

# CougarNow

Volume 1 • Fall 2016

AND THEN  
AND NEXT

Pete Hamstra '76



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**W**elcome to Cougar Now! We are pleased to bring to you the excitement of Phoenix Christian Preparatory School on a more regular basis. God is doing great things here and we are bursting at the seams to communicate the news and share all of our enthusiasm. We have been praying and encourage you to join us. Jeremiah 33:3 says, "Call unto Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know." God is doing great and mighty things here at Phoenix Christian. We are thrilled to have you as part of the family. As we enthusiastically embrace the cooler weather in the Valley, we also look forward to this year's Homecoming celebration. Homecoming is Friday, October 28th. We encourage ALL of PC; including alumni, friends, and current families to join in the celebration. Hope to see you there and... Welcome Home!



Joe Bradley

**“God is doing great and mighty things here at Phoenix Christian.”**

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**If the Halls Could Talk**

**P**ete Hamstra, class of 1976, is coming "home" to celebrate his 40th class reunion this year. Coming home has become a recent theme for Pete and his wife. Having spent seventeen years in the Chicago area working in admissions for Dordt and Trinity Colleges, and raising their three children, Pete received an opportunity to return to the Valley as Vice President of Admissions for Arizona Christian University. Since his return, Pete has renewed his relationship with his alma mater and recently spent some time reflecting on Phoenix Christian.

When asked how PC has impacted his life, he responds, "In every way imaginable... spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and even physically. I was raised in a Christian home and never doubted that God existed or that He loved me. But what was my parents' faith in Christ became mine at PC. I had not been involved much in athletics before high school and the four years of football, as well as track and field, were significant in my life. I learned to see Christ in everything, made lifelong friends and received a great education. When I got to college I appreciated even more the quality education I had received at Phoenix Christian."

Pete continued by describing his favorite places on campus, "Lunch in the commons; we had so much good fellowship there. I also spent plenty of time in the weight room. Not that I loved lifting weights so much but



because of the great fellowship with brothers while we tried to get bigger and stronger together. Also, I loved the shot put ring. Again, it was great fellowship with my brothers out there throwing a heavy metal ball while we also encouraged our track teammates who actually had to run."

Pete wanted to give a few "shout-outs" to his favorite PC faculty and staff. "Mr. Hovda was a great Bible teacher. He had his hands full teaching us from many different churches and denominations. But he always taught with grace and style. I have great memories of Mr. Wickersham coaching our team to the state track championship my junior year. I was the

student body treasurer my senior year and Mr. Gumm was incredibly patient and helpful while dealing with my less than stellar accounting skills. I also have good memories of playing the trombone in Mr. Hoskins' band."

Pete offered one final thought for our current PC students, "Revel in your time at PC! There are many great times ahead in college and after. But some of your best times will happen at PC and some of your best friends for life will be made there. It occurs to me that I have stood up in the weddings of four of my classmates at Phoenix Christian and they are still good friends to this day. Fix your eyes on Christ."

## Cougar Territory

**E**ach year we bus about 200 high school students up through the deserts and into the beautiful forest of Lost Canyon in Williams, Arizona. As we emerge on Young Life's five-star campground, our students, some filled with anticipation, some with great anxiety, move into this beautiful, breathtaking place. It is a place where students discover nature, meet new friends, revive old friendships, play a little volleyball with a teacher, share their stories in the comfort and safety of their cabin-time, get loud and crazy during worship and minutes later lift up hands and voices singing the camp theme song. And for many students (and this is not an exaggeration), they made a brand new commitment to Jesus Christ.

After an opportunity to publically express their new commitment, students stayed behind praying for each other, with teachers and other mentors, sharing tears, hugs, and smiles. The last morning, our Middle School and High School Principal, Jeff Blake, shared his heart with the students,

**"This is a new day, a new year and a brand new opportunity to live within a community of believers. Let us not forget what we've experienced. Our school has been offered a second chance at life!"**

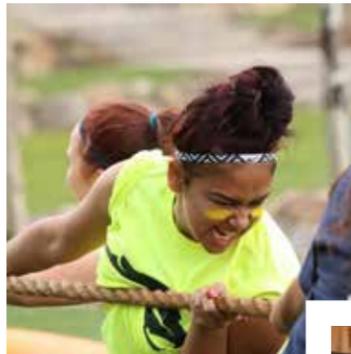
One new student shared that they have never felt so loved. Another young man read a poem he had written. "...you can't cheat yourself into the Holy Place! Because that shows that you haven't finished the race! You can't cheat yourself into Heaven... because you aren't the shepherd of the sheep... but the Bible tells us that if we weep and ask for forgiveness, putting our faith in Christ, then our sins are paid and we can live forever in Heaven and glorify Jesus Christ as Lord! Can I get an amen?"  
-excerpt by anonymous student



# A breathtaking experience

"This hope is a safe anchor for our souls. It will never move. This hope goes into the Holiest Place of All behind the curtain of heaven."

Hebrews 6:19



## Little Cougars



**I**n addition to all these new faces, we welcomed two new elementary teachers, third grade teacher, Dawn Nelson and first grade teacher, Liz Gill. We also added a new Director of Special Needs and Reading Specialist Coordinator, Tene Burrow. One of the third graders recently told his parents that he has decided to be a pastor. When asked why, he explained that his teacher (Ms. Nelson) was talking about Jesus telling Peter to "follow me. I will make you fish for men." (Matt 4:19) He continued by saying that he too feels called to follow Jesus and to tell others about Christ. That must have been quite a Bible lesson! But the thing is, our teachers avail themselves to His direction and the leading of the Holy Spirit, all day, every day.

This year was especially delightful because we greeted so many new faces. Under the leadership of Yvonne Calderon, the elementary grew by 17%; think of all those new smiles!



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Preschool sings the *National Anthem*

## Cougar Cubs

**T**hirty-some little cubs bravely marched up the stands in their PC shirts and sang the *National Anthem* at the top of their lungs to open the first home football game of the season. Some, more shy than others, sang the **WHOLE** song including the jumbo words like perilous, ramparts, and gallantly. One little guy in the front sang above the rest, Tristan Stephens, son of Bible teacher, Ryan Stephens. Tristan is in the three year old class with Mrs. Jones. I mentioned to Mr. Stephens that his son must have really been practicing; he laughed and said that he would not even try singing it at home, even when they begged! Suffice to say, his parents were both shocked and proud. Our preschool, under the direction of Jeanne Bookhout, has experienced tremendous growth the last two years; the two's class even has a waiting list. This year's kindergarten students, moving from our preschool, showed significantly high proficiency levels in reading aptitude.

**Kudos to our preschool!**



Look at these beautiful smiles. Do they not just capture your heart? How we love the first day of school, especially in the "Little Cougar" territory. Students anticipate a new year as well, looking forward to a new teacher, freshly sharpened pencils, a beautiful clean backpack, and those pencil boxes.

# Cougar future is bright

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# Sports Siblings

## Cougar Sports

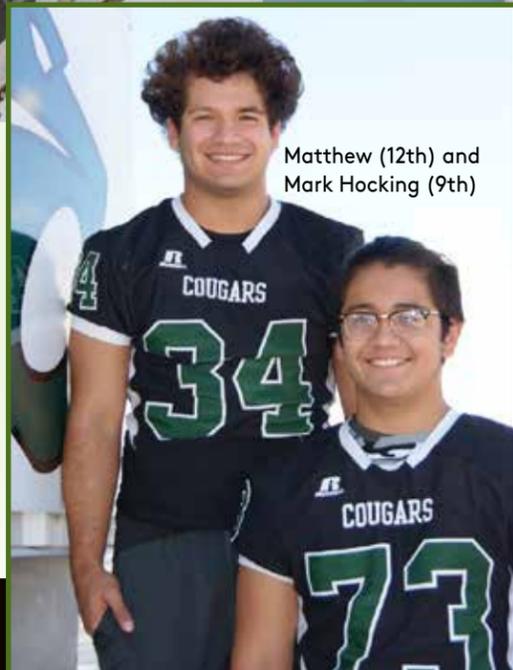
**F**all sports at Phoenix Christian are HUGE! But did you know that we have many siblings playing on the same team? From running miles and miles together to throwing a pass for the touchdown, our siblings love playing together. The Boyce siblings (Gregory - 12th, Diana - 10th, and Andrea - 9th) love being there for each other. Diana who cheers on the sideline loves to go crazy when her brother makes a good play. Gregory laughs and said he has no idea what she's doing, he's just focused on the game.



The Cole brothers (Hunter - 11th and Zach - 9th) were quick to mention the competition. Hunter shared that he and his brother compete both on and off the field (football, food, computer games, girls). Hunter seems to think that he always wins.



Ashley Felix (9th) loves the fact that she can actually beat her sister Alondra (11th) at something!



Matthew (12th) and Mark Hocking (9th)

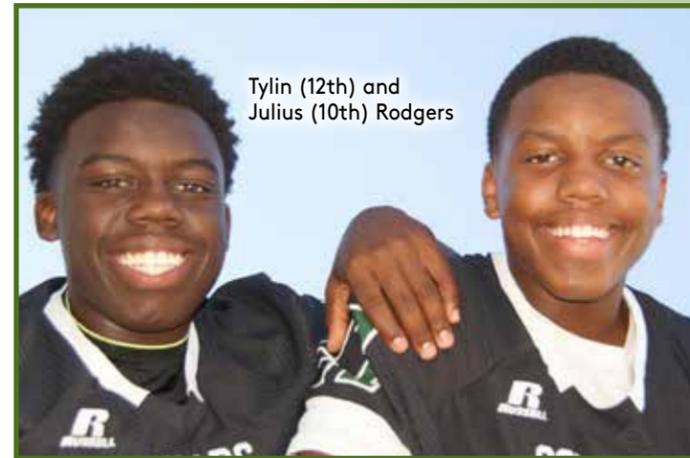


The Jimenez siblings (Eunice - 12th and Moises - 10th) love to pick on each other when they run.

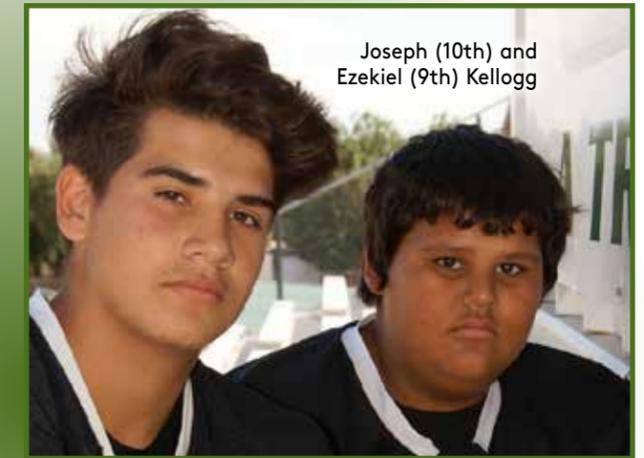
Tate (10th) and Mateya (9th) Holterman



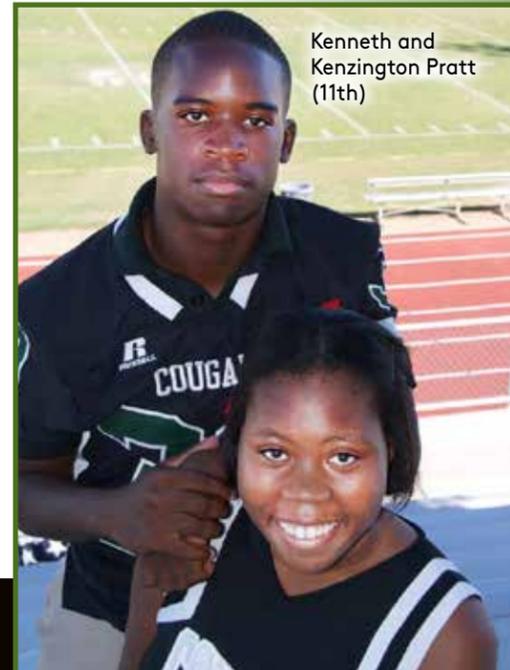
Even though the competition is a common theme amongst these siblings, I observed such beautiful joy, camaraderie and comfort between these families that will last long into adulthood. Alondra Felix said it best, "If we can run cross country together, we can do anything!"



Tylin (12th) and Julius (10th) Rodgers



Joseph (10th) and Ezekiel (9th) Kellogg



Kenneth and Kenzington Pratt (11th)



Zeke (10th) and Ava (9th) VanderNaalt



Kaylee (10th) and Creed (9th) Shellenberger



## Cougars in the Middle

**T**hings are “STEMING” up in the middle school this year. Mr. Kelby Milgrim, class of 1988, joined the middle and high school teaching faculty this year as the Director of STEM and middle school Science, Math and high school Chemistry & Honors Physics teacher. Mr. Milgrim has seen tremendous success leading groups of middle school students in the MESA program. Competing nationally the last three years, his teams blew away the competition. When reflecting on these experiences, Mr. Milgrim described the students, “Once you let kids loose, you’ll be amazed at what they can accomplish.” He carries this philosophy into his classroom. His plan is to transform the middle

school science program into a beautiful balance of knowledge and experience.

Mr. Milgrim believes that students can have all the book smarts in the world, but it won’t matter if they can’t solve a problem. Adding extensive lab components and creating a middle school MESA team will no doubt begin to accomplish his dream. Students in his seventh grade Life Science class will begin to grow plants in two-liter pop bottles and his eighth grade Physical Science class will make hydrogen gas. His MESA team meets before and after school and works on various challenges.

When I stopped by after school last week, I observed several students

working on a golf ball catapult and one student building a rollercoaster. Many students desperately want to know the answer or the “how-to” before attempting to solve a problem, but Mr. Milgrim refrains from telling them “how.” Instead he encourages trial and error; it is the “productive struggle” that empowers students to discover a solution. Feeling empowered, students have the confidence to take on bigger problems in life.

**I asked Mr. Milgrim what he is loving about PC and he said, “I love the diversity of age and race and also love the opportunity to hear the students’ hearts.”**

Produced by the PC Family  
for the PC Family

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Phoenix Christian Preparatory School

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“Once you let kids loose, you’ll be amazed at what they can accomplish.”

- Kelby Milgrim





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