



School History

In April 1975, after a school levy failed for the second time in a year, the Seattle School District sent out termination notices to 1,700 teachers. Tired of the distressing conditions in the public schools at that time, a small band of teachers met to discuss creating their own school. After months of meetings that took place while they were still keeping up their teaching schedules, they invited the public to take a look on February 29, 1976, at their ideas for the campus, the school philosophy, and the program. The buildings were not yet leased, there were no classrooms, and no students were yet a part of the school. Still, the founders' enthusiasm and their vision sparked something in the 287 guests that day. University Preparatory Academy was launched!

That's when the real work began. On Sundays and evenings throughout the spring and summer of 1976, the seven founders met prospective students and parents at informative coffee hours. Students were tested; students and parents were interviewed. On September 6, 1976, these dedicated educators, Roger J. Bass, Terry A. Froggatt, Patricia Zuvella Landy, John H. Makinen, Christine Petersen McGarry, Mary Jane Seymour, and Aileen Welgan, opened University Preparatory Academy to students in grades 7 to 10. One full-time, four part-time fine arts teachers, plus two volunteer secretaries filled out the staff. Aileen Welgan served as first Head of School. These professionals created an inspiring, disciplined environment—one that would nurture students and allow teachers to do their best. They built a curriculum that would respond to parents' desire for academic excellence and to students' need for individual attention.

In the early years, the founder not only taught but also comprised the Board of Directors. The hours were demanding, but the rewards were abundant. The founders knew they were indebted to their families, friends, and numerous professionals from the community who gave their encouragement and expertise to this fledgling undertaking. Along with the rigorous curriculum, students began school publications: newspaper and yearbook. The Parent Council was established to provide parent involvement in the school program from the beginning.

Many parents who were skeptical to enroll their children the first year joined in for the second year. Founder Roger Bass assumed duties as Head of School. The student body grew to ninety-five, adding an 11th grade, and the faculty grew to nine full-time and six part-time teachers. That year saw the strengthening of the arts program, including a full-scale musical production. Administrative duties were redistributed as a Director of Admission was appointed and as Development and Business offices began to take shape. The first Annual Giving drive made more than \$40,000 for campus expansion and faculty salaries.

The third year of University Prep's existence, 1978-1979, marked a new solidity. The campus grew with the addition of the 12th grade to 102 students. There were new science and activity buildings, and the acquisition of 2.5 acres adjacent land. Construction of the science building was a cooperative effort of parents, students, and faculty. This facility ensured that University Prep would have a complete college preparatory program. A more adequate salary scale for the 21 faculty members was implemented. That school year also brought both University Prep's first graduating class and provisional membership in the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

The Parent Council continued to be a dynamic cooperative group that ran the first Auction, which raised \$10,000 (much of it for financial aid), and an Annual Giving drive, which raised \$36,000. The faculty prepared the self-study for evaluation for membership in the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools (PNAIS).

Impressive growth marked the fourth year, 1979-1980. The 22 faculty members and 108 students participated in the school's first PNAIS evaluation, which culminated in full PNAIS membership and full accreditation through the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. Furthermore, the founding Board of Directors merged with the Advisory Board and became a community-based Board of Trustees. Other major changes included the addition of library building donated by Seafirst Bank. And, after a three-year hiatus, University Prep became financially able to contribute to Social Security for the entire staff and for all to participate.

In the fifth year, 1980-1981, the students became the "Pumas." Individual offices were created for development, admission, and business functions. The Board authorized a facilities study to ensure that the school could function on the newly acquired property to the south of Temple Beth Am. A group of students traveled to Mexico, inaugurating the international travel program. A formal process was created for what would become the school's first long-range plan.

In 1981-1982, the student body reached 137. The Board negotiated with the Temple for long-term use of space, and Morse/Stafford Partnership prepared architectural plans for expansion.

The seventh year the school opened with 156 students and a larger campus, which had added portable classroom buildings, a Main Office, and connecting decks. The school received a grant to establish a Language Skills program for bright students with dyslexia and a Language Skills Center was established. University Prep was elected to permanent membership in the College Boards. Head of School Roger Bass served as president of PNAIS, and 12 faculty members flew to Anaheim for the NAIS Annual convention. Alumni had their first off-campus reunion.

During 1983--1984, the school's sports program came into its own. Students went to the WIAA State meet for the first time, in cross country, and participated in the first Sports Banquet. Campus expansion included building two classrooms and locker rooms. The Trustees created a critical path for construction and capital campaigning. The E.E. Ford Foundation supported financial aid for Upper School students with an endowment of \$25,000, and the student body increased to 173.

The building program begun in the previous year continued throughout the ninth year. The school had its first Washington scholar, and the students had their first prom. A faculty retirement program was established and health benefits for all started.

Year ten, 1985-1986, saw a celebration of the first decade's triumphs honoring the Founders at a gala tenth anniversary auction, and those still working in the school were granted a one-month sabbatical. One student was recognized as a finalist for Presidential Scholar in the Arts, while another became a double state champion in track and field.

The eleventh year began with the Board authorizing a marketing study, a facilities search, and a plan for a capital campaign. That year, 19 percent of the senior class were National Merit Finalists. The Board approved a decision to begin a sixth grade in the fall of the coming year and to increase facilities to accommodate the anticipated growth of the student body.

The twelfth year, 1987-1988, began, after welcoming the 6th grade, with University Prep once again engaging in an evaluation by PNAIS. Following the review, University Prep was recommended for continued membership without qualification. The year saw the beginning of the school's first capital campaign to finance additional facilities to house its growing student body, which reached 195.

During the thirteenth year of the school, 1988-1989, there were two firsts: University Prep's enrollment went above the 200 mark, and the Annual Campaign topped \$100,000. The Capital Campaign was officially announced in May, and by the next month, \$1.2 million had been raised, surpassing the goal. Also, this was the year that the Alumni Association was officially begun.

The fourteenth year began with 232 students. The Capital Campaign goal was increased by \$300,000 because a gift received in the original campaign had been restricted to building a full-capacity library. More than \$200,000 was raised. This brought the total raised to more than \$1.4 million. Administrators worked with the City of Seattle and with neighbors on the master use permit and building permits. The Development Office was split into fundraising and marketing and communications, and a Director of Marketing was hired. A "Cruise Director" (Activity Coordinator) helped the students organize dances and activities.

In 1990, construction of Phase I of the permanent campus began. Students and faculty members trudged around the construction site while watching the dream come true. Fundraising continued to ensure that the planned project could be completed. The school had 264 students.

The new Commons Building and Library opened in time for the beginning of the 1991-1992 school year, the sixteenth year of the school. The gym was completed and in use by early October. All 292 students benefitted from having a permanent home and being able to host functions on campus. Fundraising to finish the kitchen and the gym entrance continued, and development efforts shifted to faculty endowment, for which a \$50,000 matching grant from the E.E. Ford Foundation was received just after the close of the school year. The Diversity Committee developed a strategic plan to increase diversity.

During the 1992-1993 school year, the school's third long-range plan was created and adopted by the Board of Trustees. This plan incorporated the strategic plan for diversity. Funds to match the E.E. Ford Foundation grant for faculty endowment were raised through a theater party, individual donations, and a major gift from an alumni family. Funds were also raised to add acoustical tile to the gym, and work was begun to complete the kitchen.

During the summer before the 1993-1994 school year, an "Upper School Dream Team" discussed ways to enhance and strengthen the Upper School. When the school year opened, the Upper School enrollment, by design, exceeded the Middle School enrollment for the first time since the sixth grade was added. The Head of School and an advisory committee adopted a strategy for implementing the long-range plan adopted the previous year. A new technology task force developed recommendations and objectives for bringing University Prep technologically up-to-date. Work was also begun on the school's third self-study in preparation for evaluation by a PNAIS team in fall 1995.

During 1994-1995, the school hired a new Information Services Manager to continue the focus on technology. A new Director of Upper School was also hired. Networking needs were addressed. Program enhancement was encouraged.

University Prep celebrated its twentieth anniversary with a variety of events and with oral histories from the Founders. The school year opened with 374 students and 2 new classrooms. The computer lab got new computers, and each classroom received a computer. Work continued to upgrade computers and to network the campus. In the fall, University Prep underwent its third PNAIS evaluation and was recommended unconditionally for reaccreditation. Parent Council worked with a steering committee of trustees, administrators, and faculty to redefine the role of parents as partners at University Prep. To help the school attain its goals for multiculturalism, a Multicultural Student Alliance was formed and a Diversity Coordinator was hired. Although the year had many high points, the University Prep community was saddened by the first death of a Founder, John Henry Makinen.

In 1996-1997, University Prep fully entered the world of technology as the Internet and email became available to all faculty and staff. Over the summer, students built a new senior lounge, and other summer projects included a dark room and a new office to house the Winter Opportunities, Diversity, and Activities coordinators. The Multicultural Student Alliance held the school's first "Bite of University Prep" and hosted a Student of Color Conference for PNAIS schools. In the spring, the sixty-four members of the Class of 1997 became the largest graduating class in the school's history.

In fall 1997, the school held its first Community Service Day. Students, parents, friends, employees, and trustees came together to fill emergency relief boxes for the American Red Cross and in the process set a new record for number of relief boxes filled in a day. After a national search, a new Director of Upper School was hired to begin in 1998-1999. Negotiations for a land swap with Temple Beth Am continued, as did work on designs for new buildings.

The quiet phase of a capital campaign continued with great success throughout the 1998-1999 year and included the school's first \$1 million gift. Temple Beth Am signed the land exchange agreement, and progress was made toward obtaining the master use permit. Both Annual Giving and receipts from the auction reached record highs. For this twenty-third year of the school, enrollment was 400 students and included the first child of a University Prep graduate to attend the school. The school year ended with anticipation of the construction expected to begin during the summer.

In fall 1999, a number of administrative offices moved to temporary quarters in preparation for construction. The capital campaign continued to raise money for the final design stage, the addition of a fine arts facility. By the end of the school year, pledges to support the building projects amounted to nearly \$8 million, and bond financing had been obtained for part of the expansion project. The school began using school buses to transport students for school activities.

The official opening of the new classrooms and administrative spaces provided an exciting beginning to the 2000-2001 school year. Planning and fund raising for the fine arts facility culminated with a groundbreaking ceremony during closing exercises. Development of the school's next long-range plan included surveys and focus groups of each of the school's constituencies and resulted in Board approval at year's end. Roger Bass announced his planned retirement for June 2002. The school community bid farewell to Founder Christine Petersen McGarry as she retired after 25 years of service to University Prep.

By the end of the 2001-2002 school year, construction of the Hooper Fine Arts Center was completed and used for many of the school's end-of-the-year events. Jeanette C. Williams, long-time Assistant Head of School and English teacher, bid a fond farewell to University Prep. The broader school community, including its 430 students, ended the year with celebrations of the tenure of Roger J. Bass, Head of School.

As 2002-2003 began, the school welcomed Erica L. Hamlin as its third Head of School. Students and faculty enjoyed a new schedule with the school's first mid-winter break.

The 2003-2004 school year opened with two new positions: a Learning Resources Coordinator and a Director of Intercultural Affairs, in place. The PNAIS visiting team made an unqualified recommendation that University Prep be accredited. The first WOW (Week Without Walls) program, the result of restructuring the Winter Opportunities program to a one-week program, was held immediately before spring break. The Instructional Council was restructured into two groups: the Academic Council and the Instructional Leadership Team. The Board of Trustees adopted a new mission statement. Gerry Dubuque, long-time Librarian, bid farewell to University Prep.

Beginning the 2004-2005 school year, the position of College and Career Advisor was changed to Director of College and Career Services and the position of Director of Administrative Services was eliminated. The Board of Trustees, guided by the school's mission, approved a preliminary case statement for building endowment to ensure the school's success in providing an outstanding educational program, let by exceptional faculty, for a diverse and dynamic student body. The year ended with the school community bidding farewell to two longtime employees: Director of Middle School Ron Waldman and Director of College and Career Services Arlene Prince. It was with great sadness that the school noted the passing of Founder Aileen Mary Welgan, first Head of School, during this school year.

Endowment planning, preliminary work for developing a new long-range plan, and launching a revised Week Without Walls (WOW) program were among the major projects during the 2005-2006 school year. For the first time, participation in the Global Link program that offers students meaningful hands-on cultural experiences was included in WOW. Remodeling the commons and the addition of a computer lab classroom in the library were completed over the summer of 2006. The school received notice that it had once again met all standards for accreditation by PNAIS. The position of Academic Dean was added for the 2006-2007 school year. Retiring after long service to University prep were faculty Mary Ann Bunnell, Spanish teacher, and Klara Weis, Art teacher. At the end of the year, Founder Christine Petersen McGarry announced her retirement from the Board of Trustees. The school community also bid a fond farewell to Founder Terry Nelson Froggatt as she retired from the faculty.

The new upper and lower level Commons were inaugurated with great fanfare at the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. In a notable development, University Prep embarked on its first Endowment Campaign with the goal of raising ten million dollars. On a sad note, Patricia Pananen, who worked for University Prep for twenty-eight years, passed away in January. And the end of the academic year brought with the retirement of two more long-time faculty members, Sara Thiel and William Moore.

In the 2007-2008 school year, the Campaign for Endowment came close to reaching the \$5 million mark, and significant progress was made in the development of the Very Long Range Plan. The Mandarin Chinese program was launched and the music program was expanded. The close of the school year brought with

it the retirement of veteran French teacher Karen Manarolla and the departure of long-time math teacher Laurie Conley.

In 2008-2009, University Prep welcomed a new Director of Middle School. The first ever brand-new Puma bus was purchased. The Board of Trustees approved the Very Long Range Plan (VLRP) which then brought the work of formulating a Very Long Range Financial Plan to support it. The Campaign for Endowment topped the \$5 million mark, and even in a difficult year for the economy, the U Prep community raised over \$400,000 at the annual Auction -- and set a record for Fund-A-Need donations, including \$137,000 for financial aid to help retain current families affected by the downturn and \$52,000 for another Puma bus. Week Without Walls was replaced with a series of Change of Pace days throughout the year, and the Middle School began switching over to a formative evaluation system.

In 2009-2010, University Prep launched a Capital Campaign to raise funds for the remodel of the Pumadome and the science labs. With almost \$3 million raised by May 2010, the remodel of the Pumadome got the go ahead for summer 2010. The annual auction raised \$433,000 in funds for other needs of the school.

The year 2010-2011 started with a celebration for the renovated Pumadome. The Capital Campaign raised a total of \$4.4 million for the Board of Trustees to approve the science facility remodel for summer 2011. University Prep embarked on a technology overhaul and continued its planning for a future library remodel. The end of the school year saw the retirement of Founder and veteran French teacher Patricia Zuvella Landy and long-time librarian Debbie Wheeler.

In 2011-2012, PNAIS granted University Prep reaccreditation through February 2020! The Annual Fund exceeded its goal by raising \$545,000 and an additional \$80,000 for the Grandparents Library Fund. The annual auction raised a total of \$325,000 with \$125,000 in Fund-A-Need donations going toward the library renovation. Long-time Spanish and language training teacher Katie Pananen (class of 1989) departed after 15 years.

In the fall of 2012-2013, University Prep inaugurated the new Library Commons. Head of School Erica Hamlin announced that she would step down at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year. The annual auction raised a total of \$256,000. The end of the year saw the retirement of history teacher Scott Herrick after thirty-two years at University Prep. A record 530 students enrolled for the coming year, and alumni involvement also reached a new high.

In 2013-2014, University Prep established the Erica and Nason Hamlin Endowed Scholarship Fund to honor departing Head of School Erica Hamlin, to benefit students in need of financial assistance, with first priority given to Rainier Scholars. The main focus of academic change was the new Middle and Upper School device programs. Global Link programs expanded to include a Middle School domestic exchange program with Santa Fe Prep. Long-time English teacher and Shake Hands with Shakespeare director Sue Patella retired after 37 years.

In 2014-2015, Matt Levinson took the reins as University Prep's fourth Head of School. the Board of Trustees took on the complex task of developing a new strategic plan for the school, forming many subcommittees and focus groups to obtain input from the school community. The summer saw the inauguration of the first Jump Start Program, two weeks of classes in August designed to help entering ninth grade students be better prepared for high school. University Prep enrolled eight new Rainier

Scholars, the largest number in one year to date. Global Link added Lithuania to its roster of programs and celebrated the tenth year of its relationship with Samoa. The new Computer Science program blossomed, with three new Middle and Upper School classes. The 2015 Auction raised \$332,000, including \$207,000 for the year's two Fund-A-Needs, a new Puma bus and Financial Aid. John Jewitt, long-time math teacher, retired at the end of the school year.

In 2015-2016, University Prep celebrated its fortieth anniversary by inaugurating a new five-year strategic plan focused on promoting teacher excellence, evolving next generation learning, and planning a future expansion of school facilities. Partnerships with Global Online Academy and Liddane Tutoring and Learning Services were notable additions to our program. A Raise-the-Paddle Gala at the Seattle Art Museum attended by founders, alumni, two former heads of school and hundreds of community members brought in over \$600,000 for our 40th Anniversary funds, the Faculty Fund for Innovation and the Endowed Financial Aid Fund. A day of on-campus festivities open to all members of our community capped off the celebrations.

In 2016–2017, University Prep advanced its Next Generation Learning initiatives, expanding innovative programming, interdisciplinary work, and student-driven learning opportunities. LaunchPad made its debut in the spring, with every senior spending two weeks of their own design off campus exploring a passion. The school continued to redefine the role of teacher in the 21st century, with professional development focused on social emotional learning, culturally responsive classroom practices, and more personalized teaching and learning. With the goal of supporting deeper learning while slowing the pace of school, a new daily schedule was adopted for Fall 2017. UPrep also continued planning for an expansion of its campus footprint, acquiring the North Seattle Friends Church lot across 25th Avenue. Preliminary designs were developed by long-time architectural firm Mithun with input from the full UPrep community, and a Master Use Permit was filed with the City of Seattle in June 2017 to explore building on the site. The Puma Fund (formerly known as the Annual Fund) beat all previous records, bringing in a grand total of \$709,000 with 82% parent participation. Our spring community celebration and fundraiser, #WeAreUPrep, raised \$506,000 for our financial aid fund. And finally, the year ended with the retirement of long-time teachers Alan Hargus and Judy Ghavamian.