

Two Families Behind Brophy College Preparatory

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine



Brophy College Preparatory may be one of the top all-boys preparatory school in the state, but it didn't become that way without the hard work and dedication expressed by the students and their families. Here, AZFoothills chat with two Brophy seniors, Scott Levine and Aaron Oleson, and their mothers, Polly Levine and Patti Oleson, who also serve as chairpersons of the school, about their experience with BCP.



Where are you from? (MOMS)

P.L: I grew up in Los Angeles, California

P.O: I grew up in Youngstown, New York

Why did you choose BCP for your son? (MOMS)

P.L: Living here for the past 20 years has given me the opportunity to meet and spend time with former Brophy Students. I was always impressed by their confidence and willingness to serve others. Having a strong Jewish faith makes me admire the religious base that Brophy infuses throughout their education and everyday activities. I am grateful that the Jesuits are open to educating all children, regardless of religious affiliation. Finally, I am most appreciative that the Jesuit philosophy is about focusing on the whole child-that it's not just about academics, but being a good person.

P.O: Actually, my older son Nick, who graduated from Brophy in 2011, first heard of Brophy in the 5th grade when his teacher told him that Brophy was the high school for him and if he worked really hard in middle school he could go there. Being new to the area, we were not familiar with Brophy. As we learned more about Brophy we loved the Jesuit approach to education and wanted both our boys to have the opportunity to attend such a special place.

Why did you want to attend Brophy College Preparatory?

S.L: When I talked to older kids about Brophy all I heard was great things. They all loved the school, so I wanted to see what it was all about.

A.O: I wanted to attend Brophy because my older brother attended Brophy and based on his experiences, I could tell that it would be a great place to go for school. Along with the major influence from my brother, I listened to a presentation about Brophy by Mr. Ward. After listening to his presentation and stories from my brother, I knew that Brophy is unlike any other school and that it was the school I wanted to attend.

What makes BCP different from the other schools in the Valley? (BOTH)

P.L: The religious aspect is foremost. Even though we are Jewish, we believe, like the Jesuits that there is a greater power beyond ourselves. Also, that we have an obligation to leave this world a better place than what we came into.

P.O: Everything about Brophy makes it different from other schools in the Valley. Not only do the students receive a top-notch education, there is also a focus on service and the boys have so many opportunities for growth. Each year the students are required to do a community service project and many work for local organizations. In addition, many boys attend service immersion trips in the United States to Los Angeles, Appalachia, and New Orleans, and internationally to Mexico, Peru, Argentina, El Salvador and Africa. Developing future leaders with global awareness is truly unique.

A.O: Brophy is different from other schools because of the opportunities that it offers its students. While it is the most academically challenging school in Phoenix, it is also gives its students the most opportunities to have fun through clubs and sports. No matter who you are at Brophy you can find something that you will enjoy being part of. Along with the many opportunities that Brophy offers its students, Brophy also separates itself from other schools in its goal to form men for others. Brophy students are challenged to serve their community and those around the world through service projects and immersion opportunities.

What is the funniest thing that has happened at BCP since you started? (BOTH)

P.L: I have to say that the dogs roaming the campus is quite a treat. So one day I brought my dog. She was treated like royalty. Now, every time we drive by the campus, Hanna (my dog) goes crazy!

P.O: One funny thing that comes to mind is the time both my boys needed to attend a play for extra credit and the tickets were sold out. My

Two Families Behind Brophy College Preparatory

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

husband, Paul, called to see if he could secure a couple tickets for any night and could not believe how nice the person he talked to was. It wasn't until he went to pick up the tickets that he received a strange look and finally... "you're not Paul Olson." They were expecting, Paul Olson, the Choir Director. Paul Oleson and Paul Olson have often received each other's emails.

A.O: I cannot think of one particular thing as the funniest thing that has happened since I have begun my schooling at Brophy because there are so many funny experiences that I have been a part of. Every day at Brophy is a fun new experience and no day is the same as another. If I had to think of the funniest thing however, it would be how my physics class this year raised money to adopt an Antarctic penguin. It's the fun things like this that makes Brophy the place it is.



Why are you involved with the Brophy Fashion Show? (MOMS)

P.L: What I love about Brophy is they "walk the talk". Over 20 percent of the boys that go there are on Financial Aid. I would do whatever I could to ensure that any boy who wants to go to BCP would get the opportunity. I've witnessed the incredible results of this first-hand. It is a beautiful thing to see a young man be the first in his family to get a college degree.

P.O: When asked to chair the Fashion Show I didn't hesitate to say yes. All proceeds from the Fashion Show go directly to the Brophy Financial Aid Fund for scholarships for students who otherwise would not have an opportunity to attend Brophy. I have met many of these students and they are truly amazing young men and their accomplishments are impressive.

This year's theme is "Brophy in Our Hearts and Minds." How does the Brophy experience guide its students both intellectually and compassionately throughout their lives? (BOTH)

P.L: I am incredibly moved by the conversations we have at dinner, driven by Brophy events. I know that the education my boys get at Brophy will serve them well in their careers, personal relationships, and their relationship with God.

P.O: Brophy graduates take away so much more than academics. They have the opportunity over four years to experience religious retreats, immersion trips, thought provoking summits, and participate in several activities, including sports, band, choir, theater, student government and an endless number of clubs. No matter what each student chooses to be involved in, all their experiences will guide them throughout their lives both intellectually and compassionately.

S.L: Teachers are always talking about taking our education out into the real world. Whenever I am out doing something, I think about what I have learned, and being a man for others. I take on my days based on that thought.

A.O: The Brophy experience guides its students both intellectually and compassionately throughout their lives because that is the goal of the school. Brophy is committed to forming what the Jesuits call a Man for Others (a man who is committed to the service of others). This is accomplished through the many service projects/opportunities offered at Brophy as well as the immersion trips that the students can participate in. Another goal of Brophy is to form the graduate at graduation which encompasses the 5 traits of intellectually competent, committed to others, religious, open to growth, and loving. The faculty and staff at Brophy commit every day to form their students both intellectually and compassionately by helping them to live these five traits. Every experience that a Brophy student has he is being formed into an intellectual and compassionate person whether he knows it or not.

Is the fashion show open to the community? (MOMS)

P.L: Of course, the entire community is invited and encouraged to come. Saks will have an amazing show and your contribution helps others. A win-win situation, please come

P.O: We would love to share this day with the community. Our committee is hard at work to make this a fun and memorable day that everyone can enjoy, while showcasing some of the best Brophy has to offer. Please join us on Tuesday, November 6th at the Arizona Biltmore. The festivities will begin at 10:30 am.

Who can we contact to support and buy tickets (MOMS)

Invitations will be mailed and on-line reservations will be accepted in September. If you are interested in attending the Fashion Show, sponsoring a portion of the event or providing a 100% tax deductible donation to Brophy, please contact Colleen Edwards at cedwards@carefreeresorts.com or call her at 602-790-8278. To learn more about Brophy and its mission, please visit the website at www.brophyprep.org.