

HORIZONS

A ONE-OF-A-KIND PROGRAM TURNS 25

TO GET A SENSE FOR JUST HOW DIFFERENT THURSDAY mornings are at Miss Hall's School, step into the Front Hall at about quarter-to-nine.

On any other morning, one might find a student or two scrambling to get to the day's first class or heading to the Dining Room for a post-breakfast bagel and some quiet study time. That all goes out the window on Thursdays.

The Front Hall is a beehive, with waves of students surging for yellow buses in the Front Circle. Others hustle in the opposite direction, to waiting MHS mini-buses. Ninth-graders, meanwhile, might linger in the Living Room, awaiting instructions for their assignments on campus.

Adults herd stragglers. "To the buses, sophomores!" one calls. "Have you seen Olivia?" asks another. And so it goes, until each and every sophomore, junior, and senior is heading off campus or settling in to work at an on-campus project.

In North Adams, a nonprofit counts on three pairs of hands to prepare the day's community lunch. On Pittsfield's West Side, MHS students help clients access legal resources. At a community center in Great Barrington, the tables are turned, and MHS students guide toddlers in an early childhood classroom.

A sea of tranquility the Front Hall is not. This is Thursday morning at Miss Hall's. This — is Horizons, the School's landmark service learning and internship program, now in its 25th year.



- 1994**

Horizons is conceived and developed by MHS faculty and staff

Senior internships tested
- MAR 1995**

Ellen Kanner hired as first Director of Horizons
- SEP 1995**

Horizons launches. 16 seniors choose to participate in a pilot program and complete an internship at a Berkshire County business or service organization
- 1997**

Marcia August named Director of Horizons
- 1999-2000**

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors volunteer and intern at 46 partner sites
- 2002-2003**

MHS students contribute more than 7,200 hours of service through Horizons to the greater Berkshires community
- 2006-2007**

Ceramics students contribute handmade pottery to the Greenhouse Business Project Horizons Plant Sale. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors volunteer and intern at 65 partner sites

HORIZONS AT 25



Since its launch during the 1995-96 school year, Horizons has grown to include more than 75 sites across the Berkshires. Through Horizons, MHS students contribute an astounding 12,500 volunteer hours each year beyond the MHS campus. Further, Horizons has evolved into a signature program for the School.

“A lot of schools have internship programs, and a lot of schools have community service programs, but no school has a program like Horizons,” says Head of School Julia Heaton. “The structure, curriculum, community partnership, faculty involvement, links with the academic program, and alignment with the School’s mission and the Core Competencies expected in a Miss Hall’s graduate mean this is a truly exceptional program that makes a difference in girls’ lives.”

HORIZONS 101

Horizons is a four-year program that builds sequentially as students progress through their years at the School. It begins with on-campus community service projects in the ninth-grade, introduces off-campus elements in the sophomore year, builds on nonprofit volunteerism as a junior, and concludes with a senior-year internship typically tailored to a student’s college and/or career interests.

“Horizons is designed for each grade level to be developmentally appropriate,” explains Director of Horizons Alison Basdekis, who has led the program since 2011. “Each year builds upon the experiences of the previous year, and each year provides expanded opportunities to students. As opportunities expand, we also increase our expectations for what it means to be a Miss Hall’s student and how to be an active, engaged participant in the world and their community.”

NINTH GRADE Introduced to a new community, students stay on campus, working on projects that emphasize team-building; diversity, equity, and inclusion; health and wellness; financial literacy; and media literacy. They participate in Arty Party, developing and selling products and donating the proceeds to nonprofits. They operate the Greenhouse Business Project, which culminates in the annual Horizons Plant Sale.

“Ninth-graders enter the School from many different experiences and educational backgrounds, so we want to root them here first,” says Ms. Basdekis. Projects are designed to establish a strong foundation and understanding of how to serve on a team, work with others, and identify qualities they bring to the table.

“We want ninth-graders to develop a sense of who they are in relation to others and to have an understanding of cultural competency,” she adds. “In Arty Party and the Greenhouse Business Project, we provide opportunities for students to be creative and entrepreneurial in developmentally appropriate projects.”

SOPHOMORES Students connect with the world around them, stepping off campus to participate in class-wide service projects and participating in workshops that emphasize the history, politics, and economics of the Berkshires. With a basic understanding of the community, they volunteer later in the year in small groups at sites emphasizing community service.

“We start with larger group projects to integrate new students,” says Ms. Basdekis, noting that ten to twenty students typically join MHS as sophomores. In recent years, the class has visited Hancock Shaker Village,

“I knew how powerful it was for students to experience a classroom beyond those four walls and be out in the world.”

—FORMER HEAD OF SCHOOL
JEANNIE NORRIS H’62, H’12

2007–
2008

Volunteer hours of service to the Berkshire County community top more than 10,000

JUN
2008

Marcia August retires. E. Quincy McLaughlin named Director of Horizons

2008–
2009

Horizons financial literacy component bolstered in a partnership with Smith College

2009–
2010

Freshwoman programming enhanced with elements from Student Life and Girls’ Leadership Project curricula

SUMMER
2010

Kim Boland ‘94 named Interim Director of Horizons

FALL
2010

MAPS (Mira’s Alliance for Philanthropic Sustainability) debuts as an on-campus, student-centered Horizons site that fundraises through micro-lending

SUMMER
2011

Alison Basdekis named Director of Horizons

2011–
2012

Horizons supports the production and completion of the Girls’ Leadership Project’s documentary film, *A Seat at the Table*

Twenty-four students participate in the Youth Health Service Corps, receiving skills training on Tuesday evenings as they consider careers in healthcare

2013–
2014

MAPS hosts the first student-run conference, “Start-up While Starting Out: Women and Girls Talk Business”

Volunteer hours of service to the Berkshire County community top more than 12,000

Arty Party debuts as a social-entrepreneurial project for ninth-graders

2014–
2015

MAPS convenes another student run-conference, “Honoring Identities.” The work and dialogue of the conference helps determine the school-wide theme for the following year

2015–
2016

The Power of S.H.E. debuts for juniors and seniors interested in digital storytelling and girls’ voice development

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors volunteer and intern at 78 partner sites

2016–
2017

Girls Right the World, an international literary journal advocating for young, female-identified writers and artists, makes its debut

HORIZONS AT 25



learning about Shaker views on work and worship, equality, and their relationship to the land. Students have also learned about Community Supported Agriculture while harvesting vegetables at local farms and gleaning food for area food banks.

“In order to serve a place, you have to understand a place,” Ms. Basdekis adds. “Those first weeks are a way to help students gain an understanding of the dynamics of the Berkshires, as it relates to the different volunteer opportunities they will experience later in the year. They’re learning how to give back.”

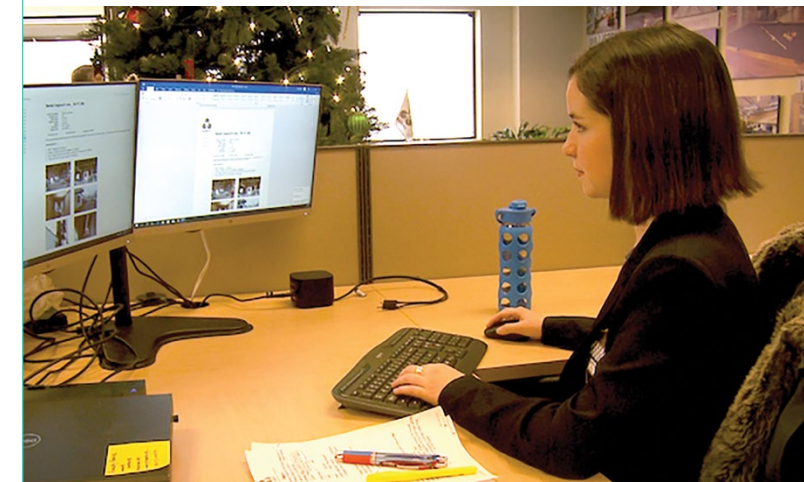
JUNIORS Students dig into the nonprofit model, volunteering across the Berkshires. They take on more responsibility, typically working individually or in pairs at their sites. Later in the year, they develop application materials for senior internships and to bolster college applications.

“Junior year sees the introduction of more choice,” Ms. Basdekis explains. “Students are still building capacity as volunteers, but their opportunities expand, and there are ways for them to intersect more closely with a personal passion or a career interest they are really starting to be explore in that year.”

Students begin to build a resume, and they participate in exercises aimed at helping them identify their passions or where college or career interests may lie. In mock interviews, they practice skills they will need when applying for internships and in the college application process.

SENIORS Horizons culminates in a yearlong internship tailored to college and career interests, and/or their personal passions. Students are expected to make substantive

HORIZONS REFLECTION ASHLEY HEHIR '20



Ashley Hehir '20 interns with EDM, an architecture, engineering, and project-management firm in Pittsfield. The experience follows Ashley's summer internship with a residential architecture firm and fits with her interest in studying architecture in college. Her work includes learning the ins and outs of CAD (computer-aided design) and working on field reports for EDM's projects.

“What I enjoy most is that I am always learning things. One of the challenges is it is mostly men in the office, and the few women tend to work in administration, not as architects or engineers. That can be a little intimidating, but it's also empowering. Overall, Horizons has made me more confident being out in the real world, and it's good that we have opportunities to volunteer and intern at a young age. I feel like my experience has been better each year. I'm learning more, getting out of my comfort zone, and being given more responsibility. It definitely makes me feel more prepared for the future.”

contributions to their sites and, in many cases, their work is added to their portfolios for college and beyond.

“Senior year is the space and place in which students have the most choice and access to something of interest,” Ms. Basdekis notes. “It could be something they are curious about and want to try, or it could be a college or career interest. It could be a project they want to push forward, and that could flow from an interest developed in their course work.”

The overwhelming majority of students intern off campus. In recent years, however, students have had opportunities to pursue supervised, on-campus projects related to personal interests. For example, one student this year is working to develop a garbage can that will compost. She has consulted industry experts, developed plans, and worked to build a prototype.

“Those projects are exciting for some,” Ms. Basdekis adds. “Others prefer the structured experience of site work. In both cases, students engage in meaningful work, in collaboration with adults, to have an impact in the world beyond the MHS campus and to prepare for their experiences after Miss Hall's.”

THURSDAY MORNINGS WEREN'T ALWAYS THIS BUSY

Horizons began as an afternoon program. And, senior internships were voluntary. Both would change as the program gained a firmer footing.

From the outset, the program incorporated all four grade levels, with MHS faculty committees meeting during the 1994-95 academic year to create guidelines for each grade. Ellen Kanner was hired in March 1995 as the program's first director. A firm believer in all-women's education — she is an alumna of Smith College — Ms. Kanner brought experience in human resources and career development to the program. She also had connections she could call upon in the Berkshires.

“From the start, you could see the program as having enormous potential,” Ms. Kanner says. “The design was great, we had the incredible wisdom of the Miss Hall's faculty and staff behind it, and you could see it being a meaningful and important experience not only for the girls but also for Miss Hall's.”

One hurdle was finding room in the schedule. At the time, Thursday afternoons were “Town Days,” free time for students. Some objected to Horizons cutting into that time, but the program ultimately launched on Thursday afternoons.

Additionally, participation in senior internships was voluntary. That soon moved to “cordially required,” recalls former Head of School Jeannie Norris H'62, H'12, who joined MHS in 1996, the program's second year.

NOV
2016

Horizons moves to the Jeannie Norris Horizons Studio in Linn Hall

FALL
2016

Power of SHE adopts a new name: Project G.I.R.L. (Gumption in Real Life). Student leaders continue to record digital stories, while expanding research to other platforms

MAY
2017

Project G.I.R.L. hosts the SASS (Students Against Sexual Silence) Conference

APRIL
2018

Horizons collaborates with members of the STEAM Committee to host the first MHS STEAM Day

2018–
2019

“Starting Up @ MHS” offers students in Horizons the chance to become entrepreneurs by working with off-campus mentors to write a business plan and develop prototypes

A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workshop series is piloted during 9th-grade Horizons Across all grade levels, students raise more than \$10,000, which is donated to a variety of nonprofits

Project G.I.R.L. hosts a conference for MHS students and regional high school students exploring trends and challenges around confidence called “We are B.O.S.S.”

HORIZONS AT 25

"I knew how powerful it was for students to experience a classroom beyond those four walls and to be out in the world, applying what they were learning on campus," Ms. Norris says. During interviews for the Head's position, she recalls telling the search committee, "If you hire me, this program will not go away." "The School had already opened the door to the program, and that sometimes is the hardest part," she adds. "I knew Horizons would be an invaluable experience, especially for girls."

In 1997, Marcia August succeeded Ms. Kanner as Director of Horizons. Ms. August, too, saw the value in requiring student participation and cementing the program into the culture of the School.

"One of my goals was to build and strengthen the program, because I knew how volunteer work could benefit students," Ms. August recalls. "I distinctly remember telling Jeannie to give me three years, but that it had to be all or nothing — either everyone does it or no one does it. We made that change my second year and that was a big cultural shift, but it definitely strengthened the program."

The program also moved to Thursday mornings. Logistics were one reason. "It was difficult to get internships that started at 1 or 1:30 p.m.," Ms. August notes, and local public schools, integral to the program, would have limited participation, because their days would be nearly over when MHS students arrived.

The shift, which committed a tenth of the weekly academic schedule to Horizons, was not easy. Again, faculty support proved crucial. "There were bumps, and that's to be expected with such a major undertaking, but I always admired how visionary and open faculty were to the program," Ms. Norris notes. "It was a huge commitment, but we ultimately built a more rigorous academic program, even with a reduction in academic time, and the faculty accommodated that."

As Ms. August recalls, by the 1999-00 academic year, the program was fixed in the MHS culture. During Ms. August's tenure, Horizons added resume-development and an application and interview process

SINCE ITS LAUNCH IN 1995, HORIZONS HAS GROWN

both in terms of the number of partner sites and the geographical breadth of those sites, which stretch throughout Berkshire County. Today, Miss Hall's students volunteer and intern at more than 75 sites from Great Barrington to North Adams!

AT THE FOUNDING

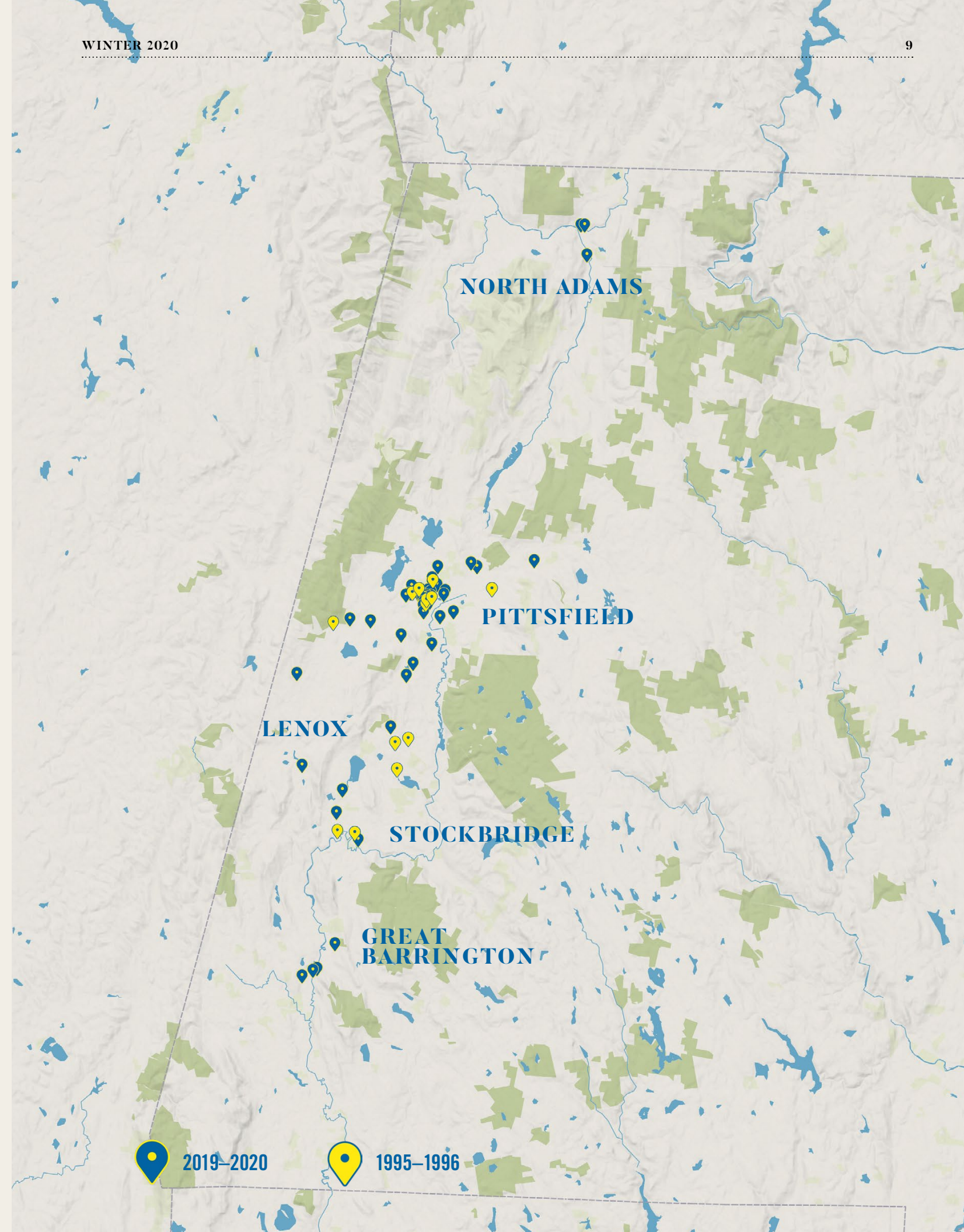
American Red Cross
Berkshire County Juvenile Court
Berkshire Medical Center
Berkshire Museum
Democratic Headquarters
Girls Inc. of the Berkshires
Habitat for Humanity
Hancock Shaker Village
Historic Stockbridge

HORIZONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

18 Degrees/Redfield House/Berkshire Children and Families
Arrowhead/Berkshire County Historical Society
Barrington Stage Company
Barry & Kinzer Law Firm
Berkshire Athenaeum
Berkshire Botanical Garden
Berkshire County Board of Realtors
Berkshire Family YMCA
Berkshire Food Project
Berkshire Horsecworks
Berkshire Immigrant Center
Berkshire Interfaith Organizing
Berkshire Medical Center
Berkshire Music School
Berkshire Museum
Berkshire Place
Berkshire Probate and Family Court, Francis B. Marinaro, Registrar
Berkshire South Regional Community Center
Berkshire Theatre Festival
Berkshire United Way
Berkshire Veterinary Hospital
Berkshire West Athletic Club
Boys' and Girls' Club of the Berkshires – Children's Center
Canyon Ranch
Crosby Elementary School
Conte Community School
Dr. Brian Dempsey
Dr. Vicki Smith
Downtown Pittsfield Inc.
EDM
Egremont Elementary School
Fairview Hospital
Girls Right the World
Girls Who Code
Hancock Shaker Village
Herberg Middle School
Hill-Engineers, Architects, Planners, Inc.
Housatonic Valley Association
Iredale Mineral Cosmetics, Ltd.

Kimball Farms
The Mount, Edith Wharton's Home
Norman Rockwell Museum
Pittsfield Community Television
Shakespeare & Co.
St. Stephen's Table
United Way

IS183
Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival
Kimball Farms Life Care
Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health
Lenox Cat Hospital
Lichtenstein Center for the Arts
The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center
MAPS (Mira's Alliance for Philanthropic Sustainability)
Mason Library
Mass in Motion/Northern Berkshire Community Coalition
Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art
MHS Athletics Department – Trainer
MHS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Intern
MHS Greenhouse Assistant
MHS Makes
MHS Media Team
Morningside Community School
The Mount
Mount Greylock Extended Care Facility
MountainOne Investments
NAACP Berkshires
Norman Rockwell Museum
North County Veterinary Hospital
Pittsfield Community Television
Pittsfield Prospers
Pittsfield Veterinary Hospital
Project G.I.R.L.
The Red Lion Inn
Robin's Candy
ROOTS Teen Center
Senior Independent Projects
Sonsini Animal Shelter
South Street Congregational Church
State Representative Tricia Farley-Bouvier
State Sen. Adam Hinds' Office
Stephanie Iverson Jewelry
Western Mass Labor Action
Western Mass Physical Therapy
Wingate Residences at Melbourne Place
Zogics



HORIZONS AT 25



for senior internships. The Greenhouse Business Project expanded in 2006-07, with students creating pottery for the Horizons Plant Sale. The program also became firmly rooted in the Berkshires.

"I am proud of the program's ability to build the relationship between the School and the community," she says. "What I am most proud of, though, is that Horizons became solidly anchored in the whole school. People couldn't see Miss Hall's without seeing Horizons." When Ms. August retired in June 2008, annual volunteer hours topped more than 10,000, and nearly 70 sites hosted Horizons students.

"From the beginning, the right person was always there to take Horizons to the next level," Ms. Norris notes. "Ellen was an entrepreneur and saw the potential. Marcia gave it the structure it needed, and Alison has taken it to the next level, which reflects how service-learning has evolved. During the last twenty-five years, colleges and universities have moved in this direction as well, which is requiring students, before they graduate, to take what they have learned and make a difference in the world."

During Ms. Basdekis' tenure, Horizons has indeed flourished, not only in participating sites, volunteer hours, and the geographic range of its partnerships, but also in programmatic elements — the types of experiences for students.

"We have expanded the idea of what a student can engage with and what that looks like," Ms. Basdekis explains. "At the same time, we have strengthened existing partnerships and the connection between student experiences off and on campus. We've also adjusted the schedule and the ways in which we find time for students to reflect, de-brief, and understand their Horizons experiences."

The program has added on-campus projects — MAPS (Mira's Alliance for Philanthropic Sustainability), Project G.I.R.L. (Gumption in Real Life), Girls Right the World, and the MHS Makes blog have provided opportunities for on-campus

experiences with off-campus impacts. And, Horizons will continue to change.

"I am excited about some of the possible collaborations and opportunities," Ms. Basdekis says. "I see ways for Horizons to intersect with Hallmark courses. There are also strategic partnerships to explore in the Berkshires and beyond. We will continue to look at the ninth-grade and tenth-grade foundational experiences, and there are ways to explore what the eleventh and twelfth-grade experiences look like. This is an incredibly important way to learn. It's learning by doing, learning by action, and there are ways to integrate with the curriculum."

Twenty-five years ago, was it thought Horizons would become a signature program for the School?

"I always thought of the vision for Horizons in two ways," notes Ms. Kanner, the program's first director. "I wanted it to be meaningful for each student, and I saw it as a way for Miss Hall's to participate in the larger community. At the end of the first year, I did some calculations, and it was staggering, the hours the girls contributed to the community and to their own development. It thrills me when I think that so many girls have had an experience in Horizons that they just wouldn't have had anywhere else." •

HORIZONS REFLECTION WENDY WANG '20



Wendy Wang '20 interns with the Berkshire Historical Society. One of her projects this year is helping the historical society develop its exhibit, "Getting to Yes: Women's Suffrage in the Berkshires and Beyond," celebrating the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage.

John Dickson, Berkshire County Historical Society Board Member and Volunteer, and Wendy's Site Supervisor:

"Wendy has been selecting anecdotes for the exhibit panels telling the story of events, places, and people of importance or who had a role in the Berkshires of moving toward women's suffrage. I've been working with her to find and tell the stories, because people like stories more than facts and dates. It's been a wonderful experience. People my age, our social life centers around people our age, and we often have so little contact with younger people, particularly in the Berkshires. In general, we all benefit from contact with other generations, and it's inspiring to see the talent of these young Miss Hall's women. Wendy is very conscientious, is a quick worker, and really has a lot to offer."



HORIZONS GOES DIGITAL

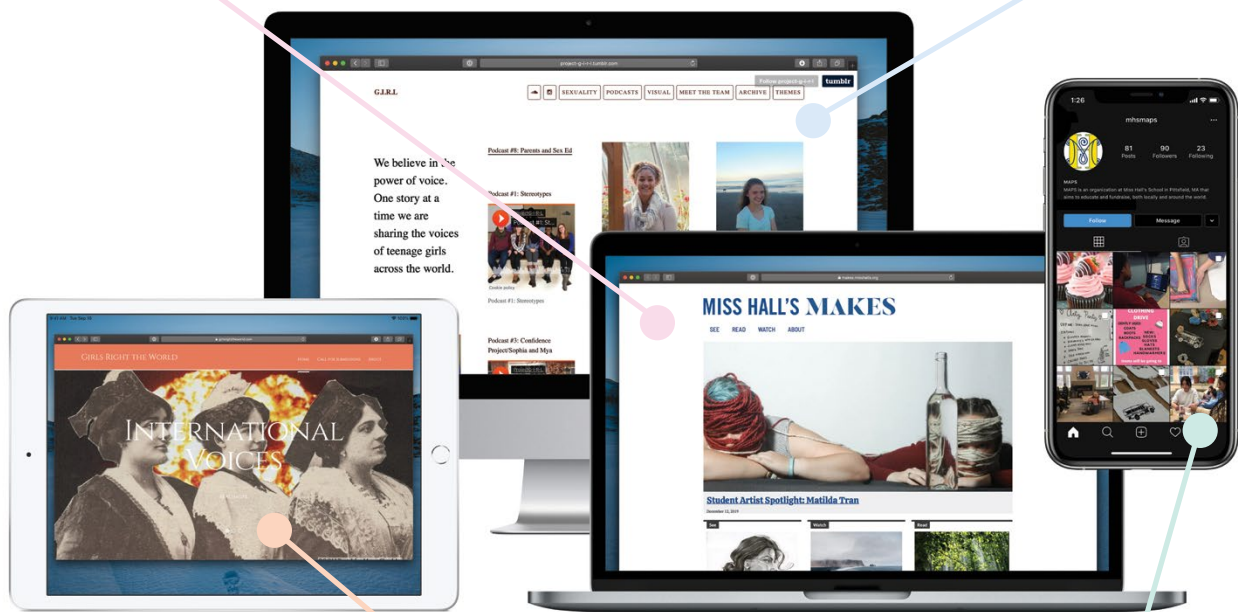
Horizons is redefining “hands-on” for a digital age

MISS HALL'S MAKES, which launched in February, is a blog designed to celebrate and disseminate student academic work. <https://makes.missfalls.org>.

PROJECT G.I.R.L. (Gumption in Real Life) launched in the 2015-16 academic year as Digital Storytelling. Entirely project-based and student-led, Project G.I.R.L. examines and documents girls' perspectives on relevant and current topics of girlhood (i.e. race, body image, gender, sexuality, education, and more).

GIRLS RIGHT THE WORLD, launched in 2016-17, is an online literary journal advocating for young, female-identified writers and artists around the globe by publishing exceptional poetry, prose, short stories, lyric essays, and visual art.

MAPS (Mira's Alliance for Philanthropic Sustainability) debuted in fall 2010 as a student-centered site at which students fundraise and promote sustainable philanthropy in the Miss Hall's community and around the world.



HOW DOES IT WORK AGAIN?

THURSDAYS AT MISS HALL'S ARE ALL ABOUT Horizons — whether on-campus (ninth-graders) or out in the community (sophomores, juniors, and seniors). Here's a glance at what a typical Thursday schedule looks like.

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
8:30am	Advisor meetings			
9:00	On-campus team-building activities	Regional exploration as a class	Volunteering off-campus	Off-campus internships or independent senior projects
10:00				
11:00	Lunch	Volunteering off-campus		
12:00pm	On-campus team-building activities	Lunch on campus		
1:00	Class meeting	Class meeting	Combined class meeting	
2:00	Regular academic class schedule			
3:00	Regular academic class schedule			

HORIZONS REFLECTION ABIGAIL LINTON '20



Abigail Linton '20 interns with the NAACP, Berkshire County chapter. Her work so far has included a mix of big picture – attending meetings and getting to know the lay of the land in the organization – and nitty-gritty details – creating a spreadsheet to collect information for the chapter's mailing list.

Chad Robertson, NAACP, Berkshire County Branch Secretary and Abigail's Site Supervisor: *“Abigail's internship with us is an opportunity to have younger people at the table, especially younger women. Our organization is 110 years old, and we trend toward an older demographic, so having Abigail here is a great way for us to include fresh, new voices in the conversation. In a lot of aspects of our culture, the voices of women are drowned out, but Abigail has a voice, and her voice is valuable. It's also important for her to know that there are mechanisms and avenues where she can impact her community and make a difference, and that it's especially important for younger people and younger black women to add their contributions. She's been a great asset for us.”*