CURRENT

SEPTEMBER 2026 | FALL IS HERE!



Practical Hands-on Learning

September was filled with creative challenges from student-run businesses to cultural celebrations and creative exploration. All of this and more, inside.

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

CARL'S CORNER

Introducing Careers of the Future



Carl Sabatino
HEAD OF SCHOOL

Aloha, Tradewinds!

As promised in the last edition, I want to share "Careers of the Future." As technology, science, and society continue to change, entirely new careers may emerge to solve problems—and manage situations—we are only beginning to imagine. Here is a fun one to think about.

Career: Extinct Species Revivalist
"Wanted: Geneticist. Experience with animals that no longer exist preferred."

PBES estimates that about 1 million animal and plant species are currently threatened with extinction, many potentially within decades.

An Extinct Species Revivalist would combine genetics, biotechnology, ecology, and conservation to recreate species lost to extinction. Using preserved DNA, genome sequencing and gene editing, the revivalist might reconstruct an extinct animal's genome and work with conservationists to determine whether—and where—the species could safely be reintroduced. The most interesting twist isn't bringing back a dinosaur; it could be restoring a species lost only decades ago because it once played an important ecological role. The job appears by this exact name in several "future careers" collections.

Enjoy...

Carl

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Giving Tuesday

Coming soon...

Tuesday, December 1, 2026

Giving Tuesday is a worldwide day of generosity held each year after Thanksgiving—a time when individuals, families, and communities are encouraged to support organizations and causes that matter to them.

On December 1st, we invite you to consider supporting **Tradewinds School** and several special projects we are planning for the coming year. These projects will directly enhance the experiences and opportunities available to our scholars and help us continue building an innovative learning environment for gifted children.

More information about this year's projects and how you can participate will be coming soon.



FROM THE FOUNDERS

HEIDI'S HIGHLIGHTS

Character, connection, and the whole child



Heidi Meck
CO-FOUNDER

A Harvest of Gratitude

Aloha families—

In our first issue, we shared Oliver's lesson from creating Tradewinds: "If you notice something's missing in the world, make it yourself." Gifted kids are remarkable noticers. They see how things work and how they could work better. This month, we pointed that gift toward noticing the abundance already around us.

On September 25, our scholars celebrated Chuseok (추석), Korea's harvest festival, when families gather to give thanks for the harvest and for the generations who came before them. The kids played traditional games, learned how to keun-jeol (bow of respect), joined in a Korean circle dance, and shared a Chuseok meal of song-pyeon (half-moon rice cakes), jeon (savory pancakes), and the four harvest fruits (jujubes, chestnuts, Asian pears, and persimmons). Together they built a gratitude tree, with each child adding leaves and blossoms for the people in their lives that they are grateful for.

That afternoon, we visited Mu Ryang Sa, the Korean Buddhist temple in Pālolo Valley, where the children saw firsthand the altar set with Chuseok offerings. When I pointed out that many of the offerings were the same foods they had eaten that morning, you could see the connection click. Some of the children chose to offer the keun-jeol they had just learned in front of the altar, and each child lit incense and reflected on something they were thankful for.

As a psychologist, I see gratitude as a skill, one that grows stronger with practice. Children who regularly notice what they're thankful for tend to feel more connected and resilient, and that is part of the character we hope our scholars carry into the world.

What moved me most was how many children commented that they were grateful for Tradewinds School. I feel the same way. One of the greatest joys of this first year has been getting to know all of you and hearing your stories about raising gifted children, the hard days and the extraordinary ones. Many of you have shared your gratitude for Tradewinds with me as well, and I want you to know how much that means. I'm grateful to our teachers and staff, who bring so much care and creativity to their work each day. And I'm grateful to each of you for trusting us with your children's education. We never take that trust for granted.

감사합니다 (gamsahamnida). Thank you.

Heidi Meck, Ph.D.
Co-founder



CELEBRATING CHUSEOK (추석)

Cultural Enrichment: Korea's harvest festival.



CELEBRATING CHUSEOK (추석)

Cultural Enrichment: Korea's harvest festival.
















WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Humanities



Amber Spahn
HUMANITIES & ELA

FROM MS. SPAHN

This month the Seals took on an individual version of the culture unit — each scholar working independently to design their own civilization from the ground up. After reading Weslandia to see how a whole culture can grow from a single idea, the Seals had to build a civilization — inventing their own government, language, economy, beliefs, food, music, celebrations, and family structures, using Rabbithole as a thinking partner to push their reasoning further at every step. Unlike a group project, each scholar is fully responsible for their own civilization from start to finish, and has to defend why every choice fits their assigned environment.

The Geckos built a whole classroom civilization together called Geckolandia! As a class, they created their own government, language, laws, clothing, food, art, holidays, and shelter, working through what a real, functioning culture needs to thrive.







WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Language Arts













In literature circles, students are reading The Girl Who Drank the Moon, following Luna as she grows up with unexpected magic in a world shaped by fear and old traditions. Along the way, they built key comprehension skills, spotting foreshadowing and dramatic irony, comparing direct and indirect characterization, and examining text structure and point of view to understand how the author reveals character and meaning without telling us outright.

This month the Geckos read a set of stories all about what makes a character interesting — Judy Moody and the Mood Martian, Scaredy Squirrel, and Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match. Alongside the stories, they worked on decoding skills like sh-blends, short vowel sounds, and vowel-consonant-e patterns, while building vocabulary and practicing point of view, summarizing, character traits, and theme.

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Science



Julia Hunckler
MATH & SCIENCE

FROM MS. Hunckler – Aloha Families! 🌺

We have been having an exciting time exploring microbiology and discovering the world at the microscopic level! 🔬 Over the past several weeks, the students have been learning that although microbes are so small, they play important roles in our health, ecosystems, decomposition, and the living world around us. We have been exploring how microbes can be helpful, harmful, or neutral, and how scientists study them to better understand the world.

We kicked off our microbiology unit with an experiment exploring just how many microbes are around us. The students swabbed different areas of our school and inoculated agar petri plates. They were asked the question, "If microbes are everywhere, where do YOU think the most are hiding in our school?" Students made their own hypotheses and observed their plates each day, carefully recording the number of bacterial colonies growing.

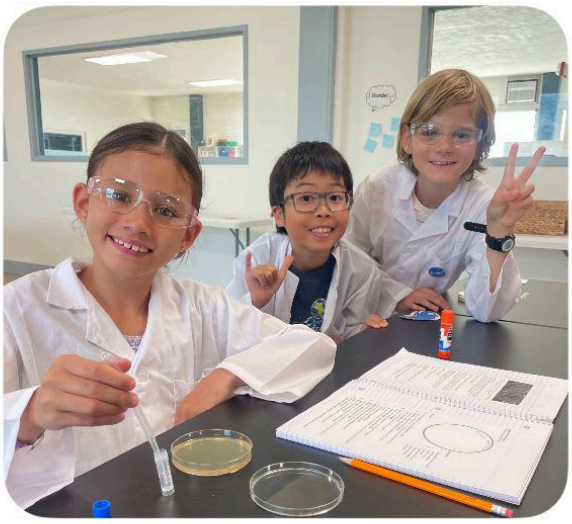
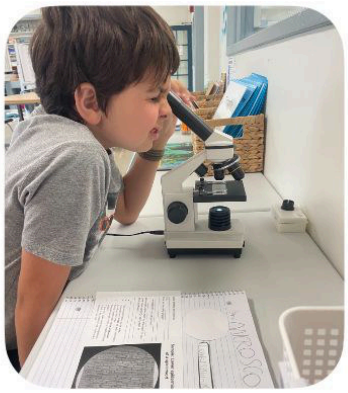
We have also been exploring classification and the incredible diversity of life! The seals each chose a species to research and investigated its place in the classification hierarchy from Domain and Kingdom through Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, and Species and learned how scientists use binomial nomenclature to give organisms their scientific names.

We also have been learning what makes something alive. After learning about the criteria for life, the seals worked on a Rabbithole Quest about the ongoing scientific debate over whether viruses are alive. Our microbiology unit has also connected directly to our classroom fish tank as the students conduct daily water chemistry tests on our fish tank, monitoring ammonia, nitrite, and nitrate levels and learning how these measurements connect to water quality and the nitrogen cycle.

The seals have been recently working through our Microbe Defense Design, where they are researching real pathogens, investigating how they are transmitted, identifying potential weak points, and designing solutions that target those weak points, such as vaccines, water filters, or hygiene protocols. Throughout this unit, the students have been practicing the scientific method: asking questions, making observations, developing hypotheses, collecting and analyzing!

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Science (cont'd)

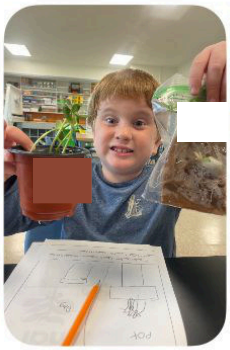












WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Coming up in Science....

We're so excited to kick off our new science unit: **Aquaponics!** 🌱🐟

Over the next several weeks, the students will learn how fish, plants, water, and microorganisms work together in an aquaponics system. We'll explore the topics of water chemistry, ecosystems, nutrient cycles, sustainability, and engineering.

This will be a very hands-on unit! The students will work on designing and building their own aquaponics system. They'll learn how to monitor the systems, make observations, troubleshoot problems, and keep their systems healthy. We'll also take a field trip to a local aquaponics facility in Waimanalo where the students can see a working system and meet people who work in the field.

The students will also have the opportunity to choose an area of aquaponics that interests them and complete an independent research project. Throughout the unit, the students will be asking questions, conducting research, collecting data, and using what they learn to solve problems. Our goal is for the students to not only understand how aquaponics works, but also to see how science and engineering can be used to grow food, care for our environment, and build more sustainable communities. We're looking forward to a fun Aquaponics unit! 🌱🔬🐟





WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Mathematics



In math, we have been building our understanding of the number system and strengthening our problem-solving skills. We have been working with inverse operations to solve for variables, geometry basics, absolute value, multiples and factors, fractions, adding and subtracting fractions, multiplying and dividing fractions, decimals, and adding and subtracting positive and negative numbers.

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

Physical Education - Karate



Taylor Kaneshiro
PHYS ED (KARATE)

FROM SENSEI TAYLOR – This month in Karate, our students have continued building a strong foundation by practicing their basic techniques, stances, and skills. We are also getting ready for our upcoming belt test at the end of October, so everyone has been working hard and putting their best effort forward!

Our Geckos have been developing their coordination through fun exercises and games that help them practice movement, balance, and focus. Our Seals took their physical fitness to the next level by putting their strength, endurance, and determination to the test. Check out their fitness test results below!

(1 min.) Push ups	(1 min.) Sit ups	(1 min.) Squats	(1 min.) Jumping Jacks	(in.) Long Jump	High Jump
62 (+3)	42	63	97	78	~~77~~
32 (+1)	14	40	77	56.5	74.5
30 (+2)	17	10	71	59	77.5
29 (+3)	41	29	65	67.5	78
23 (+2)	27	36	55	66.5	73.5
20 (+2)	32	38	95	62.25	78.5





We are proud of all of our students for their hard work, positive attitudes, and continued progress in class!

Can you tell in this picture they're spelling out "HI"?

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

ART & PHOTOGRAPHY



Nicole Zimmerman
ART & PHOTOGRAPHY











FROM MS. Z – In art, students have been getting creative with hands-on projects, experimenting with different materials, and exploring their own ideas through art.

In photography, students have been learning how to use their cameras manually and practicing aperture and shutter speed with different photo activities.

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

ENRICHMENT: Cooking Japanese Style



Momo Okada
ENRICHMENT, CHEF















FROM CHEF MOMO – Over the past few weeks, we have been cooking new Japanese recipes twice a week and learning how to use a variety of new cooking tools!

We've made a variety of Japanese dishes, including sushi (hosomaki), andagi from Okinawa, agedashi tofu, Japanese curry, and more. Some of our recipes are also inspired by Western and other Asian flavors while still exploring Japanese cooking and ingredients.

The students have been learning new cooking techniques, trying new ingredients, and gaining confidence in the kitchen. It has been so much fun cooking and learning together!
I hope the students will enjoy making some of these recipes at home and maybe even help you with cooking in the kitchen!

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

ENRICHMENT: LIMEADE STAND



Coach Serena
ROBOTICS & ENRICHMENT

FROM COACH SERENA – From tree to table—and idea to business!

Over four weeks, students harvested limes, tested recipes, researched pricing, built budgets, forecast sales, developed a marketing campaign, designed and constructed their stand, created Scratch commercials, wrote donation letters, practiced customer service, and took on 11 real jobs to operate their business.

On Stand Day, they welcomed **29 customers** and **sold 53 cups,** exceeding even their highest sales forecast and **raising $185.75** for the Tradewinds playground "superdome". The project wrapped up with handwritten thank-you notes to everyone who helped make their first student-run business a success.









WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

ENRICHMENT: LIMEADE STAND















WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

ROBOTICS

In Extended Ed Robotics, students kicked off the semester as engineers, tackling hands-on design challenges like racing LEGO cars and building structures strong enough to support a book. Along the way, they learned the engineering design process: design→ build→ test→ iterate→ communicate.

From there, students were introduced to LEGO SPIKE Essential and SPIKE Prime. They explored how motors, sensors, mechanisms, and code work together. We then moved deeper into coding through Scratch by practicing concepts like sequencing, loops, parallelism, variables, inputs, and debugging.

Coding lessons aren't only on screens. Students love playing "Coder Says," where they physically act as computers following programmed instructions, and we've used line-coding robots to explore algorithms and programming without screens.

Just as importantly, students are learning to document the engineering process. They use engineering notebook pages to sketch ideas, record tests, take notes, and track changes as their projects develop. At our Capture Station, students record short design-review videos explaining what they built, what happened during testing, and what they plan to improve next.

Across every challenge, students are learning that robotics isn't just about making something work, but it's about building, testing, documenting, communicating, debugging, and improving.







TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Tradewinds Specialist: Photographer, featured in Vogue



Nicole Zimmerman
ART & PHOTOGRAPHY



Tradewinds is proud to have **Nicole Zimmerman** on our team as a specialist in **photography and art**. Nicole's own creative work was recently featured in **British Vogue**, an exciting recognition of her talent and artistry!

We're thrilled to celebrate this accomplishment—and even more grateful that our students have the opportunity to learn directly from an accomplished working artist. Experiences like these are part of what makes our specialist program so special: students learn from educators who bring real-world expertise, creativity, and passion into the classroom.

Congratulations, Nicole! We're so proud to have you at Tradewinds.

STUDENT VISITORS

Prospective students spend the day at Tradewinds.









In September, we had the pleasure of welcoming a prospective student to spend the day at Tradewinds! She had a wonderful time getting to know our students, teachers, and campus. She even sent us a sweet thank-you card afterward. The students and staff loved having her with us and hope we may get to welcome her back as an official member of the Tradewinds community next school year!

Know a family who might be a great fit for Tradewinds?
We'd love to meet them! Families interested in joining us next school year—or transferring during the current school year—can schedule a Parent Consultation and subsequent class trial by emailing carl@tradewinds.school.

Looking Ahead

Upcoming dates; check our school calendar for more upcoming events.

OCT 05–16 — **Parent Interim Meetings - October**

If you haven't already scheduled your October Interim Parent Conference, please do so here: Google Calendar Parent Conference.

OCT · 06 — **Admissions Open House - New Students**

Share this event with prospective gifted scholars! Scan the QR code to share the event page.

OCT · 21 — **NO SCHOOL - Staff Development Day**

The school will be closed as staff attend a teacher conference.

OCT 26–30 — **Fall Spirit Week (Details to follow)**

Monday – Halloween Sports Day: "Fright Night Field Day"
Tuesday – Twisted Tuesday: "Something's Not Quite Right!"
Wednesday – Pumpkin Patch Day: "Orange You Spooky?"
Thursday – "Too Cute to Spook!"
Friday – Halloween Costume Day: "Fright Fest!"



TRADEWINDS

Designed for Extraordinary Minds

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