

# The Voyage

Paul Cuffee School 🚢 A Maritime Charter School for Providence Youth 🚢 Spring/Summer 2015 🚢 Vol. 13 Issue 2

## “Ship, Shipmates, Self”

*Christopher J. Haskins, Head of School*

**S**HIP, SHIPMATES, SELF. This is the motto of the tall ship *Mystic*, a vessel on which the Class of 2015 spent three nights at the start of the school year.

It's another way of stating the Paul Cuffee School expectations taught to students as early as kindergarten: I take care of my school. I take care of my community. I take care of myself. A sense of community, adventure, academic learning, social and emotional growth, and supportive relationships combine to make the school a special place in each of our three campuses.

My first year as Head of School has been very challenging and immensely rewarding. As I write this, I smile thinking about the Commencement Celebration for the Class of 2015 and,

the following morning, families of new kindergarten students entering the school for the first time. Many of our students will learn and grow throughout their entire 13 years of public education at Paul Cuffee School. We have a tremendous responsibility and the incredible opportunity to transform lives through our unique school model.

Being one school across three campuses can present some challenges. Teachers working in different buildings see each other with less frequency. Siblings across campuses can feel like they're in different schools. Yet, the school buildings have much more in common than differences. Additionally, several cross-campus events help to connect us. This year we held several whole-school faculty meetings and professional learning opportunities. Eighth graders spent time at the Upper School. Seniors taught classes at the Middle School and Lower School. Fifth graders “stepped up” to the Middle School. There is a sense of unity across the City of Providence for those who belong to the Paul Cuffee School community.

It has been an amazing year of learning and growing here at the school. As the Head of School you could say I'm the head learner. What I've learned about the strength of our community and the quality of its contributions speaks to me that this is the place I'm meant to be.

I hope that our school speaks to you in this way, too. 🚢



*Mr. Haskins bids Bon Voyage to sea-faring seniors aboard the schooner, “Mystic.”*



*Mr. Haskins (center) learns about boats from 5th grader Liam Hartrey during the Boat Design Presentation.*



*Yinaldis Sanchez (left) will attend URI to study biology and psychology while Savannah Pinales (right) plans to go to RIC to pursue a career in physical therapy.*

## “PINK Ladies” Provides a Solid Foundation for Future Women’s Empowerment Group at the Upper School

**H**EADED OFF TO DIFFERENT COLLEGES to pursue different career paths, first generation college attendees Savannah Pinales and Yinaldis Sanchez do not appear to have much in common. But it was the Senior Project that brought them together to form the PINK Ladies organization at the Upper School.

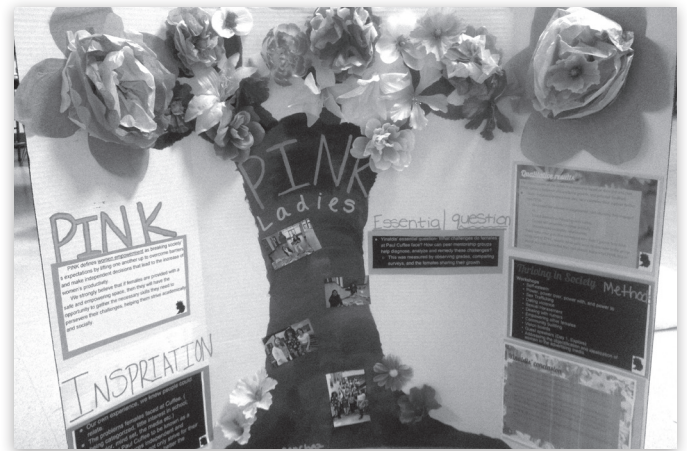
The acronym for Powerfully Intelligent Notoriously Knowledgeable, PINK Ladies emerged from a study that Savannah and Yinaldis conducted by asking 25 volunteer underclasswomen the essential question: What challenges do young females face at Paul Cuffee School and how can peer mentorship groups help diagnose, analyze, and remedy those challenges?

Utilizing data from surveys assessing opinion and outlook coupled with peer mentoring groups that provided a safe and positive environment, the girls worked on “What is it like to be an empowered woman and how can I make strides to get there?” During the course of the PINK study, almost all of the girls had ended unhealthy relationships, became more

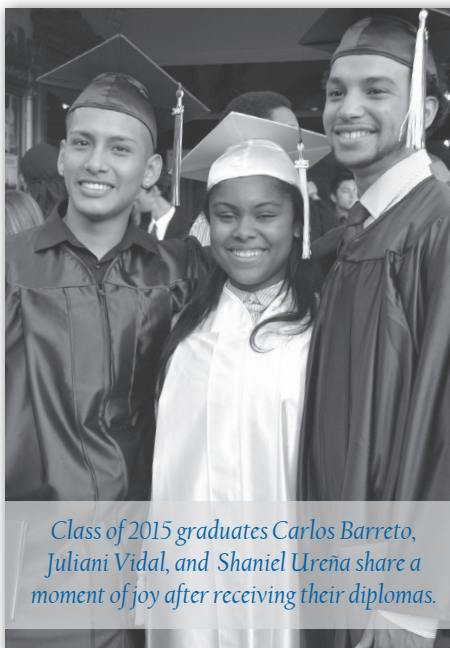
supportive of other girls, ceased the demeaning practice of “slut-shaming” other girls, and improved their attendance, their academics, and their leadership qualities.

For some, the Senior Project signifies an end: the culmination of almost a year’s worth of research, analysis, and conclusions. It’s a significant piece of their Senior Portfolio which also consists of their resume, self-reflection, awards, and community service commendations. But for Savannah and Yinaldis, project PINK Ladies leaves part of themselves behind as well - a foundation upon which other Cuffee young women can build.

On June 16th, Yinaldis and Savannah joined 58 of their peers as they walked proudly in their caps and gowns across the stage at the Columbus Theatre, diplomas in hand, part of the second graduating class of Paul Cuffee Upper School. Both graduated with honors and acknowledge that, while graduation is the “biggest weight of their lives off their shoulders,” they are tremendously proud of their milestone achievement and excited to embark on their next journey. 🐼



*“PINK Ladies” illustrates that “if females are provided with a safe and empowering space, then they will have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to persevere in overcoming their challenges and make strides academically and socially.”*



*Class of 2015 graduates Carlos Barreto, Juliani Vidal, and Shaniel Ureña share a moment of joy after receiving their diplomas.*

## Congratulations Class of 2015

### PCS’s Class of 2015 was Admitted to...

Boston College \*  
Brandeis University \*  
Bryant University \*  
Community College of Rhode Island  
Curry College \*  
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University \*  
Guilford College  
Howard University \*  
Ithaca College

Johnson & Wales University (Providence)  
Lake Forest College \*  
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences University  
New England College  
Newbury College  
Providence College  
Regis College  
Rhode Island College  
Roger Williams University  
Sacred Heart University \*  
Saint Leo University \*  
Salem State University \*

Salve Regina University  
University of Hartford  
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth  
University of New England  
University of New Hampshire \*  
University of Rhode Island  
University of Saint Joseph \*  
Villanova University \*  
Wentworth Institute of Technology \*  
Wheaton College MA

*\* indicates college acceptances that are new for this year.*





**David Burnham**  
MARITIME FUND

The David Burnham Maritime Fund, officially launched last November, has raised an amazing amount in tribute to the late David Burnham, founding President of the Board of Trustees of Paul Cuffee School. The endowment, managed by the Rhode Island Foundation, is only \$49,000 away from its ambitious goal of \$250,000.

To donate, go to <https://donations.paulcuffee.org/donate-now/> and select "David Burnham Maritime Fund." Your gift will support maritime-related leadership development opportunities for Paul Cuffee School juniors and seniors.



## Thank You for a Year of Smooth Sailing!

To each of you who contributed to the Annual Fund or David Burnham Maritime Fund, who funded grants to enhance the educational experiences for our students, who volunteered your time and talents to enrich our students' experiences, and who sang, read, baked or rendered other invaluable services to our school, we are profoundly grateful and hopeful we can count on you next year.

## How Do We Say "Good Bye?" Ann Hampson

**H**OW DO WE SAY "GOODBYE" to our beloved Bill Harley,

who for so many years has served our community as: youth-inspirer, hearts-expander, calm-restorer, court jester, mood-shifter, storyteller, laugh-generator, cultural anchor, song-writer, spell caster, tearjerker, reality-suspender, play-inciter, rule-breaker, seriousness-dispeller, fun-poker, norm-challenger, and ultimately, for all of us, most special of friends! "I care, yes I do, I care for me, I care for you" - and we mean it, Bill Harley!



Bill Harley with 4th grade play members

"I am Isabella Crema and I am a Paul Cuffee kid." So began the special Bill Harley town meeting that took place on May 29th at the Lower School. Isabella served as one of three emcees to represent the original class that came into Kindergarten as Bill entered our community. It was her class that wrote the Paul Cuffee Play with Bill in fourth grade, and it is her class that now graduates and heads to college confident in their special status as Paul Cuffee kids forever. They know that Paul Cuffee kids care for themselves, their friends, their communities, and their world!

Our Kindergarten kicked off our celebration with one of our school's favorite Bill songs, *I Care*, but we have been left with a whole archive of beloved Bill songs that speak to our community and hold us true to our values. The Paul Cuffee School anthem reminds us that we are in it together: "The world is the ocean, our school is a boat, the teachers and students all keep it afloat." How important that has been to help us weather our ups and downs as a community.

"I am Rachel Turner and I am a Paul Cuffee kid." So introduced our next emcee, daughter of first grade teacher Karen Wargo, as she brought to the stage the third graders sharing their poems and raps of appreciation for all Bill has given to them through music and his storytelling curriculum. Far surpassing the common core state standards for speaking and listening, our third graders hit it out of the ballpark with their command of the microphones and their confidence in front of a record-breaking audience. Bill has brought storytelling to life at Paul Cuffee and we are better readers and writers of compelling stories as a result.

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Fourth grade reprised their favorite songs from the Paul Cuffee Play, *We'll Build a School* and *When You're Wrong*. *We'll Build a School* was written for the Paul Cuffee Play and speaks of Paul Cuffee's determination to provide high quality education to all people regardless of color in the early 1800's. For us, it is the aspirational song for the growth of our K-12 school here in Providence.

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### PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL

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## How Do We Say “Good Bye?” (continued from previous page)

Social emotional learning is central to Paul Cuffee School and in *When You're Wrong*, Bill tapped into our universal human struggle to freely admit wrong-doing and properly listen to another point of view with openness and respect. He has given a whole generation of kids the music and lyrics for their lives. Thanks to Bill's vision, Paul Cuffee School kids and staff share a code of common songs to describe our situations, and laugh at and solve them together.

“I am Tamika Lopes and I too am a Paul Cuffee Kid.” So spoke our closing emcee while the *Pirates of the Caribbean* theme song brought on the fifth grade book clubs and their irreverent and first ever dramatization of Bill's ballad *Dirty Joe the Pirate, a True Story*. Designed and performed by piratical and creative fifth graders, Bill gave the perfect vehicle for exposing his wicked and crazy



PCS Alumni Isabella Crema, Rachel Turner, and Tamika Lopes with Bill Harley

sense of humor. Who could not be in hysterics at the idea of boy pirates sailing the seven seas in search of dirty socks and girl pirates with boxers on their heads counter-attacking to claim the prize of defeated

underwear? Share Bill's whacky books and music with the youngsters in your life - you will be glad you did!

Over the years our community has been enriched in countless other ways as Bill brought faculty special guitar lessons, storytelling workshops, encouragement, perspective, and laughs. So many laughs....

When we have been gifted with so much, can we really say “goodbye, Bill?” We know we cannot, so we will just end with “we'll sail together wherever we go” and “Thank you, Bill Harley!” 🌐

