Recognizing private school achievers and the teachers who guided them.

HEATHER PRATT
Associate Head of School
Lower Elementary Teacher
Lake Mary Montessori Academy

"I fell in love with Montessori the first time I was exposed to the philosophy in college. The love of learning and independence the Montessori teaching methods foster in children is awe inspiring. I knew I had to see it in action! From my very first day observing at LMMA, I knew I’d found my home. The students, teachers, and parents formed a loving, peaceful community full of passionate, life-long learners. Since that day, I’ve had the pleasure of teaching at each level and am proud to say that I have become a member of the loving family community at LMMA."

AUSTIN JOSEPH
The First Academy

Austin Joseph: Student, Friend, Leader. After graduating from TFA in 2011, Austin Joseph attended the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. Austin graduated from Penn in 2015 with a Bachelor of Science in Economics and concentrations in Finance and Legal Studies. Austin currently works in Private Wealth Management at Morgan Stanley and is an associate on the business strategy team for Private Wealth Management in Midtown Manhattan.

Austin spends his time outside of work mentoring high school students through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and Sponsors for Educational Opportunity. Austin says that he owes a tremendous amount of his success to the countless TFA coaches, administrators, friends, and families who helped mold him into the man he is today.

VARUN MADAN
9th Grade Student
Lake Highland Preparatory School

A performer, athlete, and academic powerhouse, Varun Madan excels in a wide variety of activities at Lake Highland while maintaining a perfect GPA. One of his many passions is science. Over the past two years, the 14-year-old has investigated ways to improve honeybee health in order to keep the prized pollinators from becoming extinct. As a middle school student, Varun won the Orange County Science Fair, was awarded second place at the State Science and Engineering Fair, and was recently one of 30 finalist for the Broadcom MASTERS Middle School STEM National Competition. The latest honor included meeting congressional representatives, senators, the Director of the U.S. Department of Science & Technology, and the nation’s first lady. In addition, MIT recently named a minor planet Varunmadan in recognition of this high-achieving Highlander.

GEORGE CLEMENS
Speech & Debate Head Coach & Upper School Teacher
Lake Highland Preparatory School

George Clemens is a beloved Upper School teacher and the award-winning head coach of Lake Highland’s Lincoln Douglas Speech & Debate team. Over 18 years, Mr. Clemens has developed one of the most successful competitive speech and debate programs in the country. Lake Highland is consistently recognized by the National Speech & Debate Association as a “School of Excellence” and ranks in the top 4% of schools nationwide. The high-achieving Highlander debaters use the skills they learn in researching, opinion-forming, persuasive speech, and powerful communications for past their time at LHP. Mr. Clemens - your Highlander family thanks you for your dedication and congratulates you on an ever-growing and award-winning program!

LYDIA FRANCIS
The Geneva School

Lydia graduated from George Washington University in DC in May with a BA in History and a minor in French. She recently won the Julien Clement Chase award for undergrad research, awarded October 25, 2018, in a ceremony at George Washington University. Lydia currently works on a culture and narrative team at Oracle called the Oracle Stories Team and lives in San Francisco.