

The Voyage

Paul Cuffee School A Maritime Charter School for Providence Children Winter 2018 Vol. 16 Issue 1

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Africa C. Smith
PCS Class of 2014



NOT A LOT OF GRASS GROWS UNDER Africa Smith's feet. A cliché to be sure, but in her case it's true. With her double major in Africana Studies and Political Science and minor in Justice, Law and Society, the URI senior will graduate this spring with a myriad of not only academic achievements to her name, but leadership, mentorship, fellowship and travel experiences that as a young girl she never considered in the realm of possibility.

Winning a seat in the third grade at Paul Cuffee School, Africa availed herself to all that the School had to offer. As she entered Paul Cuffee Upper School, she supplemented her academic course load with advocacy work centering on non-violence, particularly focusing on promoting Healthy Teen Relationships and non-violence against women.

A highlight of her college experience has been a two-week study abroad program

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"Super Brains" Students Shine in Two Languages

Christopher J. Haskins
Head of School

GET USED TO HEARING THE PHRASE "SUPER BRAINS." Referring to our English language learners, Lower School teacher and English language learner coordinator, Becky Bueno, uses the term to encourage, motivate and recognize the hard work it takes to learn a new language. It's not an exaggeration. For some of our students, many as young as age five, English is a new language and the hard work that they do to learn it helps strengthen their learning in other areas too.

People who can speak, read and write in two languages are assets to our communities. To empower Spanish-speaking students who participate in our English language learner programs, the School will soon provide an after school enrichment program teaching students in their first language.

In this program, teachers who speak, read and write in Spanish will provide the instruction students receive in English in their classrooms during the school day. That means that our English learners will reinforce the content they learn in English by making cross-linguistic connections in Spanish.

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ELL Teacher and Coordinator Becky Bueno with 2nd grader Alejandro Moreno reading "Poems to Dream Together/Poemas Para Soñar Juntos" in both English and Spanish.

“Super Brains” (continued from front page)

The program is the first of its kind for our School. It was recently approved by the Rhode Island Department of Education and will be funded through the State of Rhode Island’s English Learner Categorical Fund. Participating students will attend three additional hours of school during a 12-week program spanning February to April.

“It has been proven that strengthening literacy in one’s first language improves literacy in the new language.”

Reading, writing and speaking proficiently in English is a goal for all students. To do the same in Spanish is now a goal and expectation for those who have had the challenge and opportunity to be learning English as a new language. It has been proven that strengthening literacy in one’s first language improves literacy in the new language. This new program will be a super opportunity for our “Super Brains.” 📖



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT (continued from front page)

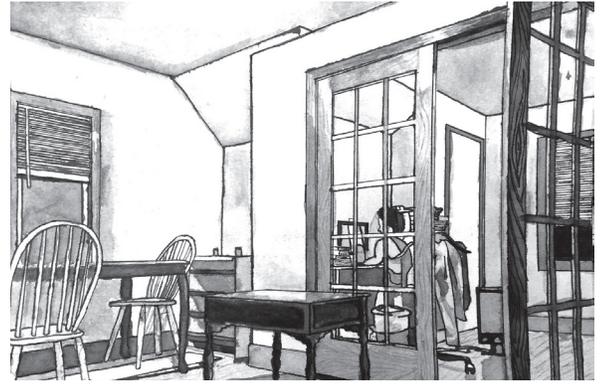
on the Dynamics of Social Change in the Caribbean in Cuba. “We stayed in Cuban homes, so it was very interesting. It was my first time out of the country and only my second time on a plane,” she reminisced. But Africa plans to

do a lot more of that. She confesses that she’s caught the travel bug. She’s been to London and Amsterdam and is embarking for the Emerald Isle next month.

Her long range career plans include study of the law and politics and she hopes for a year’s fellowship abroad after graduation.

Her advice to up and coming Cuffee graduates? “Try a little bit of everything. There’s so much out there to see and do.” And so, Africa remains true to her own advice. In fact, Costa Rica is next on her travel dream list. “My mom is originally from Costa Rica and so my parents named me Africa Costa Rica. That’s what the ‘C’ stands for. How could I not go there?” she laughs. 📖

[Africa’s] advice to up and coming Cuffee graduates? “Try a little bit of everything. There’s so much out there to see and do.”



“Uncle” by Pa Yang



“Fixed” by Salva Alifonso

Golden Keys Awarded to Upper School Artists

SINCE 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards have recognized the vision, ingenuity and talent of the nation’s youth and provided opportunities for creative teens to be celebrated.

This year, under the direction of Art Teacher Kelly Lee, two young artists have won state level recognition in the Scholastic Art Award Competition. Golden Keys have been awarded to Salva Alifonso and Pa Yang. Salva is doing a series for her AP portfolio on the challenges and pleasures of being a woman. A painting she submitted from that series that she titled “Fixed” has won.

Pa Yang won with a pen and ink piece depicting the interior of her dining room. It is titled “Uncle” because her uncle is seen seated in the next room.

Congratulations to Salva and Pa on their artistic accomplishments and this special award. 📖



What Would Paul Cuffee Do?

Robert Kelley, Paul Cuffee Descendant

WHEN I RECENTLY VISITED the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the first exhibits I saw focused on perspectives about the African continent and slavery before and after the 1400's.

Pre-16th century African and European nations traded openly with each other, and various forms of involuntary servitude, including slavery, existed on both continents. Norms were that slaves could be any color or religion, slavery was "temporary" and slaves were viewed as human beings who had civil rights. However, the norms of slavery changed as the transatlantic slave trade took hold during the 17th century. Slaves in 18th century America were considered to be chattel with absolutely no rights or protections that others had to respect – i.e., slaves were property like chairs or lamps. Slavery was for life for the slave and his or her offspring.

Paul Cuffee's father, Kofi, was an Ashanti born in Ghana around 1717. Kofi was enslaved in Ghana when he was about ten years old, and he was sold to a Massachusetts whaling captain named Ebenezer Slocum approximately one year later. In 1742, Ebenezer sold Kofi to his nephew, John Slocum. I met Marjorie Slocum Moore, the great-great-great-great granddaughter of John Slocum, over 30 years ago. She told me that her family believed John allowed Kofi to become a free man because John could not reconcile owning another human being with his Quaker religion. Since Kofi had been freed, Paul was born free. Kofi died when

Paul was a teenager. While there is evidence that Paul knew his father had been a slave, I have found no evidence that Paul and Kofi ever discussed slavery. What I do know is that, in the early 19th century, Paul was a powerful advocate for the abolition of slavery on both sides of the Atlantic. He even set out to transform Sierra Leone from a society which relied on the sale of slaves for its survival to one which relied on the trading of goods and produce. He was not able to make that dream a reality.

Let's fast forward to today's world. New research unveiled at the UN General Assembly in September 2017 showed that globally - at any moment in 2016 - an estimated 40 million people were victims of human trafficking (i.e., modern-day slavery) with about 25 million in forced labor and 15.4 million in forced marriage. Women and girls account for almost 29 million (71%) of the overall total, and about 10 million children are victims of modern slavery.



Robert Kelley

Clearly there is still much work left to eradicate slavery. What would Paul Cuffee do? 🚢

Footnote: Historically the spelling of Paul Cuffee's name varies from Cuffee, as we know it at school, and Cuffe, which may have been the original spelling. Both are derived from Paul Cuffee's father's African name, Kofi.



Paul Cuffee Middle Schoolers showcased their theatrical prowess in this year's musical, *Once on This Island* JR. Directed by Robb Dimmick and Becky Bass and performed at the Providence Career and Technical Academy, the performance was funded by the Barker Foundation and 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant.

Help us Grow the



To honor the spirit and legacy of our beloved friend Dave Burnham, we are seeking donations to the endowed fund in his name so that the whole junior or senior class can participate in a maritime-themed expedition in 2019.

You can help us surpass the \$300,000 mark by making an annual tribute gift to the David C. Burnham Maritime Fund at Paul Cuffee School or online at: www.paulcuffee.org.

Your gift today will help make it possible for an entire graduating class to experience the sense of accomplishment and confidence that comes from an outdoor education adventure at sea.

Thank you for supporting a dream that Dave Burnham had sincerely hoped to bring to fruition. Your continued generosity will help us establish this life-altering tradition for generations to come.

Family School Partnership Enhances Student Achievement



Manny Ortiz, Admissions and Family Engagement Coordinator

PLEASE WELCOME MANNY ORTIZ TO THE PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL! After serving as the Director of Graduate Support for San Miguel School in Providence, Manny has joined the Paul Cuffee administrative team as the Admissions and Family Engagement Coordinator. A graduate of Providence College, and a Masters of Public Administration degree candidate, Manny firmly believes that education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty and that family engagement is an essential part of student success.

Since his arrival in early October, Manny has been streamlining the admissions process and getting to know all of our families. Working closely with parents and caregivers in all three buildings, he is working to increase their participation in the life of the School, enlisting their involvement on the Family School Partnership Committee and is actively recruiting future leadership and more

volunteers for the Parent Association's activities and events.

Research shows that family engagement that is aligned with the School's mission and strategic priorities builds community and contributes directly to student achievement. With mutually agreed upon goals, advance planning and donations of resources, talent and time across our K-12

campus, Paul Cuffee parents can more easily produce family-centric events, meetings and programs throughout the year that help them to become even better equipped for the critical social-emotional, cultural and academic-learning that occurs at home as well as at school. 📖