



February 2018

*YOU Make the Difference...*

Forward Motion Project

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## Forward Motion: Building and Growing Our Future Together

Drawing pictures, building with blocks, negotiating with friends.... these are things that the children at Groton Community School do each day thanks to people like you, who generously support our work. What you may not know is that this is exactly what is going on with the grownups of the GCS community, too, as we prepare to build the first phase of our **Forward Motion** project this summer. The future is almost here for GCS, and we need you more than ever to help these dreams for our school become a reality.

The Trustees and **Forward Motion** Steering Committee are pleased to announce the public phase of the school's first ever, Capital Campaign this month! As architects put finishing touches on the construction drawings, we begin work with a general contractor, and we anxiously anticipate breaking ground for phase one of the project in June, it will take the support and investment of every member of the GCS family to bring the full **Forward Motion** project to life. Making a financial commitment that is *personally meaningful* to the **Forward Motion** Campaign will construct a bright future for children in our community.

The renovation of our building will be a game-changer for our beloved school as we have outgrown the space we've thrived

in for 33 years. A spacious, multipurpose Community Room, a dedicated Children's Library, Technology and Resource Center, enlarged classrooms, and new meeting spaces for teachers and families are among the many enhancements planned for our school. These, and other exciting improvements will allow GCS to continue providing the best first school experience for children and families, by flourishing, growing, and keeping pace with developments in early childhood education.

You can learn more about the vision for **Forward Motion**, and register to receive Insider Updates from our campaign Steering Committee, by visiting our website at [www.GCSForwardMotion.org](http://www.GCSForwardMotion.org). Stay tuned for your personal invitation to join other Groton Community School families, alumni, and business and community friends in helping GCS achieve all that is possible with **Forward Motion**.



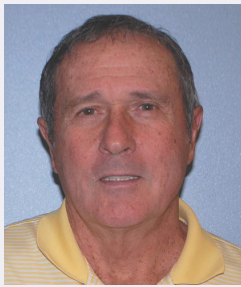
### *Did You Know?*

GCS is working hard to expand its community outreach! Check out regular Groton Community School and GCS Alumni Network posts on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter to find out about general school happenings throughout the year, and exciting news about our **Forward Motion** expansion project!



# Why I Give ...One Donor's Perspective:

## A conversation with Steve Webber, GCS Alumnus and Trustee



**GCS:** Thank you for taking time to talk with us today. Please tell us about your personal connection to Groton Community School.

**Steve:** I am an Alumnus of GCS. I attended early in the school's history, around 70 years ago. During the past few years I have served as a Trustee. My daughter also attended GCS, so we are one of several families with multiple generations of GCS alumni!

**GCS:** What do you think sets GCS apart?

**Steve:** The real value of the school is demonstrated in the longevity of the staff,

and how they exhibit a passion for their teaching and making the school succeed. Education in a child's early years is so important. GCS teachers know that this is the time to get children thinking, and they know how to get their brains going.

**GCS:** Why do you support the GCS Annual Fund every year?

**Steve:** I have been fortunate to have done well throughout the years and want to support GCS because it is an important part of our community. I hope my giving will stimulate others to give generously as well.

**GCS:** Why do you think others should support the Annual Fund?

**Steve:** GCS needs the community's support to continue and to expand. Much of the annual support comes from past GCS

families because they realize the importance of the school. We need more alumni and past families to support GCS so it can continue to be the best in our community.

**GCS:** What can you tell us about yourself?

**Steve:** Officially, we live in Florida now, but we spend half the summer in Groton and half in Maine. One of the goals of GCS to this day is to instill a love of learning in children. I'm retired, but I haven't stopped my education. I usually spend 2-3 hours per day on online coursework. I also love sports which have been a major part of my life. I do still love playing golf. I also enjoy all kinds of music and have an eclectic playlist. Taking a piano class is on my bucket list. I still have that love for learning sparked by Groton Community School many years ago!

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Want to join Steve in supporting the GCS Annual Fund? Check out our website at [www.grotoncommunityschool.org/annual.fund/](http://www.grotoncommunityschool.org/annual.fund/) or call us at 978-448-6179.

## A Word from Our Director

When you think of an early childhood school, what comes to mind? If it is a busy, vibrant place filled with fun, you would certainly be picturing the school we get to see every day. In addition to all this activity, we are implementing an innovative, personally enriching concept here at Groton Community School through our "Watch me grow!" school-wide theme this year. A "growth mindset", coined by Carol Dweck, Ph.D., author of Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, is the belief that anyone can "grow their brains by fostering a positive attitude and belief that you can develop talents and skills through hard work, persistence, good strategies, and help from others." Children and teachers alike are focusing on the power of "yet", as in "I am not able to do that yet, but can someday" and embracing

a growth mindset culture each day. It is wonderful to see even our youngest flexing their thoughts and eager to learn through "just right challenges". This concept was recently highlighted in the Aqua Room, where Gloria (a beloved puppet character) lamented, "I can't" when it was her turn to be the calendar helper. The children piped in, exclaiming, "Not yet!", "You can do it", and "I can help you!" One suggested, "I have an idea. How about she holds a lovey and tries?" Another referred to "The Power of Yet" song, saying, "If you do that song in your head, you can remember it, and use it all over again." This positive attitude toward ongoing growth is so inspirational from the mouths of children. Developing these important skills in our young learners helps prepare them for a lifetime of learning, and success!



*Linda*

Linda Kosinski  
Director

# Adelaide Luca Giving Society Exceeds \$100,000

Adelaide (Torrey) Luca played a major role in the history of Groton Community School as an early Teacher and Director in the 1940s. She had a keen memory of the children she taught, and a warm and welcoming heart for the GCS children who visited her in later years. To honor Adelaide's dedication to GCS, an Annual Fund Giving Society was named in her memory in September of 2014, for donations of \$1,000 and beyond.

Since its inception, 40 donations totaling more than \$123,000 have been made by Society members. All gifts to the Annual Fund support the ongoing operations and programming of the school, helping children, families, and staff, grow and learn.

We are grateful to our Adelaide Luca Society contributors, listed below, for their support of Groton Community School, and are delighted to honor the memory of our dear friend Adelaide by recognizing donors who share her love of GCS, passion for early education, and generous spirit!

Anonymous	The MacDonald Family
John and Diane Amaral	James and Lillian McNulty
Randall and Kathleen Barron & Family	David Moulton
Dan and Alisa Barton	Beth Lindstrom and Ray Murphy & Family
The Cline Family	Brad and Sally Smith
John and Lisa Conner	Albert and Elizabeth Stone
William and Susan Ellerkamp	David and Pamela Stone
James and Kathleen Joyce & Family	Steven and Jennifer Stone
The Kehoe Family	Steve and Nancy Webber
Steve and Marie Lane	Gus Widmayer and Miss Sophie
	David and Nancy Wilder



## A Peek Inside Our Classrooms

Honoring the cultures of children in class, and also embracing our world community is an important goal at GCS. The Toddler and Preschool Programs in the Blue and Pink Rooms both featured an "Africa" Theme recently, rich with creative activities, music, foods, literature and language. Here are a few highlights...

Pink Room Teacher Inga Nuccio writes: "Our explorations through Africa took us up the Nile and across the Savannah. As the children created animals that are indigenous to Africa, they experienced the rain on the Serengeti, and we counted to ten in Swahili. We worked on perfecting our African travel poems 'Voosi drives the Kombi' and 'Ti-Gi-Boom', and practiced drumming on a traditional African djembe. The children also learned that an adult giraffe is approximately 17 feet long, and it took four friends lying head to toe to make that length. We now know that a giraffe could not stand in the classrooms of Groton Community School! But their height makes it easy to reach the delicious leaves on the acacia trees."

Shelley Grove describes their Blue Room explorations: "Our class 'journey' to Africa has been rich in many curriculum areas. We touched upon different cultures and immersed ourselves into exciting literature. It is important for children to observe that children in other parts of the world have similar needs, like a house, family, friends, food and clothing, but may experience it all very differently. We often ask the children what they know about a subject and record their answers to plan our curriculum. This time we asked each child to look at a map of Africa which showed animals, natural resources and products in each country. Everyone chose something they were interested in learning more about. Our list is quite diverse: rocks, mountains, mining, spices, oranges, trees, rivers, animals in Libya, camels, elephants, ostriches, Madagascar, if there is snow in Africa, and is there MacDonald's in Africa? Using an iPad to research our questions, we found a MacDonald's in South Africa and perused their menu to find similar items, and different and spicy choices. Emergent curriculum is wonderful because it can take you down an unexpected path." Welcome home from your travels and discoveries, Pink and Blue Room classes!





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## Look Who's Soaring Now! *Katie von Campe*

Katie von Campe, a Groton Community School alumna, was a "Mighty Mustang" during its summer camp in 2002 and she still has her beloved camp statue! Katie, who graduated from Amherst College in 2017, is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Children's Literature and an MFA in Writing for Children from Simmons College. Katie told us that she has been writing children's books for a while, and hoping to get published. "I decided that if I could make a career out of it, this would be an ideal reality. I may want to teach, as well as write and publish children's books. Or I might work in a program that connects children to literature and teaches people to understand the value of this."

Katie remembers fondly putting on plays at GCS. "We were given so much control

in storytelling and creating characters, and encouraged to invent our own roles. My curiosity and imagination were nurtured." She also recalls, "My teacher, Jennie, was such an important influence on me. She encouraged and believed in me and created this sense of creativity and exploration."

GCS helped inspire Katie's passion for children's literature and love of learning. "The fact that I was encouraged to be curious, to be myself at GCS, has always stuck with me. We were told to see what could be possible, or to see where we could go with an idea." Now she hopes to work with children to ignite their curiosity and sense of wonder through connections to literature.

When she isn't studying, Katie is quite busy. "I am always reading and writing, and I love to draw my characters and plot stories out.



Katie, now and then!

I was on the fencing team at Amherst, and it was fun to try something new. I like long walks, and biking. I am also a vegetarian, and I enjoy trying to cook new meals."

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Do you know a GCS alum who is soaring? Visit [grotoncommunityschool.org/gcs-alumni-network](http://grotoncommunityschool.org/gcs-alumni-network), or contact [alumni@grotoncommunityschool.org](mailto:alumni@grotoncommunityschool.org) to share a personal story or nominate someone you know for our "Look Who's Soaring Now" article. Be sure to also visit our "GCS Alumni Network" Facebook and Instagram pages!!

*Helping Children Soar*