

TOWER NEWS



Withrow Alumni • Box 8186 • Cincinnati, OH 45208 • 513-363-9085

Spring 2020

Fine start for Fine Arts

by Zach Riggins '72

In this New Year, things are progressing very nicely in the Fine Arts at Withrow. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, *The Sounds of Withrow 2020*, originally scheduled for April 30-May 2, has been canceled. Nonetheless, the arts program had some notable achievements during the school year that merit sharing.

The *Beginning Band* program now has 66 students, which is a nucleus of a good band program. There are three bells of begin-

ning band with approximately 22 students in each class. There are several advanced students who can already play multiple instruments.

The *Instrumental/Marching Band* is holding steady at 16 members in the instrumental band, with a total of 33 including the Tigerettes. Mike Wade has started a Marching band instrument class and a *Jazz Ensemble*. The ensemble consists of guitar, sax, flute, trumpet, two trombones, an excellent drummer, vibraphones, and piano.

Mr. Wade's goal is to expand this group into a full-size Jazz band. Mike Wendeln teaches two *Steel Drum Band* classes with eight students each. Their performances in the Holiday show were well received. Improvements in playing and intonation continue for the students in Mr. Beasley's string classes.

The *Drama Department* performed a Black History Month in-school production on March 6 under the coordination of Mrs. Anderson.

A *Summer Music Institute* is scheduled for June 2020 and will provide a weeklong teaching/learning camp for all students interested in furthering their education in music. Fall 2020 will see a talent show in September, a drama production in October, and a holiday concert in December.

A newly-formed Withrow Fine Arts Team includes Mr. Zachery D. Riggins (Alumni Liaison, Stage Production Coordinator, Lead Fine Arts Team Leader), Mrs. Tanesha Anderson (Talent Coordinator/Associate School Fine Arts Team Leader),



Attentive Tigers listen to direction before taking to the stage for 2020 *Sounds of Withrow* rehearsals.

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President's Messages

by Dave Blocksom '68

Well-fed Tiger athletes perform better

A few years ago our Board of Trustees Vice President, Carol Mitchell Lawrence '84, started a program called *Fuel Our Tigers* to raise money to provide game day meals for our football players. At the beginning of this school year, our Board voted to expand this program to include home and away game day meals for all of our student athletes. As we prepare to fund the meals for our spring sports, we can report that we will end up providing over 7,000 meals to 475 student athletes for the entire school year at a cost of around \$21,000. Our student athletes and coaches would like to thank the alumni for their generous donations, which help fund this program.

We have included in this edition of *Tower News* a summary of all of our spending for the calendar year 2019. Speaking of athletics, next school year Withrow will move from the mostly suburban Eastern Cincinnati Conference (ECC) back to the Cincinnati Metro Athletic Conference (CMAC) which consists of Cincinnati Public Schools (similar to the old PHSL).

How to stay in touch

Because of rising printing and mailing costs and a desire of our younger alumni to receive an electronic version of *Tower News* (vs. this old school paper version), the Board has decided to mail the paper version only to those alumni who graduated prior to 1981. Those who graduated after 1980 will receive *Tower News* via an email

(if we have their email address) and it will be available for viewing on our Facebook page (Withrow HS Alumni) and our website (withrowalumni.org). If you graduated prior to 1981 and would like to receive *Tower News* electronically instead of the paper version, please contact us at withrowalum@gmail.com.

If you are visiting our Facebook page, be sure to use the above site because there are other unofficial sites using *Withrow Alumni*.

Tigers inducted into CPS athletic Hall of Fame

Four Withrow alumni athletes were inducted into the Cincinnati Public Schools Athletic Hall of Fame last year. They are Robert Longmire '73 for wrestling; Dante Love '05 for football, basketball and baseball; Ethan Allen '22 for football, basketball, baseball and track, and Dick Lemay '56 for football, basketball and baseball. You can read about Love, Allen and Lemay on our alumni website Hall of Fame section (withrowalumni.org). While you're on the website, check out the "Withrow's Century of History" tab to see links to history articles by Bob Linnenberg '63, a year-by-year history highlight by Bob and Christy McTigue Backley '66, and a video tribute by Rob Hinton '71.

New way to contribute

The recently enacted SECURE Act has slightly modified the Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from some retirement accounts. If you turn 70 ½ this

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Students learn work and social skills through Tiger Diner

Your donations to WAI help support *Tiger Diner*, an innovative program with two praiseworthy goals: first, to show appreciation to faculty and staff; and second, to provide 16 students with multiple disabilities the opportunity for job training and preparation.

Once a month, students prepare and serve a delicious lunch. During the week before, all students cook the food and bake the desserts. On the day of Tiger Diner, they set up the tables and get the food ready to serve. Jobs include hostess and wait staff. Since Withrow has three separate lunches, students rotate among jobs.

Serving food and drink in a restaurant-like setting helps students learn what it is like to have a real-life job with some pressure and practice their customer relations and social skills.

Among the meals staff have enjoyed were chicken teriyaki, a salad bar including Caesar salad, chili, fajitas and burritos, chess pie, cheesecake, carrot cake, and pineapple upside down cake. They appreciate the chance to enjoy a relaxed meal with colleagues in a pleasant setting. There is no charge, but servers do accept tips.

Meghan Kenney is one of the special education teachers who organize Tiger Diner. “We place much focus on job training and simulation programs. We (the teachers) are working to build relationships with businesses so we can develop in our students the skills these businesses will require of their employees.”

Ms. Kenney also stresses the importance of rewarding students for the job they do. They use the tips to take students on field trips. Recently, they had an outing to Shaan Indian restaurant.

Students mapped out which Metro bus route to take to best fit their time frame. At the restaurant, they were able to sample many different types of ethnic foods from the buffet. They were well behaved and respectful to the staff (after all, they know what the job is like!)

When Ms. Kenney went to pay, the owner informed her that a patron at the restaurant was so impressed by the good behavior that he felt everyone deserved a treat — so he paid their bill. Not only was it a kind gesture, but it spoke to the skills the students have developed through Tiger Diner and their daily lives at Withrow.

Tips from future Tiger Diner meals will be used for outings to a bowling alley, a Chinese restaurant, and the Harriet Beecher Stowe house.

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year you won't start taking your RMDs until you turn 72. If you are already required to take RMDs, then nothing changes. I mention this because many of our alumni make donations to Withrow Alumni Inc. (WAI) through their RMDs (as a Qualified Charitable Distribution). This is a great way to help Withrow and not have to pay income taxes on your distribution. Since many of you are no longer able to take itemized deductions on your tax return, it is a way to still get a tax benefit from contributing to Withrow. For those of you who turn 70 ½ this year (my '68

classmates), you can still take a charitable distribution this year and next (although it's not required). This process is fairly easy to set up with your retirement account custodian. We thank those of you who are taking advantage of this tax break. If you want help or more information about this program please contact us withrowalum@gmail.com.

Through the years we have been blessed by being the recipient of bequests from alumnus estates. Unfortunately, we've never properly recognized those deceased donors. To rectify that we

have established the *John Withrow Society* to recognize alumni who inform us that WAI will be part of their estate. We're not asking for any details of your bequest, just the knowledge that we are a part of your estate plan. In return, we will recognize you (if you want recognition) and host some special events for you and your guests (private tour of Withrow, meeting with teachers and/or administrators, and more). Even if we are a small part of your estate, we greatly appreciate it and we want to recognize you.

WAI SPENDING 2019: Total \$71,935

ACADEMIC: \$11,723

Tiger Diner -1,868
 Taiwan student trip - 2,250
 Scholarships - 2,000
 Senior Awards Day assembly - 313
 Bridge Walk - 200
 ELL students - 1,242
 Reading Center- 2,228
 Homecoming - 624
 PBIS initiative - 998

SPORTS AND ARTS: \$35,846

Withrow Hall of Fame - 465
 Boys basketball team meals - 3,600
 Boys basketball camps - 1,620
 Soccer team meals - 1,955
 Football team meals - 1,687
 Girls softball equipment - 778
 Girls basketball team meals - 1,284
 Girls basketball equipment - 1,024
 Girls volleyball meals - 627
 Cheerleading camp - 1,000
 Cheerleading meals - 1,320
 Dance team meals - 200
 Clean band uniforms - 1,631
 Band piano tuned - 585
 Band meals - 3,600
 Band - 1,692
 String orchestra - 5,000
 Holiday concert - 3,368
 Auditorium spotlights - 2,200
 After school music instruction - 2,935
 Gym displays - 725

SCHOOL STAFF SUPPORT : \$4,367

Financial aid counselor - 2,000
 Administrator/teachers lunches - 2,367

CAMPUS MAINTENANCE: \$1,300

Tower clock maintenance - 1,300

OPERATIONS: \$18,340

USPS - 317
 Tower News - 10,269
 Tax filing - 2,190
 Data base software - 3,352
 Supplies - 208
 Website maintenance - 2,004

CENTENNIAL FOUNTAIN SQUARE ORANGE OUT: \$1,359

Special Note

For those who may not know, Cincinnati Public Schools closed on March 17th for three weeks (one week of which was their spring break). With the state of COVID-19 in Ohio it looks like schools will probably not resume this school year. The last day of school is May 21st. We are trying to help the students in any way we can while they are out of school. We are directing donations to our WAI Principal's Fund to be used by the principal at his discretion.



Teacher-student connection spans decades

A special mentor was in the audience when Chris Hicks ('72) was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame. Former Withrow principal Major McNeil (1979-85) was the physical education teacher at Madisonville Elementary School in 1965 when Hicks was a sixth-grader. It was McNeil who encouraged Hicks to play sports at Madisonville and at Lyon Junior High. That encouragement was all Hicks needed to become a successful high school and college athlete.

The two had lost touch over the years, but reconnected in late 2019. Hicks credits McNeil for opening athletic, social, and academic doors for him. "He doesn't know how much he changed my life," says Hicks.

Says McNeil, "just seeing Chris again generates considerable positive feelings and understanding that if you have positive input, you increase your opportunity to have successful output. Chris is an example of that, so I'm feeling great."

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Ms. Diane Roland (Drama teacher), with behind the scenes support provided by Mrs. Jody McOskar and Mrs. Caroline Grizzle-Burns.

Leaders of the dance teams include Mrs. Stevens (Dynasty Dance Team), Mrs. Nina Hatcher (Tigerettes Dance Team), Mr. Nolan (Step dancers) and Mrs. Tanesha Anderson (auxiliary dancers). The International Student Coordinators are Mrs. Maria Hidalgo (ESL/international teacher) and Ms. Jaqueline Carbajal (ESL assistant with theater experience). Teachers in the Art Department assisting the program are Mrs. Kilbey and Mrs. Gordon.

In the Music Department, teachers include Mrs. Laura Omais (Beginning Band/Intermediate Band), Mr. Michael Wade (Jazz Band and Marching Band), Mr. Michael Wendeln (Steel Drum Band), Mrs. Alundra Childs (Pianist and Choral director) and Mr. John Beasley (String Players/Music Department Chair)

In addition, there is great support from other Withrow staff, the administration and Dr. Isidore Rudnick, Fine Arts Superintendent for CPS.

Musical instrument needs

We are in need of the following instruments: two concert tubas (uprights), four bass trombones, four tenor saxophones, four baritone saxophones, four French horns, two bass clarinets, two contra bass clarinets, two oboes, and two piccolos. None of these instruments currently exist at Withrow,

but they are important components of a well-balanced band program. We do have two bassoons, but their restoration will cost about \$2,000.

A *Friends of Withrow* instrument repair fund was established at Buddy Rogers Music, 1939 West Galbraith Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45239, (513) 931-6780. Anyone can add to the fund at any time. This is a payment for instrument repair and not a charitable contribution. The Withrow Fine Arts Program relies heavily on support from the Withrow Alumni Association. Please help us continue that support by sending a check payable to Withrow Alumni Inc. to P.O. Box 8186, Cincinnati, Ohio 45208. All donations to Withrow Alumni Inc. are tax deductible. Thank you.



It's not all about being onstage. Working sound equipment (top) and caring for costumes (above) are some of the valuable skills Tiger students are learning in their fine arts classes and activities.

Withdraw – The first 50 years

Dramatic and Literary Clubs

by Bob Linnenberg '63

American playwright Thornton Wilder once said, "I regard the theater as the greatest of all art forms." Students at the future Withdraw tended to agree with that concept and formed the first dramatic club in December of 1920. Known as *The East High Players*, the group's first year's presentations were mainly of plays written and performed by students. Skits with a holiday theme were presented at Christmas. When Withdraw got its new name, The Players was replaced by *Thalian Dramatic Club*, whose members performed their first plays in the 1925-26 school year. Eligible juniors and seniors had to try out for membership in Thalian and were judged on the "basis of character, merit, voice qualities, expression and poise." In 1928 a dramatic club for sophomores

was founded in order to prepare students for Thalian membership. By 1931 freshmen were also admitted to this "preparatory" club, which was called *Alphian Dramatic Club*. Alphian did not survive but Thalian flourished under the direction of Miss Marjorie Rosenberger for almost 40 years, continuing even after her retirement in 1971.

The Withdraw Players was formed in the 1935-36 school year replacing Alphian as the drama club for freshmen and sophomores. By 1944 the Players was open to all students and, like Thalian, required aspiring thespians to try out for membership. By the mid-1950s Thalian and The Withdraw Players merged and the new organization was known as *Thalian Players*.

Besides presenting such plays as *You Can't Take it With*

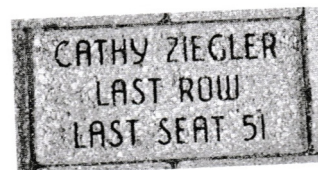
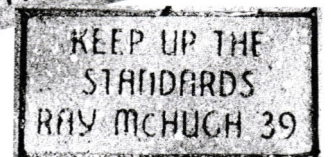
You and The Man who Came to Dinner throughout the school year, the dramatic clubs also performed skits and short plays at assemblies, pep rallies, and PTA meetings; they also helped supply the end-men and walk-ons for skits in the yearly *Minstrels* and the *Sounds of Withdraw*. The major theater productions also required the assistance of industrial arts students for sets and lighting, business students for ticketing and promotion, and other students for make-up and costumes. These opportunities for other than the dramatic students made these events truly a schoolwide activity.

Scribblers, the girl's literary society, was founded in 1924. Limited to 20 junior and senior members, Scribblers was respon-

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GET YOUR OWN PERSONALIZED BRICK AT WITHROW

Bricks are placed on the walkway leading from the bridge, past the clock tower and Rookwood fountain to the front steps. they provide a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge a former teacher, a friend or relative, or yourself, and also sustain our efforts of supporting our school. Brick cost is \$100.00 and is tax deductible. You have 3 lines with 13 characters (including spaces) per line.



Make checks payable to WITHROW ALUMNI and use the enclosed envelope.

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sible for publishing a guidebook to Withrow for incoming and new students. *The Withrow Book* contained information on the school history, activities, and sports and contained all the Withrow songs and cheers that new students would need to know. In 1933 *Literatas Club* was organized for freshmen and sophomore girls and remained active throughout the 1930s and 40s. Admittance to these clubs was limited to those girls who submitted their own literary efforts such as a poem, essay or short story. Girls also had to be recommended by their teachers. Members had to maintain a “C” average overall and a “B” average in English. The entries submitted for membership were often published in booklet or magazine form and for many years Scribbler entries were published in *Tower News*.

The oldest organization at Withrow was the *Philologian Literary Society*. Founded at East High’s predecessor, Madisonville High School, in 1912, the club’s objective was to prepare young men for public speaking and debating. The club met every other week and all discussions, talks and debates were held within the bounds of strict parliamentary procedures. There were no dues and the club made its money by fines on its absent, tardy or disorderly members. Admittance to the club was by application and the submission of a 500-word essay on a current topic of interest. Prospective members were then voted on by the membership. Philologists had to maintain a “B” average in English and Social Studies. By the late 1930s, Philologia was having joint meetings with the girls of Scribblers. The club lasted until the late 1950s. As was typical of such clubs founded in the early part

of the 20th century, Philologia had a club song, the chorus of which was:

*Onward with each brave endeavor,
In thy name we’ll fail no ever,
Yet our love will die no never,
Philologia!*

Of the literary clubs, the only one open to both boys and girls was *Quill and Scroll*. Part of a national organization, the Edmund D. Lyon (Withrow’s first principal) chapter was introduced at Withrow in 1942. The club first published a booklet *Inklings*, which consisted of literary works by student members. Another booklet, *Memories of Withrow*, was published in 1944. The club appears to have folded by the late 1940s, but was reinstated at Withrow in 1958. As its primary focus was journalistic writing, *Quill and Scroll* largely consisted of *Tower News* and Annual literary staff members.

2019 WITHROW SPECIAL TIGERS

You become a Special Tiger when you make a one-time gift of \$1,000 or more. This donation significantly impacts our ability to support academic and extracurricular programs and conserve our campus and facility. The most recent Special Tigers are:

Christy McTigue Backley ’66

Carole Black ’61

Dave Blocksom ’68

Class of 1959

Terri Colangelo ’68

Char McFall Damron ’66

Joe Dehner ’66

Linda M. Dolby ’59

Rich and Kay Ferguson Eby ’59

Judith Evans ’60

David Kleinschmidt ’59

Walter & Sylvia Laufer ’49

Robert Lindner

Dave & Bonnie Mehl ’69

Dee Stevens Shandera ’67

Carolyn Thompson ’66

Josephine Ogle Woolley ’67

George Yund

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Reunions

CLASS OF 1965

55th Class Reunion

Friday, August 28, 2020 (evening)

Saturday, August 29, 2020 (evening)

Embassy Suites Blue Ash

4554 Lake Forest Drive

Cincinnati, OH 45242

MORE INFO TO FOLLOW

Please email Janice (Van Pelt) Ludewig
jludewig@fuse.net if you have questions or
info on any other grad

CLASS OF 1970

50th Class Reunion

August 14-15, 2020

(two-day day weekend celebration)

Embassy Suites Blue Ash

4554 Lake Forest Drive

Cincinnati, OH 45242

Registration Fee: \$100 per person

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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dlbrown1111@yahoo.com