



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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Thoughts for the Week

By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster



In his most recent book, French intellectual and publisher, Guy Sorman, wrote about the culture of generosity in American Life. In *Le Coeur American*, Sorman examines the origins, the history and the practice of giving within the American community.

His intended audience is not American readers but the French reader, since the culture of giving is particularly American. In France, Italy and most other European countries, giving to schools, private schools, has very few roots in the culture. Perhaps because there are few independent schools, which do not and have not played an historical role in continental European education. Sorman directs his book at the American experience in an attempt to influence the French experience, since there are now about eighty French schools outside of France that have now entered into the mainstream of the culture of giving.

Not-for-profit, independent schools, such as Garden, have all developed a culture of giving. At Garden, while we anticipate and rely on everyone being as generous as they can be, our philosophy of giving is about achieving 100% participation as much as it is about the size of the amounts. All of the pieces of our fundraising program, the Gala, The Annual fund, PTA Fundraising Activities, all of these together with the participation of all of our stakeholder groups—parents, trustees, teachers, alumni, students—all of us unite and our community comes together as a 'whole' to support, sustain and fulfill the mission of the school.

The participation of all community stakeholders in giving has more important consequences than simply financial. When a community member gives to these efforts, it represents their understanding and appreciation that generous participation evolves into responsibility. That is our goal: for all Garden community members, past and present, to take on the responsibility for supporting Garden School through the next phase of our growth, and sustaining the school for the next generation. Sorman's book points out how this coming together of generosity and responsibility elevates the idea of giving to the value of care-giving. As members of an independent school community, each of us assumes a responsibility to maintain our school through our generosity and care-giving.

Therefore, the purpose of Annual Giving and the Gala is not a simply financial one; it is a community endorsement of the vision and the mission of Garden School. This is the way it has been at Garden School for over 92 years. In giving, we recognize the participation of those who have given before us, while, at the same time, sustaining the present and fulfilling our obligation to those who will support our school in the future.