

Henry M. Gunn HS  
Palo Alto, CA  
Job #: 404152  
4-Color with Matte Lamination  
CLR SS over everything but black background  
Emboss OUR  
Walsworth Artist: Kyla Swanson

Walsworth

HENRY M. GUNN

THE OLYMPIAN 2024

# FINDING OUR WAY

2 3 2 4

Vol. 60

Walsworth

Standard Namestamping Placement



# FINDING OUR WAY



## **The Olympian**

Henry M. Gunn High School  
780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto, CA  
2023-2024



# THE PATH...

Paying parking ticket number three and deciding it's time to finally buy a parking pass.

Standing in line at Driftwood and deciding that today is the day to get The Drifter instead of the California Club.

The choices we make change our perspective.

Holding our breath in the bleachers as Gunn sinks the game-winning bucket against Paly.

Finding yourself in the midst of Stuff A Square, wondering how you ever thought it was a good idea to be sandwiched between your classmates.

Seeing that there's more value in volunteering at YCS Service Day than for checking off Living Skills hours.

Taking a leap and joining the debate team, discovering how to argue and think on your feet.

When we give new experiences a chance, we broaden our outlook.

Exploring different extracurriculars, we've discovered hidden talents and forged lifelong friendships.

Finding our own way, we shape our future with every step we take.

# ...WE TAKE

**RUNNING ROUTES:** Luke Teare (11) makes a dash while finding the best route to avoid the opponents. Despite playing football for many years (including flag football in middle school), he played fullback only for the past year. Fullback is one of the runningback positions. They are one of the key offensive players on the team. Teare had a lot of help from his upperclassman so that he could grow more. "When I receive the ball, I think about my surroundings and try to scan the field for other players," Teare says. "I don't think much about dodging people, I either try and run through or stiff arm them."



Anthony Ho (12) introduces Hana Siddeek (9) to the Biochem Olympiad Club during the club fair event. This club prepares students for National Olympiads by demonstrating applications of biology and chemistry through lessons. Ho now serves as club president and shares his experience with joining the club: "I first joined when I was in tenth grade and it allowed me to explore biology and chemistry to a deeper level," he said. "Being able to share that with people interested as well. It made me learn how much I love teaching and mentoring younger students. There's a lot of computer science and business in this area and so this path has been super meaningful to me. I definitely advocate for people to join clubs they're interested in."



Ya-an Xue



Staff Superlatives



**Best Dressed**  
English teachers  
Kate Weymouth and  
Paul Dunlap



**Most Spirited**  
Principal's Secretary Janet  
Owen and Librarian  
Daljeet Gill



**Most Quotable**  
Science teacher Mark Brassey  
and Living Skills teacher Jea-  
nette Tucker



**Jeopardy Stars**  
English teacher Danielle  
Whichard and History teacher  
Chris Johnson

 <p>Matthew McGinn PE</p>	 <p>Heather Mellows Science</p>	 <p>Nicole Menache English</p>	 <p>Angela Merchant Science/CTE</p>	 <p>Gregory Miller Visual/Performing Arts</p>	 <p>Arya Min English</p>	 <p>Diana Modica World Languages</p>	 <p>Joyce Montalvo Torres Instructional Aide</p>	 <p>Julie Mott Munger English</p>
 <p>Teresa Nino Oliva World Languages</p>	 <p>Christina Norberg Science</p>	 <p>Tiffany Ou-Ponticelli Visual/Performing Arts</p>	 <p>Janet Owen Main Office</p>	 <p>Kristen Owen English</p>	 <p>Joshua Paley Math/CTE</p>	 <p>Marjorie Paronable English</p>	 <p>Myriam Pascucci Instructional Aide</p>	 <p>Jeffrey Patrick Social Studies</p>
 <p>Rosanna Pena Wellness</p>	 <p>Laurie Pennington Science</p>	 <p>Cindy Peters CTE</p>	 <p>Maria Powell Science</p>	 <p>Luzviminda Ramirez Instructional Aide</p>	 <p>Michelle Ramos Wellness</p>	 <p>Christopher Redfield Math</p>	 <p>Erin Renner Instructional Aide</p>	 <p>Patrick Rode Social Studies</p>
 <p>Hyei Young Roh Instructional Aide</p>	 <p>Cora Ross Guidance</p>	 <p>Kelly Rupe Wellness</p>	 <p>Adriana Sanchez de Ortega Department Secretary</p>	 <p>Karen Saxena Math</p>	 <p>Navneet Schworetzky Science</p>	 <p>Howard Selznick Instructional Aide</p>	 <p>Marta Seoane EL</p>	 <p>Rebecca Shen-Lorenson Assistant Principal</p>
 <p>Shilpan Sheth Science</p>	 <p>Jacquelyn Silverbush Math</p>	 <p>Danning Siu Math</p>	 <p>Dethrick Slocum Special Ed</p>	 <p>Ofelia Smith Registrar</p>	 <p>Wendy Stratton Principal</p>	 <p>Anita Su Visual/Performing Arts</p>	 <p>Todd Summers Visual/Performing Arts</p>	 <p>Daissy Tabares Ruiz World Languages</p>

 <p>Brittney Tabel Wellness</p>	 <p>Gopi Tantod Math</p>	 <p>Radhika Thampuran Special Ed</p>	 <p>Jeanette Tucker General Ed</p>	 <p>Yanan Vrudny World Languages</p>	 <p>Qingmin Wang SaFE</p>	 <p>Evan Watanabe Wellness</p>	 <p>Jennifer Wells Akis EL</p>	 <p>Jordan Wells English</p>
 <p>Kate Weymouth English</p>	 <p>Danielle Whichard English</p>	 <p>Tarn Wilson English</p>	 <p>Ali Wong Main Office</p>	 <p>Ning Xu Science</p>	 <p>Timothy Young Special Ed</p>	 <p>Max Zipperstein Social Studies</p>	 <p>Elana Zizmor Science</p>	

Tracing Paths *Staff Stories of Professional and Personal Exploration*



**Justin Brown**  
*English*



**Mark Gleason**  
*Visual/Performing Arts*



**Ning Xu**  
*Science*

What advice would you give to someone who's trying to figure out their career/path?

“There’s no timeline by which you need to find your thing. I think a lot of people are happy, experiencing multiple different jobs and careers. I think there’s a preconception with finding one thing that you love that you’re going to do forever, and that puts a lot of pressure on whatever that thing is.”

What path did you take before teaching, and what prompted you to switch to teaching?

“I was an illustrator, a graphic designer, DJ, bartender, and waiter. Then, I started getting into teaching because I wanted to have a way that gave me a steady income.”

Who or what inspired you to become a teacher?

“My passion for teaching was inspired by my late mother, a dedicated high school educator whose influence on her students’ lives were immeasurable. During her funeral, the heartfelt stories shared about her moved me deeply, leading to my decision to follow in her footsteps and become a high school teacher.”



High school is not about the challenging classes you took or the grades you received, but the memories that you created.

Whether it's trying to find our classes on the first day to the triumphant cheers of our final exams at the end of the year, each memory captured in these pages tells a story.

Remember the late-night study sessions after drinking coffee number two?

Was it winning a hard-fought game on the field or the nerve-wracking moments before stepping onto the Spangenberg stage?

How about dressing up for Homecoming before school, losing your voice cheering, and taking photos in front of the floats?

We all share collective memories of community, laughter, and friendship.

But beyond the excitement of these moments, we've all experienced setbacks. Despite the pressures and expectations, we've remained resilient and created our own definitions of success.

Finding our strengths, finding our passions, and ultimately,

Finding **our** way.

# THE MEMORIES...

# ...WE MAKE

**BOUNDED BY DANCE:** Sophomores Anne Dong and Aditya Swaminathan take center stage as the main focus of the sophomore Airbands. Besides the weekly practices, Dong had practiced numerous times by herself. "It was nice to just see the product of our hard work come to life. It was very satisfying to see how well the dance turned out and it made me feel really accomplished," Dong says. "I was able to kind of step out of my comfort zone and try something new, and I think it was a great way for me to really feel the spirit throughout and even before homecoming week."



Theme creation explanation: courtesy of the EIC letter

Last year, the creation of Finding Our Way came about amidst my stress to come up with a theme that I could both resonate with and apply practically to the yearbook. I took a moment to really reflect on what defines Gunn. Stepping back, I tried to see it through an outsider's perspective, but I quickly realized that outside perceptions of this school don't quite do justice to what Gunn really is. It wasn't just about acing tests or stacking up AP classes, but rather about the individuals I've met. In all my interactions, I've never come across two people with the same goals or passions. Gunn is a place where everyone has their own path, their own motivations, and their own stories to tell. In a school known for its competitiveness and high expectations, the journey of finding our way takes on a special significance. We are constantly pushed to excel, to meet and exceed the standards set before us. In our pursuits for excellence, it is essential to remember that our paths are not predetermined. Each of us possesses unique, untapped potential. So, with the freedom to shape the yearbook as I saw fit (within reason!), I wanted to make sure that unconventional paths shone just brightly as the well-trodden ones. Throughout the yearbook, graphical elements complement this narrative, reinforcing the central message of "Finding Our Way." By juxtaposing the structured layout of traditional yearbook design with more bold and unconventional graphics, the yearbook becomes a testament to the students' exploration of identity.

As editor-in-chief, I've had the privilege of experiencing our school community in its entirety. From taking photos at games, homecoming, performances, clubs, and classes, I've witnessed firsthand the enthusiasm and dedication that pervades in every corner of our campus. These experiences have allowed me to truly appreciate our school. Creating this book and getting to know all the people through doing so has made such a huge difference in my life, and I am so grateful to the three staffs I have known and Ms. Blackburn, a truly amazing adviser who has helped me all along the way. I recollect all the moments spent stressing about whether this would come together or not and although it was not easy to make it happen, I am so proud to have been able to capture memorable moments throughout the school year and document it in this publication.

– Lucy Shark  
Your 60th Editor-in-Chief of The Olympian