



Session Descriptions

Subject to change. More sessions still to come.

Breakout Session A – 10:10-11:10 AM

Building Resilient and Mindful Leaders through Global Travel: A Trip to Zambia and South Africa

Room C221

Grades Addressed: 9-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, The Reluctant Leader, Mindfulness and Well-being, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

Global travel trains emerging women leaders to better understand that effective leadership requires a deep understanding of different cultures, a sense of common purpose, and a true sense of empathy. Participants engaged collaboratively with Zambian women and girls in activities as varied as jewelry-making, tree-planting, or conversations on gender roles. Our girls were encouraged to think of the adventure as a journey of personal growth as a leader: What is my mission as a woman in this world? As one traveler noted, “A good leader recognizes the strengths of those around them and builds teams that can create incredible change.”

Presenters: Heidi Kasevich, Leadership Educator and Amy Richards, President | Soapbox, Inc.

Compassion is not a Catchphrase: Creating Kindness, Connection and Community

Room C226

Grades Addressed: K-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being

When we teach students compassion, we give them a lens with which to view themselves and others in non-contextual experience: apart from accomplishments or failures, personality traits or life circumstances. Classical compassion meditation strengthens kindness and empathy, and cultivates balance, perseverance and resilience. Participants will come away with a mindfulness meditation template that they can practice at home and teach in the classroom.

Presenter: Judith Sekler, Meditation, Mindfulness & Movement Teacher, Writer, and Speaker

K-8 Health and Wellness Program Initiative as a Driver of School Culture

Room D202

Grades Addressed: K-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management, Health and Wellness Programs

This workshop will focus on shifting school culture through a K-8 Health and Wellness Program initiative. The presenters will share their perspective and process from administration, teacher leader, and classroom teacher perspectives. Using a backward design philosophy, the presenters will share planning tools, meeting protocols, and case studies that helped shape this work. Clear outcomes for girls' social, emotional and physical health will be shared. Attendees will also be invited to share dilemmas, and our panel will be happy to provide brainstorming and "think tank" oriented solutions.

Presenters: Karen Brown, Health and Wellness Coordinator and Heather Smith, Middle School Teacher, Grade Level Coordinator | The Hamlin School

Know Thyself: Purnell School's Holistic Approach to Wellness and Success

Board Room (Room C115)

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

Purnell School is a girls' college preparatory boarding and day school where girls with learning differences can flourish. Faculty members Lauren Sagat and Amy Wood have created "Purnell's Student Self Study," a student-centered program to encourage personal growth and self-awareness while cultivating social and emotional learning. Throughout the program, students are introduced to and have opportunities to practice mindfulness. They are also encouraged to increase emotional intelligence, develop self-mastery, cultivate growth mindset, and hone positive communication skills. Students improve resiliency and reduce anxiety while learning to self-advocate. A unique strength of the Student Self Study is the integration and reinforcement of the skills and program from all facets of our school culture. The program culminates in an ePortfolio that students can both present to the community and submit to colleges as an illustration of their academic and personal development. This presentation will include an overview of our program's design, theoretical foundations, sample faculty resources and student examples, sample lessons from segments of the program, as well as a question/answer period for discussion and feedback.

Presenters: Amy Wood, Humanities Division Chair and Lauren Sagat, Director of College Guidance | Purnell School

Leading From Within - Connecting Mind and Body

Room D104

Grades Addressed: 6-8

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, The Reluctant Leader, Mindfulness and Well-being, Successful Leadership Programs, Self-care and Stress Management

This session introduces participants to a distinct brand of schools that uphold the philosophy that supporting a student's sense of self and well-being optimizes academic potential and allows all students to be leaders. The session utilizes video highlights supporting the brain/body connection and moves to an interactive demonstration of the role of movement within a classroom and school day. Participants will have the opportunity to consider structures within their own schools that have potential to harness leadership for all students and walk away with a list of essential questions to hold themselves accountable to focusing on students' self-care and self-knowledge.

Presenters: Nina Safane, Founder, Head of School Middle School; Carrie Donovan, 6-8 Head of School and Julie Dolin, Director of Counseling | Girls Athletic Leadership Schools

Making a Mindful School

Room C203

Grades Addressed: K-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management

Five years ago, Burke's School adopted the practice of mindfulness as an entire school community. We came to mindfulness, the cornerstone of our wellness program, through an intentional examination of school life by a multi-stakeholder group. In this session, you will walk through the process that led to the adoption of mindfulness, the training and implementation phases, and the means by which the school has sustained and fostered the practice over the last five years. Additionally, Lisa will share "testimonials" from students and faculty on the ways in which mindfulness has enhanced varied aspects of their lives.

Presenter: Lisa Spengler, Asst. Director of Upper School for Student Life & Leadership | Katherine Delmar Burke School

Moving on from Trust Falls and Kumbaya: Lessons Learned from Marlborough School on Building Buy-in and Your Own Leadership Program

Room C103

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Alumnae and Leadership, The Reluctant Leader, Successful Leadership Programs

Leadership. Like many buzzwords in education, leadership is an amorphous concept that can be difficult to teach. How do we avoid the moans and groans about "forced bonding" and teach girls to be leaders in a way that feels meaningful and authentic? This session will review how Marlborough's leadership curriculum has evolved over time to not only impact more students but also to increase levels of engagement and willing participation. Session participants will have the opportunity to interact with other professionals to discuss how to create a custom-designed program and share practical ideas to bring to their home schools.

Presenter: Regina Rosi, Dean of Student Life | Marlborough School

Technology, Leadership, and Grit: Experiences and Practices in All-Girls Learning

Room C219

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, The Reluctant Leader, Mindfulness and Well-being, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure, Successful Leadership Programs

The presenters will share first-hand experiences regarding students' development of leadership and grit in school-wide and classroom endeavors. The first part of the presentation will showcase how students' ownership of a Bring Your Own Laptop (BYOL) implementation process, including device and tool piloting and presentations to diverse constituencies, ultimately drove the decision to adopt the current BYOL platform at Marlborough School. Now, in the first year of the BYOL program, students are forming a "Student Tech Task Force," which will offer helpdesk support for peers and for staff. The second part of the presentation will explore flipped learning and how it creates organic leadership moments in the classroom environment, while also developing resilience and perseverance in girls. Additionally, experiences in student "tinkering" to prepare for national contests - science olympiad, rocketry, robotics, and the science bowl competitions - will be shared. The class innately incorporates leadership opportunities because students are the experts for each individual competition.

Presenters: Shauna Callahan, Associate Director of Academic Technology | Marlborough School and Dr. Edye Udell, Science Faculty | Westridge School

Transforming School Culture Using the Universal "Mindset" Language

Room C204

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, The Reluctant Leader, Mindfulness and Well-being, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

Dweck's Growth Mindset language is essential for developing an environment of academic risk-taking and redefining failure. Join educators from Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart as they share their experience of pioneering a new global partnership by infusing Mindset language into the Gashora Girls' Academy of Science and Technology culture, encouraging students and faculty to develop a growth mindset, proving that growth mindset is a universal language. The workshop will focus on growth mindset through the lenses of classroom environment, student/teacher communication and instructional method and provide participants with framework to transform their own learning environment.

Presenters: Rebecca Wilson, Director of Student Life; Maritza Tavaréz-Brown, Science Department Chair; and Mandy Underhill, Middle School Grade Level Team Leader | Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

Breakout Session B – 11:20 AM-12:20 PM

Creating a Culture of Mindful Leadership

Room C204

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Mindfulness and Well-being, Successful Leadership Programs, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

This workshop mixes presentation, discussion, and hands-on activities to prepare participants to guide schools toward a culture of mindful leadership. Participants will break down the stereotypes of what it means to be a leader, and redefine leadership to include self-awareness, compassion and mindfulness. Attendees will participate in hands-on activities to aid in self-awareness and learn the importance of the pause between stimulus and reaction, using mindfulness to facilitate mindful responses rather than knee-jerk reactions. Discussion will include a toolkit of activities from our leadership curriculum to take beyond the workshop and some of the steps necessary to infuse mindfulness into the school culture.

Presenters: Katy Nair, Upper School Assistant Head and Kathryn Jasper, Hutchison Leads Director | Hutchison School

Creating Community – Learn How to Take Time to Make it Happen (How One School Changed its Schedule in Order to Strengthen Connections)

Room C203

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management

Through three major scheduling and programmatic changes adopted to impact girls' healthy development, JMSG community members have felt positive results within a brief time. Based on research showing adolescents benefit from academics starting later and on research showing improving social and emotional skills spurs accumulation of cognitive skills, JMSG provides daily opportunities for girls to thoughtfully connect within their grades, across grades, and with faculty/staff. Along with SEL classes and advisory, these include a community band of time and Cornerstone period. Join us to learn about our transition and how design thinking may create possibilities to build community through scheduling.

Presenters: Sandra Luna, Head of School and Jess Dang, Program Coordinator | Julia Morgan School for Girls

Experiencing Leadership, Building Confidence

Room C226

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Successful Leadership Programs, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

This panel will explore ways that schools can create and foster opportunities for girls to extend their education beyond the classroom: through field work, internships, travel opportunities and more. We will look at several existing programs as well as explore possibilities that might not yet be realized in our schools. We will examine the ways in which experiential education - asking our students to engage with local and distant communities, create learning networks for themselves and take risks in new environments - fosters confidence, builds resilience and helps prepare girls for success within and beyond traditional academic settings.

Presenters: Theresa Smith, Director of Academic Affairs and Tracy Miller, Director of Experiential Learning | The Webb Schools; Samantha Coyne Donnel, Upper School Director | The Archer School for Girls; and Stacey Kertsman, Director, Center for Awareness, Compassion, and Engagement | Castilleja School

Generating Leadership and Advocacy through Mindfulness and Well-Being

Room C221

Grades Addressed: 9-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being

Educating the “whole girl” requires instilling mindfulness and well-being in all facets of her life: academic, personal, social, and spiritual. In the classroom, on the court, at lunch, during reflection and while planning for the future are all arenas for education and development. Marymount High School, Los Angeles utilizes an interdisciplinary holistic approach over four years to instill self-awareness and a global perspective, in turn forming a distinct school culture and community. Join professionals from academic advising, athletics, campus ministry and college counseling for a conversation and sharing of best practices for generating healthy and engaged students, women and citizens.

Presenters: Philip “PJ” Petrone, Co-Director of College Counseling; Kathy DeBlois, Counseling Department Chair/Academic Advisor; Jennifer Schassler, Head Physical Education Teacher; and Paola Womac, Theology Instructor | Marymount High School

Hosting a TEDx Event at your School

Room C103

Grades Addressed: 9-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Alumnae and Leadership, Successful Leadership Programs

Learn how hosting a TEDx event can offer your students a tremendous real-world experience, boost the engagement and commitment of your alumnae, and create magical moments for potential donors and your larger school community. What started with a formal proposal from a single student has now led to our school hosting TEDx events. Details about our student proposal criteria, how to develop student leadership through TEDx, the license application process, curating speakers, and planning, managing and closing out an event will be shared.

Presenter: Cassandra Brenot, Head of Upper School | Santa Catalina School

I'm Sorry. Dismantling the Culture of Apology in Female Leadership

Board Room (Room C115)

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, The Reluctant Leader, Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management

For generations women have been the ones who apologize for, not only their own actions, but for actions of others and even acts of God. But why are women and girls so prone to saying, "I'm sorry," even when they have not been the principle agents in a particular wrongdoing, or even when no wrongdoing has been perpetrated? This session will probe the motivation behind apologizing and its utility in shaping and sustaining relationships as well as its ability to limit leadership qualities like courage, initiative, candor, and confidence in both the classroom and the workplace. Numerous cultures have inscribed apology in its women in particular ways for multiple uses, even as a defining characteristic of female identity. Presenters will unlock these dynamics using multiple examples from various cultural experiences to examine the effects of inscribed apology.

Presenters: Regina Mooney, Director of Institutional Advancement and Kisha Palmer, Director of Women as Global Leaders | Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

Independent Research for Girls in STEM Disciplines: A Leadership Development Opportunity

Room C219

Grades Addressed: 9-12

Focus: Successful Leadership Programs

STEM education remains a priority for girls, however, they remain underrepresented in leadership positions in STEM careers in industry and academia. The Leonetti O'Connell Honors Research in Science program at Marlborough School will be presented as an affirmation of the School's commitment to guide girls from advanced high school science courses to careers in science while developing leadership skills. This program offers 11th and 12th grade students the opportunity to participate in research projects mentored by scientists in the greater Los Angeles area. The success of this program will be discussed in the context of the leadership opportunities it presents.

Presenter: Elizabeth Ashforth, Program Head, Leonetti O'Connell Honors Research in Science Program | Marlborough School

Leadership at the Alma Mater: How Leadership Experiences in High School Affect our Alumnae in College

Room D104

Grades Addressed: 9-12

Focus: Alumnae and Leadership

How much do young girls' school alumnae value their leadership experiences? Have they become leaders themselves in college or beyond? What is their perception of how high school leadership has affected their college experience? What future leadership challenges do they envision themselves taking on? I will present the perspectives of several recent alumnae of an independent girls' school who were in key leadership positions during high school. We will hear from them and discuss how they think their leadership experience was instrumental in several areas of their college lives, including courses, clubs, and social well-being.

Presenter: Hilary Eichelberger, Teacher, Language Department Chair | Westridge School for Girls

Of Walking on Ice

Room C202

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Mindfulness and Well-being, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

We create relationships by not remaining silent, by enacting connection, communication, and honesty, by sharing the power of stories. As part of a writing assignment, Westridge Middle School students reached out to their communities, offering objects that held stories of their own. I will share interviews with four girls who, through mindful and courageous acts, built community and then led by raising their voices. Participants will design never-before-seen, 3D metaphors that represent a story from our lives. We'll offer our objects to someone we don't know, asking that person to take care of the metaphor and to remember our stories.

Presenter: John Cross, English Teacher; Ibbby A., 8th Grade Student; Cleo B., 8th Grade Student; Reese O., 8th Grade Student; and N'Dea P-G., 8th Grade Student | Westridge School for Girls

Breakout Session C – 1:00-2:00 PM

Agents of Change: The Girls of Daraja Academy of Kenya

Room C221

Grades Addressed: 9-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Alumnae and Leadership, Successful Leadership Programs

Daraja Academy continually tests the theory that if a girl living in material poverty is provided with a strong academic base and an environment to grow her innate leadership skills, she will be an agent of change in her community, and the world. Daraja girls participate in a 4-year leadership program called WISH (Women of Integrity, Strength, and Hope). Built on the philosophy of survivorship not victimization, the curriculum is designed on the principles of identity exploration, peace building, and human rights education. Join us in a discussion with the school founder and a recent graduate of the program!

Presenters: Jason Doherty, Founder/Director and Irene Njeri Kibe, Agent of Change, Class of 2014 | Daraja Academy (Kenya)

Defining Identities: How Our Girls Use Research to Embrace Uncertainty, Take Intellectual Risks, and Find Their Voices

Board Room (Room C115)

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

The research program at FSHA includes two major projects at the junior and senior level that ask students to explore such themes as identity, social responsibility, faith, marginalization, gender, and other topics relevant to the development of their worldview. From these projects, it has been clear that the girls have found a strong voice and platform to explore topics that contribute to their emerging sense of self. A large number of students have chosen topics on gender studies, ethnic identity, family structure, and body politics. Because of the research program, there is space in the curriculum for this type of discovery that is often overlooked in traditional high school settings. Learn about the research curriculum at FSHA that is quickly becoming a hallmark of the academic program.

Presenters: Sherrie Singer, Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction and Nora Murphy, Librarian and Curriculum Resource Specialist | Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy

How To Be Alone: Leading from the Inside Out

Room C204

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, The Reluctant Leader, Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

For many girls, being alone means being lonely, bored, and disconnected: a nightmare! However, the capacity to enjoy solitude is a skill leaders need to understand themselves and develop creative solutions to problems. In a world with ever less down-time, connection to nature, and tolerance for boredom, how do we teach the value of reflection, for both individuals and leaders? How can teachers model and incorporate solitude into educational settings? This session provides a rationale for why solitude is an essential aspect of leadership, providing participants with resources for teaching girls how to incorporate reflection into their lives as leaders.

Presenter: Catherine Fink, Human Development Coordinator | Westridge School for Girls

Human Development: A Comprehensive Wellness Curriculum

Room C226

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management

How can schools promote student self-discovery and self-reflection? How can the introduction of mindfulness improve a community of learners? The Archer School for Girls uses a comprehensive wellness curriculum in all grades 6 through 12 to help students investigate their relationship with themselves and others, respond to challenges, and build healthy habits of mind. Throughout the span of seven years, the Human Development courses explore the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth that takes place in middle and upper school. Engage in this seminar to learn more about the implementation of a multifaceted approach to improving student wellness and culture.

Presenters: Gretchen Warner, Dean of Academic Affairs and Kristen Benjamin, Assistant Athletic Director & Fitness Department Chair | The Archer School for Girls

Get Outside! Lessons on Healthy, Mindful Leaders from the 2015 NCGS Retreat to the Grand Canyon

Room C103

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Mindfulness and Well-being, Successful Leadership Programs

Come hear the lessons learned during NCGS Leadership Retreat in the Grand Canyon from the participants. Gain perspective on the valuable teaching moments experienced from the viewpoint of a student, a teacher and the lead guide. During the five days in the Canyon, the girls were ushered through a variety of hands-on leadership challenges. The process helped the group define types of leadership and various roles of leaders, and allowed them to recognize their strengths and weaknesses. As we embark on the 2016 program, discover the wisdom gained from our 2015 participants and see if the excursion would be beneficial for your girls.

Presenters: John Raymond, Director, and Laura Friedman, NCGS Leadership Retreat Trip Leader | Grand Classroom and Regina Rosi, Dean of Student Life | Marlborough School

A Peaceful Classroom

Room C203

Grades Addressed: PK-12

Focus: Mindfulness and Well-being, Self-care and Stress Management

This session will provide information on the benefits of using mindfulness in and out of the classroom. The presenters will share practical, “user-friendly” tips and interventions for helping students remain calm and focused, as well as teaching them to recognize the signals that a break may be needed. Mindfulness techniques applicable to every age and stage will be discussed.

Presenters: Susan McKay, Year 6 Teacher | St Mary’s School Cambridge and Genie Stern, L.C.S.W. | Louise S. McGehee School

Risky Business: Integrating Science and Leadership to Cultivate Intentionality, Creativity, and Trust

Room C219

Grades Addressed: 6-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Successful Leadership Programs, Taking Risks and Redefining Failure

At Coastal Studies for Girls, we integrate science and leadership, redefining paradigms of each. We frame science as a creative act encouraging students to bravely explore the edge of what they know. Through leadership we cultivate growth mindsets, normalize interpersonal conflict, and provide tools for healthy resolution. In this session we will introduce how student-driven research projects can weave science with leadership to encourage confident questioning, critical thinking, and a trust of self. We’ll share tools for achieving rigorous scientific inquiry and intentional group process. Finally, we will facilitate a discussion on incorporating leadership into existing academic courses, particularly STE(A)M.

Presenters: Kate Kyros, Director of Student Life and Kerry Whittaker, Marine Science Faculty | Coastal Studies for Girls

What’s Your Story? Developing Learners’ and Leaders’ Self-Knowledge

Room C202

Grades Addressed: PK-12

Focus: Reimagining Leadership, Mindfulness and Well-being, Successful Leadership Programs

How do our identities and stories shape our leadership? How do our life experiences affect what we teach girls about leadership? We do not simply teach what we know; we teach who we are. Cultivating girls’ leadership must begin with developing our own self-knowledge and unpacking our own biases. Only then can we help girls develop into effective and authentic leaders. Participants will engage in discussions and hands-on activities with the aid of lesson

plans and student work from a single-sex classroom and research on stereotype threat and emotional intelligence.

Presenter: Ashley Marshall, Lower School Principal | The Lovett School