



Peter (left) and Peggy Preuss (right) with Laura Castro '14 and James Noraky '09

## TOP OF THE CLASS

### Preuss Earns Awards and High Marks in Annual Rankings

It's been quite a spring for The Preuss School UCSD. In May, Preuss was ranked the best high school in San Diego County by *U.S. News & World Report* in its annual list of Best High Schools. The school was also ranked the 5th best high school in California, the 9th best charter school in the country and 39th overall in the nation.

While Preuss was ranked fifth best in California, it is the only school in the top five that requires that all prospective students must be from a low-income family and in which no parent or guardian has graduated from a four-year college. At 97 percent, Preuss tied with another school for the highest minority population in the top five schools.

The *U.S. News & World Report* ranking came on the heels of other recent accolades. *The Washington Post* named Preuss one of America's Most

Challenging High Schools, ranking the school the most challenging high school in California and 21st in the nation. The California Department of Education also named Preuss a 2015 California Gold Ribbon School, which recognizes schools with model programs.

And the good news doesn't stop there. Four seniors—Jimmy Lozano, Genesis Moran Gonzalez, Joey Uy and Hiwet Weldeselase—were also awarded prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarships, which cover all college costs for undergraduate and graduate education. Only 1,000 of these scholarships are awarded nationwide each year, and Preuss is home to 35 Gates Millennium Scholars in the past 12 years.

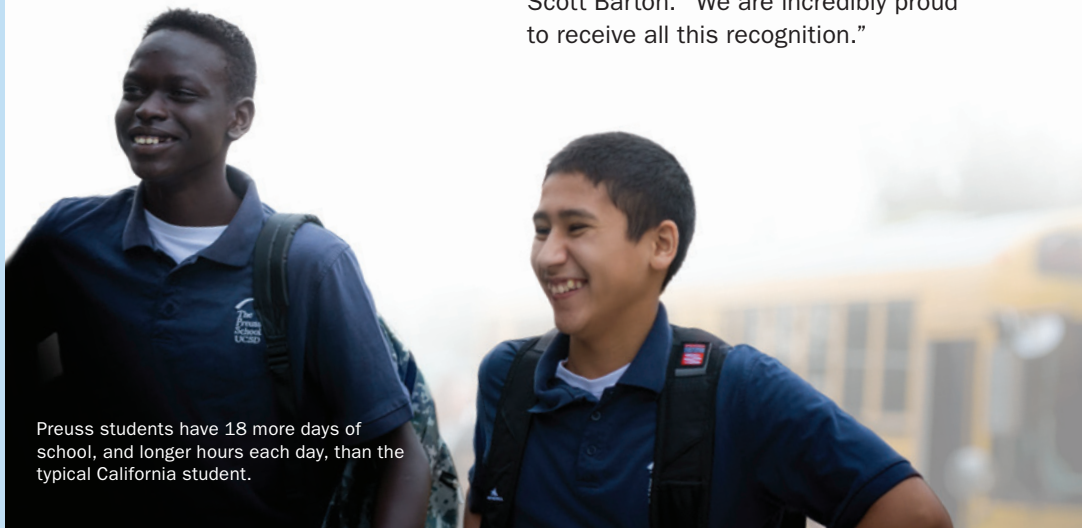
"These achievements are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, faculty, staff and all those who believe in our mission," said Principal Scott Barton. "We are incredibly proud to receive all this recognition."

### Annual Benefit Succeeds in Sustaining What Matters

More than 200 friends of The Preuss School UCSD came together to support the school and its students at The Preuss Promise: Sustaining What Matters benefit celebration. The annual event netted \$363,000 to support longer learning time at Preuss.

The evening began with a reception highlighting student installations. UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla opened the program and the keynote was given by alumnus James Noraky, co-valedictorian from the Class of 2009, who is earning his doctorate at MIT.

Special thanks to event co-chairs Erin and Peter J. Preuss and Svetlana and Matthew Weil, and honorary committee co-chairs Peggy and Peter Preuss.



Preuss students have 18 more days of school, and longer hours each day, than the typical California student.

## BULLETIN BOARD

- Preuss alumnus Marco Murillo '04 provided the opening welcome at the **22nd Annual California Charter Schools Conference** in Sacramento, Calif., where he spoke to some 3,000 attendees. A member of Preuss' first graduating class, Murillo recently received his doctorate from the Division of Urban Schooling at UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Studies.
- Congratulations to senior Genesis Moran Gonzalez, who was the grand prize winner of the **César E. Chávez Essay Contest**. Moran won \$1,000 and a laptop computer and was also invited to read her essay aloud at the annual César E. Chávez Community Breakfast.
- A big thank-you to everyone who participated in **Birdies for Charity**, part of the Farmers Insurance Open earlier this year. With your support we succeeded in raising more than \$25,000 for Preuss.

## ALUMNI UPDATES

### Andrew Buitron '11

A recent graduate of Pitzer College where he majored in psychology, Buitron is the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship in the English Teaching Assistant Program. The program places Fulbrighters in classrooms abroad to provide assistance to local English teachers. Buitron will be teaching in Malaysia.



Andrew Buitron

### Azeb Guesh '12

Guesh is currently in her third year at UCLA where she is majoring in psychobiology and preparing for medical school. In her spare time she works with the Cultural Affairs Commission (a branch of student government) to help organize art exhibits, spoken word events, concerts, festivals and much more. She also had the opportunity to volunteer at an elementary school for a quarter and said, "It reminded me so much of how important it is to give back and support better education for inner-city youth."



Azeb Guesh



## Class of 2015 Looks Forward to a Bright Future

Senior Diego Espinoza is going to Tufts University on a full-ride scholarship. His classmate Belen Hernandez is headed to UC San Diego and is one of 21 Preuss students who will attend the university on a full ride through the Chancellor's Associates Scholars Program.

"It's my family's dream come true, it's my community's dream come true," said Hernandez who plans to study environmental systems.

Ninety-nine percent of the class of 2015—102 out of 103 students—has been admitted to a four-year college or university. A few students, like Espinoza, will head to private colleges, including Stanford University, Yale University, Wesleyan University, Claremont McKenna College and Pitzer College. The majority will attend public universities, with 44 students planning to attend a University of California campus and 36 headed to a California State University campus. Nine students will attend community colleges and plan to transfer to a four-year university.

This year's graduating class has also garnered numerous scholarships. In addition to the Chancellor's Associates Scholarships and Gates Millennium Scholarships, students have received the 2015 Horatio Alger National Scholarship, the new Union Bank Scholarship for Preuss Graduating Seniors, San Diego Women's Inc. scholarships, and scholarships from Kiwanis of La Jolla, the Patricia and Christopher Weil Family Foundation, and the Grillo-Marxuach family, to name just a few.



**Stay up-to-date!** Connect with us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ThePreussSchoolUCSD](http://www.facebook.com/ThePreussSchoolUCSD) or send your email address to [kdyoung@ucsd.edu](mailto:kdyoung@ucsd.edu) to receive important announcements and updates.



## PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE



If you've read our cover article, you know that we have a lot to be proud of at Preuss. From being ranked one of the Best High Schools in America to being named a 2015 California

Gold Ribbon School, this spring has been a time of great celebration. More important than rankings, however, is recognizing the achievements of our students.

Nearly the entire class, some 99 percent, has been admitted to a four-year college or university. This is no small feat. It represents countless hours of research,

longer-than-average school days and school years, lengthy commutes to school and, above all, a student's relentless determination to transform his or her life.

Many of our students have also been awarded scholarships. Twenty-three of our students were awarded Chancellor's Associates Scholarships, which essentially provide a full-ride to UC San Diego. Four of our seniors—Jimmy Lozano, Genesis Moran Gonzalez, Joey Uy and Hiwet Weldeselase—were awarded Gates Millennium Scholarships, successfully competing against more than 50,000 other applicants to be one of 1,000 students nationwide to receive these prestigious awards. As Gates Millennium Scholars, Jimmy, Genesis, Joey and Hiwet won't have to worry about paying for college or graduate school—a dream-come-true for

anyone, but especially significant to low-income, first-generation students such as ours.

We are so proud of everything our students have accomplished. We are also grateful for all the hard work and dedication of the faculty, staff, parents and friends who have helped our students get where they are today.

Thank you for supporting The Preuss School through another successful year. Enjoy the summer!

Best regards,

Scott Barton  
Principal

## SPOTLIGHT

### James Noraky '09, *Doctoral Student*

As a doctoral student at MIT, James Noraky is researching novel techniques to advance video compression technology: techniques that will make a difference in next generation media, from 8K television to virtual reality. Before pursuing his doctorate, Noraky discovered his passion for engineering and research at The Preuss School UCSD.

"Preuss was my big break," he said. "I benefited from the rigor curriculum and opportunities to communicate, collaborate and lead, as well as from caring teachers, mentors and community members."

During his time at Preuss, the 2009 graduate undertook a variety of science-fair projects, a requirement at the school. His projects were often ambitious: He experimented with using sound waves as a means of refrigeration; later he developed control circuitry that allowed muscles in the forearms to control prosthetic hands.

"These projects were my creative outlet," he recalled, "and they spurred my decision to pursue a research career."

Another formative experience for Noraky was joining the FIRST robotics team, through which he learned how to apply concepts from the classroom to build a functional robot. It was both fun and educational. Later, in his graduate classes at MIT, he would relearn some of the same engineering concepts he used for the robotics team.

In April, Noraky returned to San Diego to share his story at The Preuss Promise, the school's annual benefit. He took



James Noraky (middle) with his mother (left) and grandmother at The Preuss Promise

advantage of the opportunity to visit former teachers and meet new students.

"For me and many others, Preuss certainly kept its promise," he told guests at the benefit. "I'm not sure how any high school could get any better."

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## FOCUS ON Arts Outreach Program

The UC San Diego Division of Arts and Humanities' Arts Outreach Program is designed to provide students from Preuss and other schools with first-hand experiences in the arts. Over the past two years, Preuss students have attended plays, concerts and gallery exhibits. Recently they learned about *The Threepenny Opera* from soprano Susan Narucki of UC San Diego's music faculty and singers from the opera's cast, who are working toward graduate degrees.

Preuss students seemed fascinated to learn how an opera with upbeat

songs such as "Mack the Knife" was actually a dark commentary on corrupt government, oppression and archaic ideas about gender roles: themes that are as relevant today as they were in the 1920s. Following the lecture and performances, students spoke with Narucki and the cast about their own ambitions as artists and heard stories about the making of an artist: the value of an arts education, early careers that can consist of obscure gigs for small pay but with large creative rewards, and the demanding but satisfying work of the professional performer.



UC San Diego graduate students Kirsten Wiest (right) and Kyle Adam Blair perform songs from *The Threepenny Opera* for Preuss students. Photo: Ine Vanoevere