



Happy to be back: Jesus Mendez and Jasmine Perez were two Preuss alumni who returned for Homecoming.

## Alumni Return for Homecoming

The year got off to a great start for Preuss with more than 50 alumni visiting the school in January to participate in Homecoming. Alumni spoke to 10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade advisory classes and shared their college experiences with them. An additional 50–75 alumni attended Homecoming activities, which included a basketball game against Gompers High School.

“I’m very happy to come back to Preuss and talk to the students,” said Jerome Sanders, who is a member of the Preuss class of 2010 and is currently a sophomore at Santa Clara University. “I share my experiences with college and help answer any questions the students might have. It’s great being able to give back.”

## THE PREUSS SCHOOL PROMISE

### Help Celebrate on Saturday, April 21, 2012

**Transformation:** It is an idea at the core of The Preuss School mission to create a functioning educational system capable of transforming a student from one who has all but given up to one whose passion to learn is ignited and whose future is reclaimed. Help us celebrate this idea at The Preuss School Promise: Lives Transformed on Saturday, April 21, at 6:30 p.m. The benefit will be held at the Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine and is sure to be an inspirational evening of fun.

The event begins with a cocktail hour featuring classical music by a quartet of Preuss students. Guests will be able to drive the Preuss robot, which just recently competed in the San Diego FIRST Regional Robotics Competition. The Preuss high-school robotics team spent six weeks building the robot from a kit that included a motorcycle battery, power distribution boards and clear polycarbonate casings. There will also be exciting science demonstrations and a fine arts exhibit by Preuss students. The exhibit will be the premiere for the students who will be displaying

their art at Space 4 Art in downtown San Diego June 6–8.

After the cocktail hour, guests will enjoy an elegant dinner with a music performance by social studies teacher and mandolinist Oscar Ramos, who will perform Vivaldi’s Mandolin Concerto in C with Preuss music students. Speakers will include Jawid Habib, a Preuss alumnus and current law student at UCLA, and Kelly Kovacic, chair of the Social Studies Department and the 2010 California Teacher of the Year. There will also be a live auction with a variety of incredible items up for bid, including a seven-day voyage aboard the largest private residential yacht on Earth, two tickets to the invitation-only 2012 Tony Awards dress rehearsal with a two-night stay in Manhattan, and a one-week stay for two in Chilean Patagonia.

The evening will also pay tribute to Roberta and Malin Burnham, who have been long-time supporters of The Preuss School. Individual tickets and tables are still available. Please visit [preuss.ucsd.edu](http://preuss.ucsd.edu) for more information or contact Maryann Laphorn at [mlaphorn@ucsd.edu](mailto:mlaphorn@ucsd.edu) or (858) 534-1404.



Members of The Preuss School robotics team with their robot at the 2011 benefit.



## BULLETIN BOARD

- Thank you to everyone who supported The Preuss School through the **San Diego Foundation giveBIG event** on December 14 and 15. We raised \$37,975 for the school during this inaugural event.
- **Newsmakers:** Preuss alumna Monika Langarika '07 was recently named Inspiring Young Latina of the Week by *Latina* magazine, and alumna Macy Olivas '09 has been featured in a variety of blogs, websites and the media for her advocacy on education reform.
- **Thank you to all the Preuss parents** who are working hard to support their students' school! Parents are targeting their fundraising efforts on transportation—a critical issue for Preuss—and have already given \$5,000 this school year. The Parent Dinner Dance on April 28 will be another fundraiser for Preuss transportation. We truly appreciate all their efforts.
- Don't miss a great opportunity to see our arts program in action this spring when Preuss hosts its annual **Shakespeare Festival**. The festival will be held on April 25 in the amphitheatre.
- **Congratulations to sophomore Daniel Million** who was one of six Coastwise Scholarship winners. The annual Coastwise Prize for Investing Excellence is a scholarship program underwritten by Coastwise Capital Group, LLC, which aims to promote financial literacy among today's youth.

Daniel Million (center, with check) was one of six Coastwise Scholarship winners.



**Stay Connected!** If you would like to receive email communications, including important announcements, videos and more from The Preuss School, please send your email address to [mlapthorn@ucsd.edu](mailto:mlapthorn@ucsd.edu).

## Girls Squash Team Finishes 2-2 in Nationals

Competing against the nation's elite prep schools, the girls' squash team finished 2-2 at the national high-school championships at Yale University. The Yale tournament is the largest in the world, with about 1,400 students competing.

The Preuss School UCSD team, which is run by the nonprofit Access Youth Academy, was pre-selected to compete in Division 1, the toughest of the six divisions in the girls' bracket. Despite losing its first two matches, the team finished strong, defeating Lawrenceville 6-1 and then Springside 4-3. The Preuss team was the only West Coast girls' team to compete in the championship.



The girls' squash team en route to their competition.

## Peer Counseling Program Launches in Memory of Poway Teen

Thanks to a grant from Chelsea's Light Foundation, The Preuss School will be the first school to establish a peer-counseling corps in memory of Poway High School student Chelsea King. The foundation, which was started by Chelsea's family after her untimely death, seeks to create peer-counseling programs in her name at schools throughout San Diego County and eventually regionally and nationally. Chelsea was inspired by her interactions with Poway High School's peer counseling program and became an active peer-to-peer volunteer. Preuss will receive \$5,000 per year over the next three years to develop and maintain the program and hopes to participate beyond the three-year cycle.

## PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

The Preuss School has been successful by virtually any measure. *Newsweek* magazine named us the top transformative high school in the nation. We are a 2010 U.S. Department of Education National Blue



Ribbon School, which places us among the elite five percent of all private and public schools, and a California Distinguished School. Our students are being accepted to four-year colleges

and universities at a rate of more than 90 percent. In fact, the acceptance rate of the class of 2012 is already at 91 percent. What we are doing at The Preuss School is working.

It's not just academic rigor that leads to our success. We also bring innovative extracurricular programs to our school to enhance

learning and personal growth. For example, San Diego's Community Music Center, in collaboration with Villa Musica and the Gourevitch family, offered Preuss students music scholarships for 90 percent tuition for the remainder of the academic year. To commemorate Read Across America Day, 16 community members came to campus to read Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* to our high school advisory classes. And Nate Burd, one of our science teachers, organized our first Science Night, with SPAWAR scientists on hand to conduct experiments. The event attracted more than 100 Preuss students and their family members.

For four years state revenue has been declining and our costs have been increasing. Preuss has already taken steps to ensure that the key pillars of our success—longer learning time and consistent access to transportation—remain untouched, but the unprecedented state budget difficulties are forcing us to look at modifying even those elements. We have submitted a strategic

multiyear, multipronged financial action plan to UC San Diego leadership. It is a plan that can be revised on an annual basis as we monitor the impact of our actions on student achievement, grades, standardized test scores, attendance, discipline, college acceptance and college-going rates.

Part of this plan calls for sharing the success of Preuss at every opportunity. I am asking that you all tell The Preuss School story and have discussions about what it takes to educate students in California. It is imperative that all students have equal access to a quality education, and Preuss is a model for that fundamental belief.

Best regards,

Scott Barton  
Principal

## SPOTLIGHT

### Renato Paiva

#### *Executive Director, Access Youth Academy*

When Renato Paiva, a former Brazilian squash champion, first came to The Preuss School UCSD with the idea of forming a squash program at the school, it was a leap of faith. A program like this had never been done before. Today, Preuss has the best urban squash team in the nation, and students earn scholarships to play squash at prestigious universities.

Squash is typically an East Coast, elite sport—Paiva was previously the assistant coach of the Harvard University squash team—but Paiva saw a unique opportunity to create a program in San Diego. He helped start the nonprofit Access Youth Academy, serving as its executive director. The organization's goal is to teach underprivileged youth the sport of squash and use it as a vehicle for academic success. When looking for a school to partner with,

Paiva found that The Preuss School UCSD was the perfect fit.

"The kids at Preuss are exactly what I had hoped to work with. They are incredibly



Renato Paiva with the girls' squash team.

driven," said Paiva. "Squash is a very intelligent sport. If you think well, you have a chance, and in that sense it's a very fair game—it's not all about fitness and running," Paiva continued: "The Preuss students get that. They understand the technique and finesse of the game."

In addition to the sport, the program engages students in academic tutoring and community service. The goal is to prepare students for college, with squash as an additional skill that sets students apart in college applications.

"There are 65 university squash programs in the nation, and that's where we have an edge," said Paiva. "Helping students get to college is really what it's all about."

## FOCUS ON Art and Sustainability

Recycled magazines, eco-friendly ink and a rolling pin may not sound like your typical art supplies, but these are a few of the tools students at The Preuss School UCSD are using to create sustainable works of art. Through the Artist Outreach Program, which was funded by the Picerne Foundation, artist Barbara Gothard, Ph.D., is working with students to incorporate sustainability and stewardship concepts into their art projects.

For one project, students created self-portraits out of recycled magazine pieces, all in shades of green. Afterward, each

portrait was scanned and digitally assembled to create one giant mosaic made up of the individual student portraits.

“This artwork is a reflection of the changes in the world around us—sustainability is a very contemporary theme,” said Barak Smith, chair of the Fine Arts Department. “It’s been a wonderful experience working with Barbara and having a fellow artist in the classroom.”

The students will show their art at Space 4 Art in downtown San Diego June 6-8, with a reception June 9.



Students created self-portraits out of recycled magazines as part of the Artist Outreach Program.

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