

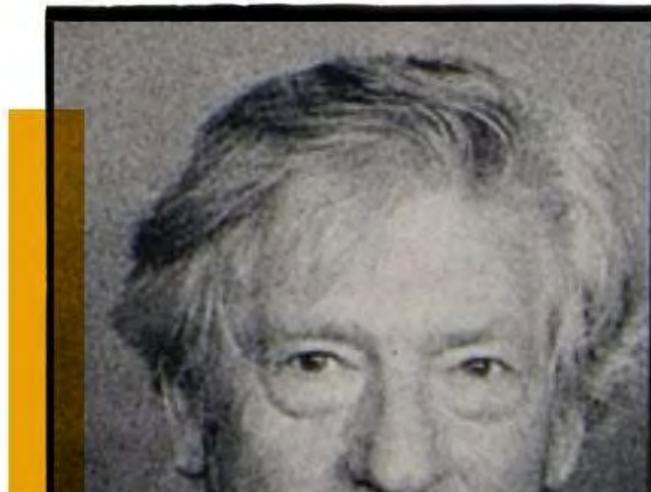
Life

HARVARD-WESTLAKE

With the holiday season upon us, let's take a moment to give thanks to those we most appreciate. For many, that includes not just family and friends, but also teachers and other school staff. Today, Harvard, Westlake, and Harvard-Westlake alums share why they are grateful for their favorite faculty and staff members, even years later.

Cheers, [Ed Hu](#) | Head of External Relations

Gratitude for Your Favorite Faculty & Staff Members





Hamlin Smith, History Teacher
Westlake, 1971-1990



“Mr. Smith had a twinkle in his eye and a perpetual smile on his face while he taught Westlake students. He truly brought history to life through his lectures and reenactments, but what I remember most is his kindness. When my locker became inoperable for several weeks—and no replacement could be found—Mr. Smith immediately handed me a key to his office and told me to use it each day to store my books and PE clothes. He called me his office buddy during that time, and I looked forward to our daily check-ins. His love for teaching was contagious, as was his warmth, humor, and empathy. Now, when I teach my own students, I strive to model these same characteristics.”

Denise Clark Pope '84





Tamar Adegbile, Upper School Dean

Harvard-Westlake, 2003-2015



"I remember the way Ms. Adegbile listened to my desires for my future and took them to heart. I could tell she truly wanted the best for me. Every time we met to discuss my next step in education, I felt comfortable being my truest self, which landed me at a university I absolutely adored attending. Thank you, Tamar!"

Hugo de Castro-Abeger '13



Steve Yang '08, Science Teacher

Harvard-Westlake, 2017-Present





“Mr. Yang managed to make physics fun! That’s not easy to do.”

Navid Ghodsi '21



Darcy Buck, English Teacher
Harvard-Westlake, 2015-Present



“Mx. Buck’s Living America class changed my life. I began to look at the world critically and fell in love with writing.”

Viswa Douglass '21



Leonard J. Sherman Ph.D., Dean of Faculty and English Teacher
Harvard, 1912-1957



“We all disliked him, as he was eager that we learn English literature and writing. But in later years I realized the importance of what he wanted us to know. When I look back, I realize he gave me a love of language and literature that has enriched my years immeasurably.”

Andrew MacAoidh Jergens '53





Katherine Holmes-Chuba, History and Social Studies Teacher
Harvard and Harvard-Westlake, 1985-Present



“Ms. Holmes-Chuba was an incredible teacher. She broke down art history in a way that made it easy to learn. She was also a great supporter of her students’ extracurricular activities, especially our soccer team!”

Alison Griffin '08

Do you have a favorite teacher, coach, or staff member you’d like to thank?

We’d love to hear your memories of a Harvard, Westlake, or Harvard-Westlake faculty or staff member who had a positive impact on you. [Tell us about your favorite!](#)

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