from learning about the Hill Top Difference.

Open House Information



HILL TOP
Preparatory School

Fall Open House

Join us
October 9th
9:30 - 11:30 AM

Educating the
Next Generation of
Neurodiverse
Learners

737 S. Ithan Ave
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010



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UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE
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Did you miss a past Hawk Talk issue? Find previous issues [here](#).



HILL TOP
Preparatory School

Serving Neurodiverse Students Grades 5 - 12

Donate





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