



Fireside

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF BROWNELL TALBOT SCHOOL

**State
Champs!**
more on page 4





Notes from Worthington Hall

Brownell Talbot's current strategic plan provided goals for the school to achieve by 2018. It's now time to stretch those goals and challenge ourselves in preparing a new strategic vision for the school. The 2013-2018 strategic plan set forth three goals:

Be a Leader in Preschool - Grade 12 Education

Key Accomplishments

- ✓ Implemented a new administration framework.
- ✓ Restructured the role of department chairs to enhance cross-divisional collaboration.
- ✓ Realigned the curriculum and introduced standards of excellence for each subject across all grades.
- ✓ Moved to a service learning model to combine classroom instruction with meaningful community service.

Increase Brand Recognition and Reputation

Key Accomplishments

- ✓ Conducted workshops and listening events to evaluate the BT brand.
- ✓ Refreshed the BT brand with new logos, brand standards, and key messaging to support the mission and vision for BT.
- ✓ Introduced a new version of brownell.edu.
- ✓ Established partnerships with key organizations including institutions of higher learning, businesses who bring people to Omaha, like-minded nonprofits, and early childhood and daycare providers.

Achieve Financial Strength, Stability, and Sustainability

Key Accomplishments

- ✓ Developed a longer term financial plan.
- ✓ Evaluated existing software, processes, and procedures and developed better metrics.
- ✓ Established better tracking/reporting tools and policies.
- ✓ Added new scholarship opportunities.

This school year, we took the initial steps in developing a new strategic plan that will produce goals and objectives to guide school decisions for the next 10 years. Recently I asked students, parents, alumni, trustees, faculty, and staff to participate in an analysis of the school to identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Throughout the strategic planning process I will continue to ask for your input to ensure a variety of perspectives and insights are considered.

Similar to the process from the 2013 strategic plan, the Board of Trustees will lead this initiative to determine how best to guide the school in achieving its mission of preparing students for college and life to ensure another 154 years of academic excellence. I look forward to hearing from you as we gather feedback and to sharing our progress along the way.

Sincerely,

Kristi N. Gibbs, Ed.D.
Head of School

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Fireside is published for alumni, parents, and friends of Brownell Talbot School. Send story ideas and comments to Brownell Talbot School, attn: Renae Mackender, 400 N. Happy Hollow Blvd., Omaha, NE 68132; email renae.mackender@brownell.edu.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING — ON CAMPUS? —



1. Music Teacher Nancy Robson Retires

Current and former students, parents, faculty, and staff gathered in James Middle and Upper School Library to congratulate Lower School music teacher Nancy Robson on her retirement.

2. Stacey Evert Appointed to Lead Regional College Counseling Organization

In April Director of College Counseling and Guidance Stacey Evert became president of the Great Plains Association for College Admission Counseling, providing leadership to counselors in Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.

3. Furry Friends with a Purpose

The kindergarten classes welcomed Sherman, a therapy dog, and his owner to class to discuss how animals can assist people

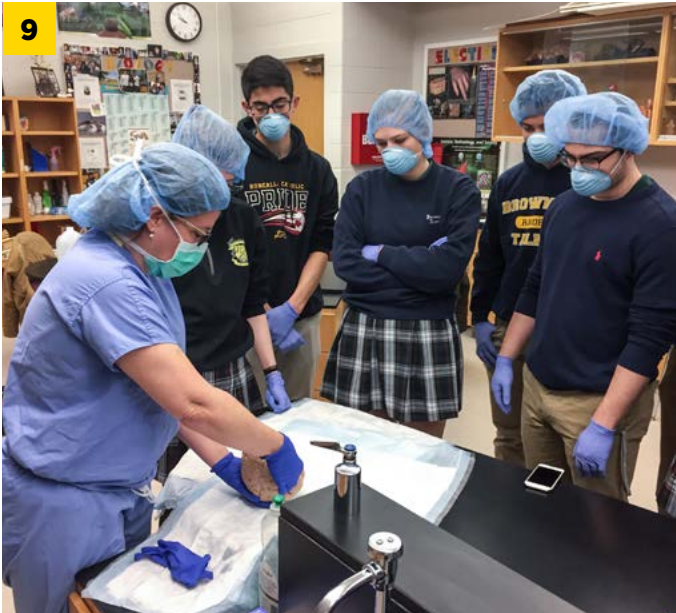
with disabilities. The guests spoke on behalf of the Lincoln-based organization Domesti-PUPS.

4. BT Robotics Continues Worlds Run

After a great showing at Regionals, the Middle School robotics team was ranked #1 in the region. The team, along with the Upper School robotics team, went on to compete in BT's fifth straight VEX Robotics World Championship.

5. Fifth Graders Create Memorial Trail

The fifth grade class did the heavy lifting on creating a trail through the woods by the football field in memory of BT student Maddie Shumaker, who passed away in 2015. They placed markers they made along the trail to honor her and remind trail users to slow down and appreciate the beauty around them.



6. Girls Tennis Dominates at State

Brianna Liu, '20, won the singles Class-B State championship title, and Jenna Mu, '18, and Ameya Shelby, '18, won the doubles title, helping BT to win the first girls State championship in school history.

7. Davis Awarded Veylupek Ripple for Change Scholarship

In May Kelly Crowell, '96, and CEO Allister Ramrattan of My Little Patient presented Janielya Davis, '22, with the Veylupek Ripple for Change Scholarship. The scholarship, named in honor of the late Jill Veylupek, '96, provides the recipient with the required laptop and associated equipment for Upper School.

8. Yakking Raiders Compete at National Level

Laura Liu, '19, Amanda Zhang, '19, Sarah Aoki, '20, and

Surya Buddharaju, '19, represented BT at the National Individual Event Tournament of Champions in Denver. Liu and Zhang placed in the top 12 nationally for duet acting and Buddharaju placed in the top 24 in humorous interpretation.

9. AP Biology Takes on the Human Brain

Students learned about the human brain and nervous system from Dr. Wendy Spangler-Morrison, a neurosurgeon and BT parent.

10. Thespians Earn Nebraska High School Theatre Honors

Surya Buddharaju, '19, and Audrey Graves, '18, both won Outstanding Performance in a Supporting Role awards at the Nebraska High School Theatre Awards for their performances in BT's fall musical, *Bring It On!*

TRANSFORMING HOW WE USE TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

<In the 1980s Brownell Talbot established its first computer lab outfitted with Apple II computers.>

<In 1996 BT launched brownell.edu, landing a “.edu” address because rules limiting the domain name to colleges and universities had not been established yet.>

<In 2001 BT introduced the state’s first 1:1 laptop computer program for high school students.>

Since the first days of manual typewriters, Brownell Talbot has prided itself on staying current with emerging technology. Today technology at BT is less about teaching students how to use it, and more about purposeful integration to support what’s happening in the classroom.

Recognizing the shift in use and access, Brownell Talbot has adopted the SAMR model to ensure a comprehensive and innovative approach to technology. It is the goal of BT’s Technology Department that the school operates “above the line,” meaning that technology should allow teachers to reimagine how they teach to challenge students in new and previously inconceivable ways.

An example of this is demonstrated with the implementation of Seesaw* in Lower School classrooms this year. Seesaw is a student-driven digital portfolio that empowers students to independently document what they learn at school. It allows the student and teacher to paint a picture of what’s happening inside the classroom so that parents can more easily participate in their student’s education. It gives students the flexibility

*Learn more about Seesaw at web.seesaw.me/about.

to conceptualize how they tell the story of their learning experience. Instead of simply assessing a final product, students, teachers, and parents are empowered to understand and better engage in the learning process.

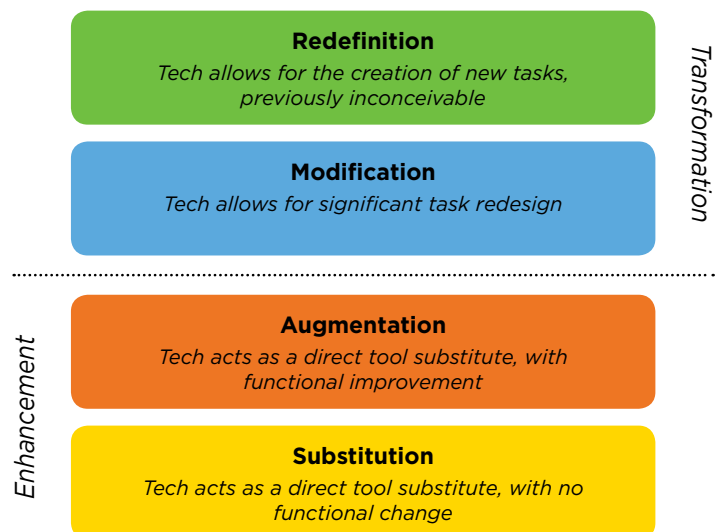
Director of Technology Rob Uchtman knows that BT can only successfully redefine how technology is used in the classroom if his department and classroom teachers work together to identify opportunities to enhance the curriculum.

“BT has the flexibility to allow tech staff to be integrated into the classroom so they can fully understand the curriculum and offer ways to enhance the student experience.”

But as Assistant Head of Academics Jason Smith points out, not all ideas are going to be winners.

“One of the things that sets BT apart is our ability to continue to push the edges with technology. And there will be flops. As an institution we want to take risks, especially with technology, because for every flop, there is a success story.”

SAMR Model





It's this support for innovation that helps BT maintain its status as a leader in technology integration in Nebraska education. One of the places in which BT's success is most evident is its robotics team. After completing the season ranked #1 in the region, BT competed for the fifth consecutive time at the VEX Robotics World Championship, entering the competition with one of the Middle School teams ranked #11 in the world.

Another aspect of the robotics team worth mentioning is the number of female students who participate.

"When you go to these robotics tournaments, we have more female team members than any of our competitors," said Smith.



This is not by accident. BT makes an intentional effort to improve awareness and interest with female students in order to increase participation in STEM activities and classes. The BT robotics team also has one of a handful of female coaches in Nebraska, providing BT students with exposure to strong female leadership in a STEM role.

With so much success in the STEM realm, it might be easy to wonder, what next? How will BT keep this momentum in forward-thinking technology application going? Luckily, the school won't be doing it without help. In March BT received a \$100,000 anonymous gift to support STEM education,

allowing BT to enhance existing resources and introduce new technology in the classrooms to include:

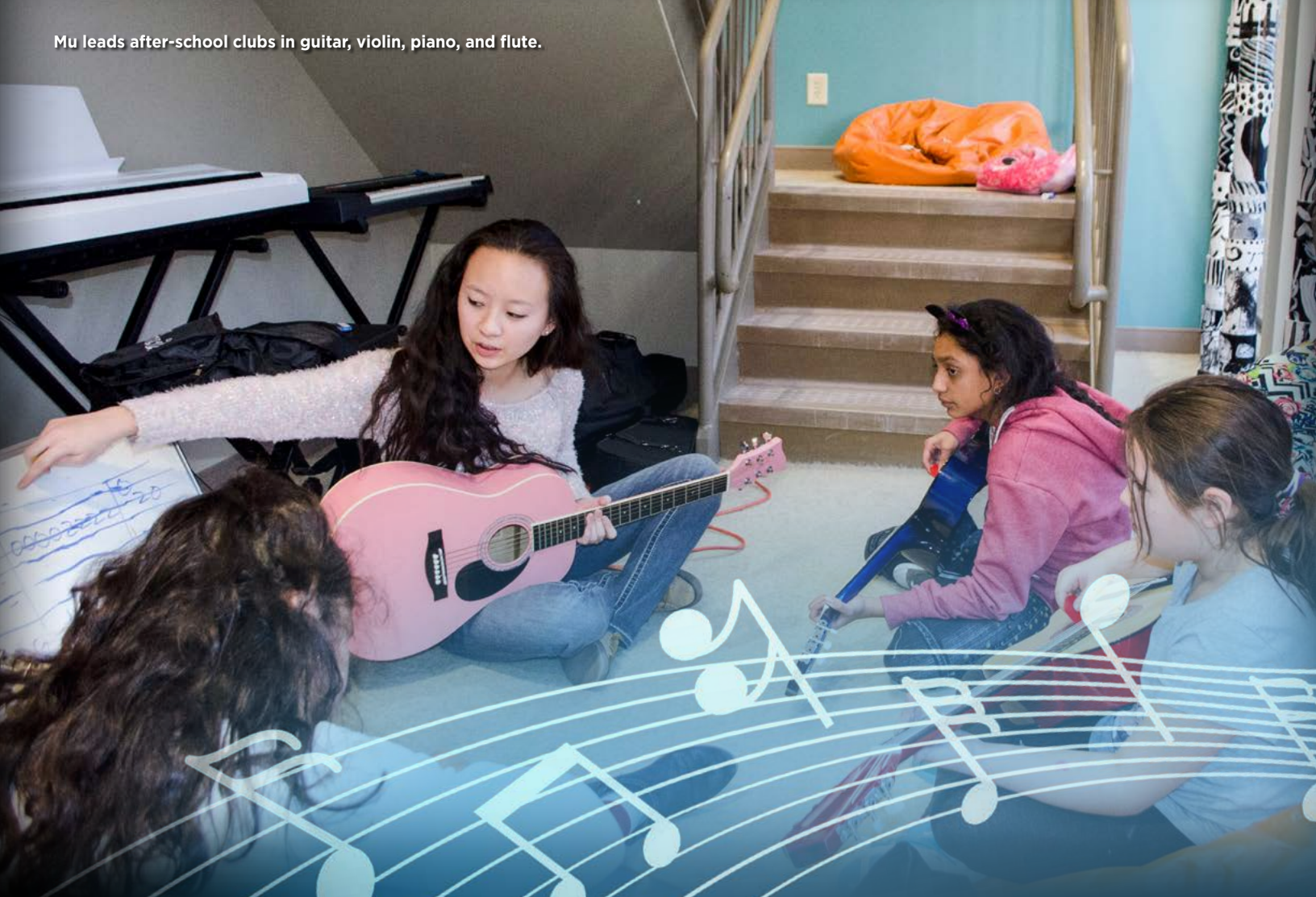
- Sensors that will improve data collection, such as temperature and oxygen levels, in labs.
- Microscopes.
- Living garden towers for Lower and Upper School science classrooms (similar to the one Middle School already has).
- Laser cutters.
- A 3D scanner.
- Programmable digital display boards for Upper School math classrooms.
- Photography and video equipment.
- Access to virtual reality field trips through Google.

This donation also supports a partnership with the Malone Schools Online Network, which allows juniors and seniors to enroll in college-level online courses as part of the BT curriculum.

Now that the school has the tools, Uchtman and the Technology Department are spending the summer working through how to implement them in the classroom.

With technology as the vehicle and innovation serving as the compass, Brownell Talbot is poised to keep pushing those edges and remain at the forefront of technology integration.

Do you have a preschool through grade 12 student passionate about robotics, coding, or engineering? Contact Director of Admissions Kim Schinzel at kim.schinzel@brownell.edu to set up a tour of our science wing!



A Passion for Music...

A key tenant of Brownell Talbot's mission is to provide opportunities for students to learn passionately. When you are passionate about something, very rarely does it stay confined to one aspect of your life. Just ask Jenna Mu, '18, whose love of creating music has not just driven her success at BT, but it has cemented her bonds with family, guided her community service endeavors, and been the force behind her tenacious work ethic.

Mu plays piano, violin, guitar, and flute but feels the violin is truly her instrument. She began playing in fourth grade, when her older brother Jesse's interest in violin rubbed off on her. He had been taking lessons from a private tutor, Anne Nagosky of the Omaha Symphony, who recognized Mu's talent and offered to tutor her.

Although tagging along to her brother's lessons is what introduced her to the violin, whether or not she would be a musician seemed like a foregone conclusion from birth. Her parents, who were both born in China, have a deep love for traditional Chinese music and encouraged Mu and her brothers to pick up instruments early on.

Mu came to BT in ninth grade from the Millard school district. Her interest in changing schools stemmed from two traits specific to BT: an orchestra that required a certain level of skill to join and the small class size. After four years participating in Brownell Talbot's orchestra, Mu credits her education with music teacher Jules DeSalvo and her private lessons with Nagosky for elevating her level of play.





“Mr. DeSalvo is very knowledgeable about all things music and is really into incorporating technology. So it’s fun to learn from him. Being in the orchestra gives me valuable experience performing with other musicians. And what I learn from my tutor strengthens my performance in school competitions.”

...And a Desire to Share It.

One might call Mu lucky for having the opportunity to learn music from two experts. In fact, that is exactly how a fellow student described her, sparking an idea in Mu to share her “luck” and turn her love of music into a charitable program.

“Jenna is dedicated to sharing music with as many people as possible. She found a way to do that by partnering with Completely KIDS,” DeSalvo said.

Completely KIDS is an Omaha-based nonprofit organization that educates and empowers kids and families to create a safe, healthy, successful, and connected community. BT works with Completely KIDS every school year to support their mission and provide service learning opportunities for students. Mu approached

Completely KIDS about creating a club for kids to learn how to play instruments in 2016.

Completely KIDS was on board with the idea but challenged Mu to design, staff, and implement the program herself. With their support, she started recruiting instructors, mostly Brownell Talbot students who she knew had musical talent. She then reached out to organizations across the city asking for new and gently used instrument donations.

Mu, an avid Disney fan, was watching the Disney Channel one day and saw a call for applications to the Youth Service America grant program. Through the application process she shared how music had shaped so much of her childhood and why she felt it was critical to child development. Mu won a \$500 grant from YSA and was finally able to launch Forever Music through the Completely KIDS after-school enrichment program in the summer of 2016.

Two years later the program is thriving. With 20 volunteer instructors, Forever Music offers clubs for violin, piano, guitar, flute, cello, ukulele, beatboxing, drums, vocal lessons, and more.

In addition to managing the Forever Music program, Mu also created Forever Speech, a program that offers free public speaking workshops to multi-language speakers.

“I love how speech and orchestra overlap. Diction, inflection, and rhythm are important to both. It’s also funny to see how like-minded people are attracted to both. All of my closest friends share these two interests,” Mu said.

Outside of participating in BT activities (orchestra; speech, in which she won a State title in extemp speaking; National Honor Society; student government; and tennis, in which she won the State doubles championship) and running two nonprofit programs, Mu had little remaining free time during her senior year. For fun, she and her younger brother Jackson, also a talented musician, visited nursing homes to play traditional Chinese music for residents.

With the help of BT’s College Counseling and Guidance Department, Mu has found a college program perfectly suited for her. In the fall, she will begin her studies in political science with a focus on education equality at Boston College, and she has already met a group of future classmates she plans to perform with. There is no denying that Jenna has “learned passionately” in her time at BT!



Mu was awarded Completely KIDS’ 2018 Person Behind Completely KIDS award in April.



Jarrett Proby, '18, helped bring pole vaulting back to BT for the first time in nearly 40 years.

When Jarrett Proby, '18, sailed over the crossbar at the Cedar Bluffs track & field meet on May 1, he broke the school's 39-year-old pole vaulting record, officially welcoming the sport back to BT with a bang.

Last summer Proby approached Head Coach Wade Lanum, asking for help in finding someone willing to teach him pole vaulting so he could compete in a decathlon for his club track team. Lanum connected Proby with a coach, and it didn't take long for Lanum to realize he would be remiss not to use this opportunity to bring pole vaulting back to BT, a sport that had been absent for nearly as long as the record had stood.

But to train BT athletes to compete in the event, the school would need a coach to, well, coach it. So at 38 years old, Lanum picked up the pole and set about learning the skill himself. Proby and Lanum worked out together twice a week for two months to get the hang of it. Lanum finished his training and took two online courses to get his pole vaulting coaching certificate in time for the 2018 track season.

Both the boys and girls teams competed in pole vaulting this year, leading Lily Teunissen, '21, to earn the distinction of being BT's first female pole vaulter in school history. Throughout the season BT consistently placed in pole vaulting at meets across the city. By the end of the season Lanum was feeling confident about the team's potential in the event in coming years.

"We didn't qualify for State in pole vaulting, but it wasn't really about that this year. We don't measure success by how many medals we get. For us it's about always competing with yourself and beating your previous best effort."

In addition to adding events to its portfolio, the track & field team has been adding athletes to its roster steadily over the last decade. This season the team had 22 members. With the growing number of participants, the coaching staff needed to grow as well, and in 2012 BT added a second head coach. Today the coaching staff includes Lanum, fellow Head Coach Brad Dunlap, and assistants Bob Williams and Jodi Bierman. A primary focus for the staff is creating individualized training programs for each athlete.

"We design their workouts to fit the events they will compete in and really focus on minimizing injury and managing energy," said Lanum.

The team does an extensive dynamic warm-up to help prevent injury, which takes up about a third of their practice time. The coaches also encourage the athletes to modify the workouts if their body is telling them it needs a break. The goal is to have each athlete at their peak performance for key meets - District, Frontier Conference, and State.

In Track & Field, You Are Your Toughest Competition

“We can do a lot of stuff before a meet to prepare, and we can do a lot of stuff to recover, but it’s always about giving your best effort and showing you have the guts to compete,” said Dunlap.

This year the boys team won the Frontier Conference and the girls placed second. Three athletes went to State: Proby competed in the 400-m dash and high jump, Sam Bock, '20, in the 110-m and 300-m hurdles, and Eliza Rice, '19, in the 200-m and 400-m dash and high jump. Rice placed in two events with her best finish in the 400-m dash, placing third. And there were many athletes this season who did not make State but beat their previous records and put in the hard work needed to continually improve. Athletes like Brandon Harrell, '19, who consistently pushes

himself in practice, is a positive presence on the team, and shows the tenacity to go much further next season.

“I love the challenge of learning the footwork and technique required in discus, and the coaches put in a lot of time and effort to help us improve. I plan on hitting 120 feet next year and helping our team win conference and districts again,” said Harrell.

“The best part of coaching is seeing how the athletes progress throughout the season and their four years. You find what they are good at and where you can stretch their talent into new events. I’m excited to see where it takes us next year,” Lanum said.



Sam Bock, '20



Eliza Rice, '19, competed in high jump and the 200-m and 400-m dashes at State this year.



**Mark your
calendar:**

BT athletics returns for the 2018-2019 school year with the first home varsity football game of the season, BT vs. Cedar Bluffs on August 31.

Dianne K. Desler Scholarship Supporters

Twyla & Mel Baker
Cindy & Mogens Bay
Bill Beavers
Belinda Beavers & Shelby Bell
Jan Brockman
Patty & Joel Calhoun
John Conley
Carolyn & Ed Conrath
Laura & Brad Crosby
Charlotte Conner & Bill Dana
Alice & Charlie Deffenbaugh
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Honoring Dianne Desler

Retired Headmaster Dianne Desler had an enormous impact on Brownell Talbot students and their families during her 42-year tenure. When she was announced as this year's gala Honorary Chair, it became obvious that words of appreciation alone would not be enough to thank her for all that she has done for the BT community.

It was the honor of a lifetime to surprise Dianne at this year's gala with the announcement of a \$100,000 endowed student scholarship in her name (read more about gala on page 13). The scholarship was made possible by the generous contributions of many BT families whose lives she has touched.

The creation of the Dianne K. Desler Scholarship ensures that Dianne's name is included amongst those families who have been the most significant supporters throughout the school's 154-year history. It also paves the way for her legacy and life's work to continue to impact BT students for generations to come.

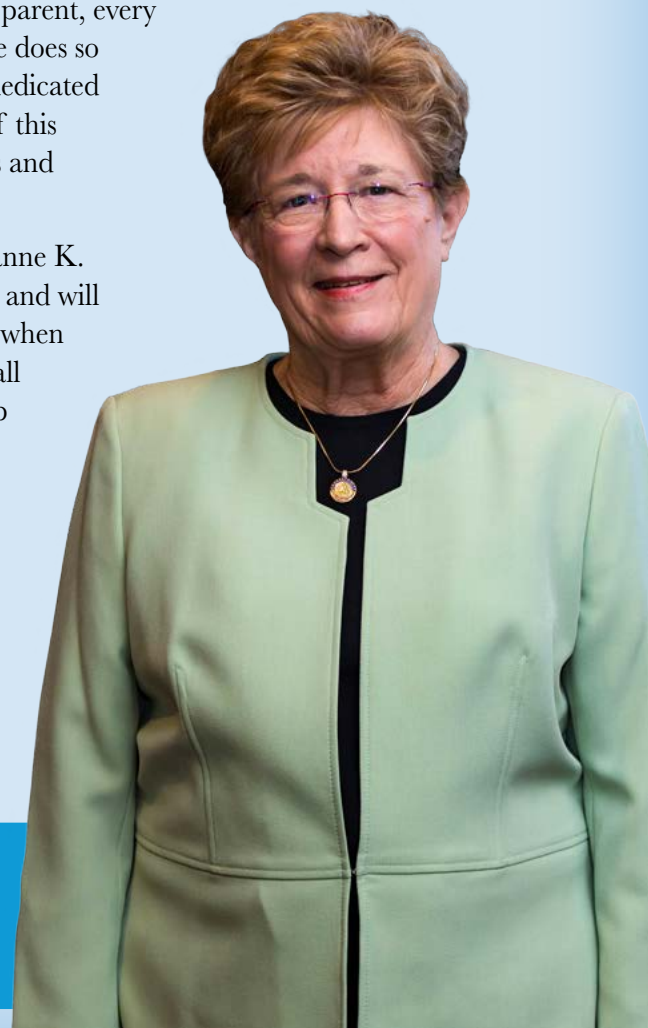
Dr. Gibbs said it best when she shared, "Dianne Desler genuinely cares for every student, every parent, every person connected to the school. And she does so with incredible dignity and grace. She dedicated her life to our school and the creation of this scholarship will honor her contributions and commitment to BT."

We look forward to naming the first Dianne K. Desler Scholarship in February of 2019 and will share any additional progress and news when the time comes. A special thank you to all of the people who made this scholarship possible.

Gratefully,

Shannon Gilroy
Executive Director of Advancement

**You can watch Dianne's
tribute video by visiting
brownell.edu/DKD**



If you would like to support the Dianne K. Desler Academic Scholarship with a charitable gift, please contact Shannon Gilroy at 402.556.3772 or visit brownell.edu/give.



Your Participation Makes a Big Impact!

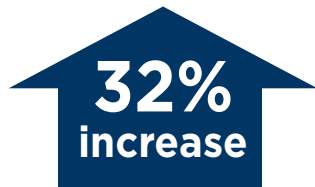
Alumni built on the momentum of last year's increased commitment and generosity, showing the power of participation in giving to The BT Fund during the 2017-2018 school year!

Perhaps most notably, the class of 2018 made a commitment to Brownell Talbot and demonstrated financial support of future BT students with the inaugural Senior Class Challenge. The seniors met their goal of 100% participation in The BT Fund in December, earning them recognition at May's Celebrate Your Senior lunch and their Commencement ceremony. They have set a great example for future classes and for the entire alumni community.

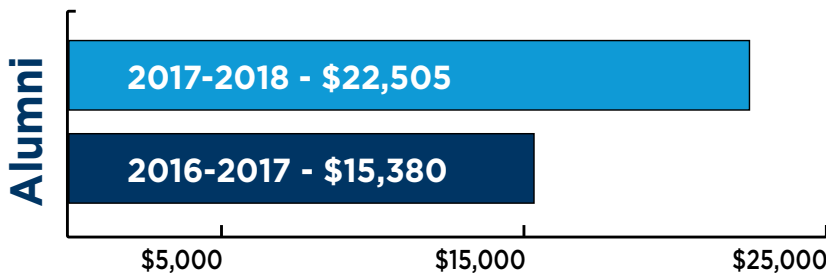


Students accept the Senior Class Challenge plaque on behalf of their class.

The BT Fund Total: \$291,486



in alumni donations to The BT Fund compared to last year.



DID YOU KNOW...

A donation to The BT Fund is unrestricted, which means it's an instantly available source of student support that can be used when and where it is needed most.

\$402 Average Alumni Gift

Ways to Give

Check
 Credit Card
 Cash

brownell.edu/btfund

— PORTRAITS OF — Excellence

2018 GALA

On Friday, May 11, 2018, more than 400 members of the Brownell Talbot community gathered on campus to celebrate the school and show their generosity of spirit. In an incredible gesture, “Portraits of Excellence” raised \$914,595.

Pirate Radio, BT’s a capella group, welcomed guests outside the entrance with an al fresco performance. Raider Blues Jazz Combo also performed throughout the evening as guests bid on silent auction items in Scott Gymnasium. In honor of the this year’s theme, a special section of the silent auction showcased items from local and national artists. The celebration continued as guests moved into the gala tent for dinner, the evening’s program, and live auction.

This year’s Honorary Chair was retired Headmaster Dianne Desler. Desler worked at BT for 42 years, when she began her teaching career at Brownell Talbot as a mathematics instructor in 1970. In 1988 Dianne became the school’s first female headmaster and served in this role for

24 years until her retirement in 2012.

During the evening’s program, Executive Director of Advancement Shannon Gilroy announced the creation of a \$100,000 endowed academic scholarship named in honor of Desler’s 42 years of service and support of BT (read more about the scholarship on page 11). A portrait of Desler painted by faculty member Cody Wheelock was also unveiled. The portrait will hang in the school so that all who pass through the halls will have the opportunity to appreciate her contributions.

Jocelyn Ho, ’18, served as this year’s student speaker. Ho, a Malone Family Foundation scholarship recipient, was an active member of the senior class throughout the 2017-2018 school year, having participated in National Honor Society, served as yearbook managing editor, and held the position of stage manager in BT’s theatre department. Ho will attend Drake University and pursue a degree in actuarial science in the fall.



Head of School Kristi Gibbs and Executive Director of Advancement Shannon Gilroy, right, revealed Dianne Desler’s portrait at gala.



Student speaker Jocelyn Ho, '18.

This year's Gala Co-Chairs were alumni (and sisters) Belinda Beavers, '87, and Shelby Bell, parents of Amelia, '25, and Bethany, '86, and Todd Graves, parents of Audrey, '18, and Brett, '17.

Gilded antique frames with garlands of flowers were strung throughout the hallways and gym. Centerpieces of hydrangeas, peonies, and roses nestled inside wooden picture frames decorated the tables draped with navy and magenta linens. The mood was set inside the tent with a lighting scheme that complimented the gala logo. Serving as a hands-on learning opportunity, the tent lighting was planned and installed by Brownell Talbot's Tech Theatre class. Guests dined on leek, potato, and goat cheese galettes; arugula and watermelon salad; and a duo of herb roasted beef and dungeness crab cakes. Individual bundlets from Nothing Bundt Cakes were served for dessert. Continuing on the tradition started in 2017, guests grabbed a sweet treat on their way home: a Gerda's donut.

A heartfelt thank you to our sponsors:

Visionaries



Bill Beavers



Heroes

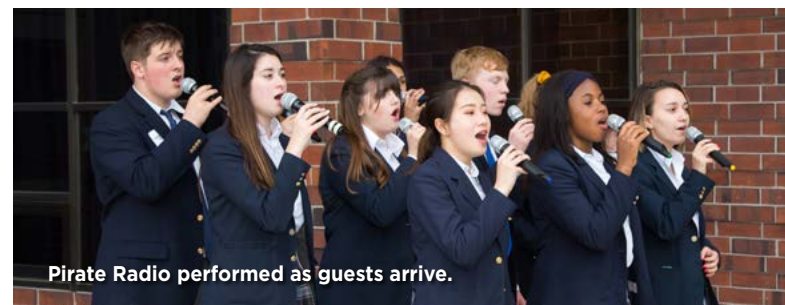
The Lori and David Scott Foundation

Champions

**Belinda Beavers, '87, and Shelby Bell
Bethany, '86, and Todd Graves**



Gala Co-Chairs Todd and Bethany, '86, Graves and Belinda Beavers, '87, and Shelby Bell (left to right).



Pirate Radio performed as guests arrive.



Centerpieces of hydrangeas, peonies, and roses decorated dinner tables.



BT's Tech Theatre class helped plan and install the lighting in the tent.

CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2018

In five years I hope to be...



“Settled and happy with my life, in a position where I can travel the world, learn new things, and help others in the process.”
- Ameya Shelby, '18



“A great Chinese historian.”
- Daniel Ning, '18

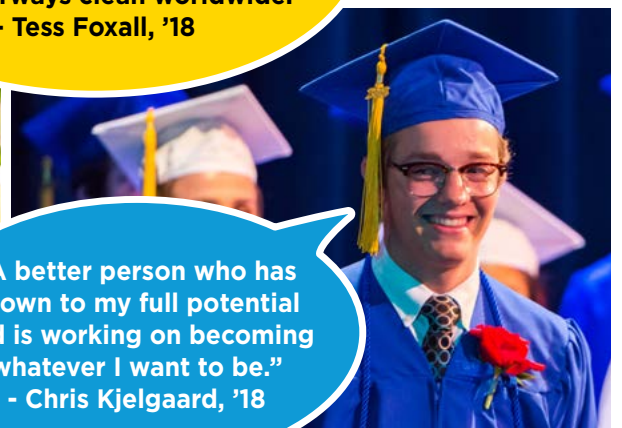


“Successful at whatever I'm doing.”
- Aneeq Bashir, '18





**“Working alongside other environmental biologists and conservationists to help protect endangered species and keep oceans and waterways clean worldwide.”
- Tess Foxall, '18**



**“A better person who has grown to my full potential and is working on becoming whatever I want to be.”
- Chris Kjelgaard, '18**

ALUMNI ON CAMPUS

MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR JUDGES

- 1** Zach Ehresman, '12, assisting as a judge for the Middle School Science Fair.
- 2** Reid Rise, '16, and Katelyn (Schindler) Laflin, '08, also served as science fair judges.
- 3** Julian Davis, '14, science fair judge.

HOUSE REUNION

- 4** BT welcomed alumni from the classes of 2012-2017 to campus in December for the annual House Reunion with the class of 2018 and House Deans.

CELEBRATE YOUR SENIOR LUNCH

- 5** Andy Ketterson, '82, attended the Celebrate Your Senior Lunch with daughter Mylie, '18. Other legacy families in the class of 2018 include: David Scott, '81, and daughter Madison; Bethany (Beavers) Graves, '86, and daughter Audrey; and Rebecca (Huang) Liu, '86, and daughter Hannah.



GALA

6 Alison Brockman, '13, BT faculty member Rob Schindler, and Alison's mother, Jan Brockman.

7 Peter, '81, and Michelle Massey.

8 Mary (Marshall) Kerr, '67, and Tom Kerr.

GRADUATION

9 Ian Gaupp, '15, with sister Zoe, '18.

10 Jordan Proby, '15, celebrates brother Jarrett, '18.

11 Parker Gottsch, '17, Sean O'Connell, '17, and Kathryn Johnson, '17, along with Tess Foxall, '18.

12 David Scott, '81, and daughter Madison, '18, snap a photo before Baccalaureate.

OTHER

13 Aysa Pribus, '08, and Brett Graves, '17 (right) enjoyed meeting Darin Larsen, senior class sponsor, for dinner during the class of 2018's trip to Chicago.

14 Adam Hedican, '17, Wyatt Smith, '17, Maya Mathews, '17, Charlotte Hedican, '15, and Jordan Proby, '15, (not pictured) participated in an alumni panel for members of the class of 2019 and their parents.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Erica Volkir, Class of 1992

I am currently the Executive Director of the Pipestone Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau located in Southwest Minnesota. Pipestone is home to the Pipestone National Monument, which preserves the quarries held sacred by Native Americans for thousands of years. About 90,000 tourists from around the world visit our town each year.



Which BT teacher had the biggest impact on you?

All of them! Each one of my teachers from second grade through twelfth had a significant impact on me as a person. By far, the greatest strength of Brownell Talbot is the quality and dedication of the faculty and staff.

Favorite spot on BT's campus?

In Lower School, I loved the Lower School library with the quaint town square murals as well as the old music room (down in the "pit"). In Middle and Upper School, my favorite spots were Worthington Hall and the serenity of St. Matthias Chapel.

Last book you read?

Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World by Linda Hirshman.

What's on your bucket list?

My bucket list is full of places I'd like to visit. At the top of the list would be New York City (to see the Macy's Day Parade and Rockefeller Center Christmas tree lighting); Boleslawiec, Poland (to tour the Polish pottery factories); and Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta (to sip afternoon tea at the Prince of Wales Hotel).

What do you miss about Omaha?

There are so many things I miss: seeing my mom on a daily basis; enjoying ALL of the amazing food - especially Runza; spending time at Memorial Park; and of course, my days at Brownell Talbot.

What advice would you give to current BT students?

Take full advantage of the variety of courses and extracurricular activities offered. One of the best things about attending BT is that students are able to be involved in so many unique opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom. Step out of your comfort zone and get involved!

Fondest memory of BT?

I have so many fond memories - except presidential physical fitness testing days and Field Days (which were torture as athletics were not my strong suit). One memory that really holds a special spot in my heart was seventh grade headmaster's study tour trip by train to Seattle, Victoria, and Vancouver.

How did BT help prepare you for what you are doing now?

As the executive director of an organization representing a variety of businesses and nonprofit organizations, I use skills I learned at BT every day - public speaking, critical thinking, writing, research, analysis, and advocacy. Additionally, the emphasis BT places on public service and good citizenship is directly related to my current role in growing our community.

What's up next for you?

I am looking forward to my Girl Scouts troop's summer field trip as well as a vacation to Maine in the fall to see fellow BT alum Jenna Maciel, '92.

What do you do for fun? How do you de-stress?

I really love the arts - attending art exhibits, concerts, Broadway musicals, and independent films. I like discovering new places to eat! To de-stress, I enjoy taking photographs and spending time with my dog, Rocket, and my fiancé, Tom.

ALUMNI NEWS AND NOTES

IN MEMORIAM

ALUMNI

Shirley (Baker) Nicholson, '47
D. March 28, 2018

Sally Anne "Sunny" Rullman, '47
D. January 20, 2018

Patricia (Kimmel) Reifschneider, '48
D. December 16, 2016

Anna (Smith) Elliott, '55
D. January 16, 2018

Natalie Sue "Susie" (Jacobs) Peebler,
x'50; survived by sons David Peebler,
'80, and Mark Peebler, x'82
D. April 17, 2018

FRIENDS OF BT

Patricia "Patty" Crowe, former executive
assistant to retired Headmaster
Dianne Desler
D. April 28, 2018

Carlene Kraft, father to
Greg Kraft, '83
D. March 18, 2018

Ann Grandjean, mother to
Nicole Grandjean, '90
D. January 6, 2018

James "Jim" Bonham
Survived by fiancée
Connie Dorman Heiden, '65
D. May 18, 2018

The Alumni News and Notes section of Fireside celebrates your recent accomplishments. Share information about births, weddings, anniversaries, career moves, retirements, and life-changing experiences! We publish alumni submissions and any other news we receive from friends, employers, and media sources. Update us at brownell.edu/hello.

NEWS

Lesley (Dahlk) Turner, '02, and **Ben Turner**, '01, welcomed daughter Mackenzie born on March 6, 2018. She joins big sister Emerson at home.

Jorge Sotolongo, '06, is working as a commercial real estate broker at NAI NP Dodge. Sotolongo was recently featured as an MBA Spotlight for the University of Nebraska Omaha College of Business Administration.

JD Haskell, '08, is working as the Marketing Strategist for RCG Contractor Marketing, a full service marketing firm that launched in January, specializing in the unique marketing challenges that contractors and home service professionals face. He leads a team of account and media specialists that works with clients across the country. Haskell also leads business development initiatives by creating specific content and presenting at nationwide events and trade shows.



Alexandra Dennis-Renner, '10, is in Los Angeles where she works in the indie film world as an assistant director. Her debut short film as both writer and director (*'Til Death*) has been touring the national festival circuit. *'Til Death* was nominated for Best Original Screenplay at the Beverly Hills Film Festival, won

Best Short Screenplay at the Hollywood Comedy Festival, won Best Romantic Comedy at the Austin Comedy Shorts Film Festival, was a semifinalist at the Inroads Screenwriting Fellowship, is currently an official selection at three more festivals and showcases, and was just optioned for a three-episode order with major TV partners. The show's production began in June.

This fall, Dennis-Renner will begin a residency as a screenwriting fellow at the American Film Institute and AFI Conservatory.

Wellesley Michael, '14, was one of 50 students nationwide to be chosen for the American Advertising Federation's Most Promising Multicultural Students Program in November 2017. Wellesley graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communications this year.

Julian Davis, '14, graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a chemical engineering degree and has accepted a position at Exxon Mobile in Houston as an over pressure protection engineer.



A Page in Time

On July 10, 1868, Helen Ingalls and Helen Hoyt graduated from Brownell Hall. As reported in the *Omaha Herald*, it was the first commencement in Nebraska. Rev. Samuel Hermann, the school's principal, had high ideals for women's education and "installed a course of study which is even now a college preparatory course." At this time, Vassar College was the only college women could attend and they had not yet graduated their first class.

In 1868 the school was located three miles north of Omaha in an area known as Saratoga Springs. Hoop skirts, lace collars, and turbans were in style for the young ladies and students came to school by boat, private carriage, lumber wagons, or in stage coaches. A favorite activity at Friday night socials was showing the spark of electricity!



Saratoga Springs - The original location of Brownell Hall in Saratoga Springs at what is now approximately 24th and Grand Avenue.



Helen Ingalls - One of Brownell Hall's first graduates.



Louise Gillmore - First head teacher of Brownell Hall.

If you are interested in helping the alumni office identify and organize photographs or assist with other archive projects, please contact Renae Mackender at renae.mackender@brownell.edu or 402.556.3772 ext 1015.

FROM THE ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE



Through the power of participation, you made the 2017-2018 school year simply amazing! Alumni joined us on campus for reunions, celebrations, school productions, and athletic competitions and to lend a helping hand for special projects. Former faculty, staff, and Board of Trustee members enjoyed reconnecting with each other and the school. Parents, grandparents, and friends of the school all came together in various ways to contribute to our success. We are grateful for every act of kindness and every gift of time and treasure you shared with us!

In her commencement address, Dr. Gibbs reminded the Class of 2018 that “One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself - right here, right now, in this single, solitary, monumental moment in your life - is to decide, without apology, to commit to the journey, and not to the outcome. So, take a deep breath and enjoy the beginning of your next journey.”

As we start the 2018-2019 school year, I am asking each of you to be a part of our journey! Take a moment to make that commitment, pause to take that deep breath, and contact me to be a part of an incredible Brownell Talbot experience you won't soon forget!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Renae Mackender". The script is cursive and fluid.

Renae Mackender
Director of Constituent Relations
402.556.3772 ext 1015
renae.mackender@brownell.edu

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Laura Foxall has done it all: led gala committees, managed the book fair, collected Box Tops, chaperoned field trips, chaperoned post-prom, baked cookies for theatre, sold theatre buttons, corralled kids at various events. But the BT volunteer gig you probably most recognize her from is the concessions stand, which she has run for three of the last four years.

The Foxalls have been a BT family since 2012, and within Laura's first week on campus she was picking up donations and setting up the tent for that year's gala. Her willingness to volunteer her time and talents has known no bounds and everyone in the BT community has benefited from her generous spirit.

With her daughter, Tess, '18, having graduated in May, the Foxalls may not be as common a fixture at BT as they have been over the last decade. Laura, her husband, James (who has been known to man the grill at football games), son, Ethan, '16, and Tess will be missed, especially on game nights, as they now fill different roles in the BT family. But as Laura says, “Forever Blue and Gold.”



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUG 14

BT STORYTIME

Visit brownell.edu/goBT for additional dates

AUG 25

DUNDEE DAY PARADE

SEPT 17-22

HOMECOMING



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