

connection And community

★ 2022 ★

MIDDLE COLLEGE



keeping the memories!



MIDDLE COLLEGE

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**College of San Mateo
1700 W Hillsdale Blvd, San Mateo, CA 94402
East Hall Building 12, Room 213
Don Scatena, Principal
(650) 574-6536**

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

a middle college student



Hanging out in Building 10 (A.K.A. The College Center) after grabbing snacks from CSM's cafeteria.



Learning all about English and historic events in Building 12's room 12-201!



Studying with friends in the student lounge.

Orientation



WHY DID YOU

join middle college?

I don't have to do what others tell me to do

cliques and immature social scene
lack of motivation due to lack of interest in content and curriculum
want a smaller community with more genuine connections
college credits
engaging content

Why I came:

- People that will be mature
- Challenging courses
- Headstart into my major
- Personal growth academically & socially
- Connections to college

What am I seeking in Middle College?

- Get to know different stories
- Get to be with people who have similar goals
- Challenge - classes + personalities
- New experiences in life
- Opportunities - scholarships
- Get to know more about my strength as a student

WHAT DO I SEEK AT MIDDLE COLLEGE:

IT'D BE NICE TO DISCOVER MYSELF, I MEAN IN TERMS OF SCIENCE, WITH ALL THE VARIETY OF SCIENCE CLASSES, PERHAPS I'LL FIND WHICH FIELD I AM PASSIONATE THE MOST IN! THAT WAY, I KNOW WHAT I WANT TO MAJOR/ MINOR IN AT COLLEGE!

I THINK CONTRIBUTING AND BUILDING A MORE CONNECTED COMMUNITY WOULD BE LOVELY AS WELL, I BELIEVE IF PEOPLE FELT MORE CONNECTED W/ ONE ANOTHER, PEOPLE WOULD FEEL LESS CONCIOUS/AFRAID IN ASKING HELP, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY NEED IT MOST.



Why I left my Home High School

Their classes didn't interest me too much and I need a bit of a challenge. Not to mention meeting new people while getting college credit sounded really nice.

genuine companionship + relationships (community)
self discovery and academic progression
comfort and respect among me and my peers
engaging education and school experience
more class options!

In middle college, I am seeking Purpose, Passion, and motivation. I felt like this was an opportunity to stand out and excel more. By attending middle college I want to build more connections and experience things I am not able to do at my home school.

I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE BEHIND MY PROCRASTINATION

Why I left my home school:

I didn't have plans on leaving my school until I was given the option to leave & come to MC. When reflecting on my time at AHS, I realized that I wasn't very happy & was ready for something different.

- Felt de-motivated, "going through the motions"
- Wasn't excited about many parts of learning experience; school was getting stale





Field Trips



let's escape **ALCATRAZ**



Alcatraz Island lays right off the coast of San Francisco, CA. The island began development in the 19th century with the construction of a lighthouse and military fortification. These buildings were used as a fortified prison, making it extremely difficult to escape. In 1969, the island was occupied by a group of Native Americans performing various protests in the United States at the time. Today, the island stands as a National Park for people to visit and learn about the island's history. During these visits, tourists are given the opportunity to explore the island and have a walk through tour.



Community Day

St. Mary's & UC Davis



SAINT
MARY'S
COLLEGE
of CALIFORNIA



UC DAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Community Day

Scandia Family Fun Center



Community Day (Seniors)

Events



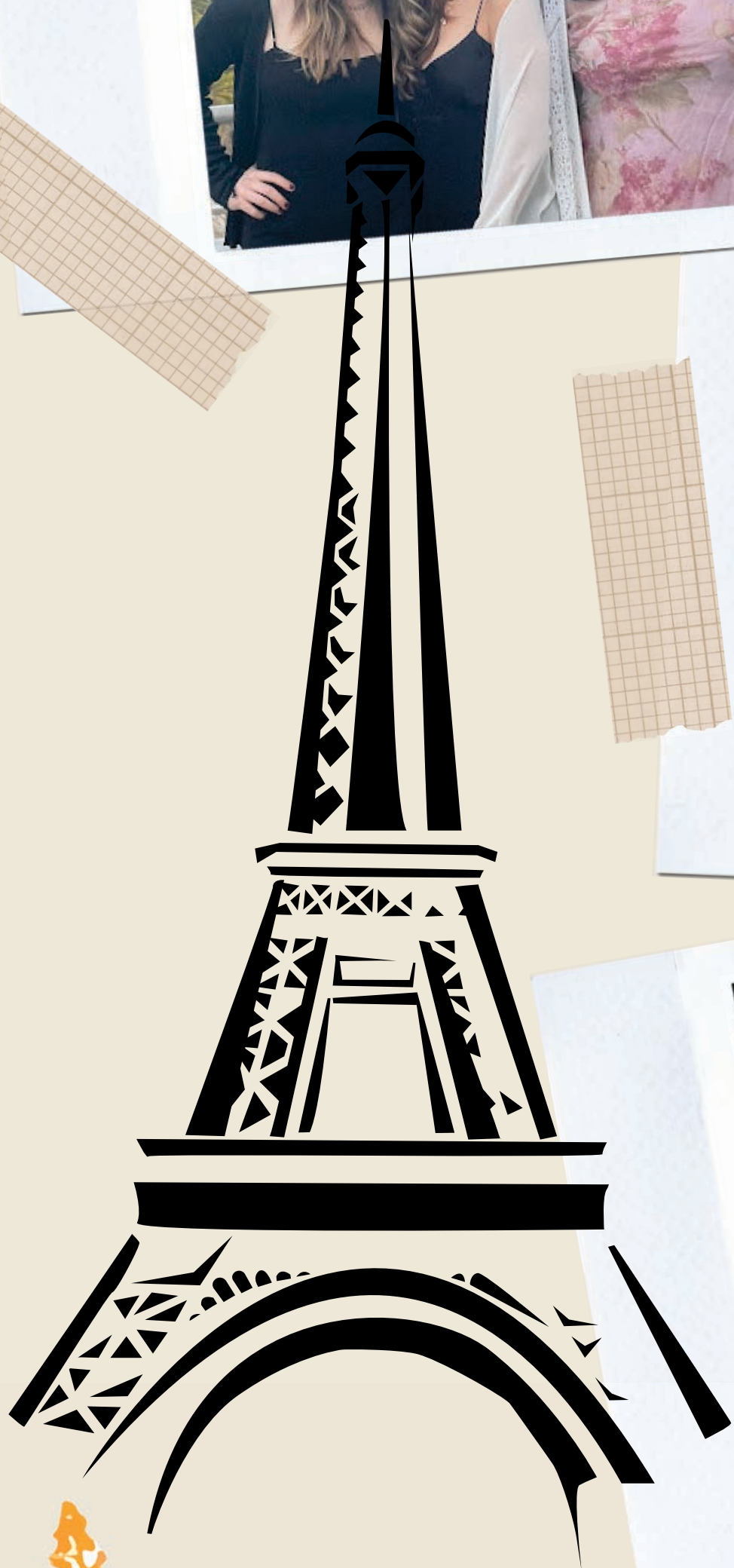
Middle College

Annual Picnic



Spring Time in Paris

Middle College Dance



Clubs





The "WBC" was brought together by MC and our shared academic experiences. We are thankful for the program and teachers for providing an environment for us to become, learn, and build our community!!



MC Asians



MC Asians is a new startup club that was built upon the establishment of sharing and appreciation of Asian culture in the CSM community. Throughout the year, they have organized community-like activities that have united students of the Middle College program. Members that have founded this club go by the names of Iris Budiman, Alexis Centeno, Marc Lam, Dio Cabitac, Kenneth Wong, Patrick Abejero, & Ethan Petersen. This club will continue on next year to advance to projects like raising fundraisers or hosting community events outside of the Middle College program.



Wellness Club

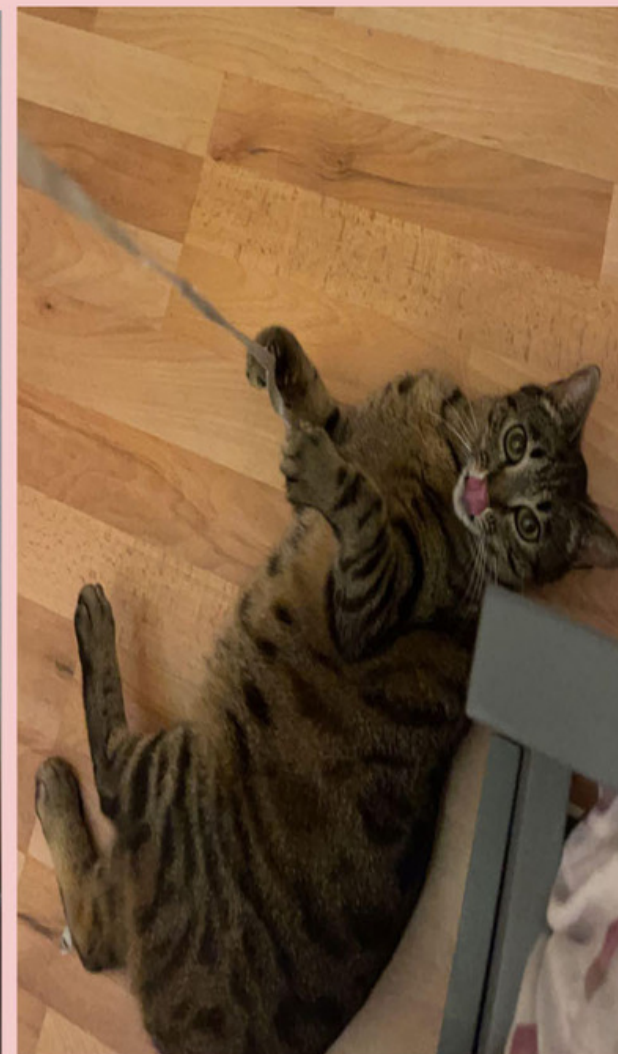
Wellness Club was created in order to give the students of Middle College an opportunity to socialize over crafts. At meetings, we worked on tons of projects from vision boards to thank you cards.



Personal Pages



Dalia Abualhassan



Middle College has been an extraordinary experience that has allowed me to explore a wonderful and memorable environment! This program was truly the best decision I made, thank you to the people that made it worth it. Congratulations to the class of 2022 we did it!!





Sayri Yasmin Ajanel Ramos :)

Who am I? Well, I'm just a girl. I am a girl who is not afraid of risks. I'm always determined to try my best in all I love. Someone who adores her family, friends, and parakeets. Someone who delights in the simplest pleasures. I am Sayri. Oh, and I'm very proud to be one of the Latinas at Middle College! :)



The Beginning of Something New...

One of the happiest moments in 2021 was receiving the admission letter from MC. I felt a new adventure was about to begin, and the urge to experience new things hit me the moment I stepped onto the MC building. It was the beginning of my new adventure...



Enjoy the Little Things...

A to-do list is essential in life to keep track of everything and avoid forgetting anything. That, however, does not work for me. But one thing I keep in mind is to always appreciate the simple things because those memories will last a lifetime.



It will Last Forever...

Two years of working with incredible people. Two years to meet new people and create friends for life. Two years to become the strongest version of myself. I shall carry all of my memories, laughs, tears, hugs, and smiles with me. These two years at MC will live on in my heart forever.

"You know
what...
Hakuna
Matata"



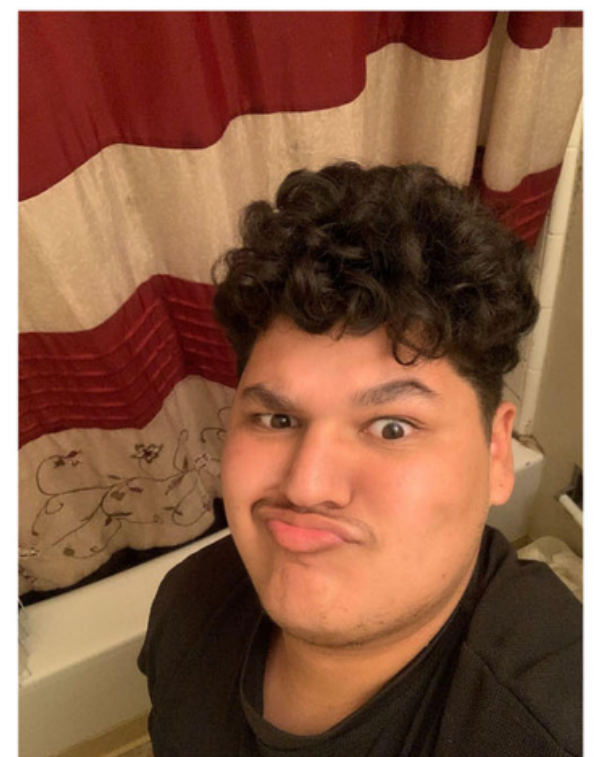
Class
of '23



I am an MC Senior, and next semester I will be attending Princeton Law. I am very excited to learn and pass my BAR exam in the future. I love frogs, cheese, and ski ball.

Elliott Bliss

I am eternally grateful to Middle College for the 1 full year of in-person school, and 1 year of online school (Zoom). Thanks for all of the friends I have made, and I wish you the best of luck in whatever you choose to do. Remember to drink water, take fish oil, and play ski ball! :)



IRIS BUDIMAN



Being in Middle College for my junior year has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. Not only was I able to achieve my goals academically, I met some of the best people in my life. They truly taught me what great friendship is, you know who you are. I love all of you and I want to thank you for holding such a special place in my heart.

I'm so happy to be able to make so many memories that I will cherish forever. From the amazing students to the amazing teachers here at MC, I am so fortunate to call MC my home.

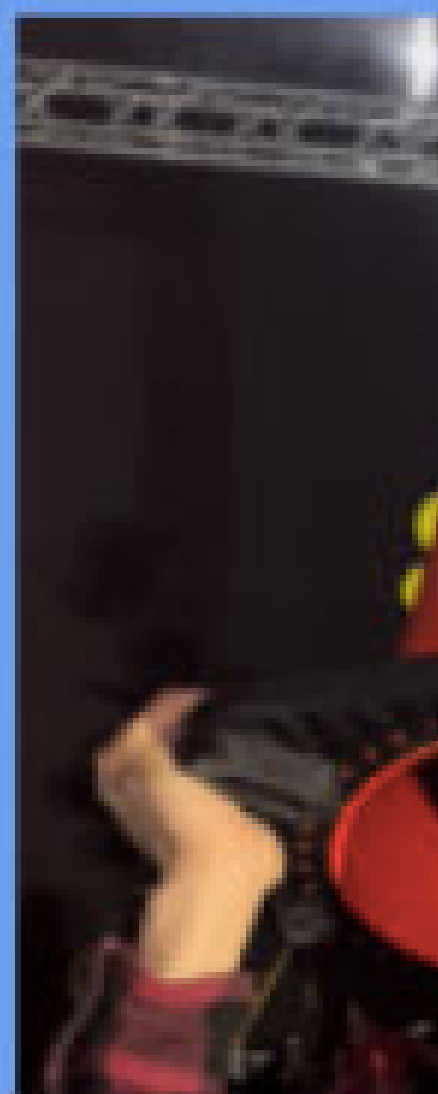


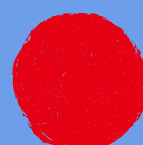
MC picnic with friends

Me and my best friend Alexis Centeno at prom



I really enjoyed my first year of Middle College. Coming out of online learning I was ready for a change, and Middle College was it. It opened up new opportunities for me to grow as a person and a student. I can't wait to see what the next year brings! <3







This program has been such a wonderful opportunity that I feel privileged to have experienced. I met so many wonderful people that have changed my life for the better and I couldn't have asked for a greater high school experience

It was here that I was able to grow as a person in a safe environment, and for that I am truly grateful. I am especially thankful for the wonderful teachers at MC because they are what makes MC so great.

I am going to miss MC but I know I will cherish every memory I made here, so I would like to end this by saying thanks for everything

**STEPHANIE CAMACHO
SIBRIAN**



Jasmine Cardenas



ME !!



Hello!

I'm Jasmine. I'm a senior and my home school is Hillsdale High School.

I enjoy drawing and playing video games in my free time.

I also enjoy hiking and walking on the beach.

Class of
2022

Next Destination:



AT LASSEN VOLCANIC PARK

I have enjoyed every second at Middle College. The teachers are very supportive and I enjoy being at the CSM campus every day.

Middle College at San Mateo was such an incredible experience for me! I would be lying if I said that it went exactly what I had expected, and I'd be lying even more if I said that every second here was an enjoyable one. But I learned a lot about myself and I'm so lucky to have met all these incredible people. This is definitely a school year that I will never forget.



me and iris at



saw my husband
in concert <3





friends I made at MC



had a very interesting year with my team, we're hoping to take a CCS title this year though lol.



Thank you to everyone for all of the wonderful memories!

I am so glad that I choose to attend Middle College. It was a scary decision,
but was completely the right one!

Thank you to my family, teachers and friends for their support!

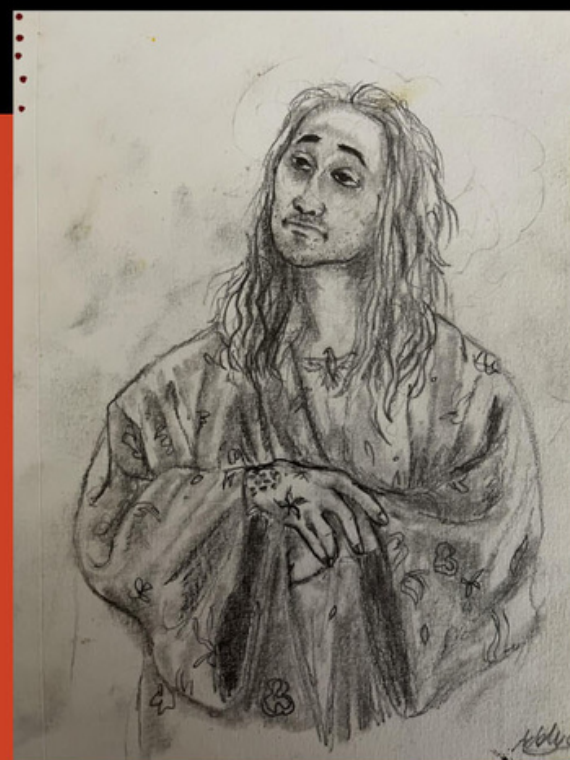
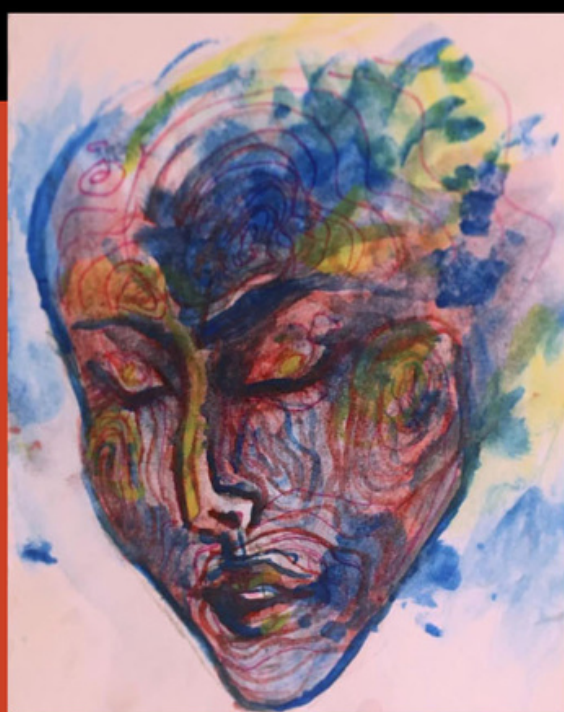
Wishing everyone all the success in their future endeavors!



ADDY CORNWALL



"WE'RE ALL DIFFERENT. HIM ESPECIALLY. BUT THERE'S SOMETHING KIND OF FANTASTIC ABOUT THAT, ISN'T THERE?"



ALL ORIGINAL WORKS





Attending Middle College was easily the best decision I've ever made. The supportive teachers and students made it such an easy transition from BHS.

Everyone here cares about every individual on a personal level, and holds maturity and respect towards everyone here.

I'm so grateful for all of the teachers who told me not to go back to my home school. The friends, memories & life skills I've made at Middle College are profound. I'll miss the program deeply & everyone involved <3



SEATTLE
UNIVERSITY



ETHAN DUBOVSKY

IT'S DIFFICULT to overstate the impact Middle College has had on me. It is a special thing in life to find something when you need it most and yet that was exactly what Middle College provided me for about two years now and has continued to provide me until this very day. For two years now, Middle College has offered me the chance to find out who I am and who I want to be, along with the kinds of things I want to do. From the excellent Zoom program that gave me the opportunity to dive into my passion for film, to coming back Senior year and finding new friends that I've now made countless memories with, it's a difficult task to demonstrate just how grateful I am for everything this school has offered me. The only way I can think to pay it back is to do everything in my power to achieve my goals; and that's exactly what I plan to do. So to Middle College, my most heartfelt thanks, all the faculty and students that made each day such a worthwhile experience, you have my eternal gratitude. I hope to pay it back someday.

EDPC PRODUCTIONS
PRESENTS
A CLASS OF 2022
PRODUCTION
ETHAN DUBOVSKY IS...



This
is
Ethan.

He's
a little
worried
about
his
future.

THE GRADUATE



EDPC Productions



Rowe Eis

Brooke Kelsey Freeman



“You will face many feats in life, but never let yourself be defeated.” – Maya Angelou

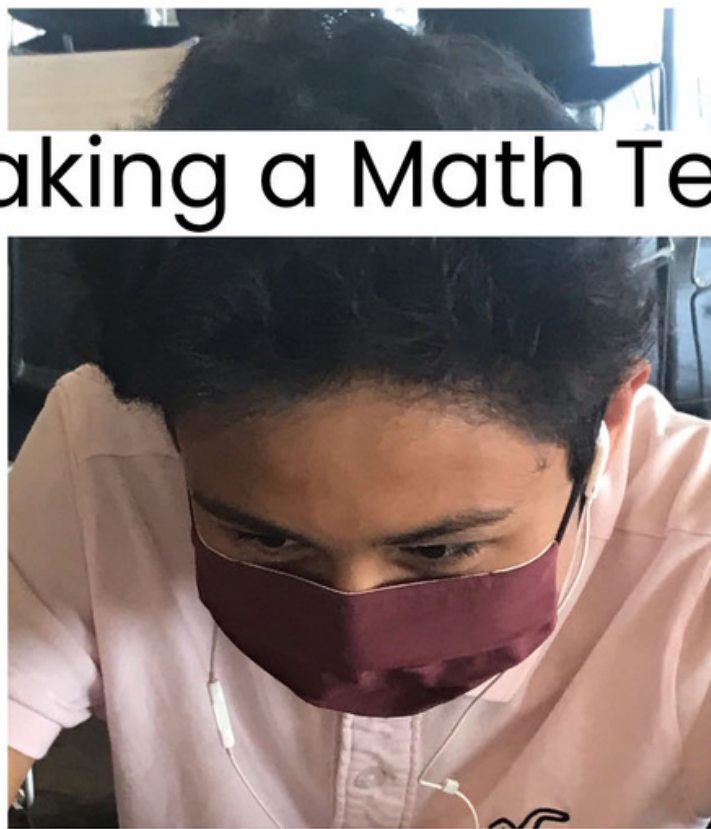


I will never forget the experiences and memories made at Middle College.





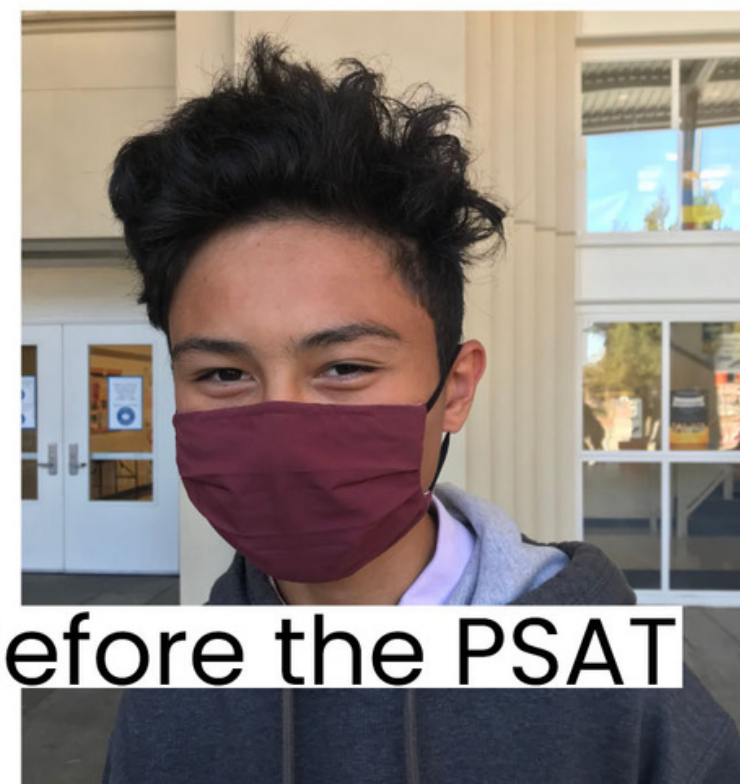
Taking a Math Test



Free Food



We went to prison!



Before the PSAT

DEVIN GOWDY

I'm very happy that I chose to come to Middle College because it completely changed my outlook on school. Before Middle College, I always thought of school as a chore, but now I am excited to come to school every day. I also appreciate the freedom that we have at middle college to explore our interests in college-level classes and to schedule our classes in a way that works with what we want to do outside of school. But above all, the community at Middle College really surprised me. I knew that it was a small learning community when I chose to come, but I never really grasped what that meant. Middle College really is a great community and everyone there contributed to my success.



MC Dance



Devin



MC Dance





Thank you for the memories!

This year in middle college I was able to make a lot of friendships and fun adventures that made my year memorable!!!

CAN'T WAIT FOR NEXT YEAR



Estefania



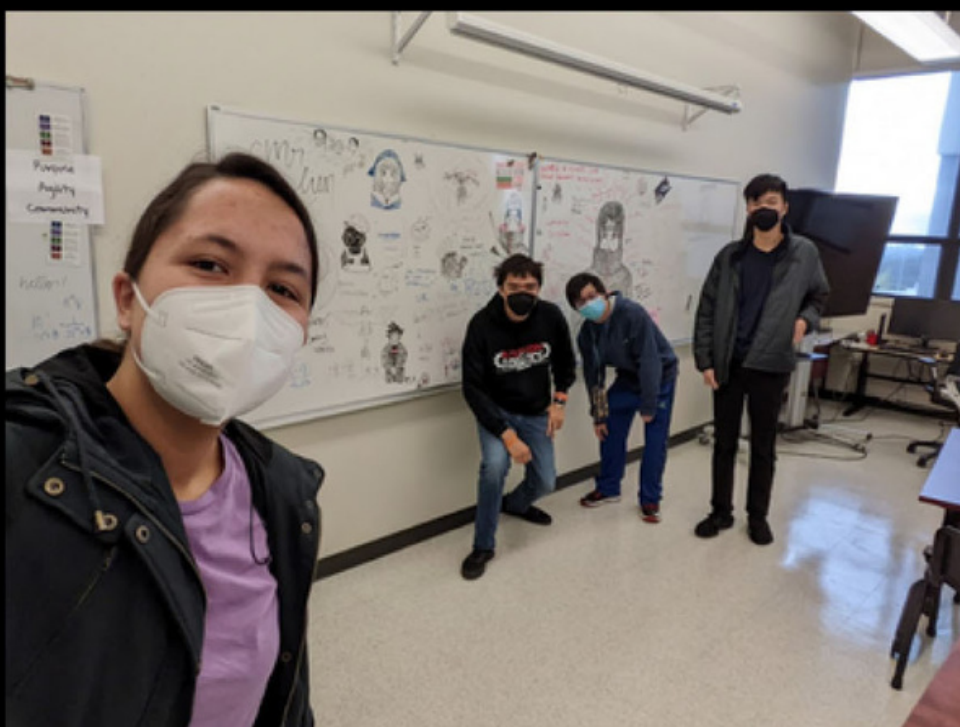
Tyler Hill



Middle College is a wonderful community where I have felt involved.

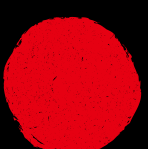


It has been so much fun getting to know the teachers and staff.



I made so many wonderful friendships that I hope will continue far into the future.

Thank you Middle College





Coming to Middle College was by far the best decision I have made in life. Middle College has given me some of my closest friends, fondest memories, and best educational experiences for which I will forever reflect on and be thankful for.

After High School, I plan on attending UC Irvine to study Environmental Policy, in hopes of becoming an Environmental Lawyer one day.

Thank you for the greatest two years of school!

Sydney Hilliard





Angelina Huerta



*I had such a great year !!!
Can't wait for what the
future
holds! Thanks for the fun
year!*





A portrait of a young woman with long, dark brown hair parted in the middle. She is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. She is wearing a black, off-the-shoulder top. Her accessories include small hoop earrings and a necklace consisting of two thin gold chains with a small, rectangular pendant. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green and yellow.

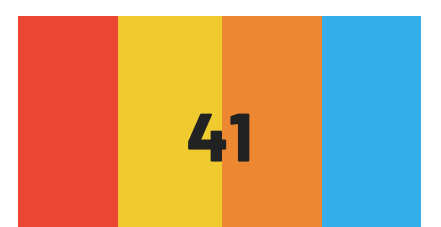
Excerpt from *On Earth We're Briefly
Gorgeous* by Ocean Vuong



Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



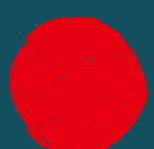
SciencesPo



Marc Andre Lam



Nervous, unassured, and anxious. Those are the words I would use to describe my feelings at August orientation as I sat on the amphitheater steps, awaiting the beginning of my junior year. As I write this 9 months later, I can confidently say it was the best choice I could have made. Through the laughter, the smiles, and even the tears, I am grateful to be a part of this community, which continues to flourish and brighten in ways I couldn't have imagined when I applied just a year ago.





Perrine Lee

The past two years at Middle College have been truly amazing and I can not imagine having spent them anywhere else. The

community and skills I have learned at Middle College are parts of my upperclassmen years that I will never forget. Thank you to all the Middle College and CSM staff who have made my experience so memorable <3





ZACHARY LICHAA

Middle College has been one of the best decisions I made because of the opportunities and the collective experience. I am forever grateful for the teachers and students for helping this program reach its highest potential. Thank you!

PEPPERDINE





Melissa Mendez

At my time in Middle College, I have learned what it means to value community. Everyone at Middle College is extremely supportive which made me feel really valued and respected. You could really tell that the people around you cared about seeing others succeed.



Additionally, I really enjoyed this great sense of freedom that came with being at Middle College. It allowed me to learn very valuable lessons on distributing my time and energy among different aspects of my life.

My time at Middle College has made me realize new things about myself too! I have realized what priorities I have in life as well as the direction I want to head in moving forward.



I feel like this community can really strive to connect with others in ways they might not have imagined. For instance, in my advisory classroom, students from all across the Middle College hallway came together to form a collage of different drawings on the whiteboard. You could draw whatever your heart desired. The whiteboard is filled with so many different student's artwork. That goes to show the amount of creativity and community Middle College has.



MAYA MUSSELMAN



**CLASS OF
2023**



THIÊN - TIỀNNAM Q. NGUYỄN-ĐỒ

MC CLASS OF
2023

Roses are red,
Violets are blue,
Middle College is here,
what's it to you?



NAM NHỊ ĐẠI
TRƯỜNG PHU



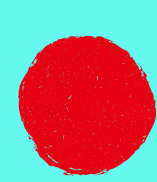
"An unexamined life is
not worth living."
-Socrates



DROP,
COVER &
HOLD



HELLO THERE



Sean Norton

You know, I did not expect anything from Middle College Initially. I just thought "oh it's just high school". How crazy I was!

People care for one another here. The teachers are full of energy (Ms.Rohrbach at 9 am), kindness, and character.

Honestly, it helps take away all the pressure that is put on you as a high school student, in some ways and makes you learn other aspects of being a college student.

Now sure, is the program perfect? Of course not. It has its difficulties, and the challenges that may come from that. Is it something that I think was worth it? Yes, academically and socially.

There are so many people that I expect to remember down the road (we hope).



Ethan James Petersen

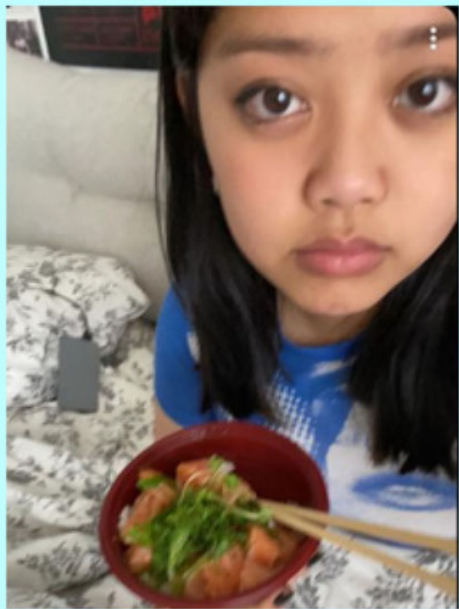


^ Middle College Dance w/ Kenny ^

The experiences I've had at Middle College can be described as none other than remarkable. Every aspect of the program presents students with various opportunities to find and be themselves. Many of my peers, including myself, became entirely different people for the better, as we created new relationships with our peers and teachers.

I am thankful for all the amazing people I met throughout this journey, and I hope to make many more next year.

Dance w/ Alisson
v



< Sad Jaden w/ noodles

I found a carrot w/ Dio
v



^ CSM picnic ^

Hangout at Mimi's house
v



< Prom



Class of 2023



DON'T YOU REMEMBER WHEN...



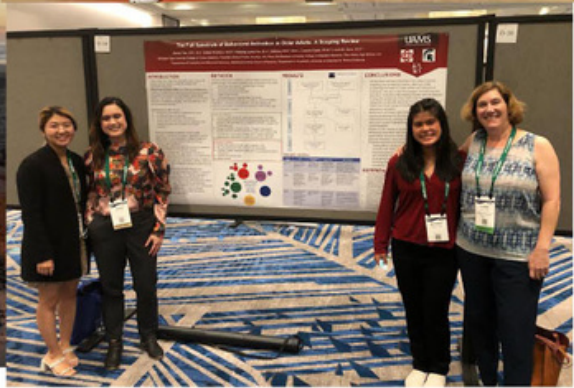
REBECCA REINHARDT MULLINS
CLASS OF 2022



I'm so thankful for the opportunity to attend Middle College and for all the lessons and experiences I've gained from being a part of the MC community. Thank you to all the teachers and staff for being so welcoming and caring towards all the students. I'm extremely grateful for the interactions I've had with the teachers and the kindness they've shown in class and in the halls. Thank you for the effort to our development and growth as students, but more importantly, people. I am incredibly appreciative of all the people I've met and the wonderful memories.

Thank you for a great two years!

- Bethany Shih



Brendan Sinclair



The most important decision that I made in the last four years was going to Middle College. Not only have I been exposed to teachers who've changed the way I think, but I've made friends who've taught me that our lives are fuller when achievements aren't the only thing we care about. I used to believe that my life everyone inevitably becomes unhappy once they leave school. Becoming a more authentic person at Middle College than I was at my home school, I've learned that I can always be happy long as I'm being myself.





BEYA VALDEZ

CLASS OF 2022

THE WAY MIDDLE COLLEGE HAS IMPACTED ME AND MY FUTURE IS ONE THAT I WILL FOREVER APPRECIATE. I AM SO GRATEFUL TO MY PAST SELF FOR TAKING THIS RISK INTO A NEW COMMUNITY WITH THE UNCERTAINTY OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN. NEXT THING YOU KNOW... COVID HIT! NOW I DEFINITELY HAD NO CLUE WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN! HOWEVER, THE MC COMMUNITY WAS SO SINCERE IN MAKING THIS PERIOD OF TIME AS COMFORTABLE AS POSSIBLE FOR US STUDENTS, AND FOR THAT I AM SINCERELY THANKFUL.

I WAS ABLE TO EXPLORE MY INDEPENDENCE, CREATIVITY, AND PERSONAL DETERMINATION WITH THE HELP OF THIS PROGRAM.

THIS PROGRAM HELPED ME LIVE MY BEST LIFE EACH AND EVERYDAY AND OPENED SO MANY NEW DOORS FOR ME. DOORS THAT WOULD HAVE REMAINED CLOSED AT MY HOME-SCHOOL. I AM NOW CONFIDENT THAT I WILL HAVE A STABLE AND SATISFYING FUTURE THANKS TO MIDDLE COLLEGE<3



R
V



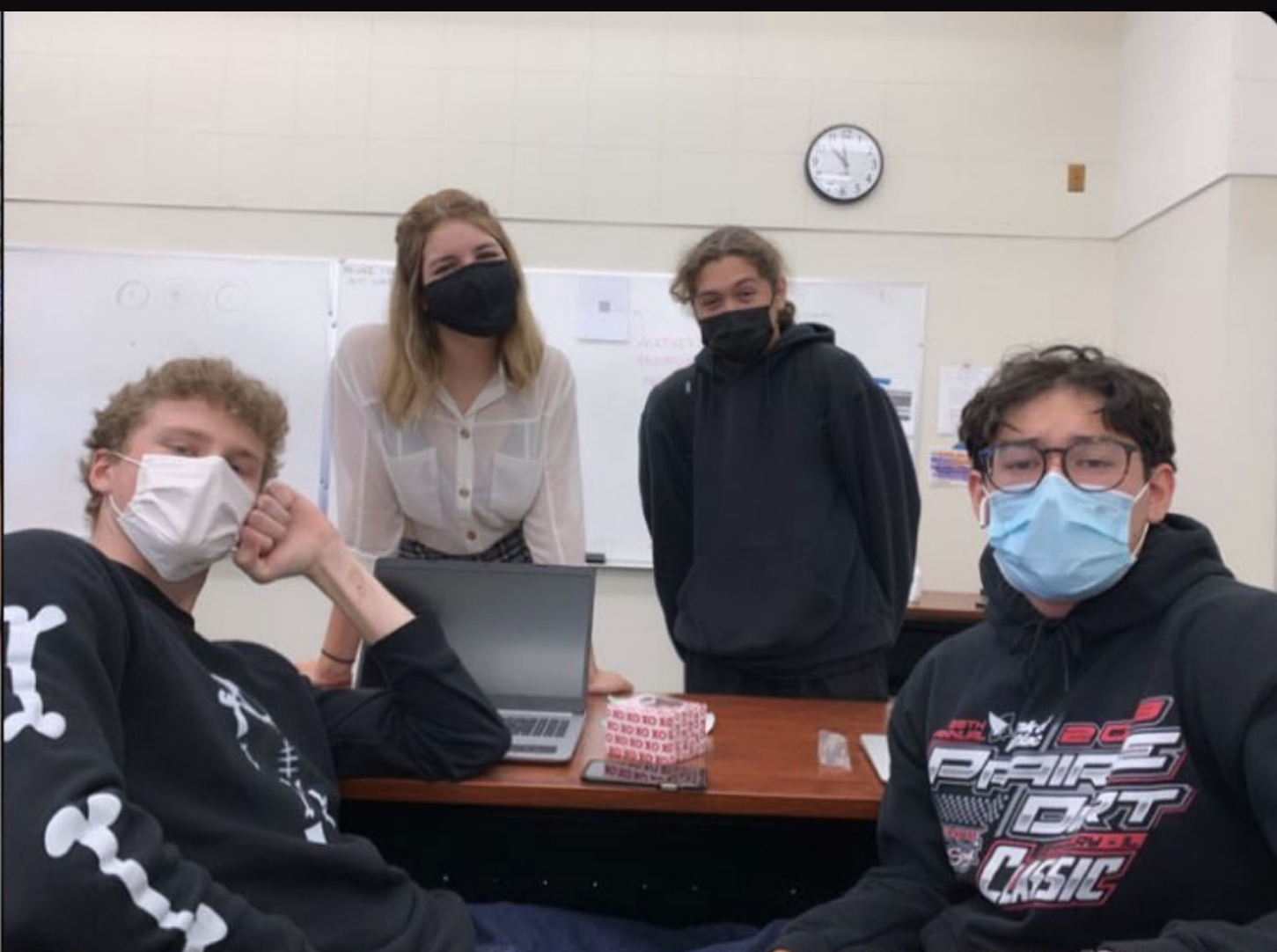
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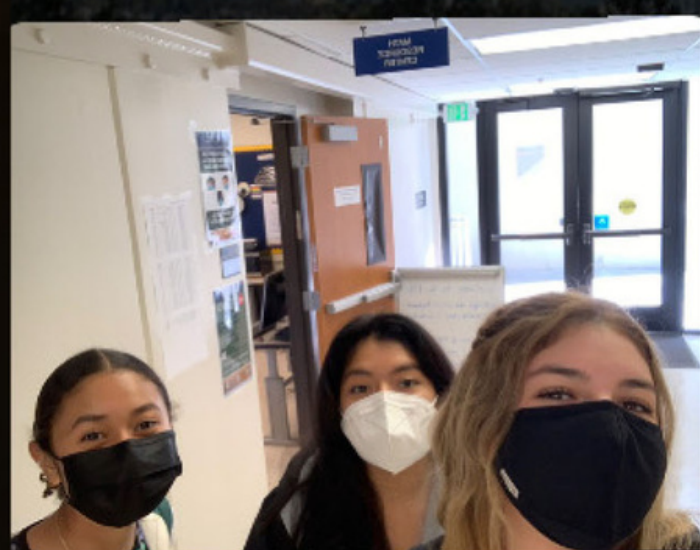


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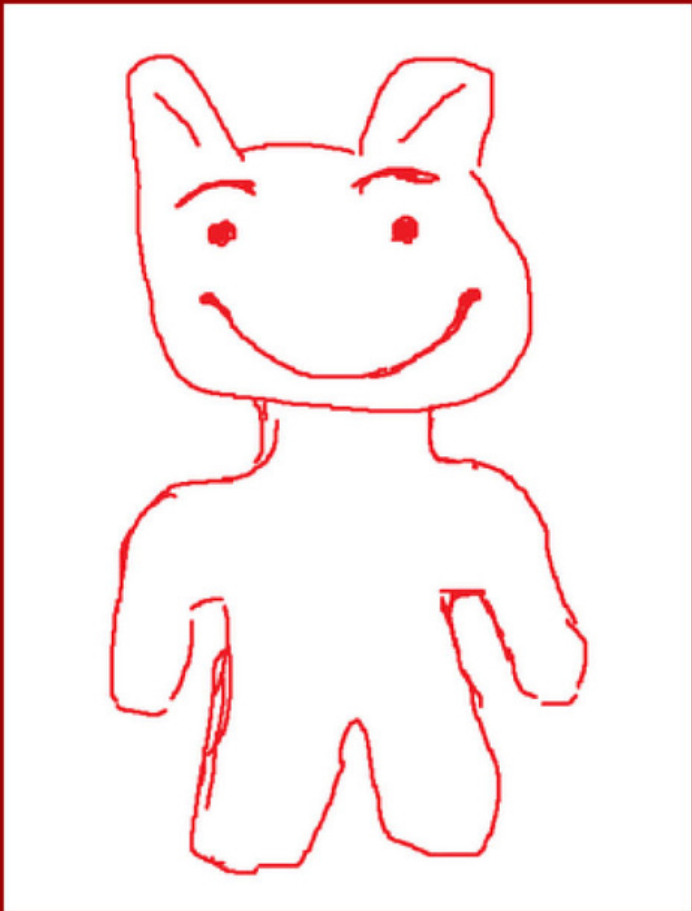
“
Find a
group of
people
who
challenge
and inspire
you, spend
a lot of
time with
them,
and it
will change
your life
”

-AMY POEHLER

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Obert Vongsavanh

6061-T6 aluminum gifts. Attention.
Agile. Whiteboard drawings.



Thanks for the memories Middle College.



See ya,





Shuqi
WU

CLASS OF 2022

Middle College has gifted me with such memorable experiences throughout the past two years. I've grown tremendously academically and personally, and I couldn't be happier. I'm truly grateful to the teachers that contributed to my education and, of course, the staff that makes Middle College possible!

"If I didn't define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive." - Audre Lorde

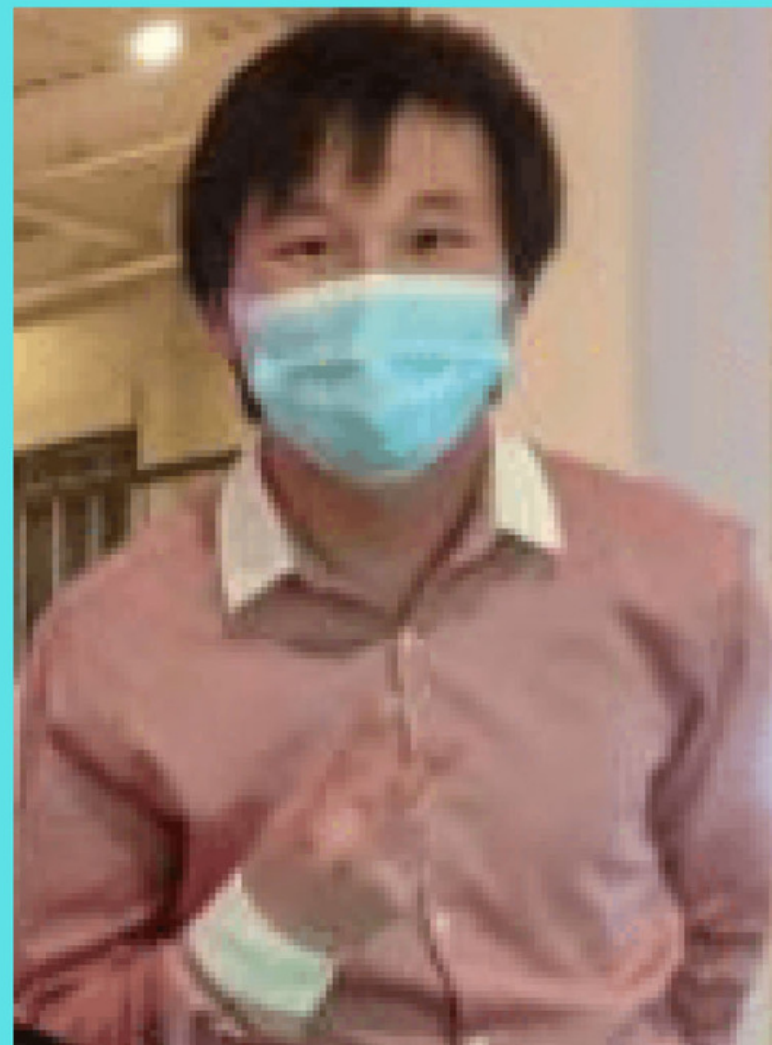




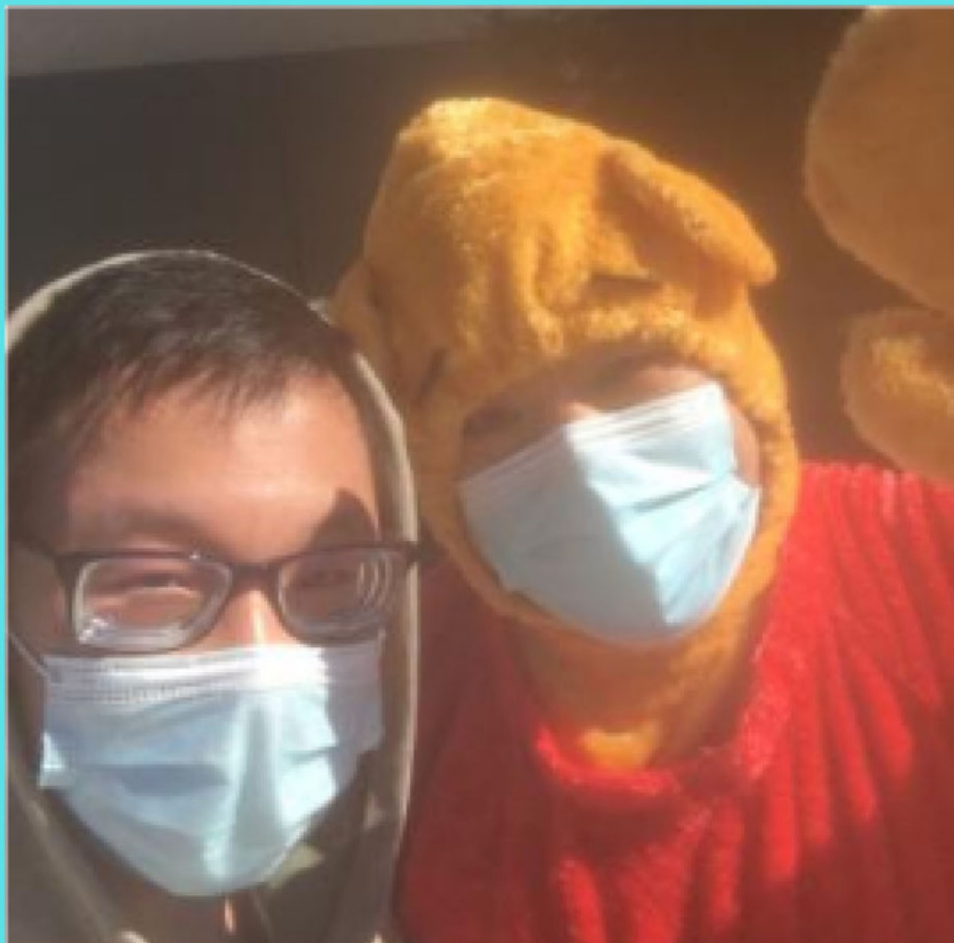
Joey Yeo

My passion for Electronic Music Production grew when I took MUS 290, and I also got to learn a variety of coding languages that weren't offered at my home site.

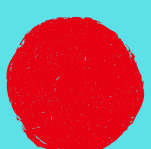
I got to become friends with so many great people whom I would never have met if I hadn't gone to Middle College



I learned that going to school could be fun, not just a monotonous two way trip from home to school and back. I wake up at least motivated to attend school each day.



Class of 2022



Vladimir Zeltser



My senior year at Middle College has been a unique yet interesting one. My decision to join Middle College enabled me to discover who I am and my ability to thrive outside the societal norms, of attending a proper high school. I am very thankful for all the teachers, professors, peers, friends, and family who have assisted me along this journey to achieve success.

Throughout my year at Middle College, I have formed many great relationships with classmates and teachers, that will serve me in the future. I have established a helpful network that will always be there for me in any situation, and for that I am grateful.



I will dearly miss Middle College, and I will not forget what it has taught and offered to me. Once again, I am very appreciative of this opportunity and will cherish all the memories that occurred because of it.



Thank you to Middle College for bringing these two weirdos together :D



Kenny Wong and Simran Kumar

2022



ALISSON
Lopez G.



MICHELLE
Lopez G.



STACEY
P. Castillo

Lindsay & Clara

"The only one
that *wanted* me
this year
was COVID"



@ming



@anika

"It's not about
the *SIZE* of
the shrimp, it's
about the *taste*."



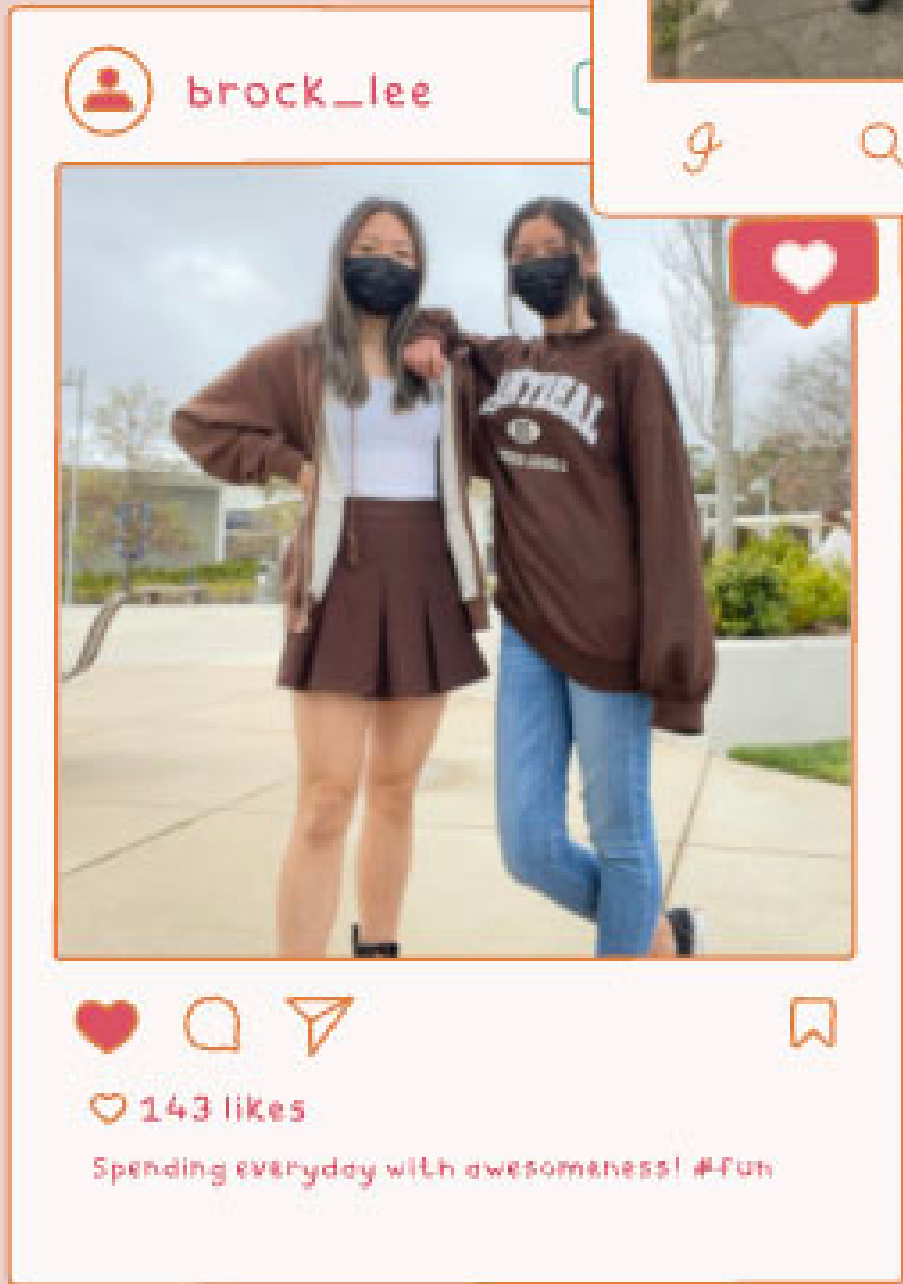
Macarons, Maffles,
and other baked
goods! (Fridays in
Building 12)

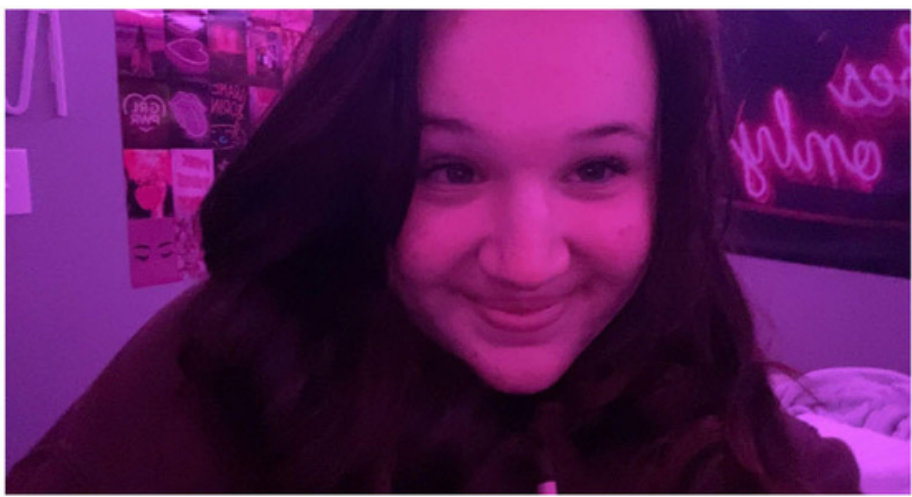
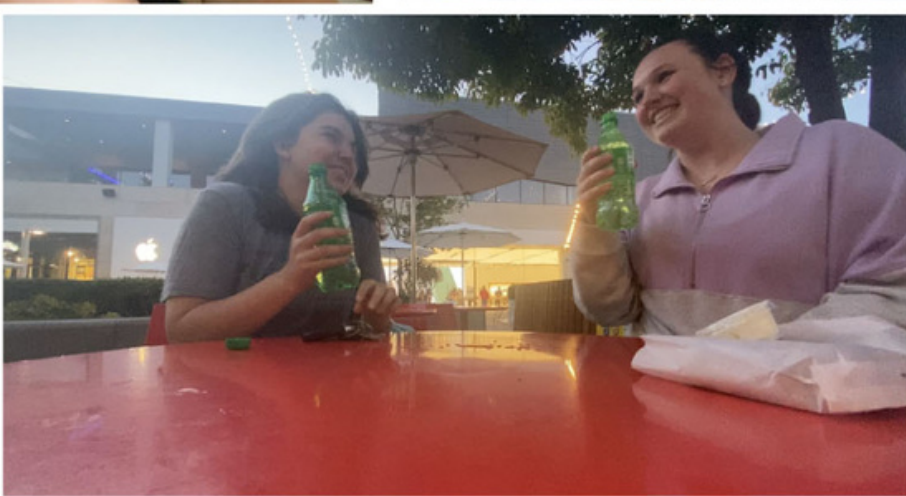
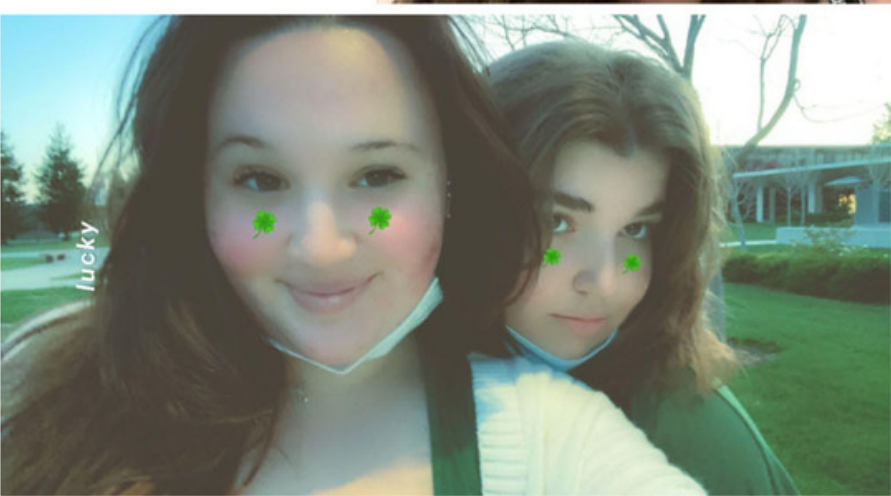
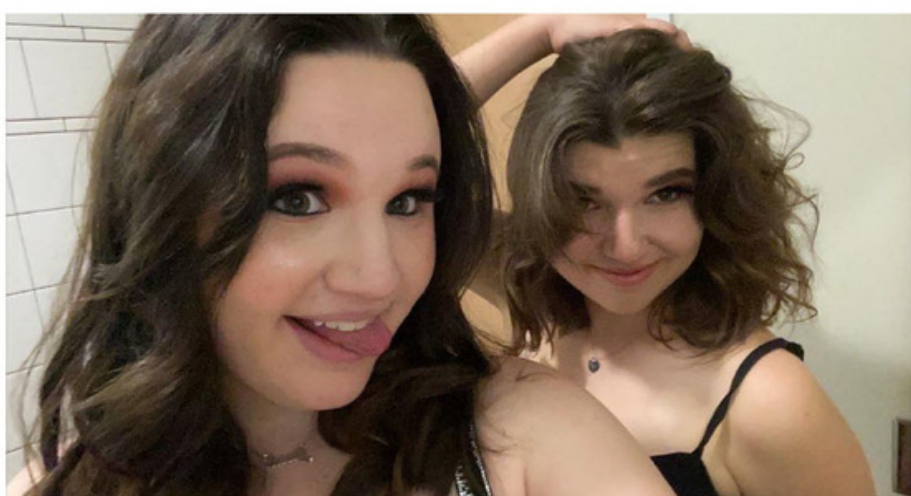




"Don't follow your DREAMS , follow my *wishes*:
@walking_flaming_trash"

"I'm actually not funny, I'm just really mean and people think I'm joking"





My name is Madison Matthews and through my time at Middle College, I have grown so much. I met my best friend Blythe, grew in my academic confidence, and actually enjoyed school for once. I'm so glad to have had the opportunity to go schooling at Middle College for Junior year and I can't wait to see what Senior year brings!

My name is Blythe Jones and I have been so greatly for the opportunity to attend Middle College. I have met so many wonderful teachers and friends including Madison and I wouldn't trade my experience for the world. Look forward to senior year and graduating with class of 2023!



MIDDLE COLLEGE

COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO 24th Commencement

Class of 2022



Superintendent Dr. Kevin Skelly...

Compromise - Middle College Graduation

Congratulations to the Graduates - Wow. Amazing to be here. Another record breaking Middle College Class. When I started as superintendent almost seven years ago, there were about 25 graduates here. Now look at you. Middle College used to be the best kept secret. But nothing this good can stay a secret forever and over the past six years interest in MC has grown by almost 500%.

Like all educational endeavors, Much of the credit for success goes to the teachers, administration, and staff. Can we give them a round of applause?

Graduations are times for advice. I googled advice to give graduates. The various lists included such pearls as "call your mom, your parents love you more than you know" and "value your health", "find a mentor," or, my favorite, "practice good hygiene habits early."

One thing that I did not find in any of my google searching was a speech extolling the virtues of compromising. So here goes.

Graduates, when you find yourself in a tough situation or a conflict, give serious thought to how you can compromise. Not how you can win, or further your dreams, or get your way, but how compromising will make you, and our world, better.

Compromising brings forth three important virtues. The first is being in community. The act of compromising tells another person that you want to be in partnership with them more than something you value, and you are willing to forgo something for the success of a relationship. When I have been at my best I have compromised in order to repair or maintain a relationship that I held dear.

The second virtue is humility. I have lots of ideas about how the world should be. And sometimes I move too fast. Sometimes I realize solutions or actions that I initially think are brilliant need serious modification when subject to the scrutiny and examination of others. It is only when I accept the suggestions humbly and recognize that I don't have a monopoly on wisdom and virtue that a better, more effective plan emerges. As I look back at my career, I can't think of anything I proposed that wasn't better after I compromised. And I learned so much from listening and incorporating others' ideas into our actions.

Finally, compromising leads to progress. We live in divided times. The Supreme Court, Congress, local politics, and school board meetings feature more polarized and polarizing decisions than ever before. And, it seems, that every decision by the government is seen as a win for a particular group and a devastating loss for others. Since so much feels at stake, nothing gets done.

So, graduates, as you venture out into this wonderful world so full of opportunities and beauty, remember to compromise. It's an action we so sorely need to address our troubled times, and it is essential to our collective sense of community

Welcome family, friends, faculty, staff, Superintendent Skelly, Trustee Dwyer, and Dr. Taylor-Mendoza to the Middle College Graduation of 2022.

“The only guaranteed way to fail is to stop trying”. Now I don’t know who said that, but I like it. I like it because it accurately describes the perseverance demonstrated by each and every student seated here tonight in a cap and gown in the midst of one of the most uncertain times in recent history. As we all witnessed, in 2020 our world was devastated by an aggressive global pandemic that left our future unknowable. Schools shut down and went remote. Some people lost their jobs, while others lost friends and family. The economy began deteriorating as businesses shut down, borders closed, everyone stayed home, quarantine began. During this time of such distress, the future of our world was unclear. As if being a teenager half way through highschool wasn’t already hard enough, along came a global pandemic! In fact, I remember sitting in my room at the beginning of quarantine thinking...what will I do now? How long is this going to last? How will this affect my future? We—as a generation—had reached a universal low.

Being a student in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic proved to be a real challenge not only academically, but physically, emotionally, and especially mentally. According to the CDC, “more than a third of highschool students reported they experienced poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic”. Essentially, we—as students, humans, children—were overwhelmed, and so many of us just “stopped trying”.

However, by doing so we were locking ourselves in with our worst enemy: failure. The only way to escape this enemy was to try. So each one of us worked to overcome the challenges that came our way, so we could not just survive, but thrive as a result of the pandemic. One of those challenges was: Zoom school. Never in my life could I have thought that I would be going to school while in my own bedroom. NEVER. However, as our new school year began, the schools needed to continue educating students and keep us and our families safe from the virus. Hence, Zoom school. We weren’t familiar with how school would function properly online. We were understandably skeptical; however, as time went on we learned to adjust, to persevere through these hard times, and to reject failure.

Middle college was a big part of that perseverance, thanks to the safe environment our teachers created for us through such values as purpose, agility, and community. Our teachers individually motivated us to build a strong purpose within ourselves. This developed in us the resilience to meet the challenges we would face. They also taught us to be agile, something we had overlooked until we were all up close and personal with a situation that forced us to be agile. Agility guided us through the obstacles presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, and proved a vital tool that helped us succeed despite our recent and future challenges. Such success could not have been possible without our community—No, our FAMILY that we found here at Middle College and at home.

I am so proud of each and every one of you and how we have continued to persevere through these strange and difficult years. This class of 2022 is an extraordinary example of how in the presence of failure, we can all take control and make the necessary changes and ensure our future and our success.

Take your future into your own hands and decide for yourself how it will look. We, the class of 2022 are the future!

And any challenges we face in the future—we’re ready!
Thank you and congratulations to the Middle College Class of 2022!!



Two years ago, we all took a step out of our “safe” boundaries when we applied to go to Middle College. Here, we experienced a path far different from the one considered normal for high schoolers as we learned online in a new school environment during the Covid pandemic, then reintegrated ourselves back into face-to-face relationships with others in person this year on the CSM campus. While we’ve lost some people who were on this two year journey with us, the majority of us are now at its end. Here we stand together, having developed ourselves socially, personally, and academically. We’ve made lifelong friends here, explored our insecurities together, and found that going to school can have far more meaning than it ever did back at our home schools. I know this is certainly true for me.

For many of us, the first year of Middle College was the most hectic as it was the beginning of our story here and as we all know, the beginning is always the hardest part to write. At times, we had to deal with insufferable professors, pull all-nighters or cram sessions to study for an exam the next day, or simply stress about how to plan out our weeks so that we could get our mountain of work done on time. On top of all of that, we had to figure out how to establish connections with others while distance learning, both in our Middle College and CSM classes. However, it is also such challenges which caused us to grow the most, as we began to understand what mixing college life with high school life was truly like. It was like being pushed into the water and having to learn how to swim, with very few “safe” places to be found. Middle College was one of those places. Perhaps this was the “independence” that we had heard so much about from Middle College, back when they introduced the program to us as sophomores. This learning process suited some well and for others.....not so much. However, I’m glad to see us all here today, to know that we made it work, to this day, together.

The final page of each of our stories is being written as I speak. Even my decision to be a graduation speaker for Middle College today is yet another page that I’m adding as the final page to my story at Middle College. I’m not a good public speaker and I’m scared to even be up here but as we’ve all learned, we’ve got to keep challenging ourselves, we’ve all got to keep trying something new as we did when we applied to Middle College. We’ve all transcended our own boundaries in some way, and found new sides and passions within ourselves that we never knew about or just recently discovered.

To you my fellow graduates I say: take comfort in having pulled through these two years and be confident that you are prepared for those to come. No matter what lies ahead for us in the future, we will get through it, just as we did to get to this day. In fact, I hope that we are all absolutely positively excited for what is to come for each of us in the future, that we will use what we’ve learned about ourselves and our passions, through Middle College. Congratulations everyone, we’ve made it.



Listening to your senior reflections these last two weeks, I often thought about the experiences of my own three children—now 30, 27, and 23. And I could not help thinking at times about the fact that my wife and I sat (figuratively) where you all sit right now, unknown to each other, blind to the possibility that we would one day meet in Paris, having traveled from Japan and Africa where we each lived at the time, to see if we loved each other as much in real life as we did in the letters we had written to each other. —Ah but I am getting ahead of myself...

You, the class of '22, and I have something in common tonight: We are all seniors. You are high school seniors, as my wife and I were back then; and I, too, qualify as a senior, now that I'm sixty. Yet we are all graduating tonight, moving on to whatever is next: for most of you, college somewhere; for me, retirement after teaching high school English for thirty-five years. (The reason, by the way, that my wife and I did not know each other in high school was because I was in the bottom ten percent of the class while she was headed to UCSB where she no doubt thought she knew what the future held—and it wasn't me.

The thing is, though, that as humans we are terrible at predicting what we will be like, what we will love or want to be in the years to come. According to the psychologist Daniel Gilbert, we tend to believe that who we are now, what we value today, what we like at this moment will be the same ten years from now.

Now how many of you, if I gave you the chance right here, would want to flashfreeze yourself and all you are at this time, with no chance to change, grow, or discover any new possible selves in the years to come? Anyone? Yeah, I didn't think so.

Returning to that stage where my wife and I sat back in high school, just rows but really miles apart, no one, least of all me, would have imagined that I would become an English teacher (I mean, I got a D- in English senior year). And certainly no one would have believed that I would end up going to and thriving at UCSB after first working in a printing shop and parking cars at the state fair where a man my father had once fired was my boss and made my life hell once he found out who my father was. Nor would there have been any reason for me or anyone else to expect that I would go on to publish over thirty books—about teaching, no less! But most of all, I could not in my wildest dreams have believed that I would one day marry and live happily ever after with Susan Dykman, that girl sitting just a few rows over from me at graduation that afternoon when we were your age.

So take a second and look around—down your row and across the aisle. You have no idea who might be sitting there with you: The future co-founder of the next Microsoft or Google? Our future president, whenever she decides she is ready to run? The love of your life? Some artist like Addy or Julia who will go on to capture the zeitgeist of this era, whose art will be displayed in the greatest museums in the world?

Nor can you know the details about your own life, for we rarely end up living the story we thought our life would tell.... After all, how can we possibly know all of our possible selves—and why would we want to? Isn't that some part of the excitement of this moment for us both: What is next? How will it turn out? What will we discover—about ourselves or others or life?

What I do know is that we are not complete unto ourselves, that we can get nowhere worth going on our own. So we must take our lessons where we find them, learning as we go who we are and how to live.

We have to be like Ethan Dubovsky, for example, who told me during one of our chats last year that he just knew this pandemic thing was going to last for a long time. So he set about watching films, studying films—over 400 films last year, methodically examining them, developing a YouTube channel where he also began doing reviews.

We have to be like Charlotte Fenwick, who showed us all what it means to apply the first rule of improv to life: Yes...and... Meaning you take what life throws you and use it for your own ends, flipping it to find the laughter and wisdom within.

Or we can be like Maya Richter, who has reminded me over the last two years that we must learn to trust those things that we love most---even if those things are cockroaches, snakes, and spiders, beautiful birds, and, umm, rodents.

And we can learn such important lessons from people like Alexandra and Angela Dayag and so many other MC students whose passions burn bright for policies, politics, and people.

Whatever we do, we will need models and mentors, guides and goals to show us the way, for the road ahead is rarely straight nor paved as we would hope.

To discover ourselves, the story our lives will tell, who or what we are to become, requires that we not follow the paths of all who have come before us, but that we each make our own way, with the help of those models and mentors we find throughout our journey. As the poet Antonio Machado warns us:

Traveler, there is no road;
you make your own path as you walk.
As you walk, you make your own road,
and when you look back
you see the path
you will never travel again.

Or perhaps, more appropriate to this moment, I think of William Stafford's poem "Vocation" in which he imagines himself at about your age standing on a hilltop perhaps a bit like this one, looking out toward the horizon to the west, and says:

I hear [my father] say while I stand between the two,
helpless, both of them part of me:
"Your job is to find what the world is trying to be."

You can't know yet what the world is trying to be or what your role will be in that world, but when that day comes, you will want to be ready for it and hold on tight when it arrives.

That girl sitting a few rows away from me at graduation so long ago? We will celebrate our thirty-fifth anniversary next week and we just married our daughter to a great man she did not even know three years ago. So let's you and I learn from and listen to Charlotte and think, Yes...and...when the world throws us an oyster we don't know how to open or eat, and keep in our mind and heart the words of the poet Mary Oliver as we leave tonight to whatever is next for each of us:

Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

Trustee Linda Lees Dwyer...

MC Graduation Address from Linda Lees Dwyer

I am only one,
but I am one.

I cannot do everything,
but still I can do something.

And because I cannot do everything,
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.

These words were written by

Edward Everett Hale-born in 1822- 200 years ago. He led a life of compassion and service-was a strong advocate for education for all in a time when education was not available to every child and wrote a story that became the impetus for the beginning of the Lend A Hand Society, which like so many others continues to this day to provide assistance to families, individuals, seniors and disabled people. Sending books to schools and libraries in areas of need was one of their initial missions.

Edward lived in a time where electricity and indoor plumbing were not widely available. On line referred to laundry hanging on a line or an unlucky fish on a hook and line. Today- we text, twitter, blog, google, email, youtube and on and on—The world has changed, but has it? Under the glitter and gloss and film and fog-we still have hunger and needs. We still struggle as a people to work together, to pull together, to be together.

You are leaving this nurturing environment to go out into the bigger world of education and work and life. Please take your best self with you-rejoicing in all that you have accomplished and have received-always seeking to continue to learn and grow and be the best you can be.

Edward Everett Hale—almost 200 years ago said that what we are meant to do is To look up and not down, to look forward and not back, To look out and not in—and To lend a hand.

Congratulations to you as you take your strong hands out into the world. We need you.



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Zachary J. Lichaa

Mr. Burke often credited his conversations with Zachary during the quarantine as helping him get through those crazy days. Zachary brings to every class such a commitment to his own success and that of others around him. As his friends at MC would surely attest, he is also a great friend when they need him. When we needed someone to sing the National Anthem at the MC graduation, we knew we could count on Zach. We know he will thrive at Pepperdine where he is headed to study theater and we will look for his name in lights on Broadway in the future!

Beya Valdez

Beya Valdez seems to offer up an enthusiastic YES! to life. Want to speak at this year's graduation? Yes! Have thoughts about how to improve Middle College? Yes! She brings a great enthusiasm to the classroom, to the businesses she's started, to her closest friends, and to the subjects she is studying at CSM. We are confident that Beya will do great things wherever she goes, for her answer to the question is always a heartfelt Yes! to the possibilities of the world.

Joey Yeo

If Middle College had a mascot, it would be Joey Yeo. He brings a joy with him every day that we wish we could bottle. He is excited about everyone and everything, it often seems. Whether he is hanging out with friends, talking with teachers, creating music, or helping someone out, he seems to embody the spirit of Middle College. The fact that he is up here on the stage even at graduation giving one of the graduation speeches today only reminds us what a special member of the MC community he is.

Dalia Abu Al Hassan

We are so glad that Dalia came to Middle College this year. Not only is she the most diligent and hardworking of students, but she wonderfully filled out a trio of friends into an awesome quadruple. Dalia is a bright and caring individual who is coming to her own and will undoubtedly make her family proud as she pursues the path that she knows is best for her.

Alexis Alegria

A dash of sass, several cups of curiosity, a t-spoon of marching to the beat of her own drummer, and a whole bunch of fun and you have a recipe for Alexis. Alexis brings people together with her infectious personality and builds community, getting quieter people to open up and be vulnerable. When she opens up as well, magic happens. We can't wait to see what kind of magic she makes happen at CSM and beyond.

Kent Amahan

Kent is a thoughtful young man who takes into consideration new ideas and implements them in his life. He enjoys philosophical discussions and sees their relevance to the world around him. His choice to attend Middle College was a step into something new and he has made the most of that opportunity, putting himself on a trajectory to a promising future in whatever field he chooses to pursue.

Khadija Amani

Khadija slays. She slays as a student and as a human being. Her warm and vibrant personality has a way of making all around her smile and feel at ease. Her energy is infectious and she was one of those students who even made teaching over zoom a pleasure. There is even more to come from Khadija in the next chapter and we have no doubt that she will continue to slay, slay slay!

Sheima Amir-Araghi

Sheima brings her style and keen eye with her wherever she goes. She asks the questions, sees the connections. Her style is not limited to the amazing way she curates her clothes, for she is also a poet, one who weaves words, who gives voice to the person she is and will go on to become.

Ysabella Ballesteros-Barajas

Bella is an impressive young woman who has already accomplished so much at such a young age. Whether it's leading her cheerleading team, achieving A+'s in her advanced science classes, writing incredibly beautiful creative narratives, or building her own business styling the stars, Bella sets incredibly high expectations for herself and is able to clear every hurdle that she comes across. We know without a doubt that she will continue to exceed every goal that she sets as she pursues her career in Sonography.

Mayah Brasse

Three words that come to mind when we think of Mayah are kind, brave, and free. It's quite perfect that she feels most at home in nature, a place as wild and as generous as she. Mayah, we are so thankful that you "unvisibled" yourself, because we are a better world with your abundant spirit reverberating through it, and we wish you all the best as you pursue sociology at Lewis and Clarke next year!

Jasmine Milagros Cardenas

Jasmine is a keen observer who uses her quiet strength and curiosity to soak up the world around her. With her wry sense of humor and enthusiasm, she is a natural role model for the kids at the Boys and Girls Club in Redwood City, and she also codes and paints as creative outlets. Wherever the future takes you, we know you'll make it brighter and better for those around you!

Kiana Castro

With a cool laid-backness and ease in her laughter, one might underestimate how tough Kiana is and how determined she can be. While balancing her time between work, school, and softball Kiana has persevered through many trials and tribulations this year but has always bounced back like the fierce competitor she is. She joins many of her MC graduates heading to the Pacific Northwest, as she attends the University of Oregon next year.

Gisella Chan

Gisella has an ability to analyze details while also seeing the whole picture that makes her able to operate on multiple levels at the same time. She is a gifted writer, a gifted mathematician and has an artist's eye, as her photography demonstrates. This wonderful combination of talents and abilities is undoubtedly what UC Berkeley saw in her and we can't wait to see what she does with these, there and beyond!

Hilary Chung

Hilary flies under the radar sometimes, but as you get to know her you find a young woman who is very serious about her education. From an early age, Hilary has had to rely on herself, and focusing on her education was something she knew she could control and would be a key to her future success. Midway through her senior year Hilary finally had some space to "smell the roses" and ask herself, who am I? and who do I want to be? Hilary, we hope you will continue finding space to ponder life's questions on the lawn, in the sun, at UC Berkeley. We are confident you will succeed at both!

Rowan Clarke

Rowan may come off at first as shy and quiet, but as soon as you get to know her, you quickly realize just how friendly and intelligent she is. She has the kind of unique energy that only the coolest people will gravitate towards, those who are also willing to defy conventions and be truly free. It truly feels like she has found the ideal home for herself for the next few years up at Lewis & Clark College.

Catalina Elizabeth Coral

Catalina never found a college to which she did not want to apply because she is driven by her curiosity and hunger to learn about seemingly everything--literature, whales, the environment, business, and so much more. She seems to see the world as one big school, everyday a new class, a new opportunity to learn and take that learning and use it to help others and improve the world. We know she will bring that passion with her to Brown University next year and make a home for herself there as she settles in to soak it all up.

Addison Cornwall

Addy is just so amazingly Addy. You cannot help but smile and feel brighter inside when you interact with this awesome human being. Whether adding unique insights to a classroom conversation, taking a leadership role in clubs, or sharing their amazing artwork, Addy's presence shines and has made Middle College a better place. Addy, please plan to stop by regularly next year as we will need our regular dose of your positivity and pizzazz. And remember us when you publish that graphic novel that is going to change lives!

Maya Crossley

We are so glad that Maya came to us in her senior year. She has a curious mind, kind heart and is thoughtful about the ways our society needs to progress beyond the structures that fail to serve individuals. She is also a budding entrepreneur who knits awesome hats and we can't wait to see how she puts her wonderful combination of traits and talents to use as she explores business at CSM next year.

Melissa Cuadra

Melissa truly is one of the sweetest human beings we've had the pleasure of watching grow these past two years. Although she may be quiet, we would warn everyone not to underestimate her bright mind and perseverance. She has had to balance a lot these past two years, including being a teacher and best big sister to her younger brother. We know she will continue to face all challenges head on and with a humility that is abundantly admirable. We know she will continue to defy expectations next year at CSM.

Isabella Dal Porto

Izzie is an amazing young woman. She works super hard, both in school and out at various part time jobs, having now worked at nearly every store at the Hillsdale Mall. She has been a dedicated leader of The Middle College Effect, helping to raise thousands of dollars for women in Guatemala to use to grow small businesses. The ripple effects of her efforts are endless. Someday a very lucky elementary school class of students is going to love her maybe even more than we do. We wish her all the best at Seattle University next year.

Angela Malig Dayag

Angela is a radical healer. She is not only willing to stand up for what she believes is right, she does so with a quiet confidence that clearly communicates how grounded she is in her sense of self and how purpose driven she can be when it comes to challenging the systems of oppression. Her poetry and her creative narratives are mesmerizing, weaving words in layers that are both assertive and tender. I have no doubt that you all will hear her name again as she continues to remake the narratives of our world so that we can all get free.

Olivia Dinardo

There are two consistent memories of Liv that stick out from our year of Distance Learning. One is guessing which state she was doing school from today - is it a California day, or an Arizona day, or are we Zooming in from Oklahoma? Olivia is an elite athlete who often had to do school from airports & hotel rooms in order to get seen by different colleges - which distance learning actually made possible. The other lasting memory was the fact that whenever you'd check in on her in a Zoom breakout room, it almost always turned into a conversation that left you smiling. Olivia has an infectious personality that typically leads to laughter whenever you're around her. This dedication to being as student athlete while also being a person that people gravitate towards will serve Olivia well the next few years at the University of Arizona.

Ethan Dubovsky

Ethan has learned to make obstacles into opportunities, learned that experience is simply what stories are made of and will be the basis of his next great film as he goes on to make movies worthy of being hung up on the wall of his room along side all the other greats there! In the meantime, we will be able to keep track of what he is watching and thinking from his YouTube channel where he shares his insights about and love of film.

Nathan T. Dujsik

Nathan may be on the quiet and laconic side, but this does not mean he is not thinking and processing all the ideas swirling around him in the culture. He is becoming a young man who knows which messages are truth and will lead to stronger, healthier and more inclusive and compassionate communities. We know that he will take what he has learned at Middle College and make sure that he builds that kind of community around him as he continues his studies at Loyola Marymount University.

Rowe Eis

Rowe is a non-linear girl living in a linear world. She is someone who is so comfortable with the questions, always ready to dive head first into the murky business of difficult ideas and challenging emotions. She's not afraid to speak her mind, and she is someone we all admire for this -- for her strength and unwillingness to be tamed by the rigid expectations of society. The truth is, the culture hasn't developed ways to measure the kind of brilliance of Rowe Eis, and we hope it never does.

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Katherine Errington

Katherine is a young woman of extraordinary abilities. She has been an invaluable student leader of the Middle College newsletter. She has taken some of CSMs most challenging classes and tutored college students while still in high school. But, more importantly, she has a heart that makes you feel good about the human race. Wherever she ends up studying next, they will be lucky to have her in their midst.

Charlotte Fenwick

Always the thoughtful, sensitive thinker, every class at MC is made better when Charlotte was in the house. She asked the questions that challenged us all to think, teachers and students alike, and showed us all what strength of character looks like when confronting the challenges we encounter in our lives. Charlotte has taught us all to live by the improv rule "Yes...and!" and we know she will continue to be a force of centered strength at Cap Poly Humboldt.

Brooke Freeman

The author and educator Sir Ken Robinson speaks of the importance of finding one's "element," that context in which we see someone most at home, most engaged, most content. For Brooke, this is her art. In the beautiful sculptures, she helps us see aspects of the natural world in new ways--flowers made from luminescent green soda bottles! Others made from glass! Brooke takes her artistic sensibility and talents with her down to UC Riverside where she will be ready to flourish.

Dominique Garibay

Dominique is a young woman learning to embrace all aspects of herself, not allowing society to force her to fit into some pre-conceived notion of who she is supposed to be. In doing so, she exudes a quiet strength and has a groundedness that emanates out and impacts others around her. She listens deeply, and then takes what she learns and grows and moves forward. These wonderful qualities are going to serve her well at CSM and beyond!

Daniela Gonzalez

Daniela is very musically driven and connected, if you didn't know. It seemed as if much of our conversations were about one concert or another. Pitbull concert - yep. Justin Bieber concert - sure. A 2nd Bieber concert in a different town - oh why not?!? What about going to college and studying on the beach in paradise - that's so Daniela. It is with this same passion and energy that Daniela will bring to her studies as a future nurse at Hawaii Pacific University.

Ashley Gonzalez

If you want to know what being goal-oriented looks like, just look at Ashley. She wanted an internship at a dentists office and went out and got one. She wanted to go to University of the Pacific to study dentistry, and that is just what she is going on to do. Ashley has taken challenging classes at CSM that have impacted her thinking about philosphy and ethics. She wants to be a dentist who serves every member of her community. She makes her family proud and we are so proud of her as well. We wish you all the best at UOP next year.

Arthur Graf

Arthur is an engineer in every sense of the world. He sees the world in black and white, standing strongly in his purpose while orienting himself toward problem solving and having fun. He cares deeply for nature, a love that we know will continue to fuel his connections to the world. He also cares very deeply about his community, a tight-knit group of people that get the benefit of sharing his jokes and his delicious, home-cooked meals. We wish you all the best at Arizona next year, Arthur!

Naz Gulden

Many Middle College students come to us ready to start a new chapter in their lives, and Naz is a wonderful example of a young woman who decided that the future depends on what you are doing now. She knows how to take a look around her and ask the question, what can I learn from this? She demonstrates this throughout her life whether it's finding her way through middle school after moving here from Turkey, beginning high school in a new city, and finally, applying to Middle College, Naz has learned from all of her experiences. We look forward to watching you write your next chapter here at CSM in the fall.

Harris Hilbert

Harris is proof that modern philosophers can have sagging pants and drive pick up trucks. He may have grease under his nails, but he also has amazing thoughts running through his head and is curious, articulate and dedicated. We have no doubt that Harris will keep reading, keep thinking and keep dedicating himself to whatever possibilities present themselves at University of Colorado at Boulder or wherever his path leads.

Tyler Hill

Tyler is the perfect embodiment of the idea of "still waters run deep." So quiet, so thoughtful, but in the privacy of the 1:1 chat, he shares all the questions that engage that mind of his. Whether it is the intricacies of robotics or his fascination with World War Two planes and other machines of wonder and war, Tyler seems already to possess the understanding of the great scientists and engineers of that era. We will watch the skies in the future for signs of his genius, grateful for his good and generous nature and quiet humor.

Sydney Hilliard

We are so very grateful for the vulnerability, open mindedness, and open-heart that Sydney brought to our community here every day. It is abundantly clear to us just what a strong young woman she is, and we know that she will continue watching the world with a keen eye for injustice and untangling herself from these harmful algorithms in the process. We are in awe of Sydney, and we know that she'll continue to do great things at UC Irvine.

Carmen Hinton

Carmen is quite possibly one of the most well-rounded individuals we've ever met. A brilliant student, a hard worker, and, perhaps above all, a kind and considerate friend, Carmen is wise beyond her years. Her classmates hold her in high esteem and we think it is reflective of the dignity with which she holds herself and with which she holds others. We know that Carmen will always be available to help those who reach out to her because she understands the strength of the village. With a scholarship for soccer, Carmen will attend Cal State Fullerton next year.

Sarah Huerta

The banana slug is an underrated creature. In nature, they provide nutrients to the soil. Sarah is similar only to a banana slug in that she too has provided nutrients to the Middle College "soil". She leads by example and commands attention when she speaks as she has come to realize the worth of her voice, her ideas, and her perspectives. She is thoughtful of her peers and provides stability to all who know her. Sarah is not afraid to ask why things are the way they are and we have no doubt that she will thrive at UC Santa Cruz and beyond as she will help others to see new possibilities for how things could be.

Kiana Castro

With a cool laid-backness and ease in her laughter, one might underestimate how tough Kiana is and how determined she can be. While balancing her time between work, school, and softball Kiana has persevered through many trials and tribulations this year but has always bounced back like the fierce competitor she is. She joins many of her MC graduates heading to the Pacific Northwest, as she attends the University of Oregon next year.

Alexandra Tsipoulou

We've had the incredible joy of getting to know Alex this year not only through our interactions, but also through her writing. She is absolutely incredible with words, whic comes as no surprise when you find out just what a prolific reader she is. Alex has a deep understanding of how our words hold power -- they can be used to transform our consciousness, to create imaginary borders and to help us expand beyond them, to divert power from many to the hands of a few. We can rest easy knowing that Alex will work to challenge the ways that words are used perpetuate the invisible forces of power she pursues the field of political science at UC Berkeley.

Erena Imura

Erena's quiet demeanor belies the incredible expansiveness of her mind. Her writing is dense with poetry, revealing the keen ways in which she diligent observations of the world and makes significant beauty from the murk of it. Her strength emanates from her stillness, a quiet storm that brews just below the surface, and everyone who has the privilege of tapping into the depths of this world is sure to be forever changed by it.

Ali S. Khalil

Although Ali has been with Middle College for only a year, we have all come to know and love him as someone who is incredibly kind. As his advisor, I've gotten a window into what motivates him -- his family, his friends, and having fun. It's been a lot of fun getting to know you this year, Ali -- we are so glad you chose us!

Shoshana Kurland

Shoshana, such a wonderfully thoughtful and kind member of the MC community. You can find her reading, out for walks in nature, or working away on her classes over in Building 10 with a view of the world outside the window. Every teacher is grateful for the enthusiasm she brings to her learning and the ideas that she shares in the class with others.

Allison Lang

Alie never ceases to surprise in all the most wonderful ways. Whether it is the amazing paper she wrote about some important topic involving human nature or human rights, or some book you see her reading or she mentions in passing having read, you are reminded at every turn what a voracious, compassionate, and original mind she has. And then she tells you she is going off to live in the mountains for a few weeks in the summer and you realize yet again that this is a young woman who knows her own mind and will chart her own course through the world in the years to come. Lewis and Clark University is the perfect place for her to continue her explorations!

Perrine Lee

Perrine is one of our unsung heroes. She has done so much, behind the scenes, to help cultivate the Middle College Community. If you ever wondered who puts together the birthday wall, who replenishes our stack of crossword puzzles, who helped make our dance a huge hit....well Perrine is front & center in that work. Considering all that Perrine has overcome in her life...it says so much about who she is as person that one of her main priorities is to make sure everyone else enjoys their experience. Thanks for all that you have done for our community, Perrine! We know you will continue to contribute to this vital fabric at the University of Portland.

Ryan Lee

Ryan flies under the radar sometimes, but as you get to know him you quickly discover that Ryan is a young man who is driven to succeed. Not only succeed...but to consistently improve as a student. It always feels like Ryan looks at school as a chance to keep getting better at learning. College next year is going to be a great platform for Ryan to keep evolving as a student & as a person. Good luck moving forward, Ryan!

Hailey Faith Lo

Hailey is a natural leader, independent and intelligent, who others seek out for assistance and advice. She has worked hard to focus on growing herself and finding ways to hold boundaries and to support others to help themselves so she has this room to grow. We are so grateful to have been a part of your journey and wish you the best at CSU Fullerton next year!

Kaitlyn Danielle Majlesi

Kaitlyn is such a remarkable young woman! She has faced many challenges in getting to this stage, and yet, those challenges have not diminished her determination to always move forward. Kaitlyn brings so many amazing qualities with her: a willingness to deeply engage with questions raised in class; a humor that helps her weather difficult times, and an ability to communicate her ideas and her feelings in a way that her audience truly understands. We know that these qualities will serve her well as she continues her studies at CSM and beyond.



ACCEPTANCE OF THE

class of 2022

Ona Manera Gomez

Ona is such a talented, dedicated human being. When Ona first joined us as a junior, even on Zoom you could tell this was someone ready to make a difference in our community! Senior year we have been so grateful to have your strength, passion and thoughtfulness day in and day out, in person here at Middle College. She is always finding ways to help out, encourage others, and lead fearlessly. We will miss you Ona and wish you the best of luck in Santa Barbara and beyond!

Melissa Mendez

The warm smile and quiet demeanor hide how truly confident and incredible Melissa is. Underneath, Melissa is a strong, ambitious, resilient go-getter who does not let setbacks get in her way. Not only does she face the world with a strong ethical compass and a keen sense of self-awareness, she does with absolute non-judgment and a huge open heart. We look forward to watching Melissa show the world what we already know, a future leader is in our midst.

Connor Moriarty

Connor is quite simply a crack up. The quick wit that he has brought to our community this past year is matched in equal weight to the amount of open-mindedness and kindness that we have seen from him. We are so thankful he decided to spend his last year with us; we have been a much more light-hearted, joyful community for it. We wish him all the best at LMU next year and beyond!

Julia Morriu

Julia was so eager to put distance learning behind her. She was one of our small number of students who joined us in-person back at the Adult School. You could tell she just wanted to get back to 'doing normal' again. It was an opportunity to showcase her fashion sense (complete with matching masks) & then as we came back to CSM it was a chance to get in art studios & to follow her passions as a student. All the best in the future & keep chasing those passions in life!

Manal Moussaoui

Manal was one of a cadre of 7 students who came back in person in the spring (mice, you know who you are), and made that a meaningful and fun learning environment. Manal thinks deeply about ideas and it is not at all surprising to find yourself in an extended conversation with her about fate and free will. We have no doubt that she is going to slay at University of Redlands as well!

Stephanie Neuendorff

Stephanie has taught us many lessons this year: how to connect authentically and with purpose, how to build trust through patience and holding space, how to shed the expectations of others in order to find meaning in our true selves, and how to find that meaning in discovering what you are not. We are inspired by Stephanie's ability to stay grounded in themselves no matter what mosh pit life throws them into, and we will know they will continue to inspire others, perhaps without even knowing it. Thank you Stephanie!

Angie Michelle Nguyen

Angie just might take over the world someday. With her tenacious attitude and ability to read people, she is a natural leader who was born to "rock the boat" and transform the mainstream. Whether it's running her own business (or several) or shaking up her field of choice, Angie has the skills, passion, and perseverance to make it happen. We wish you all the best, Angie!!

Leticia Nicole Olaya

Leticia has an evident grace about her, but do not confuse her serenity for a lack of strength or depth. She is an incredibly handworker with ambition and abilities that shine through. She might be the only one in the room with her personality type, but that doesn't phase her. She is who she is and she can stand and explain herself in a way that makes people want to listen and get to know her. These are the qualities of an emerging leader and we have no doubt that she is going to have an impact at every community that is lucky enough to have her next year.

Emma Oliver

You might not see it from where you are sitting, but Emma has one of the most radiant spirits you will have the privilege of being in company with. She glows without even trying and with a humility, generosity, and kindness that leaves everyone in her wake feeling cared for. This kind of strength has an invisible but powerful doppler effect, and we know it will be felt by everyone who is lucky enough to meet her at the University of Oregon.

Adam Pearlman

Adam knows how to persist and to create happy endings. His path has taken him in many directions over the past three years and has not always been a smooth one, but Adam is proof that rough waters make for highly polished and solid rocks, and he is heading off to the University of Arizona having found himself and secure in the skills and self-knowing that are going to serve him well there and beyond. Keep being one of the good guys, Adam. The world needs them!

Mikha Portugal

Mikha is one of those students who might, at first, slip a bit under the radar, but watch out. She is coming into her own. A bright and curious young woman, she has grown tremendously over the past year and is emerging very ready to take what she has learned and use it to not only transform into an amazing adult but to transform others in her community as well. We wish her all the best at CSM and beyond on her beautiful journey!

Ahmed Rashad

Ahmed is a quiet, shy man....and then you get to know him. His confidence is understated but strong, his faith is understated but strong, and his expectations of himself are understated but strong. He is a man who works really hard for everything he receives and takes nothing for granted. He will give you his last dollar, he will drop everything to be there for his friends and family, and he is selfless and kind. We can't wait to cheer Ahmed on as he continues his football career here at CSM, Go Bulldogs!

Rebecca Reinhardt Mullins

Rebecca brought so much to the MC community in different and sometimes quiet ways, always bringing people together whether in-class or online, through clubs or through games. Rebecca created the Wellness Club at a time when many others were looking to start coasting, so each week people would gather and use art to think about life and feel a bit better about it. And as if that weren't enough, Rebecca stepped up to take on the yearbook in the last weeks of the semester to give that one last gift to the whole community!

Maya Richter

If you have ever witnessed Maya telling a story, about one of her pets, especially her Madagascar hissing cockroaches, you know you are in the presence of a great storyteller. Her intelligence is overshadowed by her humbleness but you see it when she tells her stories, like the time she woke up only to realize her cockroaches had escaped their enclosure. We feel like Jane Goodall had Maya Richter in mind when she said "THERE IS STILL SO MUCH IN THE WORLD WORTH FIGHTING FOR. SO MUCH THAT IS BEAUTIFUL, SO MANY WONDERFUL PEOPLE WORKING TO REVERSE THE HARM, TO HELP ALLEVIATE THE SUFFERING. AND SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE DEDICATED TO MAKING THIS A BETTER WORLD." Maya is on her way to Cal State Long Beach to ensure the earth is protected for every species to thrive, and much to our unease, even the cockroaches.

Maria Fernanda Rodriguez

Maria has the power of a thousand suns pulsing through her veins. That power comes out in her amazing entrepreneurialism dipping hundreds and hundreds of strawberries in chocolate with her mother and marketing and selling them with great success. That power comes out in the wisdom she has about the value in finding a quiet place to reflect and feel the earth beneath your feet. That power comes through in her love for her family and the stories she can tell about a crotchety old art teacher whose heart she can soften and come to love or about sitting on the porch with her father and staring up at the stars. Watch out world. This powerful young woman is going to have an impact and the world will be better for it as she continues her studies at CSM and beyond.

Mya Rose Wright

Mya came to us in her senior year proving that she can set goals and achieve them. Her writing reveals a keen, critical mind that recognizes the structures around us that limit our abilities to be free. We know that she will continue to deconstruct these invisible barriers so that others can shed the boxes that she refuses to fold herself into, leaving a stronger, healthier world in her wake.

Isabelle Marie Santos

Ella has been so ready for this day. She has encountered challenge after challenge, and each time gathered her strength and determination, doing what she needed to do to move forward. She has held herself together with support from close friends and family, and a lot of dry humor! Next year, Ella will move into her next phase at Seattle University, where she will have a chance to begin again and move toward her true path in life. All of your MC teachers and staff are so proud of you, Ella, and can't wait to see what you do in the future.

Owen Steven Schoenherr

You'll hear teachers talk about what a difficult year teaching online was, and it was! Still, there were students who somehow managed to not just show up each day but to really show up each day. Owen was one of those students. Owen is reliable, bright, curious. Owen has grown into a wonderful young man who thinks about others and his own place in the community and the universe. He has a wisdom and a kindness about him that make him someone you want to talk to and get to know. We know he will build and influence community in wonderful ways in the next leg of his journey at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Bethany Shih

Bethany is a true student-athlete in the sense that she somehow finds ways to make both a true priority. Bethany is inquisitive & eager to truly evolve as a student. She is very serious about her learning & is always looking for opportunities to improve the already high standards that she has for her academics. She has the same approach on the softball field & it has all clearly paid off for Bethany as she looks to continue being a student-athlete at Santa Clara University.

Brendan Sinclair

Back in the day, one of the greatest compliments you could pay a young man was to call him a gentleman and a scholar. Its time to bring that one back for Brendan Sinclair. Brendan approaches school and life with the utmost integrity, with an open and curious mind and a compassionate heart. The Cal Berkeley community is going to be very lucky to have him.

Maya Srimal

When Maya opens up to you, it is a thing of beauty. Her composed exterior protects a wonderful, complex internal world that is filled with compassion and heart. Maya is truly beautiful both inside and out, and, while we know she will work hard to strive for excellence, we hope that she also keeps sharing herself with others while solving the problems of the world as an Engineer at Santa Clara University.

David Stennet

Guys, we know it is true. Women mature faster. It takes us awhile to catch up, if we ever do. Maybe that is why so many more women come to Middle College. But I have a theory about Middle College. I think it helps guys catch up. And when I listen to David Stennet's senior reflection, that is what I think...he caught up. David has grown into a humble yet confident young man, secure in who he is, curious about what others think and what there is to learn, responsible and hardworking and compassionate toward others. We've had the privilege of having 4 Stennet's come to Middle College, and he was a great way to end the dynasty! We know many good things are yet to come as he continues his studies at CSM and beyond.

Natalie Tah

Natalie will surprise you. It might not surprise you that she is an absolutely gorgeous writer who has amazing control of language. But it might surprise you that this quiet and understated young woman has had a multi-year passion for addressing issues with mass incarceration and that she absolutely loves trying to shepherd unruly elementary school children in an after school homework support program. Natalie is not afraid to stretch herself and grow in challenging situations and we have no doubt that trait is going to have an impact on the UC Santa Cruz community and wherever life takes her beyond that.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE

class of 2022

Jaylene Valenzuela

Many may not realize how much of a quiet scholar Jaylene is. Unabashedly and firmly rooted in her family, Jaylene thrives on the small personal connections. It was during our 1:1 meetings that I saw the breadth and depth of her character and personality. She shared her dreams and motivations for pursuing a healthcare career and she is exactly the type of caregiver you, I, and the world want and need - thoughtful, detailed, and motivated to help others.

Anna Voinalovych

During our year online, there were those who stayed in the wings, not turning their screens on, but not Anna. She was an active and insightful class participant, one that raised the bar by demonstrating an entirely authentic intellectual curiosity. Anna has a brilliance and a beautiful and internal world that she is ready to share with others and we have no doubt that the gorgeous way she expresses herself on paper has her poised to increasingly share her gentle brilliance and her compassionate heart with a world that desperately needs more of exactly what she has to offer.

Obert Vongsavanh

Obert is one of our students who has skillsets that come naturally & will easily transfer to the real world. He's a person whose passions are an entry point to leadership. His creative & intellectual outlet is robotics & his is a person who takes pride in modeling the right approach to his peers. He is diligent & detail oriented...but he also is a person who knows how to get everyone around him to relax & enjoy the work being done. That's leadership! Good luck in the future Obert!

ShuQi Wu

ShuQi is hilarious (not to mention smart, caring, strong, resilient, and many other positive adjectives including Wordle-obsessed). When you start talking to her, you keep finding more and more to appreciate. Middle College is lucky to have had you bringing smiles and laughter to our community, ShuQi, and we wish you the best at Cal State Channel Islands next year!

Addison Yeh

Addison is truly an old soul. He carries with him the energy of our ancestors, and, with a poet's mind, he listens and watches the world as an astute observer of its complex dynamics. In his senior reflection, he shared his wisdom with us as he declared that change is the only constant of the world. With his ability to be fluid, to stay grounded in his connections and deep care for others, and to find opportunities for growth in times of instability, we know that Addison will continue to navigate the complex energies of the world with ease as a Chemical Engineer at UC Berkeley.

Elisa May Young

Ellie is a strong, independent young woman who gives of herself tirelessly and without complaint to those who need her. We have watched her work these past two years to cultivate boundaries without sacrificing her generosity, to be both empathetic and kind towards others while also honoring herself and her container. We think that these are the qualities that make Ellie not only a strong, capable young human being, but also someone who will continue to find balance in supporting her community while also protecting herself. She truly has a light that emanates from within, and we are so excited to see her share this with others as she pursues business at CSM and beyond.

Vladimir Zeltser

In Vlad's single year at Middle College, he has managed to leave an indelible impression on all of us as an incredibly kind, incredibly wise, and incredibly open-minded individual. Vlad is thoughtful in both head and heart, maintaining a keen awareness of the world, a strong sense of discipline and ethics, and all the while showing us how graceful, generous, and kind he is. We have no doubt that Vlad will find success as he continues to pursue business next year here at CSM.







Class of 2022 & 2023



Camacho Sibrian, Stephanie 12
Carranza-Torres, Jose 11
Chan, Gisella 12
Chand, Radhika 12
Chen, Brennen 11
Cheng, Kylie 11
Coral, Catalina 12
Cornwall, Addison 12
Cuadra Martinez, Melissa 12
Dhillon, Guramrit 11
Dinardo, Olivia 12
Errington, Katherine 12
Espinoza, Anika 11
Estrada, Ruby 11
Figueroa, Diego 11
Freeman, Brooke 12
Hararah, Kareem 11
Hill, Tyler 12
Hinton, Carmen 12
Huerta, Angelina 11
Huerta, Sarah 12
Khalil, Ali 12
Korer, Charlotte 11
Lam, Marc Andre 11
Lang, Allison 12
Levi, Danielle 11
Lopez Grijalva, Alisson 11
Lopez Grijalva, Michelle 11
Luechtefeld, Kati 11
Mendez, Melissa 12
Morrow, Julia 12
Mukharjee, Isha 11
Olayo, Leticia 12
Portugal, Mikhaela 12
Richter, Maya 12
Rose, Mya 12
Sandoval, Julyssa 11
Schoenherr, Owen 12
Sinclair, Brendan 12
Srimal, Maya 12
Tran, Brooke 11
Valdez, Beya 12
Valenzuela, Jaylene 12
Vasquez Gutierrez, Esmerelda 11
Vazquez-Ruiz, Kamila 11
Wigenstam, Sophia 12
Wilson, Mimi 11
Yang, Ming Ting 11
Yeh, Addison 12
Yeh, Katherine 11
Yeo, Joey 12



Aggen, Bridget 11
Bernabe, Arren 11
Bliss, Elliott 12
Brown, Sophia 12
Clarke, Rowan 12
Dal Porto, Isabella 12
Dubovsky, Ethan 12
Eugenio, Madison 11
Gravagno, Donovan 11
Gulden, Naz 12
Hilbert, Harris 12
Hilliard, Sydnie 12
Idio, Isabelle 11
Jones, Blythe 11
Krakow, Amelia 11
Luke, Jaden 11
Maldonado, Francesco 11
Neece, Jon-Luc 11
Norton, Sean 11
Ordonez, Natalie 11
Rodriguez Ortega, Maria 12
Venugopal, Mira 11
Verrico, Dante 11
Viner, Karina 11
Vongsavanh, Obert 12
Wong, Chloe 11
Zeltser, Anthony 11
Zeltser, Vladimir 12



Aguilera, Emily 11
Alvarez, Dafne 11
Cabitac, Dionicio 11
Centeno, Alexis 11
Grajeda, David 11
Kelly, Isabella 11
Ku, Trenton 11
Kumar, Simran 11
Perez Romero, Nicole 11
Quezada, Noelia 11
Santos Stevenson, Mikaela 11
Sibug, Francheska 11
Staff, Brianna 11
Tapia, Mateo 11
Torres Morales, Alexia 11



Abejero, Patrick 11
Akiva, Naama 11
Allendorf, Graziella 11
Amir-Araghi, Sheima 12
Azardoust, Jazmin 11
Bao, Sydney 11
Bironas, Sophie 11
Budiman, Iris 11
Castillo, Stacey 11
Castro, Kiana 12
Cerron, Jasmine 12
Chung, Hilary 12
Crossley, Maya 12
Dayag, Angela 12
Fenwick, Charlotte 12
Garibay, Dominique 12
Gonzalez, Daniela 12
Graf, Arthur 12
Harris, Samantha 11
Hernandez, Estefania 11
Iliopoulou, Alexandra 12
Lee, Perrine 12
Maloney, Kate 11
Manalastas, Odran 11
Manero Gomez, Ona 12
Matthews, Madison 11
McMahon, James 11
Morales, Destiny 11
Moussaoui, Manal 12
Moyo, Mercy 11
Musselman, Maya 11
Neuendorff, Stephanie 12
Nguyen-Do, Thien-TienNam 11
Nobrega, Miles 11
Oliver, Emma 12
Petersen, Ethan 11
Reed, Rachel 11
Stennet, David 12
Toh, Natalie 12
Vega, Kevin 11
Wong, Kenneth 11
Wu, ShuQi 12



Mendez, Brooke 11



Eis, Rowe 12
Ikaahihifo, Elleonoa 11
Lee, Ryan 12
Lo, Hailey 12
Mendiola, Theonne 11
Monroy Valdez, Regina 11
Nguyen, Angelina 12
Rashad, Ahmed 12
Reinhardt Mullins, Rebecca 12
Vera Gutierrez, Princess 11
Young, Elisa May 12



Albert, Ernest (Max) 11
Alegria, Alexis 12
Dujsik, Nathan 12
Gonzalez, Ashley 12
Gowdy, Devin 11
Imura, Erena 12
Kurland, Shoshana 12
Lichaa, Zachary 12
Liu, Lindsay 11
Majlesi, Kaitlyn 12
Moriarty, Connor 12
Mukund, Anabella 11
Pearlman, Adam 12
Ramos, Sayri 11
Santos, Isabella Marie 12
Sapugay, Clara 11
Shapiro, Daniel 11
Shih, Bethany 12
Voinalovych, Anna 12

A high-angle photograph of three students sitting on a green lawn. The student on the left is wearing a grey hoodie with 'ADE' on it and is looking down at a smartphone. The student on the right is wearing a white shirt and dark pants, also looking at a smartphone. A third student's legs in green pants are visible in the bottom left. Several travel brochures are scattered on the grass, including one for 'WORLD LEADERS' and another for 'FREEDOM'. A red water bottle and a tan backpack are also on the grass.

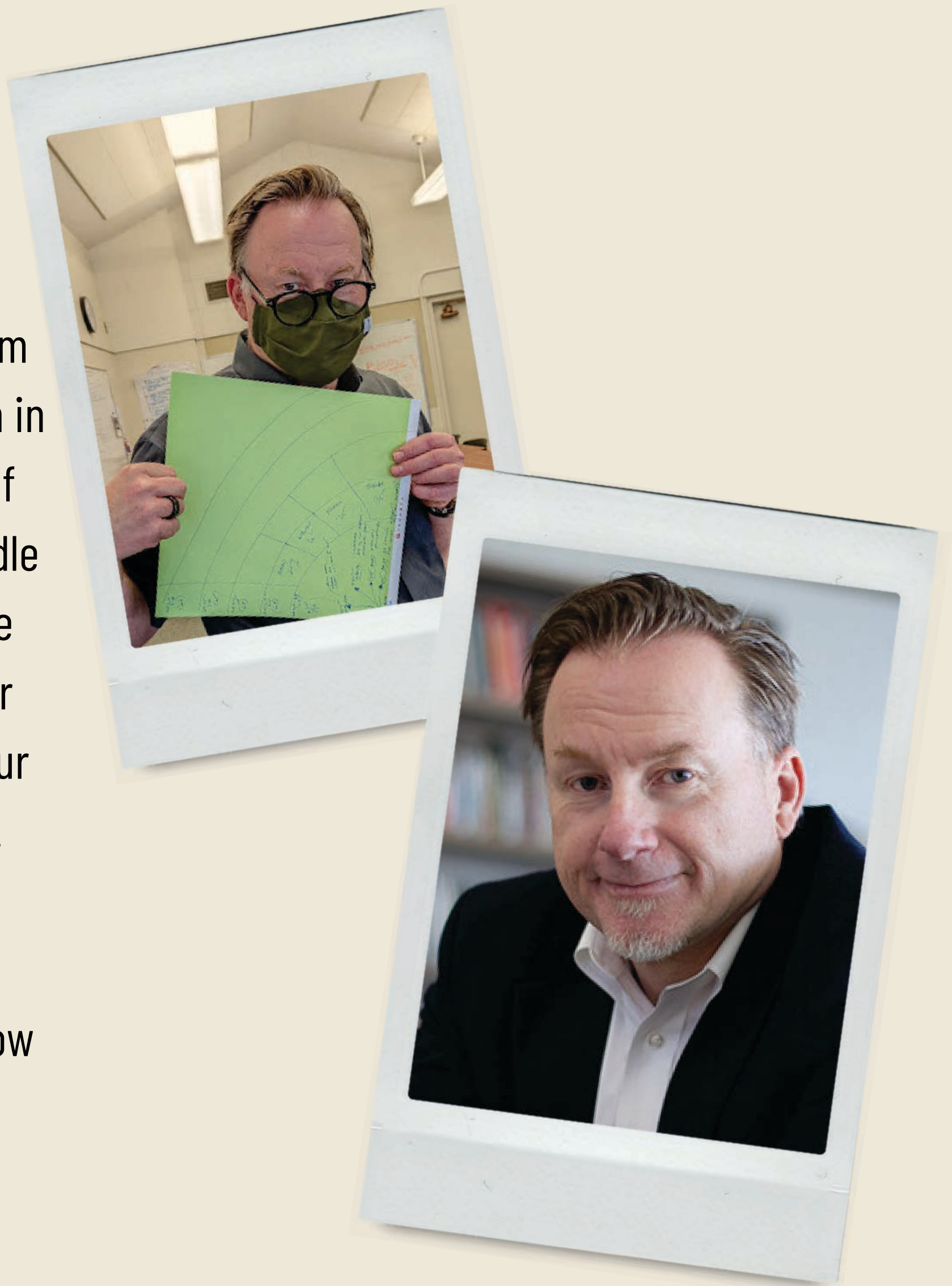
enjoy
every
moment.



Colophon

& Dedication

This book is dedicated to Mr. Jim Burke, English teacher, has been in education for 35 years, three of those years have been with Middle College. On behalf of the Middle College community and all your past students, thank you for your dedication, time, and support. You've made an impact and influence on so many people, thank you. Happy retirement, now on to your next chapter!



This book was created through the volunteer efforts of Rebecca Reinhardt Mullins, Angela Reinhardt-Mullins, and Jim Burke.

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Faculty: Jim Burke, Jason Letke, Brittany Redgate, Terence Lien, Greg Lance, & Jennifer Rohrbach

Counselors: Emilie Bohorquez & Laura Kauth

Disclaimer: Our staff realizes that there may be misnaming, misspelling or an extra space, those are mistakes, everyone makes them; even textbooks and novels to million dollar TV shows, you do too! We would appreciate you look past it and enjoy what we have created for you. We most likely know it's there (now that it's sent out) and feel bad about it already. You do not need to point it out. We do apologize, we do our very best, we are human.

