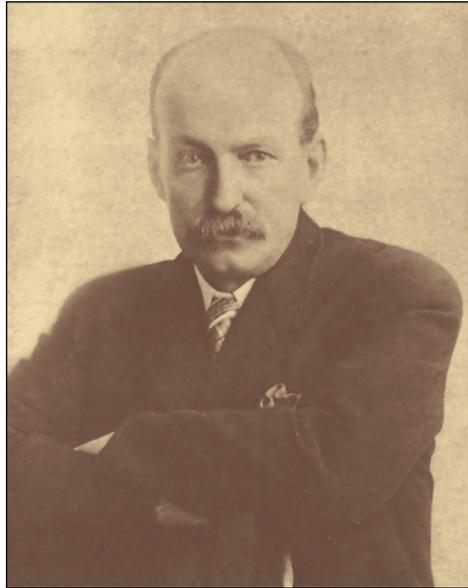


# THE MACK HOUSE

## THE HISTORY OF 2698 PACIFIC AVENUE

This Classical Revival house at 2698 Pacific Avenue was built in 1904 and designed by architects Samuel Newsom and his son, Sidney. Notable for its unusual “pebble dash” stucco exterior and dramatic circular colonnaded entry, the house represents a transition from the ornate Victorian designs for which the older generation of Newsoms were well known, to the Period Revival styles the younger generation favored. The Italian Renaissance-inspired house was very grand, at more than 11,000 square feet, with eight bedrooms, seven bathrooms, and many beautifully crafted old world details. It also had, and still has, a timeless functionality with a graceful floor plan, lots of natural light, and comfortable open spaces.



Samuel Newsom, noted architect who designed 2698 Pacific Avenue.

The two generations of Newsoms who worked as California architects at the turn of the century included brothers John, Thomas, Samuel, and Joseph Cather, and later, Samuel's sons, Sidney, and Noble. It is estimated that close to 600 Newsom structures, both commercial and residential, were built throughout the state. Samuel and his brother, Joseph Cather Newsom, are best known for the Carson Mansion they built in Eureka, California in 1886, which today is considered the grandest Victorian home in America. Newsom & Newsom proudly marketed its “up-to-date” architecture, willingness to adopt new styles, and aim to impress. Samuel Newsom wrote in 1890, “We have built homes for men who were little known until they were occupying their homes . . . and then public attention was drawn to them simply because their home was so striking and well carried out.”

At age 15, Sidney joined his father's firm as an apprentice, becoming a partner in 1901. Over the next seven years, until Samuel's death in 1908, father and son designed more than a dozen homes and apartment buildings in Pacific Heights. This home at the corner of Pacific Avenue and Scott Street was built for Julius J. Mack (1853-1928) and his wife Irene “Nettie” Silverberg Mack (1865-1914). It is one of the most notable houses the two designed during this period.

Mack was a self-made man, one of ten children born to Eastern European immigrants in New York City. He began his career as a Wall Street errand boy and moved west in 1872 with only \$20 in savings. Mack was first employed as a bookkeeper in the Central Valley and worked his way up to starting the Bank of Bakersfield with Philip N. Lilienthal. In 1887, he married Nettie, the daughter of a prominent San Francisco wholesale butcher and philanthropist, at the Concordia Club in San Francisco. They had one child, Irene “Nettie” Mack in 1888, and by 1904, when they moved into their new home on Pacific, Mack had left banking behind

and was the president of Imperial Oil. The four-story home, situated on nearly one-fifth of an acre, featured, in addition to its many bedrooms and bathrooms, a ballroom, two libraries, four offices, a sitting room, a large formal dining room, a kitchen with a separate butler's pantry, seven fireplaces, and a seven-car motor court in the rear of the house. Anne Bloomfield, the late Northern California architectural historian wrote, “I find 2698 one of [the Newsoms'] best productions: the temple portico is beautiful, the symmetry of the house, almost a cube, satisfies, and the siting is perfect.”

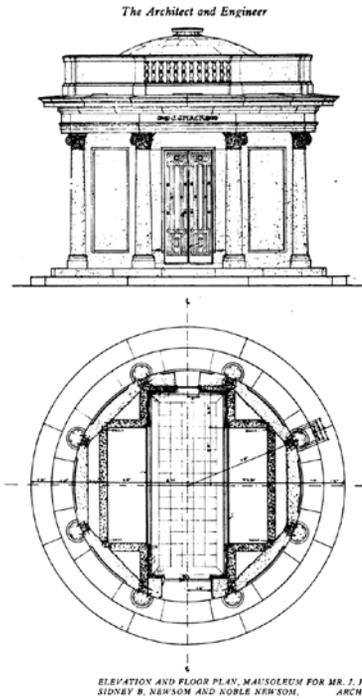
Jay Turnbull of the architecture firm Page & Turnbull, explains that young San Francisco architects shifted toward the City Beautiful movement in the early 1900s, a philosophy that favored neo-classical period revival styles. The Mack house is an early example of this shift.

The Macks were part of a community of successful, self-made, German-Jewish families that included the Lilienthals, the Strausses, the Sutros, and others who were committed to making San Francisco a civilized place to live. The Macks contributed generously to many Jewish charities and were also supportive of the arts. According to Maria Cate Cammarata, who writes several blogs about the history of Italian immigrants in the Bay Area, the Macks' living room had wonderful acoustics and musicians such as Luigi

Catalano, who founded the Napa Valley Symphony, often performed there for friends of the Macks, including Alma Spreckels and Sigmund and Rosalie Stern.

In 1906, Newsom & Newsom built another “pebble dash” house, just next door, at 2676 Pacific, for Julius’ brother Adolph “Dick” Mack and his wife, Clara Gerstle Mack. The brothers were extremely close; in addition to living next door to each other in very similar houses, they worked together in the Mills Building on Montgomery Street and spent summers together in San Rafael, where Clara Gerstle’s family owned a large estate.

In April 1906, two years after the Macks moved in to their home, the Great Earthquake demolished much of San Francisco, but Pacific Heights families like the Macks were extremely fortunate because the fire that raged for three days after the earthquake, leaving half of the city’s population homeless, was halted at Van Ness Avenue.



When Nettie Mack died in 1914, her husband, Julius, commissioned Newsom & Newsom to design a mausoleum for the family that echoes the temple portico entry design at 2698 Pacific. The mausoleum is at the Home of Peace Cemetery in Colma.



One year later, in 1907, Nettie Mack married George Roos, joining the post-earthquake marriage boom. Her small wedding at the Fairmont Hotel was mentioned in the August 13, 1907 *San Francisco Call*, which reported, “Mrs. Roos is the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.J. Mack, and was a debutante last season . . . She is clever and vivacious, with great charm of manner, has traveled extensively, and is always exquisitely gowned.” A prominent rabbi from Temple Emanu-El, the Rev. Dr. Voorsanger, officiated.

After her father’s death in 1928 Nettie and her husband managed an inheritance of about \$4 million, or around \$96

The wedding announcement of Irene “Nettie” Mack in the *San Francisco Call*.

million today. The house, however, was left to Mack’s second wife, Blanche, who quickly sold it.

Only three other families have lived in the house since J.J. Mack died. The first was that of the late Judge William H. Orrick, Jr., a United States District Judge for the

Northern District of California who was appointed by President Kennedy. He presided over a number of high-profile cases, including the sentencing of newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst. His wife, Marion, was a founding board member of the Cathedral School for Boys and his son, William H. Orrick III, is an Obama-appointed judge on the same Court as his late father.

Starting in 1976, the Kunin family lived in the house for 37 years. Dr. Richard Kunin, a psychiatrist, co-founded the Orthomolecular Medical Society, and Matilda Kunin founded Young Performer’s Theater, named for their late son, Anthony Manning Kunin.

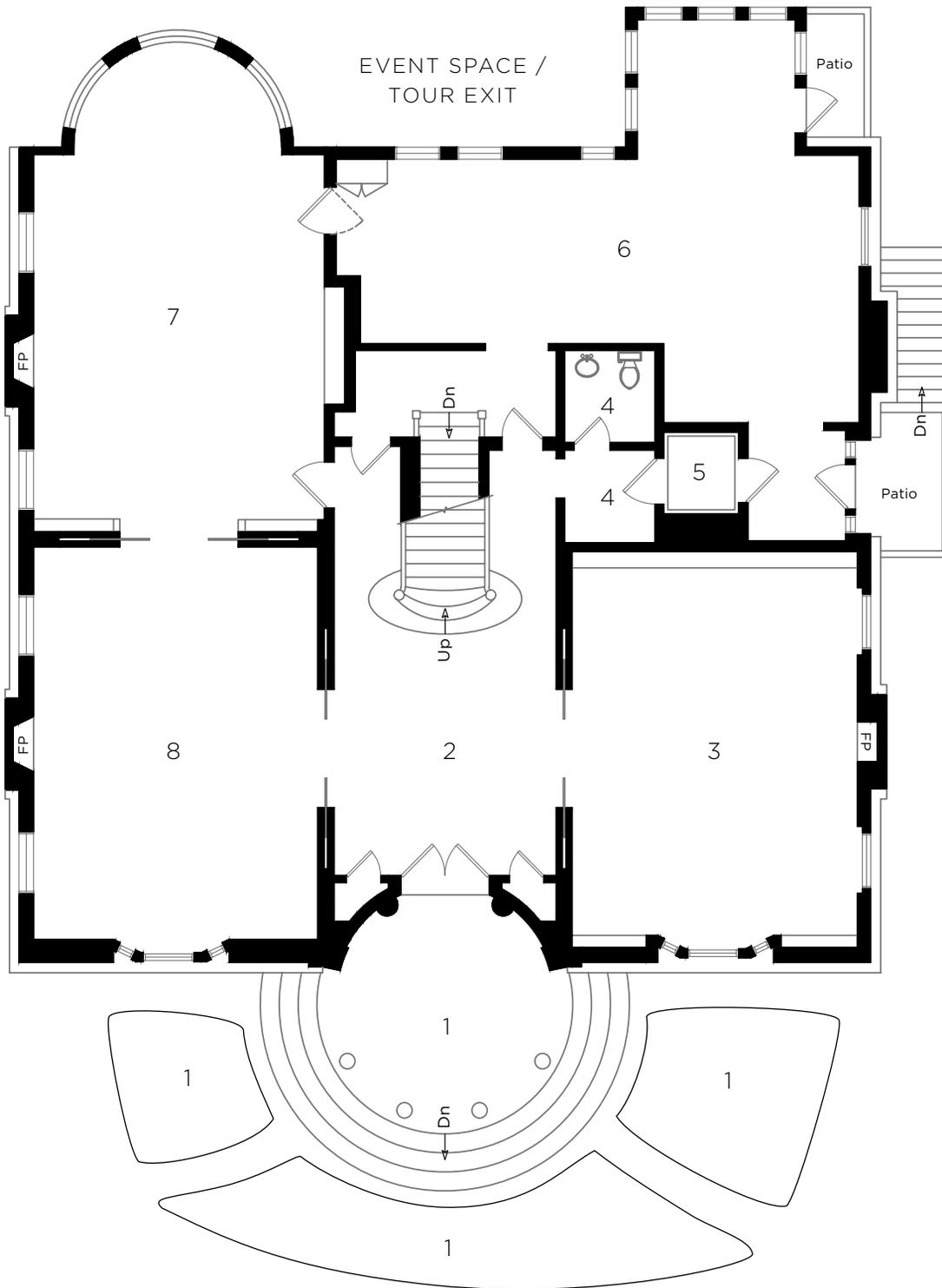
The home’s most recent owners have undertaken a major “studs out” remodel on three floors, along with a seismic upgrade, the addition of a radiant heating system, new double-paned windows, and a new kitchen. Every effort was made to maintain the historic character of the house on the second and third floors, but the basement level and top floor are renovated in a more modern style.

– Colleen Quinn Amster

*Colleen Quinn Amster, the mother of Finn, class of 2017, is a writer and editor who serves on the board of 826 Valencia, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting under-resourced students ages six to eighteen with their writing skills.*

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# FIRST LEVEL



**1 Front Garden**  
Jarrod R. Baumann

**2 Grand Entry**  
Ironies

**3 Library / Bibliothek**  
Martin Kobus

**4 Powder Room and Vestibule**  
Benni Amadi  
Courtney Springer

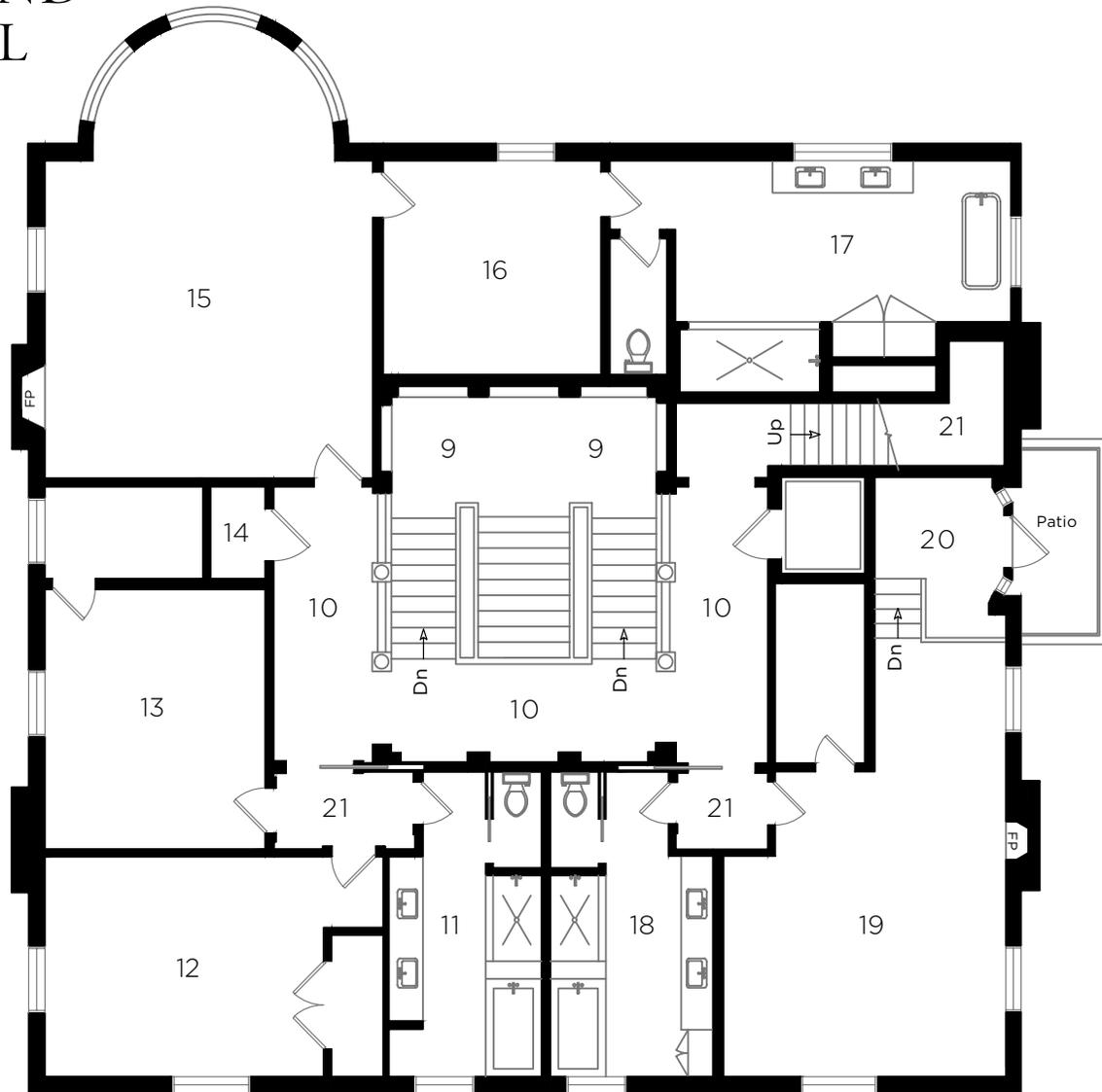
**5 An Elegant Lift**  
Jane Richardson-Mack  
Victoria Weiss

**6 Mise En Place**  
Jon De La Cruz

**7 Dining Room**  
Chloe Warner

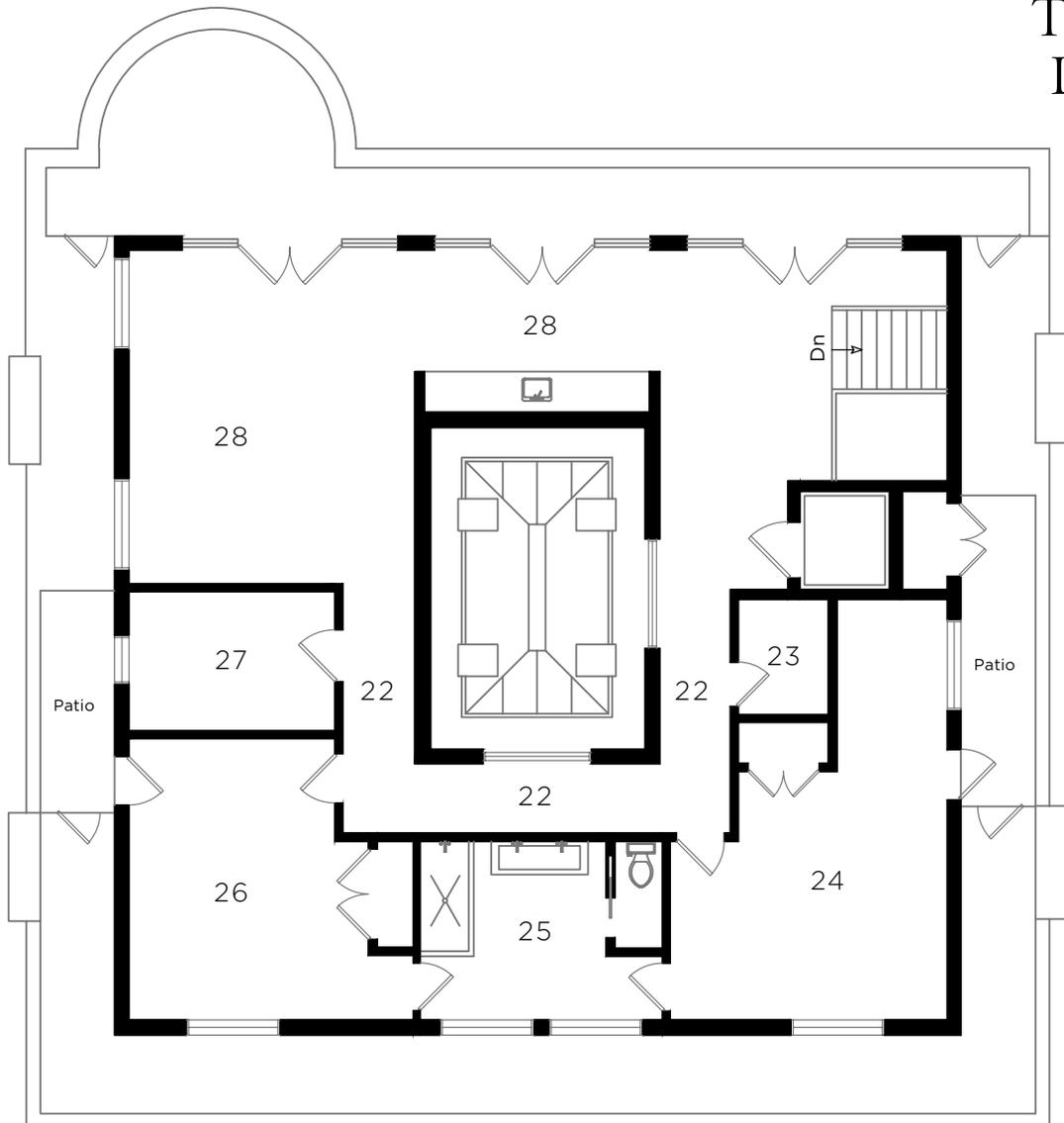
**8 "A Muse'ing April in Paris"**  
**Living Room**  
Jonathan Rachman

# SECOND LEVEL



- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 9 Stair Alcoves<br>Elan Evans                                    | 14 Curio Closet<br>Krista Hoffman                        | 19 The Bedroom<br>Jaimie Belew   |
| 10 Guardians<br>Stephanie Breitbard<br>Evie Simon                | 15 Master Bedroom<br>Beth Martin                         | 20 The Loggia<br>Jaimie Belew  |
| 11 All Is Vanity<br>Molie Malone                                 | 16 The Balancing Point<br>Kari McIntosh                  | 21 Stairwell & Vestibules<br>Lisa Carroll<br>Gale Jesi<br>Jenifer Kent<br>Matt Scheatzle |
| 12 The Great Exploration<br>Kid's Bedroom<br>Sherry Hope-Kennedy | 17 Master Bath:<br>Restore and Refresh<br>Cecilie Starin |  |
| 13 The Age of Innocence<br>Ian Stallings                         | 18 Guest Bathroom<br>Mead Quin                           |  |

# THIRD LEVEL



**22 Third Floor Hallway**  
Diane Rosenblum

**23 Powder Room**  
David Bjørngaard  
Stephen Stout

**24 Executive Refuge**  
Chris Eskra

**25 A Thousand Watt Bathroom**  
Adele Salierno

**26 Teen Bedroom**  
Kristen Peña

**27 "Tumbled in Thousand Li"**  
Dina Bandman

**28 Penthouse Living Room & Bar**  
Catherine Kwong

# COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

## ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

San Francisco University High School welcomes students of demonstrated motivation and ability to engage in an education that fosters responsibility and the spirited pursuit of knowledge. We are a school where adults believe in the promise of every student, and together we work to build and sustain a community of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and talents. UHS challenges each individual to live a life of integrity, inquiry, and purpose larger than the self.

In 1973, the founders of San Francisco University High School believed in the educational value of diversity and pluralism, imagining a school that drew upon the exciting variety and resources of the city of San Francisco to develop creative, capable, and socially responsible leaders. Their efforts led to a school that would achieve both equity and excellence, encompassing the arts, academics, athletics, and community engagement. More than forty years later, we are still a community that fosters inquiry, risk-taking, collaboration, and personal and intellectual growth for both students and teachers.

In 2014, UHS launched a two-year process of far-reaching self study, meaningful collaboration, and profound discovery. Officially adopted by our community in the Fall of 2016, our new strategic direction charts the school's next era, building on a legacy of excellence, while remaining institutionally reflective and continually poised to respond to our changing world.

### OUR STRATEGIC DESIGN

We are a courageous community, dedicating ourselves to embracing education as a transformational, rather than a transactional, endeavor. We empower our students to invent and sustain their own vision of success and sense of purpose. Our school culture provides a dynamic and challenging education, while simultaneously promoting wellness, care, and wholeness. We fundamentally believe that collaboration among people with diverse backgrounds and life experiences is essential to deep learning. And we pledge to ensure that UHS remains a strategically nimble institution, engaged in learning, reflection, and growth on all levels.



To fulfill our vision, we commit to conducting ourselves in accordance with these values:

**Inquiry:** Being curious, open-minded, and courageous; seeking out different perspectives and learning from one another; and striving to deepen our understanding of the evolving world.

**Care:** Investing wholeheartedly in our work and in one another; cultivating empathy, compassion, mindfulness, and resilience; recognizing and seeking to address injustice.

**Integrity:** Being truthful, open, honest, and reflective; honoring the wholeness of each individual; acting to fulfill a purpose larger than the self.

**Agency:** Taking risks and growing from the experience; pursuing our passions with confidence, creativity, and humility; discovering and making real our own distinctive and evolving expressions of excellence.

**Interconnection:** Building and sustaining an intentionally diverse, equitable, and inclusive school; engaging as socially responsible citizens in communities both near and far; recognizing that we form a web through our common humanity: what affects one person affects us all.