



THE
SPARK

by middle schoolers for middle schoolers

MEET
THE NEW
PYTHONS

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FRONT PAGE COVER BY BRIANNA NELSON

MEET THE NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

As the first semester of the 2018-2019 school year ends, the handful of new middle school teachers have come to adjust to the Pine View campus and environment. However, unless you're a student of one of these staff members, you aren't familiar with their personalities or qualities. Courtesy of The Spark, get to know the new faces of Pine View and meet the new middle school teachers.

Dr. Dylan Bell

By Ava Epstein

Over three months into the school year, science teacher, Dylan Bell, is happy to be teaching here. After graduating high school at River-view High School in 2008, Bell later graduated from the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) with a PhD in space sciences.

His career in teaching started at FIT, where he taught Physics I and II while studying for his PhD. "I was forced into teaching in graduate school to pay for my courses when I couldn't afford it. So, if you taught a class, the school waived the expenses. After teaching the class for a while, I realized I really enjoyed teaching," he said.

After Bell graduated, he decided to come back to Sarasota to teach. Coming from a college campus, he said there were many changes. "Colleges are basically little towns, and when I was teaching at FIT, I was surrounded by adults. I didn't even have my own classroom, I just had

to go to different classrooms to teach the students. But now I feel comfortable, and I have my own home, my home base, my own science classroom I can teach in," Bell said.

Bell teaches both a life science class for middle-schoolers and an Astronomy Honors class for high-schoolers. "It's difficult to teach two different classes, but I enjoy teaching both classes because I get to see the understanding between middle-schoolers in life science and high-schoolers in Astronomy Honors. You can really see the differences between them," Bell said.

When asked what students should take from his class, he said, "I want them to have a fundamental understanding and passion for science. I wants them to leave here wanting to learn more science." On the other hand, he said he wants students entering his class to know there are expectations. "They should expect to read, take notes, and learn. And, be able to complete my homework and turn it in," Bell said.



PHOTO BY GWYN PETERSEN

Jeffrey Gill

By Apollonia Krolkiewicz

After the first quarter of the school year, new seventh-grade civics teacher, Jeffrey Gill has been adapting well. Continuing his 13 years of teaching, Gill has taught many subjects such as: world history, civics, American history and biology for three years.

Prior to coming to Pine View, Gill has taught at Woodland Middle School and North Port High School. He is currently filling in for seventh-grade civics teacher Caroline Gannon, who is currently on leave.

Before teaching, Gill worked as a magazine editor

for Time Life Magazine. Gill said, "We would do fact checking and get them [magazines] ready for publication." After being a magazine editor, Gill became an environmental chemist.

Later, since Gill's youngest child would start school, Gill needed to find a job that would be flexible with his child's schedule and thought that teaching was the perfect fit. Since an opportunity at Pine View arose, he finally took the job. "I wanted to



PHOTO BY APOLLONIA KROLKIEWICZ

come to Pine View for a while and other than the opportunity opening up, my last child went to college, so I am no longer in need to be local," Gill said.

Throughout the first quarter of the school year Gill has been planning lessons with fellow social studies teacher, Carol Lavallee. "Mrs. Lavallee has helped me. We plan together a lot," he said.

Gill uses PowerPoints, debates, roleplaying, and document analysis in his civics classes. Gill helps to sponsor Mock Trial, a club that allows students to perform cases in front of judges.

"I am looking forward to staying here [Pine View] a while... I'll probably sponsor more clubs in the future," Gill said.

Maggie Higgins

By Jonas Meyer

Three months into the school year, Maggie Higgins, a new Chinese teacher, has settled into her new teaching environment. As a graduate of the class of 2012, she remembers her time in Pine View and what it was like to not know any Chinese just like her sixth-graders.

When teaching, Higgins uses PowerPoint to present new grammar concepts and symbols for her students. "For sixth

grade especially, it is hard to remember words," she said.

She remembers what it was like to not understand any Chinese and just how difficult it can be for sixth-graders to learn. Higgins has asked why her students chose Chinese and "most of them said it was good for their job prospects." She said that because Spanish and French still use the same alphabet as English, "Chinese is totally new and exciting" for her students.



PHOTO BY JONAS MEYER

Higgins also teaches Chinese IV to high school students. In it she uses less English and explains things with Chinese; however, she will repeat parts in English when there are questions.

She said she enjoys all of her students very much but believes that because she's new, they are sometimes testing her. To help her teaching, she goes to faculty meetings and has spoken with other teachers. However, because of her schedule she is unable to attend grade level meetings.

"I think it is fun to be in the classroom with students," Higgins said. "Students want to learn, they chose it [Chinese] over French or Spanish."

Pamela Novak

By Kylie Bates

Starting at a new school can be challenging for any teacher, but for new eighth-grade English teacher Pamela Novak, being hired a few weeks after the school year started posed even more challenges.

"I guess just coming five weeks into the school year and having everyone not be settled into routines because they had multiple teachers and substitutes, I sort of had to bring everyone on board into getting routines and just quelling some poor behavior over that time," Novak said. But now that they have routines, she said she sees her students "rise to the occasion" a lot more. Novak also had a bit of a routine change dealing with her teaching time once 100 minutes, now 55. Novak said she wishes she would've come to Pine View sooner, but also said her

previous school, Braden River, helped her with her new job. "I hadn't taught anyone below college age before so for me the experience of teaching high school in a regular public high school was very worthwhile. It was a giant growing opportunity for me, so I'm more equipped to teach at Pine View," she said.

Prior to Novak's start as a teacher, she was a coach for Pine View's Odyssey of the Mind (OM) team. OM is creative problem-solving for students kindergarten to college. She feels that just like last year this will be a transitional year for OM.

Novak would like to get more kids involved and have more parents to coach OM. Novak, as a coach, thinks that she should push the team members in the right direction, but said "it's coming from them, they need to create their own solution to the long-term problem they're trying to answer."



PHOTO BY KYLIE BATES

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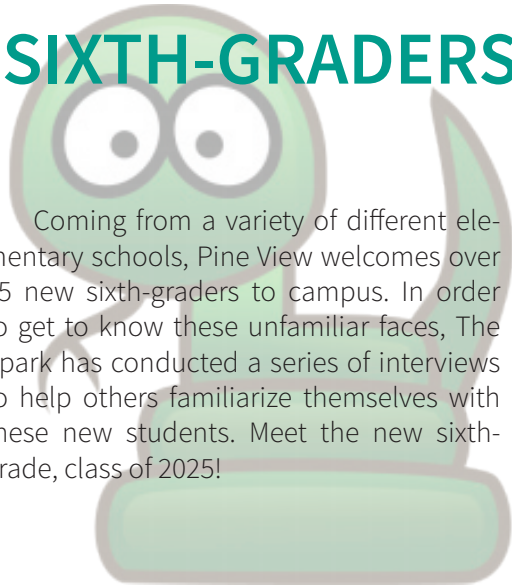
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MEET THE NEW SIXTH-GRADERS

Coming from a variety of different elementary schools, Pine View welcomes over 65 new sixth-graders to campus. In order to get to know these unfamiliar faces, The Spark has conducted a series of interviews to help others familiarize themselves with these new students. Meet the new sixth-grade, class of 2025!



Jayden Acevedo



Interview by Lauren Burd

Previous school: Phillippi Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What challenges have you faced at Pine View?

A: The homework has been a challenge.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Mr. Dacey as a teacher and the peer mentoring that the high school girls do.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: A squirrel.

Q: Who inspires you?

A: I'd say Emma Watson.

Madeline Alexander



Interview by Lauren Burd

Previous school: Englewood Elementary School (Englewood, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived in?

A: I lived in Rhode Island for a while.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View?

A: My first impression is it is a good school and it has a nice community.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Probably a tegu.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: I'd probably save half of it and put the rest toward opening a veterinarian clinic.

Gavin Beachy



Interview by Lauren Burd

Previous school: Fruitville Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I do Chess Club and my favorite teacher is Mr. Dacey. He's just fun and unpredictable.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: If I had to choose something, probably an astronaut or an architect. Maybe a scientist. It seems interesting and fun.

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?

A: The power of having every power.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Dogs because they're cute and they're fun to have. I have three.

Maya Berger



Interview by Gwen Cushman

Previous school: Tatum Ridge Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I row, and I also do knitting.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I have enjoyed the Mythology Club and I like my teachers.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Nurse, vet or lawyer.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: I'd donate some to the health community and save the rest for college funds.

Remy Blunier



Interview by Gwen Cushman

Previous school: Vineyard Elementary School (Naples, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived in/traveled to?

A: I have visited Mexico a few times.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I like the Dungeons and Dragons Club.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: I am thinking about being a computer designer.

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?

A: The ability to create everything.

Juliana Boatwright



Interview by
Gwen Cushman

Previous school:
Phillippi Shores Elementary School
(Sarasota, Fla.)

- Q: What other places have you traveled to?**
A: I have visited Georgia, New York and Argentina.
- Q: What professions are you interested in?**
A: A doctor.
- Q: What is your favorite animal?**
A: A duck.
- Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?**
A: I would want to be able to read minds.
- Q: What or who inspires you?**
A: My friends.

Faith Bossman



Interview by
Claire Critchett

Previous school:
Phillippi Shores Elementary School
(Sarasota, Fla.)

- Q: What professions are you interested in?**
A: I think it would be cool to create robots. I want to be a vet tech and a teacher.
- Q: What would you do with a million dollars?**
A: I would travel the world on a boat. I would also add a slide to the stair case in my house.
- Q: Who inspires you?**
A: One of my neighbors inspires me because she's a science teacher. She is really good to the environment and is vegan.

Nicklaus Bown



Interview by
Claire Critchett

Previous school:
Ridgecrest Elementary School (Ridgecrest, Fla.)

- Q: What other places have you lived in?**
A: I lived in Illinois, Pinellas County and Colombia. I went to kindergarten in Colombia.
- Q: What were your first impressions of Pine View?**
A: It was a lot bigger. You see high schoolers and elementary schoolers in the same place and it's kind of weird.
- Q: What professions are you interested in?**
A: Three things: software programmer, photographer and car mechanic.

Matthew Brown



Interview by
Claire Critchett

Previous school:
Fruitville Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

- Q: What other places have you traveled to?**
A: I have traveled to North Carolina; Cancun, Mexico; New York; and - two months ago - Newhaven, Connecticut.
- Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?**
A: I do Drama Club. I play viola, and I want to play saxophone next year.
- Q: What professions are you interested in?**
A: Acting, band, musicals and engineering. I really like acting, that's why I'm doing Drama Club.
- Q: What is your favorite animal?**
A: My favorite animal is a lizard.

Arabella Carlson



Interview by Ava
Pappas

Previous school:
Laurel Nokomis School (Nokomis, Fla.)

- Q: What would you do with a million dollars?**
A: I would put it towards these bags that I make with slightly used t-shirts and fill them with necessities for foster girls.
- Q: What hobbies/sports do you like?**
A: I used to do Irish dance. I'm in Drama Club and Student Council.
- Q: First impressions of Pine View?**
A: I like it a lot better than my last school. I didn't feel like I fit in there.
- Q: What places have you lived/traveled to?**
A: Ireland. It rained a lot there and I got to see my cousins.

Ethan Chan



Interview by Ava
Pappas

Previous school:
Tropical Isles, J cullen, and Garfield (Calif.)

- Q: What professions are you interested in?**
A: Programming and gaming.
- Q: First impressions of Pine View?**
A: I definitely like it, but I didn't know how to study before and it took me time to adjust to it.
- Q: What hobbies/sports do you do?**
A: I used to participate in swimming. I started in Inca and then Swim FL and The Sharks.
- Q: What superpower would you want?**
A: Be able to summon a genie to use wishes to get more superpowers.
- Q: Who inspires you?**
A: Mainly my dad. He's hardworking.

Chloe Chang



Interview by
Liza Strong

Previous school:
NEST + m (New
York, N.Y.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?

A: I've traveled to California a lot because a lot of my mom's friends are there. I have also been to Korea because that's where my mom's hometown is.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I play golf. My grandparents played it a lot, and they encouraged me to try it.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: Someone who inspires me is my mom because she works really hard.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Any dog.

Kaeley Conrad



Interview by
Liza Strong

Previous school:
Partee Elementary
School (Snellville,
Ga.)

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: I haven't really decided yet, but I like baking, so maybe a pastry chef. I love to bake cake and pies.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: I like dogs a lot. I have one called a "Teddy Bear dog." It's a mix between a Shih Tzu and a Bichon.

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?

A: Probably to communicate with animals.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I like social studies with Mrs. Molinaro and French with Madame Greig.

Andres Cortes



Interview by Liza
Strong

Previous school:
Atwater Elementary
School (North Port,
Fla.)

Q: What other places have you traveled to?

A: I've been to Colombia, Puerto Rico and Rhode Island.

Q: What classes or teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Mr. Dacey, he is crazy and funny, in a good way.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Architecture, marine biology and game design. Also, engineering.

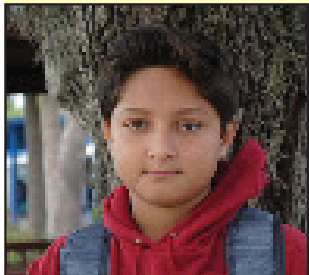
Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: I'd invest the money. Spend some of it on things like college because that's something important.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: A penguin.

Connor D'Silva



Interview by
Scarlett Whisnant

Previous school:
Phillippi Shores El-
ementary (Sarasota,
Fla.)

Q: What other states ave you lived/traveled to?

A: I was born in Massachusetts, and I moved here when I was 7. My family travels a lot. I like it in Ireland. It has nice air, temperature and mountains. My mom is from Ireland as well.

Q: If you could have any super power, what would it be?

The power to do anything.

Q: Who or what inspires you?

My dad. He started his own business and it's really successful.

Jameson Dawes



Interview by
Scarlett Whisnant

Previous school:
Phillippi Shores
Elementary (Sarasota,
Fla.)

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I liked science class the most but now Mr. Dacey has left. Now it's probably Chinese.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Anything that will make a lot of money.

Q: If you could have any super power, what would it be?

A: Time travel or manipulation.

Q: What is your favorite animal?

A: A dog.

Juliana DiVincenzo



Interview by
Scarlett
Whisnant

Previous school:
Southside Elementa-
ry School (Sarasota,
Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I like to play tennis, swim and sing.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

Maybe a tennis instructor, a singer or a doctor.

Q: What is your favorite animal?

A: Probably a dog. I have a dog named Cosmo.

Q: Who or what inspires you?

A: Probably an artist, like Taylor Swift.

Q: If you could have any super power, what would it be?

A: To fly.

Samuel Dorril



Interview by Asha Sallapudi

Previous school: Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What places have you lived/traveled to?

A: Canada was a fun place to visit.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I play tennis and football and I like video games.

Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

A: Invisibility.

Q: What is your favorite animal?

A: Dogs.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: A lawyer.

Loudon Dougherty



Interview by Lauren Burd

Previous school: Phillipi Shores Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: I'm interested in fashion designing and singing.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Foxes because they are awesome.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: Probably Diane Von Furstenberg. I love her wrap dress, it really inspired me.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I participate in tennis and I used to do Tae Kwon Do.

Sophia Doyle



Interview by Esa Lerario

Previous school: Out-of-Door Academy (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?

A: Washington D.C. and Maryland.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I play tennis and do dance. I also play piano and violin.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced?

A: It's a really good school with good kids. A challenge would be having to go across campus, back and forth, and still making it to class on time.

Allivia Egglefield



Interview by Wahu Cordero

Previous school: Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: Competitive cheerleading.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I really like history with Mr. Froelich.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced at Pine View?

A: I really like it. I've had no challenges here at Pine View.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: A narwhal.

Savannah Fortune



Interview by Wahu Cordero

Previous school: Fruitville Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?

A: I lived in Alabama when I was little.

Q: What hobbies do you participate in?

A: I do drawing and sewing.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View?

A: Pretty good. There's a lot of homework.

Q: What classes/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Mr Dacey has been my favorite. I also like my Chinese teacher, Jin Lao Shi.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: An elephant because I was assigned it for a school project.

Morgan Gustafson



Interview by Courtney Nelson

Previous school: Willis Elementary School (Bradenton, Fla.)

Q: What careers are you interested in?

A: I would like to be a professor, because I like the idea of teaching.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: My mom, because she can handle stress well and can stay calm in almost any situation.

Q: What is your favorite animal?

A: I like cats a lot, and I've also owned one for most of my life.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I enjoy going to Spanish class, and I also like Sra. Sand as a teacher.

Lauren Haggard



Interview by Courtney Nelson

Previous school: Sarasota Suncoast Academy (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: I would like to maybe be an actress or singer, maybe even a scientist or doctor.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: I would donate most of it to some sort of charity, probably St. Jude.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: I think that Lindsey Stirling is very inspirational, since she is an amazing violinist. I also think Dr. Covert is inspirational, he's kind and encouraging.

Brandon Haney



Interview by Addison Stewart

Previous school: Lakeview Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived? Have you seen snow?

A: I lived in New Jersey. I saw snow there.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Dogs, probably. I have three dogs: Romeo, Roxy and Tank.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I play soccer and basketball. I like video games.

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?

A: Teleportation because I like exploring.

Zoe Harrell



Interview by Addison Stewart

Previous school: Fruitville Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I did martial arts for a little bit, I also like drawing and painting.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: A fox. They're smart and pretty.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: I would donate a lot of it to animal shelters.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: I would like to work in science.

Elena Herman



Interview by Addison Stewart

Previous school: Ashton Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I really like Mrs. Molinaro. She's the best person you'll ever meet ever.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Snakes. Snakes are the best. I feel like the snake master when they crawl on me.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: Theater is so cool. I do musical theater. I also do art, as a hobby.

Q: What other places have you traveled to?

A: I've been to Colorado, Illinois, New York and Mexico.

Katerina Herman



Interview by Marissa Saba

Previous school: Ashton Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I was in a performing group last year, but not this year because I wanted to focus on school.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I really like history with Mrs. Molinaro.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View?

A: That the campus is really big and the tests are hard to keep track of.

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?

A: Flying.

Ignacio Hurtado



Interview by Marissa Saba

Previous school: Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Musician, programmer or game designer.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: I would go find Logan Paul and flex back. Then, I would buy Supreme and burn it.

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?

A: Super speed and time travel.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Orchestra with Mr. Mink and Spanish with Sra. Sand.

Alexandria Kahl



Interview by Marissa Saba

Previous school: Phillippi Shores Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you traveled to?
A: I've traveled to California, New York, North Carolina, Tennessee and Brazil.
Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?
A: I like to draw.
Q: What's your favorite animal?
A: Dogs.
Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View?
A: It's a cool school.

Brooke Keane



Interview by Monica Hennawy

Previous school: Phillippi Shores Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What sports do you like?
A: I play soccer and enjoy watching baseball.
Q: What's your favorite animal?
A: I love cougars and their big eyes.
Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
A: Teleportation.
Q: What or who inspires you?
A: Michael Phelps.
Q: If you had a million dollars what would you do with it?
A: I would save it.

Emerson Kelly



Interview by Monica Hennawy

Previous schools: Phillippi Shores Elementary School, Morse Pond (Falmouth, Mass.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?
A: I like to play football with my dad, and make dog collars with my nanna. I also love to help out with fundraisers, and have even raised over \$40,000 before.
Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
A: The power to spread happiness!
Q: What's your favorite animal?
A: That's hard for me to choose, but I like dogs, horses and elephants.

Katharine Kempton



Interview by Lauren Burd

Previous school: Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?
A: I haven't lived anywhere else, but I've been to a lot of places. I can fly for free because my dad is a pilot.
Q: What classes/teachers/clubs have you enjoyed?
A: I like Mrs. Lyons because she is very nice. I also like the volleyball team here.
Q: What professions are you interested in?
A: To have my own business or to be a doctor.
Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
A: I would be able to fly.

Angus Kirby



Interview by Asha Sallapudi

Previous school: Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What's your favorite animal?
A: A cat.
Q: What would you do with a million dollars?
A: Invest it so I could get more one million dollars.
Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
A: Flying.
Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?
A: Mr. Dacey and Mrs. Lazareva.
Q: What professions are you interested in?
A: A doctor.

Skylar Kreithen



Interview by Asha Sallapudi

Previous school: Willis Elementary School (Bradenton, Fla.)

Q: What's your favorite animal?
A: Cats.
Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?
A: Sra. Sand and Dungeons and Dragons Club.
Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
A: Stopping time.
Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced?
A: The homework.

Emmy Li



Interview by
Asha Sallapudi

Previous school:
Tampa Palms
Elementary School
(Tampa, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: Piano.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: A fox and a wolf.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: Buy books and chocolate.

Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

A: Invisibility.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: All teachers and Chinese club.

Kai Lopez



Interview by
Esa Lerario

Previous school:
Gocio Elementary
School (Sarasota,
Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived? Have you experienced snow?

A: I have lived in many places with snow, but I was too young to remember them all.

Q: What have been your impression of Pine View? A: I like the campus. Also, I really like the kids here, they are really nice and welcoming.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Neurologist, to study the brain.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: Give a lot to charity and give the rest away.

Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

A: Invisibility.

Lindsay Luberecki



Interview by Esa
Lerario

Previous school:
Venice Elementary
School (Venice, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies or sports do you participate in?

A: I have played soccer for about...5 years.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View?

A: I think it is pretty cool, I really like how we have a really long lunch. There are a lot of nice people here.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: Probably travel a lot, because I really like traveling.

Adam Lyda



Interview by Esa
Lerario

Previous school: Lau-
rel Nokomis Elementary
School (Nokomis, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to? Have you experienced snow?

A: I moved from Ohio, so I have experienced snow.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced at Pine View?

A: A lot of tests, a lot of homework, but it is easy to get done if I sit down and focus without having my phone next to me. Sometimes, if it becomes too much of a distraction, I ask my family to hide it.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Math, because I feel it is fun to have a challenge. Sometimes it is hard keeping up with advanced skills.

Noah Marks



Interview by Han-
nah Stevens

Previous school:
West Elementary
School (Arcadia, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?

A: One time, I used to live in Texas, and I have been to Washington D.C.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: Video games.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Mr. Dacey's class because it's fun.

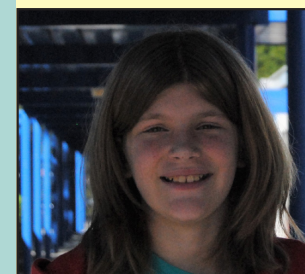
Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: Give some to charity, buy a jeep, house and v-bucks.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Red Panda.

Lillian Martin



Interview by Han-
nah Stevens

Previous school:
Alta Vista Elementa-
ry School (Sarasota,
Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: My hobbies are drawing and baking.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced at Pine View?

A: A lot more work than elementary school.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Owning a bakery with my mom.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Giraffe.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: My favorite subject is World History.

Padraig McAnarney



Interview by Hannah Stevens

Previous school:
Tatum Ridge Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What places have you lived/traveled to? Have you experienced snow?

A: I've lived in Columbus, Ohio, and yes, I have experienced snow.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I play soccer and look at cool cars.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced at Pine View?

A: A lot more work than elementary school, also a lot more freedom.

Chance McArtor



Interview by Victoria Liu

Previous school:
Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What places have you traveled to? Have you experienced snow?

A: New York City, North Carolina, Ohio, Chicago, and I have seen snow.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Miss Wise, Mrs. Hollar and Ms. Salamon.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Animating and art.

Q: If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

A: Flying.

Ryan McCarthy



Interview by Victoria Liu

Previous school:
Lakeview Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: Soccer for three years at FC Sarasota; piano and guitar for fun.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Neurologist.

Q: Who or what inspires you?

A: Neymar.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: Donate it to cancer for kids; save some for college.

Ethan Perrin



Interview by Victoria Liu

Previous school:
Phillippi Shores Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: Rowing, video games and lacrosse.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Medical Programmer.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: My dad, who is a doctor and Elon Musk.

Q: What is your favorite animal?

A: Dogs.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?

A: I have three siblings: one little sister, one older sister and one little brother.

Nelson Rapalo



Interview by Leo Lenerz

Previous school:
Ridgecrest Elementary School (Ridgecrest, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?

A: I used to live somewhere in Central America, then Pennsylvania.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I want to do track, used to play soccer.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: I like orchestra.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: The developer of Game Freak, Ken Sugimori.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Fox.

Alexandro Reni



Interview by Leo Lenerz

Previous school:
Ashton Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?

A: Massachusetts.

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Acting.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Spanish class.

Q: What are some of your hobbies?

A: Video games!

Q: If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

A: Invisibility.

Aaron Schroeder



Interview by Leo Lenerz

Previous school: Venice Elementary School (Venice, Fla.)

Q: What places have you lived/traveled to?

A: Montana, New Orleans [and the] Bahamas.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: I participate in soccer.

Q: What have been your impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced?

A: I think it's quite a nice school. [I have trouble] somewhat getting from class to class on time.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?

A: Probably just travel the world.

Isabella Seng



Interview by Luke Rominiecki

Previous school: Lakewood Elementary School (St. Petersburg, Fla.)

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Horses.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced at Pine View?

A: I'm a little scared of the size of the campus. I've also had some trouble with learning to deal with the amount of homework.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Orchestra and math because the teachers are amazing.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: My teacher and instructors.

Terry Shen



Interview by Luke Rominiecki

Previous school: Ridgecrest Elementary School (Ridgecrest, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: A little bit of golf and tennis.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?

A: Dr. Bell, Lyons and Molinaro.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Crab.

Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced at Pine View?

A: It's a big school and people are nice. There is less homework than I would've expected. A problem is the distances between classes.

Henry Shoemaker



Interview by Luke Rominiecki

Previous school: Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What professions are you interested in?

A: Heart doctor.

Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?

A: Swimming.

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to? Have you experienced snow?

A: I've traveled to New York and have lived in Jacksonville. I have experienced snow.

Q: What or who inspires you?

A: My parents because they never give up.

Q: What's your favorite animal?

A: Dogs.

Jesse Springer



Interview by Sam Wright

Previous school: West Elementary School (Arcadia, Fla.)

Q: What places have you traveled to?

A: I have traveled to Ireland, Germany, France and Chicago.

Q: Have you experienced snow?

A: Yes.

Q: What profession are you interested in?

A: I'm interested in a career as a lawyer.

Q: If you had a million dollars, what would you do with it?

A: Travel.

Q: If you had a superpower, what would it be?

A: The power to stop crying babies on a plane.

Q: What is your favorite animal?

A: Housecats.

Julian St. Esprit



Interview by Sam Wright

Previous school: Kinnan Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What places have you traveled to?

A: I used to go to Pittsburgh to see family.

Q: Have you experienced snow?

A: Yes.

Q: What profession(s) are you interested in?

A: I'm interested in being a surgeon.

Q: If you had a superpower, what would it be?

A: The power to stop time.

Q: What are your first impressions of Pine View?

A: The gifted part.

Alexander Stathis



Interview by Sam Wright

Previous school: Philippi Shores Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What places have you lived previously?
A: I have lived in Los Angeles and Phoenix, Arizona, as well as Sarasota.

Q: What sports do you participate in?
A: I participate in soccer, baseball, football and basketball.

Q: What professions are you interested in?
A: I'm interested in being a realtor and a surgeon.

Q: What is your favorite animal?
A: Dogs. More specifically, golden retrievers.

Q: If you had a superpower, what would it be?
A: Invisibility.

Sienna Steiner



Interview by Victoria Liu

Previous school: Phillippi Shores Elementary School, (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to? Have you ever experienced snow?
A: I've traveled to Tennessee and Italy. I have seen snow.

Q: What classes/clubs/teachers have you enjoyed?
A: Ms. Molinaro.

Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?
A: Flying.

Q: What's your favorite animal?
A: My favorite animals are dogs.

Anthony Tiutyama



Interview by Miguel Rodriguez-Diaz

Previous school: Brentwood Elementary School, (Sarasota Fla.)

Q: What sports/hobbies do you like?
A: I like to play soccer as a sport. I like to run, not as a sport but as more of an activity.

Q: What are your favorite subjects?
A: My top favorite is math, but I also like Spanish.

Q: Who inspires you?
A: My sister, because she is very dedicated to the school.

Q: What are some challenges you've faced at Pine View?
A: Finding new friends, and that there is more work than I'm used to.

Ella Trandem



Interview by Jade Firlie

Previous school: Lakeview Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What sports do you participate in?
A: I play softball. I've played softball for two years, and baseball for four.

Q: What professions are you interested in?
A: I want to be a paramedic. I want to help people.

Q: What would you do with a million dollars?
A: I would give some of it to my mom and put the rest of it towards college.

Q: What super power would you like to have?
A: Invisibility - I could get away with more stuff.

Q: What is your favorite animal?
A: My favorite animals are elephants.

Chantal Usubillaga



Interview by Jade Firlie

Previous school: Saint Stephen's Episcopal School (Bradenton, Fla.)

Q: What professions are you interested in?
A: I'm interested in being a doctor and a professional gymnast.

Q: What are your favorite animals?
A: My favorite animals are pigs, goats and walrus!

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?
A: I have lived in Venezuela and Bradenton. I have traveled to Spain and South America.

Q: What sports do you participate in?
A: I do gymnastics at EVO's Athletics.

Q: Who inspires you?
A: Simone Biles inspires me.

Leonardas Vapsva



Interview by Jade Firlie

Previous school: Gene Witt Elementary School (Bradenton, Fla.)

Q: What places have you traveled to?
A: I have traveled to Russia, Germany and Lithuania.

Q: What professions are you interested in?
A: I want to be an investor/buisnessman.

Q: What classes and teachers have you enjoyed?
A: My two favorite subjects are technology and math, and my favorite teacher is Ms. Higgins.

Q: What hobbies and sports do you partake in?
A: I play baseball. I love playing video games, especially Fortnite. And I used to play tennis and soccer.

Ava Wasilewski



Interview by
Claire Critchett

Previous school:
Fruitville Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What professions are you interested in?
A: I want to be a teacher because I like little kids. I want to be a veterinarian because I like animals.
Q: What would you do with a million dollars?
A: I would buy a new house, get a new car for my dad, and a horse and track for it, and a few cats.
Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?
A: To fly because I think it would be fun to be in the sky and see something from so far away.
Q: What is your favorite animal?
A: Horses because they are really sweet.

Nina Wasluk

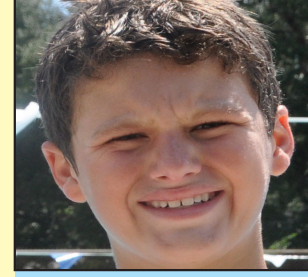


Interview by
Claire Critchett

Previous School:
Englewood Elementary School (Englewood, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you traveled to?
A: I've traveled to the Bahamas, New Hampshire and basically all of the states in New England.
Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?
A: I do gymnastics and sailing. I like hanging out with friends and camera stuff like videos and photography.
Q: Who inspires you?
A: I like famous Youtubers like Erica Costell. She inspires me because she likes goats and she's funny.

Christopher Wietrzykowski



Interview by
Jade Firlie

Previous school:
Tatum Ridge Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What other places have you lived/traveled to?
A: I lived in South Carolina, and I have traveled to Virginia and Iowa.
Q: What hobbies and/or sports do you participate in?
A: I'm in boy scouts. And I'm also in the Dungeons and Dragons Club.
Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?
A: Flight. I could get from place to place easier.

Joshua Woody



Interview by Ava Pappas

Previous school:
Venice Elementary School (Venice, Fla.)

Q: What are some of your challenges at Pine View?
A: I have soccer practice every Tuesday and Thursday, so it's kind of a challenge to do homework.
Q: What professions do you like?
A: I want to work in NASA or some space program.
Q: What places have you lived in?
A: I used to live in New Orleans and before then I used to live in San Diego.
Q: What classes/teachers have you enjoyed?
A: I like my science teacher Dr. Bell.
Q: What are your sports/hobbies?
A: Soccer, golf and video games.

Thomas Zamsky

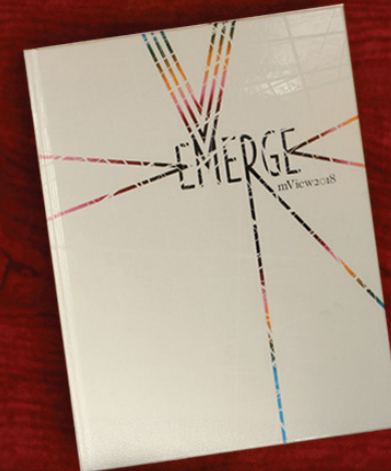


Interview by
Wahu Cordero

Previous school:
Southside Elementary School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Q: What hobbies/sports do you participate in?
A: Soccer.
Q: What have been your first impressions of Pine View? What challenges have you faced at Pine View?
A: It's a good school. No challenges.
Q: What classes/teachers have you enjoyed?
A: I enjoy Mr. Dacey's class.
Q: If you could have a super power, what would it be?
A: Super speed.
Q: What's your favorite animal?
A: Dogs.

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MEET THE SEVENTH-GRADERS

“Wait, who’s that?” Facing the upcoming Pine View seventh-grade class, these brave souls have ventured from wide and far to take on the 212 quest. Leaving their old schools and friends, the journey has not been easy, but will be worthwhile in their educational path. With 15 new smiles, they have already begun to intertwine with fellow classmates, faculty and staff, becoming one with the Pine View community.

Maeva Ginsberg-Klemmt

Interview by Anson Nguyen

Previous school: Booker Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

“I just love learning. That’s actually one of the reasons I came to Pine View,” seventh-grader Maeva Ginsberg-Klemmt said.

One of her main passions is theater, which she uses as an outlet to channel her creativity and to escape from reality.

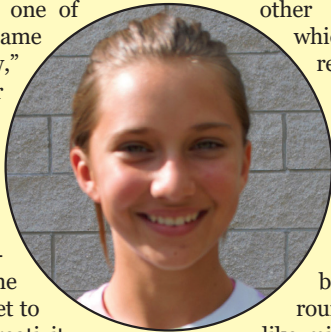
“[Theater] helps me take a break from all the stress and homework and just focus on the task at hand,” Ginsberg-Klemmt said.

At 7 years old, she started doing theater in California, where she would go to visit her grandmother during the

summers. She went to a nearby theater program and took some of the classes offered.

From there, her passion for theater only grew; she started doing Drama Kids and other programs in which she would reenact scenes from movies or acting as characters from TV shows. “I loved going to [theater] class because it surrounded me with like-minded people that were driven to learn like me,” Ginsberg-Klemmt said.

“The one thing that keeps me coming back to theater is the never-ending things to learn, there are still so many more things I want to learn about it. Whenever I do learn something new, it just fascinates me,” she said.



7th

Michael Girgis

Interview by Elena D’Amato
Previous school: Sarasota Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

New seventh-grader Michael Girgis focuses eagerly on his education. This may be because his brother went to Harvard. Michael looks up to his brother and wants to be like him someday.

Girgis said, “My brother went here, as well, and worked hard so he could get into Harvard.” Michael also said that he would prefer to get into Harvard over Yale.

To get into such a prestigious school, it is required that you get good grades. Girgis said that he is working hard

on obtaining good grades this year.

Michael’s



brother has always been a big influence in his life and while he greatly looks up to his brother, he said that he would like to

Interview by Nathan Weitzner

Previous school: McIntosh Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Pine View opens up more opportunities in seventh-grade eyes. Born in Washington D.C., he recently moved to Sarasota to join his grandparents for a better education. Originally attending elementary school in D.C., Bonaparte left after finding the area to be dangerous due to a high crime rate and drug cartels in the District.

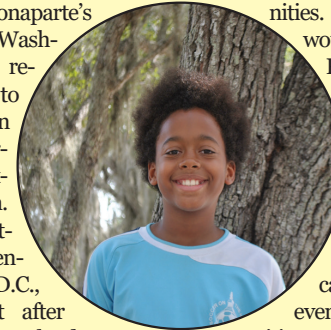
Bonaparte finds that Pine View can be a challenge, but other than that he is having fun. To him, Pine View offers more freedom and opportunities. Bonaparte said, “There is a lot more room to explore and I

can do things I couldn’t in D.C.” According to him, his old school couldn’t afford to have a field or playground, or even a library.

He hopes that Pine View will open up more opportunities. If he could, he would recommend Pine View because of what it provides.

Bonaparte said he is having fun at his new school and hopes he can be granted even more opportunities. He believes that

Pine View makes life easier later on, and that more people should come. Pine View school is an upgrade according to him, his old school didn’t have many of the “goods,” like fields or playgrounds. He hopes to gain many more happy moments at Pine View.



Ava Griner

Interview by Kylie Bates
Previous school: Sarasota Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

New seventh-grader Ava Griner is very academically and musically motivated. "Since I was little, I've always loved to sing and perform, but when I was older, I found out about Broadway. When I switched elementary schools and they had a show it was the thing that kind of introduced me to Broadway."

Griner takes advanced math, causing her to be surrounded by eighth graders. "It's kind of intimidating.

I don't know a lot of them, but the ones I do know are nice to me," she said.



Even though Griner takes advanced math, she would say her favorite subject is histo-

ry, but she takes civics now, so she'd go with language arts because she likes learning the vocab and enhancing her writing skills. Griner's love of history was started from her love of the popular Broadway musical, Hamilton.

Griner has been doing theater since third grade and has been in plays with her elementary theater and the group she's in now, called Rise Above. In the future, she said she wants to go further in her love of performing by going to Juiard, then continuing by becoming an actress on Broadway.

Ruby Gurcan

Interview by Marybeth Damico
Previous school: Sarasota School of Arts and Sciences (Sarasota, Fla.)

New seventh-grader ruby Gurcan is enjoys her new school. "I like the big campus, and the fast-paced learning more than my old school," she said.

"The biggest challenge for me was the fact that I came in seventh-grade," Gurcan said, "the majority of the kids came in sixth-grade, so they were already used to the school system."

Besides that, she didn't find it challenging to switch schools and already knew a few people before switching. Gurcan was interested in coming to Pine View

because she wanted to see how she liked it in middle school before possibly attending high school. She felt that middle school was a good way to introduce her to the style of the school. She also wanted to get used to the homework load.

"I don't have much more homework than my old school, but in the classroom, we learn faster and get more accomplished," Gurcan said. She said that some teachers give more homework than others, but it is all mostly reasonable. "With the teachers I have, homework is manageable," Gurcan said. "It may be different for others though." Overall, Gurcan has been enjoying the challenges and the freedom in coming to Pine View.



Liam Hendley

Interview by Alyson Mizanin
Previous school: Seven Springs Middle School (New Port Richey, Fla.)

Riffs and strums are seventh-grader Liam Hendley's specialty. Although he doesn't see himself pursuing guitar as a career, he has a deep connection to the instrument.

Hendley has been playing guitar for five years. His interest in the instrument began once he started paying closer attention to the music he typically listened to on the radio. After realizing that he needed more from the music he was

accustomed to, Hendley began listening to rock. "The guitar captivated me instantly," he said.

Hendley's love for music has helped him adjust to Pine View. "The schoolwork [at Pine View] is a lot more than what I had at my other school," Hendley said. "I've been able to adjust, and music has played a big role in that."



Although Hendley enjoys playing the guitar, he doesn't see it becoming his career. "The future isn't definitive yet, but I think that I'll end up in engineering," Hendley said. "However, I think music will continue being an important part of my life. It always has been, and I think it always will be."

7th

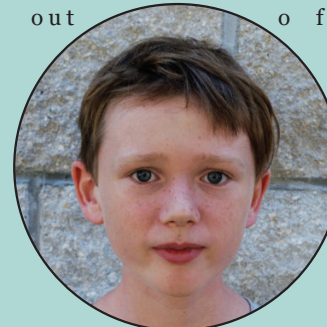
Tanner Isaacs

Interview by Felicity Chang
Previous school: Winburn Middle School (Lexington, Ky.)

"If I could have any career, I would like to be a physicist or an environmental scientist," seventh-grader Tanner Isaacs said. He has participated in science fairs and is interested in reducing global warming and deforestation.

"I feel like global warming is a major problem," Isaacs said. "I would [like to]

make a device that can take carbon dioxide out of



the air and split it into carbon and oxygen. You could use the carbon

for plastic and release the oxygen into the air."

Isaacs also has plans for reducing deforestation. "When people cut down trees, they need to plant them back," Isaacs said. "I could find a senator or representative to make more land for trees and put limits on how many trees you can cut down."

Isaacs has participated in multiple science fairs. Some of his projects include research on how water is affected by fertilizer and the effects of pollution on plants.

Jordan Kane

Interview by Caroline Deacon

Previous School: Terrace Community Middle School (Thonotosassa, Fla.)

Seventh-grader Jordan Kane aspires to achieve the Pine View dream: succeeding in her education and pursuing a prosperous future. Coming from Terrace Community Middle School, Kane has remained in Florida throughout her life.

She intends to graduate from Pine View and is focused on her grades. "Keeping up, maybe maintaining good grades," Kane said when asked what she is nervous about when transitioning to a new school. She explained by say-

ing that she finds Pine View to be more difficult than her previous school, something she also enjoys.



She also aims to be successful in general in terms of long-term goals and identifies

getting all A's as a short-term goal. Kane enjoys math the most when it comes to school subjects. "You know there's always an answer, you just have to get to it," she said.

Kane is very driven and knows what she wants to do. She would like to become a doctor but has not decided on a specialization yet.

This motivation comes from her parents, who she described as hardworking and looks up to for getting up and going to work every morning, which she said isn't the most fun activity. Kane is a goal-oriented student with her eye on the ball when it comes to academics.

Mark Lyda

Interview by Max Friedland

Previous school: Lural Nokomis School (Sarasota, Fla.)

"I want to be a marine biologist," seventh-grader Mark Lyda said. He said he is quite enjoying it here, and that because of the other students. He said they have been quite welcoming in this time of moving from another school to here.



He said, "Pine View stands out because it is challenging, which is good because I like the challenge." He is excited to be at Pine View and hopes to stay here through high school, so that he can become a marine biologist.

Lyda wants to be a marine biologist because he is interested in animals, as

shown by the fact that he has ten pets.

His biggest role model is his father because of the hard work he does on things such as lightning protection, and he said he hopes to be like him someday. Lyda has shown that he can work hard too by getting into the National Junior Honors Society, and by overcoming obstacles.

"One of my biggest problems is managing school work, as there is a lot of it," Lyda said. However, he said that he's improved on that since, but it was challenging at first.

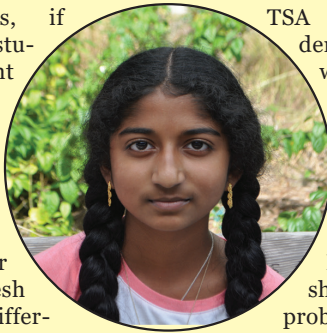
Lyda said that he can't live without his family and his pets, as they help him throughout his life because they support him and his dream of being a marine biologist.

Pooja Magesh

Interview by Evan Cressell-Simmons

Previous school: Sarasota Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Most seventh-graders, if not most students, might list art, writing, or a sports as their true passion. But, seventh-grader Pooja Magesh is much different, because she loves coding and technology.



Before Pine View, Magesh attended Sarasota Middle School. According to Magesh, Pine View is much different and more challenging than her last school.

"Last year, we didn't work on as many topics as we do this year," she said.

Being skilled in math and problem-solving, Magesh was also very successful in TSA (Technology Student Association), which is a competitive program, holding competitions in different subjects within science, like coding and robotics.

In this program, she won an award in problem solving within the competition. To win the award, she had to solve certain logic problems within a certain time limit.

Alongside TSA, Magesh also grew a love for coding and would like to pursue a career in software design or something of the like.

7th

Kai Sprunger

Interview by Alyson Mizanin

Previous School: Thompson Middle School (Newport, R.I.)

Heralding from Rhode Island, seventh-grader Kai Sprunger has a deep fondness for the sea. With a passion for areas with the aroma of salt water and fish, Sprunger sees the ocean remaining an essential part of her life.

In Rhode Island, Sprunger lived in a tourist-filled area. Although life was busy, one thing that remained steady throughout the chaos was the

proximity of the ocean. "Life is easier when the smell of fish is in the air and the



sound of the ocean is just close enough to be heard," Sprunger said.

Although Sprunger misses the natural aspects of her home state, her relocation to Florida was because of her need for a better education. "The schools up north didn't fit my academic needs," Sprunger said. "Pine View is a perfect fit."

As for the future, Sprunger's passion for the ocean may come to fruition in the form of her career. "I don't know where life is going to take me, but I think that the ocean will have some part of it," Sprunger said. "It has always been there; I don't see it going away anytime soon."

Nishalle Uthuppan

Interview by Elena D'Amato

Previous School: Brookside Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

For seventh-grader Nishalle Uthuppan, coming to Pine View is just one more way for her to feel connected to her family. "All my relatives came here so I already have a connection with this school, making it easier to move here," she said.

Her sister, Nicole Uthuppan, went to school here as well, and told her that this was a great school and that she created some great memories here. Nishalle Uthuppan said, "I love my sister because she encourages me to work



hard." Uthuppan's previous school was Brookside Middle School. Her favorite memory of her previous school is the Cuda Team (short for Barracuda). She said that the hardest thing about changing schools was the change in pace. But besides this, she has not experienced many obstacles. When she does, however, she said she is able to draw strength from her family.

Family is obviously an important concept to Uthuppan. "Having a good family can brighten up even the worst of days. I love spending quality time with my family because I know that

Gianna Weerasooriya

Interview by Felicity Chang

Previous School: Laurel Nokomis School (Nokomis, Fla.)

With an affinity for acting, seventh-grader Gianna Weerasooriya has been in

multiple camp productions and is currently in the Pine View Drama Club. "If I had 80 days to do anything, and money wasn't a concern, I'd go to New York City and see every Broadway show there is," she said.

Weerasooriya's interest in acting started when she was young. When she was merely four years old, she acted out scenes with her stuffed animals past her bedtime. "My parents had a camera in my room ... and decided to put me into [acting] classes when I got older. When I started the classes, I was like, 'I love this.'" Weerasooriya said.

As Weerasooriya grew older, she participated in

camp productions such as "Pinocchio" and "Seussical the Musical." One of her proudest accomplishments was getting a role as the Blue Fairy's assistant in the show "Pinocchio." The show was also Weerasooriya's first time on stage. "I was nervous, but then I realized it was excitement. I love being on stage," she said.

Besides being on stage, there are other aspects of theater Weerasooriya enjoys. "I love singing. I like being in a team. When you have rehearsals 24/7, you build a bond with these people. That's one of the reasons why I love theater," she said.



7th

they are always going to be here for me," she said.

Uthuppan loves her family very much, "They would do anything for me so I could at least do something for them." Uthuppan said, "My favorite thing to do outside of school is hanging out with them [her family]."

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MEET THE EIGHTH-GRADERS

Marked by the end of the middle school experience, entering eighth grade as a new student isn't the easiest transition. Because of being surrounded by pre-existing friend groups and connections, the social change can add more stress than what already exists with the new amounts of homework often found at Pine View. The following students wish to leave their mark on the school and its interconnected community while heralding their new "Pine View Python" moniker.

Nico Brion

Interview by Ava Epstein

Previous school: Booker Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Swimming in boatloads of Pine View level work, eighth-grader Nico Brion still finds time to spend with his family.

Brion finds family and friends very important, while staying very studious with his academics. When asked what are some of the most important things in his life. "My family and friends. Because they're really fun to be around. Me and my family are very close. On weekends we play board games, and we travel a lot together," he said.

er," he said.

Like any other Pine View student, Brion feels strongly about having the best grades possible. "Last year in the third quarter I didn't do much of my homework and ended up getting a C in math. I was very disappointed, so I worked hard the next quarter to do better," Brion said.

Along with trying to get good grades, he said he loves travelling, especially to see his family. "I love going to France because I get to visit my family. I love to travel," he said.

His family helps encourage him to succeed and be more successful in school, and even other

out of school activities. "I like to swim and do tennis a lot," Brion said, "I swim and play tennis out of school."

Brion does not swim nor play tennis competitively, rather because they are fun activities to do. "Most time is spent on something else, other than constantly focusing on schoolwork and academics," he said.

"Swimming and tennis are just really cool activities I get to do, and swimming makes me feel very refreshed. I also love to swim with my family. It makes for another fun thing to do with family," Brion said. His family is a



very important aspect of his life, including all of the activities he gets to do with them.

"One time when I was in

France with my family, we went to a river with a really tall rock and jumped off into the water and swam around," he said.

Nicholas Harrington

Interview by Tyra Motkar

Previous school: Laurel Nokomis Middle School (Nokomis, Fla.)

New to this school, Nicholas Harrington is an eighth grader in his third month here. He was born in Indianapolis but moved to Florida when he was only 2-years-old. He enjoys learning about history and is advanced in math, being a grade above in geometry.

But academics aren't all he's good at. Three years ago, Harrington started his love of soccer. He was encouraged to join soccer by his family, mainly by his older sisters who played soccer

in the past at the YMCA, and he has claimed to love soccer ever since he was introduced. "Every year I feel like we win more and more and grow even more as people," he said.

In the same year, Harrington was also encouraged to play in orchestra by his sisters, who played in orchestra and wanted him to join as well. Harrington tried playing many different instruments, but when he played the viola, he said that he immediately loved it.

His orchestra teacher, Chris Mink, said that he enjoys Harrington in his class. "He's a very responsible, good student who is very

talented at the instrument he plays," Mink says. Mink also said that Harrington's previous teacher was an instructor named Amanda Bowman and claims her to be a very good teacher because of the skill level Harrington had when he came to Pine View.

Although Harrington does a lot in his spare time, giving him a substantially less amount of time to study than some of his other peers, he still manages to keep up good grades. He says that the workload in Pine View is a lot more than his previous school, Laurel Nokomis, and the classes are more rigorous as well. "I love it here, although it is a lot more



challenging than my other school, it's very fun and I enjoy being here a lot," he said. Harrington said. He

hopes to be able to excel in academics here in his aspirations to be a dermatologist.

Sophia Korman

Interview by Aleksandra Masiulis

Previous school: Homeschooled

Transitioning from homeschool to a public school may be a tall order for some, but not to eighth-grader Sophia Korman.

Before Pine View, she was homeschooled her whole life. Her parents believed she would have an easier time learning at home. She didn't transfer sooner because she said she really didn't feel like going to public school.

Most of her courses were covered at home, so she was able to easily transition into eighth-grade. "Honestly, the hardest part is getting used to the schedule," she said. "Homeschooling was very relaxing,

but I was still prepared for public school, even if things are a little different here than going to a [regular] public school, and there's less schoolwork. I liked being homeschooled more," Korman said. "The teachers here are stricter than my relatives. But I like [the teachers]."

Korman said she transferred to Pine View because she was lonely. "At Pine View, people are nice, and I've already made a couple friends," she said.

Her first impression of Pine View was that the community was full of smart kids. Korman said her favorite subject is P.E. because it's the least stressful and at the end of the day.

Korman aims to be a doctor one day because she likes helping people. She does

not know what college she will go to, but she says she'll finish high school and figure it out then.

In her spare time, Korman plays the violin. She said she had a friend who practiced and inspired her to learn violin as well. She has been playing for five years has had seven performances. She now plays for Sarasota Youth Orchestra and was the star of the show several times. She performed "Spring," from Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" at the Sarasota Orchestra, a famous piece that has even been performed by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. It took her three weeks to learn. "The violin was very fulfilling that night," Korman said.

Another friend of hers inspired her to join acrobatics



she said, which she has also been doing for a long time. However, although Korman does acrobatics, her favorite sport is volleyball because "it requires teamwork. I mean all

sports do, but volleyball especially."

So far, Korman feels the school year is going well, and she's looking forward to the year ahead.

Aleksandra Masiulis

Interview by Jonas Meyer

Previous School: Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School (Clearwater, Fla.)

Eighth-grader Aleksandra Masiulis recently joined Pine View School from Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School. As a new student Masiulis said that she felt “excited and nervous” on her first day. Masiulis was nervous because she was not sure she would be able to make friends, yet was excited to experience what it would be like at her new school.

Masiulis said that the academics in Pine View

are challenging. In Algebra 1 Honors for example, Masiulis was struggling, but her math teacher, Summer Grantham, has helped her get back on track by having her in for lunch and helping her in other ways too. “Math and numbers have never been my forte,” said Masiulis. “Mrs. Grantham noticed me struggling, none of my past teachers had.”

In her free time, Masiulis likes to swim and read and she said she aspires to be a writer. Masiulis is proud that she has had her writing, a poem called “Complain’ Lou” published in a school newspaper, The

Cross Creek Chronical.

Masiulis’ passion for writing also led her to Journalism. “I don’t write enough, I thought that journalism would give me a chance to practice,” she said.

Masiulis said that her favorite subjects in school are math and Spanish. Masiulis likes her math class because of her teacher [Summer Grantham] and likes her Spanish class as it is easy for her since she has taken Spanish for multiple years at her old school already.

Masiulis also said that she likes her new



school very much and that she hopes to stay here for now, as she appreciates

many aspects of it such as the open campus and the helpful teachers.

Carter McCaa

Interview by Apollonia Krolikiewicz

Previous School: The Out-Of-Door Academy (Sarasota, Fla.)

New to Pine View School, eighth-grader, Carter McCaa has been thriving in his new learning environment. He previously attended The Out-Of-Door Academy (ODA). “ODA was pretty cool, I enjoyed having break times once or twice a day,” McCaa said, “I miss the sports from ODA, because Pine View doesn’t have many sports like football.”

McCaa came to Pine View because he and his family recently moved, and the closest best school was Pine View. He said he had

his doubts about the school before coming. “I thought there was going to be a lot of homework and I was worried about the teachers,” he said.

McCaa has Emese Percy for Pre-Calculus. He is in Pre-Calculus because of “hard work and determination.” McCaa is the only eighth-grader that takes Pre-Calculus.

McCaa is in the club Math Counts, a nationwide club. “We answer math questions and they are super difficult and eventually we will compete in a large competition...” he said.

His math journey started in fifth-grade when McCaa tripled on math courses, by taking online

courses on Florida Virtual School (FLVS). In fifth-grade, he took fifth and sixth grade math as well as Pre-Algebra. McCaa said, “I took the math courses at the time that my class was at, so I would go to the library and do online courses. My class was slower than me, so I was able to do the three courses.”

McCaa takes advanced math courses over the summers. In the summer between sixth and seventh-grade he took geometry and he took Algebra 2 last year while attending ODA. McCaa took the SAT in the summer before seventh-grade. He said, “I got two questions wrong from the math section... so that



score would be 760 out of 800.”

McCaa said he has been adapting really well. “I have made many friends,

and I like Pine View so far. I like most of my teachers and I think my classes help me socially because I have great people in my classes.”

Dharmesh Patel

Interview by Vir Patel

Previous school: Woodland Middle School (North Port, Fla.)

For many students, middle school is a time of uncertainty, a time of self-doubt; however, eighth-grader Dharmesh Patel knows what he likes and knows what gives him confidence.

He loves to play basketball with his friends when he is done with homework and other chores.

He likes Arizona Green Tea because he said he thinks it is not bland like water and is not too unhealthy.

He is vegetarian and

likes burritos and flautas with beans and chips.

He likes playing video games on his PlayStation 4 and watching Netflix. He likes rap.

He wants to be a dentist when he grows up because it does not have a weighty responsibility and there is good money.

How is Patel able to be so sure of himself? He said it starts with overcoming your fears.

He recently went to the Howl-o-Screams attraction at Busch Gardens in Tampa, Fla., with some friends. He said he overcame one of his fears there. Patel said he was scared at first,

but then became increasingly less scared with the help of his best friend's encouragement. "I even overcame my fear of the Falcon's Fury ride, also," Patel said. "I loved it."

Patel said he's had many accomplishments, but his overcoming of his fears of the Falcon's Fury ride and other Howl-o-Screams attractions were accomplished with his friends, which made them even memorable. "Since I overcame my fears, I feel prouder about myself," he said.

Patel has some advice for others facing new challenges: "I think people should try to accomplish things but try not to get



peer-pressured into doing it, especially when it is something bad."

Patel has been proving he can

rise over his deepest fears and achieve new heights that he never thought were possible.

Riley Pflug

Interview by Sebastian Genelhu-Bazan

Previous school: Sarasota Middle School (Sarasota, Fla.)

Transitions are hard, as eighth-grader Riley Pflug continues his transition to Pine View from Sarasota Middle School he's learning to fit in time for friends while adjusting to a new workload and school environment.

Although Pflug said he's happy with how things are going into Pine View, he realizes how difficult it is to make new friends in eighth grade, where everyone has their own friend groups and are reluctant to make new ones.

"Unless you have a group of friends that will follow you around for life, they will not transition with you everywhere you go. You have to make new friends, or you'll fall behind," Pflug said.

It's been especially difficult when lunch is filled with homework, and a scarce number of friends to help him. Pflug said he keeps close ties with friends from his old school, but his time with them is limited now that he's at Pine View.

"Though [I'm] keeping bonds with my old friends, I know sooner or later I am going to have to move on. I should be treating this as a

fresh, new start," he said.

Whenever he's free from the massive homework he gets every day, he plays video games with friends. He only plays with friends, though, as "it is not good when playing solo, as boredom will occur, and I don't like boredom."

He loves to play with his dog and lounge around his bed, reading comics.

He doesn't have many goals in life, as he hasn't figured it all out yet. He said he figures he won't have to worry about it until high school.

"As you go on in life, you'll get better ideas, so you might as well wait. You



can't set a map of life if that map's going to change," he said.

Pflug is a new face at Pine View, and although his

struggles may look monumental now, Pflug recognizes that it's only temporary. "It's just a rock I have to climb around," he said.

PINE VIEW

SURVIVAL GUIDE

Transitioning into middle school is difficult. You're stepping into a new world. Those of you that are new this year might not know many people. So, we, The Spark staff, put together a survival guide to help you with this transition and give you guidance for your journey through middle school.

Write things down.

Use an agenda, jot items down on Post-It notes, or keep a bullet journal.



Divide your to-do list into portions and set up goals for every day.

Workload



Sleep Deprivation

Keep track of your sleep schedule. If you stay up after midnight every day, you may want to manage your time so you can go to sleep earlier.



GRAPHIC BY FELICITY CHANG

Have fun.



Life can get overwhelming with all the responsibilities and deadlines. Sometimes you have to destress, have fun, and make time for yourself.

Stop comparing yourself to others. Compare yourself with the person you were yesterday. "Better" does not mean anything if you don't improve.

Improvement



Procrastination

Prevent burying yourself in a pile of assignments the day before they're due and falling asleep on them. Put your priorities first and split large projects into sections.



Stay on task.

When you are trying to get something done, stay on task and stay away from distractions. Try putting your phone on silent and setting a timer for breaks.

Eat.

Do not skip lunch. Don't do it. You need food and energy to function. Since middle school lunch times are often a little awkward, bring snacks for in-between classes.



Time Management

If you know that you'll be busy one day due to a tournament, concert, etc., plan to finish your work before then.



Get to know others.

Trust us, we know how intimidating it can be to interact with new people, but getting to know others will help you with group projects, assignments, etc.

hello